



South Downs National Park

Settlement Facilities Assessment

Covering Report

November 2024

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Appendix A – Settlement Facility Availability Scores 2024

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Settlement Facilities Assessment forms part of the evidence base for the South Downs Local Plan Review. Its purpose is to provide an updated assessment of settlement facilities across the National Park and assist in identifying the relative sustainability of settlements based on the concept of living locally – whereby residents can access daily goods, services and places by a short walk or cycle, or without the use of a private car.

1.2 The assessment will help inform decisions regarding the provision of future housing development in the Local Plan Review and focus development within established or well-connected settlements. The assessment also provides information on gaps in provision and can assist in infrastructure planning and investment.

1.3 An assessment of settlement facilities was first published in 2015 and formed part of the evidence base for the South Downs Local Plan (2019). This was informed by feedback from Parish and Town Councils received in 2014. Due to the nature and number of facilities being subject to change, the assessment requires regular updating to inform the Local Plan Process.

1.4 The list of settlements along with their facilities, included in this assessment are presented in **Appendix I** by alphabetical order. The settlements are not set out in a hierarchy or into separate tiers.

1.5 For this update, additional settlements have been assessed including some on the edge of the National Park where the main settlement is outside the National Park boundary, with facilities that serve communities within the Park. The list of settlements includes both the larger towns and villages in the National Park, and much smaller settlements which have just a few facilities.

1.6 Not all the settlements listed in this assessment have a defined settlement boundary in the Local Plan, as many of them are considered unsuitable for infill development. Settlements without boundaries are treated as part of the open countryside for planning purposes, but this does not mean they are not settlements.

2.0 Process

2.1 To establish the availability of services within settlements, reference has been made to the existing settlement facilities study (2015) to create a base list of settlements and the availability of services. Following a request for information from parish and town councils across the National Park, additional settlements have been added to the assessment. Settlements on the edge of the National Park have also been included where facilities located here serve the day-to-day needs of communities within the National Park.

2.2 Secondly, there has been a review of the methodology. This review has resulted in some limited changes to the types of facilities included in the study. This was influenced by officer feedback and review of other existing settlement studies in other planning authorities. The overall aim of the Settlement Facilities Assessment is to identify the relative sustainability of settlements, therefore it is considered appropriate to include facilities that people visit or need on a regular basis or require for day-to-day essentials. The review of 2015 methodology led to the addition of the following facilities in the assessment:

- Community / village hall
- Playground
- Active travel route (aka Non-Motorised User route)
- Electric vehicle charging point
- High speed broadband coverage

2.3 Finally, an audit of facilities has been taken place. This included distribution of a proforma to all parish and town councils entirely and partly within the SDNPA boundary in early 2023. Those proformas that were returned informed an update of the 2015 baseline list of facilities. This was complimented by an extensive desktop review of settlement facilities to fill any gaps on settlement facilities using online mapping tools, published District and County Council information and officer knowledge. Provisional scores were then shared with parishes for feedback and amendment in late 2023.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 The number of facilities and services are identified within and in close proximity to a settlement and recorded in **Appendix I**. This is not a simple tally of the number of facilities but is based on the scoring system outlined below. The inclusion of particular services and facilities has been based on those which are most commonly used on a regular basis. Very small settlements with no or just one facility e.g. public house, have not been recorded in Appendix I.

3.2 A change in the methodology since 2015 relates to the distance facilities in nearby settlements are readily available to a community. Rather than recording facilities within 1km of a settlement, a facility must now be considered accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route. This change has been made due to the practicality of accessing facilities on a day-to-day basis, as it is unlikely that the average person would cycle 1km to a facility if there is no designated walking or cycling route, or if the route included traveling along a busy road without a footpath. This means that nearby facilities are recorded in a more practical way, reflecting what is reasonably available to a community to use on a day-to-day basis.

Recording of services/facilities

Childcare and Education Facilities:

Information required	Response
<p>Is there a nursery or pre-school in the settlement?</p> <p><i>*neighbouring settlement (inside or outside the SDNP) that are accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No nursery or pre-school provision (0)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> One or more nursery or pre-school services (1)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nursery or pre-school in neighbouring settlement* - give name of neighbouring settlement: (0.5)</p>
<p>Is there an infant, primary or junior school in the settlement?</p> <p><i>*neighbouring settlement (inside or outside the SDNP) that are accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No primary school provision (0)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> One or more primary schools (1)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Primary school provision in neighbouring settlement* - give name of neighbouring settlement: (0.5)</p>

Information required	Response
<p>Is there a secondary school in the settlement? <i>*neighbouring settlement (inside or outside the SDNP) that are accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No secondary school provision (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more secondary schools (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary school in neighbouring settlement* - give name of neighbouring settlement: (0.5)</p>

Shopping Facilities:

Information Required	Response
<p>Is there a local shop(s) providing for essential food, drink and convenience shopping? <i>*neighbouring settlement (inside or outside the SDNP) that are accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No local shop (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more local shops (1) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more supermarkets (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Local shop in neighbouring settlement* - give name of neighbouring settlement: (0.5)</p>

Transport:

Information required	Response
<p>Is there a regular bus service in the settlement? <i>For the purposes of this audit, a regular bus service is defined as at least an hourly bus service that operates during peak hours and connects the settlement with larger villages / towns nearby</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No regular bus service (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more regular bus service (1)</p>
<p>Is there a train station in the settlement? <i>*neighbouring settlement (inside or outside the SDNP) that are accessible within 20 minutes by walking or cycling via an active travel route.</i></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No train station (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Train station in settlement (2) <input type="checkbox"/> Train station in neighbouring settlement* - give name of neighbouring settlement: (0.5)</p>

Information required	Response
Is there an active travel route (aka non-motorised user route) connecting the settlement to other nearby settlements?	<input type="checkbox"/> No active travel / Non-motorised user route (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Active travel / Non-motorised user route connecting to settlements within 5km (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Active travel / Non-motorised user route connecting to settlements within 2km (2)
Are there electric vehicle charging facilities in the settlement?	<input type="checkbox"/> No EV charging (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One EV charging station (0.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Two or more EV charging stations (1)

Health Facilities:

Information required	Response
Is there a GP surgery or pharmacy in the settlement?	<input type="checkbox"/> No GP surgery or pharmacy (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One GP surgery or pharmacy (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Two or more GP surgery or pharmacy (2)

Community Facilities:

Information required	Response
Is there a community/village hall in the settlement?	<input type="checkbox"/> No community/village hall (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more community/village hall (1)
Is there a playground in the settlement?	<input type="checkbox"/> No playground (0) <input type="checkbox"/> One or more playgrounds (1)

Information required	Response
<p>Is there high speed fibre broadband coverage in the settlement?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> No high speed fibre broadband coverage (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Some high speed fibre broadband coverage (0.5) <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive high speed fibre broadband coverage (1) </p>
<p>Are there other community facilities available in the settlement (e.g. library, post office, public house or bank/building society)?</p>	<p> <input type="checkbox"/> No other community facilities (0) <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile or part time other community facility(s) (0.5) <input type="checkbox"/> One other community facility (1) <input type="checkbox"/> Two or more other community facilities (2) </p>