

SOUTH DOWNS PLANNING

NEWS FROM YOUR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



Welcome to the planning newsletter for the South Downs National Park Authority
Send your comments to us at planningnewsletter@southdowns.gov.uk

Call for Sites launched by National Park

The South Downs National Park Authority is offering an opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to put forward sites for potential development.

The “Call for Sites” launches today as the National Park Authority undertakes a review of its Local Plan – a process that is required by law to ensure the Local Plan is up-to-date.

Potential sites can be put forward for consideration for the following range of uses:

- Housing includes new homes, 100% affordable housing, specialised care, for example, for older persons, self and custom-build homes
- Economic development, including offices, manufacturing and warehousing
- Renewable energy
- Gypsy & Traveller, and travelling showpeople sites
- Biodiversity net gain (where the natural environment is improved) and nutrient offsetting sites.



The National Park Authority is also looking for nominations for “Local Green Spaces”, which local communities think are demonstrably special and should be protected from development.

The Local Plan and neighbourhood plans already have a number of



designated Local Green Spaces, but communities are being invited to nominate more sites for consideration.

The call-out runs until 28 September.

Lucy Howard, Planning Policy Manager for the National Park Authority, said: “We’re launching our Call for Sites as part of the Local Plan Review, which Government requires us to do every five years.

“It’s important to say this is not just about housing. We’re asking people to put forward sites for a whole range of uses. Just because a site is put forward does not mean it will be allocated and, of course, landscape will always come first in our appraisal.

“This Call for Sites is a key aspect of the Local Plan Review, which is a detailed planning process that is likely to take up to three years.

It’s crucial we keep the Local Plan up-to-date otherwise the National Park would be more vulnerable to speculative developments that haven’t been properly consulted on. This will be a review, rather than a brand new plan, and we will be keeping our award-winning landscape-led approach.”

Affordable homes are given the go-ahead



New affordable, eco-friendly homes have been given the green light for a Hampshire village.

The Authority's Planning Committee voted to approve plans for 10 homes, as well as access, car parking, cycle storage and landscaping, on land at Greenway Lane in Buriton.

The land was already allocated for development in the South Downs Local Plan and Mapledean Projects and Metis Homes put forward an application for a high-quality, sustainable development.

The plans include one passive house, electrical vehicle charging points for each dwelling, solar panels on each dwelling, and air source heat pumps.

Water sustainability is high, with water use of 110 litres per person per day and sustainable drainage systems.

Biodiversity enhancements are included in the landscaping proposals, as well as the creation of bee bricks and swift boxes.

The development includes four new affordable homes.

Richard Ferguson, Development Management Lead for the west of the National Park, said: "This small housing development makes good use of a site that was allocated in the South Downs Local Plan.

"We have worked closely with the developers to deliver this allocated site and take on board local community views to ensure there are social benefits in terms of



new affordable homes for people with local connections as well as environmental enhancements such as biodiversity net gain.

"The development is a good addition to this semi-rural location and

improves the settlement edge of Buriton."

Following this summer's general call-out, the Authority will be carrying out a park-wide Land Availability Assessment in the autumn and winter. This will involve looking at the suitability of all the submitted sites.

Lucy added: "We're working very closely with parish and town councils across the National Park, as well as other key partners, to look for new development sites to meet local need without adversely impacting on the landscape of the National Park."

Please visit

www.southdowns.gov.uk/CallForSites2022 to submit a site to the National Park Authority by midnight on 28 September.

To see some frequently asked questions about the Call for Sites and Local Plan Review [click here](#).

RTPI gives top award



The National Park Authority has won a prestigious award from the Royal Town Planning Institute for its record in helping to deliver greener planning.

The Chair's Award focused on "supporting greener planning in practice" and was given at a ceremony in Brighton.

Simon Taylor, Chair of RTPI South East, said: "The South Downs National Park Authority have demonstrated clear ambitions on how environmental principles and protections can inform sustainable placemaking to support the areas needs and the wider 'greener' planning agenda."

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning, added: "We are so delighted to receive this award.

"In particular because it relates to our overall strategy, development plan and implementation on the ground, rather than any specific policy document or development.



"On behalf of the team, I am grateful to the RTPI South East and hope that the principles we have adopted are a showcase for planning going forward. The Local Plan and work we do are as applicable to places and spaces outside the National Park as they are to those areas inside."

Public have their say on future of derelict site



A total of 240 responses have been received for a public consultation seeking views on the future redevelopment of Shoreham Cement Works.

The Authority held an eight-week consultation as it works up a planning blueprint for the 44-hectare site that will guide any future development.

The derelict site in West Sussex is located in the narrowest part of the National Park and offers exceptional opportunities for an exemplar, sustainable mixed-use development.

The cement works were built by the concrete industry pioneer, Oscar Faber.

His other notable works include the Menin Gate in Ypres and he advised Winston Churchill on the construction of the Mulberry Harbours.

Large-scale cement production began on the site at the end of the 19th century and the current buildings were completed in the late 1940s. Chalk extraction and cement production ended in 1991.

The principle of creating a strategic development that is compatible with the special qualities and statutory purposes of the National Park was established in the South Downs Local Plan, which was formally adopted in 2019.

The Authority sought views on the Issue and Options version of the Area Action Plan (AAP), which is effectively a “mini Local Plan” for the site.



The consultation included 28 questions, covering a wide range of topics, including housing, cultural heritage, leisure, and employment.

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A specially-commissioned film was produced that sets the scene for the consultation and gave the public a more detailed look at the site.

Ian Phillips, Deputy Chair of the National Park Authority, said: “The site is one of the largest brownfield sites in the south of England and remains a landmark, with its chimney visible for miles around and impressive topography displaying the geology of the South Downs.

“Today this legacy of past industry sits within the South Downs National Park, designated for its natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. The site needs a new role that makes best use of its unique characteristics and relates to the National Park’s purposes – to be regenerated as a place that is truly special and embodies values that will be both relevant and sustainable for a new era.



“The site offers exceptional opportunities for both nature and people as part of a visionary development proposal.”

Four potential development scenarios for the site were used for transport and viability modelling. They are:

- Mixed use scheme with employment and 400 new homes
- Mixed use scheme with employment and 240 new homes
- Mixed use leisure-led scheme and 200 new homes
- Mixed use scheme with employment and 84 new homes.

A mixed used development could include residential and commercial areas, as well as areas for wildlife and leisure.

This initial consultation will help determine which option is taken forward to the next stage of the planning process. The public will then have the opportunity to comment on the Preferred Option of the Area Action Plan, which will include detailed policies related to the future development of the site.

The National Park Authority does not own the site but the final AAP will be the agreed masterplan that will guide any future planning application from a developer.

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning at the National Park Authority, said: “We believe Shoreham Cement Works represents a unique and exciting opportunity for an exceptional quality development that complements and celebrates the site and makes a positive contribution to the National Park. Comments received will help shape the masterplan for the site which needs to be sustainable, deliverable and also inspirational.”

To see some FAQs, visit

www.southdowns.gov.uk/area-action-plan-shoreham-cement-works/faqs/

Update on First Homes



A new scheme aimed at helping first-time buyers and key workers get on the property ladder is now an important consideration for developers and agents.

Since 28 March, the Government's First Homes scheme is relevant to the determination of all new full and outline applications in the National Park.

The key aspects of First Homes are:

- First Homes are sold with a minimum 30% discount on the open market price. The percentage discount is kept in perpetuity.
- The value of First Homes, after the discount has been applied, is capped at £250,000. Price caps only apply on the initial sale.
- Eligibility criteria applies to buyers; who must be first-time buyers, with a household income not more than £80,000, have a mortgage covering at least 50% of the discounted purchase price value and meet a local connection and/or key worker criteria.

The discounts will apply to the homes forever, meaning that generations of new buyers and the local community will continue to benefit every time the property is sold.

The scheme is in its infancy, but a programme of 1,500 First Homes is being rolled out over the next two years in over 100 locations across England. Some of these sites in the future could be in the National Park.

The Local Plan Review will look at potential options for First Homes in the National Park.

Tim Slaney, Director of Planning, said: "Delivering affordable homes to meet local needs is a priority for the Authority. There is an acute need for affordable homes, with average property prices 16.5 times average local earnings, putting the prospect of buying a house out of reach for many people. We'll seek to implement the Government's First Homes policy while allowing flexibility to prioritise local needs for affordable housing and maintaining a focus on affordable rental tenure."

First Homes are not required to form part of the affordable housing provision on Rural Exception Sites, but may do so if there is a need for First Homes identified by the local community.

New Dark Skies guidance



Best practice guidance has been produced by the National Park Authority to help organisers of light festivals and artistic installations.

The advice has been created to help protect the National Park's Dark Skies, which are so special that they were given international status six years ago.

The simple takeaway message from the report is: The right light, in the right place, at the right time, with the right intensity.

Dan Oakley, Lead Ranger and Dark Skies Lead for the National Park, explained: "Light festivals and illumination events are becoming increasingly common, especially during the winter.

"They offer residents and visitors a unique experience and can transform a location with a magical sense of place and theatricality. Because of their limited operational time, events of this type are not usually subject to planning control and are considered a 'temporary' development. As such, their impact on the local environment is rarely considered.

"The type of lighting used at these events are highly prominent and can be visible for many miles around the site, thereby reducing dark sky quality. Bright, powerful lights can be installed with little regard for dark skies or any basic lighting impact assessment.

"As a result of the growing popularity of these events for commercial, promotional or creative purposes, we're seeking some best practice principles within this guidance for artists, creative commissioners and event organisers to follow. This is not about banning lighting, but simply choosing the right light for the right place and time."

The National Park is one of 20 International Dark Sky Reserves in the world. The designation recognises it as one of the best places globally to stargaze, as well as underlining the biodiversity benefits that having a dark sky brings for a range of animals and plants.

The guidance does not aim to ban Christmas lighting and will not cover domestic Christmas lights or Local Authority Christmas lights mounted on streetlights.

We will give advice and consultation on any aspect of lighting design for events, festivals and creative commissions. Please contact us on 01730 814810 or email info@southdowns.gov.uk

Parishes benefit from funding boost

Thirty parishes across Hampshire and Sussex have had their direct share of more than **£250,000** from the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**.



The payments are administered by the Authority on new development and the money goes towards improving infrastructure in communities around transport, recreation, education and biodiversity.

The payments in April were as follows:

Amberley Parish Council	£14,465.43
Beddingham with Glynde Parish Council	£559.02
Bishops Waltham Parish Council	£480.69
Cheriton Parish Council	£450.00
Coldwaltham Parish Council	£3,669.73
Corhampton and Meonstoke Parish Council	£1,200.00
Droxford Parish Council	£32,820.00
Easebourne Parish Council	£5,722.78
East Dean and Friston Parish Council	£1,534.42
East Meon Parish Council	£5,208.00
Elsted and Treyford Parish Council	£1,199.40
Fulking Parish Council	£450
Funtington Parish Council	£6,351.82
Harting Parish Council	£10,094.42
Hawkley Parish Council	£2,760
Itchen Valley Parish Council	£2,178.22
Lavant Parish Council	£68,399.87
Lewes Town Council	£33,345.44
Liss Parish Council	£9,739.67
Lodsworth Parish Council	£208.85
Petersfield Town Council	£2,558.38
Pulborough Parish Council	£71.34
Pyecombe Parish Council	£12,940.24
Selborne Parish Council	£5,682.23
Steep Parish Council	£5,476.88
Swanmore Parish Council	£900
Tillington Parish Council	£1,847.67
Trotton with Chithurst Parish Council	£4,751.34
Twyford Parish Council	£664.84
West Meon Parish Council	£17,197.60
Total	£ 252,928.28

Tranquil Lewes spot gets a little love



An urban wildlife haven is enjoying a new lease of life, thanks to CIL funding to the tune of over £15,000.

People and wildlife are benefitting from the improvements at Lewes Railway Land, which is situated in the heart of Lewes, just off Cliffe High Street and behind the train station.

Nestled on the flood plain of the River Ouse, the reserve was once a busy railway marshalling yard that has now been reclaimed by nature. The area where the railway sidings once stood is now crammed with wildflowers that buzz with bees and butterflies.

The Railway Land Wildlife Trust was awarded £15,500 for habitat improvements to the site's water meadows and hedgerows. The money has also help to pay for improvements to the old Signal Box – now a brilliant bird hide – and the installation of a dipping platform.

Helen Meade, CEO of Railway Land Wildlife Trust, said: "Our new pond dipping platform in the water meadows has opened up a whole world of beautiful water creatures to the many children and community groups who visit us – the excitement at finding a water stick insect was brilliant! They can dip safely and without damaging the banks of the ditches. When it's really hot we take the creatures to look at in our Signal Box nature hide – also greatly improved with the help of CIL funding."

And Helen added: "We've also had some paths replaced. One path in particular, by the pedestrian bridge over the railway line, would regularly become impassably muddy in the winter months and so we're looking forward to people being able to get into the nature reserve more easily."



Nikki Allen, who helps manage CIL payments for the Authority, said: "It's wonderful to see the improvements take shape at this little oasis in the heart of Lewes. This scheme shows just how much of a difference CIL can make to local communities."

Boost for apprenticeships



New funding is helping people learn new skills and develop their career through apprenticeships.

Section 106 developer contributions, which are administered by the Authority, were awarded to Get East Hants Working Apprenticeship Scheme, creating eight new apprenticeships for people living in the Petersfield area. The scheme supports businesses in East Hampshire district, enabling small business to recruit local people into apprenticeship opportunities. The scheme subsidises wages and facilitates training, easing the burden of recruitment for small businesses.

Since 2013 over 60 apprenticeships have been completed through this scheme across a wide employment sector.

Gill Welsman, who manages Section 106 funds, said: “Establishing and maintaining a healthy economy is essential to underpin the landscapes and communities of the National Park, and supporting small businesses is key in addressing some of the challenges faced by local communities.”

Overview of last quarter

Appeals submitted to Planning Inspectorate	14
Appeals started	19
Appeals determined	15
Appeals successfully defended	14
Statutory submissions received	1,097
Statutory submissions determined	1,047
Neighbours notified	3,906
Representations received	1,863
Consultations issued	2,812
Conditions imposed	3,129
Enquiries for planning advice	304
Enforcement complaints received	222
Enforcement cases opened	192
Site inspections	219
Enforcement notices served	3
Enforcement cases closed	159

(Stats for period 1/4/22 to 30/6/22)

First Design Guide created



An exhaustive guide on design excellence in the National Park has been produced for developers, landowners and agents.

Following two years in the making, the Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted by Planning Committee last month.

The document’s creation benefitted from the involvement of Members and community groups and was subject to two rounds of public consultation.

The Design Guide provides guidance on a range of design issues for new development in the National Park. The need to respect the first purpose of the National Park – namely to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area – strongly informs the guidance.

The design quality of new proposals will now be assessed by the Authority against this document as well as Local Plan policies. The design of any new development in the National Park will be expected to demonstrate that it’s responding to existing local character and identity.

Heather Baker, Chair of Planning Committee, said: “Part of what makes the National Park such a special place is the variety of significant landscapes, from the western downs on the edge of Winchester to the iconic coast at the Seven Sisters and everything in between, including historic villages and market towns. This document stresses that new development must respect and build on the National Park’s diverse, distinctive landscapes and townscapes; celebrate the unique sense of place found in them.

“Development proposals considered to be mediocre or poor will not be acceptable. New development should be an opportunity to enhance the beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park for future generations as well as to achieve great place making.”

Applicants will be expected to use the adopted Sustainable Construction SPD in parallel with the Design Guide.

And Heather added: “It sets out a clear process and what our expectations are. Much of the guidance remains relevant even where small scale development does not need planning permission, as the cumulative impacts of small changes can become significant over time.” Read the document [here](#).

Regeneration leads the way at prestigious awards



The new visitor facilities at One Garden Brighton

A garden restoration project, regenerated farm buildings and a winery with visitor attractions were announced as the winners of the South Downs Award at the 2022 Sussex Heritage Trust Awards.



Vanessa Rowlands, Chair of the National Park Authority, presented the South Downs Award at a glittering ceremony at Pangdean Old Barn last month.

The prestigious accolade is sponsored by the Authority and aims to promote outstanding design in a nationally-designated landscape.

One Garden Brighton in Stanmer Park was announced as the overall winner of the South Downs Award. The new facility is a partnership between Brighton and Hove City Council and Plumpton College to restore Stanmer Park. An amazing walled garden and community space has been created, with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, in 20 hectares of the park with the aim to also deliver training, education and outreach opportunities. The South Downs National Park judging team said of the project: “A much-needed, accessible space for everyone, which connects the South Downs National Park with Brighton and Hove.”

Two highly commended projects were also announced: Southview Farm in Pulborough (submitted by Nicholls Countryside Construction), a new family home created from a series of redundant farm buildings, collectively know as ‘Bone Barn’ arranged around a courtyard and 17th century barn.

Wiston Estate Winery, Washington (submitted by ECE Architecture) was also commended for the creation of a new restaurant, shop and tasting room from redundant agricultural barns.

Chairman Simon Knight, Chairman of Sussex Heritage Trust, said: “The Sussex Heritage Trust Awards celebrates a wide variety of excellent restoration,

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conservation and new design architectural and landscape projects. It is fantastic to see such a worthy winner and highly commended projects in the South Downs Award, which has done much to set the standard for outstanding design within the National Park.”

The Sussex Heritage Trust Awards are an annual Awards designed to recognise and reward high-quality conservation, restoration and the good design of newly built projects and encourage the use of traditional skills and crafts.

For a full list of all the Award winners and highly commended projects please go to www.sussexheritagetrust.org.uk



New courtyard and visitor facilities at the Wiston Estate winery



Southview Farm in Pulborough

Dates for diary – Planning Committee

The next Planning Committee meetings will be held on 8 September, 13 October, 10 November and 8 December.

You can watch the meetings on-demand for up to six months after the meeting through our [webcasting portal](#).

You can look at previous and upcoming agendas on the website [here](#).

Meet the team... Ten questions with Carol Brown



Three words that sum up your job in planning?

We Help Everyone

Okay, so what's your role at the National Park?

I manage the Development Management Technical Support Team at the Park. My team support the professional officers with planning application casework, but I also oversee the management and ongoing maintenance all of the systems that underpin development management. In reality, we also support the admin teams and professional officers at our five partner authorities (approximately 230 users all in), and all of the public and consultees that view and comment on our planning applications (25,000 registered users on public access). I respond to all manner of data requests, for example, the statutory Government performance reports, as well as internal performance monitoring and Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) data, and also provide data for Freedom of Information (FOI) for planning.

What appealed to you about working in planning?

Well I actually wanted to be in the RAF as an engineer, but my folks wouldn't sign my forms, so when I did leave school I decided my next best option was to work in a technical drawing office. Coming from Glasgow, it was either a job at the council or in the shipbuilders. Back in the early eighties, shipbuilding was very much a man's job, so I took a Youth Training Scheme post at Strathclyde Regional Council, and was assigned to the Department of Physical Planning (Countryside Section). One of the first tasks I was given was plotting the boundary of Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park! In all, I have 37 years' experience in Local Authority Planning – nine of which were as planning and building control business expert with a software company serving planning authorities like ours across all of the UK.

Can you describe your typical day?

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Well every day is different. I try to plan my week so I have a regular routine, but most days I am answering support calls or dealing with more complex emails and matters flagged to me by the team. Yesterday I answered about 220 emails, three internal support calls, coordinated seven refunds for planning fees, held our regular team meeting, and marked up my diary for July and August. We have a major system upgrade in August, so it's important to plan that well, so I have had to factor in test plans for July, and take notes on how we notify all users of the changes that will occur.

Best thing about working in planning for a National Park?

I think for me, from the 30,000 emails my team process annually in our main inbox, is seeing how much passion there is out there for the National Park. A lot of people put their absolute heart and soul into their letters of representation, and most trust us to do the right thing.

What do you love about the South Downs National Park?

I love being outdoors, so for me I think the vastness of the National Park offers so much variety – coastal, inland, hilltops and foreshores, heaths, grasslands, meadows and forests. There really is something for everyone, regardless of the seasons.

Currently reading/watching?

I'm revisiting Hilary Mantel's Thomas Cromwell Trilogy, so almost finished Wolf Hall (audiobook), and mostly watching Wimbledon when I'm not at a laptop.

If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Spaghetti bolognese

Who inspires you?

Difficult one. Inspiration for me comes from many places, and from many people. People like Claire Lomas, for example, absolutely astound me, and make me ashamed of my first-world problems. Sometimes we all ought to give our heads a wobble.

Describe your perfect day (when not working, of course!)

A very remote all-day trek across the Scottish Highlands. Solitude, a landscape unspoiled, and complete tranquillity. And a very small tent (Leave no trace).

Picture credits

P3 Richard Reed; P4 right Neil Jones; P6 left Ann-Katrin Purkiss