

SOUTH DOWNS PLANNING NEWS

UPDATES FROM YOUR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

A NEWSLETTER COVERING PLACEMAKING, PLANNING POLICY,
ENFORCEMENT, DESIGN, CONSERVATION AND COMMUNITIES

Autumn 2026



Welcome to the Autumn Planning Newsletter for the South Downs National Park Authority. In this edition, find out how the new NPPF impacts National Parks, which developments have been given the green light and where community infrastructure funding is being invested.

This captivating photograph, by Sam Moore, captures an autumn mist on a September morning at Cowdray.

[Read a PDF version of newsletter](#)



Big boost for biodiversity after scheme approved

Much-needed habitat for birds will be created and restored after the go-ahead was given to a major biodiversity project.

The Planning Committee of the National Park Authority voted to approve the restoration of 42 hectares of intertidal habitat at Chyngton Brooks, as well as the construction of a new public footpath at the site. [Learn more here.](#)



Affordable housing gets the go-ahead

New development on a Local Plan allocation, with affordable housing, is on its way to a South Downs village.

Members of the Authority's Planning Committee voted to give the go-ahead to plans for 13 new homes on brownfield land at Downvale Nurseries, Park Lane, Droxford, in Hampshire. [Find out more.](#)

**MEMBERS VOTE ON
VINEYARD PLANS**

**ENFORCEMENT TAKEN
AFTER WARNINGS**

**UPDATE ON
MIDHURST FIRE**



New accommodation to expand the visitor offer of a thriving wine business has been given the green light in the National Park.

[Learn more →](#)



Major enforcement action has been taken to remove unauthorised structures and caravans after repeated warnings and formal notices were ignored.

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Works are continuing on the site of the former Tuck Shop/Olive and Vine to ensure that all repairs to the neighbouring building are finalised.

[Find out more →](#)



What new NPPF means for National Parks planning

Claire Tester, Head of Strategic Planning, breaks down the [new National Planning Policy Framework](#) and what it means for the South Downs National Park.

A new National Planning Policy Framework was published by Government on 17 August. A report on its implications for planning decisions is available as [part of the papers for Planning Committee](#) on 10 September.

Overall – The NPPF is deliberately loosening planning rules and encouraging growth. However, it retains its strong protection for National Parks and National Landscapes.

Headlines – Policies have been clearly divided into those for plan-making and those for decision-making. From 17 August, decisions on planning applications and appeals must have regard to the decision-making policies in the NPPF, and Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies that are 'materially inconsistent' with them will carry very limited weight.

There is a 'presumption in favour' (default yes) for development within settlements and certain categories of development outside settlements. The latter includes development around certain 'well-connected' railway stations and to address unmet needs, including housing. A greater density of development is supported as well as improvements for telecoms and retention of community facilities especially pubs.

National Parks and National Landscapes (AONBs) – One of our key asks as a protected landscapes family was to reinstate the wording for the test for major development in protected landscapes, which was proposed to be weakened in the consultation draft. This has happened (Policy N4). This is important as 'presumption to refuse' (default no) policies are very rare in the

NPPF. This is good news, as is the reference now to natural rather than scenic beauty in policy N4.

Duty to 'seek to further' purposes and mitigation – There is reference to the duty to seek to further the purposes of National Parks and National Landscapes early on in the NPPF (footnote 2). In addition, in relation to major development (Policy N4), there is mention of mitigating adverse impacts on special qualities and statutory purposes, and potentially seeking compensation for harm. Government has confirmed that this is in response to the duty to further the purposes of protected landscapes.

Plan-making – Policy S1 on positive plan making continues to acknowledge the special status of National Parks through footnote 24 and our ability to look differently at housing requirements. This is similar to the previous NPPF's approach. This is important in relation to Spatial Development Strategies, where housing numbers will be worked out and apportioned in future. It is now explicitly stated development plans should have regard to protected landscape management plans (Policy N1), which is helpful as are the multiple references to LNRS's, enabling them to have spatial dimension in plans (e.g. allocations).

Affordable homes – We can continue to set affordable housing requirements for smaller developments (i.e. less than the national 10 dwelling threshold) (Policy HO5). This is welcomed as the provision of affordable housing is highlighted in the 2010 Circular as a priority for National Parks.



Green haven is created in historic market town

Midhurst is benefitting from a funding boost to spruce up public areas thanks to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Midhurst Vision Partnership CIC was awarded £20,000 in CIL funding to revitalise the Northern Gateway by North Street car park. [Learn more here.](#)

**UPDATE ON
BOOMTOWN**

**NEW LEAD FOR
ESTATE PLANS**

**LOCAL PLAN MOVES
STEP FORWARD**



Rob Ainslie, Head of Development Management, gives an update on Boomtown Festival, which is held at the Matterley Estate.

[Learn more →](#)



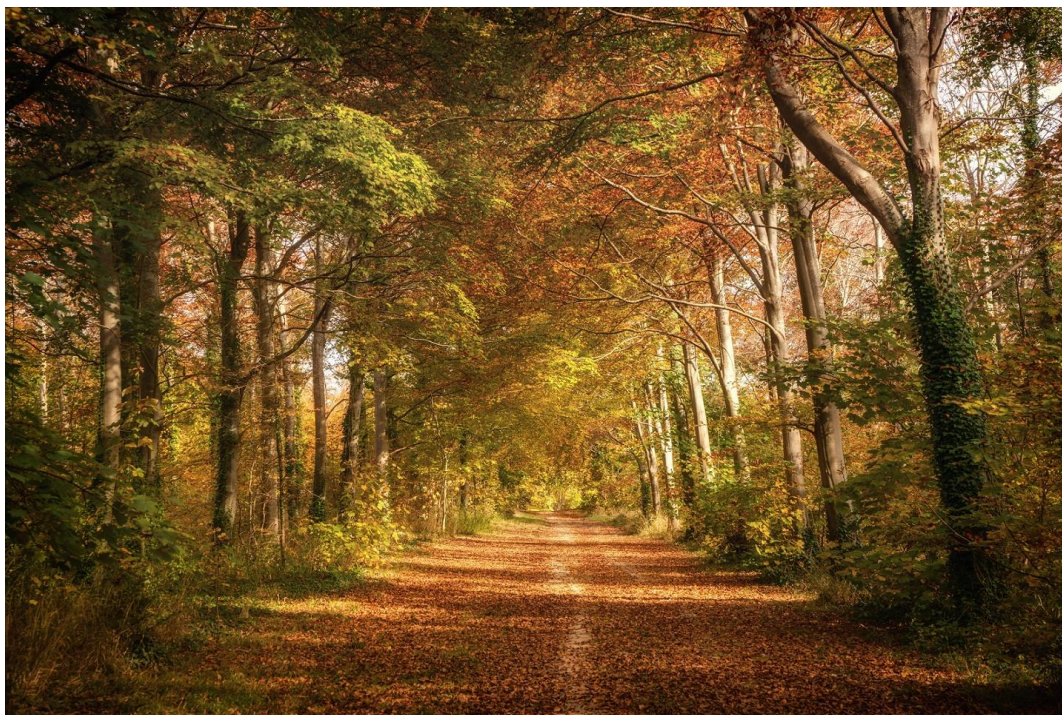
A new appointment has been made at the National Park Authority to lead Whole Estate Plans (WEPs). Kat Beer will be working with a range of landowners.

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More than 2,700 representations on the new Local Plan are currently being analysed in preparation for the next important stages of the planning process.

[Find out more →](#)



Enforcement snippets

- On 16 June 2026 an Enforcement Notice was served at Land to the West of Long Furlong (Roots), Patching Meadows for various operational development (a copy of the notice can be viewed on the public Enforcement Register). This is primarily due to the cumulative landscape impact caused. Removal of the development is required by 17 October 2026. However, please note that we are not preventing an allotment use here.
- On 22 June 2026 an Enforcement Notice was served at Grange Road, Lewes for the erection of a shed, causing harm to the Conservation Area. The shed has now been removed and the notice complied with.
- On 9 July 2026 the appeal against the planning decision to refuse a 5G Mast at Land Opposite Highdown Road, Nevill Road, Lewes (appeal ref. 6005994) was allowed. Therefore there will be no further enforcement action.
- On 21 July 2026 a Tree Replacement Notice was served at Land at The Stables with Dairy, Mill Laine Farm, The Street, Offham. A sycamore or beech (3-4m high) is required to be planted between October 2026 and March 2027 and maintained for the first five years of being planted.

- On 23 July 2026 an Enforcement Notice was served at Novington Manor, Plumpton Lane, for the material change of use of the land to commercial holiday lets. This follows planning retrospective planning refusals (SDNP/23/00155/FUL and SDNP/23/02932/FUL) and a Planning Inspectorate dismissal (APP/Y9507/W/23/3330237). Removal of the glamping pods was initially required by 20 November 2026, now varied to 20 May 2027 to allow a bat survey to be carried out.
- On 3 August 2026 an Enforcement Notice was issued following the refusal of planning application SDNP/26/00511/FUL. At land north of the Crescent, Newhaven. The breach relates to the material change of use of the land as a site for gypsy and travellers by the stationing of caravans for residential purposes and associated development. Habitation and clearance of the land needs to cease by 3 February 2027.
- On 7 August 2026 the Planning Inspector dismissed an appeal against an Enforcement Notice served on 16 May 2024 at A23 Diner, London Road, Pyecombe, Brighton for the alleged storage of vehicles. The site must cease this use within four months of the Inspector's decision.



Planning Policy updates

Updated Minerals and Waste Plan

The updated Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan was adopted by Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council, the New Forest National Park Authority, and the South Downs National Park Authority in July.

This Plan supersedes the 2013 Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan and sets out a clear decision-making framework for mineral extraction, waste management, and related infrastructure in Hampshire up to 2040. It is now part of the Development Plan for Hampshire, including the Hampshire Area of the South Downs National Park, and will be used to determine planning applications for minerals and waste development in that area. Further information can be found [here](#).

Neighbourhood Plans

The Peacehaven & Telscombe NDP was made part of the Development Plan for the National Park area of these parishes on 27 May following its successful examination and referendum. The West Chiltington NDP was made part of the Development Plan for the National Park area of the parish on 16 July following its successful examination and referendum. The Coldean NDP will proceed to referendum on Thursday 24 September following its successful examination.



Meet the planner...

For this edition, we meet **Kathryn Andrews**,
Development Management Officer.

Find out about more about [Kathryn, her life and passions](#).

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The next Planning Committee meeting will take place on 8 October, 12 November and 10 December.

See agendas for meetings [here](#).

You can watch the meetings live or on-demand for up to six months after the meeting on our [YouTube channel](#).

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

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