

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Note for East Hampshire Association of Parish & Town Councils Meeting 28th November 2012

This is the latest of my regular notes for EHAPTC Meetings about current activities of the National Park Authority and forthcoming events which may be of interest to Parish Councils.

Developments in the last few months have included:

- Work to identify a wide range of important issues to be included in the first ever Management Plan for the National Park is well underway. The National Park Authority (NPA) is aiming to draw on inputs and ideas from as wide a range of people and partner organisations as possible. It is recognised that, in due course, many organisations will need to make contributions towards the delivery of the Management Plan
- Workshops, open to all Parish Councillors and other stakeholders, have been held in recent weeks to help shape the Management Plan. Topics have included: sustainable tourism; farming for successful farms and sustainable land management (three workshops); housing and development (three workshops); and energy. It has been good to see that a number of Parish Councils have attended these events and provided their inputs. My email of 5th October with information about these events is attached to this report
- There are opportunities for Parish Councils to make sure that issues raised in their Parish Plans etc are fed into the consideration of Management Plan issues
- A major workshop for all Parish Councils in East Hampshire and Winchester Districts is taking place on 7th December in Meonstoke Village Hall starting at 7pm. This is a significant opportunity to feed into the development of the Management Plan. Details were circulated to Parish Clerks at the beginning of October and again in mid-November
- The NPA has published its 'State of the Park' report which provides a 'baseline' position about current conditions in the National Park – to enable the NPA and partners to measure the impact of the Management Plan (and other factors) in the years ahead. The report contains a wealth of data and it provides links to more comprehensive sources. It can be found on-line at <http://snpr.southdowns.gov.uk/files/default.html>
- The NPA is preparing some guidance (specifically for parishes and local communities) about the range of Community Planning tools, techniques and plans that are currently available. This should help communities decide whether to undertake work on a new Neighbourhood Plan or whether to focus on Parish Plans, Village Design Statements, Local Landscape Character Assessments or other plans. If any parishes have any queries about any of these sorts of projects and would like any advice on the matter, please contact the lead officer (Strategy Lead for Communities), Chris Paterson on 01730 811766 or chris.paterson@southdowns.gov.uk
- Work with Highways Authorities from across the National Park has commenced – to share up-to-date information and experience about traffic calming in villages and to think about best practices for the future

Grants available from the National Park Authority

Many communities are now taking advantage of the grants available from the National Park Authority for a wide range of projects. Details about grants available through the National Park's 'Sustainable Communities Fund' can be found in the 'Funding' section of the Park's website (<http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/communities/funding>) and ideas can be discussed with Mark Rose, External Funding Coordinator, on 01730 811755 or Mark.Rose@southdowns.gov.uk

Planning

An 'examination in public' of the joint EHDC/NPA 'Core Strategy' (proposing planning policies for the district for the next 15 years) has been completed. The strategy came under close scrutiny from the Inspector (and from representatives of developers) – particularly the speed at which developments in the Bordon area might take place. Depending on the findings of the Inspector, this may have implications for other parts of the district.

A small number of decisions taken by the NPA Planning Committee have been taken to appeal by the applicants / developers. To date the independent Planning Inspectors have upheld all the decisions taken by the NPA and rejected the appeals.

Natalie Fellows has recently swapped roles with Nat Belderson to become the 'link officer' for most of East Hampshire inside the National Park and will generally be based at Penns Place, Petersfield. Although the vast majority of planning applications are delegated to EHDC and handled much as they had been prior to the creation of the National Park, the NPA 'calls in' a relatively small proportion for the attention of its own Planning Committee. These are generally potentially sensitive and important cases. Any queries about such planning matters can now be directed to Natalie on 01730 234130, 07872 410442 or natalie.fellows@southdowns.gov.uk

Area Operations

The Area Operations team for the Hampshire part of the National Park is based at the Queen Elizabeth Country Park (QECP). The team acts as a 'first stop shop' to communities and land managers, providing advice and support towards achieving the national park's purposes. The team also acts as the 'eyes and ears' on the ground, assisting with a wide range of projects and activities. Nick Heasman is the Area Manager and the rangers for the East Hampshire parts of the National Park are Dan Oakley and Rob Nicholls. Contact Nick on nick.heasman@southdowns.gov.uk or 02392 571381 for further information on how the NPA can help your community.

The team has embarked upon its autumn and winter work schedule and the first of the habitat management work with local farmers, to restore chalk grassland, has started. Funding for this has come from a national competitive source called Nature Improvement Areas which the National Park successfully won with partners to ensure resources to manage the landscape of the South Downs. The grant is helping to remove invasive scrub and provide fencing and water to enable livestock grazing, critical to maintaining landscape and a rich habitat for wildlife. The area team has also recently provided support for traditional hedge management, pond creation and wild flower sowing and continue to work with many stakeholders and partners to achieve the national parks purposes: parish councils, government bodies, charities and individuals. Coming up there are plans to improve further areas of open access by providing easy access furniture to a number of sites, river restoration work, tools for a community volunteer group and tree planting.

The South Downs Volunteer Rangers have been busy with projects in Worldham, Steep, Binsted, Liss, Buriton and Chalton. If you know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a volunteer please encourage them to contact the national park. There are places available on local Tuesday and Sunday groups. It's a great way to meet people and see the landscape. Training and clothing can be provided. People should contact Dan Oakley: 02392572619, dan.oakley@southdowns.gov.uk

Further information

Further information and updates about all the work of the NPA can be found on the National Park website www.southdowns.gov.uk and there is also always plenty of interest on the 'Forum' pages: <http://southdownsforum.ning.com/main>

Although my role is to act in the best interests of the whole of the National Park, I want to continue to maintain close contact with Parish Councils in East Hampshire to make sure that all important issues, concerns and ideas are taken into account by the National Park Authority.

Doug Jones, Member of the South Downs National Park Authority and Buriton Parish Council
doug.jones@southdowns.gov.uk 23rd November 2012

From: Doug Jones [mailto:doug.pam@btinternet.com]

Sent: 05 October 2012

To: 'Susan Halstead'; 'sarahgoudie14@yahoo.co.uk'; 'Teresa Whelan'; 'Lynn Evans'; 'Howard Linsley'; 'Ken Carter'; 'karen ross'; 'Alton steve parkinson'; 'Bramshott & Liphook'; 'Michelle Snow'; 'trish bell'; 'Tony Crawford'; 'Jenny Hollington (Steep Parish Clerk)'; 'Katie Knowles'; 'Lisa Walker'; 'Neil Hitch'; 'Gill Pendlebury'; 'Dick Bowery'; 'Helen Marsh'; 'Karine Nana Yonko'; 'karine yonko'; 'Tracey Predeth'; 'Sue Harwood'; 'mike Findlay'; 'Emma Dilnutt'; 'sarah cowrick'; 'Christopher Slater'; 'Diane Duffy'; 'Sue Hodder'; 'Mandi Sowick'; 'wendy shone'; 'peter durrant'; 'Robin Twining'; 'michelle snow' **Cc:** 'Chris Paterson'

Subject: Opportunities to help to shape the contents of the South Downs National Park Management Plan

Note for Parish Clerks / Cllrs in East Hampshire in and immediately adjacent to the South Downs National Park

Opportunities to help to shape the contents of the South Downs National Park Management Plan

In my most recent quarterly report I mentioned some forthcoming workshops and events which will help to shape the strategic plan for the park area for the years ahead: the formal 'Management Plan'.

This will be a very important document and I suspect that many Parish Councils will want to make contributions ...

There will be opportunities to comment on draft versions of the emerging plan in around June / July next year, but there are also some early events during autumn 2012 which I would draw your attention to below.

Firstly, the **next big meeting for representatives of all Hampshire parishes will be on the evening of 7th December** and will give Parish and Town Councils an opportunity to comment and contribute to the development of the priorities for the Management Plan. There will also be opportunities to ask questions of senior officers and Members of the National Park Authority. The venue and timings of this event are yet to be finalised and you will receive a more formal notification about this from the East Hampshire Association in the near future – but I wanted to alert you as soon as possible to this important date ...

Secondly, the Park Authority will be running an **online survey** later in the year to capture thoughts on how this work is progressing. If you are not yet signed up to the **Online Forum** - <http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/forum> - then your Parish Council may wish to do so. This will help to keep informed of when this survey goes live – as well as many other things... The online survey will provide a further opportunity to make inputs prior to the formal consultation on the draft Management Plan.

In addition, if you think that any of your Parish Councillors may be particularly interested in any of the following **specific topic area workshops**, please draw them to their attention and ask them to contact Chris Paterson at the National Park Authority as soon as possible.

The intention of these facilitated workshops is to discuss some high level policy areas in some depth. These policy areas are likely to be very important in delivering a successful Management Plan and the workshops are being designed to enable professionals and industry experts to contribute to the development of policy in these topic areas. Attendance at the events will be structured to make sure that the NPA gets a good cross-section of opinions and so there may be some limits on capacity at some events / venues. Prior knowledge in the relevant subject areas will be particularly valuable to enable effective contributions, discussion and debate ...

If you would like to nominate a representative from your Town or Parish Council, please contact Chris Paterson via chris.paterson@southdowns.gov.uk or 01730 811766 to register an expression of interest.

All the workshops are from mid-morning to early afternoon and will include a light lunch of local produce. The topics, dates and venues are as follows:

- Development & Housing workshops on 12th, 14th and 20th November at Liphook, Lewes and Pulborough or Arundel (venues are not yet confirmed, so locations for each date are not yet finalised)

- Tourism - 19th October, near Chichester.
- Farming for successful farms and sustainable land management - 3 workshops with similar content to reflect different landscapes and farming patterns: 23rd October at Cowdray Hall, Easebourne nr Midhurst (Greensand and Chalk of West Sussex); 24th October at Plumpton College near Lewes (thin chalk soils of East Sussex); 25th October –at the Gilbert White Centre, Selborne (mixed farming in Hampshire).

If you would like to nominate a representative from your Town or Parish Council for any of these specific workshops, please send your expression of interest as soon as possible to Chris Paterson via chris.paterson@southdowns.gov.uk or 01730 811766. For the Tourism workshop expressions of interest are needed by 12th October 2012. More details of the events (including location and programme) will be provided to those expressing an interest ...

Please note you will also receive a formal invitation to the dedicated Parish and Town Council workshop on 7th December soon.

In the meantime I hope that this message is helpful to you ...

With best wishes

Doug Jones

Buriton Parish Council and Member of South Downs National Park Authority