

09 February 2023

Town/Parish Clerk
By email only

Dear Colleagues

South Downs Local Plan Review

Following on from the parish workshops, we are writing to update you on progress on the South Downs Local Plan Review and to invite you to help with some of our evidence gathering.

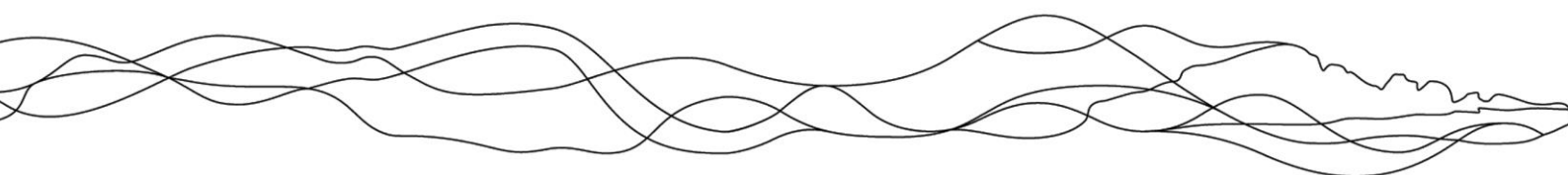
In December 2022 the National Park Authority considered a proposal to review the timetable for the Local Plan Review. The Authority agreed a revised timetable, more information on this can be found in the minutes and papers of the [December NPA meeting](#). The new timetable will allow the Authority to consider the major changes evolving regarding National Planning Policy reform and will ensure that the Local Plan Review is considered and adopted under the new plan making arrangements.

We ran our Call for Sites over the summer and received more than 300 site submissions. We also ran a Call for Local Green Spaces and received 95 submissions. Thank you if your parish council sent in a site. We are now processing all the submissions and will be going out on site to assess them.

As highlighted in our letter to you in December 2022 we are asking all Town and Parish Councils for help in developing the evidence base for the Local Plan Review. There are two key pieces of evidence where we would welcome your support. For both of these evidence based studies we need you to identify the facilities and open spaces for any settlements within your Parish. Please provide only factual information on the provision of open space and facilities in your settlements, we are not asking you to identify potential sites for open space or a lack of a particular facility.

Firstly, we are updating our **Settlement Facilities Assessment**, which assesses the number and type of facilities and services provided in individual settlements across the National Park. This study helps in our understanding of the relative sustainability of individual settlements. A copy of the Settlement Facilities Assessment form is enclosed for you to fill out for each settlement in your parish located in the National Park. We would be grateful if you could do this by **6 April 2023**.

Secondly, we have started work on an **Open Space Assessment**. The purpose of the study is to understand how much public open space is available across the National Park and identify any shortfall, which can be considered through the Local Plan Review. We also want to understand the different types of public open space, which exist across the National Park and any issues associated with the open space. A copy of the Open Space form and guidance note is included with this letter for you fill out for that part of your parish, which is located in the National Park. We would be grateful if you could do this by **6 April 2023**. We may



contact you after this date for follow up discussions on open space provision in your Parish if necessary.

We mentioned **Parish Priority Statements** in our previous letter to you and at the parish workshops held in October and November 2022. These are for parishes that are wholly in the National Park or whose main settlement is in the National Park. A list of these Parishes can be found in Appendix I. They are your opportunity to set out the principal needs and prevailing views of your local community and are much simpler than Neighbourhood Development Plans. PPS will be used in the preparation of the Local Plan Review and will inform our decision on policy development, land allocations and designations. They are a key part of the collaborative approach to plan making the Authority is committed to. PPS will be easier and less resource intensive to prepare than a Neighbourhood Plan and provide a helpful method for the parish to engage in the Local Plan Review Process. A copy of the template for PPS and guidance is also included with this letter. Completed PPS will need to be returned by **20 October 2023** to inform the development of the LPR. We have given you more time to complete the PPS template as this will require community engagement and may require consideration and approval at Parish or Town Council meetings.

There are a number of town and parish councils that are considering starting work on new Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) or a NDP Review. As stated in our June letter to Town and Parish Councils and at the autumn 2022 Parish Workshops we will only be able to offer feedback at the statutory stages of preparing an NDP namely pre-submission and submission. Instead of preparing an NDP, you may wish to prepare Parish Priorities Statement to summarise the principal needs and prevailing views of their local community, as described above, which we think offer a proportionate response to community plan making.

If you are intending to prepare a NDP or NDP review including land allocations to meet any housing provision identified by the Local Plan Review, I would be grateful if you could confirm your intention to do so, to planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk by **20 October 2023**. We appreciate this will be a key decision for Town and Parish Councils. We will engage with you before October to provide more information on likely housing provision (numbers) for individual settlements and to provide more information on our assessment of potential sites. This information will be made available to Town and Parish Councils before the deadline to confirm your intention to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan.

Please contact us on planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully

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