

12/05/2026

Have your say on vital placemaking plan for National Park

People are being encouraged to have their say as the South Downs National Park's Local Plan goes out for public consultation.

The National Park Authority is preparing a new Local Plan to guide how and where development takes place in the National Park over the next two decades, replacing the current Local Plan adopted in 2019.

The goal of the Local Plan is to address vital issues such as the need for affordable housing, quality development, restoring nature, climate action, a flourishing rural economy and helping local communities thrive.

The proposed Local Plan has been shaped by a consultation last year that involved almost 2,000 people and organisations, who submitted more than 3,700 comments on proposed policies, sites and evidence.



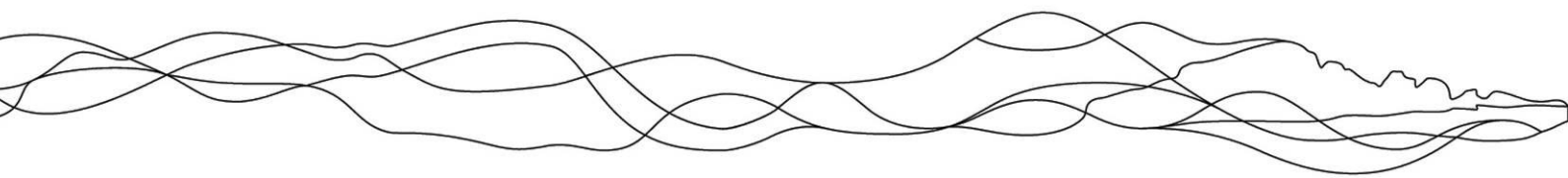
The new consultation launches today (12 May) and runs until **23 June**. The National Park Authority is asking for people to share their final comments before the proposed Local Plan is submitted for examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

Vanessa Rowlands, Chair of the National Park Authority, said: "This is a hugely important time for the South Downs as we plan for the future of this vibrant and much-loved National Park.

"We recognise places need to evolve and respond to local needs, as well as wider issues the nation faces amid changing, and potentially uncertain, times.

"This is an opportunity to protect and enhance the things we all love most – our landscapes, communities, cultural heritage, dark skies, wildlife, water courses and much more.

"I'd like to thank each and every person who has helped shape the Local Plan and we're really keen for even more participation in this current consultation. Please do have your say and help ensure



we can make the National Park an even better place in the coming years and for future generations.”

Tim Slaney, Director of Placemaking for the National Park Authority, said: “We want to create special places inspired by this nationally-important landscape, with well-designed homes, buildings and spaces for local communities and visitors, and a thriving rural economy that supports climate action.

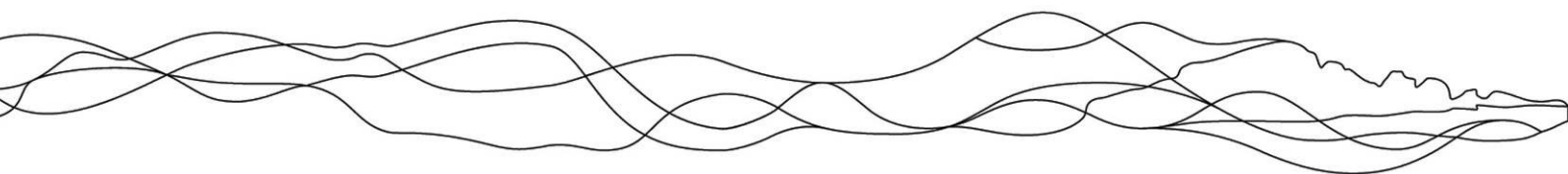
“The goal is to grow sustainably within the context and capacity of the landscape – so that both people and nature can flourish together.”

Among some of the key proposed policies in the new Local Plan are:

- Landscape-led – so conserving and enhancing the South Downs landscape is considered strongly with any planning application that comes forward.
- A total of 58 policies on core issues, including landscape, design and heritage, nature recovery, water and pollution, housing, the economy, green, blue and community spaces and transport and infrastructure.
- A total of 77 site allocations spread across the National Park, delivering 3,559 new homes, including affordable homes, as well as employment and gypsy and traveller pitches. Sites chosen include brownfield sites and those in and around existing settlements.
- An overall housing provision of 6,735 homes between 2024 and 2042. This includes existing planning permissions and allocations from neighbourhood plans that have been developed with local communities. This would meet the National Park’s housing need of 323 homes per year and would support more than 2,000 new jobs.
- Key strategic sites for development such as North Street Quarter, in Lewes, and Shoreham Cement Works. Shoreham is earmarked as a potential mixed-use development of residential, commercial and community spaces with the capacity to support up to 400 homes and significant employment opportunities.

The Local Plan will be submitted for examination by a Planning Inspector in the autumn, along with a list of proposed modifications to address any issues raised by the consultation.

The Inspector will consider these and make recommendations about any changes to the Local Plan that are needed to make it ‘sound’.



There will then be a further public consultation on any major modifications to the Local Plan before the Inspector's final report is made.

After completing all the required stages, it's hoped that the new Local Plan will be adopted in 2027. From then on, all planning applications will be considered against policies in the new Local Plan.

To see the proposed Local Plan and make a comment visit www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/new-south-downs-local-plan/. The documents will be live from midday on Tuesday, 12 May.

Ends

Notes to Editors

- Any comments should relate to the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This means whether it has been prepared positively to address local needs, is justified by evidence, effective and consistent with national planning policy.
- The current Local Plan is available here: www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/south-downs-local-plan/local-plan/
- The South Downs National Park has one of the most unique built environments within a protected landscape in the UK. As Britain's most populated National Park with over 113,000 residents, it spans 15 different local authority areas across three counties and has four bustling market towns. It boasts 167 conservation areas – more than any other National Park in the UK – as well as 18 distinctive landscape types, over 1,000 designated spaces for wildlife and well over 5,800 listed buildings. Dealing with around 5,000 planning cases a year, the National Park is one of the country's top 30 busiest Planning Authorities.

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