


South Downs National Park

Working in Partnership
Hampshire County Council
Environment and Transportation
Select Committee

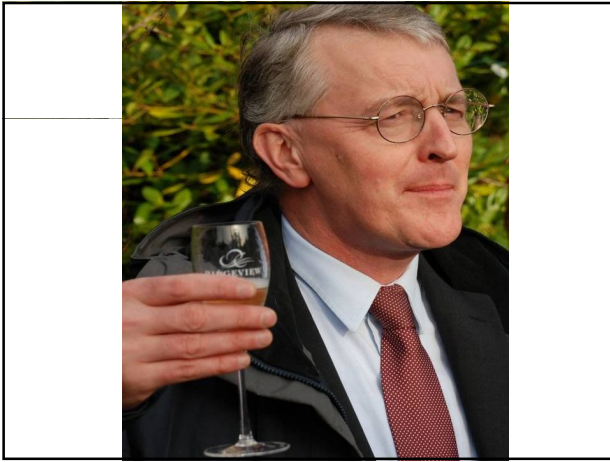
Jim Redwood
Interim Head of Planning
South Downs National Park Authority



South Downs National Park – the History

- 1947: Hobhouse Report identifies 12 areas for designation (incl. South Downs)
- 1949: Countryside Act enabling legislation
- 1951-1957: Creation of 7 National Parks in England & 2 in Wales
- 31 March 2010 South Downs becomes a National Park







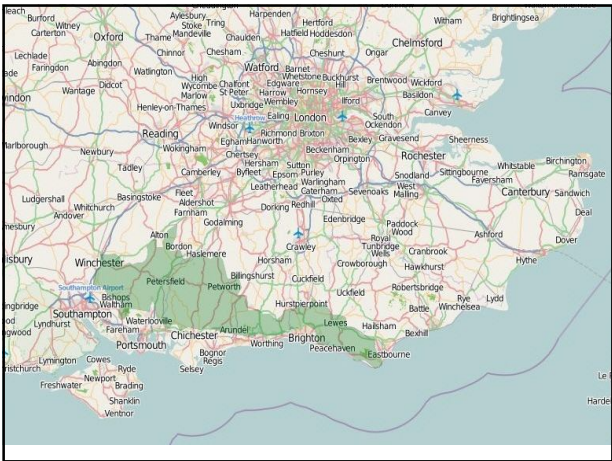




















South Downs Facts & Figures

- Length Eastbourne/Winchester 100 miles
- Area 1637 sq km
- Population in the Park 108,000
- Visitor Numbers 39 million?
- Area farmed/managed 85%
- Woodland 20%




South Downs Facts & Figures

No of Local Authorities	15
Parish Councils	179
Rights of Way	3,200 km
Access Land	9,800ha



South Downs Towns

Towns	Population
Lewes	16,000
Petersfield	13,000
Liss	4,900
Midhurst	4,900
Petworth	2,775



SDNP Planning statistics

- c4,000 planning applications/year – other NPAs in range 39 (Northumberland)-1,000 (NFNP)
- 8th largest LPA in 2008/9 – cf Kirklees (3,700)
- Only 61 'majors' in 2008/9
- 15 LAs/LDFs



South Downs National Park Authority

- Came into being on 1 April 2010
- Will operate in shadow mode for 12 months
- Will become operational on 1 April 2011
- Is funded 100% by Defra
- The South Downs Joint Committee is funded by 15 local authorities and Natural England (c.£2.3 million pa)
- It will wind up in March 2011 and some staff may transfer to the SDNPA



SDNPA Membership

- 27 Members comprising:
- 14 local authority Members: one for each council (Adur & Worthing share one)
- 6 parish council Members: appointed by the Secretary of State following parish association elections
- 7 Members appointed by the Secretary of State following open competition





SDNPA Membership

First meeting of the SDNPA was on 20 April to:

- elect a Chair & Deputy Chair
- adopt constitutional documents
- establish four committees







National Park Purposes

Purposes:

1. Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
2. Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the park's special qualities by the public

Authority Duty:

- To seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the communities within the National Park



National Park Authority Powers

- The statutory planning authority
- The access authority
- All other public bodies must have regard to National Park Purposes
- The SDNPA cannot achieve National Park Purposes on its own



Guiding Principles – the SDNPA’s Role

- Champion the South Downs with inspiring, strategic leadership and priorities that carry wide support
- Act as a coordinator to achieve more for the South Downs through combined action
- Draw down external funding and fill the gaps that others cannot fill
- Influence others’ policies as a source of knowledge and expertise
- Engage directly with residents, farmers, landowners and visitors to understand their priorities and provide advice or support
- Encourage volunteering to support Park Purposes and strengthen communities
- Build effective partnerships to tackle the challenges facing the South Downs



Partnership working

- Steering Group – SDNPA, LAs, Defra, NE, NP
- Portfolio members group – all LAs
- Planning working party – M&W/Districts
- Planning Funding working party – Districts/Counties, Planning/finance officers
- Stakeholder involvement – SDS, CPRE, interest groups, Archaeological Societies, Civic Societies
- Partnership working on Rights of Way, visitor management, Dutch Elm Disease control



Planning Policy

- Existing policies apply (largely!) – ‘saved’ local plan policies (1,600 – all different!)
- LDF – spatial manifestation of NP Management Plan (cf Sustainable community strategies)
- SDNPA Management Plan in place by 2014
- 15 emerging LDFs/reviews – joint adoption by SDNPA/LAs
- LDS in place by April 2011 – Core Strategy by 2014



Development Management

'Delegation':

- c30 staff (cf c100 for in-house service)
- Utilises existing systems – less risk on day 1
- Relies on effective partnership working with LAs
- Agency agreement under 1972 LG Act
- All decisions will still be SDNPA decisions
- Control and influence – role of Link Officer



Delegation origins

SDNP enquiries:

- Planning is one of the reasons for designation (*inspectors report*)
- 'Planning could pose a formidable task which could easily divert attention and resources from other priorities' (*inspectors report*)
- 'There is merit in examining ways of delegating back to the constituent LAs applications that have little bearing on NP purposes' (*inspector's report*)
- 'There should be delegation in so far as is possible' (SoS *'minded to' decision letter*)



Delegation framework (1)

'Default' position is major/minor split

- call-in for 'minor' applications of significance
- agreement on delegation of non-significant 'major' applications, eg in urban areas, and 'minor' M&W applications
- Link Officer influence over delegated applications



Delegation framework (2)

- All applications will be 'processed' through current LA systems –
- All correspondence etc 'badged' as NPA applications
- 'Significant' applications will be identified early – at pre-app stage if possible



Delegation costs and funding

- LAs would be paid for services provided
- Fees retained by LAs as payments on account
- Delegation may cost more, at least initially
- May be scope to drive costs down and improve standards
- c£4.5m will be transferred from LAs (nationally) to SDNPA via Defra – regardless of delegation
- LAs will not lose significant RSG funding but will no longer provide the service



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