
Summer 2016 Newsletter

A lot has happened since the last newsletter – not least the decision to leave the EU, which has led to a certain amount of uncertainty particularly around grants. Hopefully, as time moves on things will become clearer.

Date for your Diary

Thursday 13th October 2016 9am – 5pm Sandown Park Racecourse, Portsmouth Rd, Esher KT10 9AJ **Fuelling the Landscape Woodland's Growing Role in the Rural Economy**. Sponsored by the Forestry Commission, the one day conference is organized by Surrey Hills Enterprises in association with Grown in Britain, LC Energy, Verdo Renewables and the CLA. The 7th National Wood Fuel Conference will offer a valuable opportunity to hear from experts on woodland creation and funding; catchment management; the future for biomass and district heating; new technologies and market opportunities at home and abroad.

SDNPA News



SDNPA Re-organisation

The South Downs National Park has undergone a major restructure. It has reduced from four to three directorates: merging the Strategy and Partnerships with Operations to create a new– Countryside Policy and Management Directorate, headed up by Andrew Lee. This brings together the four area ranger services and the strategy leads into one grouping which will deliver projects and programmes locally and across the whole National Park, working with landowners, communities, charities and other partners.

It has five teams: Four delivery teams each of which has National Park-wide roles – leading on one habitat type (water, chalk, woods or heaths) and another area of work (access, outreach/volunteers/education, heritage, or tourism/economy). Each also includes an enlarged ranger team covering one part of the National Park (Wealden, Western, Central or Eastern Downs).

A fifth team provides corporate and strategic planning and expertise on performance management, research and project evaluation across the whole of the SDNPA.

A new Marketing and Income Generation Team has been added to the Corporate Strategy Directorate. The Planning Directorate has largely remained unchanged with



Development Management, Planning Policy and Performance and Technical Management Teams.

Organograms of each of the Directorates and a map of the Ranger areas can be found at the following link: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-people/sdnpa-structure-2016/>

Meeting updates

Changes to South Downs Land Managers.

At the Annual General Meeting in June, Members at the South Downs Land Managers voted in favour of the proposed changes to membership. This means that from 1st January 2017 landowners who farm within the South Downs and are members of either National Farmers Union or Country Land and Business Association will automatically become Members of the South Downs Land Managers, without having to pay an annual membership fee. Other landowners including woodland owners who are not members of either NFU or CLA will still be eligible to join. Reserves will be used to fund the website and Liaison Officer for the next two to three years, after which the situation will be reassessed.

Top security tips

Police Sergeant Tom Carter spoke to Members after the AGM about tackling rural crime. He urged landowners to take preventative measures in particular security marking, data tagging and tracker systems as well as CCTV and security lighting in order to try and reduce theft of farm equipment. He stressed the importance of evidence whilst tackling poaching and hare coursing, in particular photographic and the use of DNA evidence in being able to prosecute perpetrators. On the subject of livestock attacks, signage has been developed with the NPA is available on request. He stressed the importance of using signs only when appropriate and not leaving them up all year round.

Planning update

Local Plan

Following consultation on the Local Plan Preferred Options the SDNPA have been making amendments to the policies. A number of specific comments from the SDLM on agriculture and forestry policies have been taken on board. In particular policy number SD46 which sets out the conditions under which development proposals will be accepted for new agricultural or forestry buildings the criterion on previous disposal of buildings has been reduced from ten years to three years. Comments can be viewed in full on the NPA website <http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/national-park-local-plan/>

Publication of the revised Local Plan (followed by a formal pre-submission consultation) will take place in September – October 2017 and final adoption in July 2018.

Whole Estate Plans Guidance

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/care-for/supporting-communities-business/whole-estate-plans/>

The section on producing Whole Estate Plans includes both links to the documents which were circulated in June and additionally a page providing links to socio economic data documents which have been produced by the National Park Authority to support a range of policy documents. These reports should assist you in understanding your landholdings within their wider context and provide you with verifiable data.

Additionally there is also a link to allow you to a new portal to allow you to directly access census data for your landholding, which you may find useful.

Project updates

Secrets of the High Woods Revealed

The Secrets of the High Woods project in the South Downs National Park is now in its final year and the Historic England National Mapping Programme report has now been published on their web-site. The link is:

<http://research.historicengland.org.uk/Report.aspx?i=15425&ru=%2fResults.aspx%3fp%3d1%26n%3d10%26rn%3d14%26ry%3d2016%26ns%3d1>

This highlights some of the most important discoveries and themes and how this is a multi-period landscape with exceptional preservation. The full records of the discoveries in the project have also been supplied to the local authority Historic Environment Records.

Land managers and foresters have been crucial to this project, in giving permission to go off the rights of way for ground-truthing and for the community excavations. The National Park Authority project always seeks to work in partnership with the land managers and to build good working relationships.

The National Park Authority is currently tendering for specialist consultants to work with land managers and foresters to develop guidelines for considering the archaeology in their future forestry operations. This piece of work is a part of the Lottery funded project and when we have consultants appointed in September they will be introduced to the relevant people and then will work with them collaboratively.

Other news

Invasive Aliens

The SDNPA chaired the inaugural meeting of the new South Downs Invasive Alien Species Partnership. The Partnership agreed to prioritise work on 11 species: Himalayan balsam, giant hogweed, *Crassula*, floating pennywort, Japanese knotweed, *Rhododendron ponticum*, *Cotoneaster*, American mink, water fern, skunk cabbage, and parrot's feather.



Volunteers have continued to target Himalayan Balsam in the central and western area of the National Park

New regulations regarding the sale of wild game



Many people in the National Park enjoy game shooting, deer stalking and fishing. Mostly, people will take home what they shoot or catch and prepare it as a meal for the family. However, a significant number of people sell some of the game to Approved Game Handling Establishments of which there are several operating in the National Park. Last year, new regulations came into force and if you are planning on selling any game then you should be aware of them. They may not apply to you at all; they are not designed to catch out the small-time pot-hunter. So how can you tell if the regulations apply to you? Download the guidance at www.food.gov.uk. You will find a very useful flow chart on page nine of the guidance that should make it all clear.

Park Protector Award Nominations

Two South Downs Projects: Arun and Rother Connections and Butterfly Conservation Sussex Branch, have been shortlisted for the Campaign for National Parks, Park Protector Awards. The Awards recognize projects that make a lasting contribution to the protection, restoration and conservation of a National Park.

Funding

Coast to Capital

Broadband Connection Vouchers



Are you a business based in West Sussex? You could benefit from a voucher of up to £3000 to meet the capital costs of a superfast broadband connection to your premises. If you can complete and pay for the work by 31st March then you could be eligible. The scheme is now open and will run until 1st February 2017 or until the available budget has been allocated, whichever is sooner.

West Sussex LEADER Grants- The LEADER scheme is part of the Rural Development Programme. Grant funding is awarded to local businesses and organisations to help them carry out projects which create jobs and benefit the rural economy.

Coast to Capital Wood Processing Grant - This is an initiative to support enterprising timber businesses. The programme is currently providing capital grants to small and medium sized businesses to part-fund projects that create jobs and strengthen and expand the operation of the wood processing industry in the area. Further information on the above grants is available at: <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/helping-business-growth/grant-funding#sthash.JsIXtR2h.dpbs>

