

**SDNPA : SDLMG : SDN Liaison Meeting**  
**Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre, Midhurst, GU29 9DH**  
**Wednesday 28 September 2018**  
**10:00-11:30**



**Present:**

Margaret Paren – Chair of SDNPA, Andrew Lee – Director of Countryside Policy and Management, Jackie Nicholls – Executive Assistant to Andrew Lee, William Wolmer – Chair of SDLMG, Alison Tingley Liaison Officer SDLMG, David Ashcroft, Tim Bamford, James Cooper, Andrew Elms, Mike Tristram, Simon Ward and William White, Regional Director NFU.

Nigel James – SDNPA [Item 2]

Nick Heasman – SDNPA [Item 4]

**Apologies:** Trevor Beattie CEO SDNPA

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**1. Welcome**

Margaret Paren welcomed attendees. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 22 November 2017, were found to be accurate. Any matters arising were scheduled items, to be discussed at this meeting. Items for AOB were noted.

**2. Reflections on the Agriculture Bill – Nigel James**

**Nigel**

- Reference to farming is limited and a little vague.
- Good to see detail around the transition period 2021-2027. In addition, by phasing out Direct Payments over a 7 year transition period, pleasing to see mention of the freeing-up of funding to reinvest into the delivery of public goods.

Nigel explained that support from the SDNPA officers to farmers will include: support from the Farming Officer, Bruce Fowkes; continuing to strengthen Farm Clusters; and continuing to be engaged with pilot schemes and tests and trials. The SDNPA's Expression of Interest for a Pilot Scheme was sent to Defra in February 2017, but it is worth noting that over 100 proposals have been submitted, so far.

Andrew Lee pointed out that the SDNPA are engaging with local AONBs to progress a co-ordinated approach, as we have many similarities. The South East landscapes have different qualities to the uplands landscapes and this fact needs raising at every opportunity.

Rural development is very important and it is disappointing to see a lack of reference to this issue in the Bill.

**Margaret**

- Discussed at the National Parks England (NPE) Board meeting yesterday:
  - NPE welcomes the mention of access;
  - Concerns were raised about: the lack of detail around rural development; and little mention of the word landscape;

A discussion followed regarding the extension of HLS.

### **3. SDNPA Agriculture Permitted Development Guidance – Nick Heasman**

Nick introduced the newly published document *Agriculture Permitted Development Guidance*, which has been produced by Bourne Rural Planning Consultancy (BRPC) and commissioned by the South Down National Park Authority (SDNPA). The SDNPA has been proactive in commissioning the guide, recognising that farmers/landowners occasionally require support as to whether or not to apply for planning permission. The guide provides detailed information on permitted development (PD) rights as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (referred to as the GPDO).

The SDNPA *Agriculture Permitted Development Guidance* will be published on the SDNPA's website in the near future. Nick explained that the guidance may be revised at a later date, but in the meantime, any feed-back would be welcomed. **Action:** Jackie to send *SDNPA Agriculture Permitted Development Guidance* to Alison Tingley to circulate to SDLMG members. This document can also be found on the SDNPA website [here](#).

### **4. Updates:**

#### **Glover Review**

- Julian Glover has not yet completed his round of visits to National Parks. He will also be visiting the AONBs and other protected landscapes.
- He has listened and asked questions wherever he has visited.
- There will be a Call for Evidence, to help inform the review, possibly in November.
- The review findings will be published in November 2019.
- The review is seen as a positive move and does not appear to be about the funding of protected landscapes.
- Julian has held a roundtable meeting with National Parks England and will hold another one after he has visited landscapes.

#### **Whole Estate Plans (WEPs)**

- There are currently four WEPs endorsed; seven are in the pipeline.
- A discussion followed regarding the merits of having farm clusters as well as WEPs. It was pointed out that the mechanisms are different but we can learn from both the farm cluster and WEP models.
- It was explained that a WEP aims to enable collaboration between individual estates and the National Park Authority, to achieve the ambitions of the organisation and the purposes of the National Park, and deliver the Partnership Management Plan. A WEP is a non-statutory, flexible plan which demonstrates the overall position and aspirations an organisation should have as an estate and plans do not have to cover a specific time period, and may be updated to reflect changes in circumstance or withdrawn if appropriate.
- A WEP is designed to support an organisation which is generally a large landholding that includes complex commercial, social and environmental activities.

#### **Chalara – Ash dieback**

Nick Heasman outlined the severity of Chalara (ash dieback) across every county in England and across the South Downs National Park; the impact and long term effects is already noticeable and will be great.

Felling licenses are still applicable and attention needs to be paid to health and safety. The Forestry Commission have published new guidance to support woodland owners in the management of ash in woodlands and can be found [here](#) under Operations note 46.

### **PMP Review**

Andrew Lee reminded attendees that we are currently reviewing the Partnership Management Plan. After a successful and well-attended Strategic Workshop, held on 25 September 2018, further public engagement with stakeholders and partners will take place regarding the emerging priorities. As well as another workshop in January, the engagement will include the farmers' breakfast meetings and National Park Authority Parish Meetings, in November.

## **5. Road closures for commercial cycle races**

### **Velo South**

It was noted that the Velo South cycle race, scheduled for 23 September 2018, had now been cancelled, due to bad weather forecasts. It was reiterated that the event was not National Park led and that permission for road closures were a matter for WSCC and highways.

## **6. AOB**

- Concerns were raised about a rise in deer dogging and pheasant shooting and where residents can go to for support when concerned. It was accepted that the police Wildlife Crime and Rural Affairs operational lead is Sergeant Tom Carter, but were there any other avenues that land owners and residents could seek help from. Robin Edwards, CLA, advised that he had met with Chief Constable Giles York last week to discuss rural crime. A network of specially trained rural and wildlife officers will continue to deal with agricultural, environmental, heritage and wildlife incidents across Sussex.
- **Local Plan** - the dates for the Local Plan Examination are: week commencing 12 November 2018 and 03 December 2018. Further details can be found on the SDNPA website [here](#).
- **Meet the Farmer plaques** – Laura Warren, Events and Engagement Officer and Stephen Sibbald, Place and Interpretation Officer, joined the meeting to demonstrate the meet the farmer plaques that have recently been installed along the South Downs Way between the river Arun and Adur. The idea was formed by the Arun and Adur Farmers Group and will enable walkers to learn more about the land around them and to discover the farmer who owns that stretch of land. This can be done using a mobile phone to either scan the QR code using a QR code reader app or, by enabling the NFC setting on their phone, simply by tapping the plaque enabling a video to open on YouTube. The videos allow six farmers to introduce themselves and give more of a background to the area as well as give some detail as to how they manage the farmland. Feedback from members of the public has been positive.

**Meeting closed 11:30**

**Next meeting Wednesday 05 December 2018**

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