

# National Parks - looking forward to the next 70 years



**Steve Avery, Executive Director, NFNPA**

# This morning...

- Overview of National Parks
  - the journey so far
- Governance
  - and the planning function
- The New Forest experience
  - pressures on the National Park
- The future...?
  - the Glover Review



# What are National Parks?











National  
Parks



# National Parks – a global brand





# The journey so far...



“a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy”



# The journey so far...



# The Dower Report - 1945



*A national park may be defined, in application to Great Britain, as an extensive area of beautiful and relatively wild country in which:*

- landscape is preserved*
- access amply provided and enjoyed*
- wildlife and heritage protected*
- farming use maintained*

# National Parks in England & Wales



- National Parks & Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- Britain's first National Park, the Peak District, established with full planning powers
- But a range of different arrangements were put in place for the other National Parks
- Edwards Review of National Parks (1991)
- Environment Act 1995

# How are National Parks different ?



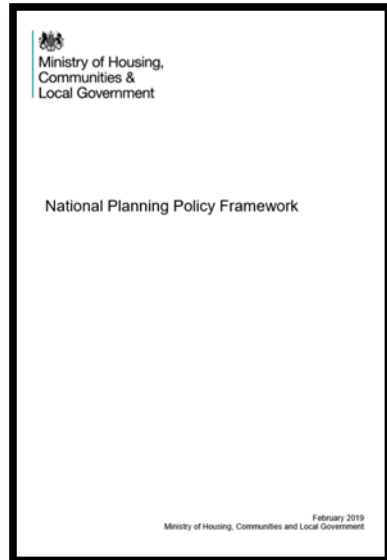
- Stand alone authorities with sole responsibility for planning in the Park area
- Funded by central government (Defra)
- Include government appointed members
- Focussed on achieving the two statutory national park purposes

# National Park purposes

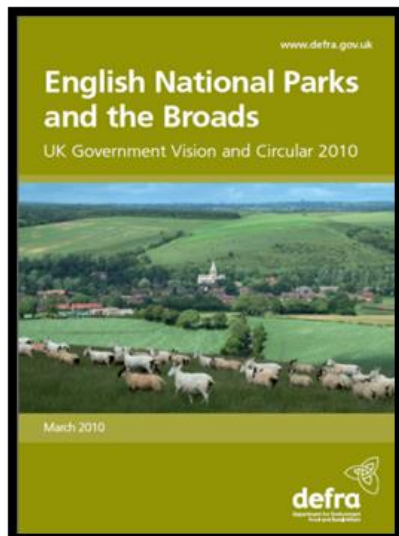


1. To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Parks; and
  2. To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities by the public.
- “...to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.”

# National Planning Policy Framework



- NPPF confirms that:
  - National Parks having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty
  - Planning permission should be refused for major developments except in exceptional circumstances
- National Parks Circular contains clear guidance on housing in National Parks



# Greater planning controls...

- In addition to the special planning policies that apply, National Park status brings greater “permitted development” restrictions
- National Park responsible for minerals and waste planning
- Under the 1995 Environment Act, public bodies are statutorily required to have regard to the National Park purposes



# Achievements



# Achievements

## National Parks, National Assets



**England's National Parks are environmental and cultural assets playing a valuable role in local and national economies.**

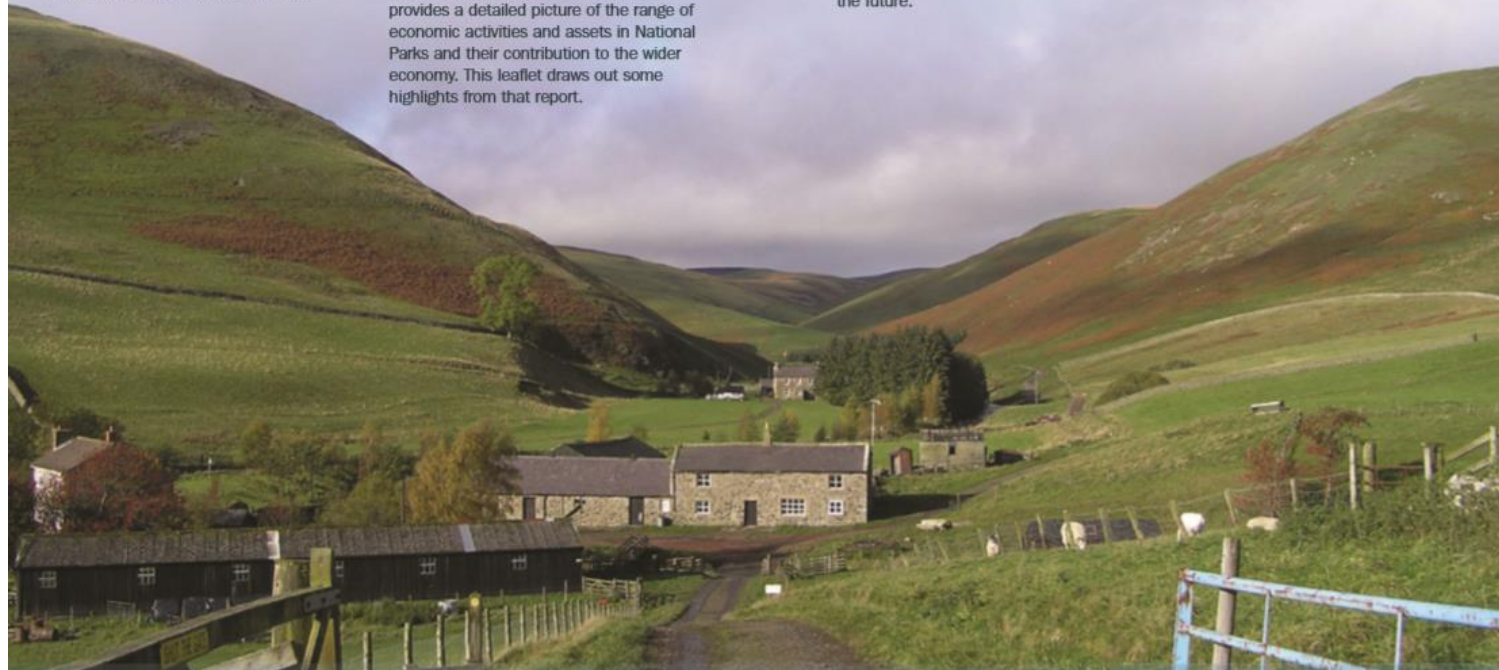
England's 10 National Parks are special places. Covering 9.3% of England by area, they include some of our most iconic landscapes, archaeological and historical sites and valuable wildlife habitats.

They are visited by millions of people every year and contain strong communities who care passionately for these beautiful areas.

Economic activity in National Parks is underpinned by the high quality environment. Key activities such as farming help maintain and enhance the special qualities of National Parks. The study 'Valuing England's National Parks' provides a detailed picture of the range of economic activities and assets in National Parks and their contribution to the wider economy. This leaflet draws out some highlights from that report.

National Park Authorities (NPAs) are uniquely placed to continue supporting sustainable economic growth in National Parks. Working in partnership with a range of other organisations and interest groups, they aim to maintain thriving living landscapes, where natural assets are conserved and enhanced and where people, businesses and communities can prosper, now and in the future.

With sufficient core funding and the support of partners, the NPAs will be able to continue to do this important work and more - helping to grow National Park economies in a sustainable way to maintain thriving living landscapes, where natural assets are conserved and enhanced and where people, businesses and communities can prosper, now and in the future.



# Achievements



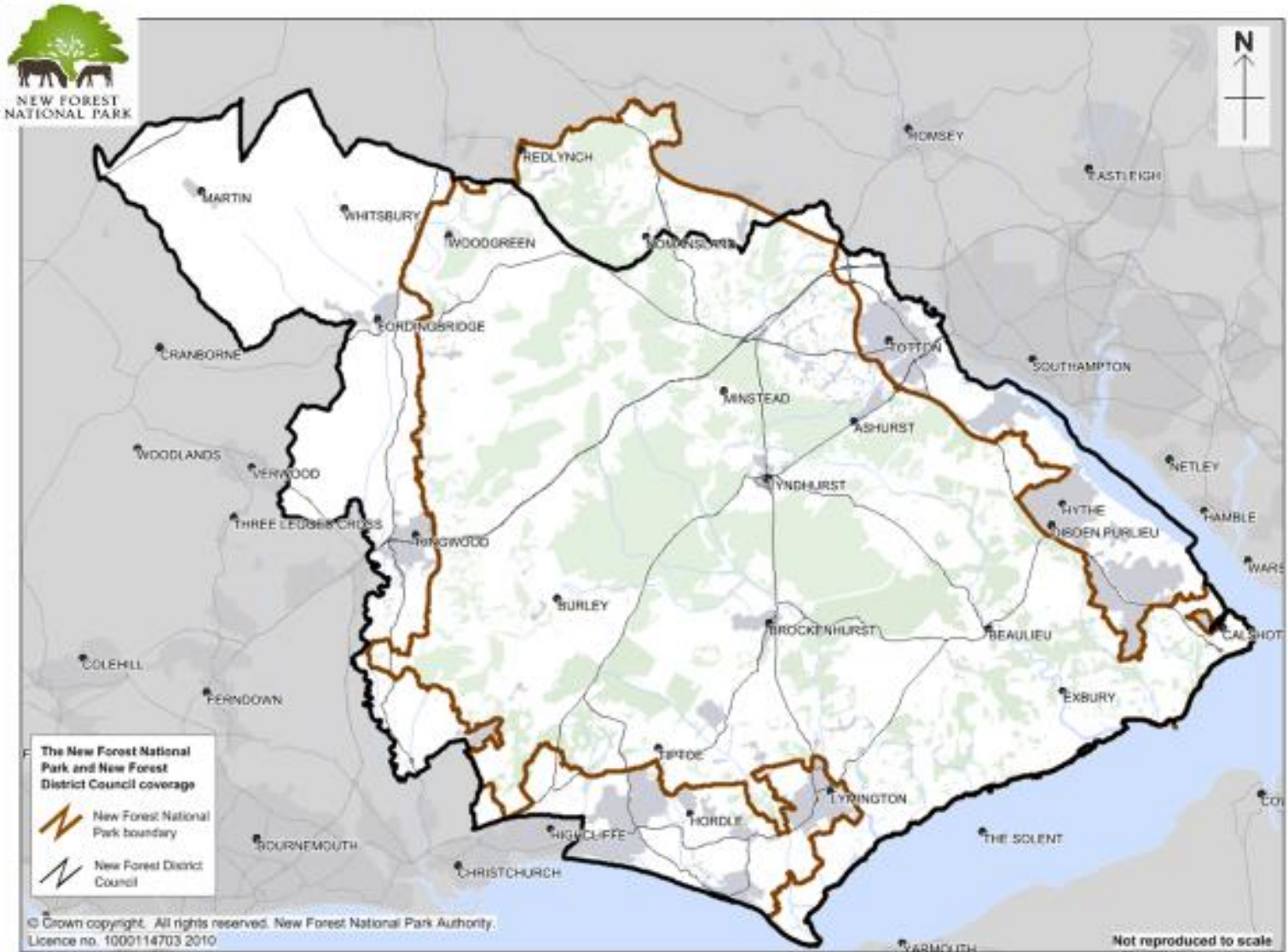
# The New Forest experience



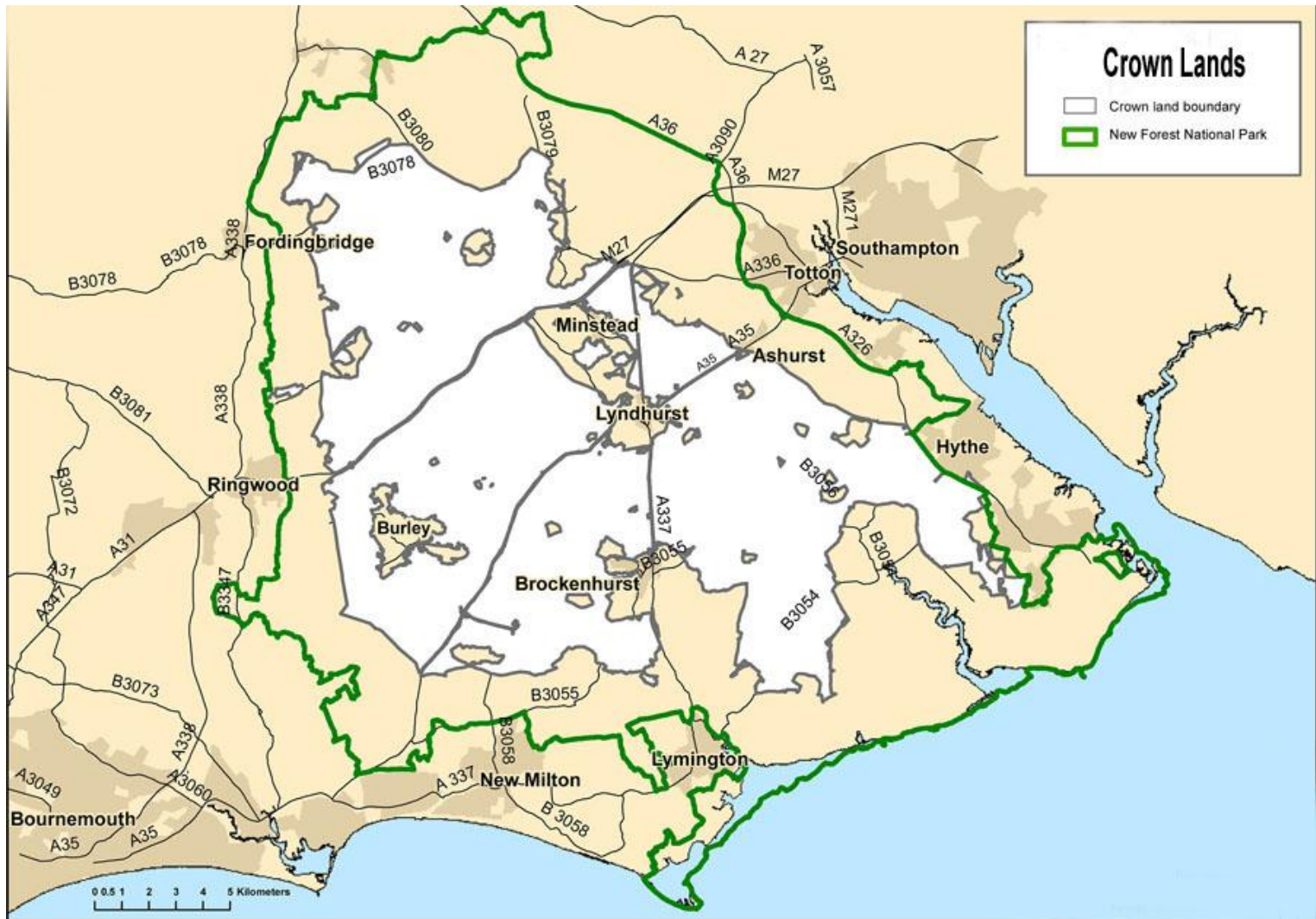
- Long-recognised as a special and important area
- New Forest Heritage Area (1995)
- John Prescott's "Birthday present to the nation"



# Calls for a bespoke approach in the New Forest



# Calls for a bespoke approach in the New Forest



# The New Forest National Park



Designated in 2005

220 square miles –  
smallest National  
Park

35,000 residents –  
the second most  
densely populated  
Park

37 parish/town  
councils within Park

56% of the Park  
covered by Natura  
2000 sites

15 million people live  
within 90 minute  
drive

# Early successes



- Planning applications approved!
- Support for commoning
- New visitor experiences
- Supporting local projects through the SDF



# But then...



- Produced first consultation NP Plan
- Combined two statutory documents into a single integrated plan
  - the National Park Management Plan &
  - the Local Plan
- Conflation of aspirational and land use planning policies

# A turbulent time



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SATURDAY, JUNE 13th, 2009

## STAFF UNREST SPARKS NPA LEADERSHIP CRISIS

The New Forest National Park Authority was plunged into crisis after its chief executive Lindsay Cornish, faced hard-hitting protests about her leadership — apparently from her own staff — sent in a letter to Whitehall.

The explosive three-page complaint claimed to be from 11 workers at the NPA at middle and junior levels who said they had reached 'breaking point' with their frustration and 'disillusionment' at their boss's 'authoritarian style'.

The letter was sent anonymously to top civil servant Helen Clapham at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which is in charge of national parks. A key complaint was the findings of a review at the authority — expected to be published — had still not been published.

It comes just days after the well-regarded director of strategy and planning, Richard Lemon, left the NPA only six months since joining.

The deputy chairman, Barry Rickman, described the letter as 'truly shocking' and told the A&T: 'I think it is very sad that the staff are so desperate they thought this was the only way to make their voices heard.'

It even prompted New Forest West MP Desmond Swayne to table a question in parliament asking DEFRA secretary of state Hilary Benn for a statement in response to

'Taking, for example, the peer review, I believe we are already working hard to address the issues it raised, but clearly we need to do more to demonstrate that. A DEFRA spokesperson said it was 'watching developments closely'.

The independent peer review that appeared to be the catalyst for the unhappy staff's action was carried out in October last year. But the letter condemned it as a 'white-wash' and complained only a 'very short summary of its findings was circulated to staff with 'vague' and 'almost meaningless' recommendations.

The letter from 'technical and professional' staff — who said it had been circulated to all the NPA's members and both New Forest MPs — also attacked Ms Cornish for her style of leadership and the authority's 'over-declaring reputation'.



The letter writers explained: 'We are reporting to this possibly under-hand but we feel necessary, initially because all our normal channels internal efforts through senior management, and now our input to the peer review on which you had pinned our hopes, have no effect.'

They claimed that when asked during the independent review, to name one single thing that was causing a problem in the authority, the near unanimous response from staff was 'the chief executive's leadership'.

Staff morale was low, it said, with enthusiasm and initiative suppressed, creating 'an authority which is almost ashamed of itself and reluctant to promote, or defend, it-

self or the national park'.

The NPA has been under siege from critics ever since it was created, but the pressure grew even stronger last year with the publication of its draft policies for the area, which sparked fierce protests from Forest users and residents.

Ms Cornish's style was described as 'authoritarian and over-bureaucratic' which did not foster partnership working and there was little communication with councils and key government departments.

The letter continued: 'This is not an idle whistle blowing complaint or a vindictive campaign (although we agree that it is, necessarily, aimed at

(Continued on page 2)

## Gas works threaten Forest traffic chaos

Forest drivers face traffic chaos later this year if Lyndhurst High Street is closed off to motorists and dug up for gas works.

A new pipe needs to be laid from near the bus shelter outside the Romney Road police station to join up with the existing main pipe outside the Snettisham bank at the bottom

tively the pipe could be diverted before reaching the High Street left along Wellbanks Road.

To then join the pipe to the main, situated under the traffic island outside the bank it would have to run under the forecourt of the prestigious Meridian garage, which would have to be dug up. That proposal

## Road noisy



We will be heard: commoners and members of the public protest

ALMOST 100 people turned up to support a march through Brockenhurst calling for action to cut the number of animal accidents on Forest roads.

South Wests Action Group for Safety (SWAGS) chanting slogans, thumping African drums and blowing whistles as the marchers made themselves heard.

The route went through the high street, past the college and back through the village to Burley Road.

(Continued on page 3)

## Forest campaigners call for park chief to be replaced

CAMPAIGNERS fighting plans put forward by the New Forest National Park Authority, are calling for chief executive Lindsay Cornish to be replaced.

It follows the revelation in yesterday's Daily Echo that staff at the authority have written to a Government department to complain about Ms Cornish, whom they accuse of being 'blinkered and autocratic'.

Ms Cornish has hit back, saying in a statement that she is shocked and disappointed by the comments.

Now the New Forest Dog Owners' Group says Ms Cornish should be dismissed or made to resign.

Deputy chairman David Dickenson said: 'Unless she is summarily forced from office, it is unlikely that any progress will be made on any issue. If she is retained in office then it seems unlikely there will be any change to the park plan.'

Members of the authority have also cast doubt on Ms Cornish's future.

Pat Wyeth said: 'If I found myself in that situation I think I would consider my position untenable.'

Maureen Holding added: 'It's vital that we have the right person in charge.'



UNDER FIRE: Lindsay Cornish.

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RICT VS  
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finished...  
could have been a...  
Bournemouth Crown Court heard...  
knocked 149,000 miles off...  
Biggest Motors Page 38

**HIGHCLIFFE**  
Lynx sighting claim  
A Highcliffe man was 'amused' when he spotted what he thought could have been a lynx on the ground in the village. Jimmy Compton said a friend spotted the creature over the road near Rowan Drive on Thursday morning in last week. He told the A&T: 'It was quite scary' Page 21

**MILFORD**  
Emergency hit-and-run  
An emergency responder vehicle was left off in a hit-and-run, resulting in a crash to a lorry that caught fire in Milford on Sunday night. It was seen splashing into an adjoining bay by a car which pulled out of a car park on Floride CRT and failed to stop. Page 22

# Protesters' delight at Park plan U-turn

Colin and Elaine Baker walk their dog Havoc in the New Forest. Right: Protesters mass against the original plan

## Park chiefs' U-turn on blueprint curbs delights protesters



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## NPA U-TURN ON HORSE AND DOG CLAMPDOWNS

In a dramatic U-turn, the national park authority has pledged to reverse a host of controversial proposals from the revised version of the NPA's controversial masterplan blueprint that will set local plans for the next five years.

All references to dog-free car parks in the 'New Forest' will now be scrapped along with tougher planning rules on recreational plans, according to the NPA's head of strategic planning, Steve Trewer.

Speaking at the NPA's first public meeting since the controversial plans were published last summer, Trewer admitted they had been "badly treated" by the huge public protests.

Steve Trewer, the NPA director of conservation, recreation and community development, said he had been "hugely confident" and the public had "blatantly" lied to him. "We've been listening to all the noise that we've needed to change. Our clear intention is that there are no equity surprises in the revised plan," he said.

Last autumn more than 7,000 people signed a petition against the plan. A further 10,000 signatures gathered for a petition in March. The plan also stated the NPA was in order to destroy the locations they had on the map for recreation.

Other contentious ideas such as "zoning" the Forest as some areas would be low-impact, including



Listening: park chiefs at Applinore with meeting chairman Chris Ward (right)

## Expelled Tory club members to get a hearing

MEMBERS expelled from New Milton Conservative Club will be given the chance to explain their actions, after the ruling committee was the satisfied with a vote of no confidence.

The 15 were asked to get back at their public meeting in the New Milton council election campaign, they had been expelled from the club.

The ruling committee was satisfied with a vote of no confidence in the ruling committee, which was held at a meeting on Tuesday night. The ruling committee was satisfied with a vote of no confidence in the ruling committee, which was held at a meeting on Tuesday night.

## DISTRICT NEWS

**NEW MILTON**  
Transport charity hits back  
"Extensive and unannounced" publicity on the 100, from a mobile phone app, was used to target the charity's members.

One of those targeted was former town councillor John Evans, who signed an open letter in support of the charity's members.

Chris Hobbs, who runs Party Sign and signed Mr Evans' nomination paper.

Mr Evans said the committee was back-peddling in order to save their position and he wanted a vote of no confidence in the ruling committee.

He also demanded a written apology from the chairman and a public meeting to discuss the matter.

Chris Hobbs said he was not satisfied for the chairman to publicly apologise to the ruling committee.

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**RINGWOOD**  
Robin Hood' checked  
A former skip inspector from Ringwood was checked by a New Forest ranger as he tried to enter the park in a car.

The skipper, who was driving a white van, was stopped by a ranger who checked his documents and found they were not in order.

The skipper was then taken to a ranger station where he was interviewed about his activities in the park.

The skipper was then released and the van was returned to him.

SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO - 3 SEP

## NEW FOREST: Contentious parts of New Forest blueprint are ditched

By Julian Robinson  
julian.robinson@southcoast.co.uk  
For up-to-the-minute news and information - dailyecho.co.uk

NATIONAL Park bosses last night performed a stunning U-turn after scrapping a series of controversial plans that would have changed the face of the New Forest.

In a huge victory for campaigners, key parts of a blueprint for the future of ancient woodland have been ditched. At a public meeting last night, the under-fire New Forest National Park Authority (NPA) pledged to scrap plans for:

- dog free car parks,
- road tolls,
- New curbs for recreational horse owners.

Further contentious issues, the 1 of labelling some living areas "service villages", was also abandoned.



he controversial ideas all appeared in the original blueprint for the 2008 released last year, which led to mass rallies, protests and a 7,000 name petition. It sparked fury among dog walkers, dog owners, horse owners and business owners in the New Forest.

Two action groups, Forest Uprising and One Voice, were even formed specifically to fight the proposals.

Tim Cant, of Forest Uprising, hailed the NPA's about face.

She said: "Only an idiot would have removed these items but give them credit where it is due. They stood up and said it's wrong and we're having very positive dialogue with them and we are cautiously optimistic going forward."

Interim chief executive of the NPA, Paul Lewis, who took up the reins after the departure of former chief executive Paul Lewis, said the plan was "counter productive."

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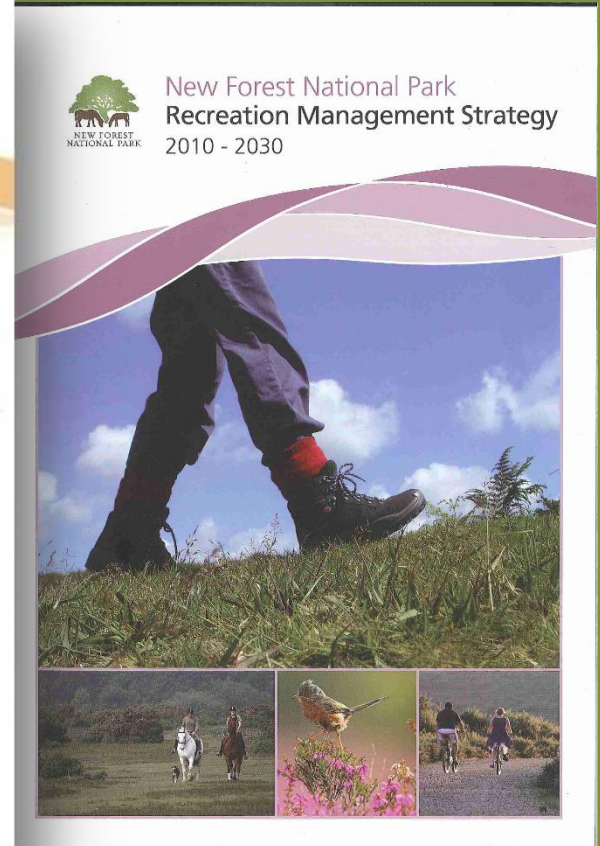
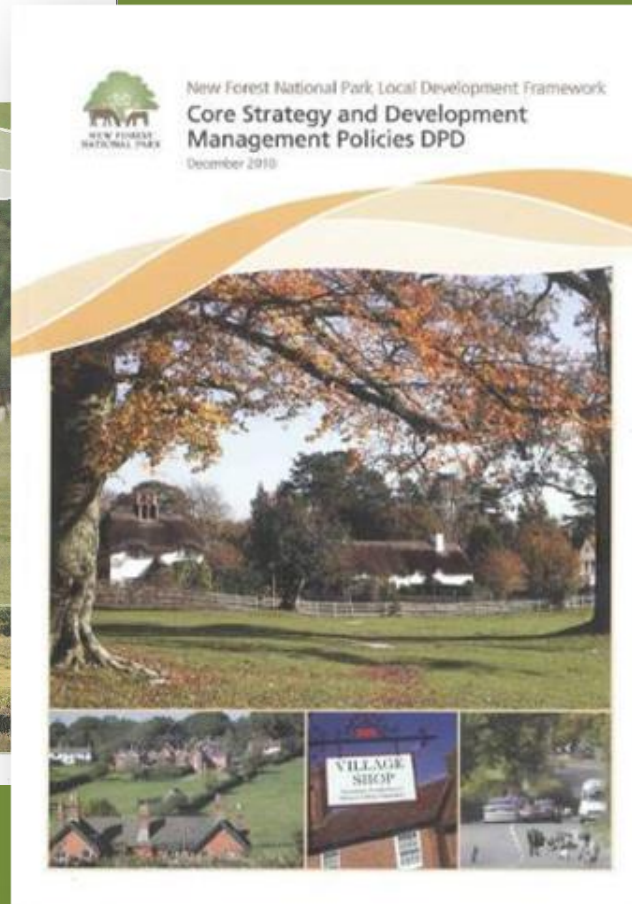
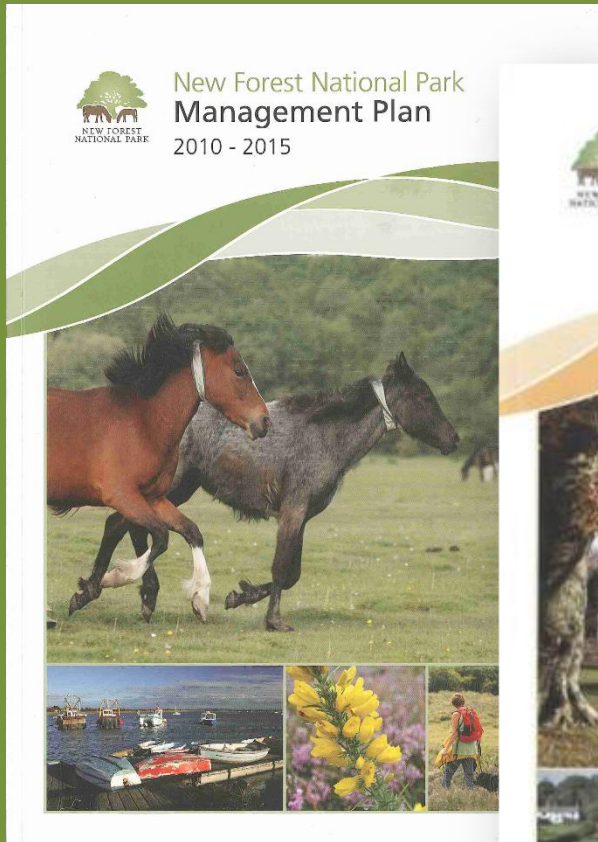
## Forest U-turn

- Dog-free car parks — SCRAPPED
- Road tolls — SCRAPPED
- Curb on horse owners — SCRAPPED

We recognise that it had all gone a bit wrong earlier on, which is why we wanted to embark on another programme of active engagement."

The draft of the masterplan will be published in the next few days.

# Approved Plans



# Lessons learnt

- Time and place for being innovative
- Need to build up trust
- Partnership working
- Sound evidence base
- Work closely with Parish Councils
- Managing the media

# Development pressures (1)



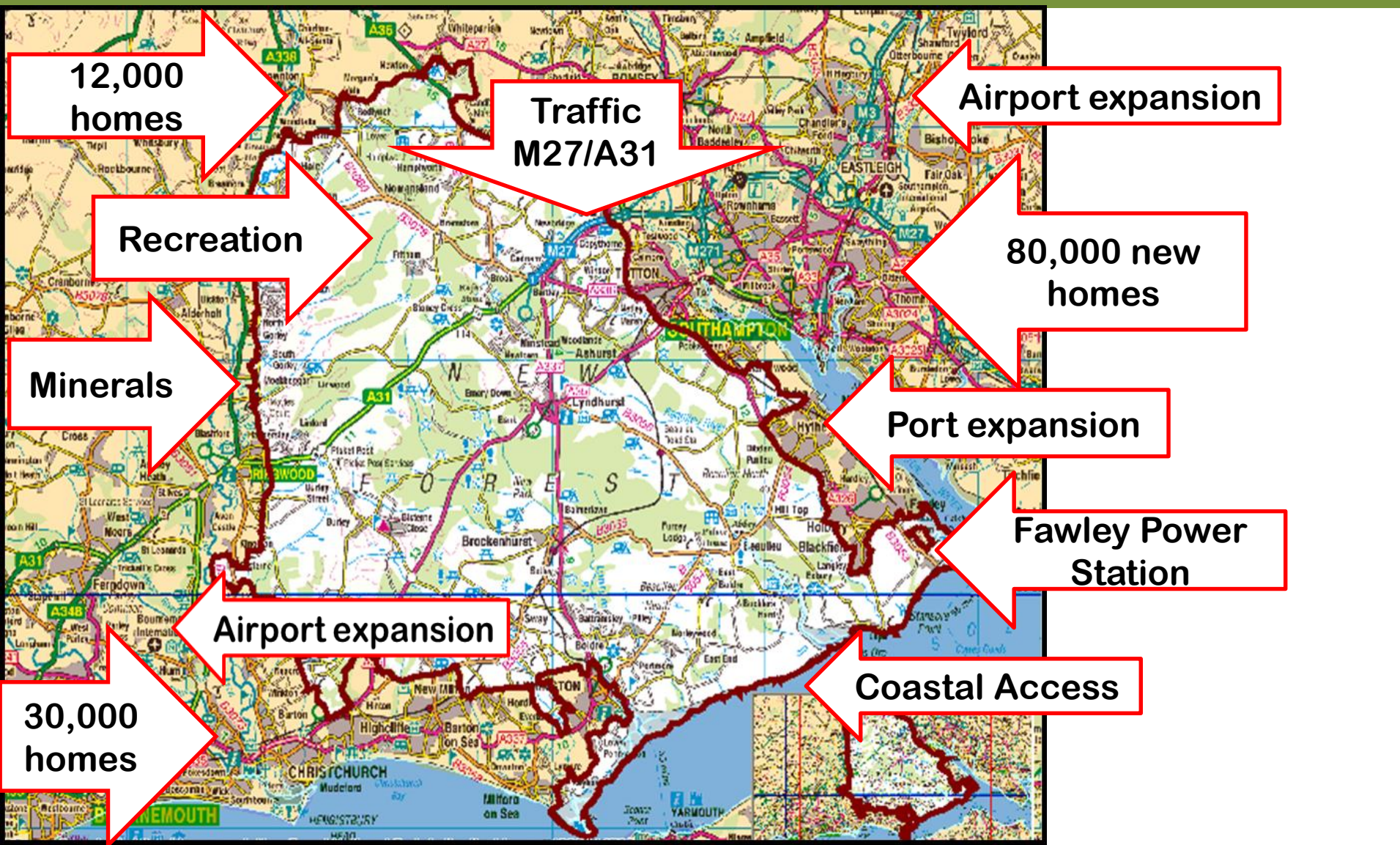
1,000 applications per annum

Very affluent area

Replacement dwellings

Major development

# Development pressures (2)





# Affordable Housing

- National Parks produce 22% price premium
- Key issue in National Parks and focus of planning policies
- Long standing support for rural exception sites
- Many studies/research into problem

| National Park   | Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> ) | Popl. living in park | Average house price | Indicative premium |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| New Forest      | 570                          | 34,000               | £525,000            | £115,500           |
| South Downs     | 1,624                        | 115,000              | £350,000            | £77,000            |
| Lake District   | 2,362                        | 40,100               | £250,000            | £55,000            |
| Dartmoor        | 953                          | 34,000               | £245,000            | £53,900            |
| Yorkshire Dales | 2,178                        | 19,600               | £234,000            | £51,500            |
| The Cairngorms  | 4,528                        | 17,000               | £233,000            | £51,300            |
| Peak District   | 1,437                        | 37,200               | £230,000            | £50,600            |
| Brecon Beacons  | 1,344                        | 33,400               | £230,000            | £50,600            |
| Snowdonia       | 2,176                        | 25,500               | £157,000            | £34,500            |

Sources: Nationwide, ONS, National Parks UK

# Affordable Housing

- Low Incomes v High House Prices
- Development Restraint in National Parks
- Higher build costs – small scale, remote locations, design, materials
- More complex – greater number of agencies
- High thresholds to trigger requirement for affordable housing

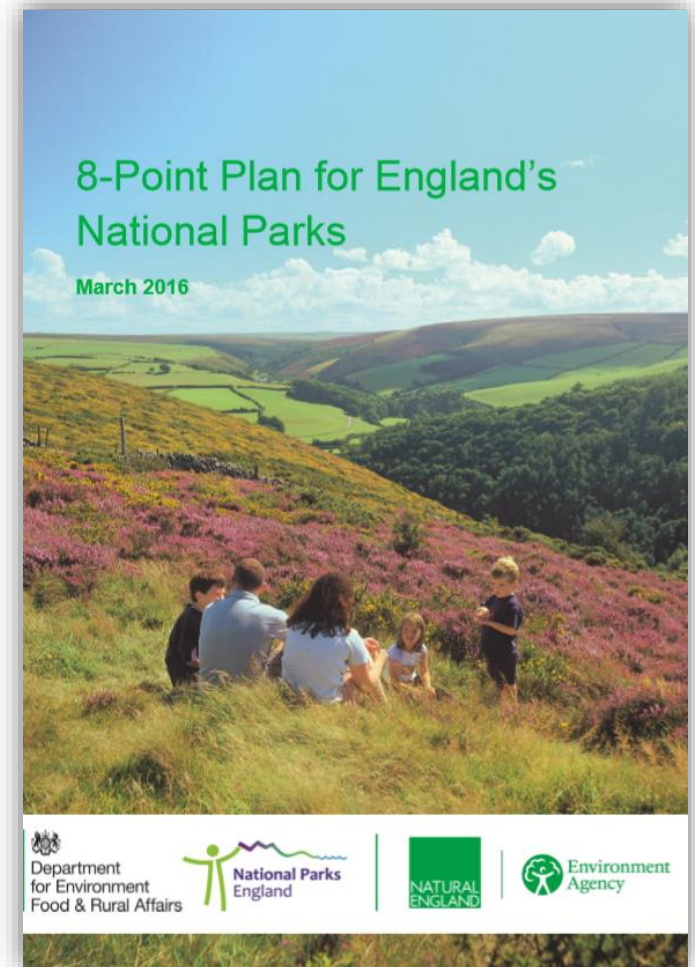
# Affordable Housing





# Visitor pressures

- Traffic congestion
- Litter
- Damage to farmland
- Conflict between recreational users
- Holiday homes – rise of Airbnb
- Damage and disturbance to wildlife
- Encouraged by National Park designation?



# Wildlife pressures

## National parks: where our wildlife goes to die

Birds and animals are being wiped out so fast that Britain's wilderness areas risk losing UN status, warn conservationists

Jonathan Leake Environment Editor

Britain's national parks risk losing their United Nations status as globally protected nature reserves because humans are wiping out their wildlife so fast, the chairman of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has warned.

Kevin Cox suggests that even calling them "national parks" is misleading because farming – plus grouse shooting and tourism – is doing so much damage.

"National parks are not delivering for wildlife and are often in worse condition than areas outside the park," said Cox in an interview with The Sunday Times. "They aren't being monitored, lack funding and have no clear purpose."

Cox said farm policy was the main factor rather than individual farmers. "The biggest driver of the damage is farming. It is down to [government] policy encouraging the use of chemicals and intensification of livestock and crops."

It follows one of British wildlife's most poignant losses: the disappearance and suspected death of Dartmoor's last breeding female curlew. There were once hundreds of the birds, whose long curved beaks made them a conservation icon.

Curlews find food by probing damp soil, but farmers get aid to drain it. The birds also suffer from disturbance by walkers

and dogs, as national parks have no powers to protect nesting areas.

The birds live for up to 30 years and mate for life and the lost female's partner still scours the site apparently looking for her. "It's a tragedy," said Derek Gow, a bird expert who monitors them. "National parks are now places where wildlife goes to die."

This coincides with growing concern over declining wildlife in Britain's so-called wilderness areas. The UK has 15 national parks, with 10 in England, three in Wales and two in Scotland, covering a 10th of Britain. They are meant to protect nature but when contacted by The Sunday Times all confirmed falls in biodiversity and the loss or decline of key species.

This autumn the main conservation bodies will publish State of UK Nature 2019, a report warning nearly 60% of Britain's wildlife species are in rapid decline.

Golden eagles are the most iconic. They bred in the Lake District for centuries but the last female in England died in 2004. Its partner survived until 2016, building nests to attract females – but there were none left.

The Lake District National Park authority said it hoped a single pair of ospreys would breed this year but this compares with almost 690,000 sheep in the region. "We acknowledge the urgent need to improve nature," it said.

In the New Forest some link its designation as a national park in 2005



There were once hundreds of curlews on Dartmoor



Golden eagle: in rapid decline



# Resident pressures

- New development
- Recreation Management
- Cycling Events
- Strong representation
- Political Support
- Influence on National Park boards

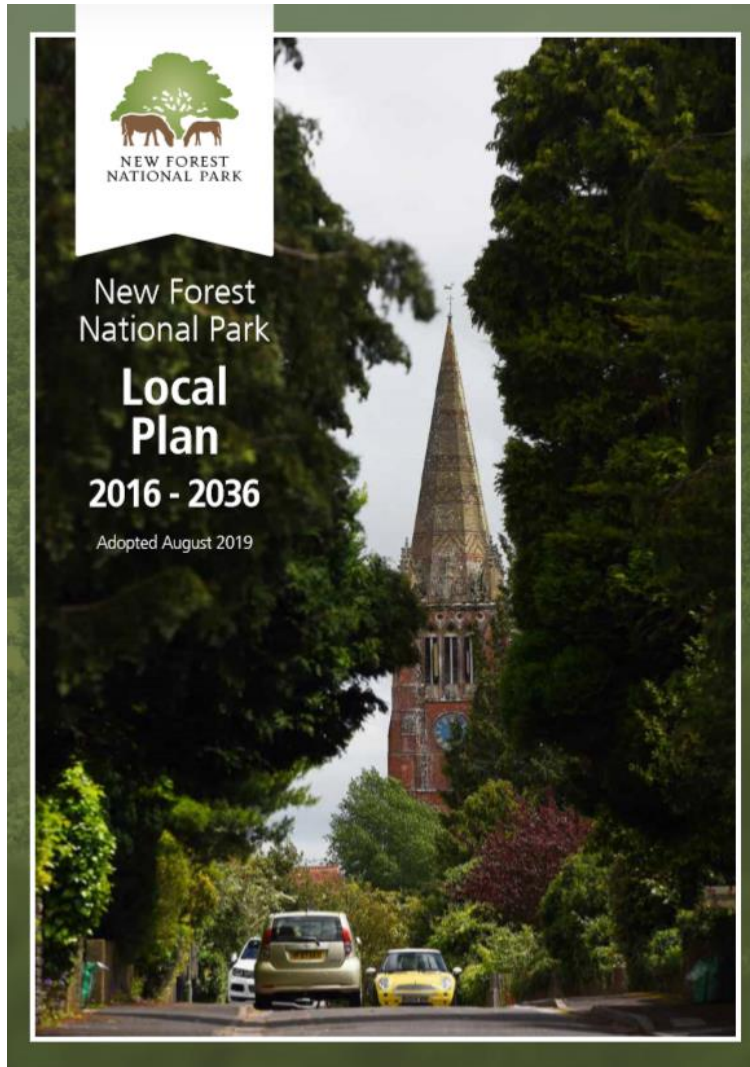


# Resident pressures





# The answer?



# Government Planning Reforms

## Planning revolt fuels fears over economy



shameful way to rural Britain

As Vinay Chabria is concerned, people who object to the Government's plans to make it easier for developers to build in the countryside are "semi-hysterical". The Business Secretary is to discover that there are a great many more in this country. The National Trust has a petition opposing the new national planning framework and is writing to all 3.7 million of its members about its dangers. The size of the street curbs on building in rural areas...

Countryside lobby

Sam Fleming, Roland Watson

Ministers must defy opposition plans that would ease restrictions on building in the countryside, one country's foremost business men have warned.

The Government must "be course" as the row intensifies

'Reform will cut business earnings by a quarter' News, pages 10, 11

proposed changes that would create a "presumption in favour of sustainable development". David Frost, the chief of the British Chambers of Commerce, told The Times.

Reforms making it harder for developers to block development provoked another dispute between conservationists and rural campaigners.

## Coalition 'rush to sweep aside planning laws will put countryside in peril'



“The

with discontent among Conservative back-bench MPs and vocal criticism from both Tory and Liberal Democrat councillors.

It comes as *The Daily Telegraph* starts to report the countryside reforms.

planning minister, a week of behaving "fishness" because of much-needed jobs for people.

ation on the draft framework began to pick up for the summer close on Oct 17, for a national discussion, while the Localism Bill is cur-

## Letters

111, Broad Street, London W1A 1AA. We accept letters by post, fax, email and text.

### The Government's d

SIR - Ed Howerker is right to say that Britain has too few affordable homes for sale (Comment, August 28). And you report the belief of Greg Clark, the planning minister, that when the state gets out of the way, ordinary people will choose to do what is in the interests of the country and support more house building (News, August 27).

That was the premise of the Government's localism agenda. But localism has been gutted by the Treasury, and the state is not going to get out of the way. Rather, if Mr Clark's national planning policy framework is implemented, local authorities will be required to favour economic development. Far from getting out of the way, the state is siding with developers against all other interests.

Daily Mail, Monday, November 5, 2012

Page 29

## Beauty spots at risk in 4G phone mast 'free-for-all'

By Paul Sims

HOW WIND FARMS RUIN A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP



Suburban sprawl a bricklayer carries



Westminster and Whitehall to know anything about the rural scene. Charles Keen, Dunsborough House, Gloucestershire

SIR - All the discussions regarding loosening of planning regulations fail to acknowledge one critical element.

## Now National Parks at risk from reform of planning laws

By Christopher Hope Senior Political Correspondent

Authorities need to better reflect their role in facilitating sustainable development.

BUILDING regulations in some of the most beautiful parts of the country could be relaxed under government plans, *The Daily Telegraph* can disclose.

The consultation about changes to the National Parks guidance is to begin next month and end in March.

Labour claims developers could be given a "licence to build" under new guidelines for national parks authorities.

The Government's rural communities advisers said that by giving National Parks this third purpose they would be "expected to deliver socio-economic benefits when pursuing their purposes".

England has 10 National Parks - most protected under law dating back to the early 1950s. The regulations cover nearly 5,000 square miles of beautiful countryside, including Exmoor, the Peak District, Dartmoor, the New Forest

Mary Creagh, the shadow environment secretary, said: "This latest consultation, imposing a duty to promote ill-defined 'sustainable development', could lead to a licence to build on our

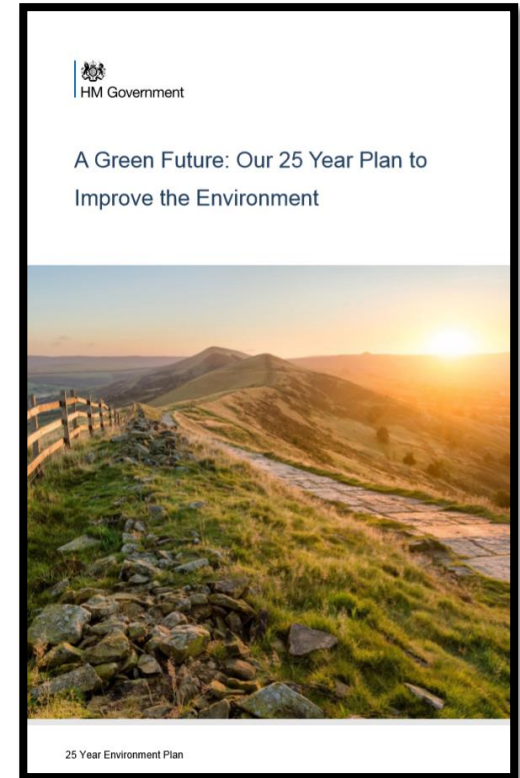
## National Trust warns planning changes could tear up countryside

Builders and developers back simplified planning process to boost jobs and growth but conservationists predict mass revolt

limits on building in rural areas that communities custom, while the Localism Bill is cur-

# Julian Glover Review - TOR

- Are the statutory purposes being met?
- Degree of alignment with the 25-Year Plan
- Extend / create new designated areas
- Improve governance
- Financing of National Parks and AONBs
- How to enhance the environment and biodiversity
- How to build on the existing 8 point plan for National Parks
- How National Parks and AONBs support communities



# Julian Glover – Interim Findings

- Visited every AONB and National Park
- Falling short of what can be achieved
- What does the nation need from them today?
- More must be done for nature and beauty
- Nature Recovery Networks
- Lead response to climate change
- Working with BAME
- Links with NHS
- Shortage of affordable housing
- More money “doing more will cost more”



# The future?

- Need to remain living, working landscapes
- Government response to Glover's final report?
- Life outside the CAP - public money for public good
- National Parks taking on land management role?
- Meeting the challenge of the digital age
- Need to see a clearer join up between Defra, DCMS and MHCLG
- An end to weakening planning protections in protected landscapes



# National Parks - looking forward to the next 70 years



**Steve Avery, Executive Director, NFNPA**