

New Forest National Park Local Plan Review Update

We are in the process of reviewing the local planning policies that cover the National Park. The Local Plan forms the basis for determining planning applications within the New Forest and the first Local Plan for the area was adopted 5 years ago. Since then there have been significant changes in national planning policy and our review will focus on the key areas where an update is required including the scale and location of new housing; support for the local economy; and the conservation of the Forest's protected landscape and habitats.

The New Forest is one of only 10 National Parks in the country and the Local Plan is a key means through which the special qualities of the New Forest can be protected. Over 50% of the New Forest is designated as being of international importance for nature conservation and at the same time the New Forest is also home to 35,000 people and 2,300 local businesses. Our new Local Plan must balance these considerations and ensure the Forest remains a living-working area valued by millions of people.

We undertook an initial public consultation in Autumn 2015 on what people thought were the main planning issues facing the New Forest. We are now considering the responses received and are meeting a wide range of local groups and organisations over the next few months to help us draft the new Local Plan. Our current intention is to publish a draft Local Plan in October 2016 which people will be invited to comment on.