



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

National Park Update

5 September 2024

Planning reforms

- Consultation launched on 30 July setting out proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework
- [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system)
- Focus on growth and delivery of new housing
- Consultation closes on 24 September



Main changes

- **Mandatory Housing Targets:** New Standard Method will set mandatory housing targets, aiming for 370,000 new homes per year.
- **Affordability Ratio:** Stronger affordability ratio driver will be included, and previous oversupply clauses will be removed.
- **Green Belt Review:** Councils must review green belts where land is insufficient, prioritising previously developed land.
- **New Grey-Belt Definition:** Major developments on grey belt sites must deliver 50% affordable housing plus necessary infrastructure, subject to a viability assessment.
- **Affordable Housing Focus:** Shift towards Social Rent in affordable housing tenure preferences.
- **Supporting green energy:** solar panels and wind turbines.



But no changes to National Parks sections...

- No revisions to these key paragraphs:
 - A strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in National Parks (paragraph 11 and footnote 7)
 - The wording on the protection afforded to National Parks, including the major development ‘tests’ (paragraphs 182 – 183 and footnote 63).
- National Parks continue to be areas that national policy states should be protected, with great weight attached to conserving and enhancing their landscape, scenic beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.



Mandatory Housing Targets

- Changes reverse those made last December, which saw a ‘softening’ in housing targets to make them advisory
- Now proposed to make the housing need figures ‘mandatory’ – in that the way they are worked out (the ‘standard method’) will be non-negotiable
- Figures provide the basis for plan making - not the final housing requirement – LPAs may justify a lower number but only where they can evidence ‘hard constraints’
- A presumption that local planning authorities will either deliver these numbers or achieve cooperation from neighbours to pick up the shortfall
- The numbers themselves will be much higher than the existing figures because the new standard method applies an affordability accelerator which boosts numbers in areas like ours

| Local Authority | Current Standard Method Housing Need | Proposed Standard Method Housing Need | Change |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| New Forest District | 729 dwellings per annum | 1,465 dwellings per annum | +101% |
| Test Valley Borough | 524 dwellings per annum | 921 dwellings per annum | +76% |
| Wiltshire | 1,917 dwellings per annum | 3,476 dwellings per annum | +81% |
| Eastleigh | 645 dwellings per annum | 902 dwellings per annum | +40% |
| Southampton | 1,473 dwellings per annum | 1,295 dwellings per annum | -12% |

Our likely response...

- Unclear from the consultation how National Parks are to be treated in terms of meeting housing needs.
- Seek further clarity from Govt through updates to National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- Call for a more bespoke approach to generating National Park-specific housing figures.
- Need to identify growth areas nationally.

Green Belt Review and new Grey-Belt definition

- Where LPA is unable to meet housing needs after fully considering all opportunities to make effective and efficient use of brownfield, it should undertake a **green belt review**.
- The review should look to release poor quality **grey belt** land from the green belt through both plan-making and decision-making to meet local needs.
- Although no Green Belt in the National Park, there is green belt immediately adjacent to the National Park.

Our likely response...

- Although not a specific purpose of the green belt, it does play a role in protecting the setting of the National Park.
- This is consistent with national policy set out in paragraph 182 of the NPPF which confirms that development within the setting of National Parks should be sensitively located and designed.
- If neighbouring planning authorities are to be undertaking future green belt reviews they should consider the contribution the designated green belt makes against a comprehensive range of policy objectives, rather than purely against the narrower green belt purposes.

Supporting green energy

- Significant weight to be given to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation, and proposals' contribution to meeting a net zero future.
- The consultation reiterates that whilst these changes seek to promote the delivery of renewable energy schemes, proposals would still be subject to the other policy requirements set out in the framework alongside other environmental safeguards.

Our likely response...

- Proposals need to be assessed against a range of material planning considerations and this is particularly the case within nationally protected landscapes such as National Parks.
- The changes to paragraph 164 of the Framework should include an acknowledgement of the range of planning considerations that should be weighed in the planning balance.

Other proposed changes

- Application fees:
 - Increasing householder application fees to meet full cost recovery, from £258 to £528
 - Extending fees to other (currently exempt) types of applications such as applications for Listed Building consent
 - Localisation of fees
 - Recovering costs on responding to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects
- Transitional arrangements for emerging plans.

Visitor engagement this summer

- Our five NPA Rangers have engaged with 9,819 people undertaking 378 hours of engagement
- Targeted establishments in the pony feeding and petting hot spot areas of Burley, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Beaulieu. Posters have been offered to every business
- Engagement activities included patrols, working with Police, Forestry England, New Forest Dog Owners Group and others, community events, campsites, local businesses and local shows (e.g. Ellingham Show, Burley Show and New Forest Food Festival)



Public Spaces Protection Order

Be Forest
Friendly!

It is an offence to:



Feed, provide or deposit food for consumption by any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey



Pet or touch any New Forest pony, horse, mule or donkey

Fail to terminate any of these activities or surrender any items used in conjunction when required by an Authorised Officer.

Failure to comply may result in a fixed penalty of £100 or being taken to court and a fine of up to £1,000.



To find out more, scan the QR code or visit newforest.gov.uk/PSPO

‘Behind the Scenes’ of the New Forest National Park

- As part of the 75th anniversary of National Parks, the NFNPA & partners launched a campaign taking people ‘behind the scenes’ and revealing the ‘secrets’ of the New Forest.
- Launched at the New Forest Show, it includes an exhibition of people working in nature conservation with photographs by internationally-renowned photographer Steve Poole and interviews.
- Gaining lots of impressions, video views and engagements on social media





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Behind the Scenes

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Come 'Behind the Scenes' of the New Forest National Park

As part of the 75th anniversary of National Parks, the New Forest National Park Authority and partners launched a

New Forest National Park Authority Chairman David Bence said: 'With many rare species and an incredible mix of different habitats all underpinned by the ancient tradition of commoners' animals grazing the landscape, there really is

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