



Government's planning reforms

The Government has published a consultation document on a new planning system, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The document aims to radically streamline existing Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes to form a single consolidated document.

The Framework condenses nearly 900,000 words of national planning policies into a single document the Government hopes will be better understood and used by everybody who has an interest in shaping the development of their area.

This isn't about a shake up in the way local councils make decisions about conservatories and extensions, but is to do with how large scale developments and applications for new towns will be determined.

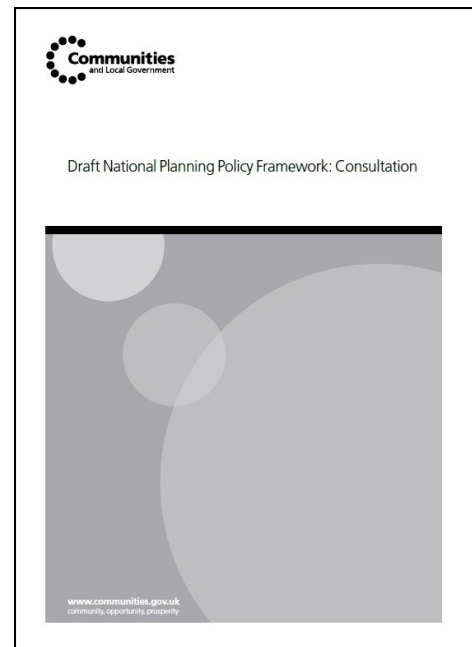
There seems to be a fundamental shift in the approach, moving the system from one that is designed to protect the environment to one whose main objective is to stimulate the economy.

Controversially the proposals put forward the concept that there should be a presumption in favour of development for applications, albeit for those that are determined to be "sustainable".

At this stage it is not clear how these proposals fit in with the Government's localism agenda. Instead they appear to go against the earlier statements from Government about how more power over decision making will be placed in the hands of local people.

Many organisations have raised concerns over the proposals and the CPRE, Woodland Trust, National Trust and RSPB have all started campaigns to oppose them. All of these organisations have further information on their websites and we would encourage members to add their support.

The Dever Society will keep a careful eye on developments and has raised concerns with our local MP, Steve Brine, who set out his vision for the planning system on these pages in the last edition. Steve Brine told the Society; "I have spent a great deal of time listening to, questioning and lobbying Ministers over the proposed reforms and have conveyed all the genuine feedback I've received from constituents. I don't share some of the apocalyptic views I have read, but I am far from satisfied at this stage. Ministers have to get this right."



Black Wood – holiday cabins agreed

Despite receiving over 170 objections, Winchester City Council's Planning Control Development Committee has approved the construction of a 60-cabin holiday village in Black Wood.

This was the third attempt by Forest Holidays to develop the wood, which we believe is the wrong location for such a development because this is a relatively small wood, bounded by major highways and the equally dangerous Larkwhistle Farm Road.

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The stone-curlew: a conservation success story in southern England

Matthew White, RSPB Wessex stone-curlew project officer, reports on a very successful year for the stone-curlew population in southern England, with a record number of breeding pairs, nesting attempts and fledged young.

Numbers in the south have risen from 136 breeding pairs in 2010 and 123 in 2009. Records for 2011 will be published shortly in the national press.

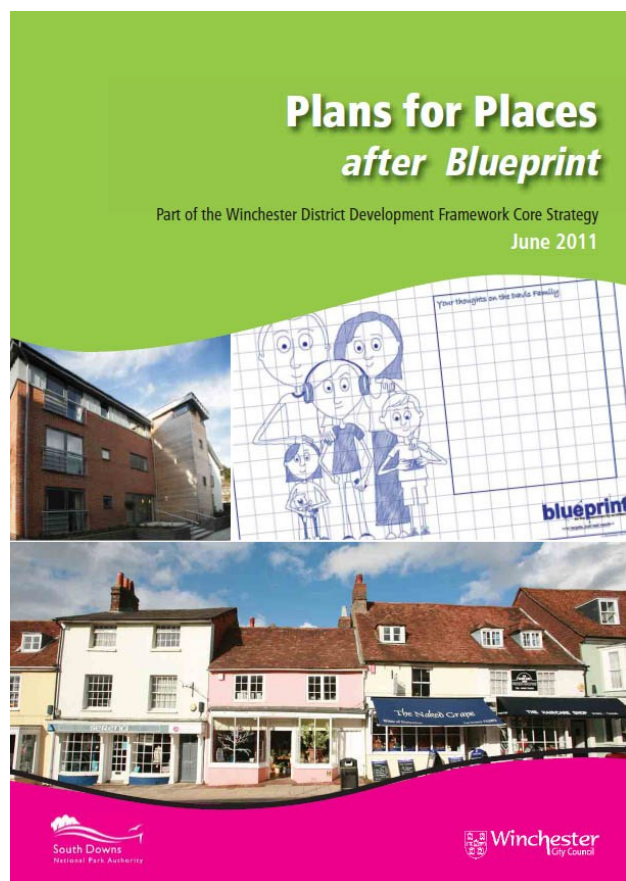
In Hampshire, breeding pairs have again increased from around 23 in 2010. Unfortunately no stone-curlews were recorded in the Micheldever area on RSPB monitored land and this small sub-population remains very vulnerable. There may be birds that we simply do not know about, so if you hear or see any stone-curlews around the Micheldever area please do not hesitate to contact me, Matthew White, on 07872 157745 or e-mail me at matt.white@rspb.org.uk

Many thanks again to the Dever Society for providing vital support to the project, and also thanks to farmers for providing habitat for stone-curlews to breed on.



- You can find further details on the RSPB Wessex stone-curlew project at <http://www.rspb.org.uk/ourwork/projects/details/212603-wessex-stonecurlew-project>

Next rounds in the Blueprint planning process



In June, Winchester City Council published a new consultation paper, *Plans for Places – after Blueprint*. The original *Blueprint* consultation, which went on last year, asked communities to set out what type of housing and development they felt their area needed over the next twenty years.

The new paper reflects on the response to the *Blueprint* consultation and sets out draft planning strategies for Winchester District and is the next step in the development of the Local Development Framework, which will replace the existing Winchester District Local Plan.

The new paper proposes a new District housing target for 2011-2031 of 11,000 new dwellings, based on updated population and housing requirements. It suggests that 4,000 of these be built in Winchester Town, 5,500 in the south Hampshire urban areas and the remaining 1,500 in the so-called market towns and rural areas. Planned development west of Waterlooville and north of Whiteley will generate the 5,500 homes in south Hampshire, but the other two areas are more controversial.

In September, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, dismissed the appeal by Cala Homes to build 2,000 new homes at Barton Farm in Winchester (*see back page*). The market towns and rural areas sector includes the new South Downs National Park, where development is restricted. The majority of the sites for the 1,500 homes target will therefore have to be found in the towns and villages outside the Park.

You are invited to support the Dever Society...

... by joining us at an evening of wine tasting, music and acrobatic rope performance at Upper Cranbourne Farm. The Japanese pianist Chisato Kusunoki will play music from Bach to Rachmaninov between courses of wine introduced and explained by an eminent wine master. Chisato's final piece will accompany a performance by Gisele Edwards on a suspended rope.

Chisato Kusunoki was born in Germany and has lived in London since 1993. She was a music scholar at Haberdashers' Aske's School for Girls, and went on to read music at University College, Oxford where she graduated with first-class honours in performance.



Chisato was a prize-winner at the Newport International Competition for Young Pianists in 2003 and has won many awards and scholarships throughout her studies in the UK. She has played at important London venues including the Purcell Room and St Martin-in-the-Fields, as well as at international locations like the Mendelssohn Institute in Leipzig and the Sumida Triphony Hall in Tokyo.

Gisele Edwards trained in physical theatre at the Central School of Speech and Drama, where she was a founding member of the award-winning theatre company SHUNT. She collaborated in the company's early shows before leaving to concentrate on her aerial work, remaining a director on the Board until 2010. In 1999 she attended the Circus Space where she trained in aerial skills,



performing in the Millennium Dome show during 2000. Since then she has been working as an aerialist, musician and theatre maker.

In 2011 Gisele received a commission from the LSO and SoundUK to collaborate with violinist Alexander Balenescu and accordionist Lina Petrova; the performance was presented to a sell-out audience at LSO St Lukes.

Our photograph shows Gisele performing earlier this year in the newly-restored clock tower at London's St Pancras Station.

The evening's wines will be kindly supplied by Elliston Fine Wines Ltd of Hunton Down House, Hunton, and we are grateful to winemaker Richard Harvey of Bonhams who will explain the wines.

- *The event will take place at 8pm on 12th November at Upper Cranbourne Farm, Sutton Scotney. Tickets are priced at £35 and are available from Lucy Dowson on 01962 774659 or phil@kitelands.freeseve.co.uk Proceeds will go to the Dever Society.*

Annual General Meeting 2012

Members are hereby given notice that the Society's next AGM will be held on Monday, March 19th at 7.30 pm in the Northbrook Hall, Micheldever

The formal business will include receiving and adopting the audited accounts for the year ending 30th September 2010; considering the Chairman's statement for the year and electing or re-electing the President, Chairman, Officers and Executive Committee.

After the formal business Peter Thompson, Biodiversity Officer at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (formerly the Game Conservancy), will give an illustrated talk on farming, wildlife and conservation in Hampshire.

Full details will be sent out in the New Year but, meanwhile, please note this date in your diary now. Do come along – and why not think about joining the committee?

Woodland talk follows 2011 AGM

The Society's 21st AGM was held on Tuesday 22nd March 2011. Some 30 members were joined by Winchester City Councillor (now Mayor) Barry Lipscomb at a new venue at Upper Cranbourne Farm, Sutton Scotney.

In his statement for the year the Chairman summarised the campaign against the proposed development of Black Wood urging members to attend the Planning Committee meeting in Winchester Guildhall on April 21st.

The President, Professor Khalid Aziz, gave an address in which he speculated on what the result of the forthcoming General Election might mean for the English countryside. He feared that a head of steam was building in favour of new developments, and urged the Society to attract new members to help build up its funds and moral authority.

Following the formal business a fascinating illustrated talk entitled *Our Woodland Heritage* was given by Ted Green MBE of the Ancient Tree Forum.

Black Wood – holiday cabins agreed

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As before, the Dever Society worked with Micheldever Parish Council and our local city councillors to oppose the scheme, but sadly this time we were unsuccessful.

Dever Society Vice-Chairman Tessa Robertson, told the Committee, “Our simple message is that it is not acceptable for one of the last publicly accessible, small but precious pieces of woodland in an area of mid-Hampshire classified by the Local Plan as ‘countryside’, to be turned into a log-cabin hotel.”

This much-loved, peaceful and tranquil local asset is used by many people for horseriding, walking and cycling. Forest Holidays has made a commitment that current public access will be maintained, but there is concern from many people that certain types of activity such as horseriding, mountain bike training and walking dogs off the lead will prove incompatible with the needs of the resident holidaymakers, and will be banned. The Dever Society has raised this concern with our local councillors and with the City Council.

The Dever Society is also concerned that the approval of the scheme is an invitation to Forest Holidays to apply for more cabins. We believe that once the principle of development is established it will be impossible to stop this scheme increasing in size, as is happening at Forest Holidays’ other locations in the UK.



The Dever Society has set up an easy way to make small donations by text message, using Vodafone’s new *JustTextGiving* service.

To make a donation, simply key in the message DEVE21, followed by the actual amount that you want to give. Donations can only be in set amounts of £1, £2, £3, £4, £5, or £10 – so, to donate £10, you’d key in DEVE21 £10 and then text your message to 70070.

Your donation will be deducted from your pay-as-you-go credit, or added to your mobile phone bill. You won’t pay any VAT on the amount that you’ve given and, because this is a free service from Vodafone, the Society will receive every penny of your gift.

After making your donation, you’ll get a text reply explaining how you can add Gift Aid at no extra cost.

History Society update

The Dever Valley Local History Society arranges about six popular evening talks a year on aspects of local history, in one of the village halls, with refreshment.

It also arranges summer visits – this year a walk along the tow path of the historic Itchen Navigation guided by Terry Gould, and a guided tour of the excavations at Magdalen Hill, Winchester, the site of the former medieval hospital and almshouse of St Mary Magdalen.

Other recent events have included an illustrated talk on the fascinating historic objects found at East Stratton, on a metal detecting day in March 2011. There is no membership charge, and entry for talks is normally £3.

- *Anyone who wishes to be added to the mailing list for event notices should e-mail Hugh Sandars – hugh@sandars.org.uk – or ring 01962 774220.*

Secretary of State dismisses Barton Farm appeal

Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, has dismissed the appeal by Cala Homes to build 2,000 new homes at Barton Farm in Winchester.

The Government has stated that one of its key planning priorities is to return decision-making powers in housing to local authorities. The Secretary of State therefore took the view that allowing such a large housing scheme now would undermine the work being carried out by Winchester City Council to establish a new bottom-up housing strategy (the *Blueprint* process).

Cllr George Beckett, Leader of the City Council commented, “While the Secretary of State has commended our approach, he has set Winchester the challenge of making the difficult decisions on necessary growth at a local level.”



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Executive Committee: James Drewer, Hugh Sandars

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