

# FARNHAM'S NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Newsletter - Farnham Town Council – Spring/Summer 2015

## STATUTORY CONSULTEES

The Town Council has consulted with statutory consultees such as Natural England, Surrey Highways, Surrey Education, Thames Water and South East Water throughout the development of the NP. The team is also in the process of consulting with local GPs.

Following the regulation 14 consultation, the statutory consultees were asked if there would be provision and/or ability for services to cope with the additional number of people in specific areas of the town, as a result of the proposed site allocations. This information will be used to inform the submission draft of the plan.

## New to neighbourhood planning?

Visit [www.farnham.gov.uk/shapefarnham](http://www.farnham.gov.uk/shapefarnham) for more information.



*“The consultation was a huge success. The public feedback will be used to determine changes to the plan and the discussions with statutory bodies will help to ensure that plan is robust and evidence based, which is key for when we get to examination.”*

*– Councillor Carole Cockburn,  
Lead Member, Infrastructure  
Planning Group 2014/15*

## Dealing with constraints: SANG

Farnham is constrained by two Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Thames Basin Heaths and Wealden Heaths. These areas of heathland, SPAs, are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species. Farnham is especially restricted by an area called the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection area (TBH SPA). This area sits behind the Sandy Hill area in Upper Hale.

The Thames Basin Heath is one of the South East's most important natural assets with the lowland heath supporting important populations of vulnerable ground-nesting birds that are sensitive to visitors, such as the Dartford Warbler, Nightjar and Woodlark.

Because of the buffer zones that surround SPAs, any new housing development in Farnham must provide sufficient alternative green space. A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) is a green open space provided and managed, to offer the community an attractive alternative place to visit, to alleviate the harmful effects of new development on the Special Protection Areas.

The most recent advice from Natural England is that in order for the Neighbourhood Plan to be acceptable and deliverable at submission, the plan needs to ensure SANG availability for all the allocated sites in the plan and describe where this is to be provided.

Waverley Borough Council has commissioned a report on SANG provision in Farnham as part of their ongoing work on the Local Plan. This report is understood to have been completed, but it has not yet been published by Waverley or made available to FTC.

At the Town Council's meeting with Natural England, IPG were advised that some landowners had provisionally shown an interest in making their land available for SANG. Farnham Town Council, as part of their work in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan, decided to take a more leading role in facilitating discussions between landowners, in order to allocate SANG provision in the Neighbourhood Plan. Without SANG provision being allocated, the Draft Plan cannot be submitted. This work was ongoing at May 2015.

## What happens next?

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In order to allocate any housing sites, including brownfield, further meetings need to take place with landowners, Natural England and Waverley Borough Council to arrange SANG land to support the housing proposals. If you have any questions in relation to the progress of the plan, updates are available online at [www.farnham.gov.uk/shapefarnham](http://www.farnham.gov.uk/shapefarnham), email [neighbourhood.plan@farnham.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.plan@farnham.gov.uk) or call 01252 712667.

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# The Neighbourhood Plan Lifecycle

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