

Agenda HRA Committee Meeting Tuesday 8 September 2026
Highfield Church Halls 19:00h



- Annex.i. Portswood Project Timeline (5.a.)
- Annex.ii. University Report incl. Gower Car Park (to follow) (7.a)
- Annex.iii. HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group (8.a.)
- Annex.iv. Update on effectiveness of the Dispersal Order Portswood High Street (8.b.)
- Annex.v. Minutes of the PACT Meeting 12/12/26 (8.c.)
- Annex. vi. An executive summary of the National Planning Policy Framework document (Aug 2026) (9.b.)
- Annex.vii. Rt Hon Matthew Pennycook MP Letter to All Local Authority Leaders and Metro Mayors in England (9.b.)

Prof. Roger Brown will chair the meeting

1. Welcome:

2. Apologies: Barbara Claridge, Paul Beard, Sharon Burgess (OARA), Stephen Connolly

3. Declarations of interest:

4. Minutes

- a. July 2026 Committee Meeting circulated in advance:

5. Matters Arising, not covered elsewhere

- a. Update on Council plans for Portswood District Centre

(Also Annex.i. Timeline, confirmed by Greg Churcher)

- b. Art for Art's Sake Report

In previous years the exhibition ran over 3 days and there were many lulls in footfall. This time it was very busy almost the whole time and most people sold more items in two days than in the previous 3-day exhibitions.

Martin and I multi-tasked between selling our cards etc, welcoming people and explaining the layout and in Martin's case, served tea at one point.

There had been a worrying time before the event about people attending. This had been our first time of organising such a big event and we tried to ensure that it was a community-social event with the artwork etc as a back drop. We achieved that and felt very happy....

The support given by HRA was incredibly helpful in paying for the brochure entry, helping so much with online publicity and Ken's expertise with branding really lifted the event.

Christine Benning

c. Following the note in the Minutes of 14 July, Item 10.a. Planning, the Hon Sec contacted the HMO Department. It was confirmed that a Planning ELDC for Change of Use to an HMO would not be issued if there had been any break of the property NOT being an HMO within those 10 years. This had relevance to several recent ELDC applications.

6. Information Reports from Councillors

- a. Councillor Barbour, Portswood
- b. Councillor Savage, Portswood
- c. Councillor Foster, Portswood
- d. Councillor Walsh, Swaythling

7. University

- a. University Report including University plans for the Gower Car Park and the End of Term Waste Collection (G Giles, Annex.ii.)
- b. SUSU

8. Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group Report

- a. Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group Report (Annex.iii.)
- b. Update on effectiveness of the Dispersal Order Portswood High Street (Annex.iv. Report Nadine)
- c. Minutes of the PACT Meeting 12/08/26 (Annex.v)
- d. PSPO for the Common – information from Lead Ranger

To start with, the general SCC policy has allowed people to have BBQs on our sites, including disposables- with the caveat that they must be raised to not cause damage, that is until the recent temporary ban - this has been reflected and updated on our website [Barbecues \(BBQs\) in parks](#) . There has been official signage around the Common for many weeks to highlight the risk of grass fires but on Friday we removed these and instead installed clear 'No BBQs and No Fires' signage across the Common. Alongside this, an emergency message was issued and a temporary ban on disposable BBQs has been put in place due to the current conditions and heightened fire risk.

We are hopeful that the combination of clear signage, public messaging and the temporary restrictions will have a significant impact on reducing BBQ use and the associated fire risk on the Common. Even before this recent ban there has been a noticeable reduction in BBQs on the Common over the last couple of weeks.

We are also exploring the introduction of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), which would allow for more straightforward enforcement of restrictions in the future. Please note that this process would take some time to implement, but I'm hopeful it could be in place for next BBQ season.

In response to your question about what action members of the public can take, we would advise that they do not approach individuals/groups having BBQs or lighting fires and instead prioritise their own safety. If anyone observes a fire, or a smouldering fire pit (most likely in the woods), they should contact the Fire Brigade so they can come and put it out.

We will continue to monitor the situation closely and engage with visitors where necessary to reinforce the message and help protect the Common.

In terms of enforcement, I'm not sure yet. The PSPO process is being worked on by higher management whilst taking advice from our legal team. An Environmental Protection Enforcement team has been contracted for 12 months starting from September, I am hopeful that this team will also be able to enforce PSPO rules on the Common in regard to BBQs next year, assuming the PSPO is in place then.

Dawn Bannatyne 26 August 2026

9. Planning

- a. New Local Plan - Ref: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning/planning-policy/emerging-plans/city-vision/notice-of-intention-to-commence/>
- b. National Planning Policy Framework: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a8334c03bd75b81e2329ac4/National_Planning_Policy_Framework.pdf (Summary details Annex.vi.)

Rt Hon Matthew Pennycook MP Letter to All Local Authority Leaders and Metro Mayors in England See (Annex.vii.)

10. Reports

a. **Finance** – income/expenditure for the last period. Current Account Balance; High Interest Account Balance; HRA@50 Donations

b. **Membership** - 346 members recorded on the Database. Members by month: Jan = 30; Feb = 9; March = 47; April = 78; May = 23; June = 10; July 28; Aug 11 = 236 paid up members to date in 2026.
Aug payments – no cash, 5 cheques, 5 BACS

Not paid - Jan = 8; Feb = 7; March = 12; April = 15; May = 11; June = 6; July = 6; Aug = 3

A total of 68 member households have not rejoined in 2026

c. Digital Communications Report

Facebook/Website

There are now 1,325 followers on the HRA Facebook page. An increase of 23 since the meeting of 14 July 2026. Thank you to Ken, Barbara and one other HRA member for photos and to Barbara and miscellaneous others for news items.

New HRA Member Discount

Quick Click Repairs in Unit 18 (Unity 12) 9-19 Rose Road are giving HRA Members a 10% discount on all repairs (on computers, laptops, consoles, soldering of PCBs, data recovery) See more on: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/benefits/>

eNews emailed to members

There have been two eNews - on 18 July and on 15 August.

Facebook / Website / eNews emailed to members

11. A.O.B.

a. HRA Community Speedwatch - I am pursuing the formation of the HRA Community Speedwatch Group. I have 9 volunteers so far (we need 6 to begin) of these, 4 are trained. I am waiting for training information for the other 5 and the name of our local PCSO who looks after Speedwatch Groups. Because we have a willing co-ordinator (Simon Fidler) and the fact that the 20mph is to be rolled out across a wider Highfield later this year, it would be advantageous to have the group ready. As yet I don't know how often the group would need to check roads / speeds but with more members it shouldn't be too onerous on any individual.

The roads where I have nominated to begin are: Highfield Lane, Church Lane and Brookvale Road.

We have to have an official starter kit although volunteers might have additional high viz clothing. I would hope HRA could purchase the slightly more expensive kit with the superior speed gun (Rb and MB have the details). I would not purchase until everything was approved and ready with both the police and HRA.

b. Autumn Newsletter: The majority of Street Reps have signed up for which I am very grateful. I need two more volunteers to cover to following rounds: 1. Welbeck-Upper Grosvenor-Donnington Grove (138): 2. Upper Shaftesbury-rest of Welbeck (143).

Dates of the next meetings:

13 October – Committee Meeting and AGM Planning: 12 November AGM: 8 December Committee Meeting

Annex.i. Portswood Project Timeline

Project	Initial Engagement	Consultation Period	Next Steps (If Supported)
Safer Routes to School	Collaboration with Highfield CoE Infant School (Jan 2026)	Formal consultation phase (Oct 2026)	Design (Jul to Nov 2026) Delivery (Jan to Mar 2027)
20mph Extension	Prepare extension proposal (Feb 2026)	Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation (Apr 2026)	Final design and rollout (late 2026)
Highfield Active Travel Zone	Initial resident engagement on options (Feb to Mar 2026)	Formal consultation phase (Oct 2026)	Design (Jul to Nov 2026) Delivery (Jan to Mar 2027)
The Broadway	Preparing consultation (Apr to Jul 2026)	Consultation with businesses (Jul to Aug 2026), consultation with public (TBC)	To be confirmed depending on consultation feedback
Cycle Quietways	N/A	N/A	Lawn Road (Jun 2026) Priory Road south (Autumn 2026)

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/tcf/eastleigh-to-southampton-corridor/portswood-project/>

Annex.ii. University Report incl. Gower Car Park (To follow)

Annex.iii. HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group

1.Reported incidents since the last HRA Committee Meeting of 14 July 2026 - (66+)

There were 66+ reported incidents since the last HRA Committee Meeting on 14 July. An increase of 27 when compared to the previous period although this period covered 2 months not the usual one.

(i)Incidents in Portswood - (57+)

56 incidents were reported in Portswood Broadway between 14 July and 17 August - see attached table (Annex.iii.) This figure also includes those incidents collected immediately prior to the meeting of 14 July but not included in the report to that meeting*. 50 of these incidents were for street drinking / the encampments / abandoned street furniture and other street items.

*** Illegal e-scooters etc:** Two of the above incidents were for electric bike riding on the pavement where one person was almost run over. The person reporting said there were many such incidents occurring, too many for all to be reported in the Group.

One additional incident was reported on 2 September, not included in the attached table: an assault in the flats on Addis Square, opposite Al Barakah Superstores. A person was stabbed in the abdomen (1)

A Dispersal Order in Portswood High Street took place for 48 hours from the afternoon of 5 August to 3.04pm on 7 August. **Since then, there have only been 5 reported incidents.**

Note: Data on street drinkers / rough sleepers / street furniture / encampments was collected separately outside of the WhatsApp Group. Thank you to some HRA Committee Members and some members of the WhatsApp Group for their continued reporting.

(ii) Incidents outside Portswood - (9+)

- Potential for burning hazardous waste - house in Highfield. HRA was forwarded a copy of an email to Hampshire Fire & Rescue by a local resident and responded that he should also warn the police, Community Safety and the three Portswood Ward Councillors (details given) (1)
- Electrical box was making a high pitched noise by No 1 bus stop in the trees above the underpass. This was reported and an Engineer advised not to approach the green box (1);
- On 3/8/26, a Cyber Security incident affected the Beacon CRM system that Yellow Door uses to store information about supporters and donors. Beacon informed them that an unauthorised person had gained access to its systems using compromised credentials. More here: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/message-from-yellow-door-brookvale-road-re-a-cyber-security-incident-affecting-beacon-crm-on-3-august-2026-beacon-informed-us-that-an-unauthorised-person-had-gained-access-to-its-system/>
- Lots of discarded litter at the end of Russell Place and rubbish not disposed of correctly and blowing across the road at 7/7a and 3 Brookvale Road. These are regular incidents. Reported to 'street cleaning' (2+);
- Two men removed wing mirrors from a parked car in a driveway in [Crofton Close](#) (1);
- Attempted break-in of a house in Nile Road. The garden gate (heftily secured) was broken across the top. Nothing taken and no evidence they went inside (1);
- Drug dealing in the alleyway between Church Lane and Highfield Crescent (1);

- Police report received from OARA from a person who was approached by an unknown female who claimed to be a victim of domestic abuse and residing in a safe house and in need of assistance. This was a scam. She used false identities, including claims to be a social worker and police officer (1).

It is understood that the above incidents, except where stated, were reported to the relevant authorities, i.e. the Police and/or Community Safety.

All crime and anti-social behaviour incidents are listed here: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/crime-incidents/>

2. Beat Surgery: Portswood Broadway 11am, Monday 17 August

Several members of the Crime Information Sharing WhatsApp Group tried to find the above. One was unsuccessful and the other said that "It was tucked away under the Victory Gospel Church Building in the shadows". I wrote to PC Adam O'Neill on 18 August expressing our disappointment at the lack of visibility and accessibility of the location and also that the precise details of the location in Portswood Broadway were not mentioned in the Hampshire Alert (Hampshire and IOW Constabulary) email where it was publicised. The main points of PC Adam's response are here for which I thanked him:

<https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/main-points-in-the-response-received-from-the-local-portswood-police-about-the-location-of-the-beat-surgery-in-portswood-broadway-at-11am-on-monday-17-august-2026/>

3. Important communications from the Police on protest activity

We received information from the police that a protest would be held at the Highfield House Hotel on Friday 28 August. This was posted on the website in the usual way on our dedicated page set up under 'Hot Topics' on the About Us (home page) for important communications from the Police. Here is the link: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/important-police-communications/>

These police communications also continue to be posted on the News/Events page of the website: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/news/>

4. Reporting anti-social behaviour: which authority to use

Barbara and I have updated this key document: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/reporting-anti-social-behaviour-which-authority-to-use/>

*Nadine Johnson
Digital Communications*

Annex.iv. Incidents in Portswood Broadway from 16 June to 23 August 2026

(It is understood that all incidents were reported to the relevant authorities i.e. Community Safety and/or the Police)

Date)	Location in Portswood Broadway	Incident	No of incidents / reports
16 June to 11 July	Seating/decking area and immediately outside former Flagship Coffee House	Street drinkers / street people plus abandoned street furniture	Four
16 June to 11 July	Sheltered area outside former Farm Foods / Broadway Bar (former Portswood Shopping Centre)	Large number of street drinkers / street people plus encampment (bedding, corner sofa/bed, other abandoned street furniture, a bike, trolleys full of stuff)	Twenty-one
16 June to 11 July	Outside former Juice'c Juice	Abandoned street furniture	Two
16 June to 11 July	Outside October Books	Abandoned trolley full of stuff	One
16 June to 11 July	Outside Piri Piri	Abandoned wooden pallets	One
16 June to 11 July	Portswood Broadway and lower Brookvale Road	Prolific littering	One Street cleaning team contacted
12 July to 20 July	Outside former Portswood Shopping Centre (PSC)	Large numbers of street drinkers/street people plus encampment (bedding, corner sofa/bad, other abandoned street furniture, 2 adult bikes, trolleys full of stuff and now joined by a motorbike)	Six
14 July	Outside former PSC	Man urinating against wall in full view near to encampment	One
15 July	Seating outside Trago Lounge	Two street drinkers plus trolleys full of stuff	One
17 July	Seating/decking outside the former Flagship Coffee	Two street drinkers, one begging	One
19 July	On the pavement outside Sainsbury's	A young man riding on an electric bike with wide tyres	One
19 July	Coffee#1	Reported problems of street drinkers / street people from the encampment using their toilet	More than one
20 July	Outside former PSC	Encampment cleared!	0
22 July	Outside former PSC	New graffiti on hoarding	One
23 and 28 July	Outside former Juice'c Juice	Build-up of abandoned street furniture and other stuff	Two
23 July	On pavement in Portswood	Several electric bikes with fat wheels, one nearly knocked down a pedestrian	One

23 July to 5 August	Sheltered area of PSC outside former Cancer Research Shop/Atlantic Cleaners and closer to the Victory Gospel Church than the previous encampment	A growing encampment, getting bigger and more populated with street drinkers / street people plus abandoned street furniture (mattress, bike, suitcase, lots of trolley etc stuff)	Six
3 August	Portswood Road	Drug taking activity captured on CCTV. No attempt to hide drug taking. Lots of discarded litter	One
Afternoon of 5 August to 3.04pm on 7 August	48 hour Dispersal Order Portswood High Street		
6 August	Outside former Cancer Research Shop/Atlantic Cleaners (former PSC)	Encampment completely cleared of people and items	0
6 August	Outside former Cancer Research Shop/Atlantic Cleaners (former PSC)	8 street drinkers plus some belongings returned after the above!	One
8 August	In seating/decking area outside former Flagship Coffee House	4-5 street drinkers	One
11 August	Outside Trago Lounge (closed for refurbishment)	One rough sleeper	One
17 August	On the wall outside Waitrose	Three people drug taking/possible drug trafficking?	One

Annex.v. Minutes PACT Meeting 12/08/26

Meeting Title:	PACT meeting
Date:	12/08/26
Time:	18:30
Location:	St Deny's Community Centre

Attendees: 1 MOP Staff: Francesca Prior – SCC Malkeat Singh – SCC PC Adam O'Neil – Police PC – Chloe Borr PCSO – Hannah Cllr Savage - SCC
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Apologies: Members of HRA Cllr Barbour – SCC Cllr Foster - SCC
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		Actions
	Introductions: Francesca chaired the meeting, introductions and confidently was discussed.	
	Police Dispersal order in Portswood – Discussed the reason for this, and the MOP – Petty crime is higher, low-level crime re sheds, bike theft, car break ins. Cllr Savage – BBQ's and fires on the common – On south side of the common, bonfires and firefighters – It was reported to Cllr Savage, Police attended and the Police apparently advised the fire should be put out safely.	
3.	Community concerns MOP. Are there recurrent issues in the community centre grounds? POLICE – No it's all quite quiet and don't get called down here that often. ACTIONS – no actions Date of the next meeting: TBC	

Annex.vi. Executive Summary of the National Planning Policy Framework document (Aug 2026):

Core Purpose

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the UK Government's planning policies for plan-making and decision-making in England. The primary purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, balancing economic, social, and environmental objectives.

Key Structural and Procedural Policies

- * Plan-Making System: Emphasises a plan-led system where up-to-date plans direct growth, climate adaptation, and environmental protection.
- * Spatial Development Strategies: Prepared at a sub-regional scale covering a minimum 25-year growth vision, including broad growth locations and strategic infrastructure provision.
- * Local Plans: Local planning authorities must prepare local plans for a period of no less than 10 years, which are to be prepared and adopted within 30 months of publishing a Gateway 1 self-assessment.
- * Decision-Making: Requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Delivering Homes and Economic Growth

- * Housing Delivery: Authorities must assess housing needs using the standard method and maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites with an appropriate buffer.
- * Affordable Housing and Specific Needs: Plans must set requirements for affordable housing (including Social Rent) and address specialist accommodation for groups such as older people, disabled people, and travellers.
- * Economic Support: Prioritises business investment, modern industrial strategies, data-driven industries, freight, logistics, and rural business diversification.
- * Town Centres: Prioritises town centres for main town centre uses, enforcing a sequential test for proposals outside existing centres.

Land Use, Green Belt, and Environment

- * Effective Land Use: Encourages previously developed (brownfield) land use, urban airspace developments, and minimum density standards (at least 35 dwellings per hectare near well-connected stations).
- * Green Belt: Preserves Green Belt openness and permanence. Boundary alterations require exceptional circumstances, with priority given to previously developed land and "grey belt" land. Specific "Golden Rules" apply to major housing development in released or application-based Green Belt land.
- * Climate and Infrastructure: Sets policies for net zero transitions, climate adaptation, flood risk management, clean energy, telecommunications, and sustainable minerals extraction.

***Note:** AI Generated using Googel Gemini*

National Planning Policy Framework (published August 2026)

Contents

1. Introduction

Procedural policies

2. Plan-making policies

3. Decision-making policies

Sustainable development

4. Achieving sustainable development

5. Meeting the challenge of climate change

Delivering homes and supporting growth

6. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

7. Building a strong, effective economy

8. Ensuring the vitality of town centres

9. Supporting high quality communications

10. Securing clean energy and water

11. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Creating high quality, sustainable places

12. Making effective use of land

13. Protecting Green Belt land

14. Achieving well-designed places

15. Promoting sustainable transport

16. Promoting healthy communities

17. Pollution, public protection and security

Conserving and enhancing the environment

18. Managing flood risk and coastal change

19. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

20. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a8334c03bd75b81e2329ac4/National_Planning_Policy_Framework.pdf

Annex.vii. Rt Hon Matthew Pennycook MP Letter to All Local Authority Leaders and Metro Mayors in England

Rt Hon Matthew Pennycook MP

Minister of State for Housing and Planning

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

To: All Local Authority Leaders and Metro Mayors
in England

Cc: All Local Authority Chief Executives and
Combined Authority Chief Executives in England

17 August 2026

Dear Leaders,

CREATING A CLEAR, RULES-BASED PLANNING SYSTEM

As you know, this government has acted with ambition and urgency in response to the acute and entrenched housing crisis that we inherited, including by means of a bold overhaul of the planning system. In December 2024, we revised the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), reversing the previous government's anti-supply changes, implementing a new standard method aligned to our more ambitious national housing target, and releasing more land into the system through a modernised, strategic approach to green-belt land designation and release.

In December 2025, our landmark Planning and Infrastructure Act received Royal Assent, and we launched a consultation on a fuller and more definitive overhaul of the NPPF. This wholly restructured Framework built on the initial revisions we made in December 2024, included a range of new measures to support key economic sectors, and incorporated new clear and rules-based national policies for the making of both plans and decisions.

Following extensive engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and detailed analysis of responses to the consultation undertaken between 16 December 2025 and 10 March 2026, we are today publishing a new NPPF and the government response to that consultation. You can find the full response and new NPPF on gov.uk [here](#), but key changes made following consultation are summarised below.

Alongside the NPPF, we are also announcing wider reforms to speed up the planning system and make it more certain. This includes publishing the response to the recent government consultation on reforms to the statutory consultee system and publishing Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results for 2024 and 2025.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

The new NPPF confirms reforms to make planning policy easier to use, underpin the development of faster and simpler local plans, and provide a clearer basis for decision-making. This includes separating policies for plan-making and decision-making. In order to ensure that these changes make an immediate difference, the decision-making policies will come into effect from today.

Many of the reforms reflect the positions set out in December, but I have summarised the key changes since the consultation below:

1. **Clarifying policies throughout the Framework:** including setting out more clearly the respective roles of different types of plans and what needs to be considered in decision-making (e.g. how transport impacts, pollution, heritage, protected landscapes and safety for women and girls should be reflected in planning decisions).
2. **Increasing the ambition of the 'default yes' for development around well-connected stations:** expanding the scope of the policy to the top 80 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) by Gross Value Added, as opposed to the top 60 TTWAs proposed in the consultation.
3. **Updating policies to support increased densities:** supporting more types of development within the curtilage of residential properties and ensuring that extra floorspace rather than just extra units are supported – giving more flexibility to expand accommodation of all types.
4. **Tailoring minimum densities to maximise overall supply:** by adjusting our approach to minimum densities around rail stations and ensuring local areas maximise densities where they can be supported, we have maintained an ambitious approach, while avoiding unviable requirements in areas that cannot support them.
5. **Requiring flexibility when applying parking standards to large retail and similar redevelopment schemes:** making it easier to regenerate sites.
6. **Recognising the role of strategic sites:** by creating a consistent and distinct category of sites comprising around 1,500 units or more, with policies tailored to support them where relevant.
7. **Revising policy on local standards:** by maintaining that quantitative standards in development plans should be limited to matters where local variation is justified and setting out clearly the circumstances in which local standards for energy efficiency and internal layout may be justified.
8. **Providing clearer support for telecommunications development:** ensuring schemes can come forward in appropriate locations, including where this can improve connectivity for rail users.
9. **Updating policies which safeguard against the loss of facilities:** ensuring that key facilities such as public houses are not lost where that can reasonably be avoided.
10. **Strengthening policy on Protected Landscapes:** reinserting text to make clear that major development should be refused other than in exceptional cases. Landscape and scenic beauty in Protected Landscapes will also remain protected by statute.

Statutory Consultee Reforms

Alongside the new NPPF, the government is also publishing its response to the consultation on reforms to the statutory consultee system. As you know, statutory consultees play an important role in the planning process by providing expert advice on matters ranging from transport and heritage to the environment and sport. However, where referrals are unnecessary or advice is delayed, the system can slow decision-making and hold back the delivery of homes and growth.

That is why, in November 2025, we launched a consultation on reforms designed to ensure that statutory consultees provide timely, proportionate and relevant advice on planning applications. Following careful consideration of more than 1,600 consultation responses, today the government is publishing its response and setting out a package of reforms that will streamline consultation requirements while maintaining important safeguards.

The response to the consultation confirms that Sport England will be retained as a statutory consultee, but the range of planning applications on which it must be consulted will be narrowed to ensure their advice is focused on the cases where they add most value. The statutory consultee status of The Gardens Trust and Theatres Trust is being removed, while a new notification requirement is being introduced to ensure these bodies can continue their important role in the planning process. We are proceeding with the proposals on which we consulted to reform four of the national statutory consultees that receive the highest volume of planning applications: Active Travel England, National Highways, Historic England, and the Mining Remediation Authority.

We are also maintaining the current moratorium on the creation of new statutory consultees, ensuring that the planning system remains targeted, proportionate and focused on supporting growth. Together, these reforms will reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, help local planning authorities reach decisions more quickly, and ensure statutory consultees can focus their expertise on the proposals that matter most. You can find the full government response and details of the reforms [here](#).

Housing Delivery Test (HDT) Results

Alongside the new NPPF, the government has also published the 2024 and 2025 Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results. This combined publication is to help support the HDT return to a regular publication timetable and ensure that scores reflect the most up-to-date information on housing delivery. The 2025 HDT results, which can be found on gov.uk [here](#), will be used for the purposes of decision making. Alongside these results, the government has also published a revised HDT Rule Book, which can be found [here](#).

This suite of reforms represent a significant moment of change to national policy; however, there will be more to do in the coming months as we continue to modernise the planning system through a range of activities including updating relevant Planning Practice Guidance, implementing the measures from the Planning and Infrastructure Act, and continuing to support local authorities' capacity & capability.

I would like to thank you for continuing to work alongside government as we deliver the reforms needed to tackle our national housing emergency and generate the sustained economic growth needed to improve the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people in all areas. It is only by working together to make the best use of these changes that we will deliver the homes, jobs and improved living standards we owe to those we serve.

Best wishes,

RT HON MATTHEW PENNYCOOK MP

Minister of State for Housing and Planning