

Have your say on how we protect and improve Cannock Chase

A partnership that works to protect the habitats of Cannock Chase from accidental damage caused by visitors is seeking views on its plans for how this internationally important landscape will be protected in the future.

Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Partnership includes local authorities, statutory agencies, wildlife conservation organisations and landowners, who work together to ensure Cannock Chase continues to improve both as a home for nature and a place people can enjoy.

The partnership is now consulting on two plans that set out how it will improve the infrastructure at Cannock Chase, including the car parks, footpaths and visitor centres. They also look at how to raise awareness of the vital role visitors can play in protecting this special area.

Glenn Watson, the Chair of the SAC Partnership, said: “2.4 million people visit Cannock Chase every year. With increased housing development and a growing population, the number of people visiting Cannock Chase is expected to go up by 15 to 20 percent by 2026.”

“Our two plans set out how we can make sure there will be space for everyone to continue to enjoy the open air and natural beauty of Cannock Chase, without hurting its protected habitats and species.”

“I hope everyone who enjoys living by or visiting this stunning landscape will take the time to read through the plans and give us their views.”

Money has already been collected from developers of new housing developments that are built near Cannock Chase. This will be used to fund improvements to the Chase’s visitor infrastructure, provide better information, and work with visitors and landowners to help protect the site.

“Once we’ve finalised these plans we are all excited to start delivering these improvements to Cannock Chase’s visitor infrastructure from early 2020 onwards,” added Glenn.

The consultation will run from **21 October to 29 November 2019**.

To read the plans and other relevant documents, please visit the consultation website at www.haveyoursaycannockchase.org.uk

Reference copies of the plans are also available in the reception of:

- **Stafford Borough Council** at Riverside, Civic Centre, Stafford ST16 3AQ
- **East Staffordshire Borough Council** at The Town Hall, King Edward Place, Burton upon Trent DE14 2EB
- **South Staffordshire District Council** at Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, South Staffordshire, WV8 1PX
- **Lichfield District Council** at Frog Ln, Lichfield WS13 6HS

- **Cannock Chase District Council** at Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, Staffs WS11 1BG
- **The City of Wolverhampton Council** at Civic Centre, St Peters Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SH
- **Staffordshire County Council** at 1 Staffordshire Place, Stafford, ST16 2DH

To discuss the plans, please call the Cannock Chase SAC team on: 07800619650 or 07800619636.

Cannock Chase SAC Partnership includes: Stafford Borough Council, Cannock Chase District Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire District Council, East Staffordshire District Council, the City of Wolverhampton Council, Staffordshire County Council, Natural England, Forestry England, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, National Trust, RSPB and Cannock Chase AONB.

Ends

Additional information

The large heathland landscapes of Cannock Chase were designated as a Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) in 2005. This is the highest level of legal designation for habitats and species that an area can have in the England. The landowners of the SAC must, by law, look after and protect its habitats and wildlife. These habitats are among the most sensitive parts of Cannock Chase and need to be carefully managed to ensure they survive for future generations. Currently the SAC is suffering whilst facing a number of pressures.

Developer contributions have been collected from developments which will result in new housing within 8km of Cannock Chase to pay for better visitor management across the Chase to ensure that future visitor growth will not cause accidental harm to the SAC

The ideas explored within the plan include:

Improving surfacing and signage of paths; improving public access to free environmental education; providing more information, interpretation and waymarked trails; increasing online engagement and resources; methods for tackling dog mess and fly-tipping; improvements to car parks and increasing the total number of parking spaces and changes to parking locations; better visitor facilities at all the visitor centres.