

STANDING ROOM ONLY AT TIPTOE MEETING!

Over 100 people attended a meeting at the Young Farmers Club in Tiptoe last evening (29/9/08) to discuss the New Forest National Park Authority Draft Consultation Plan and in particular, the strategy of the NPA's consultation process. The meeting was primarily for Tiptoe residents to voice their concerns for the first time, but was also attended by residents of Sway and surrounding areas together with other organisations and local Councillors.

The points raised were many and varied but one major concern was that the NPA has to date shown a perceived arrogance and unwillingness to engage with the public on the Draft Consultation Plan and that the consultation process of 'stakeholder workshops' was not as robust as it should have been. The draft plan was published in the height of the summer holidays so it was only mid-September before people could obtain copies and digest the information. With only one month of the consultation process remaining, this leaves little time to make informed decisions on how to formally respond.

There was overwhelming agreement that organisations and residents of the New Forest should merge as ONE VOICE to lobby the NPA for: -

- An extension to the cut-off date of 31 October 2008 to allow due process of responses.
- To accommodate a series of open and transparent public meetings at accessible venues, outside of working hours; facilitated by NPA members who are conversant with the consultation draft and the consultation process. These meetings should also be appropriately publicised in local newspapers by the NPA.

The second part of the meeting was for Tiptoe residents to discuss the implications of the unprecedented planning application for a 25-metre wind turbine at Brockhills Farm.

If you wish to get involved in lobbying the NPA or would like an information pack from the meeting, please email Sue Baillie on onevoice@officeoverload.com or telephone 01425 621889.