

## DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

1 December 2017

**HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST (HOTSW) JOINT COMMITTEE**Report of the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)Recommendations: **That the Authority:**

- (i) **Approve the recommendation of the HotSW Leaders (meeting as a shadow Joint Committee) to form a Joint Committee for the Heart of the South West;**
- (ii) **Approve the Arrangements and Inter-Authority Agreement documents set out in appendices A and B for the establishment of the Joint Committee with the commencement date of Monday 22 January 2018;**
- (iii) **Appoint two Members to serve as the Authority's representative and substitute named representative on the Joint Committee;**
- (iv) **Agree to the appointment of Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority for the Joint Committee for a 2 year period commencing 22 January 2018;**
- (v) **Approve the transfer of the remaining joint devolution budget to meet the support costs of the Joint Committee for the remainder of 2017/18 financial year subject to approval of any expenditure by the Administering Authority;**
- (vi) **Approve an initial contribution of £1,400 for 2018/19 to fund the administration and the work programme of the Joint Committee;**
- (vii) **Agree that the key function of the Joint Committee is to approve the Productivity Strategy (it is intended to bring the Strategy to the Joint Committee for approval by February 2018);**
- (viii) **Authorise the initial work programme of the Joint Committee aimed at the successful delivery of the Productivity Strategy;**
- (ix) **Agree the proposed meeting arrangements for the Joint Committee including the timetable of meetings for the Joint Committee as set out below.**
- (x) **Comment on the draft response to the Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy and authorise the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) in consultation with the Chairman to submit a joint response (with Exmoor National Park Authority) to the consultation.**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 Since August 2015, Devon and Somerset County Councils, all Somerset and Devon Districts, Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the three Clinical Commissioning Groups, Exmoor National Park Authority

(ENPA) have worked in partnership to progress towards securing a devolution deal for the Heart of the South West (HotSW) area focusing on delivering improved productivity. There have been significant changes at central government level since August 2015 but the 'informal partnership' has continued to progress its objectives.

- 1.2 Members agreed, in principle, to the establishment of a formal Joint Committee for the HoSW at the Authority meeting in April 2017 (NPA/17/015). This 'in principle' agreement was subject to further details about the role, governance and powers of the proposed Joint Committee. This report sets out the necessary documents which, if agreed, will enable the Joint Committee to be formally established.
- 1.3 On the 13 October 2017 representatives of HotSW (from the Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay upper tier authorities) met Jake Berry MP, Minister for Devolution to clarify the position of the Government and the HotSW Partnership on the devolution issue. The meeting was positive and although no agreements were reached at the meeting, the partnership's representatives were given a clear message that the Government would welcome a bid from the partnership to progress our productivity ambitions by identifying areas where we can work together with Government. Importantly the Minister indicated that there would be no requirement to have an elected mayor for Devon and Somerset as a condition of any deal. This statement has removed one significant blockage to moving our ambitions forward and we now need to agree what we want from this initiative and then find practical ways to work with the Government on delivery.
- 1.4 There is now no doubt that the Government is keen to engage with wider areas that can demonstrate:
  - Unity, clarity of purpose and a shared, ambitious vision built on local strengths
  - Strong partnership between business and the public sector with solid governance arrangements that provide assurance in capacity to deliver
  - Compelling ideas that can help to deliver Government objectives
  - Clarity about the offer to Government in terms of savings and is prepared to take hard decisions based on a robust analysis of risk and benefits.

It is believed that the establishment and operation of a formal Joint Committee will provide an appropriate governance framework, at this stage, to take forward this dialogue with Government.

- 1.5 The key role of the HotSW Joint Committee will be to develop, agree and ensure the implementation of the Productivity Strategy (currently in draft). This can only be achieved by working, where appropriate, in collaboration with the individual constituent authorities and the LEP. The Strategy will agree a common vision for increased prosperity through economic growth informed by a local evidence base and engagement with local stakeholders. It will also link to Government policy initiatives, particularly in relation to the Industrial Strategy, and will form the basis for developing our collective 'ask' of Government.

## **2 HotSW Joint Committee Proposal**

- 2.1 The detail of the proposed functions of the Joint Committee and how it will operate are set out in appendix A and Appendix B sets out an Inter-Authority Agreement for

consideration which details how the Joint Committee will be supported and sets out the obligations of the Authority if it agrees to become a constituent member.

- 2.2 The documents detail the Administering Authority functions in support of the operation of the Committee including the provision of financial, legal, constitutional and administrative support to the Committee.
- 2.3 At this stage the Arrangements and Inter-Authority documents have been 'scaled' to fit the functions of the Joint Committee and the limited liabilities that each authority faces in signing up to be a Constituent Authority. In the event that the remit of the Joint Committee expands to take on more decision-making responsibilities and functions of the constituent authorities, the Arrangements and Inter-Authority agreement will be revisited to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and proportionate. Any expansion of the functions and responsibilities would require the approval of the Constituent Authorities.
- 2.4 The Joint Committee has a much more limited role than a Combined Authority. It does not have the statutory or legal status of a Combined Authority and cannot deliver the full range of benefits that a Combined Authority can, but it does have the potential to provide cohesive, coherent leadership and a formal governance structure. Its role will focus on collaboration, negotiation and influencing with full decision making responsibilities limited to developing and agreeing the Productivity Strategy. The principle of subsidiarity will apply to the relationship between the Joint Committee, the Constituent Authorities and local Sub-Regional Partnerships with decisions to deliver the Productivity Strategy, and decisions necessary as a result of the other functions of the Joint Committee, being taken at the most local and appropriate level.
- 2.5 The aim of the Joint Committee through the delivery of the Productivity Strategy will be to:
  - Improve the economic prosperity of the wider area by bringing together the public, private and education sectors;
  - Work together to realise opportunities and mitigate impacts resulting from Brexit;
  - Increase understanding of the local economy and what needs to be implemented locally to improve prosperity for all;
  - Ensure the necessary strategic framework, including infrastructure requirements, is in place across the HotSW area to enable sub-regional arrangements to fully deliver local aspirations; and improve the efficiency and productivity of the public sector. This work will be supported by a Joint Committee budget based on an agreed work programme.
- 2.6 It is believed that the creation of a single strategic public sector partnership covering the HotSW area will:
  - facilitate collaborative working;
  - provide a formal structure to engage with Government at a strategic level on major areas of policy.

The Joint Committee also has the potential to enable the Constituent Authorities and partners to have discussions with neighbouring Councils / Combined Authorities / LEPs on South West peninsula regarding shared priorities and issues. There is also

the potential to move swiftly towards a Combined Authority model in the future (by potentially acting as a shadow Combined Authority) if the conditions are deemed acceptable to the Constituent Authorities.

- 2.7 Critically, the Joint Committee will also provide a formal mechanism for the Constituent Authorities to engage effectively with the LEP across common boundaries and agendas. Neither Dartmoor nor Exmoor NPAs have any formal representation on the LEP and thus the establishment of a Joint Committee may assist in providing a mechanism to ensure our 'voice is heard'. The LEP, which will sit alongside the Joint Committee, has recently adopted new governance requirements to ensure greater transparency and accountability and wishes to further improve its democratic accountability in discussion with HotSW partners. The Joint Committee will provide a formal structure to take these discussions forward and for the Constituent Authorities to have greater influence over the activities of the LEP on our common agendas.
- 2.8 Although the Joint Committee is a cost-effective formal structure, some provision needs to be made to meet the support costs of what will be a fully constituted local authority joint committee. It is proposed that Somerset County Council (who have provided the lead for the governance workstream of the devolution project over the last two years) takes on the support role (with the option of rotating the role after 2 years of operation), to provide the financial, legal, democratic support to the Joint Committee from 22 January 2018.
- 2.9 There is currently the remainder of the joint devolution budget raised from an initial contribution from all Authorities and the LEP in 2015. It is recommended that the remaining funds from this budget - £42,000 - are transferred to the Administering Authority and the budget is used to support the costs of the Joint Committee for the remainder of 2017/18 financial year and for some of 2018/19.
- 2.10 In addition, the Joint Committee will need a budget to undertake its work programme in order to oversee the implementation of the Productivity Strategy. The overall budget required to support the Joint Committee and enable it to undertake its work programme will be dependent, to an extent, on the level of 'in-kind' officer resources provided to the Committee by the constituent authorities. The Administering Authority will review the in-kind support which has been provided for the devolution project in consultation with the constituent authorities and bring forward revised budget figures as part of a budget and cost sharing agreement as necessary in due course to the Joint Committee for consideration and recommendation to the Constituent Authorities. The budget figures set out in this report in paragraph 2.11 are therefore provisional at this stage. The initial Joint Committee work programme is set out in section 3 below for approval.
- 2.11 Through work undertaken by the partners it is estimated that the operating cost of a Joint Committee will be £89,000 in 2018/19 (and to cover the remainder of 2017/18) excluding any in-kind support. This estimate is made up of the following:
- £40,000 for the Administering Authority to undertake its duties. This is seen as a minimum cost and assumes that 'in-kind' officer resource remains in place at the same level; the Joint Committee meeting venues are provided by partners as 'in-kind' contribution
  - £25,000 (estimate) for work the Joint Committee would wish to commission

- £24,000 for the Brexit Resilience and Opportunities Group Secretariat.
- 2.12 The Shadow Joint Committee recommends the budget is met by contributions from the Constituent Authorities. This would exclude the LEP and the CCGs from contributing as non-voting partners. As stated above it is estimated there will be a funding carry forward of £42,000 from the 2015 devolution budget. This would leave a shortfall of £47,000 to meet the total estimated budget requirement of the Joint Committee in 2018/19. Using the formula of contributions agreed in 2015 to support the devolution project the contribution requested of each Constituent Authority for 2018/19 is set out below. This assumes that all authorities agree to become members of the Joint Committee and would have to be recalculated should fewer than 19 Authorities become Members.
- County Councils - £10,500
  - Unitary Councils - £4,000
  - District Councils and National Parks £1,400
- 2.13 Under this formula it is the Authority would pay a minimum of £1,400 towards the costs of the Joint Committee as a formal, voting member of the Committee. Any expenditure against this budget would be subject to the formal approval of the Administering Authority.
- 2.14 The Joint Committee's future budgetary arrangements shall be detailed in a budget and cost sharing agreement (*to be drafted*) to be agreed by all of the constituent authorities annually on the recommendation of the Joint Committee and in advance of the financial year.
- 2.15 In terms of the proposed meeting arrangements for the Joint Committee, it is recommended:
- a. That the Joint Committee should meet formally immediately after the LEP Board meetings to assist with engagement and co-operation between the bodies and allow co-ordination of the respective work programmes.
  - b. That the following dates are reserved for meetings of the Joint Committee in 2018:
    - Friday 26 January
    - Friday 23 March
    - Friday 25 May
    - Friday 20 July
    - Friday 28 September
    - Friday 30 November
  - c. That the Joint Committee meetings should start at 10am with the venues rotated throughout the HotSW area. The assumption will be that the host authority for that meeting will provide appropriate accommodation and facilities 'in kind'.

### **3 HotSW Productivity Plan and the Joint Committee Work Programme**

- 3.1 The Partnership has, since its inception, been focused on working together to tackle low productivity as this is seen as the key to future economic growth and is a key

priority for the Government. The academic research undertaken in the HotSW Green Paper on Productivity:

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/council/how-the-council-works/devolution/productivity-plan-green-paper/>

highlighted that whilst Devon and Somerset have one of the highest employment rates in the country too many of those jobs are part-time and low paid. This means that our area has one of the lowest productivity rates in the Country and this is a major barrier to future prosperity.

- 3.2 The Partnership has continued to lobby Government to work more closely with our area in order to make good on its promise to spread economic growth across the Country and we now need to build on the recent meeting of the Minister and the momentum achieved. This work is urgently needed to ensure that areas such as the Heart of the South West don't get left behind as Government look to focus investment in areas where there are strong, cross boundary strategic partnership arrangements such as the six Mayoral Combined Authorities.
- 3.3 The Productivity Strategy is being developed through an academic evidence base and engagement with stakeholders and the community. The draft plan is currently out to consultation (<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/devolution>).
- 3.4 In summary the Strategy proposes to deliver prosperity and productivity across the entire HotSW and to do so in an inclusive way. It proposes to build on existing strengths such as aerospace, advanced manufacturing, nuclear energy and agri-tech as well as exploiting new opportunities and releasing untapped potential. The Strategy is built around three key objectives:
  - Developing **leadership and knowledge** within businesses in our area;
  - Strengthening the **connectivity and infrastructure** our businesses and people rely on; and
  - Developing the ability of people in our area to **work and learn** in a rapidly changing economy.

	Leadership and knowledge	Connectivity and infrastructure	Working and learning
<b>Aspiration</b>	To substantially improve the productivity of businesses in the area.	Improve our physical and natural assets to support wellbeing and economic opportunities.	Meet the potential of every individual within the area to work and contribute to our shared prosperity.
<b>High-level aim</b>	Help develop innovative, ambitious, growing businesses that can compete internationally.	Create vibrant places that are attractive to skilled people and new investment, with infrastructure to support productivity growth.	Develop, attract and retain a highly skilled and adaptable workforce.
<b>Strategic objective</b>	<p><b>Programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management excellence</li> <li>• New markets, new opportunities</li> <li>• Remove barriers to expansion</li> <li>• Attract talent and investment</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean energy infrastructure</li> <li>• Connectivity and resilience</li> <li>• Land for business and housing needs</li> <li>• Natural capital to support productivity</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programmes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills for a knowledge-led economy</li> <li>• Pathways to success</li> <li>• Access to work and opportunities</li> <li>• Skills for our 'golden opportunities'</li> </ul>

3.5 It is recommended that one of the first tasks of the Joint Committee will be to approve the Productivity Strategy early in the New Year;

3.6 The Partnership has been meeting as a Shadow Joint Committee since 22 September 2017. Its focus is to ensure the Joint Committee can immediately move into action and take advantage of major funding streams, national policy debates and lobbying around the economy. The Partnership will be working with the LEP to deliver the Productivity Strategy and will be supporting a joint work programme which initially will involve:

- Developing and recommending a delivery and investment Framework, to implement the Productivity Strategy and demonstrating our capacity to deliver. This will complement the LEP's Strategic Investment Panel which oversees the LEP's investments;
- Investigating ways to complement existing work to draw out opportunities to attract infrastructure investment; deliver the skills agenda and strengthen leadership and knowledge within the area's SMEs;

3.7 Any Joint Committee expenditure on the joint work programme will be subject to approval by the Administering Authority.

#### **4. Draft Productivity Strategy for the Heart of the South West**

- 4.1 The Authority's draft response to the draft Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy is attached at Appendix C. The response has been prepared jointly with Exmoor National Park Authority. The consultation version of the Productivity Strategy can be accessed via: <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/devolution>

#### **5. Equality and Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 The Inter-Authority Agreement requires all Constituent Authorities to support, promote and discharge its duties under the Equality Act through the work of the Joint Committee. The Partnership is developing an Equality Impact Needs Assessment to inform the development of the Productivity Strategy. The Joint Committee will consider this assessment alongside the Productivity Strategy before adoption.
- 5.2 Our draft response to the Productivity Strategy emphasises the importance of addressing social mobility and ensuring that we have an inclusive approach to productivity and economic growth

#### **6. Financial considerations**

- 6.1 The costs associated with the early work on the Productivity Strategy preparation largely relate to officer time which is being provided 'in kind' by the authorities and partners. Specifically the LEP has met some direct costs.
- 6.2 The establishment of the Joint Committee provides a low cost option compared to a Combined Authority model of governance. As part of the Inter-Authority Agreement the assumption is that the Constituent Authorities will continue to provide in-kind support although this will be reviewed by the Administering Authority to ensure that the levels of support are appropriate, sustainable into the future and acceptable to the authorities providing the support. The direct running costs of the Joint Committee will be limited to providing officer support for the meetings, if there is insufficient 'in-house' capacity, and the costs of the meetings themselves. At this stage direct support costs will be kept to a minimum and for 2017/18 and some of 2018/19 will be covered by the residual joint devolution budget established in 2015.
- 6.3 In addition to the direct costs of administering the Joint Committee there is also the issue of a budget to fund its Work Programme. Further details of the provisional budget requirements are set out in section 2 above together with the proposed funding mechanism for contributions from individual Constituent Authorities.
- 6.4 The financial risk to the individual Constituent Authorities of establishing the Joint Committee is limited to their financial contributions to the running and operational costs of the Joint Committee. The risk is shared between all of the Constituent Authorities.



## **7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 It is clear that Government is looking for areas to come together and articulate their vision and priorities across footprints wider than their organisational boundary or sub-regional areas. Ministers have also been clear that they wish to see a formal mechanism and governance framework for joint working across local authority boundaries that involves the LEP. Whilst there is always the option of 'do nothing' this is not going to find favour with Government who have indicated that they prefer to work 'at scale' and are looking favourably at areas that have a unity of vision and purpose. The Joint Committee would appear to offer a low risk and cost option to formalise current joint working arrangements across the partners identified above.
- 7.2 The Authority's involvement to-date has principally been through the time input of officers. We have been able to use the informal partnership to influence and help shape the original prospectus for growth and the emerging productivity plan. The National Park is no longer seen as a 'barrier to growth' but as a potential economic and environmental asset. This has been achieved through engagement with the LEP and latterly the HoSW partnership. The Heart of the South West LEP took the lead on establishing a Rural Productivity Commission and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) for Exmoor sat on this body to represent the National Park interest. In a time of considerable uncertainty and potential opportunity it is important that we are able to influence frameworks that could have a significant impact on future funding, the economy and productivity of the HoSW and thus Dartmoor. The Productivity Strategy will replace the Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan. It will be the key strategic document for the partners to engage with Government and each other on a range of investment opportunities and powers emerging from the Industrial Strategy, Brexit and other policy opportunities.
- 7.3 It is recommended that the Authority formally supports the establishment of the Joint Committee and appoints a Member to sit on it and a further Member to act as a 'substitute'.
- 7.4 Members are asked to comment on the draft response to the Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy and authorise the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to submit a joint response with Exmoor National Park Authority.

KEVIN BISHOP

## Appendix A: HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST (HOTSW) JOINT COMMITTEE – DRAFT ARRANGEMENTS

### 1. Introduction:

- 1.1 Legal status: The HotSW Joint Committee is a Joint Committee of the local authorities listed in 1.5 below that comprise the HotSW area and established under Sections 101 to 103 of the Local Government Act 1972 and all other enabling legislation to undertake the functions detailed in section 2 of this Agreement.
- 1.2 Key purpose: The key purpose of the Joint Committee is to be the vehicle through which the HotSW partners will ensure that the desired increase in productivity across the area is achieved.
- 1.3 Aims and objectives: The aim is to provide a single strategic public sector partnership that covers the entire area and provides cohesive, coherent leadership and governance to ensure delivery of the Productivity Strategy for the HotSW area. The specific objectives of the Joint Committee are to:
- a) Improve the economy and the prospects for the region by bringing together the public, private and education sectors;
  - b) Increase our understanding of the economy and what needs to be done to make it stronger;
  - c) Improve the efficiency and productivity of the public sector;
  - d) Identify and remove barriers to progress and maximise the opportunities /benefits available to the area from current and future government policy.
- 1.4 Commencement: The Joint Committee will be established in accordance with the resolutions of the Constituent Authorities listed below in paragraph 1.5 with effect from the Commencement Date (22nd January 2018) and shall continue in existence unless and until dissolved by resolution of a majority of the Constituent Authorities.
- 1.5 Membership: Each of the Constituent Authorities listed below shall appoint 1 member and 1 named substitute member to the Joint Committee on an annual basis. Each member shall have 1 vote including substitute members. For the Councils, the member appointed shall be that Council's Leader except in the case of Torridge District Council where the member appointed by the Council shall have authority to speak and vote on matters on behalf of the Council. Political balance rules do not apply to the Joint Committee membership. The substitute member shall also be a cabinet member where the Council is operating executive arrangements. For the National Park Authorities the member appointed shall have authority to speak and vote on matters on behalf of the Authority:
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
  - Devon County Council
  - East Devon District Council
  - Exeter City Council
  - Exmoor National Park Authority
  - Mendip District Council
  - Mid Devon District Council

- North Devon Council
- Plymouth City Council
- Sedgemoor District Council
- Somerset County Council
- South Hams District Council
- South Somerset District Council
- Torbay Council
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- Teignbridge District Council
- Torridge District Council
- West Devon Borough Council
- West Somerset Council.

1.6 In addition to the Constituent Authorities the partner organisations listed below shall each be invited to appoint 1 co-opted representative and 1 named substitute co-opted representative to the Joint Committee. Co-opted members shall not have voting rights:

- Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (the LEP)
- NHS Northern, Eastern and Weston Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group

1.7 The Joint Committee may co-opt further non-voting representatives from the private, public and/or voluntary sectors at any time.

1.8 Each appointed member / representative shall remain a member of the Joint Committee until removed or replaced by the appointing authority / organisation. Appointments to fill vacancies arising should be notified to the Joint Committee Secretary as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs.

1.9 Standing Orders / Rules of Procedure: Outside of the contents of this 'Arrangements' document, the Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure for the Joint Committee shall be those contained in the Constitution of the Administering Authority to the Joint Committee, subject, in the event of any conflict, to the provisions in the Arrangements document taking precedent.

1.10 Administering Authority: A Council shall be appointed by the Constituent Authorities as the Administering Authority for the Joint Committee and shall provide legal, democratic services, financial and communications support to the Committee. The Joint Committee's Forward Plan of business and papers for its meetings shall be published on the Administering Authority's website with links provided to the websites of the other Constituent Authorities and partner organisations.

## **2. Joint Committee Functions**

2.1 The only delegated function of the Joint Committee relates to the approval of the HotSW Productivity Strategy. All other matters referred to in 2.3 are 'referred' matters where the Joint Committee will make recommendations to the Constituent Authority or Authorities for decision. Additional delegated or referred functions may be proposed for the Joint Committee in the future by the Joint Committee or any of

the Constituent Authorities, but shall only be agreed if approved by all of the Constituent Authorities.

2.2 The principle of subsidiarity will apply to the relationship between the Joint Committee, the Constituent Authorities and local Sub-Regional Partnerships with decisions being made at the most local and appropriate level on all matters to do with the delivery of the Productivity Strategy and in relation to the other functions of the Joint Committee.

2.3 The Joint Committee shall:

- (a) Develop and agree the HotSW Productivity Strategy in collaboration with the LEP.
- (b) Ensure delivery of the HotSW Productivity Strategy in collaboration with the LEP and the Constituent Authorities.
- (c) Continue discussions /negotiations with the Government on the possibility of achieving devolved responsibilities, funding and related governance amendments to assist with the delivery of the Productivity Strategy. Joint Committee proposals arising from these discussions /negotiations would require the formal approval of the Constituent Authorities / partner agencies.
- (d) Continue discussions / negotiations with the Government / relevant agencies to secure delivery of the Government's strategic infrastructure commitments, eg, strategic road and rail transport improvements
- (e) Work with the LEP to identify and deliver adjustments to the LEP's democratic accountability and to assist the organisation to comply with the revised (November 2016) LEP Assurance Framework. This includes endorsing the LEP's assurance framework on behalf of the Constituent Authorities as and when required. However, this is subject to the Framework being formally approved by the LEP's Administering Authority.
- (f) Ensure that adequate resources (including staff and funding) are allocated by the Constituent Authorities to enable the objectives in (a) to (e) above to be delivered.

### **3. Funding**

3.1 The Constituent Authorities shall agree each year and in advance of the start of the financial year (except in the year of the establishment of the Joint Committee) a budget for the Joint Committee in accordance with a Budget and Cost Sharing Agreement to cover the administrative costs of the Joint Committee and costs incurred in carrying out its functions. All funds will be held and administered by the Administering Authority on behalf of the Constituent Authorities and spent in accordance with that Authority's financial regulations and policies.

3.2 In the Joint Committee's first year of operation, the budget will be approved by the constituent authorities on the recommendation of the Joint Committee as soon as possible after the establishment of the Joint Committee.

3.3 Joint Committee members' costs and expenses will be funded and administered by the respective Constituent Authority.

#### **4. Review of the Joint Committee Arrangements**

4.1 The Joint Committee may at any time propose amendments to the Arrangements document which shall be subject to the approval of all of the Constituent Authorities.

4.2 Any Constituent Authority may propose to the Joint Committee amendments to the Arrangements. Such amendments shall only be implemented if agreed by all of the Constituent Authorities on the recommendation of the Joint Committee.

#### **5. Members' Conduct**

5.1 All members of the Joint Committee shall observe the "Seven Principles of Public Life" (the 'Nolan' principles) and will be bound by their own authority's code of conduct in their work on the Joint Committee.

5.2 Joint Committee members / representatives shall be subject to the code of conduct for elected members adopted by the Constituent Authority that nominated them to be a Joint Committee member or to the conduct requirements of the organisation that appointed them. This includes the requirement to declare relevant interests at formal meetings of the Joint Committee.

#### **6. Requirements of Joint Committee members**

6.1 Joint Committee members shall:

(a) Act in the interests of the Joint Committee as a whole except where this would result in a breach of a statutory or other duty to their constituent authority or would be in breach of their Constituent Authority's Code of Conduct.

(b) Be committed to, and act as a champion for, the achievement of the Joint Committee's aims.

(c) Be an ambassador for the Joint Committee and its work.

(d) Attend Joint Committee meetings regularly, work with others to achieve consensus on items of business and make a positive contribution to the Committee's work.

(e) Act as an advocate for the Joint Committee in any dealings with their organisation including seeking any approvals from their Constituent Authority/partner organisation to Joint Committee recommendations.

(f) Adhere to the requirements of the 'Arrangements' document and maintain high ethical standards.

## **7. Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

- 7.1 The Joint Committee shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from amongst the voting membership as the first items of business at its inaugural meeting and at each Joint Committee Annual General Meeting thereafter. The appointments shall be confirmed by a simple majority vote of Constituent Authority members. If a deadlock occurs between two or more candidates a secret ballot shall immediately be conducted to confirm the appointment. If there is still deadlock following a secret ballot then a further meeting of the Joint Committee shall be held within 14 days and a further secret ballot shall be held to resolve the appointment.
- 7.2 A vacancy occurring in the positions of Chairman or Vice-Chairman between Annual General Meetings shall be filled by election at the next meeting of the Joint Committee. The person elected will serve until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 7.3 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall, unless he or she resigns the office or ceases to be a member of the Joint Committee and subject to 7.5 below, continue in office until a successor is appointed.
- 7.4 In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman at a meeting, the voting members of the Committee present shall elect a Chairman for that meeting.
- 7.5 The Chairman or Vice-Chairman may be removed by a vote of all of the Constituent Authority members present at a meeting of the Joint Committee.

## **8. Quorum**

The quorum for any meeting of the Joint Committee shall be 9 Constituent Authority members. The Chairman will adjourn the meeting if there is not a quorum present. In the absence of a quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned to a date, time and venue to be agreed by the Chairman.

## **9. Voting**

- 9.1 Wherever possible the elected and co-opted members of the Joint Committee shall reach decisions by consensus and shall seek to achieve unanimity.
- 9.2 In exceptional circumstances where a formal vote is required, the proposal will be carried by a simple majority agreement of the voting members present and voting by a show of hands. The Chairman of the Joint Committee shall not have a casting vote in the event of a tied vote.

## **10 Decision making Arrangements**

- 10.1 Only the Joint Committee shall approve the Productivity Strategy.
- 10.2 The Joint Committee may at any time appoint working groups consisting of Joint Committee members and/or co-opted representatives / officers to consider specific matters and report back / make recommendations to the Joint Committee.

## **11 Formal Meeting Arrangements**

- 11.1 The Joint Committee will hold an Inaugural Meeting within 30 days of the agreed commencement date and thereafter shall meet on a regular basis as agreed by the Joint Committee annually at its Annual General Meeting.
- 11.2 The Chairman or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman, may call a special meeting of the Joint Committee following consultation with the Chief Executives' Advisory Group to consider a matter that falls within the Committee's remit but cannot be deferred to the next scheduled meeting, provided that at least ten clear working days' notice in writing is given to the Joint Committee membership.
- 11.3 Formal meetings of the Joint Committee shall normally be held in public, in accordance with the Access to Information Rules and the Standing Orders / Rules of Procedure of the Administering Authority.
- 11.4 Meetings of any working groups or task groups established by the Joint Committee shall, unless otherwise agreed, be held in private.

## **12. Who can put items on the Joint Committee's agenda?**

- (a) The Joint Committee itself;
- (b) Any of the members of the Joint Committee appointed by the Constituent Authorities
- (c) A Constituent Authority by way of a formal resolution
- (d) The Chief Executives' Advisory Group
- (e) The Monitoring Officer and / or the Chief Finance Officer of the Administering Authority.

## **13. Reporting Arrangements**

- 13.1 In addition to any ad hoc reports to the Constituent Authorities, the Joint Committee shall supply an annual report of its activities to the Constituent Authorities in May of each year.
- 13.2 The Joint Committee shall co-operate with the public scrutiny arrangements of the Constituent Authorities.

## **14 Record of attendance**

- 14.1 All members present during the whole or part of a meeting are asked sign their names on the attendance sheets before the conclusion of every meeting to assist with the record of attendance.

Julian Gale  
Monitoring Officer  
Somerset County Council  
30.10.17

## **Appendix B: HOTSW JOINT COMMITTEE DRAFT INTER – AUTHORITY AGREEMENT**

### **1. Commencement and Duration:**

- 1.1 This Agreement (and the obligation of the Constituent Authorities [CAs]) shall take effect on the agreed Commencement Date – Monday 22nd January 2018 - and shall continue until the Joint Committee (JC) is dissolved.

### **2. Formation provisions:**

- 2.1 The CAs agree to form the JC from the agreed Commencement Date and to delegate / refer the functions specified to the JC from that date as set out in section 2.3 of the Arrangements document.
- 2.1 The JC shall operate in accordance with the Arrangements document and the Standing Orders and Rules of Procedure of the Administering Authority (AA).

### **3. Administering Authority (AA) arrangements**

- 3.1 The AA shall be appointed by resolution of the CAs for a 24 month period (24 months is considered as appropriate to provide sufficient continuity but also to provide the option to rotate the role on a regular basis).
- 3.2 The AA shall provide:
- Financial, legal, constitutional and administrative support to the JC and its meetings
  - An on-line presence for the JC via the AA website with links to the CAs / partner organisations websites.
  - Ensure it has appropriate insurance arrangements in place to cover the AA role.
- 3.3 The AA may resign from the role by giving 6 months' notice to the CAs.
- 3.4 The AA may be removed and replaced by a majority vote of the CA members at a formal meeting of the JC.
- 3.5 The JC shall cease to exist in the event that no CA or organisation can be identified to undertake the AA role.

### **4. JC Finance**

- 4.1 The JC's budgetary arrangements shall be detailed in a budget and cost sharing agreement (*to be drafted*) to be agreed by all of the CAs annually on the recommendation of the JC and in advance of the financial year. The only exception to this will be in the JC's first year of operation when the JC shall recommend a budget and cost sharing agreement to the CAs for approval at the first opportunity following its establishment.
- 4.2 The budget and cost sharing agreement shall cover:



- (a) The responsibilities of the CAs for providing funding for the JC
- (b) The anticipated level of expenditure for the JC for the year ahead
- (c) The cost sharing mechanism to be applied to the CAs
- (d) Details of how the budget will be set and agreed each year
- (e) Who is to be responsible for maintaining financial records on behalf of the JC (the 'accountable body');
- (f) What financial records are to be maintained;
- (g) What financial reports are to be made, to whom and when;
- (h) What arrangements and responsibilities are to be made for:
  - auditing accounts;
  - insurance including ensuring all partners have sufficient cover;
- (i) How any financial assets held by the JC on behalf of the CAs will be redistributed to the CAs in the event of the dissolution of the JC or in the event of a CA formally withdrawing from the CA.

## **5. Roles and responsibilities of the CAs**

### **5.1 The CAs shall:**

- (a) Appoint Members and named substitutes to the JC in accordance with the 'Arrangements'.
- (b) Undertake to share the costs of the JC in accordance with the budget and cost sharing agreement and pay their contribution to the JC to the AA in good time.
- (c) Make appropriate arrangements for recommendations of the JC to be considered and decisions made by the CA.
- (d) Support the work of the JC by offering services, resources or other 'in kind' support to assist with JC projects and activities.
- (e) Within the terms of the Inter-Authority Agreement, agree to share information to support the work of the JC.

## **6. Chief Executives' Advisory Group**

### **6.1 The Group shall:**

- (a) Ensure that the JC fulfils its functions and responsibilities and in accordance with all legal and constitutional requirements.
- (b) Plan and co-ordinate the JC's activities to ensure the achievement of its aims and objectives
- (c) Consider the performance and effectiveness of the JC on an on-going basis and make recommendations for changes for consideration by the JC and CAs as necessary.
- (d) Ensure that professional advice is available and provided as necessary to the JC to enable it to carry out its functions.
- (e) Rigorously monitor and scrutinise the JC's budget.
- (f) Consider disputes between the CAs over the application or interpretation of this Agreement together with any potential breaches of this Agreement.

## **7. Withdrawal from / dissolution of the JC**

- 7.1 A CA wishing to withdraw from the JC shall give a minimum of 6 months' notice in writing to the other CA via the AA. The CAs shall co-operate with any such request.

- 7.2 If two or more CAs give notice of withdrawal from membership of the JC in the same Financial Year, the JC shall consider and make recommendations to the remaining CA as to the future operation of the JC and, if appropriate, recommend any necessary amendments required to the JC's functions and operating arrangements.
- 7.3 Where a majority of the CAs at any time agree (via formal resolutions) that the JC should be dissolved or terminated on a specified date then the JC shall cease to exist from that date.

## **8. Accounts, Audit and Reporting arrangements**

- 8.1 The AA's accounts and audit arrangements will apply to JC business.
- 8.2 The AA will ensure appropriate reporting arrangements are in place for the JC.

## **9. Review of Inter-Authority Agreement**

- 9.1 At any time one or more of the CAs may seek a review of this agreement and the operation of the JC by giving notice to the CAs via the AA.
- 9.2 The review shall be undertaken by the Chief Executives Advisory Group for report to the JC. Any recommendations for changes to the agreement from the JC shall only be implemented if agreed by all of the CAs.

## **10. Insurance, Indemnities, and Conduct of Claims**

- 10.1 The JC as a scrutiny and policy making group rather than a commissioning body undertakes administrative functions and therefore carries relatively little risk.
- 10.2 Each authority's insurance cover will automatically extend to provide protection for their members and officers participating in the work of the JC and in their capacity as officers or members of that authority.

## **11. Information Sharing, Data Protection, Confidentiality, Publicity and Freedom of Information (FOI) Requests**

- 11.1 The CA shall share information about their organisations where that information is relevant to the aims and objectives of the JC.
- 11.2 Where such information is confidential or privileged, for example for reasons of commercial, customer or client confidentiality, the CA concerned shall seek to provide the information in such a form as to assist the JC whilst maintaining confidentiality, for example by the use of statistical and other non-identifiable forms of data. If confidential information is provided by a constituent authority to assist the work of the JC, then each CA will respect that confidentiality and shall not use or disclose such information without the permission of the authority that provided the information.

11.3 In respect of FOI requests, the AA will ensure that the requirements of the FOI Act 2000 are met in respect of the activities of the JC. In particular the AA will consult the officers of the CA as necessary regarding any potentially contentious enquiries and will then respond to them accordingly on behalf of the JC.

11.4 The JC and the CAs shall at all times abide by the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

11.5 All press releases and public statements to be sent out on behalf of the Joint Committee shall be the responsibility of the press office of the Administering Authority.

## **12. Promoting Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

12.1 All CAs will support and promote the principles of inclusiveness and equality for all through the work of the JC.

## **13. Extent of obligations and further assurance**

13.1 Nothing in this Agreement is to require any of the CA to act in any way that is inconsistent with its obligations or duties as a local authority.

## **14. Variations of the Agreement**

14.1 Subject to the express provisions of this Agreement, no variation of this Agreement will be valid or effective unless agreed by formal resolution of all of the CA.

## **15. Dispute Resolution / Breach of this Agreement**

15.1 In the event of a dispute arising from the interpretation and operation of this Agreement or a breach of this Agreement by any CA or JC member, the matter shall first be considered by the Chief Executives' Advisory Group. The Group shall seek to resolve the matter by discussion and mutual agreement and report to the JC and CA as necessary.

15.2 Where this fails to achieve a resolution, then the JC may give formal consideration to further action. Such action may include:

- (a) A request to a CA to replace a JC member;
- (b) A request to a CA to withdraw from the JC;
- (c) A recommendation to the other CAs for the termination of the participation of a CA.

Julian Gale  
Monitoring Officer  
Somerset County Council

As amended following Shadow Joint Committee meeting held on 14 November 2017

**Appendix C: Draft response to the Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy**

Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities  
Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy consultation response

**Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities****Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy consultation response**

*This is a joint response on behalf of both Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities.*

1. Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation for this important strategy. Dartmoor and Exmoor cover some of the finest landscapes in the UK as well as some of the most deeply rural areas of the South West. As National Parks, they are regional and national assets, with an iconic (international) brand. They are special places, designated to conserve their stunning landscapes, abundant wildlife and cultural heritage, whilst offering exceptional recreational opportunities for all. Special does not mean that they cannot thrive as economic as well as social and environmental assets.
2. As National Park Authorities, we have a duty to foster social and economic well-being when delivering against our core purposes of conservation and enjoyment and understanding and we are pleased to have this opportunity to work with other public sector partners and the private sector to grow the economy of the area through a drive in productivity.
3. It is important when considering productivity that this is looked at across the board in terms of social and environmental factors in addition to economic issues. There needs to be a focus on the productivity of a 'place' as a whole in addition to the productivity of any individual business or sector. We are pleased that the draft strategy identifies our Natural Capital as a Unique Selling Point (USP) for the area. Along with Cultural Capital, this forms the bedrock of our economy. Natural and Cultural Capital needs to be conserved and enhanced to deliver 'sustainable' productivity.
4. The draft Heart of the South West Productivity Strategy refers to stepping up productivity and prosperity for all and it is important that the social and environmental aspects of prosperity are enhanced through productivity growth in addition to economic growth. If achieved this could create the Heart of the South West as the 'Natural Capital' for sustainable and inclusive productivity growth. This fits well with the focus highlighted in the introduction of the strategy to 'unlock our natural potential'.

## Ambition

5. The current draft does not quantify how the ambition of doubling Gross Value Added<sup>1</sup> (GVA) over the next 18 years will be fulfilled or what this will look like. Whilst welcoming the 'ambitious' approach some further detail is required. In particular, as we explain further on, we need to understand how the plan will achieve its ambition of inclusive growth and make clear links across the region and how this will look within the different geographies of the area – e.g. spatially or thematically looking at urban, rural and deeply rural areas.
6. Whilst we appreciate this has been developed as a high level strategic document we feel the final strategy will need to define more clearly how the ambitions will be implemented and the delivery plans drawn up and delivered within the confines of the proposed joint committee.

## Natural Capital

7. We welcome the inclusion of Natural Capital as a cross cutting theme within the strategy. As has been widely discussed in the development stages of this plan the rich Natural Capital of the area provides a strong USP, differentiating the Heart of the South West from others. The potential opportunity to utilise our natural capital, in a sustainable manner, to further economic productivity should be used to the areas advantage. This is why the plan needs to look at Productivity of Place and ensure investment is made in conserving and enhancing our natural capital as a foundation for productivity. Without this, the resource will degrade and opportunities for sustainable rural growth will be lost.
8. There is a need and an opportunity within the final Productivity Strategy to demonstrate further, *how* Natural and Cultural Capital can be used to deliver against the key priorities / themes. We support the joint work of the Local Nature Partnerships in unpacking the Natural Capital concept further within the context of the Heart of the South West. Their (draft) Natural Capital advocacy document illustrates the different ways natural capital contributes to the economy:
  - Attracting inward investment – our strong natural and cultural assets such as the National Parks, coastlines and recreational opportunities together provide a strong shop window for the Heart of the South West.
  - Underpinning Sustainable Development
  - Bringing Business benefits (e.g increased margins as a result of reduced costs)
  - Improving resilience
  - Providing a foundation for health and productivity.

## Cultural Capital

9. In addition to considering Natural Capital, the Cultural Capital of the Heart of the South West requires recognition too. Cultural Capital contributes significantly to sense of place and quality of life. Much of our 'natural' capital exists due to human influence and interactions with the land and so are cultural too.

---

Gross Value Added - the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy

10. We suggest that the final strategy should consider the opportunities to boost productivity through investment in and utilisation of our cultural capital. As highlighted in the South West Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Rural Commission report Cultural Capital "not only attracts visitors from around the world but also plays a vital role in supporting the well-being of people and communities and attracting investment". Vital roles that can boost productivity.

### **Rural productivity as a golden opportunity**

11. We strongly support the inclusion of 'Rural Productivity' as a golden opportunity for the Heart of the South West. Further work will be required to flesh out the meaning of this and the underpinning actions for delivery.
12. The joint South West LEPs "Rural Productivity Commission" report provides a strong starting point. The strategic recommendations within must be considered and incorporated into the final plan.
13. Growing our rural productivity will require recognition of the diverse nature of the area and providing interventions that are flexible and tailored for this diversity, that enhance the qualities that support the Heart of the South West brand (namely its rural nature and valued natural environment). This will require interventions focused not only on growing productivity in high net worth industries but also across the board in high volume sectors in the rural areas such as agriculture, tourism, food and drink and, micro businesses – see box 1 below.
14. Facilitating specific interventions for these sectors will also contribute to the ambition of 'inclusive productivity' as well as helping to deliver the higher growth / value sectors e.g. through tourism providing a strong shop window for the South West to promote itself on a national and international stage.

#### **Box 1: The deeply rural economies of Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks**

Over 3,145 businesses are based within the National Parks with an annual turnover of approximately £770m (based on 2010 census data). The economy is largely dependent upon agriculture, tourism and micro businesses. This however does not necessarily limit the potential to increase productivity.

Dartmoor and Exmoor are two of the strongest tourism brands in the South West attracting over 5 million visitor days, with an economic value of over £250m a year and supporting over 4,500 FTEs.

Almost a third (32%) of businesses across the National Parks are in agriculture, forestry and fishing, compared to just 5% across England as a whole. Almost 2,000 FTE jobs are directly supported by farming, but the impact is much wider with farmers playing a vital role in managing and conserving the landscapes that attract millions of visitors each year as well as offering health, well-being and recreational opportunities to those living in the South West. We believe there is a significant opportunity to make greater use of local produce, utilising the brand to add value.

Micro businesses dominate with just 1% employing 50 or more people. These micro businesses span tourism, agriculture and a myriad of other sectors (in particular energy, construction and creative industries). The National Parks are home to a surprising number and range of professional, high tech and creative businesses. 93% of businesses have 9 or fewer employees

with 51% employment in small businesses (14% across England) and the proportion of self-employed is approximately double the national average (26% on Exmoor and 19% on Dartmoor, compared to 10% across England)

A report by SERIO (Plymouth University) for Dartmoor National Park Authority (Dartmoor's Sector Outlooks, 2013) highlights business services, tourism and construction / property sectors as those that had the greatest potential to increase jobs as well as to increase value and productivity. Within Exmoor the Employment Land Review (2009) estimated that 95% of job growth is likely to be in the hospitality and health and social care sectors.

### **Developing rural productivity actions**

15. We would be delighted as National Park Authorities to work with the LEP and partners to pioneer and pilot new and effective interventions to address rural productivity.
16. Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks have worked with the County Councils and Local Enterprise Partnership to prepare a proposal to trial Rural Productivity Networks across the region's National Parks which would provide a tailored approach to tackling productivity in these deeply rural geographies. At the heart of the proposal is the concept of 'place-based, facilitated, innovation' with the proposed networks building on our strongest assets – our people, communities and spectacular environment.
17. A key element would be integrated rural development – there is a virtuous circle to be made by forging stronger links between the core sectors of tourism, farming and micro businesses.
18. There is a need to try something new, and to offer start-up funding for a 5-year period to pilot a new approach that will help demonstrate how:
19. Rural productivity can be improved through, for example, collaborative action to foster entrepreneurship, promote innovation and knowledge transfer
20. A high quality, resilient environment and cultural heritage can be at the heart of rural growth and productivity
  - New models of service provision and delivery can be developed to ensure the long-term sustainability of our rural communities
  - Rural areas can provide effective and economic services to other areas (for example, health and water management)
  - Traditional land-based industries can be developed to improve productivity and growth but also to deliver a range of environmental services
21. The model proposed seeks to take advice from the Rural Growth Network evaluation and to build on successful initiatives such as the Hill Farm Networks operating in Dartmoor and Exmoor which have provided a cost effective approach to bring disparate micro enterprises together to provide tailored support and networking.
22. The concept was embedded in the 'Devolution for the Heart of the South West: A prospectus for productivity' but current funding arrangements have not been flexible enough to cater for this approach. The new Productivity Plan provides an opportunity to address this imbalance.

## **Inclusive Growth**

23. We strongly support the drive towards include growth. This requires robust rural proofing and where necessary specific interventions for different spatial areas and sectors (as described in our section on rural productivity). Whilst overall economic growth by volume may be smaller in the more rural areas (outside of the Principal and Secondary Growth Areas) and often achieved through multiple interventions as opposed to a single 'big bang' opportunity there is nothing to suggest similar proportional levels of growth cannot be achieved. In fact, this is essential to maintain rural communities.
24. A 'one-size fits all' approach is unlikely to maximise the potential for productivity given the differing needs between, for example, a start-up diversification business on Exmoor or Dartmoor and the expansion of a science park along the M5 corridor.
25. We believe the strategy needs to articulate better, how the plan will deliver inclusive growth. The current draft does not clearly identify how linkages will be made between the principal and secondary growth Areas and the rest of the region. The SWOT analysis within the draft identifies the 'peripheral area with distributed population' as a weakness but as drafted the plan does not address how this can be overcome.
26. The link between rural areas and hub towns (in addition to larger conurbations) is important, providing access to tertiary services, education (secondary, further and higher) and links to consumer markets. At the same time, the rural areas very often provide key recreational offers to those living and working in the urban areas.
27. There is a complex relationship between rural and urban areas and a one size fits all approach, as often delivered through regional programmes, is not fit for purpose. In addition the notion that focusing investment in urban hubs will benefit all through trickle down is unproven with local businesses seeking specific interventions for the rural areas. Whilst there will be relatively few opportunities to develop the rural economies in a similar way to the larger urban centres there is a need to ensure that sustainable productivity grows proportionally across all geographical areas at a similar pace.

## **Social mobility**

28. Addressing social mobility issues will be a key element to achieving 'Prosperity for all'. The work of the West Somerset Opportunity Area in addressing social mobility should provide an opportunity to test and develop actions to contribute to inclusive growth, which can be applied across the Heart of the South West as required, particularly in the rural areas, which can be perceived as lacking in opportunities other than low wage employment.

## **Connectivity and Infrastructure, and the Brexit opportunity**

29. We support this strategic objective and the approach to both physical and digital connectivity and infrastructure and the recognition that it makes 'economic sense' to invest in the natural environment in order that natural assets will continue to provide dividends in the future.



30. There is a need for continued investment in the management of the National Parks of the Heart of the South West including the environment, access to them and promotion.
31. Whilst there is great uncertainty around the impact of Brexit it is important that the area seeks to take advantage of any emerging opportunities to consider new ways of investing in these assets. Currently the vast majority of rural support stems from the European Union and so there is a potential to shape a new approach to supporting our rural communities and managing our environment.
32. National Parks in England have developed an outline proposal, which considers wider rural development in addition to agriculture. This proposes a new system of integrated, place based delivery of rural development funding focusing on agricultural support, locally led agri-environmental schemes and wider rural development. The aim is to address identified issues with the current delivery models, which are
  - Silo based – with different funding streams poorly integrated
  - Managed by prescription rather than empowerment
  - Adverse to risk rather than stimulating innovation and productivity.
33. The support of partners, through the productivity strategy, to this work will be important and welcomed.
34. Investing in our natural and cultural capital will be foundational in achieving growth in the Heart of the South West attracting inward investment through the high quality environment and recreational opportunities, enriching the experience of visitors to the area, boosting the rural economy and sustaining rural livelihoods (primarily in tourism and agriculture).
35. It is well known that affordable housing (or a lack thereof) can be a barrier to both social inclusion and productivity. There are examples of high tech, high value businesses in both National Parks where productivity is limited due to recruitment challenges. A lack of affordable housing for prospective employees therefore represents a significant barrier to raising productivity. If basic needs are met, increased and sustainable productivity becomes more achievable.

### **Connectivity and linkages**

36. Within connectivity we also feel more attention needs to be made to links to the wider areas, extending the reach of the (Heart of the) South West brand at a national and international level and also learning from other areas, in particular with regard to 'good growth' and 'rural productivity'.

November 2017

*For further information please contact Dan James, Sustainable Economy Manager, Exmoor National Park Authority, on 01398 322234 or [DTJames@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:DTJames@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).*

## DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

1 December 2017

**SOUTH WEST PEATLAND PARTNERSHIP - Defra Capital Grant Application****Report of the Director of Conservation and Communities**

**Recommendation: That Members support the SW Peatland Project with a contribution of £150,000 to fund a Project Officer to help deliver peatland restoration on Dartmoor.**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 In July 2017 Defra launched a new capital grant scheme for the restoration of Peatland in England. The grant scheme aims to deliver multiple ecosystem services including: carbon storage, increased biodiversity, water quality and water level management. The grant will only fund the capital elements of a bid with a small payment for project management, capped at £10,000 per bid. The closing date for applications was the 20 November and successful applicants will be notified on 22 December 2017. The scheme allows delivery over a three year period with a start date on 1 April 2018. Payments will be made in arrears against milestones.
- 1.2 Defra advised that they would prefer to see applications of over £500,000 and suggested that applicants might want to combine sites to develop bids of the appropriate size.
- 1.3 Members will recall that a key action in the 2017/18 Business Plan is to apply for funding to implement an agreed plan to conserve and enhance Dartmoor's peatlands, ensuring multiple outcomes; looking at opportunities for engagement of local contractors and payment for ecosystem services. At the members workshop in September those Members present confirmed that Peatlands remain a key priority and encouraged officers to take a positive approach.
- 1.4 IUCN's Peatland Programme Commission of Inquiry has identified south-west (SW) peatlands as being the most vulnerable in the UK to the impacts of climate change, due to their southerly position. Scientific research by the University of Exeter (UoE) on Exmoor and Dartmoor clearly shows the extent of damage and pre and post restoration research clearly demonstrates that restoration can help halt this decline, enabling peat formation to restart, protecting areas of pristine blanket bog and improving peatlands' ability to withstand predicted changes in temperature and rainfall patterns

**2 Peatland restoration on Dartmoor – The Dartmoor Mires Project 2010- 2015**

- 2.1 The Dartmoor Mires Project aimed to test the feasibility of restoring blanket bog on Dartmoor and gather evidence on the effects of restoration on water quality, carbon and biodiversity. Work was undertaken to block erosion gullies and related features

using predominantly peat dams. Restoration was undertaken on three sites: Winneys Down, South Tavy Heads and Flat Tor Pan. The final work was completed at Flat Tor Pan in March 2015 - together these sites amount to 70 ha. (of hydrologically restored blanket bog).

- 2.2 A rigorous pre and post restoration monitoring programme was attached to the Project and this evidence is demonstrating significant positive results. Hydrological monitoring undertaken by the University of Exeter shows that the water table was dropping to an average of 30 cm below the surface before restoration took place, in a healthy blanket bog the water table should remain fairly stable and remain nearer to the surface. The monitoring for two comparable summer periods since restoration shows that there has been an average increase in ground water level of 9 cm. Monitoring data also shows that, pre-restoration, the level of dissolved organic carbon (dissolved peat) carried in water flowing from the blanket bog was as high as 45mg per litre. This is significantly higher than initially expected and comparable with the well documented damaged peat bogs in northern England.
- 2.3 Bird surveys undertaken by RSBP show that Dunlin numbers have increased significantly in areas around the restoration sites since restoration work has been undertaken. 2014 saw the highest number of Dunlin ever recorded on Dartmoor, up 38 percent since 2010. Dartmoor's Dunlin are the most southerly breeding population in Europe, there is a decline in the population of these birds in the UK and the nearest population of breeding Dunlin in the UK is Brecon Beacons and in England the Peak District.
- 2.4 Vegetation surveys at Winney's Down shows that before restoration Dartmoor blanket bogs were not supporting the community of bog plants you would expect in a healthy bog. Post-restoration data is showing an increase in Sphagnum species (23%) and cotton grasses (11%), and a decrease in grass (11%) and herb species (24%). This shows a significant shift from species preferring drier conditions to bog species in the first two years after restoration.
- 2.5 A significant amount of archaeological work was undertaken as part of the project to record any areas of interest and to increase knowledge where opportunities arise. In depth paleoecological surveys and research into industrial peat cutting have been undertaken and revealed some new and unexpected information. Peat depths of over 7 metres have been recorded in some areas.
- 2.6 At the close of the Dartmoor Mires Project the Project Board agreed that the project had achieved its aims and this was signed off by the Environment Agency and South West Water. An independent evaluation highlighted areas for further effort and these have been picked up over the past two years:

**A) Widening membership of the partnership** – this has been achieved and the Dartmoor partnership now includes representatives from the following bodies: Natural England, Environment Agency, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Forest of Dartmoor Commoners Association, Duchy of Cornwall, Historic England, Ministry of Defence, Devon Wildlife Trust, West Country Rivers Trust, Dartmoor Preservation Association (DPA), Dartmoor Society, the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth and National Trust.

**B) Improve public awareness of Dartmoor's peatlands** – this has been achieved through Magnificent Mires, a project hosted by Devon Wildlife Trust and part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Authority, the DPA and the Duchy of Cornwall. The project has engaged with over 25 schools and 12 community events have been delivered engaging 535 people. A new bog garden within the Dartmoor Conservation Garden, Princetown (managed by the DPA) and a bog model (Slice of Dartmoor) has been used to explain to people how bogs are important and their ability to absorb water. The model has been used at agricultural and community shows and events across the National Park. A film and an on-line game are currently being finalised and a 'bog in a tube' has been funded by the project to go into Princetown Visitor Centre.

**C) Establish a better understanding of the extent and condition of Dartmoor's peatland.** The University of Exeter has completed mapping of the extent and condition of Dartmoor's peatlands to help identify where the peatlands are not functioning as healthy bogs. The mapping revealed that Dartmoor contains 315 km<sup>2</sup> of peatland of which 175 km<sup>2</sup> is deep peat (>40 cm). The mapping identified erosion and gully features, peat cuttings and associated drainage that would affect the condition (the eco-hydrology) of the peatland. Further work was undertaken to consider the area of peatland hydrologically affected by these features which is estimated to be 29 km<sup>2</sup> (6.5%) of the total area

This data has been used to identify candidate areas for future restoration where the eco-hydrological impact is likely to be highest.

### **3 South West Peatland Partnership- Defra Capital Grant Application**

- 3.1 The work outlined above has provided an excellent and timely basis for development of a bid for further peatland restoration on Dartmoor. Through the Peatland Partnership we have been working with our partners to develop proposals for submission to Defra and crucially, we have support from the landowners and the Commoners. The Dartmoor Society have registered their objection to the proposal through the Dartmoor Peatland Partnership but all other partners have submitted a letter of support for the bid.
- 3.2 We have been careful to try and develop a bid that allows for restoration at a scale and pace that the farming community feel able to support but is large enough to get support from Defra. We have useful experience from the Dartmoor Mires project which we have incorporated into the Defra bid along with experience from elsewhere (most notably the Exmoor Mires project).
- 3.3 The bid includes 276ha of restoration on Dartmoor to be delivered at four sites over a three year period. The sites include completion of work started at Flat Tor Pan and new work at Hangingstone Hill, Amicombe/Rattlebrook and Red Lake.
- 3.4 Working with South West Water and the Bodmin and Exmoor Peatland Partnerships we have agreed to develop and submit one umbrella bid for the three moors - the South West Peatland bid. There was a steer from Defra to consider combining smaller applications but officers could also see wider benefits of a joint bid, including: sharing and better using resources, skills and experience through a multi-disciplinary team supporting delivery across all three moors..

- 3.5 The closing date for applications was the 20 November. South West Water has submitted the bid as the lead Contractor on behalf of the three local peatland partnerships. The umbrella project will be overseen by a Three Moors Partnership Steering Group, comprising representatives from the three local partnerships. The Authority will be the lead partner on Dartmoor but supported by the Dartmoor Peatland Partnership for which the Director of Conservation and Communities is the current chair. Many of our partners have committed in kind support and match funding.
- 3.6 The total value of the SW Peatland bid is £3,637,127.55 of which £1,970,367.55 is eligible for Defra grant. The remainder of the funding is for elements of work that cannot be funded through the Defra grant but is recognised as “Complimentary funding”. These elements have to be funded by other contributions and therefore in essence this is a 45% grant from Defra. On Dartmoor the Complimentary funding is required to fund a dedicated Project Officer to deliver the works on the ground; to commission detailed archaeological surveys; to undertake the Historic Environment Watching Brief (year 3 only as years 1 and 2 will be covered by the existing Exmoor.Officer) and on-going monitoring.

TABLE 1:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Restoration	£640,820	Defra	Capital works
Unexploded Ordnance	£591,210	Defra	Capital works
Bird Survey	£20,500	RSPB	In Kind
Biodiversity surveys	£4,300	DWT	Staff and volunteer time
Project Officer	£150,000	DNPA	To be confirmed
Archaeological surveys	£40,000	Duchy of Cornwall, DPA and MoD	£39,000 committed subject to deliver of milestones an annual budget bidding process.
Historic Environment Watching Brief	£30,000	tbc	Shortfall relates to the final year of the project
Equipment/machinery	tbc	tbc	To support the purchase/adaption of relevant equipment locally.
Eco- hydro monitoring	tbc	tbc	The University of Exeter have committed in kind time to the value of £32, 400 to support this work across the three moors.

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,681,080</b>		
<b>INCOME</b>			
Defra Grant request	£1,232,030		
Other confirmed funds	£39,500		
DNPA requested	£150,000		
In principle	£24,000		
<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>£31,400</b>		

- 3.7 It should be noted that Environment Agency, Natural England and the University of Exeter are contributing to the umbrella project through in-kind officer time for which Dartmoor will benefit. The MoD has also committed in-kind support for the transport of materials to site and possibly through the UXO work.
- 3.8 The programme of works as detailed in the bid is ambitious. All of the identified sites will require further work to ensure that we have an integrated restoration plan using appropriate restoration techniques and balancing archaeology, farming, public access and military interests. The appointment of a dedicated officer to deliver this programme of activity is crucial, likewise there will need to be dedicated time from our specialist team including archaeologists, ecologists, GIS officers and management. The support already offered by our partners will also be crucial. As we have learnt from previous work there are added complications for Dartmoor; our blanket bog is in remote locations; past and current use as a military firing range means that there is the added cost of UXO surveys and for the Hangingstone Hill site we will be limited in the days we can work due to its location within the Okehampton live firing range. Some of the wetter sites will require machines with very low ground pressure, which are in short supply however we have also picked sites that will require a lesser specification and we hope that local contractors will be able to benefit from this work. We have written the purchase of equipment /machinery into our bid to try and support this.

#### 4 Risks

On Dartmoor the programme of works as detailed in the bid is ambitious and we will need to have two machines working to deliver the targets

TABLE 2:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Control measures</b>
Weather delays progress on restoration	Possible	This could have a major impact on the sites where working days are limited by MoD activity.	Days lost through weather for the Dartmoor Mires project were low. Build into contracts the potential for weekend working and agree call off fees
No agreement on sites and restoration techniques.	Possible	Minimal impact.	Key stakeholders have been involved in process of identifying sites
UXO survey limits progress due to high density of finds in one area.	Likely	High if no alternative sites are available range of	A range of alternative sites have been discussed.
Lack of public support/engagement	Possible	High	Communication plan agreed with partners. Material available from the magnificent Mires project and can be utilised to support the work.  A good evidence base is available.

## 5 Conclusion

5.1 The Moorland Vision developed back in 2005 recognised the importance of Dartmoor's blanket bogs and the potential for restoration. Since then we have completed experimental work through the Dartmoor Mires Project and extended the evidence gathering through the establishment of a wider Dartmoor Peatland Partnership. The Dartmoor Peatland Partnership has worked co-operatively to develop proposals for further restoration on Dartmoor. In particular we have worked with the landowner and commoners to develop proposals that they can support.

5.2 The evidence we have collated through past restoration and the mapping work undertaken by the University of Exeter clearly shows that we have features across our peatlands that are affecting the eco-hydrology and therefore our blanket bogs are not in a healthy state. The Government have recognised the importance of peatlands through its new peatland strategy and the Defra capital grant scheme as outlined in this report. The benefits accrued from healthy peatlands are well rehearsed and include:

- carbon storage
- clean water
- flood alleviation
- biodiversity and
- protection of archaeology.

- 5.3 Blanket bogs and mires are a fantastic and important resource for society, and in the future SW peatlands are likely to come under increasing pressure through climate change.
- 5.4 It is important that we act now to protect and enhance our bogs to help future resilience and position the SW alongside some of the northern moors who have developed and received funding for large schemes over many years. A combined bid and collaborative working with Bodmin and Exmoor is a very positive step and we hope that Defra will see the benefits of sharing resources and expertise to ensure high quality delivery in the south west. In light of changes to agri-environment support post Brexit, recognition of the need for restoration and support from our partners, landowners and commoners this bid shows a positive approach.
- 5.5 The Defra grant will only fund capital work and therefore we need to find complimentary funding to support this delivery as detailed in paragraph 3. However the Defra grant for the Dartmoor element of the project is 73% which would be regarded to be a good intervention level.

## **6 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The full SW Peatlands umbrella bid has a value of £3,637,127.55. The Dartmoor element of the funding is £1,681,080 with a possible Defra grant of £1,232,030 for the capital elements of the work. If the Authority is going to lead this project then a Project Officer with the expertise to deliver these works is essential. The full cost of this is £150,000 for a three year post and members are being asked to allocate this from the match funding reserve. A number of our partners have offered cash and in kind support to a value of £63,500 which would leave a shortfall of £31,000 to deliver some of the other elements and we will be working with partners to secure this funding over coming months
- 6.2 Officers feel this is a positive way to utilise our match funding reserve on a project which aims to deliver against key priorities and attracts a grant of 73%.
- 6.3 Members should also note that the capital grant is payed in arrears and therefore there will be an up- front cost for the Authority. However we will need to confirm how we manage this with South West Water as the lead contractor.

## **7 Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The techniques used to implement the restoration will take into account access routes and will ensure that access is not impeded by the proposed works.

Alison Kohler  
Director of Conservation and Communities



## DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

1 December 2017

**MOOR OTTERS EVALUATION**Report of The Head of Communications, Economy and FundraisingRecommendation: That Members

- (i) **Note the content of the project summary and evaluation report and lessons learned from the project**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 In June 2016 Members agreed to set aside £140,000 from reserves to support a new public arts initiative on Dartmoor.
- 1.2 It was suggested that we build upon the successful projects undertaken elsewhere, adding new elements to tailor the project to better reflect National Park status:
- Build a community engagement element to the project, linking with local schools and encouraging them to create their own model. Supporting the Government's 8-point plan for National Parks.
  - Incorporate messages and interpretation about the sculpture and use this to promote visits to our Visitor Centres.
  - Include an option for the public to make donations when they visit sculptures on the trail and therefore promote Donate for Dartmoor.
  - Consider whether there are merchandising opportunities.
- 1.3 A Member steering group was established to support the officer leading on the delivery and the project was established with the following aims:
- Engage with new audiences
  - Provide an art-based visitor attraction
  - Support the local economy by encouraging increased footfall at local businesses
  - Promoting key messages about the national park and our work
  - Bring in sponsorship income and other revenue
- 1.4 A tender process was undertaken to select a contractor to project manage the delivery of the project. Shortly followed by the selection of the chosen animal to feature as the sculpture; the otter was felt to best reflect our conservation message given how the population of otters had grown on Dartmoor over the past 15 years. And so **Moor Otters** was born.

## **2. The Artist Selection Process**

- 2.1 Attracting the best quality artists was key to the success of this project. Previous projects of a similar nature are the most successful both at auction and as trails with artwork that captures the audience's imagination.
- 2.2 Developing a list of artists both local and national that would be happy to support was difficult as this was a new area for us. The external project manager, with assistance from officers, was able to enlist the support of the Devon Guild of Craftsmen, The Contemporary Craft Festival and Delamore Arts to contact their artists, craftspeople and members to encourage them to submit designs.
- 2.3 Thanks to the buy in and support from these organisations we were able to attract a very high calibre of artists to submit designs for the blank otter; well over the 80 needed. We also had submissions from a secondary school in Plymouth and an arts project for adults with learning difficulties, both of which were included. The final selection was made by our expert panel from the Devon Guild, the Contemporary Craft Festival and The Arts Council, South West.
- 2.4 The final 20 otters were given to high profile artists, approached by celebrated artist Alan Cotton. It was hoped these otters would go on to be part of the final selection of the 30 'golden otters' auctioned in the live auction, at the end of the project, to collectors of their work.
- 2.5 The selection of the 30 'golden otters' was made once all 100 otters had been decorated by the artists and returned to us. This was done prior to the launch and was made by Alan Cotton and our auctioneer, with a view to selecting the ones that we hoped would realise the most value at a live auction. The selection was a mix of the high profile artists and the other artists.
- 2.6 The high standard of the design of the 100 otters made it very hard to select the 30; all of the otters were so beautiful or imaginative and all very collectable.

## **3 The Engagement of Sponsors and Valued Partners**

- 3.1 Gaining some high level sponsorship and valued partners who would provide in-kind sponsorship was highlighted in the original report to Authority as a line of income to the value of £125,000 sponsorship and £20,000 in-kind support.
- 3.2 The in-kind support we received was well above what was anticipated. It is hard to put a value on the total, but we received the following:
  - Logistics for the delivery and collection of the otters to artists from Mailboxes etc, this was all over the country
  - PR from Absolute PR
  - The Western Morning News as our media partner

- Logistics for the trail and storage from the Jolly Roger [who supplied the sculptures]
- Live auction and online auction payment support from Bearnas Hampton and Littlewood auctioneers
- Event hosting for the launches at Bovey Castle
- Print support for the early stages of the project from South West Colour labs
- Luxury chocolates for the artists and the auction from Melchoir Chocolates
- Additional in-kind support over and above some of the project deliverables from The Art of Fundraising [our project manager].

3.3 We were able to secure one main financial supporter/sponsor, South West Water. This was a good fit for the project given the link with the otter's habitat. This support was gained by our contacts with South West Water.

3.4 Through our good working relationship with The Duchy of Cornwall, we were able to secure additional support for the project by a specially commissioned otter sculpture, to a design approved by HRH The Prince of Wales. The sculpture was donated to the project and auctioned at the end in the live auction. This high profile supporter of the project enabled us to gain much more publicity than we would have done without this.

3.5 Without strong local business links and networks the project manager was unable to secure any further sponsorship. It was also difficult to 'sell' the concept at first.

3.6 The businesses that supported the trail were invited to sponsor their otters, this did not realise as much sponsorship as we had anticipated. Again given the new nature of the project, we felt getting support from business to form the trail was more important than generating large sums of money from them. We also wanted to support the local economy by creating footfall to these businesses; this was one of the objectives of the project.

## **4 The Development of the Trail**

4.1 Initially it was hoped there would be a number of trails to form the main trail. Some of these would be walking and cycling routes in and around the National Park.

4.2 In practice this was much harder to do. We tried to find suitable business locations around these trails for the project manager to approach, but without the buy-in of all the businesses on these trails it was difficult to develop them.

4.3 We also found as the project gained momentum we were being approached by other businesses and towns such as Newton Abbot who wanted to be a part of the trail. They were all willing to pay to host an otter. We felt that by having otters in locations such as gateway towns, the airport and RHS Rosemoor it would help to promote the trail and drive footfall to the main trail in the National Park.

- 4.4 We tried to create mini trails in our towns and villages, but again getting the buy in from businesses meant that some of these were a little fragmented and not as complete as we would have liked them to be.
- 4.5 We ended up with a trail that had some walking and cycling routes; the walking ones were mainly around towns and villages

## **5 The Schools Project**

- 5.1 A key element of the community part of the project was to engage local schools. This would support our conservation messages and engage young people in the work we do.
- 5.2 We approached six schools [five primary and one secondary] around Dartmoor to gain a good geographical spread. This was a manageable amount given the staff time available to support. They were:
- South Tawton
  - Dunsford
  - Princetown
  - Buckfastleigh
  - Mary Tavy
  - Okehampton College
- 5.3 The schools were invited to decorate their own mini otters, supplied by us. These would then form a mini otter trail at Princetown Visitor Centre over the summer holidays. Once the trail was over the mini otters would be returned to the schools to keep or auction as they chose to raise money for the schools.
- 5.4 The schools trail was launched at the summer fair and we produced a mini-guide for this, in-house, with images of the otters and the artist's motivation.
- 5.5 This project was very successful with the schools. The primary schools decorated their otters post SATS and found that quite therapeutic! All of the otters were stunning and we even had a Trump otter!

## **6. Public Engagement**

- 6.1 There were a number of elements we introduced to generate public interest in the project:
- Trail booklets, with spot 20 otters and win a prize. We encouraged people to submit their forms at Visitor Centres to collect a free 'otter spotter badge'
  - Having a roving otter on the outreach vehicle all summer
  - Running a design your own competition to win a mini otter to decorate
  - Dedicated social media; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts

- 6.2 Public engagement in the trail was incredible! Otter Spotting was *the* summer activity. Otter Spotters were keen not only to get their 20 but all 100. So many people engaged it was quite overwhelming. Otter Spotters could be seen sharing notes and developing their own 'community'. Images and comments were shared on social media and letters and emails were received about the project, all positive.
- 6.3 The entries into the prize draw demonstrated the level of engagement. We had over 3,500 entries from all over the UK and Europe, including multiple entries from people who entered 5 times, having spotted all 100. The postcodes have been plotted on a map showing the geographical spread [*Appendix A*]; most are notably from around the National Park, demonstrating the high local level of engagement.
- 6.4 Having a roving otter on the Outreach Vehicle was a big hit. It generated lots of opportunities to talk to people about Dartmoor with lots of unprompted conversations. The anecdotal evidence from the team was people were actively seeking out the vehicle and otter and this in-turn enabled a high level of public engagement. The otter theme worked well with the Magnificent Mires project helping engagement with that project too.
- 6.5 Listing our attendance at shows and other events such as litter picks benefitted the events as well.
- 6.6 Part way into the project we developed a design your own otter competition with Primary Times, again aimed at engaging children with the project. We had 500 entries to this competition across each of the three age categories.
- 6.7 This type of project lends itself to social media and this was a key tool for engagement. Both accounts were run by the project manager, almost 24/7 and this gave us a very high level of engagement and created a real buzz. There were also spin off accounts including the otters themselves, as well as the host locations and artists taking advantage of otter mania.
- 6.8 The Moor Otters Facebook account had over 2,300 followers and 31 five star reviews for the trail with some amazing comments, as well as photos posted and shared as people discovered their favourites or completed the trail. The Twitter account had 1,150 followers and Instagram 250. We shared and posted content on our own accounts generating more likes and followers to our DNPA accounts.

## **7 Visitor Centres**

- 7.1 Having otters at each centre with the centres as the locations you could hand your form in and collect your otter spotter badge worked really well. There was a very high level of engagement with children and adults alike. Visitor Centre staff had 'otter training' at the Otter Sanctuary to enable them to really bring the project to life.

- 7.2 Once we had the footfall in the centres we were able to help visitors understand Dartmoor's special qualities. Visitor Centre staff engaged children in the design your own otter competition; many entries were received through the centres.
- 7.3 We developed an associated retail range for the project, with fluffy otters being one of our top sellers. Figures for this range over the project totalled £9,600 gross, £3,500 net against cost of sales.
- 7.4 Footfall at Princetown and Postbridge was pretty similar to what we would expect at that time of year. The biggest impact in footfall was felt at Haytor where it went up from 21,895 over the three months [June, July, and August] to 27,472, roughly a 25% increase. In August alone the figures were 3,000 more than last year

## 8. The Auctions

- 8.1 The artwork was always a key part of the success of this project from an income generation point of view. The otters would be auctioned off once the trail had finished becoming unique pieces for collectors.
- 8.2 We auctioned the otters in two ways, firstly through an online auction that launched the same day as the trail and ran until early October. People could register and bid on their favourites in the same way other online auction sites work.
- 8.3 Secondly through the live auction at Bearnas Hampton and Littlewood [BHL], where the 30 'golden otters' were auctioned. This was undertaken at the end of September before the online auction closed.
- 8.4 The auctions raised a total of just under £126,000 gross for the project. There were no fees from BHL for this; they were very supportive.
- 8.5 We hoped the live auction would have raised more money given the calibre of artists on sale. It was apparent on the day that there were otters that people really wanted and others that would have benefitted from going back to the online auction, which finished a few days later.

## 9. The Financials

- 9.1 In the original report to the Authority the budgeted costs and income were based on other similar projects and estimated as set out below:

Original Budget	Expenditure	Income
Raw materials (sculptures and transport)	£47,000	
Marketing ,design and printing	£34,500	
Artists	£11,000	
Consultant/Project Manager fee	£35,500	
Artists	£11,000	
Miscellaneous	£3,000	

Sponsorship of sculptures		£125,000
Live auction sales of sculptures		£120,000
Other in kind sponsorship		£20,000
Donations		£5,000
<b>Forecast Budget</b>	<b>£142,000</b>	<b>£270,000</b>

- 9.2 Although not completely finalised\* as yet, the table below highlights the actual costs and income (at the time of writing this report). With the support of our valued partners we were able to keep the costs well below our original estimate.

<b>Project Outturn</b>	<b>Actual Costs</b>	<b>Actual Income</b>
Raw materials (sculptures and transport)	£29,814	
Marketing ,design and printing	£21,260	
Artists expenses	£3,157	
Project Manager fee and expenses	£33,021	
Artists commission	£8,968	
Miscellaneous	£1,670	
Online auction website costs	£1,514	
Sponsorship of sculptures		£34,033
Live auction sales of sculptures		£125,743
Other in kind sponsorship**		
Donations [plinths]		£2,689
<b>Total</b>	<b>£99,404</b>	<b>£162,465</b>

\*There are some outstanding artist's expenses and miscellaneous items to settle.

\*\* Difficult to put a value on this but we have saved a considerable amount of money particularly on transport, storage and logistics costs.

- 9.3 This means that we have generated an approximate net income of **£60,000** to be split equally between the three projects that were identified at the start to benefit from the project, and they are:

#### **Junior Rangers: £20,000 over two years**

The money will be used to embed Junior Rangers into our core work, providing a sustainable future for this great project which has, up until now been run as a pilot project. We will also develop a new Youth Ranger scheme for young people aged 16 – 19 and trial this as stepping stone from Junior Rangers. We will then have a model which allows progression from Ranger Ralph, Junior Rangers, Youth Rangers through to an apprenticeship in the environmental field.

#### **Invasive Non-native Plant Control: £20,000 over two years**

We will take direct action to tackle a very real threat to Dartmoor's environment and wildlife - the spread of non-native invasive plants. The funding will help us to build on successful trials and expand their scope to protect more habitats and involve more communities. We will concentrate our efforts on two species, Himalayan

balsam and American skunk cabbage. These species are closely associated with streams, rivers, wetlands and ponds - the same habitats in which Dartmoor's otter population thrive.

Himalayan balsam – we know from work elsewhere (e.g. River Tale in East Devon) that this is something we can tackle at a local community scale. A willing group of volunteers pulling up the plants before they flower can clear this plant in just 2 years. We are probably never going to eradicate this invader from an entire river catchment as large as the Dart or Tavy, but we can still make a difference in the upper tributaries. Moor Otters funding will enable us to initiate a two year programme of control in priority catchments.

American skunk cabbage – The presence of this plant on Dartmoor has been known for many years. We have already taken action to control the plant at two locations, with the cooperation of the landowners, the local community and Moor than Meets the Eye landscape partnership. In 2018 we will work with land managers and local community volunteers to survey all accessible known sites, assess their threat and prioritise actions. We will use Moor Otters funding to offer advice and specialist help to control the plant at sites of high wildlife value. Moor Otters funding gives us the unique opportunity to deal with this problem plant before it gets any worse.

### **Repairs to Erosion: £20,000 over two years**

Wistmans Wood – a popular footpath that runs from Two Bridges up to the very special and iconic Wistmans Wood. Over the past year the path has predominately suffered from localised heavy rainfall. A series of potential solutions regarding drainage has been agreed and securing funding would mean this important work could be undertaken.

Postbridge/Grey Wethers - when proceeding along the bridleway north of Postbridge you face a wall of very large gorse. You cannot continue on the actual bridleway at this stage but there is a very well used and now heavily eroded track. The proposed work in this area is firstly to cut another one or two linear routes through the gorse to spread footfall and block off the eroded track.

Abbots Way route – the very rocky and sunken track (but underneath hard surface) section of the Abbots way route above the Avon Dam on Dean moor has been overgrown with gorse which is forcing users to cause erosion on the moorland on one side. Rainfall is now also rushing down the track causing further problems and erosion. The proposal is to cut back vegetation, remove some of the loose rocks and to reopen blocked drainage channels to take water away from going down the track.

## **10. Business Survey Results**



- 10.1 A short survey was sent to all the host locations to evaluate how successful the project was for them. We asked six simple questions and two open questions. The full results are in *Appendix B*.
- 10.2 40 out of the 95 businesses responded to the survey, the results are summarised below:
- Primary motivation for supporting the project:** 45% stated it was to support the project and increase footfall
- Was the sponsorship value for money?** 86% said yes
- Did you notice an increase in footfall?** 82% said yes
- Did you notice an increase in turnover?** 12% said yes, 47% said it was difficult to say
- Did you offer any Otter related promotion or events?** Only 25% said yes
- Would you take part in a similar initiative if we did it again?** 70% said yes and 27% maybe
- 10.3 We also asked how we could improve their experience if we did it again and if there was any other comment they would like to make about the project. One of the main issues was the expectation from some otter spotters that the venues would be open all the time. Better communication about opening hours and perhaps etiquette to follow for people on the trail was a common comment.
- 10.4 Most enjoyed the experience and felt it was good to be part of, there was no expectation that everyone would spend money but a hope that they would come back. The anecdotal feedback from the public was exactly that, so many people said they had discovered new places and planned to return.

## **11. Staff time**

- 11.1 This project has taken 18 months from inception to completion and has been an excellent example of 'Team Dartmoor' in action. However, given the fact it was a new type of initiative for DNPA and we were learning as we were delivering; it took a huge amount of staff time.
- 11.2 The project was introduced part way through the year when work programmes for the year had already been set. This meant that in the early stages of delivery the detail could not be worked through properly as there was no staff time to do this. It put pressure on the officer leading the project and other teams as they were asked to support it.
- 11.3 Below is the estimated amount of staff time it took to deliver Moor Otters for the main teams involved over the full 18 month duration of the project. This should be

considered against how successful the project was at engaging with the public, the scale of which we had not experienced before as an Authority.

- Head of Communications approx. 30% of a FTE
- Communications and Visitor Services team approx. 14% of a FTE
- Finance and admin approx. 12% of a FTE
- Outreach, Rangers, CWT approx. 12% of a FTE

## **12. What Worked Well?**

- 12.1 There is no doubt that the trail was a huge success with the public and their engagement with it was amazing. Demonstrating a need that some people want to be given something to 'do', Dartmoor can be a formidable place for some and giving them an organised trail with a map that was free was undoubtedly a hit. We can see from the competition mapping that many were local and probably doing the trail at the weekends and in the school holidays.
- 12.2 The PR and social media helped generate lots of interest and gave people the opportunity to comment and feedback as well as share photos of the otters. This was boosted by the involvement of the Duchy of Cornwall and the 'Royal' Otter which gave the project a much higher profile in the media.
- 12.3 Having a "Roving Otter" and collecting otter spotter badges as prizes from our Visitor Centres helped us to engage with the public on the trail. Helping us to share the work we do and promote understanding and key messages. It drove footfall and generated sales in the associated otter merchandise.
- 12.4 The sculpture and the artists support: By getting the sculpture right at the beginning by selecting an upright otter, gave a good blank canvas to work with that was not too large. This in turn enabled the artists to create a very high standard of work that made the otters very desirable when it came to the auction. The size of the model also made it easy to fit into people's homes once purchased.
- 12.5 The level of support given by the valued partners for the project: The Jolly Roger, for example, went over and above to make the project work on the ground, supporting our own team in logistics and going the extra mile on many last minute elements of the project to ensure its success. We are very grateful to all of the support we received from our valued partners.
- 12.6 The businesses that hosted otter that offered special otter events, competitions or promotions. This worked well for their footfall and added to the high level of communication about the project in general.
- 12.7 The schools project worked really well, we could have gone to many more schools if we had the staff time. It worked well with their curriculum and linked to the Governments 8 Point Plan. Having the mini trail at Princetown Visitor Centre again helped with footfall and engagement.

### **13. What We Would Do Differently (if we did it again)**

- 13.1 The level of public engagement genuinely took us by surprise. If we did a similar project we need to think about how we can maximise this level of engagement to share more about our work, the National Park and some of our key messages. We should also think about how we continue to tell our story once the project has ended.
- 13.2 Project Management: We rushed the start of the project and as such there was no detailed project plan outlined in the agreement with the project manager, detailing the level of involvement required by DNPA staff and teams. This was to a certain extent because we were learning as we were delivering, but this caused a considerable amount of work and problems internally as we tried to fit the project in with other work and make it work with our own systems and processes. This had a significant impact on staff time, particularly with the officer leading and the finance team.
- 13.3 Using an external project manager with experience of delivering similar projects was good, but the communications at times were difficult, this made it hard to deliver project communications to the wider team and created frustrations. This could have been because he was not based in the office and therefore it was difficult to keep everyone regularly updated. This is not a reflection on how hard he worked, which he did over and above his contract, to a tried and tested method for other projects.
- 13.4 If we did it again we would work out a detailed project plan before securing the services of a project manager and clearly outline roles and responsibilities. This would avoid duplication and ensure we were able to programme in adequate staff time to support the project. It would also be a good idea to have them office based from time to time to improve communications.
- 13.5 Development of the trail: Look at developing better routes that involved cycling and walking as originally anticipated. Perhaps review the need for 100 sculptures and focus on quality rather than quantity for the route, consider the sustainability of the trail and carbon footprint of driving between locations.
- 13.6 Logistics of delivering and collecting otters to locations. Despite the goodwill and in-kind support of the Jolly Roger this did not go very smoothly for our CWT team or the host businesses. If we did it again we would contract this element out as it would save a huge amount of staff time and costs.
- 13.7 Better communication about the opening hours and availability of otters. We were a victim of our own success with this and did not anticipate that most otter spotters would want to spot all 100. Also support for businesses to help them maximise the benefit of being on the trail with a few ideas to help promotion.

- 13.8 We would look to develop a better range of associated merchandise for the project to sell through our Visitor Centres, including a paint your own mini version of the sculpture which has been done with other trails.
- 13.9 Review the auction process and how both the live and online auctions worked together; should the live auction have been after the online auction closed making it your last chance to buy an otter – would that have generated more income?

## **14. Summary**

- 14.1 The Authority took a calculated risk when agreeing to this new initiative and it paid off. The project was a huge success, the level of engagement was more than we could have imagined and the feedback has been incredible. It's been described as one of the best PR exercises we have ever done and created a real feel-good factor over the summer.
- 14.2 We owe a debt of gratitude to all our sponsors and valued partners for helping to make the project a success.
- 14.3 The level of support from both the artists and our valued partners contributed to the success of the project and ensured we made a good amount of income for the projects it will support, giving a lasting legacy. The artists' imagination and the quality of the sculptures helped create a magical trail. We have had many requests to do another one.

## **Samantha Hill Head of Communications, Economy and Fundraising**

Appendices:

Appendix A – Map of Competition entries

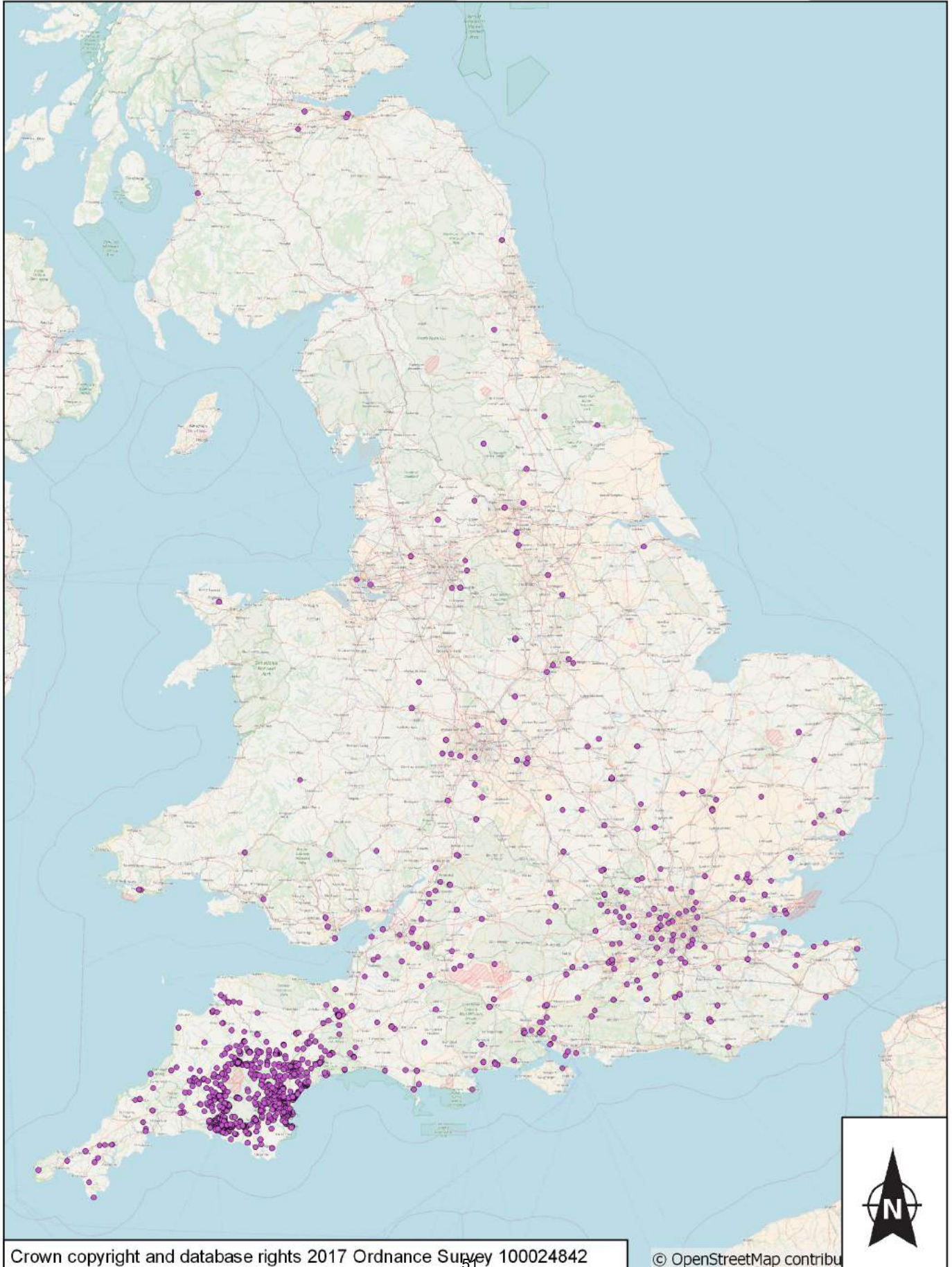
Appendix B – Business survey results

# Dartmoor National Park Authority

## Moor Otters - Competition Entries

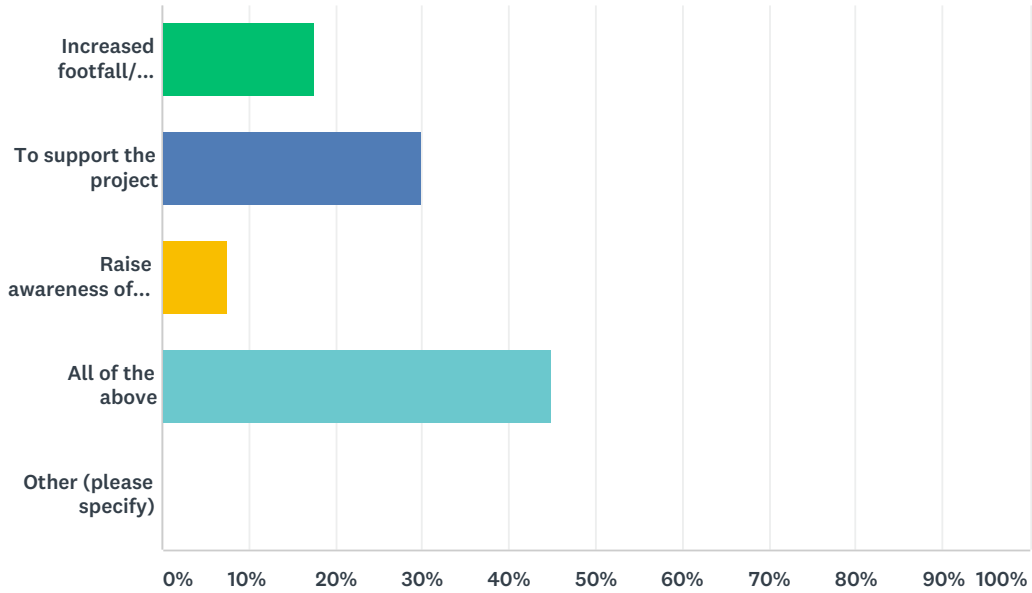


Compiled by mtravis on 13/11/2017



# Q1 What was your primary motivation for hosting an otter on the trail?

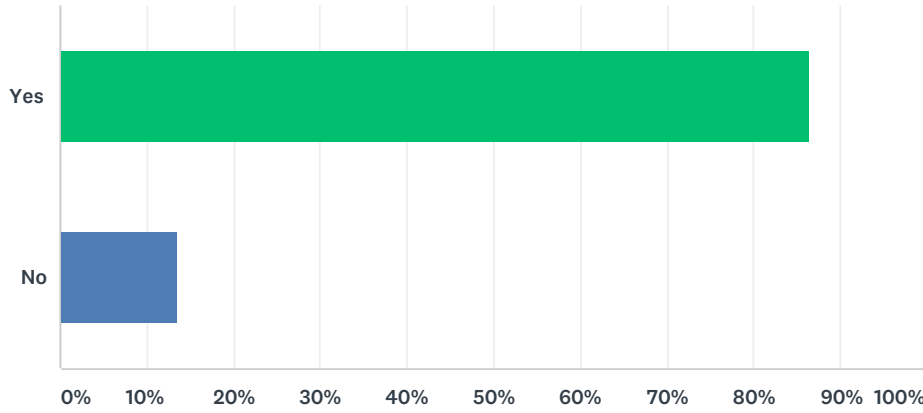
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Increased footfall/ turnover	17.50%	7
To support the project	30.00%	12
Raise awareness of my business	7.50%	3
All of the above	45.00%	18
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>40</b>

## Q2 Do you think the sponsorship was value for money?

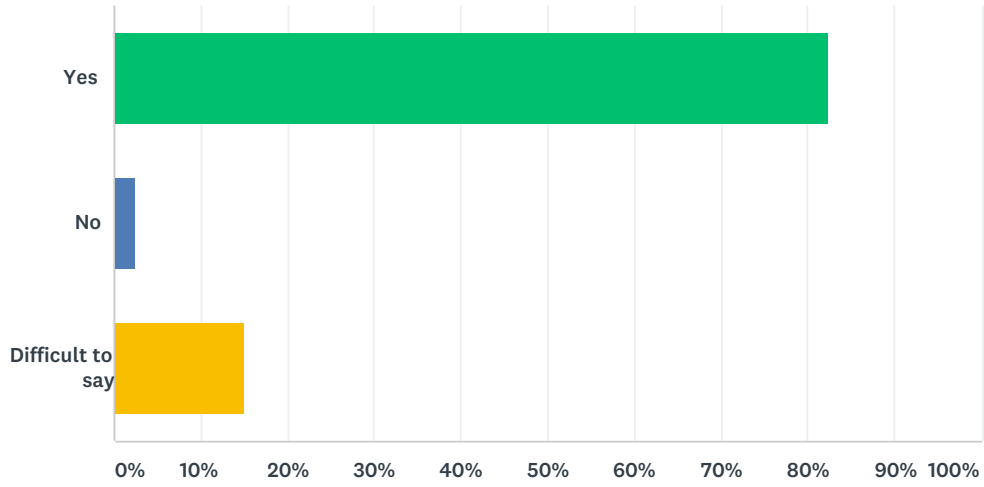
Answered: 37 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	86.49%	32
No	13.51%	5
TOTAL		37

### Q3 Did you notice an increase in footfall as a result of hosting an otter?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0

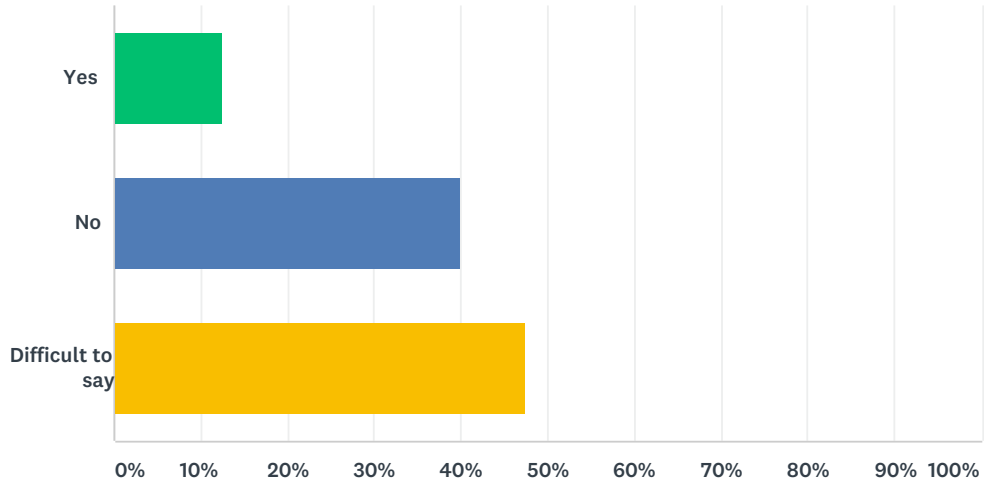


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.50%	33
No	2.50%	1
Difficult to say	15.00%	6
TOTAL		40



### Q4 Did you notice an increase in turnover as a result of hosting an otter?

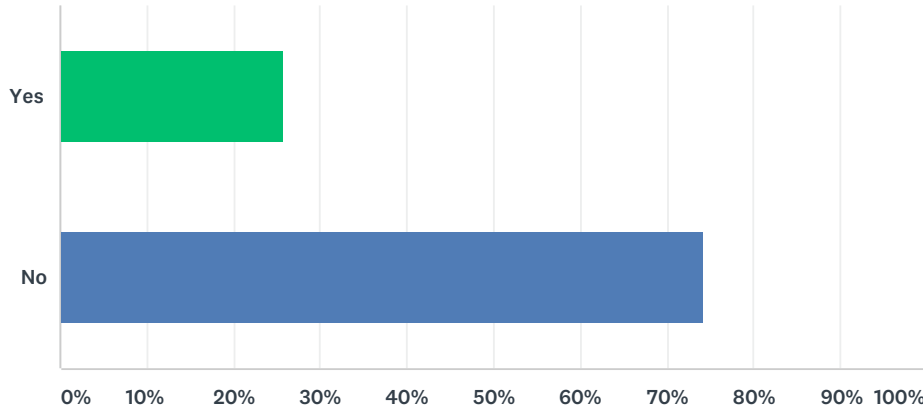
Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	12.50%	5
No	40.00%	16
Difficult to say	47.50%	19
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>40</b>

### Q5 Did you offer any otter related promotions or events?

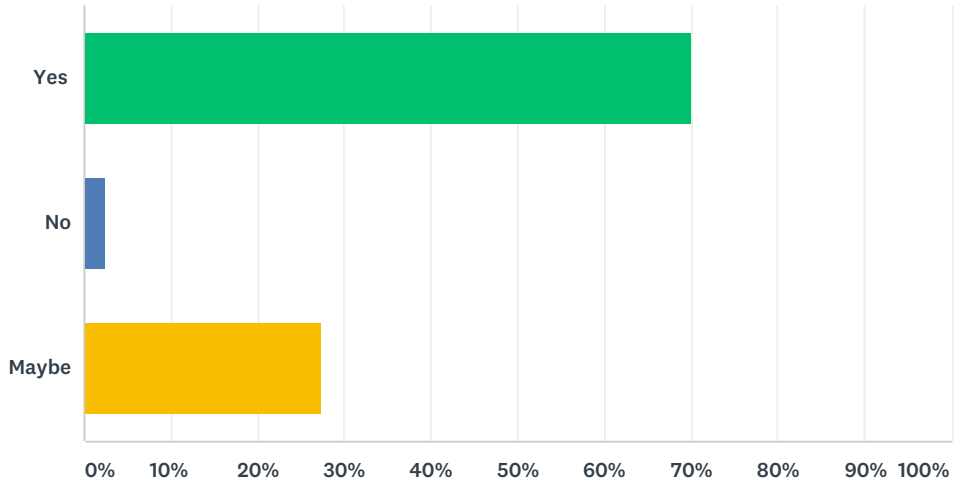
Answered: 39 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.64%	10
No	74.36%	29
TOTAL		39

### Q6 Would you take part in a similar initiative if we did it again?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.00%	28
No	2.50%	1
Maybe	27.50%	11
TOTAL		40

## Q7 How could we improve your experience if we did it again?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 10

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	1) An external plinth (even better if it was designed as a Tor") as we could then have placed it outside (we did request one, but it wasn't supplied!) 2) Some backup educational information for schools to use about the projects the DNPA were raising funds for. 3) Linkages to "otters" on Dartmoor information 4) Encouraging local clusters to work together on events 5) Consider listing where the otters were on the map in the promotional materials (we had a spreadsheet, but the public didn't have this). You could argue it made it more of a discovery trail through.	11/1/2017 11:52 AM
2	None	10/30/2017 9:02 AM
3	Provide a phone number so that booklets could be ordered directly by the staff as they require them - this job added extra work for me, when the middle man could've been cut out to make it all a bit smoother.	10/26/2017 4:35 PM
4	I don't think you could. It just wasn't the thing for my business.	10/26/2017 2:06 PM
5	More about hosts in booklets	10/25/2017 8:33 AM
6	take an order for what otter would best suit the business in advance - a more personalised option perhaps	10/23/2017 1:13 PM
7	Relate the cost of sponsorship to size of establishment? Offer shared sponsorship which I wasn't but later noticed was happening.	10/23/2017 12:04 PM
8	Web links would be important and more information for the visitors on each of the hosting locations.	10/23/2017 10:04 AM
9	See above comments	10/18/2017 1:31 PM
10	I feel we were well supported, and as a professional marketer, we had a plan for how we would incorporate the otter into our business.	10/17/2017 9:31 AM
11	Better communication about the delivery and collection. We got invited to some events but perhaps more supported participation in activities for members of the public?	10/16/2017 12:25 PM
12	I think initially you could give better information, I actually thought it was about real otter sponsorship! Maybe I should have read the email a little more thoroughly.	10/13/2017 10:24 PM
13	I don't think anything would improve the experience. It was very much like we expected really. Obviously if everyone bought something that would have been great but we're hoping it will have a residual effect and people now know what we do and may well come back. I personally think less driving would have been an improvement.	10/13/2017 4:52 PM
14	it seemed to work very well as it was.	10/13/2017 1:07 PM
15	Larger quantities of leaflets for customers to pick up. More promotional material for us to use in store and online.	10/13/2017 11:02 AM
16	Have a set of rules for "Otter Spotters" so that they respect the establishment they are visiting, rather than barging in in the middle of lunch for example and using the facilities and interrupting peoples meals. Also interrupting customers being served when asking for directions.	10/13/2017 11:01 AM
17	N/A	10/13/2017 9:16 AM
18	Not sure	10/12/2017 7:56 PM
19	By getting local schools more involved and local B and Bs. It would've been great to have some small otters for children to decorate too.	10/12/2017 5:57 PM
20	let me have more otters/beavers/owls...whatever you do next!	10/12/2017 4:11 PM
21	Very happy with the whole project.	10/12/2017 3:51 PM
22	All satisfactory.	10/12/2017 3:06 PM

## Moor Otters Business Feedback

23	Not really.	10/12/2017 12:05 PM
24	Provision of extra booklets . Making sure all Town and Borough Councils took part Better selection /rec-commendation of venues to contact for participation dont just ask BID who you should approach !!!!!	10/12/2017 11:01 AM
25	Ask venues for opening times? Not sue how to overcome this. It was difficult to dissuade Otter spotters from barging into a private party.	10/12/2017 10:30 AM
26	I would just suggest that the art, whatever it happens to be, was not put on such a high plinth so that it is more child friendly	10/12/2017 10:07 AM
27	More information on opening times of venues	10/12/2017 9:28 AM
28	It would be good to have a way people could get the otter numbers when businesses were closed	10/12/2017 9:24 AM
29	I think you dit it all perfectly	10/12/2017 8:44 AM
30	We have had a great experience so in terms of our own experience I don't think there is anything that could have improved it. I would have liked to have charged for people to come in to see the otter but I didn't think that was in the spirit of the initiative. We relied on trust for people to pay if they wanted to look around the rest of the museum.	10/12/2017 8:30 AM

## Q8 Is there any other comment you would like to make about the otter trail, project management and communication and idea in general?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 14

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	In general it was a great project that we were proud to be involved with. If we had a bit more advance notice, then we could have done more at working with the schools that were coming to our venue, to advise them about the project in advance of their visit. As well as building more rapport with the artist that provide the otter.	11/11/2017 11:52 AM
2	no	10/30/2017 9:02 AM
3	It worked far better than we anticipated, and we feel that there was an increase in footfall as a result. It is hard to say how much increased income we had as a result but we are sure we did manage to get a few new customers who have just discovered or re-discovered us and we hope they will visit again. Our one problem was people turning up after we had closed, trying to get in to see the otter (or sneaking in as we were closing, not actually buying anything and the poor shop staff were having to wait around for them before they could go home). Perhaps it could be made more clear that people doing a trail like this should consult individual opening hours or provide a key of the ones which are open in the daytime vs evening (ie a sun or moon?).	10/26/2017 4:35 PM
4	no	10/26/2017 2:06 PM
5	Fantastic project, worthy cause and well planned and executed. Very happy to have supported the project but my recovery was approx 10% expenditure	10/23/2017 12:04 PM
6	Its a great idea and project for this region as otters are synonymous with the area. May be have more otters across Devon not just confined to the moor towns.	10/23/2017 10:04 AM
7	Think it is an excellent idea and good to have the otters in place for this period of time	10/18/2017 8:43 PM
8	The number of venues not open at a weekend was disappointing eg dartmoor museum in Okehampton - they really should have been open at a time when people are naturally out and about. I encountered a few frosty landlords including the Highway Man pub who had such rigid trading hours we just couldn't see the otter - and at one point he was closing the pub and refused me entry telling me I was too late! In all I thought it was a well managed experience, and having visited 96 otters I thoroughly enjoyed being a host and a participant. We ran out of the first batch of brochures, and used up the second batch by the end of the programme. We were very glad to be re-stocked! Social media support was excellent. I found the PR agency weak, and again as a professional marketer, I felt there were opportunities missed.	10/17/2017 9:31 AM
9	It was a lovely statue and we enjoyed hosting it.	10/16/2017 12:25 PM
10	Was a great idea!	10/13/2017 10:24 PM
11	Thanks for organising it, it's been great to have been involved. ;)	10/13/2017 4:52 PM
12	Firstly, thank you for all your hard work. I have to admit I wasn't entirely sure that there would be much interest, so I was wrong there. We had lots of people otter-spotting in South Brent - single people, groups of retired people, families with small kids - people who came by bus and were having a day out visiting places they'd never been before. They all seemed incredibly enthusiastic and engaged, so I have no doubt that people loved it. All ages seemed to be having fun. I don't think it led to many sales, as mostly people popped in and out quickly on their way to the next otter - but they may come back - and at least they can now say they have been to South Brent! So all in all it seems to have been a resounding success.	10/13/2017 1:07 PM
13	Brilliant idea. Perhaps a £5k reservation fee is too high and you could have offered them to hosts for less - we were outbid on every otter we bid for, the maximum of £2,100.	10/13/2017 11:01 AM
14	Better understanding of location/communication.	10/13/2017 9:16 AM
15	It was excellent. Loved every minute of having a moor otter in our town.	10/12/2017 7:56 PM

## Moor Otters Business Feedback

16	The Golden Otters mystified quite a few people including customers and artists. The selection for Golden Otters didn't seem fair or transparent . On the whole we have been very pleased with how it was organised and communication was good .	10/12/2017 5:57 PM
17	superbly put together, managed and marketed. wish I could have come to more of the associated events though!	10/12/2017 4:11 PM
18	To work with organisations who are unable to display the project because they are closed at weekends etc. Perhaps list times when the project would be available to view.	10/12/2017 3:51 PM
19	All excellent	10/12/2017 3:06 PM
20	A couple of people mentioned (including my children) how good it would be if there could have been miniature otters for sale, which they could then paint and maybe even enter into a competition. Just an idea for additional revenue.	10/12/2017 12:28 PM
21	Great idea. Great Fun.	10/12/2017 12:05 PM
22	I think it was a fantastic initiative. Perhaps a linked theme with the prospective hosts for example it would have been great for us to host a sporty otter.	10/12/2017 10:30 AM
23	A bit more info at the start about the social media hashtags and links would be good	10/12/2017 10:07 AM
24	I believe this has been the best and most successful PR exercise DNPA have ever undertaken.	10/12/2017 9:28 AM
25	I thought it was a brilliant project and would love to see it continue	10/12/2017 9:24 AM
26	Better communication in terms of when the otter was arriving and leaving would have been helpful. I also think a charge could have been made for the checklist booklets. They were high quality and a lovely keepsake, even a nominal 50p/£1 would have gone some way to the cost of producing them, particularly as there was no charge to the public for going on the trail. It would have also been nice for each venue to have been separately featured at some point on the Moor Otter FB page to increase the profile of the host venues. In terms of merchandising small 'copies' of the otters would have sold extremely well, the otters are beautiful pieces of art and for those who couldn't bid on the main otter they would have been a great souvenir. All in all though it was a great experience for the Museum of Dartmoor Life, it raised footfall, turnover and our profile. We would gladly be involved again in similar initiatives.	10/12/2017 8:30 AM

## DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

1 December 2017

**MOOR THAN MEETS THE EYE (MTMTE) LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME  
YEAR 3 PROGRESS REPORT**Report of the *Moor than meets the eye* Scheme Manager

**Recommendation:** **That Members:**

- (i) **note progress to date; and**
- (ii) **note that a six month report will be presented at 4 May 2018 Audit and Governance Committee and end of year 4 report to Authority in December 2018**

**1 Background**

- 1.1 The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) granted Permission to Start on 18 August 2014 following the *Moor than meets the eye (MTMTE)* Landscape Partnership Scheme's (the Scheme) successful Round 2 application to the HLF Landscape Partnership Programme grant fund. This triggered the transition from the 'Development' to the 'Delivery' Stage. HLF has granted up to £1.9m towards the Scheme's total budget of £3,843,182 giving an Intervention Rate of 49.4%. The remaining funding comes from the *MTMTE* Partners
- 1.2 There are 34 co-ordinated projects within the scheme. Each project has a partner who is responsible for delivering the project (there are 13 partners in total). As lead partner, Dartmoor National Park Authority (the Authority) is responsible for the general administrative, financial and management functions of the scheme. These include:
- Overall administration of the Scheme
  - overall monitoring of actions and projects undertaken in the delivery of the Scheme
  - responsibility for completing and submitting grant claims to HLF on behalf of the Projects within the Scheme
  - taking receipt of grant claim monies from HLF
  - making payments to Project Partners
  - retaining core documents and records relating to the Scheme for audit and governance purposes.
- 1.3 Representatives from the 13 partners form the Landscape Partnership Board (the Board) and provide strategic oversight and direction for the Scheme and the *MTMTE* Staff Team.
- 1.4 The Projects vary in duration but all must be delivered by 17 August 2019 (five years after the Permission to Start).



## 2 Update on the Delivery Stage of the Scheme

- 2.1 Generally, the Projects and Scheme overall is well underway and a real sense of momentum is starting to build. There has been more recognition of individual projects and their activities, particularly through exposure and coverage of some higher-profile elements. This in turn is starting to see wider engagement and recognition of the Scheme in the community.
- 2.2 A summary of the Projects' progress and Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status against each key project performance measure can be seen in Appendix 1. This gives a snapshot of the Projects and the Scheme overall at the end of August 2017 (Y3Q4). This will be updated after the Y4Q1 reporting from Project Leads due by 7 December 2017. Whilst we are behind the forecast position submitted at the bid stage, in terms of progress and spend overall, revised plans have been submitted for Board and HLF approval which will enable the Projects to move forward over the remaining two years.
- 2.3 Unfortunately, two Projects have been formally withdrawn from delivery: PB8 – Pony Herd Identification and PD3 – East Shallowford Trust. The funding associated with these projects is currently ring-fenced for potential alternative proposals from the Partners. If none are forthcoming, we currently propose to use any available funding to offset the higher-than-bid-for core *MTMTE* Staff Team salary costs.
- 2.4 A further two projects have been significantly re-scoped this last year following challenges in their delivery: PA1 – Moorland Birds and PD1 – Dartmoor Diploma.
  - 2.4.1 The new PA1 – Dartmoor Moorland Bird Project has significantly increased its scope through wider partnership with The Duchy of Cornwall, RSPB, Devon Birds, NE, Dartmoor Preservation Association, Dartmoor Commoners Council, the Authority and farmers. We are working in collaboration to ensure Dartmoor remains a special place for birds while acting to encourage the recovery of species that are under threat. A moorland bird advisor, hosted by the RSPB, represents this partnership to share species and habitat information and provide advice to Dartmoor farmers and land users through a fully integrated approach with existing agencies, researchers and initiatives working on Dartmoor. Half of the advisor's post covers the *MTMTE* area studied at the start of the original project.
  - 2.4.2 The training provision originally envisaged under the original PD1 – Dartmoor Diploma project has been re-scoped into two separate projects: PD4 – Heritage Skills Training and PD5 – Conservation Apprentices. Both projects successfully drew in wider partners and funding to support their delivery and are well underway.
  - 2.4.3 A new Training Coordinator was appointed in August 2017 to run the PD4 – Heritage Skills Training project, building on the successful training delivered predominantly to the farming community, directly

through the Hill Farm Project. Offering bespoke training opportunities ensuring that relevant local heritage skills are sustained and used into the future, the project is working in partnership with the Dartmoor Hill Farm project, to develop and organise the delivery of courses and opportunities over the next two years.

- 2.4.4 We successfully recruited two new apprentices under the new PD5 – Conservation Apprentices project, providing two, two-year apprenticeships hosted by the Authority’s Conservation Works Team (one of the apprentice posts is funded by *MTMTE*). Targeting young people who do not want to continue with formal education and are seeking work, the aim is to help young people develop the skills and experience to start a career in heritage conservation. Combining practical work and public engagement training, it is intended to deliver a rounded and positive experience for the apprentices and also for the partner organisations that will benefit from their contributions to the landscape management of Dartmoor. We are currently shortlisting 55 applicants for the third post in the project and the successful applicant will hopefully be joining the team in January 2018.
- 2.5 One project, PC8 – Postbridge Visitor Centre, remains without an approved plan for delivery.
- 2.5.1 Members will recall the difficulties experienced in delivering the original project within budget, where the ambitions being met and the value for money of the proposed extension were deemed not best use of funds.
- 2.5.2 An alternative plan has been discussed in outline with the Landscape Partnership Board and HLF, and agreed in principle. This sees the enhancement of the Visitor Centre, the welcome and immediate surrounding area to ensure that Postbridge becomes a ‘destination’ where people can understand and appreciate the special qualities of the National Park and its rich cultural heritage. The proposal is currently under development for approval by Board and HLF in January 2018 and anticipated to be complete by Y5Q4 (summer 2019).
- 2.6 At the end of Y3Q4, the Scheme had spent £2.228m (58%). Whilst this is behind the original bid submission estimates, revised plans have been submitted and we are confident that for most projects there will be an achievable and deliverable outcome forecast. All projects will continue to be closely monitored and reported to the Board. The Board has specifically identified the following projects to provide regular updates to ensure that progress remains at a satisfactory level:
- PB1 - Bellever & Postbridge Trails
  - PC8 - Postbridge VC
  - PC1 - Dartmoor Story

There are 2 other projects that are currently being re-scoped, with new project plans for Board approval in January:

- PA5 – Unveiling the Heritage of the High Moor
- PB5 – Welcome to Widecombe

We have made significant progress over the last six months in confirming and agreeing plans to control some significant forecast under and overspends on four projects. All have either been underwritten by the partner responsible for delivering the projects or costs agreed to be transferred to other projects. None of these plans have affected the intended outcomes and resultant benefits of the projects and Scheme overall.

2.7 Many of the Projects are delivering significant tangible outputs, experiences and outcomes. Some significant and recent examples include:

- *PA2 - Haymeadows:*
  - Supporting Dartmoor's first meadow conference, attended by over 100 interested parties, followed by an engaging public open day: Meadow Magic. There is a real opportunity to have lasting legacy for the project by continuing to support and mobilise the Moor Meadows enthusiast group
- *PA6 - Higher Uppacott:*
  - Completion of internal works
- *PB2 - Parishscapes:*
  - Sympathetic re-carving and conservation of Buckland Beacon's Ten Commandment Stones
  - Bovey Tracey's Granite Elements project and exhibitions (the latest is currently in Princetown Visitor Centre)
- *PB5 - Welcome to Widecombe:*
  - The first phase of village interpretation was completed this summer, engaging visitors in a series of trails around village landmarks to tell the story of the village and its surrounding Dartmoor landscape
- *PB7 - In the footsteps of the Victorians:*
  - Final preparations for the first major exhibition at RAMM to examine how artists have portrayed Dartmoor in this period: "Dartmoor – A Wild & Wondrous Region" taking place between 22 December 2017 and 31 March 2018
- *PC5 - Wray Valley Trail:*
  - The final section of the route is currently under construction and should be complete by January 2018.

2.8 We've organised or supported over 230 events to date, attended by over 9,000 people. 3,058 people have been involved in 64 events this year, including:

- conferences
- exhibitions
- guided walks
- open days
- school links
- talks
- workshops, and
- family activities.

2.9 Over 500 people subscribe to our monthly newsletter which forms our main communications channel along with our social media presence. This has continued its significant exposure in the latter half of this year, mainly in response to the central staff team's sustained effort generating content and raising awareness of our activities. Our Twitter has 580 followers with our tweets being seen over 40,000 times/month on average over the last three months. This continues to be a significant step change, and in response to scheduled daily and opportunistic response to associated tweets by the central staff team. Facebook coverage continues in parallel with Twitter and we have grown to 800 followers.

2.10 We have had articles published in the local, regional and national press and publications including:

- a double page feature on access projects in the summer Active Dartmoor magazine distributed through over 80 outlets, online and by mailshot to a readership around 30,000
- a double page feature on the Scheme over the last year in the winter edition of Dartmoor Magazine (12,000 readership)
- a volunteering piece in the October issue of BBC Wildlife magazine
- local and regional coverage of the Ten Commandment Stones' conservation, including TV coverage on BBC Spotlight.

One of the challenges we continue to face is engaging all our partners and people involved in the Scheme to showcase our successes and increasing our exposure and recognition in the community. Hopefully this will be helped with further pro-active engagement across all parties involved in the Scheme and our Projects.

2.11 We continue to be very lucky with so much support from a passionate and willing volunteer group helping us deliver our projects. We hope that they also benefit from the support, training and opportunities we give them. The Scheme has a £114k target for volunteering input (equivalent to 2,280 'unskilled' days). We exceeded this target in 2016 and our volunteers have already kindly given: 2,071 'Unskilled', 655 'Skilled' and 76 'Professional'

days, equivalent to almost £230k in contributions through diverse areas such as:

- historical research
- practical conservation management tasks
- trail improvements
- developing interpretation such as leaflets, guides, books and panels
- archaeological surveys and excavations
- recording and monitoring wildlife, and
- supporting our communications.

2.12 In October, we received the preliminary results of our **Interim Monitoring & Evaluation survey** which canvassed a select group of Board members, the Staff Team, Project Leads, volunteers, participants and attendees at events.

Some of the striking quotes included:

- *“so many good little things going on”*
- *“A wide range of organisations are now all talking”*
- *“Excellent stimulating day”*
- *“We need to define the role of the CSG”*
- *“Lots of positivity. People in different parishes are working together and are inspired.”*
- *“People recognise man’s role in Dartmoor more”*
- *“This Scheme is taking it out to them, making it easier”*
- *“a softer type of legacy we’re trying to form”*
- *“I learnt so much, enjoyed excellent company.”*
- *“Some projects are running behind...the next 6 months are crucial”*

2.13 The key emerging themes to focus on over the remaining two years, and largely as expected, were:

- Project planning – delayed projects
- Communications – Partner support and the role of the Community Stakeholders’ Group
- Scheme management & governance – reporting & related decision-making
- Legacy planning
- Increasing understanding and awareness
- Monitoring – improving the amount and standardisation of monitoring evidence across the projects.

2.14 Overall, the main findings were that positive change is beginning to be seen and that we’re heading in the right direction. Relationships with communities and organisations are also being strengthened.

### **3 Key issues and actions**

- 3.1 As to be expected with project delivery, the main areas of concern and focus continue to be on:
- Projects:
    - behind progress
    - forecast under/overspent
  - Ensuring accurate project spend forecasts
  - Increasing requests for change control and agreeing this with the HLF, particularly within the remaining lifetime of the Scheme and its funding.
- 3.2 The projects identified in paragraph 2.6 are due to report back to Board in January 2018 where we expect approval to be given to the new project plans.

### **4 Financial implications**

- 4.1 As the Lead Partner and Accountable Body, the Authority does carry a significant risk in managing the Scheme and the Scheme Cash Flow position.
- 4.2 The Authority has committed a £200k contribution to the Scheme's Common Fund, which is match-funding for the Higher Uppacott and Postbridge Visitor Centre projects. However, if these projects did not come to fruition the Authority would still need to commit this money to the Scheme to enable full delivery.
- 4.3 At the end of the first year, the Scheme was £900k behind the bid forecast, but feedback from HLF suggested that this was typical of the majority of Landscape Partnership Schemes at the start of their Delivery Stage.
- 4.4 At the end of the third year, the Scheme's expenditure is still £929k behind the original bid forecast. This highlights the need for some of our Projects to accelerate their delivery in the remaining two years in order to ensure we drawdown all of the Scheme's remaining HLF funding. If some projects do underspend there is a risk that other projects (that have a high HLF funding intervention rate) cannot be fully supported, with resultant outcomes and benefits not being realised for both the individual projects and Scheme overall. The current financial risk to the Authority is £127k.

However with some revised project plans in place, some re-scoping being undertaken and robust monitoring, management and oversight in place, there is every reason to feel confident that the Scheme will progress as planned and deliver the outcomes sought.

It should be noted though that as we near the end of the Scheme, there will also be more limited time left to make alternative plans, seek change control and still be able to deliver.

## **5 Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 The projects being delivered were selected to improve access to and understanding of the *MTMTE* (and wider Dartmoor) area by all sectors of society; support local communities and businesses; and deliver a range of environmental benefits.

MARK ALLOTT

Background papers: NPA/15/039  
NPA/AG/16/015  
NP/AG/16/017  
NPA/17/004

Attachments: Appendix 1 – Project Status Summary

## MTMTE - Landscape Partnership Scheme

### Project Status

IR	ID	Project	Project Performance - Status (RAG)							
			Overall	Schedule (Timescale)	Quality	Cost position	Scope	Benefits	Risk	
47%	PA1	Moorland Birds	G	G	G	A	G	G	G	
56%	PA2	Haymeadows	A	A	G	A	A	G	A	
56%	PA3	Natural Connections	A	A	G	A	A	G	A	
31%	PA4	Discovering the Nature of the Bovey Valley	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
86%	PA5	Unveiling the heritage of the High Moor and Forests	G	G	G	R	R	G	G	
35%	PA6	Higher Uppacott	A	A	A	A	A	G	A	
100%	PA7	Ponies, Pounds and Driftways	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
20%	PA8	Ancient Boundaries, Modern Farming	G	G	G	A	G	G	A	
100%	PA9	Hameldown WWII Bomber Crash Archaeological Survey	COMPLETE Remaining budget could be used to produce summary video							
47%	PB1	Bellever and Postbridge Trails	A	A	G	A	A	G	A	
96%	PB2	Parishscapes	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
90%	PB3	Moor Medieval	G	G	G	G	A	G	R	
50%	PB4	Engaging with the Nature of the Bovey Valley	G	G	G	A	G	G	G	
100%	PB5	Welcome to Widecombe	G	A	G	R	R	G	G	
100%	PB6	Managing Volunteers	A	G	G	A	A	G	G	
47%	PB7	In the Footsteps of the Victorians	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
25%	PB8	Pony Herd Identification Project	ON HOLD							
50%	PB9	Moor Boots	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
98%	PB10	Whitehorse Community Play	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
78%	PC1	Discovering the Dartmoor Story	G	A	G	A	A	G	A	
100%	PC4	Brimpts Tin Trail	A	G	G	A	G	G	G	
0%	PC5	Wray Valley Trail	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
100%	PC6	Heritage Trails	G	A	A	G	G	G	G	
76%	PC7	Ferworthy Reservoir Improved Access	COMPLETE							
46%	PC8	Postbridge Visitor Centre	R	R	G	R	R	G	R	
32%	PD1	Dartmoor Diploma	REPLACED BY PD4 AND PD5							
63%	PD2	EcoSkills	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	
33%	PD3	East Shallowford Trust	ON HOLD							
31%	PD4	Heritage Skills Training	G	G	G	A	G	G	G	
31%	PD5	Conservation Apprentices	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	



## DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK PLANNING AUTHORITY

1 December 2017

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS, SECTION 211 NOTIFICATIONS  
(WORKS TO TREES IN CONSERVATION AREAS)  
AND HEDGEROW REMOVAL NOTICES  
DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

Report of the Trees and Landscape Officer

Recommendation : **That the decisions be noted.**

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS**

Teignbridge

**Ref: 17/0036                                      46 Miner Close, Ashburton                                      SX 7604 7040**

Application to pollard a sycamore tree. The tree has a large basal cavity and pollarding will retain the tree. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

**West Devon**

**Ref: 17/0017                                      Rushford Bridge, Chagford                                      SX 7048 8816**

Application to fell a beech tree. The application was withdrawn.

**Ref: 17/0035                                      Rushford Bridge, Chagford                                      SX 7048 8816**

Application to crown lift and reduce two beech trees. The works are minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

**Ref: 17/0018**

**The Old Station, Horrabridge**

**SX 5103 8950**

Application to re-pollard five semi-mature sycamore trees and to reduce a hawthorn. The works are minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

**Ref: 17/0037**

**13 Manor Drive, Chagford**

**SX 6987 8735**

Application to raise the canopy of a mature oak tree. The works are minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

### **South Hams**

**Ref: 17/0033**

**1 Bishops Mead, South Brent**

**SX 6697 6034**

Application to fell a mature sycamore tree. The tree is unbalanced and has a basal cavity. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. Replacement planting of a half standard oak tree within the crown spread of the original during the first planting season following felling.

### **SECTION 211 NOTICES**

#### **Teignbridge**

**Ref: 17/0027**

**2 The Orchard, Throwleigh**

**SX 6684 9078**

Notification to fell a maple and reduce a birch and rowan tree. The trees have minimal public amenity value and the works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 17/0028**

**26 Stapledon Lane, Ashburton**

**SX 7558 7005**

Notification to fell a pine, cypress and willow tree. The trees have minimal public amenity value and the the felling will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 17/0030**                      **Beverley Gardens, Ashburton**                      **SX 7608 7060**

Notification to reduce an oak tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 17/0031**                      **24 Market Close, Buckfastleigh**                      **SX 7340 6621**

Notification to fell a rowan tree. The tree has minimal public amenity value and the works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

### **West Devon**

**Ref: 17/0029**                      **8 Warren Road, Mary Tavy**                      **SX 5057 7953**

Notification to pollard an ash tree. The tree has minimal public amenity value and the felling will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 17/0032**                      **Field Cottage, Mary Tavy**                      **SX 5030 7927**

Notification to fell a cypress tree. The tree is growing very close to a property, it is multi stemmed and there is a high risk of stem failure in high winds.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 17/0034**                      **Walkhampton Church**                      **SX 5368 7017**

Notification to fell a pine tree. The tree is in poor condition and potentially unstable.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

### **BRIAN BEASLEY**

(For further information please contact Brian Beasley – Trees & Landscape Officer)