



## Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes (DDL) – Moorscapes Community Grant Scheme

### Moorscapes Assessment Panel

### Working structure and Terms of Reference

#### Purpose of the Panel

To consider and decide on applications for project grants submitted to the Moorscapes Community Grant Scheme, according to the agreed criteria for the scheme as published in the information for applicants and in accordance with the scoring system provided. Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA), as lead DDL Project Partners are responsible for appointing the panel, in consultation with the DDL Executive Board.

#### Role of Moorscapes Assessment Panel (MAP)

The panel shall:

- The Panel will be accountable to Dartmoor National Park Authority in the first instance, DNPA may consult with the DDL Executive and/or Partnership Board if necessary.
- Refer all enquiries for the DDL Moorscapes grant to DNPA's lead officer for the DDL programme without prejudicing their decision making
- Receive a report and recommendation on all valid applications from the DDL officers and should consider all applications along with the DDL officer report and recommendations
- Assess applications, giving regard to the Moorscapes published guidance, Heritage Fund Terms of Grant, DDL aims and approved purposes and other guiding documents, and marking applications to achieve the desired outcomes of the Moorscapes Grant Scheme
- Assess applications using the scoring system provided
- Award, partially award, defer or refuse applications
- Give precise reasons for decisions - these reasons should refer to the guidance documents and scheme criteria.
- Treat decisions as confidential until notice has been issued by DDL officers to the applicant.
- Review and make recommendations for alterations the Panel's Terms of Reference; these recommendations will be considered by the DDL Executive Board and the Chair of the panel
- Champion the Moorscapes Grant Scheme within their own communities and networks.

- Have regard to the [Nolan Principles](#) in all its affairs

### **Membership of the LAP**

The Moorscapes Assessment Panel shall comprise of the following representatives/members:

- Ivybridge Community
- Princetown Community
- Okehampton Community
- Member with knowledge and experience of public engagement and communication activities, including volunteering
- Member with knowledge and experience of natural heritage in the context of the DDL area and aims.
- Member with knowledge and experience of creative community activities.
- Member with knowledge and experience of accessibility in the context of the DDL aims and area.
- Representative from DDL Executive Board.

In appointing the Panel members we recognise that people may have knowledge, skills and interests that relate to more than one of these seats/criteria. When deciding on Panel members DNPA and the DDL Executive Board will aim to appoint seven Panel members who collectively best represent the criteria and the Scheme's successful delivery.

- The panel should as far as is practical represent the diversity of the people who live, work and spend time in the DDL area.
- Panel members should have good specialist knowledge in their field, good knowledge of the local area and the respect and support of their peers.
- The quorum of the panel should be 50% +1.
- If a panel member fails to attend three consecutive meetings then he/she will be asked to step down from the panel unless significant mitigating circumstances has prevented attendance (this will be at the discretion of the National Park Authority)
- The panel may keep its membership under review and may, at the discretion of the Chair and the DDL Executive Board, invite additional members or remove members.
- The Panel should appoint a chair and vice chair from among its membership at the first meeting.
- The chair and vice chair will undertake these roles for one of the DDL programme years, at the end of which the Panel will repeat the election process (at the first meeting of the new financial/programme year).
- The secretariat shall be provided by DDL officers.
- The Panel membership should be available to the public, if requested

### **Organisation of MAP meetings**

- The Panel shall meet on a regular basis to consider applications with an expectation that this will be no less than every 12 weeks. The schedule of meetings will be

determined by DNPA. Additional meetings can be called at a minimum of 5 working days' notice.

- Meetings should be considered quorate where at least 50% +1 of the membership is present.
- All members of the panel have equal voting powers and decisions should be taken by a majority of those present. In the event of no clear conclusion the Chair will have a second and casting vote.
- Where it is considered (by officer or panel member) that a member has a significant conflict of interest in a matter under discussion, that member must be excluded from that part of the meeting (they will have to leave the meeting or disconnect from a video link), they will have no vote on such applications and the conflict of interest noted in the minutes. Panel members will have a responsibility to declare an interest in any application under discussion. Where minor interests occur (such as acquaintance with the applicant but no relationship), these interests should still be declared and recorded, the remainder of the Panel will decide on the best way to proceed (e.g. take part in discussion but not vote)
- All applications and matters discussed at grants panel meetings should be treated in the strictest confidence, though it should also be noted that all communication in relation to the fund is on the public record and subject to Freedom of Information legislation.

### **Administration**

- All meetings should be scheduled where possible to suit the majority of members, meetings can be called at a minimum of 5 working days' notice.
- The agenda, supporting papers and report shall be issued at least one (1) week before the date of a meeting, by email.
- Panels will usually meet in person but if necessary can choose to meet virtually and in exceptional circumstances decide by correspondence by local agreement.
- All administration of the panel including note taking will be the responsibility of the DNPA. This includes reasons for decisions made at the meeting.
- Decisions of the panel including the reasons for those decisions should be issued in writing to applicants within 1 week of the date at which it was agreed.
- Records of the panel meeting should be circulated to members within two (2) weeks of a meeting. They shall include:
  - Attendance
  - Matters arising from previous meetings (e.g. progress on deferred applications)
  - A decision record for each application
  - Financial information (committed and spent funds)

### **Conflicts of interest**

All members of the Moorscapes Assessment Panel are required to adhere to the Nolan Principles of conduct in public office<sup>1</sup>. Panel members will be expected to declare any pecuniary interest or other conflict of interest in projects being assessed.

Panel members may apply to the fund but, will not be involved in assessing their own applications nor may they lobby other panel members for support. Where it is considered (by officer or panel member) that a member has a potentially compromising interest in a matter under discussion, that member should be excluded from that part of the meeting, must abstain from voting on the application, and the conflict of interest noted in the records.

## **Appeals**

Appeals on decisions made on applications should be made to DNPA.

Applicants can only query a funding decision if they think that the Moorscapes Assessment Panel has:

- made a mistake with the application
- made a processing error
- got the law wrong

Applicants must set out to the reason for their appeal under one (or more) of these 3 criteria. Information on how to appeal shall be included in the written decision from the panel as a matter of course.

Applicants should be provided with the following advice for making an appeal:

- An appeal must be made within 10 working days of receiving your application decision
- DNPA will aim to communicate with you about your appeal within 15 working days from when you submitted your appeal.

Appeals should be dealt with locally in the first instance by the DDL Executive Board. Where necessary, the DDL Executive Board can escalate the appeal to the Heritage Fund for advice and further management of the appeal.

## **Complaints**

Complaints (separate to appeals on applications) should be directed to DNPA.

Applicants should be provided with the following advice for making a complaint:

- DNPA will aim to communicate with you about your complaint within 15 working days from when you submitted your complaint, although if the matter is complex this may need to be extended, within a reasonable period, after explaining to why.

The DDL Executive Board should address the complaint in the first instance. Should an applicant think their complaint is not being dealt with adequately, the DDL Executive

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>

Board can escalate the appeal to DNPA's Leadership Team and/or Heritage Fund for advice and further management of the complaint.

Dartmoor National Park Authority has formal complaint and compliment procedures in place and fall under the jurisdiction of the independent Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman which is the final stage for complaints about the local authorities (i.e. protected landscapes).

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