



NPA/22/001

## Dartmoor National Park Authority

7 January 2022

# Consultation Response : Teignbridge Local Plan

### Report of the Head of Forward Planning and Economy

**Recommendation:** That Members agree the principles of the response to the Teignbridge Local Plan consultation and delegate Authority to the Head of Forward Planning and Economy in consultation with the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to submit a formal response.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the key issues in the current consultation draft Teignbridge Local Plan, identifies main points which DNPA should include in its response, and seeks Members' agreement to submit a formal response to the consultation.

## 2 The Teignbridge Local Plan consultation

2.1 The Teignbridge Local Plan covers the district of Teignbridge outside the National Park. The current Local Plan was adopted in 2014. This is the fourth consultation regarding the draft Teignbridge Local Plan. Teignbridge intends to publish the combined single Regulation 19 (submission version) consultation in July 2022.

2.2 It is important to note the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), a joint strategic plan covering Exeter, Teignbridge (outside DNP), East Devon and Mid Devon is no longer proceeding. The Teignbridge Local Plan will therefore now cover strategic matters as well as development management policies, and smaller site allocations.

2.3 DNPA has commented on previous consultation stages. It should be welcomed that Teignbridge is actively pursuing the review of its Plan, which will ensure good planning decisions can be made and upheld and the development strategy is genuinely plan-led.

2.4 This consultation covers three main areas:

- Renewable Energy including options for wind turbine sites, and wind and solar power policies
- Provision for Gypsies and travellers
- Small residential development sites

### 3 Key Issues

3.1 As identified previously, the key cross boundary issues which we would identify for the Teignbridge Local Plan (as a whole) include:

- Housing delivery – ensuring the overall identified housing need is met across the Exeter Housing Market Area (HMA) and that the Plan’s approach to housing delivery recognises the ‘great weight’ given to National Parks by supporting the Dartmoor Local Plan’s focus on affordable local needs.
- Taking into account the setting of the National Park in appropriate policies and site identifications. Noting also the new NPPF 2021 wording which adds, in respect of National Parks, that “any development within their settings should be sensitively located and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the designated landscapes”.
- Working together to understand and mitigate the recreation impact arising from development, including large scale development leading to population increase outside the National Park.
- Taking a collaborative approach to conserve and enhance the natural environment, including biodiversity net gain, upstream catchment management, protection of designated sites (for example the South Hams SAC) and habitat connectivity.

3.2 In addition to the above points in relation to the Local Plan, DNPA and Teignbridge District Council work closely together to support communities, including through, for example, affordable housing enabling, economic development, community projects and grant funding, green infrastructure, and sports and play space.

3.3 This consultation phase covers the following three areas:

- **Renewable energy:** The Plan describes that the development strategy for renewable energy is led by the evidence of where those sources of energy exist in sufficient quantity (e.g., in the most windy or sunny locations) and the constraints applied in the modelling exercise (e.g., avoiding areas of grade 1 agricultural land). The development strategy for wind energy is therefore to identify and allocate sites for wind turbines in the most suitable locations for generating power, whilst avoiding and/or minimising negative impacts on the built and natural environment. Specific allocations are not proposed for solar PV energy infrastructure, because the evidence points to a very significant proportion of the district being suitable for Solar PV. Therefore, the consultation proposes a criteria-based policy which would be used to determine where planning applications for solar PV are suitable. This draft policy would seek to enable solar PV development whilst minimising negative effects on the built and natural environment.
- **Gypsy and traveller provision:** The Local Plan has to provide land to accommodate sufficient Gypsy and traveller pitches in the same way that it has to provide land for additional housing and employment development. Work has been commissioned to identify the current and future needs of Gypsies and travellers, and those of travelling show-people. A draft policy was included in the draft Local Plan Part 1 consultation (March 2020). The policy will be updated in light of consultation responses and further evidence.

- **Small residential development sites:** The consultation includes 24 small residential site options. These sites are being consulted upon following a call for sites during which landowners submitted their land as an option. This is in response to the Government's requirement for Councils to allocate 10% of their housing target on small sites of 1 hectare or less. It is therefore important that there are sufficient options to meet this requirement.

## 4 Proposed Response

4.1 It is recommended that Members delegate authority for the detailed points in a response to the Local Plan consultation. The key issues which it is proposed the Authority should include in its response are as follows:

1. Solar Photovoltaic (PV) development. The Local Plan identifies a significant area of the district as being suitable for solar PV development. It has a permissive criteria-based policy for the determination of applications. The policy states solar PV is "strongly supported in principle within areas identified as having suitable solar resource" and that "development will be permitted where, on balance, the contribution towards renewable energy provision and climate change mitigation outweighs significant harm, which cannot be mitigated".

Whilst the support for renewable energy development is welcomed, the language of the policy is considered to lack consistency and strength in responding to applications which may impact upon the setting of the National Park. This would be inconsistent with NPPF paragraph 176, which states "development within [a National Park's] setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas".

DNPA therefore objects to this policy as currently worded. Officers would offer to work with the District Council to identify alternative appropriate wording, potentially in conjunction with a review of the areas suitable for PV development (reviewing or refining the criteria used to identify these areas in order to better take into account the setting of the Dartmoor National Park).

2. As described above, development of wind turbines can only take place where suitable areas are identified in the Local Plan. A number of areas have been identified by Teignbridge District Council. Some of these have the potential to impact upon the setting of the Dartmoor National Park.

- Land to the north-west of View Farm and south west of Staddon Road The valued landscape attributes for this landscape type are:

- An intricate, 'patchwork' landscape of productive farmland, woods, small settlements and rural lanes.
- Gently rolling topography dissected by small streams.
- Bands of mixed and broadleaved woodlands, along with patches of neutral and marshy grasslands.
- Strong medieval field pattern on lower slopes and valley floors.
- Pastoral character with patches of rough grazing serving as a reminder of the close proximity of the moorland.
- Scattered villages, hamlets and farmsteads linked by a network of narrow winding lanes.

- Traditional orchards associated with farmsteads and settlements.

There are very few modern vertical structures in this landscape and the introduction of wind turbines will have an impact on the character of the local landscape and the setting of the National Park. This is a tranquil landscape and turbines are dynamic features that will impact on the perception of tranquillity. Whilst the identification of an area does not provide sufficient detail to understand the extent of impact, it is considered that wind turbines on these sites may be inconsistent with NPPF paragraph 176 (see above). In the absence of detail regarding the scale of turbines on these sites, DNPA would object to these allocations.

- West Of Tedburn St Mary, Ducks Brook, Land North West of View Farm and West of Downhouse Farm

Turbines on these sites may be visible from the National Park, but the distance of the sites from the National Park boundary will reduce their visual impact. Whilst it may be possible to introduce small scale turbines into this landscape without them causing significant harm, the level of harm will depend on siting, size and numbers of turbines introduced onto the land. There is a risk of creating a band of wind turbines surrounding the boundary of the National Park and consideration has to be given to cumulative impact.

The introduction of turbines will have an impact on the character of the landscape, but the impact can only be assessed when there is some understanding of size and scale of the proposal.

There is the potential for wind turbines on these sites to have an impact on the setting of the National Park and in the absence of detail regarding the scale of turbines or clearer evidence regarding landscape impact on these sites, DNPA would place a holding objection against the identification of these sites.

3. Gypsy and traveller site allocation (Higher Mead, Ashburton). Dartmoor National Park Authority would object to development in this location. This is consistent with the approach DNPA agreed in considering a housing development site on the eastern side of the dual carriageway. The site is distant from the town centre and functionally divorced from Ashburton itself which lies almost wholly on the opposite side of the dual carriageway. Development in this location would represent poor placemaking, creating a separate residential area of Ashburton inevitably reliant upon private car use to access town centre amenities.

Good planning should create accessible and permeable development which integrates well with adjoining settlements; residential areas separated by rail lines or trunk roads in this way do not create integrated and cohesive communities. Development in this location would not be read as part of the townscape of Ashburton or promote activities and patterns of use which promote community cohesion.

Whilst additional patronage of local shops and services would be welcome the use of the town centre by residents in this location in a way which meets our shared carbon reduction objectives would be dependent upon significant

infrastructure improvements to encourage walking and cycling and avoid additional vehicular pressure upon an already congested town centre.

The scale of the development option proposed would require comprehensive assessment of the need for additional or improved infrastructure and services (in particular education) in the settlement along with clear co-operation in order to establish whether their delivery within the National Park Local Plan Area is achievable. It would also be critical that any additional infrastructure or service needs do not prejudice our shared objective of meeting affordable housing needs within the settlement.

Whilst the area identified relates to an existing caravan park, the scale of development on the site is not defined, and development in this location would require detailed assessment of any impact upon the landscape setting of the National Park.

Development in this location would seem to be at odds with the Teignbridge Local Plan's development strategy which aims that *"new development is focussed into key locations ... maximising the co-location of new homes with new and existing job opportunities, services and public transport links. This approach secures better access to key local facilities and services for new residents, protects the vast majority of the countryside, and also minimises overall car use (or distances driven) which can have significant benefits in helping to address the impacts of climate change."*

4. Land South of Strode Road, Buckfastleigh. An area of land for 10-14 homes is identified.

DNPA would support the provision of affordable housing to meet identified need in Buckfastleigh and encourage an assessment of the need for additional or improved infrastructure and services in the settlement (taking into account development provided for by the Adopted Dartmoor Local Plan) along with clear co-operation in order to establish whether their delivery within the National Park Local Plan Area is achievable. It would also be critical that any additional infrastructure or service needs do not prejudice our shared objective of meeting affordable housing needs within the settlement.

## **5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 This report has no financial implications for DNPA.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 This report seeks Members' agreement to submit a formal detailed response to the District Council in respect of the Local Plan consultation. It described the key points to be included in a response and recommends that Members delegate Authority to the Head of Forward Planning and Economy in consultation with the Chief Executive (NPO) to complete the final detailed response in January.

DAN JANOTA



NPA/22/002

## Dartmoor National Park Authority

7 January 2022

# Moor Otters Arts Trail Evaluation

### Report of The Head of Communications and Fundraising

**Recommendation: That Members note the content of the project summary and evaluation report and lessons learned from the project**

## 1 Background

1.1 In May 2019 Members agreed to set aside £120,000 from reserves to support a second public arts initiative on Dartmoor: The Moor Otters Arts Trail.

1.2 In addition to positive messaging, audience engagement and raising awareness of conservation projects, there were opportunities to increase retail sales and develop business connections. The messages for the project were:

- Engagement
  - Engage with visitors to Dartmoor and share key messages, generating a greater understanding of the special qualities of Dartmoor
  - The benefits to mental and physical health as well as exploring new areas.
  - Work with local schools and groups to strengthen ties for educational development.
- Business Support
  - Increase footfall and visitor spend to Dartmoor and surrounding businesses
- Fundraising
  - Generate income for conservation projects
  - Raise awareness of need for fundraising and Donate for Dartmoor

1.3 A Member steering group was established to support the delivery and the project was established with the following aims:

- Provide an art-based visitor attraction;
- Engage with new audiences, particularly hard to reach groups;
- To generate a minimum of £60k for conservation and access projects through donations, sponsorship and auction sales
- Increase footfall to Dartmoor businesses
- Generate £5k profit from Moor Otter retail products;
- Engage with local schools through participation – measured by number of schools participating and feedback.

1.4 Risk and project dependencies were evaluated; the biggest risks to the project being, generating enough buy in from artists, businesses and the public along with generating enough sponsorship and income from the project. Mitigations were put in place as part of the project plan and the project was developed, with a view to the trail going live in May 2020.

1.5 Unfortunately we did not mitigate against a global pandemic in our risk register.

## **2 The Artist Selection Process**

2.1 Attracting the best quality artists was key to the success of this project. As we did with the first Moor Otters project, we invited artists and community groups to submit designs to decorate the Otter and cub sculpture. We received a fantastic response to our public request to submit designs, attracting a very high calibre of artists as well as, individuals and community groups.

2.2 A selection panel chaired by celebrated artist Alan Cotton was brought together, representatives from DNPA, local artists and galleries supported this process, and the final selection was made.

2.3 The final selection included some excellent submissions from community groups working with a range of young people and adults from hard-to-reach groups, we were delighted to include these in our final selection. They were:

- Dame Hannah Rogers Trust
- South Devon Families with Autism Group
- Learn Devon Adults with Learning disabilities group
- The DOVE Project for adults with learning disabilities
- Honiton Memory café with the Honiton Dementia Alliance
- Rainey Community Creations
- Buckfastleigh Guides

2.4 The selection of the 25 Golden Otters [the otters that went to live auction] was completed via a small panel voting for their favourite otters once decorated. The panel was once again led by Alan Cotton with representatives from our main sponsor South West Water, Bearnas Hampton and Littlewood and DNPA.

2.5 The high standard of the design of the 81 otters made it very hard to select the 25; all of the otters were so beautiful or imaginative and all very collectable.

## **3 Project Management**

3.1 We commissioned an external project manager to develop and create the project with clear lines of responsibility/work programmes with the internal co-ordinator. The main purpose of the external project manager was to ensure the opportunities for sponsorship and income generation were maximised, with clear targets being set for this in his contract. Minimum income targets were set at:

- £50,000 for hosting and sponsorship partners
- £120,000 for sales of the otters through auction and individual adoptions
- £10,000 in-kind support from valued partners

3.2 He was also tasked with:

- Delivering the arts trail including, developing trails, engagement (artists, businesses, public), and fundraising;
- Securing artists and the selection panel;
- Co-ordinating Otter logistics throughout the project, from delivery to storage, distribution to artists, launch event, hosts, back to artists and then to auction;
- Securing business support and sponsorship e.g. valued partners and patrons as well as hosts
- Arranging and co-ordinating the launch event and auction;

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

4.1 Gaining some high level sponsorship and valued partners who would provide in-kind sponsorship was important for the success of this project. In-kind support keeps costs down.

4.2 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 trail, publicity and storage [for an extra year] from the Jolly Roger [who supplied the sculptures]
- Live auction and reception and online auction from Bearnas Hampton and Littlewood auctioneers [commission free sales]
- Online auction hosting from The Saleroom
- 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
- Event hosting for the launch and thank you event at Bovey Castle

4.3 We were also once again 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 sponsorship was secured by us through our good working relationship with South West Water.

#### **5 The Development of the Trail**

5.1 This time we wanted to develop a series of mini-trails that people could complete as sustainably as possible, grouping otters into four different colour coded trails. The focus being very much on completing these mini-trails rather than the whole trail. We also ran a competition for the most sustainable 'otter spotter', inviting people to submit how they had completed the trails without their cars. We had some very imaginative responses! The three winners had completed trails on foot, bike, Haytor Hoppa, bus and even by piggyback! Strava maps were submitted along with photographic evidence. Picnics were taken in re-usable containers as well!

5.2 We also worked with Plymouth City Council on the development of a Mayflower trail in Plymouth to be part of the Mayflower 400 celebrations in 2020. The aim was that



this trail would help engage with new audiences who might then visit the National Park.

- 5.3 We located a few otters in gateway towns such as Exeter, Newton Abbot and Totnes, primarily as a means of promoting the trail and our key messages, as well as encouraging footfall to local businesses.

## **6 Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic**

- 6.1 By March 2020 we had received all the decorated otters back from artists, photographed them ready for the trail leaflet and catalogue, secured some sponsorship and secured all the host businesses for the trail. Some schools had been engaged with and the project was running to schedule.
- 6.2 Following the announcement of the first lockdown we agreed with the steering group that the trail should be postponed for a year. We looked at an autumn/winter 2020 trail as an option but decided that for the host businesses to receive maximum benefit, the project should be put on hold until 2021.
- 6.3 To support local businesses that had paid to host an otter by this point, we offered a refund as many of them had been forced to close for the lockdown. Most businesses were grateful for this offer, but remained keen to support the trail and did not take us up on this offer.
- 6.4 At this point the project became a financial risk to the Authority. We had spent a significant amount of the budget and had no guarantee we would realise our targets as the economic situation surrounding the global pandemic looked uncertain.
- 6.5 The trail was finally launched at the end of May 2021 with a renewed focus on supporting the economic recovery of our local businesses, engaging with new audiences – helping them to re-connect with the outdoors and nature and create a managed activity for new visitors to do. When the trail was initially launched there were still some Covid restrictions in place.

## **7 The Schools Project**

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 Originally, we had hoped to engage ten schools with the project, we engaged with nine in the end. This was primarily because the pandemic disrupted this, and schools had other priorities during 2020. We invited schools we had not engaged with in the previous project. The schools that participated this time were:
- Okehampton Primary
  - Horrabridge Primary
  - Widecombe Primary
  - Christow Primary
  - Ilsington Primary
  - Elburton Primary

- Tavistock Community College
- Teign Secondary
- Camphill Community

7.3 The schools were invited to decorate six mini otters each, supplied by us. These would then form an exhibition at Princetown Visitor Centre. 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.

7.4 The schools exhibition [appendix C] was developed in-house by the comms team and launched at the start of the school summer holidays at Princetown Visitor Centre in July. Lots of excited children came to visit with their parents and grandparents, keen to showcase their mini otters - this gave the visitor centre team a good opportunity to engage with these new audiences.

7.5 Although Covid did have an impact on the ability to make the most of the school otter project and prevented the face-to-face engagement that was a success in 2017, we were still able to engage via video calls and the one school that did have a Covid-Secure outdoor assembly reported that it really fired children's imaginations and created a sense of excitement. Other highlights included:

- Free at point of delivery - really valued by schools especially after this difficult 18 months. Ensured equality of participation and opportunity for Dartmoor Primary Schools and schools further away who felt a connection with Dartmoor.
- Flexibility for schools to use otters as best suited their circumstances: many using the otter project for multiple outcomes, including: children's mental well-being, re-socialising students after a year of on-off social isolations, lockdowns and home learning, curriculum enrichment particularly supporting literacy and creativity. Teachers reported that having an exciting and significant project helped children "reconnect with learning" and helped them to focus over an extended period of time. These educational outcomes are the real success of this aspect of the project – teachers and schools really valued our offer.
- Enough resource to make the project worthwhile for schools and individual children. Fewer otters per school would have compromised the quality of the excellent educational outcomes.
- Allowing schools to 'retrieve, keep or sell' the otters was an additional benefit that many schools were delighted by – thus strengthening relationships within and across communities.

## **8 Public Engagement**

8.1 There were a number of elements we introduced to generate interest in the project:

- Trail booklets, with spot 15 otters and win a prize. We encouraged people to submit their forms at Visitor Centres to collect a free 'otter spotter badge'
- We also had different otter spotter activity stickers to collect from our Visitor Centres and the outreach vehicle to encourage more in-depth engagement with the project and Dartmoor.
- 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; a Moor Otters Facebook group, Twitter and Instagram feeds
- A QR code on each otter plinth that led back to the dedicated webpage for the project
- Regular media stories

8.2 There is no doubt that this trail was incredibly successful from a public engagement point of view. Starting at the end of the final round of lockdown restrictions there was a real public appetite to get out and do something, connecting with the outdoors and other people after a very difficult time. It gave new audiences and visitors something to do to explore the National Park, supporting businesses, and existing audiences an excuse to get out again.

8.3 As with the previous project an 'otter spotter' community developed, sharing tips and experiences in the dedicated Facebook group along with positive messages of thanks for organising the trail (see section 10.5 below). This time there was also a greater sense of understanding about the importance of supporting the host businesses through making a purchase or recommendations for a good cake or meal.

8.4 Having a roving otter on the Outreach Vehicle was a big hit. It was well very received by the visitors who enjoyed looking closely at the detail of the painting. It generated lots of opportunities to talk to people about Dartmoor with lots of unprompted conversations. The vehicle attended 30 locations including the Tour of Britain, surrounding towns and cities and engaged with approximately 2,250 people, providing information, advice and promoting other events and activities including the Time for Nature Challenge. Encouraging a deeper connection with the National Park.

## **9 Visitor Centres**

9.1 Having otters at each centre with the centres as the locations you could collect your otter spotter badge, or an activity sticker worked really well. There was a very high level of engagement with children and adults alike. Once we had the footfall in the centres, we were able to help visitors understand Dartmoor's special qualities, provide advice and guidance and give them a good starting point for their discovery of Dartmoor.

9.2 We developed an associated retail range for the project, including branded merchandise, T-shirts [regularly shared on Facebook] and other otter related merchandise. This proved an irresistible draw to many of our otter spotters.

9.3 Covid restrictions until July had an impact on footfall through the centres, however the trail helped to increase footfall, particularly once restrictions were lifted, and visitor numbers increased. From the end of May to the end of September we had 60,231 visitors across all three centres.

## **10 Digital engagement**

10.1 The Moor Otters webpages have performed consistently well; throughout the duration of the trail the Moor Otters landing page and trail map page has consistently ranked just under our two most popular pages (camping and planning) on the website. We had just under 90,000 page views with 50,000 of those as new users to our website.

Around 67% of visitors to the landing page clicked through to the trail map page, while just over 10% clicked through to buy an otter. There were spikes on our analytics just after the trail was launched and during the online auction period.

10.2 We used a QR code on the plinths of the otters to generate interest in the project and drive traffic to the dedicated webpages. The data we collected using the QR codes showed we had 1,145 people scan the code using devices that were registered in 265 different cities [appendix A]. Demonstrating the breadth of reach of our audiences.

10.3 We used social media to engage with and promote the trail with new and existing audiences. Using the main DNPA Twitter, Facebook and Instagram channels, as well as setting up a dedicated Moor Otters Facebook group to create an online community of otter spotters, we also had a dedicated Moor Otters Twitter account.

10.4 The Moor Otters Facebook Group proved very popular with otter spotters, was a great way to receive real-time feedback, self-sufficient, businesses were able to interact with otter spotters, otter spotters shared tips and tricks and promoted businesses in return; it was a positive community.

10.5 Social media key headlines:

- The Moor Otters Facebook group received the most engagement with a total of 26,864 likes, reactions, comments, and shares on DNPA posts in the group. This does not include posts from other group members.
  - As of the end of October there were 3,316 members
  - The Facebook group demographic was 88% female, 12% male. Plymouth was the top city with 611 members, followed by Newton Abbot, Okehampton, Exeter and Tavistock.
  - A total of 830 posts were made into the group by members between May and October, sentiment all positive.
- #MoorOtters was used a total of 727 times between March and October on Twitter.
- Moor Otters related posts published through the DNPA and MO social media channels received a total of 34,059 likes, reactions, shares and retweets from May to October.
- Moor Otters related tweets from the DNPA and Moor Otters Twitter were seen a total of 124,390 times from May to October.
- Moor Otters related posts from the DNPA Facebook page reached a total of 40,636 people from May to October.
- Moor Otters related posts from the DNPA Instagram reached a total of 18,640 people from May to October. Much of the project updates and interaction with artists/hosts/otter spotters/partners was done through Instagram stories rather than posts. Stories were viewed a total of 38,095 times.

## **11 The Auctions**

11.1 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.

- 11.2 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.
- 11.3 Secondly through the live auction at Bearnas Hampton and Littlewood [BHL], where the 25 'golden otters' were auctioned. This was undertaken after the online auction closed. Bidders were also able to bid online during the live auction to enable us to maximise the opportunity to reach a wide audience for the live auction.
- 11.4 The auctions and adoption of otters raised a total of £68,910 gross for the project. There were no fees from BHL for this; they were very supportive.
- 11.5 The auction process worked better than it did last time, opening up the live auction to online sales improved the options to maximise the hammer price. Having two auction options still felt a bit cumbersome and if we did it again we should seek to simplify to a single auction.

## 12 The Financials

- 12.1 The costs and income generated have been set out in the table below as a comparison to the figures from the 2017 trail:

| <b>Project Outturn</b>                               | <b>2017 actual<br/>[101 otters]</b> | <b>2021 actual<br/>[81 otters]</b> |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                   |                                     |                                    |
| Raw materials (sculptures and transport)             | £29,814                             | £31,850                            |
| Marketing ,design* and printing                      | £21,260                             | £10,192                            |
| Artists expenses                                     | £3,157                              | £6,415                             |
| Project Manager fee and expenses                     | £33,021                             | £44,000                            |
| Artists commission                                   | £8,968                              | £4,363                             |
| Miscellaneous  | £1,670                              | £1,160                             |
| Online auction website costs                         | £1,514                              | £450                               |
| <i>Total expenditure</i>                             | <i>£99,404</i>                      | <i>£98,430</i>                     |
| <b>Income</b>  |                                     |                                    |
| Sponsorship of sculptures                            | £34,033                             | £36,100                            |
| Auction sales and adoption of sculptures             | £125,743                            | £68,910                            |
| Online donations                                     |                                     | £601                               |
| Donations [plinths]                                  | £2,689                              | £2,728                             |
| Net retail profit against sales on otter merchandise | £3,500                              | £7,510                             |
| <i>Total income</i>                                  | <i>£165,965</i>                     | <i>£115,849</i>                    |
| <b>Total net</b>                                     | <b>£66,561</b>                      | <b>£17,419</b>                     |

\*Design was delivered in-house in 2021

- 12.2 The economic impact of the pandemic had a significant impact on the amount of money we raised from the sale of the sculptures. We were however able to sell them all, some of them went to our otter spotter community, who shared images of their new homes in the Facebook group. The pandemic also had an impact on the ability to attract additional sponsorship income from businesses.

12.3 The income generated from the project will be added to Donate for Dartmoor and spent on conservation and access projects in the National Park. The website will be updated to reflect how the money was spent.

### 13 Business Survey Results

13.1 A short survey was sent to all the host locations to evaluate how successful the project was for them. We asked some simple questions summarised below:

**Primary motivation for supporting the project:** 61% stated it was to support the project and increase footfall

**Was the sponsorship value for money?** 69% said yes

**Did you notice an increase in footfall?** 92% said yes or difficult to say

**Did you notice an increase in turnover?** 53% said it was difficult to say

**Did you offer any Otter related promotion or events?** No one said yes to this – but given this was launched as covid restrictions were easing, we were not surprised.

**Would you take part in a similar initiative if we did it again?** 53% said yes and 38% maybe

13.2 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. Generally, the feedback was positive and most felt it was well organised, they like the fact it was a free trail and inclusive. Two comments summarised how well the trail had worked for local communities:

*“Buckfastleigh Town Council has supported the Moor Otters Arts Trail on both occasions and would be pleased to participate in this again. The trail encourages both visitors and residents to visit new places which are not necessarily tourist hotspots and by doing so may use the facilities that are on offer such as cafes, pubs and shops. The project is colourful, entertaining and educational which attracts all ages and is of course free!”*

*“We think this was an excellent initiative that helped us to support a number of independent businesses and raise the profile of Plymouth City Centre. COVID restrictions meant it was difficult for us to assess the impact of the project but social media and visitor engagement was overwhelmingly positive.”*

### 14 Public survey

14.1 We also undertook a short survey with people who had engaged with the project through the Facebook group to understand the impact the of the project. We asked some simple questions the responses highlighted below:

**Did you enjoy otter spotting?** 100% said yes

**Did you visit new places?** 100% said yes

**Did you spend money at some of the otter locations?** 96% said yes

**Did you know the project was a fundraiser for Dartmoor National Park?** 91% said yes

**Have you supported the project with a donation?** 68% said yes

**We then asked a free text question: What did you most enjoy about otter spotting?** There were many comments that can be summarised as follows:

- New places to explore
- Sense of community
- Collecting as many as possible
- Helping small local businesses
- Free - not discriminating against 'poor'
- Getting outside and active
- The designs
- Family time
- Finding out about the VC's
- Exploring Dartmoor
- Friendliness of the hosts
- Good for all age groups
- Merchandise
- The challenge
- Use of the booklet / passport
- Raising money
- Variety of host venues
- Facebook page very helpful
- Mental health reasons
- Please do again or similar activities

14.2 A recent survey of this same Facebook group [December 2021] asked if they have made a return visit to Dartmoor since engaging in the trail. 73% of our respondents said they have.

## **15 Staff time**

15.1 We had planned for this project to take 18 months from inception to completion, Covid added an extra year to this. As such some momentum was lost, particularly with the external project manager – it was still an excellent example of 'Team Dartmoor' in action.

15.2 Below is the estimated amount of staff time it took to deliver Moor Otters for the main teams involved over the full duration of the project. This should be considered against how successful the project was at engaging with the public, the scale of which was by far the largest mass public engagement project we had completed since the first Moor Otters trail.

- Marketing and Fundraising Officer 30% of an FTE
- Communications team approx. 25% of an FTE
- Visitor services 10% of an FTE
- Finance and admin approx. 12% of a FTE
- Outreach team 5% of an FTE

## **16 What Worked Well?**

16.1 There is no doubt that the trail was a huge success with the public and their engagement with it was amazing. Launching it at the end of lockdown to support our business recovery was a calculated risk, but one that paid off. It was clear people were keen to get out and about again, connecting with each other and the wider National Park. It also gave people 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. It also gave many of the new visitors we knew from tourism data were coming, an activity to do that dispersed them around Dartmoor, away from the 'usual' sites.

- 16.2 Managing the PR, social media and design in-house gave the project an excellent brand that was easily recognisable and a big hit with otter spotters. It gave us a brand to add to otter merchandise and sold very well as a result. Creating a Facebook group gave us a means of engaging with our audience and gave them a way to engage with each other, sharing tips advice and having a sense of community. For those who had been feeling isolated following lockdown this proved to be a great boost.
- 16.3 Having a "Roving Otter" on the outreach vehicle, adding sticker collections to the trail maps and collecting otter spotter badges as prizes from our Visitor Centres helped us to engage face to face 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.
- 16.4 The level of support given by the artists, sponsors, valued partners and host businesses 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 including storing the otters for an extra year, free of charge. We are very grateful to all of the support we received.
- 16.5 Having the live auction live streamed online so bids could be received online. This opened up the live bidding to a wider audience, particularly helpful given we were still in a pandemic.
- 16.6 Working with the Plymouth BID on the Mayflower Trail. This opened up a new audience to us and helped us to engage with them. It also enabled us to piggyback on the Mayflower 400 celebrations [even if they were a year late!].

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

- 17.1 Project Management: We used an external project manager and set some very clear income targets for him to meet. This became very difficult to achieve once the pandemic started and the economic situation changed quite dramatically. However, we still managed to attract sponsorship for the project, but this was generated in-house by the DNPA team. It also became quite difficult once the pandemic hit to work with an external project manager, no fault of his, but we lost some project momentum as a result. If we were to consider a similar project again, we should think about bringing all elements of the project inhouse.
- 17.2 Valued partners: We are extremely grateful to our valued partners and the support they have given the project. If we did it again, we should set out the type of valued partners we would like to work with, what we expect of them and what they get from us in return. Some of the partnerships established by the project manager were a little vague in what was being delivered, others we felt, were being asked too much.
- 17.3 Development of the trail: Having smaller trails worked well. If we did it again, we would focus on fewer sculptures on a few small trails in and around the National Park.



- 17.4 Developing an app to support the digital engagement element of the project: We used digital much more this time, including the use of QR codes on the otters to drive people to the project website. Developing an app that supported this and the online auction element would simplify this and encourage more engagement and income generation opportunities.
- 17.5 Sculpture: We think we have exhausted the otter as a decorative sculpture, if we did a similar trail, we would consider developing a different model. This should still have a narrative that links back to the special qualities of the National Park.
- 17.6 The Covid pandemic: Unforeseen as a risk and clearly had an impact on delivery and income generation.

## **18 Summary**

- 18.1 The Authority took a calculated risk when launching this as lockdown restrictions were easing and it paid off. The project was re-focussed to support the recovery and engaging with new audiences and was a success; the level of engagement was more than we could have imagined, and the feedback has been incredibly positive. It created a much-needed feel-good factor over the summer after a difficult year, helped many people re-connect with each other and the landscape. We did not realise as much income as we did last time, but we still managed to generate money to support projects on Dartmoor through the Donate for Dartmoor fund.
- **62,481** face-to-face engagement opportunities at Visitor Centres and the outreach vehicle
  - **90,000** website hits on Moor Otters page
  - **183,666** audience reach across all social media channels
  - **3,316** members of Moor Otters Facebook group
- 18.2 We owe a debt of gratitude to all our artists, host businesses, sponsors and valued partners for helping to make the project a success. Their level of support contributed to the success of the project. The artists' imagination and the quality of the sculptures helped create a magical trail. We have had many requests to do another one.
- 18.3 If we were to consider another trail we would propose a different sculpture, simplify the trail, bring all elements of the project in-house to maximise the engagement and sponsor opportunities, building on our existing relationships with businesses and partners.

**SAMANTHA HILL**

**Attachments:**    **Appendix A – Map of QR code data**  
                         **Appendix B – Media coverage**  
                         **Appendix C – School exhibition**

20211216 SH Moor Otters

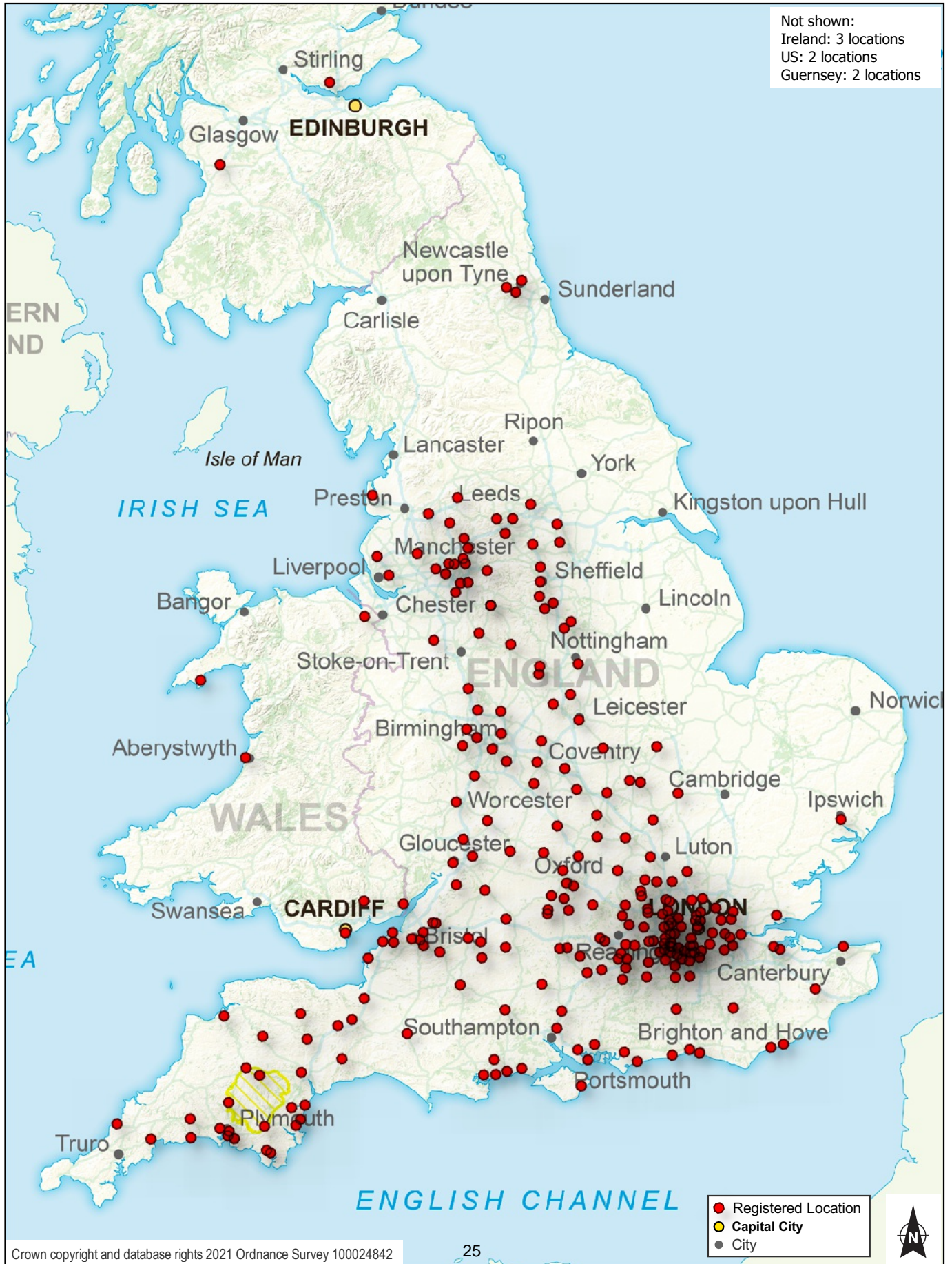
# Dartmoor National Park Authority



## Registered Location of Devices Used to Scan an Otter QR Code

Scale 1:3,132,211

Compiled by gdriver on 7/12/2021



## Moor Otters Arts Trail 2021 – a snapshot of media coverage

Western Morning News



Devon Live

 News ▶ Devon News ▶ Dartmoor

### Colourful trail of 81 otters for families to discover across Dartmoor

There are five different trails to follow for those who want to explore the Moors this summer






# Meet Splotter Otter, the Moor Otters sculpture designed by talented pupils at Dame Hannah Rogers School

A total of 81 resin sculptures can be found, all designed and decorated by artists, local talent and organisations.

SHARE     COMMENTS | By [Lewis Clarke](#)  
11:32, 6 SEP 2021

NEWS




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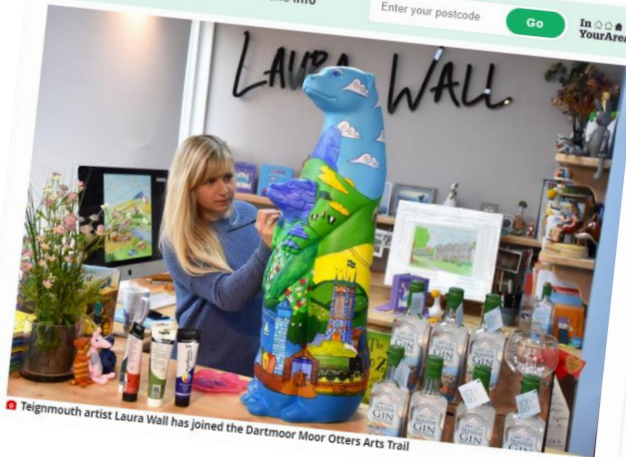


## Colourful otter sculpture heading to Dartmoor Zoo as Devon artist features in trail

Laura Wall quit her job in 2010 to follow her passion and now one of her works is set to feature in a prominent position

SHARE     2 COMMENTS | By [Guy Henderson](#) Chief Reporter  
07:00, 30 AUG 2021

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Teignmouth artist Laura Wall has joined the Dartmoor Moor Otters Arts Trail

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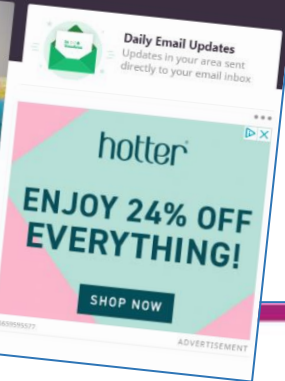
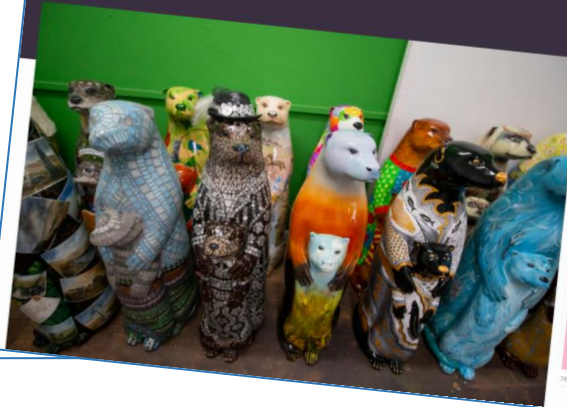
Find out more >

70% of retail investor accounts lose money when trading spread bets and CFDs with this provider. You should consider whether you understand how spread bets and CFDs work, and whether you can afford to take the high risk of losing your money.

In Your Area network

## Dartmoor trail for 'otter spotters' begins on Friday

Bovey Tracey-based Jolly Roger Lifesize Models is delivering the sculptures ready for 'otter spotters' to find  
© 24 May 2021



\*Oke Links magazine

May 28

### Moor Otters Arts Trail is back!

Dartmoor National Park Authority's Moor Otters Arts Trail goes live on Friday, May 28th, helping people explore, discover and learn more about Dartmoor and raise money for its ongoing conservation.

Eighty-one stunning sculptures of otters with cubs, designed and decorated by local and national artists – will be placed around the National Park and places near Dartmoor.

The trails are designed so people can safely explore Dartmoor on foot, bike, car or public transport and learn about

the National Park as they go. There will be four trails on Dartmoor and one in Plymouth, the Mayflower Trail, which commemorates the historic journey of the Mayflower in 1620. Otters can also be spotted in towns and villages on the outskirts of the National Park too.

Before setting out on a trail, please check [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/moorotters](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/moorotters) for the most up to date information.

People will have the opportunity to own a sculpture when the public trail ends by bidding for one through an online auction, which also goes live on May



28th. The Moor Otters Arts Trail aims to raise £60,000 for Donate for Dartmoor, the National Park's fundraising scheme which helps look after the moor's cultural heritage, habitats and wildlife.

## Plym Links (April/May 2021)

May 28

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## Greatest Hits Radio

['Moor Otters project will help Dartmoor's economy to recover' | News - Greatest Hits Radio \(Devon\) \(planetradio.co.uk\)](#)

### 'Moor Otters project will help Dartmoor's economy to recover'

There'll be 81 specially decorated so-called 'moor otters' across Dartmoor from today.



Some of the otters for people to try and find



MID-DEVON **Advertiser** SERIES Search

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## Moor Otters Arts Trail gets underway today

Friday, 28 May 2021 - Promotion

0  
Post a comment

by Mid Devon Advertiser reporter

**TODAY'S the day Dartmoor National Park launches its Moor Otters Arts Trail 2021.**

Moor Otters is a sculpture trail aimed at helping people discover and learn more about Dartmoor, raise funds to keep it special now and in the future, and support local businesses.

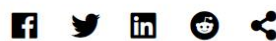
There are 81 stunning sculptures of otters with cubs - all designed and decorated by artists, local talent and organisations – spread out across Dartmoor and surrounding areas ready for 'otter spotters' of all ages to find.



## Devon Life magazine

### Why families should head to Dartmoor National Park this summer

Hannah Gosset



Published: 5:25 PM July 28, 2021



## Wheal Otters among guests at artists wedding

The Dartmoor Otters are now being auctioned to help fund conservation projects





Appendix C – School Otter Exhibition Princetown Visitor Centre





NPA/22/003

## Dartmoor National Park Authority

7 January 2022

# 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.**

### TPO APPLICATIONS

#### Teignbridge

**Ref: 21/0045**

**OBrook, Manaton**

**SX 7568 8076**

Application to reduce extended branches from an oak tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health and appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to 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: 21/0042**

**Way Cottage, Gidleigh**

**SX 6709 8837**

Application to crown lift and reduce a long lateral branch from a beech tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to 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: 21/0043**

**11 Pencreaber Road, Horrabridge**

**SX 5110 6976**

Application to crown lift and reduce long lateral branches from a beech tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to 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: 21/0041**

**19-20 Clobells, South Brent**

**SX 6998 5979**

Application to fell three cypress trees. The trees are in very poor condition and have little public amenity value. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. Replacement planting of two silver birch and one rowan within the crown spread of the originals during the first planting season following felling.

**Ref: 21/0039**

**Stoke Shallows Holne**

**SX 6961 5965**

Application to fell three shelterbelts and reduce a line of boundary trees. The shelterbelts have not been managed and are starting to collapse. The works to the boundary trees will prevent branch failure. Consent was granted subject to 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.
3. Replacement planting of trees as set out in tree planting plan BQE007 705 within the crown spread of the originals during the first planting season following felling.

## **SECTION 211 NOTICES**

### **West Devon**

**Ref: 21/0038**

**Olde Stone, Lydford**

**SX 5103 8484**

Notification to fell two cypress and two Douglas fir trees. The trees are growing over a garage and have dropped several large limbs.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 21/0040**

**Town Farm, Lydford**

**SX 5112 8492**

Notification to fell a cypress tree and reduce two yews, a poplar and hornbeam. The works will have minimal impact on the character of the area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 21/0044**

**Chagford Montessori School**

**SX 7015 8784**

Notification to reduce three birch trees and crown lift a cherry, yew and amalanchier. The works will have minimal impact on the health and appearance of the trees.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

BRIAN BEASLEY