

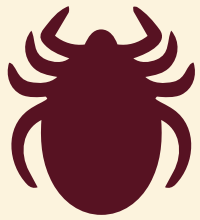


Dartmoor

National Park Authority

Annual Review

2025/26



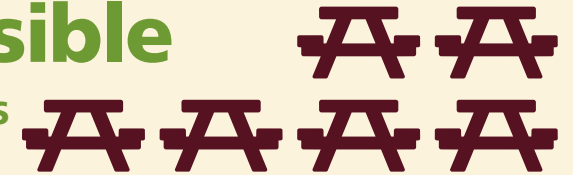
£1 million

secured for tick borne disease research

6

accessible

picnic tables installed



£3,331,149

awarded to

200+

FiPL projects

(since 2021)

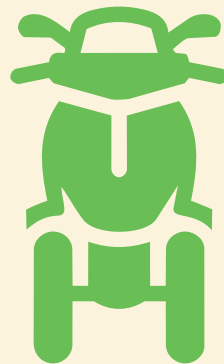


Landscape Recovery projects on Dartmoor

Discovery of



on Dartmoor



1 new tramper

acquired for Postbridge Visitor Centre

Deployment of Dartmoor Marshals



for 6th consecutive summer

SUCCESSFUL EXCAVATION OF



Cut Hill Cist

1km

of Tramper Trail resurfaced





Landmark ruling securing
backpack camping
for Dartmoor



1

**DEVON
TOURISM
AWARD**
for Haytor
Visitor Centre

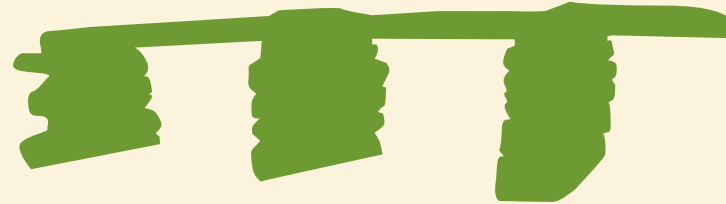
£50,000

Government funding
to digitise historic
planning records



2

Devon Tourism Awards
for Postbridge Visitor Centre



Miles Without Stiles routes increased

FROM 15 TO 20

£3.1 million

Heritage Fund grant awarded to support

**DARTMOOR'S DYNAMIC
LANDSCAPES (DDL)**



**Leadership
change for DNPA**

New DNPA Chair elected

New Chief
Executive
recruited



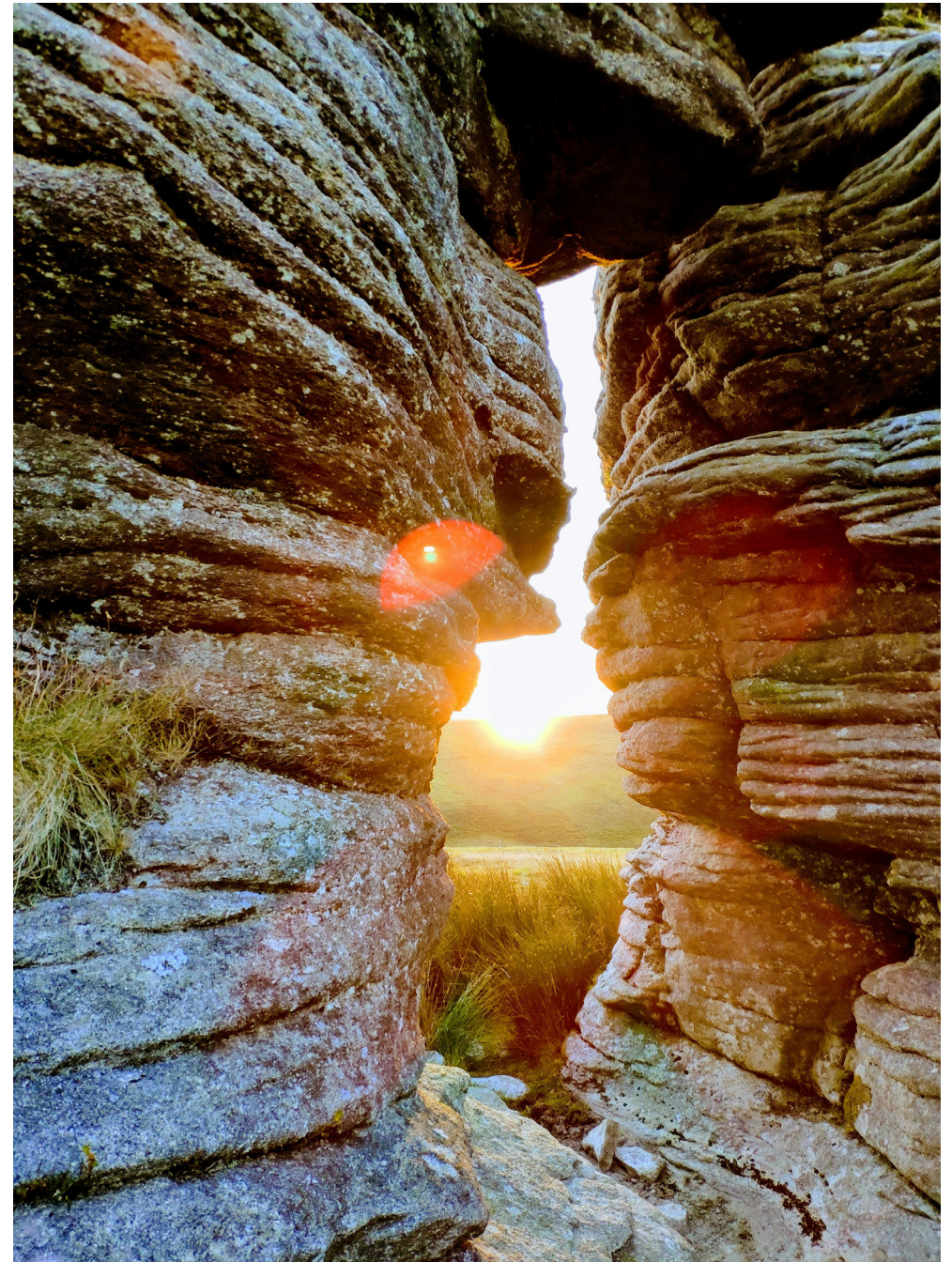
Introduction

At the start of 2025 we set an ambitious Business Plan with key priority areas to deliver against, setting out how we work with our partners, stakeholders and communities to successfully deliver our aims.

2025/26 has been a year of high achievement which would not have been possible without the active support and engagement of our partners; individuals and businesses; community groups and corporate sponsors; government departments and agencies and the volunteers who give their time for free. Within this annual review we formally thank them for their ongoing support over the last 12 months.

Within the past year the Authority has seen numerous challenges and heightened public awareness of Dartmoor, particularly in relation to the outcome from the legal challenge over the right to backpack camp, the financial pressures faced by English National Parks, and the closure of the National Park Visitor Centre at Princetown in October 2025.

This annual review highlights the breadth of activity undertaken by the Authority in 2025/26, reflecting on our enduring commitment to delivering our core purposes and duty: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of Dartmoor; promoting opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment; and fostering the economic and social wellbeing of the park's communities.



Contents



4 Introduction

6 Nature

The Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Project
Biodiversity Duty

12 Farming and Forestry

Uptick Project
Land Use Management Group
Boundary Boost
Farming in Protected Landscapes

12 Cultural Heritage

Dartmoor in the Mesolithic
Cut Hill Update

13 People

Supreme Court Ruling on Open Air Recreation
Dartmoor Marshals
Access for All in Dartmoor National Park
Visitor Centres Recognised at Devon Tourism Awards
Dartmoor History Hunters

16 Communities and Business

Spatial Planning
National Park Visitor Centre Princetown
Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes

18 An Excellent Organisation

Climate Action Plan
Partnership Plan Review
New Chair for the Authority
Change of National Park Officer

Nature

Managing existing habitats for increased biodiversity and developing greater areas of wildlife rich habitats.

The Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Project

The Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Project is reshaping how the valley's farms, habitats and communities can thrive together. As one of Dartmoor's three Landscape Recovery areas, this farmer-led, landowner-driven initiative is developing a long term, bespoke plan that reflects the valley's moorland edges, wooded river corridors, small fields, and rich cultural heritage.

Throughout 2025, the project team has focused on building a robust evidence base to inform the next 20 years of environmental recovery. We carried out a wide range of wildlife and habitat surveys this year. From using drones to count deer to monitoring butterflies and checking the health of our rivers. Combined, this data gives us a clear picture of the Park's current ecological condition. Conversations with farmers, commoners, and land managers have been central, ensuring ideas are grounded in local knowledge and that ambitions and concerns are understood early.

A major step forward this year was the first steering group meeting, bringing land managers together to guide the project's direction. Thematic workshops on woody habitats, grasslands, soils and water have further strengthened collaboration and helped shape a shared vision: a valley with thriving rivers and wetlands, resilient woodlands and peatlands, healthy soils, diverse grasslands, and productive farms that coexist with abundant wildlife. Cultural heritage and traditional land knowledge remain integral to decision making.

As the project moves into 2026, the focus will shift from broad concepts to detailed planning. The final year of the development phase will refine the frameworks needed for a 20-year implementation scheme, with plans due in September. This work will lay the foundations for a landscape that is better able to adapt to climate change, support local livelihoods and deliver long-term environmental resilience.

The Walkham Valley scheme forms part of a wider picture on Dartmoor, where there are three Landscape Recovery projects in progress. Walkham Valley

led by DNPA, the East Dartmoor initiative led by Devon Wildlife Trust with partners including DNPA, and the Central Dartmoor Farm Cluster working with the Duchy of Cornwall and other landowners. Working alongside each other, these programmes of work are collectively creating a more connected, climate-resilient environment. Each project follows a two-phase process, beginning with intensive development and planning followed by long-term implementation supported by public and private funding.

Together, these efforts mark a significant step towards a greener, more resilient Dartmoor where nature, farming and community benefits grow hand in hand.



Tree surveying

Biodiversity Duty

Since 1 January 2023, all public authorities have been under a statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity. This statutory duty applies to Government departments, local authorities, planning authorities (including national park authorities) and statutory undertakers.

The actions taken by relevant authorities for biodiversity will contribute to the achievement of the Government's national goals and targets on biodiversity. As such National Park Authorities started in 2025-26 to produce a Biodiversity Duty report that sets out a summary of the actions that we have taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity over the reporting period (in the first instance 1st January 2023 – 1st January 2026) and an overview of our future actions. The presentation of the Biodiversity Duty report matches the chapters and format of the Dartmoor National Park Partnership Plan, our annual Business Plan and this Annual Review, to demonstrate that furthering the biodiversity duty is embedded across all DNPA actions.



Stonechat male



Emsworthy Gate

Farming and Forestry

Farming and forestry businesses play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits.

Uptick Project

At the start of 2026, the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project, working with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and Animal and Plant Health Agency, have secured £1m to research tick borne diseases. The Uptick Project on Dartmoor is a groundbreaking scheme, starting with the roll out of drop-in sessions for people who work on, live in the National Park or regularly visit Dartmoor to give blood. The blood will be analysed for Lyme disease, tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) and louping ill virus. TBE is a medically important/significant virus in Europe and was found in England for the first-time in 2019. Louping ill virus is found in sheep, cattle and dogs but can also 'cross' to humans.

The study will help ascertain whether people working, living or recreating on Dartmoor have been exposed. The study will help us understand the level of risk and determine whether further work is required.

DNPA have offered support to staff who want to engage in this study, targeted especially at those who spend a lot of time on Dartmoor. Participants of the study will be able to request the results of their blood test and in the event of any significant positive results will have the opportunity to talk to a UKHSA clinician.

Land Use Management Group

The Government established the Dartmoor Land Use Management Group (DLUMG) as part of its response to the Independent Review of Protected Site Management on Dartmoor (The Fursdon Review) which was commissioned by the then Government in 2023. The DLUMG is independent of the National Park Authority. The Chair of the Group is Phil Stocker. He reports to Angela Eagle MP, Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs. The Chair, in consultation with Defra, determines the membership of the DLUMG.

The group's remit covers the whole of the Dartmoor National Park and all relevant aspects of land-use within its boundaries. Its role in relation to the management of 'protected sites' includes ancient monuments and archaeology as well as ecological designations. In this way, DLUMG will facilitate the achievement of improved outcomes for nature and climate on Dartmoor, together with a wide range of other public benefits, in a resilient landscape that is underpinned by viable, sustainable, farm businesses.

In 2025-26 the group has worked hard to initiate a number of grazing and land management trials for 2026-27; commissioned DNPA to produce a data observatory which can also be used to support the National Park Partnership (management) Plan; the Land Use Framework group have commenced the baseline and capability mapping through the University of Exeter; work has begun on mapping for nature recovery opportunities; and a group has come together to consider the feasibility of a single agri-environmental scheme for Dartmoor.



Hill farming on Dartmoor

Boundary Boost

This year the work across the 10 case study farms has continued to provide evidence contributing to our understanding, with the help and input from farmers. As an innovation project, Boundary Boost has benefitted from the flexibility to trial approaches, explore opportunities and test some of these in practice. Background research has included consultancy to interrogate market trends and opportunities, interviews with potential buyers and sellers as well as learning from existing schemes in the UK, even if not directly comparable. This may enable a locally based scheme to emerge that recognizes and rewards the wider values of protected landscapes, or may link with other schemes to provide an overarching larger, regional or national scale offer.

It has developed and trialled a new hedge survey App; carried out exploratory Natural Flood Management (NFM) modelling and deployed Biophones to gather acoustic data as supporting evidence of bird and bat species on each of the 10 farm sites. The core driver is to identify potential alternative funding routes that could support land management actions – Boundary Boost focuses on the extensive network of hedges, walls and banks, and in particular their importance for their influence on water within a landscape, and the higher connectivity, habitat and biodiversity values that small field systems represent with a greater density (kms of hedge in any given hectare).

Final results are being confirmed, but farms recorded averages of 40-50 bird species across the Spring and Summer of 2025 which is a really positive indication and reflection of good current management regimes.



Boundary boost case study farm

Farming in Protected Landscapes

In January 2025, Defra made the exciting announcement that the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) grant funding programme is to be extended for a further three years, from 31st March 2026 - 2029. This extension presents an incredible opportunity for Dartmoor. The decision to extend is due to the success of the programme, with an overwhelmingly positive response received from the farming community, wider protected landscape teams and Defra themselves.

FiPL is a grant funding programme developed by Defra but delivered locally through the UK's National Parks and National Landscapes, with dedicated staff in each landscape supporting farmers and land managers to apply for and deliver projects.

On the ground, FiPL is a flexible, applicant led and competitive local grant programme, providing funding to farmers and land managers to improve access, enhance nature, tackle climate change and support farmer's business development.

Since 2021, the Dartmoor FiPL Team have funded over 200 projects on Dartmoor, with a total of £3,331,149 being awarded to projects that meet the programmes outcomes and wider National Landscape priorities.



Sheep at Sherberton Farm



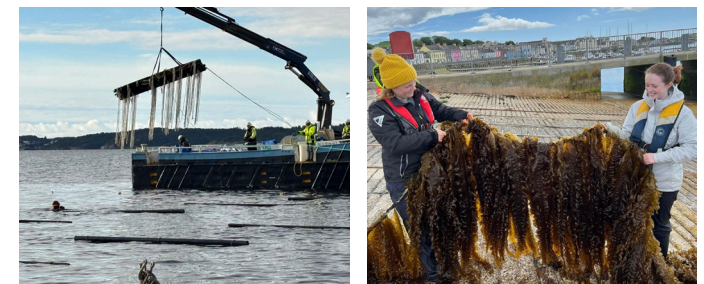
Example FiPL Projects on Dartmoor

Twool – Dartmoor Sea Kelp Project

In 2024, FiPL supported a trial project for Twool, a Dartmoor-based wool innovation company. The project aimed to develop a sustainable substrate and rope line made from 100% Whiteface Dartmoor wool, providing a biodegradable alternative to the synthetic versions widely used in global kelp farming. Britain produces around 70,000 tonnes of wool every year, yet this remarkable and renewable resource remains underused and undervalued.

Through FiPL, Twool were able to develop, research and trial their products, culminating in seeded and germinating lines of sea kelp deployed off the Irish coast in winter 2024. The trial was a great success and the wool ropes even survived 142mph winds (Storm Eowyn, January 2025) without any damage. This is an incredible opportunity for Dartmoor’s farmers; this project provides more of an income from the wool they produce and strengthens the local supply chain.

Further live trials are currently underway with Arctic Seaweed, who are an industry leader and producer of commercial kelp. Twool are confident that the results of this initial trial will contribute to supporting Dartmoor’s farmers, reducing plastic use in our oceans, and providing a sustainable alternative for global industries.



Trialling the wool ropes

Greenwell Farm - Wool Storage

Greenwell Farm works alongside Twool and the Whiteface Dartmoor breed in supporting the local wool supply chain. Greenwell Farm currently stores wool for over 50 local farms, processing up to 50 tonnes annually, including for Ttwool.

In 2025, FiPL funding supported improvements to wool packing and storage to help protect wool quality and streamline processing. FiPL funded the purchase of a Wool Press and Weigh Bar, in addition to upgrades to the storage barn for a cleaner, more efficient workspace. This will make Greenwell Farm Dartmoor's first on-farm facility capable of fully sorting, pressing, and packing wool on site.

Having a local farmer-led facility reduces the need for farmers to transport wool off Dartmoor, which supports the local economy and reduces carbon emissions. The project enables business diversification at Greenwell Farm and strengthens the circular wool economy, working in close partnership with Ttwool and other wool-based businesses to add value to Dartmoor's wool.



Greenwell Farm wool processing

TB Champions - Community Interest Company



The Dartmoor FiPL Team are thrilled to have been able to support the establishment of a Dartmoor-born, not-for-profit Community Interest Company (CIC), which aims to support farmers going through a bovine tuberculosis (bTB) outbreak on their farm. Dartmoor is part of a

high-risk area for bTB in England, but it is widespread across the UK and cattle are regularly tested to detect disease. This has significant negative impacts on farmers, extending beyond financial costs to include mental health struggles and business disruption.

The CIC is called TB Champions, and is being run by Emily Ashford, a local Dartmoor farmer. The long-term goal is to train up local representatives (Champions) who will be able to provide the farming community with face-to-face, bespoke on-farm support and guidance. FiPL funding has contributed to the initial investigative and developmental stage of this long-term vision, providing an opportunity for Emily to scope out and learn whether a registered CIC that supports farmers going through a bTB outbreak would be feasible and well-received by Dartmoor's farming community.

FiPL is supporting a series of farmer-led workshops aiming to start these crucial conversations, giving farmers the opportunity to voice the issues with bTB support they've experienced previously, and discuss how these issues can be solved on a local level. The project includes input from industry experts (TBAS, NFU, APHA, and local farm veterinary practices) and will result in an informed evaluation report which will identify gaps in existing support, demonstrate interest from Dartmoor's farming community, evaluate learnings and serve as evidence to support future funding opportunities. This is an exciting opportunity for Dartmoor to pave the way with local bTB support.

Cultural Heritage

Dartmoor's cultural heritage is protected, well managed and in good condition. The significance of the historic environment will be understood by both those living and working on Dartmoor and by visitors.

Dartmoor in the Mesolithic

Emma Stockley completed her PhD this year with her thesis 'Predicting and protecting lithic landscapes.'. Her PhD set out to explore the region's Mesolithic hunter-gatherers through the study of lithic scatters. A lithic scatter is an archaeological term for a surface deposit of stone tools and the debris created from making them. Typically found in ploughed fields, eroding sand dunes, or exposed footpaths, they consist of durable materials like flint or chert and serve as key evidence for prehistoric human activity.

Using predictive modelling and targeted test-pit excavation, Emma focused on how Mesolithic people moved through this granite upland, where they paused, and what the distribution of lithic scatters might reveal about how they lived, acquired, and passed on environmental and social knowledge.

Part of her research depended on understanding the formation of soils and their capacity to preserve traces of activity. Working alongside a team of National Park volunteers, excavations revealed new areas of hunter-gatherer activity in the form of lithic scatters – and a striking variety of soil types. These included podzols with pronounced horizons, granitic layers on exposed moorland, and rich black peaty soils.

To a geoarchaeologist, these different soil types help explain why we might encounter stone tools in some places and not others. Emma will be presenting her findings to a National Park audience later in 2026-27.

Cut Hill Update

The excavation of the Cut Hill Burial Cist took place in June 2024. It took three days for the team of archaeologists to excavate the early Bronze Age cist from one of Dartmoor's highest and most remote hills.

Since that time work has been taken place to date, analyse and understand what had been excavated and what clues this give to this period.

Surveys and analyses have included a dating survey, archaeobotanical assessment to examine grass bundles and small amounts of burnt grain and other material in log coffin; Charcoal survey; geological survey, an ancient DNA analysis undertaken in Copenhagen; Isotope analysis of the wood and a palaeo-environment analysis of several samples from within the cist and log coffin.

This information is being collated and recorded and in 2026-27 Dr Lee Bray will work with others to publish the results and undertake talks supporting the 75th anniversary of Dartmoor's designation as a National park.



Specialists working on the cist in the Wiltshire laboratory

People

Giving more people opportunities to explore, engage, enjoy and understand the landscape.

Supreme Court Ruling on Open Air Recreation

In May the UK Supreme Court made a landmark ruling on what the Dartmoor Commons Act means for the right to access common land for open air recreation. The ruling provided legal clarity and reaffirmed the Authority's belief: that the right established by the Dartmoor Commons Act 1985 and the phrase 'open-air recreation' should be defined to include activities like picnicking, birdwatching, sketching the landscape and, the focus of this case, backpack camping.

That right is clarified by the National Park byelaws which effectively define what is meant by open-air recreation. Their purpose is to provide a framework for safe and sustainable enjoyment of open-air recreation while respecting the rights of landowners and protecting Dartmoor for future generations.

The judgment reaffirms the public's right to backpack camp on certain commons and, our role in regulating and managing that access. It is important to note that it is not a blanket right to camp wherever, or do whatever, you want. With the right comes a responsibility to make sure that you tread lightly and leave no trace. We have been robust in defending the right to backpack camp, we will be equally robust in ensuring that people exercise that right responsibly and with respect to landowners and farmers.

Dartmoor Marshals

Following the Supreme Court ruling the Authority and its partners stressed to everyone coming to enjoy the National Park that they must continue to follow the leave-no-trace principles while enjoying Dartmoor's special places. To support the National Park's Rangers in managing public engagement and behaviour marshals were deployed across Dartmoor for the sixth consecutive summer.

First introduced in summer 2020, the Dartmoor Marshals have become an

invaluable resource during the busier months. They provide high-visibility patrols to help reduce anti-social behaviour and play a vital role in engaging with visitors so everyone feels safe and enjoys their time on the moor.

As in previous years, Marshals supported that important work particularly in the evenings until mid September. The additional boots on the ground were funded through a partnership project bringing together the Police and Crime Commissioner for Devon and Cornwall Alison Hernandez, the National Trust, Forestry England, Duchy of Cornwall, South West Lakes Trust, Dartmoor Common Owners Association and private landowners.



Backpack camping

©R Drysdale DNPA

Access for All in Dartmoor National Park

Recent Access for All funding from Defra has supported improvements to accessible routes across the National Park, increasing the number of Miles Without Stiles routes from 15 to 20. These routes help remove barriers for those who are not able to navigate steps, stiles or uneven terrain, opening up more of the landscape to a wider range of visitors.

In 2025-26 the funding enabled a new Trampler to be acquired for Postbridge Visitor Centre; key sections of the Bellever Forest Trampler Trail were resurfaced (c 1km); new path surfaced around Postbridge; 5 stiles replaced with gates (on the Two Moors Way and above Two Bridges); 6 new accessible picnic tables requested and ordered for sites (e.g. Burrator Arboretum, Avon Dam route and Okehampton Tramlines) and new decking, gate and bench installed at Haytor Visitor Centre.

Access improvements are being delivered by DNPA in partnership with organisations including Forestry England, South West Lakes Trust, the National Trust and the Duchy of Cornwall, to ensure benefits are spread across Dartmoor. Recent examples include upgrades to the Trampler trail at Bellever Forest, the introduction of a second Trampler for hire at Postbridge Visitor Centre, resurfacing at the picnic area at Meldon Reservoir, and continued delivery of the “stiles to gates” policy, replacing stiles with gates wherever possible.

Access to greenspace continues to play a vital role in supporting people’s health and wellbeing. In a world where many experience increasing pressures, Dartmoor offers space to breathe, exercise and reconnect with the natural environment. This connection remains a central part of the National Park’s purpose and as such further funding opportunities will be explored to build on this work and continue improving access to Dartmoor’s landscapes for everyone.



Trampler Hire at Postbridge Visitor Centre

Visitor Centres Recognised at Devon Tourism Awards

Dartmoor National Park Authority's visitor centres at Haytor and Postbridge have been recognised at the Devon Tourism Awards, held in November 2025.

Both centres were finalists in the Visitor Information Service of the Year category, with Postbridge awarded Silver and Haytor Bronze. The awards reflect the high standard of information, local knowledge and welcome provided by DNPA visitor centre staff.

Postbridge also received Silver in the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Award category, following recent accessibility improvements including the introduction of Trammer mobility scooter hire and clearer visitor information.

The awards were announced during a period of change, following the recent closure of Princetown Visitor Centre, and reflect the Authority's continued commitment to caring for Dartmoor's special qualities while supporting people to access and enjoy the National Park.

The National Park visitor centres support local communities and visitors alike and continue to play a key role in connecting people with the landscape, heritage and opportunities Dartmoor offers throughout the year.



Devon Tourism Awards

Dartmoor History Hunters

In 2025 the Dartmoor's history hunters' event changed location from its traditional base at Postbridge and headed to Exeter for a special family fun day at, and in conjunction with, the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM).

The day, which is designed to suit children aged from five to 11 years old and aimed at helping them to discover and understand Dartmoor's cultural heritage in new and fun ways, was a huge success with numbers for both the event and for RAMM significantly higher than expected.

Every year, History Hunters is a fantastic opportunity for families to uncover the secrets of Dartmoor. It allows children to have a go at being an archaeologist uncovering treasures in excavation trays, shape a clay pot, spin some wool, play some medieval games, take a selfie with our Victorian camera and much more, with of course a little help from the adults accompanying them!



History Hunters Team at RAMM

Communities and Business

People of all ages can enjoy living and working in low carbon, flourishing communities that are connected physically and digitally.

Spatial Planning

The Development Management service has delivered strong performance while undertaking significant transformation work.

A new Development Management System (DEF / MasterGov) has been selected for implementation in Autumn 2026, supported by £50,000 Government funding to digitise historic records, consolidate data and modernise the service.

A new Local Validation Checklist has been adopted to improve application quality and reduce delays, while a new Statement of Community Involvement sets out a modernised, digital-first approach to consultation, including the rollout in May 2025 of a planning subscription service enabling residents to keep up to date with development in their area.

Further improvements, including a revised amended plans protocol and updated planning webpages, are supporting a more efficient, customer-focused and responsive planning service.



National Park Visitor Centre at Princetown

Friday 31 October was a difficult day for staff, volunteers and visitors as the National Park Visitor Centre at Princetown closed its doors for the final time.

Due to rising costs and reduced government funding, the Authority had confirmed that it would not renew the lease for the centre, located in the former Duchy Hotel.



The centre had served as an information and exhibition space since 1993. Following closure, the teams worked hard on ensuring a smooth transition back to the landlord, the Duchy of Cornwall, when the lease expired in March 2026.

On the day of the closure, the then Chief Executive of Dartmoor National Park Authority Kevin Bishop said: "This is a sad day. Over the years, we've worked hard to explore a wide range of options aimed at securing the future of the visitor centre or providing a new use of the building that would support the local economy. Despite our best efforts, the scale of the funding challenges we face left us with no alternative.

"We'd like to thank our hard-working centre staff over the years for the warm welcome they've given to people who visit Princetown as part of their Dartmoor experience."

Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes

Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes is a partnership of ten organisations, delivering a programme of fifteen projects between 2025-30.

Having received news in late 2024 that the Heritage Fund had approved our grant application of £3.1m, 2025 was the first year of this five-year programme. The focus has been on recruitment, establishing procedures and launching projects.

Recruitment is complete for now, with nine out of ten new roles filled (one not due till 2028).

(DDL has created 10 new jobs, amounting to 8.3fte, as well as contributing to the sustainability of several existing roles across the partnership).

Most of the programme's processes are established, with boards and project leads meeting regularly and claims to the Heritage Fund up to date. £30k of additional match funding has been secured from Arts Council England towards delivery of our first Rivers & Moorland Festival (June 5th-6th 2026).

Work is geographically focussed on the catchments of the rivers Okement, Dart, Erme & Yealm as well as the towns of Okehampton, Ivybridge and Princetown (we refer to these as 'Gateway Towns').

Projects will:

- Gather information, vital to understanding natural and cultural heritage, by supporting around 150 new citizen scientists (through 5 projects looking at meadows, river health, moorland birds, ancient trees and tin streaming archaeology).
- Enhance and restore over 1,000 hectares of habitat for nature.
- Contribute to Dartmoor's knowledge & skill base; exploring the application of new technology, woodland management, access to funding and organisational sustainability for farmers and other land managers.
- Improve and encourage responsible car free access to green space around the three focus towns, through practical improvements and a project to encourage 3,000 people to walk, wheel and cycle.
- Celebrate and learn about Dartmoor's natural heritage through a series of events attended by over 20,000 people.

For more information about DDL, including a list of the projects visit www.dartmoorsdynamic.org



The River Erme at Piles Copse

An Excellent Organisation

An organisation that provides an excellent level of service, where the people (staff, members and volunteers) and partnerships are what makes the organisation effective in delivering outcomes for Dartmoor.

Climate Action Plan

In 2025 DNPA's updated Organisational Climate Action Plan was formally adopted by Members, establishing an ambitious, science aligned framework to reduce the Authority's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and achieve net zero by at least 2050, in line with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). The Plan builds on earlier commitments made when DNPA declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and replaces the previous 2025 net zero target for scope 1 & 2 emissions with a robust pathway that covers all three scopes of emissions. Core elements include integrating carbon reduction into organisational governance, setting near term (2030) targets, expanding

low emission fleet vehicles, improving energy efficiency across premises and operations, and strengthening procurement policy to address scope 3 emissions. This work underpins wider Authority climate leadership and transparent annual reporting of emissions performance.

As part of this work, DNPA has calculated its 2024/25 organisational greenhouse gas emissions at 617 tCO₂e, enabling us to track progress against net zero target.



Lydford EV charger - installed in 2025

Partnership Plan Review

The Dartmoor Partnership Plan is the National Park's key policy document, providing the strategic framework to deliver statutory purposes and local and national priorities.

The current Plan (2021–2026) is under review, with preparation having begun in 2024. Over the past year, we have carried out extensive engagement to inform the updated Plan. This has included a public opinion survey, a series of stakeholder engagement workshops with partners across all themes, and a series of Dartmoor Farmer Breakfasts. The outputs from these workshops were captured in a stakeholder engagement report, now helping to shape the drafting of the updated Plan.

Plan drafting workshops took place in March 2026, continuing this engagement. We have also completed a Climate Change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment with Adapt40, identifying key climate hazards and vulnerabilities to underpin the Plan's adaptation commitments and strengthen resilience across Dartmoor.

The review will continue through 2026–27 and is expected to be ready for adoption in early 2027.

New Chair for the Authority

At its Annual Meeting on Friday 27 June 2025, the National Park Authority elected Will Dracup as its Chair with Mark Renders named as Deputy Chair.

Mr Dracup succeeds Pamela Woods who had been Chair since June 2019 and had served on the Authority in different roles for 16 years but decided not to re-stand.

Whilst continuing to serve as an Authority Member until June 2026, words of thanks and appreciation were given to Ms Woods for her leadership and oversight during a period of financial uncertainty, the pandemic and the court cases pertaining to open air recreation.

The new Chair, Dartmoor born farmer Will Dracup has said that his appointment to the role is a 'great honour'.

Change of National Park Officer

In the summer of 2025, the National Park Authority's Chief Executive and National Park Officer Dr Kevin Bishop announced that he would stand down at the beginning of 2026.

After 18 years of leadership Kevin announced his departure from what he calls 'the dream job.' He was appointed to the role on 1 October 2007 and during his time as Chief Executive, Kevin has led the Authority through significant changes and delivered a range of ambitious programmes focusing on restoring nature and land use management, ending unequal access and inspiring people of all ages to act and look after Dartmoor.

After a rigorous selection process, it was announced that Tom Surrey had been appointed as its new Chief Executive, and Tom started in March 2026.

Tom joined Dartmoor National Park Authority from the Department of Health and Social Care, where he served as Director of Adult Social Care Workforce and Policy for the past five years. His Civil Service career spans more than two decades and includes leading policy, strategy and legislation for National Parks, Forestry, Common Land and Rights of Way at Defra, alongside roles in Housing, Local Government and the Cabinet Office.

Tom said: "Dartmoor is an exceptionally special place and one with which I have a lifelong connection. I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed as Chief Executive for the Authority. I look forward to working with the team and all those who live, work and enjoy Dartmoor, as we work together to shape a bright and sustainable future for the National Park."



Tom Surrey - DNPA Chief Executive



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