



NPA/22/027

Dartmoor National Park Authority

29 July 2022

Annual Review 2021/22

Report of The Head of Communications and Fundraising

Recommendation: **That Members note the report and Dartmoor National Park Authority's Annual Review 2021/22 for information**

1 Background

- 1.1 Every year we produce an Annual Review of our work completed during the previous financial year. We submit the Annual Review to Defra and it also provides us with the opportunity to highlight some of our work from the previous year in a less formal way than normally presented through more detailed Authority Reports reporting against our Business Plan and other performance indicators.
- 1.2 The Annual Review is published as a summary document with key achievements against our Business Plan along with any other significant highlights from the previous year. This is designed and presented as a summary PDF on our website and circulated to key partners and stakeholders, including Defra, local MPs and constituent local authorities.

2 Annual Review 2021/22

- 2.1 At the start of 2021 we set an ambitious Business Plan with some key priority areas to deliver against. Working in partnership with our partners, stakeholders, and communities to successfully deliver our aims.
- 2.2 We celebrated 70 years of being designated a National Park, one of the first four to celebrate this significant milestone.
- 2.3 It was also a year in which we emerged out of Covid restrictions, but still felt some of the challenges of managing a large volume of visitors to the National Park.
- 2.4 The Annual Review for 2021/22 [appendix A] provides a summary of some of the key areas of work we have delivered under four headings:
 - **People** – how we have given people more opportunities to engage with the landscape

- **Place** – how we have supported the development of thriving communities and enhanced the landscape
- **Nature** – how we have managed and improved habitats for increased biodiversity
- **Climate** – how careful land management can reduce the risk of flooding and store carbon

2.5 The Annual Review is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of everything we have completed over the past year. It is intended to provide a summary and a range of different examples of the work we have undertaken, in a visual and digestible way for our audiences.

2.6 Our Business Plan reporting process provides the mechanism to report fully against our objectives over the previous year. This information is provided to Members at the May Audit and Governance Committee.

3 Conclusion

3.1 Members are invited to note this report and Dartmoor National Park Authority's Annual Review 2021/22, highlighting some of our key achievements from the past year.

SAMANTHA HILL

Annual Review 2021/22 – draft

Last year we celebrated 70 years of Dartmoor being designated as a National Park. In those 70 years much has changed, but as we emerged from the restrictions following the pandemic, we know it's as important today to access to the outdoors and nature, as it was 70 years ago, as we saw people enjoying and reconnecting with the National Park.

We once again set ourselves an ambitious Business Plan working in partnership with our partners, stakeholders and communities to deliver our aims. We are proud of these relationships and grateful to the ongoing support of everyone who has worked with us for the past 70 years.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside our partners to share our vision for Dartmoor, to make it better for future generations, climate resilient, nature rich, beautiful, connected to the past and looking to the future; a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can live, work or visit. A place that is loved cherished and cared for.

People

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

Generation Green – inspiring the next generation

This one-year project funded by the Green Recovery Challenge Fund and led by the Youth Hostel Association (YHA) was a huge success in delivering its aims of increasing young people's engagement in the National Parks.

Some of the activities young people enjoyed included: cooking over a campfire at the Burrator Discovery Centre with the Barefoot youth groups in Plymouth; Dame Hannah's young adults did practical tasks at sites they could easily return to; a litter pick at Shipley Bridge and tree planting in Ivybridge and, for Tavistock College, a programme of one-off taster sessions for every Year 7 pupil to have a day on Dartmoor. Practical sessions included bridleway repairs with a Dartmoor Ranger; orchard mulching with the National Trust at Lydford Gorge; drainage work on Walkhampton Common and farm visits to Tor Royal Farm, Princetown.

The project delivered:

- 39 taster days on Dartmoor for 206 children from backgrounds that meant they wouldn't normally have access to the outdoors, this included asylum seekers and young people with complex needs.

- A junior and youth ranger programme for 65 12–19-year-olds: 2,664 volunteering hours by young people!
- 2 weekend residentials for 23 young people to experience a night under the stars on Dartmoor.

Miles Without Stiles wins national award

The Miles Without Stiles project has been awarded the prestigious Gordon Miller Award, from the Countryside Management Association (CMA).

The annual accolade goes to the most deserving project that's made an outstanding contribution to countryside management. It's named after the CMA's Honorary President, himself a former National Park ranger, who set up the International Ranger Federation.

Dartmoor's Miles Without Stiles routes have been created to tackle some of the challenges people face, like gates, stiles and steep slopes, making it difficult for some people to explore the open landscape. Routes are primarily designed for people with limited mobility including those who use wheelchairs and families with pushchairs, and they don't feature any obstacles. They also have facilities such as parking and toilets nearby.

Practical improvements were made on the ground with assistance from the Dartmoor Wheelchair Access Group and regular volunteers.

With six routes now available, it means that anyone, no matter what their ability, can explore Dartmoor's varied landscape from woodland river valleys to expansive moorland; Bronze Age monuments to quarrying remains.

Public Arts Trail – helping people re-connect with Dartmoor

Postponed from 2020, our popular arts trail was launched just as Covid restrictions were easing at the start of the summer; to support businesses recovery, help people re-connect with the outdoors and each other, benefitting physical and mental health and to raise funds to support conservation and access projects on Dartmoor.

The trail was a huge success with the public and their engagement with it was much higher than anticipated. It was clear that people were keen to get out and about again, connecting with each other and the wider National Park. It gave people something to 'do', that was free and gave people a sense of community; businesses saw an increase in footfall, and it also gave many new visitors an activity to do that dispersed them around Dartmoor, away from the 'usual' sites, discovering new places to return to.

- **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

Welcoming visitors

With Covid restrictions in place we still welcomed over 90,000 visitors to our National Park Visitor Centres at Princetown, Postbridge and Haytor.

As well as an exhibition celebrating 70 years as a designated National Park, we ran a series of school holiday event programmes to engage with current and new audiences to deepen enjoyment, engagement and understanding of the special qualities of Dartmoor. The events and activities were run by staff, volunteers and partners and were free, to ensure they were accessible to all.

- 60 events at the three centres
- 2500 people undertaking self-led or drop-in activities
- Engagement with approximately 700 families
- Nine schools taking part in Moor Otters schools' exhibition, including Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Special School pupils.

The retail offer at our centres supports local suppliers, we have 72 local producers working on and around the Dartmoor area.

Of the 111 suppliers we use:

- 63% are based on and around Dartmoor
- 72% are based in Devon or Cornwall
- 77% are based in the South West

Visitor management

Working in partnership with organisations such as Forestry England, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Okehampton Hamlet Parish Council and others, we developed a coordinated approach to manage visitor pressures during the summer of 2021.

This included:

- A communications strategy that encouraged responsible behaviour, based on a 'tools not rules' approach to the information people needed before visiting, ensuring they could make positive choices. This was supported by a social media campaign - *Leave no trace, give nature space*, driving people to this information on our website.
- Working with regular volunteer 'Engagement Rangers' to meet and greet visitors to our popular sites: 40 weekend patrols, equating to 400 hours volunteering support.
- Shared visitor management signage with partners, ensuring consistent messaging across the National Park.

- A Dartmoor Marshal programme providing additional cover on 61 evenings, circa 1408 hours patrolling.
- Joint Patrols with Police Specials and regular updates with the Police.
- Implementation of double yellow lines and the associated traffic order around Two Bridges.
- Banking and bouldering and various locations to prevent displacement parking.

Place

Ensuring the quality and character of the landscape and its heritage is reinforced or enhanced. Developing a resilient and thriving economy.

Farm for the future

The Farm for the Future programme is part of the Defra-funded resilience projects that aim to raise awareness of the Agricultural Transition, the reduction and ultimate loss of the Basic Payment Scheme. It aims to identify and provide support and information to assist farmers to find positive options in the emerging new Environmental Land Management schemes or in other diverse opportunities.

This was delivered via a group of 11 regional Farm Support Groups (plus a separate national, entirely online group), working in partnership via the Princes Countryside Fund. The Dartmoor Hill Farm Project delivered this locally from October 2021 to April 2022.

Overall engagement numbers were 68 in total, of which 38 were regularly engaged and 15 to a lesser degree, a smaller number did not engage at all or withdrew.

Additional funding has been applied for, if successful the scheme could run for another three years.

The Dartmoor Community Resilience (DCR) Project

This project has sought to bring together local business and social enterprise on Dartmoor, building local networks, supporting learning and resilience and promoting the importance of buying locally.

The new WeAreDartmoor.org website, supported by the Prince's Countryside Fund and delivered by Visit Dartmoor is a brand-new opportunity to promote local business. This followed on from the success of the WeAreDartmoor social media campaign, that showed the faces behind local businesses and encouraged people to buy local through the pandemic.

Dartmoor business and enterprise is supported through the development of a network which promotes learning and joint working. The DCR project included several training sessions for local businesses, including marketing, green business, and community supported agriculture.

WeAreDartmoor encourages people to shop locally, reducing their need to travel, reducing food miles, and investing back into Dartmoor businesses and communities.

Developing more walking and cycling opportunities from the A38

The A38 corridor of the National Park is included in our Recreation Strategy as an area of opportunity. It also identifies town hubs, five of which are within the A38 corridor. The priority for the A38 corridor is to develop walking and cycling links using public rights of way and public transport, helping gateway towns as destinations to support the local economy and promote onward sustainable travel.

To support the development of town hubs we have identified several pilot projects for Ivybridge including, electric bike docking stations, a river festival and a park and ride visitor hub. We are looking at opportunities to expand an electric bike trial beyond Ivybridge.

The A38 corridor project aims to provide more opportunities for people to experience the National Park and provide more opportunities for a wider range of users and visitors. Pilots within the town hub development will help people learn about, connect to and value the landscape and the local economy will also be supported through enhanced tourism offers.

We have been working with districts, local communities, and key stakeholders to identify opportunities to deliver these priorities.

Dartmoor Line re-opens

The Dartmoor line has been re-instated after nearly 50 years, providing regular passenger services to Okehampton from Exeter, with connecting bus services to Tavistock. This has provided a much welcome boost to businesses on Dartmoor and provided a sustainable way for people to visit Dartmoor.

There are currently limited public transport options available for Dartmoor, especially away from primary routes, with most visitors arriving by car. It is estimated that journey times will be 30% quicker between Okehampton and Exeter by rail, avoiding congestion on the busy A30 at peak times.

We have been working with GWR on the provision of a Dartmoor National Park 'micro' visitor centre in the newly refurbished station buildings. Providing visitors arriving by train with information and interpretation about the National Park and providing local businesses with the opportunity to promote themselves to new visitors.

Since the line opened there has been a 240% increase over forecast passenger numbers!

Dartmoor Local Plan adopted

The Local Plan sets the framework for planning decisions in the National Park; a key way in which we pursue National Park Purposes. Following several years of

evidence gathering, drafting, consultation and engagement the Plan was examined in public in 2021, found sound by a Planning Inspector and adopted by the Authority in December 2021. It will now be used as the basis for all planning decisions on Dartmoor.

The Local Plan brings in several forward-thinking policies including higher energy efficiency standards in buildings, requirements for electric vehicle charging points, and a new route for 'local self-build'.

It sustains a focus on affordable housing, and promotes economic development which is good for Dartmoor, and support for community resilience.

The Local Plan sets a settlement strategy focused on sustainable development, and a range of policies which mitigate our impact on climate change.

It also brings in the lowest Biodiversity Net Gain threshold in Devon, seeking to achieve biodiversity improvements from all development

Development that is good for Dartmoor

The new Local Plan has been well received, it gives the Planning team some new tools to drive climate change ambitions, promote excellent design and encourage biodiversity net gain.

Demands on the Planning service have continued to rise throughout the last year. A trend of approximately 20% increase in planning applications received is backed up by similar requests for advice, new enforcement cases and other work.

Nature

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

Farming in Protected Landscapes

Dartmoor's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme launched in July 2021 and has so far helped our countryside community with over £250,000 of funding for projects that enhance nature, improve the environmental sustainability of farming, improve public access and maintain the traditional character of Dartmoor's landscape.

Farming in Protected Landscapes is an innovative partnership funding programme, bringing Defra and protected landscapes together to provide farmers with tailored, local support to deliver benefits for climate, nature, people and place.

So far, we have worked with:

- 29 farmers
- 9 farmers who have not engaged with agri-environment (AE) schemes recently (and one Commons Association of 30plus Commoners outside AE for 14yrs)
- 11 farmers who the Protected Landscape bodies have not engaged with before
- 1 farm cluster supported, several Commons Associations

Delivering:

21 projects for nature

Including:

- 690 metres of hedgerows planted and enhanced
- 45 ha of positive management on SSSIs
- 220 ha of habitat improvement for biodiversity
- 90 ha of improved habitat connectivity
- 1 deer survey and management project

6 projects for climate

Including:

- 12 ha of woodland creation
- 393 ha of land being managed with regenerative farming techniques
- 6 projects to improve the soil quality
- 4 projects helping to reduce flood risk
- 1 project using natural materials in glass recycling (pilot)
- 2 projects to reduce wildfire risk

Marsh Fritillary – habitat improvements

Dartmoor is home to the globally threatened marsh fritillary butterfly. We have been working with farmers, land managers and landowners in targeted areas across Dartmoor to increase the understanding of marsh fritillary ecology and the importance of cross-farm management to ensure healthy populations. This has been concentrated within areas of known butterfly populations and where we are attempting large, landscape scale nature recovery. In one river catchment farmers are working together on multi-farm nature enhancement projects, improving the long-term viability of marsh fritillary populations.

We have also been carrying out a long-term management programme on key rôs pasture sites to maintain and improve marsh fritillary habitat. This has been achieved through appropriate grazing management and scrub clearance. We contributed data to a report produced by Butterfly Conservation in 2021, outlining the

state of marsh fritillary on Dartmoor. This showed that the long-term trend shows an increase in butterfly numbers, bucking the national trend which is showing declines.

Climate

More carbon is stored through careful management of the land, reducing the risk of flooding and making the landscape more resilient to climate change

South West Peatland Partnership

We are a partner in this project in delivering blanket bog restoration across key sites on Dartmoor where the peat has become eroded through previous industrial land use. Last year we worked with landowners, commoners and other interest groups to restore degraded peatland for the benefit of biodiversity, historic environment, carbon and flood alleviation.

In 2021/22 we restored the following sites:

- Black Hill - 29.2ha
- Red Lake – 38.9ha
- Left Lake – 22.0ha
- Buckfastleigh Moor – 37.3ha
- Prison Farm – 117.8h

Totalling 245.2ha restored in the past year. Dartmoor's peatlands are an important store of carbon and water, and ensuring they are restored and do not suffer any further degradation is an important part of tackling the climate emergency.

Progressing our Climate Action Plan

Positive action to tackle climate change is exceeding expectations with good progress made on work so far.

The 2020 Climate Action Plan set out our strategy for achieving our ambition of being a carbon neutral Authority by 2025. The Plan establishes key projects we will pursue to do this, including those targeting emissions reduction and offsetting, and indicating how projects should be prioritised.

The Action Plan has delivered a number of progressive projects to reduce the organisation's overall climate impact, but also significantly improves staff's understanding of carbon emissions.

Achievements so far and projects actively pursued include:

- Reduced, gas and electricity emissions by 20% between 2018/19 and 2021/22

- Installed electric vehicle charging points at the National Park's Haytor visitor centre, with another planned for the centre at Postbridge
- Introducing electric vehicles as part of a fleet replacement plan
- Promoting flexible working to reduce staff commuting emissions by 18%
- Begun calculating the footprint of our land assets carbon footprint to better understand how Dartmoor's habitats contribute to tackling climate change
- Working with partners to buy renewable energy and make our energy use greener
- Plans for installing solar panels on the National Park Visitor Centre at Haytor
- Reduced print materials across all DNPA services



NPA/22/028

Dartmoor National Park Authority

29 July 2022

Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme A report on the first twelve months of the programme July 2021 – July 2022

Report of the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager

Recommendation: That Members note the content of this report.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises the progress made in launching and running the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) for Dartmoor over the first twelve months of the programme.

2 Background

- 2.1 Authority report NPA/21/019 provides background details on how the FiPL programme was developed, the national objectives and how it links to the Dartmoor National Park Partnership Plan (formerly titled National Park Management Plan) and delivery mechanisms. In summary, each protected landscape in England has received a ring-fenced financial allocation for FiPL. The majority of this money is to be spent on grants to farmers and other eligible applicants but some of the money (up to a specified maximum) can be spent on delivering the programme (administration, financial management etc.) and technical advice to potential applicants and grant recipients. The programme launched at the start of July 2021 and is planned to run until end March 2024 by which time all funded projects must be completed, a report on the first six months of the programme is provided in Authority report NPA/22/009

3 Launch and delivery of the programme

- 3.1 The programme launched on 1 July 2021 with a range of publicity coordinated nationally by Defra. With support from DNPA Communications team and Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (DHFP) we promoted the programme through local channels and networks. Dartmoor FiPL Local Assessment Panel members and Dartmoor National Park Rangers have been active in promoting the scheme through their significant networks in the land management community.

- 3.2 The number of enquiries received has remained high with new enquiries received every week and at a level that the team is stretched to meet.
- 3.3 We have received and considered 66 applications for funding during the first twelve months.
- 3.4 Up to and including the July Local Assessment Panel meeting (7 July 2022), the programme has awarded grants totalling £575,443 to projects spanning the three financial years (2021/22 – 2023/24).
- Year 1 (2021/22) £244,689 completed and claimed of a project fund for the year of £250,000
 - Year 2 (2022/23) £305,731 'live' projects out of an available £566,720
 - Year 3 (2023/24) £35,024 awarded out of £503.636
- 3.5 We have so far allocated around 54% of our current year 2 (2022/23) project fund. With the average total grant award being £10,857.43 (ranging from £45,000 to £2,115).
- 3.6 The minimum grant request is £2,000 with a maximum suggested by Defra of £250,000 with £567,000 project fund for this financial year, we would consider grants over £50,000 as relatively large for Dartmoor.
- 3.7 We have awarded funding to a range of project values, the majority being in the lower part of the range:
- 9 'larger' applications (£20K+) totalling £257,356.90
 - 22 'medium' applications (£10K – £20K) totalling £231,521.27
 - 22 'smaller' applications (under £5K) totalling £86,565.62
- 3.8 The programme is supported nationally by a small Defra team who have developed a good working relationship with individual protected landscapes.

4 Local Assessment Panel and staffing

- 4.1 We have experienced difficulties recruiting to the FiPL project officer post and, initially, we had to support the FiPL programme by re-deploying existing staff and buying in contract support. A 0.6 FTE FiPL Project Officer was recruited in October 2021 with separate, dedicated administrative support (0.6 FTE). The programme is managed by the Authority's Strategic Planning and Projects Manager. The FiPL Project Officer left the post at the end of March '22 after securing employment elsewhere and the Administrative Officer leaves us on 15 July 2022 for another job (promotion).
- 4.2 We have recruited a new full-time FiPL Project Officer and, at the time of writing, are discussing how we provide continue administrative support to the FiPL programme.
- 4.3 The membership of the Dartmoor Local Assessment Panel is detailed below – it follows the structure agreed by the Authority in July 2021. The table also shows the attendance record.

Representing	Name	Meetings attended
Dartmoor Commoners Council – invitation to the Chair	Layland Branfield	6
Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Chair - invitation to the Chair	Russell Ashford	8
Farmer representative	Daniel Alford	7
Farmer representative	Martin Perryman	8
DNPA Member – appointed by the Authority	Peter Harper	7
DNPA Member– appointed by the Authority	Will Dracup	6
DNPA Officer– appointed by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)	James Sharpe	9
Natural England	Eamon Crowe	6
Representative from environmental NGOs (defined as one member of the Panel to represent the following organisations: RSPB, Devon Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and National Trust)	Helen Booker	7
Landowner representative – invitation to the Chair of the Dartmoor Common Landowners Association	John Howell	5
Representative from Dartmoor Local Access Forum	Mark Walker	6
Rural Payments Agency (non voting member)	Paul Dean	3

5 Funding

- 5.1 The allocations for DNPA Advisory staff (£59,000) and Administration of FiPL (£34,000) are the same for each year of the programme. This table reflects the revised allocations agreed during 2021/22 when Defra allowed us to re-profile spend from year 1 to years 2 and 3.

Table 5.1, showing DNPA's FiPL grant profile

Year	Total allocation
2021/22	£343,000
2022/23	£649,372
2023/24	£596,635

- 5.2 Allocating the £250,000 project fund in year one, to projects that could complete within the financial year, was challenging as we had no lead into programme launch and a short nine month 'year'. With a lead in from project year one, as well as a full twelve months of delivery, we aim to have most of the funding allocated this autumn with all the current year's projects underway by Christmas.

6 Grants awarded to July 2022

- 6.1 We have approved 53 applications so far, of these 11 have fully completed all activities.
- 6.2 We have 42 applications with activities taking place in the current financial year. Of those, seven have completed sufficient progress to submit at least one claim.
- 6.3 We have declined or deferred 12 applications, although we are working with most of these applicants to bring forward amended and improved proposals.
- 6.4 Projects awarded funding are described on the [DNPA Farming in Protected Landscapes web pages](#), we also publish notes on decisions made by the Local Assessment Panel.
- 6.5 All proposals must deliver against at least one of the FiPL outcomes of nature, climate, people and place in order to be successful. Chart 6.1 shows categories of activity delivered by applicants to meet these outcomes.

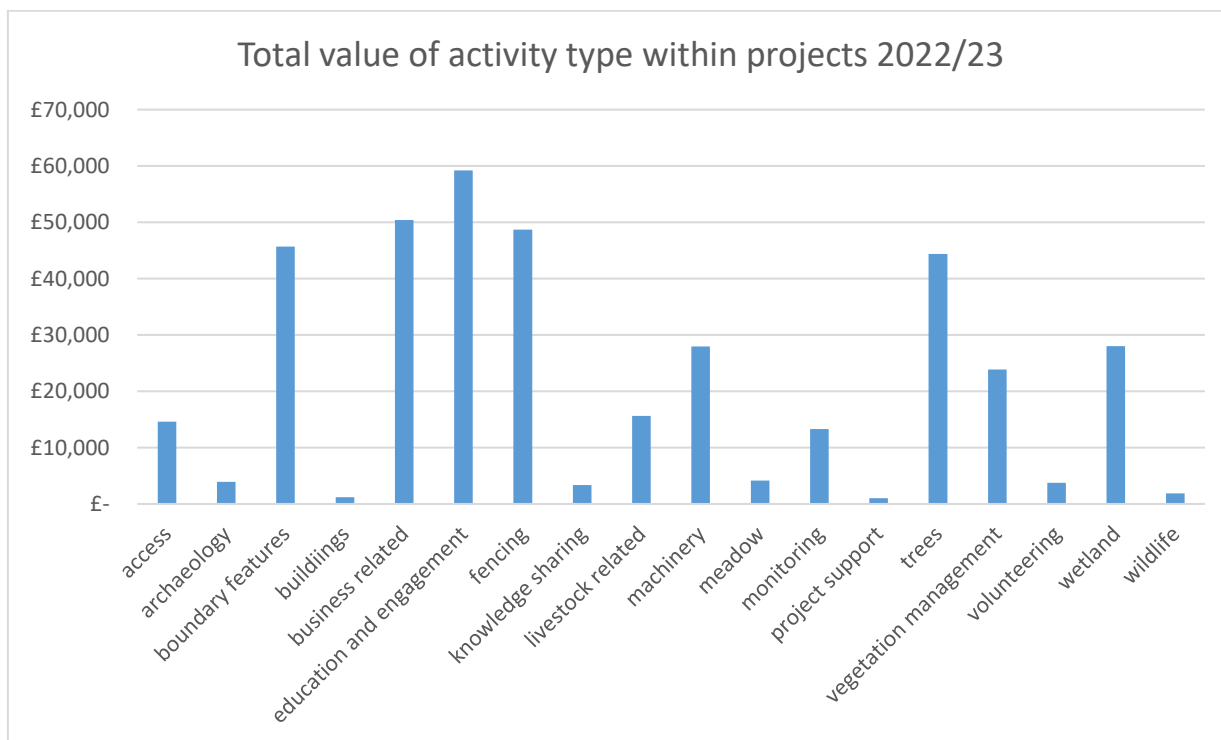
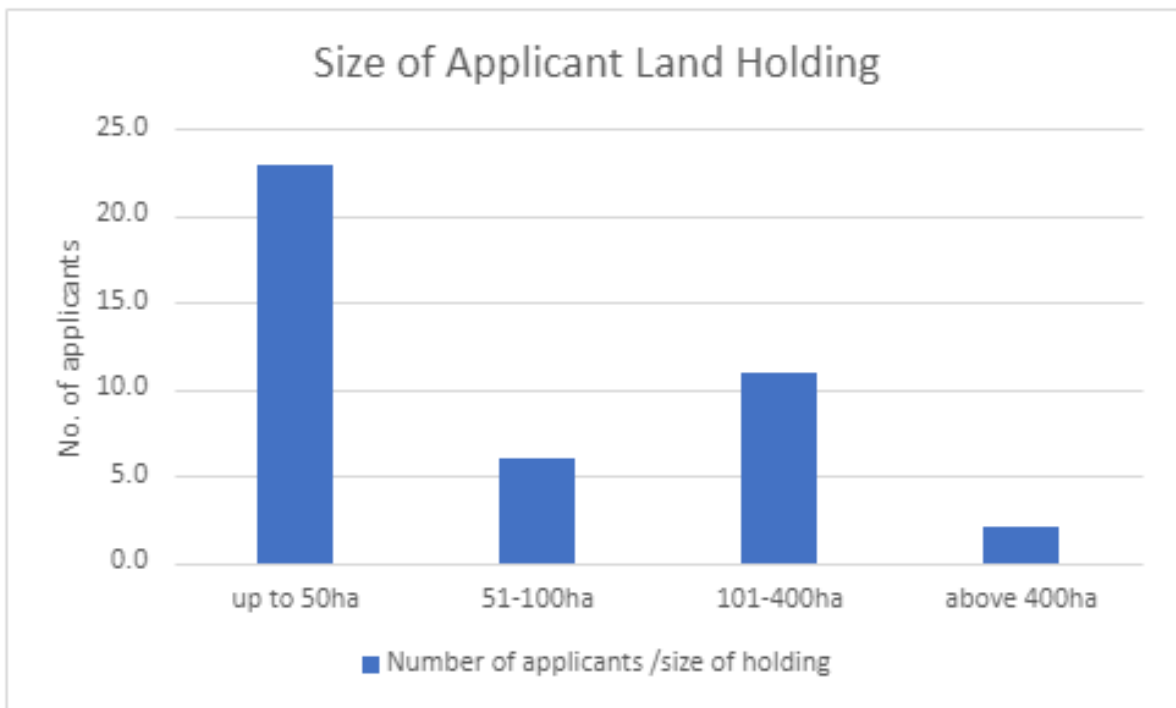


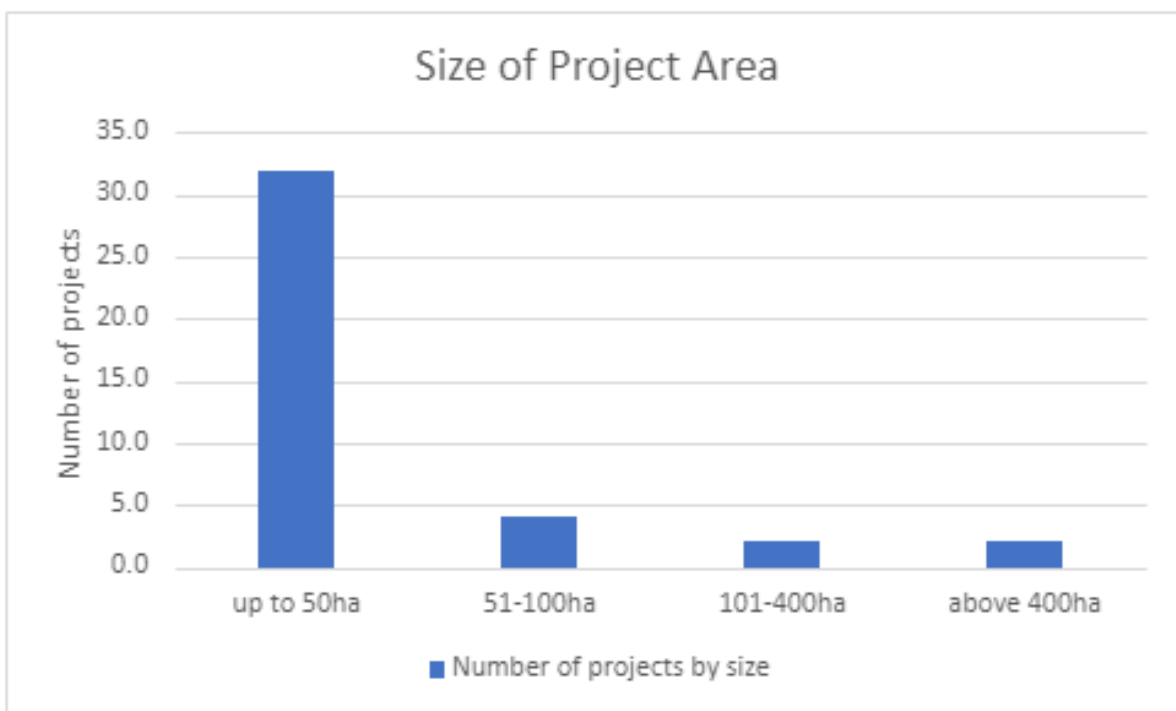
Chart 6.1, value of activity categories employed to meet FiPL outcomes.

- 6.6 The mix of successful applicants covers a range of those eligible, the Authority is able to bring forward applications on behalf of the National Park but has not done so yet. Most applications have come from farming and other land-based businesses, there are a significant number of private landowners making successful applications, the majority of these are focussed on nature and education outcomes.

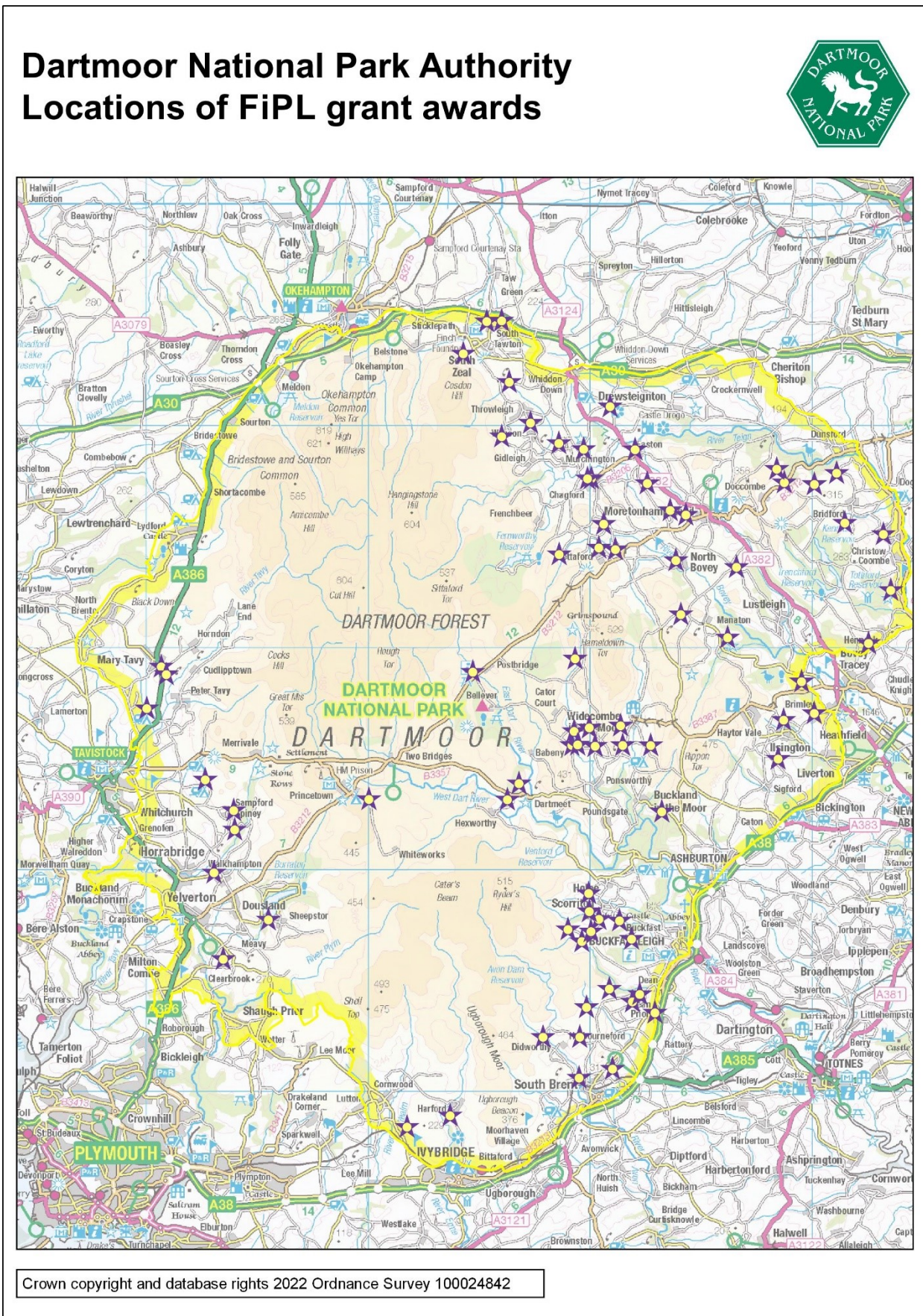
6.7 Chart 6.2 shows the size of land holding under management control of applicants.



6.8 Chart 6.3 shows sizes of area where FiPL projects are delivered, in some cases outcomes are delivered for the whole farm but projects are typically smaller, focussed interventions. We currently have projects delivering over 4,268ha total area.



6.9 Figure 6.4 shows the mapped locations of FiPL applicants.



7 Project pipeline

- 7.1 Our records currently show over 85 enquiries at various stages of development. Among these are some that we consider higher impact (as discussed elsewhere in this report, because of scale, ambition or because they may support those in the farming community who would benefit most) and we will prioritise our time on these applications while continuing to ensure a thematic and geographic spread of projects coming forward for assessment.

8 Key risks identified

- 8.1 In the initial FiPL report to Authority on 9th July 2021 a number of key risks were identified, those relevant to programme delivery on Dartmoor are commented on here:

a. Operational risks

Lack of applications – this is not currently a problem, although we aim to increase the number of applications (through targeted promotion and support) from farmers currently outside Agri Environment Schemes and/or who may be less likely to make applications for grant funding.

Staff resource – The number of enquiries is challenging to service, previously we have tried to meet with all eligible applicants. We are now trying to provide only desk-based support to the smaller and more straightforward applications, allowing more time for site visits and support to priority applications.

Working alongside existing schemes - The risk of inadvertently double funding activity remains significant as we rely, to a large extent, on applicants sharing the details of any publicly funded agreements with us. We direct applicants to other Defra funding where this may be possible, the Assessment Panel members are highly knowledgeable and routinely challenge applications that may be eligible for funding through other schemes.

b. Financial risks

Accountable body – the risk remains as previously stated.

Year-end spend – where appropriate projects are split into stages, with the opportunity for staged payments on completion of defined pieces of work. With some degree of extra planning and communication, this allows projects to span financial year end/two financial years.

Underspend – as can be seen in section 3 of this report (average grant value) the majority of applications are no more than £20k. This risk is still present. We will prioritise officer support to larger, more ambitious applications to achieve both impact and to ensure the full grant allocation within financial year.

c. Reputational risk

Local Assessment Panel – This risk remains as previously stated. It is moderated through clear processes and procedures for declaring interests and these have been explained to Panel members through the initial training sessions and routinely at meetings. Details of grants awarded are now published on the DNPA website along

with notes from Assessment Panel meetings. Further Panel workshops will be held during 2022.

External scrutiny – there is a risk of scrutiny and public criticism if stakeholders regard FiPL as not delivering priorities for farming and/or public funding. This remains a significant risk although FiPL has recently received praise nationally from within Government/Defra and support from the Secretary of State. There is more we can do during summer 2022, and beyond, to share positive case studies from Dartmoor FiPL and proactively engage land managers less likely to take part in national schemes.

9 Lessons to learn

9.1 We have identified some lessons to learn, including:

- One of the strengths of FiPL is local delivery and the ability to provide applicants with someone they know and who aims to understand their specific needs (as opposed to a national agency/call centre/online form). Relationships matter, trust and familiarity take time to develop. It is important to listen to potential applicants, especially those who are less familiar with funding applications. FiPL aims to achieve multiple, holistic outcomes but we have been told that applicants may feel uncomfortable being encouraged to scale up their proposal, so we should pay attention to different applicant needs and build trust first where needed.
- The requirement for data capture, analysis, compliance, and reporting is rightly high for such a public funding programme as this. The formats for application and reporting provided by Defra are not as efficient as they could be.
- There are times of year when Dartmoor's farmers and land-based businesses are very busy and unlikely to engage with a funding programme. Priority programmes should be planned around these times.
- What some might consider a 'simple' application is a long and off-putting process to others. We are now providing a very short Expression of Interest (EOI) form to encourage potential applicants to share their ideas in a quick and easy format, other Protected Landscapes have done this too. The application process can be a bigger barrier than we had anticipated.
- The good relationships with the farming community that are maintained through the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project are very valuable and have helped us deliver the FiPL programme to-date
- There are very few people working on the grant award and advice side of this programme that have detailed understanding or direct experience of farming on Dartmoor (although we have a good deal of other relevant expertise). The advice and guidance we have received from members of the Local Assessment

Panel is of great value, perhaps more so (as it is available on a day-to-day basis) is the knowledge of our National Park Rangers and Dartmoor Hill Farm Project.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 The Dartmoor FiPL scheme is fully operational and successfully awarded the full project fund in the first financial year of operation (2021/22). A range of worthwhile projects have been awarded funding and these projects are delivering the national outcomes and contributing to the delivery of the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.
- 10.2 Now the programme is established there is more we can do. We know who has current Agri environment agreements (AES), with this data we should be able to identify, and prioritise offers of support to those who do not have AES and may be more vulnerable to changes during the Agricultural Transition. We can do more to celebrate the successes of Dartmoor FiPL and we are well placed to develop projects that deliver across the National Park (we are currently working with the Commoners Council and other stakeholders to develop an up to date, coordinated and accessible fire plan for the whole of Dartmoor).
- 10.3 FiPL has been launched at a time of considerable uncertainty and financial challenge for many in the farming community: they are starting to experience reductions in their income via the Basic Payment Scheme, we have supported some projects that help our farmers to prepare for ELM but these transitional projects are in the minority and it may be possible to do more.

JAMES SHARPE