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To: All Members
of the Dartmoor National Park Authority

Please quote: NPA/26/Agenda

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Date: 23 September 2026

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Friday 02 October 2026

The next meeting of the Authority will be held on the above date, **commencing at 11.00am, or on the rising of the Development Management Committee, whichever is the later, in the Ian Mercer Meeting Room at Parke, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9JQ** to consider the following matters.

Registered speakers are able to participate remotely or in person by following [our procedure](#).

Members of the public may attend in person or can follow proceedings by listening to the live audio of meetings: [Channel content - YouTube Studio](#)

Tom Surrey
Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Access to Information - Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

Agenda and Reports

Copies of the Agenda and Part I reports are available for inspection by members of the public on the Authority's website: [Authority Meetings | Dartmoor](#). They are also available at the Authority's main office at Parke, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9JQ during [office opening times](#) five clear days prior to the meeting.

Background Papers

The Background Papers relating to Part I reports, except any containing exempt information, are available on our website [Meetings and committees | Dartmoor](#).

Will Dracup Chair Tom Surrey Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

The purposes of the Dartmoor National Park Authority are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities.
In pursuing these purposes, the Authority has a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of the local community

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 Dartmoor National Park

 Dartmoor National Park Authority

AGENDA

PART I - OPEN PROCEEDINGS

1 Welcome and Apologies

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are invited to declare any pecuniary, registerable or personal interest relating to any agenda item at this stage in the meeting.

3 Minutes of the Authority meetings held on 4 September 2026 (Pg.3)

Please raise any issues or questions with the relevant officer **before** the meeting.

4 Chair's Report

5 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

6 Public Participation

To answer any questions or to receive any statements, representations or petitions which relate to the published reports in Part I of the Agenda. Representations will be heard immediately prior to the item to which they refer.

7 Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027-2032 Outcomes and Targets

Report of the Partnership Plan and Climate Officer NPA/26/020 (Pg.7)

8 Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme

Report of the Landscape Development Manager NPA/26/021 (Pg.27)

9 Dartmoor Headwaters Plan 2026-2029

Report of the Dartmoor Headwaters Manager NPA/26/022 (Pg.38)

PART II - ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPT INFORMATION MAY BE DISCLOSED

None

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership: W Dracup, M Fife Cook, J Galbenu, G Hill, M Jeffery, R Keeling, J Major, S Morgan, C Mott, J Nutley, M Owen, G Pannell, M Renders, S Rogers, M Seddon, P Smerdon, D Thomas, M Williams

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Public Minutes of the Authority Meeting held on 04 September 2026

Present: Will Dracup (Chair), Corinne Farrell (Independent Person), Gay Hill, Sally Morgan, Caroline Mott, John Nutley, Mark Owen, Guy Pannell, Mark Renders, Stuart Rogers, Peter Smerdon, Dan Thomas, Mark Williams, Pamela Woods

Apologies: Mary Seddon, Michael Fife Cook, Mike Jeffery

Non Attendance: Julia Galbenu, Richard Keeling, Jack Major

Leadership Team: Tom Surrey (Chief Executive), Richard Drysdale (Director of Conservation and Communities), Esther Thorpe (Chief Finance Officer and S151)

Officers in Attendance: Andrew Watson (Head of Recreation, Access and Estates), James Wright (Farming in Protected Landscapes Manager), Bea Dunscome (Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme Officer), Kaitlin Perryman (Farming in Protected Landscapes Adviser) Gemma Eales (Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme Officer), Penny Bailey (Minutes), Jad Kozuch (Minutes)

3776 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed Members, the Independent Person, members of the press and public, and those listening online. Members were reminded to use the microphones clearly during the meeting.

3777 Declarations of Interest

The Chair declared a personal interest in the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme Update. Mr Williams and Mr Owen also declared that they were members of the Farming in Protected Landscapes Local Assessment Panel.

3778 Minutes of the Authority meeting held on 03 July 2026

Members considered the minutes of the Authority meeting held on 03 July 2026. A correction was noted to page five, under the Planning and Sustainable Development Working Panel, to include Mrs Mott within the list of Members who had expressed an interest in serving on the Panel. Subject to that amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 03 July 2026, having been printed and circulated, were approved as a correct record.

3779 Chair's Report

The Chair paid tribute to Ms Woods, who was attending her final Authority meeting after more than ten years as a Member and two years previously as an Independent Person. Members thanked Ms Woods for her significant contribution to the Authority, including her leadership as Chair through challenging periods. A presentation was made to Ms Woods of a limited edition 75th anniversary print - #12/75, to mark Ms Woods 12 years of work with the Authority.

The Chair reported that he and the Chief Executive had attended the 75th anniversary event in the Peak District, which celebrated the contribution and future role of National Parks. He also reported that, at the National Parks England Board meeting and Annual General Meeting, he had been elected Deputy Chair of National Parks England.

The Chair advised Members that he, the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chair and Honey Green (Partnership Plan & Climate Officer) would be attending the National Parks UK conference in the Cairngorms later in the month. He also reported that he had taken part in interviews for Secretary of State appointments and that the outcome was awaited.

The Chief Executive advised Members that recruitment for the Director of Resources post was live and encouraged Members to share the advert where appropriate. He also updated Members on recruitment for the Chair of the Dartmoor Steering Group, noting that the advert had closed and that the shortlisting and appointment process would take place over the coming weeks.

3780 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

None.

3781 Public Participation

The Chair welcomed Mr Michael Owen, Chair of the Dartmoor Access Forum, who spoke in relation to the revised Signing and Waymarking Policy. Mr Owen explained that the Dartmoor Access Forum had established a subgroup to support the development of the policy and that its ideas had been incorporated into the work led by officers.

Mr Owen thanked the Authority and officers for working constructively with the Forum and highlighted the value of a proactive Access Forum in helping to shape practical proposals. The Chair thanked Mr Owen and the Forum for their work.

3782 Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Programme Update

Considered: The report of the Farming in Protected Landscapes Manager (NPA/26/016)

Members were advised that the FiPL programme had been extended until March 2029, with annual Dartmoor funding of £768,530 for project delivery. Officers reported that approximately £3.5 million had been delivered through the programme to date and that a further £2 million was expected to be delivered during the remainder of the programme.

Officers presented examples of FiPL projects. These included the Brimpts Farm access-for-all trail, which had created Dartmoor's seventeenth access-for-all route; the Dartmoor Farmers Association Farm to Fork connections with schools; the hosting of the Ellwood Classic dry stone walling competition at Merrivale Farm; and the

Dartmoor-wide wildfire response plan delivered with the Dartmoor Commons' Council and partners.

Members discussed engagement with schools; the importance of ongoing national lobbying in relation to disposable barbecues; the continued fire risk on Dartmoor following a hot and dry summer; and opportunities to publicise improved river crossings to horse riders as an additional benefit to the wildfire plan.

In response to questions, officers explained that schools could not apply directly to FiPL unless they were landowners or land managers but could be connected with relevant farm-based projects. Officers also confirmed that FiPL could support appropriate farm resilience measures, including water retention, on a case-by-case basis.

Resolved: Members noted the report and welcomed the update on the Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme.

3783 2026/27 Policy for Signing and Waymarking Public Rights of Way, Permissive Paths and Access Land

Considered: The report of the Head of Recreation, Access and Estates (NPA/26/017)

Members received a presentation on the draft policy. Officers explained that the policy clarified and updated the Authority's approach to signing and waymarking public rights of way, permissive paths and access land, and had been developed with input from the Dartmoor Access Forum.

Members were advised that the policy would improve consistency across the National Park, including by providing clearer information on route status, destinations, distances and user symbols. Officers also highlighted proposed trials of granite boulders or posts where routes leave metalled roads onto common land, and the intention to develop a promoted routes policy and detailed design guide.

Members discussed production of signs, opportunities to increase in-house manufacture, local sourcing of timber, funding options, possible sponsorship, the relationship with defibrillator signage, and the timetable for the promoted routes policy. Officers confirmed that a combination of in-house and local contractor production was currently used and that work would continue with the Dartmoor Access Forum on further design detail.

Resolved: Members approved the draft Policy for Signing and Waymarking Public Rights of Way, Permissive Paths and Access Land.

3784 Financial Management 1 April to 30 June 2026 and Forecast of Financial Outturn 2026/27

Considered: The report of the Chief Finance Officer and S151 (NPA/26/018)

Members were advised that the Authority's financial outlook had strengthened following confirmation of additional one-off Defra revenue funding of £1.7 million, alongside the annual Defra revenue grant. Officers explained that the funding

announcement would reduce the need to draw on reserves and would allow internally generated income to be used to bolster reserves.

Members discussed the late notification of funding, whether the spend deadline could be extended, the impact on reserves and interest, staff recruitment and pay, and the meaning of virement. Officers advised that concerns about the 31 March 2027 deadline continued to be raised through the Section 151 group and with Defra, but that Defra's position remained that funding must be spent by that date.

Resolved: Members:

- i. noted the content of the report
- ii. noted the budget increase for grants awarded
- iii. noted the virements less than £30,000 in Appendix 1; and
- iv. approved the virements in excess of £30,000 as set out in paragraph 5.3.

3785 2026/27 Capital Strategy and Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29

Considered: The report of the Chief Finance Officer and S151 (NPA/26/019)

Members considered the Authority's first comprehensive Capital Strategy, which set out a framework for managing Defra capital funding and proposed a £2.6 million capital programme for 2026/27. Officers advised that the programme focused on nature recovery, access improvements, organisational resilience and delivery of National Park purposes.

Members welcomed the development of the strategy and discussed the reporting regime, Member accountability and alignment with the Authority's core principles and values. Officers confirmed that quarterly capital programme monitoring would be reported to Members alongside revenue monitoring, including variance analysis and any required budget changes.

Resolved: Members:

- i. noted the content of the report;
- ii. noted and adopted the Capital Strategy principles;
- iii. approved the 2026/27 Capital Programme projects and financing;
- iv. noted the indicative Capital Programme and financing; and
- v. delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer to manage delivery of the approved Programme within the agreed budget envelope for 2026/27 as set out in paragraph 4.2.

There being no other business, the meeting closed following closing remarks from Ms Woods, who thanked Members and officers for their support and reflected on her time with the Authority. The meeting closed at 12.32 pm.



NPA/26/020

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Friday 2 October 2026

Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027-2032 Outcomes and Targets

Report of Report of the Partnership Plan and Climate Officer

Recommendation: **That Members;**

- i) **agree the Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027–2032 outcomes and targets for public consultation from 12 October to 22 November 2026; and**
- ii) **agree the use of the Partnership Plan badge to support partners and projects in communicating their contribution to delivery of the Partnership Plan.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Dartmoor Partnership Plan fulfils Dartmoor National Park Authority's (DNPA) statutory duty to prepare a management plan for the National Park. It is a shared plan for Dartmoor, setting out the priorities and outcomes that partners will work towards together over the next five years.
- 1.2 The current Partnership Plan covers the period 2021–2026. The review of the Plan has been undertaken collaboratively with partners, stakeholders and the public, informed by the updated Vision for Dartmoor 2045, which sets out the longer-term direction for the National Park. The review has also had regard to relevant Government policy and guidance for National Parks and Protected Landscapes, including the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework and the 30 by 30 commitment.
- 1.3 A draft set of outcomes and associated targets has now been developed for 2027–2032.
- 1.4 This report seeks Member agreement to take the draft outcomes and targets forward to public consultation and to approve the use of the Partnership Plan badge.

The report provides supporting information as follows:

Appendix 1: Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027–2032 – Outcomes and Targets

Appendix 2: Proposed Partnership Plan badge

2 Background

- 2.1 The draft Partnership Plan outcomes and targets attached at Appendix 1 were circulated to the Partnership Plan Board for review at a meeting on 14 September 2026. The Board's discussion may result in some minor amendments to the draft prior to public consultation. As a result, the version attached to this report may not be identical to the final consultation draft published on 12 October 2026.
- 2.2 The review of the Partnership Plan provides an opportunity to establish a clear and shared direction for action across Dartmoor for 2027–2032, supporting the delivery of the Vision for Dartmoor 2045. The Plan brings together the priorities of partners and provides a framework for coordinated action towards agreed outcomes, recognising that its delivery relies on the collective contribution of organisations, communities, businesses and individuals across and beyond the National Park.
- 2.3 The review has been informed by evidence, public opinion and engagement. In 2025, a public opinion survey was undertaken, receiving 2,654 responses, which provided a broad range of views on the priorities and challenges facing Dartmoor.
- 2.4 This was followed by a programme of partner and stakeholder engagement, including workshops across the themes of the Plan, farmer engagement and targeted discussions with relevant sectors and organisations. This engagement has helped identify shared priorities, test emerging outcomes and shape the proposed targets for 2027–2032.
- 2.5 The review process has resulted in a focused set of outcomes describing the changes partners want to see on Dartmoor by 2032, with targets providing a means of measuring progress where suitable data and evidence are available.
- 2.6 The draft outcomes and targets are structured around seven themes:
 - Better Response to Climate Change
 - Better for the Next Generation
 - Better for Nature and Natural Beauty
 - Better for Cultural Heritage
 - Better for Farming and Forestry
 - Better for People
 - Better for Business and Communities

The first two themes are crosscutting and are intended to influence and support delivery across the other themes.

3 Draft Partnership Plan 2027–2032

3.1 Outcomes and Targets

The draft outcomes describe the desired change and provide a clear direction for partnership action. The draft targets set out how progress towards these outcomes can be measured, with their level of specificity reflecting the availability of data and existing monitoring arrangements.

Where robust data is available, targets provide measurable indicators of progress. Further work with partners will be needed following consultation to establish ownership, baselines and measures for some targets.

Together, the draft outcomes and targets provide a framework for partnership delivery and a basis for developing a shared evidence and monitoring framework over the lifetime of the Plan.

3.2 Cross Cutting Themes: Climate Change and the Next Generation

The draft outcomes and targets include two cross-cutting priorities: Better Response to Climate Change and Better for the Next Generation.

The Climate Change priority reflects Dartmoor's role in tackling and adapting to climate change. The Plan will provide the framework for Dartmoor's climate action and adaptation for 2027–2032, aligned with the Devon Carbon Plan and contributing to the Race to Zero commitment.

The Next Generation priority recognises the importance of giving young people a stronger voice in shaping decisions about Dartmoor's future, including opportunities to influence delivery and future development of the Plan.

The seven themes provide the overall structure for the Plan, with the two cross-cutting priorities embedded throughout the outcomes and targets.

4 Public Consultation

- 4.1 Subject to Member agreement, the draft Partnership Plan outcomes and targets will be published for public consultation from 12 October 2026 to 22 November 2026, for a period of six weeks.
- 4.2 The consultation will seek views on the overall direction of the draft Plan, as well as the proposed outcomes and targets under each of the seven themes.
- 4.3 The proposed consultation will include:
 - an online questionnaire with the opportunity to provide written comments;
 - public drop-in events at locations across and around Dartmoor;
 - partner and stakeholder communications;
 - social media and digital engagement; and
 - printed information to support people who may not engage online.

- 4.4 The consultation will also seek to reach audiences beyond the National Park boundary, recognising the importance of Dartmoor to neighbouring communities and the wider regional population.
- 4.5 The consultation responses will be reviewed and used to inform the final Partnership Plan. Following consideration of consultation feedback and any necessary amendments, the Plan will be brought forward for formal adoption early 2027.

5 Formal Adoption

- 5.1 Following the public consultation, the final Partnership Plan will be considered by the Partnership Plan Board at a meeting anticipated for February 2027.
- 5.2 Following consideration by the Partnership Plan Board, the final Plan will be presented to the full Authority for formal adoption, with a meeting anticipated for March 2027.
- 5.3 After formal adoption, a copy of the Partnership Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in accordance with the Government's guidance on management plans for Protected Landscapes.
- 5.4 The final adopted Partnership Plan will then be published and made publicly available, with partners and stakeholders supported to understand their role in contributing to its delivery.

6 Partnership Plan Badge

- 6.1 A Partnership Plan badge has been developed to provide a clear visual identity for the Plan and to help partners and projects demonstrate their contribution to its delivery.
- 6.2 Two badge options have been developed. Members are asked to agree and support its use as part of the Partnership Plan communications and engagement approach.

7 Monitoring and Reporting

- 7.1 The Partnership Plan will require ongoing monitoring to understand progress towards the agreed outcomes and targets. This will include working with partners to establish ownership, responsibilities, baselines and indicators, and to collect and review available data.
- 7.2 The Dartmoor Data Observatory will provide the framework for monitoring and reporting progress, bringing together relevant data, indicators and evidence of partnership activity and making this information more accessible to partners and the public.
- 7.3 Monitoring will support the identification of progress, challenges and emerging issues, and enable periodic updates on delivery of the Plan. The approach will be reviewed throughout the Plan period to ensure it remains useful and proportionate.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The Partnership Plan is a strategic partnership framework and does not commit DNPA or individual partners to specific expenditure through adoption of the Plan.
- 8.2 Delivery of individual outcomes and targets will be dependent on the resources, funding and priorities of the organisations involved. Many activities identified through the Plan will build on existing programmes and projects.
- 8.3 Some outcomes may require additional resources or external funding to achieve the desired level of change. Opportunities for collaborative funding and partnership investment will therefore be explored as delivery develops.
- 8.4 The costs for materials to help promote and undertake the consultation have been allocated within the current year's budget.

9 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 9.1 The Partnership Plan aims to support positive outcomes for Dartmoor's environment, communities and economy, including action to respond to climate change, support nature recovery, protect cultural heritage, improve access and opportunities for people, and strengthen the resilience of communities and businesses.
- 9.2 Equality considerations have been taken into account throughout the review process, including through public engagement and the proposed consultation approach. The consultation will provide a range of opportunities for people to contribute, including online and written responses, public drop-in events and printed information, with engagement extending to communities both within and beyond the National Park.
- 9.3 The draft Partnership Plan is subject to a Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, and Habitats Regulations Assessment. The findings of these assessments will be made available alongside the consultation documentation.

10 Conclusion

- 10.1 The draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027–2032 provides a clear framework for coordinated action across Dartmoor, informed by evidence, public engagement and partnership working. The outcomes and targets set out the changes the Plan seeks to achieve and provide a basis for monitoring progress.
- 10.2 Members are asked to agree the draft outcomes and targets for public consultation from 12 October to 22 November 2026 and to agree the Partnership Plan badge for use in communicating and signposting delivery of the Plan.

HONEY GREEN

Background Papers:

Attachments: Appendix 1 - Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027–2032 – Outcomes and Targets
Appendix 2 - Proposed Partnership Plan Badge

20261002 HG Draft Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027-2032 Outcomes and Targets

Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2027-2032

Draft Outcomes and Targets for Dartmoor National Park Authority Member's Review

September 2026

Purpose of this document: To seek Member's feedback on the proposed outcomes and targets ahead of public consultation in October 2026.

The drafting process: The Dartmoor Partnership Plan sets out a shared vision, priorities and framework for collective action to guide the future of Dartmoor National Park. It brings together the ambition of partners, communities, land managers, businesses and organisations to protect and enhance Dartmoor's special qualities, while supporting a thriving, resilient and inclusive future.

This draft Plan has been developed collaboratively with Dartmoor's communities, stakeholders and partners through a programme of engagement, including workshops and discussions held across the National Park. Together, we have identified shared priorities, challenges and opportunities, which have shaped the outcomes and targets within each theme and provide a framework for coordinated action over the lifetime of the Plan.

Structure of the document: The outcomes describe the changes we want to see for Dartmoor by 2032, contributing to the achievement of the Vision for Dartmoor 2045. The targets set out measurable commitments and milestones that will help track progress towards achieving these outcomes. Delivery will depend on collaboration and alignment between partners, communities, land managers, businesses and organisations across Dartmoor.

Five themes focus on key areas of work across Dartmoor, while two cross-cutting themes recognise priorities that influence and connect all areas of delivery. These themes are embedded throughout the Plan, with specific outcomes and targets highlighting areas where coordinated action is particularly important.

Cross-Cutting Themes:



A Better response to Climate Change (green shading in table cells)



Better for the Next Generation (blue shading in table cells)

Partnership Plan Themes:

Better for Nature and Natural Beauty

Better for Cultural Heritage

Better for Farming and Forestry

Better for People

Better for Business and Communities

Cross Cutting Themes

Better Response to Climate Change

Climate change is the greatest challenge facing Dartmoor, affecting its landscapes, wildlife, farming, businesses, heritage, communities and visitors. At the same time, Dartmoor has a vital role in tackling climate change through its peatlands, woodlands, soils and other natural habitats, which store carbon, regulate water and support nature recovery.

Achieving the Vision for Dartmoor requires both reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), increasing carbon sequestration and adapting to the impacts of a changing climate (adaptation). Rather than treating climate change as a standalone issue, climate action is embedded throughout this Partnership Plan. Together, this chapter and the climate-related outcomes and targets across the Plan form Dartmoor's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan for 2027–2032.

The Devon Carbon Plan is the principal delivery framework for climate mitigation on Dartmoor. Climate adaptation is delivered through the outcomes and actions across this Partnership Plan, with partners working collaboratively to build the resilience of Dartmoor's landscapes, communities and economy.

Mitigation means reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing carbon sequestration and storage to limit future climate change.

Adaptation means preparing for and responding to the impacts of climate change, improving the resilience of Dartmoor's landscapes, communities and economy.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	Dartmoor's response to climate change is coordinated through strong partnership working, evidence-based decision-making and shared learning. 	1.1	Partners collaborate to deliver the Devon Carbon Plan and relevant climate actions across Dartmoor, sharing learning and maximising opportunities for emissions reduction, carbon storage and climate resilience.
		1.2	Ensure climate considerations are embedded across all Partnership Plan delivery programmes by 2032, supporting both mitigation and adaptation.
2		2.1	Deliver climate adaptation measures across Dartmoor's landscapes, communities, businesses, cultural heritage and infrastructure by 2032 to improve resilience to climate change impacts.

	Dartmoor contributes towards becoming a net carbon sink by 2045 by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and delivering climate action in line with the Devon Carbon Plan, while increasing carbon sequestration and storage through the delivery of the wider Partnership Plan.  	2.2	Demonstrate measurable progress annually in reducing greenhouse gas emissions across Dartmoor against an agreed baseline, following an evidence-based pathway towards net zero and aligned with the Devon Carbon Plan and Race to Zero commitment.
3	Dartmoor's landscapes, communities, businesses, cultural heritage and infrastructure are more resilient and better adapted to the impacts of climate change.  	3.1	Deliver climate adaptation measures across Dartmoor's landscapes, communities, businesses, cultural heritage and infrastructure by 2032 to improve resilience to climate change impacts.
		3.2	Support partners, communities, businesses and land managers to develop and deliver climate adaptation actions through collaboration, knowledge sharing and access to evidence and guidance.

Better for the Next Generation

Better for the Next Generation is a cross-cutting theme that runs throughout the Partnership Plan. Every theme includes actions that will help create a thriving and resilient future for children and young people, from restoring nature and tackling climate change to supporting sustainable farming, thriving communities and accessible recreation. This chapter highlights the specific commitments that empower young people to engage with Dartmoor, influence decisions, and help shape the future of the National Park.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	By 2032, children and young people have regular, inclusive opportunities to experience, enjoy and learn about Dartmoor, regardless of their background or where they live.	1.1	Increase the number of schools, colleges and youth organisations participating in Dartmoor-based learning, outdoor education or volunteering programmes by 15% by 2032 from 2027 baseline.
		1.2	By 2032, provide opportunities for all primary schools in and around Dartmoor to enable pupils to visit Dartmoor before the age of 11.

			
2	Young people actively shape decisions about Dartmoor, with the needs and aspirations of future generations embedded in planning, management and delivery. 	2.1	By 2028, establish a Youth Dartmoor Partnership Plan Board and a Future Generations approach, including guidance and training, to embed young people's voices and future generations' interests in Partnership Plan projects and decision-making.
		2.2	Deliver at least one youth-led engagement activity or consultation each year from 2028 to 2032.
		2.3	Publish an annual report demonstrating how Partnership Plan delivery has benefited children, young people and future generations, including evidence of improved awareness and understanding among children and young people of the benefits of engaging with Dartmoor.

Partnership Plan Themes

Better for Nature and Natural Beauty

This theme focuses on enhancing Dartmoor's natural environment through a nature-first approach, supported by improved evidence, monitoring and landscape-scale collaboration. Key priorities include establishing a shared baseline for habitats, expanding nature recovery approaches, restoring peatlands and improving water, soil and habitat condition. It also aims to support the recovery of priority species and improve the condition and resilience of Dartmoor's most important habitats.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	By 2032, a nature-first approach underpins decision-making across Dartmoor, supported by a comprehensive, shared evidence base for the natural environment that enables consistent monitoring, improved understanding of environmental change, and informed, landscape-scale ecological restoration and land management across the National Park. 	1.1	By 2032, all Partnership Plan delivery programmes will apply a nature-first approach, ensuring the conservation and enhancement of Dartmoor's natural beauty and wildlife are central to decision-making.
		1.2	By 2032, establish a Dartmoor-wide natural environment baseline that maps the extent of priority habitats.
		1.3	Increase the proportion of Dartmoor managed under coordinated landscape-scale nature recovery agreements from 0% (2026 baseline) to 40% by 2032
		1.4	Increase the proportion of Dartmoor in at least higher tier agri-environment schemes from the 2026 baseline to at least X% by 2032.

2	Habitats are more connected and functioning naturally to support biodiversity, water quality, carbon storage, climate regulation and reduce flood risk. 	2.1	An additional 1000 hectares of peatland under restoration by 2032 to support recovery of natural hydrological function.
		2.2	By 2032, increase the proportion of river water bodies within Dartmoor achieving Good Ecological Status or better under the Water Framework Directive from the 2026 baseline to X% , contributing towards the national ambition to restore 75% of water bodies to Good Ecological Status.
		2.3	By 2032, identify the priority wetland habitats based on their ecological and hydrological value, condition and vulnerability to climate change and other pressures, and implement targeted measures to improve their condition and resilience.
		2.4	Promote a baseline for soil health and hydrological condition, prioritise areas where action is most needed, and achieve measurable improvement in soil organic matter and hydrological condition across at least X% of monitored sites by 2032.
3	Priority species are recovering and thriving, with appropriate reintroductions where suitable, and overall species diversity and abundance increasing over time. 	3.1	Achieve a X% increase in biodiversity in targeted areas (LRs) by 2032 compared to 2028 baseline.
		3.2	Complete a Species Recovery Plan by 2028, aligned with the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which identifies priority species and appropriate recovery measures, including where relevant the feasibility of reintroduction.
		3.3	By 2030, at least 30% of Dartmoor's priority habitat will be in good condition.
		3.4	Restore or create at least 1,887 hectares of wildlife-rich habitats outside protected sites by 2032, contributing to Dartmoor's apportioned contribution of 7,548 hectares by 2042 under PLTOF Target 1.
		3.5	Increase SSSI land in favourable condition from X% in 2026 to X% by 2032.
		3.6	Publish and adopt a Dartmoor-wide Invasive and Non-Native Species Strategy by 2028, with agreed priority species and monitoring arrangements, and deliver coordinated monitoring and management at all priority sites by 2032.

Better for Cultural Heritage

The Cultural Heritage theme focuses on understanding, protecting and celebrating Dartmoor's rich cultural heritage, ensuring historic assets are recorded, monitored and resilient to future pressures. Priorities include improving the evidence base for heritage assets, supporting conservation and climate adaptation, and increasing opportunities for communities, young people and visitors to engage with Dartmoor's traditions, skills and cultural identity.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	By 2032, Dartmoor has a comprehensive, accessible evidence base for its historic assets, their condition and constraints, supporting effective management, monitoring and greater public understanding and appreciation of its rich cultural heritage. 	1.1	Assess and record the condition of assets at 500 Historic Environment Record (HER) features by 2032
		1.2	Undertake at least 10 active volunteer, citizen science, academic or community monitoring projects by 2032, to support heritage monitoring and data collection
		1.3	Reduce the Historic Environment Record (HER) backlog by at least 2% annually
		1.4	Prioritise and develop at least 5 heritage research proposals by 2032 using the research framework.
		1.5	By 2032, produce or update at least 10 accessible heritage interpretation or guidance resources, including digital interpretation to improve public understanding of historic assets and promote Dartmoor's cultural heritage.
2	Dartmoor's historic environment is conserved, enhanced, and resilient, with priority assets protected from current and future pressures and heritage considerations embedded into land management and conservation. 	2.1	Complete significance and constraints assessments for 2500 assets within priority areas by 2032.
		2.2	Remove 12 scheduled monuments and listed buildings from the Heritage at Risk register by 2032 from 2027 baseline.
		2.3	Deliver conservation interventions for a minimum of 6 non-designated heritage assets per year, focusing on those at greatest risk
		2.4	By 2032, provide heritage advice, recording guidance and targeted engagement to ensure heritage considerations are integrated into 100% of relevant land management plans and environmental funding projects.
		2.5	Produce and adopt a Cultural Heritage Climate Adaptation Strategy by 2032, including a set of principles to guide the integration of cultural heritage into climate adaptation planning and decision-making.
3	Dartmoor's cultural identity, traditions and rural skills are sustained and celebrated, with increased opportunities for participation, learning and intergenerational knowledge-sharing of traditional crafts.	3.1	Support the delivery of at least 20 engagement events annually until 2032.
		3.2	Deliver heritage and traditional skills activities to at least 100 young people by 2032.
		3.3	Deliver at least 5 heritage engagement activities for schools annually, reaching 150 pupils per year by 2032.
		3.4	Expand opportunities for traditional rural skills training by supporting at least 10 training courses each year until 2032.

		
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Better for Farming and Forestry

This theme focuses on supporting a resilient and sustainable farming and forestry sector that can adapt to future challenges while continuing to deliver benefits for Dartmoor's landscape, nature and communities. It aims to strengthen farm businesses, support sustainable land management, improve woodland condition and resilience, and encourage collaboration, skills development and opportunities for the next generation of farmers and land managers.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	Farm businesses on Dartmoor are economically viable, resilient and enabled through strong networks, knowledge-sharing, advice and collaboration. 	1.1	Advocate for the improvement and evolution of Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes and other suitable schemes, so they are accessible to all eligible farms and better enable farming businesses and nature to thrive, through engagement with Defra, evidence provision, and pilot activity.
		1.2	By 2030, support at least 65% of land managers to adopt nature-friendly farming practices across at least 10% of their land, with an ambition to increase this to 80% of land managers and 15% of their land.
		1.3	By 2032, pilot and evaluate at least 2 approaches to working with farm businesses through the DNPA planning process, including longer-term farm masterplans for existing businesses and new entrants. Subject to successful evaluation, extend the approach to a further 30 farm businesses.
		1.4	Support farm businesses to improve their resilience and long-term viability by 2032, through access to appropriate advice and opportunities, including diversification where appropriate.
		1.5	By 2032, strengthen access to integrated business advice, data gathering, and knowledge exchange opportunities for farm businesses, increasing farmer participation in support programmes by 10%.
2	Dartmoor's farming systems are climate resilient and adaptive, with regenerative practices widely adopted improving soil health, water management, biodiversity, carbon storage and wider ecosystem services, supported by	2.1	Build on current work to develop and implement a Dartmoor-wide wildfire prevention and response plan by 2032, supporting land managers and partners to reduce wildfire risk, strengthen prevention and preparedness, and coordinate an effective response to large wildfires on Dartmoor.
		2.2	By 2029, establish a Dartmoor Land Use Framework and establish and maintain a freely accessible Dartmoor Data Observatory, bringing together land use and farm-level data to inform land management priorities, planning, advisory services and evidence-based decision-making, while recognising the diversity

	evidence-based decision-making, monitoring and landscape-scale collaboration, that improves environmental and economic outcomes.  		of Dartmoor's farming businesses and enabling collaborative approaches with farmers and partners.
		2.3	By 2032, support farmers to identify, monitor and respond to climate risks affecting their businesses, including drought, flooding, extreme weather and changing seasons, by increasing the number of farm businesses completing climate risk assessments, and support at least 30 farm businesses to develop and implement climate-adaptive farm masterplans by 2032.
		2.4	By 2032, increase the area of land under sustainable land management practices by X hectares, supporting measurable improvements in soil health, water quality, carbon storage and biodiversity.
		2.5	By 2032, increase the number of farm businesses participating in coordinated landscape-scale management approaches by 40%, that strengthen farm resilience and support nature-friendly farming, including collaborative action on soil health, water management, habitat connectivity, natural regeneration and tree corridors across farmed landscapes.
3	Strong local markets and supply chains enhance farm and woodland business resilience, supporting profitable farming, sustainable food and timber production, biodiversity and a circular low-carbon land-based economy.  	3.1	Develop and deliver a Dartmoor Food Strategy by 2028, strengthening resilient and sustainable local food supply chains, promoting Dartmoor-produced food, increasing the use of locally sourced products, and supporting skills development, training opportunities and local economic benefits through partnerships and collaboration across the wider business network.
		3.2	Establish a Dartmoor wide collaborative deer management and venison supply chain initiative by 2032.
		3.3	By 2032, strengthen Dartmoor's woodland economy through initiatives that promote locally produced and sustainably grown timber and other woodland products, improving supply chains and processing opportunities, and increasing the use of locally sourced materials through partnerships, marketing and pilot projects
4	Dartmoor has a shared evidence base and understanding of woodland extent, condition, habitat value and opportunities for action, enabling coordinated woodland management, nature recovery and sustainable forestry.	4.1	Complete a Dartmoor-wide woodland call for evidence by 2028, identifying priority data gaps and producing an action plan to address them by 2029.
		4.2	By 2029, agree a shared framework and terminology for woodland, tree canopy, hedgerows and woody habitats, establishing a consistent approach to assessing current cover and identifying future opportunities, including the role of lower-density woodland, trees outside woodland and natural regeneration in Dartmoor's landscapes.
		4.3	Complete mapping of woodland extent, condition, and habitat type by 2029, with condition assessments completed for 80% of ancient woodland, 50% of

			secondary woodland, of 100% for SSSI woodland by 2032.
5	Dartmoor's woodlands and woody habitats are expanded, better managed and resilient, supporting biodiversity, carbon storage, climate adaptation and ecosystem function through sustainable and collaborative land management 	5.1	By 2032, increase the proportion of woodland covered by current condition assessments and adopted woodland management plans to at least 80% of priority woodland.
		5.2	Increase the proportion of woodland, scrub and temperate rainforest habitats in favourable or recovering condition from the 2028 baseline by 2032.
		5.3	By 2028, establish a baseline understanding of Dartmoor's capacity for woodland creation and woody habitat enhancement, including opportunities, constraints and landscape considerations.
		5.4	By 2032, deliver 570 hectares of woodland creation, woodland restoration and woody habitat enhancement, including hedgerows and copses, using natural regeneration where appropriate and possible to support biodiversity, climate resilience and ecosystem function
6	Dartmoor has connected farming and forestry networks that enable collaboration, knowledge sharing, skills development and coordinated support, providing clear pathways for new and next generation farmers and land managers to enter, remain and thrive. 	6.1	By 2028, re-establish a Dartmoor Woodland and Forestry Group with agreed terms of reference and develop a cross-sector woodland coordination action plan by 2029, incorporating forestry, farming, nature recovery, heritage and access, with annual reporting on progress.
		6.2	Deliver at least 4 woodland knowledge-sharing, networking or technical events annually, including at least 2 mentoring or networking events linking new entrants with Forestry Group members.
		6.3	Develop an updated baseline understanding of forestry workforce capacity, contractors, and machinery availability in Dartmoor and surrounding areas by 2028.
		6.4	By 2028, establish a farming, forestry and land-based careers new entrants programme, in partnership with local and regional training providers and sector organisations, enabling at least 15 new entrants every five years, including at least 5 apprenticeships or accredited training placements by 2032.
		6.5	Improve access for new entrant farming businesses to land, finance, business support and practical guidance, including support to navigate funding processes and reduce barriers to entry.
		6.6	By 2029, develop and evaluate a pilot approach for new entrants to access grazing commons, identifying best practice, barriers and opportunities relating to land access, tenure, mentoring and advice.

Better for People

Better for People focuses on ensuring Dartmoor is accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for everyone, while supporting responsible recreation that protects the National Park's special qualities. It aims to improve understanding of visitors and communities, expand inclusive participation and volunteering opportunities, support sustainable ways to travel and explore Dartmoor, and manage visitor pressures to maintain a balance between access, tranquillity, nature and landscape character.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	By 2032, Dartmoor is accessed and enjoyed by a diverse range of people, with inclusive and well-promoted volunteering and participation opportunities widely available. 	1.1	Complete a baseline visitor survey by 2028 to understand who visits Dartmoor, their activities, motivations and barriers to access, reaching a minimum of 1000 people per survey, repeating the survey every two years.
		1.2	Develop and maintain a central page on the DNPA website showcasing routes, facilities, activities, volunteering which are inclusive and accessible with a minimum of 10% of website users.
		1.3	Identify priority places to develop a place-based strategy by 2029 to deliver public rights of way network and access improvements aligned with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Dartmoor
		1.4	Increase the number of targeted activities for underrepresented groups by 25% from 2027 baseline.
		1.5	Establish and support youth engagement pathways across Dartmoor, including 3 opportunities for young people's influence in decision-making, 2 volunteer programmes, 2 skills development programmes, 5 apprenticeships, 5 mentoring programmes, and 100 events, reaching 3000 young people.
		1.6	Establish a coordinated baseline of volunteering and learning activity, with agreed approach to data collection, monitoring, promotion and partnership coordination.
		1.7	Establish a Dartmoor-wide volunteering network by 2028, involving at least 5 partner organisations, with shared promotion and monitoring arrangements and introduce at least 3 new inclusive and accessible volunteering programs by 2032
2	Dartmoor's transport network is better connected, more reliable, and easier to use, enabling more people to access and enjoy Dartmoor sustainably.	2.1	By 2032, increase visitor awareness of sustainable transport options by 50% from baseline by delivering at least 4 targeted annual promotional campaigns.
		2.2	Develop and promote at least 10 integrated low-carbon visitor itineraries by 2028, combining sustainable transport, active travel, accommodation, volunteering and visitor activities.

		2.3	Deliver at least 3 priority walking, cycling and access improvement schemes, including key route enhancements, junction improvements, accessibility measures and priority connections, improving at least 30km of routes by 2032.
		2.4	Deliver, monitor and evaluate at least 5 pilot schemes exploring innovative sustainable transport and active travel solutions by 2032 at key access points.
3	By 2032, people enjoy Dartmoor responsibly, helping protect the National Park, while visitor management maintains a balance between accessible, well-served areas and wilder, quieter spaces, sustaining tranquillity, biodiversity, landscape character and climate resilience. 	3.1	Identify, map, and monitor areas of high visitor pressure, resilient visitor capacity, and environmentally sensitive or tranquil landscapes to inform coordinated visitor management by end of 2027.
		3.2	By 2028, develop and adopt clear, consistent and evidence-based responsible behaviour messaging, including shared signage and interpretation guidance, for use by partner organisations to provide coordinated visitor communications across Dartmoor.
		3.3	By 2032, implement targeted interventions and infrastructure improvements at least 10 priority locations across Dartmoor, informed by evidence of visitor pressures.
		3.4	Promote and encourage use of accessible and well-served routes, sites, and visitor hubs with existing capacity, using targeted communications, mapping, and partnership campaigns.
		3.5	Work with partners to increase awareness of year-round visitor experiences, helping to spread demand across seasons where possible, increasing off season visitation by 10% by 2032 from 2027 baseline.

Better for Business and Communities

This theme focuses on supporting thriving, resilient and connected businesses and communities across Dartmoor. It aims to strengthen local networks, improve understanding of the local economy and community needs, enhance digital and transport connectivity, support skills and employment opportunities, and help businesses and communities adapt to future challenges including climate change, while ensuring access to appropriate housing and local services.

	Draft Outcome		Draft Target
1	By 2032, Dartmoor has resilient, collaborative businesses and communities with a strong voice, active local networks, a thriving cultural life, and a strong sense of belonging, underpinned by a	1.1	Undertake a Dartmoor business audit and establish a maintained Dartmoor business database by 2028.
		1.2	Establish a Dartmoor business forum by 2028, with participation from at least 10% of registered businesses and organisations, to support collaboration, skills sharing, access to support and promotion of local supply chains through at least two annual networking events.
		1.3	Establish a community engagement and belonging baseline survey by 2028 and repeat every two years to monitor changes in community connection, participation and sense of belonging across Dartmoor.

	well-understood local economy. 	1.4	Increase the number of community events celebrating Dartmoor's local identity, culture and communities by 10% from the 2026 baseline by 2032.
2	Businesses and communities across Dartmoor have reliable digital connectivity that enables effective living, working, and access to services and opportunities. 	2.1	Complete baseline mapping of broadband and mobile coverage to identify connectivity blackspots and existing improvement plans by 2028.
		2.2	Reduce identified digital connectivity blackspots by 50% from the baseline by 2032, prioritising areas where poor connectivity limits access to services, employment and business opportunities.
		2.3	Improve digital connectivity coverage across Dartmoor's local centres and rural settlements by 2032, informed by baseline mapping.
		2.4	Establish at least three digital connectivity hubs by 2032, providing accessible spaces for businesses and communities in areas with limited connectivity to access digital services, skills and opportunities.
3	Businesses and communities across Dartmoor are supported by innovative, locally appropriate transport options that are accessible, connected, and sustainable. 	3.1	Establish a business and community-led sustainable travel forum by 2028 to identify barriers, secure funding opportunities and develop at least three collaborative sustainable travel initiatives by 2032.
		3.2	Complete transport demand assessment by 2028 to identify priority intervention areas and increase the provision of regular transport services serving identified high-need areas by X% or X routes by 2032.
		3.3	Utilise a Dartmoor carsharing or bus-sharing platform by 2028, achieving at least 50 recorded journeys annually from 2028 onwards to support more sustainable travel choices.
		3.4	Increase annual users of community transport and sustainable travel initiatives by 30% from the 2027 baseline by 2032, improving access to services and opportunities for rural communities.
		3.5	Increase the number of active community care hubs that help overcome transport barriers and improve access to local services by 10% from the 2027 baseline by 2032.
4	Dartmoor has accessible employment, strong skills pathways, training, and enterprise opportunities that enable people to live and work and for businesses to thrive locally.	4.1	Promote coordinated business support functions by 2028, providing advice, funding guidance and administrative support, and supporting at least 50 additional businesses annually by 2032.
		4.2	Establish a coordinated skills and apprenticeship pathway programme by 2028, connecting businesses, training providers and learners, and facilitating at least 10 apprenticeship or skills-training opportunities annually by 2032.
		4.3	Deliver at least X skills taster days annually by 2032, reaching at least X young people each year, increasing awareness of local career opportunities and skilled employment pathways.

		4.4	Complete a baseline assessment of local services by 2028 to understand availability, usage and gaps, informing future investment and support priorities.
		4.5	Promote existing careers networks and facilitate at least X employment, training or career connections annually by 2032.
5	Businesses and communities across Dartmoor are better adapted and resilient to climate risks, with improved awareness, planning, and local capacity to respond. 	5.1	Promote accessible climate reporting tools by 2028 and support at least 80 businesses by 2032 to measure, monitor and communicate their climate contributions in alignment with regional and national climate goals.
		5.2	Support at least 160 businesses and community organisations to make voluntary climate commitments by 2032 and establish an annual recognition scheme to celebrate and share good practice.
		5.3	Support at least 100 businesses by 2032 to develop and implement climate action plans that improve efficiency, resilience and preparedness for climate risks.
		5.4	Ensure 100% of Dartmoor parishes have reviewed and updated emergency plans by 2032, accessible to communities and aligned with wider emergency response arrangements.
		5.5	Deliver at least five awareness campaigns by 2032 to improve understanding of climate-sensitive vector-borne disease risks, prevention and community preparedness.
		5.6	Increase the proportion of Dartmoor parishes with active resilience networks and appropriate flood warning coverage to 100% by 2032.
6	By 2032, Dartmoor communities have access to innovative and appropriate housing solutions, with homes that are energy efficient, affordable to run, and meet local needs.  	6.1	Deliver housing that meets identified local needs, including at least 30 affordable homes annually and ensuring all new affordable homes achieve EPC A or B (or equivalent recognised standard) by 2032.
		6.2	Complete a parish-level demographic and housing baseline by 2028, including analysis of second homes and holiday accommodation, and publish findings to inform housing delivery and monitor change over time.
		6.3	Increase community engagement with energy efficiency and retrofit initiatives, resulting in improved access to retrofit opportunities and increased number of homes improved by 2032.

Monitoring and Reporting

A monitoring framework will be developed alongside the final Partnership Plan, establishing indicators, baselines and data sources for each outcome and target where these are not already available.

Progress against the Partnership Plan will be reviewed annually, with updates shared with the Partnership Plan Board and partners. Monitoring will consider both progress against individual targets and wider changes taking place across Dartmoor, recognising that many outcomes are interconnected and require collaborative action across multiple themes.

Where new evidence, changing circumstances or emerging challenges are identified, delivery approaches and priorities may be adapted. Where necessary, monitoring measures or targets may also be reviewed and updated to ensure the Plan continues to respond effectively to changing circumstances and the needs of Dartmoor's landscapes, communities, businesses and future generations.

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NPA/26/021

Dartmoor National Park Authority

02 October 2026

Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme

Report of the Landscape Development Manager

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- i. **Note the format and requirements of the proposed Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme and that it is due for submission to Defra for assessment in November 2026.**
- ii. **Agree that the Authority should support the submission of the Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme to Defra for assessment including the proposal to establish a new Single Legal Entity as the delivery vehicle for the Landscape Recovery project.**
- iii. **Authorise the National Park Officer (Chief Executive), in consultation with the Chair of the Authority, to make decisions on behalf of the Authority during the Assurance stage.**
- iv. **Note that a further report will be brought to Authority at the end of the Negotiation Stage to seek formal approval to be a member of the proposed Single Legal Entity and support the Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Landscape Recovery Scheme is part of the Environmental Land Management (ELM) framework established by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It focuses on large-scale projects that require collaborative efforts among farmers, landowners, and environmental organisations to achieve significant environmental benefits. The scheme aims to support projects that can last 20 years or more, addressing critical issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, and water quality.

The key features are:

- **Long-Term Funding:** The scheme provides long-term public funding, enabling projects to undertake extensive habitat restoration and land-use changes that require time to yield results.
- **Bespoke Agreements:** Participants can co-design agreements tailored to their local needs, allowing for flexibility in achieving environmental and climate goals.
- **Blended Funding:** The scheme encourages a mix of public and private investment, making projects more ambitious and sustainable.
- **Focus Areas:** Round 2 Landscape Recovery projects target three core priorities: net zero, protected sites and wildlife-rich habitats.

- 1.2 The Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme (WVLR) is a round two project led by Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA). The proposed scheme is focused on supporting nature recovery and resilience on a landscape scale across the Walkham river catchment. This is in line with the approach of a nature first principle as set out currently in the Partnership Plan for Dartmoor 2027-2032 .
- 1.3 The project has been developed over the last two years, with DNPA acting as the project lead during the Project Development Phase (PDP). An amendment request has been submitted to Defra to extend the submission deadline from 30 September to 20 November 2026, and confirmation is awaited. The extension is not expected to affect the WVLR scheme or its assurance process, as Defra is currently managing a backlog of projects entering assurance.
- 1.4 The submission will then be subject to an assurance (assessment) process led by Defra, during which the project's proposals will be reviewed and assessed over several stages. Although the process was originally expected to take around three months, schemes are currently taking between 6 and 12 months to complete assurance. A decision on funding for the delivery phase is therefore expected later in 2027. The submission is competitive and there is no guarantee that all Landscape Recovery schemes will receive all or any delivery funding. This is subject to negotiation based on the outcomes and securing funding from other sources.
- 1.5 Eligible core staff costs may continue to be claimed from Defra where assurance extends beyond the originally anticipated three-month period. The longer assurance timetable is therefore not currently expected to create an additional unfunded staffing cost for DNPA.

1.5.1 Landscape Recovery on Dartmoor

There are three active Landscape Recovery schemes on Dartmoor: Walkham Valley, led by DNPA; East Dartmoor, covering the Bovey catchment and led by Devon Wildlife Trust; and Central Dartmoor, focused predominantly on the Duchy of Cornwall estate and led by the Central Dartmoor Community Interest Company. Together, they cover approximately 30% of the National Park, as shown in Appendix 1. Collectively they represent a significant programme of landscape-scale activity across Dartmoor.

1.5.2 Overlap with Central Dartmoor Landscape Recovery

The WVLR and Central Dartmoor Landscape Recovery schemes include discrete areas of overlap, which were known to Defra when the projects were selected for the development phase. DNPA, the Duchy of Cornwall and the Central Dartmoor Landscape Recovery project have written jointly to Defra as requested, setting out how the overlap could be managed through assurance and delivery.

- 1.6 Defra has confirmed that the schemes will be assessed independently but will share an assurance coordinator, enabling the overlap to be managed consistently throughout assurance. The project teams will continue to work together throughout assurance and delivery, coordinating proposals and aligning plans where appropriate to manage the areas of overlap and avoid duplication of work.

2 **Background**

- 2.1 The Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery (WVLR) scheme is a landowner, farmer and community led initiative on a tributary of the Tamar within Dartmoor National Park. The WVLR area is roughly 3600 hectares (Appendix 2), of which there are 20 landowners signed up to the development phase. Together, they represent around 70% of the total catchment and project area.
- 2.2 DNPA is a participating landowner, owning 94 hectares of Plasterdown Common, equivalent to around 3% of the total WVLR area. Proposals for this land are being developed through the same process as those of other participating landowners.
- 2.3 The project area includes three large and several smaller commons, as well as a number of protected sites, including three Site of Special Scientific Interest, (SSSI's) and two Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's).
- 2.4 During the development phase, participating landowners, farmers and partners are collectively developing the scheme's proposed activities, costs, governance and delivery arrangements. At its conclusion, the project will submit to Defra a fully costed and collectively agreed package of six plans, endorsed by participating members.
- 2.5 Subject to assurance and funding approval, these plans will form the basis of a 20-year agreement administered by Natural England and delivered through the chosen Single Legal Entity, providing clear oversight and direction.
- 2.6 The six plans will set out how the scheme will deliver a thriving and resilient landscape that brings together nature recovery, sustainable farm businesses, and cultural heritage.
- 2.6.1 They comprise:
- **Land Management Plan:** Sets out the proposed land management interventions across participating holdings and commons, including grazing, habitat restoration, woodland creation, water management and heritage conservation.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** Establishes how environmental, agricultural and wider project outcomes will be measured, reviewed and reported.
 - **Site Access Plan:** Identifies how public access and recreation will be managed alongside farming, habitat recovery and protection of sensitive sites.
 - **Stakeholder Engagement Plan:** Sets out how participating members, local communities, partners and wider stakeholders will be involved throughout delivery.
 - **Blended Finance and Business Model:** Defines the proposed funding approach, combining Defra support with appropriate private finance to sustain delivery over the agreement period.
 - **Project Management and Governance:** Establishes the governance, decision-making, risk management and delivery arrangements for the scheme, including the role of the Single Legal Entity.
- 2.7 After submission the WVLR will undergo several stages before it is brought back to members for final approval and signing. This process is outlined in more detail in Appendix 3.
- **Completeness check:** identifies significant gaps or errors in the submission.
 - **Pre-assurance period:** project refines deliverables while waiting to enter assurance.
 - **Deliverables review:** specialist technical review of deliverables.
 - **Project review group:** considers assurance findings and recommends whether project should proceed.
 - **Negotiation:** discussions between Defra and LR project on the implementation offer.
 - **Project Implementation Board:** reviews overall project and recommends whether it should proceed to implementation.
 - **Final decision:** Implementation agreement signed and project through to delivery.

3 Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery – Vision

- 3.1 The future Walkham Valley is envisaged as a thriving, climate-resilient valley where clean, free-flowing waters, healthy soils, diverse grasslands, woodlands and peatlands support abundant wildlife, store carbon and reduce flood and drought risk. Nature thrives alongside viable farm businesses and a strong local identity, with cultural heritage and traditional knowledge helping to shape a resilient future for people and nature.
- 3.2 The Walkham Valley faces increasing pressures from biodiversity loss, climate change and economic uncertainty. Through WVLR, farmers, landowners and partners will work together to restore natural processes, connect habitats and strengthen the valley's environmental and agricultural resilience. This approach aligns with the wider vision for Dartmoor set out in the Partnership Plan.

4 Proposed land management interventions

- 4.1 The Land Management Plan is the core delivery plan for the scheme. It will set out how land across participating farmland, commons and protected sites will be managed to achieve the scheme's environmental and social outcomes, including restoring natural processes, improving habitat condition and connectivity, and strengthening the catchment's resilience to climate change.
- 4.2 Interventions will include adaptive grazing, species-rich grassland restoration, hedgerow and woodland establishment and management, peatland and wetland restoration, riparian planting and natural flood management. These measures will be coordinated across participating holdings to connect habitats and natural processes at a landscape scale.

4.2.1 Farms

On farmland, proposals focus on restoring and extending hedgerows and tree-lined boundaries, conserving the valley's characteristic bocage landscape and connecting habitats across enclosed land. They will also protect small field patterns and historic farmsteads, restore species-rich grasslands and meadows, encourage lower-input and regenerative management, and establish wood pasture and targeted woodland around the core upland oak woodland SSSI. Together, these measures will improve biodiversity and soil health, protect and enhance heritage features, and support resilient farm businesses.

4.2.2 Commons

On the commons, the principal focus will be implementing adaptive grazing plans to create a more varied habitat mosaic and address overgrazing, undergrazing and the spread of *Molinia*, gorse and bracken. Targeted peatland restoration, scattered trees, localised woodland and water-management measures will be introduced where appropriate, while protecting archaeological features, meeting livestock needs and managing high levels of public access.

4.2.3 Innovative proposals

WVLR integrates nature recovery, sustainable farming and cultural heritage within a single landscape-scale approach. By embedding these elements within the design and delivery of the scheme, WVLR is taking a broader approach to environmental delivery that aims to strengthen its long-term outcomes.

- 4.3 Cultural heritage is integrated into land management planning, recognising that the valley's habitats and character have been shaped by centuries of farming and commoning, and the inherent interdependency between many habitats and heritage should be recognised and rewarded. Proposals include protecting archaeological features and historic field patterns, supporting traditional land management knowledge and skills, and using cultural evidence gathered from 'Willingness to Pay' surveys and subsequent valuation of heritage features within the WVLR to inform management and future investment.
- 4.4 The project is also developing a One Health programme that builds on the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project's 'UpTick' work. The programme would bring together ecological, livestock and human-health monitoring to understand how changes in grazing,

vegetation and habitat management influence ticks and tick-borne disease. The evidence would inform practical land management, support livestock health and farm resilience, and help manage risks for people using the landscape.

- 4.5 Payments to farmers are still being finalised but will be stacked where appropriate to reflect the multiple public benefits being delivered. In addition to individual payments, there will be remuneration for collective management and landscape scale benefits.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Delivery of the scheme is expected to be funded primarily by Defra, alongside private finance secured through the Blended Finance and Business Model. Potential sources include biodiversity net gain, carbon and corporate investment. The scale and composition of this funding will be confirmed as the business model is finalised with our consultants, Great Yellow, and agreed with the Steering Group. Great Yellow have strongly recommended that the SLE is structured around a model that will attract equity as it is unlikely that Defra alone will be able to provide the funding needed to deliver the ambition.
- 5.2 No direct financial contribution from DNPA is currently anticipated during delivery. The Steering Group would like to explore an arrangement under which DNPA hosts the scheme's delivery staff and provides supporting services such as HR, building on its existing infrastructure and project development phase role. If agreed, all associated staffing, overhead and service costs would be reimbursed through the scheme, at no net cost to the Authority. Any arrangement would require further consideration and formal approval at the negotiation stage of the process.

6 Single Legal Entity

- 6.1 Defra requires each Landscape Recovery scheme to be governed through a Single Legal Entity (SLE), which may be an existing organisation or a newly established body. The SLE will provide the legal and governance framework for delivering the WVLR scheme and managing public and private funding.
- 6.2 The project team, DNPA and the Steering Group have considered a range of options, supported by legal advice from Muckle LLP, advice from the projects blended finance consultants, Great Yellow, and independent tax advice. This work has examined the suitability, risks and funding implications of each model, including its ability to receive Defra grant funding and attract private finance.
- 6.3 The Steering Group has narrowed the SLE options down to a Company Limited by Shares or a Community Interest Company Limited by Shares. Discussions are continuing on whether a Community Interest Company should form part of the structure to provide additional protection for environmental and community outcomes.
- 6.4 The final structure and governance arrangements, including how the SLE will interact with the scheme's delivery plans, are being developed with the Steering Group. These arrangements will be confirmed before submission to Defra in November 2026.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 WVLR provides a significant opportunity to deliver landscape-scale nature recovery while supporting viable farming and wider benefits for access, cultural heritage, water

management and carbon storage. The scheme aligns with the Dartmoor Partnership Plan and, if approved for delivery, would contribute significantly to its implementation as well as 30 by 30 and Protected Landscape Target and Outcome Targets (PLTOF).

- 7.2 Members are therefore asked to provide support for submission of the WVLR scheme to Defra for assurance. Detailed delivery arrangements, including land management interventions, visitor management, and governance, will continue to be developed and considered during the assurance process.

EMMA RUSSELL

Background Papers:

Attachments: **Appendix 1 - Map of 3 Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Areas**
 Appendix 2 - Map of Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery area
 Appendix 3 - LR Assurance Diagram

20261002 ER Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Scheme

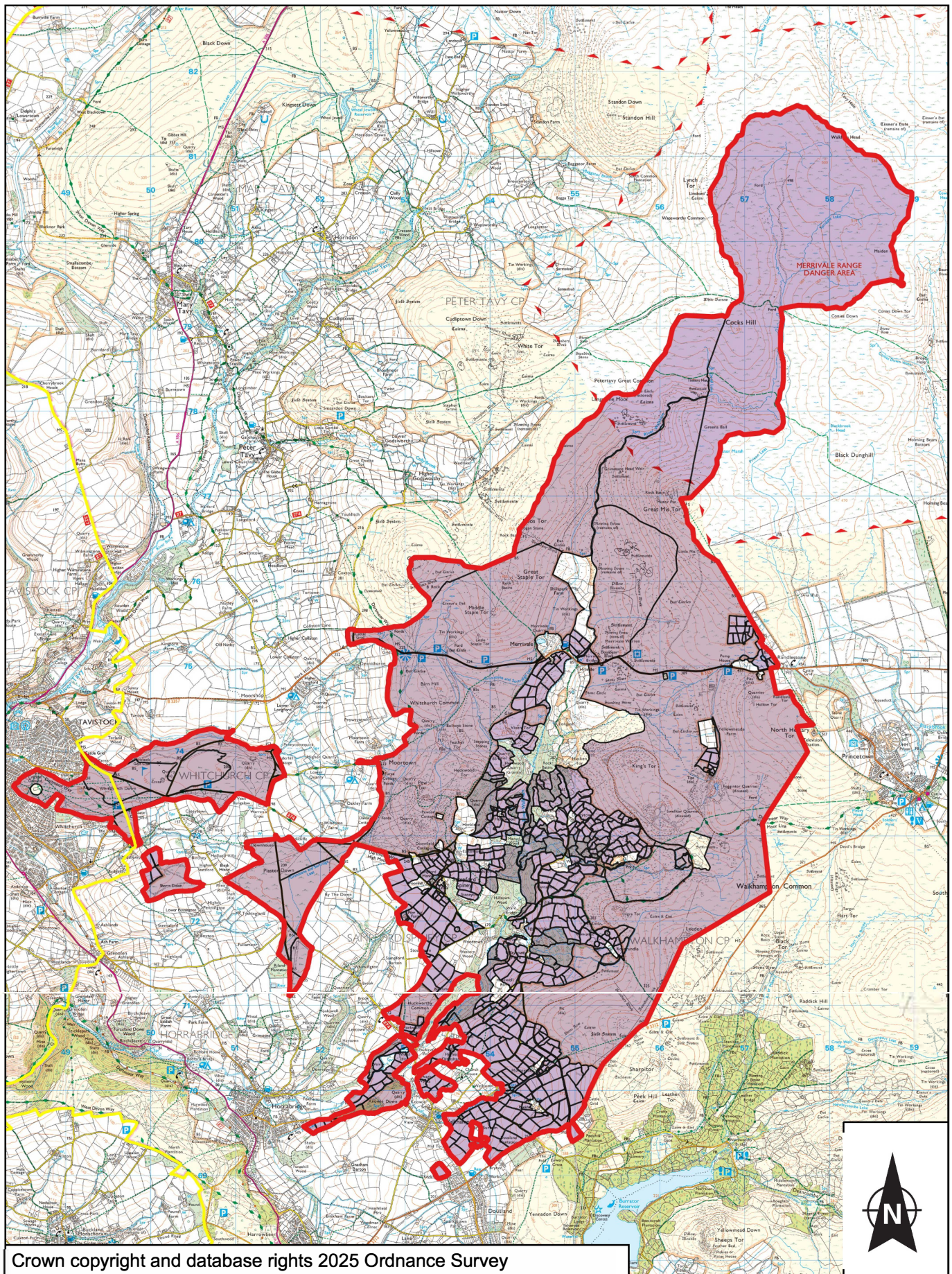
Dartmoor National Park Authority

Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Area



Scale 1:61,735

Compiled by erussell on 11/8/2025

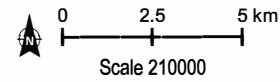


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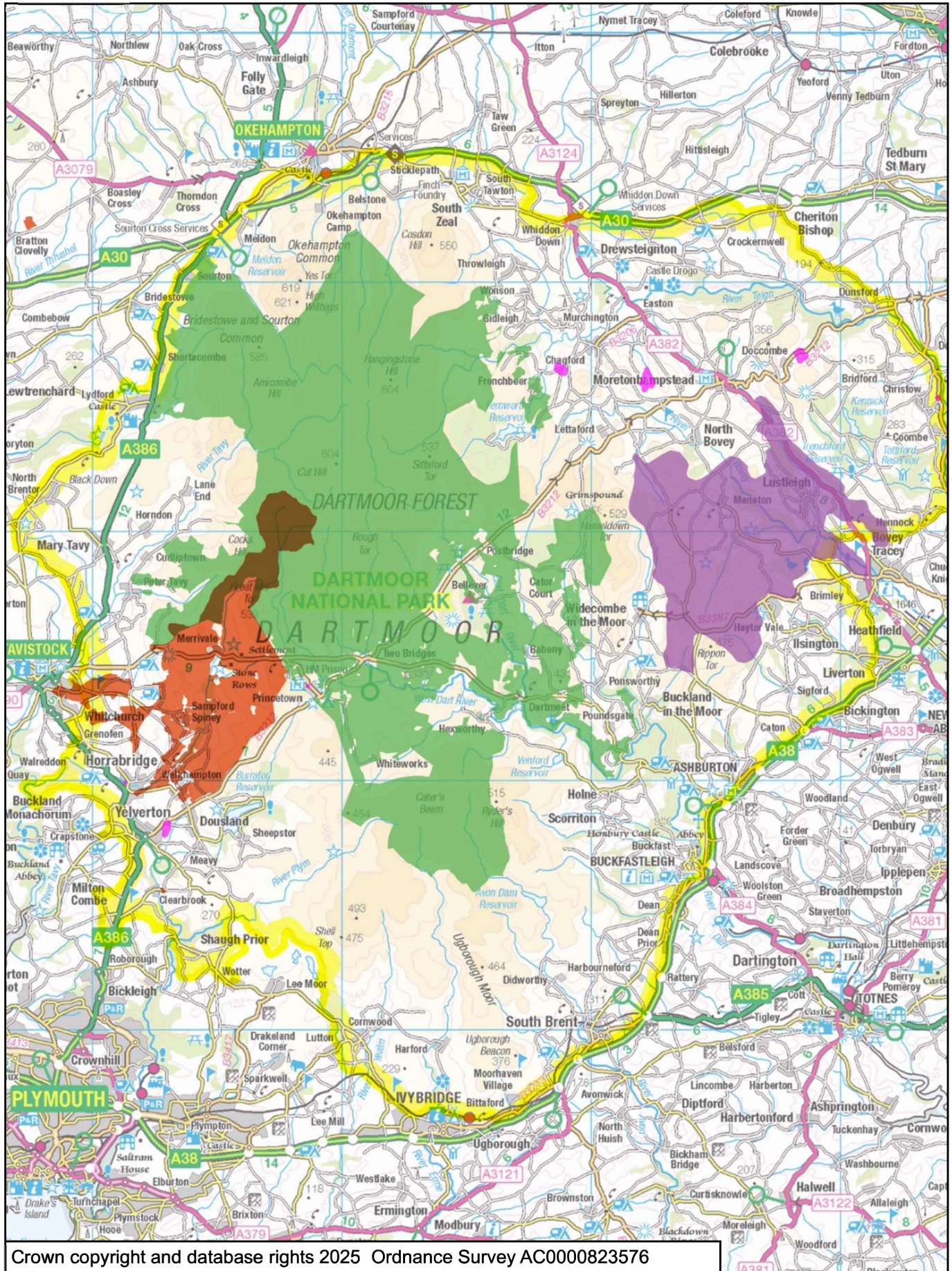
Dartmoor National Park Authority

Landscape Recovery Areas

- Central Dartmoor
- East Dartmoor
- Walkham



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Deliverables Assurance: These stages ensure that the projects will deliver the outcomes over the long-term agreement in a way that is good value for money and involves all relevant stakeholders

PDP checks:

Environmental - right thing, right place, right time; community engagement & access; proportionate and robust approach; appropriate ambition; resilient to climate change

Implementation preparation:

Financial - project is financially viable; good value for money **Social** - impacts on land managers
Delivery - project is deliverable; risks are detailed and managed

Stage	Completeness check	Pre-assurance period	Deliverables review	Project Review Group	Negotiation	Project takes offer to landowners/managers to discuss and agree	Project Implementation Board	Final Decision
Who?	PLO, analysts, supported by assurance team	PLO, LR assurance team	ALB specialists, assurance team, lead negotiator	LR assurance team ALB specialist leads, lead negotiator	Lead negotiator LR assurance team		NE seniors Lead negotiator ALB strategic specialists	NE Accounting Officer for PIP
Why & What?	Deliverables completeness review Identify gaps and significant errors that stop assurance of deliverables and supporting documents Checklist completed Feedback to project who get 15 working days to respond Outcome: Complete – move to pre-assurance phase Incomplete – recommend to exit LR	Pre-assurance refinement actions for project to work on whilst being scheduled to enter assurance Actions collated during completeness check to project with up to 3 months to refine deliverables. Expected assurance start date scheduled. Communicated to project when confirmed.	Specialist technical review of deliverables Analysis of all the deliverables to establish environmental, value for money and commercial & governance assessment Clarification questions (CQs) provided to project with 25 working days to respond	Holistic recommendation based on review and analysis of deliverables Agree whether Deliverables meet guidance requirements Establish if environmental, value for money, commercial, monitoring, legal and financial proposals are acceptable Flag issues and opportunities for following stages Discuss appropriateness of payments and mechanisms for negotiation and implementation Outcome: Recommendation to progress to negotiation or exit LR	Discussions with LR project Confirm PIP proposals, public funding offer and other adjustments and agree offer for projects to propose to landowners		Holistic project review and recommendation Project proposals are suitable, any outstanding risks are acceptable and managed Outcome: Recommendation to NE AO to progress to implementation or exit LR If progress: double funding and legal checks carried out. Legal agreement and payment schedules drawn up.	Final Decision maker for PIP AO confirms outcome of assurance

KEY

PLO – Project Liaison Officer

LMP – Land Management Plan

BFP – Blended Finance Plan

MEL – Monitoring Evaluation & Learning

PMGP –Project Management
Governance Plan

SAP – Site Access Plan

SEP – Stakeholder Engagement Plan

AO – Accounting Officer

ALB – Arms length Body



NPA/26/022

Dartmoor National Park Authority

Friday 2 October 2026

Dartmoor Headwaters Plan 2026-29

Report of the Dartmoor Headwaters Manager

Recommendation: **That Members note the content of the report**

1 Introduction

Dartmoor Headwaters is a Natural Flood Management (NFM) project based across priority Dartmoor catchments: the Colly Brook, Erme, Yealm, Walkhampton, Dean and Mardle, Bovey and East and West Okements (Appendix 1). It is a partnership project between Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA), the Environment Agency (EA), Devon County Council and the South West Peatland Partnership (SWPP) and funded by the EA. This is part of a larger programme within the SWPP restoration programme.

2 Background

The focus is to slow and store water in the landscape using NFM techniques (including peatland restoration) to reduce flood risk to communities downstream, and restore and enhance the natural environment on Dartmoor using nature-based solutions. The project successfully completed a pilot phase in 2018-2021, delivering interventions such as Miyawaki-style tree planting on Harford, stone dams on Walkhampton common, floodplain reconnections, and woody debris dams. The original team (2 x NFM Officers, 1 x Programme Co-ordinator and 1 x Engagement Officer) who delivered the pilot phase have now moved on to new posts outside the DNPA and we are currently rebuilding the team for the next phase (see 3.3).

3 Current position

3.1 Financial implications

The business cases were written for each catchment and presented by the EA to secure the total project budget of just under £11m through to 2033. Funding is allocated annually by the EA, with the collaborative agreement (signed by DNPA, EA and DCC) extending to 2033. While formal funding approvals must align with government spending cycles, partners consider the likelihood of continuation to 2033 to be very high. DNPA and the EA will also explore private finance and other alternative funding opportunities throughout the life of the programme.

This is a full cost recovery model, whereby overheads for staff time are also claimed. This removes the financial burden and risk to the Authority.

3.2 Delivery

Over the next 12 months the focus will be on completing catchment plans for priority catchments, mobilising the expanded delivery team, progressing the Hall Farm and Parke schemes to implementation, and developing a pipeline of projects for delivery between 2027 and 2033. The work has already begun with the EA, and we have identified the top 5 priority actions for each catchment. The aim will be to have developed a catchment plan for each of the catchments, which includes key works, costs and maps. A governance plan is being written to give clarity around roles, funding etc.

3.3 Recruitment

We are currently recruiting for four NFM Officers and one Historic Environment Officer. We are hoping to make appointments to the four NFM Officer positions in the next few weeks and will be interviewing for the HE role and the end of September, with the view to officers being in post by November 2026 or the new year at the latest depending on notice periods.

4 Risks and Benefits

4.1 Key risks include:

- Not being able to appoint strong candidates to all 4 NFM Officer roles.
- Funding length. We have been assured by the EA that funding is as secure as possible and have jointly signed the Collaborative Agreement to 2033.
- Procurement processes remain a significant programme risk. Lengthy procurement timescales may reduce delivery efficiency, increase staff resource requirements and present challenges for engaging smaller local contractors (part of the circular economy model we would hope to promote).
- Reliance on an ELMS scheme (principally Higher Tier but also Landscape Recovery where relevant) that still has not fully launched to provide the revenue element of the project as Headwaters only provides capital funding. This is a key barrier to uptake by landowners and commoners. Without this certainty over future revenue / maintenance payments, the incentive is reduced as there is less certainty over future income. LR only partially covers Headwaters catchments, therefore revenue funding for NFM is largely reliant on Higher Tier payments.
- The EA provides some funding to support peatland restoration, but this is insufficient to maintain the current or expanded targets needed to meet Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (PLTOF) targets in light of the current uncertainties of ongoing funding for peatland restoration.

4.2 Key benefits include:

- Able to plan at a catchment scale for delivery across the seven catchments (for people, nature, water etc.).
- Funding and full cost recovery for staff members to deliver outcomes aligned with DNPA's Partnership Plan, 30x30 and PLTOF targets.
- Reduces flood risk to Dartmoor communities. Creates opportunities for nature recovery, carbon storage, and climate resilience.
- Continued partnership working to deliver at landscape scale across Dartmoor.
- Achieve multiple benefits including flood and drought resilience, healthy soils, biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience.
- Meeting key outcomes and targets of the 2027-2032 Partnership Plan for Dartmoor.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The Dartmoor Headwaters programme has been in hiatus for approximately one year as recruitment was put in place, in particular the role of the Dartmoor Headwaters Manager, and whilst the Collaborative Agreement was updated to reflect the funding available, and the interventions required across the different catchments. However, in the second half of 2026, with recruitment of the new delivery team nearing completion, long-term funding secured, major priority schemes at Hall Farm and Parke progressing through development and catchment planning underway across all seven catchments, we are confident on future delivery.

KENDAL ARCHER



Appendix 1 to Report No. NPA/26/022

Maps of Headwaters Catchments

