



# Dartmoor

National Park Authority

## Business Plan

2023-24

April 2023

# Introduction



**Our Business Plan for 2023/24 is structured around the five priorities identified through the preparation of the Dartmoor Partnership Plan, namely:**

- Better for Nature
- Better for Cultural Heritage
- Better for Farming and Forestry
- Better for People
- Better for Communities and Business

There is a sixth priority – **‘Be an excellent organisation’ – which reflects our desire to be an effective organisation providing an excellent level of service. This priority also incorporates our aim to be a carbon neutral organisation by 2025.**

As well as acknowledging Dartmoor’s unique cultural heritage, these priorities clearly relate to national priorities such as nature recovery, the 30 x 30 target, climate action and improved access and engagement with the environment. There is a link between the Authority’s Business Plan and the Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan and the recently published Environmental Improvement Plan. Our priorities, wherever possible, take forward the

recommendations from the independent Landscapes Review published in 2019 and the Government’s response which was published in January 2022. At the time of writing this Business Plan we await the Government’s response to the public consultation conducted in early 2022 concerning potential revisions to National Park purposes, new enforcement powers and strengthened Management or Partnership Plans.

We share the Government’s vision for protected landscapes – to make them nature-rich spaces that all parts of society can easily access and enjoy and to support thriving local communities and economies. However, we note, with regret and disappointment, that the Government has not acted on the proposal to at least protect our core funding in real terms.

Our ambition for Dartmoor remains but is constrained by the financial reality of continued fiscal austerity. The reality of the financial situation we face – more than a decade of sustained cuts to our core funding – means that we are continuing to have to reduce our services rather than focus on helping people enjoy Dartmoor and inspiring them to care for this special place. We welcome the one-off additional grant from Defra worth £440,000 paid in 2022/23; this is an important ‘sticking plaster’, but does not provide a long-term solution.

Notwithstanding this very real financial challenge, our people and partnerships are what make us effective in achieving our goals and delivering outcomes for Dartmoor. We look forward to another year of working with our partners to achieve our priorities and, in doing so, to deliver a National Park that is better for nature and better for people.



**Pamela Woods**  
Chair



**Kevin Bishop**  
Chief Executive

# The Authority

**The Dartmoor National Park Authority was established under the provisions of the Environment Act 1995 as an independent body within the framework of local government.**

The Authority's role is clearly defined by Parliament through our two statutory purposes to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area by the public.

These purposes are of equal weight unless there is an irreconcilable conflict between the two, in which case, conservation of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage takes priority.

In pursuing the two statutory purposes, we are also required to:

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park.

The National Park Authority is governed by 19 Members appointed via different routes:

- by the Secretary of State to reflect the national interest
- by constituent authorities (Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council and West Devon Borough Council).
- via parish council elections and subsequent appointment by the Secretary of State.

The Authority is a small organisation and the majority of the work we do is undertaken in partnership with others in order to achieve the best outcomes for Dartmoor National Park, the people who live and work here and those who visit this special place. Our partners range from public authorities to private individuals, from commercial businesses to community groups.

To learn more about the work of the Authority visit: [dartmoor.gov.uk](https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk)



# Vision for Dartmoor National Park 2045

**Dartmoor National Park is an extraordinary landscape: shaped by nature and humans over time; steeped in history but always changing; one of Britain's finest. It has the power to inspire and enrich lives.**

Our Vision is to make Dartmoor 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.

It will be:

## **Alive with nature**

Networks of healthy habitats that are home to many different plants, insects and animals create a more resilient natural environment connected within and across the boundary of the National Park. Some areas feel wilder as nature is enhanced and allowed to take its course.

## **Celebrated and enhanced**

Dartmoor's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is better understood, valued and looked after.

## **A warm welcome for all**

Enriching people's lives, reaching out to people from all backgrounds, connecting them with this special place. Transformative experiences will inspire people to care for the National Park.

## **A great place to live and work**

People of all ages can enjoy living and working in low carbon, flourishing communities that are connected physically and digitally. Farming and forestry businesses play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits.

## **Carbon negative**

Dartmoor's peatlands, soils and woodlands will store significantly more carbon. Responding to climate change will be embedded in our way of life, making the best use of natural resources and reducing carbon emissions.

Everyone will come together to deliver this Vision for Dartmoor; make choices that balance the needs of people and place; embrace positive change; and inspire the next generation to help shape its future.

The Dartmoor Partnership Plan sets out how we will work together over the next five years towards the vision. This National Park Management Plan for Dartmoor will be reviewed and updated every five years.

To learn more about the Dartmoor Partnership Plan visit: [yourdartmoor.org](https://yourdartmoor.org)



# The Business Plan

## Our Business Plan is structured around six priorities:

- Better for Nature
- Better for Cultural Heritage
- Better for Farming and Forestry
- Better for People
- Better for Communities and Business
- Be an excellent organisation

Most of these relate directly to the Dartmoor Partnership Plan. Priority 6 reflects our desire to be an effective organisation providing an excellent level of service.

The table below highlights key actions that the Authority will lead in 2023/24 under each of these 6 priorities. It should be noted that whilst we up-date our Business Plan on an annual basis most of our work programmes span more than one financial year.

Our work is presented under the six priorities but our overall goal is integrated delivery: to ensure action on one priority considers and delivers, wherever possible, across all themes and helps Dartmoor become carbon neutral. The Business Plan does not detail all the work we do. As well as delivering these key actions we will be seeking to maintain services including:

- Development management – determining over 640 planning applications per annum and responding to over 5,000 of planning enquiries per annum
- Conservation – providing advice to landowners and managers
- Rangers – helping people to enjoy and look after the National Park – over 2,500 days of practical work and assistance
- Visitor Centres – operating award winning Visitor Centres that help people enjoy Dartmoor, inspire them to care for this special place and support the local economy.
- Securing external funding for strategic projects that help conserve and enhance the National Park for people to enjoy today and tomorrow. The Authority has secured over £16m for Dartmoor in the last two years.





**Better for Nature**



**Better for People**



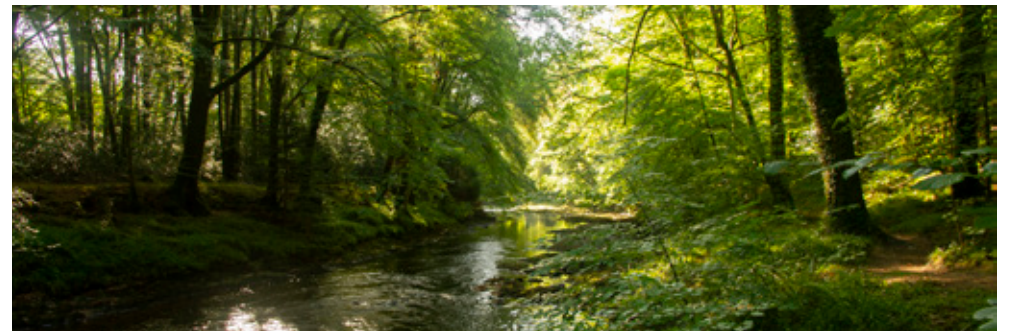
**Better for Farming and Forestry**



**Better for Communities and Business**



**Better for Cultural Heritage**



**Be an excellent organisation**

## Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

Key Action	Outcome sought	Target start date	Target end date	Contribute to carbon neutral	25 Year Environmental Strategy	Landscapes Review
<b>Better for Nature</b>						
Dartmoor Headwaters - working with the SW Peatland Partnership deliver a programme of Peatland Restoration	Restoration and enhancement of 1000 ha of peatland on Dartmoor by 2026 to deliver multiple benefits including increased local capacity to undertake the restoration work and thus support a 'circular economy'.	Ongoing	Funding confirmed until 2026	✓	✓	✓
Dartmoor Headwaters – working with the Environment Agency and others to deliver natural flood management schemes	Targeted use of natural approaches for catchment management that delivers a range of public benefits in a way that supports local communities and the 'circular economy'	Ongoing	2027			
Deliver landscape scale nature enhancement	Pilot nature enhancement/recovery at a landscape scale across at least two catchments working with clusters of landowners/farmers to identify and develop opportunities and engaging local communities where possible. Work in partnership to deliver the East Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Project.	Ongoing	Subject to confirmation of funding	✓	✓	✓
Improved condition of soils and understanding of their role in carbon management, flood management and nature recovery	By 2025 work with 50 farm businesses to improve soil health and improve soil structures to reduce compaction; improve soil biodiversity; and, to understand and increase carbon capture.	Started	2025 Part-funded	✓	✓	✓
Produce species prioritisation strategy	Strategic approach to identify and target species (both extant and reintroductions) that support the greatest environmental benefit and identifies opportunities for community engagement.	2021	2025 Implementation	✓	✓	✓

Key Action	Outcome sought	Target start date	Target end date	Contribute to carbon neutral	25 Year Environmental Strategy	Landscapes Review
<b>Better for Cultural Heritage</b>						
Valuing Cultural Heritage	A programme of proactive advice, research and community engagement that sustains Dartmoor's cultural heritage and helps people to enjoy it.	Started	Ongoing			
<b>Better for Farming and Forestry</b>						
Deliver Farming in Protected Landscapes	Efficient delivery of Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) – budget allocation is fully spent and farming community is receiving funding to deliver the four objectives of FiPL (Nature, Climate, People and Place). Learning from FiPL is applied to the development of the new Environmental Land Management system. FiPL grants are helping Dartmoor farmers make the transition to environmental land management and supporting the circular economy.	Ongoing	2024	✓	✓	✓
Farm Dartmoor	Support for farm businesses across the National Park to help them deliver a range of public goods as part of a sustainable business and promote effective collaboration. Focus on supporting: agricultural transition, understanding of the new Environmental Land Management system and a circular economy.	Started	Ongoing subject to external funding	✓	✓	✓
Our Upland Commons	Deliver agreed outcomes for National Lottery Heritage Funded programme, including: shared local visions for commons, showcasing new approaches to management of common land to deliver a range of public benefits and improved public understanding of commoning. Contribute to thinking about new Environmental Land Management system.	Started	Feb 2024	✓	✓	✓

Key Action	Outcome sought	Target start date	Target end date	Contribute to carbon neutral	25 Year Environmental Strategy	Landscapes Review
<b>Better for People</b>						
Develop and implement Visitor Management Plan for 2023 season	Ensure a warm welcome for all visitors to Dartmoor National Park. Targeted outreach activity to improve inclusivity. Visitor behaviour influenced and changed so that negative impact on the fabric of the moor and local communities is reduced and positive impacts increased.	Started	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓
Byelaw Review	A comprehensive set of easy to understand and implement byelaws (for the commons of Dartmoor and land owned by the National Park Authority) that help people enjoy the National Park's special qualities and ensure these special qualities are conserved for future generations to enjoy.	Started	2024 (subject to legal action)	✓	✓	✓
'Miles Better'	Implement a costed programme of improvements to access infrastructure and secure funding for this programme in order to ensure that all access routes and associated infrastructure is in good condition, easy to use and helps support the Dartmoor economy.	Started	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓
Develop a Green Transport Strategy	A strategy to reduce the impact of cars through congestion or inappropriate parking as people arrive and travel around the National Park by other means of transport. Opportunities for those without access to a car are increased	2021	2023 (Subject to staff resources)			
Programme of outreach events and activities	Engage and welcome new visitors and reach out to all audiences. Provide an opportunity to communicate key messages and explain the work of the Authority and its partners. Increase income through retail sales and voluntary donations. Ensure community engagement and support for the local economy.	Started	Ongoing		✓	✓

Key Action	Outcome sought	Target start date	Target end date	Contribute to carbon neutral	25 Year Environmental Strategy	Landscapes Review
<b>Better for Communities and Businesses</b>						
Housing	New Housing Guidance (SPD) adds detail to the Dartmoor Local Plan, enabling good planning for housing which meets the needs of Dartmoor communities.	2021	2023	✓		✓
Programme of support to deliver the 'Dartmoor model' of community and economic well-being including a business case to be the first 'Digital National Park'	Support for community development and the circular economy. Clear business case for investment in gigabit broadband and improved mobile connectivity to support a 'Digital National Park' model that does not harm the special qualities of the National Park.	Started	Ongoing	✓		✓
Scope potential for a programme that will help Dartmoor communities address climate change	A community-led approach to climate action that improves resilience, supports a circular economy and focuses on nature and climate	April 2024	Scoping completed by July 2024 and funding opportunities identified	✓	✓	✓

Key Action	Outcome sought	Target start date	Target end date	Contribute to carbon neutral	25 Year Environmental Strategy	Landscapes Review
<b>Be an Excellent Organisation</b>						
Review and deliver DNPA's Climate Action Plan.	Review the Climate Action Plan in 2023 and track progress towards the objective of DNPA becoming a carbon neutral organisation (against its scope 1 and 2 emissions) by 2025.	2021	2023	✓		✓
Volunteering – develop and improve our work with volunteers, providing rewarding opportunities that support staff and deliver national park purposes and priorities	Cohort of long-term volunteers undertaking regular conservation and access tasks across the National Park. Expanded network of Volunteer Engagement Rangers. Improved 'recruitment' of volunteers, enhanced support for volunteers leading to more rewarding experiences for volunteers and better outcomes for the National Park.	Started	Ongoing		✓	✓
Dartmoor Foundation	Establish a new 'Dartmoor Foundation' as a vehicle for income generation to support National Park purposes, deliver the agreed vision for Dartmoor National Park and key actions in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.	April 2024	Scoping completed by July 2024 and funding opportunities identified		✓	✓
'Dynamic Dartmoor'	Use National Lottery Heritage Fund grant secured in 2022 to develop a five year programme of funding to help deliver key priorities in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan: including nature recovery, environmental enhancement, engaging and welcoming a wider range of people and supporting sustainable use of the National Park, the local economy, jobs and communities.	Started	2024	✓	✓	✓
Developing a strong evidence base	An evidence base and strong partnerships with key organisations (e.g. universities) to support our work, report on the state of the National Park and evidence the impact of work to deliver the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.	Started	2028	✓	✓	✓
Integrated Management Plans for land owned by the Authority	To demonstrate best practice and appropriate experimentation on our own land to deliver multiple benefits in partnership with others.	April 2023	Ongoing	✓	✓	✓

# Measuring progress

**We continually seek ways to improve the quality and value for money of the services we provide.**

Progress against the key actions is monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the Authority's Audit and Governance Committee. Each service area has its own dashboard to monitor service delivery, highlight achievements and pressure points. The dashboards are reported quarterly to Leadership Team.

At the end of each financial year, the Authority completes an annual performance review which contains information about the progress made in delivering the actions in the Business Plan, together with achievement against a comprehensive set of performance indicators. A copy of our latest Annual Review can be accessed [here](#).

## Funding and expenditure

All our core funding comes from central Government, not from local taxpayers. This reflects the fact that, unlike local councils, our responsibilities extend to people who live well beyond our boundaries.

Our core grant for 2023/24 is £3,825,865

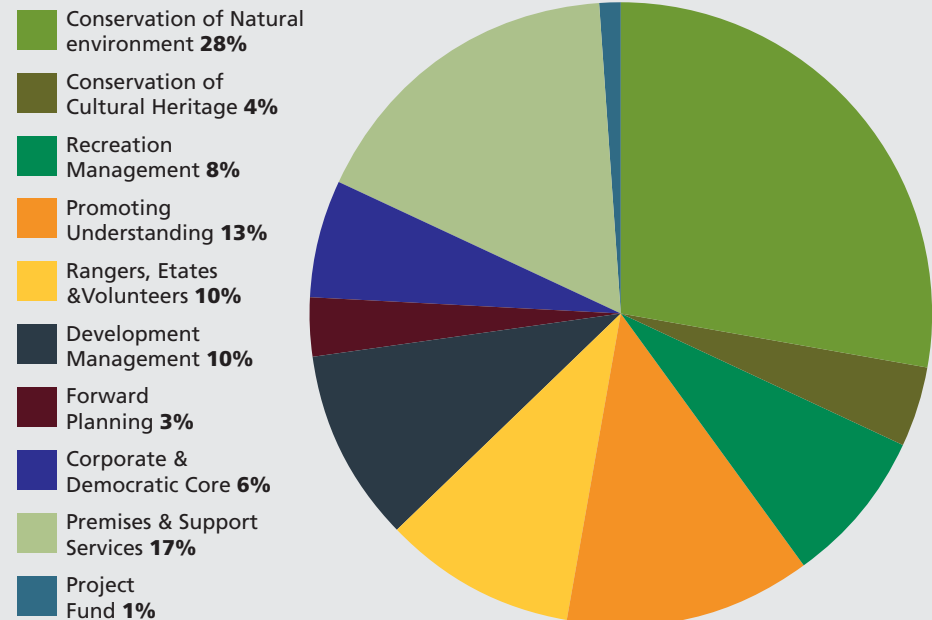
Our ability to provide a high-quality service in priority areas depends on raising significant funding from other sources (charges for services, fees, external grants etc.). Most of our priority actions are focused on securing income to deliver work programmes.

In 2022/23 we secured over of £11m external income from various grant sources. This external income is not a replacement for our core funding which is essential to maintain key services such as: planning, rangers, conservation advice, access management etc.

## Sources of Funding 2023/24

Source of Funding	£
National Park Grant (NPG)	3,825,865
Reserves	101,282
Income	585,334
Other Grants	1,120,011
Total Funds Available	5,632,492

## Projected Expenditure 2023/24





**Dartmoor National Park Authority**  
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**[dartmoor.gov.uk](http://dartmoor.gov.uk)**