



Dartmoor

National Park Authority

Annual Review

2024/25

250+ hectares of
PEATLAND RESTORED

 **65**
leaky dams
installed

15
pine martens
released



8.5 hectares of
native woodland
planted

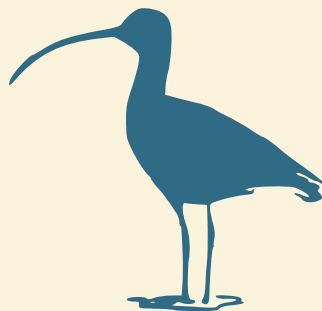


(Miyawaki Method)

3,782 days
of volunteer support,
valued at
£378,223



1,300+
miles flown by reintroduced
CURLEWS



7,482
outreach and
engagement interactions

1,570
YOUNG
PEOPLE



 **80**
forked
spleenwort
plants reintroduced

910
hours of
Dartmoor Marshals



given a bespoke
**DARTMOOR
EXPERIENCE**

120+
new
fingerpost
signs
installed

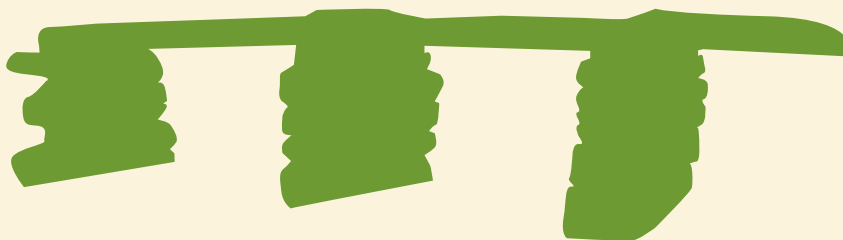
178 
FiPL projects completed

1000+
targeted conversations about
Dogs on Leads
during Ground Nesting Birds Campaign

22 guided
events
at **Higher
Uppacott**



SILVER AWARD



FOR POSTBRIDGE VISITOR CENTRE
at 2024 Devon Tourism Awards

Products from
**15 new
LOCAL
suppliers**

sold at our
Visitor
Centres



**National Park
Protector Awards
Won**

1 new sister park
partnership with



£3.12M

National Lottery funding
awarded for Dartmoor's
Dynamic Landscapes



Contents

5 Introduction

6 Nature

Acquisition of Buckfastleigh Moor
Two Moors Pine Marten Project
Forked Spleenwort Reintroduction
Curlew Recovery Project
Dartmoor Headwaters
South West Peatland Partnership
Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Projects

11 Cultural Heritage

Cut Hill Cist
Higher Uppacott

12 Farming and Forestry

Land Use Management Group (LUMG)
Boundary Boost

14 People

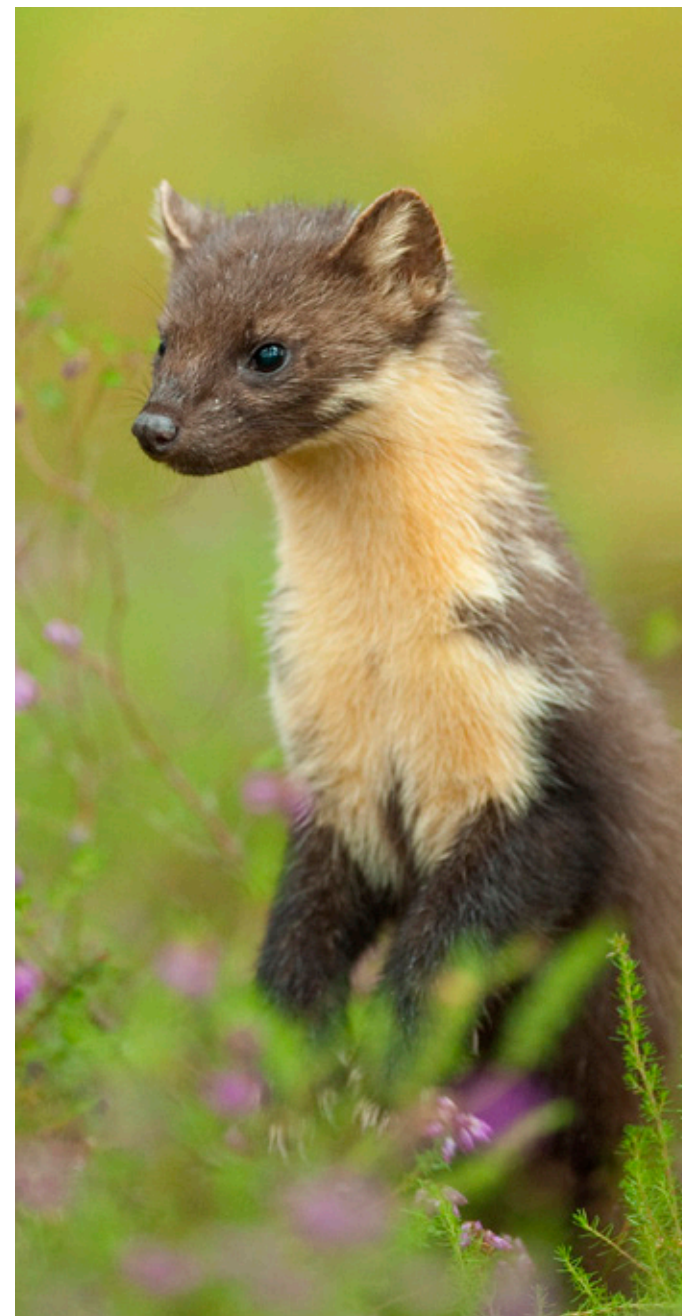
Visitor Management
Dartmoor Marshals
Visitor Engagement – Outreach and Events
Education Guide Service
Generation Green
Green Skills Week
Community Engagement
Girls Do Dartmoor
Ranger Ralph Club
Public Right of Way Upgrades
Defra Access for All Fund – Year 2 Achievements

22 Communities and Business

Supporting Sustainable Transport on Dartmoor
Visitor Centre Retail Offer
Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscape
Princetown Visitor Centre

24 An Excellent Organisation

Organisational Climate Action Plan
Race to Zero
Dartmoor Partnership Plan
State of the Park Report
Dartmoor Futures
Formal Partnership with the United States
National Park Service
Devon Tourism Awards
DNPA Volunteers



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Introduction

2024/25 marked a period of both challenge and opportunity for Dartmoor National Park Authority, as we continued to deliver on our statutory purposes while responding to evolving national policy, environmental pressures, and the needs of local communities. Against the backdrop of constrained public funding and increasing climate and nature recovery ambitions, the Authority remained focused on protecting Dartmoor's unique natural and cultural heritage, supporting sustainable land management and championing access for all.

This year saw significant progress in key areas of our work: from leading and contributing to partnerships on large-scale nature recovery through the three Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Areas, to managing increasing visitor numbers with a focus on responsible recreation, and strengthening relationships with Dartmoor's farming and local communities. We continued to invest in evidence-based policy development, innovative engagement programmes, and practical conservation initiatives – ensuring Dartmoor remains a living, working landscape that benefits people and wildlife and is protected for future generations.

This annual review highlights the breadth of activity undertaken by the Authority in 2024/25, reflecting on our enduring commitment to delivering our core purposes and duty: conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of Dartmoor; promoting opportunities for public understanding and enjoyment; and fostering the economic and social well-being of the park's communities.



DNPA Headquarters at Parke

Nature

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

Acquisition of Buckfastleigh Moor

In 2024 Dartmoor National Park Authority acquired Buckfastleigh Moor. The purchase was 100% funded via a grant from Defra's Protected Landscapes capital grant scheme. The acquisition secures the long-term protection of a key part of southern Dartmoor, supporting nature recovery, climate resilience, and public access.

The area now in the care of DNPA covers 858 acres of ecologically and historically rich common land. The site includes upland heath, blanket bog, ancient rights of way, and designated conservation habitats (SAC and SSSI), supporting rare species such as the bilberry bumblebee and pearl-bordered fritillary. It also features archaeological landmarks like Petre's Bound Stone and Bronze Age reaves. DNPA plans to work closely with the Buckfastleigh West Commoners Association on the management of the land. This new landholding links with existing Authority owned land on Holne Moor, enhancing ecological connectivity and offering fresh opportunities for sustainable land management.

Two Moors Pine Marten Project

The Two Moors Pine Marten Project is a partnership, supported by DNPA and others, led by Devon Wildlife Trust, working to restore a sustainable population of pine martens to Dartmoor and Exmoor.

Once widespread in the UK, pine martens are now classified as critically endangered in England & Wales.

In September 2024, 15 individuals (eight females, seven males) were moved under licence from Scotland and released on Dartmoor as part of the wider recovery plan. The animals were all fitted with tracking collars prior to their release. Once released, the project team used the tracking collars and camera traps to observe their movement and how they dispersed across their new habitat.

The project team were hoping that some or all of the females may have been pregnant when translocated. Pine Martens mate in June – Aug and give birth to up to 4 kits in March-April. If pine marten kits are born, the first young will leave the den in June-July 2025 and disperse a few months later.

The fitted tracking collars are now falling off, as intended, so the focus is now on using camera traps with bait stations to monitor individual's whereabouts and activity. Pine martens have distinctive markings on their bibs making it easier to identify individuals.

Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) are rolling out a camera loan scheme to landowners, targeting areas around known locations, to monitor dispersal and hopefully get a glimpse of the first pine marten kits to be born in Dartmoor for many years.

The second year of the project will start in 2025, with further animals to be released on Exmoor in the autumn.



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Forked Spleenwort Reintroduction

Only found in a few locations across the UK, forked spleenwort, one of Britain's oldest species of fern, once thrived on Dartmoor. The plant grows well in Northern England and Wales but faces extinction in Southern England, with only a few plants remaining on Dartmoor. The Species Recovery Trust (SRT) intend to re-introduce the plant to extinct locations to strengthen its range. Spores were collected from a wild plant that had been found dislodged from its location and grown on.

Under the guidance of the SRT, approximately 80 plants were re-introduced to suitable locations across Dartmoor in October 2024, with the help of DNPA and DWT and a small group of volunteers.

The first monitoring visit in April 2025 has confirmed an approximate 15% success rate of plants re-introduced. The plants failed in heavily vegetated sites. There has been more success on scree slopes where there's less vegetation. These results prove what has been observed in existing locations, that the plant prefers harsher growing environments. A second monitoring visit is planned in autumn 2025.



Forked Spleenwort on Dartmoor

Curlew Recovery Project

Supported by Dartmoor National Park Authority, this five-year Duchy of Cornwall led initiative is now in its penultimate year.

Young curlews that were released on Dartmoor in the summer of 2024 have been tracked as part of a wider monitoring programme. These young birds have been found to have travelled over 1,300 miles, with some spotted wintering in the Algarve. Their movements offer valuable insight into the species' behaviour and survival.

Crucial to this work is the support of local farmers, who manage the land to create suitable breeding habitats for these ground nesting birds, including shorter vegetation and scrapes. In the spring of 2025, the Headstarting team will be watching closely for the return of these Dartmoor reared Curlew's – identifiable by their distinctive yellow leg flags.



Curlew

Dartmoor Headwaters

The Dartmoor Headwaters project has funded four schemes across the Erme, Yealm, Mardle and Bovey catchments. This includes an innovative upland tree planting trial (see below), mire restoration, creation of leaky dams, and floodplain restoration.

Project achievements in 2024/25 include:

- Over 2100 trees planted
- 65 leaky dams installed
- 2 hectares of floodplain restoration
- 3.8km of river restoration

As part of the Headwaters project the National Park Authority has led on an innovative tree planting project on Harford Moor. The project has used the 'Miyawaki Method', to plant around 8.5 hectares of native Devon trees in small, varied-density plots.

This process aims to reconnect fragmented woodland, enhance biodiversity, and strengthen Dartmoor's flood resilience. Supported by the Environment Agency and Devon County Council, the project is being closely monitored by the University of Plymouth to assess long-term ecological and hydrological benefits.

Key partners include landowners the Howell family, local charity Moor Trees, and the Harford and Ugborough Commoners' Association. Volunteers from all partner organisations gathered to help plant the native saplings grown from local seed. This initiative has contributing to broader goals in the *Dartmoor Partnership Plan* and the *Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons* initiative.

This collaborative approach exemplifies how innovative land management and community engagement can work together to restore nature, protect heritage, and address climate challenges.



Dartmoor Headwaters - Harford Moor Miyawaki Method Tree Planting

South West Peatland Partnership

This year has seen another busy season of peatland restoration on Dartmoor across a variety of sites from Tavy Head, Cranmere, and Great Gnats Head and Langcombe. At the end of 2024/24 it was confirmed that funding had been extended until 2027 for future works.

Project achievements in 2024/25 include the restoration of over 250 hectares of peatland on Dartmoor.

Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Projects

Covering over 124 square miles of the National Park, Dartmoor has three landscape recovery projects, each providing long-term, sustainable benefits for ecosystem functions, water quality and food resilience, farming and climate change.

In 2024 these three areas – Central Dartmoor Farm Cluster, Walkham Valley and East Dartmoor – entered into the development phase of the Defra Landscape Recovery Scheme.

Across these areas, work has focused on co-designing long-term land management plans, establishing governance and monitoring frameworks, engaging with farmers, commoners, and local communities, and identifying nature-based solutions such as habitat connectivity, natural flood management, peatland restoration, and species recovery.

Delivery partners for these three projects, including the farming and landowning community, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon Wildlife Trust, the Duchy of Cornwall, and others, supported these efforts with a shared ambition to secure long-term environmental, cultural and agricultural resilience across Dartmoor. The groundwork laid in 2024/25 will prepare each area for transition to a 20-year delivery phase, pending Defra approval in 2025/26.



South West Peatland Partnership Cranmere Pool



River Walkham in the Walkham Valley Landscape Recovery Area



Emsworthy Gate in the East Dartmoor Landscape Recovery Area

Cultural Heritage

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

Cut Hill Cist

In August of 2024 a significant Early Bronze Age burial cist was excavated at Cut Hill, one of Dartmoor's most remote locations. The peat around the cist was being eroded and specialists feared that the cist would be damaged if action was not taken. The excavation, by DNPA Archaeologists, revealed a remarkably well-preserved one-metre-square cist containing shaped and cut wooden fragments and other undisturbed material, dating to around 1800 BC. This find, larger than the 2011 Whitehorse Hill cist, could offer new insight into prehistoric life and burial practices on Dartmoor.

The project involved a wide partnership, including Historic England, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, University of Leicester, University of Plymouth, and Quantock and Exmoor Ltd., with support from the Duchy of Cornwall, MOD, and other local stakeholders.

The cist is now undergoing micro-excavation and conservation with Wiltshire Conservation and Museums Advisory Service, and we wait to see what further important findings it yields.



Specialists working on the Cut Hill Cist in the Wiltshire laboratory

Higher Uppacott

In the care of DNPA, Higher Uppacott is a grade 1 listed 14th century longhouse, a building of national importance which offers an insight into how people have lived and worked on Dartmoor for well over half a millennium. Guided tours offer an opportunity to view the Shippon in its unaltered state and explain the subsequent development of the longhouse with two rooms to become what is now the accepted form of a modern-day dwelling.

Improvements to the site in 2024 have included a new door and windows for the parlour wing.

In 2024/25 the longhouse has been enjoyed by 261 members of the public, through 14 public visits and eight private groups.



Higher Uppacott

Farming and Forestry

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

Land Use Management Group (LUMG)

In April of 2024 the government responded to the Independent Review of Protected Site Management on Dartmoor, known as the Fursdon Review, commissioned in 2023.

A key part of the Government's response is the creation of a new Land Use Management Group for Dartmoor (LUMG) with an independent chair who will report to the Secretary of State.

Phil Stocker has been appointed as the Chair of the LUMG and, in consultation with Defra, he has appointed the wider Group. The Authority is represented on the Group by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer). The Group's Terms of Reference are set by Defra and include the development of a data observatory, a land use framework for the National Park and consideration of agri-environment issues.

The Fursdon Review and the Government response endorsed the vision in the *Dartmoor Partnership Plan*. A key part of that vision is the need for farming systems that can deliver a high-quality environment and food production. DNPA firmly believe that you can farm for food and the environment but recognise the need for change from all involved to be able to move forward.

Farming in Protected Landscapes

Since the beginning of the programme in March 2021, Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) has supported farmers and landowners on Dartmoor, allocating funding to projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.

To date, FiPL grants have supported our farmers and land managers to deliver:

- 1,923m created or restored dry stone walls
- 7,146 ha wildlife rich habitat managed for biodiversity outside SSSI
- 18,576 ha wildlife rich habitat managed for biodiversity inside SSSI
- 22 projects that are reducing flood risk
- 283 educational visit days
- 14 projects to enhance rivers and streams
- 6,079 trees planted
- 36 projects making the landscape more inclusive for visitors
- 4 farm clusters supported
- 5 heritage assets that were deemed at risk supported
- 28 projects increasing the resilience of nature friendly farm businesses
- 35 projects to improve understanding of carbon storage, carbon emissions and climate change impacts
- 178 FiPL projects supported in total



Farming in Protected Landscapes

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Boundary Boost

This Dartmoor Hill Farm Project led initiative (with funding from the Defra Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund) aims to develop a means to acknowledge the values that the extensive network of hedges, walls and banks represent – and which could ultimately reward and incentivise their long-term management. The many miles of Dartmoor boundaries are part of its iconic identity, whilst practically connecting habitats and species, helping to retain, manage or filter water, sequester and store Carbon, provide forage and remain a functional aspect for livestock farmers. The project is generating a new survey methodology for farmers to record condition of their boundaries. The aspiration is that this work could ultimately identify opportunities for financial support for these environmental goods via a matrix, connecting investors who wish to support local, grass roots schemes that have tangible outcomes.

10 farmers across Dartmoor are involved as case study farms, which will trial and implement activity to help develop the ideas in practice. These include deployment of innovative and cost-effective biodiversity monitors which represent evidence of current condition, alongside scientific modelling to quantify the scalability of actions or proposed interventions. Two of these will be 'Pilot' farms, with further in-depth assessment.



A traditional Devon bank

People

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

Visitor Management

Dartmoor National Park Rangers maintain a focus on delivering DNPA's key messages, including Dogs on Leads, with hundreds of interactions reinforcing appropriate behaviour. Supported by the DNPA Communications Team who manage a 'Dogs on Dartmoor' Communications Partnership Working Group*, the Rangers have been paramount in delivering the 'Take the Lead' campaign on the ground, across the National Park.

Recognising that the South West has some of the highest reports of livestock worrying in the country, and is an essential area for ground nesting birds, this campaign has been a key focus for DNPA in the run up to and during the March – July nesting and lambing season.

Trialled in 2024, visitor engagement events were held for a second year at Roborough Down, Shipley Bridge, Cadover Bridge and Haytor during March 2025. Dog owners were approached with offers of dog treats and leads and then offered an explanation of why they're being asked to keep their dog on a lead. The team of DNPA Rangers and supporting partners who worked at these events recorded over 800 public interactions and gave out 700 DNPA branded dog leads during the 2025 events. The results of this approach to visitor engagement have been positive with dog owners on the whole, with Rangers reporting it's felt like more of a conversation than an order.

These engagement events are used to launch a multi-channel approach to the Take the Lead campaign, with the seasonal installation of gateway and access point signage, totem signage at car parks, posters at DNPA Visitor Centres, communications on digital and print media and key messages shared by all our visitor engagement officers including Rangers, Information Advisors, Outreach Officers and Volunteers.

At the start of the 2025 season, targeted signs were created and installed at important nesting sites to put extra effort into the protection of Lapwing and Curlew.

Over 2024/25 Rangers have recorded almost 1,000 targeted 'dogs on leads' conversations and logged 160 conversations from routine patrols from Rangers and Marshals.



Visitor Management Dogs on Leads - Roborough Dogs on Leads Engagement Event with Volunteer Wardens, DNPA Rangers and National Trust

*This group includes the Rural Crime Police Team, National Trust and relevant DNPA officers.

Dartmoor Marshals

The summer of 2024 saw the return of the Marshals for the fifth season, to support the Ranger team during a period of high visitor numbers to Dartmoor. This is a partnership initiative involving the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and contributions from other agencies, a parish council and individual landowners. The Marshals are trained, supported and deployed through the Authority Ranger team.

This initiative has received widespread support from landowners, farmers, commoners and other agencies. The continuation of the service for a fifth year has provided essential momentum to influence public behaviour and reinforce key messages.

In 2024/25 the Marshals focused on deterring and preventing 'fly camping' and other anti-social behaviours and signposted welfare issues such as homelessness. The Marshals recorded interactions with camper van drivers, campers, owners of dogs off leads worrying livestock, and visitors who had started camp-fires. The Marshals are, first and foremost, an 'engagement tool' to provide advice and to influence behaviour. Evaluation of their role demonstrates that they have been successful in helping to prevent potential raves as well as addressing bye-law infringements. They help ensure that Dartmoor remains safe for all to enjoy whilst recognizing the rights of private landowners, farmers and commoners.

In total the Marshals worked 910 hours, covering 47 evenings over the summer of 2024.

Visitor Engagement - Outreach and Events

The outreach and engagement team facilitate opportunities to reach audiences both on and off the moor. With outreach, this includes attending a mixture of formal occasions such as local shows and events as well as informal outreach such as visiting busy car park locations on Dartmoor to engage with visitors.

Working towards the aims of the partnership plan, the team have continued to focus on engagement with young people from all backgrounds, supporting them to experience the national park.

Through our work, we continue to seek opportunities to engage with new audiences and people from different backgrounds, helping to deepen people's connections to Dartmoor and inspiring them to care.

In 2024/25 the Outreach team attended:

- 54 outreach events/locations open to the public
- 40 on Dartmoor (2,700 interactions)
- 14 away from Dartmoor (2,485 interactions)
- 11 Family events (1,638 participants)
- 5 Visitor Centre based events (115 participants)
- 4 self-guided activities (544 participants)



DNPA Staff at the Devon County Show

Education Guide Service

Young people are at the heart of DNPA's engagement activities, and the Education Guide Service continues to be an important way to reach them. The Service to local schools has been well used this year. We have offered guided walks and experiences that introduce Dartmoor, investigate Dartmoor's rivers, and explore prehistoric Dartmoor. In 2024/25 we worked with 32 primary schools, reaching 904 participants. A further 286 students from eight secondary schools and colleges took up our educational offer.

In 2024 the Education Guide Service was inspected and successfully retained its Adventurous Activities License, enabling the guides to operate in more remote moorland areas. The award of this license is a reflection on the skills and knowledge of the team of 15 dedicated volunteer education guides trained to deliver high quality experiences.

Generation Green

DNPA is part of the Access Unlimited Partnership which successfully bid for money from Defra. The project was called Generation Green, and its aim was to help young people from disadvantaged backgrounds experience the National Park and connect with nature. The funding enabled the engagement team to remove the main barrier for groups accessing the national park which is the cost of transport.

Through the year long project, 240 young people from 8 schools visited the national park to experience and learn about a Dartmoor Rainforest. The funding also enabled the team to facilitate 121 young people across 7 groups to have a Night Under the Stars (NUTS), working with local providers.



A group from Tavistock College take photos at Burrator Reservoir

Green Skills Week

In 2024, Dartmoor National Park Authority secured £7,000 in funding from AMEX through the National Parks Partnership to launch Dartmoor Future Skills – a residential work experience programme aimed at engaging 16–17-year-olds in green skills development. This initiative combined elements from two successful youth programmes - Dartmoor Youth Rangers and Nights Under the Stars - and was designed to address the lack of accessible work experience opportunities in environmental sectors.

Hosted at Dartmoor Activity Centre, the February half-term programme brought together 19 enthusiastic young participants and a wide range of “skills experts” from environmental organisations, offering practical, hands-on experiences in land management, conservation, archaeology, and communications. The immersive format also included activities like bushcraft, mindfulness, and team building, to enhance personal growth and build connections among participants.

The programme proved to be highly impactful, providing a rare and meaningful opportunity for young people to explore green careers in a supportive and inspiring environment. Participants not only gained technical skills and knowledge but also grew in confidence and personal resilience, forming strong bonds through shared challenges and a common passion for the landscape. Feedback from both the young people and the professionals involved was overwhelmingly positive, with many noting a significant increase in awareness and interest in environmental careers. Going forward, the Authority aims to continue supporting these young people with mentoring and further development opportunities, including mock interviews and application support. Dartmoor Future Skills has clearly demonstrated the value of targeted, immersive experiences in shaping the next generation of environmental leaders.



Green Skills Week Participants fix a Dry Stone Wall

Community Engagement

The current focus for DNPA Community Engagement Rangers is young people, the majority being aged 12-17. This work is delivered through a suite of programmes and events tailored to a range of audiences. It is now widely demonstrated that spending time in nature is good for you, and the teenage generation continue to miss these opportunities whilst needing them the most. The work of the Community Engagement Rangers provides opportunities for people to experience Dartmoor who currently feel excluded from it, or struggle to access the National Park. Helping young people to spend more quality time in the natural world benefits them personally but also makes them better custodians of this special landscape.

Core activities delivered to identified cohorts include:

- Dartmoor Youth Rangers
- Girls Do Dartmoor
- Nights Under the Stars

All activities encompass three objectives allowing young people to:

- Connect with nature
- Understand and respect the landscape
- Improve health and wellbeing

Girls Do Dartmoor

Launched in 2024, Girls Do Dartmoor is an initiative to encourage confidence, exploration, and resilience in young women whilst they reap the wellbeing benefits of being active in the outdoors. The programme is led by an experienced Community Engagement Ranger from the Dartmoor National Park Authority, supported by colleagues, partners, and volunteers.

Girls Do Dartmoor is a safe and nurturing space for female students from years 8 and 9 to experience the special qualities of Dartmoor National Park. The guided sessions within the inspirational landscape will help build their confidence in accessing and experiencing the outdoors, allow the participants to connect to and benefit from the natural world, form a peer support group, and experience a sense of freedom.

This programme provides an opportunity to enjoy the special qualities of Dartmoor for those that may not be able to participate in existing programmes such as Ten Tors and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE).

This pioneering initiative was shortlisted for a Campaign for National Park's 2024 National Park Protector Award. In December 2024 staff from DNPA and past programme participants from Okehampton College attended an awards ceremony at the House of Lords, where they accepted a double win for the New Perspectives Award and the People's Choice public vote.



Campaign for National Parks Awards Community Engagement Ranger, DPA and Okehampton College Students

Ranger Ralph Club

The Ranger Ralph Club has seen another successful year of outdoor learning and exploration. The young members and their families have experienced a wealth of opportunities that ordinarily may not be accessible to them. We have led and facilitated a variety of events that highlight Dartmoor and everything that makes it special.

Activities have included creative arts at Haytor, story making at Hound tor, a mini three tors challenge over Cox tor on the west of the moor and a magical nature-based pond dip at Langafor Farm in August. A visit to Venford was enjoyed, learning about navigation and things got spooky at Yarner Woods in October when our Ralphers took part in a night time walk.

Christmas time is loved by all and children made a wealth of natural decorations to take home. We celebrated National Nest Box week by building cosy nest boxes for garden birds and finished the year with Lambing Live, a firm favourite, watching and feeding the newborn lambs is a highlight for all involved.



Ranger Ralph Lambing Live

In 2024/25 we led nine Ranger Ralph events during the last year and engaged 160 children and 120 adults. An average of 31 participants per session.

Our membership base stands at around 80 young people from ages 5 – 12 years with many renewing their membership for several years.

Membership costs £12 per child per year which is a price set to ensure it's accessible to all. This includes a welcome pack full of Ranger Ralph branded stationery and gives access to all the events free of charge once joined.

The Ranger Ralph Club has been impacted by a reduction in staff capacity for leading the events. We are at a crossroads in what we can deliver as part of this programme and prioritisation and investment will be needed in this area of outreach and understanding if we want to develop or grow the programme.



Ranger Ralph Club Participants

Public Right of Way Upgrades

In 2024 the Ranger team undertook extensive improvements to the Public Rights of Way network, including:

- Pithill Woods – a programme of replacing stiles with gates, and paths with boardwalks.
- A new bridge and riverbank erosion works at Chalk Ford
- Enhancement of the Two Moors Way in preparation of its anniversary in 2026
- Installation of over 120 new Finger Post signs to improve signage on the network and make it more user friendly.



Chalk Ford Bridge - Ranger team members on the new Chalk Ford Bridge

Defra Access for All Fund – Year 2 Achievements

Over 2024/25, Dartmoor National Park Authority has utilised a second tranche of a Defra-funded Access for All Fund (£150k over two years), to improve access across the National Park. Collaborating with partners including the National Trust, South West Lakes Trust, Duchy of Cornwall, Ivybridge Town Council, Forestry England, and Natural England, plus funding from Teignbridge District Council and the Ramblers Association, DNPA focused on projects chosen through consultation with user groups like the Dartmoor Wheelchair Access Group (WAGS). The aim was to enhance accessibility and ensure a broad geographic spread.

Key Projects:

- **Bellever Forest Riverside Trail**
Collaboration with Forestry England created easy-access picnic areas and improved all-ability trails alongside the East Dart river, providing accessible green space sheltered from the weather.
- **Miles Without Stiles (MWS) Tramper Route Improvements**
Drainage and path surfacing enhancements on the popular circular route from Postbridge Visitor Centre, improving accessibility and scenic value. Further improvements are planned.
- **Blackingstone Rock MWS Easy-Access Trail**
DNPA site improvements including lowered car park, new path surfacing, enhanced gateway, accessible viewpoint, accessible picnic table, and seating.
- **Fernworthy Reservoir MWS Easy-Access Trail**
Partnership with South West Lakes Trust to upgrade a 1km easy-access circular route with new surfacing, wider gates, and accessible viewpoints.



Tramper users will benefit from continuing Miles Without Stiles route improvements throughout the National Park

- **Fingle Bridge MWS Riverside Trail**

New all-ability trail on National Trust land along the River Teign, with ongoing extensions to create a circular route linked to the medieval Fingle Bridge.

- **Haytor Vale MWS & Dartmoor Way**

Upgraded a popular route by replacing a difficult stile with a gate, addressing local user needs and improving access.

- **Longtimber Woods MWS & Dartmoor Way Access Improvements**

New picnic site and major access upgrades including stiles-to-gates replacement, fencing, and boardwalk installation funded by the Ramblers Association.

- **Meldon Reservoir and Vennford Car Park**

New accessible picnic tables installed to enhance visitor experience at reservoir viewpoints and DNPA car park.

- **South Brent Stiles to Gates**

Two hazardous stiles replaced with gates, improving safety and creating a user-friendly circular walk.

- **Wistman's Wood Viewpoint Access**

New easy-access path and viewpoint developed in partnership with Duchy of Cornwall to allow better views of this iconic woodland without impacting the sensitive environment.



Fingle Bridge

- **Yarner Wood NNR Easy-Access Trail**

New wide footbridge installed with Natural England to improve access near visitor facilities.

- **Tramper Purchase for Dartmoor**

Acquisition of a Tramper (mobility scooter) to support visitors with limited mobility, will be available for hire via Countryside Mobility at Postbridge in 2025/26.

- **Dunsford Riverside Path Improvements**

Funded by Teignbridge District Council's Connectivity Fund, 2 km of bridleway upgraded alongside the River Teign, including installation of three new bridges.



Defra Access for All Fund – Year 2 Achievements - Bench improvements at Fernworthy Reservoir

Communities and Business

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

Supporting Sustainable Transport on Dartmoor

The Authority successfully applied for Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) funding from Teignbridge District Council on behalf of Newton Abbot Community Transport Association (NACTA) to expand their bus services further into Dartmoor. This improves services for people in remote villages with accessible transport, where little or no transport currently exists. This project is another example of practical delivery through partnership working.

The grant achieved was £150,000 and enabled the purchase of two new low-emission minibuses. The buses are fully accessible, equipped with tail-lifts.

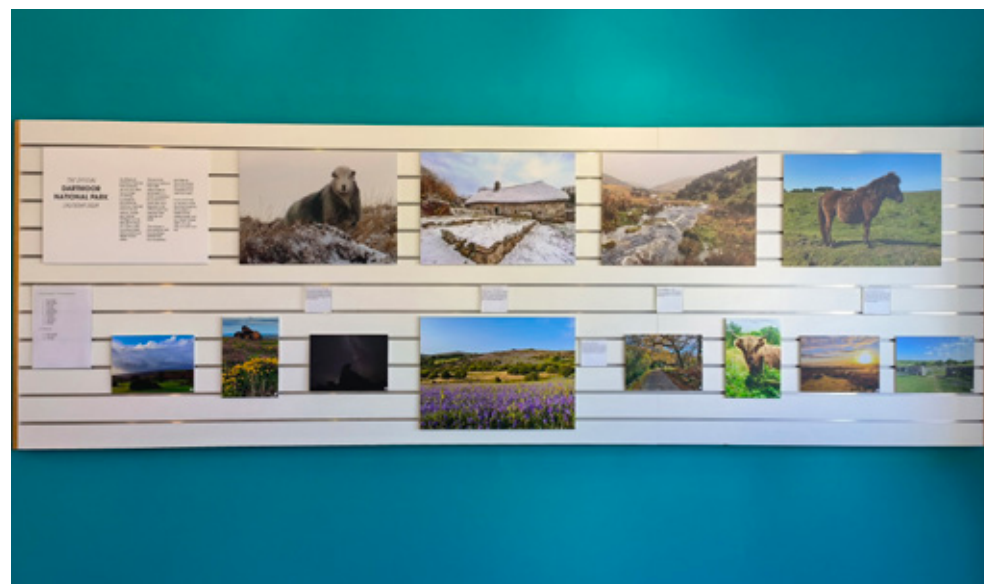


Supporting Sustainable Transport on Dartmoor - NACTA Bus Group

Visitor Centre Retail Offer

The past year has been successful for our retail offer within the National Park Visitor Centres. As well as an overall increase in sales of 3%, profit margins also increased by 1% despite falling visitor numbers over the year. The most successful project was the production of the Official Dartmoor 2025 calendar which featured photographs taken by DNPA staff, was designed in Okehampton, and printed in Tavistock. It was the basis of an exhibition in Princetown which attracted over 20,000 visitors and the calendar sold out before the end of December 2024.

We have continued to support local producers as part of the 'Dartmoor Range' – in 2024/25 we worked with 15 new suppliers including independent authors, artists, photographers and producers.



Dartmoor Calendar Exhibition at Princetown Visitor Centre

Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscape

At the beginning of 2025, DNPA received news that the Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes partnership has been awarded £3,124,179 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, to take forward a major programme of work to restore nature, protect and enhance Dartmoor's cultural heritage and enrich people's understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities.

Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes brings together Dartmoor National Park Authority, the Woodland Trust, Sustrans, the RSPB, Dartmoor Hill Farm Project, Emergency Exit Arts & Flock South West, the Environment Agency, Shallowford Trust, Dartmoor Headwaters Project, South West Water for the South West Peatland Partnership and the Westcountry Rivers Trust.

Work will deliver a wide-ranging suite of projects encompassing river, habitat and species conservation; creative events and engagement activities, support for farmers, training and skills and improving access and active travel opportunities.



Stonechat at Emsworthy Mire

The communities of Okehampton, Ivybridge, and Princetown, will become 'hubs' for visitors, allowing people from all backgrounds to spend time and money in these places while taking part in events or activities that promote enjoyment and understanding of Dartmoor's special qualities.

Conservation work will advance the excellent woodland, habitat and river restoration already taking place, with a particular focus on the river catchment areas of the Okement, Dart, Erme and Yealm.

Active travel and access will unlock further opportunities for walking and cycling, particularly for children, and giving people the chance to experience amazing views or explore historic remains no matter what their age or ability. Work on the project is scheduled to start during the 2025/26 financial year.

Princetown Visitor Centre

At the January 2025 Dartmoor National Park Authority Meeting, members of the authority agreed to keep the Princetown Visitor Centre open until the end of October 2025. The decision was made considering ongoing financial pressures and the need to reduce costs.

Located in the Duchy Hotel and leased from the Duchy of Cornwall, the Centre will continue operating under normal hours until the end of October 2025. Prior to its confirmed closure, DNPA had worked with the Duchy of Cornwall over a number of years to explore options for the future use of the building, that would support the local economy.

Proposals to close the visitor centre at Princetown were first considered in 2022. A £440,000 one-off grant from Defra in March 2023 enabled the centre to stay open until March 2025, though there's never been any guarantee similar funds would become available. In January 2025 Members agreed to keep the Centre open until the end of October 2025 in order to provide an opportunity for the Princetown Business Network to develop its ideas for a Visitor Centre run by local businesses and volunteers.

An Excellent Organisation

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

Organisational Climate Action Plan

In 2024/25, Dartmoor National Park Authority commissioned a full organisational carbon footprint from the University of Exeter, to provide an updated baseline for greenhouse gas emissions across Scopes 1 (direct), 2 (energy), and 3 (indirect) for 2023/24.

This data forms the foundation for producing DNPA's revised Climate Action Plan 2025/26. The work identifies key emissions sources and aligns reduction targets with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). It enables DNPA to prioritise effective actions and track progress toward achieving near-term (2030) and long-term (2050) net zero goals.

Race to Zero

In 2024/25, DNPA worked with Small World Consulting to complete an emissions baseline for Dartmoor National Park. This work established decarbonisation targets and outlined a clear trajectory for reducing emissions. The authority is also actively collaborating with the Climate and Energy Working Group across all UK National Parks, exchanging insights and working collectively to accelerate our efforts toward achieving net zero.

Total baseline emissions for Dartmoor National Park: 633,439 tonnes CO₂e.

RACE TO ZERO

Dartmoor Partnership Plan

The Dartmoor Partnership Plan (also known as the Management Plan) is the most important policy document for Dartmoor. It provides the strategic framework to ensure that the National Park's statutory purposes and duty are met, while also delivering national and local priorities. The current Plan period runs from 2021 – 2026, the Plan must be reviewed every five years and preparation for the review began in 2024.

As the Partnership Plan is a document for the whole National Park (and not just the National Park Authority) it is essential that the review process involves key partner organisations and stakeholders. To guide the review process, the Dartmoor Partnership Board was established in 2024 and brings together key partners who play a vital role in delivering the Plan. The Partnership Board will provide strategic oversight and ensure a coordinated, collaborative approach to both the review and future delivery of the Plan.

The main review period will take place throughout 2025–26 and will include a series of public and stakeholder engagement events. As part of this process, a new monitoring framework will also be established. It is expected that an updated Partnership Plan will be prepared for adoption in early 2027.



© Veronica White / Unsplash

State of the Park Report

In preparation for the review of the Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021- 26 an updated State of the Park report has been prepared. The State of the Park report is an important evidence base for the review process and ensures that the review is guided by the latest data and trends.

The report draws on a combination of open data, data owned by Dartmoor National Park Authority and data and research provided by our partners. Where data is available and relevant, the report highlights specific projects to demonstrate their impact and contribution towards delivering the Dartmoor Partnership Plan and the Vision for Dartmoor.



Haytor

Dartmoor Futures

The Authority agreed to establish an independent charity and associated trading company as a vehicle to help deliver the Dartmoor Partnership Plan and fundraise for conservation and access projects across the National Park. The new charity will be called Dartmoor Futures. Gemma Mortensen has been appointed as the Chair of the trustees. Dartmoor Futures will formally launch in 2026 – the 75th anniversary of the designation of Dartmoor as a National Park. DNPA hope that Dartmoor Futures will help secure the next 75 years of the National Park.

Formal Partnership with the United States National Park Service



In June 2024 Dartmoor became the first National Park in the UK to enter into an international Sister Park arrangement with a United States National Park – Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park encompasses over 33,000 acres along the Cuyahoga River between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. Managed by the National Park Service, its central feature is the winding river from which the park takes its name and includes deep forests, rolling hills, open farmland and over 1,500 wetlands. It is managed by the US National Park Service but unusual in that a lot of the land remains in private ownership and there are no tolls to visit.

The purpose of the formal sister park relationship is to promote international cooperation for the mutual benefit of the National Parks, provide a forum for collaboration about shared challenges, learn from exemplar projects to protect, preserve and promote the natural environment and share cultural and social values of both countries.

The Sister Park agreement is already influencing the work of the Authority – we are learning from their extensive use of volunteers and the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Conservancy is a model of how Dartmoor Futures might develop.



Cuyahoga Valley National Park entrance sign

Devon Tourism Awards

In 2024 DNPA officers entered the National Park Visitor Centres into the Devon Tourism Awards

After being mystery shopped and its online information and visitor reviews were scrutinised, Postbridge was shortlisted for the 'Visitor Information Service of the Year' award and was subsequently awarded silver at the annual award ceremony in Plymouth.

This award is an excellent recognition for the warm welcome, enthusiasm and dedication that all DNPA Information Advisors give to every visitor that passes through the centre doors. While the award is displayed in pride of place at Postbridge Visitor Centre, it is a shared celebration for all DNPA centres and the teams that support them



Information Advisors Sarah Curtis and Simon Van-Orden collect the Devon Tourism Award Trophy

DNPA Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in supporting the work of Dartmoor National Park Authority. In 2024/25 the total number of volunteer days organised or supported by DNPA was 3,782 with the value of these days recorded as £378,223. These volunteers work across our services and fulfil a number of roles, including: Voluntary Wardens, Engagement volunteers, Education Guides, Outreach, Youth Ranger, Photography, Archaeology and Ecology.



Pat Fitzsimmons working with the Rangers and Youth Rangers.



Volunteer Warden Jo Burgess at Piles Hill



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Walkers on Combestone Tor