



NPA/21/014

Dartmoor National Park Authority

9 April 2021

Dartmoor National Park Authority Climate Action Plan – Progress Update

Report of the Senior Policy Officer

Recommendation: That the Members note progress made on the Action Plan and endorse projects identified for implementation in 2021/22

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2020 Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) produced and approved a Climate Action Plan for the organisation. The action plan is part of the Authority's response to its declaration of a climate emergency and establishes how the Authority, as an organisation, will seek to achieve its ambition to be carbon neutral against its scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2025.
- 1.2 This report provides Members with an update on:
 - progress against the climate action plan over the period 2020/21
 - projects scheduled for action for the period 2021/22
 - the Authority's carbon footprint for the period 2019/20

2 Progress on the Climate Action Plan

Impacts of the COVID Pandemic

- 2.1 The Action Plan was approved shortly before the COVID pandemic. As the pandemic continues to have significant impacts on all our lives and the work of the Authority we have had to review implementation of the climate action plan throughout the year. Whilst some projects have been brought forward others have been delayed, particularly where there continues to be uncertainty over how long restrictions will last and how the Authority will operate in the future. The action plan has also had to be implemented during a time of constrained staff capacity (through home-working), a changed work environment, and with no increase in National Park Authority grant funding. All of these factors have brought challenges in implementing the plan and will continue to mean we have difficult decisions ahead in balancing the Authority's work priorities with its climate obligations.

2.2 This said, the challenges of 2020 have meant that some changes, essential to a low carbon future, have been implemented far quicker than we ever could have imagined possible a year ago. In particular, the Authority is now equipped and capable of operating digitally across many of its work streams. The COVID pandemic has forced staff to undergo major transformation in the way they work, in particular:

- Departments are now operating mostly paperless
- Video conferencing software is used to avoid unnecessary travel by staff and Members, including for Authority and committee meetings
- Home working avoids commuting emissions

2.3 The skills we have developed through 2020 and the investment we have made as an organisation in working digitally and remotely will help us ensure a permanent shift to more sustainable working patterns in the future.

2.4 This Climate Action Plan update provides an updated carbon footprint for the Authority for the financial year 2019/20, see section 4. This period mostly predates the UK COVID restrictions which started in quarter 4, on 16th March 2020. It is nevertheless interesting to review figures we do have for 2020/21, seeing how key emissions changed during the pandemic.

Table 1 – Percentage difference in key scope 1 and 2 emissions between 2019/20 and 2020/21

Emission	% difference in usage between 2019/20 and 2020/21		
	April to June	July to September	October to December
Gas	-100%	Not in use	-18%
Diesel	-37%	-17%	-22%
Electricity	-29%	-36%	- 7%

2.5 These changes are attributable to restrictions on movement during the pandemic, restrictions were more limiting during quarter 1 of 2020/21. During the second and third quarter some staff gradually returned to the office and visitor centres re-opened, this incrementally increased gas and electricity usage to near normal levels.

2.6 Hidden behind this data is the fact that many staff working from home will have increased personal emissions by using their home energy and heating systems, not DNPA’s systems. It is very difficult to estimate the net impact of this across the organisation: different heating systems, different household sizes, different house sizes and efficiencies, and the difficulty of apportioning heating used during work hours by a single individual in a household all mean that estimating individual impacts is highly variable and would be very time consuming to calculate. However, the Carbon Trust estimated that a commute of 4 miles by car was enough to offset average additional heating emissions created from home working¹. Where staff are commuting large distances alone by car the emissions saving from not commuting will significantly exceed the heating and energy usage emissions from home working, and this is exaggerated where their home is well-insulated.

Update on Climate Action Plan projects

2.7 The following table provides a progress update on projects scheduled for implementation in 2020/21.

¹ [Carbon Trust, ‘Homeworking: helping business cut costs and reduce their carbon footprint’](#)

Project	Update
1: Purchase more fuel efficient vehicles	<p>Being progressed upon vehicle redundancy</p> <p>Emissions from DNPA vehicles have reduced significantly during the COVID period, but are likely to bounce back quickly once restrictions ease and travel patterns resume.</p> <p>Opportunities to invest in low emission alternatives are being considered when vehicles are considered for redundancy. In the meantime we are installing accessible charging infrastructure which can be used by DNPA vehicles in the future. A charge point has been installed at Haytor and is now the most remote charge point on Dartmoor.</p>
2: Promote travel alternatives	<p>Target achieved, ongoing maintenance required</p> <p>This project sought to encourage travel alternatives and work towards avoiding unnecessary staff travel, principally by raising awareness of video conferencing options and allowing flexibility for home-working in appropriate roles. The Action Plan sought to scope this project in 2020 and targeted a nominal 10% emission reduction for DNPA vehicles before 2025.</p> <p>Influencing climate friendly travel behaviours is notoriously difficult, but COVID has accelerated this project far quicker than we could have hoped. All staff are now familiar with video conferencing and are able to work from home. Table 1 demonstrates emission savings of +20% have been achieved in all DNPA vehicles.</p> <p>When it is safe to return to the office, there will rightly be a normalisation and return to earlier working patterns. However, some of these behaviour changes should be maintained to secure the reductions achieved and avoid slipping back into earlier emissions. This will require leadership and a clear organisational policy on unnecessary travel and remote working.</p>
5: Purchase renewable energy	<p>Progressing alongside Devon County Council</p> <p>This project looks to ensure DNPA has a secure means of purchasing renewable energy that will enable DNPA to offset its emissions from electricity use. DNPA are seeking to do this via a synthetic power purchase agreement with Devon County Council (DCC) that will ensure the purchase of renewable energy directly supports the creation of new renewable energy infrastructure.</p> <p>DCC's synthetic Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) project has experienced delays related to COVID, but is still progressing. DNPA will be seeking a Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin (REGO) verified electricity tariff in the meantime, acknowledging these do not support the creation of new renewable energy infrastructure.</p>

6: Solar PV @ Haytor VC	<p>Progressing</p> <p>Limited staff capacity during the COVID pandemic and a closed Haytor visitor centre has delayed this project. The project will be considered for progression in 2021/22. This project will further enhance the benefits of the vehicle charging point installed at Haytor Visitor Centre.</p>
7: Audit of high demand electrical items	<p>On hold, watching brief</p> <p>This project sought to review all electrical items rated over 1kW and determine whether these are necessary or can be replaced by more efficient alternatives.</p> <p>Limited staff capacity during the COVID pandemic has delayed this project and it has not been prioritised given staff have not been using DNPA's electrical equipment as usual. This project is on hold with a watching brief to review when staff return to the office.</p>
9: LED lighting Parke car park	<p>Progressing</p> <p>This project sought to replace lighting serving the Parke car park with efficient LED alternatives.</p> <p>Limited staff capacity during the COVID pandemic and staff not using the car park as usual has delayed this project. This project will be considered for implementation in 2021/22.</p>
11: Carbon footprint land assets	<p>Progressing</p> <p>This project looks to footprint our land assets and determine the extent to which conservation of these assets results in sequestration that offsets our organisation's carbon emissions. Understanding this is key to calculating the emissions we need to offset to achieve carbon neutrality in 2025.</p> <p>We are in the process of scoping this work and will soon be issuing an invitation to quote for consultant support.</p>
14: Digital by default	<p>Target achieved, on-going maintenance required</p> <p>The COVID pandemic response has progressed this for us. The Authority's printing is down 75% (July) to 60% (September), against a target of 20%. Ensuring this is sustained as staff return is key. A digital by default policy should be progressed to ensure staff have guidance on printing and are advised of the emission savings.</p>

15: Encourage sustainable commuting	<p>On hold, watching brief</p> <p>This project sought to encourage more sustainable commuting patterns, including by improving facilities.</p> <p>COVID has clearly caused a precipitous fall in staff commuting, but this will rebound when restrictions ease. When there is more certainty over future working patterns DNPA will be considering implementing the following projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve shower and changing facilities (project 8 scheduled for 2021) • Install one or more EV charging point(s) for staff use • Consider corporate working from home policy to reduce commuting
19: Behaviour change campaign	<p>Partly achieved, progressing</p> <p>This project sought to raise awareness of the impact of DNPA and how this can be reduced by actions from staff. Including, driving to meetings, commuting, switching off equipment, printing, heating controls (turning down heating, shutting windows, shutting doors etc.), reducing overnight consumption, and procurement.</p> <p>This project was to be scoped out after the action plan and many of its ambitions have been indirectly implemented by COVID restrictions. What is now important is that organisational policies are introduced which maintain behaviour changes and capture their climate benefits.</p> <p>An element of this project sought to amend procurement processes and require contractors to submit estimated emissions data when responding to tenders. DNPA are progressing this through discussions with DCC.</p>

Other projects progressed in 2020/21

Project 12: Investments

- 2.8 As part of producing the Climate Action Plan not all the Authority's emission sources could be investigated and calculated. One of the more complicated areas omitted was the Authority's pension investments, but there has now been progress in understanding the emissions associated with these investments.
- 2.9 The Devon County Council Investment and Pension Fund Committee oversee investment of the Devon Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). The fund is gradually being transferred to the Brunel Pension Partnership (BPP) a pension fund pooling body that has been set up by 10 LGPS bodies (in the South West) who are entrusted to invest the fund on our behalf (Devon LGPS funds are gradually being transitioned to BPP). In March 2020 the Fund Committee commissioned a carbon footprint analysis of the Devon Pension Fund's investments, to be published annually. This footprint provides the basis for Dartmoor to understand the likely emissions from its pension investments.

- 2.10 The study found that the fund had a weighted average carbon intensity of 332 tCO₂e per million GBP, which is 29 tCO₂e below a benchmark calculated on the average for businesses operating in the areas the fund is invested in. This means that the emissions of our investments is about 9% lower than the averages for the areas we are invested in. As a helpful comparison, using the DNPA carbon footprint and DEFRA grant, we could say that DNPA has a carbon intensity of 85.1 tCO₂e / £m.
- 2.11 The value of DNPA's Assets held in the Devon LGPS as at 31 March 2020 was £19.441 million and this represents 1% of the Devon Fund. It's therefore possible to say that an estimate of the annual emissions associated with our pension investments is in the region of 6,454 tCO₂e, approximately 22 times DNPA's annual footprint.
- 2.12 The Devon Pension Fund's current strategy is set out in their climate change policy². Their strategy is always under review, but doesn't necessarily involve divestment where they are confident engagement is leading to change³. The Brunel Partnership holds approximately £30bn of investment and so has significant voting powers to influence change and indeed transferring the Devon Fund to Brunel has delivered significant emission savings of 21.5% between March and December 2019.
- 2.13 The report is a milestone in improving our understanding of where our pensions are invested and allows us to take targeted action. The implications for this on DNPA's footprint and the Devon Fund's proposed response is summarised below:
- As expected the fund is not on course to be carbon neutral by 2025, when DNPA are aiming to be carbon neutral.
 - Pension investments are a scope 3 emission which DNPA do not include in the commitment to be carbon neutral by 2025 (as these emissions are from other organisations, not directly in DNPA's control, nor entirely DNPA's responsibility to reduce/offset). However, DNPA are committed to monitoring and tackling scope 3 emissions where we can.
 - The Devon Fund have agreed to continue to work with Brunel to seek further reductions in its carbon footprint, with the aim of seeking a further 7% improvement over each of the next two years, before Brunel conducts a further review of the position.
 - There is a need to improve carbon reporting in investees, as carbon data for only 64% of the fund (by investment) was available.

Project 18: Enjoy Dartmoor Distribution Strategy

- 2.14 Communications have reviewed the distribution strategy for Enjoy Dartmoor. It was estimated the printing and distribution of 100,000 copies of the magazine was responsible for 20tCO₂e in 2018/19. The action plan targeted for this to be reduced by half.
- 2.15 A review of the distribution strategy in 2020 has led to a reduced print run and a reduced size format of B5 in 2021. These represent a 50% reduction in copies

² <https://www.brunelpensionpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Brunel-Climate-Change-Policy-rev01.pdf>

³ <https://www.room151.co.uk/interviews/sponsored-investment-roundtable-climate-and-the-lgps/>

printed and a 30% reduction in format size. These changes should exceed the target in the action plan and will be footprinted in the next action plan.

3 Project Priorities for 2021/22

3.1 The Climate Action Plan highlights the following projects for implementation in 2021/22:

- Project 1: Consider case for electric vehicles
- Project 5: Purchase renewable energy
- Project 8: Convert electrical shower (consider refurbishment)
- Project 14: Implement digital by default
- Project 15: Implement encourage sustainable commuting
- Project 16: Review procurement strategy for Visitor Centres
- Project 18: Review Enjoy Dartmoor magazine distribution strategy
- Project 19: Implement behaviour change campaign
- Offsetting Project: Scope habitat restoration on DNPA Land Assets

3.2 These continue to be appropriate and should be pursued, in addition to those projects not completed in 2020. The COVID pandemic's impact on priorities and staff capacity has materially affected implementation. The following discusses adjustments for 2021/22 in response to this.

Organisational policies for low-carbon working

3.3 There is a risk that as COVID restrictions ease we will return to work as usual and lose the climate benefits that have been realised from our working patterns in the last year. Organisational policies on avoiding unnecessary travel to meetings, continuing to use video conferencing software, avoiding printing and introducing a flexible approach to home working would help ensure there is continued encouragement for low-emission working practices.

Capital investment projects

3.4 As certainty improves post-COVID there should be a re-prioritisation of capital investment projects, bearing in mind that in the absence of a National Park grant funding increase these will need to be pragmatic and prioritised.

4 DNPA Carbon Footprint 2019/20

4.1 DNPA's carbon footprint for 2019/20 is provided below. The footprint is broadly comparable with the 2018/19 footprint presented in the 2020 climate action plan and this is expected.

4.2 In this period scope 1 and 2 emissions reduced by 58tCO_{2e}. With the addition of pension investment emissions the Authority's scope 1-3 emission were 6,764 tCO_{2e}.

Table 2 – DNPA’s carbon footprint 2019/20

Emission source	Scope 1				Scope 2				Scope 3				Total	% ¹
	Consumption	Unit	Emission factor kgCO ₂ e/unit	tCO ₂ e	Consumption	Unit	Emission factor kgCO ₂ e/unit	tCO ₂ e	Consumption	Unit	Emission factor kgCO ₂ e/unit	tCO ₂ e		
Natural gas	86,629	kWh	0.18	15.93					86,629	kWh	0.02	2.1	18	7.7%
Oil	4,341	L	2.54	11.03					4,341	L	0.05	0.2	11.3	1.8%
Diesel	27,607	L	2.59	71.62					27,607	L	0.06	1.6	73.2	23.4%
Petrol	389	L	2.21	0.86					389	L	0.06	0.03	0.88	0.1%
Wood chip	180	tonnes	59.03	10.63					180	tonnes	30.4	5.5	16.1	5.2%
Electricity					172,697	kWh	0.3	44.1	172,697	kWh	0.02	3.8	47.9	14%
Grey fleet									14,665 ²	miles	0.28	4	4.03	3.7%
Water supply									1,127	m ³	0.34	0.39	0.39	0.1%
Water treatment									1,014.3	m ³	0.71	0.7	0.72	0.3%
Business travel flights									1,965	pax.km	0.28	0.6	0.56	1.6%
Business travel coach									0	pax.km	0.03	0	0	0%
Business travel rail									2,063	pax.km	0.05	0.1	0.1	0.6%
Commuting												114.2	114.2	34.7%
Enjoy Dartmoor Magazine												20.8	20.8	6.3%
Internal printing												1.5	1.5	0.5%
Pension investments												6,454	6,454	-
Total	110				44.1				154				6,764	100%

1 - Emissions from pension investments have been excluded for clarity

2 - This data has a potential error due to a change in reporting software in quarter 4

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 5.1 DNPA have progressed well against its climate action plan in challenging circumstances, in some cases exceeding expectations.
- 5.2 DNPA's ability to meet its ambition of being carbon neutral against its scope 1 and 2 emissions will be particularly reliant on securing a renewable source of electricity, improving efficiency of DNPA's vehicle fleet and offsetting remaining unavoidable emissions. At this stage it is envisaged that some offsetting should be possible on DNPA's existing land assets. Carbon footprinting these land assets remains key in understanding what additional offsetting DNPA will need to do to achieve neutrality and this work will be progressing over the coming months.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the Members note progress made on the Action Plan and endorse projects identified for implementation in 2021/22

Alex Gandy



NPA/21/015

Dartmoor National Park Authority

9 April 2021

Tree Preservation Orders, Section 211 Notifications (Works to Trees in Conservation Areas) and Hedgerow Removal Notices Determined Under Delegated Powers

Report of the Trees and Landscape Officer

Recommendation: **That the decisions be noted.**

TPO APPLICATIONS

Teignbridge

Ref: 20/0043

Ashburton Hospital, Ashburton

SX 7614 7032

Application to crown lift a group of elm, sycamore and ash. The works are minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations.

West Devon

Ref: 20/0046

Town Barton, South Tawton

SX 6527 9440

Application to reduce a sycamore tree. The works are minor and will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. Five working days' notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.

South Hams

Ref: 20/0051

4 St Michaels Close, South Brent

SX 6987 5959

Application to fell a willow tree. The tree is in very poor condition and has a very short life expectancy. Consent was granted subject to conditions:

1. All works are carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work-Recommendations.
2. Replacement planting of one half standard rowan within the crown spread of the original during the first planting following felling.

SECTION 211 NOTICES

Teignbridge

Ref: 20/0042

17 Kingcombe Court, Buckfastleigh

SX 7401 6604

Notification to reduce a sycamore by 4m. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 20/0048

79 East Street, Ashburton

SX 7586 7005

Notification to reduce a cherry tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 20/0050

29 Fore Street, Buckfastleigh

SX 7400 6606

Notification to reduce a robinia, cherry and willow tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

West Devon

Ref: 20/0047

The Old School House, Sticklepath

SX 6381 9630

Notification to fell an ash tree. The tree is infected with Ash Die Back and has a very short life expectancy.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 20/0049

Meavy Barton, Meavy

SX 5398 6721

Notification to crown lift a walnut tree. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

South Brent

Ref: 20/0044

Church House, South Brent

SX 6965 6020

Notification to fell three larch trees a cherry and apple tree. The trees are in poor condition and the felling will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Ref: 20/0052

Woodlands House, Murchington

SX 6873 8827

Notification to cut back a birch tree to avoid an adjacent dwelling. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the tree.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

Brian Beasley