



Dartmoor
National Park Authority
Business Plan
2024-25

Introduction

Our Business Plan for 2024/25 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, the Environmental Improvement Plan and the recently published Outcomes and Targets Framework for Protected Landscapes.

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. We are grateful for the additional £0.5 million in grant aid provided by Defra for 2024/25. This is welcome but does not address the over 40% real-terms cut in our core funding and the need for a long-term settlement so we can plan ahead rather than year by year.

Our ambition and passion for Dartmoor – its communities and environment – is undiminished. This Business Plan sets out an ambitious programme of key actions which will help deliver national park purposes and the vision in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan, doing so in a way which supports our local communities.

Our people (staff, members and volunteers) and partnerships are what make us effective in achieving our goals and delivering outcomes for Dartmoor. We have few statutory powers but the soft ‘power’ of convening and partnership working should not be underestimated. We look forward to another year of working with our partners to achieve our priorities and, in doing so, deliver a National Park that is better for nature and better for people.



Pamela Woods
Chair



Kevin Bishop
Chief Executive

Dartmoor National Park 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.

Our role is clearly defined by Parliament through 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, priority is given to the first purpose to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park.

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.

We are a small organisation and the majority of our work 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)



Dartmoor Partnership Plan

The Dartmoor Partnership Plan (also known as the National Park Management Plan) is the most important document for the National Park. It sets out a vision for the National Park and specific objectives for the next five to ten years. The Partnership Plan is developed collaboratively, with the Authority playing a crucial role in facilitating the partnership and guiding the process. The vision for Dartmoor (see below) is ambitious: it combines national and local priorities.

This Business Plan identifies key actions that we will lead on in support of the Partnership Plan (see next section).

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.

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.

This 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: [**Partnership Plan**](#)



The Business Plan

The Business Plan sets out:

- Our priorities
- Key actions to deliver our priorities
- Performance targets for our key services
- The funding available to deliver our services and key actions
- The key strategic risks that may impact on delivery of the business plan

Priorities

Our Business Plan is structured around six priorities:

- P1 Better for Nature
- P2 Better for Cultural Heritage
- P3 Better for Farming and Forestry
- P4 Better for People
- P5 Better for Communities and Business
- P6 Be an excellent organisation

Priorities 1 - 5 relate directly to the Dartmoor Partnership Plan (previous page). Priority 6 reflects our desire to be an effective organisation providing an excellent level of service.

The table on the following pages highlights key actions that we will focus on in 2024/25 to deliver the key priorities identified above. 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 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 key actions do not encompass all of the work that we undertake, nor do they relate to all of our services; rather, they reflect, as the name suggests, the key actions which will help deliver our priorities and contribute to delivery of the vision and ambition in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.





P1 Better for Nature



P2 Better for Cultural Heritage



P3 Better for Farming and Forestry



P4 Better for People



P5 Better for Communities and Business



P6 Be an excellent organisation

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
1	Peatland restoration - work with the South West Peatland Partnership to deliver an agreed programme of peatland restoration	Restoration and enhancement of 1,000 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'.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured funding for an ongoing programme of peatland restoration for 2025/26 and beyond. Completed restoration of 400 ha of blanket bog. 	P1, P2, P3
2	Natural Flood Management – working with the Environment Agency and others to deliver natural flood management schemes	Use of natural flood management measures within key catchments that reduce the risk of flooding, improve hydrological systems and deliver other public benefits in a way that supports local communities and the 'circular economy'.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured, subject to Environment Agency approval, funding for a work programme of natural flood management within Dartmoor's priority catchment areas. Developed a pipeline of practical projects through engagement with landowners, farmers and other stakeholders and commenced work in priority catchments. 	P1, P2, P3
3	Deliver landscape scale nature enhancement	Nature enhancement at a landscape scale is underpinned by dynamic natural processes and we have viable farming and forestry businesses that have delivery of public benefits at their heart.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commenced delivery of the Walkham Landscape Recovery project and ensured an active programme of farmer, landowner and community engagement. Worked with partners to ensure an integrated approach to the three Landscape Recovery projects on Dartmoor, learning is shared and they are being developed as examples of 'best practice' in landscape-scale nature recovery. 	P1, P2, P3, P4
4	Support key species	An abundance and diversity of species on Dartmoor, which are widespread and thriving. This will include work on species reintroduction.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued support for the Curlew Recovery Project; worked with partners on key lessons and a citizens science programme for reporting curlew sightings. Worked with Devon Wildlife Trust on the reintroduction of Pine Martens at agreed sites on Dartmoor and ensured a robust evidence and monitoring framework is in place. Identified and supported the delivery of projects that help safeguard key species on Dartmoor as well as projects that support species reintroduction. 	P1, P4

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
5	Better for 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.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertaken one major archaeological excavation. Identified and sought to secure funding to improve historic environment features and target at risk monuments. Run a 'History Day' to engage with local history societies and other stakeholders. Ensured we have a team of trained, local volunteers to undertake a programme of condition assessment for heritage assets. Developed projects that increase understanding of cultural Dartmoor. 	P1, P4
6	Work with partners to implement the recommendations from the Fursdon Review	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.	By March 2025 we will work with partners to seek funding and authorisation for a programme of activity that takes forward key recommendations from the Fursdon Review, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dartmoor Observatory – a central library of data and evidence relating to the condition of Dartmoor that is accessible by all. A new approach to measuring nature and 'favourable condition'. Development of thinking around a Dartmoor wide grazing and agri-environment scheme that supports the Partnership Plan vision. Work with Defra on exploring the potential role and remit for a 'Land Use Management Group'. Scope a land use strategy linked to the Dartmoor Partnership Plan. 	P1, P2, P3, P4

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
7	Deliver Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)	FiPL will help support a farmed landscape that contributes to the Dartmoor Partnership Plan Vision across all of its themes.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully committed the grant of £1m for 2024-25. Ensure spend delivers across all four themes (carbon, nature, people, place). Completed an impact report identifying what FiPL has achieved on Dartmoor and any lessons to learn. Ensured that the learning from FiPL is embedded in the new environmental land management schemes and protected landscapes are a key priority in the schemes. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5
8	Hill Farm Project	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.	By March 2025 we will have : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secured funding for 2025 and beyond. Provided ongoing high quality, information for all Members of the Hill Farm Project. Run at least six events to support farmers through agricultural transition. Celebrated 20 years of achievements by the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project. Provided a focus on soil management. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5
9	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 the new Environmental Land Management system.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explored extension of the project beyond the contractual end date of November 2024. Developed the role and requirement for a Commons Convenor role, where that would sit and how it might be funded. Completed a legacy report, disseminated key findings and celebrated the achievements to date. Support the establishment of a 'Dartmoor Observatory' (see No 6). 	P1, P2, P3, P4

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
10	Develop and implement a Visitor Management Plan for 2024 season	Visitors understand and respect the environment, each other and the people living and working on Dartmoor.	<p>By March 2025 we will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in partnership and implemented, as appropriate, a visitor management plan for 2024 and for 2025. Sought funding to continue the work of the 'Dartmoor Marshalls' to ensure that visitors are welcome, safe and 'leave no trace'. Subject to the timing of the decision of the Supreme Court case in the matter of Darwalls vs DNPA; finalised a work plan and timeline to complete the byelaw review alongside considering alternative options to deliver the outcomes sought. Reviewed our media channels, their role and impact. Ensured key messages are promoted through Visitor Centres, the Outreach Vehicle and events. Continued to support the Dartmoor Rural Crime Initiative as a basis for partnership working to address priority issues such as anti-social behaviour, livestock worrying and heritage crime. 	P1, P4, P5
11	Access for All	High quality infrastructure that supports access by people from all backgrounds and ages.	<p>By March 2025 we will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the creation of National Parks by improving the condition and infrastructure on a minimum of 10 miles of the Two Moors Way. Completed 12 projects as part of the Defra funded 'Access for All' programme. Ensured consistent use of volunteers to support the Ranger Service in delivering PROW improvements across the whole network. Delivered new cycling initiatives through Active Travel England funding. 	P4, P5

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
12	Dartmoor for All	People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are able to access Dartmoor and feel welcome. Every visitor has positive and immersive experiences resulting in a long-lasting connection and care for the place and its communities.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported 40 educational visits. Hosted, in partnership, five overnight stays for groups on Dartmoor through Nights Under the Stars. Deliver three, free to engage, public events that celebrate wildlife, heritage and access. Secured ongoing funding for the Community Engagement Ranger to deliver a proactive engagement programme that includes Junior and Youth Rangers and Girls Do Dartmoor. Review Ranger Ralph Club with a focus on how we can use this model to engage harder to reach communities. 	P4
13	Better Communities	Dartmoor's communities are thriving and engaged in caring for the National Park.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed at least two 'Town Trails' that support the local economy, engage local communities and help people explore our 'Terrific Towns and Vital Villages'. Identified need for community facilities through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and helped local communities secure funding for these facilities. Identified and collated climate action plans for Dartmoor's communities that ensures a coordinated community-led approach to climate action supporting the economy, nature and climate. Developed a vision for Princetown working with partners and the local community and businesses. 	P2, P4, P5
14	Digital National Park	Working in partnership to support communities in enabling high quality digital connectivity through the development of ultra-fast broadband and mobile provision in ways compatible with the National Park's landscape and cultural heritage.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with partners to seek funding for the 'Digital National Park' proposal with the aim of commencing work on a gigabit network across Dartmoor by December 2024. Explored the potential of AI (Artificial Intelligence) to help deliver National Park purposes and identified actions for implementation as appropriate. 	P5

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
15	Race to Zero Review and deliver DNPA's Climate Action Plan.	An action plan that supports our ambition for the National Park to be carbon negative by 2045.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commenced work on an Action Plan for the National Park. Agreed, a revised Climate Action Plan for the Authority. 	P6
16	Volunteering	A spectrum of volunteering opportunities so that anyone in communities within or outside the National Park has the opportunity to engage in caring for and managing Dartmoor.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a new team of regular volunteers who will help undertake practical access and conservation work across the National Park. Developed a volunteer 'hub' at Parke and to ensure volunteers are equipped, trained and supported. 	P6
17	Dartmoor Foundation	Establish a new 'Dartmoor Foundation' as a vehicle to support National Park purposes, deliver the agreed vision for Dartmoor National Park and key actions in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.	By December 2024 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched the Dartmoor Foundation, agreed a business plan for the Foundation and developed a portfolio of potential projects for the Foundation to help deliver. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6
18	Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes	An integrated programme of funded partnership activity projects that help deliver the vision in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitted the 'Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes' bid to the National Lottery Fund for Heritage (August 2024). Start the delivery phase in January 2025 (subject to the bid above being successful) running until 2030. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5
19	Integrated Management Plans for land owned by the Authority	Management of land owned by the National Park Authority is helping to demonstrate practical delivery of the vision in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed integrated management plans for the areas of common land owned by the Authority and identified funding streams that could help us deliver agreed actions on each common. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6

Key Actions to Deliver Business Plan Priorities

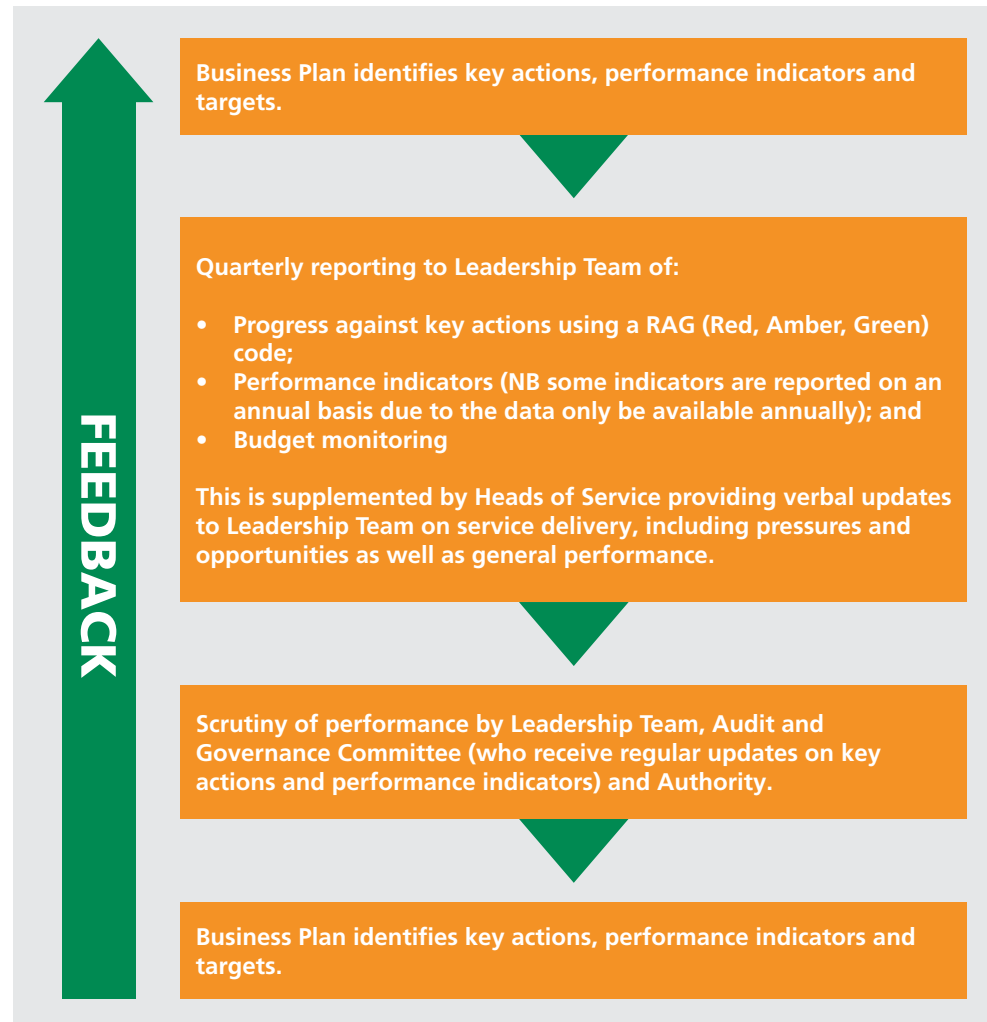
No	Key Action	Output and/or Outcome sought	Targets	Link to Priorities
20	Publish a revised State of the Park Report and review the governance arrangements for the Partnership Plan	A comprehensive report on the State of the Park that provides an evidence base for future policies and projects. A clear governance structure for the Partnership Plan.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published a revised State of the Park report. Identified research and data gaps and linked these to work on the proposed Dartmoor Observatory (see No 6). Agreed with partners a revised governance structure for the Partnership Plan that reflects the recommendations from the Fursdon Review (see action 6 above), the new Outcomes and Targets Framework for Protected Landscapes and forthcoming guidance on Management Plans. 	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6
21	Implement a new financial system	A robust IT system that supports more efficient and effective processes for financial transactions and monitoring.	By March 2025 we will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced a new IT system for financial management and have identified how we will use this to deliver potential efficiency savings. 	P6



Measuring progress

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

The Authority's performance framework is summarised below:



Progress against key actions is monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the Authority's Audit and Governance Committee.

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

In addition, the Authority reports separately on the Dartmoor Partnership Plan and produces a State of the Park report every five years.



Funding

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

Our core grant from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for 2024/25 is £4,075,865. We have also received a capital grant of £250,000 for 2024/25 from Defra.

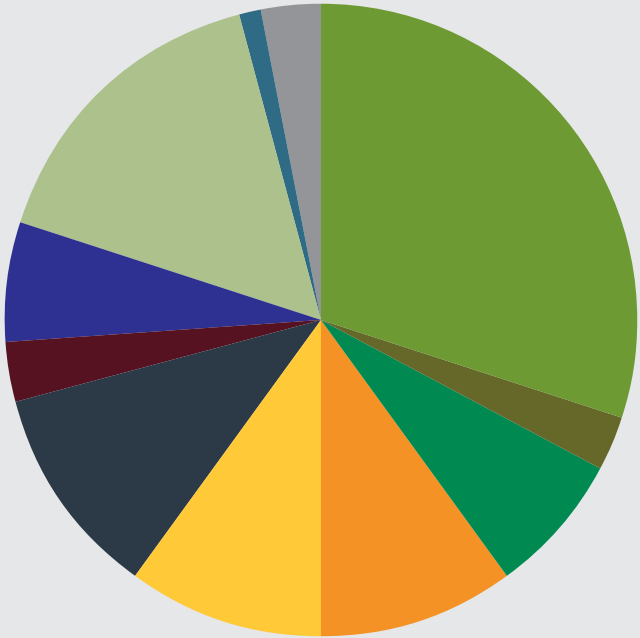
Our ability to provide a high-quality service in priority areas depends on raising significant funding from other sources (charges for services, fees, external grants etc.). In 2024/25 we are forecasting generating ££2,596,155 from external sources such as competitive grants, planning fees, car park charges, etc. Most of our priority actions are focused on securing income to deliver work programmes. 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.; the external income enables us to undertake practical projects and programmes of work that deliver National Park purposes.



Sources of Funding 2024/25

Source of Funding	£
National Park Grant (NPG)	4,075,865
Reserves	159,047
Income	753,621
Other Grants	1,842,534
Total Revenue Funds	5,632,492
Capital Funding (Defra)	250,000
Total of All Funds Available	7,081,067

Projected Expenditure 2024/25



Performance indicators

Ref	Spatial Planning	Target
01	Percentage of all planning applications determined which have been approved	No target - success is positive decisions for Dartmoor
02	Percentage of major applications determined within 13 weeks	50%
03	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	65%
04	Percentage of other applications determined within 8 weeks	85%
05	Percentage of planning applicants satisfied with quality of the service received	80%
06	Percentage of pre-applications for minor and householder applications which have been concluded within 42 days	70%
07	Percentage of pre-applications for major applications which have been concluded within 56 days	70%
08	Percentage of applications validated within 5 working days	70%
09	Percentage of applications registered within 5 working days	70%
10	Number of enforcement cases received	No target - trend/baseline data
11	Number of enforcement notices issued	No target - trend/baseline data
12	Number of enforcement cases closed	No target - trend/baseline data
13	Percentage of appeals allowed	30%
14	Number of affordable housing units approved	65

Performance indicators

Ref	Conservation & Communities	Target
15	Percentage of public rights of way network that is easy to use	90%
16	Total number of unresolved maintenance issues on the public rights of way network	No target - trend/baseline data
17	Number of maintenance issues resolved by the Authority on the public rights of way network	600
18	User behaviour engagements	80%
19	Erosion monitor: Number of known erosion sites and percentage of known erosion sites stable or improving	No target - methodology being developed in 2024/25
20	Number of visitors to the National Park Visitor Centres	170,000
21	Number of engagement events delivered on Dartmoor and number of attendees	150 events/10,000 attendees
22	Number of engagement events attended/delivered beyond the National Park and number of attendees	
23	Percentage of engagement events attended/delivered on and off Dartmoor, reaching attendees on Index of Multiple Deprivation scale 1-3	10%
24	Number of followers on social media	110,000
25	Number of subscribers to e-communications	5,000
26	Percentage of e-communications opened by subscribers	48%
27	Number of unique visitors to Authority website and page views	300,000 total users 500,000 page views
28	Proportion of Farming in Protected Landscapes budget committed and spent	100%

Performance indicators

Ref	Corporate Services	Target
29	Employee sickness absence	7 days per FTE 4 days (excluding long-term)
30	Employee turnover	10%
31	Employee appraisals	90%
32	Total number of volunteer days organised or supported by the Authority	3,500
33	Value of volunteer days organised or supported by the Authority	350,000
34	No. of volunteer days attended by under-represented groups	350
35	No. of formal complaints received and number of formal complaints upheld by Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman	No target - trend/baseline data
36	Spend per visitor in National Park Visitor Centres	£2.00
37	Percentage of income derived from sources other than National Park Grant	45%
38	Percentage change in carbon dioxide equivalent emissions from DNPA operations	0% - target being reviewed as part of Climate Action Plan
39	Percentage of Membership attending Authority meetings	85%
40	Number of parish meetings attended by Members	30
41	Number of parish meetings attended by Rangers and other officers	53



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