

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 August 2014

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013/14

Report of the Head of Resources

Recommendation : **That Members review the 2013/14 Statement of Accounts prior to Authority approval on 5 September 2014**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Statement of Accounts is a statutory document which all local authorities have to produce and make available for public inspection. In addition, the accounts are subject to external examination by the Authority's external auditors.
- 1.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) publishes The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (The Code) which specifies the principles and practices of accounting that must be followed in preparing the statement of accounts. The Statement of Accounts must be authorised for issue and made available for public inspection by 30 June each year; the un-audited copy can be accessed on our website at http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/462525/Unaudited-Annual-Statement-of-Accounts-2013-14.pdf (copy provided to Members).
- 1.3 The external auditor reviews compliance against the requirements of The Code and must provide the audit opinion and the Annual Governance Report by 30 September each year.
- 1.4 There are no significant changes to the format or the content of the Statement of Accounts this year, but there is one change of accounting policy that the Authority has applied relating to the presentation and disclosure of post-employment benefits. The overall measurement of the Authority's net pension liability has not changed; there are just some reclassifications of the components into which year-on-year changes in the net liability are analysed. The 2012/13 comparator has been restated on both the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Movement in Reserves Statement along with the relevant notes. For further explanation see the information provided in this Foreword on page 6 and in the Notes to the Accounts numbered 2 and 36.

2 Financial Performance

- 2.1 Whilst our aspiration and ambition remain, our practical capacity to 'deliver for Dartmoor' has been significantly reduced – all areas of work have been impacted on as we have reduced expenditure and staffing levels to reflect the available budget. However, we had positioned ourselves well for the future with healthy reserve balances, a robust revenue budget and we are anticipating receiving further income streams from external funding bids and from partner organisations for exciting new

projects. Indeed during 2013/14 the Authority levered in an additional £156k from Defra, received £54k from the sale of land and in excess of £45k from other partner organisations, along with making vacancy savings of £43k and receiving additional fees and charges of circa £41k. This meant that the budgeted in-year call on reserves was not needed.

- 2.2 The 2013/14 budget and 3 year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was produced to reflect the challenging economic situation i.e. reduced NPG, less staff, a reduced work programme and the risk of further future uncertainty (future years' NPG is indicative only). This resulted in only core and essential work being fully costed and programmed, leaving an element of unallocated budget being available for in-year bids; the aim of which was to be able to react to and meet new opportunities as they arose and bring in extra staffing capacity on a temporary basis as required. This strategy has proved highly successful for the last two years and although the whole allocation was not used, this format has been taken forward into the 2014/15 budget, albeit at a slightly reduced amount.
- 2.3 The Audit and Governance Committee carried out a detailed review of the outturn position on 16 May 2014 (NPA/AG/14/037) and the final Financial Outturn Report was approved by the Authority on 6 June (NPA/14/027). At both meetings Members congratulated staff for the efforts made and outcomes achieved during the year, commenting specifically on the resilience shown in these difficult times, the skill in the way budgets have been handled and the way the Authority continues to move forward.
- 2.4 The actual revenue outturn, in terms of its in-year Management Account reporting (NPA/14/027) was a surplus of £47,974 (£119,965 surplus in 2012/13) against a net Revenue Budget of £4,489,361 (£4,093,309 in 2012/13) which represents a -1.07% variance (-2.09% in 2012/13).

This figure is reconciled to the deficit shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on page 10 in the table below:

	31 March 2014
	£000
Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	230
Reverse amortisation, depreciation & impairment charges	(108)
Reverse gain on sale of land	42
Reversal of IAS19 Retirement Benefit Adjustments	(504)
Reverse employee annual leave accrual movement	4
Transfers to or (from) reserves per Management Accounts	122
Capital expenditure funded from NPG	166
Revenue Budget Surplus (NPA/14/027)	(48)

3 Reserves

- 3.1 The Authority brought forward Earmarked Reserve balances totalling £2.424 million on 1 April 2013 and utilised a total of £0.375 million during the year. The Movement in Reserves Statement on page 9 and Note 9 on page 27, details the movements in year. The carried forward Earmarked Reserve balance stands at £2.594 million, it should be noted however, that £0.961 million will be fully utilised in 2014/15, bringing the closing balance close to the 2013/14 opening balance.

In addition the General Reserve remains at £300,000 equating to approximately 8.9% of the 2014/15 Net Budget Requirement and is the minimum level that the Authority has determined must be retained.

- 3.2 In aggregate, the level of reserves and balances held is regarded as sufficient to meet current needs and to provide some assurance that unforeseen risks and emergencies can be managed. These balances are determined in part by our on-going work programmes and projects and by a risk based analysis and methodology approved by the Authority.

4 Pension Scheme Assets and Liabilities

- 4.1 The pension liability is based on an actuarial valuation and represents the benefits that have been accrued by members of the local government pension scheme. The disclosures show many things, with a key factor being that they are highly unpredictable due mainly to the “snapshot” valuation of assets and liabilities on one particular day in the year and the mismatch between assets held and the corporate bonds based method that is used to value the liabilities. These estimates reflect the position as at 31 March 2014 and the conditions and actuarial assumptions prevailing at that time.
- 4.2 The return on Fund (on a bid value to bid value basis) for the year to 31 March 2014 is estimated to be 5%, although the actual return on Fund assets over the year may be different. Liabilities are valued using a discount rate based on Corporate Bond Yields. At 31 March 2014, the point of the Merrill Lynch AA-rated corporate bond curve which is closest to the duration of the employer’s liabilities is used. Corporate Bond Yields have mainly increased and the change in discount rate over the year is estimated to have had little effect on our liabilities. Pension increases are expected to rise by inflation and this has resulted in an estimated 1% rise in liabilities. Although future benefits from 1 April 2014 will not be linked to final salary, benefits accrued up to that date will continue to be final salary benefits. It has been estimated that salary increases will just be at 1% per annum above RPI inflation, which is lower than the assumption used in previous years and it has been estimated that this will have the effect of decreasing liabilities.
- 4.3 As a result for 2013/14 the net liability has decreased by just over £0.297 million from £8.080m to £7.783 million. The pension fund deficit does not represent an immediate call on the Authority’s reserves but simply provides a snapshot (at 31 March 2014), with the value of assets and liabilities changing on a daily basis. It is arguable whether the annual calculation of the pension fund deficit accurately reflects the long run position, many believe it does not. The last triennial valuation undertaken by the actuary and effective from 1 April 2014 shows a continued improvement in funding which has allowed the Authority’s pension fund contributions to remain unchanged until 2017.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 Given reduced staff capacity (25% less compared to the start of the Comprehensive Spending Review Period) managing an ambitious and complex work programme once again presented a significant challenge. Whilst there has been some slippage in programmed work, Members have recognised the huge effort that all staff have made this year and have congratulated them for the outcomes achieved.

5.2 The financial statements record that as a result of careful management of the Authority's resources a reasonable level of reserves has been maintained, leaving the Authority in a sound financial position to cope with future challenges. The impact of the economic downturn has seen a significant squeeze on public expenditure, including that for National Park Authorities, and this looks likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The financial resilience of the Authority during this period will be recorded in future years' financial statements and will give a unique insight into the robustness of its financial management structures.

DONNA HEALY

Background Papers: NPA/14/027; NPA/AG/14/037

Attachments: Appendix 1 – Unaudited Statement of Accounts

20140815 DLH SoA

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 August 2014

HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICE - ANNUAL REPORT 2014Report of the Head of Human Resources

Recommendation : **That Members note the content of the report and progress made in the past 12 months**

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with an overview of activity within the HR Service and the opportunity for discussion and challenge regarding progress. It also provides data and trends for the workforce of the Authority.

2 Background

- 2.1 The work programme of the HR Service is guided by the objectives and actions identified in the HR Strategy 2011-2014 and the Business Plan. However, the Authority operates in an ever changing environment and financial context that means we must be flexible in how we recruit, organise, develop and motivate people to deliver our services.
- 2.2 From 1 April 2014, interim arrangements were established that mean responsibility for managing the complaints procedure (including liaison with the Local Government Ombudsman), handling compliments and comments and leading on the equalities agenda, in particular compliance with the Equality Duty now rest with the Head of Human Resources and are therefore contained in this report.

3 Performance Management

- 3.1 Following the introduction of a competency framework in 2013/14 to senior managers, the HR Service led a review of its implementation and impact. The findings of this review were discussed with the HR Focus Group and Leadership Team. It was agreed that the competency based approach would be extended to staff at Grade 4 and above in 2014/15. This roll out was facilitated and supported by delivering training to 38 staff in January 2014. It is anticipated that all posts will be subject to competency based appraisals from 2015/16 subject to a further review to ensure the process is efficient and effective.

4 Parke House Project Management

- 4.1 Parke House Project Management (PHPM) was introduced in June last year to provide a framework for the management and control of all projects. It was designed by staff (the Project Makers) to be meaningful, simple and easy to remember. Its aim was to improve communication and strengthen working between teams across the Authority.

- 4.2 Twelve months on, the Project Makers carried out a review which identified what had gone well and where there were areas for improvement. An action plan was agreed with Leadership Team in June 2014.
- 4.3 The introduction of PHPM has enabled us to integrate this thinking into our work planning and programmes. Directorate Plans now identify projects that require the PHPM approach to be followed. Leadership Team are reviewing these projects on a quarterly basis to recognise where projects are progressing as planned, and importantly, identify where a project may be slipping behind schedule.
- 4.4 As PHPM increasingly becomes the way we work (culture of thinking) it is envisaged that this approach will be extended next year so that individual appraisals and work programmes will be marked as PHPM activities.
- 4.5 The review also saw improvements made to the process and information to support project managers, the integration of PHPM into the competency framework and, in response to staff feedback, agreement to provide further project management training to be delivered in the autumn of 2014. A further review of PHPM is planned for May 2015.

5 Learning & Development Partnership & E-Academy

- 5.1 Working in partnership with Teignbridge District Council and other local authorities we continue to provide access to a wide ranging programme of training opportunities including in-house workshops and certificated courses. The programme is designed to accommodate personal and professional development requirements normally identified through our appraisal process. The HR Service has also identified and arranged accredited management development courses upon request.
- 5.2 The E-Academy (e-learning) partnership goes from strength to strength and Members will be interested to note that two further Park Authorities (Exmoor and Yorkshire Dales) have joined this year. E-learning can provide flexible, effective development across a range of topics and we have established a suite of core courses that all staff will be required to complete during this year (2014/15).

6 Apprenticeships

- 6.1 We have continued to explore opportunities to introduce apprenticeships across the Authority, building on the success of the Conservation Works Team apprenticeship which has recently been extended by 18 months to March 2016. We secured external funding to introduce a new Marketing and Outreach Apprentice this year, but unfortunately have had difficulty recruiting and retaining to that role and this is under review. On a positive note, we will recruit a Business Administration Apprentice later this year.

7 Equalities

- 7.1 The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone.

- 7.2 The public sector Equality Duty came into force in 2011. It means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies:
- have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
 - advance equality of opportunity
 - foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities
- 7.3 Members received a report in November 2012 (NPA/AG/12/027) setting out how the Authority will approach compliance with the Equality Act and public sector Equality Duty. Members are advised that the Authority has continued to follow the agreed approach to ensure that equality issues are built into routine processes and decision making of the Authority (via Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment).
- 7.4 It is important that any actions the Authority takes in complying with the Equality Duty are proportionate to the size and purpose of the Authority. It is considered that the systems put in place provide appropriate focus on equality issues without adding significantly to workload.
- 7.5 The HR Service also leads on ensuring that the Authority considers equality issues relating to all aspects of employment. The Authority continues to be an approved user of the disability 'Two Ticks' symbol and a signatory to the 'Mindful Employer' Charter for employers who are positive about mental health.

8 Health, Safety & Wellbeing

- 8.1 The Authority has a service level agreement with Teignbridge District Council for the provision of a health and safety service. This includes an appointed Health & Safety Adviser working two days per month on Authority premises.
- 8.2 The Corporate Health and Safety Report 2013-14 is provided at Appendix 1. Note that this report will be next written in April 2015 and annually thereafter so that it fits with our business planning year.
- 8.3 On 1 April 2014, the Authority introduced an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) working in partnership with Devon County Council. The EAP provides a new counselling service, employee helplines and an online health portal giving access to a health assessment tool, medical factsheets, fitness advice and personal coaching. This improved service has been achieved at no additional cost.
- 8.4 The HR Service also arranged two wellbeing events for staff linked to common health issues and new initiatives.
- 8.5 The Authority continues to be signed up to the Public Health Responsibility Deal with updated commitments and pledges submitted in May 2014.

9 Compliments & Complaints

- 9.1 Appendices 2 and 3 contain an overview of compliments and complaints received for 2012/13 and to date for 2013/14. Members will note the high number of compliments received across the whole Authority.

9.2 Members attention is drawn to the annual review letter received from the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) attached at Appendix 4 highlighting developments at the LGO and the future for local accountability. For the year ending 31 March 2014, the LGO received 4 complaints pertaining to Dartmoor National Park Authority, all relating to Planning and development. Members will note that of the 4 complaints submitted to, and investigated by the LGO, none were upheld.

10 Strategic Trends and Information

10.1 Information relating to employees, including year on year trend data, is included at Appendix 5.

10.2 The effective management of sickness absence is always a priority and we have continued to proactively support staff and managers when dealing with short and long-term absences. It is disappointing that the improved performance seen in 2012/13, probably brought about by the introduction of a new Attendance Management Procedure (late 2011) did not continue last year. However, there were two exceptional long-term absences (not work-related) that affected our performance significantly. We will continue to monitor this closely.

10.3 The HR Service will also deliver further attendance management training (during 2015) for staff and managers to ensure all staff understand the procedure and so that managers are equipped with the skills to manage absences effectively.

11 Equality and Sustainability Impact

11.1 It is important that any actions the Authority takes are compliant with employment legislation and the Equality Act. This is foremost in the work of the HR Service and in the advice provided to managers.

12 Financial Implications

12.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

12.2 The main human resource and financial risk is staff absence. This has been partly mitigated by managing levels of staff sickness, employing qualified agency and consultancy staff to cover gaps due to staff turnover, peaks in work and long-term sickness. However, the Authority is vulnerable to key staff being absent and this remains a high risk.

NEIL WHITE

Attachments: **Appendix 1 – DNPA Corporate Health and Safety Report 2013-14**
 Appendix 2 – Compliments Register
 Appendix 3 – Complaints Register
 Appendix 4 – Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2014
 Appendix 5 – Employee Data

Dartmoor National Park Authority Corporate Health & Safety Report 2013-2014

Introduction

This report is written prior to the end of the reporting year and covers the time period from 1 April 2013 to current date.

DNPA has continued to demonstrate a good level of health and safety management despite challenges to resources and management change. Managers have in some cases been required to manage areas of which they have little previous experience, they have generally achieved competency in health and safety management for those areas.

DNPA is still experiencing cultural change in health and safety terms but there is clear evidence staff are progressively understanding health and safety procedures and complying more often with them as part of their operational work activities.

Incident Reporting

Incident reporting remains low in number and there is still concern that under reporting is present, first aid reports are rarely received. There are also few reports received from staff in relation to incidents occurring on DNPA owned or managed land. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee is in the process of trying to address this by review of policy and simplification of reporting forms.

Twenty five incidents have occurred in 2013/14 to date and are varied in nature, 3 have been RIDDOR¹ reportable. Incidents reported are-

- Member of staff 'over 7 day injury'
- Member of public taken directly to hospital from scene
- Contractor fall (Parke) reported by his employer

There are no identified significant failings by DNPA in relation any RIDDOR reported incident. The DNPA management process should continue to encourage staff to report incidents and training can be delivered in-house if required in incident reporting and incident investigation.

Risk Assessment

The risk assessment management system for DNPA has been implemented with register and completed assessments available for view on screen. Assessments have been reviewed, revised or retired as necessary and managers have my continued support in managing their responsibilities. There is a general improvement in carrying out risk assessments however standards vary from team to team. Fire risk assessments have been completed for all significant DNPA buildings and will shortly be due for review.

¹ *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations*

Health Surveillance

Although health surveillance is well managed when identified, it was found during 2013 that there was a potential weakness in identifying staff who may be eligible by respective DNPA managers. This potential weakness has been addressed by policy review, vibration testing and implementation of the health and safety remit into the current health surveillance arrangements. This will require pro-active local managerial action in conjunction with advice from the Health & Safety Advisor.

Wellbeing

DNPA continues to provide a very good level of wellbeing management for staff, this is reliant on staff accessing the wellbeing services provided but the programme is of a high quality.

Stress

Work related stress is relatively well managed at DNPA despite the recent management changes and reduction in staff. There is a noticeable reduction in staff perception in relation to job security, but this no different in any other local authority. The danger is that staff will take on additional work which may be unrealistic and the potential for stress may increase, however this is realised and generally well managed. The impact of non-work related stress is also well understood and managed appropriately.

Training

The e-learning system provided by the Training Partnership has been widely promoted and provides the management arrangements for DSE assessments – some mandatory training has been identified. Ali Bright and Andrew Watson have successfully attended the Managing Safety Course (IOSH) and Rob Steemson and Jon Stones are scheduled to attend in 2014.

The Conservation Works Team has undertaken a number of health and safety training courses during 2013. These ensure the team is updated with information and complies with current legislation and best practice. The HSE recommended refresher period of 3 years had been exceeded in some cases which did not comply with best practice. The provision of the training has removed a potential risk of criticism from DNPA by enforcement authorities.

Events Management

The links with Teignbridge District Council enable a uniform approach to be taken in relation to event management by neighbouring district councils, and attendance at Safety Advisory Group (Teignbridge TSAG) where events impact on DNPA. This should be helpful to DNPA managers with event management responsibility. The DNPA Events policy and procedure will be compiled and incorporated into the Authority Health and Safety Policy.

Audit - Internal Safety Review

This programme has been maintained and identified positive improvement across the Authority. This has it appears been mainly due to managers realising health and safety as partner to operational management rather than being complacent as has some times previously been the case.

Summary

DNPA has continued to evidence a steady but sustainable improvement in health and safety management. Management change has benefited cultural development and there is cautious optimism that improvement will continue during 2014 and 2015.

Peter Wilson (DipSM) FIIRSM, Tech IOSH, RMaPS
Corporate Health & Safety Advisor
Teignbridge District Council

20 February 2014

COMPLIMENTS REGISTER - Dartmoor National Park Authority

2013/14

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
09-Apr-13	Communications & Business Support	ICT	Map with clustering	It looks brilliant, & really improves usability of map, I love it! Hope other parks start using it. I'm making badges 'GIS dream team'.	NPA Portal Manager
19-Apr-13	Planning	Forward Planning Team	Chagford PC annual assembly	Audience praised calibre of NP staff, especially those involved in masterplanning exercise.	People in audience
21-Apr-13	Conservation & Communities	Access/Ranger	Lutton and Diamond Lane cycle ride	Just back from a lovely ride round the local bridleways, and thought I would let you know that the Lutton Bridleway is excellent – much more passable than it was before, so that is really great.	Service User
30-Apr-13	Conservation & Communities	Archaeologists	Hill Fort Study Group Meeting	Thank you for your generous hosting of HFSG meeting. Thank your Archaeologist for his contribution on site & generally. Everyone was delighted	Hill Fort Study Group
30-Apr-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger	Footpath work at Teign Village	I have been asked by the Parish Councillors to convey their sincere thanks to you and the student of Bicton College for the footpath work at Teign Village and to say how much the local community appreciates the work.	Hennock Parish Council
03-May-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger	Fixing Stile at Liverton	As you're doubtless aware, your Ranger has made a really good job of fixing the stile at 809748. Many thanks for facilitating the work.	Resident
14-May-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger	Laying of gravel path	Members of the PC have asked me to thank you formally for all your hard work laying the gravel path from Teign Village car park. Please also pass on the Council's thanks to your students from Bicton College for their contribution to the project, which has been very much appreciated by residents in the village	Clerk to Hennock PC
01-Jun-13	Planning	Planning Team Manager	Personal Accident	Sincere thank you for your assistance. My leg was broken in 2 places. Without your help, and the other two couples I don't know what we would have done.	Person involved in accident

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
05-Jun-13	Various	Officers & Members	Accident on B3212	We wish for our gratitude to be passed on to all those wonderful people who acted promptly and cared for us at the scene of our accident on Friday 24th May.	Those involved in the accident
22-Jun-13	Authority	N/A	Visit to Dartmoor (from Dorset)	Conservation of the landscape. Looks well cared for	Visitor
25-Jun-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger	Environmental Day - Haytor	Special thanks for making it possible for us to come up and get involved, he was the perfect host! We hope to be back in the Autumn for more hard graft if you'll accept us?	Participant
08-Jul-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger		Thank you for helping to dig the pond, we appreciate it, and can't wait for wildlife to come.	Mary Tavy & Brentor School
09-Jul-13	Conservation & Communities	Various	Higher Uppacott visit	Thanks and appreciation for the time and enthusiasm you put into our visit to HU last Monday. Your enthusiasm brushed off on us and we definately learnt and enjoyed the experience. Thanks for your expertise.	Visitor
Jul-13	Conservation & Communities	Mires Officers	Dartmoor Mires Project	This is one of the most important projects to be launched in my 60 years of life on and around the moor. I hugely welcome it. Interactive map is better than I could have thought possible.	Member of public
Jul-13	Communications & Business Support	HR & Various	Work Experience	Thank you for your support of Work Experience. We greatly value the employers contribution.	Head of Bright Futures, South Dartmoor Community College
Jul-13	Communications & Business Support	HR & Various	Work Experience	Thank you for having me and giving up your time to tutor me. I thoroughly enjoyed it.	Participant, ISCA School
Jul-13	Communications & Business Support	HR & Various	Work Experience	Thank you for accomodating C. We appreciate your generosity and support.	Work related Learning co-ordinator, Chulmleigh Community College.
Jul-13	Communications & Business Support	HR & Various	Work Experience	Thank you for taking L on work experience, we appreciate your time and effort.	Careers Administrator, Queen Elizabeths

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
22-Jul-13	Authority	Various	Incident at Haytor	I wanted to thank you and your team for your assistance. Your swift and professional response is an absolute credit to all of you and greatly appreciated by myself and Devon & Cornwall Police.	Inspector Devon & Cornwall Police - Critical Incident Manager
23-Jul-13	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Esso Shoot (filming)	Just wanted to say a quick thankyou to you and your team for all your help on the Esso shoot. Your Rangers were fantastic and a pleasure to work with.	Organiser
29-Jul-13	Communications & Business Support	HR & Various	Work Experience	I would like to thank your team for an outstanding week of work experience last week. The whole week was structured brilliantly and J gained a great deal of knowledge from it. Please extend our thanks to your colleagues and congratulate them upon the wonderful work that they do.	Parents
30-Jul-13	Authority	Various	Unlawful occupation of Marley Head	Parish Council & the people of S Brent are very grateful to the Nat. Park, it's officers and members for the way this matter has been handled. After a long & difficult road, let us hope that the legal land owners can once again have the use of their land without fear of trespass.	South Hams District Councillor
05/08/2013	Planning	Planning Officer	Mires project letter	Your planner was really good on Friday – the outlining of the proposals made my job much easier! Many thanks	Fisheries, Rec & Bio Team (Devon area)
13/08/2013	Planning	Community Planner	Creation of village trail	Thanks for turning up and being so interested in our venture. It was good to have someone who is willing to actually DO something to help!	Residents
19/08/2013	Planning	Planning Officer	Planning Application	The approval is due in no small part to your helpful comments and professionalism. Much appreciated.	Architect
22-Aug-13	Planning	Planning Officers	Planning Advice	May I thank you and your officers for your attention & consideration in such a timely manner - within your very busy work shedule.	Applicant
28-Aug-13	Planning	Enforcement Planner	Works to Vixen Tor Leat	Thank you for such a detailed resume of the situation. It is immensely reassuring to find that an appeal from a member of the public can elicit such a direct and effective response. It is a real pleasure to know that there are those who look after its character & evolution for its own sake.	Applicant

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
02-Sep-13	Conservation & Communities	Ranger	Co-ordinating assistance to young hill walkers, lost at night.	Thank you to the Ranger who responded to our son & daughter & helped them on Saturday night.They too are incredibly grateful to the Ranger.	Service User
09-Sep-13	Planning	Planning Officer	Planning Application	We were delighted to receive consent. It was thanks in no small part to the clear representation of our application, and the detail provided by you & your colleagues.	Applicant
10-Sep-13	Human Resources	HR Assistant	Work Experience	Thank you for accomodating our pupil we appreciate your generosity and support.	Chulmleigh Community College.
Sep-13	Conservation & Communities	Information Adviser	Advice given to wild camper (one last night).	I've can't remember my father being so happy. The camping spot was perfect, with the ponies and lovely views, especially to the North. The weather was perfect and the night sky was clear. I really Do appreciate you efforts in findings this spot. THANK YOU	Service User
12-Sep-13	Conservation & Communities	Various	Widecombe Fair	I just wanted to say how cheerful, helpful , enthusiastic and knowledgeable your two staff manning the DNP van were yesterday at Widecombe Fair. A breath of air, and a valuable service, much appreciated by me and my family.	Service User
20-Sep-13	Communications & Business Support	Admin Officer	Member attending a course	Thank you for your help when I got lost in Wales. It made a nasty time bearable and I really appreciate your kindness.	DNPA Member
23-Sep-13	Conservation & Communities	Various	Edward Moorshead Award and Hameldown Research Project.	Greatful appreciation for the Ceremony, a defining moment linked to the project. All have greatly impressed me with their professionalism,dedication and overall enthusiasm for the National Park. You have a very good team indeed.	Hameldown Research Project
23-Sep-13	Authority	All	Tour of Britain	Well done on putting together & running the TOB stage finish at Haytor. It truly was a fantastic day with an electric atmosphere! A feather in DNPA's cap.	Lady's Mile Catering

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
27-Sep-13	Conservation & Communities	Various	EMT Project from Scout Hut to Plym Ford	Thank you sincerely not only for the financial support for the project but also on the ground by the team mentioned. The support of the DNPA has been essential to the projects success. Please convey Council's sincere thanks to all of your colleagues.	Chairman & Members of the Dartmoor Commoners' Council.
03-Oct-13	Communications & Business Support	Visitor Centre	Hospitality on Sunday 29th Sept.	Stayed open to allow 110 tired & wet pupils to shelter after DoE walk, to await their lost coaches.	DoE staff & students at Hayesfield Girls' School, & Beechen Cliff School, Bath.
03-Oct-13	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Ranger lead walks	We have taken part in 7 of the walks, and without exception they have been great fun, well organised, very informative & good value for money. All are professional, great company with impressive knowledge and patience. They are doing great work, opening up the secrets of Dartmoor (one of Britains greatest assets) in a way that a book cannot.	Service User
06-Oct-13	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Work on boardwalks upper reaches of the Erme	Congratulations on a really great job you, contractors & volunteers have done creating new board walk beyond Longtimber Wood Trail. Also well done on work on Stowford bridle way, a vast improvement. Thanks also for clearing up letter around Stowford Moor. Keep up the good work.	Service User
08-Oct-13	Communications & Business Support	Promotion & Development Officer	Prize win through our e-newsletter	Thanks for the tickets. Please keep the History (Uppacott) & Archaeology (item of the month) items, and others, coming on your website.	Prize winner
09-Oct-13	Conservation & Communities	Education Support Officer	Ranger Ralph membership	A big thank you to you & the RR team for all you have done over the years. We thoroughly enjoyed the adventures & fun you provided. Thanks for helping him gain confidence & develop an adventurous & inquisitive mind, a liking for nature & the moors. You have sowed the seeds of interest that will never fade away.	RR member and parents

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
24-Oct-13	Conservation & Communities	Education Support Officer	School visit to Haytor	The children really enjoyed your walk & learned so much from your interesting information. Thank you for making our trip a day to remember.	Ashburton Primary School, enclosing 5 of the childrens own letters.
29-Oct-13	Communications & Business Support	ICT	Assisting DPA in setting up office	A huge thank you to you & your guys for sorting out our office - so impressed you got us up and running so quickly. Thanks to all concerned.	Chief Exec. DPA
07-Nov-13	Conservation & Communities	Norman Baldock & Naomi Barker	Work Experience	Thank you for having me last week and making me so welcome! It was really worthwhile and feel I've learnt a lot. Just to say thank you for taking me out on Dartmoor	Kate Rider
13-Nov-13	Conservation & Communities	Naomi Barker	Cuckoo Tracking	I live on Dartmoor and am often left disappointed by DNPA website, the cuckoo project is a great exception, fascinating innovative stuff.	Tom Smith
13-Nov-13	Communications & Business Support	ICT	Biomass Boiler Installation	How very pleased & grateful we are for the way A has dealt with the project. We were kept well informed & queries dealt with efficiently, & heads of terms easily agreed.	Duchy of Cornwall
15-Nov-13	Planning	Planning Officers	Planning Approval	Thank you for you help & efficient handling. I was most grateful for your immediate assistance and advice before and during the process.The gazebo cedar is starting to age nicely.	Applicant
01-Dec-13	Conservation & Communities	Various	Ranger Ralph at Lydford Gorge	Thanks for a fantastic day. My daughter & son had a fantastic time & enjoyed every RR event they've attended. A great way for children to enjoy the natural environment. Friendly & fun.	Parent of Ranger Ralph members.
11-Dec-13	Conservation & Communities	CEO	Dartmoor Hill Farm Project	I am very pleased that the lobbying on the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project has been successful. I commend you for all that you & your team do to protect the important heritage of Dartmoor.	MP
15-Dec-13	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Rescue in the fog	We cannot thank you enough, if it were not for you we would still be on the moor. I have never been so cold & scared. Thank you for the clothes you lent us. I want to give everyone the thanks they deserve.	Service User
16-Dec-13	Conservation & Communities	Access	Reduced hedge height at Brentor toilets.	Excellent - thank you DNP	WDBC

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
20-Dec-13	Planning	Planning Officer	Granting of Planning	I've said it on the phone, it bears repeating, thank you	Applicant
23-Dec-13	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Rescue in the fog	In my opinion the Rangers volunteering their services went above and beyond what is expected of them, and I feel a letter of appreciation from the Sector Inspector is warranted. I have spoken to the missing ladies today, and they are very thankful for all those involved.	Inspector, Devon & Cornwall Police
14-Jan-14	Planning	Enforcement Planner	Re Car Park, Bedford Bridge	If there was a feedback form it would be 10 out of 10	Service User
21-Jan-14	Planning	Community Planner	Solar Panel Advice	Thank you for coming back to me. I think your panel layout is the best I have seen.	Service User
10-Feb-14	Planning	Planning Officer	Devel. Man. Meeting	Your presentation was extremely fair. It was appreciated you mentioned the PCC letter, & showed photos of the Dam on busy days. We had impartial & professional advice from planning before and saw democracy in action at the meeting.	Applicant
14-Feb-14	Planning	Enforcement Planner	Conviction assistance	Many thanks for your contribution in the case	Trading Standards Officer
20-Feb-14	Planning	Planning Admin	Planning enquiry	The info and feedback were interesting and appreciated. Your officer researched the planning application & was very helpful.	Service User
04-Mar-14	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Ten Tors	I'm grateful for your support, and I am particularly grateful to X for his advice, wisdom and common sense.	Commander 43 (Wessex) Brigade
13-Mar-14	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Fallen tree	Just wanted to mention the prompt response about a tree across Throwleigh FP 2 last week. I led a walk, and pointed out how well paths are looked after by everyone a DNP. Thanks.	Service User
22-Mar-14	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Path clearing at Bridford Bridleway 11.	All the paths around Lowton Farm are clear, someone has been very busy. Thank you. Also the path junctions are well sign posted.	Footpath Secretary for Newton Abbot Ramblers.

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
2014/15					
25-Apr-14	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Talk at Chollacott Nursing Home	Huge thank you. The residents expressed their gratitued, and would welcome futher visits.	Chollacott Nursing Home
09-May-14	Conservation & Communities	Comms & Ecology	Cuckoo Film	What a great film about Dartmoor cuckoos. What a great project. Many from Normandy looked at website.	Service User
09-May-14	Conservation & Communities	Education & Ranger	Grant and footpath work	Thank you for the grant we have received. We very much enjoyed working on the moor in particular with your Ranger, to conserve the beauty of the moor.	Chagford Conservation Group
12-May-14	Conservation & Communities	Comms Mgr & Head Ranger	Ten Tors	We are so grateful for your help. Parking was potentially a big problem, thanks to your help a crisis (which would have damaged the Army's reputation) was averted. Many thanks indeed.	Army Press Officer, SWE
12-May-14	Planning & SDF	HBO & Planners	Old House Eco Course	I want to say how much I appreciated the Course. It was a thought provoking & inspiring event. Thank you to the staff who worked so hard to make the day so valuable.	Tavistock Town Council
14-May-14	Authority	Various	Work placement	Our employee reported positive experiences & impressions. Thank you sincerely for the kind care, & to colleagues involved in practical training.	Director, NP Kellerwald-Edersee, Germany
04-Jun-14	Conservation & Communities	Information Adviser	Bad weather at Haytor	Our bus driver drove off and left us with 22 foreign students dressed for summer in a hailstorm with no shelter. We walked to the NP visitor centre where X drove me to find the bus driver, whilst your Adviser entertained the children with question & answer sessions. I can't describe my gratitude for resolving my crisis and keeping the children safe & entertained.	Service User
11-Jun-14	Planning	Planning Officer	Granting of Planning	I really appreciate the time & trouble you took on this matter	Applicant
13-Jun-14	Planning	Planning Officer	Planning project	Thank you for your time on the Lower Commmons Project	Service User
14-Jun-14	Planning	Planning Officers	Retrospective planning	Thank you both for your help & guidance. Your officer helped us with paperwork, and guided us with getting plans done.	Applicant

Date Received	Directorate	Officer	Service / Event	Details of Compliment	Received from
16-Jun-14	Conservation & Communities	Rangers	Fall at Clapper Bridge	Gentleman called into the Postbridge centre to thank rangers for help, support & comfort offered to his wife before being taken to Derriford.	Service User
18-Jun-14	Planning	Enforcement Planner	Enforcement	Thank you so much for your hard work & persistence	Service User
22-Jun-14	Archaeology	Archaeologist	Conference	Thank you for organising a fantastic conference. Good to catch up with other groups & exchange tips.	Service User
25-Jun-14	Works	CWT & Cleaner	Toilets at Haytor	My daughter & her friend used the toilets on Saturday night & complimented you on how clean & pleasant they were	Service User
27-Jun-14	Enforcement	Enforcement Planner	Skip on highway land	Thanks for your work, the Council will be similarly appreciative	North Bovey PC
16-Jul-14	Planning	Planning Officer	Planning app	Thanks, the relief of the applicant was overwhelming	Service User
18-Jul-14	Conservation & Communities	Access	Teign Rails	Visited Teign Rails since repair, and must congratulate you & team for an excellent job well done. Much safer to cross the river now.	Service User
24-Jul-14	Conservation & Communities	Information Adviser & Cleaner	Tourist visit	Due to disability I can only access Dartmoor by car. Your staff at Haytor were most helpful with advice & very friendly. May I also compliment the man who keeps the disabled toilet spotless.	Service User

COMPLAINTS REGISTER - Dartmoor National Park Authority

2013/14

Ref:	Date Received	Reason	Stages	Ombudsman	Outcomes	Date Resolved / Concluded
13/01	23/04/2013	Enforcement action and behaviour of officers	1&2	Yes	Not upheld at stage 1 Full response at stage 2. Most aspects not upheld. One apology given for delay in communication	17/05/2013 - Stage 1 22/11/2013 & 15/01/2014 - Stage 2 19/12/2013 LGO cannot investigate
13/02	10/05/2013	Enforcement action	2		Outside complaints procedure. Advised to use appeal process	16/05/2013
13/03	20/06/2013	Lack of support to bus route 82, with consequent erosion of the service	1		Explanation of financial constraints and priorities sent	19/07/2013
13/04	03/05/2013	Complaint regarding River Teign Shellfish	N/A	Yes	Under consideration until planning decision notice issued	15/11/2013 - no fault
13/05	03/06/2013	Delay in discharge of conditions	1		Apology for going over 12 weeks and fee refunded but major part of complaint not upheld	16/07/2013
13/06	09/07/2013	Enforcement action. Request for compensation	2	Yes	Not upheld but recommendation made regarding wording of a Committee report	Stage 2 letter sent 01/08/2013; LGO unable to investigate 25/10/2013
13/07	16/08/2013	Charging for Princetown toilets and poor condition	N/A	No	Responsibility of WDBC. Passed to them to deal with	19/08/2013
13/08	06/09/2013	Lack of response from DM	1		Not upheld	12/09/2013
13/09	28/11/2013	Access across private land without permission to gain access to neighbouring development site	1	No	Upheld and apology given. Officers directed to make themselves known in future	04/12/2013

Ref:	Date Received	Reason	Stages	Ombudsman	Outcomes	Date Resolved / Concluded
13/10	02/12/2013	Unreasonable behaviour by DNPA - Enforcement action	2		Apology for one error in information given to Members. Substantive complaint not upheld	13/01/2014
13/11	16/01/2014	Planning application process in respect of curtilage of listed building. Approval against advise of HBO	1		Not upheld	04/02/2014
13/12	12/02/2014	Master Planning process at Ashburton - preventing participation	1		Not upheld	
13/13	03/03/2014	Unfairness and bias in DM reports	2		Not upheld. Should be dealt with through appeals procedure	14/03/2014

2014/15

Ref:	Date Received	Reason	Stages	Ombudsman	Outcomes	Date Resolved / Concluded
14/01	14/04/2014	Misled by DNPA at pre-app stage of application; advice contrary to policy	1		Response sent 08/05/2014. Not upheld	08/05/2014
14/02	15/04/2014	Director of Planning acted improperly re: change of agents	2		Response sent 01/05/2014. Not upheld	01/05/2014
14/03	07/05/2014	Concern re: handling by Trees & Landscape Officer of issue with trees/property	1		Response sent 28/05/2014. Not upheld	28/05/2014
14/04	19/05/2014	Disputing planning consent given	1		Response sent 05/06/2014. Not upheld	05/06/2014
14/05	20/05/2014	Further complaint about misinformation presented to Members (dealt with under previous complaint 13/10)	2		Not upheld. Initial response 30/05/2014. Further response sent 04/06/2014.	04/06/2014
14/06	03/06/2014	Bridlepath; lack of fairness and due diligence	1		Response sent 19/06/14. Not upheld.	19/06/2014

Ref:	Date Received	Reason	Stages	Ombudsman	Outcomes	Date Resolved / Concluded
-	13/06/2014	Coach use on Dartmoor	n/a		Not treated as formal complaint. Response emailed 16/06/14 and follow up 26/06/14 (saved in comments folder)	26/06/2014
14/07	25/06/2014	Actions and correspondence regarding minor application	1&2		Response sent 11/07/2014. Not upheld. Stage 2 complaint received 22/07/14 - currently being considered	
14/08	29/07/2014	Communication regarding enquiry relating to PROW	1		Currently being considered	

7 July 2014

By email

Mr Kevin Bishop
Chief Executive & NPO
Dartmoor National Park Authority

Dear Mr Kevin Bishop

Annual Review Letter 2014

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2014. This is the first full year of recording complaints under our new business model so the figures will not be directly comparable to previous years. This year's statistics can be found in the table attached.

A summary of complaint statistics for every local authority in England will also be included in a new yearly report on local government complaint handling. This will be published alongside our annual review letters on 15 July. This approach is in response to feedback from councils who told us that they want to be able to compare their performance on complaints against their peers.

For the first time this year we are also sending a copy of each annual review letter to the leader of the council as well as to the chief executive. We hope this will help to support greater democratic scrutiny of local complaint handling and ensure effective local accountability of public services. In the future we will also send a copy of any published Ombudsman report to the leader of the council as well as the chief executive.

Developments at the Local Government Ombudsman

At the end of March Anne Seex retired as my fellow Local Government Ombudsman. Following an independent review of the governance of the LGO last year the Government has committed to formalising a single ombudsman structure at LGO, and to strengthen our governance, when parliamentary time allows. I welcome these changes and have begun the process of strengthening our governance by inviting the independent Chairs of our Audit and Remuneration Committees to join our board, the Commission for Administration in England. We have also recruited a further independent advisory member.

Future for local accountability

There has been much discussion in Parliament and elsewhere about the effectiveness of complaints handling in the public sector and the role of ombudsmen. I have supported the creation of a single ombudsman for all public services in England. I consider this is the best way to deliver a system of redress that is accessible for users; provides an effective and comprehensive service; and ensures that services are accountable locally.

To contribute to that debate we held a roundtable discussion with senior leaders from across the local government landscape including the Local Government Association, Care Quality Commission and SOLACE. The purpose of this forum was to discuss the challenges and opportunities that exist to strengthen local accountability of public services, particularly in an environment where those services are delivered by many different providers.

Over the summer we will be developing our corporate strategy for the next three years and considering how we can best play our part in enhancing the local accountability of public services. We will be listening to the views of a wide range of stakeholders from across local government and social care and would be pleased to hear your comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local authority report – Dartmoor National Park Authority

For the period ending – 31/03/2014

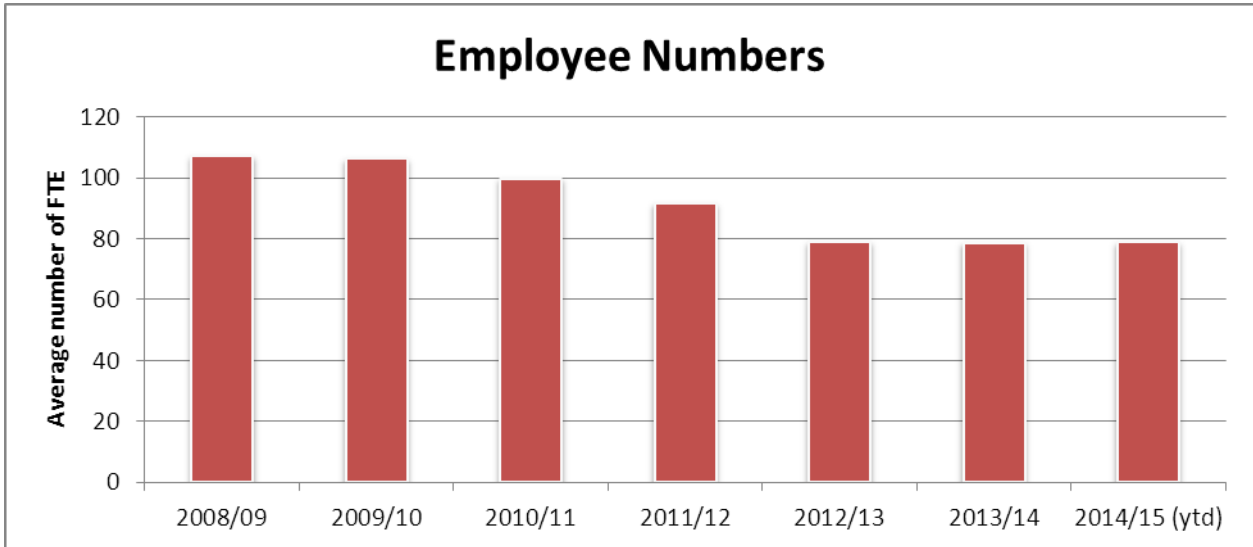
For further information on interpretation of statistics click on this link to go to <http://www.lgo.org.uk/publications/annual-report/note-interpretation-statistics/>

Complaints and enquiries received

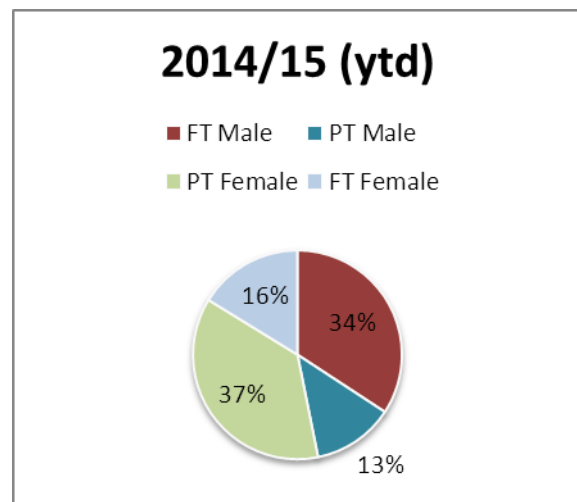
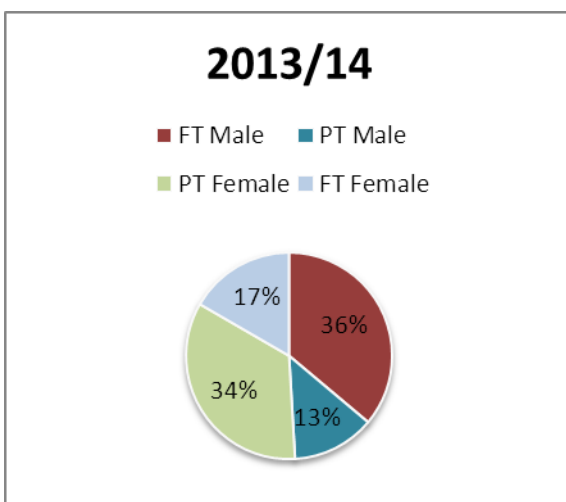
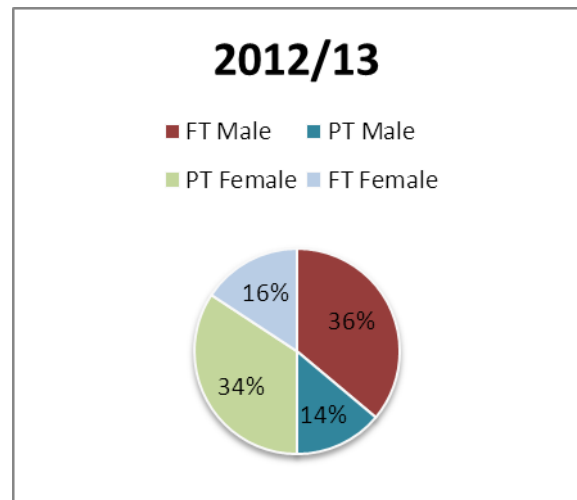
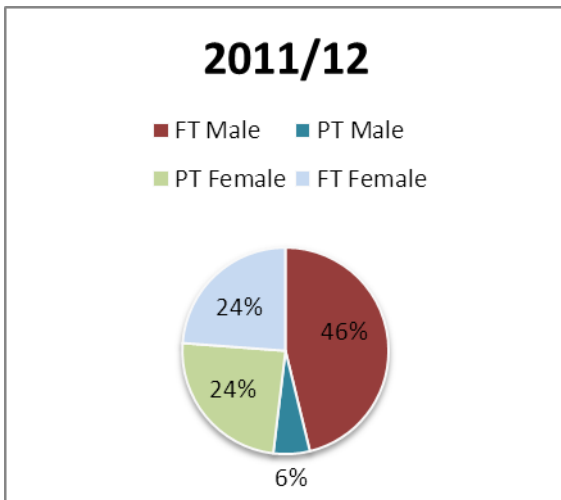
Local authority	Adult care services	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Education and children's services	Environmental services and public protection and regulation	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and development	Total
Dartmoor NPA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4

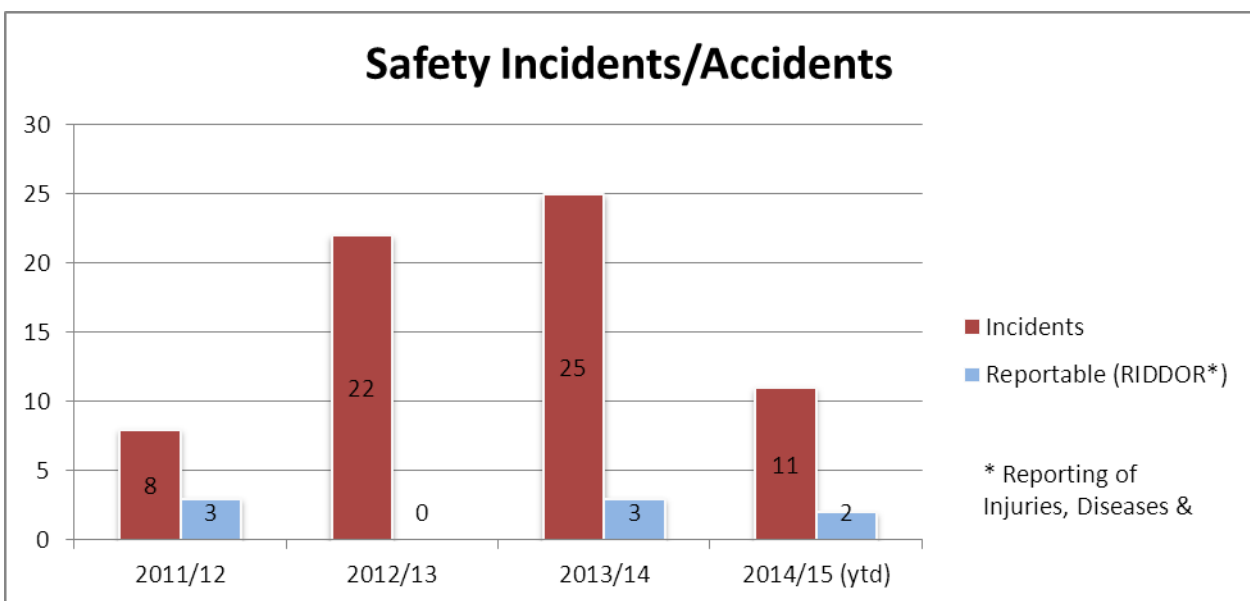
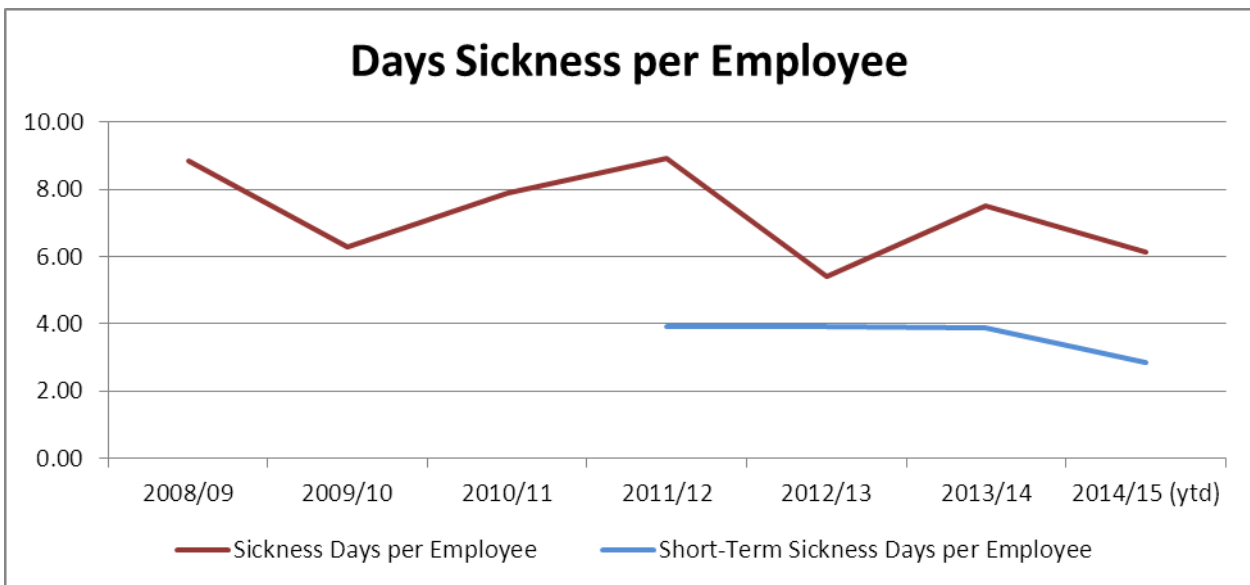
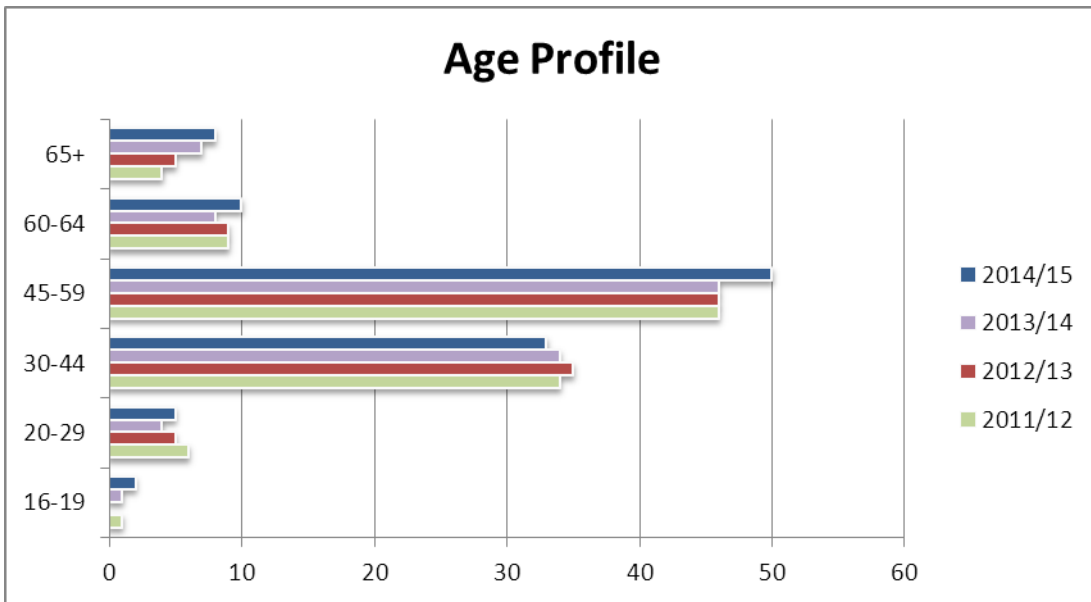
Decisions made

Local authority	<u>Detailed investigations carried out</u>		Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
	Upheld	Not upheld					
Dartmoor NPA	0	4	1	2	0	0	7

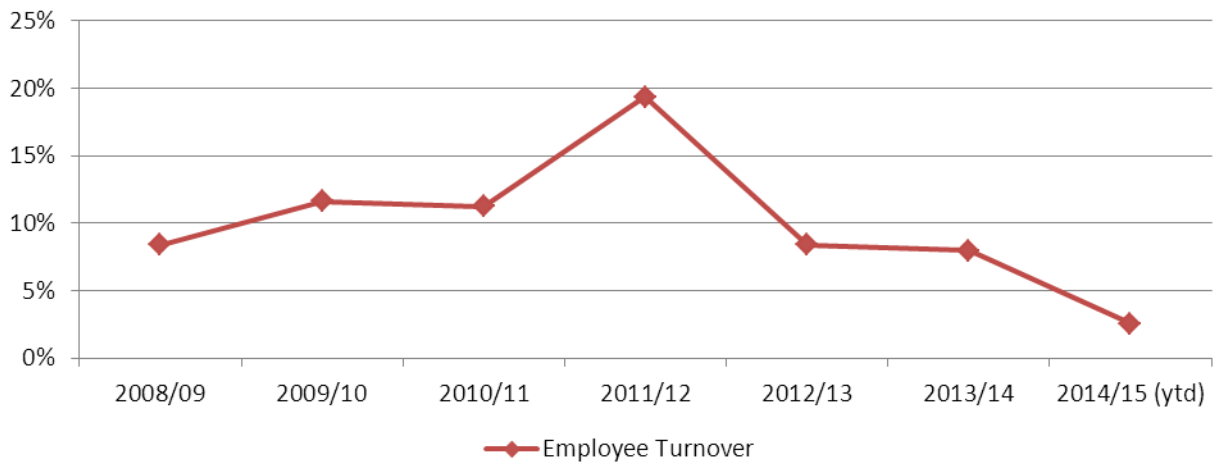


Employee Gender & Full-time/Part-time Analysis

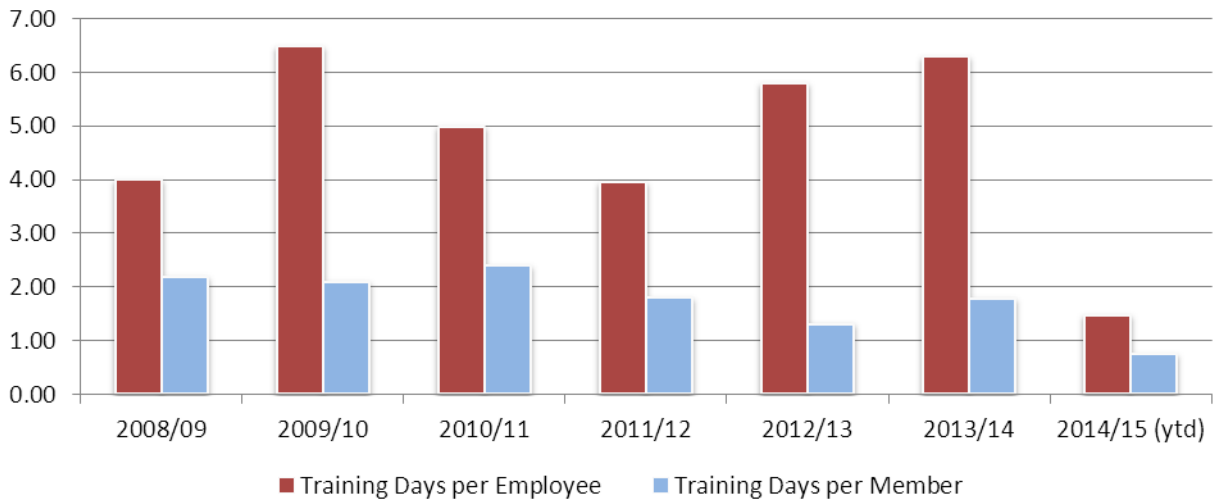




Employee Turnover



Training Days Per Employee/Member



DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 August 2014

**QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE
BUSINESS PLAN 2014/15**

Report of the Director of Conservation and Communities

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

1 Purpose of the report

1.1 This report is to inform Members of progress towards implementation of actions within the Business Plan.

2 Overview of Objectives and Key Actions from the Business Plan

2.1 Rather than report progress against all of the key actions in the Business Plan this report deals with 'exceptions' (ie actions where progress is delayed or causing significant concern). Progress towards implementation of key actions is good and the only areas of concern are:

- Preparation of a new Minerals Local Plan – work has been delayed due to other priorities (please refer to NPA/AG/14/050 for further details).
- Superfast broadband – work is progressing on the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme with a number of Dartmoor communities connected but there are ongoing issues with the Rural Community Broadband Fund scheme pertaining to state aid, cost per premise etc (please refer to NPA/AG/14/050 for further details).
- Masterplanning – Ashburton masterplan is delayed so that we can complete additional work and respond to issues raised by the local community and businesses (please refer to NPA/AG/14/050 for further details).
- Consideration of options for car park charges on sites operated by the Authority – delayed start and looking to see whether we need external support to complete this work.
- Retail strategy for the Visitor Centres – delayed but still on target for completion by end of 2014.

2.2 Success with the *Moor than meets the eye* scheme means that work on key projects for implementation in year one is just starting. These projects are highlighted in the Business Plan. A verbal update on any projects or work areas of particular interest to Members can be provided at the meeting.

3 Overview of Performance

3.1 At this stage in the year performance against key indicators is showing no cause for concern.

4 Equality and Sustainability Impact

4.1 There are no sustainability or equality issues to report.

ALISON KOHLER

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Friday 15 August 2014

REVIEW OF FUNCTION & DELIVERY OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY WORKReport of the Head of Recreation, Access and Estates

Recommendation: **That Members consider the report and discuss the key considerations in Section 8 of the report**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The public rights of way (PROW) network within the National Park is managed by the Authority on behalf of Devon County Council (DCC) as the local highway authority through a Service Level Agreement (SLA). As part of the agreement with DCC, since 2008/09 the Authority has received an annual “grant” from the County Council for revenue maintenance works. This has been reduced over recent years following cuts in public sector funding.
- 1.2 A background paper outlining the current approach to the management of public rights of way is appended to this report (Appendix 1).
- 1.3 A member and officer working group has been established to undertake a review of the function and delivery of the Authority’s responsibilities for the management of public rights of way within the National Park.
- 1.4 The terms of reference for this working group were agreed by Members at the May 2014 meeting of Audit & Governance Committee, where it was agreed that the review would specifically consider the following:
 - The resources the Authority allocates to this area of work and how this compares with the funding we receive from Devon County Council
 - The benefits to the Authority for continuing to have an Service Level Agreement with Devon County Council to deliver this work
 - The likely implications for the Authority if we do not continue with an SLA
 - To explore alternative models for delivering this work and consider the cost/benefits of such approaches for the Authority, the National Park, local communities and users.
- 1.5 This report provides an update on the work undertaken so far, highlights some key issues and identifies likely areas for change. A final report and recommendations will be presented to a future Audit & Governance meeting in November 2014.

2 Resources allocated to PROW work

- 2.1 The maintenance grant received from Devon County Council for the current financial year is £43,000. You will see from Appendix 1 that the level of grant

peaked in 2010 to 2012 at £63,000 but is now back at the level received in 2008, which is a cut in real terms. The main areas of expenditure are shown in the following table:

	Flailing	Contractor schemes	Materials	Other
2013/14	£12,000 (25%)	£23,000 (48%)	£11,000 (23%)	£2,000 (4%)

- 2.2 The review of the Ranger service in 2008, found that the in kind contribution that the Authority made to public rights of way work was valued at approximately £130,000 per annum. This figure was based on the time Rangers spent on PROW work and operational costs, including vehicles. Following that review and subsequent reductions in funding from DCC for maintenance work, the Authority has sought to reduce the amount of time Rangers spend on PROW work, particularly for path surveys.
- 2.3 In 2011/12 officers re-negotiated the SLA to reduce the frequency of path surveys. Coupled with a drive to increase the number of path surveys undertaken by Voluntary Wardens the approximate cost to the Authority of PROW work is £126,000. This includes time allocated to this work by the Ranger Support Officer and the Head of Recreation, Access and Estates . It is worth, noting that more use of volunteers and a reduction in the number of Rangers has reduced the total Ranger cost to £90,000 a year – a reduction of £40,000 since 2008.
- 2.4 In recent years additional funding has been made available through external funding bids:
- 2012/13 - £46,000 from Devon County Council (via the Belwin scheme) to deal with winter storm damage.
 - 2014 - £150,000 from Defra for storm and flood damage repairs to public paths.
- 2.5 Additional funding from other sources can also be used where it fulfils shared objectives e.g. Department for Transport “Granite and Gears” project funding is being used to improve routes for cyclists.
- 2.6 The bulk of day to day work on public rights of way is undertaken by the Ranger service. Vegetation clearance is carried out by Rangers using brush cutters for narrower routes, or by local contractors for routes where it is accessible for a tractor mounted flail to be used. A small amount of clearance is undertaken by the Authority’s works team, although this is limited due to other commitments.
- 2.7 The Ranger service undertakes smaller scale repairs and improvements such as the installation of stiles, gates and signposts, while local contractors carry out larger scale works including surfacing and drainage works. The typical cost for contractor schemes is £2,000 - £3,000.
- 2.8 The success with external funding for storm repairs reflects the challenges imposed by recent weather patterns, which given climate change predictions are likely to continue into the future.

3 What are the benefits to the National Park and the Authority of having a service level agreement?

3.1 The principal benefits are:

- The SLA Enables an integrated approach to access management work (Commons, CROW access land and public rights of way)
- The public know who to contact for access queries
- Public rights of way is high profile work which is recognised and valued by visitors and local communities (e.g. the Future Focus local resident survey found that 96% of residents were satisfied with footpaths, access land and other public rights of way)
- Helps to deliver wider public benefits: a well-managed, well maintained access network supports our second purpose ,enabling people to enjoy the special qualities of the National Park, and contributes to health and wellbeing, social inclusion, tourism & rural economy
- Access work provides an ongoing relationship between the Authority and local communities – farmers and landowners, Parish Councils, user groups etc. It can be the start of a conversation about other things
- Officers have detailed knowledge of the access network and the legal framework that underpins it

4 Likely implications of not continuing with a Service Level Agreement

4.1 The following issues were highlighted by the Dartmoor Access Forum:

- Uncertainty of responsibilities between Authority, County Council, District Councils, parishes, farmers (DNPA likely to receive many of the complaints). The public , landowners and farmers are likely to be confused and the level of service reduced
- Likely to lead to a fragmented approach, loss of local knowledge and contact through Rangers
- Differing priorities between DNPA and DCC. Path problems would not necessarily be given higher priority within the National Park
- Loss of local distinctiveness and character as standardised approach to infrastructure and materials .e.g. The Authority uses timber routed signposts, surfacing materials used may not be as sympathetic (impact on landscape)
- May be an impact on local contractors as those used would have to be on the DCC approved list. This could have a negative impact on contractors that currently work for the Authority on access work.

5 Future delivery models for delivering public rights of way

5.1 There appear to be three options for the future delivery of PROW on Dartmoor:

- Maintain the status quo and DNPA continue to subsidise the work through officer time and occasional project funding
- End the SLA and pass all responsibility back to DCC
- Maintain the SLA but look for further savings in the cost to the Authority and in doing so consider re-negotiating provisions of the SLA.

- 5.2 There are a number of pros and cons of keeping the agency agreement many of which are not directly related to the quality of the network, but rather landscape considerations and our working relationships with landowners and other partners.
- 5.3 It is made even more complicated by the fact that it is not an 'all or nothing' decision. There are a number of middle options to consider, e.g. moving to undertaking small scale works only. Our current SLA with DCC could already be considered a middle option in the sense that we do not take responsibility for the definitive map (which some other NPA's do).
- 5.4 The working group has considered the points in paragraphs 3 & 4 and recognises the valuable work that the Authority has undertaken over many years to maintain and improve public rights of way within the National Park. The work is highly valued by residents, farmers and landowners and visitors and helps to maintain communication and contact.
- 5.5 The Working Group are therefore currently of the view that we should endeavour to keep the SLA with Devon but find ways of significantly reducing the costs to the Authority. We have therefore started to explore ways of doing this.
- 5.6 Some of the options are described below but we now need to work these up in more detail to determine actual savings, clarify impacts on the network and consider the risks to the Authority for any change. In short, we need to look at ways to encourage others, to assist us with looking after the access network and/or we reduce our resources to this area of work accordingly and the working group has focused on these two principal areas.

6 Increasing Community Involvement

- 6.1 Local communities already support the work of the Authority with access work in a variety of ways. Assistance comes from a variety of sources including local conservation volunteer groups, Voluntary Wardens, individual volunteers and user groups.
- 6.2 In 2013/14 a total of 615 volunteers days were recorded for works on PROW, which equates to around 21% of the total volunteer days recorded for the whole Authority last financial year. Costed at £97.30 a day as per the guidance in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) this already contributes £59,000.00 per year. The work done by volunteers ranges from vegetation clearance (mainly with hand tools), repairs to field furniture, signposting and waymarking, to surfacing and drainage. Some of the Voluntary Wardens have also received training in carrying out path inspections on behalf of the Authority, with around 50% of the network now surveyed in this way.
- 6.3 The working group have undertaken initial work to look at a range of options for increasing community involvement. The key areas emerging from this area of work are:
- Working more closely with Parish Councils and community groups through collaborative working
 - Increased role for Voluntary Wardens
 - Recruitment of specific "path volunteers"

- Better utilisation and co-ordination of user group volunteers
- Working with educational establishments, apprentices, internships

6.4 The type of work that could be undertaken by volunteers includes:

- Path surveys
- Regular inspections and monitoring
- Vegetation clearance with hand tools
- Brush cutter / strimming clearance by trained volunteers
- Small scale “running repairs” to stiles and gates
- Task days / work parties for larger schemes

6.5 Increasing community involvement would provide several benefits including:

- Increases community involvement and “ownership” of the network
- Opportunities for local people to work with the Authority, learn new skills and gain experience
- Reduction in amount of Ranger time for direct works (e.g. amount of strimming Rangers currently do)
- Parish Councils could use their parish precept towards improvements and enhancements which are local priorities.

6.6 The Working Group have looked at the Parish Path Partnership (P3) model and at the moment it is considered that this might require more resource, however there are certainly some principles that can be adopted and altered to fit with the local Dartmoor situation. For example parishes may be willing to assist in a variety of ways, including help with path surveys, vegetation clearance, small scale repairs, to larger improvements or enhancements to their local path network. Options being considered include a brush cutter “loan” system whereby local suitably trained volunteers could support the work of Rangers to help clear a number of agreed routes.

6.7 Greater collaboration with Parish Councils also opens up other possibilities. For example around a quarter of Parish Councils who are part of the P3 scheme in Devon have used their parish precept to contribute towards access projects that they consider important. There may also be other sources of external funding that are eligible to Parish Councils but the Authority is not able to access.

6.8 This approach is reliant on Parish Councils and other community based groups being willing to get more involved in path maintenance and there would be initial staff time required to talk with local communities and then to provide training and support for volunteers.

6.9 The Ranger service has been considering ways in which the level of community involvement could be increased. Further work is needed to better understand the likely reductions in Ranger time afforded to PROW works, bearing in mind that volunteers need proper level of support and co-ordination of effort.

6.10 The table at Appendix 2 outlines a range of potential options. A full cost benefit analysis will be undertaken of these options and this will be included in the final report.

7 Review of approach to maintenance responsibilities

- 7.1 The working group is reviewing the Authority's approach to both statutory and discretionary works to public rights of way. The Authority's statutory duties include signing rights of way where they leave a road, clearance of surface vegetation, surfacing and drainage works.
- 7.2 Potential savings could be achieved if the Authority reduced the amount of discretionary works that are carried out on behalf of the landowner / occupier. These include provision of gates and stiles, cutting back of side growth from hedges, clearing overhanging tree limbs, and clearing fallen trees.
- 7.3 Further work is needed in this area to determine the likely savings that could be made. However, reducing the level of service provided, could lead to an increase in enforcement activity, and there would also be a potential reputational risk to the Authority.
- 7.4 A benchmarking survey has been undertaken with several National Park authorities to look at comparative approaches for the management of public rights of way. Direct comparisons are not straightforward due to the differing responsibilities National Parks have for managing PROW. It is intended that we undertake more detailed work with two National Parks.
- 7.5 Work has started to look at potential future prioritisation of access work and issues picked up from path surveys or reported to us by the public. Rangers have been looking at current path priorities allocated to specific routes and to look, for example, at identifying routes where it might be more cost effective in the long run to divert a path to a more sustainable route.
- 7.6 Further discussion will be needed with DCC regarding prioritisation of works and access standards in a climate of reduced funding to better reflect the reality of delivery. Clearly DCC cannot expect DNPA to provide a higher level of service than is provided outside of the National Park.
- 7.7 We have also considered areas where savings can be made through better procurement of materials. For example there is potential to place joint purchase orders with DCC to suppliers and make savings through bulk purchasing and lower delivery costs. We are considering where we can further reduce costs. Each year the Authority replaces around 100 timber routed fingerposts on the network. We have already moved away from providing timber routed fingerposts with destination and distances on them, due in part to the length of time taken for them to be manufactured as bespoke items.
- 7.8 Current signage simply depicts route status (Public Footpath, Public Bridleway etc). Further savings could be made through only providing a routed symbol on the signpost finger blade (i.e. walking man for footpath, horse rider for bridleway etc). This would use less materials and be less labour intensive to produce although further work is needed to establish what the savings would be.

8 Key considerations

- 8.1 The Authority needs to consider whether it is willing to continue supporting the management of public rights of way with cash funding and officer time and if so to what level. It is important to recognise that funding from Devon County Council is likely to decrease further in the short and medium term and that weather patterns are likely to continue to pose significant challenges.
- 8.2 From the work undertaken so far the view of the Working Group is that we should continue with the SLA but make significant savings in the costs to the Authority and ensure that the SLA has appropriate outputs and targets. This should be monitored and reviewed in 3 years' time.
- 8.3 If Members discuss the options for delivery as described above the Working Group will then undertake a cost benefit analysis and provide a costed programme of activities for discussion and approval at the November meeting.
- 8.4 Over the next two months the Working Group will undertake the cost benefit analysis and also consider the following questions:
- What resources (time and money) will be needed to support volunteers and local groups?
 - What should be the priority areas for change in increasing community involvement – Parish Councils, user groups, recruitment of individual path volunteers etc
 - How should we prioritise works on the ground in future in light of continued reduced budgets?
 - How do we manage risk in the future with less investment and capacity to carry out repairs? Could this lead to more personal injury type of claims?
 - Should the Authority continue to allocate financial resources to PROW maintenance, if we are to reduce our costs what is a realistic target over 3 years?
 - Is there a point at which Devon County Council funding is so insignificant that we should withdraw from the SLA?

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 At this stage, there are no financial implications.

10 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 10.1 Potential impacts will be considered as part of the cost benefit analysis process.

ANDREW WATSON

Attachments: Appendix 1 – PROW Review background paper
Appendix 2 – Potential options

Future Management of Public Rights of Way

Leadership Team have asked that consideration is given to look at alternative delivery models for PROW related work, due to the further reductions in funding from Devon County Council.

The PROW network within the national park is managed by the Authority on behalf of DCC as the local highway authority through a Service Level Agreement (SLA).

The principal benefits of the Authority undertaking PROW works are seen as:

- Enables an integrated approach to access management for PROW and open access land within the National Park (CROW and Dartmoor Commons)
- It is high profile work which is recognised by the public and can provide a positive image for the Authority (this was reflected in the recent Community Survey)
- Helps to deliver statutory purposes through delivery of management plan / business plan objectives / ROWIP
- PROW work provides links between the Authority and local communities – farmers, parish councils, user groups etc
- Provides opportunities to increase community engagement e.g. volunteering opportunities and gaining skills

The main areas of responsibility delegated to the National Park Authority are:

- Maintenance
- Enforcement
- Annual inspection programme
- Reporting on performance indicator
- Diversions, extinguishments and creations of PROW
- Traffic Regulation Orders (can also be done in our own right)
- Implementation of Rights of Way Improvement Plan within the National Park

Areas of responsibility retained by DCC are:

- Definitive Map and statement under continuous review
- Inspection and maintenance of specific larger bridges on the network
- Inspection and maintenance of certain PROW which are metalled
- Minor county roads (UCR's)

Routes are categorised to reflect their nature and use as follows:

- RC1 Routes in and around towns and villages linking destinations (functional routes)

- RC2 Routes Longer distance providing recreational facility (dog walking, rambling etc), characterised that enable circular routes to be made giving access from settlements, towns and villages
- RC3 Routes nature of terrain or remoteness from population attracts users looking for a more natural, wild or challenging experience – (typically moorland routes across Dartmoor) or dead end routes that do not provide access to other areas

The total length of the PROW network within the national park is 730km, consisting of:

Status	Number	Length(km)	% of network
Footpath	465	353	48
Bridleway	270	358	49
Byway	28	19	3

Maintenance “grant” from Devon County Council

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
£42,000	£42,000	£63,000	£63,000	£48,000	£48,000	£43,000

Following the completion of the Ranger Service and Access Review in 2009, funding for 2010 onwards was increased in recognition of the resource that that the Authority invested into public rights of way work (approximated at £130k per annum). In 2012 this was reduced by 25% following the spending review and this reduction was maintained for 2013.

DCC confirmed that the maintenance grant for 2014/15 was to be reduced by a further 10% to £43,200.00. We don't yet know what further reductions there could be for 2015 and beyond.

Current approach to maintenance and improvement works

Current task	Comment
Inspections (annual path checks)	Frequency of path inspections reduced by agreement with DCC, following last reduction in funding to the following schedule: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RC1 paths 100% surveyed each year • RC2 paths at least 50% surveyed each year • RC3 paths at least 33% surveyed each year
Random survey	Required as a performance indicator. Minimum 5% random sample of network surveyed each year. We currently do an 8 – 10% sample which provides a more robust statistic. The NP Access Officers group has recommended this should be done every two years in future – to be considered by JIG.
*Enforcement	Statutory duty to assert and protect PROW. Specialist skill/knowledge required (and a thick skin sometimes!).

Information and advice	Dealing with general enquiries, service requests and complaints from the public, landowners and farmers, user groups, local communities, access forum.
*Signing and waymarking	DNPA responsibility (waymarking of routes could be done by volunteers)
*Surface vegetation	DNPA responsibility to keep PROW clear
Surfacing improvements	Duty to keep in reasonable condition for intended use (e.g. on foot/horse for a bridleway)
Drainage works	Powers to undertake works to keep PROW passable for users
*Bridges	Duty to keep in good repair and safe
Repair and replacement of field furniture (gates and stiles)	s146 HA 80 duty is on landowners / occupiers to keep gates and stiles in good repair (they can claim 25% of costs from HA). We provide a 100% service to supply materials and do all the work at our cost.
Sidegrowth (hedges, trees, overhanging vegetation etc)	S154 duty is on landowners to keep clear. We currently do some of this work free of charge.
Public Path Orders	Processing applications from landowners for diversions and extinguishments. NPA also has powers to instigate diversions etc that would improve the network / resolve anomalies etc.
Traffic Regulation Orders	Processing applications from statutory undertakers, other bodies, landowners for temporary closures to enable works to take place / public safety
S147 HA applications	Process and determination of applications for new gates and stiles on PROW. Authorisations issued where appropriate.

*These are statutory duties

PROW Expenditure

	Flailing	Contractor Schemes	*Materials	Other
2012/13	£11,000 (23%)	£22,000 (46%)	£13,000 (27%)	£2,000 (4%)
2013/14	£12,000 (25%)	£23,000 (48%)	£11,000 (23%)	£2,000 (4%)

*Materials includes fingerposts, signage, waymarks, gates & timber.

Review of Public Rights of Way Function with DNPA

The purpose of the review is to complete a review of the function and delivery of the Authority's responsibilities for the management of public rights of way within the National Park.

The Working Group is likely to review the the current approach to management of PROW and consider the following:

- The resources the Authority allocates to this area of work and how this compares with the funding we receive from Devon County Council
- The benefits to the Authority for continuing to have an Service Level Agreement with Devon County Council to deliver this work
- The likely implications for the Authority if we do not continue with an SLA
- Explore alternative models for delivering this work and consider the cost/benefits of such approaches for the Authority, the National Park, local communities and users.

The Working group will produce a report to the Authority's Audit and Governance Committee on the future management of public rights of way within the National Park.

Ranger Service ideas to increase community involvement - Draft

Proposal	What do we think we can achieve with proposal and how will we measure this	What is realistic target over 3 years?	Ease of implementation and issues to consider	Lead Officer
VOLUNTARY WARDENS				
VW PROW surveys and drainage works	75% in Yr2 via appraisal and all recorded on CAMS 50% drainage work	100%	Easy to implement Nothing to buy	RS
PATH VOLUNTEERS				
Volunteers / students strimming vegetation	Job done cheaper but will need managing, all recorded on CAMS	50% of paths on strimming schedule. More if take up is good	Training and organising equipment deployment Strimmers, safety gear & training	RS
Increase use of work parties	Cheaper cost of delivery	Cannot predict	Dependant on groups being available Annual tool provision	RS
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS				
Community work days on prow	Via appraisal 2014/15	Minimum of one per Ranger	Easy to implement as long as community is willing. If take up is good this could increase. No unless they use strimmers. Cost of Ranger weekend working	RS
Parish Council to support community help	It will vary in different Parishes & recorded on CAMS	10% across DNP area	Easy to implement as long as community is willing. Linked to 3 above. No unless they use strimmers	RS
Local community groups	Cheaper cost of delivery	Cannot predict	Dependant on groups being available Annual DNPA grant	RS
Parish Councils helping out	Extra help, maybe taking lead with surveys?	10 Parish Councils	Dependant on take up. Links to 3 & 4 above Nothing to buy	RS
Access forum help	Extra help, maybe taking lead with surveys	6 people helping	Easy to implement Nothing to buy	RS
Approach other user groups to help	Cheaper cost of delivery, CAMS record	5 groups	Easy to implement with good planning however we could be overwhelmed with Rambler etc support. Clear & concise management required	RS

Proposal	What do we think we can achieve with proposal and how will we measure this	What is realistic target over 3 years?	Ease of implementation and issues to consider	Lead Officer
PLACEMENTS / APPRENTICESHIPS				
Use 2 nd year Bicton students for maintenance	Adoption of some paths on eastern side. Record in CAMS	Up to 10 paths	Easy to implement (if taken up) but is also reliant on Bicton bus drivers. We would need to prearrange tools. Yes a lockable trailer to leave kit safely at sites.	SL
Career advancement scheme	Longer term aim, cheaper delivery, all work on CAMS	Starting scheme 4 people	Time needed to get it worked up, requires commitment from both sides. Vehicle, uniform & all other kit/tools	SL
Ranger apprentice(s)	Positive training for future Rangers. On-going appraisal	2 people in Yr3	Sponsorship or grant opportunity to cover predominant costs. Linked to 8 above Vehicle, uniform & all other kit/tools	SL
Degree level placement(s)	Positive training for future Rangers.	2 people in Yr3	Sponsorship or grant opportunity to cover predominant costs. Linked to 8/12 above Vehicle, uniform & all other kit/tools	SL
OTHER FUNDING SOURCES				
Path sponsorship / donations / £ for the Park	Financial support to PROW budget	10 improvement projects per year	Dependent on level of donations received. Need to await 'sponsorship' policy to be in place. Potential for public to 'adopt' kissing gates/bridges etc (instead of memorial benches/trees etc)	AW

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 August 2014

**PLANNING DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT - QUARTER 1
(APRIL-JUNE 2014)**

Report of the Director of Planning

Recommendation: **That the content of the report be noted.**

1 Purpose of report

- To advise Members of progress against planned actions and achievement of performance targets in the Business Plan and National Park Management Plan;
- to provide opportunity for Members to question and challenge;
- to review planned actions and targets and determine whether any amendments are required based on progress to date; and
- to consider other unplanned opportunities which may be worthy of action

2 Overview of Priorities and key actions for Quarter 1

PROSPER

- To support a diverse, resilient economy that contributes to the special qualities of the National Park
- Supporting and empowering local communities to meet identified needs

SUSTAIN

- Spectacular landscapes, natural networks – conserving and enhancing Dartmoor's diverse landscapes, natural ecosystems and improving the connections between them, both within and across National Park boundaries.

3 Development Management Performance

Performance relating to the determination of planning applications over quarter 1.

3.1 Planning applications

Number of planning applications received	154 (Q4 = 185)
Number of prior notifications received	11 (Q4 = 5)

Applications determined against the Government performance targets

Major applications in 13 weeks (target 60%)	0 (0%) (Q4 = 0%)
Minor applications in 8 weeks (target 65%)	52 (86.7%) (Q4 = 76.4%)

Other applications in 8 weeks (target 80%) **78** (89.7%) (Q4 = 82.2%)

169 decisions (Q4=176) were issued within the quarter.

- 3.2 Numbers of applications received are down on last quarter. Targets exceeded in quarter for determination of minor and other applications by significant margin. The single major application was not determined within the required 13 week period. Application required site inspection and reference back to DM Committee to resolve issues (NE car park at Trendlebere Down).
- 3.3 It is pleasing to note that householder (other) applications have now been determined above government targets in the last 6 quarters. Similarly minor applications have also been determined above target for the last 3 quarters. The team is starting to build a consistent picture of performance. The arrival of a new planning officer in early April and the continued success of the secondment of a planning technician to deal with householders is proving effective.
- 3.4 Regarding major applications these are all now subject to a Planning Performance Agreement request whereby we agree with the applicants a timetable. This then allows us to report these figures separately to Government. The recent change in the performance bar which has now been raised to 40%, below which poorly performing authorities can have their ability to determine applications removed, is important to note. The exception to this is if the timetable has been agreed with the applicant. In our case we have determined 62% of major applications in the last two year period in line with either the government target or in agreement with the applicant.

4 Appeals performance

Number of appeals received	25 (Q4 = 16)
Number of appeals determined	6 (Q4 = 5)
No of appeals dismissed (target 66%)	1 (20%) (Q4= 4)(50%)

- 4.1 Disappointing to note number of appeals upheld against DNPA decision – need to examine and monitor any issues that may arise from these decisions. No obvious trend at present.
- 4.2 Above figure is for all appeals including enforcement appeals. Not all appeals are counted against official government figures.

5 Preliminary Enquiries

Preliminary enquiries received	297 (Q4 = 241)
Preliminary enquiries dealt with	295 (Q4 = 219)
Average time taken	22 days (Q4 = 21 days)

- 5.1 Significant increase in enquiries received during quarter. Corresponding increase in number of enquiries dealt with however average time taken only slightly increased and well within 28 day target for response.

- 5.2 Members are referred to the report elsewhere on this agenda in relation to charges for pre application advice.

6 Enforcement

Number of new cases	72 (Q4 = 65)
Outstanding cases	155 (Q4 = 162)
Number of cases resolved	82 (Q4 = 57)
Resolved without formal action	67 (81.7%) (Q4 = 49 (80.3%))

- 6.1 The number of new cases is up slightly on the last quarter. Cases resolved up significantly and continuation of high percentage of cases resolved without need for formal action. Similarly the backlog of outstanding cases is keeping pace with the incoming work.
- 6.2 Members are also referred to the updated list of Enforcement cases where action has been authorised by Members and for those cases over 5 years old. This normally forms part of a separate report but is amalgamated here for ease of reference. In total the number of cases over 5 years old has stayed the same whilst the number of cases where action has been authorised has risen by 15 new cases. A significant number of cases now on the list have been officially closed. Members will note the number of cases delegated to officers which is having a positive impact on performance by reducing delays.

7 Monitoring of occupancy conditions

- 7.1 The ongoing Monitoring exercise into occupancy conditions continues and has so far been very successful. In June 2014, the third batch of letters was sent to those applicants granted permission for agricultural workers dwelling between ten and twenty years ago. Of the 35 letters sent, 23 responses have so far been received of which only 1 appears to confirm a breach of the condition which will be followed up.
- 7.2 Members will recall that of the 28 letters sent to agricultural workers dwellings in the first batch last year, we received 27 responses which resulted in two enforcement investigations, only one of which is still ongoing and for which we now have a planning application seeking to regularise the situation.
- 7.3 In February this year, 101 letters were sent to properties with holiday occupancy conditions attached to which we have received a 90% response rate. The next batch of letters is likely to be sent to those properties granted permission for ancillary accommodation within the last ten years. It is also proposed to write to those applicants who were granted permission for dwellings that are restricted by legal agreement as affordable dwellings.
- 7.4 The Authority continues to receive positive feedback in the responses, applauding it for its efforts in ensuring compliance.

8 Forward Planning & Community

8.1 Local Development Scheme

Updated scheme adopted by Authority at their meeting on 2 May 2014 setting out a timetable for delivery of new planning policy documents.

8.2 Minerals and Waste Plan

Initial scoping carried out and discussions with Devon County Council and other potential external bodies who could assist us in this area. No other work at this stage given more urgent priorities listed below. Some agreed slippage in timetable.

DM team advised on policy implications for major quarry application received regarding Yennadon.

8.3 Masterplans

Chagford Masterplan - adopted by the Authority at their meeting on 4 April. Will now be used as a template for two planning applications expected later this year. Ongoing discussions with both developers and Parish Council undertaken as well as with Community Land Trust; working group between interested parties facilitated by Forward Planning who will also lead on Section 106 and affordable housing as applications come forward.

Ashburton Masterplan agreed extension of contract with consultants, further discussions undertaken with primary stakeholders, land and business owners and with Town Council. Revised programme to deliver masterplan by end of this calendar year now agreed. Forward Planning taking direct lead on next Draft and leading on communication and engagement.

8.4 Affordable Housing

No new affordable housing delivery in this quarter but see below for other proactive work in this area.

Positive publicity in local press regarding new scheme at Holne now completed and first local residents moved in.

New supplementary planning document to support affordable housing adopted by Authority at their meeting on 4 April. Copies sent to all primary users and Parish Councils. Further discussions held with Housing partners and others on delivering sites at South Tawton, North Brentor, Chagford, Horrabridge, South Brent, Buckfastleigh, Moretonhampstead and Ashburton. Major schemes now submitted which include at least 11 affordable units at Yelverton, and 14 affordable units at South Brent.

Responded robustly to government consultation on reduction of thresholds for affordable housing following report to Authority on 2 May. Support of local MPs also support for our stance.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment call for sites commenced in this quarter and is due to report later this year. A significant number of potential new sites have been put forward for future consideration.

Officers are currently engaged in Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment work for both the Exeter and Plymouth Housing Market Areas (HMAs), which include discussions under the Duty to Cooperate.

8.5 Rural Community Broadband Fund update

At the end of December last year, BDUK and DEFRA announced that Dartmoor's RCBF bid could no longer be progressed due to issues around state aid. However, as our project was considered to be a good fit and offered value for money, alternative funding sources were made available and a revised bid progressed through the CDS programme. Work continues on the scheme and following support from Ed Vaizey, Minister for DCMS the revised scheme was recently approved. It is expected that the survey work will be undertaken towards the end of 2015 and a service delivered in 2016.

8.6 Community-led Planning

Four Neighbourhood Planning groups are currently active on Dartmoor, Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Buckland Monachorum and Okehampton Hamlets and North Bovey is also currently undertaking a parish plan. The groups are at different stages with only 2 plan areas designated so far.

8.7 Dartmoor Communities Fund 2014/15

The Dartmoor Communities Fund is now set up and the first round will open in September to community led capital projects in the South Hams and West Devon areas of the National Park. The first grant awards are expected to be made at the beginning of October. Discussions are ongoing with Teignbridge District Council to secure funding for the Teignbridge area also. Ineligible applicants and those requiring match funding are signposted to other sources of funding support.

9 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 9.1 Both the DM and Forward Planning team continue to ensure that equality and sustainability are considered in applications and policy work. Similarly the Communities Officer takes such matters into account. The DMD and all statutory documents are subject to formal appraisal.

10 Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no significant issues to raise regarding the planning directorate budget apart from the ongoing need to seek advice from outside consultants through various planning appraisals e.g. on agricultural and housing viability appraisals. This budget line has already been heavily committed given consultant fee increases. Housing viability appraisals will in future be covered in Planning

Performance Agreements to recoup any such costs from the developer. A recent use of a consultant from another National Park to assist us with a minerals application was more cost effective than using a minerals planner consultant. We will continue to look for similar opportunities to reduce costs.

STEPHEN BELLI

Attachments: **Appendix 1 – Planning Directorate Performance Indicators**
 Appendix 2 – Enforcement cases where action authorised
 Appendix 3 – Enforcement cases over 5 years old

20140815 SB Planning Directorate Performance Report Q1

PLANNING DIRECTORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2014-15

		Previous Years		Current Year			
		2012/13	2013/14	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Applications:							
Applications Received ¹	629	702	165 <i>*(178)</i>	<i>*(174)</i>	<i>*(160)</i>	<i>*(190)</i>	
Applications Determined	628	700	169 <i>*(167)</i>	<i>*(189)</i>	<i>*(168)</i>	<i>*(176)</i>	
Applications Outstanding	126	121	114 <i>*(135)</i>	<i>*(116)</i>	<i>*(112)</i>	<i>*(121)</i>	
Average Time Taken (days)	74	64	60 <i>*(67)</i>	<i>*(59)</i>	<i>*(61)</i>	<i>*(68)</i>	
Enforcement:							
Alleged Breaches	251	283	72 <i>*(79)</i>	<i>*(60)</i>	<i>*(70)</i>	<i>*(66)</i>	
Identified Breaches	153	209	31 <i>*(37)</i>	<i>*(55)</i>	<i>*(68)</i>	<i>*(49)</i>	
Cases Resolved	245	268	82 <i>*(77)</i>	<i>*(59)</i>	<i>*(75)</i>	<i>*(57)</i>	
Cases Outstanding	156	164	154 <i>*(159)</i>	<i>*(156)</i>	<i>*(150)</i>	<i>*(164)</i>	
Pre Applications:							
Received	817	939	297 <i>*(187)</i>	<i>*(271)</i>	<i>*(240)</i>	<i>*(241)</i>	
Out	813	910	295 <i>*(195)</i>	<i>*(252)</i>	<i>*(244)</i>	<i>*(219)</i>	
Outstanding	46	93	95 <i>*(40)</i>	<i>*(82)</i>	<i>*(80)</i>	<i>*(93)</i>	
Average Time Taken (days)	17.25	21	22 <i>*(17)</i>	<i>*(24)</i>	<i>*(23)</i>	<i>*(21)</i>	

* - figures from previous year 2013/14

Enforcement cases still outstanding in which legal action has been authorised (Committee and delegated)

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
<p>ENF/00038/07 Walkham Mill, Walkhampton Unauthorised alterations to a listed building</p>	07/02/07	02/03/07	<p>Legal action authorised in March 2007.</p> <p>Following discussions with the Environment Agency and neighbouring landowner in March 2013, to ensure that flooding does not cause more damage to the properties and wider vicinity, the EA has recommended that the launder should not be re-built.</p> <p>Planning and listed building consent applications are required to ensure the preservation of the remaining significance of the listed building, the machinery, water wheel and remains of the launder and also to regularise the ground floor annex accommodation.</p> <p>A meeting was held on 22 October 2013 with the owner's agent and a scheme agreed to progress this long outstanding matter to a satisfactory conclusion. Despite a number of reminders, the Authority still awaits the necessary planning and listed building consent applications and will be writing again asking for these to be submitted as a matter of urgency in order to avoid the risk of legal action being taken.</p>
<p>ENF/0010/10 etc Venn Bridge Works, Bridford.</p> <p>0159/10 Disposal of waste</p> <p>0160/10 Unauthorised compound.</p> <p>0162/10 Unauthorised bunds.</p>	26/01/10	01/10/10	<p>Legal action authorised to secure the cessation of the residential use of land and building, the removal of the residential accommodation and all domestic paraphernalia from the land including a portable cabin, to secure the cessation of the use of the land for keeping horses and the removal of an enclosed compound and waste deposited on the land.</p> <p>EN served 15/12/10</p> <p>Appeal received; Dismissed and Notice Upheld June 2011</p> <p>Deadline for compliance with EN's extended to 28 Feb 2012 for the main parcel of land.</p> <p>Enforcement Notice covers two parcels of land in separate ownership. Western Power Distribution have completed necessary remedial works on its land but larger parcel acquired new owner in 2012 and some remedial works remain outstanding.</p> <p>It has been difficult arranging a meeting with the new owner but a visit in July 2014 confirmed that the residential, equine, waste transfer and works depot use of the site have ceased but some bunds, a hardstanding and portable cabin are required to be removed and the land restored to its former condition. The Authority will now seek final resolution of these outstanding matters.</p>

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
<p>ENF/0012/08 Kestor, Slade Cross, Bovey Tracey Unauthorised construction of track and parking of several vehicles on agricultural land</p>	16/01/08	03/12/10	<p>Legal action authorised to secure the removal of the unauthorised track; the cessation of the use of the land for the parking and/or storage of motor vehicles; and secure the restoration of the land. EN served 11/04/11; compliance due 01/09/11.</p> <p>Temporary permission (0020/11) granted Feb 2011 for a track through the field to enable the movement of building materials and machinery to build approved householder extension (ref: 0651/02).</p> <p>Permission expires Feb 2014 when reinstatement of land is required.</p> <p>Previous improvement with appearance of land but visit in May 2013 noted some deterioration. Case was heard at Newton Abbot Magistrates Court on 10 July 2013 and the landowner subsequently prosecuted and ordered to pay £2000 in fines plus costs (£150 per month). Visits to the site through the last half of 2013 noted little improvement in the appearance of the site, despite several meetings and detailed correspondence with landowners.</p> <p>As such; Case was heard at Newton Abbot Magistrates Court on 12 March 2014 and both landowners were prosecuted and ordered to pay £1250 (each) in fines plus costs.</p> <p>Recent visits suggest further legal action may be required</p>
<p>ENF/0295/09 Mardlewood House, Higher Combe, Buckfastleigh Unauthorised alterations to a listed dwelling, including the replacement of windows and the removal of a staircase and partition wall</p>	14/12/09	04/02/11	<p>Legal action authorised to secure the removal of the unauthorised windows and the replacement of the staircase and partition wall.</p> <p>LBEN served Sept 2011.</p> <p>Appeal found Notice to be a Nullity.</p> <p>Fresh EN issued 12 Sep 2012 with compliance by 19 Apr 2013.</p> <p>Appeal received Nov 2012.</p> <p>Awaiting appeal site inspection and decision.</p>
<p>ENF/0236/10 Hall Farm, Harford, Ivybridge Unauthorised alterations and works to the Building</p>	05/11/10	03/02/12	<p>Legal action authorised to secure the removal of the unauthorised windows and inner vestibule type doors, and to secure proper re-instatement of the original front door.</p> <p>LBEN served Feb 2012. Inspector found notice to be a Nullity.</p> <p>LBEN served Sept 2012. Three deadlines for compliance, final one being 19 Oct 2015. Appeal received Nov 2012.</p> <p>Appeal decision received 4th Nov 2013. Outcome was to quash the Listed Building Enforcement Notice <u>but</u> only on the basis that the owner of the property modifies all the windows to improve their appearance. The permission granted has conditions attached which require these works to be carried out</p> <p>S106 agreement between owner and NPA - works to be completed by 22 December 2014</p>

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/0062/12 Brookfield Terrace, Lustleigh Unauthorised portacabin	15/03/12	13/04/12	Legal action authorised to secure the removal of the portable cabin in April 2012. DM Committee resolved to grant planning permission (ref: 0056/13) for a new purpose built replacement building on the site at its meeting in July 2013. Site was visited on 3 June 2014 whereupon it was noted that the portacabin had been removed from the land. Enforcement Notice complied with as of 3 June 2014 – Case Closed
ENF/0121/12 Foxgrove Farm/Witches Cottage, Christow Unauthorised sub division of dwelling house	09/05/12	05/10/12	Legal action authorised to secure the cessation of the use of the building as two separate dwellings and revert its use to that of a single dwellinghouse. EN issued Oct 2012. Appeal received Nov 2012. Appeal decision received 16 October 2013; Appeal dismissed and enforcement notice upheld. Case closed on 15 January 2014 as it is considered that the existence of the Enforcement Notice protects the Authority's position by preventing the building from being used as two separate dwellings or from any unauthorised future use(s) becoming lawful.
ENF/0162/12 Little Holme & 5 Pound Cottages, Lustleigh Unauthorised satellite dish	11/07/12	07/06/13	LBC application (ref. 0091/13) for erection of satellite dish refused 17 April 2013. Listed Building Enforcement Notice served 17 July 2013. Compliance required by 1 December 2013. Appeal lodged 3 October 2013 – Awaiting appeal site inspection and decision.
ENF/0097/12 Higher Michelcombe Farm, Holne Subdivision of dwelling into two separate dwellings	18/04/12	Delegated	Enforcement Notice served 28 February 2013. Appeal dismissed and enforcement notice upheld 5 August 2013. Compliance required by 6 February 2014. Site inspected on 20 February whereupon it was noted that the requirements of the Enforcement Notice had been met – Case Closed.
ENF/0279/11 Elliots Farm, Buckland-in-the-Moor Unauthorised design and domestic use of agricultural building	22/09/11	01/03/13	Enforcement Notice served 17 April 2013. Appeal allowed and enforcement notice quashed, subject to agricultural use only and stone cladding to be completed. Compliance required by 11 October 2014.
ENF/0108/12 Jordan Manor, Widecombe-in-the-Moor Unauthorised fence	24/04/12	01/03/13	Enforcement Notice served 4 September 2013. Site visited on 13 November 2013. It was noted that the unauthorised brushwood fence and supporting timbers had been removed from the land. As such; the Enforcement Notice is considered to have been complied with – Case Closed.

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/0177/12 Land near Buda Farm, Meldon Common, Chagford Unauthorised stable and shed	23/07/12	01/03/13	Enforcement Notice served 17 April 2013. Appeal dismissed and enforcement notice upheld 9 October 2013. Site visited on 17 April; it was noted that the buildings had been removed and that the land had been returned to its original profile,. Notice is considered to have been complied with – Case Closed.
ENF/0181/12 Land at Lower Bowdley, Ashburton Unauthorised engineering works including new field access and track	25/07/12	01/03/13	Enforcement Notice served 2 May 2013. Appeal part dismissed, part allowed 21 August 2013. Compliance (removal of one of the tracks and grass seeding of second) required by 21 November 2013. Site visited on 30 October 2013. Officers noted that the requirements of the appeal decision had been met – Case Closed.
ENF/0179/12 Withill, Sampford Spiney Use of barns as independent dwellings	24/07/12	Delegated	Enforcement Notice served 7 March 2013. Appeal withdrawn 2 September 2013 - Compliance required by 2 March 2014. Application (0042/14) for the Conversion of barn to ancillary accommodation/holiday use (retrospective application) was received on 23 January 2014 and approved by members at DM Committee on 4 April 2014. This permission allows for a limited occupation of the building but Enforcement Notice remains in place to protect the building from ever being used as an independent dwelling. Case Closed on 16 April 2014.
ENF/0293/09 The Old Barn, Dunsford Holiday let being used as permanent dwelling	08/12/09	Delegated	Breach of Condition Notice served 17 April 2013. Compliance required by 17 Oct 2013. A visit on 17 October suggested that full time residential use by the owner was still on-going. However, subsequent visits and correspondence with the owner suggested that he is now living elsewhere. Case Closed on 20 February 2014 but BOC Notice remains in place to prevent any full time residential use taking place in the future.
ENF/0202/11 Poole Farm, Bridford Unauthorised temp agricultural workers dwelling	05/07/11	Delegated	Breach of Condition Notice served 17 April 2013. Compliance required by 17 April 2014. Outline permission for permanent agricultural worker's dwelling granted 7 May 2013. However, application for full planning permission (0293/14) for permanent dwelling is currently under consideration. Prosecution proceedings pending for non-compliance with BOC.

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/0271/08 Proper Job, Chagford Siting of unauthorised containers and portable buildings	06/10/08	03/05/13	Permission for construction of a pole barn to enclose cabins granted 14 May 2013 (0010/13). Enforcement Notice served 15 May 2013. Phased compliance due by 19 December 2014 with work in progress.
ENF/0196/09 1 Barnsfield Lane, Buckfastleigh Large shed constructed at bottom of rear garden	15/07/09	07/06/13	13 July 2012 permission granted for erection of replacement dwelling and change of use of part of orchard area to garden (0182/12). Enforcement Notice served 13 June 2013. Compliance due 20 January 2015.
ENF/0209/10 Holly Cottage, Ley Farm, Horndon Unauthorised use of stable, sand school and land, construction of round pen, tracks and field shelter and the filling in of drainage ditches	22/10/10	04/10/13	Extended period of evidence gathering and monitoring during 2011-12. An Enforcement Notice was issued in October 2013 requiring the cessation of the unauthorised equestrian use of the land and removal of the 'round pen' and other equestrian paraphernalia but, following further negotiation, this was superseded by a legal agreement in March 2014 that gave the Authority control over the use of the land in perpetuity whilst also achieving an improvement to the land. A visit in July 2014 appeared to confirm that the use of the land for equestrian purposes has ceased and that the round pen has been removed and the land restored.
ENF/0305/11 The Lodge, 1000ft Peek Hill, Walkhampton Unauthorised dwellinghouse and engineering works	25/10/11	03/05/13	Enforcement Notices served 15 May 2013. Phased compliance originally due by 19 August 2014. Appeal Hearing February 2014 and May 2014 – Appeal upheld. Case Closed 22 July 2014.
ENF/0023/13 Burnicombe Farm, Bridford Residential use of mobile home, touring caravan and provision of septic tank	31/01/13	07/06/13	Enforcement Notice served 4 September 2013. Compliance originally due 7 December 2013. Appeal received October 2013. Appeal dismissed 27 March 2014 and Notices complied with shortly afterwards. Case Closed – 17 June 2014

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/0167/12 Stone Park, Walkhampton Unauthorised pole barns	17/07/12	Delegated	Enforcement Notice served 4 December 2013 Compliance due 31 March 2014 Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision
ENF/0050/13 Southway Farm, Widecombe-in-the-Moor Unauthorised rooflight in curtilage listed building	12/01/13	Delegated	Listed Building Enforcement Notice served 12 December 2013 Compliance 12 June 2014 Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision
ENF/0187/11 The Old Barn, Dunsford Non-compliance with landscaping condition	10/05/11	Delegated	BOC Notice served 16 December 2013 Compliance 17 February 2014. Site was inspected on several occasions and non-compliance was noted. However, works undertaken after compliance date and Notice was complied with on 17 April 2014. Case Closed
ENF/0182/13 Hyner Vale, Christow Unauthorised erection of prefabricated tunnel shaped building	9/11/13	Delegated	Enforcement Notice requiring removal of building served 15 January 2014. Compliance 23 March 2014. Appeal received against Notice. Appeal upheld on 13 June 2014 and Notice quashed due to incorrect service. However, the Inspector's decision did not grant any form of permission for the building and therefore did not restrict the ability of the Authority to take further enforcement action. Notice to be re-served
ENF/0166/13 Land at Cheston, Wrangaton Erection of two timbers buildings	22/7/13	Delegated	Enforcement Notice requiring removal of buildings issued 15 January 2014. Compliance 19 April 2014. Site visited whereupon it was noted that the requirements of the Notice have been met. Case Closed – 4 June 2014
ENF/0087/13 Waye Plantation, Ashburton Unauthorised shipping container and timber buildings	10/4/13	Delegated	Enforcement Notices issued 15 January 2014 Compliance due by 24 March 2014. Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/216/13 Sungleam, Haytor Non-compliance with holiday occupancy condition	29/10/13	Delegated	BOC Notice issued 15 January 2014 Compliance due by 17 April 2014. Notice complied with – Case Closed 17 April 2014
ENF/0176/12 Greenbank, Chagford Unauthorised change of use to a dwelling	11/7/12	6/12/13	Enforcement Notice issued 15 January 2014 Compliance due by 24 February 2015 Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision.
ENF/0199/13 Great Rock Farm, Hennock Unauthorised residential use of mobile homes	4/10/13	07/03/14	Enforcement Notices issued 31 March 2014 Compliance due by 9 November 2014 Appeals received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision
ENF/0010/13 Violet House, Haytor Non-compliance with condition requiring demolition of former dwelling	7/1/13	Delegated	BOC Notice issued 10 April 2014 Staggered compliance period ends on 10 October 2014 Application subsequently made to vary original planning condition – Refused on 21 January 2014. Awaiting compliance and/or planning appeal decision.
ENF/0156/13 Challamoore Farm, Buckland in the Moor Unauthorised timber building	31/7/13	Delegated	Enforcement Notice issued 10 April 2014 requiring the removal of building. Compliance due by 19 July 2014. Site visited on 2 July whereupon it was noted that the building has been removed from the land. Case Closed.
ENF/0194/13 Peasmore Field, Hennock Unauthorised caravan and engineering operations	24/9/13	Delegated	Enforcement Notices issued 10 April 2014. Compliance 20 July 2014. Negotiating extension of time for compliance
ENF/0167/13 The Seed, 40 Fore Street, Buckfastleigh Change of use of shop to a mixed use incorporating a cafe	14/8/13	7/3/14	Enforcement Notice requiring the use of the premises for the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises to cease and that all tables, chairs and other furniture which is used to facilitate a café use are removed from the premises served on 9 May 2014. Compliance due by 11 July 2014. Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision.

Details	Case Opened	Legal Action Authorised	Notes
ENF/0070/12 The Barn, Whiteheads Cross, Dean Prior Unauthorised hardstanding and timber building	21/2/12	Delegated	Enforcement Notice requiring the removal of building and hardstanding issued 12 May 2014 Compliance due by 16 August 2014. Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision.
ENF/0209/13 Middle Venton Farm, Drewsteignton Unauthorised change of use of land to domestic curtilage	16/10/13	02/05/2014	Enforcement Notice issued 30 June 2014 Compliance due by 29 August 2014. Appeal received – Currently awaiting appeal site visit and decision.

Enforcement cases open for more than 5 years

Details	Case opened	Legal action authorised	EN served	Appeal decision	Prosecution	Notes
<p>ENF/00038/07 Walkham Mill, Walkhampton</p> <p>Unauthorised alterations to a listed building</p>	07/02/07	02/03/07				<p>Legal action authorised in March 2007. Following discussions with the Environment Agency and neighbouring landowner in March 2013, to ensure that flooding does not cause more damage to the properties and wider vicinity, the requirement to re-build the launder has been waived. Planning and listed building consent applications are required to ensure the preservation of the remaining significance of the listed building, the machinery, water wheel and remains of the launder and also to regularise the ground floor annex accommodation. A meeting was held on 22 October 2013 with the owner's agent and a scheme agreed to progress this long outstanding matter to a satisfactory conclusion. Despite a number of reminders, the Authority still awaits the necessary planning and listed building consent applications and will be writing again asking for these to be submitted as a matter of urgency in order to avoid the risk of legal action being taken.</p>
<p>ENF/0383/07 1000ft, Peek Hill, Dousland</p> <p>Unauthorised chalet and mobile home</p>	26/11/07					<p>6 November 2013 a site visit confirmed the chalet and mobile home have been removed. This case was close 6/11/13</p>
<p>ENF/0012/08 Kestor, Slade Cross, Bovey Tracey</p> <p>Untidy Site</p>	16/01/08	03/12/10	11/04/11			<p>Legal action authorised to secure the removal of the unauthorised track; the cessation of the use of the land for the parking and/or storage of motor vehicles; and secure the restoration of the land. EN served 11/04/11; compliance due 01/09/11. Temporary permission (0020/11) granted Feb 2011 for a track through the field to enable the movement of building materials and machinery to build approved householder extension (ref: 0651/02). Permission expires Feb 2014 when reinstatement of land is required.</p>

					<p>Previous improvement with appearance of land but visit in May 2013 noted some deterioration. Case was heard at Newton Abbot Magistrates Court on 10 July 2013 and the landowner subsequently prosecuted and ordered to pay £2000 in fines plus costs (£150 per month). Visits to the site through the last half of 2013 noted little improvement in the appearance of the site, despite several meetings and detailed correspondence with landowners. As such; Case was heard at Newton Abbot Magistrates Court on 12 March 2014 and both landowners were prosecuted and ordered to pay £1250 (each) in fines plus costs.</p> <p>Recent visit suggests further legal action may be required</p>
<p>ENF/0271/08 Proper Job, Chagford</p> <p>Siting of unauthorised containers and portable buildings</p>	06/10/08	03/05/13	15/05/13		<p>Permission for construction of a pole barn to enclose some of the unauthorised cabins was granted 14 May 2013 (0010/13).</p> <p>The Enforcement Notice served 15 May 2013 provides a generous phased compliance period, due by 19 December 2014, in order to allow the approved development to be completed whilst protecting the Authority's position in this matter.</p>
<p>ENF/0196/09 1 Barnsfield Lane, Buckfastleigh</p> <p>Unauthorised wooden building</p>	15/07/09	07/06/13	13/06/13		<p>An unauthorised wooden chalet building was constructed in June/July 2009 by the owner of a building plot in Barnsfield Lane to reside while he was constructing a new bungalow. The land owner lives in London and is developing the site part time. He subsequently got PP to construct a second dwelling on the site.</p> <p>Because of the time taken in developing the land and to protect the position of the Authority an Enforcement Notice was issued in June 2013 to remove the building with a compliance period of 18 months from 20 July 2013.</p>

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

15 August 2014

CHARGING FOR PRE APPLICATION PLANNING ADVICEReport of the Director of Planning

Recommendation: That Members confirm their views on the introduction of charges and the draft charging schedule for public consultation

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 Members will recall that a report was taken to the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee on 21 February 2014 (NPA/AG/14/035). At that meeting it was resolved that:
- A detailed report be brought to the August 2014 meeting setting out how charges for pre application advice could be calculated and applied
 - Officers of constituent authorities to be asked for advice on the introduction of charges and the risks associated.
- 1.2 This reports sets out the business case pertaining to potential pre-application charges and a draft charging schedule together with a list of exemptions. For information the current charging schedule of West Devon Borough Council/ South Hams District Council (same charges apply to both Councils), and Mid Devon District Council is appended to this report.
- 1.3 Teignbridge District Council does not charge for pre application advice except in the case of major development pre application forum meetings. They have no current plans to introduce charges.

2 Breakdown of pre applications received in 2013/14

- 2.1 In the last financial year the following pre application enquiries were dealt with by the planning team. These are broken down into development types.
- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| • Advertisements | 11 |
| • Changes of use | 62 |
| • Householder | 391 |
| • Listed Building Consent (LBC) | 68 |
| • 1-9 dwellings | 220 |
| • Other minor devt. | 198 (includes agr.buildings) |
| • Major residential (over 10) dwellings | 18 |
- 2.2 In terms of numbers of enquiries the bulk of the work appears to fall into householder, LBC, 1-9 dwellings and other minor development categories.

3 Pros and cons of charging

3.1 Disadvantages

- Reduction in customer satisfaction
- Additional officer time through the arrangements and senior officer checks that may need to be made. The impact of requiring officers to carry out further site visits in a small team already under pressure should not be under-estimated.
- Possible additional applications by those unwilling to pay for advice and using an initial application to identify any problems and then have a 'free go' via a re-submitted application
- Additional appeal work that may result in a higher refusal rate
- Negative perception of additional refusals
- Those put off by the cost with the resultant application being the poorer for it and perhaps needing more 'free' officer time to seek improvements to achieve validation and/or improvements during the course of determination
- Reputational risk to the Authority and adverse publicity
- Charging could be seen as contrary to the Vanguard ethos of encouraging early engagement

3.2 Advantages:

- Charging would remove frivolous 'what if?' enquiries
- Additional income to fund wider planning service costs
- Freeing up additional staff time through possibly less pre-app enquiries (depending on the chosen approach)
- Would bring us into line with our constituent district council partners
- Would put more emphasis on the private sector to provide advice rather than the NPA, particularly in LBC and more complex case work.

4 Potential income and risks

4.1 The advice from other colleagues in neighbouring authorities is not to rely on previous year's figures to produce an income generation figure. It is clear that on introduction of charges there is an immediate drop in the number of written pre app requests. There is likely to be initial resistance from customers and professional agents and a willingness on their part to test the system by putting in an application and then using the free go mechanism for a second application without planning fee. On the basis of the charging schedule set out below however, the Authority would have seen an income as follows:

Advertisements	£1,100	
Changes of use	£6,200	
LBC	£2,760	(based on a third proceeding to site visit)
1-9 dwellings	£33,000	(based on 1-2 dwellings as this is the majority)
Other minor	£15,840	
Major devt.	£7,200	(based on 10-30 dwellings)

Total income	£66,100	

- 4.2 Based on experience from constituent Councils in the area we could see an initial recoup of say a third of the above figure but this could rise in future once fees become more accepted. It will be important to monitor the impact of charges and how this affects both workload and income received, but it is considered that there is a prospect of receiving a reasonable level of income from a targeted charging schedule.
- 4.3 Further information is, however, being sought from constituent districts to inform Members of the potential costs set against the benefits. An update on this element will be given at Committee.

5 Householder advice

- 5.1 Members will note the number of householder enquiries received. This is consistently by far our biggest customer base. Whilst other Authorities do charge it is considered that this would be a retrograde step in many ways. At the present time on average most householder enquires could be dealt with as a desk top exercise within 1-2 hours. A site visit is only undertaken at present if the officer is passing a site whilst dealing with a submitted planning application. Normally site visits are not undertaken because of the level of work and a lack of officer resource. Given current tools available in the office however it is not essential to carry out a site visit. On this basis it is suggested we maintain the status quo, do not charge for householder advice and limit the time we take to two hours maximum. As a rule we should not offer site visits as we will not be able to achieve this given current staffing levels and application/other work.

6 Commercial/residential development

- 6.1 Conversely it seems to be normal accepted practice now for most planning agents to expect to pay a fee for pre app advice on commercial or residential type developments. In fact new agents submitting proposals tend to ask what the fee is when they contact us. There can be a distinction drawn as well in terms of householders wishing to improve their properties and developers who will clearly profit significantly from increased land values should planning permission be granted. In this respect it is recommended that fees are introduced for these and other categories noted above. Both West Devon and South Hams Councils along with Mid Devon District Council have a sliding scale of fees based on the number of residential units with the cut off being more than 2 and up to 9, with a higher fee paid for major developments of 10 dwellings upwards. This makes sense and is defensible and fair based on the uplift in development land values.

7 Listed Buildings advice

- 7.1 The area of work around Listed Buildings does deserve further consideration. There is no official charge for a formal Listed Building Consent application. The National Planning Policy Framework states clearly that local planning authorities should engage early to improve the quality of Listed Building application submissions. At the present time we offer a free service which is well received and has undoubted benefits in improving the eventual application submission and looking after Dartmoor's rich heritage. It would be a retrograde step if this were undermined in any way. Fee paying would be an obstacle and could lead to owners either submitting a poor quality application or taking a chance and doing the work without permission.

7.2 It is clear that giving advice sometimes requires specialist rather than generic knowledge, albeit the simpler Listed Building queries could be dealt with by a planning officer. In about a third of cases it is also the practice to carry out a site inspection which can take a number of additional hours taken into account travel time as well as time spent in the office. Each Listed Building pre app on average takes about two hours to deal with. This can double if a site visit is involved.

7.3 Unlike householder enquiries there will be times when a site visit is essential if we are to offer sound clear advice particularly related to the building concerned. In such cases it should be expected given the additional resources needed that the Authority should levy a reasonable charge. This would make a reasonable compromise between free advice delivered from the 'desktop' and advice following a site inspection.

8 Tree advice

8.1 The advice currently offered revolves around works to TPO trees, trees within conservation areas and trees which are dead, dying or dangerous. There are no official charges for formal applications for tree notifications or works to TPO trees. If specific advice is needed in relation to trees on a potential development site this can be picked up above as part of the charges levied for residential/commercial development. It is not considered appropriate that we charge for advice other than through that mechanism. Generally speaking unless the tree is part of a development site there is no commercial gain for the owner of a tree (predominantly householders and Parish Councils). It is however true to say that advice can be sought from the private sector. Turning people away or charging may however send out a poor message about conservation of the natural environment.

9 Advice regarding need for permission

9.1 Some Councils do not offer advice on the need for planning permission and point applicants to the formal Lawful Development Certificate route for which there is a planning fee and a formal binding decision issued. At the present time officers offer informal advice on the need for permission and then complete that advice by giving design/policy comments if appropriate. Officers are careful to point out that the nature of the advice is informal and not binding. It is considered that this friendly and helpful approach should be maintained rather than pushing all customers through the formal route. In most cases the need for permission will be obvious. If there is a doubt this will be expressed in any letter and the applicant given the choice and told not to rely wholly on the informal advice tendered. This advice can be included therefore in the general pre application fee.

10 Charges and how these are formulated

10.1 Members are referred to the charging schedule for West Devon/ South Hams Councils and the latest charging schedule for Mid Devon Council. In discussion with senior officers of those Councils it became clear that the formulation basis of the various charges was based on a mixture of identifying officer costs and benchmarking against other local authorities in the area.

10.2 In setting any charge for pre app advice much depends on the nature of the enquiry and the number of officers potentially involved. A typical planning officer cost is between £25 and £30 an hour including overheads but excluding travel costs. The suggested charging schedule set out below is considered to be a reasonable and

defensible position to take and is based on salary and overheads and is comparable with other Authority charges in the area. In this respect there is little likelihood of challenge or accusations of recouping more than the costs of the service provided.

- 10.3 In general terms it usually takes about 1-2 hours to process householder and Listed Building enquiries as a desktop exercise. A site visit will increase the time spent by 2 hours. A small scale minor application would take longer, potentially up to 4 hours without a site visit or 6 hours with a site visit. It is likely that a number of officers could be engaged in providing one single comprehensive piece of written advice on pre-apps above householder level, eg, planners, archaeologist, ecologist, historic buildings officer and trees officer.

11 Set up costs

- 11.1 Members will note from the appendices to this report that detailed advice notes need to accompany any charging schedule. This can be done in house and will be relatively straightforward to pull together. In addition the IT demands of a charging system have been considered and do not present any technical or financial difficulties in setting up an on line payment system. Some limited officer time will be needed but no significant changes or upgrades to our systems are required. At the present time all pre application enquiries are logged onto our planning database. Unlike planning applications pre app enquiries are not retained other than in paper form for a period of 4 years and then disposed of. If a pre app enquiry turns into a planning application then this is picked up by the administration team as part of the checks on validation and the pre app papers are scanned as part of the planning archive once a decision is made. The pre app advice is not made a public document for all to view however. In resource terms this is the most cost effective way of dealing with and retaining a record of the pre app advice given. It is also the case that the text of any letter is usually entered onto the database. This can continue as present. Bearing in mind that only a small number of pre apps turn into applications there seems little point in scanning everything.

12 Payment methods

- 12.1 There will be costs accrued in dealing with payments. The simplest method of payment would be an online system as is currently in place for planning applications. Councils generally also offer payment by cheque and other methods but this will increase costs. It is recommended therefore that we use an online system only. The actual cost of administering the system will be in the order of less than £1 per transaction. It will be important to have a robust system in place to require upfront payment **before** the enquiry is processed.

13 Exemptions

- 13.1 As with planning fees there should be some exemptions to any charging schedule. It is considered the following exemptions should apply. These generally reflect those exemptions listed by our constituent districts.

- Parish Councils (own land or land they are to acquire)
- Householder development within the curtilage of a dwelling house (not change of use of land outside the curtilage)
- Listed Building advice with no site visit
- Registered charitable organisations or not for profit organisations
- 100% affordable housing schemes

- Rural 'exception' site affordable housing schemes
- Cross subsidy schemes to be based on open market proportion to assess fee
- Enforcement enquiries to regularise unauthorised development
- Generic advice over the telephone or in reception but on a very limited time basis (no more than 5/10 minutes)
- Power of absolute discretion to Director to waive or refund any fee but only in exceptional circumstances.

14 Timescale to give advice and process

- 14.1 At the present time the Authority has an informal target of 28 days. Our performance to date varies but generally meets this target dependant on the nature of the enquiry. It is considered that the 28 day target should be retained. The exception to this target should be for major developments in which case a timescale will be agreed dependant on the complexity of the proposal on a case by case basis.
- 14.2 A simple to follow process is suggested supported by a standard application form and advice notes on what to submit, standards of service etc. See appended flow chart.

15 Financial Implications

- 15.1 The potential income generated is set out above. Expenditure to set up the system will be minimal. There will undoubtedly be a drop in the number of pre application advice requests on fee paying items. A likely increase in the rate of refusal could have a knock-on impact on the number of appeals. This area of work is resource intensive in officer time. Further information on this will be presented to Members at the Committee meeting. Should fees be introduced a quarterly assessment will be made and further reporting to Committee is anticipated at the end of the first year following the introduction of charges.

16 Equality and Sustainability Impact Assessment

- 16.1 Members will note a number of exemptions to fees set out above. These are aimed at those customers who are less able to afford fees and for whom there are different needs from the planning service. We will continue to offer free householder advice, and free advice to community not for profit groups provided they are properly set up and constituted. Registered charities will also be exempt. The Director will maintain a power to exempt in special circumstances if required taking into account equality and sustainability issues.

17 Conclusion

- 17.1 Members are asked to consider the report and draft charging schedule. A key issue for consideration is the relative merits of a potential new income stream to offset costs and/or reduced workload (ie through reduced volume of pre-application enquiries) versus the negative perception of charges, the potential impact in terms of 'poorer quality applications', increased refusal rates and appeals.
- 17.2 If Members wish to proceed with potential pre-application charges, the next stage is a report to Authority to approve a public consultation paper. Results of the consultation will be reported to Authority for decision on whether to proceed.

Suggested timescale for implementation is the start of the 2015/16 financial year.
Fees would then be reviewed annually.

STEPHEN BELLI

Background Papers and appendices

(NPA/AG/14/035)

Attachments: **Appendix 1 - Draft charging schedule for Dartmoor National Park**
 Appendix 2 - Charging schedule of Mid Devon District Council
 Appendix 3 - Charging schedule of South Hams District Council/West Devon Borough Council
 Appendix 4 - Flow diagram of process

20140815 SB Pre App Charges

Dartmoor National Park planning advice pre application fees

Draft schedule of fees payable

Costs will include meetings sometimes with multiple officers and a detailed written response. Meetings can be in the office or on site.

Fees are inclusive of VAT

Exemptions where no fee payable

- Parish Councils (own land or land they are to acquire)
- Householder development within the curtilage of a dwelling house (not change of use of land/buildings or other development outside the curtilage)
- Listed Building advice with no site visit
- Registered charitable organisations or not for profit organisations
- 100% affordable housing schemes
- Rural 'exception' site affordable housing schemes
- Cross subsidy schemes to be based on open market proportion to assess fee
- Enforcement enquiries to regularise unauthorised development
- Generic advice over the telephone or in reception but on a very limited time basis (no more than 5/10 minutes)

Type of Development	£ Including VAT	Additional Fee
CLASS A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential between 31-149 dwellings • Non-residential floor space 5,000- 9,999 sq. m 	£600 (up to 2 meetings)	£300 per additional meeting
CLASS B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential between 10-30 dwellings - • Non-residential floor space 1,000-4,999 sq. m 	£400 (up to one meeting)	£200 per additional meeting
CLASS C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential (including holiday lets) between 3-9 dwellings • Non-residential floor space 500-999 sq. m 	£300 (up to one meeting)	£150 per additional meeting
CLASS D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential 1-2 dwellings (including replacement dwellings) including change of use to, conversion and holiday lets • Non-residential floor space up to 499 sq. m 	£150 (up to one meeting)	£50 per additional meeting

<p>CLASS E</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements • Telecommunications proposals • Change of use where no operational development (except residential/holiday let) 	<p>£100 £100 £100 (up to one meeting only)</p>	
<p>CLASS F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listed Building where site visit involved 	<p>£120 (up to one meeting)</p>	<p>£60 per additional meeting</p>
<p>CLASS G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other minor development including agricultural based development 	<p>£80 (up to one meeting)</p>	<p>£40 per additional meeting</p>
<p>CLASS H</p> <p>Renewable energy - solar, wind, hydro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic scale • Non-domestic Hydro schemes 	<p>Free but £120 if site visit needed</p> <p>£150 (up to one meeting)</p>	<p>£50 per additional meeting</p>

MID DEVON
DISTRICT COUNCIL

5. Any necessary scaled plans, elevations, sections, photographs or sketches. (Photos are often very useful to understand the proposal and its context).
6. Your contact details and whether you are requesting a meeting.
7. The pre-application advice fee.
8. We also request the submission of a draft Design and Access Statement where it will be useful to guide the discussions. However this is not a requirement at the pre-application stage.

When we receive a written request for pre-application advice we will check whether sufficient information has been submitted in order for us to understand the site, its surroundings and the proposed scheme. We may need further information before offering pre-application advice in writing. Timescale standards for the issuing of written advice will only begin once sufficient information has been received and will only apply to proposals where a fee is charged.

Our charges.

Payment can be made by the following methods:

1. Cheque payable to Mid Devon District Council.
2. Bankers Draft payable to Mid Devon District Council.
3. Telegraphic Transfer – (account details can be provided).
4. Cash payable at the Council Offices, Phoenix House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton.
5. Credit card by phone or at the Council Offices.

Type of development.	Fee (incl VAT)	Additional fee (incl VAT)
1. LARGE SCALE MAJOR Residential >150 houses or site area >4ha; Non residential 10,000 sq m floorspace or site area >4 ha; All Environmental Impact Assessment development	£1000 (up to 3 meetings)	£400 (each additional meeting)
2. MEDIUM SCALE MAJOR Residential 31-149 houses or site area 2 – 4ha; Non residential 5,000 – 9,999 sq m floorspace or site area between 2-4ha	£650 (up to 2 meetings)	£300 (each additional meeting)
3. SMALL SCALE MAJOR Residential 10-30 houses or site area	£400 (up to 1 meeting)	£200 (each additional

up to 2ha; Non residential 1,000 – 4,999 sq m floorspace or site area between 1-2 ha		meeting)
4. MINOR Residential proposals (including holiday lets) involving the erection of or change of use to between 3 – 9 residential units; Non residential 500 – 1,000 sq m floorspace;	£300 (up to 1 meeting)	£150 (each additional meeting)
5. SMALL MINOR All residential schemes for the replacement, change of use or erection of 1 or 2 dwellings (or holiday lets) or conversion of building(s) to 1 or 2 residential units (or holiday lets); All minor non residential schemes for new buildings; Non residential 200 – 499 sq m floorspace	£150 (up to 1 meeting)	£50 (each additional meeting)
6. OTHER Advertisements; Telecommunications; Changes of use (except residential / holiday let)	£100 (up to 1 meeting)	£50 (each additional meeting)
7. WIND TURBINES Height to tip: 25m or less 26-75m More than 75m (Where Environmental Impact Assessment is needed, the charge will be at the large scale major rate)	Up to 3 meetings £550 £800 £1000	Each additional meeting £200 £300 £400
8. GROUND MOUNTED SOLAR PV AND THERMAL Domestic (if planning permission required) Less than 1 ha (2.5 acres) 1 to 10 ha (2.5– 25 acres) Over 10 ha (25 acres) (Where Environmental Impact Assessment is needed, the charge will be at the large scale major rate)	Up to 3 meetings £80 £550 £800 £1000	Each additional meeting £40 £200 £300 £400

9. ANAEROBIC DIGESTERS	Up to 3 meetings	Each additional meeting
On farm (single farm feedstock source)	£300	£150
On farm (multiple farm or mixed agricultural & non-agricultural feedstock source)	£550	£200
Off farm / non-agricultural commercial (Where Environmental Impact Assessment is needed, the charge will be at the large scale major rate)	£1000	£400
10. Written confirmation that an enforcement notice has been complied with.	£100	£50
9. Householder applications	£80	£40
10. Listed Building / heritage (in addition to any fee for planning advice).		
a. Repair / maintenance only	FREE	FREE
b. Enhancement / added value:		
In principle, no visit	£50	£50
In principle with visit	£75	£50
Detailed with visit	£120	£50
11. Lawful Development Certificate advice	£50	£50
12. Planning matters relating to an enforcement issue (other than written confirmation that an enforcement notice has been complied with – see 9 above).	FREE	FREE
13. Registered charities and Town and Parish Council proposals (on their own land or land they plan to acquire).	FREE	FREE
14. 100% Affordable housing schemes	50% normal pre-app fee	50% normal pre-app fee
15. Non residential additional floorspace (extensions) < 200 square metres	£100	£50
16. Discussions with local residents potentially affected by applications for development.	FREE	FREE
17. One meeting following a refusal of planning permission.	FREE	As fee category
18. Facilities for the disabled.	FREE	FREE

WEST DEVON PRE - APPLICATION ENQUIRY CHARGES

FEES SHOWN BELOW INCLUDE VAT at 20%

Type of development.	£ Including VAT	Additional Fee
CLASS A <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential greater than 150 houses or site area greater than 4ha; • Non residential 10,000sqm floorspace or site area greater than 4ha; • All Environmental Impact Development 	£5,000 (up to 6 meetings)	£500 per additional meeting
CLASS B <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential 31- 149 houses or site area 2 – 4 ha; • Non residential 5,000 – 9,999 sq m floor space or site area between 2-4 ha 	£2,400 - (up to 4 meetings)	£500 each additional meeting
CLASS C <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential 10-30 houses or site area up to 2 ha; • Non residential 1,000 – 4,999 sq m or site area between 1 -2 ha 	£1,800 (up to 3 meetings)	£360 each additional meeting
CLASS D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential proposals (including holiday lets) involving the erection of or change of use to between 3 – 9 residential units • Non residential 500 – 1000sq m floorspace 	£600 (up to 2 meetings)	£180 each additional meeting
CLASS E <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residential schemes for the change of use to or erection of 1 or 2 dwellings (or holiday lets) or conversion of building(s) to 1 or 2 residential units (or holiday lets); • All minor non residential schemes for new buildings • Non residential buildings/extensions up to 499 sq m floorspace 	£360 (up to 2 meetings)	£120 each additional meeting
SINGLE REPLACEMENT DWELLING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential schemes for the replacement of a single dwelling 	£180 (up to 1 meeting)	£120 each additional meeting
CLASS F <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisements; • Telecommunications; • Changes of use where no operational development (except residential/holiday) 	£180 (up to 1 meeting)	£120 each additional meeting
CLASS G Renewable Energy – (Solar, Wind turbines etc) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turbines up to 25m hub height or Site area under 1 hectare ▪ Turbines 25 – 50 metres or site area 1 – 2 hectares 	£850.00 £1725.00	£180 per meeting £360 per meeting

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Turbines over 50m (hub height) or site area over 2 hectares 	£2300.00	£500 per meeting
Householder Schemes - works or alterations to an existing residential dwelling, including extensions, garages, satellite dishes, garden structures etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type A - NO SITE VISIT OR REDESIGN • Type B - WHERE SITE VISIT AND/OR REDESIGN REQUIRED 	Type A - NO CHARGE Type B - £120.00	None
CLASS H LISTED BUILDING SCHEMES (where no planning permission will be required) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type A – works to a listed building – where little guidance needed • Type B – works to listed building – where significant advice, redesign and site visits needed 	Type A - NO CHARGE Type B - £120.00	None
Conservation Area Consent advice (where no planning permission will be required)	NO CHARGE	
Lawful Development Certificate advice	NO CHARGE	N/A

No fee will be charged for all 100% affordable housing schemes; Parish Council, voluntary sector, charitable trust or not-for-profit organisations' development enquiries.

Please note that Planning Officers do not give informal advice on whether or not planning permission will be required. There is extensive guidance available to view on the [Planning Portal](#) but if owners or prospective developers are unsure they are encouraged to submit an application for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) which will provide a legally binding decision.

Notes –

- Floorspace refers to gross external floorspace
- The larger element of a mixed use scheme will primarily be used to determine which category of fee applies
- For the purposes of charging, flats and holiday accommodation are considered as dwellings/houses
- Fees will be subject to review
- All fees are subject to the current rate of VAT. Fees show VAT at 20%
- * "Redesign" means it is necessary to change substantially the nature of the scheme before it can be supported...
- There is a difference between the cost of additional meetings between different categories because of the number of officers that are expected to need to be involved.

West Devon Borough Council

Development Management

Pre-application enquiry form



**West Devon
Borough
Council**

- such as:- GOSW, the Highway Authority, Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, etc. subject to their availability;
- Be provided in writing, and be reviewed by senior officers;
 - Include references to all relevant planning policies and planning history;
 - Be provided on a without prejudice basis because it cannot constrain the Planning and Licensing Committee which is entitled to not accept the officer recommendation if there are good and justifiable planning reasons not to do so;
 - Set out clearly the issues which would be raised by the development, and either what sort of changes would be needed to make it supportable, or, in the event of insufficient changes being likely, what the grounds for refusal would be;
 - Identify what level of community consultation would be expected in order to comply with the Council's Statement on Community Involvement;
 - Set out the nature and quality of information which would need to accompany any subsequent application in order for it to be validated;
 - Establish, as a minimum the Heads of Terms that are needed to be included in any Section 106 Agreement; but preferably have discussed in detail the agreement to enable a S106 agreement to be submitted with the application;
 - Be based on site visit information made by officers of the Council.

With the exception of householder schemes (below), the service would establish a mutually agreeable timetable to conclude the pre-application process and provide the written response and this is likely to take between 2-6 months depending upon the complexity of the issues raised. The users of the service may seek to impose a refund of some of the charges if the Council is unable to meet the agreed timescales.

For Householder Schemes (works or alterations to an existing residential dwelling, including extensions, garages, satellite dishes, garden structures etc) advice would:-

- Be provided in writing;
- Include references to all relevant planning policies and planning history;
- Be provided on a without prejudice basis because it cannot constrain the Planning and Licensing Committee which is entitled to not accept the officer recommendation if there are good and justifiable planning reasons not to do so;
- Set out clearly the issues which would be raised by the development, and either what sort of changes would be needed to make it supportable, or, in the event of insufficient changes being likely, what the grounds for refusal would be;
- Set out the nature and quality of information which would need to accompany any subsequent application in order for it to be validated;
- Provide the guidance of the case officer who would deal with any subsequent application and any other useful contact details.

Every effort will be made to deal with your enquiry within 6 weeks. If for any reason officers have to ask you to agree to extend the period for response, then your co-operation will be appreciated.

