



NPA/24/041

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026 – Progress Update

Report of the Partnership Plan and Climate Officer and the Director of Spatial Planning

Recommendation: **That:**

- (i) Members note and comment on progress of the Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026; and**
- (ii) Members' views are sought on lessons learnt and next steps**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report summarises progress of the [Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026](#) (hereby referred to as 'the Plan') and outlines proposals to build greater ownership amongst partners, increase engagement and strengthen the monitoring and delivery frameworks that support the Partnership Plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026 is the single most important policy document for the National Park. It is the strategic, overarching plan for the National Park and is the principal vehicle for ensuring that the statutory purposes and duty are met and provides a mechanism for combining national (30 x 30, Net Zero, Environmental Improvement Plan and Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, LNRS) and local priorities.
- 2.2 The Partnership Plan is for the National Park and not just the National Park Authority, or any individual group or organisation. It should set the framework for partnership and collective action to deliver outcomes set out in the Plan and the [Vision](#) for Dartmoor.
- 2.3 Each National Park Authority is required to prepare and publish a Management Plan under section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995. The Act also requires a National Park Authority to review the Plan at least every 5 years.

3 Policy Context

- 3.1 The [2019 Landscapes Review](#) included a proposal to strengthen National Park Management Plans, the proposal set out that there should be clear priorities and actions for nature recovery and that their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law. In response to the Landscapes Review, amendments were made to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 requiring Management Plans to contribute to national targets and strengthening the role of relevant authorities in supporting the delivery of Management Plans and statutory purposes.

4 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023

- 4.1 Section 245 (the Protected Landscapes clause) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) strengthens how Relevant Authorities must further the purposes of Protected Landscapes and help develop and implement Management Plans. The new duty is positive in that it requires Relevant Authorities to further National Park purposes and not just consider them. We anticipate guidance from Defra and/or Natural England. We hope that this new duty will reinforce the relationships that we already have with partners and strengthen the collaborative approach for the process of preparing, reviewing, implementing and delivering the Plan.

5 Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework

- 5.1 The [Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework](#) (PLTOF) published in January 2024 builds on the new LURA legislation and sets the ambition for how Protected Landscapes will achieve outcomes within DEFRA's [Environmental Improvement Plan](#). It sets out 10 national targets that all Protected Landscapes are expected to contribute to. The targets are non-statutory and are for the geographic area of each Protected Landscape, with shared responsibility amongst all stakeholders, partners and land managers for delivery. Natural England are working on protected landscape specific targets (i.e. breaking down national targets by protected landscape). The targets that have been identified are those that are most relevant to National Park and National Landscapes statutory purposes and which Protected Landscapes bodies can influence through their Management Plans.

6 Management Plan Guidance

- 6.1 In response to the Landscapes Review the government committed to review Natural England's guidance on Management Plans. We have been provided with a working draft of this guidance that aims to set out a framework for producing and delivering a consistent suite of Management Plans across England. We are currently waiting for the final updated guidance and any significant changes in the guidance will be factored into future reviews.

7 Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026

- 7.1 The current Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026 sets out a bold vision for the future of Dartmoor National Park. The Dartmoor Partnership Plan is focused on seven themes that describe, in more detail, what the Authority and partners want to achieve and how we will achieve this. The themes in the Partnership Plan are:

- A Better Response to Climate Change
- Better for the Next Generation
- Better for Nature and Natural Beauty
- Better for Cultural Heritage
- Better for People
- Better for Farming and Forestry
- Better for Business and Communities

8 Progress of the Partnership Plan

8.1 The current partnership plan contains 195 detailed actions across the seven themes. An internal review of the actions suggests that:

- 169 are in progress
- 9 are completed
- 17 have not been started

8.2 There are a number of projects that deliver against many of the actions and outcomes within the Plan. These include:

8.3 **Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)** – the FiPL programme is a grant scheme for farmers and land managers in Protected Landscapes across England. The programme is running from March 2021 until March 2025 and provides funding to deliver Management Plan priorities, along with the programme outcomes. Since the beginning of the programme, FiPL has supported over 140 farmers and landowners on Dartmoor and allocated over £1,500,000 to projects that support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses.

8.4 **Dartmoor’s Dynamic Landscapes** - Dartmoor’s Dynamic Landscapes is an area-based partnership led by DNPA and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The programme aims to create more naturally resilient landscapes, to enable better understanding to connect people more sustainably to their place. It focuses on three river catchments – the Okement, Dart, Erme and Yealm. Partners include the Woodland Trust, Sustrans, RSPB, Shallowford Trust, Emergency Exit Arts & Flock SW, Environment Agency, South West Water, Westcountry Rivers Trust. If successful, the delivery phase will run for five years from January 2025

8.5 **South West Peatland Partnership** – The South West Peatland Partnership is working to restore over 2,500 hectares of degraded peatland in the South West by 2025. 947ha of peatland has been bought under restoration on Dartmoor between August 2020 and March 2024.

8.6 **Landscape Recovery** – There are currently three active Landscape Recovery (LR) schemes on Dartmoor; East Dartmoor covering the Bovey catchment and led by the Devon Wildlife Trust; the Walkham Valley led by Authority; and the Central Dartmoor LR predominantly covering the Duchy estate led by the Central Dartmoor CIC. Between them they cover about 30% of the National Park

8.7 **Farm for the Future** - The Farm for the Future programme is funded by DEFRA’s Future Farming Resilience Fund to help farmers understand the impacts of the Agricultural transition, the loss of BPS payments and navigate potential options via

emerging ELMs. The programme of events through the scheme have been active since 2021, 130 farmers have signed up to the programme with many more engaged informally.

- 8.8 **Race to Zero** – the UK’s National Parks have become the first in the world to join the ‘Race to Zero’ initiative, committing to drive action to halve carbon emissions by 2030 and become significant net carbon sinks by 2050 within the landscapes. Joining Race to Zero sets Dartmoor on a credible, science-based pathway to reaching net zero. DNPA pledged to Race Zero in 2024, committing to taking a leadership role in climate action on Dartmoor.
- 8.9 **Farm 2 City** - Shallowford Farm Trust and local partners supported a weeklong programme of outreach and engagement which enabled a Dartmoor Farm complete with pigs and cows to visit Clapham Junction and engage with over 2000 young people.
- 8.10 **Affordable Housing** - 111 affordable homes have been completed on Dartmoor, 99 of these were approved prior to 2021 and 12 of which were approved following adoption of the current Plan.
- 8.11 There has been clear progress in delivery of the Partnership Plan, but there are also areas that of the Plan that have not progressed as much as we would have wanted. The Next Generation Manifesto was developed during the review process of the Plan and highlighted the need to provide the next generation with opportunities to engage with decision making on the future of Dartmoor and have space to ensure that their voices are heard.
- 8.12 No significant progress has been made to develop opportunities for the next generation. It is recognised that more must be done to create opportunities for and support the next generation.
- 8.13 A more detailed summary of projects being delivered against the themes can be found in Appendix 1.

9 Lessons learnt and next steps

- 9.1 It is important to note that the current Plan was developed over 2018-20, at a time when ‘normal’ ways of working were significantly disrupted. Opportunities for engagement were considerably reduced, and key messaging had a very different focus. We need to work with partners to better promote the Plan, demonstrate where projects contribute towards delivery and engage communities across the National Park with the Plan and what it means for them.
- 9.2 We refer to the Management Plan as the Partnership Plan as it should be delivered in partnership, however, partner engagement with the Plan has not been at the level envisaged when adopting the Plan. The Plan continues to be seen as the Plan for DNPA. Whilst there is a strong ethos of partnership working at a project or programme level there is little joint working on the governance, monitoring and development of the Plan. The increased capacity in the Spatial Planning Team provides us with greater resources to work with key strategic partners that are critical to delivery of the Plan to develop a true partnership approach to the Partnership Plan.

- 9.3 It is clear that there is a significant amount of partnership work taking place on Dartmoor that contributes to success of the Plan, however, much of this has not been developed or celebrated with the Partnership Plan as it's central driving force and the collective outcomes of the many projects needs recognising. A clear monitoring and reporting framework is needed to assist in illustrating progress against the ambition of the Plan and the impact that the Plan is having on Dartmoor.
- 9.4 Feedback on actions in the current Plan suggests that the actions aren't SMART enough and are too detailed, meaning that they go out of date and are not dynamic enough to adapt and respond to the ever-changing policy and funding landscape. Recommendations for the next Plan include creating a Plan that is outcome focussed with opportunities for delivery being developed throughout the lifespan of the Plan.

10 Partner engagement

- 10.1 On the 7 November key partners met to discuss the Partnership Plan and what it means for them. The response from partners was positive, it was clear that there was appetite for a stronger partnership and a more dynamic and responsive plan underpinned by clear actions and outcomes.
- 10.2 As we head towards the review process and the end of the life of this Plan, the following next steps have been identified:
- 10.2.1 **Governance Structure** – we will work with partners to establish a robust governance structure that creates a meaningful partnership and ensure a collaborative approach to delivering and reviewing the Plan. The governance structure will support the creation of a true partnership approach to the Partnership Plan, aiming to align collective efforts towards achieving the outcomes with the Plan and Vision for Dartmoor to ensure its ongoing relevance and impact.
- 10.2.2 **Review Process** – the current Plan period runs until December 2026. We expect to begin the review process at the start of 2026. We want the review process to be developed and delivered in partnership and supported by a new governance structure. Discussions have already started with partners on what we can learn from the previous review process and opportunities for the next review.
- 10.2.3 **Monitoring** – establish a monitoring framework that is outcome focused and demonstrates the collective action of work being delivered across Dartmoor. The framework will need to be underpinned by robust data that is accessible to all partners. There is also a need to track progress towards the outcomes against identified actions. The new framework should move away from the onerous reporting used in previous plans, initial discussions have focussed on creating a live database and crossover with the Dartmoor Observatory has been highlighted.
- 10.2.4 A monitoring framework must be established as part of the review process, but we must also be able to demonstrate the progress and successes of the current Plan as it comes to an end.
- 10.2.5 **Communications** – there has been little ongoing communication and direct engagement with stakeholders on the role of the Partnership Plan and the

outcomes it is delivering for Dartmoor. As we look to strengthen the Partnership Plan, a communication strategy should be developed to actively engage, inform and involve all stakeholders, including local communities, businesses and users of the National Park. Communications should focus on demonstrating tangible benefits and outcomes of the Partnership Plan and celebrating and building on collaboration among partners and stakeholders.

11 Financial Implications

- 11.1 There will be financial implications relating to the preparation and review of the current Plan. The figures are being prepared and will be reported on at a later date. It is important to note that funding may be a limiting factor in the development of the revised Partnership Plan and our ability to monitor and communicate delivery of the current Plan.

12 Conclusion

- 12.1 There is a significant amount of work taking place across Dartmoor that contributes to delivery of the Partnership Plan and the Vision. In some cases, funding for this work is underpinned by the Partnership Plan. The Partnership Plan must be of value to our partners and be the golden thread of all organisations working across Dartmoor.
- 12.2 There is an appetite among partners to work with us to promote, develop and improve the Partnership Plan. We will continue to work with our partners to develop a meaningful partnership to develop and deliver a Partnership Plan that is understood by everyone that lives and works on Dartmoor, celebrated for what it delivers and strengthens the collaborative approach to delivering for Dartmoor.
- 12.3 Funding, or lack of it, is a key strategic risk for the review of the Partnership Plan. If we do not see an increase in National Park Grant for 2025/26 and/or contributions from partners to the costs of the review process then we need to consider what can be achieved and against a revised timeline.

JEN MANNING &
DEAN KINSELLA

DARTMOOR PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2021-2026

Summary of Progress

A BETTER RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The Partnership Plan and Vision for Dartmoor sets an ambition for the National Park to be carbon negative by 2045.

In 2024 the UK's National Parks became the first in the world to join the UN backed Race to Zero initiative committing to drive action to halve carbon emissions by 2030 and become significant net carbon sinks by 2050.

A detailed report by Small World Consulting outlines the current carbon footprint of UK National Parks and lays out a plan for achieving the above goals through a combination of energy reduction and land use changes, including specific changes for each of the 15 UK National Parks.

BETTER FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The Partnership Plan includes a Next Generation Manifesto that sets out the 'asks' of the Next Generation in relation to all the themes included in the Partnership Plan. The Manifesto was developed by a Next Generation group that also identified the need to ensure that the next generation are actively involved in the future of the National Park.

Throughout the life of this Plan, there has been progress against the Manifesto asks, however, there has been little progress in engaging the next generation at a decision-making level. The Next Generation group that developed the Manifesto last met during the review process.

There has been no engagement or discussion with the Next Generation to form a new group. It is well known that there are challenges with creating meaningful engagement opportunities for the Next Generation at the right level and it is recognised that we must do more to develop these opportunities.

BETTER FOR NATURE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

This section of the Partnership Plan focuses on the Vision for Dartmoor to be ***Alive with Nature***: Networks of healthy habitats that are home to many different plants, insects and animals create a more resilient natural environment connected within and across the boundary of the National Park. Some areas will feel wilder as nature is enhanced and allowed to take its course.

It is significant also in delivering the Vision for Dartmoor to be: ***Celebrated and enhanced, A great place to live and work, and Carbon Negative.***

What have we achieved?

Dartmoor Headwaters NFM

A collaboration between DNPA, the Environment Agency, South West Water and other partners, this programme has been restoring and emulating natural processes to reinstate blanket bog and reduce flooding to vulnerable communities. The project has delivered 108 timber dams, 44 stone dams, 130 willow faggot dams, 5120 trees, 8 trial wool log dams

and other woody debris dams were installed, along with floodplain reconnection, extensive soil surveys and funding for delivery of 75ha of peatland restoration

South West Peatland Partnership

The South West Peatland Partnership is working to restore over 2,500 hectares of degraded peatland in the South West by 2025. 947ha of peatland has been bought under restoration on Dartmoor between August 2020 and March 2024.

Landscape Recovery

There are currently three active LR schemes on Dartmoor; East Dartmoor covering the Bovey catchment and led by the Wildlife Trust; the Walkham Valley led by DNPA; and the Central Dartmoor LR predominantly covering the Duchy estate led by the Central Dartmoor CIC. Between them they cover about 30% of the National Park

Woodland Creation

The Plymouth and South Devon Community Forest encompasses all of Dartmoor and alongside the English Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) and other schemes (NFM/UST/OUC etc) has enabled landowners and land managers to have an array of choice in planting and maintenance grants.

Invasive Species

For five years DNPA has led a partnership project to reduce the impact of specific invasives species (American skunk cabbage and Himalayan balsam) within targeted catchments. This will be expanded and incorporated into LR schemes in coming years

Species reintroduction

The Two Moors Pine Marten partnership project led by Devon Wildlife Trust has been successful in releasing 15 Pine Marten on Dartmoor. The National Lottery Heritage Fund provided funding for their release and associated monitoring.

Species Recovery

The curlew head starting programme is a Duchy of Cornwall led initiative now in the fourth year of five. Eggs that would otherwise be destroyed are incubated and raised on Dartmoor for release in summer to subsequently return each spring. The aim is to help restore the Dartmoor breeding population which is now down to the last pair. Habitat restoration is also carried out in parallel with the releases to ensure suitable landscapes are available to support an increasing population.

BETTER FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

This section of the Partnership Plan focuses on ***Celebrated and enhanced***: Dartmoor's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is better understood, valued and looked after. It is significant also in delivering: ***A warm welcome, A great place to live and work*** and ***Carbon Negative***.

What have we achieved?

Piles Hill Excavation

Discovery of a quartz surface, possibly laid deliberately to enhance the setting of a double stone row during excavation at Piles Hill. The excavation was part of the Our Upland Commons initiative, funding by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England and Dartmoor Preservation Association.

Cut Hill Excavation

A team of archaeologists excavated an Early Bronze Age cist at Cut Hill, providing evidence that this part of Dartmoor is an important part of prehistory. Further examinations in a specialist laboratory will determine what, if anything, the cist contains.

Significance and Constraints Framework

The framework has been established and provides a methodology and consistent way of working for all partners to consider cultural heritage. The methodology has been applied in multiple projects, including for NFM and the East Dartmoor LRA.

BETTER FOR FARMING AND FORESTRY

This section of the Partnership Plan contributes to achieving the Vision for Dartmoor in 20245 across all of its themes: ***Alive with Nature, Celebrated and enhanced, A warm welcome for All, Carbon negative***, and primarily ***A great place to live and work: People of all ages can enjoy living and working in low carbon, flourishing communities that are connected physically and digitally. Farming and forestry business play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits.***

What have we achieved?

Farming in Protected Landscapes

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme is running on Dartmoor from March 2021 until March 2025. Since the beginning of the programme, FiPL has supported over 140 farmers and landowners on Dartmoor and allocated over £1,500,000 to projects to support the natural environment, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide public access opportunities, nature friendly farming and sustainable farm businesses.

Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons

Our Upland Commons runs from 2021-2025. It is a £3m project which is helping to secure the future of upland commons in Dartmoor, the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and Shropshire Hills. Led by the Foundation for Common Land, with the backing of 25 partners, it is made possible by funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, grants from Esmée Fairbairn and Garfield Weston Foundations and support from local funders. Through collaborative action with commoners, landowners and experts, Our Upland Commons has delivered research and training to inform land and habitat management trials, improve the resilience of livestock and restore natural and cultural heritage. Over 2,500 young people have engaged in educational events and activities.

Independent Review of Protected Site Management on Dartmoor

The independent review was commissioned by DEFRA ministers in 2023 to make recommendations on the most effective grazing and management regime(s) that would deliver improvements on the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) across Dartmoor, so they can maintain or achieve favourable condition. Key recommendations from the review include the creation of an independently chaired Dartmoor Land Use Management Group to help deliver a land use framework and plan for Dartmoor, improve SSSI condition and identify areas for data collection that will feed into the development of protected site management strategies.

Dartmoor Test and Trials

A second Test and Trial on Dartmoor tested the practical development of payment by results (PBR) on common land by designing and trialling a model with commons graziers

across Dartmoor, this included understanding the governance required for a PBR approach. Funding was provided by DEFRA and the project was delivered collaboratively between Dartmoor National Park Authority and the Countryside Community Research Institute (CCRI). A summary report with recommendations was provided at the end of the project.

Farm for the Future

The Farm for the Future programme is funded by DEFRA's Future Farming Resilience Fund to help farmers understand the impacts of the Agricultural transition, the loss of BPS payments and navigate potential options via emerging ELMs. The programme of events through the scheme have been active since 2021, 130 farmers have signed up to the programme with many more engaged informally.

BETTER FOR PEOPLE

This section of the Partnership Plan contributes to achieving the Vision for Dartmoor in 2045 across all of its themes but primarily ***A warm welcome for all: enriching people's lives, reaching out to people from all backgrounds, connecting them with this special place. Transformative experiences will inspire people to care for the National Park.***

What have we achieved?

Access for All Funding

DNPA has received £138,000 of Access for All funding to deliver accessibility improvements across Dartmoor. Through the Access for All funding, DNPA is increased its Miles without Stiles offer, providing 38km of stile free routes that are suitable for a wide range of users.

Dartmoor National Park Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

In 2024 DNPA received £100,000 of funding from Active Travel England to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Dartmoor. The plan will set out how multi-model travel can be better integrated to and within the National Park and provide support for seeking future investment for active travel.

Dartmoor Marshals

2023/24 was the fourth year the Dartmoor Marshals have been deployed. The Dartmoor Marshals is a partnership project supported by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Forestry England, the National Trust, the Woodland Trust, Duchy of Cornwall, a private landowners and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council. f Cornwall, a private landowner and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council. This initiative is focused on changing public behaviours, to ensure that Dartmoor National Park can be enjoyed by all. The marshals worked to engage and educate visitors to Dartmoor in the evening from the end of July through to the beginning of September.

Community Engagement Rangers

In 2022/23 three Community Engagement Rangers were funded through the Green Recovery Fund to reach wider audiences, this was delivered as a partnership with DNPA, the National Trust, Woodland Trust and the South West Lakes Trust. The Engagement Rangers delivered outreach activities and events including Dartmoor Youth Rangers, Nights Under the Stars and practical taster sessions for young people to connect with nature through conservation work.

In 2023/24 additional funding as received from BMW Recharge in Nature Project and the DPA for two Community Engagement Rangers. These roles built on the work of previous

projects delivering Dartmoor Youth Rangers Programme. Engagement activities have included Girls Do Dartmoor to help teenage girls develop their confidence and resilience in the outdoors, a programme of Nights Under the Stars residentials and outreach to schools based in Torbay, Plymouth and Exeter

Farm 2 City

Shallowford Farm Trust and local partners supported a weeklong programme of outreach and engagement which enabled a Dartmoor Farm complete with pigs and cows to visit Clapham Junction and engage with over 2000 young people

BETTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND BUSINESS

This section of the Partnership Plan focuses on the Vision for Dartmoor to be *‘A great place to live and work: People of all ages can enjoy living and working in low carbon, flourishing communities that are connected physically and digitally. Farming and forestry businesses play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits’*, as well as *‘Carbon negative:’*

What have we achieved?

Dartmoor National Park Local Plan and Housing Supplementary Planning Documents

The Local Plan was adopted in 2021 and provides proactive policies to assist in the expansion of and creation of new buildings, the sustainable provision of affordable housing and supports local communities. As part of the adoption and implementation of the Local Plan, the Housing Supplementary Planning Document (Housing SPD) was adopted in 2023.

Affordable Housing

111 affordable homes have been completed on Dartmoor, 99 of these were approved prior to 2021 and 12 of which were approved following adoption of the current Plan.

Community Facilities and Services

Policy 4.1 within the local plan focuses on supporting community services and facilities within the national park. Since 2021, there have been 10 approvals of applications that fall under this policy. The Moor Imagination Collective Project is transforming Buckfastleigh Methodist church into a community hub. Approved in June 2024, this change of use will provide a dedicated space for local activities and social gatherings, reinforcing community bonds and offering a venue for cultural and social events. The repurposes of this building will ensure that it continues to serve the community in a meaningful way, whilst preserving the architectural heritage of the church.

Dartmoor’s Dynamic Landscapes

Dartmoor’s Dynamic Landscapes is an area-based partnership led by DNPA and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). The programme aims to create more naturally resilient landscapes, to enable better understanding to connect people more sustainably to their place. It focuses on a number of river catchments – the Okement, Dart, Erme and Yealm. Partners include the Woodland Trust, Sustrans, RSPB, Shallowford Trust, Emergency Exit Arts & Flock SW, Environment Agency, South West Water, Westcountry Rivers Trust. Proposals were submitted in August 2024 and if successful the delivery phase will run for five years from January 2025.



NPA/24/042

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Boundary Boost Consultancy work Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF)

Report of the Dartmoor Farming Officer

Recommendation: **That Members approve the utilisation of the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund framework thresholds rather than those of the Authority.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (DHFP) was successful earlier in 2024 to secure funding from the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) for a project that explores options for private finance to support land management and the delivery of public goods. The Boundary Boost project will focus on the extensive network of Devon hedges and boundaries and how to reflect or potentially recognise their broader values in the landscape, working across sectors and with local and national partners, not least the local farming community.
- 1.2 NEIRF is a Defra funding pot administered by the Environment Agency.
- 1.3 The project contract exists between Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) and Defra as DHFP is not a legal entity – it is an ‘arm’s length’ project funded by the Authority, Duchy of Cornwall, farmer contributions and project funds. The NEIRF grant is £99,982.86. A substantial proportion of this is allocated to the provision of consultancy work that enables professional and specialist support towards achieving those deliverables, e.g., an Environmental Economist, Social Scientist etc.

2 Financial Implications

- 2.1 Under DNPA financial regulations, the threshold for contracting Consultants is set at £10,000; for anything above this limit Member approval is required. The DNPA threshold is lower than that of the NEIRF programme, which is set at £30,000. To progress this workstream in a timely and efficient manner, DHFP wishes to ensure that the consultancy roles and responsibilities and ultimate recruitment is not only conducted in a fair and transparent manner but avoids unnecessary delay. To note,

there is still a requirement to gather three formal quotes in writing based on written specifications.

3 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 3.1 As the project is relatively short term, running until March 2026, and was officially signed off later than anticipated by the Environment Agency, the emphasis on progressing these roles to avoid delay and the risk of losing allocated budget as a result from the originally identified phasing of project delivery is very real.
- 3.2 It is recommended that Members approve to utilise the NEIRF framework thresholds rather than those of DNPA. This would facilitate the recruitment of roles and practical work initiated in the current year which avoids the prospect of delayed allocated spend, either resulting in unrealistic delivery timeframes or actual loss of budget.

HAZEL KENDALL

Background Information:

Further details of Project outline: [Boundary Boost | Dartmoor Hill Farm](#)

Funding stream: [Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund](#)



NPA/24/043

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Preventing Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Report of the Head of Organisational Development

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- (i) **note the content of the report**
- (ii) **commit to completing appropriate e-learning to raise their awareness and understanding of their role and responsibilities to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace**

1 Introduction

1.1 There have been recent legislation changes to the '*Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023*' which provides a new **positive** duty on employers to take **reasonable steps** to **prevent** sexual harassment of their employees in the course of their employment.

1.2 The main features of this change include:

- the introduction of a mandatory duty on employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.
- the strengthening of the law provides employment tribunals with the power to increase compensation by up to 25% where a claim of sexual harassment is upheld and the employer has breached this duty.

2 Background

2.1 Employers are already liable for harassment carried out by their employees at work unless they have taken "all reasonable steps" to prevent the harassment. However, a new positive duty on employers to take steps to prevent sexual harassment requires employers to review their policies and procedures to ensure that:

- the equality, diversity and inclusion policies that they have in place will meet the new requirements;
- those policies are implemented in practice;
- their workforce is made aware of the policies;
- employees and line managers are provided with appropriate training;
- there is a system in place for dealing effectively with employee complaints; and
- policies are reviewed as appropriate.

3 Next steps

3.1 To comply with the preventative duty, the following measures have been discussed, considered and agreed by Leadership Team:

- **update policies** – the existing ‘Acceptable Behaviour Policy’ and ‘Confidential Reporting Policy (Whistleblowing)’ will be updated to incorporate the duty regarding sexual harassment. This includes stating what actions and behaviour the Authority determines to be sexual harassment, and a commitment to zero tolerance. It will also set out routes for reporting sexual harassment to ensure it can be reported safely and without restrictive processes.
- **training** – all staff will be required to complete the ‘Sexual Harassment at Work’ module on our online e-learning management system, as well as being required to read the updated policy on Acceptable Behaviour. Members will also be asked to complete the e-learning module. All line managers will also be required to complete a second e-learning module on ‘Bullying & Harassment in Practice: For Managers.’ This covers; how to recognise bullying and harassment, how to deal with harassment by third parties, creating the right culture, dealing with complaints, and duty of care.
- **consider the risks of sexual harassment** taking place at Dartmoor National Park Authority. Incorporate the risk of sexual harassment into the current ongoing review of lone working practices for the Authority.
- **keep policies and practices under review** - Continue to seek feedback (through staff surveys, appraisals, exit interviews, 1:1s) to ensure staff continue to feel safe and respected at work.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 To access the e-learning, Members will be provided with an individual licence. The annual cost is £11.50 per licence, total cost of £218.50 for 19 Members. This will be met from the current revenue budget.

5 Conclusion

5.1 Members provide leadership and direction for the Authority. It is also important that Members act as role models in how they behave and conduct themselves in order that the Authority is an inclusive, safe and respectful place to work.

5.2 The Members Code of Conduct states that Members must not bully, harass, intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person. This includes sexual harassment and it is important that Members understand what we mean by sexual harassment, what constitutes sexual harassment, the roles and responsibilities, of those at Dartmoor National Park Authority, if Members experience or witness sexual harassment and how we can minimise and prevent sexual harassment.

5.3 It is therefore recommended that Members commit to completing the same e-learning module on ‘Sexual Harassment at Work’ as required by our employees. This e-learning module will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and can be done at home. Full details will be provided by Human Resources.

NEIL WHITE



NPA/24/044

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Open Consultation: Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings

Report of the Head of Organisational Development (Monitoring Officer) and the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

Recommendation: **That Members:**

- i. **Comment on the draft Authority response to the current open consultation on remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings; and**
- ii. **Delegate authority to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer), in consultation with the Deputy Chair of the Authority, Chair of Development Management and Chair of Audit and Governance Committees, to finalise and submit the final response.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) has published a [consultation paper](#) on the detail and practical implications of allowing remote and hybrid attendance at local authority meetings.
- 1.2 The [consultation paper](#) is also testing views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely. For example, during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.
- 1.3 Any changes made to legislation as a result of this consultation would only apply to local authorities in England, including National Park Authorities.
- 1.4 The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 19 December 2024.

2 Consultation Proposals

- 2.1 The government is seeking to modernise democratic engagement, raise standards and widen the range of candidates standing for council by removing unnecessary barriers.
- 2.2 While recognising that the attendance of elected members at local authority meetings is a core part of the democratic process at the local level and is integral to members carrying out their functions effectively, the Government also recognises that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for members to attend council meetings in person.

- 2.3 It is with this in mind that the Government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings.
- 2.4 The intent is that this increased flexibility will strike the balance between the principle that significant in-person engagement remains vitally important, and a recognition that there will sometimes be a need to accommodate members' requirements to attend council meetings remotely.
- 2.5 The Government hopes that the proposed changes will encourage a wider diversity of people willing and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy by creating improved conditions where meetings are accessible and inclusive.
- 2.6 The Government is also seeking views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an elected member, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

3 Draft Response

- 3.1 Officers have carefully considered the proposals set out in the consultation and a draft response is provided at Appendix 1 to inform and shape Member discussion.
- 3.2 We understand that National Parks England will be coordinating a collective response on behalf of English National Park Authorities. At the time of writing, we have not heard anything further regarding this.

4 Equality and Sustainability Impact

- 4.1 The Authority is committed to ensuring its services and functions are accessible and inclusive. This consultation proposes legislative change that may bring about greater opportunities for people from all backgrounds and abilities to engage in the democratic process.
- 4.2 The Authority has promoted this open consultation to the public via its social media channels and alerted all Authority Members and employees of the opportunity to respond individually.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Other than officer and Member time, there are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation exercise.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 This is an important consultation. The proposals outlined in the consultation paper could radically alter the way in which the Authority conducts its business.

NEIL WHITE and KEVIN BISHOP

Background papers/link:

[Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix 1 – DNPA draft response to the consultation

Draft response to the open consultation on enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings.

The text below outlines the key questions from the consultation paper which require a response from the Authority and a suggested response. There are specific questions (notable 1 and 4) with the consultation paper that are best answered by a Member responding in a personal capacity.

Question 2

Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?

Suggested response:

Yes

Question 3

If you answered Yes to the above question, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?

Please tick all the options below that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.
- b) Members should only be able to attend council meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances, such as those who are medically or physically unable to attend, or for reasons of local or national emergencies.
- c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.
- d) [Free text box]

Suggested response:

There should be no limitations placed upon the Authority with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of public meetings. This would provide the flexibility for the Authority to consider any limitations as part of its Standing Orders (i.e. a requirement that XX percentage of Members should be physically present or remote attendance is only allowed in exceptional circumstances).

This approach maximises local flexibility but would also mean that there would potentially be a lack of consistency across local authorities/national park authorities.

Question 5

If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?

- less than 10%
- more than 10% but less than 50%
- more than 50% but less than 90%
- most of them 90% to 100%

Suggested response:

To be determined at the meeting of the Authority.

Question 6

The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?

- a) Councils should be able to allow full remote attendance at up to half of council meetings within a twelve-month calendar period.
- b) Councils should only have the flexibility to change a meeting from in-person to online, or vice versa, due to unforeseen and exceptional circumstances.
- c) Councils should not have the flexibility to conduct fully remote meetings to ensure there is always an in-person presence.
- d) [Free text box]

Suggested response:

It is suggested that the Authority request the ability to allow full remote attendance at up to half of all public meetings (i.e. Authority, Development Management, Audit and Governance and Standards Sub-Committee) within a twelve-month calendar period. This would provide flexibility. The view of Officers is that fully remote meetings should only be held in exceptional circumstances or when the agenda indicates that this is the most effective and efficient means e.g. limited agenda items). Criteria for remote only meetings could be established via the Authority's Standing Orders.

Whilst not covered by the consultation paper, we believe that a member of the public should be able to register to speak at a public meeting via a remote link or face to face. The specific arrangements would be set out in Standing Orders.

Question 7

Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?

Please tick all the options that correspond with your view and use the free text box for any other comments.

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.
- d) Other [Free text box]

Suggested response:

It is important that normal, hybrid and remote meetings are governed by the same Standing Orders to ensure that members of the public that may participate in the meetings are not disadvantaged, that Members participating remotely have same opportunity to contribute and question as per those attending in person and the principles of public life are properly adhered to.

A requirement to list those attending remotely in advance of a public meeting may restrict the flexibility that remote attendance potentially offers. What happens if a member is suddenly taken ill with a potentially contagious illness but is okay to participate remotely. At the start of hybrid or fully remote meetings the Chair for the meeting should set out who is attending and how (i.e. whether they are participating remotely or physically in attendance).

At a national level there should be a set of principles that provide a common framework for public meetings (be they in-person, hybrid or remote) which can then be expanded upon by local Standing Orders.

Remote attendance should be via a private and safe place to avoid background noise/interference – this should apply for Part 1 and Part 2 items. If the connection is lost then the Member should not be allowed to vote as, potentially, they will not have heard all of the arguments/debate.

Question 8

Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?

Tick all the statements below that apply to your point of view.

Should be considered because

Should not be considered because

It is a positive modernising measure.

Councillors should be physically present at all formal meetings.

It would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

It could lead to a significant number of councillors habitually attending remotely and ultimately reduce the effectiveness of councils.

Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

It would be more difficult for councillors to build personal working relationships with colleagues, and engage with members of the public in attendance at meetings.

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Free text box – please state any other reasons

Suggested response:

The Authority supports the ability to hold remote and hybrid meetings as we believe that this flexibility offers the following potential advantages:

It could improve attendance by Members

It may facilitate a more diverse range of people to become members of the Authority. NB we believe that there should be a restriction on how many meetings a member can attend in a remote capacity (i.e. cant do all meetings remotely as this mitigates against the collective or collegiate decision-making).

Potential cost savings (member travel) and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions (subject to calculation).

Question 9

In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics, for example those with disabilities or caring responsibilities?

Please tick an option below:

- it would benefit members
- it would disadvantage members
- neither

Please use the text box below to make any further comment on this question.

Suggested response:

We believe that the ability to attend some meetings remotely would help facilitate membership of the Authority from those with protected characteristics. However, we can also see a potential risk if such persons only ever attend remotely, hence our comments about a cap on the number of meetings that an individual member can attend remotely.

Proxy voting

Proxy voting is a form of voting whereby a member of a decision-making body may delegate their voting power to another representative to enable a vote in their absence. It is possible some members may find that, due to their personal circumstances, they are temporarily unable to participate in meetings even if remote attendance provisions are in place. Provisions for proxy voting could provide additional flexibility to those who really need it on a time-limited basis, allowing affected members to indirectly exercise their democratic duty, participate in their local authority's governance, and ensure that their views are taken into consideration. In the context of local authorities, the representative would have to be another elected member of the local authority.

Question 10

In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?

- yes
- no
- unsure

Suggested response:

The Authority does not support the proposal to allow votes by proxy. Officers believe that such an approach will mitigate transparency of decision-making, potentially reduce attendance and participation in meetings and could weaken public confidence in member decision-making. There are also important technical questions to be addressed about who would exercise a proxy vote and the soundness of such an approach. The issuing of a proxy vote would occur before discussion of an agenda item/a member had the opportunity to listen to presentations. This would be a particular issue in Development Management Committee where a proxy vote may raise questions of pre-determination and/or soundness of decision-making.



NPA/24/045

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme A report on the programme to date July 2021 – October 2024

Report of the Strategic Planning and Projects Manager

Recommendation: **That Members note the content of this report.**

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Since July 2021 Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) has provided funding at a local (protected landscape) scale through a flexible, 'ground up' programme, facilitated by local officer teams.
- 1.2 This report summarises the grant making activity and projects supported by the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme (FiPL) for Dartmoor from its inception in July 2021 to end October 2024.

2 Background

- 2.1 Authority report NPA/21/019 provides background details on how the FiPL programme was developed, the national objectives and how it links to the Dartmoor National Park Partnership Plan and delivery mechanisms.
- 2.2 In summary, the FiPL programme is a part of Defra's (Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs) [Agricultural Transition Plan](#). Through the programme Protected Landscapes offer funding to farmers and land managers in PLs that:
 - Support nature recovery
 - Mitigate the impacts of climate change
 - Provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage
 - Protect or improve the quality and character of the landscape or place.
- 2.3 The programme is not an Agri-environment scheme, but a flexible, applicant led, competitive local grant programme.

- 2.4 Each protected landscape in England has received a ring-fenced, annual financial allocation for FiPL from Defra. The majority of this money is spent on grants to farmers and other eligible applicants but some of the money (set as a proportion of the total annual grant allocation) can be spent on delivering the programme (staff time and associated running costs) as well as technical advice to potential applicants and grant recipients.
- 2.5 The programme launched at the start of July 2021 and is planned to run until end March 2025 by which time all funded projects must be completed, a report on the first six months of the programme is provided in Authority report NPA/22/009.
- 2.6 Initially FiPL was planned to run for three years (to end March 2024), the programme has been extended by a year and individual protected landscapes were also given an opportunity to bid for adjusted grant allocations as part of the extension process. Dartmoor requested additional funding at this time, resulting in significantly higher grant available in years three (FY23/4), increasing by approximately 50%, and four (FY24/5) by a further 30%.

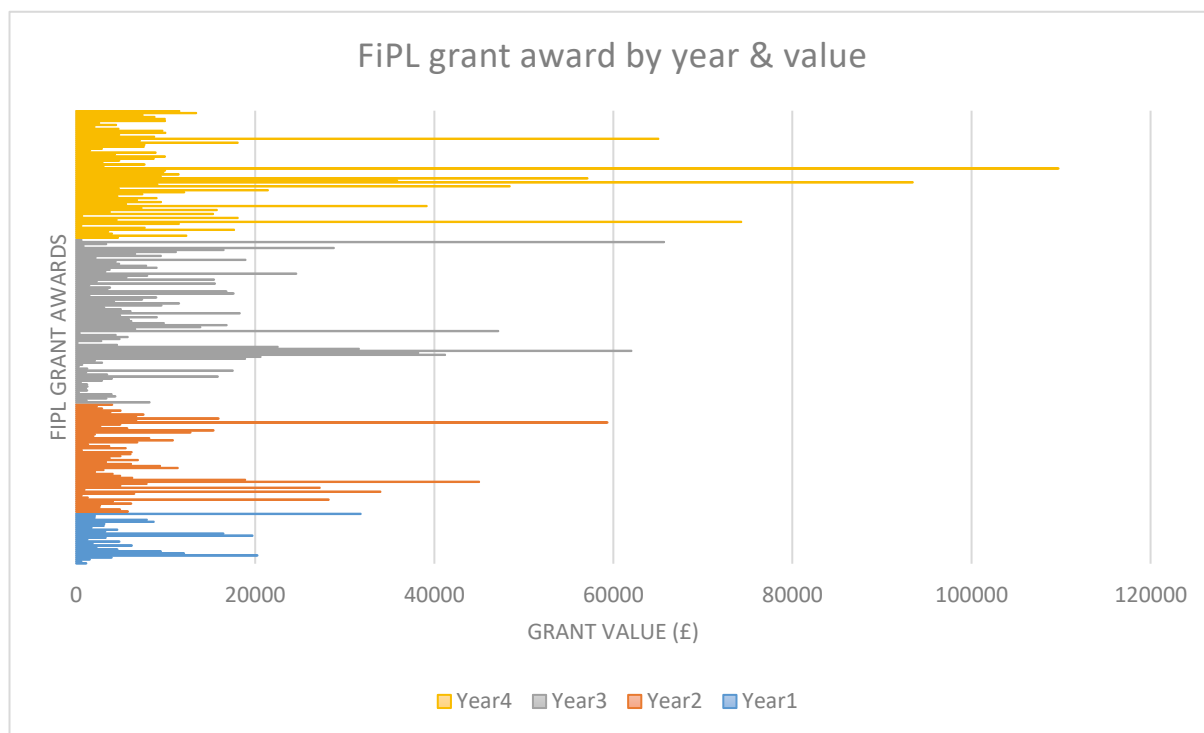
3 Delivery of the programme

- 3.1 The programme launched on 1 July 2021 with a range of publicity coordinated nationally by Defra. With support from DNPA Communications team and Dartmoor Hill Farm Project (DHFP) we promoted the programme through local channels and networks.
- 3.2 Dartmoor FiPL Local Assessment Panel (LAP) members and Dartmoor National Park staff (including Rangers, Recreation & Access team, Historic Environment team) have been successful in promoting the scheme through their significant networks in the land management community.
- 3.3 The typical application process begins with potential applicants contacting the FiPL team to discuss their ideas. The team can help develop the application as appropriate, advising on eligibility, value for money etc. The team has comprised one or more staff able to visit applicants and provide on-site advice to help develop proposals, other DNPA officers with relevant specialist knowledge have also contributed to this process. Once complete applicants submit their finished application for assessment. For grant requests of more than £10k applications are assessed by our Local Assessment Panel (LAP) who meet approximately every six weeks, with requests for less than £10k¹ being assessed at officer level every two weeks.
- 3.4 DNPA's website provides the main source of information required by applicants, as well as publishing details of grants awarded to projects, records of LAP meetings and decision making. Applicants have also been able to communicate and submit applications by other means (e.g. on paper).
- 3.5 Projects can be multiyear and can be supported by grants of between £2,000 up to a maximum of £250,000. The grant intervention rate for FiPL is variable depending on the balance of public goods to private gain expected from the project, for

¹ Initially the officer delegated grant amount was £5k, this was increased by Defra to £10k during year three. Each applicant may only make two such 'fast track' applications for officer level decision with all subsequent applications being assessed by the LAP regardless of value.

example a project that delivers the FiPL aims as well as those of Dartmoor’s National Park Partnership Plan but is also a commercial venture might be offered up to 40% grant support whereas a project that only seeks to deliver benefits for nature, climate, people and place without benefit to the business might be offered up to 80% grant contribution. Exceptionally FiPL can offer 100% project funding.

Graph showing Dartmoor FiPL grant awards over the course of the programme (July 2021 to date), the scale and ambition in project applications has grown each year and this can be seen in the value of grant awards each year.



3.6 The programme is supported nationally by a small Defra team who have developed a good working relationship with individual protected landscapes.

4 Local Assessment Panel and staffing

4.1 At launch we had not been able to recruit any dedicated staff to the programme. Dartmoor’s FiPL programme has been managed by the Authority’s Strategic Planning and Projects Manager throughout. Initially programme delivery was enabled by existing DNPA officers, particularly the Hill Farm Project’s Land Management Advisor, David Attwell. The Headwaters officer and Nature Recovery officer were also well placed to support FiPL at that time (summer 2021) alongside limited freelance farm advisor time.

4.2 By October 2021 we had recruited two part-time staff to FiPL

Position	FTE
Strategic Planning and Projects Manager	0.6
Dartmoor FiPL Advisor	0.6
Dartmoor FiPL Administrator	0.6

Other DNPA officers (especially Hill Farm Project, Headwaters and Nature Recovery)	Flexible as required/have capacity
--	------------------------------------

- 4.3 Both Advisor and Administrator moved on and were replaced but roles and structure remained until FiPL Yr3 (FY2023/4) when we were able to recruit more people to the team as a result of the increased grant and higher accompanying operational budget.

Dartmoor FiPL team structure from mid Yr3 (FY 2023/4) to present

Position	FTE
Strategic Planning and Projects Manager	0.6
Dartmoor FiPL Advisor	1.0
Dartmoor FiPL Engagement Officer	1.0
Dartmoor FiPL Advisor	0.6
Dartmoor FiPL Assistant	1.0
Other DNPA officers (especially HFP, Headwaters, Rangers and Historic Environment team)	Flexible as required/have capacity

- 4.4 The team has also contracted in historic buildings advice, as our experience is predominantly natural environment and farming. Planning colleagues have also been particularly helpful in sharing specialist knowledge.
- 4.5 Grant award decisions, guidance and advocacy are provided by Dartmoor FiPL's Local Advisory Panel (LAP). The membership of the Dartmoor Local Assessment Panel is detailed in the following table – the LAP structure agreed by the Authority in July 2021. There have been some changes within individuals attending LAP but the overall structure has not changed. Panel members were asked to identify seconds to cover any non-attendance, ensuring all meetings remain quorate. The table also shows the attendance record.

Table showing the composition of Dartmoor FiPL's Local Assessment Panel (LAP), attendance figures are included. Total number of meetings held to date is 28.

Representing	Name	Meetings attended
Dartmoor Commoners Council – invitation to the Chair	Layland Branfield (Anne Wilcocks/Philip French substitute)	22
Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Chair - invitation to the Chair	Russell Ashford	26
Farmer representative	Daniel Alford (Shirley Mudge acts as second to both independent Farmer reps.)	19
Farmer representative	Martin Perryman then Christine Malseed	15
DNPA Member – appointed by the Authority	Peter Harper	22
DNPA Member– appointed by the Authority	Will Dracup	13

DNPA Officer – appointed by the Chief Executive (National Park Officer)	James Sharpe (Richard Drysdale substitute on occasion)	26
Natural England	Eamon Crowe then Laurie Phippen, then David Hazelhurst and will be Katie Wynter	19
Representative from environmental NGOs (defined as one member of the Panel to represent the following organisations: RSPB, Devon Wildlife Trust, Woodland Trust and National Trust)	Helen Booker then Sarah Blyth, both RSPB (Emma Jones, National Trust substitute for one meeting)	19
Landowner representative - invitation to the Chair of the Dartmoor Common Landowners Association	John Howell	17
Representative from Dartmoor Local Access Forum	Mark Walker then Alison Clish-Green	22
Rural Payments Agency (non-voting member)	Paul Dean	3

5 Funding

5.1 As mentioned in 3.0, the initial grant allocation for Yr3 was lower at £503,636 with operating costs the same as Yrs1&2. We were able to increase our funding as part of the Yr4 extension process.

Dartmoor FiPL programme funding allocation from Defra

	FiPL Yr1 (2021/2)	Yr2 (2022/3)	Yr3 (2023/4)	Yr4 (2024/5)
Grant allocation	£250,000	£556,372	£759,414 ²	£1,005,950
Provision of Advice & Guidance	£59,000	£59,000	£97,428	£151,320
Programme administration	£34,000	£34,000	£56,145	£87,200

5.2 The FiPL team are grateful for the support provided by many core DNPA colleagues, including our Finance Team. Putting an additional £1m of grant payments (each project typically submitting a number of staged claims) through DNPA's financial administration represents a significant increase in work. The success of the FiPL programme on Dartmoor has certainly required a DNPA team effort.

6 Grants awarded to date

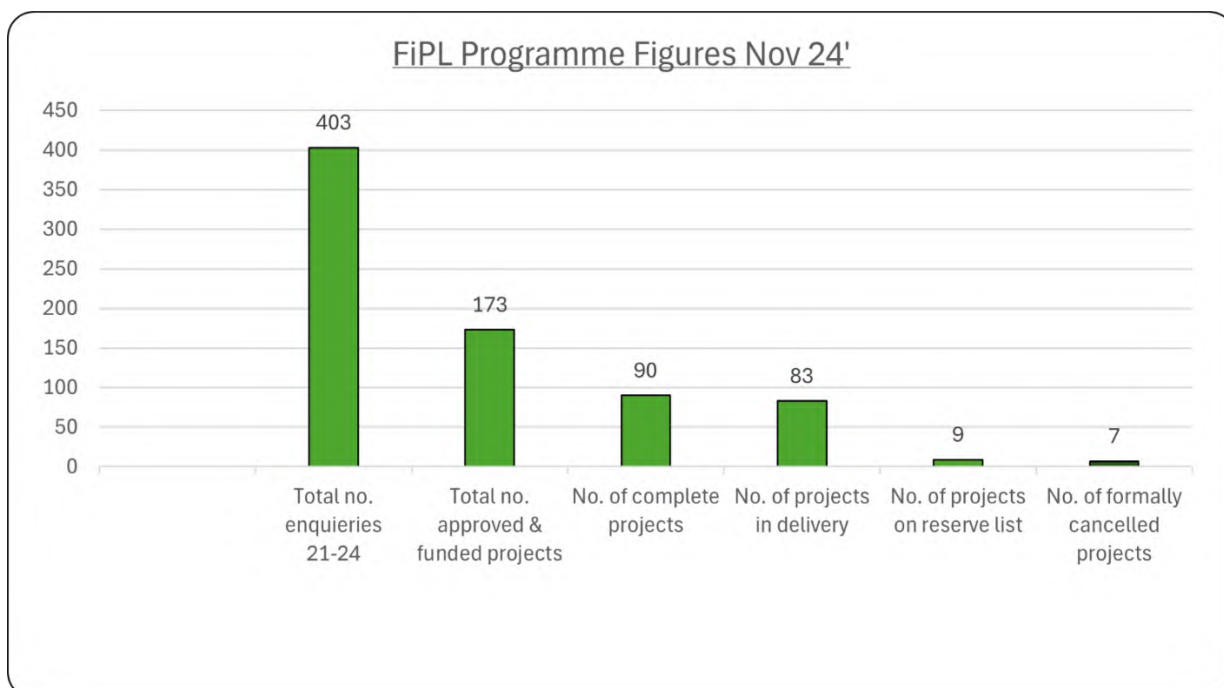
6.1 We have processed 403 early stage enquiries for FiPL funding, resulting in 173 finished applications being submitted and approved, at the time of writing, we have allocated all available funding so have closed to new applications. Experience from

² Grant allocation figure for year three was increased from £503,636 at our request. Advice and Admin costs were also increased from the Yr1&2 level.

previous years would suggest that a number of projects will not deliver to the full extent of their grant award and we would aim to reallocate any unclaimed grant money to other projects, with this in mind we have a number of projects pre-approved subject to funding becoming available.

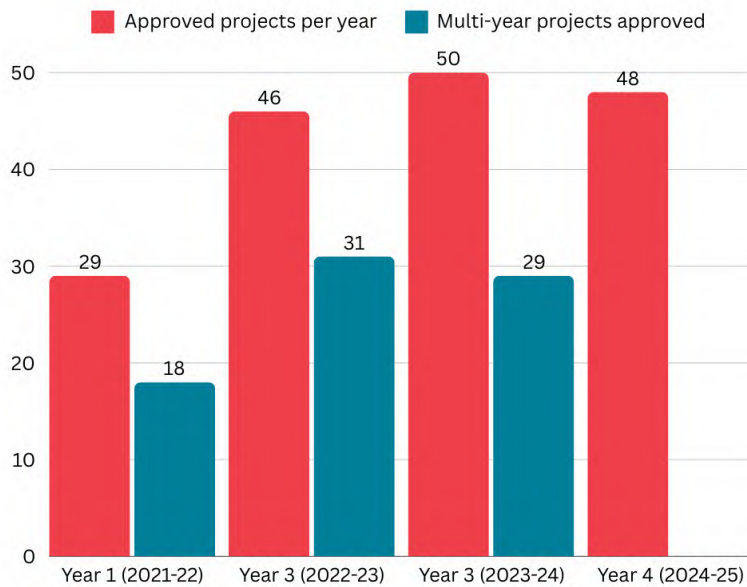
6.2 Of the 173 grants awarded, 90 projects are complete with 83 currently active. 7 grants have been cancelled after approval, typically because the applicant does not have capacity to deliver following a change in circumstances or the applicant secures funding from other sources.

6.3 Numbers of grants awarded and completed to date

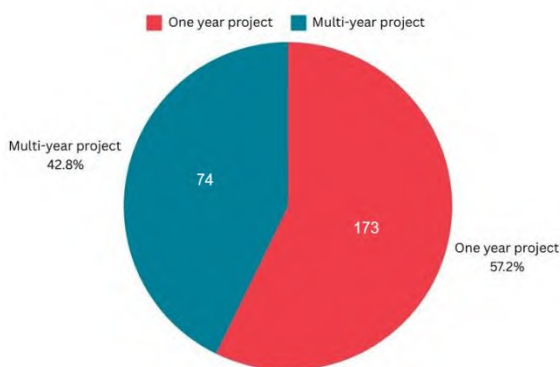


6.4 While there is benefit to FiPL supporting multiyear projects, the FiPL grant from Defra has been administered as single years with full annual grant amounts having to be committed and spent in that year. Ensuring each single year is fully committed, spent and closed down whilst also enabling applicants' multiyear projects has been challenging.

6.5 Chart showing mix of multi-year projects alongside number of grants awarded in each year, multi-year projects account for 43% of Dartmoor FiPL grants.



6.6 Multi-year agreements as proportion of total grants awarded, Dartmoor FiPL launch to present

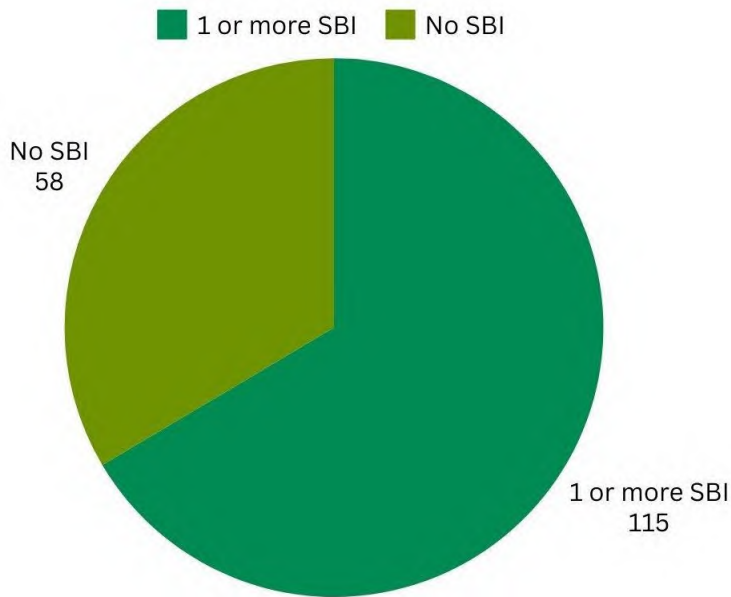


6.7 Projects awarded funding are described on the [DNPA Farming in Protected Landscapes web pages](#), we also publish an account of decisions made by the Local Assessment Panel.

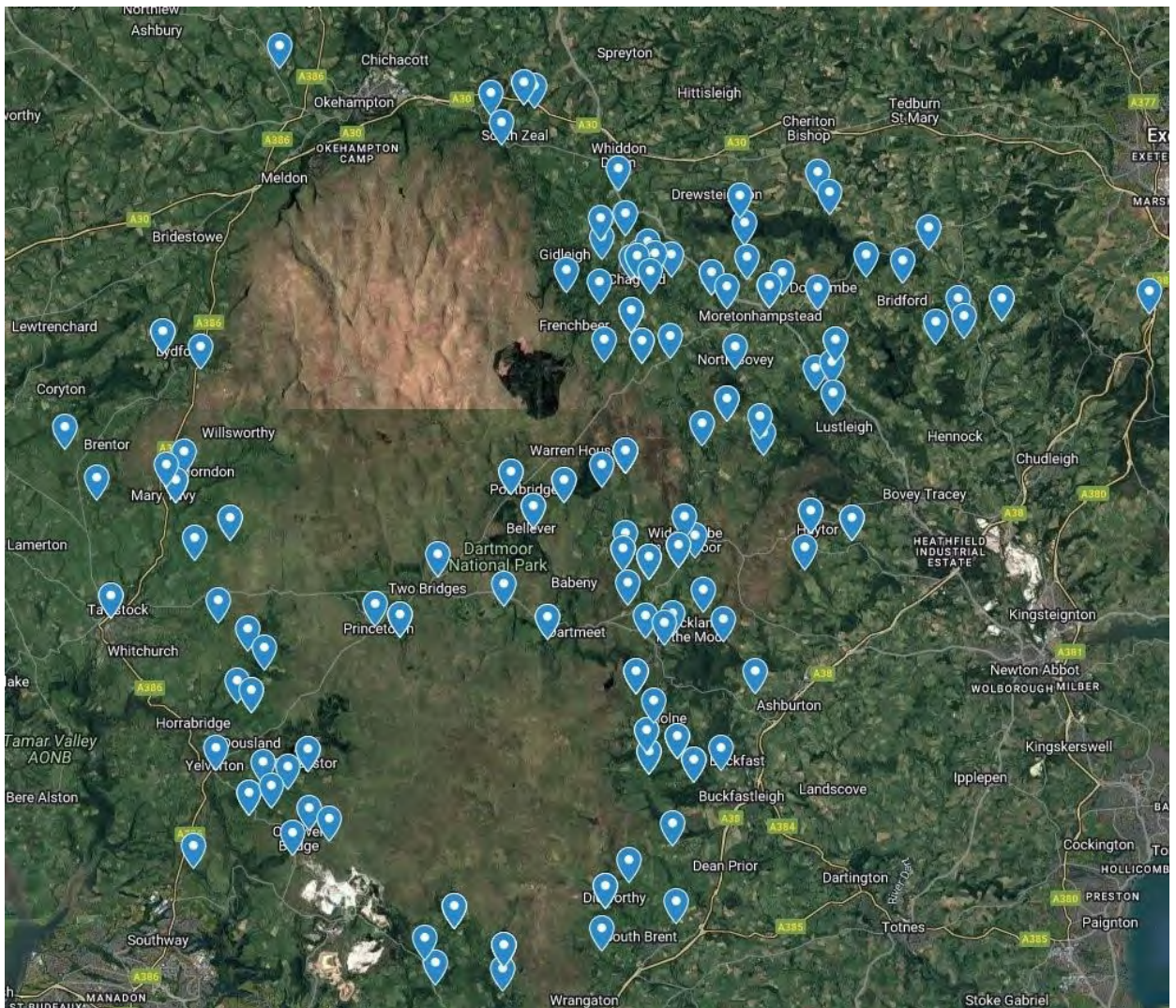
6.8 All proposals must deliver against at least one of the FiPL outcomes of nature, climate, people and place as well as delivering the aims of Dartmoor’s National Park Partnership Plan in order to be successful.

6.9 The mix of successful applicants covers a diverse range of eligible land managers/owners in the National Park. Dartmoor FiPL has been able to support projects on small areas of agricultural land that is not eligible under the mainstream Defra grants. But most applications have come from farming and other land-based businesses, both in number and value (applications from farm businesses tend to account for the more ambitious and higher value grants).

6.10 Proportion of grants awarded to applicants involved in agricultural activity (having registered Single Business Identifier (SBI) with the Rural Payments Agency).



6.11 Locations of FiPL grantees



7 Key risks identified

In the initial FiPL report to Authority on 9th July 2021 a number of key risks were identified, those relevant to programme delivery on Dartmoor are commented on here:

7.1 Operational risks

Lack of applications – we have awarded all available funding and have a substantial pipeline of potential projects.

Staff resource – The number of enquiries is challenging to service and we try to meet with all eligible applicants. The Dartmoor FiPL team has worked at capacity through the duration of the programme.

Working alongside existing schemes - The risk of inadvertently double funding activity remains significant as we rely, to a large extent, on applicants sharing the details of any publicly funded agreements with us. We direct applicants to other Defra funding where this may be possible, the Assessment Panel members are highly knowledgeable and have routinely challenged applications that may be eligible for funding through other schemes.

7.2 Financial risks

Accountable body – the risk remains as previously stated.

Year-end spend – With the close of the programme at the end of the current financial year, grantees must complete projects by the end of March 2025 and submit claims shortly after to receive their grant or there is a risk their claims will become ineligible as the programme closes.

Underspend – although all grant has been allocated there is a risk of grantees not being able to (fully) deliver and claim their full grant. We do have a wait list of approved projects but if existing grantees underclaim we need to anticipate and act on this in time for reserve projects to deliver.

7.3 Reputational risk

Local Assessment Panel – This risk remains as previously stated. It is moderated through clear processes and procedures for declaring interests and these have been explained to Panel members through the initial training sessions and routinely at meetings. Details of grants awarded are published on the DNPA website along with notes from Assessment Panel meetings.

External scrutiny – there is a risk of scrutiny and public criticism if stakeholders regard FiPL as not delivering priorities for farming and/or public funding. This remains a risk although FiPL has received praise nationally from within Government/Defra and support from the Secretary of State.

8 Lessons to learn

8.1 We have identified some lessons to learn, including:

- One of the strengths of FiPL is local delivery and the ability to provide applicants with someone they know and who aims to understand their specific needs (as opposed to a national agency/call centre/online form). Relationships matter, trust and familiarity take time to develop. It is important to listen to potential applicants, especially those who are less familiar with funding applications.
- The requirement for data capture, analysis, compliance, and reporting is rightly high for such a public funding programme as this. The formats for application and reporting provided by Defra are not as efficient as they could be.
- There are times of year when Dartmoor's farmers and land-based businesses are very busy and unlikely to engage with a funding programme. Priority programmes should be planned around these times.
- What some might consider a 'simple' application is a long and off-putting process to others. We developed a very short Expression of Interest (EOI) form to encourage potential applicants to share their ideas in a quick and easy format, other Protected Landscapes have done this too. The application process can be a bigger barrier than we had anticipated.
- The good relationships with the farming community that are maintained through the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project are extremely valuable and have helped us deliver the FiPL programme to the extent we have in the short time available.
- The support, advice and guidance we have received from members of the Local Assessment Panel is of great value, alongside this is the help provided by established DNPA teams (including but not limited to, Rangers, Archaeologists, Planning colleagues, Finance and administration, Ecologists, our GIS specialist, Headwaters, Access & Recreation, Hill Farm Project). The value of help and expertise 'at the next desk' to a broadly focused programme such as FiPL should not be underestimated.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 FiPL has been well received on Dartmoor and elsewhere across the country. On Dartmoor we have been fortunate to award roughly double the original amount of grant money.
- 9.2 The Dartmoor FiPL programme has supported a diverse range of valuable projects and provides a blueprint and strong case for Protected Landscape teams to play a leading role in government grant schemes.
- 9.3 Protected landscapes have made the case for FiPL to be extended beyond March 2025. This case is based on an impressive track record of delivery and the lack of an alternative model within the 'mainstream' Environmental Land Management

programmes. FiPL has been particularly successful in funding new innovative and integrated projects that combine the four aims: people, place, nature and climate.

JAMES SHARPE

Attachments: **Appendix 1** : Output figures from Dartmoor FiPL
 Appendix 2 - A selection of projects funded

20241206 JS – FiPL report on programme to date

Dartmoor Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)
Headline output from funded projects July 2021 to April 2024



6 projects to protect and enhance rivers

18 ponds created or restored



57ha woodland cover created

4,251 trees planted

1,367m new hedgerow

12,611m hedgerow restored



7,050ha area of projects to improve soil health

12 projects improve understanding of climate change mitigation and adaptation



20,783ha area better managed for biodiversity

Including 6,285ha area of favourable management within SSSIs






23 projects making the landscape more accessible



to a wider range of visitors



141 land managers engaged with the programme, of whom 36 were not in agri-environment scheme and **51 had not engaged with DNPA before**

Examples of projects supported through the Dartmoor FiPL programme
A full list of grants awarded can be found on [DNPA's website](#)

<p>Teign Valley Venison</p>  <p>An example of healthy woodland understorey</p>  <p>The same wood following heavy deer browsing</p>	<p>FiPL grant: £6,043</p> <p>Support for an existing deer management and venison supply business in the Teign Valley..</p> <p>Grant towards a Thermal Monocular, a larger deer chiller, and a portable winch, increasing efficiency in survey, management and production. This will, in turn, help keep the deer population healthy and in balance with the environment, thereby reducing the impact deer will have on woodland and agriculture.</p>
<p>Dartmoor Farmers' Association – on farm education</p>  <p>Local school children introduced to farming on Dartmoor</p>	<p>FiPL grant: £97,835</p> <p>A partnership project that is being led by Dartmoor Farmers Association, in collaboration with Shallowford Farm Trust and Dartmoor Hill Farm Project. The Project creates understanding of the link between food eaten at school and/or at home with farming and conservation on Dartmoor by promoting, organising and delivering 25 farm visits involving up to 10 different farms and over 500 children.</p> <p>In parallel to the educational visits, the Project is piloting the development and delivery of bespoke Farm Environment Plans</p>

<p>Meavy Barton farm expansion and education facilities</p>	<p>FiPL grant: £109,720</p>
 <p>New shed and classroom during construction at Meavy Barton</p>	<p>An improved outlet within Dartmoor for the applicant's own grass-based beef, supplying to their Farm Shop, Farmers' Market and Butchery with the erection of an additional shed to finish their cattle.</p> <p>Included in the shed is a classroom to teach primary to higher education students about the process of rearing beef animals on Dartmoor. This educational opportunity will link to the applicant's partnered Butcher's shop a 3-minute drive away, where students will be able to complete their field to fork learning.</p>
<p>Dartmoor Molinia Management Trials</p>	<p>FiPL grant: £38,737</p>
 <p>Results of different molinia management approaches</p>  <p>Maps showing some trial plot locations</p>	<p>Molinia is rapidly spreading across Dartmoor to dominate large areas. It is taking over from other plant communities and makes large areas unpalatable for livestock which leads to increased grazing pressure on priority habitats and erosion. The thatch of dead Molinia also provides a large fuel load for fire. Removing the thatch and opening up the areas for grazing are vital to reversing this change.</p> <p>This project increases commoners' knowledge of how to best control Molinia on both deep and shallow peat as well as developing a monitoring methodology to assess success.</p>



NPA/24/046

Dartmoor National Park Authority

6 December 2024

Visitor Engagement - End Of Season Report 2024

Report of the Director of Conservation and Communities

Recommendation: **That Members note the content of the report.**

1 Background

1.1 Summer 2024 proved to be very mixed with regards to the weather, visitor numbers and visitor spend on Dartmoor. What has been consistent is the work by the engagement teams across Dartmoor and how they work effectively together as well as with partners on, across and outside of Dartmoor.

2 2024 Visitor Season

2.1 As in previous seasons, and recognising the importance of continuity, we delivered the core of our visitor engagement work using three key themes.

- Communicating key messages
- Providing a warm welcome
- Limiting damaging activity

2.2 Critically, the engagement aimed to influence people's decisions and behaviour from the point they decided to visit Dartmoor all the way through their visit. It aimed to help everybody enjoy Dartmoor but in ways, and at times and locations that do not cause harm to the special qualities of the National Park or to local communities and crucially to support local businesses.

3 Communication and Key Messages

3.1 In 2024 we have used our social media channels to relay key messages that educate and influence visitor behaviour. These included dogs on leads, take litter home, cycling, fires, and camping. To ensure understanding and take up we have managed the approach by explaining to people why they should do something in a positive way rather than just post messages that say 'no' or 'don't' and which have been shown to alienate visitors and not change their behaviour.

- 3.2 Alongside the social media channels we recognise that traditional media coverage remains one of the most important tools for sharing messages and explaining the Authority's work so people understand what we do, and why we do it. This is key to how we can reach bigger, more diverse audiences with the messages outlined previously. The Authority's brand awareness, audience reach, and public understanding would be significantly reduced, without earned media and PR.
- 3.3 Dogs on Dartmoor is an example where traditional media (with articles in various local and regional publications), social media (posts across our channels), team engagement (Rangers, Engagement Volunteers, Volunteer Wardens Visitor Centre staff and outreach staff) working together in advance and then at events alongside partners (including the National Trust, Devon and Cornwall Police and the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society) to promote themed and aligned messages have worked positively. This has also been supplemented by rewarding positive conversations about dogs on Dartmoor and around livestock and ground nesting birds with dog leads and dog treats handed out. Crucially this coordinated approach goes some way to ensuring that the conversations on the ground were not the 'last port of call' or a surprise for visitors.
- 3.4 Backpack camping on Dartmoor was still a key story across all channels and in particular in the lead up to the Supreme Court hearing on the 8 October 2024. However, the top performing press releases relating to visitor management included a news item about the Dartmoor Marshals – this news item went to 2,000 subscribers and was featured on both BBC Spotlight and ITV Westcountry, both of which increased reach and understanding. It was also featured in print and online media outlets including Devon Live, which is in the top 10 best performing media websites in the UK with an audience of more than 3million.
- 3.5 The top performing posts across all social media channels from 01 April to 31 October 2024 were
[Facebook](#): Northern lights photos captured by DNPAs very own Paula Legg. Date posted: 11 April 2024
[Instagram](#): The same as above. Date posted: 11 April 2024
[X \(fka Twitter\)](#): Good luck Ten Tors. Date posted: 10 May 2024
[LinkedIn](#): Fire pit damage. Date posted: 16 August 2024
[TikTok](#): Fire pit damage. Date posted: 9 August 2024
- 3.6 Promoting all teams and their work has seen the Comms team develop messaging with the Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Team and since the start of October have created #FiPLFriday posts for our digital channels. These posts are designed to inform the public about works Dartmoor FiPL has funded. One post around an access project at Bowden Farm has been used by Defra and featured in their fortnightly round up. The most popular #FiPLFriday has been a short film created with Ranger Stuart Hoopell where he explains the details of erosion repair works at Haytor. At the beginning of November it had been viewed as follows:
- | | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Facebook: | 10.2k |
| X (fkaTwitter): | 1498 |
| TikTok: | 715 |
| LinkedIn: | 764 |
| Instagram: | 8271 |

4 Providing a warm welcome

4.1 In 2024, Dartmoor National Park Authority joined the founding Devon and Partners Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) Steering Group. The Devon LVEP allows Dartmoor to be engaged on shared priorities and targets for Devon's tourism which will help support and grow the visitor economy. Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park Authorities will be leading on the sustainable/regenerative tourism element of the partnership.

4.2 Access for All

4.2.1 2024 is the final year of the Defra funding and £73,000 has been allocated which has enabled Dartmoor to be more accessible to a wider audience. 15 projects have been undertaken including access improvements at eight sites including Wistman's Wood, Fernworthy Reservoir, Blackingtone Rock and Longtimber Woods. Additionally, the funding is being used to invest in digital resources through a Dartmoor walking app and the purchase of a tramper/off-road mobility scooter will be made available for visitors to Dartmoor in 2025.

4.2.2 The National Park website added a further four 'Miles without Stiles' routes this summer, to bring the number up to ten. –
(<https://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/enjoy-dartmoor/outdoor-activities/accessible-dartmoor>)

4.2.3 The Two Moors Way is a key walking route and there have been improvements to the path alongside drainage works at Ponsworthy. We have also undertaken opportunity mapping of improvements so that when funds are available, they can be directed to make relevant improvements in advance of its 50th anniversary in 2026.

4.2.4 We are hugely indebted to the continued input from volunteers on waymarking production and installation. Record numbers of fingerposts and way markers have been upgraded and installed across the moor. These works bring a significant cost-benefit to the Authority as well as helping all users on the ground.

4.2.5 Active Travel England have supported the English National Parks to undertake an audit of the current cycle network and to develop a plan of additional routes and interventions. Over 200 submissions have been made during the four-week public consultation. A draft network plan will be available for Members to view in the spring.

4.3 Visitor Centres

4.3.1 Visitor figures between April and the end of October show that there has been around 8% less footfall in 2024 against 2023. 2023 had seen a significant increase and this fall in 2024 is in line with the lower visitor numbers seen across the region and also the unpredictability of the weather, causing events such as the family focused History Hunters Day based around Postbridge Visitor Centre to be cancelled.

4.3.2 Princetown Visitor Centre numbers were also lower than anticipated as the works in the Ian Mercer Room were still being undertaken, meaning that larger exhibitions

could not take place, and the Princetown Arts Festival was unable to make use of the larger space. However, we still managed to hold two exhibitions in the smaller gallery:

A Portrait of Place: The River Dart Anglers 19 March - 28 July

In association with the University of Plymouth, the exhibition had a well-attended launch event and was greatly enjoyed by those who visited, including many locals
Visitor numbers 12,323

Dartmoor Calendar exhibition 30 July – 1 December

An exhibition featuring the photos of staff and many of which were then used in the Dartmoor calendar 2025. This has proved to be one of the biggest income generating items of the year (see 4.4.1)

Visitor numbers until the end of October 18537

4.3.3 The visitor centres also hosted a number of activities, events and self-guided sessions which were aimed to welcome new visitors and help existing visitors to deepen their connection with Dartmoor's special qualities. This included:

- Self-guided 'egg-venture' trails from Haytor and Postbridge looking for the first signs of Spring.
- River dipping events at Postbridge during May ½ term
- Family fun with the 'Wild Bunch' during the summer holidays
- Myths, Legends and Bats in the Autumn half term
- Arts and crafts activities available at each Centre throughout the summer holidays.

4.3.4 In total the three centres welcomed just under 120,000 people between 1 April and 30 October 2024.

4.4 Retail

4.4.1 Whilst the overall visitor footfall was down by eight percent the retail sales in the Visitor Centres stayed the same and average transactional value increased by four percent. Profit margin has also risen, in part to production of more in house items, including calendars, greater concentration on lines that produce more income and margin and the introduction of more food items at Haytor Visitor Centre.

4.4.2 As well as producing more items with the DNPA logon on, the Retail Officer has held specific events to produce goods, such as a chocolate tasting event which resulted in significant increase in daily turnover on the days they were held.

4.4.3 The Outreach van has also had its best year of sales to date. This is in part to the range of items available but also the technology through contactless payments to process transactions.

4.5 Outreach and Engagement

4.5.1 The visitor centres are part of our 'Inreach' engagement programme but It has been a busy season for the Outreach and Engagement team. The engagement

programme for 2024 continued to have a focus on young people to help every child under 11 have a Dartmoor experience, as stated in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-2026.

- 4.5.2 To reach audiences who might not engage with us normally we have worked with partner organisations around the edge of the National Park to deliver our activities. This included the Rotary Club's Yelverton Funday, Hello Buckfastleigh, Langaford Trust's Black2Nature event and the National Trust's Autumn celebration.
- 4.5.3 We also ran three larger events for families, working with partners and colleagues. Highlights included the popular Rainforest Discovery Day working with Natural England for 369 people, Meldon Wildlife Festival supported by many local groups around Okehampton for over 300 people and the Big Day Out in the Woods with Natural England for over 350 people.
- 4.5.4 As highlighted earlier these events can only run with the support of various teams across DNPA, volunteers, partner organisations and the support of the comms team to help us promote and support the events. This can be through dedicated email newsletters which go to more than 3,000 subscribers and for the events mentioned in 4.5.3 these newsletters attracted a click rate of between 42% and 45%, where anything around 40% is considered positive. These events also secured media coverage, particularly in local media outlets such as The Moorlander, Tavistock Times, Mid Devon Advertiser, BBC Radio Devon among others.
- 4.5.5 Ranger Ralph continues to be very popular, with the nearly 150 members coming from across Devon and beyond to attend the monthly events. Ranger Ralph events included sessions on Dartmoor stories, a three Tors challenge and a spooky Halloween torch walk in the woods Ralph did though lose one of his greatest advocates when we said an emotional farewell to Ranger Ralph Club stalwart Bill Allen who retired as a Ranger this year and was a huge champion and advocate of the club.
- 4.5.6 The Outreach vehicle had Another busy outreach year attending a variety of formal engagements such as local shows and events both on and off Dartmoor and informal outreach across Dartmoor at popular car park locations. This summer the team on the Outreach vehicle engaged with nearly 4500 people.
- 4.5.7 The Outreach and Education team deliver the formal education element of their work through a school's programme that is supported by our wonderful volunteer education guides. This enables us to deliver Dartmoor experience for under 11s and enables us to reach a more diverse audience than we can solely through public events. This summer we delivered 34 school sessions to over 1000 young people. These sessions have been varied and have included an introduction to Dartmoor, geology, rivers, Is Dartmoor a Wild Place?, a Rainforest Discovery Day and for one school the opportunity to visit the tor each of their classes is named after. We have been able to expand our offer this year and remove barriers for five qualifying schools through Generation green 2 funding which covered the cost of the trip and critically the coach hire.
- 4.5.8 Through support from the Dartmoor Preservation Association (DPA), we have ensured continuity with our Junior and Youth Rangers and provide a space to

engage with teenagers and connect them with what makes Dartmoor so special. We have consistently been able to offer up to 30 places per event with the support of two new Casual Youth Engagement Assistants this summer. From April to October 57 young people aged 12-17 have attended 16 events. The programme of events has included a broad range of relevant activities through working in partnership including with Forestry England, Natural England, and many members of Team Dartmoor.

- 4.5.9 The Girls Do Dartmoor programme has engaged 21 young people from 2 local secondary schools since April. The impact the programme has on the wellbeing of the young people is clear but unfortunately this journey of connection has been disrupted at times due to administrative issues at the schools we engage with. The Girls Do Dartmoor Programme has been shortlisted in the “New Perspectives” category of Campaign for National Park’s Park Protector Awards this year.
- 4.5.10 Generation Green 2 funding has also enabled us to deliver two Nights Under The Stars (NUTS) events in August this year for 31 attendees from Devon Young Carers and Dartmoor Youth Rangers, aged 12-17. These were delivered at Shallowford Farm, supported by the staff there. We worked with young carers from across Devon throughout the spring and summer visiting them in their schools, bringing them out to Dartmoor for the day, and then offering them the opportunity to spend a Night under The Stars on a Dartmoor farm. The importance of these events was highlighted in the [episode of BBC Open Country](#) which was recorded during the event for Devon Young Carers.
- 4.5.11 The DPA funding through to October 2024 has meant our Community Engagement Ranger has lead on the above engagement activities and also promoted work in conjunction with DPA. This has bene highlighted by the successful delivery to date of the 3Ps campaign. The campaign is aimed at anyone who is considering or is already accessing more rural areas of Dartmoor. The 3Ps are pees, poos, and periods in the outdoors. The campaign aims to educate and promote conversation, giving people confidence to explore the national park further and to recreate in the national park respectfully. The campaign has been well received and has been taken on by Ten Tors with some group leaders requesting 3Ps packs of toileting resources for their groups.

4.6 Engagement Volunteers

- 4.6.1 To support our ranger team we have continued to deploy a number of Engagement Volunteers at key honeypot sites including Haytor, Postbridge, Wistman’s Wood track and Foggingtor. The weekends run from the beginning of April until the middle of September and Engagement Volunteers are available between 11:00 – 16:00 and relay key messages including dogs on leads throughout the lambing/bird nesting season and responsible backpack camping messages.

5 Limiting Damaging Activity

- 5.1 We continued to use the using the bright yellow ‘emergency signs’ that were created in 2020 at sites across the national park as required. We have updated how these signs are affixed on posts and have reduced the size of some following feedback and ensuring their efficacy.

5.2 Dartmoor Marshals

- 5.2.1 We managed to secure partnership support for the fifth year to deploy the ‘Dartmoor Marshals’, who engage and help educate the public at a number of key sites across Dartmoor from May through to the beginning of September, with a concentration on weekends and bank holidays. This is a partnership project supported by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, National Trust, Woodland Trust, Duchy of Cornwall, a private landowner and Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council.
- 5.2.2 The marshals recorded their work and interactions on the Ranger App, with 140 entries. These mainly dealt with overnight stays in motorhomes, ‘fly-camping’ (roadside or other non-permitted locations) including associated open fires, dogs off leads (prior to the end of July) as well as offering a presence into the early evening.
- 5.2.3 As well as being a valuable support to DNPA Rangers and partners, the marshals value to the Police is highlighted by their work in stopping a variety of anti-social behaviour and ensuring that incidents are recorded through the proper channels.

5.3 Ranger Liaison

- 5.3.1 The Ranger team has had to cope with its highest number of staff vacancies this year after three of its highly regarded team left during the course of the year. As we head to the end of the year the team is now back up to full strength and in fact has added additional resource in the South West corner of Dartmoor.
- 5.3.2 The team entered its ninth year supporting Speedwatch. Often joined by the Police or Speed detector van team, it was pleasing to report that the percentage of speeding and top speeds were generally lower. A number of the team also attended a Dog DNA workshop looking at traceability regarding livestock attacks. This has backed up the wider Dogs on Dartmoor work area and the importance of partnership working with the Police and the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society. Relationships with organisations and partners have been enhanced through the Dartmoor Rural Crime Initiative (DRCI) and the sharing of data and ideas. The DRCI includes Dartmoor Commoners’ Council, Dartmoor Common Landowners Association, Devon and Cornwall Police, Devon County Council, Devon Fire and Rescue Service, Forestry Commission, National Trust, Natural England, South West Lakes Trust and Woodland Trust amongst others.

5.4 Volunteer Wardens

- 5.4.1 The Volunteer Wardens team and other regular Volunteers (such as Haytor Second Sunday members) make up over 70 people who regularly help the Ranger Team in a multitude of ways throughout the seasons - such as surveying, patrolling, site visits, practical work and support. Their support in limiting and countering damaging activity on Dartmoor cannot be understated.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 We used agreed funds to support each area of the Authority’s work but should highlight our thanks to the Dartmoor Preservation Association for their contribution

to work of the Community Engagement Ranger; to Defra for the Access for All funds; Generation Green 2 for support of our programmes to allow all children to visit Dartmoor the age of 11 and all of those organisations and individuals who supported the work of the Dartmoor Marshalls. Finally, the time that our volunteers have generously given to support education, events and engagement is hugely appreciated and enables the Authority to achieve so much more that benefits Dartmoor.

7 Conclusion / Recommendation

- 7.1 Our visitor management plan for the National Park, with active involvement and support from a range of partners including statutory bodies, third sector organisation and private landowners, ensures continuity of message and the greatest engagement with visitors.
- 7.2 The Authority is very much aware of the pressures that the ongoing legal case on backpack camping has created for the moor and for all the teams involved with engagement. We continue to work with landowners, commoners and other stakeholders to ensure that those who visit Dartmoor do so responsibly and ensure that Dartmoor offers a warm welcome with clear guidance and advice.
- 7.3 Officers will continue to work with partners to consider plans for 2025 and with the Dartmoor Rural Crime Initiative to ensure coordination of message and support of projects and messaging.
- 7.4 The success of the visitor engagement is largely due to the support of our partners, the volunteers who gave their time, the dedication of staff and the engagement and support of the public.
- 7.6 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

RICHARD DRYSDALE