



## Dartmoor Access Forum

Parke, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 9JQ

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To: All Members of the  
Dartmoor Access Forum  
(see below)

# DARTMOOR ACCESS FORUM

## MINUTES of meeting held on Tuesday, 14 November 2023

Andrew Watson  
Head of Recreation, Access & Estates  
E-mail: [recreation@dartmoor.gov.uk](mailto:recreation@dartmoor.gov.uk)

**Present:** Mrs G Branfield, Mrs A Clish-Green; Mr J Hayes, Mrs A Head, Mr M Jeffery, Mrs A Head, Mr J Howell, Mrs J Lewis, Dr R Manning, Mrs L Martin, Mrs S Morgan, Mr M Owen, Ms S Viccars & Mrs P Warren

### 1 Welcome and Apologies

The meeting was opened by the Chair Michael Owen (MO).

**Apologies** were received from J Daymond, P French, G Kelly, A Lovell and M Walker.

### 2 Minutes of meeting held on 25 April 2023

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 were accepted as a correct record by the Chair and seconded by Alison Clish-Green & Sue Viccars.

### 3 Access and Recreation Update

#### **Fursdon Review**

Final report due mid-December. Report notes circulated with agenda. DAF Members submitted reports individually. Penny Warren reported that she had met some of the review panel members and that they appeared to be very thorough in their review process. John Howell reported the panel had met with access representatives in the last week. The Forum expressed the view that the review is thorough and welcomed.

#### **Planning Reforms**

Report attached with minutes. NPA's view opposes the proposal changes to planning system. Sally Morgan reported the view of Authority Members – that proposals would undermine The Local Plan.



## **Cycling Strategy**

DNPA are keen to improve relationships and engagement with key stakeholders in MTB Community. Drawing up a plan – will run some workshops early in 2024. DAF will need to contribute to the discussion and help shape the Strategy. MO explained that he'd like to establish a DAF Working Group to help take this forward. Expressions of interest to be sent to MO and Rachel Manning.

## **South West Peatland Partnership**

James Wright will share the restoration plans with Forum Members. MO reported that Emma C had raised concerns about potential impact on ancient tracks, that the partnership are aware of this and are taking into account.

## **Camping**

Andrew Watson provided an update regarding the current position with the camping case. AW confirmed that the Park Authority raised objections to the application by the claimants for the case to be heard in the Supreme Court. DNPA are awaiting a decision from the Supreme Court as to whether this will be heard. No timeframe has been provided for this.

## **Dogs on Dartmoor**

Andrew Watson provided an update on the Dogs on Dartmoor project, lead by the National Trust. The focus is on shared, consistent messaging and positive engagement with owners. Sometimes there is a lack of understanding about presence of wildlife etc. Training for front-line staff is being considered.

## **Access for All**

Tim Russell reported that there is funding from DEFRA across three years. £65K of access improvements were delivered last year. From 2024, the budget is £73K and Tim is working up the detail of the individual schemes.

## **Two Moors Way**

The Authority recognises that some sections of TMW require significant improvement and enhancement. Survey work is ongoing to identify areas of improvement, together with a costed plan. Funding will need to be identified/secured.

## **4 Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes**

Hannah Kingsbury presented the two-stage development programme for 2023-2029, a £3million project. The partnership project is linked to Dartmoors Partnership Plan and is focused on three river catchments – Erme, Dart and Okement. It is currently in its development stage. If successful following the development phase, the project will start in 2025. Aims of the project are Better for Nature, Better for People. Hannah provided an overview for the Access related projects, including Hubs, Miles Without Stiles, Cycling related projects and monitoring of erosion. Slides will accompany these minutes.

## **5 Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 Review of Access Restriction – West Dart River Valley**

Gillian Branfield – Declaration of Interest – Duchy Tenant. James Wright outlined the statutory review process for this long -term direction. DAF is a Statutory Consultee for the review. The site remains sensitive for breeding otters and salmon spawning. Forum decision to maintain current restriction and review again in five years.



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## 6 Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

Alison Clish-Green (ACG) attends the Local Assessment Panel meetings. ACG attended a workshop for all LAPs which was useful. Alison scrutinises Dartmoor applications to see if access elements can be included. £1million is available for FiPL on Dartmoor. Amanda Head looked at projects which could benefit improving access. DAF have written to various groups and there have been positive responses. Case studies from other National Parks to be shared with DAF members.

Report notes, including a copy of the letter sent to David Fursdon from MO and AC-G, were circulated with the agenda.

## 7 DAF Membership

Terms of Appointment for existing DAF Members are due to end on 31/12/2023. Exceptions are Rachel Manning and Amanda Head. DNPA as the appointing Authority will advertise for Members in the middle of December. The Secretary will write out to all members in early December. Invitation for any Members to contact James Wright if interested in helping to promote the work of DAF.

## 8 Date of Next Meeting

- Informal meeting – March 2024
- Next DAF meeting to be agreed with Chair and Vice Chair

