



Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-26

THE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK





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Introduction

Dartmoor is one of the UK's 15 National Parks, the 'breathing spaces' for the nation, a place of enjoyment and recreation for millions, home to around 35,000 people, and a place of work for around 10,000 people, including those who work the land, and in doing so help to create the landscapes that make Dartmoor worthy of National Park status. Wild, open moorlands and deep river valleys, characteristic and rare wildlife, and a rich history, are amongst the special qualities that make Dartmoor a unique place.

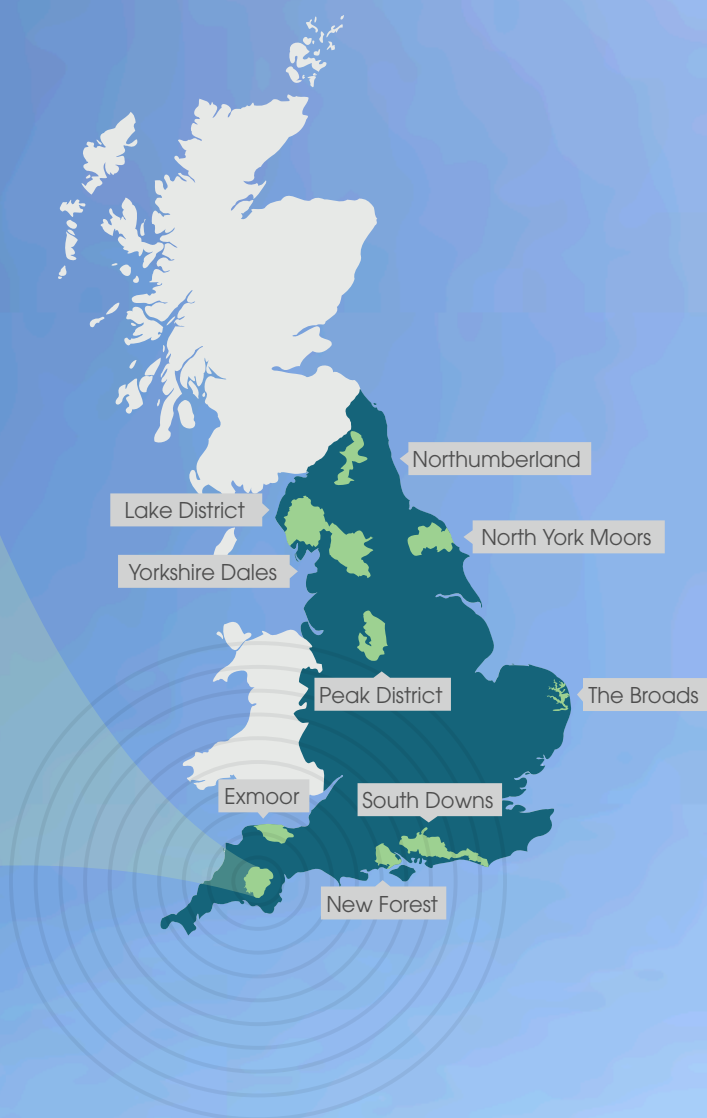
This Partnership Plan (also known as the 'Management Plan') sets a bold Vision for Dartmoor's future in delivering the purposes for which National Parks were designated, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, and to promote understanding and enjoyment of Dartmoor's special qualities. The Plan is a call to action for individuals, communities, businesses, public bodies, voluntary sector, and other organisations to work together and with the National Park Authority to deliver this Vision. It also includes the Vision of the Next Generation of people who will be the future custodians of Dartmoor.

The Partnership Plan outlines the key drivers and challenges facing the National Park, including conflicting objectives and competing priorities, and sets out how these should be addressed. It will guide the resource allocation and priorities of the National Park Authority and partner organisations who are key to its delivery, and the Partners hope that it will also influence wider decisions and investment of those who have a role to play in land management, tourism and the wider economy.





Map showing the 10 English National Parks and Dartmoor National Park



This Partnership Plan sets a bold Vision for Dartmoor's future in delivering the purposes for which the National Parks were designated

Preparation of the Partnership Plan

The Partnership Plan (referred to during consultation as the 'Management Plan') has been developed over 2019-20. This involved gathering evidence, considering the issues and opportunities, engaging with partners through a series of Dartmoor Debates, and seeking views through a public opinion survey. A draft of the Plan was publicly available and circulated between January and the end of May 2020, feedback sought and considered by stakeholder groups including the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project Steering Group, Natural Environment Working Group and Better for People Stakeholder Group. This consultation and consideration resulting in production of this final version of the Plan.

Dartmoor National Park Authority is working with a **Next Generation group** to ensure that the Next Generation are involved in the future of Dartmoor National Park. This group of young people, who live and work in, or visit, the National Park, has produced a **Next Generation Manifesto** as a call to action to influence how organisations and decision makers shape Dartmoor for its future communities, recreation users, visitors, businesses, young people, farmers and the environment, landscape and heritage. It includes their **own Vision for Dartmoor**. Specific calls for action are included in the Next Generation Manifesto which accompanies this Plan. The National Park Authority will continue to work with the Next Generation and put in place mechanisms to enable young people to be involved in decision making and have more opportunities to get involved.

The Partnership Plan's contribution to sustainable development, and its potential impact on designated nature conservation sites, were tested through a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

The Partnership Plan was prepared at a time when significant national policy change was anticipated as a result of the Landscapes Review (National Parks and AONBs)¹ and Environment Bill 2020. The publication of the Plan was delayed in anticipation of the Government's response to the Review (also known as the 'Glover Report' 2019)², which was then not forthcoming for a further year. The final design and print version of the Plan is now published with the milestones against some actions revised (as these were superseded), and a number of small revisions, which take into account the Government's Response to the Landscape Review and the Outcome Indicator Framework for the 25 Year Environment Plan³.

The National Park Authority
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¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan-progress-reports

A VISION FOR DARTMOOR in 2045

Dartmoor National Park is an extraordinary landscape: shaped by nature and humans over time; steeped in history but always changing; one of Britain's finest. It has the power to inspire and enrich lives.

Our Vision is to make Dartmoor better for future generations: climate resilient, nature rich, beautiful, connected to the past and looking to the future; a place where people of all ages and backgrounds can live, work or visit. A place that is loved, cherished and cared for.

It will 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 feel wilder as nature is enhanced and allowed to take its course.

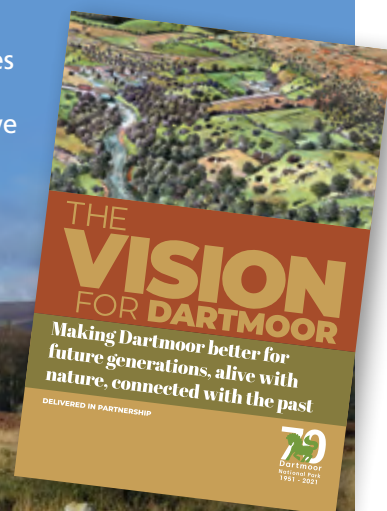
CELEBRATED AND ENHANCED: Dartmoor's natural beauty and rich cultural heritage is better understood, valued and looked after.

A WARM WELCOME FOR ALL: Enriching people's lives, reaching out to people from all backgrounds, connecting them with this special place. Transformative experiences will inspire people to care for the National Park.

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK: People of all ages can enjoy living and working in low carbon, flourishing communities that are connected physically and digitally. Farming and forestry businesses play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits.

CARBON NEGATIVE: Dartmoor's peatlands, soils and woodlands will store significantly more carbon. Responding to climate change will be embedded in our way of life, making the best use of natural resources and reducing carbon emissions.

Everyone will come together to deliver this Vision for Dartmoor; make choices that balance the needs of people and place; embrace positive change; and inspire the next generation to help shape its future. This plan sets out how we will work together over the next five years towards the vision. This National Park Partnership Plan for Dartmoor will be reviewed and updated every five years.



Cairn circle and cist on Houndtor Down

A Vision for Dartmoor in 2045

DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP



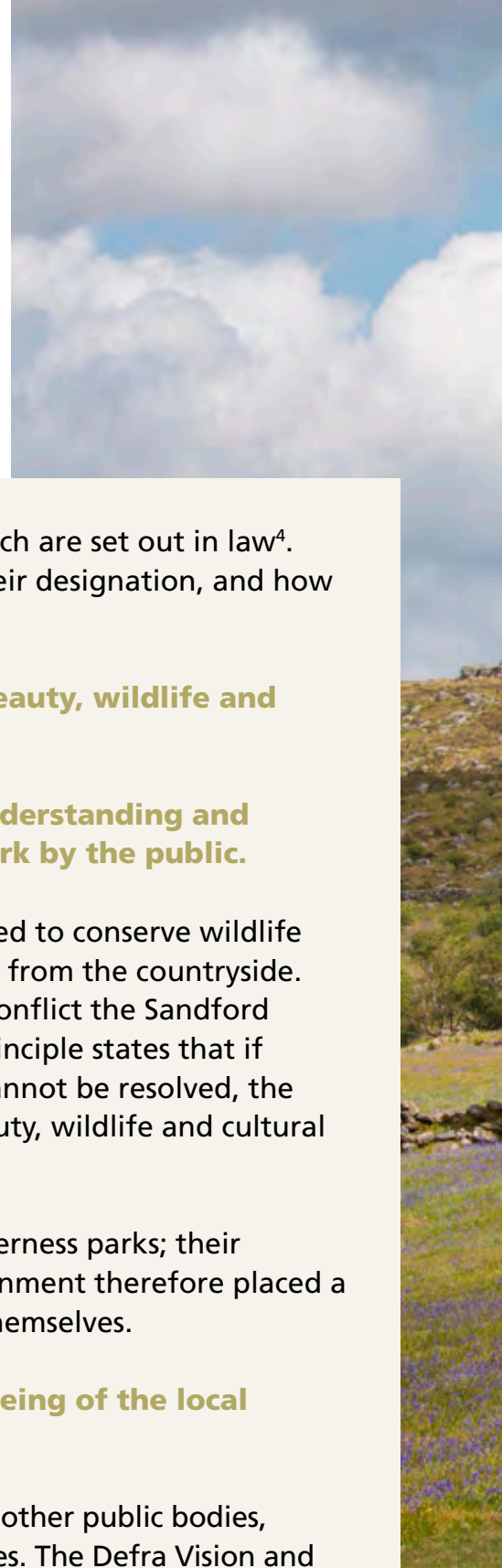
Illustration: Liam O'Farrell

This illustration has been prepared to bring to life the Vision for 2045. It shows the impact the positive changes reflected in the Partnership Plan can have on Dartmoor's special qualities.



- 1.** Peatland is restored to provide a rich habitat, extensive carbon sink and reduced downstream flooding
- 2.** 2,000 ha of new broadleaf woodland across Dartmoor
- 3.** Dartmoor is carbon negative
- 4.** Towns and villages have community level food growing, recycling and energy generation
- 5.** Communities have better digital and sustainable transport connections
- 6.** Scrub and woodland are naturally regenerating up lower moorland valleys
- 7.** Hedgerows are healthy, fuller, and provide corridors and stepping-stones of connected habitat
- 8.** Farming and forestry enterprises play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local produce
- 9.** Dartmoor is a place for active and responsible recreation
- 10.** There are more opportunities to find tranquillity and dark night skies
- 11.** Visitors leave no trace; they understand and respect the environment
- 12.** Local people have ready access to quality affordable housing
- 13.** New development is of the highest quality, accessible, adaptable, and energy efficient
- 14.** Dartmoor's historic environment is visible at a landscape scale
- 15.** Expansive views of tors remain a key part of Dartmoor's landscape character
- 16.** There are more opportunities for all sectors of society to enjoy the National Park
- 17.** Dartmoor plays an important part in good health and well-being
- 18.** Haymeadows are more extensive and better connected
- 19.** Businesses thrive in a way which supports the vision for Dartmoor

National Park Purposes and Duty



English National Parks were created with two purposes which are set out in law⁴. These shape what the National Parks are, the reason for their designation, and how they should be managed.

First Purpose: To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

Second Purpose: To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Special Qualities of the National Park by the public.

Pursuit of the purposes can lead to conflicts, such as the need to conserve wildlife and habitats, but also encourage people to enjoy and learn from the countryside. In circumstances where the purposes of the National Park conflict the Sandford Principle is used to guide decision making. The Sandford Principle states that if there is a conflict between National Park purposes which cannot be resolved, the first purpose, of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, will be given greater weight.

National Parks have not, however, been designated as wilderness parks; their communities are fundamental to their character. The government therefore placed a social and economic duty upon National Park Authorities themselves.

Duty: To seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.

All relevant authorities, including statutory undertakers and other public bodies, are required by law⁴ to have regard to National Park purposes. The Defra Vision and Circular on English National Parks and the Broads⁵ provides guidance on achieving National Park purposes and the duty.



Devon Wildlife Trust's Emsworthy Mire nature reserve

⁴ Most recently the Environment Act 1995

⁵ English national parks and the broads: UK government vision and circular 2010

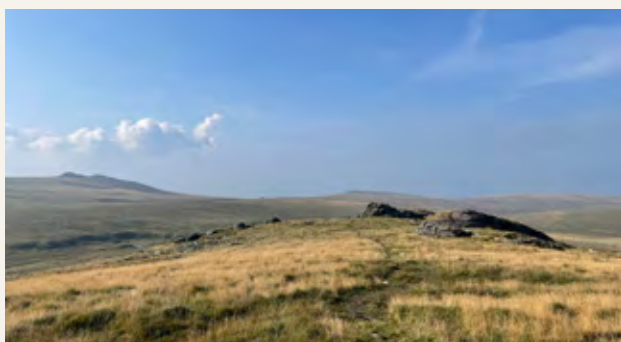
Special Qualities

Dartmoor has a very special place in people's appreciation of Devon and the wider south west of England and the UK. The special qualities of the National Park identify what is distinctive about Dartmoor and help to identify what is most important to be conserved, enhanced and enjoyed.

This Partnership Plan recognises these special qualities but does not aim to 'preserve the National Park in aspic'. Dartmoor is a dynamic landscape, and the Plan promotes positive change. We recognise that there may be conflicts in delivering this change and principles for managing this are outlined in our key challenges section.

DARTMOOR'S SPECIAL QUALITIES ARE:

A distinctive landscape and valuable biodiversity, including:



open, windswept **upland moors** with far reaching views and a sense of remoteness and wildness, distinctive granite tors surrounded by loose rock or 'clitter', and large expanses of grass and heather moorland, blanket bogs, and valley mires providing habitats for distinctive wildlife such as skylark and cuckoo, and rarities including Vigur's eyebright and southern damselfly;



sheltered valleys with upland oak woodland, rôs pasture and fast-flowing boulder-strewn rivers, home to characteristic wildlife including the pied flycatcher and salmon, and rare species such as the marsh fritillary butterfly;



enclosed farmland with small irregular pasture fields bounded by dry stone walls and hedgebanks providing a mosaic of different wildlife habitats, including hay meadows and species rich dry grasslands with wildlife such as the beautiful greater butterfly orchid;



a varied geology, including the granite bedrock providing the dominant building material throughout history, and a wide range of valued minerals including tin, copper, lead, silver and arsenic;



timelessness: a place spared many of the intrusions of modern life, with dark night-time skies;



tranquillity: where it is possible to find absolute peace, offering spiritual refreshment and opportunities for quiet reflection, escape and creativity;



unrivalled opportunities to roam at will over the extensive open moorland, and an **exceptional rights of way network** for walking, riding and cycling;



traditional farming practices, using the moorland commons for extensive grazing of hardy cattle, sheep and ponies including locally distinctive breeds;



clean water: the catchment area for most of the rivers of Devon; historic leats still supply water to surrounding settlements. The peatlands and open water of the reservoirs provide an important water store helping to regulate the flow of water off the moor;



one of the most **important archaeological landscapes** in western Europe revealing a chronology of human activity stretching back over 8,000 years, from ancient field systems to the legacy of tin mining;



resourceful rural communities with distinctive culture and traditions, characteristic ways of life, local crafts, fairs, food and drink;



a wealth of historic buildings, structures and townscapes, including a strong medieval settlement pattern of **scattered farmsteads, hamlets, villages and towns**, set within enclosed farmland surrounding the open moor and linked by an intimate pattern of sunken lanes;



an **inspirational landscape** of legends and myths that has inspired art and literature through the centuries and continues to inspire;



opportunities for **discovery, challenge and adventure** for all.

What Dartmoor means to people



Words from the public opinion survey used to describe what is special about Dartmoor

Forces for Change

There are many forces for change that will influence Dartmoor's future. Some, such as climate change or national policy and legislation, are things that we need to respond to although they are outside the direct control of the delivery partners. Some of the key issues raised during preparation of the Partnership Plan are listed below:

The implications of **climate change**, and the opportunity to respond both in terms of reducing emissions of greenhouse gasses, and adapting to the changes in climate already being experienced and predicted.

The pressures arising from **increased visitor numbers**, driven by new housing and development in surrounding areas leading to increased erosion; anti-social behaviour; traffic congestion; disturbance to wildlife and livestock; and resulting in conflicts with farmers and local communities.

The challenges facing the natural environment including **declines in biodiversity**; disruption of natural processes; inappropriate (or lack of) land management; soil compaction and erosion; increased flood risk; invasive species, pests and diseases.

Uncertainty over the **future of upland farming** and forestry particularly in the light of Brexit and what changes to markets, policy and funding will follow. However, if framed correctly the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) could provide an opportunity to enhance Dartmoor and support sustainable farm businesses.

The implications of an **ageing population** and falling numbers of working age people living on Dartmoor; high house prices driven by the attractiveness of the National Park as a place to live; and low wage levels in key sectors such as agriculture, tourism and leisure.



Visitor waste at Bellever



Highland cow and calf



All-terrain mobility scooter excursion

Landscapes (Glover) Review

The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan announced a review of Protected Landscapes in England. Julian Glover, a journalist and author, was asked to head up the Review Panel. The Panel's Report⁶, issued in September 2019, included 27 specific recommendations with an overall purpose that 'we want our national landscapes to work together with big ambitions, so they are happier, healthier, greener, more beautiful and open to everyone.' These included:

- proposals for a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature;
- a stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes; to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors; and improve the nation's health and well-being;
- national landscapes working for vibrant communities; in particular addressing affordable housing and sustainable transport issues;
- new designated landscapes nationally and changes to the designation process;
- changes to the statutory purposes for designated landscapes; reformed governance arrangements; and a new financial model.

In January 2022 the Government published its response⁷ to the Glover Review. The response sets out a revised vision for protected landscapes:

A coherent national network of beautiful, nature-rich spaces that all parts of society can easily access and enjoy. Protected landscapes will support thriving local communities and economies, improve our public health and wellbeing, drive forward nature recovery, and build our resilience to climate change

Key reforms identified include:

- A new National Landscapes Strategy to be prepared by Defra;
- A revised 'first purpose' setting out that a core function of protected landscapes should be to drive nature recovery;
- A revised 'second purpose' that highlights the need to improve opportunities and remove barriers to access for all parts of society with clear reference to public health and wellbeing as an outcome;
- Enhanced role for local partnerships in statutory management plans;
- Strengthening the legal duty on public bodies to have regard to National Park and AONB purposes.

Implementation of the reforms described in the Government's response will require new strategies and working practice, the formation of new bodies and legislative changes. Currently these ambitious reforms are not supported with any new or additional funding for National Parks, making delivery of the Vision extremely challenging, and partnership working even more crucial to the pursuit of National Park purposes.

⁶ Landscapes Review: National Parks and AONBs (2019)

⁷ Landscapes Review (National Parks and AONBs): Government Response 2022

Delivering the Plan

Delivery of the Vision is a shared responsibility, led by the National Park Authority but dependent on **maintaining existing, strong partnership working and forging new partnerships**. It will involve everyone with an interest in the future of Dartmoor, in particular those who manage the land, national agencies, local authorities, local communities, businesses, interest groups, the voluntary sector and those people who visit the National Park. With this in mind the term 'we' is used frequently throughout the plan when referring to the aims and objectives described, in this context 'we' means all stakeholders who may be able to play a part in delivering these aims.

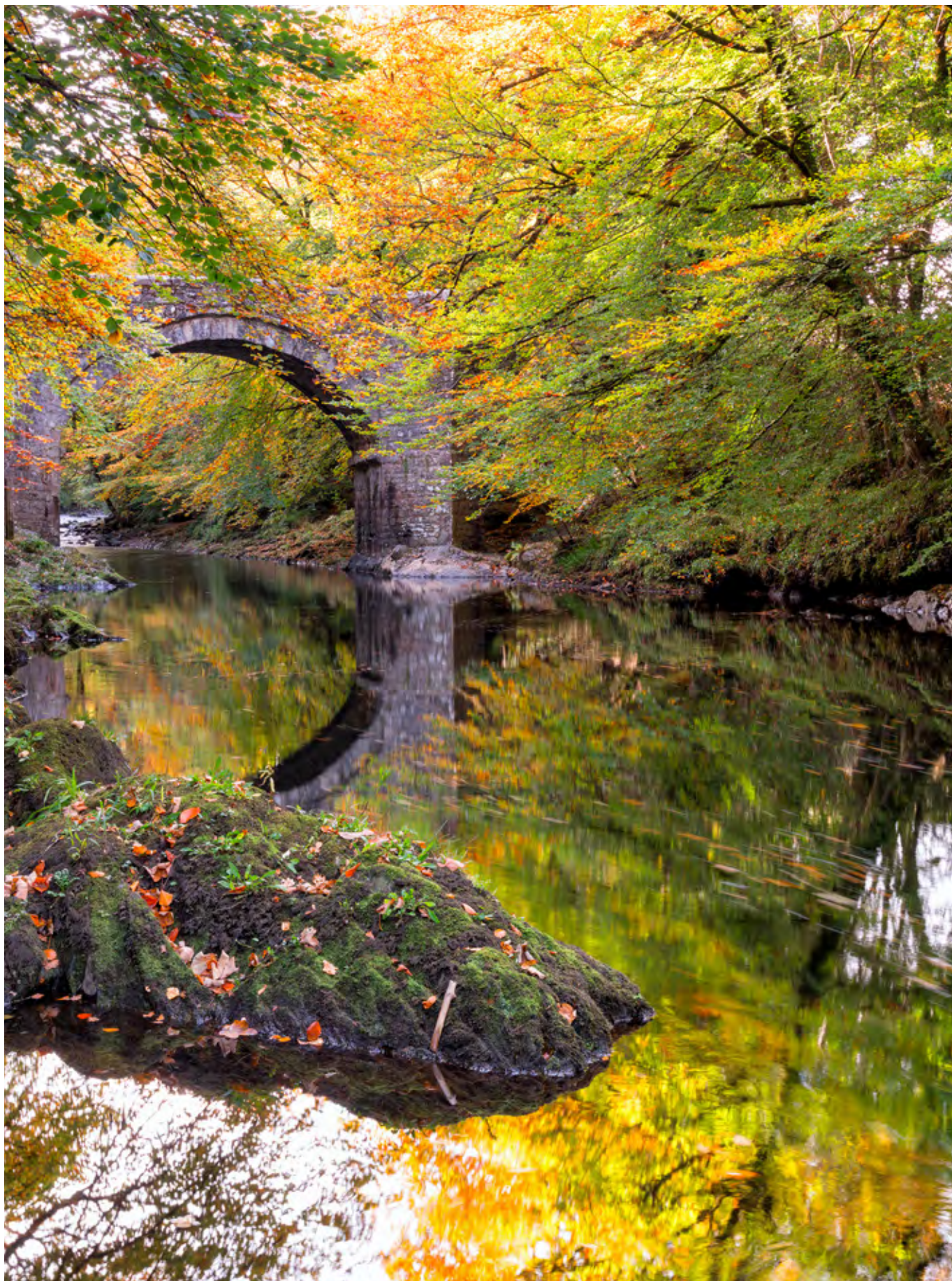
As well as this continued partnership working, the Partnership Plan will require existing resources to be aligned around delivery of the Vision, and significant new sources of funding to be secured.

The Partnership Plan sits alongside the recently adopted Dartmoor National Park Local Plan, which is another important statutory document for Dartmoor and provides the planning framework for decisions regarding development and the use of land. The Partnership Plan and Local Plan are both designed to help deliver the statutory purposes of the National Park: to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and to promote understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities. The two Plans have been developed over a similar timeframe and so are closely aligned in what they are seeking to achieve. The decisions that the Authority makes in relation to planning are also an important element of how the Partnership Plan will be delivered.

Farmers and land managers are central to achieving this Plan, underpinned by delivery mechanisms such as the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS), national policy, and local support through the Dartmoor Hill Farm Project and partner organisations. The new ELMS will influence how farmers, foresters and land managers will be rewarded for delivering a range of public benefits including clean water, natural beauty, abundant nature, and cultural heritage. Food is not defined as a public benefit for the purpose of ELMS, but high-quality food production has been, and will continue to be, an important part of Dartmoor's landscape.

There is also a significant amount of human and cultural capital that can be harnessed to help deliver of the Plan, through the active support of our local communities, partner organisations, and volunteers.

Delivering the Plan will involve everyone with an interest in the future of Dartmoor, in particular those who manage the land, national agencies, local authorities, local communities, businesses, interest groups, the voluntary sector and those people who visit the National Park



The River Dart at Holne Bridge

Themes

In order to deliver this Vision, we have focused on **seven themes**, which describe in more detail what we want to achieve, and how we will achieve this. The themes do not cover all the work that will be ongoing within the National Park but instead highlight the areas where we will work together to achieve transformative change. The aspirations in this Plan are very ambitious, and we recognise that they will be challenging to achieve, but their inclusion in the Partnership Plan is intended to drive action and to target efforts to secure the funding and resources required.



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

A better response to Climate Change



Flood event



Roof-mounted solar panels



Local food production: Hilltown Organics, Okehampton

INTRODUCTION

Climate change is the greatest challenge in the present day. The impact of climate change on Dartmoor will continue to be wide reaching, with warmer, wetter winters, hotter, dryer summers, increased (and decreased) river flows and an increasing frequency of extreme weather events, the effects of which are already being seen. The overriding opportunity for the Partnership Plan is to make a significant contribution to both mitigating and adapting to climate change and addressing the ecological emergency. This will need a concerted effort by all partners to this plan and people visiting Dartmoor but also strong national policy and resources to deliver.

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS:

Dartmoor National Park Authority declared a climate and ecological emergency in June 2019, with a commitment for the Authority to be carbon neutral by 2025.

Our 2045 Vision sets an ambition for the National Park to be carbon negative.

The National Park can play a significant role as a carbon sink through peatland restoration, woodland management and creation, sustainable farming and land management practices to increase soil carbon. The Authority is also working with Devon County Council and partners on a co-ordinated response to the climate emergency for the whole county.

We want to ensure that Dartmoor leads the way on climate change mitigation and adaptation, making the best use of Dartmoor's natural, built and cultural resources. The impacts of climate change cut-across all aspects of the Partnership Plan, and so the response has been integrated throughout each section of the Plan, linking to relevant aspects of the Local Plan which is an important delivery mechanism. In summary, this includes:

MITIGATING CLIMATE CHANGE BY REDUCING EMISSIONS

- A major focus on **increasing Dartmoor's carbon storage and sequestration** through restoration of; soils, extensively on peatland; natural regeneration of semi-natural habitats; woodland creation and management;
- **Restoring naturally functioning hydrological systems** and supporting healthy soils to maximise carbon storage and increase water-holding capacity;
- Incentivising **low carbon land management** and agricultural practices (extensive, low input, pasture fed livestock systems) as part of future environmental land management schemes
- **Promoting local food and wood supply chains** to reduce food and timber miles and support the local economy;
- Significantly **reducing emissions from transport** by improving sustainable transport options;
- Using National Park Visitor Centres, information centres and wider communications and engagement at local, regional and national levels to help **inform, engage and empower visitors and local residents** to take action at a personal level;
- Significantly reducing energy consumption **through improved building efficiency**, particularly fabric-first building, retro-fitting enhancements and requiring high standards of sustainable construction and sensitive treatment of the historic environment;
- Encouraging the use of **small-scale renewable** and low carbon energy technologies such as biomass, solar PV and hydro, which are compatible with Dartmoor's Special Qualities.

ADAPTING TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

- A fundamental **shift in nature enhancement**, establishing nature recovery areas and restoring natural hydrological systems and well managed soils;
- Adopting **natural flood management** techniques in key catchments to improve water absorption, slow the flow and reduce flood risk.
- Considering future climate risks when managing development including flood risk, water availability for people and nature, cooling and shading;
- **Adapting land management and farming practices** to support nature enhancement, soils, flood risk and future farm business resilience;
- Requiring **net gains for biodiversity** as part of new development (through Local Plan policies), including green infrastructure which can help species adapt to climate change;
- Responding to the threats and opportunities for the historic environment as well as addressing competing priorities between nature enhancement, climate change mitigation & adaptation and heritage assets;
- **Supporting community action** and engaging with young people through the climate emergency response.

Our 2045 Vision
sets an ambition for
the National Park to
be carbon negative

Better for the Next Generation

Dartmoor National Park Authority has supported a **Next Generation group** to ensure that the Next Generation are involved in the future of Dartmoor National Park. Their Manifesto accompanies this Plan and is a 'Call to Action' from the Next Generation to influence how organisations and decision makers shape Dartmoor for its future communities, recreation users, visitors, businesses, young people, farmers and the environment, landscape and heritage. It includes their own Vision for Dartmoor:

NEXT GENERATION VISION

The National Park will be a place that the next generation can thrive in: a place to call home, a place to work, a place to explore and a place to protect and understand. The next generation will be supported on Dartmoor through reliable infrastructure and services, viable jobs and diverse career opportunities. Communities will thrive, traditions will be alive and there will be widespread recognition of the rural skills on offer.

There will also be a future for the environment and heritage of Dartmoor, it will be protected, enhanced and understood by all. Everyone will have the opportunity to visit and experience Dartmoor and it will remain one of Britain's breathing spaces.

The National Park Authority will ensure the Next Generation group is enabled and supported, putting in place mechanisms to enable young people to be involved in decision making and have more opportunities to get involved in responding to the Calls to Action. Stakeholders and other organisations will also play a role in delivering the Calls to Action, particularly in areas that fall outside of the Authority's influence. As part of monitoring and review of the Partnership Plan we will assess how we are delivering against the Next Generation Calls to Action.



Junior & Youth Ranger Project



Meldon Wildlife Festival

The Next Generation 'asks' in the Manifesto relate to all the Themes in the Partnership Plan.

In summary these Calls to Action are:

Infrastructure and Services:

- Digital connectivity is essential for local residents, businesses and visitors. Improve mobile phone coverage, internet / broadband reliability and speed;
- Provide good public transport throughout the year, connecting settlements within the National Park and surrounding areas.

Communities:

- Digital connectivity can only go so far. Young people need activities and social opportunities to help them feel part of the community, as well as avoiding feelings of isolation and issues with mental health.

Housing:

- Many young people are finding it difficult to stay in their communities. There needs to be a better understanding of young people's housing needs and support / signposting to how to access housing.

Job Opportunities and Skills:

- Develop a Dartmoor scheme linking local schools and colleges to local employers to provide opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, internships and work experience;
- Ensure that traditional skills and knowledge are passed on to the next generation and there are opportunities for young people that want to get into hill farming.

Businesses:

- Promote a spirit of entrepreneurship on Dartmoor with funding and support to encourage young people to start their own businesses;
- Provide community workspaces and hubs that are desirable to work in, connected, and encourage creativity, innovation and collaboration.

Dartmoor's Natural and Cultural Heritage:

- Help us (young people) to learn about what is special about Dartmoor and how we can help to conserve and enhance it;
- Be bold and innovative to conserve and enhance the National Park for the next generation, to ensure that it is in better condition;
- Provide opportunities for us (young people) to get involved with conservation projects.

Opportunities to Experience Dartmoor:

- Use social media to improve communication about how we (young people and users) can access and enjoy the National Park responsibly;
- Develop a Dartmoor Ranger App with information about the local area, projects, routes and sensitivities that gives people the confidence to visit Dartmoor and use it in the right way;
- Create a series of waymarked routes to help people to feel more confident exploring Dartmoor, and to make it more accessible.

Understanding and Respect:

- Provide opportunities for shared understanding between different groups and with local communities;
- Identify ways to help visitors and user groups to understand the role farming plays in managing the landscape.

Better for Nature and Natural Beauty

DELIVERING THE VISION

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.'**

INTRODUCTION

Dartmoor National Park is an extraordinary landscape, one of Britain's finest; its special qualities (see page 12) recognised nationally through designation in 1951 as one of the first National Parks in the UK. The natural beauty of the landscape includes wild, open moorlands, with striking granite tors and steep wooded river valleys, intimate enclosed farmland with historic field patterns, and settlements; always changing, and shaped by nature and people over time.

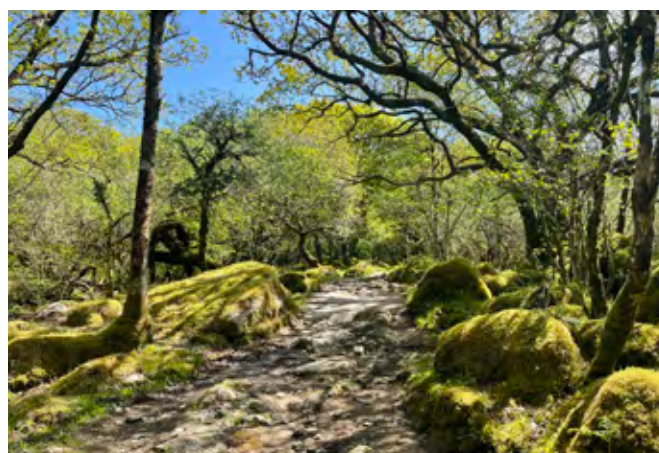
Dartmoor is internationally important for a range of habitats including blanket bogs, upland heaths, upland oak woods, Rhôs pastures, lowland pastures, rivers and valley mires. It also supports many rare and common species. It hosts the headwaters of nine main river catchments and is the principal source of drinking water for much of Devon. Its deep peat, soils and woodlands are important stores of carbon.

Whilst Dartmoor remains a stronghold for many habitats and species, it is not immune from the wider ecological crisis which is impacting nature

nationally and globally. This was recognised by the Authority with the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in June 2019. During the preparation of the Partnership Plan, it became clear that a bold and ambitious response is needed to nature enhancement at a landscape scale across the National Park and connecting beyond its boundary: with Dartmoor acting as the beating heart of nature enhancement in Devon and beyond.



View from Combestone Tor



Ancient trackway above Walkham Valley

Conserve and Restore Nature and Natural Processes

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Nature enhancement at a landscape scale is underpinned by the restoration of dynamic natural processes. Habitats are protected, restored, maintained, cared for, expanded and connected; supported by land management systems and natural capital investment that have the delivery of public goods at their heart.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will achieve nature enhancement at a landscape scale by ensuring that soils are well managed, achieve good condition and are functioning to improve biodiversity, productivity, maximise carbon storage and reduce flood risk, including the following priorities:

Throughout the life of this plan and beyond, maintain Dartmoor's peatlands, restoring their condition where necessary, so that our peatland resource is not degrading but healthy and accumulating new peat, including through:

- Working with the SW Peatland Project and the **Dartmoor Peatland Partnership** restore an additional minimum 1000 hectares of priority blanket bog by 2026;
- Maintaining all restored areas and ensure no degradation of wider peatland resource;
- Increasing capacity and **local skills** to enable higher levels of annual restoration and sustainable land management to meet government 2050 net zero targets⁸.

Increase understanding of carbon storage potential and maximise storage and retention within key Dartmoor soils through land use and management:

- By the end of 2022 work with experts to understand **carbon storage** potential of Dartmoor soils and habitats, and identify areas of uncertainty to target in further research;
- By 2023 produce practical guidance and provide support on measures that will increase the carbon stored in each of the main soil types and land uses on Dartmoor;

- From 2021 work with partners to undertake a 'stock take' of current soil carbon storage, combining new measurements with existing mapping to quantify current and projected future change;
- Work with at least 12 land managers to implement changes and demonstrate increased soil carbon storage and productivity by 2024 across key Dartmoor soil types;
- Improve soil structure, reduce compaction and increase water retention capacity;
- By 2025 work with 50 farm businesses to explore and implement agreed measures to enhance **soil structure** and monitor results;
- By 2024 four farm cluster groups established to explore and share learning;
- From 2022 begin to explore how sustainable soil management can provide increased productivity and economic benefits;
- From 2022 identify funding in order to provide support in terms of advice on best practice for soil management.

In order to increase the understanding of soil health, to inform land management and increase soil biodiversity, we will:

- Establish partnership research and monitoring projects with academic institutions and land managers to test the effectiveness of different interventions;
- Work with farmers to establish several 'soil improvement test and trial sites' where different measures are implemented and monitored to assess the efficacy, cost and practicality.
- Increase understanding of public good benefits derived from healthy soils.

⁸ Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)



View from Buckland Beacon

Partners will work towards ensuring hydrological systems that are functioning naturally, providing clean, plentiful water and supporting abundant biodiversity. During the life of this plan, we will:

Enhance rivers, streams and floodplains to improve water quality and regain naturalised form and flow: slowing the flow, increasing water storage, reducing the risk of flooding and increasing biodiversity:

- By 2022 identify sections of river that would provide optimal ecological benefit from restoration;
- Working with farmers and other partners over the five-year period to establish pilot areas in different parts of a catchment (i.e., headwaters to floodplain) where sections of stream and river have been 're-naturalised';
- By 2024 work with partners to integrate a wide range of natural flood management measures within key catchments that will reduce the risk of flooding and **improve hydrological systems**.

Protect and restore wetland habitats, reconnecting them to wider catchment systems:

- By 2026 restore or re-create wetland habitats, in locations where they can be connected to other habitats;
- From 2022 secure funding to identify and maintain existing high-quality wetland habitat
- From 2022 encourage and facilitate skills training with local communities to provide sustainability, income and resilience for specialist habitat management.

Restore the hydrological functions of our degraded blanket bogs and maintain existing sites:

- From 2020 **blanket bog restoration** will continue to be targeted at areas where the University of Exeter and South West Water have identified the greatest hydrological opportunities.

Partners will achieve habitat improvement and connectivity by striving to manage existing priority habitats adaptively, reflecting environmental change at landscape scale, delivering larger, better connected and diverse habitats:

Review all priority habitats to assess their sustainability in the light of likely climate change effects:

- By 2023 commission a review of all the key wildlife habitats and vegetation types across Dartmoor to assess their resilience and sustainability in the light of likely climate change effects;
- From 2022 develop mechanisms and tools to identify opportunities for **habitat creation and connectivity** in partnership with landowners, land managers and mapping experts.

Maintain, restore, connect and expand priority habitats that are resilient and adaptable to climate change:

- By 2026 identify opportunities with landowners and land managers to restore fragmented priority habitats that contributes to landscape scale change;

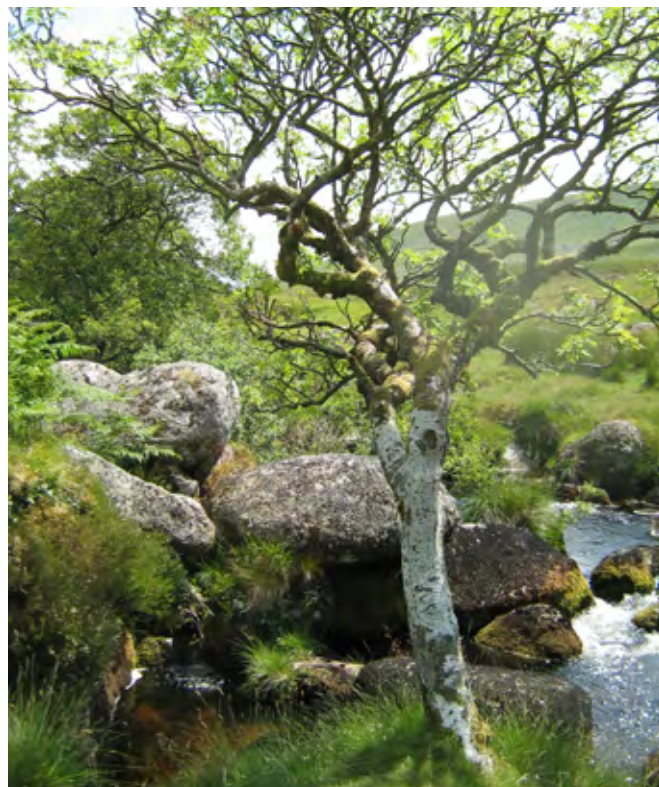
⁹ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0032/88466/Living-Dartmoor-COMPLETE-TEXT.pdf

- By 2026 SSSIs will have achieved favourable or recovering status if still feasible;
- By 2024 work with farmers, their advisers and other partners to help inform ELMS development and secure the funding required to create and maintain these habitats on the ground.

Partners will achieve restoration of natural processes by supporting dynamic, diverse, and well-functioning ecosystems at landscape scale, maintained by appropriate management to ensure resilience and adaptation. Activity to support this aim will include:

Identify and promote a network of landscape scale nature recovery areas across Dartmoor linking to wider Devon and Cornwall landscapes:

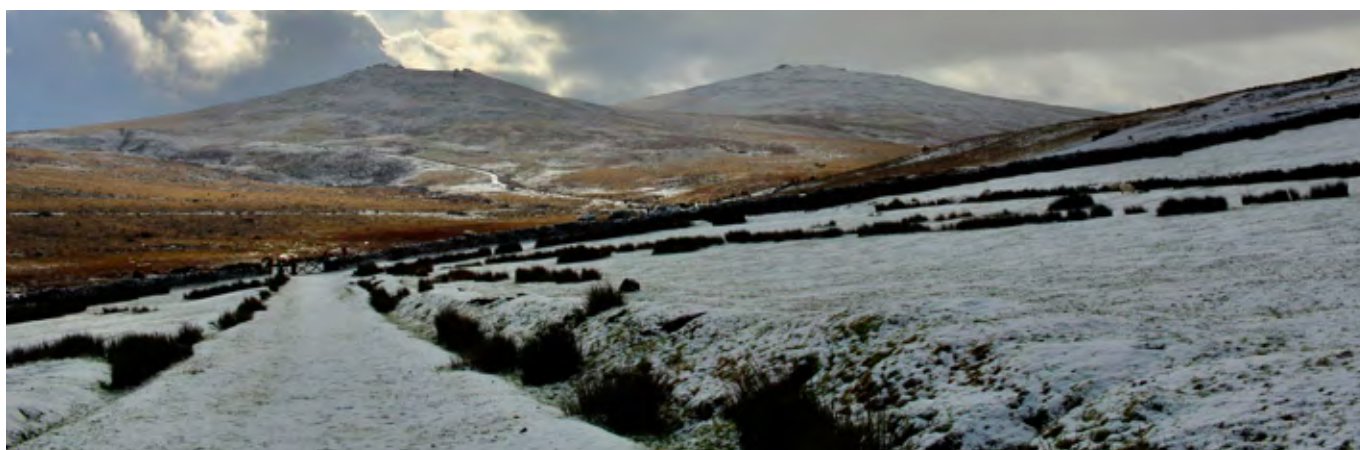
- From 2021 identify pilot **Nature Recovery Area** (NRA) catchments where habitat diversity and abundance offer good opportunities for landscape scale nature recovery;
- From 2022 work with partners, landowners, land managers and communities to explore opportunities, interest and ambition to develop and deliver ambitious nature recovery visions;
- By 2023 establish at least two pilot landscape scale nature recovery catchment areas, one of which will explore a whole catchment approach from source to sea. Funding and resources will be secured from 2022 and focused to explore innovative methods and opportunities for significant landscape scale enhancement;
- Two further pilots will have been established and begun with initial funding secured by the end of 2024.



Rowan



Vigur's Eyebright



West Mill Tor and Yes Tor

Abundant and Diverse Wildlife

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

The abundance, diversity and distribution of biodiversity on Dartmoor adapts and evolves in response to climate change and the recovery of natural processes, supported by proactive habitat restoration and ongoing management. There is acceptance of change, and that in future Dartmoor's landscape and wildlife may be different, with some areas becoming wilder as nature is allowed to take its course.

We will achieve this by working to ensure there is an abundance and diversity of species on Dartmoor, which are widespread and thriving, including:

Review all priority species¹⁰ to assess their sustainability in light of likely climate change effects.

- From 2022 using experts within the partnership identify a short list of **iconic species** that are particularly vulnerable, and where work on Dartmoor has a high potential to turn around their decline and establish sustainable populations;
- By the end of 2022 identify priority species list that are should be prioritised for future conservation effort. This will include key species that act as indicators for good ecosystem health.

Actively manage priority species that are able to adapt to climate change, to initially reverse declines by 2025, then maintain numbers and ultimately ensure thriving populations:

- By the end of 2023, working with local specialists and land managers, we will produce a suite of guidance to inspire people managing land or livestock by explaining the vital role they can play in enhancing nature and addressing climate change;
- By the end of 2023 secure funding to support the recovery of five priority species and associated habitats;
- By the end of 2023 identify and support the resilience of species that are a characteristic and cherished part of Dartmoor's heritage. Recruit

volunteer champions for each of these species, who will give advice and co-ordinate monitoring of success.

Partners aim to successfully reintroduce key species lost to Dartmoor, enhancing biodiversity and building future resilience, including:

Producing a **species reintroduction** strategy, to establish prioritisation and understanding of species that would provide greatest environmental benefit:

- By the end of 2023 establish feasibility, rationale and justification for key species reintroductions;
- By the end of 2023 explore opportunities with farmers, local communities and any other groups likely to be affected by reintroductions in relation to identified reintroduction priorities and determine concerns, interest and understand potential benefits to Dartmoor;
- By the end of 2023 identify areas where there is widespread support for such a reintroduction, where the negative impacts are small and where the chances of success are high;
- By the end of 2023 work with stakeholders and bring in expertise and experience from other parts of the UK and Europe, to develop practical ways to minimise the risks and negative impacts.

Develop and agree plans to reintroduce two species by 2025 if feasible and supported by the Dartmoor community:

- By 2025 if community support has been established, secure funding to progress feasibility, planning and reintroductions.

¹⁰ www.naturaldevon.org.uk/devons-natural-environment/devons-wildlife/devonspecialspecies/

We will work towards damaging invasive and non-native species being eradicated while accepting that some new species may naturally colonise Dartmoor, by:

Implementing a sustained programme of measures to remove species causing greatest ecological damage throughout the term of this plan:

- By the end of 2023 identify greatest **Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)** threats and produce strategy;
- By the end of 2023 expand the scope of work with landowners and land managers to secure funding and establish projects to remove highest risk species.

We will ensure new development will avoid harm in accordance with the need to protect irreplaceable habitats; and within the mitigation hierarchy deliver a net gain in biodiversity, by:

Adopting Local Plan policy and guidance for biodiversity net gain

Developing a strategy with partners to identify and deliver in areas where biodiversity net gain opportunities would lead to multiple environment net gain benefits, within and beyond the boundary of the National Park.

- From 2022 seek opportunities to use funding from **net gain** developments to deliver transformational restoration and creation of wildlife habitats;
- By the end of 2023 identify how funding may be targeted in locations where the people affected by the loss of environmental assets as a result of the development are able to enjoy and benefit from the compensatory habitats.



Cuckoo



Male stonechat



Southern damselfly

Conserve and Enhance Natural Beauty

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's dynamic natural beauty, heritage and valued landscape character will be embraced, maintained and enhanced.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will conserve natural beauty by maintaining and enhancing:

The open moorland network of upland habitats, whilst encouraging natural woodland regeneration and expansion where appropriate:

- From 2022 work with landowners, commoners, partners and other agencies to identify suitable areas of upland valley that will accommodate natural **woodland regeneration** and look at processes that will ensure a positive outcome;
- By 2026 facilitate and fund the establishment of at least 500 ha of new valley native broadleaf woodland;
- By 2026 maintain and manage existing and new valley native broadleaf woodland;
- By 2026 work with landowners and land managers to ensure there are suitable **stocking levels** to maintain and enhance the open nature rich moorland landscapes.

Maintaining the small-scale pastoral landscape by enhancing boundaries of historic field systems:

- From 2022 continue to work with landowners to maintain and enhance traditional field boundaries by encouraging the use of appropriate management techniques
- By 2026 **replace lost hedgerows** to enhance the enclosed historic landscape;
- From 2022 establish skilled volunteer groups to help expand traditional walling and hedgerow skills.

Restoring treed and wooded landscapes lost through Ash Die Back and other tree diseases:

- From 2022 continue to establish opportunities to work with landowners, agencies and partners to replace tree and woodland cover lost through Ash Die Back and other pest and diseases;
- From 2022 continue to encourage landowners to adopt a 3/2/1 approach to replacing trees lost to Ash Die Back (one replacement for a small tree, two for a medium sized tree and three for a large tree);
- By 2024 work with partners to identify land that is suitable for woodland creation and that will maintain and enhance the character of Dartmoor's landscape.

And through Local Plan policies and development management, ensuring that Dartmoor's natural beauty and distinctive landscape character is maintained and enhanced

- From 2022 ensure the National Park Authority maintains an up-to-date **Landscape Character Assessment** to help understand Dartmoor's landscape.



Better for Cultural Heritage

DELIVERING THE VISION

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 for all, A great place to live and work, and Carbon negative.***

INTRODUCTION

Dartmoor is internationally renowned as a rich cultural landscape, with evidence of thousands of years of human interaction from at least the Mesolithic period to present day. Archaeological remains range from Bronze Age cists, stone rows and hut circles to deserted medieval settlement and field-systems, and the remains of the tin-mining industry.

The history and culture of Dartmoor National Park is written in its buildings, public spaces, historic landscapes and towns and villages. This architectural legacy is widely celebrated for its uniqueness and variety, forming a local Dartmoor 'vernacular' influenced by the availability of local building materials and techniques, and the local climate.

The National Park is also rich in intangible cultural heritage, having many distinctive local traditions, festivals, markets and celebrations, oral histories, customs and skills. These skills and traditions have helped shape the National Park as we see it today and their continuation is essential in conserving and enhancing the special qualities of Dartmoor. Dartmoor has been a source of inspiration for artists since the 18th century and continues to inspire present-day makers, writers and artists.

There are a variety of threats to Dartmoor's cultural heritage, including: climate change; lack of or inappropriate management; and recreational pressure. In addition, many heritage assets are not identified or designated and therefore are less easy to protect. Increasing understanding of, and engagement with, this cultural heritage is central to building a positive future: by understanding cultural heritage people will value it; by valuing it they will want to care for it; by caring for it people will be able to enjoy it; and from enjoying it comes a desire to understand it better.



Stone row at Merrivale

Conservation of Dartmoor's Archaeological Heritage and Enhancement of its Significance

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's cultural heritage is protected, well managed and in good condition. The significance of the historic environment will be understood by both those living and working on Dartmoor and by visitors.

The historic environment will be appropriately managed using sustainable, local techniques whilst also incorporating the best modern techniques. The Premier Archaeological Landscapes (PALs) and other areas of high significance will be managed as a priority concern, but elsewhere the management of the historic environment will be carefully integrated into other conservation projects and concerns.

Dartmoor's rich historic environment will be actively researched and shared by both academic institutions and local interest societies and community groups.

We will achieve the protection, good management and better understanding of Dartmoor's archaeological heritage implementing the process for assessing strategic historic environment priorities, to guide decision making where there may be potential competing priorities in relation to other conservation objectives:

- From 2022, refine the Archaeological Significance and Constraint Assessment Methodology ("SigCon") and implement it more widely. This approach was developed in 2021 and is intended to mitigate potential negative impacts of non-archaeological, landscape-scale conservation initiatives while also facilitating their operations.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will achieve better management and condition by identifying and implementing sustainable management techniques for designated and non-designated archaeological features:

- From 2022 we will focus resources to provide additional advice to landowners and land managers around sustainable management of cultural heritage in priority areas;
- By the end of 2023 we will have assessed the impact of winter cattle grazing regimes for improving the condition of archaeological assets

and will provide appropriate resource and advice;

- Continue to support the use of **targeted grazing** in maintaining and improving the condition of archaeological assets.

Partners will ensure that cultural and natural heritage outcomes are delivered together, holistically. We will achieve improved understanding and recording of the condition of Dartmoor's designated and non-designated archaeological features through a rolling programme of field assessment by staff and volunteers, including:

- By the end of 2023 we will have established a team of trained, local volunteers to undertake a programme of **condition assessment** covering all heritage asset types across all parts of the National Park;
- By the end of 2024 we will have completed the outstanding surveys of the **Premier Archaeological Landscapes** (PALs);
- From 2022 we will implement the Dartmoor Archaeological Condition Database which will inform future conservation work;
- Continue to work with Historic England to maintain an up-to-date Heritage at Risk Register and to work in partnership with stakeholders, local conservation groups and volunteers to seek resources to remove 40 at risk scheduled monuments from the register by 2025.

We will achieve better management of the most significant historic environment areas by undertaking a review of PALs, identify new PALs and explore the prospect for formal designation of PALs so that they continue to be recognised by all agencies and stakeholders working on Dartmoor

- By the end of 2023 complete a review on the concept of PALs. The review will assess their impact, effectiveness and role in protecting the Historic Environment;
- By the end of 2024 all outstanding PAL surveys will have been completed;
- By the end of 2025 all PALs will be identified, be incorporated into new ELMS, be recognised in landscape scale conservation projects, and under a proactive management scheme to achieve good condition.

Partners will achieve good condition and management of the historic environment by ensuring cultural heritage is a key focus of the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS), by:

- From 2022 we will work in partnership to ensure that the future ELMS scheme gives due consideration to the historic environment and provides farmers and land managers with appropriate payment for the management and enhancement of the historic environment.



Scorhill stone circle



Archaeological excavation at Holwell Hut Circle

Conserving and Enhancing the Character of Dartmoor's Historic Built Environment and Historic Vernacular

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's historic built environment and historic vernacular is in good condition, widely appreciated and understood.

Records are comprehensive, accurate and up to date with quality contributions to the record being made by well-resourced professionals, working across organisations and alongside capable amateurs and stakeholder communities.

We will achieve conservation and enhancement by ensuring that the condition of designated heritage assets, including listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas is monitored, improved and maintained by:

- Continuing to maintain an up-to-date **Buildings at Risk** Register and seek resources to reduce the number of vulnerable buildings from the list;
- Improving awareness of the condition of Dartmoor's Listed Buildings through a rolling survey of Listed Buildings and the quinquennial buildings and structures at risk survey;
- Expanding our rolling survey of listed buildings and structures to assess registered parks and gardens and conservation areas by 2024. Each park, garden or conservation area being treated as a whole;
- Adding to the existing data held on individual properties, by 2024, so that they will be fully geographically referenced and indexed to the corresponding reference numbers of Historic England's designation register.

Partners, including Historic England, will achieve conservation and enhancement by working together to make amendments to the list of designated buildings, structures, parks and gardens, including the following priorities over the life of the Plan:

- Over the last 20 years a number of listed buildings have been subject to damage by

fire. Partners, including Historic England will work over the life of this plan to evaluate the appropriate amendment of designation of these buildings;

- Newly identified buildings, structures and sites which have sufficient architectural, historic, archaeological or artistic interest to meet national criteria will be promoted, and considered by Historic England for appropriate protection;
- Where buildings, structures and sites are considered to no longer meet the national criteria they will be removed from protection, enabling appropriate focus on what is special within Dartmoor.

We will achieve conservation and enhancement by reviewing and updating Dartmoor's Conservation Area appraisals, and working with local communities to maintain their character and appearance, including the following actions:

- By the end of 2022 each of the 25 **Conservation Area Character Appraisals** will be reviewed and a timetable for updating and revising all Appraisals prepared;
- Following the identification of documents to be revised Partners will, over the life of this Plan, work with local communities towards the updating of documents and boundaries (as necessary) and the production of management proposals and action plans for each Conservation Area.

Understanding Dartmoor's Cultural Heritage and its Importance

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's cultural heritage is better understood. Local communities, visitors and other stakeholders' value, understand and are engaged with Dartmoor's rich cultural history which contributes to the sense of place.

Partners will achieve an increased understanding by facilitating research on priority aspects of Dartmoor's cultural heritage, as defined in the Cultural Heritage Research Framework, including the following priorities:

- Continue to participate as partners in research projects led by **academic institutions** where appropriate and possible;
- Encourage and facilitate the timely publication of ongoing **research projects** and actively pursue the establishment of new links with academic institutions;
- By the end of 2023 Partners will work with academic institutions to provide training opportunities for students and volunteers;
- DNPA will continue to host an annual Local History Day to enable local researchers to network and hear about the latest research;
- By the end of 2023 DNPA will have established an annual, public cultural heritage seminar which will enable the latest findings on Dartmoor's cultural heritage to be presented to the public.

We will achieve increased understanding by ensuring that all hard copy documents and images held by DNPA are accessible and fully incorporated into the Historic Environment Record:

- From 2023 all hard copy reports, plans and images will be digitized and catalogued;
- We will ensure that the results of research concerning Dartmoor's historic environment is accessioned to the Historic Environment Record (HER) as soon as possible;

- By the end of 2022 work in partnership to ensure the HER remains publicly accessible, and identify ways to ensure it is fully funded and extend opportunities for volunteers to contribute.

We will achieve increased understanding by fostering and promoting a sense of community and place through engagement, experience and skills:

- Aim to hold at least ten local archaeological and history events annually, including annual conferences, a walks & talks programme, seminars and skills training and community field works opportunities;
- By the end of 2022 we will work in partnership and seek funding to support innovative **community heritage** projects;
- We will achieve greater community engagement through an active programme of archaeological conservation projects and fieldwork opportunities. By the end of 2023 partners will establish a Dartmoor archaeological **volunteers** group trained in fieldwork to undertake site assessment, condition assessment and contribute to an active programme of archaeological conservation projects and fieldwork opportunities in place;
- From 2022 pursue the development of a new 'Adopt a Monument' scheme.



Granite corbels at King's Tor



Holy Trinity Church, Buckfastleigh



Wheal Betsy engine house



Cist at Whitehorse Hill



Windy Post stone cross



Meldon Viaduct

Better for Farming and Forestry

DELIVERING THE VISION

This section of the Partnership Plan contributes to achieving the Vision for Dartmoor in 2045 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 businesses play a key role in delivering a high-quality environment and local products alongside a range of other public benefits'**.

INTRODUCTION

Dartmoor is a farmed landscape and has been for several millennia, farming and forestry are an integral part of Dartmoor's landscape, including the iconic wildlife and natural capital it supports. Natural England's description of Dartmoor's Landscape Character Area includes the following, "Agriculture continues to shape Dartmoor's landscape, as it has for thousands of years. Extensive grazing of the moorland commons by cattle, sheep and Dartmoor Ponies helps to manage the

habitats and the large tracts of open access land. The surrounding enclosed land is an integral part of the upland farming system, providing ground for overwintering stock, hay meadows and winter feed crops. Dartmoor provides a wealth of natural services, fresh water, carbon storage and food, as well as significant opportunity for recreation and access to areas with a high level of tranquillity".

The support provided to farming, especially hill farming as practiced on Dartmoor, and to forestry is undergoing seismic change. Since 1972 the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has played a significant role providing the policy framework for a number of agri-environment schemes and direct payments. Both agri-environment schemes and direct payments (currently Basic Payment Scheme) have been essential to farmers on Dartmoor as have the Rural Development Plans for forestry. The challenge is to ensure future farming and forestry practice is economically viable, helping to protect and manage Dartmoor's special qualities and contributing positively to nature enhancement and the climate crisis.



Sheep farming

¹¹ (NE519: NCA Profile:150 Dartmoor)

Benefits from changing Government Policy

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Farming and forestry systems that sustain a high-quality natural environment, store and sequester carbon, produce healthy food, high quality fibre and other products, are economically viable and deliver a wide range of public goods.

The principal drivers for both agriculture and forestry are government policy and commodity markets which dictate the demand and supply of products. The Dartmoor National Park Partnership Plan has an important role in guiding and focusing action to achieve local results. Collaboration with the farming and forestry community is essential in developing activities which are relevant and deliverable in partnership.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will achieve greater benefit from changing government policy by nurturing the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in the changing business environment and by enabling coordination between farmers, foresters, agencies and other stakeholders. Specific initiatives include:

- Together, stakeholders will produce a spatial and visual expression to the National Park Partnership Plan, developed through close working with all stakeholders including farmers, commoners and foresters. This work will build on the Dartmoor Moorland Vision, that was prepared in partnership with the farming and land management community and relevant statutory bodies. The aim is to develop a spatial approach, to the delivery of all public benefits – identifying priority areas and setting local priorities for the new **Environmental Land Management Scheme** (ELMS) (including woodland creation) and other investment. This spatial approach, covering the whole of the National Park, will provide a framework for land management plans at a common and individual farm level;
- Working with the **Dartmoor Hill Farm Project** to develop a relevant and targeted programme to support farm businesses. This will inform core activities relating to livestock, soils, and grassland with a focus on encouraging and

facilitating innovation that is designed to deliver environmental enhancement and economic sustainability. A key task is to help farms adapt to change embracing new opportunities arising from the agricultural transition. This includes the Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) and other strategic tools to improve business resilience and performance.

Partners will contribute to the evolving agricultural and forestry framework and specifically the new National Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS). The scheme will be a key tool to maintain and enhance Dartmoor's natural and cultural capital, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support viable businesses. We will do this by:

- Deliver the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme on Dartmoor (2021 – 2024). We will ensure learning from the programme is fed into the design and development of the new ELMS
- Seek funding to extend the work of the Dartmoor Test and Trial in partnership with the farming and land-owning communities and other stakeholders;
- In partnership with farmers, foresters, landowners and others develop **Integrated Land Management Plans** for key commons and priority areas with the aim of developing a planned approach to environmental and cultural management and enhancement;
- From 2022-2025, in partnership with farmers, foresters, landowners and others pilot approaches to Nature Recovery areas (NRAs).

Developing Markets

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Value-added products from agricultural and forestry enterprises which are supported by the local economy through enhanced supply chains, processing infrastructure and well-known point-of-sale brands and quality assurance. New products are developed to support a sustainable future for local businesses.

2020 saw a renewed interest in local food and a growth in demand for high quality low carbon food. Dartmoor is a Livestock producing area with extensively reared animals mainly provided by small family farms that often use common land as part of the farming system. In addition, the area is blessed with a range of artisan food producers and a number of community supported agriculture projects. Many of these food producers have strong associations with the landscape of the National Park and help to support its core purposes.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will achieve our shared aims by adding value to existing products and markets whilst developing new opportunities for the land-based sector on Dartmoor, including the following priorities:

- Support existing collaborative selling and buying groups such as Dartmoor Farmers Association and Meat Dartmoor. Help to develop and promote a **'Dartmoor Brand'** that provides the tools for producers to link their products to the landscape and its key habitats and species. Working in partnership, by 2023 seek to develop a scoping study that can address issues of environmental husbandry, animal health and welfare and fair trade. The study will explore market potential;
- Through existing resources such as the **Dartmoor Food Directory**, National Park Visitor Centres and marketing programmes develop a media strategy that links food produced on Dartmoor with the environment and seasons. This work will link to other actions within the Farming and Forestry actions.

- Work with local communities and authorities in the Dartmoor 'hinterland' to develop a strong, high environmental-value food culture that links town and country building on the Dartmoor Community Food hub and **community supported agriculture** initiatives.



The Dartmoor Ice Cream Company, Princetown



Papillon Gin, Moretonhampstead

Greater Collaboration and Knowledge Development

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

People, businesses and organisations with a stake in farming and forestry have a greater understanding of the needs and opportunities for the sector on Dartmoor, especially where this relates to agricultural transition and changing societal factors.

Partners will achieve this through a range of training, advice, new projects, working groups and networks, including the following priorities:

- By the end of 2022 reform the Dartmoor Woodland & Forestry Group to act as a focus for the **forestry and woodland sectors** on Dartmoor. Develop terms of reference to allow the group to provide strategic guidance for the management and development of the resource within the National Park;
- By the end of 2022 develop a **soils and grassland** programme that informs best practice specifically relating to Dartmoor across improved and semi natural grassland. Delivered by practical field trials, demonstration sites and peer to peer learning explore topics from carbon to grassland establishment, enhancement and associated livestock systems;
- Working with **Our Upland Commons** (previously known as the Common Cause project) (2021 – 2025) deliver a range of projects that will support commoning and the management of the commons. This will include investment in skills and resources for participating commoners as well as works to enhance habitats, key species and for public engagement.
- During the agricultural transition provide up to date advice, information and support linked to grant streams relevant to farming and forestry;
- From 2022 develop a **training and awareness** framework for

Staff and Members at the National Park and relevant Local Planning Authorities focused on the Farming and Forestry sector. This will include topics such as planning and development, supply chains, new entrants, and land tenure. Delivery to be a combination of site visits, workshops, and mentoring;

- Explore opportunities for farmers and foresters across National Parks in England to share **best practice** and explore opportunities for collaborative programmes of investment and activity;
- Through the Hill Farm Project re-engage with national agencies such as Defra, Natural England, and the Rural Payments Agency to offer training and awareness sessions. These will focus on upland farming for staff involved in strategy and front-line services;
- Working in partnership in 2023 develop a strategy to support opportunities for **new entrants and next generation farmers** to aid progression within the sector.



Knowledge sharing workshops with farmers (Dartmoor Hill Farm Project)

Understanding and Appreciating Farming And Forestry on Dartmoor

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Visitors, policy makers and local communities will understand the central role that farming, and forestry play in producing food and a range of environmental goods, including landscape character and that this relationship between people and the land is a rich and valuable part of our cultural heritage. Better understanding and appreciation will lead to lower levels of anti-social behaviour including speeding, livestock worrying by dogs and illegal camping.

Partners will achieve this through a range of training, advice, new projects, working groups and networks, including the following priorities:

- Through Our Upland Commons (2021-2025) develop engagement activities that will provide educational opportunities linked to farming and forestry. This will include activities such as 'The Great Gather' and the Walling Club;
- Annual Visitor publications, key websites and National Park Visitor Centres will have a coordinated message, which highlights the role of **high environment, low carbon** farming and forestry systems in managing and enhancing the National Park and producing healthy food, fibre and other products. Behavioural change and perceptions will be monitored through the National Park Visitor Survey and feedback from farmers and foresters;
- Through the **Rural Crime Initiative** and working closely with the farming community and the Livestock Protection Officer (LPO) develop a programme of education and awareness work linked to dog worrying and road traffic incidents focused on hotspots and seasonal trends. Communicate the 'hidden costs' of anti-social behaviour at the farm level and use this to inform educational messages. Monitor data through the LPO records and analyse historic records to improve understanding of trends;
- Improve and, if necessary, increase signage to ensure public awareness and understanding of issues (dog worrying, road traffic accidents, litter, dog fouling / worming etc.) Including, a targeted initiative to provide on-farm interpretation (linked to the Dartmoor Story and **Love Moor Life**) in key honey-pot locations.



Chagfood Community Market Garden



Cattle farming



Balancing traditional practices and current demands in hill farming

Better for People

DELIVERING THE VISION

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'*.

INTRODUCTION

It is important that everybody who wants to visit Dartmoor is able to do so and can enjoy the benefits that a visit to this special landscape can offer, including benefits to people's health and well-being. We want to remove current barriers and offer a warm welcome for all; however, this will pose some significant challenges: currently car parks are full on nice weekends (all year round) and we are expecting visitor numbers to increase significantly over the next 10 years driven by new housing development outside the National Park.

Sometimes visitor behaviour or the sheer number of visitors to one part of the National Park causes conflict with local communities and those that manage the land, and it can cause harm to the fabric of the National Park and to conservation interests¹². There is a need to understand and review opportunities for improving the relevance of Dartmoor's byelaws and their enforcement. In light of the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency, now is the time to plan strategically for this growth, to ask visitors to help us take care of and enhance the National Park through appropriate behaviour and consider how they can contribute to reducing carbon emissions through changing the way they travel to and around the National Park. A number of the actions may be achieved through a large-scale partnership project which enhances visitor engagement and improves opportunities for green travel.



Climbers at Haytor Rocks



Horse riding at Taw Marsh

¹² The Sandford Principle is explained in the section on National Park purposes and sets out when greater weight will be given to the first purpose



Kayaking



All-terrain mobility scooter excursion

Benefits from changing Government Policy

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Across Dartmoor people from all backgrounds and ages are enjoying the National Park, undertaking activities of their choice. Visitors are spread out through time and space, even on the busiest days.

You are still able to find peace and solitude and some areas are quiet, as sanctuaries for nature.

Visitors leave no trace of their visit; they understand and respect the environment, each other and the people living and working here.

Existing and potential new visitors can find good and consistent information from the point they start to plan their visit right through to the point they start their activity.

Local businesses are thriving and are supported by our visitors. There is less conflict, and local communities and farmers welcome visitors.

Partners will achieve this by working together across the boundary to ensure that people make informed and responsible choices about visiting the National Park. We will manage recreation, employing a zonal approach as shown in the Recreation Strategy Map, with the following priorities for action:

- Green space in new development: work with adjoining Local Planning Authorities to seek to ensure that all new development near the National Park has **local green recreational space** allocated for everyday activities and dog walks;
- Information: by the end of 2023 work with one Local Housing Authority to develop and pilot a “Welcome Pack” for new residents purchasing or renting property in large new housing developments close to Dartmoor; the Welcome Pack will contain information about the Countryside Code, countryside recreation opportunities and sustainable transport options. This pilot will be evaluated and rolled out across all local authority areas if successful;
- Linking town and country: From 2023 develop and deliver a targeted campaign, to promote **off road walking and cycling routes** to the National Park and fill gaps in current provision;

- Town Hubs: By the end of 2025 work with 5 local communities to promote Dartmoor's towns as hubs for visitors to **increase economic benefit** and promote sustainable modes of onward travel;
- Areas of Opportunity: By the end of 2023, work with local stakeholders to develop and implement **improved recreation opportunities** for local communities and visitors on the A38 corridor Area of Opportunity;
- Heavily Used Sites: As a partnership manage the Postbridge and Bellever area as a heavily used site. By the end of 2023 develop an Area Management Plan for the land to the west of Princetown;
- Events: Continue to positively manage large scale Recreation Events in line with the agreed policy;
- **'Nature Recovery Areas'** (NRAs): Recreation activity will be managed to ensure nature recovery is supported;
- Trial innovative management approaches at peak times when visitor pressure is likely to lead to congestion, damage, conflict or disturbance;
- Through the Dartmoor **Rural Crime Initiative** and working closely with the Dartmoor farming community continue to address priority issues: anti-social behaviour, livestock worrying & attacks by dogs, wildlife & heritage crime, litter and initiatives to improve safety for people and animals on Dartmoor roads;
- From 2022 continue working with Dartmoor Specials on Dartmoor patrols to have an increased police presence reinforcing messages around anti-social behaviour;
- Explore opportunities to work in partnership with District Councils as part of the Community Protection Notice system to address anti-social behaviour;
- Support and expand opportunities for voluntary wardens and other **volunteers** to help with engagement and education in order to reduce antisocial behaviour and encourage more responsible visits to the National Park;
- By the end of 2023 develop a costed plan to **sustainably manage erosion** and seek resources to deliver.

Reach Out and Understand

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

People of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are able to access Dartmoor and feel welcome. Every visitor has positive and immersive experiences resulting in a long-lasting connection and care for the place and its communities. More people can benefit from the health and well-being benefits that Dartmoor offers.

Partners will achieve a greater reach and welcome by better understanding the needs of different people and building partnerships:

- By the end of 2022 undertake research into **visitor motivations** and, working with partners, use this to help shape future recreational and outreach activity;
- By the end of 2023 develop **cycling and horse riding improvement plans**, that will also benefit walking. Seek resources to deliver these.
- Work with local and national user groups to improve recreation opportunities where these can be sustainably managed, deliver community and economic benefit and contribute to active and sustainable travel;
- By the end of 2025 improve up to 20 **'Miles Without Stiles'** routes to increase accessibility for visitors with limited mobility (providing improved access for wheelchairs and mobility scooters) across the National Park;
- By the end of 2025 Increase proportion of Public Rights of Way defined as easy to use to 90%
- From 2022 Natural England will develop a new 'people & nature survey' that will gauge public perception, priority and use of the natural

environment at a national level. Partners will actively contribute to this work through analysing and learning from this data to ensure it is shared and benefits decision-making on Dartmoor.

We will achieve a wider representation of visitors by reaching out to new audiences and spreading the benefits:

- By the end of 2025 seek resources to deliver the **strategy for outreach and understanding** including physical access and remote access via digital channels;
- From 2022 identify funding to deliver the coordinated partnership communication strategy in order to provide clear and inspiring information for visitors starting at the point they first make a decision to come to Dartmoor;
- Work with national and local user groups to promote positive actions, increasing understanding of **environmental limitations** alongside improved facilities;
- By the end of 2025 deliver a network of 10 on-site farm information boards. By 2022 build on existing national programmes to expand and promote an annual programme of **farm and woodland open** days to enable people to experience and understand the role of farming and forestry in looking after the National Park;
- By the end of 2024 work with local GP surgeries to develop new relationships with social prescribers promoting activities on Dartmoor to help improve **health and well-being** of more people.



Moorland walkers with dogs

Partners will achieve a wider representation of visitors and a long-lasting connection by looking to the future and having a focus on young people from all backgrounds:

- Working in partnership through Sustainable Outdoor Learning in Devon (S.O.L.I.D.), AONBs and the Dartmoor Educators Forum, from 2022, design and pilot a new inclusive and progressive approach to school visits aiming to build a long-lasting connection with Dartmoor for all children in Devon. With the Community Engagement Rangers take opportunities to test the feasibility that:
 - by the age of 11 children will have visited Dartmoor;
 - by 14 all students will have had at least one residential or camping overnight experience on Dartmoor;
 - by 18 all students will have had an opportunity to contribute positively through conservation volunteering;
- From 2022 collaborate with existing and new partners to remove barriers, encouraging and enabling more **young people** to explore and enjoy Dartmoor outside of a formal setting; through for example: Ranger Ralph, Junior Rangers and Youth Rangers, John Muir Award and other opportunities through Scouts and Guides, Youth Hostel Association and Duke of Edinburgh Award;
- Work with at least one secondary school to pilot an **outdoor-focused school curriculum** as an alternative to traditional academic learning.



'Generation Green' certificates

Stimulating green travel

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

There are fewer cars on the road, and no congestion or inappropriate parking, as people arrive by other means of transport.

We will achieve this by developing a green transport strategy (by end 2022) to increase the number of people accessing and moving around the National Park sustainably, including the following actions:

- From 2023 develop and promote a network of multi-functional bus services to and around Dartmoor, linking settlements and rail links. These networks should be dual function, providing services that serve the needs of local residents, are affordable and carry bikes;
- From 2023 use new technology to improve service and reduce carbon emissions;
- Deliver a coordinated network of **electric vehicle charging** points and develop an e-bike charging network, working with local businesses and tourist attractions;
- By the end of 2025 develop safe **multi-user route networks** as part of the Strategy, providing a strategic network to get people to and around the National Park and increase length of stay;
- From 2023 develop a communication strategy to encourage non car-based travel;
- By the end of 2022 extend car park charges to support delivery of National Park purposes.



Electric charging point at DNP Visitor Centre, Haytor



The Dartmoor Line, re-opened in 2021, provides a daily rail link between Okehampton and Exeter



Cycling across Meldon Viaduct, part of The Granite Way

Better for Communities and Business

DELIVERING THE VISION

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:'** and there are specific strands to this section that directly support other elements of the Vision.

INTRODUCTION

Dartmoor is home to around 35,000 people, and a place of work for around 10,000 people. As with many rural areas, the National Park is characterised by an ageing population and workforce; net out-commuting to surrounding areas for work;

rural isolation; lack of sustainable transport and connectivity; difficulties accessing services and facilities; high house prices; and low wages; which all present implications and opportunities in terms of the needs of local communities and businesses. The implications of climate change also bring challenges and opportunities and will require a concerted and collective response.

The current business profile is, however, very diverse in nature and this depth underpins its strength and resilience. Dartmoor has a wealth of natural and cultural capital which provide opportunities for future innovation and prosperity. The National Park provides an attractive place to live and work; and the network of settlements provide opportunities for meeting the needs of local communities and businesses whilst conserving and enhancing Dartmoor's special qualities



Buckfastleigh

Greater collaboration and knowledge development

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's communities are thriving and engaged in caring for the National Park. Sustainable development is supported in the right places, with climate change mitigation and adaptation at its heart, helping market towns, villages and the wider rural community thrive in a way which protects the environment, and leads by example. Dartmoor's communities have ready access to quality housing, and the services and facilities they need, and make sustainable travel choices. New development in the National Park is of the highest quality, efficient, and conserves and enhances natural and heritage assets.

We will support thriving communities by supporting development which is good for Dartmoor, by:

- On an ongoing basis, working in partnership between DNPA, Local Housing Authorities, communities, landowners and Registered Housing Providers to deliver **affordable homes**, of a mix of types and tenures which respond to the identified local housing need;
- Preparing planning guidance during 2022/3, which develops a **modern design** vernacular for Dartmoor, drawing on traditional local materials and styles, and promoting innovation, challenge, and an expectation of **sustainable building**;
- From 2022 implementing the Local Plan¹³, which promotes development that is sustainable over its whole life cycle, in terms of its location, design, use of resources, and climate change adaptation.

Partners will achieve this by enabling sustainable communities, including:

- Developing from 2022, a network of public, private and third sector groups, which help communities to retain access to local services and facilities by sharing, exploring and developing innovative and replicable models for service delivery;
- Identifying needs for **community facilities** through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan each year, and support the communities to maintain and improve these through collaborative projects so that all generations have access to clubs, events, and activities in a way which promotes community cohesion and inclusion;
- From 2022, working in partnership to develop and seek funding for an annual programme of **volunteering and apprenticeship opportunities** so that anyone in communities within or outside the National Park has the opportunity to engage in caring for and managing Dartmoor and shaping its future;
- From 2023 promoting and enabling **sustainable travel choices** for local communities and visitors through development of the Green Transport Strategy;
- Developing, from 2022, a network of public, private and third sector groups which help communities to make good choices about how they use resources, with opportunities for **community recycling, local food, efficient buildings and energy generation**, building local resilience and minimising their impact upon climate change.

¹³ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/business/planning-policy

Resilient Economy

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Dartmoor's diverse economy fosters traditional sectors; supports businesses that meet the needs of local communities; and encourages the growth of productive, innovative and resilient enterprise. Dartmoor is valued nationally for its outstanding natural and cultural capital, which acts as a catalyst for inward investment and prosperity across the region, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship. People who live in the National Park have the opportunity to work locally, and Dartmoor's businesses have access to a skilled workforce.

Partners will support a resilient economy by developing local markets:

- From 2022 building a network which improves productivity through strengthening **local supply chains**, promoting local food and other products such as timber, and crafts and maximising Dartmoor branding as a marketing tool;
- In 2022 explore a joint project to support an ambitious **natural capital market** on Dartmoor which helps protect and manage natural and cultural assets and support growth across the region in the longer term;
- Encouraging the celebration of Dartmoor's special qualities through **culture and the arts**, and encourage other knowledge based and skilled sectors such as IT, media and professional services;
- From 2022 developing a collaborative project which promotes **innovation** and depth in the tourism sector, developing opportunities to extend the season, creating more attractive full-time jobs. Build on the increasing demand for an 'experience led' offer and the green agenda in retail and tourism, encouraging new ways of working together and supporting **collaboration** between businesses which sustain Dartmoor's special qualities;
- Working in partnership to influence and access funding and support programmes which are appropriate for Dartmoor's **rural entrepreneurs** and will encourage new businesses through providing start-up and early years business support, and access to loans and investment
- Developing, from 2022, a network of public, private and third sector groups, which help skills development and new businesses, which promote health, social care and well-being to support Dartmoor's older population.

Dartmoor's stakeholders will achieve growth and innovation by creating an environment for productivity:

- Working in partnership to support communities in enabling high quality digital connectivity through extensive high-speed broadband coverage, and development of **ultra-fast broadband** and mobile provision in ways compatible with the protection of the National Park's landscape and cultural heritage;
- From 2022, develop a Dartmoor business network, which enables a better understanding of local businesses workforce needs, and supporting connections with **skills and training** providers so they can attract, upskill and retain a local workforce;
- Implementing the Local Plan from 2022, with clear local planning policies, which encourage businesses to locate and grow where there is ready access to affordable housing and sustainable travel choices;
- Implementing the Local Plan from 2022, with clear local planning policies, which support opportunities for **affordable workspace, high quality workspace** and the ability to homework enabling business to start up, grow in the National Park;
- Implementing the Local Plan from 2022, and revised Design Guidance in 2022, which help businesses transition to a **low carbon economy** through premises improvements, access to local agricultural, forestry and minerals resources, and maximise opportunities for green business growth.



Linhay Hill Quarry, Ashburton



The Dartmoor Soap Company, Okehampton



Blackaller Apiary, North Bovey



Dartmoor Brewery, Princetown



Eleanor Ludgate, Artist, Chagford



Two Bridges Hotel, Two Bridges

Key Challenges

In preparing the Partnership Plan, it was clear that there are a number conflicting or competing objectives; these were described as 'grit issues' where views are split on what the Plan should say. Decision making should always be grounded in the statutory purposes of the National Park when considering such issues, and where necessary the Sandford Principle: where conflicts between conservation and recreation cannot be reconciled, conservation will take precedence. In many cases, this requires careful consideration of the specific circumstances and balancing different objectives in order to achieve the overall Vision of the Partnership Plan. Set out below are the principles that will guide decision-making when considering these key challenges.



Flooding at Postbridge



Damage from camping at Bellever



New affordable homes at South Tawton

Landscape Management and Nature Enhancement and Recovery

The bold ambitions in the Partnership Plan for nature enhancement and recovery means **being open to change**, but also brings challenges for other objectives of the Partnership Plan including archaeology and landscape character. For example, there may be places where, for nature enhancement/recovery reasons we want to allow vegetation to grow or natural succession to take place, but this could impact on the visibility of heritage assets. Similarly, for **Natural Flood Management** purposes we may need to support changes such as allowing streams to meander where they have been straightened by tin streaming, or trees may be established within Premier Archaeological Landscapes and in other areas which will impact on heritage assets and will change the landscape character. Dartmoor currently has fourteen **Premier Archaeological Landscapes** (PALs) which were selected to represent the best examples of Dartmoor's rich archaeological resources. They are areas that are considered to be of international importance and are some of the finest archaeological landscapes in Europe. They are not formally designated heritage assets and are not protected by legislation but are identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in decision-making. In these areas management of the archaeology is paramount, whilst remaining sympathetic to the ecological interest.

Conserving and enhancing **landscape character** does not mean 'preserving the National Park in aspic' or resisting all change. It recognises that landscapes are dynamic and the result of management or interactions with people. UK National Parks are listed as IUCN Category V landscapes as 'areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value'. This is encapsulated within the term 'natural beauty' which is part of the statutory purposes 'to conserve

the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage'. The Dartmoor National Park Landscape Character Assessment (2017)¹⁴ provides guidance on how changes in the landscape can be managed and the characteristics of the landscape that are more sensitive to change.

PRINCIPLES:

- At the Dartmoor scale seek aligned benefits, or an overall balance, for natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage that recognises the international importance of the National Park's habitats and archaeological sites and enables the enhancement of nature at scale. Ensure that good examples of all significant archaeological features are still accessible and visible;
- In Premier Archaeological Landscapes (already defined), the primary focus will be to conserve and enhance archaeology. The current set of PALs need to be extended to cover a wider range and distribution of features;
- In Nature Recovery Areas, the primary focus will be nature and letting natural processes take their course;
- Where potential conflict exists between nature enhancement/recovery schemes and archaeology, an initial assessment¹⁵ will be made of the current understanding and significance of archaeological features and any possible mitigation measures identified;
- Where conflicts cannot be avoided, records will be made if there is potential for the asset to be lost or changed.

¹⁴ www.dartmoor.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/76142/Dartmoor-LCA-report2017-FINAL-web.pdf

¹⁵ with reference to appropriate guidance, such as Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic England 2015

More Trees

During the preparation of the Partnership Plan including the Dartmoor Debates and public opinion survey, we received many comments in support of more trees in the landscape. Various terms were used, with general consensus around **natural regeneration** and succession of **native woodland** creeping up river valleys, but with less consensus around commercial forestry and conifer plantations, although the potential for woodland creation and management to support the local economy was broadly supported. Concerns were also raised that current policies and designations prevent new woodland creation from happening.

The Climate Change Committee has suggested a UK target of 1.5 million hectares of new woodland planting by 2050 to respond to the climate emergency. The current government has a target to create 30,000ha of new woodland in England every year until 2025.

There are potential conflicts between more trees and other objectives of the Partnership Plan, including **landscape character and cultural heritage**. Trees

are an important part of the landscape character in Dartmoor, but this does not mean that more trees would be appropriate everywhere, for example on the open, windswept upland moors which are one of Dartmoor's special qualities due to the far-reaching views and a sense of remoteness and wildness. Many of the areas where more trees would fit into the landscape, for example along the river valleys, have important archaeological features such as the tin streaming along many moorland rivers, for which Dartmoor is internationally significant.

Woodlands and trees provide multiple benefits including **carbon sequestration, natural flood management, climate regulation, wildlife, and providing locations for recreation**, as well as supporting the local economy through timber production and wood fuel. Ancient and semi-natural woodlands are considered to be of greater value for cultural heritage and wildlife, whereas conifer plantations provide some different benefits and have the capacity to absorb greater numbers of visitors, including more active recreation such as mountain biking.



East Okement Valley from Belstone Cleave

Dartmoor also holds significant carbon stores within its **peatlands**, which are many times greater than its woodlands, and are of vital importance to conserve. Significant tree growth on deep peat is to be avoided, as it will likely lead to peatland drainage, erosion and carbon emissions many times greater than the woodland's carbon sequestration potential. Over the long term (200 years and more) peatlands in good condition have far greater carbon storage potential than the equivalent woodland.



Peatlands restoration at Flat Tor Pan



Black-A-Tor Copse

PRINCIPLES:

- Dartmoor currently has around 12% woodland cover – the debate is not about trees or no trees, but about the right trees in the right place, and the scale and location of new woodland;
- Natural regeneration is already taking place across areas of Common land; an assessment of the impact on archaeology will help guide future decisions;
- As part of nature enhancement, an increase in woodland cover, primarily broadleaved and native species, delivered through natural regeneration and new planting will be guided by the Landscape Character Assessment and is likely to be primarily in the river valleys, farmed and forested plateau, farmland, and in and around settlements;
- Where increased tree cover is planned, aim to avoid negative impacts on significant heritage assets;
- Where conflicts cannot be avoided, the significance of the heritage assets will be considered, and records made if there is potential for the asset to be lost or changed;
- The species of trees established should be native and traditional to Dartmoor. Where other species need to be considered in response to climate change and pests /diseases including non-native species, these should be sympathetic to the landscape character, and enhance biodiversity;
- Work together to address potentially conflicting objectives in current policy and designations (such as prescriptions for Sites of Special Scientific Interest).



New trees at Fernworthy

Existing Conifer Plantations

The blocks of conifer plantations on Dartmoor were mainly planted up in the 19th and early 20th centuries, despite significant opposition at the time, largely due to their landscape impact. During the debates about the long-term Vision for Dartmoor, the issue was raised again. Opinions were split between:

- those who supported a long-term aim to remove conifer plantations from the high moor for nature enhancement/recovery, to store carbon in restored peatlands, and to enhance landscape quality
- those in favour of conifer plantations who pointed to the benefits they bring including limiting water acidification, jobs and economic benefits, ability to absorb recreation and sequester carbon.

PRINCIPLES:

- A long-term ambition is to **remove conifer plantations from the deep peat** and restore these peatlands for nature enhancement/recovery and carbon capture. This would apply to Soussons, Fernworthy and parts of Bellever. Current woodland should be allowed to mature, and clearance should wait until the end of their natural rotation in order to maximise carbon sequestration, with the timber ideally going to construction or other end uses that lock up the carbon;
- Support the restoration of **Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites**¹⁶ to native broadleaved woodland;
- Long term ambition to remove conifer plantations where they do not fit with the landscape character or detract from its quality and scenic beauty, for example where they occupy prominent positions on the open moor. This will be guided by the Landscape Character Assessment and would include Landscape Character Types 1L: Upland Moorland with Tors; 2D: Moorland Edge slopes; and Rivers and Stream;
- Any felling or restocking operations should respect the presence of archaeological features and wildlife.

- All trees, hedges and woodlands are protected by the Forestry Act which prohibits felling trees above a threshold, without an approved sustainable management plan or felling licence. The UK Forestry Standard outlines a baseline of good practice in relation to soils, water, wildlife, carbon, recreation and landscape.



Bellever Forest

¹⁶ 'Plantations on ancient woodland sites' (PAWS) are areas of ancient woodland where the former native tree cover has been felled and replaced by planted trees, usually of species not native to the site. Dartmoor has around 250ha of PAWS the majority of which is found in the wooded valleys such as the Teign valley, much of which is in positive restoration management by conservation organisations.

A Grazed Moorland Landscape

In 2005 a Moorland Vision for Dartmoor was agreed. It was designed to provide farmers with a clear statement on what the public bodies (i.e., the statutory agencies) wanted the moorland to look like in the future (2030). The Vision confirmed that active management including grazing and swaling (burning moorland vegetation) was essential to delivering the Vision.

In developing this Partnership Plan, the question of a grazed landscape was raised again, with concerns about **over-grazing** (particularly by sheep) in some areas; and **under-grazing** in others; leading to conflicts with Dartmoor's important archaeology, habitats and wildlife. Intensive sheep grazing may keep vegetation too short and prevents a **mosaic of vegetation heights and habitats**; in other places insufficient grazing causes problems for **archaeology** (visibility and damage to buried archaeology), sustainable farming and specific habitats for wildlife. Conservation grazing is an essential management tool for some habitats, but intensive grazing will hamper others.

Concerns were also raised about **swaling** (planned and controlled burns) conflicting with climate change objectives, although stopping or reducing burning could increase the risk of more damaging wildfires, particularly with hotter drier summers resulting from climate change.

The idea of high nature value or high environmental quality farming was raised during preparation of the Plan. This refers to low intensity farming systems which are managed with the production of public goods at the heart. Management of Common Land by Commoners (people, usually farmers, using common rights to graze animals) was also considered to be a public good and something to be supported.

PRINCIPLES:

- Grazing animals are one of the main tools to deliver the objectives of this Plan, to deliver conservation and access outcomes and support local communities;

- The number, type and seasonality of animals should be determined locally depending on the outcomes to be delivered and linked to sustainable farm businesses;
- Animals grazing on the Common are inextricably linked to those on the home farm. It is important that all stakeholders work together to ensure the availability of stock to graze the commons. Especially, that the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) deliver a programme for the uplands that is relevant and economic;
- Ask Government to review the Heather and Grass burning code to provide updated guidance for land managers on management regimes to deliver conservation objectives and respond to the climate emergency. This needs to be in the context of the wildfire risk associated with current vegetation and also the availability of other mechanisms to deliver environmental outcomes. Farmers should be involved in identifying solutions;
- Support high nature / environment value farming (low intensity farming systems which are managed with the production of public goods at the heart) through ELMS..



Cattle at Powdermills

More Visitors

Dartmoor is attracting an increasing number of visitors, a trend that has been exacerbated during the COVID19 pandemic and is predicted to continue, particular with the large number of new houses being built in surrounding areas. During the preparation of the Partnership Plan there were conflicting views between those who welcomed the increasing numbers and those who felt that this was having a negative effect on the National Park, including impacts on local communities through **increased traffic, loss of tranquillity, path erosion and tensions** between different recreation users.

These pressures though are a consequence of more people visiting and engaging with the National Park, which is to be welcomed. As opportunities for wider travel were limited during periods of lockdown, visits to Dartmoor from those from communities or backgrounds which have typically not accessed the National Park to a great extent began to increase. Broadly, society recognised and appreciated the **importance of green space and open air recreation for health and well-being**, and local communities valued what was on their doorstep with a fresh perspective.



Traffic jam at Haytor

PRINCIPLES:

- Recognise that visitor numbers will increase, and plan for this with a particular focus to promote sustainable travel options to and around the National Park;
- Issues of anti-social behaviour and conflict are real and have been increasing. Although we want to welcome people to the National Park, we need to have the tools and resources to manage them. Continued work with the police will be crucial but also continued targeted communication to raise awareness;
- Promote increased understanding and mutual respect between visitors and local communities, and respect for the National Park's special qualities
- Proactively manage visitor activity through strategic zoning;
- Accept and implement restrictions or tighter management on certain activities, in certain places or at certain times of year when this is necessary to protect the fabric of the National Park.



2 Minute Litter Pick campaign at Spitchwick



Affordable Passivhaus homes, Christow

Changing Demographics

Dartmoor's population is ageing, which brings challenges and opportunities for the economy in terms of attracting new businesses in sectors such as health and well-being alongside residential domiciliary care, but also the need to enable a younger profile of employees to live and work on Dartmoor. The high quality of Dartmoor's natural and built environment makes it an attractive location for people to retire to, or buy second homes, which alongside a low-wage economy with significant employment in the agricultural and tourism sectors means that often local people cannot afford housing.

PRINCIPLES:

- The statutory purposes of National Park designation mean that Dartmoor is not a suitable location for large-scale or unrestricted development;
- Development will continue to be carefully planned and managed to balance the competing, and often conflicting, demands of local communities and businesses, visitors, and the high-quality environment;
- Planning decisions are guided by national policy and local policies set out in the Local Plan. This includes positive policies which enable affordable housing delivery in the most sustainable locations, housing which is suitable into later life, new employment opportunities, and support appropriate services and facilities;
- The Authority will establish mechanisms to work with Next Generation representatives to involve young people and ensure that their views are reflected in decision-making.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Responding to climate change also raises potential conflicts between the drivers for renewable energy and energy efficiency, which do not always sit happily with landscape character, or the historic environment.

National Parks are not considered appropriate for large scale, commercial wind or solar farms due to impacts on landscape character, and these are considered to be 'major development'¹⁷. There is significant potential for hydroelectricity schemes on Dartmoor, especially with the increased river flows predicted with climate change, however significant environmental constraints exist because of impacts on biodiversity and water flows. These impacts are largely managed through licensing or regulatory processes. If the viability of the technology improves and average river flows increase with climate change as predicted¹⁸, demand for hydroelectricity schemes could increase.

The efficiency and viability of solar photovoltaics has improved significantly over the last plan period and been by far the most popular type of renewable technology installed. Without the incentive of the Feed In Tariff, though, the amount of new domestic solar installation (much of which does not require planning permission) has fallen.

A future focus on retrofitting existing buildings to address energy efficiency and carbon performance is likely in response to the climate emergency. For historic buildings a balance needs to be achieved between improving energy efficiency and avoiding damage both to the significance of the building and its fabric.

PRINCIPLES:

- The primary aim is to reduce energy consumption through improved building efficiency, particularly fabric-first building, retro-fitting enhancements and reducing the need to travel;
- Measures to improve the efficiency and carbon performance of historic buildings will be supported in line with Historic England guidance¹⁹;
- There is a presumption against renewable energy projects in the National Park where they are Major Development;
- The Authority will provide positive and proactive support for renewable energy projects which are not Major Development, where their delivery is compatible with National Park purposes, through Local Plan policies and advice to applicants.



Hydro electricity at Dunsford

¹⁷ 'Major Development' in the National Park is defined as development which has the potential to have a significant adverse impact on the Special Qualities of the National Park, such as its dark night skies, landscape character, heritage significance, biodiversity, tranquillity and other qualities. National policy and guidance (the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Parks Circular (2010)) emphasises that major development should not take place within a National Park except in exceptional circumstances. Whilst recognising that National Parks offer important opportunities for renewable energy generation, these must be appropriate to the national value of the landscape

¹⁸ Topic Paper 1: Natural Environment, Table 8, DNPA, September 2019

¹⁹ Historic England, 2017, Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings



Military training exercise



Ten Tors

Military Training

Dartmoor has been an important location for military training since at least the 19th century, fulfilling an important national requirement. Military training is mainly delivered through landowners granting permission for it to occur on their land with some MOD freehold land around Willsworthy. Concerns have been raised in the past regarding conflicts with the statutory purposes and special qualities due to **restricted access and impacts of live firing on tranquillity**. However, management of the training area can also deliver benefits **such a positive management of wildlife and cultural heritage** and the annual Ten Tors helps thousands of young people of differing backgrounds enjoy and learn more about the National Park. Military training was not raised as a significant issue during the public opinion survey or Dartmoor Debates. The long-term aspiration of the National Park Authority is that military training on Dartmoor should be **compatible with**

the statutory purposes of the National Park, specifically through ending live firing on Dartmoor. The Landscapes Review^[1] suggested that military training areas might be suitable as 'wilder' areas of National Parks.

PRINCIPLES:

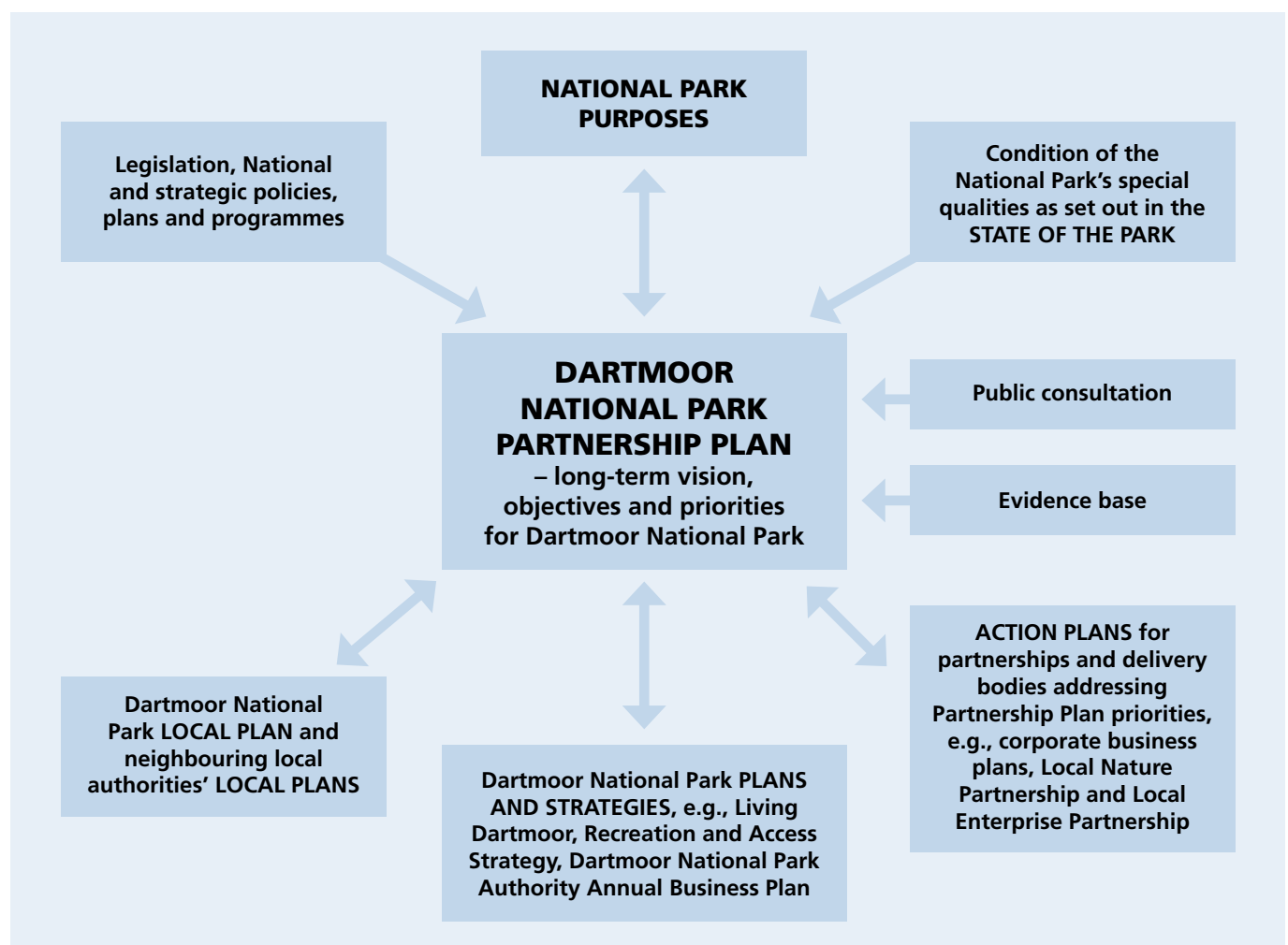
- Where the Ministry of Defence has management responsibilities under the terms of their respective training licences from landowners it should support the Partnership Plan vision and objectives through positive management for access, nature, cultural heritage, and responding to the climate and ecological emergency;
- The balanced needs of military training alongside pursuit of the Partnership Plan vision and objectives will continue to be overseen by the Dartmoor Steering Group and Working Party.

^[1] Protected Landscapes Review, September 2019, page 44

Links to other Plans and Strategies

This Partnership Plan (the National Park Management Plan) is one of two important statutory documents that guide activity, decision-making and investment on Dartmoor; the other is the Local Plan. The two documents are distinct, although they both have the same overall objective to help deliver National Park purposes. The Local Plan sets the policies which guide planning decisions about development and the use of land. The Partnership Plan is a broader strategic plan that sets out a long-term vision for Dartmoor and provides the framework for partnership working to deliver this.

It also provides the strategic context for more specific plans and strategies for example on nature enhancement or recreation management, which will help deliver the long-term Vision for Dartmoor.



The Partnership Plan takes forward relevant national and international policies, such as the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and 8 Point Plan for National Parks, in a way that reflects local circumstances. It responds to the recommendations of the Glover review, particularly in relation to climate change, improving natural capital, nature enhancement, engagement with young people and a more diverse range of visitors, and addressing the challenges of an ageing population. It also takes account of the policies and strategies of other local bodies or organisations which work in the National Park. It does not however, override any other specific legislative requirements or consent processes.



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Monitoring

Monitoring of the Partnership Plan is important for:

- Understanding whether the actions or projects the Plan is seeking to do are happening;
- Understanding whether these actions are having an impact 'on the ground';
- Identifying new or evolving issues which may need to be considered.

There are two key ways in which monitoring takes place:

- State of the Park Reporting - the purpose of the State of the Park Report is to identify and seek to understand the issues affecting the National Park at the broadest level; its environment, its communities, its users. A Report is normally completed every 5 years, and in advance of a review of the Partnership Plan. It will seek to explore commonly known issues which need to be understood, as well as identifying new or emerging issues which may need to be addressed by the next Plan. The most recent State of the Park Report was undertaken in 2018. The next State of the Park Report will be completed in 2023;
- Action/outcome monitoring – the purpose of Plan monitoring is to establish whether actions identified in the Plan are taking place, whether they are on time, and whether they are delivering what was intended. A challenge for the monitoring process is being able to establish links between action/outcome monitoring and the State of the Park. Given the number of variables effecting the State of the Park it can be difficult to establish a correlation between actions (e.g. the completion of a project) and outcome (i.e. a positive change 'on the ground'). In some cases this can be achieved over the longer term, and/or through more detailed study or research.

Partners will work together to monitor the actions of the Plan on a regular basis, addressing through the Partnership Board any work necessary to understand a change in circumstances or address under-delivery. Partners will also support the preparation of the next State of the Park, providing data as well as specialist interpretation and advice. An annex to the Partnership Plan setting out the monitoring framework, annual action monitoring, and the most recent State of the Park Report, are all published on www.yourdartmoor.org.





Archaeological survey



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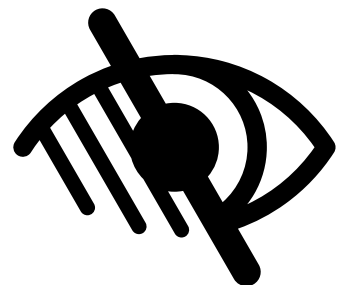
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Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-26

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