EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Business Plan
2017-2020

Working together for Exmoor
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Welcome to the 2017-2020 Business Plan

Exmoor is many things, to many people. To some a home and to others a livelihood, a place for adventure or a tranquil place to escape. It is also an area full of resources and opportunities to provide benefits beyond its boundary.

For everyone though it is a special place, protected as a National Park.

Underpinning our Business Plan is the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan. This 5-year plan establishes the priorities and programmes required to maintain the special qualities of the area. It is used to highlight the opportunities and threats facing the National Park, to agree priorities and resource allocations and to co-ordinate action between partners. The Partnership Plan is a true partnership plan for the area, developed in consultation with partner organisations, communities, visitors and businesses and delivered by over 100 partners.

This Business Plan sets out our priorities for the next three years to ensure the Authority is

- working hard to further National Park Purposes
- achieving the ambitions stated within the 8-Point Plan for England’s National Parks, Defra, March 2016
- delivering our commitments within the emerging new Partnership Plan and
- carrying out our services effectively

The National Park Authority facilitates the partnership plan’s delivery. The new plan for the period 2017-2022 is currently under development and we will revisit our Business Plan annually to ensure we remain focussed on the priorities for Exmoor.

The Authority will continue to be flexible and responsive to local, regional and national opportunities and challenges. It will be important for us to participate in and influence discussions around policy changes linked to Britain’s withdrawal from the EU where this impacts the delivery of National Park purposes. Equally important will be to find the opportunities in a natural capital approach, understanding and enhancing the benefits the National Park offers to society such as food, clean water, energy, flood defence, and health and wellbeing.

We look forward to delivering this Business Plan through the work of our skilled and committed staff team in partnership with the community and our key partners.

Andrea Davis
Chair

Sarah Bryan
Chief Executive
Our 22 Members have responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the Authority and ensuring we achieve our objectives through effective use of our resources.

- 12 are appointed by the county and district councils with land within the National Park
- 5 are nominated by and elected from the Parish Councils within the National Park
- 5 are appointed by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Members meet monthly as an Authority to consider priorities and make decisions relating to our duties as a National Park Authority, including determining planning applications for development on Exmoor. These are public meetings that anyone can attend.
We employ 60.6 FTE core staff (April 2017) and our knowledgeable and dedicated staff team are a key resource in ensuring we deliver this Business Plan. We additionally employ skilled and enthusiastic project and seasonal staff delivered through partnerships and shared services. This not only helps us make the best use of our resources but also benefits all parties through shared learning and understanding.

Much of what we do would simply not be possible without our partners, local communities, interest groups and volunteers. We are committed to working closely with others to deliver National Park purposes and protect the special qualities of Exmoor. We will continue to develop close working relationships with local businesses and communities alongside our regional and national partners, and provide opportunities for people to get involved in the delivery of our plans.

We will regularly meet with key interest groups and facilitate meetings between specialists to gain insight and input from others during delivery of this plan.

Regular meetings of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum provide a forum for consultation and discussion about matters affecting the National Park and an opportunity to promote understanding between the Authority, local communities and other bodies with an interest in the National Park. The Forum meets at different venues across the National Park and members of the public are welcome to attend.
Inspiring Natural Environments
Our Priorities:
- Connect young people with Exmoor
- Create thriving natural environments

National Treasures
Our Priorities:
- Everyone’s Exmoor
- Exmoor’s Landscape and Heritage
- Health and wellbeing - delivering through Exmoor

Drivers of the Rural Economy
Our Priorities:
- Drive sustainable growth in international and domestic tourism
- Deliver new apprenticeships and placements on Exmoor
- Seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of Exmoor communities

Corporate Priorities
Our Priorities:
- Broaden our income base to ensure sustainable delivery of National Park purposes
- Work with communities, businesses and partners to deliver National Park purposes
- Develop and maintain effective and efficient services
Inspiring Natural Environments

Our Priorities

1. Connect Young People with Nature

The focus of this area of work will be to support schools and groups to deliver high quality outdoor learning on Exmoor with a target of reaching 8,000 young people per year by 2020. The Authority currently engages on average 170 schools each year in activities on Exmoor, which translates to over 5,000 young people of school age experiencing Exmoor.

We will:

1. Engage teachers and group leaders, both within Exmoor and regionally, to develop knowledge, skills and confidence in outdoor learning and in using Exmoor as an outdoor classroom

2. Support partners to deliver the National Citizenship Service on Exmoor and further develop the concepts of the Young Champions scheme in partnership with the Somerset Rural Youth Project

3. Integrate Pinkery Centre into the Authority’s Learning and Outreach service, reducing net costs to the Authority while providing a fun learning experience for young people

4. Provide information, toolkits and access to small grants to enable teachers, group leaders and young people to access Exmoor independently

5. Promote understanding of the health and wellbeing benefits of being in nature to young people through all activities, linking back to the Government’s 5 Ways to Wellbeing

Defra’s 8 Point Plan for England’s National Parks highlights that currently just 10% of school children have access to outdoor learning.

Furthermore, recent research suggests that up to 12% of children (1.3 million) UK-wide did not visit, or rarely visited natural places in the last year. In contrast, 96% of people say they want every child to experience a National Park for themselves.
The moorland, woodland, streams and farmland of Exmoor support a great diversity of wildlife including herds of wild red deer, rich lichen communities, bats and rare butterflies. 19,387ha of land are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are 300km of rivers and streams.

There are many public benefits achieved through a thriving natural environment. These include clean water and sustainably produced food; flood and disease control; spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and conditions that conserve habitats, wildlife and the health of our land for generations to come. Collectively, we refer to these benefits as natural and cultural capital.

2. Create thriving natural environments

This area of work will be delivered in partnership with farmers, land managers, local communities, Defra and other agencies to ensure integrated management of the natural environment that keeps Exmoor special.

We will:

1. Work with South West Water to coordinate the Headwaters of the Exe programme which will provide advice and grant aid to farmers and foresters in the Exe and Barle catchments to help maintain and improve the management of water on their land for the health and wellbeing of the environment, local and regional communities.

2. Work with Exeter University and Dartmoor National Park Authority to carry out an audit of Natural Capital on Exmoor, and explore a range of scenarios for future agri environment funding.

3. Explore, with farmers, land managers, agencies and interest groups, options for a new system of locally targeted farm support which rewards the delivery of valued public goods and services.

4. Continue support for the control of Japanese Knotweed and other non-native invasive species.

5. Support farmers to conserve Exmoor’s landscapes and wildlife by providing Landscape Conservation Grants for hedgebank management or other conservation projects.

Continues on next page
We will (continued):

6. In association with the Woodland Trust, woodland owners/businesses, and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Forestry Commission, commence the 3 year Woodlinks Project, which will develop innovative and sustainable solutions to improve the condition and resilience of woodlands on Exmoor.


8. Ensure the interests of Exmoor are represented on Defra’s Upland Stakeholders Forum and use other mechanisms to shape the way future support is provided to the uplands, including liaison with the Uplands Alliance Group.

9. Work with the Local Access Forum, the Moorland Initiative Board, the Woodland and Forestry Advisory Group, the Landscape Advisory Group, the Nature Conservation Advisory Panel, Farming, and Rivers and Streams Groups to identify and deliver shared objectives.

10. Support the annual deer counts to monitor the health and wellbeing of the red deer herds and work with the Exmoor Rural Crime Initiative to monitor and reduce the impact of poaching on red deer.

11. Hold the annual moorland swaling review, provide help and advice on swaling and moorland management.

12. Support the moorland herd owners and others to complete and implement an Action Plan and genome database for the free living Exmoor ponies.

13. Engage volunteers in monitoring and surveying wildlife and habitats to increase our understanding and provide opportunities for people to Get Involved in their National Park.

14. Work with our tenants and wider stakeholders to manage our woodland and moorland estate to optimise the delivery of National Park purposes.
National Treasures
Our Priorities

1. Everyone’s Exmoor

The focus of this area of work is to provide opportunities for all to enjoy Exmoor, reducing barriers that stop people enjoying National Parks

In 2016/17:

The rights of way network was assessed as 96% open and easy to use.

3,411 volunteer days were completed, with an estimated value of £255,825

175,790 people visited a National Park Centre for information or advice

7,460 people attended public events that helped promote understanding, enjoyment and health and wellbeing
We will:

1. Provide a wide range of opportunities for participation and engagement including volunteering (Get Involved), formal and informal education, training and greater involvement of non-traditional users

2. Deliver a New Audience Fund to offer small grants that will support and enable groups that have not been to Exmoor before or have limited opportunities to enjoy what is special about the National Park

3. Provide National Park Centres at Lynmouth, Dunster and Dulverton to promote ways to enjoy and understand the National Park and bring wider benefits to Exmoor communities and businesses - seeking to reduce net costs of delivering the service

4. Celebrate the 70th anniversary of the creation of English and Welsh National Parks in 2019 through events, information and activities that engage people with Exmoor and help local communities and businesses promote Exmoor as a destination of choice

5. Ensure a great recreational experience through management of our extensive public access network, including picnic sites and car parks, ensuring that 95% of public Rights of Way are open and easy to use

6. Develop and deliver Big Adventure Days with a focus on encouraging families to learn more about Exmoor, to experience the benefits of being active and outdoors, and to have confidence to come to Exmoor independently

7. Promote Exmoor and the opportunities it offers through exciting and engaging content on the website and social media, in partnership with tourism providers
National Treasures

Our Priorities

2. Exmoor’s Landscape and Heritage

The focus of this area of work is to conserve and enhance the Landscape and Heritage of Exmoor while supporting sustainable development that allows local communities and businesses to thrive.

Within its 267 square miles, Exmoor National Park contains an amazing variety of landscapes, shaped by people and nature over thousands of years.

Large areas of open moorland provide a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity rare in southern Britain, while spectacular coastal views, deep wooded valleys, high sea cliffs and fast flowing streams all combine to form a rich and distinct mosaic.

The landscape of Exmoor tells the story of how people have lived in, exploited and enjoyed Exmoor over the last 8000 years. Burial mounds on high ridges, unique and ancient patterns of standing stones, cliff top Roman forts, astonishingly preserved medieval villages and incredible Victorian industrial engineering are all there to be explored.
We will:
1. Complete, review and publish the 2017 Exmoor Landscape Character Assessment as Supplementary Planning Guidance and integrate the findings into policy and land management in the National Park
2. Scope potential for the production of design guidance to encourage high quality, locally distinctive design in the National Park
3. Liaise with the owners of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments and continue to implement a programme of condition surveys, events and training opportunities to improve our understanding and management of Exmoor’s archaeological and built heritage
4. Work with the Heritage Lottery Fund and other bodies to explore opportunities for the future funding of conservation projects on Exmoor
5. Work with the Somerset Geology Group and Somerset Environmental Records Centre, volunteers and students to conduct a Local Geological Sites Review. Information obtained will be used to develop educational information for schools and study centres on geology, geomorphology and landform
6. Work with the Simonsbath Steering Group to complete feasibility studies for the future uses of White Rock Cottage and the old Simonsbath school buildings, develop management structures for the project, gather external funding and implement the preferred options for the buildings
7. Work with all Exmoor Parishes and Somerset County Council to record, refurbish and celebrate the Historic Signposts across the National Park
8. Manage the Exmoor Historic Environment Record to provide access to information on archaeology, historic buildings and the historic landscape across the National Park
9. Work in partnership to implement conservation area enhancement schemes and community development projects
10. Pro-actively monitor larger scale and controversial development sites to ensure compliance with approved plans and conditions
11. Investigate alleged breaches of Planning and Listed Building Consent and resolve breaches of control through appropriate actions dependent on circumstances including negotiations, submission of applications and, where necessary, the serving of enforcement and other notices
12. Adopt the Exmoor Local Plan which will guide and support sustainable development on Exmoor
13. Produce and keep updated information and guidance that assists and furthers National Park purposes and supports the delivery of the Partnership Plan and Local Plan policies
There is growing evidence that green spaces have a vital role to play in our health and wellbeing. National Parks like Exmoor can make a central contribution to our national wellbeing.

3. Health and wellbeing - delivering through Exmoor

We will use the Government’s 5 Ways to Wellbeing framework to guide our programmes of work and promote the public health benefits of volunteering, learning and recreational activities on Exmoor.

We will:

1. Through the Moor to Enjoy Project, continue to work with partners on initiatives to improve public health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities, promoting Exmoor as a health and wellbeing resource.
2. Work with partners to explore joint working opportunities to increase participation and reducing health inequalities.
3. Integrate the 5 Ways to Wellbeing within wider work programmes and project planning to help people access the benefits of volunteering, learning and being active on Exmoor.
4. Celebrate and promote the Exmoor section of the new England Coast Path - Coastal Access, realising the immense recreation potential offered by it and the wider rights of way network.
5. Consider what health and wellbeing improvements could be achieved for Exmoor communities and visitors through delivery of our services and projects, and ensure we retain a focus on wellbeing within the workplace for our employees.
Drivers of the Rural Economy

Our Priorities

1. Drive sustainable growth in international and domestic tourism

The focus of this area of work will be to work in partnership with tourism bodies and businesses to achieve greater numbers of visitors and an extended tourism season.

1. Work with Visit England, Visit Exmoor and tourism businesses to promote Exmoor as a destination
2. Play an active role with Visit Exmoor to help grow the local tourism economy
3. Work with local Astronomy groups and businesses to promote and monitor the Exmoor International Dark Sky Reserve and increase tourism in autumn and winter months. We will help preserve this special quality of Exmoor through active lighting management policies, information and education
4. Work in partnership with other National Parks and protected landscapes, and with commercial tourism operators to explore the potential tourism offer of a multi-destination package
5. Work with Exmoor producers to promote the best of Exmoor food and products, connecting the tourism offer with local produce

In 2015, there were an estimated 1.36 million visitors to Exmoor; 2.14 million visitor days. Defra outlines ambitions to increase visitor days across all England’s National Parks by 10 million, to reach 100 million visitor days by 2020.

National Parks provide world class destinations for both UK and international visitors.

There are currently an estimated 90 million visitors to our National Parks every year. Visitors to National Parks are hugely important to the rural economy.
Drivers of the Rural Economy

Our Priorities

The focus of this area of work will be to work in partnership with other National Parks to create new apprenticeship standards for careers in the countryside and continue to offer work placements, paid internships and apprenticeships, providing opportunities for young people to learn and develop their career.

We have delivered one apprenticeship and six paid internship placements since the Authority’s placement scheme started in 2014.

We will:

1. Work with English National Parks to develop appropriate apprenticeship standards for careers in countryside land management and seek opportunities to develop additional standards where there is a demand for skills
2. Offer paid apprenticeships and internships providing opportunities for young people to learn and develop their careers
3. Provide short study/work placements for young people interested in a career in conservation, planning, outdoor education, corporate administration or rural tourism

2. Deliver new apprenticeships and placements on Exmoor

The Government is committed to delivering 3 million apprenticeships by 2020 and National Parks have a role to play in delivering apprenticeships to help young people find a path to employment in rural areas.
Drivers of the Rural Economy

Our Priorities

3. Seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of Exmoor communities

The focus of this area of work will be, whilst meeting National Park purposes, to seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities in the National Park.

We will:

1. Liaise with the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership to influence the development and delivery of the Heart of the South West Productivity Plan
2. Further develop the joint Economy Prospectus and Rural Productivity Network Proposition with Dartmoor National Park Authority
3. Work in partnership with our District and County Councils on initiatives that will enhance the social and economic wellbeing on Exmoor
4. Working with other National Park Authorities to influence Government Policy on farming, housing and telecommunications where it impacts Exmoor communities
5. Work with communities, providers and Connecting Devon & Somerset to maximise the delivery of Superfast Broadband, especially through development of the Airband Network, in ways that are compatible with National Park purposes.
6. Determine planning applications within the national timeliness targets and provide a good service to applicants, including free planning advisory surgeries in Porlock and Lynton
7. Provide support to communities, including community and neighbourhood planning initiatives and rural housing initiatives to meet local affordable housing needs
8. Work in partnership with the Rural Housing Network, the housing enabler and housing associations to support the delivery of local needs affordable housing and to support the delivery of the Local Plan, and produce further supplementary planning guidance on affordable housing
Corporate Projects

Our Priorities

1. Broaden our income base to ensure sustainable delivery of National Park purposes

We will:

1. Explore innovative ways to deliver National Park purposes through the newly granted Power of Competence which enables National Park Authorities to develop commercial partnerships and business ventures to grow our income base.
2. Generate support and donations to CareMoor for Exmoor® to help fund key projects, rights of way maintenance and conservation initiatives.
3. Work with National Parks Partnerships Ltd on UK National Park initiatives to forge commercial partnerships.
4. Maximise opportunities across the Authority’s estate for income generation where this is compatible with National Park purposes.

2. Work with communities, businesses and partners to deliver National Park purposes

We will:

1. Develop and adopt the 2017-2022 Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan and work with key partners to deliver the priorities for Exmoor identified in the plan.
2. Hold regular meetings of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum for all parish councils in the National Park, representatives of local organisations and individuals.
3. Continue a series of Parish Council Workshops to receive feedback and provide training on the planning process and provide information and seek feedback on the wider aspects of the Authority’s work.
4. Seek and use feedback from communities, business, visitors and partners to improve our services and monitor progress in delivery of our plans.

3. Develop and maintain effective and efficient services

We will:

1. Continue to develop online resources and simplify processes both internally and for our customers.
2. Develop and support our staff team to enable the best use of our knowledge, skills and experience in delivering National Park purposes.
3. Publish the State of the Park report and conduct or facilitate monitoring and research to inform State of the Park updates.
4. Develop the processes and train staff to meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations which will apply in the UK from 25 May 2018.
Use of our Resources

The summary Medium Term Financial Plan set out below provides a projection of Authority income and expenditure to 2020/21.

The four year settlement for 2016-20 shows an increase in Government funding from £3 million in 2015/16 to £3.2 million in 2019/20. This settlement reflects the value placed on National Parks by the Secretary of State due to the impact that the Authorities are having across a range of priority issues for Defra, including ecosystems services, water catchment, rural business, food production and community engagement. In making this settlement commitment, Defra will look to the Authority to deliver Defra priorities and in particular the 8-Point Plan for England’s National Parks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>2017/18 Projected £’000</th>
<th>2018/19 Projected £’000</th>
<th>2019/20 Projected £’000</th>
<th>2020/21 Projected £’000</th>
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<td>National Park Grant Income</td>
<td>3,104</td>
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<td>Fees - planning</td>
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<td>Fees - car parks</td>
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<td>Interest earned</td>
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<td>Rents and contributions</td>
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<td>National Park Centre sales</td>
<td>87</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Rights of Way income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkery Trading income</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other - including Consultancy income</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,835</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,919</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,991</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,059</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
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<td>Staffing</td>
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<td>Members</td>
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<td>Premises</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<td>Travel / vehicles</td>
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<td>Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contracted work (legal; audit etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corporate Subscriptions</td>
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<td>National Park Centre Goods</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumables</td>
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<td>ICT and Communications</td>
<td>99</td>
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<td>101</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Facility (toilets/car parks)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinkery Centre costs</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>160</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Core Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,462</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,529</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,604</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,681</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Programmes/Partnership Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>373</strong></td>
<td><strong>390</strong></td>
<td><strong>387</strong></td>
<td><strong>378</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,835</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,919</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,991</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,059</strong></td>
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What we do to deliver
National Park Purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Service</th>
<th>Key Deliverables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Projects</td>
<td>Practical initiatives to further priorities within the Partnership Plan to conserve and enhance Exmoor’s landscape, wildlife and historic environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Advice/Liaison</td>
<td>Specialist advice on landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage for farmers, woodland owners, game shoot managers, conservation organisations, the local community and the general public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Rights of Way and recreation</td>
<td>Maintenance and improvement of the 986km of rights of way on Exmoor, picnic sites and access land and promotion of the diverse range of recreational activities and opportunities available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger Service</td>
<td>Public access management and liaison with land managers and recreational users of the National Park to promote and conserve its special qualities and help to manage the impacts of public recreation on Exmoor’s special qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Facilities</td>
<td>Maintenance and improvement of Authority owned toilets and car parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/ Volunteers/ Outreach</td>
<td>Provision of formal and informal education, training, volunteer opportunities and greater involvement of non-traditional users, including health and wellbeing initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information/ Interpretation</td>
<td>Information and interpretation of Exmoor’s special qualities through publications, website, social media, display boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Park Centres</td>
<td>Centres in Lynmouth, Dulverton and Dunster providing information about Exmoor National Park, with informative displays, maps, publications and staff with specialist knowledge about the area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Economy</td>
<td>Engagement with business sector and local communities and liaison with local authority economic development services to help sustain a thriving economy on Exmoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Management</td>
<td>Ensuring that development is of the right scale, directed to appropriate locations and conserves and enhances the character and appearance of the National Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Policy</td>
<td>Support to communities, neighbourhood planning and policy guidance, including development and implementation of Local Plan policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Management</td>
<td>Management of Authority land for landscape, wildlife and recreation benefits, including management of Authority owned Exmoor ponies to help promote and conserve the breed. Opportunities to demonstrate best practice and emerging land management techniques. Working with partners towards conservation enhancements across Exmoor including swaling, flood alleviation and woodland management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>