

Exmoor National Park
Historic Environment Report Series No 24

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2017-21

Exmoor National Park
Historic Environment Report Series

This report series includes interim reports, policy documents and other information relating to the historic environment of Exmoor National Park.

Further hard copies of this report can be obtained from the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record:
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Contents

	Page
List of Abbreviations	
SUMMARY	1
THIS DOCUMENT	1
Exmoor National Park Statutory Purposes	1
Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017	2
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PART 1:	
PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2010-2015	3
Is the Vision set out in the Historic Environment Research Framework 2010-2015 being achieved?	4
Progress in advancing The Historic Environment Research Framework 2010-2015 priority by priority	5
Review of the Key Methods and Techniques 2010-2015	22
Progress against Specific Actions and Areas for Development 2010-2015	24
Research Projects which contributed to delivering the Research Framework 2010-2016	25
<hr/>	
PART 2:	
THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2017-21	29
VISION	30
What is the historic environment?	31
Why is Exmoor’s historic environment special?	31
The Purpose of Research	31
Regional frameworks and strategies	32
Research Priorities for Exmoor 2017-2021	33
Key Methods and Techniques	42
Specific Actions and Areas for Development	44

List of Abbreviations

EMLPS	Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme
EMP	Exmoor Mires Project
EWSBRG	Exmoor and West Somerset Buildings Research Group (from Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society)
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
LLG	Longstone Landscapes Group
NP	National Park

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2017-21

SUMMARY

This document builds on the past Historic Environment Research Frameworks of 2004-9 and 2010-15. It also incorporates elements of Exmoor's Moorlands Historic Environment Research Priorities 2011-2015 and The Royal Forest of Exmoor: Research Framework (2012) whose priorities it aims to embrace.

The report is presented in two parts: firstly, a summary of the progress made in achieving the objectives of the Framework in 2010-2015 including the year 2016 (PART I), and secondly, the research priorities for Exmoor's historic environment over the next five years, 2017-2021 (PART II).

THIS DOCUMENT

The starting point of this document (PART I) is a review of progress made against the Historic Environment Research Framework 2010-2015 including progress in 2016; the vision, priorities and objectives. It is not an exhaustive, detailed account of all research, but a broad overview of the most significant progress.

The Research Framework for 2017-2021 (PART II) has been produced by the Historic Environment Service at Exmoor National Park Authority informed by a workshop held in Dulverton in February 2015 involving a range of stakeholders: local individuals, groups and bodies as well as local, regional and national agencies and local authorities. The Historic Environment Advisory Group have since reviewed and commented on a draft of this report.

The Framework is intended to guide and assist in the prioritising of research into the historic environment for,

- i) the benefit of the community of Exmoor,
- ii) those who have a role in the management and curation of the resource
- iii) anyone who is interested in Exmoor and its past.

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK STATUTORY PURPOSES

The Research Framework is guided by the statutory purposes for which Exmoor is designated as a National Park:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public.

It has been delivered in part through objectives and targets in the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017.

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2012-2017

This is the key document that set out in detail how Exmoor National Park Authority and its partners work together to support National Park purposes over these five years.

The overarching objective for the historic environment is contained in **Priority A4: Engage people in understanding, protecting and managing Exmoor's cultural heritage and historic environment.**

Three strategic activities are identified:

- Engage the owners and managers of heritage assets in their conservation and protection
- Encourage participation and community engagement in learning about and conserving Exmoor's historic environment and cultural heritage
- Increase knowledge and understanding of Exmoor's historic environment

Under this latter strategic activity are two action points:

A4.11 Implement the Historic Environment Research Framework 2010-15.

A4.12 Monitor change and trends in the historic environment to inform the development of future policy.

A new plan for Exmoor National Park to cover the years from 2018 -2022 is in preparation and will be informed by this Research Framework.

The Framework will be formally revisited and updated every five years. It is available in hard copy or via the National Park Authority's website:

www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/

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FRONT COVER

A view over Bury Castle, Selworthy and the Vale of Porlock (Damian Grady)

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PART 1

PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2010-15

IS THE VISION SET OUT IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2010-15 BEING ACHIEVED?

The following table summarises the vision for the Research Framework and shows whether that vision is being achieved, and if not, why not.

VISION	EVIDENCE (Examples)	
A series of multi-disciplinary research projects, drawing on and helping to develop up-to-date methodologies.	Exmoor Mires Project, Exmoor Moorland Landscapes Partnership, Somerset Victoria County History	Achieving
Research carried out by a broad spectrum of individuals, groups, societies and organisations.	National organisations Universities Societies Individuals	Achieving
The results of research pooled and disseminated in a timely fashion.	Good number of publications but some projects remain unpublished (e.g. Exmoor Iron, Ley Hill, Timberscombe)	Partly achieving
A continuing, rigorous re-appraisal of our knowledge.	e.g work on prehistoric landscapes by EMLPS, EMP, LLG; reassessing understanding of buildings by EWSBRG, academic research	Achieving
Research projects which involve the local community wherever possible, providing a range of learning opportunities for all.	Dig Dulverton 2011 Dig Village, Dunster 2012- Dig Porlock 2013 Dig Porlock Village 2014 Exmoor and West Somerset Historic Buildings Research Group 2013- Longstone Landscapes 2014- Timberscombe 2010	Achieving
These results underpinning high quality sustainable management of the historic environment.	Work feeding into HER to inform management but need more applied management research.	Partly achieving

VISION	EVIDENCE (Examples)	
Interpretation that flows from and closely reflects the results of this up-to-date, high quality research.	Field Guides	Achieving
	Publications	
	Website essays	
An Historic Environment Record for Exmoor National Park which underpins and pools the research of individuals and organisations, by being up-to-date and accessible to all.	'Exmoor's Past' HER website is a huge advance & considerable work being is undertaken but continued development & enhancement following the results of the 2013-14 HER audit is required	Partly achieving

PROGRESS IN ADVANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2010-15 PRIORITY BY PRIORITY

In the following table, each 2010-2015 research priority is highlighted in a shaded box followed by known developments or actions towards advancing the priority and a summary derived from the group discussions in the Research Framework workshop held in February 2015. Progress in 2016 has subsequently been included.

Note: the numbering of priorities in the published Historic Environment Research Framework for Exmoor 2010-2015 included a run of duplicated numbers, this has been amended below. Therefore, the numbering here does not match the previously published list, although the order and text of each priority remains the same.

1. **Chronology** To improve the chronological framework for archaeological sites and buildings by increasing the number of sites, structures and places dated by reliable archaeological methods, and to make that objective explicit in project designs. SWARF research aim 16 (p281)

Action	Notes
Tephrochronological Analysis	EMP: Tephrochronological contribution is significant: 3 palaeo sequences have been analysed and all contain tephra. The third on Buscombe contains 9 layers. Work in progress.
C14 dating	EMP has used C14 dating to date 3 palaeo sequences and archaeological material from the Mesolithic at Wintershead and from Late Neolithic/EBA at Spooners burnt mound. Publication work in progress.
Lead isotope dating	EMP have used lead isotope dating for recent part of one palaeo sequence on Ricksy Ball.
Dendrochronology	Dulverton Weir stakes (post-med) dated in DWLRG project. Time Team Dig Village Dunster has undertaken dendrochronology of buildings - report awaited by HER.

Summary

The objective is being built into project designs and new and a wider range of techniques are being utilised. Good work is being done; especially notable is the developing tephra chronology which is of international significance. There is still a lack of dendrochronology (across the board) and dating of buildings and artefacts, results are awaited from work in Dunster. Concern about how progress is continued without external projects e.g. EMP/EMLPS. As only small areas are subject to archaeological excavation the material available to sample is generally very small which has led to small levels of progress in most areas other than palaeo-sequences. There is a need to apply specific questions to the existing dataset especially palaeo-environmental sample cores and to gather new samples from known archaeological sites.

2. **Sea level change, coastal erosion and climate change** To identify all elements of the historic environment which are threatened by sea level rise, coastal erosion and climate change. To adequately record and understand landscapes, archaeological features, artefacts and deposits which are threatened by sea level rise, coastal erosion and climate change. To carry out adequate recording and sampling of archaeological deposits threatened by sea level change, coastal erosion and climate change. Preserve, through sampling or excavation of organic material (such as wood and bone), environmental deposits, boats, other structures related to maritime and other industries, as well as the remains of the earliest periods (such as the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic). SWARF research aim 23 (p285)

Action	Notes
Coastal audit 2014 -5	'Cleaning' the data on the HER and reviewing information from historic maps.
Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey (RCZAS)	The Historic England funded project started in 2015, building on the coastal funded by ENPA in 2014. Phase 1 is due to finish in early 2017.
Porlock Marsh monitoring up to 2011	10+yrs worth of work needing to be drawn together and written up.

Summary

The RCZAS (phase 1) assesses the overall coastal threat and identify coastal issues and priorities, this needs to be followed by targeted field work assessing and recording sites at risk and monitoring (phase 2). There is still a need to consider inland areas and the impact of flash flooding from rivers especially on bridges and buildings and the further impacts of climate change. 10 years of work needs to be drawn together from Porlock Marsh monitoring. There is a need to link with related work e.g. in Severn estuary, and to explore the wider implications of work elsewhere to Exmoor (and vice versa). Work needs to continue on identifying how historic assets on Exmoor could be affected by climate change more widely (e.g. wetter / drier or more extreme conditions, ensuing vegetation change etc.) as well as identifying sites directly affected by coastal or river erosion. More management research is needed, considering past and future changes and the effects of changing agents and practices on the historic environment. The workshop recommended adapting this objective to be part of a 'heritage at risk' objective.

3. **Origin and development of settlements in the medieval period** To understand the origin and development of existing settlements on and around Exmoor by carrying out multi-disciplinary projects to investigate the origins of existing settlements and settlement patterns on Exmoor. SWARF research aim 4f (p278)

Action	Notes
Dig Dulverton 2010	Community project excavating sample areas and building recording.
Dig Village, Dunster	A 'Time Team' Project started in 2012 undertaking sample excavation and building recording.
Dig Porlock Village 2014	Community project excavating sample areas and recording buildings.
Exmoor and West Somerset Historic Buildings Research Group [SANHS]	Research and buildings recording in Porlock, Dunster and Roadwater.
Longstone Landscape Group: survey and research of Radworthy	Origins of settlement in medieval period possible Domesday settlement.

Summary

Considerable effort on this priority with successful building recording in particular beginning to increase our understanding. Post-medieval results outweigh medieval evidence which can be masked in continuously settled areas and the test pitting in settlements has resulted in cases of 'negative' evidence ('no evidence of the medieval settlement here') which needs further probing. The resourcing of the voluntary sector to enable high quality buildings survey and research work is important. There is a need for more focus on non-moorland settlement and a perception that research on moorland sites is well funded compared to non-moorland areas especially settlements. Some past work remains to be completed, for example report on Ley Hill excavation. HER needs to reflect work being done in this area e.g. making data such as the VCH studies on markets more widely available perhaps as a subject theme. As it is difficult to separate medieval and post medieval research in practice the workshop recommended the combining of priorities 3 & 8.

4. **Relict Prehistoric Landscapes** Exmoor’s relict prehistoric landscapes – standing stones, barrows and cairns, hut circles, field systems and hill-slope enclosures - are a remarkable survival. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape have been covered under other research priorities in this document. However, it is important to pull together these separate strands and to see them in the context of the wider resource. Exmoor’s prehistoric landscapes have received little attention in the past, with the result that chronologies are vague; the form and function of monuments also requires further recording and analysis. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape are particularly vulnerable - such as stone settings. Amongst other priorities, selective excavation is required to allow sites to be placed in a tighter chronological framework and to better understand form and function. Further palaeo-environmental sampling is required – both from archaeological deposits during excavation and from mire sites – to develop our understanding of contemporary environments, and in particular changing woodland cover and the nature of prehistoric farming (there is some evidence for pastoralism in the Bronze Age on Exmoor, but how extensive was this? What was the balance with arable cultivation?). Other issues might include: the function and date of stone settings and how they relate (if at all) to settlement evidence; the apparent absence of Neolithic monuments on Exmoor; whether the absence of field systems at some settlement sites indicates pastoralism or seasonal use of these sites. SWARF research aim 3 (p276), 25 (285), 28 (p 286), 54 (p292), 57 (p293)

Action	Notes
Miniliths Project	Extensive publication
Collaborative Doctoral Award - University of Leicester	On Late Neolithic - EBA landscapes due to be submitted 2016
The Lanacombe Case Study (EMP)	A relict landscape, probably of Prehistoric date, included geophysical survey and excavation. Awaits some specialist results and synthesis.
Dig Porlock (EMLPS)	Survey, excavation and research reports in HER, summary publication of project results
Hoak Oak Valley survey (including Cheriton Ridge)	Survey report in HER

Summary

Although much work has been undertaken there is still much to be done to further this objective. Significant advances include widening the range of site types recognised with the identification of sites previously undocumented such as 2 burnt mounds at Hoccombe Combe and Spooners and the possible mortuary enclosure on Challacombe Common. Dating and chronology remain problematic and levels of archaeological excavation able to answer specific questions are low. Further synthesis of existing research and material and a focus on specific aims or techniques to explore questions is required. Greater use of geophysical survey and interrogation of LiDAR is recommended. Some work has indicated landscapes buried by peat development and this needs more analysis. More targeted work to relate the onset of peat accumulation to known archaeological sites is needed. Peat accumulation starts at different times in different locations according to slope, aspect, drainage vegetation management etc. The palaeo-environment research needs to be designed to investigate past grazing and other management regimes e.g. swaling. Could the relative past grazing levels be compared for example in the Bronze Age and Medieval periods? This could link to other interests such as farming and landscape studies.



Carrying out a geophysical survey of Porlock stone row as part of Dig Porlock 2013

5. **Reassessment of existing museum collections** There is an urgent need for existing collections of artefacts to be re-analysed. These include ceramic and flint assemblages. There should also be a concerted attempt to identify collections that are still in private hands. The results of this work should be published as soon as possible SWARF research aim 5 (p278) and 11 (p280)

Action	Notes
Assessment of prehistoric lithic collections	PhD Thesis research (Doug Mitcham, Leicester University) due for submission 2016
Review of peat cutting and packhorse equipment	part of EMP study of routeways, report in HER
'Virtual Museum' begun on HER website	Requires development
Exmoor Society Archives	New post of archivist to curate the collection and make it more accessible

Summary

Opportunities for working with local museums and volunteers with appropriate support. Recent studies (e.g. routeways and turf cutting) have shown the potential for Exmoor collections to be held in regional and national museums and more may be held in private collections.

These could be investigated by volunteers or placements. Suggestion that this objective could be combined with objective 15 (Social History). Work began in 2016 on an Understanding Exmoor's Barrows project examining collections in museums.



An exceptional set of packhorse equipment from an Exmoor farm has been preserved at Torquay Museum (photo: Hazel Riley)

- 6. **Landscape based research** There are various elements of this approach. The first recognises the need to use the Historic Landscape Characterisation tool to develop a series of specific research questions. The second recognises that Exmoor comprises a number of distinct historic landscapes – there is a need to refine the approach to Exmoor so that it explicitly recognises the fine grained nature of these historic landscapes. Part of this priority is the acquisition of LiDAR data for Exmoor. SWARF Research aim 1a (p274).

Action	Notes
EMLPS: survey and building recording in Hoar Oak Valley	Reports in HER
The National Mapping Programme (NMP) on Exmoor 2007-9 analysis	Publication 'The archaeology of Hill Farming on Exmoor' (2014)
LiDAR obtained by ENPA	high resolution only extends over moorland areas obtained through EMP

Summary

this objective is to promote the use of Exmoor-wide techniques to interpret the landscape on a wide scale. With the completion of the NMP (recognised as a major achievement) and acquisition of LiDAR, focus now needs to be on targeted survey and analysis of LiDAR and the development or greater interrogation of Exmoor HLC. Exmoor’s HLC is not easily accessible or user-friendly; it is important to have an effective HLC so this needs consideration and appropriate development.



Lidar image of prehistoric and medieval enclosures at Bradimoor overlain by ridge and furrow cultivation



Old Burrow Roman Fortlet Historic England 2012 (Damian Grady) 27468_027

7. **The Roman Landscape** To further our understanding of the Roman landscape of Exmoor by carrying out research into the nature of military occupation on and around Exmoor, by investigating native settlement and by extending the research begun by the Exmoor Iron project into the iron industry during this period. A fundamental part of achieving this objective is the publication of the existing research carried out by the Exmoor Iron Project. SWARF research aim 50 (p291)

Action	Notes
Palaeo-environmental sequences	Samples from EMP cover the Roman period
Possible Roman votive find from Porlock Stone Circle	Raising interesting question of use of prehistoric sites in later periods.

Summary

Little active work in this area since 2010. Publication of Exmoor Iron needs to be achieved. Specific questions should be applied to the existing dataset of the palaeo-environmental material and to strategically sample known sites. There is some recent work just outside the National Park e.g. at Brayford and sites on Exmoor need to be considered in the context of a wider area.

8. **Settlements** Understanding the origin, development and morphology of settlements are central themes to the understanding of Exmoor’s historic environment. This work should include
- (i) research into settlement morphology and characterisation,
 - (ii) the origin and evolution of Iron Age enclosures and their landscape context,
 - (iii) research into the significance of Dunster as a medieval town through building recording, historical research and selective excavation,
 - (iv) research into post-medieval desertions, which are a common feature of Exmoor’s landscape, to analyse these sites: their origins, their longevity, form and ultimately the reasons for failure (amalgamation, changing patterns of farming etc).

SWARF research aims 4f (p278) and 7 (p279)

Action	Notes
Dig Dulverton	Community project excavating sample areas and building recording
Dig Village, Dunster	A ‘Time Team’ Project excavating sample areas and building recording
Dig Porlock Village 2014	Community project excavating sample areas and building recording
Exmoor and West Somerset Historic Buildings Group	Research and building recording in Porlock, Dunster and Roadwater
Timberscombe enclosure excavation 2010	

Summary

Much progress on initiating the study of current settlements and buildings, some small scale projects and the results will take time to come through and have an impact on our understanding so it’s important that this work continues. Some notable progress such as the discovery of a DMS in the Hoarook Valley and research and recording of the Radworthy farmstead (EMLPS funded). The continued resourcing and support of the voluntary sector to enable high quality survey and research work including building recording is important. Little progress on Iron Age sites and medieval desertions. Further work on place names is required as our current understanding is based on limited work from the 19th and early 20th century. Suggest combining this priority with priority 3.

9. **Resource Exploitation** Exmoor’s abundant natural resources include minerals, marine resources, woodlands and moorlands. Priorities for research include mining centres such as Combe Martin and Bampfylde. There is also a need for industry specific research, for example into the lime industry, harbours and havens, the woodland industry, the iron industry. SWARF research aim 38 (p288) and 47 (p291)

Action	Notes
EMP peat extraction case study	A good foundation for further research and has collated evidence and characterised Exmoor’s peat exploitation industry.
West Somerset Mineral Line	Extensive publications 2010-2011
Exmoor Iron	Exmoor's early Iron Industry field guide
Combe Martin	Progress being made, inside and outside the National Park. More liaison between NP and local groups working on edge of NP desirable.
Exmoor Society woodlands report 2013	‘Unlocking Exmoor’s Woodland Potential’ a report on woodlands but recommendation 4 makes reference to historic environment

Summary

level of work in this area much lower than 10 years ago when it was a considerable focus for the NP. Publication of Exmoor Iron remains a priority. The study of peat extraction demonstrates the potential for developing knowledge in areas subject to little previous study, such as others listed above. Research into coastal subjects may develop in future with priority 2. Greater knowledge in NP of adjacent projects such as Silver Mining research in Combe Martin is desirable. Funding & a focus on woodlands is required. Sources of flint used by prehistoric societies requires further study.

10. **Farming** Most of Exmoor is farmed land (or has formerly been so). The biggest changes to the landscape are caused by farming practice. Priorities for research are Exmoor’s medieval (?) field systems, ancient breeds, field gutter systems, reclamation, customs and traditions associated with the farming industry. SWARF research aims 42 and 43 (p290)

Action	Notes
National Mapping Programme (NMP)	‘The archaeology of Hill Farming on Exmoor’
EMP surveys	
Ancient breeds - the pony project	

Summary

Significant contribution made to this priority over last 10 years especially through NMP, the publication of ‘The Archaeology of Hill Farming on Exmoor’ and work by the EMP on mapping reclamation and associated features and moorland farming practice. Little awareness of work undertaken in cultural heritage and rare breeds, is this because little is going on or that we are not aware of it?

11. **Communication and Transport** The infrastructure of the historic landscape is fundamental to its working especially in a remote area such as Exmoor. Priorities for research include: Packhorse tracks (particularly in and around the Royal Forest), bridges and other routeways.

Action	Notes
EMP: Exmoor’s Ancient Routeways study	provides an important overview of Exmoor’s communications routes and their relationships with other archaeology.
West Somerset Mineral Line Project	publications 2010-2011
Tarr steps survey and research	Report in HER
Lynnton to Lynmouth Railway	Research and recording

Summary

substantial work in this area over past 10 years. Further work should be undertaken into trade and it is suggested that trade is added to this priority.

12. **Ritual and Religion** Ritual and religion may be conveniently divided into pre-Christian and Christian. The priorities for research are: stone settings and standing stones generally, burial mounds: barrows and cairns, Early Christianity, churches and churchyards, holy wells. SWARF research aim 55 (p292)

Action	Notes
EMLPS: Dig Porlock 2013	Survey of moorland landscape including excavations at Porlock Circle and stone row (University of Leicester)
Longstone Landscapes Project	Survey of prehistoric landscape including Chapman Barrows continuing and CDA - mortuary enclosure
Exmoor Miniliths project	published

Summary

Strong focus and delivery on moorland and prehistory especially through EMLPS and projects such as Miniliths Project and Longstone Landscapes and this momentum shouldn't be lost. Other areas have received much less attention and need addressing. For example unclear to what extent non-conformism and the resultant churches and chapels have been studied and how they are affected by change of use / conversion, are they adequately recorded before change? The workshop questioned whether a post-Roman priority be separated from prehistoric ritual landscapes which tend to be covered by priority 4.



Chapman Barrows under survey by Longstone Landscape Group

13. **Estates and Designed Landscapes** Exmoor’s estates and their designed landscapes have profoundly influenced the character of the National Park. Research is required to characterise the various estates – their architecture, design and designed landscapes – through historical research and fieldwork. It would lead to more detailed investigation at some sites, and should seek to influence their future management. Out of such work should come an analysis of the kind of styles that are being used on Exmoor and how they reflect (or not) national trends. On Exmoor, at least 25 estates and designed landscapes have been identified, and all require some level of investigation. However, priorities for research are: Ashley Combe, Dunster, Simonsbath House, Chargot House, Combe Sydenham, Nettlecombe, Glenthorne

Action	Notes
Simonsbath Project	Work started on more detailed understanding of Simonsbath and surrounding landscape following ENPA acquisition of White Rock Cottage (former school) in 2013
Royal Forest boundary survey	Field Guide published 2013

Summary

Consider further research into ‘at risk’ landscapes e.g. Ashley Combe. The Simonsbath work is beginning to understand the Knight endeavours better but more work needed, some specific questions



One of the white rocks in Ashcombe designed landscape

e.g. survey of boundaries would be very useful in drawing out 19th designed landscape from farmed landscape. Work has been undertaken in the past on National Trust estates but little work known from other estates. Should more work be undertaken engaging directly with landowners? Synthesis & characterisation of designed landscapes across the National Park is still required.

14. The Built Environment Vernacular styles, other styles, traditional building methods. Priorities for research are: thatch (specifically to identify thatched buildings on Exmoor, and locate examples of smoke blackened thatch), traditional building techniques, medieval buildings on Exmoor, buildings associated with the Arts & Crafts movement

Action	Notes
Dig Dulverton 2010 & Dig Porlock 2014	Community project included building recording
Dig Village, Dunster	A 'Time Team' Project from 2012 in part undertaking building recording
Exmoor and West Somerset Historic Buildings Group from 2014	Research and buildings recording in Porlock, Dunster and Roadwater

Summary

There is increased vernacular building recording being undertaken although much to be done. The continued resourcing and support of the voluntary sector

to enable high quality survey and research work including building recording is important. Public awareness of the significance of Exmoor's vernacular buildings in particular is low. Dendrochronology on buildings in Dunster being undertaken may raise profile of significance. Little comparative or themed work, this could be an increased focus in future, e.g. memorials. Lateral thinking about data collection – e.g. Fire and Rescue service record thatched buildings. A programme with the aim of identifying undesignated buildings meeting the criteria for Listing is required.



Exmoor and West Somerset Buildings Research Group recording in Porlock



Simonsbath schoolchildren 1880s

15. **Social History** A priority for future research is the development of tourism on and around Exmoor. This should be seen also in the context of leisure and sporting activities such as horse riding, hunting and fishing

Action	Notes
Oral histories as part of EMLPS & Simonsbath Project	
Lynmouth Pavilion oral history research and collection of historic photographs	

Summary

Some oral history recording work has been undertaken but generally this priority needs some expansion and an understanding or collation of what is being done by groups (such as Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage, Friends of Simonsbath Sawmill, Exmoor Society) across the NP is required. Little dissemination. Could the HER have a greater role in signposting this material? Need to ensure that current work has a long term future through collation and appropriate archiving / curation. Photography is an underused source of information and defined projects could engage community groups and special interest groups.

16. **Defence and Offence (military and naval)** Investigation into the military use of Exmoor. A priority for research is WWII where Exmoor has significant and extensive remains, especially those relating to training grounds.

Action	Notes
North Hill Radar station survey	Report in HER
An ongoing case study will provide much-needed detail on WWII on Exmoor.	Report awaited

Summary

Some work has been undertaken, further research could follow from survey scoping resources. This priority should include the Civil War and other periods of conflict which need more focus. Research into the two World Wars overlaps with priority 15 and oral history (including 2nd generation), is there enough research into e.g. use of sphagnum moss in WWI and other special uses of Exmoor such as housing of mules etc.

17. **The Context of Exmoor’s Historic Environment** Where Exmoor’s archaeological monuments have been dated scientifically, the dates do not accord precisely with comparable monuments from the south-west region. Analysis is required to examine this apparent divergence and to understand what it actually means.

Summary

Although it was recognised as being an important issue no group identified progress in this area. Is the sample of dated monuments large enough? A suggestion was made that more work should be done to consider Exmoor in its wider regional and national context generally and this should be covered by priority 1.



North Hill Radar Station
Reconstruction illustration by Peter Lorimer

REVIEW OF THE KEY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES USED 2010-2015

Research priorities need to be delivered through appropriate methodologies. The lack of previous work on Exmoor means that in some areas the development of effective techniques is still a priority. Research ideas should ideally incorporate some of the following methods and techniques:

1. Integrated, multi-disciplinary approach

Progress: many projects continue to be exemplars of this e.g. Dig Porlock 2013, Exmoor Mires Projects, Miniliths Project. It remains key to our working methodology.

2. Scientific dating

Progress: much of Exmoor's archaeology remains dated by analogy with similar sites elsewhere or by object typology. Exmoor Mires Project has introduced new techniques with some outstanding results for example the use of tephrochronology has helped to refine understanding of timing of vegetation change and rate of peat growth at several locations. There is still a need for scientific dating on key sites.

3. Remote sensing

Progress: Standard geophysical methods are proving highly useful on Exmoor, and have been used to great effect on a number of projects e.g. Longstone Landscapes, Dig Porlock, Exmoor Mires project. More work needs to be done in particular the use of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR).

4. Palaeo-environmental sampling

Progress: much work has been undertaken particularly as part of Exmoor Mires Project but as previously sampling is particularly required where the relationship between cultural remains and environmental sequences is or can be clearly established. Appropriate Bioarchaeological and geoarchaeological sampling should be an integral part of evaluations and excavations.

5. Selective excavation at key sites

Many of Exmoor's monument categories (such as hut circles, barrows and hill-slope enclosures) have not been examined by excavation. Selective excavation is needed at representative sites to examine questions about form and function and to establish dates. Progress: some key sites such as Porlock Stone Circle and Stone row have been investigated and work continued at Hawkcombe Head but lack of suitable deposits meant that further refinement of dating was not possible so this objective remains.

6. Dendrochronology on buildings

Progress: some work has been undertaken e.g. Dulverton Weir but objective remains: more dendrochronological sampling is required on Exmoor's historic buildings and will help to build a reference chronology for north Devon and west Somerset, areas which in the past have proved difficult to date.

7. An Historic Environment Record to assimilate information

Progress: the development of the HER and associated publically available website 'Exmoor's Past' www.exmoorher.co.uk are significant achievements. The Historic Environment Record is a key research tool for those working on Exmoor's historic environment. An audit was undertaken in 2014 and the work identified in this needs to be progressed, continuing to bring the resource up-to-date and to incorporate a suite of evidence sets.

8. Detailed building recording

Progress: Considerable progress is being made with the work of the West Somerset and Exmoor Historic Buildings Group and Dig Village Dunster project as well as Dig Dulverton and Dig Porlock. Additional recording has been undertaken via the Planning process. This work highlights what little has been studied to date and the huge potential for further work.

9. Fieldwalking

Progress: some work has been undertaken however it remains that a systematic fieldwalking programme is required on Exmoor to reveal new sites and boost artefact assemblages. There is particular scope here (and on excavations) for the involvement of young people and the local community, as well as archaeological societies. This would increase our understanding of the farmed landscape where little work has been undertaken to date.

10. Air photography and LiDAR

Progress: Annual aerial survey has continued in a partnership project with Historic England. LiDAR is now extensively available and the moorland area of Exmoor has been covered at high resolution suitable for archaeological interrogation. The resource is available for use by projects within this area. The remaining areas of the National Park need this high resolution survey. Work should also continue on photographing levelled sites. The use of 'drones' is in early stages and may become a more prominent tool in the coming 5 year period.

11. Geochemical survey

Progress: Further work is required to test and develop this method and to refine interpretation in conjunction with geophysical survey, so that it is better understood when and where it is appropriate to use it as a standard part of the archaeological repertoire.



Sampling a peat sequence on Ricksy Ball, July 2012.

PROGRESS AGAINST SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT 2010-2016

The extent of research during the lifetime of the plan is clear from the progress against priorities. The programme of research needs to be continued and developed with a wide range of partners.

Publication of results for all audiences remains a key product of research on Exmoor, with monographs, reports in academic journals and popular publications and exhibitions all produced during the life of the Framework. The annual Exmoor Archaeology Forum has continued to be a highly popular event and includes presentations of current research. A summary review of work across the National Park is published in the annual Historic Environment Review and reaches a wide audience.

During the life of the Framework two research groups met to develop specific priorities for Exmoor's Moorlands and The Royal Forest of Exmoor which were published as individual research frameworks. The Historic Environment Advisory Group was established as a Strategic Overview Group in 2012 to help deliver the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017. Action 4.11 in the plan is to implement the Historic Environment Research Framework.

Research Projects which contributed to delivering the Research Framework 2010-2016

Aerial Survey an annual programme has been undertaken as a partnership project between ENPA and Historic England (formerly English Heritage). Survey targets 2010-2016 have included poorly covered coastal areas and sites; targeted moorland areas especially sites covered by the work of the EMLPS and EMP; poorly covered historic settlements and Scheduled Monuments particularly those potentially vulnerable or at risk. [RP 2,3,4,6,7,13]

Coastal Audit an assessment of sites along the coast and the threats they face was begun by ENPA in 2014 and in 2015 funding was secured from Historic England for ENPA to undertake a Phase 1 (desk based) Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey in 2016. [RP 2,4,6,7]

Condition Surveys of Designated sites. Listed Buildings survey undertaken 2012-13, Scheduled Monument Condition Survey undertaken 2015. [RP 13,14]

Dig Dulverton 2011 and Dig Porlock Village 2014. The archaeology of Exmoor's settlements has been studied through two community archaeology projects run by ENPA. Both projects included sample excavations and historic building recording. [RP 8,14]

Dig Porlock 2013 was a community project run by the Exmoor Moorland Landscapes Partnership Scheme 'Heart of Exmoor' project to research the moorlands of Porlock parish through survey, research and excavation. A publication summarises the results. [RP 8,14]

Dig Village, Dunster, a Time Team project from 2012 investigating the buried archaeology and standing buildings of Dunster. [RP 8,14]

Dulverton Weir and Leat Research Trust established in 2015 and formed into a Trust in 2016 set up to research and find ways of conserving the town's weir and leat system. [RP 14]

Exmoor Archaeology Field School was a research project run by the University of Bristol's Archaeology Department and ENPA to examine the Mesolithic Coastal landscape on Exmoor and especially the site at Hawkcombe Head, near Porlock. Excavations were completed at Hawkcombe Head in 2013, further research is continuing at Farley Hill and post-excavation work is in progress. [RP 6, 4]

Exmoor Moorland Landscapes Partnership, known as the Heart of Exmoor project this Heritage Lottery Funded scheme based at ENPA 2010-2015 initiated and funded a number of research projects some of which are listed separately.

Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record, the continued development of a public HER as a fundamental tool in managing, conserving and researching Exmoor's historic environment. In 2013 the HER became publically available on a website known as 'Exmoor's Past' www.exmoorher.co.uk. An audit to identify and prioritise future direction was undertaken in 2014 funded by English Heritage. [RP 7]

Exmoor Iron was a project undertaking fieldwork from 2001 to 2005 to examine Exmoor's early iron working sites. A field guide to sites was published in 2010. [RP 9]

Exmoor Miniliths Project examined the Neolithic/Bronze Age transition on Exmoor between 2007 and 2013. It focused on the stone settings and their associated monuments and landscapes, and included surveys and excavations associated with conservation works. The project was run by the University of Leicester and a number of publications have ensued. [RP 1,4]

Exmoor Mires Project / Partnership is funded by South West Water and aims to restore the peat bogs of Exmoor to healthy condition. The Historic Environment is a key component of the project and mitigation work and research between 2010 and 2015 examined a number of sites and issues including the prehistoric landscapes of Lanacombe and Wintershead, the palae- and geoarchaeological evidence for changing environments and themes such as mining, historic moorland routes and peat cutting. New techniques have been successfully used such as tephrochronological analysis and new sites have been discovered such as the burnt mound at Spooners. The results of the historic environment work during this period were published in 'The Past and the Peat' in 2015. A new 3-5 year project continued from April 2015 renamed 'Exmoor Mires Partnership'. [RP 1,4,6,9,10,11]

Exmoor and West Somerset Buildings Recording Group, was set up in 2013 and is part of Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society Historic Buildings Group. Vernacular buildings have been recorded on Exmoor including in Porlock, Dunster and Roadwater. [RP 8, 14]

The Longstone Landscape Project was initiated by the Exmoor Moorland Landscapes Partnership Scheme 'Heart of Exmoor', Parracombe Archaeology and History Society and members of the Parracombe Project in 2014. The aim of the project is to record the archaeological landscape on Challacombe Common including the Chapman Barrows and a possible mortuary enclosure and Radworthy medieval and later settlement. [RP 3, 12,13]

The National Mapping Programme plotted archaeological sites from the study of over 10,000 aerial photographs of Exmoor. The survey was undertaken

between 2007 and 2009 and culminated in a publication 'The Archaeology of Hill Farming on Exmoor' in 2014. [RP 2,3,4,6,7,10,13]

The Porlock Beach and Marsh Project was a low level, long term programme of monitoring and recording archaeological features and palaeo-environmental deposits exposed by the process of coastal change on Porlock Beach. Small scale excavation and associated palaeo-environmental sampling were undertaken from 1998 until the programme closed in 2011. [RP 1,2]

The Somerset Victoria County History Research is complete for a volume on the Dunster and Minehead area, with a publication in 2017 planned. [RP 3,8,14]

The Sustainable Management of Upland Valley Mires A palaeo-environmental sampling project run by the University of Plymouth to map, sample and analyse the nature and condition of upland valley mires on Exmoor. The project was supported by the Great Western Research Council and Exmoor National Park's Sustainable Development Fund and the results formed part of a PhD by Dr Heather Davies showing the mires had the potential to allow the vegetation changes across Exmoor to be reconstructed at a very local level.

Timberscombe Hill Enclosure 2010 – small scale excavations were undertaken by ENPA with local participants to examine the defences and interior of this prehistoric enclosure site. [RP 8]

University Placement Scheme and Research Dissertations Student Work Placements are offered at Exmoor National Park Authority to advance both research and conservation objectives. Placement projects 2010-2015 have included condition surveys of standing stones and a survey of the boundary of the Royal Forest. [RP 13]

West Somerset Mineral Railway Project which ended fieldwork in 2010 was supported by Heritage Lottery Fund and has since published extensively including popular walks leaflets and a major work 'Neither Here nor There? The Mining and Transport of Iron Ore from Brendon Hills to South Wales' by Mike Jones and John Hamilton (2010) which won the Peter Neaverson Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Industrial Archaeology. [RP 9, 15]

PART II

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2017-21

VISION

Research which shows how people from the past lived, worked and died on Exmoor; shaping its environment and landscape and adapting to its challenges. This vision is to be achieved by:

- **A series of multi-disciplinary research projects, drawing on and helping to develop up-to-date methodologies.**
- **Research carried out by a broad spectrum of individuals, groups, societies and organisations; involving the local community wherever possible to provide a range of learning opportunities for all.**
- **A continuing, rigorous re-appraisal of our knowledge and resource.**
- **High quality research informing and supporting equally high quality sustainable management of the historic environment.**
- **Interpretation accessible to all that flows from and closely reflects the results of this up-to-date, high quality research.**
- **The results of research disseminated in a timely fashion in a variety of media.**
- **An Historic Environment Record for Exmoor National Park which underpins and pools the research of individuals and organisations, by being up-to-date and accessible to all.**

What is the historic environment?

Exmoor's historic environment comprises the entire historic and prehistoric landscape: archaeological sites and monuments, buried archaeological deposits, historic buildings, historic field patterns, objects and artefacts, historical sources, customs and traditions, and oral history. It also includes waterlogged deposits, such as coastal marshes and upland peat bogs and valley mire sites and other soils and sediments which contain information about past environments.

Why is Exmoor's historic environment special?

- It uniquely contributes to Exmoor's special character, through the use of local building materials, and through the past management of the entire landscape (moorlands, woodlands and farmed land)
- Exmoor is a marginal landscape (and has a resulting dynamism in terms of past farming systems and settlements). Related to this, it also contains relict landscapes from prehistory to medieval times, the level of survival of which is only paralleled on other uplands. These landscapes are a very rare survival nationally
- It has great, largely untapped palaeo-environmental potential
- It has a dispersed settlement pattern, representative of the south west of England
- Exmoor's coastline, which plays a major part in its economy and tourism industry, has a high concentration of historic features (which play an especially significant role in shaping its distinctiveness)

The Purpose of Research

Exmoor's landscape has been profoundly shaped by people over the last 8000 years. The layers of previous human activity contribute to the variety of Exmoor's landscape and its special qualities; they also tell the story of human exploitation and activity on and around the moor through time. The purpose of research into the historic environment is to improve understanding of the physical remains in the landscape, both above and below ground. This Research should also be directed towards artefacts and artefact collections, as well as historical and oral sources. Through better understanding, improved management strategies can be put in place which will help to conserve the resource. The interpretation that flows from high quality research will shape our view of Exmoor's past and build an appreciation of Exmoor's special qualities today.

Regional frameworks and strategies

The Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the South West Archaeological Research Framework (SWARF) was published in 2008 (Webster C J ed). It provides the regional context for the Exmoor Historic Environment Research Framework. Relevant research themes from SWARF are indicated below. In setting priorities for research into Exmoor's historic environment a two way process is essential: firstly, regional, national (and international) research frameworks and strategies will help to focus priorities for Exmoor, but equally from within Exmoor the nature of the evidence itself and the expertise of those engaged in its study, identify priorities for research. It is therefore important that Exmoor's and other sub-regional research frameworks seek to pursue a more nuanced approach in balance with and supplementing wider priorities.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR EXMOOR 2017-2021

We have identified key research priorities. Some of these remain long term goals continued from the previous research frameworks which should underpin nearly all the research that is done. Others represent more time-limited priorities (we have related them, where applicable, to the South West Archaeological Research Framework):

1. Chronology

To improve the chronological framework for archaeological sites and buildings by increasing the number of sites, structures and places dated by reliable archaeological methods, and to make that objective explicit in project designs to ensure that adequate funding is included. Where Exmoor's archaeological monuments have been dated scientifically, the dates do not accord precisely with comparable monuments from the south-west region. Analysis is required to examine this apparent divergence and to understand what it actually means.

SWARF research aim 16 (p281)

Projected focus 2016-2020: developing further Exmoor's tephra chronology is of international significance. There is still a lack of dendrochronology and dating of buildings and artefacts including ceramics. These areas need development and are relevant to current building recording projects and settlement investigation. As only small areas are subject to archaeological excavation the amount of appropriate material available to sample is generally very small so opportunities for development of scientific dating strategies should be maximised. There is a need to re-examine collections from previously investigated sites and apply specific questions to the existing dataset, especially palaeo-environmental sample cores, and to gain new samples from known archaeological sites. More work should be done to consider Exmoor in its wider regional and national context.

2. Heritage at Risk

The elements of the historic environment (landscapes, archaeological features, buildings, artefacts and deposits) which are at risk from external threats (including sea level rise, coastal erosion, flash flooding, climate change and changes in farming practice, land use, vegetation cover and development) should be identified and appropriately studied. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape are particularly vulnerable - such as stone settings. Research should

include designated and non-designated sites; identify sites, areas and site types most at risk, their significance and the key issues or threats. Research into management options and their effectiveness is also required. It is recognised that Exmoor has many undesignated sites and buildings that are likely to meet the criteria for designation and need assessing.

SWARF research aim 23 (p285)

Projected focus 2016-2020: The Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey Phase 1 will identify sites at risk in the coastal zone and make recommendations for further work to be taken forward in Phase 2. The results of the monitoring programme at Porlock Marsh need synthesis and evaluation. These and other projects should inform the forthcoming Marine Plan (Marine Management Organisation) which should be completed by 2020. Focus is also required on the potential impacts of climate change on inland areas for example the impact of flash flooding from rivers especially on bridges and buildings and increased levels of regenerating woodland, scrub and bracken. Other potential threats to heritage assets include the conversion and updating of traditional buildings the impact of which on historic fabric is currently poorly understood. Recording and sampling of heritage assets at risk is required as well as assessment for greater designation or protection. Excavation and environmental analysis should be undertaken where appropriate on damaged sites as part of conservation work. Rapid condition surveys of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings should continue on their 5 yearly cycle to identify threats and monitor issues and trends. The non-moorland PALs required a condition survey.

3. Relict Prehistoric Landscapes

Exmoor's relict prehistoric landscapes - standing stones, barrows and cairns, hut circles, field systems and hill-slope enclosures - are a remarkable survival. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape have been covered under other research priorities in this document. However, it is important to pull together these separate strands and to see them in the context of the wide resource. Exmoor's prehistoric landscapes have received little attention in the past, with the result that chronologies are inadequate and the form and function of monuments requires further recording and analysis. Priorities include selective excavation to recover dating evidence to place sites in a tighter chronological framework and to better understand form and function. Further palaeo-environmental sampling is required – both from archaeological deposits during excavation and from mire sequences – to develop our understanding of contemporary

environments, and in particular changing woodland cover and the nature of prehistoric farming (there is some evidence for pastoralism in the Bronze Age on Exmoor, but how extensive was this? What was the balance with arable cultivation?). Other issues might include: the function and date of stone settings and how they relate (if at all) to settlement evidence; the apparent absence of Neolithic monuments on Exmoor; whether the absence of field systems at some settlement sites indicates pastoralism or seasonal use of these sites.

SWARF research aim 3 (p276), 25 (285), 28 (p 286), 54 (p292), 57 (p293)

Projected focus 2016-2020: Although much work has been undertaken there is still much to be done to further this objective. Dating and chronology remain problematic and levels of archaeological excavation able to answer specific questions are low. Further synthesis of existing research and material and a focus on specific aims or techniques to explore questions is required. Some work is commencing such as the 'Understanding Exmoor's Barrows' project (2016). Support for local groups such as Longstone Landscape Group is important. Greater use of geophysical survey and lidar is recommended. Some work has indicated landscapes buried by peat development and this needs more analysis. More targeted work is needed on how and when the blanket peat developed as it appears to develop at different times and to link this to known archaeological sites. The palaeo-environment research needs to be linked to past grazing and other management regimes e.g. swaling. Could the relative past grazing levels be compared for example in the Bronze Age and Medieval periods? This could link to other interests such as farming and landscape studies.

4. Re-assessment of existing museum collections

There is an urgent need for existing collections of artefacts to be re-analysed. These include ceramic and flint assemblages. There should also be a concerted attempt to identify collections that are still in private hands. The results of this work should be published and made publicly available.

SWARF research aim 5 (p278) and 11 (p280)

Projected focus 2016-2020: This remains a priority and there are opportunities here for working with local museums and volunteers or placements with appropriate support. Lithics were studied as part of a collaborative PhD (Douglas Mitcham University of Leicester) priorities for further study / analysis are required. Recent studies (e.g. routeways and turf cutting) have shown the potential for Exmoor collections to be held in regional and national museums and more may be held in private collections. Results should aim to enhance the 'virtual

museum' side of the website. Some significant work is commencing such as the 'Understanding Exmoor's Barrows' project (2016) which is re-examining material from excavated sites in and around the National Park.

5. Landscape based research

There are various elements of this approach. The first recognises the need to use the Historic Landscape Characterisation tool to develop a series of specific research questions. The second recognises that Exmoor comprises a number of distinct historic landscapes – there is a need to refine the approach to Exmoor so that it explicitly recognises the fine grained nature of these historic landscapes.

SWARF Research aim 1a (p274)

Projected focus 2016-2020: this objective is to promote the use of Exmoor-wide techniques to interpret the landscape on a wide scale. Targeted survey and analysis of LiDAR and the development or revision of Exmoor HLC is needed.

6. The Roman landscape

To further our understanding of the Roman landscape of Exmoor by carrying out research into the nature of military occupation on and around Exmoor, by investigating native settlement and by extending the research begun by the Exmoor Iron project into the iron industry during this period. A fundamental part of achieving this objective is the publication of the existing research carried out by the Exmoor Iron Project.

SWARF research aim 50 (p291)

Projected focus 2016-2020: Publication of Exmoor Iron and curation of the archive needs to be achieved. Specific questions should be applied to the existing dataset of the palaeo-environmental material and to strategically sample known sites. There is potential for results from the study of museum and private collections and in the context of some recent work just outside the National Park e.g. at Brayford.

7. Origin and development of Settlements

Understanding the origin, development and morphology of settlements are central themes to the understanding of Exmoor's historic environment. Multi-disciplinary projects are required to investigate abandoned and existing

settlements as well as settlement patterns on Exmoor. This work should include:

- i. research into settlement morphology and characterisation,
- ii. the origin and evolution of Iron Age enclosures and their landscape context,
- iii. research into the significance of Dunster as a medieval town and other settlements through building recording, historical research and selective excavation,
- iv. multi-disciplinary projects to investigate the origins of existing settlements and settlement patterns on Exmoor
- v. research into post-medieval desertions, which are a common feature of Exmoor's landscape, to analyse these sites: their origins, their longevity, form and ultimately the reasons for failure (amalgamation, changing patterns of farming etc).
- vi. research into place-names; their meaning and origin

SWARF research aims 4f (p278) and 7 (p279)

Projected focus 2016-2020: building recording is beginning to increase our understanding in this area and needs to be continued. Community 'test-pit' projects have shown post-medieval results to outweigh medieval evidence which needs further probing. The resourcing of the voluntary sector to enable high quality buildings survey and research work is important. Some work remains to be completed, for example Ley Hill excavation report. HER needs to reflect work being done in this area e.g. making data such as the VCH studies on markets more widely available perhaps as a subject theme. Progress needed on research into Iron Age sites and medieval desertions. Further work on place names is also required as our current understanding is based on limited work from 19th and early 20th century.

8. Resource exploitation

Exmoor's abundant natural resources include minerals, marine resources, woodlands and moorlands. Priorities for research include mining centres such as Combe Martin and Bampfylde. There is also a need for industry specific research, for example into the lime industry, harbours and havens, the woodland industry, the iron industry.

SWARF research aim 38 (p288) and 47 (p291)

Projected focus 2016-2020: Publication of Exmoor Iron remains a priority. There

is a need for greater understanding of the mining features on the moorland especially in the light of work by Exmoor Iron at Roman Lode. The study of peat extraction demonstrates the potential for developing knowledge in areas subject to little previous study, such as others listed above. Research into coastal subjects may develop in future with priority 2. Greater knowledge in NP of adjacent projects such as Silver Mining research in Combe Martin is desirable. Funding & a focus on woodlands is required; related studies such as dendrochronology may give a greater understanding of past woodland management. Sources of flint used by prehistoric societies requires further study.

9. Farming & land management

Most of Exmoor is farmed land (or has formerly been so). The biggest changes to the landscape are caused by farming practice. Priorities for research are Exmoor's medieval (?) field systems, ancient breeds, field gutter systems, reclamation, customs and traditions associated with the farming industry. Recent environmental change and man's adaptation to and influence on that change is also a key priority. Long term ecological and climatic records should be used to give a context to recent land management and climatic change (the last 500-1000 years).

SWARF research aims 42 and 43 (p290)

Projected focus 2016-2020: the 200th anniversary of John Knight acquiring the Royal Forest in 2020 could be a stimulus to researching the reclamation features and other engineering works surviving on Exmoor for which there is currently little understanding. Greater connection between cultural heritage, traditional and past farming practice and how this is reflected in the fabric of our landscape and buildings needs to be achieved. An understanding of this in the context of climatic and environmental changes is essential.

10. Communication, Transport & Trade

The infrastructure of the historic landscape is fundamental to its working especially in a remote area such as Exmoor and has a huge impact on trade and travel. Understanding trade links with other areas and the import and export of goods and materials are priorities for further research.

SWARF research aims 15.2.4

Projected focus 2016-2020: greater study of coastal infrastructure & bridges is

required especially in the context of coastal and climate change. Past trade links need further research through documentary sources as well as material remains such as pottery, flint and stone (source analysis) especially for periods or products for which there is little or no documentary support. Modern forms of communication such as telephone and signage should be included here.

11. Ritual and Religion

Ritual and religion may be conveniently divided into pre-Christian and Christian. The priorities for research are: stone settings and standing stones generally, burial mounds: barrows and cairns, Early Christianity, churches and churchyards, holy wells.

SWARF research aim 55 (p292)

Projected focus 2016-2020: The focus on moorland and prehistory has momentum and is producing good results and this work needs to be continued. Other areas that have received much less attention need addressing such as non-conformism and the resultant churches and chapels and how they are affected by change of use / conversion; early Christian memorial stones; later memorials, and other faiths.

12. Estates and Designed Landscapes

Exmoor's estates and their designed landscapes have profoundly influenced the character of the National Park. Research is required to characterise the various estates – their architecture, design and designed landscapes – through historical research and fieldwork. It would lead to more detailed

investigation at some sites, and should seek to influence their future management. Out of such work should come an analysis of the kind of styles that are being used on Exmoor and how they reflect (or not) national trends. On Exmoor, at least 25 estates and designed landscapes have been identified, and all require some level of investigation. However, priorities for research are: Ashley Combe, Dunster, Simonsbath House, Charget House, Combe Sydenham, Nettlecombe, Glenthorne.

Projected focus 2016-2020: further research into 'at risk' landscapes e.g. Ashley Combe. The Simonsbath work is beginning to understand the Knight endeavours but more work needed and the 200th year anniversary of the acquisition of the estate in 2020 is a good context for further research. Here some specific questions e.g. survey of boundaries would be very useful in

drawing out 19th designed landscape from farmed landscape. Consider the development of a local register of designed landscapes with specialist partners. Synthesis and understanding of designed landscapes as an Exmoor group and collation of any work undertaken on estates is required.

13. The Built Environment

Vernacular styles, other styles, traditional building methods. Priorities for research are: thatch (specifically to identify thatched buildings on Exmoor, and locate examples of smoke blackened thatch), traditional building techniques, medieval buildings on Exmoor, historic farm buildings, buildings associated with the Arts & Crafts movement.

Projected focus 2016-2020: historic building recording is a significant priority as is increasing public awareness of the significance of Exmoor's historic buildings. There is much scope for themed work of poorly researched areas e.g. thatched buildings, building materials, historic farm buildings, memorials and landscape furniture. There is also scope for wider awareness, dissemination and use of previous work undertaken by bodies such as the National Trust and groups such as SANHS.

14. Social History

A priority for future research is the development of tourism on and around Exmoor. This should be seen also in the context of leisure and sporting activities such as horse riding, hunting and fishing.

Projected focus 2016-2020: work is needed to build on, collate and disseminate the oral history recording work already undertaken. Collation of what is being done by groups (such as Exmoor Society, Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage and Friends of Simonsbath Sawmill) across the NP is required. There is a need to ensure that past work has a long term future through appropriate archiving and curation. Photography is an underused source of information and defined projects could engage community groups and special interest groups.

15. Defence and Offence

Investigation into the military use of Exmoor. A priority for research is WWII where Exmoor has significant and extensive remains, especially those relating to training grounds.

Projected focus 2016-2020: further research should follow from the survey

scoping WWII resources. This priority should include the Civil War and other periods of conflict which need more focus. Research into the two World Wars overlaps with priority 15, and any opportunities for oral history recording including childhood memories should be maximised. There is scope for research into e.g. use of sphagnum moss in WWI and other special uses of Exmoor for the war effort such as housing of mules etc.

KEY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Research priorities need to be delivered through appropriate methodologies and the use of effective techniques on Exmoor is still a priority. Research ideas should ideally incorporate some of the following methods and techniques:

- 1. Integrated, multi-disciplinary approach**
Should bring together building recording, landscape survey, fieldwalking, historical research, artefact analysis and palaeo-environmental studies.
- 2. Scientific dating**
Much of Exmoor's archaeology is dated by analogy with similar sites elsewhere or by object typology. There is still a need for scientific dating on key sites.
- 3. Remote sensing**
Standard geophysical methods are proving highly useful on Exmoor, but more work needs to be done. In particular the use of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) needs to be developed. Further interrogation of LiDAR and the use of drones are areas of potential development.
- 4. Palaeo-environmental sampling**
Exmoor is rich in wetland deposits, such as blanket bogs, valley mire sites and coastal wetlands. Sampling is particularly required where the relationship between cultural remains and environmental sequences is or can be clearly established. Bioarchaeological and geoarchaeological sampling appropriate to the research questions asked should be an integral part of evaluations and excavations.
- 5. Selective excavation at key sites**
Many of Exmoor's monument categories (such as hut circles, barrows and hill-slope enclosures) have not been examined by excavation. Selective excavation is needed at representative sites to examine questions about form and function and to establish dates.
- 6. Dendrochronology on buildings**
Dendrochronology has only been used at a few locations on Exmoor, but has already revealed several medieval roof structures. More dendrochronological sampling is required as part of other project work on Exmoor's historic buildings and this will help to build a reference chronology for north Devon and west Somerset, areas which in the past have proved difficult to date using tree rings. It may also help in understanding past woodland management.

7. An Historic Environment Record to assimilate information

The Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record and newly available website is a key research tool for those working on Exmoor's historic environment. It needs to be up-to-date and to incorporate a suite of evidence sets.

8. Detailed building recording

Detailed surveys of historic buildings are being carried out on Exmoor, but much more work on this area needs to be done.

9. Fieldwalking

A systematic fieldwalking programme is required on Exmoor to reveal new sites and boost artefact assemblages. There is particular scope here (and on excavations) for the involvement of young people and the local community, as well as archaeological societies.

10. Air photography and Lidar

There is now a very extensive air photographic collection for Exmoor held in the Historic England Archive. The work should continue and needs to target a wide range of research projects. Work should also continue on photographing levelled sites. A key research tool for Exmoor is the acquisition of lidar coverage for the moorland area. Coverage of the entire National Park at a grade suitable for identifying archaeological features is still required.

11. Geochemical survey

Geochemical survey to identify areas of metal working has been carried out and has revealed very positive results at a number of locations, including on hill-slope enclosures and to identify areas of activity on iron working sites. Further work is required to test and develop this method and to refine interpretation in conjunction with geophysical survey, to better understand when and where it is appropriate to use it.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Continue and further develop the existing network of research projects
 - a. consider development of a resource assessment for Exmoor
2. Encourage others to undertake projects on Exmoor.
 - a. Develop and extend links with academic institutions, agencies, other local authorities, groups and societies, individuals and the local community.
 - b. Encourage the setting up of archaeological and local history projects by local groups, archaeological societies and schools, and support existing projects, especially in recording, monitoring and the use of commonly available technology; photography is an under-used resource and could be used more by volunteers, community groups and interest groups.
 - c. Encourage greater synthesis of previous work and the processing and publication of existing research.
3. There should be better funding for research projects
 - a. Develop and extend funding streams for research into Exmoor's historic environment,
 - b. Work with partners such as Historic England, the AHRC, Medieval Settlement Research Group, and academic institutions as well as other local funding streams such as the Maltwood Fund, the Malcolm MacEwan Trust, The Exmoor Society and the Exmoor Sustainable Development Fund.
4. Raise awareness of historic environment research
 - a. Promote academic and popular publications on Exmoor's past, including field guides and leaflets
 - b. Encourage specialised walks and talks
 - c. Continue the annual Exmoor Archaeology Forum
 - d. Use the Historic Environment Review to publish a summary of recent research
 - e. The Historic Environment Research Group with further and promote the Research Framework
5. Foster communication between groups researching Exmoor's Historic Environment.
 - a. Seminars or workshops held on research themes or project areas where necessary to progress or share knowledge in an area of research.

- b. Encourage the development of other formats or networks for communication such as social media or on-line fora.
6. Develop a landscape scale approach to research by development of historic landscape characterisation.