

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

6 JUNE 2006

## NEW ECONOMICS FOUNDATION STUDY

### Report of the National Park Officer

**Purpose of Report:**

To advise members on a forthcoming study into the working of the Exmoor economy and measures to increase its future sustainability.

**Legal Implications including Human Rights Act 1998:**

Environment Act 1995

**Financial Implications:**

A contribution of £4,000 is being made by the Authority towards the study with a further £36,000 secured from other sources including £30,000 from the South West Regional Development Agency.

**National Park Purposes:**

Whilst the Authority is not directly responsible for economic development functions there is a close link between local economic and social wellbeing and the ability of the Authority to achieve its priorities. The study has been specifically commissioned to investigate ways in which the economy of the National Park can develop in ways that are sustainable and consistent with National Park purposes. The study will also feed into the current review of the National Park Management Plan.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Authority:

1. NOTES the scope and objectives of the study
2. SUPPORTS participation by all ENPA members and the Consultative & Parish Forum in a workshop event to be facilitated by New Economics Foundation on Tuesday 1 August 2006 following Planning Committee.

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The proposal for a study into the Exmoor economy by New Economics Foundation arose from a presentation by NEF to the ANPA Workshop held in Harrogate in 2005. Subsequently, a proposal has been worked up with NEF and funding support sought from local and regional partners. An inaugural meeting of partners was held on 9 May 2006 and the Regional Development Agency has recently confirmed its financial support and participation in the project board.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 The study has the following objectives:

- To provide a better understanding of the economy of the greater Exmoor area and the strategic actions needed to improve well-being and economic prospects; tackle problems, and realise opportunities provided by National Park designation. Including by reviewing:
  - money flows
  - supply chains
  - plugging leaks
  - new opportunities [e.g. linked to experience in using the Exmoor NP Sustainable Development Fund]
- To provide an input into the National Park Management Plan that is under review and lead to take up and integrate with strategies of key economical development agencies that impact on the National Park area e.g. Devon, Somerset and Regional economic and community strategies.
- To identify practical actions that will lead to change [i.e. Action Plan]:
  - linked to funding streams
  - identifying delivery responsibilities.
- To position the Exmoor area to take advantage / influence the allocation of future funding opportunities e.g. Axis 4.
- To provide appropriate models for business support and development in a rural context, e.g.:
  - entrepreneurs and innovation
  - transferable skills
  - infrastructure development.
- To provide an overview of existing initiatives, programmes and ideas – developing methods for improved integration across the National Park. i.e. across Devon / Somerset boundary.
- To comment on future approaches to business development and support, e.g.: ways to simplify access and improve effectiveness / impact in the Exmoor context.
- To link to similar initiatives being undertaken by NEF including those focused on overall well-being, e.g. the NEF/Esmee Fairburn project and NEF study with Council for National Parks.

## 3. FUNDING

3.1 Exmoor NPA is the fund holder and commissioning agent for the project and funding has been committed by the following partners:

- £30,000 – South West Regional Development Agency (confirmation letter awaited)
- £2,000 – Devon County Council
- £2,000 – Somerset County Council
- £1,000 – North Devon District Council
- £1,000 – West Somerset District Council
- £4,000 – Exmoor National Park Authority

**Nigel Stone**  
**National Park Officer**  
**25 May 2006**

**Background papers on which this report, or an important part of it are based, constitute the list of background papers required by Section 100 D (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to be open to members of the public comprise:-**

- 1. Project Implementation Plan – Exmoor Sustainable Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan**

**2. Notes of Project Board inception meeting, Exmoor House, 9 May 2006**