

Exmoor Adventures:

A Rural Enterprise Exmoor business case study



Exmoor Adventures is an activity provider based in Porlock Wier offering a range of exciting outdoor activities including kayaking, mountain biking, rock climbing, archery and coastering.

Founded by Dan French in 2009, his passion is to deliver a range of quality, enjoyable and unforgettable experiences to a wide range of participants.

With over 18 years of experience in the Outdoor Industry, Dan has a range of National Governing Bodies as well as a degree in 'Outdoor Studies'.

Over the past couple of years Exmoor Adventures have become an Exmoor National Park partner, gained a Certificate of Excellence from TripAdvisor (5/5), as well as winning a 'Highly Commended' at the South West Tourism Awards.

In the past, during the summer months Dan has employed up to 14 people however, over the past two years, they have streamlined their offering ensuring a more personable approach is taken to activity providing employing around 4 people.

The team showcase the beautiful and breathtaking Exmoor scenery whether that be kayaking across Porlock Bay, Mountain biking over Dunkery Beacon or Rock climbing at the Valley of the Rocks. They always aim to provide their customers with unique and immersive experiences in the place we call home.

They are also a hire base with 16 e-bikes and over 25 mountain bikes.

Benefits and challenges of working on Exmoor

Benefits

Dan believes his business benefits from being based on Exmoor for several reasons:

- There is competition in the area however, the activity provided is based upon location. Healthy competition is good however, we don't tend to offer the same experiences.
- Our location is perfect for a wide range of activities, we have coastal paths, the sea and moorland adventures within a short radius of where we are based meaning we are able offer a variety of true Exmoor experiences.

Challenges

The challenges we face working on Exmoor are:

- When starting up, it was difficult to find other people with relevant qualifications in the area meaning, a lot of time was spent finding staff and providing training.
- The cost of living in this area is quite high therefore, some find it difficult to live and work here.
- Our activities are somewhat seasonal. The summer months can be jam packed however, the winter months are very sparse with bookings.

Aspirations and advice

Aspirations

“Over the next 3-5 years we plan on developing our E-bike offering to help make Exmoor more accessible”

Advice

“One bit of advice would be to start small. Build your business, regardless of the sector in bite sized steps. Test the water with your customer base and other local businesses and allow room for adaptation to suit”

