

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2024-25****1. Introduction**

Exmoor National Park Authority's scheme provides for payment of:-

- A **Basic Allowance** which is a flat rate payable to each Member;
- A **Special Responsibility Allowance** for Members undertaking additional roles as defined by the Authority.

2. General Points

The term "Member" in these notes means a Member of the Exmoor National Park Authority.

Members have the option of not claiming all or part of any allowance. The Head of Finance and Operations must be notified in writing if a Member chooses this option.

All enquiries relating to Members allowances should be made to our Member Services Team (tel 01398 323665) or e-mail membersupport@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk.

3. Basic Allowance

- Is payable to all Members.
- Is £3,095.28 per annum from 1 April 2024, payable in arrears in monthly instalments. This is paid automatically (unless a Member has opted not to receive it in whole or in part) and Members do not need to claim it.
- Recompenses Members for time devoted to their work as a Member and is intended to cover
 - preparation for and attendance at Authority, committee, sub-committee, panel and working group meetings (including travel time to and from meetings)
 - preparation for and attendance at seminars, conferences and training sessions
 - representing the Authority on "outside organisations"
 - dealing with correspondence
 - single Member duties
 - other incidental costs for which no other specific provision is made, including use of Member's home
- Adjustments to the annual Basic Allowance will be linked to staff cost of living pay awards.
- Where the Member's term of office begins or ends at any time other than the start of the financial year, they are entitled to the appropriate proportion of the annual allowance.

4. Special Responsibility Allowance

- Is payable in addition to the Basic Allowance.
- Is payable to Members who have been given significant responsibilities e.g. Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Chairperson of the Planning Committee.
- Is allocated on the degree of responsibility and upon the perceived call on the Member's time, as agreed by the Authority, with no Member receiving more than one Special Responsibility Allowance at any one time.
- Is paid in arrears in 12 equal instalments automatically (with no need for the Member to claim) and where applicable is apportioned for part year entitlements.
- Is intended to cover:-
 - significant additional work preparing for meetings
 - meetings with officers
 - meetings with fellow chairmen
 - acting as the spokesperson for their area of special responsibility
 - dealing with correspondence
 - visits directly connected to the performance of a Special Responsibility Allowance, e.g. official openings, fact finding visits
- Does not include any element for travel expenses, which are claimable in the normal way for any Special Responsibility Allowance duty.
- Is banded on multiples of the basic allowance to reflect the work and responsibilities that have to be undertaken and will be paid as follows:-

Chairperson of the Authority	2 x basic allowance
Deputy Chairperson of the Authority	1.5 x basic allowance
Chairperson of the Planning Committee	1.5 x basic allowance
Chairperson of the Standards Committee	.25 x basic allowance
Chairperson of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum	.5 x basic allowance

- To cater for changes in circumstances that can occur during the year and to ensure that no individual cases of exceptional hardship are experienced, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance & Operations in consultation with the Chairperson of the Authority can agree Special Responsibility Allowances temporarily for individual Members as considered necessary.

4. Dependents Carer's Allowance

5.1 Subject to paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3, Dependents Carer's Allowance (DCA) may be claimed where a Member arranges paid care in respect a spouse/partner, child or parent, or a person living with you in the same household (but not as an employee, tenant, lodger or border), or someone who is involved in an emergency where you are the only person who can help.

5.2 Payment of DCA is:-

- claimable for any **approved duty**, and for attending meetings or events covered by a **special responsibility payment** ; payable for the duration of the meeting or event attended, plus travelling time to and from the meeting;

- paid on the basis of the actual expenditure incurred, subject to a maximum hourly rate and a maximum annual allowance, as specified in Appendix 2;
- not payable where a Member already receives a carer's allowance from the Department for Works and Pensions;
- not payable where the care provided is by a parent of the dependent, a person who is part of the Member's household or someone under 16;
- claimed monthly on the Members' claim form.

5.3 All claims for DCA must be supported by receipts.

5. Travel Allowance

- Current rates are shown in Appendix 2.
- Can only be claimed for an approved duty (which is set out in Appendix 3) or one covered by a Special Responsibility Allowance.
- Should be claimed promptly at the end of each month on the Members' claim form.
- For official journeys outside Somerset and Devon see policy as set out in Appendix 2.
- Train fares are normally reimbursed at the standard class rate. Members eligible for a Railcard who regularly use the train for Authority business may reclaim the cost of the railcard.

NB The Member Services Team can obtain pre-booked tickets for Members; such advance bookings attract cheaper fares and reserved seats.

- Wherever possible, Members should share transport.
- Taxi fares will be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances on production of receipts.
- Expenditure on tolls, parking fees, etc may be claimed for re-imburement on production of receipts.
- Members are advised to check the position with their insurer to ensure they have adequate vehicle insurance cover in place to include use of their vehicle for Authority business.

6. Subsistence Allowance

- Is claimable for the actual cost of the meal or overnight expenses (excluding alcoholic drinks) up to the same maximum set out for staff which is updated annually. Current rates are shown in the attached Appendix 2.
- Subsistence claims should not include receipts for the purchase of alcoholic drinks.
- Is claimable for any approved duty or Special Responsibility Attendance exceeding 4 hours which spans the agreed meal time periods where additional expenditure is incurred.
- Should be claimed promptly at the end of each month on the Members' claim form and receipts must be attached to support the claim. Claims made without proof of expenditure will only be paid in special circumstances and will be

referred for the approval of the Head of Finance and Operations in consultation with the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Authority.

- Is not claimable if a meal is provided free of charge.
- For special circumstances the Head of Finance and Operations can agree allowances in excess of the maximum where this is considered necessary and appropriate.

7. Non Claimable Duties

- For the avoidance of doubt, the following duties are **not** approved for the purpose of claiming travel or subsistence allowances:-
 - Single Member duties
 - Attendance at Parish Council meetings
 - Attendance at any committee, panel or working group meetings to which a Member has not been appointed, unless as a previously named substitute

8. Payment of Allowances

- Basic Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances are paid automatically monthly after completion of:-
 - Written undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members
 - Declaration of interests
 - Tax, National Insurance and Bank detail pro-formas

These allowances are treated as imbursements and subject to Tax and National Insurance Contributions under PAYE regulations.

- Travel and subsistence must be claimed monthly on the Members' Claim Form. Mileage Allowances are taxed according to the profit element which is calculated by comparing the amounts paid per mile with the Inland Revenue's Authorised Mileage Rates. Reimbursement of subsistence and other expenses incurred (car park fees, tolls, taxis etc) should not give rise to a tax or national insurance contribution liability as there is no profit element involved.
- Fuel receipts which predate the dates of travel should be attached to the monthly mileage claim form in order that VAT can be reclaimed on the expenses paid.
- Claims must be submitted monthly. Claims not received by the Member Services Team by the 5th day of the following month will not be paid that month.
- A supply of claim forms can be obtained from the Member Services Team.
- Allowances must not be claimed where the Member is entitled to receive payment from another body for the same duty/activity.
- Payments are made through Somerset Council which provides a payroll bureau service to Exmoor National Park Authority.
- Payment has to be made directly into a Bank or Building Society account.
- Members can request a PAYE code from the Inland Revenue for the taxable payments, otherwise payments will be taxed at the basic rate of tax. Some Members may be able to obtain an exemption card for national insurance. Some female Members may be able to obtain a reduced rate certificate (married

women or widows). Members seeking advice on the national insurance calculation matters should contact their tax office or the Head of Finance and Operations.

- The Authority regularly reviews expenditure on Members Allowances to ensure the budget is not overspent. In order to assist with the monitoring of the budget Members are asked to submit claims monthly, no matter how small.
- Claims older than 2 months will be referred for the approval of the Head of Finance and Operations in consultation with the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Authority and therefore payment may be delayed or refused.

9. Unemployment Pay and Statutory Sick Pay

- Members who are unemployed normally do not lose entitlements to unemployment benefit as a result of receiving a Basic Allowance or Special Responsibility Allowance, even though the earnings rule may be exceeded. Members entitled to Disability Benefits may find this entitlement is affected. In such cases Members should clarify the situation with their Tax Office.
- Members are regarded as “employees” under the Social Security and Housing Benefits Act 1982 and are entitled to receive sick pay for the first 28 weeks of sickness a year. If Members wish to pursue claims for sickness benefit, the period of sickness should be in excess of 3 consecutive days and the Member Services Team must be given prompt notification of sickness.

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE**

1. **Mileage Rates** (up to 8500 miles per annum after which reduced rates apply) for journeys within Somerset and Devon, and between Members' homes and Dulverton:-
 A flat rate allowance: **46.9p**, Passenger supplement: **5p** per passenger per mile
 The rate for use of a motor cycle is 21p per mile.

2. **Journeys Outside Devon and Somerset** For journeys outside Devon and Somerset Members should use public transport whenever possible and appropriate. Recognising that there are situations when it would be more appropriate to travel by private vehicle the rate of **35.2p** per mile is payable unless a case can be made for payment of the full mileage rate and this is subject to PRIOR approval by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Authority. Travel by car can be either by the use of a hire car or by the payment of the normal mileage rates for the journey. Situations where such prior approval is appropriate are on the grounds of:-
 - sustainability where two or more people are sharing a vehicle
 - inadequacy where public transport is not available or the journey is too time consuming involving changes of trains and taxis
 - economy where the costs of using public transport are significantly greater, overnight stays would be avoided, etc.
 - efficiency where savings in staff and Members time could justify the payment of the full rate

NB Members must ensure that they have adequate insurance cover for journeys made by them in respect of Exmoor National Park Authority business.

3. Subsistence Allowances

Breakfast	£7.50	Claimable if away from normal place of residence for more than 4 hours before 11.00am.
Lunch	£10.15	Claimable if away from normal place of residence for more than 4 hours including the lunch time period of 11.30am and 2.30pm.
Tea	£4.30	Claimable if away from normal place of residence for more than 4 hours including the period 3pm to 6pm and cannot be claimed if Evening Meal Allowance is also claimed.
Dinner	£14.00	Claimable if away from the normal place of residence more than 4 hours, ending after 7pm and cannot be claimed if tea is also claimed.
Overnight	£120.00	Claimable if away overnight from normal place of residence for overnight accommodation including breakfast.
Out of Pocket	£5.80 p/nt £23.25 p/wk	Claimable for residential courses and conferences.
Receipts must be submitted to obtain subsistence allowances up to maximum allowances above.		
Dependents' Carers' Allowance Hourly rate paid up to the national living wage. Maximum annual allowance (equivalent to 100 hours per Member per year)		Up to £11.44/hr from 1/4/24 £1,144

Notes: Members will be taxed at their marginal rate for the cost of travelling between home Exmoor House. Reimbursement of all other receipted subsistence and other expenses should give rise to a tax or national insurance liability.

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES FOR THE PAYMENT OF
TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES**

Each of the following duties shall be regarded as authorised by the ENPA:-

- Attendance at any
 - Exmoor National Park Authority meeting
 - Meeting of any Authority Committee or Sub Committee to which the Member is formally appointed by the Authority or specifically invited by the Chairperson
 - Meeting of the Planning Committee where the Member is not formally appointed but where the Member wishes to address the Committee on an item of business being considered at that meeting
 - Working group or panel meetings to which the Member has been appointed by the Authority
 - “ad hoc” meetings and site visits set up by the ENPA or its committees when attending as an appointed Member
 - Association of National Park Authorities meetings as agreed by the Authority
- The undertaking of any duty associated with the ENPA or its committees and sub-committees, including briefing sessions, site visits, meetings with outside bodies or individuals, by:
 - the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Authority
 - the Chairperson of the Planning Committee
 - the Chairperson of the Standards Committee
 - the Chairperson of the Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum
- Attendance on Authority, committee and sub-committee tours of inspection and at Members' conferences or seminars where formally appointed by the ENPA
- Attendance as the ENPA's nominee or representative at meetings associated with approved bodies
- Attendance at Open Days, official ceremonies where the Member is performing a specific function
- Attendance at any approved conference where appointed by the ENPA or a committee or sub-committee
- Any other attendance for which prior approval has been given by the Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson of the Authority

NB A duty cannot be approved, in retrospect, for the purpose of paying allowances