

# Plastic Free Exmoor

## November 2022

### Newsletter No 2



## Welcome

Welcome to our November newsletter. Following on from becoming the first National Park to become a Surfers Against Sewage Plastic Free Community, the Plastic Free Exmoor team have continued with our efforts to reduce and remove single use plastics from Exmoor.

## New Plastic Free Community Allies and Business Champions

We are delighted that the **Exmoor Society** has become Plastic Free Exmoor's latest Community Ally. They join our other twenty Community Allies who have pledged to help us spread the word about the need to reduce our reliance on single use plastics.

Our latest Plastic Free Business Champion is the Cottage Beer Project. Dan from the **Cottage Beer Project** went to great lengths to massively reduce the environmental impact of his business on the environment, while at the same time brewing the most delicious beer. For more information visit their website at: <https://cottagebeerproject.co.uk>

To see a full list of our Community Allies and Business Champions, please click on the following link to the Plastic Free Exmoor page on the Exmoor National Park website:

[Exmoor - Plastic Free Exmoor \(exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk\)](https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/plastic-free-exmoor)



## Is your Plastic Free Business Ready to Go for Gold (or Silver)?



The Surfers Against Sewage team have updated their Plastic Free Communities Business Champion Award by introducing a Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award.

The initial Plastic Free Business Champion award, that all of our current 23 business champions have attained, counts as bronze...but then as businesses continue their plastic free journey and “deepen” their actions they can achieve the silver and gold standards. To do this they will need to show what they are doing to get rid of the “biggest hitters” of plastic pollution like single use plastic bottles and plastic bags. They will also need to show how they are supporting local plastic free initiatives and events.

Further information about these awards can be found via the following link [Setting the Gold Standard for UK Businesses - Plastic Free Communities](#) and by logging on to your own Business Champion Dashboard.

If you have any questions or need further help, then contact me at [plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com](mailto:plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com)

## Plastic Free Exmoor and the Refill Campaign

Over the past six months we have continued to build an Exmoor wide network of free water refill stations. These are places where people can get their water bottles refilled with drinking water...therefore removing the need to buy single-use plastic bottled water.

Over the last six months the following businesses and organisations have kindly agreed to become water refill stations; **Parracombe Pavilion Stores & Cafe, The Buttery at Malmsmead, The Exmoor National Park Centre in Dulverton, The Exmoor Society Shop in Dulverton, The Original Dulverton Deli, and the Simonsbath House Hotel.**



We now have over twenty water refill stations across Exmoor. For further information on the refill scheme visit: [Home - Refill - find more than 280,000 Refill Stations globally](#)

To join the refill revolution and find your nearest refill station you can download the free refill app from the above website, and you need never be without access to free drinking water.

If your business or organisation would like to get involved and provide a refill station, then contact me at [plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com](mailto:plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com) and I will be able to help you get registered and also provide you with some promotional materials.

## Park Protector Awards

Over the summer Plastic Free Exmoor was shortlisted for a "Park Protector Award" by the Campaign for National Parks, a charity dedicated to campaigning to protect and promote the National Parks of England and Wales.

On July 11<sup>th</sup> I travelled to the awards ceremony at the Houses of Parliament. Although Plastic Free Exmoor was not a winner, it was great to represent Exmoor, to spread the plastic free message, and to meet so many inspirational individuals involved with projects to take care of our wonderful National Parks.



## Plastic Free Exmoor Beach Cleans

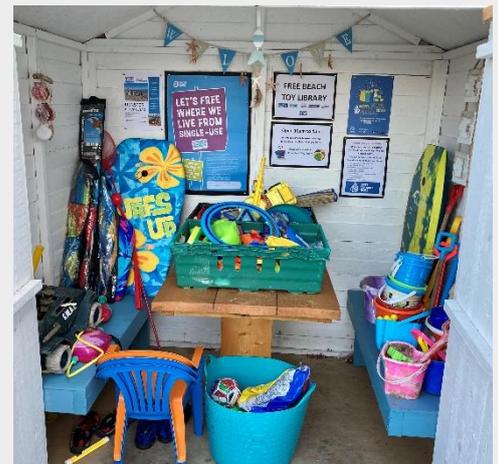
Over the past six months we have led or been involved with several beach cleans along the West Somerset and Exmoor Coast.

On Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup> we led an extreme beach clean at Greenaleigh Sand. This beach is located about a mile from Minehead, on the eastern edge of Exmoor. A small group of volunteers removed an incredible amount of single use plastic, fishing line and debris from the beach including a large number of plastic bottles (right).



On September 17<sup>th</sup> Plastic Free Exmoor led a beach clean at Dunster. This was part of the Marine Conservation Society's Great British Beach Clean. As part of the beach clean some of the 30 volunteers also undertook a detailed survey of a 100m stretch of the beach recording and weighing every piece of marine debris that was found. Along this stretch 463 items of debris were collected, 90% of which was plastic or polystyrene.

Thank you to everyone who came along to help with our beach cleans. Over the summer we also supported beach cleans at Minehead and Watchet and helped set up a free beach toy library at Minehead, that has been partly stocked by using toys collected during our beach cleans.

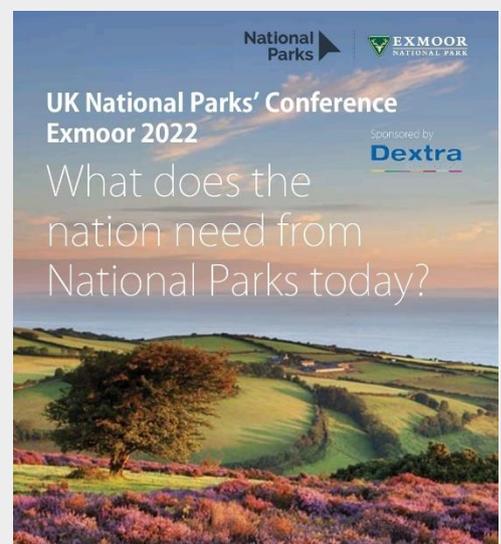


## UK National Parks Conference Exmoor 2022

On September 28<sup>th</sup> Plastic Free Exmoor was invited to speak to some of the delegates attending the National Park Conference, hosted by Exmoor National Park.

All fourteen UK National Parks and other groups such as DEFRA were represented at the conference and it was great opportunity to share the incredible work that has been done by our Business Champions, Community Allies, Refill Stations and all the people who have volunteered at our beach cleans and litter picks.

We hope that some of the other National Parks will now join us and work towards becoming Plastic Free Communities.



## Our future plans...

Over the coming months and into 2023 we will be recruiting more Business Champions, Community Allies and Water Refill Stations, as well as leading and organising beach cleans and litter picks.

We are also planning...

**Plastic and Bio-degradable Tree Guards** To get out into the Exmoor woodlands and clear them of old plastic and “biodegradable” tree guards. This protective tree guard (right) is clinging to a tree in Langridge Woods, near Roadwater. Clearly, it is no longer needed and is certainly not biodegradable. The woodland floor here is littered with tree guards and we are hoping to lead an event where all of these tree guards can be collected and disposed of. If you know of a woodland on Exmoor with a similar tree guard problem...do let us know.



**Disposable BBQs** We are also hoping to liaise with other local environmental groups and stakeholders in a campaign to encourage local retailers not to sell disposable BBQs on or close to Exmoor.

Last year saw some dreadful fires at Baggy Point, North Devon and at Studland in Dorset. On recent litter picks on Exmoor and beach cleans along the coast we found plenty of used disposable BBQs. Another hot summer in 2023 and next year it could be Exmoor facing the massive damage that such fires can cause.

## Plastic Free Exmoor Steering Group

### Volunteers Needed!

We are still looking for people to join our Plastic Free Exmoor Steering Group...particularly representatives from our Business Champions and Community Allies. We meet around four times a year and our meetings can be accessed in person or online. If you would like to join us, contact me at [plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com](mailto:plasticfreeexmoor@gmail.com)

Plastic Free Exmoor

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