



EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
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22 October 2026

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

To: All Members of the Exmoor National Park Authority

A meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority will be held in the **Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton** on **Tuesday, 3 November 2026 at 10.00am.**

The meeting will be open to the press and public subject to the passing of any resolution under s.100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

There is Public Speaking at this meeting, when the Chairperson will allow members of the public two minutes each to ask questions, make statements, or present a petition relating to any item relevant to the business of the Authority or relating to any item on the Agenda. Anyone wishing to ask questions should notify the Democratic Support Officer as soon as possible, or at the latest by 4pm on the working day before the meeting of the agenda item on which they wish to speak, indicating a brief summary of the matter or matters to be raised (contact Committees@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).

The meeting will be **recorded**. By entering the Authority's Committee Room and speaking during Public Speaking you are consenting to being recorded. We will make the recording available via our website for members of the public to listen to and/or view, within 72 hours of the meeting taking place.

Members of the public may use forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting. Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairperson so that those present may be made aware.

(The agenda and papers for this meeting can be downloaded from the National Park Authority's website www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).

Sarah Bryan
Chief Executive

As set out above, the Authority welcomes public engagement with its work and believes that everyone attending a meeting of Exmoor National Park Authority or one of its Committees has the right to be treated with respect and to feel safe at all times, including before, during and after the meeting they attend.

The Authority understands that some situations can be difficult and lead to frustration; however, the Authority is committed to promoting an environment where everyone feels listened to and respected and is not subjected to unacceptable behaviour. Further guidance is provided in our Customer Notice, available on our [website](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk).

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda for this meeting.

3. Chairperson's Announcements

4. Minutes (1) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 6 October 2026 ([Item 4](#)).

(2) To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes.

5. Business of Urgency: To introduce any business which by reason of special circumstances the Chairperson, after consultation with the Chief Executive, is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency and to resolve when such business should be ordered on the Agenda.

6. Public Speaking: The Chairperson will allow members of the public to ask questions, make statements, or present a petition. Questions of a general nature relevant to the business of the Authority can be asked under this agenda item. Any questions specific to an agenda item can be posed when that item is considered subject to the discretion of the person presiding at the meeting.

7. Revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 and Revised Budget 2026/27: To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer ([Item 7](#))

8. Treasury Management Mid-Year Report: To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer ([Item 8](#))

9. Exmoor National Park Management Plan – Progress and Highlights Report 2025/26: To consider the report of the Head of Climate, Nature and Communities ([Item 9](#))

10. Personnel Update

Starters: Hamish Awcock - Exmoor Pioneers – Environmental and Heritage Conservation Trainee – 13/10/2026
Millie Stanton – Exmoor Pioneers – Environmental and Heritage Conservation Trainee – 13/10/2026

Leavers: Peter Hoyland - Dunster National Park Centre Manager - 1/11/26
Shelley Trace – National Park Centre Information Advisor, Dulverton National Park Centre - 1/11/2026
End of summer season at National Park Centres – 1/11/2026

11. Members' Reports: To receive any updates and reports on meetings or events attended by Members as representatives of Exmoor National Park Authority.

Exmoor National Park Authority

3 November 2026

Agenda Item 4

Minutes of the Meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority held on Tuesday, 6 October 2026 at 10am in the Committee Room, Exmoor House, Dulverton

Present

Miss A V Davis (Chairperson)

Mr R Milton (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr L Baker

Mr A Bray

Mr T Butt-Philip

Mr M Ellicott

Mr W Geen

Mr J Holtom

Mr R Hopley

Dr M Kelly

Mr M Kravis

Mrs F Nicholson

Mr J Patrinos

Mr S J Pugsley

Mrs F Smith

Miss C Strom

Mr N Thwaites

23. Apologies for absence

Dr S Warren, Miss L Williams, Mr G Wren

Mr A Yendole (Solicitor and Monitoring Officer) and Ms D Mortimer (Independent Person)

24. Declarations of interest

There were none.

25. Chairperson's announcements

There were none.

26. Minutes

Confirmation: The Minutes of the Authority's meeting on 1 September 2026 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters arising: No response received following the letter regarding Blue Tongue.

27. Business of urgency:

There was none.

28. Public Speaking:

There were none.

29. Authority Meetings Schedule for 2027

The Authority considered the report of the Head of Enterprise and Operations, which set out the proposed schedule of meetings for 2027.

The Authority's consideration

The draft schedule provided for monthly meetings of Authority and Planning Committee, together with two meetings of Standards Committee. The proposed Authority meeting dates had been shared with the constituent County and District Councils and no clashes or other issues had been identified.

Members were advised that the Authority's governance arrangements would need to be reviewed following changes introduced by section 94 of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026.

These changes affected local audit and governance arrangements and could require the establishment of a new committee, together with consequential arrangements to the Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders.

A report on the proposed governance arrangements would be presented to the Standards Committee in November for consideration. Any necessary changes to the Authority's Committee structure would therefore be brought forward for approval.

Members noted that dates for PPAG meetings relating to the review of the Local Plan would need to be incorporated into a revised schedule.

Dr M Kelly and Mrs F Smith arrived during the item at 10.10am and did not vote on the resolution.

Resolved to:

1. ADOPT the schedule of meetings of the Authority and its Committees for 2027, as set out at Appendix 1, noting that a revised schedule would be brought forward to incorporate PPAG meetings and any subsequently approved changes to the Authority's governance arrangements.

30. Members' Reports

The Annual National Park Conference was held in September in the Cairngorms, this was attended by Miss AV Davis, Dr S Warren and Mrs SE Bryan (Chief Executive).

Miss AV Davis and Mr BJ Barrett (Chief Finance Officer) attended the Devon Assurance Partnership Annual Conference in September.

Members had attended a presentation from Professor Penny Johnes at Exmoor House on 28 September: 'From Land to Water: what is shaping our rivers?', this would be followed up with further discussion at a future Members forum.

The meeting closed at 10.21am

(Chairperson)

Exmoor National Park Authority

3 November 2026

Agenda Item 7

Revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 and Revised Budget 2026/27

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Purpose of Report

To consider and approve the revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2026/27 to 2030/31 and to adopt the revised revenue budget for 2026/27, taking account of financial performance at month 6, additional one-off Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) funding and the latest capital programme position.

Recommended Decision

That the Authority:

1. NOTE the financial performance for the first six months of 2026/27 in section 2 and Appendix 1;
 2. APPROVE the Revised Core Budget for 2026/27 as summarised in Appendix 2;
 3. NOTE that the Programmes, Partnerships and Contributions to Reserves Budget remains as set out in Appendix 3;
 4. NOTE the month 6 position on the 2026/27 Capital (CDEL) Programme at Appendix 4;
 5. APPROVE the revised reserves position and creation of a Revenue Reserve for forward RDEL-funded expenditure as detailed in Appendix 5; and
 6. ADOPT the revised Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 at Appendix 6.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The approved 2026/27 Budget and MTFP 2026/27 to 2030/31 were considered by the Authority in March 2026. The approved revenue budget was £6.063m, based on National Park Grant of £2.968m and the income, expenditure and funding assumptions available at that time.
- 1.2 The financial position has since changed significantly through the receipt of £1.720m of additional one-off Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) funding from DEFRA. The revised budget incorporates planned use of this funding in 2026/27 and the transfer of £1.050m of earned income to a new earmarked reserve to support increased

activity across a 36-month period. Additionally continued Access for All DEFRA grant of £83,700 has been included within the Revised Estimates.

- 1.3 The revised gross income and expenditure budget is £7.866m. The increase is driven principally by time-limited external funding and associated expenditure and does not represent a permanent increase in the Authority's core financial capacity.

2. Management Accounts at 30 September 2026

- 2.1 Appendix 1 compares actual income and expenditure for the first six months of 2026/27 with the profiled budget, together with reserve transfers and external funding expected to be applied at year end.
- 2.2 The month 6 statement shows a net adverse variance of £256,465 after identified reserve transfers and external funding. This is not currently expected to translate into an equivalent year-end overspend, as a substantial proportion relates to the timing of income, project matching, funding transfers and internal recharges.
- 2.3 The principal matters are:
- Woodlands shows an adverse variance and a moderate year-end overspend is projected due to unforeseen hazardous tree works.
 - Estates shows a significant adverse variance, principally because contribution income is below profile and specific works will be met from CDEL or the Estates Reserve at year end.
 - Finance shows an adverse variance while RDEL-funded final accounts, capital support and asset management system expenditure await year-end funding transfers.
 - National Park Centre performance is affected by seasonal income and staffing profiles, while visitor facilities income is above target.
 - Development Management and Corporate Management show favourable variances, principally due to establishment expenditure and timing.

3. Revised Core Budget 2026/27

- 3.1 Appendix 2 contains the revised budget by DEFRA service heading and business unit. The movements reflect additional externally funded activity and updated estimates while maintaining a balanced budget.
- 3.2 The revised estimate has also been updated for the latest known figures. This includes the agreed 3.3% pay award, compared with the 3% assumption in the March 2026 budget, together with other known changes in expenditure and income where these can be estimated with reasonable certainty.

	Approved Budget £000	November Revised £000	Movement £000
Income	6,063	7,866	1,804
Expenditure	6,063	7,866	1,740

- 3.3 The core changes are the additional £1.720m one-off revenue RDEL allocation and £0.084m Access For All Grant. This RDEL allocation enables the transfer to reserves of £1.050m of earned income for forward activity. The balance supports additional staffing capacity and defined projects during 2026/27.
- 3.4 The additional £1.720m of RDEL funding enables eligible expenditure that would otherwise have been met from the Authority's existing income streams to be funded from RDEL in 2026/27. As a result, £1.050m of those existing incoming resources can be transferred to a specific earmarked reserve to enable the funding of the agreed programme of time-limited activity over the following 36 months.
- 3.5 The additional RDEL funding is temporary and should not be used to create ongoing commitments beyond the funding period. The proposed allocations address current pressures, identified gaps in the Corporate Plan and the staff resources needed to progress the capital programme.
- 3.6 The main areas of planned use are summarised below. The table highlights the principal allocations rather than every individual budget adjustment.

Spend area	Indicative allocation	Background / purpose
Forward RDEL-funded activity	£1,050,000	Earned income is transferred to a new earmarked reserve to support agreed time-limited activity over a 36-month period to 2028/29. This smooths delivery beyond 2026/27 without treating the funding as a permanent increase in core resources.
Estates, buildings and asset resilience	£119,700	Building surveyor support, a stock condition survey of estate properties, Northmoor Road cliff stabilisation and the asset management system/estates terrier. These measures improve compliance, asset information and the ability to plan and deliver the wider capital programme.
Woodlands and tree safety	£83,900	Final ash dieback expenditure, a temporary Woodlands Officer, hazard-tree works and supporting software. The allocation responds to health and safety pressures while increasing capacity for woodland and habitat delivery.
Nature, climate and heritage capacity	£155,500	Time-limited ecology, climate change, natural resources and heritage capacity, including continuation or extension of existing posts. This supports delivery of Management Plan and Corporate Plan priorities where capital funding alone cannot meet staff and programme costs.

Planning, digital and corporate delivery	£121,500	Digitisation of the planning archive, GIS support, final accounts and capital support, together with additional corporate, communications, rural enterprise and facilities capacity. This provides the additional staff support needed for the revised revenue and capital programmes.
Access, ranger and project support	£89,300	Support for the Ranger Apprentice, Sowing the Seeds and other additional operational capacity, including match funding and early project costs where required.

- 3.7 The remaining balance comprises a range of smaller staffing adjustments, project contributions and budget-stabilisation measures. All expenditure is time-limited or subject to review before any commitment extends beyond the funded period.

4. Programmes, partnerships and contributions to reserves

- 4.1 The underlying budget is unchanged from March 2026. Appendix 3 shows £25,000 for the Woodlands Ash Dieback Reserve and £10,000 of top-sliced programme support, comprising £5,000 for the Exmoor Hill Farming Network and £5,000 for SERC/DBRC biological records.

5. Capital programme 2026/27

- 5.1 At its meeting on 5 May 2026, the Authority approved a programme-based approach for deploying the £1.4m DEFRA CDEL allocation. The programme was structured around five themes: Asset Renewal and Infrastructure; Natural Environment and Habitat; Heritage and Landscape; Operational Efficiency and Digital; and Access and Visitor Experience. This approach reflected lessons from 2025/26, providing flexibility to prioritise schemes that are CDEL-ready while reducing the risk of ineligible expenditure.

Theme	Allocation £	Spend to month 6 £	Remaining £
Asset renewal and infrastructure	600,000	270,433	329,567
Natural environment and habitat	400,000	276,566	123,434
Heritage and landscape	200,000	-	200,000
Operational efficiency and digital	100,000	8,487	91,513
Access and visitor experience	100,000	21,100	78,900
Total	1,400,000	576,586	823,414

- 5.2 Appendix 4 provides the month 6 position against the £1.400m programme. Expenditure at 30 September 2026 is £576,586, leaving £823,414 to be delivered in the second half of the year. Delivery is strongest within Asset Renewal and Infrastructure and Natural Environment and Habitat, including progress at Driver and Pinkery, purchase of an electric 4x4, woodland planting at Long Holcombe and a capital grant towards partner land acquisition. Heritage and Landscape has not yet recorded expenditure, while activity is progressing on digital equipment, National Park Centre enhancements and the Ashcombe bridge replacement.
- 5.3 The remaining programme is significant and will require close monitoring. As identified in the May report, deliverability, timing and organisational capacity are the principal financial risks. Procurement, permissions, surveys, consents and practical delivery timescales will determine whether all expenditure can be completed by 31 March 2027. Capital monitoring is therefore a standing item for Leadership Team and Delivery Team, with Finance oversight and escalation of delivery barriers where necessary.

6. Capital Investment Strategy

- 6.1 There are no proposed changes to the Capital Investment Strategy approved in March 2026. The Authority continues to take a low-risk approach and does not borrow to fund capital schemes.

7. Reserves

- 7.1 Appendix 5 shows total reserves of £3.655m at 31 March 2026. After the approved £25,000 budget allocation and forecast net transfers of £339,753, the anticipated balance at 31 March 2027 is £4.019m.
- 7.2 The closing balance includes £1.050m in a new Revenue Reserve for forward RDEL-funded expenditure. This is committed to the agreed time-limited programme and should not be treated as additional general financial resilience.
- 7.3 The General Fund is forecast at £246,364, the General Contingency at £300,000 and the Legal Contingency at £130,000. The overall level of reserves is considered adequate, although a material part of the increase is temporary and committed.

8. Revised Medium Term Financial Plan

- 8.1 Appendix 6 updates the rolling five-year MTFP. The November revision incorporates the additional one-off RDEL allocation and distinguishes funding for time-limited activity from the recurring financial position.
- 8.2 The following table provides a comparable view from 2026/27 to 2030/31. The exceptional scale of income and expenditure in 2026/27 is principally due to the one-off RDEL funding and the associated transfer to reserves.

£000	2026/27 Revised	2027/28 £000	2028/29 £000	2029/30 £000	2030/31 £000
National Park Grant	2,968	2,968	2,968	2,968	2,968
Other income	4,835	3,104	3,128	3,156	3,166
Total income	7,803	6,072	6,096	6,124	6,134
Pay and pensions	3,912	4,344	4,418	3,981	4,058
Pay inflation increase	3.3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Non-pay expenditure	2,806	2,346	2,363	2,383	2,385
Programmes / reserves	1,085	(515)	(515)	10	10
Total expenditure	7,803	6,175	6,266	6,375	6,453
Savings yet to be identified	-	103	170	251	319
Target pay budget as % of NPG	131.8%	146.4%	148.8%	134.1%	136.7%

- 8.3 For planning purposes, National Park Grant is assumed to remain at £2.968m throughout the plan period. This is a planning assumption rather than an indication of future Government settlements.
- 8.4 The revised plan is balanced in 2026/27. From 2027/28 it shows savings requirements of approximately £103,000, compared with £67,000 in the March 2026 paper, rising to £170,000 in 2028/29, £251,000 in 2029/30 and £319,000 in 2030/31. The one-off RDEL resources improve short-term capacity but do not remove the underlying medium-term pressure.
- 8.5 The reduction in projected pay costs in 2029/30 reflects the assumed ending of time-limited staffing commitments and is therefore dependent upon those posts and arrangements not becoming permanent commitments.
- 8.6 Staffing remains the most significant recurring cost. The pay budget as a percentage of National Park Grant is equivalent to around 146% of National Park Grant in 2027/28 and 149% in 2028/29, illustrating the increasing reliance on non-NPG income and external funding.

Sensitivity analysis

- 8.7 The MTFP is sensitive to relatively small changes in its major assumptions. For consistency with the March 2026 paper, the table below shows the financial impact of a 1% movement in the four main variables. These figures are sensitivities rather than forecasts.

Variable	Basis	2026/27 £000
National Park Grant	1% change	29.7
Staff pay award	1% change	37.1
Investment interest (1 percentage-point movement in the assumed average interest rate)	1% change	35.0
Traded income	1% change	10.0

- 8.8 A 1% improvement or reduction in National Park Grant changes the annual position by approximately £29,680. On the sensitivity basis used in March, a 1% movement in the pay award changes costs by approximately £37,070, while a 1% movement in investment interest or traded income changes the position by approximately £35,000 and £10,000 respectively. Recurring changes can compound in later years.
- 8.9 For illustration, a 1% improvement in NPG would reduce the 2030/31 savings requirement from approximately £319,000 to £289,000. Conversely, a £37,070 adverse pay movement would increase it to approximately £356,000. These are illustrations of sensitivity, not forecasts. Note that any percentage changes would be compounded year on year.
- 8.10 The revised MTFP continues to show a recurring shortfall from 2027/28. Work will therefore continue on savings, additional income, the use of the estate, service priorities and external funding. Any ongoing costs arising from the one-off programme will need to be met from identified recurring resources.

9. Current assessed risk

- 9.1 The most significant new risk is management of the additional one-off RDEL funding while preserving value for money and a sustainable recurring cost base.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
National Park Grant remains flat or reduces	Medium	High	Rolling MTFP review, reserves and early identification of recurring savings.
One-off RDEL programme is not delivered or creates ongoing commitments	Medium	High	Dedicated reserve, programme monitoring and separation of temporary and recurring expenditure.
Pay awards and inflation exceed assumptions	Medium	High	Budget monitoring, annual review and contingencies for limited variation.

CDEL programme is not fully delivered	Medium	High	Active programme management and early escalation of delivery barriers.
Property, woodland or legal liabilities arise	Medium	Medium	Earmarked reserves, contingencies and specialist advice.

- 9.2 The risks above will remain under review as funding conditions, capital delivery and the Government funding position become clearer.

10. Summary and financial standing

- 10.1 The revised budget is balanced and incorporates the additional one-off RDEL allocation while distinguishing 2026/27 delivery, forward-funded activity and the recurring financial position.
- 10.2 The month 6 position contains material variances, but many relate to timing, external funding, reserves and internal recharges. Woodland, estates, legal and capital delivery require continued attention.
- 10.3 Under section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the revised estimates are considered robust and the projected level of reserves adequate. This assessment recognises that £1.050m of the reserves balance is committed to forward RDEL-funded activity and is not available for general use.
- 10.4 The MTFP identifies a savings requirement from 2027/28, increasing over the period of the plan. The additional funding provides valuable short-term capacity, but it does not remove the need to return to a sustainable recurring budget.

11. Legal and policy considerations

- 11.1 Strategic alignment – Supports sound financial management, transparency and accountability by providing core services, securing best value from resources and improving performance and efficiency in all we do, reducing costs, improving decision making and being more sustainable.
- 11.2 Legal implications – Local Government Act 2003, Parts 1-3 (Capital Finance, Financial Administration and Grants), Section 25, Sections 1-39.
Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, Part 2 (Financial Management and Internal Control).
- 11.3 Equality implications – The recommendations principally relate to financial allocations and do not themselves alter services eligibility or access. No specific adverse equality impacts have therefore been identified.
- 11.4 Financial implications – The revised budget, MTFP and capital programme are key elements in managing financial risk.
- 11.5 Risk management implications – The main financial risks are lower income or funding, higher costs, failure to achieve the required savings and delays in delivering the revenue and capital programmes. These will be reviewed through the regular budget, MTFP and programme monitoring arrangements.

- 11.6 Climate implications – The financial decisions do not in themselves create a material adverse climate impact. The revised programme includes expenditure supporting environmental resilience, estate decarbonisation and nature recovery.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 The additional RDEL funding provides a temporary opportunity to address current pressures and support delivery of the capital programme. The revised budget is balanced and reserves are adequate, although £1.050m is committed to forward RDEL-funded activity and is not available for general use. The priority is to deliver the agreed programmes within the funding conditions and timescales, avoid unaffordable ongoing commitments and identify the recurring savings required from 2027/28.

Report Author

Ben Barrett

Chief Finance Officer

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19 October 2026

Appendices

Appendix 1 – 2026/27 Management Accounts to 30 September 2026

Appendix 2 – 2026/27 Revised Budget

Appendix 3 – 2026/27 Programmes, partnerships and contributions to Reserves

Appendix 4 – 2026/27 Capital Programme spend to 30 September 2026

Appendix 5 – 2026/27 Analysis of Reserves

Appendix 6 – Medium Term Financial Plan, 2026/27 through to 2030/31

Background papers

March 2026 Authority Paper – Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 to 2030/31 and Budgets 2026/27

May 2026 Authority Paper – Capital Programmes 2026/27



2026/27 Management Accounts to 30 September 2026

Section	Budget Heading	2026/27 Original Budget £	2026/27 YTD Budget (Month 6) £	2026/27 Reserves Transfers/ External	2026/27 Month 6 Actual	Variance between 26/27 Revised Budget and Actual & Reserves TFRs	Notes
Conservation of Cultural Heritage	Archaeology & Historic Environment	101,000	59,550	13,319	72,451	418	
	Exmoor Pioneers (Project)	0	0	106,720	106,720	0	Q4 will see Matching of Project funds to Expenditure incurred.
	Ashcombe Gardens (Project)	0	0	13,880	13,885	-5	Q4 will see Matching of Project funds to Expenditure incurred. Mostly Capital
Conservation of Cultural Heritage Total		101,000	59,550	133,919	193,056	413	
Conservation of Natural Environment	Woodlands	59,400	56,400	75,277	184,254	-52,577	Awaiting year end reserves transfers and CS income. Moderate year-end overspend projected due to unforeseen hazardous tree works.
	Landscape Recovery (Project)	0	0	20,264	20,264	0	Q4 will see Matching of Project funds to Expenditure incurred.
	ENNIS (Project)	0	0	9,741	11,741	-2,000	Awaiting year end match funding from FiPL Project
	River Barle Restoration (Project)	0	0	65,089	66,119	-1,030	Awaiting year end match funding.
	Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Project	0	0	85,746	85,746	0	Awaiting year end match funding.
	Conservation Advice	166,600	160,150	45,136	207,118	-1,832	Awaiting year-end transfers from Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL), FiPL iro Sowing the Seeds project and reserve support towards ecology advice.
Conservation of Natural Environment Total		226,000	216,550	301,253	575,242	-57,439	
Forward Planning & Communities	Planning & Community	106,700	53,350	12,587	64,050	1,887	
	CareMoor (Project)	0	0	-31,762	-31,398	-364	Donations received to date net of transfer to reserves
	Rural Enterprise	134,700	73,500	0	80,442	-6,942	
Forward Planning & Communities Total		241,400	126,850	-19,175	113,094	-5,419	
Development Management	Development Management	313,100	156,550	0	149,629	6,921	Reduced establishment expenditure
Development Management Total		313,100	156,550	0	149,629	6,921	
Promoting Understanding	National Park Centres	140,200	77,500	7,380	117,042	-32,162	Income and staffing expenditure negative variance due to seasonal profiles. Premises budget for Lymington NPC lower than anticipated.
	Grants and Contributions	200	100	0	0	100	
	Pinkery	0	17,500	109,921	101,273	26,148	Favourable variance on income due to seasonal profiling.
	Media & Communication	99,100	55,050	7,000	62,913	-863	
	Education & Interpretation	113,200	61,150	1,697	66,269	-3,422	
Promoting Understanding Total		352,700	211,300	125,998	347,497	-10,199	
Rangers, Estates & Volunteers	Rangers	111,100	98,750	101,212	229,159	-29,197	Awaiting year-end transfers from Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) in respect of Ranger Apprentice and WTE revenue costs.
	Field Services	183,700	209,450	11,600	198,026	23,024	Awaiting year-end transfers from Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) in respect of FST equipment. Awaiting Q2 vehicle recharges
	FST Workshop	27,600	13,800	0	25,056	-11,256	Residual costs after recharging vehicle and equipment maintenance charges across services. Awaiting Q2 recharges to be processed.
	Estates	-188,500	-91,350	6,214	70,695	-155,831	Contribution income significantly lower than profile at Month 6 (-£131k), spend on Chains fencing and Pinkery repairs to met by CDEL/Estates Reserve at year-end.
	Driver (Project)	0	0	217,655	217,655	0	CDEL Projects ongoing.
	Get Involved Programme (Project)	0	0	0	3,316	-3,316	To be met from interpretation reserve at year-end.
	Volunteer Engagement	66,800	33,400	0	31,740	1,660	
Rangers, Estates & Volunteers Total		200,700	264,050	336,681	775,647	-174,916	

Section	Budget Heading	2026/27 Original Budget £	2026/27 YTD Budget (Month 6) £	2026/27 Reserves Transfers/ External	2026/27 Month 6 Actual	Variance between 26/27 Revised Budget and Actual & Reserves TFRs	Notes
Recreation Management & Transport	Access & Recreation Visitor Facilities	114,000 0	85,500 0	-15,056 1,696	69,726 -45,990	718 47,686	Income above targets, good demand for parkwide permits. Lower demand for repairs and maintenance compared to prior years at this stage.
Recreation Management & Transport Total		114,000	85,500	-13,360	23,736	48,404	
Support Services	Finance	43,400	39,700	67,589	144,525	-37,236	Finance system charging profile partly reserve based. Awaiting year-end transfers from Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (RDEL) in respect of year-end and Asset Management system costs. Additional expenditure in respect of long running legal case Planned maintenance spend greater than original estimate. Likely to be some costs to be recharged to Estates Reserve in respect of Kitchen/Common Room and office refurbishments.
	Human Resources & Performance	182,000	91,000	0	93,658	-2,658	
	ICT & GIS Services	254,600	163,350	29,286	190,968	1,668	
	Legal Services	70,000	35,000	0	43,824	-8,824	
	Facilities	195,400	106,700	-8,650	113,757	-15,707	
Support Services Total		745,400	435,750	88,225	586,732	-62,757	
Corporate & Democratic Core	Corporate Management	424,400	231,800	0	218,949	12,851	Timing issue for receipt of Somerset Council Invoices
	Historic Pensions Contributions	80,000	40,000	-7,595	32,405	0	
	Corporate Subscriptions	39,200	19,600	0	30,680	-11,080	
	Members	95,200	47,600	0	47,458	142	
Corporate & Democratic Core Total		638,800	339,000	-7,595	329,492	1,913	
Core Funding & Partnership Fund	National Park Grant	-2,968,100	-1,484,050	-1,571,722	-3,055,766	-6	Includes Capital (CDEL) allocation of £700k (£1.4m full year) and one-off Revenue (RDEL) £860k (£1.72m full year) Appendix 3, Year End transactions Appendix 3
	Reserves Transactions	25,000	0	0	0	0	
	Partnership Fund Top-Sliced	10,000	5,000	3,887	12,267	-3,380	
Core Funding & Partnership Fund Total		-2,933,100	-1,479,050	-1,567,835	-3,043,499	-3,386	
Total Core Budget		0	416,050	-621,889	50,626	-256,465	



2026/27 REVISED BUDGET

Section	Budget Heading	2026/27 Approved Budget £	2026/27 Expenditure £ November Revision	2026/27 Income £ November Revision	2026/27 Revised Budget £ November Revision	Variance between 26/27 Approved and 26/27 November Revised Budgets	Notes
Conservation of Cultural Heritage	Archaeology & Historic Environment Exmoor Pioneers (Project)	101,000 0	132,400 253,600	-3,300 -253,600	129,100 0	28,100 0	Additional post funded through RDEL
Conservation of Cultural Heritage Total		101,000	386,000	-256,900	129,100	28,100	
Conservation of Natural Environment	Woodlands	59,400	206,700	-73,400	133,300	73,900	Additional post funded through RDEL. RDEL project funding towards Ash Die Back £40,000, Hazard Tree Software £3,000, Hazard Tree Works £13,000
	Landscape Recovery (Project)	0	252,400	-252,400	0	0	
	ENNIS (Project)	0	0	0	0	0	
	Moorland Bird Survey (Project)	0	0	0	0	0	
	Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) Project	0	679,800	-675,700	4,100	4,100	RDEL funded additional staffing support
	Conservation Advice	166,600	434,700	-91,900	342,800	176,200	RDEL funded additional staffing support £154,000. RDEL Project funding towards Sowing the Seeds project £8,000, Pioneers project support £10,000
Conservation of Natural Environment Total		226,000	1,573,600	-1,093,400	480,200	254,200	
Forward Planning & Communities	Planning & Community CareMoor (Project) Rural Enterprise	106,700 0 134,700	107,000 30,000 147,400	0 -30,000 -10,000	107,000 0 137,400	300 0 2,700	RDEL funded additional staffing support
Forward Planning & Communities Total		241,400	284,400	-40,000	244,400	3,000	
Development Management	Development Management	313,100	465,300	-116,000	349,300	36,200	RDEL project funding towards digitisation of planning files, £38,000
Development Management Total		313,100	465,300	-116,000	349,300	36,200	
Promoting Understanding	National Park Centres Grants and Contributions Pinkery Media & Communication Education & Interpretation	140,200 200 0 99,100 113,200	308,500 200 176,300 126,400 143,800	-146,400 -176,300 -18,000 -12,100	162,100 200 0 108,400 131,700	21,900 0 0 9,300 18,500	Reduction in Premises Costs for Lynmouth National Park Centre
Promoting Understanding Total		352,700	755,200	-352,800	402,400	49,700	
Rangers, Estates & Volunteers	Rangers Field Services FST Workshop Estates Volunteer Engagement	111,100 183,700 27,600 -188,500 66,800	274,500 473,800 27,600 437,300 66,900	-120,200 -234,000 0 -536,300 0	154,300 239,800 27,600 -99,000 66,900	43,200 56,100 0 89,500 100	RDEL project funding towards Ranger Apprentice and WTE running expenditure. £40,000 RDEL project funding towards capital support £35,000 and internal projects £20,000. reduction in reserve contributions £40,000 RDEL funded additional staffing support £16,000. RDEL Project funding towards property stock condition survey £25,000, Northmoor Road Cliff stabilisation works £40,000, capital support £17,000, Building Surveyor support £15,000
Rangers, Estates & Volunteers Total		200,700	1,280,100	-890,500	389,600	188,900	
Recreation Management & Transport	Access & Recreation Visitor Facilities	114,000 0	297,200 102,900	-185,700 -102,900	111,500 0	-2,500 0	RDEL funded additional staffing support
Recreation Management & Transport Total		114,000	400,100	-288,600	111,500	-2,500	

Section		Budget Heading	2026/27 Approved Budget £	2026/27 Expenditure £ November Revision	2026/27 Income £ November Revision	2026/27 Revised Budget £ November Revision	Variance between 26/27 Approved and 26/27 November Revised Budgets	Notes
Support Services	Finance		43,400	245,300	-140,000	105,300	61,900	RDEL funded projects Final Accounts and Capital Support £30,000, Asset Management System £26,000, increase in external audit fee budget £7,000
	Human Resources & Performance		182,000	204,800	0	204,800	22,800	RDEL funded additional staffing support £13,000. RDEL Project funding towards recruitment costs £6,000
	ICT & GIS Services		254,600	264,800	0	264,800	10,200	RDEL funded additional staffing support £9,000.
	Legal Services		70,000	70,000	0	70,000	0	
	Facilities		195,400	212,200	0	212,200	16,800	RDEL funded additional staffing support £13,000. RDEL Project funding towards recruitment costs £6,000
Support Services Total			745,400	997,100	-140,000	857,100	111,700	
Corporate & Democratic Core	Corporate Management		424,400	425,100	0	425,100	700	Slight increase in staffing costs following pay-award.
	Historic Pensions Contributions		80,000	80,000	0	80,000	0	
	Corporate Subscriptions		39,200	39,200	0	39,200	0	
	Members		95,200	95,200	0	95,200	0	
Corporate & Democratic Core Total			638,800	639,500	0	639,500	700	
Core Funding & Partnership Fund	National Park Grant		-2,968,100		-2,968,100	-2,968,100	0	One-off additional revenue funds provided by DEFRA One-off transfer to reserve of income in-lieu of RDEL funding to provide for spend across a 36 month period
	Revenue Departmental Expenditure Limit (One-off additional NPG)		0	0	-1,720,000	-1,720,000	-1,720,000	
	RDEL Reserve Match		0	1,050,000	0	1,050,000	1,050,000	
	Reserves Transactions		25,000	25,000	0	25,000	0	
	Partnership Fund Top-Sliced		10,000	10,000	0	10,000	0	
Core Funding & Partnership Fund Total			-2,933,100	1,085,000	-4,688,100	-3,603,100	-670,000	
Total Core Budget			0	7,866,300	-7,866,300	0	0	

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES, PARTNERSHIPS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO
RESERVES**

2026/27

ORIGINAL BUDGET	<u>25,000</u>
LESS: Contributions to Reserves	
Woodlands - ADB	25,000
	<u>25,000</u>
LESS: Top sliced Programmes	
Hill Farm Network	5,000
SERC/DBRC Bio-records	5,000
	<u>10,000</u>
2026/27 Programmes & Partnership Fund	<u>35,000</u>



Approved Capital (CDEL) Programmes, spend to month 6 2026/27

Proposed Capital Spend Project	RAG Status	Indicative Sum £	Spend to P6 2026/27 £	Remaining balance 2026/27 £	Notes	Headline Summary
ASSET RENEWAL & INFRASTRUCTURE	●	£600,000	£270,433	£329,567	Estate renewal, decarbonisation, plant and equipment	Driver and Pinkery schemes progressing, electric Isuzu DMAX E 4x4 pick -up purchased
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HABITAT	●	£400,000	£276,566	£123,434	Land acquisition, woodland, habitat creation, 30x30	Woodland planting at Long Holcombe, Capital Grant towards partner land acquisition.
HERITAGE & LANDSCAPE	●	£200,000		£200,000	Conservation, heritage at risk, landscape enhancement	-
OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY & DIGITAL	●	£100,000	£8,487	£91,513	ICT upgrades, digital archive, cyber security	Mobile and Tablet replacements
ACCESS & VISITOR EXPERIENCE	●	£100,000	£21,100	£78,900	Bridges, paths, National Park Centre enhancements, lighting	National Park Centre enhancement schemes progressing. Ashcombe bridge replacement in progress
		£1,400,000	£576,586	£823,414		

2026/27 ANALYSIS OF RESERVES



	Balance 31/03/26	Budget Allocations 2026/27	Transfers to/(from) Reserves 2026/27	Anticipated Balance 31/03/27
	£	£	£	£
REVENUE EARMARKED RESERVES				
Conservation of Cultural Heritage				
Archaeology	49,670		-11,000	38,670
Exmoor Pioneers	249,179		-110,000	139,179
Heritage Projects	33,077			33,077
Conservation of Natural Environment				
Deer Monitoring Study	13,424			13,424
Woodland Mgt Reserve	33,280	25,000	-18,280	40,000
Ecology Projects Reserve	102,454		-50,000	52,454
Ennis	7,424			7,424
Forward Planning & Communities				
Planning Policy (Local Plan)	343,235		-10,000	333,235
Section 106 Agreements	96,000			96,000
Caremoor For Exmoor	187,151		-57,000	130,151
Conserv Area Appraisals & Neighbourhd Plan	12,283			12,283
Rural Enterprise	67,633		-10,000	57,633
Development Management				
Development of Planning Service	46,859			46,859
Promoting Understanding				
National Park Centres spend to save	63,236		-5,000	58,236
Pinkery Reserve	0			0
Engagement & Outreach	22,202		-15,000	7,202
Rangers, Estates and Volunteers				
Authority Estate	328,777		-100,000	228,777
Estates Capital Receipts Reserve	449,200		35,000	484,200
Recreation Management				
Rights of Way	68,870		-50,000	18,870
Active Travel Grant	260,000		-130,000	130,000
Support Services				
IT and Web Development	66,475		-10,000	56,475
Financial Resilience Reserve	65,000		-40,000	25,000
Corporate Equipment & Vehicle Replacement	72,150			72,150
Modernisation	93,171			93,171
Internship and Trainee Fund	20,000		-20,000	0
Corporate & Democratic Core				
Environmental Resilience	31,881		-10,381	21,500
Partnership Plan (Research & Development)	46,901		-15,000	31,901
Corporate Subscriptions	10,000		-10,000	0
Capital Development Reserve	50,672			50,672
	2,890,204	25,000	-636,661	2,278,543
PROGRAMMES & PARTNERSHIPS				
Programmes - fixed term	24,240		-20,000	4,240
Partnership Fund/ small grants scheme	20,285		-10,000	10,285
	44,525	0	-30,000	14,525
GENERAL FUND AND CONTINGENCIES				
General Fund	193,364		53,000	246,364
Contingency Fund - General	349,966		-49,966	300,000
Contingency Fund - Legal	176,620		-46,620	130,000
Revenue reserve - RDEL forward spend	0		1,050,000	1,050,000
	719,950	0	1,006,414	1,726,364
TOTAL RESERVES	3,654,679	25,000	339,753	4,019,432

Exmoor National Park Authority
 Medium Term Financial Plan 2026/27 - 2030/31

	Previous 2025/26 £'000		Original 2026/27 £'000	Revised 2026/27 £'000	Projected 2027/28 £'000	Projected 2028/29 £'000	Projected 2029/30 £'000	Projected 2030/31 £'000
Income								
National Park Grant Income (Defra)	2,968		2,968	2,968	2,968	2,968	2,968	2,968
- Fees - planning,	116		116	116	119	122	125	125
- Fees - car parks	103		103	103	108	113	118	118
- Interest earned	140		140	140	120	120	120	120
- Rents	198		198	218	202	206	210	210
- Grants & Contributions (Including Farming in Protected Landscapes)	2,074							
Contributions			829	700	832	835	838	841
Grants received from applications			502	506	505	508	511	514
Grants automatically given (Including Farming in Protected Landscapes)			692	2,536	695	698	701	704
- National Park Centre Sales Income	137		137	137	140	143	146	146
- Rights of Way Income	155		155	155	155	155	155	155
- Pinkery Trading Income	170		174	176	179	179	183	184
- Other	49		49	49	49	49	49	49
Total:	3,142		3,095	4,835	3,104	3,128	3,156	3,166
Total Income	6,110		6,063	7,803	6,072	6,096	6,124	6,134
Expenditure								
Pay								
Current Establishment (excluding Pinkery)	3,590		3,627	3,832	4,261	4,332	3,892	3,969
Pension Costs - Fixed Element	82		80	80	83	86	89	89
Target Pay Budget	3,672		3,707	3,912	4,344	4,418	3,981	4,058
Non-Pay								
Member costs	95		95	95	96	97	98	98
Premises costs	209		213	231	216	219	222	222
Insurance	55		55	55	56	57	58	58
Travel / vehicle costs	82		78	78	80	82	84	84
Equipment	60		45	85	46	47	48	48
Contracted work (e.g. project expenditure, audit fees, legal services)	1,370		1,299	1,725	1,302	1,305	1,308	1,308
Subscriptions	41		41	41	41	41	41	41
National Park Centre Cost of Goods Sold	79		79	79	84	86	88	88
Consumables	48		48	47	49	50	51	51
ICT Expenditure	75		75	75	76	77	78	78
Communications	16		16	16	17	18	19	19
Toilet & car park costs	103		103	103	104	105	106	106
Pinkery	170		174	176	179	179	183	184
Total non-pay budget	2,403		2,321	2,806	2,346	2,363	2,383	2,385
Total Budget	6,075		6,028	6,718	6,690	6,781	6,365	6,443
Programmes, Partnerships & Contributions to Reserves								
Contributions to (-ve from)Reserves	25		25	1,075	-525	-525	0	0
Top Sliced Programmes	10		10	10	10	10	10	10
Total available Programmes & Partnerships Budget	35		35	1085	-515	-515	10	10
Total expenditure	6,110		6,063	7,803	6,175	6,266	6,375	6,453
Savings yet to be identified	0		0	0	-103	-170	-251	-319

Exmoor National Park Authority

3 November 2026

Agenda Item 8

Treasury Management Mid-Year Report

Report of the Chief Finance Officer

Purpose of Report

To report to Members on Treasury Management Performance for the first six months of the 2026-27 financial year

Recommended Decision

That the Authority:

1. NOTE the Treasury Management Outturn for the first six months of the 2026/27 financial year.
-

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2026/27 is underpinned by the adoption of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised 2021), which includes the requirement for determining a treasury strategy on the likely financing and investment activity for the forthcoming financial year. The Code also recommends that the Authority is informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year.
- 1.2 CIPFA published new versions of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) and the Treasury Management Code of Practice in 2021. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) also published revised Investment Guidance which came into effect from April 2018. This report gives a summarised account of Treasury Management activity and outturn for the first half of the year, and ensures the Authority is embracing best practice in accordance with CIPFA recommendations.
- 1.3 During the reporting period, Somerset Council (SC) has managed Treasury Management activities under a Service Level Agreement. SC sweeps cash daily between ENPA and SC accounts to bring the ENPA account to zero. It then amalgamates ENPA cash with its own and lends it into the cash market. ENPA receives the overall rate earned by SC cash investments, minus an administration fee.
- 1.4 The Authority delegates responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices, and the execution of administration of treasury management decisions, to me as Chief Finance Officer.

2. Investment Activity

- 2.1 A total of £64,768 has been earned in gross interest in the first six months of the year on an average balance of £3.25m (£77,145 on £3.61m for the same period 2025/26). An administration fee of £816 was deducted, giving net income of £63,952 for the period. The average balance was less than the previous year as grants were received later.
- 2.2 The return has been 3.97% on an average balance of £3.25m. When compared to the market, this was 0.29% higher than the overnight SONIA rate (a benchmark rate at which Banks will lend to each other), and 0.22% above average base rate. The opening rate as at 31/03/2026 was significantly enhanced for a short period over year-end as lending rates to Local Authorities reached 7% plus. The table below highlights these figures: -

	Balance on 31/03/2026 £000	Rate as at 31/03 %	Balance on 30/09/2026 £000	Rate as at 30/09 %	Average Balance for period £000	Average Rate for period %
Balances	3,570	5.33	3,596	4.02	3,254	3.97

- 2.3 The Guidance on Local Government Investments in England gives priority to security and liquidity and the Authority's aim is to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles.
- 2.4 As mentioned in 1.3, SC has managed Treasury Management activities under an agreed Service Level Agreement. The current strategy of lending all surplus funds to SC represents a low counterparty risk, subject to Somerset Council's continuing financial standing.
- 2.5 Security of capital remained SC's main investment objective. Current SC approved cash deposit counterparties are listed in the table below. Those used during the first half of the year are denoted with a hashtag.

Bank		Sterling LVNAV Money Market Funds	
Barclays Bank UK Plc		Aviva	#
Lloyds Bank Plc	#	Deutsche	#
National Westminster Bank	#	Federated Prime	#
Santander UK		Insight	#
Australia & New Zealand Bank	#	Invesco Aim	#
Standard Chartered Bank		LGIM	#
Development Bank of Singapore		SSGA	#
Toronto Dominion Bank			
Bank of Montreal		Other	
DZ Bank		DMO	#
National Bank of Canada		Other Local Authorities	# (23 deals)

- 2.6 During the period SC has continuously monitored counterparties, and all ratings of proposed counterparties have been subject to verification on the day, immediately prior to investment. Other indicators taken into account have been:
- Credit Default Swaps and Government Bond Spreads.
 - GDP and Net Debt as a Percentage of GDP for sovereign countries.
 - Likelihood and strength of Parental Support.
 - Banking resolution mechanisms for the restructure of failing financial institutions i.e. bail-in.
 - Share Price.
 - Market information on corporate developments and market sentiment towards the counterparties and sovereigns.

Counterparty Update

- 2.7 SC advisors, Arlingclose maintained its recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on the majority of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.
- 2.8 During the period, Fitch upgraded numerous banks due to a rating methodology change. Moody's changed the outlook on HSBC to Positive from Stable, while also affirming its long-term deposit rating.
- 2.9 After spiking in April following escalation in the Iran war, credit default swap prices on UK banks declined during most of the period but started to pick up again in September. They ended the period well below levels that may give cause for concern but remain under constant monitoring.
- 2.10 Financial market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and credit default swap levels will continue to be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Council's counterparty list remain under constant review.

3. The Economic Background

- 3.1 The key story remained the conflict in the Middle East and its impact on global energy prices and inflation, while on the domestic front, Andy Burnham became the new Prime Minister. Although energy prices had shown signs of moderating towards the end of June, the continuing conflict pushed oil and gas up sharply once again from July. Around mid-September, Brent oil and UK gas prices were over 30% and 70% higher respectively compared to the period preceding the Bank of England's (BoE) July Monetary Policy Report (MPR).
- 3.2 The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) maintained Bank Rate at 3.75% throughout the period. In April the MPC voted by 8-1 to leave rates unchanged, with one member wanting a 0.25% increase. The voting subsequently became more hawkish, moving to 7-2 in June and 6-3 in both July and September, with all dissenters preferring to increase Bank Rate by 0.25% to 4.00%. The change in voting patterns reflected increasing policymaker concern over the persistence of the energy shock and the risk that higher headline inflation could become embedded in domestic prices and wages.

- 3.3 UK headline consumer price inflation (CPI) initially declined, suggesting the initial energy shock was not spreading into a wider range of goods and services. However, later in the period inflation picked up again, with CPI rising from 2.6% in June to 3.1% in August due largely to higher transport costs. Core CPI was 2.6% in July and August, suggesting the divergence between that and headline inflation was due to energy rather than a broad increase in underlying inflation.
- 3.4 UK economic activity was somewhat stronger than initially anticipated over the period. GDP expanded by 0.6% in the first quarter of the calendar year and 0.5% in the second quarter, slightly stronger than the initial estimate of 0.4%. Monthly activity was more volatile, with a contraction of -0.1% in April, followed by gains of 0%, 0.3% and 0.4% in May, June and July respectively.
- 3.5 Labour market data continued to show softening employment conditions. The unemployment rate fell to 4.9% in April and remained at that level to July, against expectations it would tick up. Job vacancies also continued to decline, to 702,000 in the three months to July. Earnings growth moderated, with regular earnings at 3.5% in the three months to July and total earnings at 3.9%, suggesting weaker labour demand was continuing to restrain domestic wage pressures.
- 3.6 Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.86% and ended at a high of 5.43%. The 20-year gilt yield starting at 5.45% and finished at 5.93%, another high for the period. The Money Market Overnight Rate (BID) averaged 3.68% over the six months to 30th September but ended the period with a large jump to 3.88%.
- 3.7 The 1-month, 3-month, 6-month, and 12-month Money Market rates averaged 3.74%, 3.90%, 4.14%, and 4.48% respectively over the period, and ended the period at 3.72%, 4.02%, 4.34%, and 4.78% respectively. Whilst the 2 shorter dates remained below the previous years' levels, the 6-month and 12-month rates were 0.18% and 0.60% higher respectively, as the prospect of rate rises loomed.
- 3.8 The effect that economic conditions had on money market rates during the period, can be seen in Table 1, Appendix 1.

4. Debt Management

- 4.1 The Authority is currently debt free. Any potential borrowing is driven by the capital plan. There are no plans that would necessitate borrowing during the remainder of 2026/27 or in the foreseeable future.

5. Compliance with Prudential Indicators

- 5.1 The Authority has no borrowing, and all lending remains on an instant access basis, therefore all Prudential Indicators remain at zero. For completeness of reporting, and in line with the CIPFA code, the Authority can confirm that it has complied with its Prudential Indicators for 2026-27. Those agreed by Full Authority and actual figures as at 30th September are included below: -

Operational boundary and Authorised limit	2026/27 £thousand	As at 30th September 2026 £thousand
Authorised limit (borrowing only)	100	0.0
Operational boundary (borrowing only)	100	0.0

Maturity structure of borrowing	Upper Limit %	Lower Limit %	As at 30th September 2026 %
Under 12 months	100	0	0
>12 months and within 24 months	0	0	0
>24 months and within 5 years	0	0	0
>5 years and within 10 years	0	0	0

Prudential Limit for principal sums invested for periods longer than 365 days	2026/27 £m	As at 30th September 2026 £m
	0	0

- 5.2 SC has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating / credit score of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk (in conjunction with Arlingclose) and will be calculated quarterly.

Credit Risk Indicator	Target	Actual
Portfolio average credit rating (score)	A (6)	AA-(4.49)

6. Outlook for Quarters 3 & 4

- 6.1 Since the Bank of England's policy decision at the end of July, wholesale energy prices have surged. The effect on UK inflation is already apparent, and a further jump in the CPI rate from 3.1% will occur in the coming months as the energy price cap is increased.
- 6.2 September's monetary policy decision carried a similar message to July's but was accompanied by a sharp increase in projections for the CPI rate (4% in Q1 2027) and more forceful rhetoric from some of the 'holding' six MPC members, so the chance of near-term rate hikes has increased.
- 6.3 The key concern remains the prospect of second round inflationary effects arising from persistently high headline measures trickling into wage demands and price setting. While the focus is currently on energy, policymakers are also aware of a possible rise in

food inflation coming through supply chains. Despite little evidence of second-round effects to date, the changing tone of the MPC minutes suggests it may not take much to tip the Committee to increase Bank Rate, and although elevated market rates are already dampening demand, the MPC may hike to maintain credibility.

6.4 Set against the case for a rate rise are 4 key factors; 1) no signs of secondary effects in inflation or wage data, 2) loose labour market, 3) weak consumer demand relative to the wider economy and 4) continued tight financial markets, with monetary policy tightening already priced in and affecting businesses and households.

6.5 A table of forecast rates to September 2029 is shown below: -

	Dec 26	Mar 27	Jun 27	Sep 27	Dec 27	Mar 28
Upside Risk	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75
Base Rate	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
Downside Risk	0.00	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.75
	Jun 28	Sept 28	Dec 28	Mar 29	Jun 29	Sep 29
Upside Risk	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Base Rate	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75
Downside Risk	-1.00	-1.25	-1.25	-1.25	-1.25	-1.25

7. Summary

7.1 In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first six months of 2026/27. As indicated in this report none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

8. Legal and policy considerations

8.1 Strategic alignment – Achieve by providing core services: getting best value from our resources; and improving our performance.

8.2 Legal implications – Section 65(4) Environment Act 1995 – provides powers to the National Park Authority to “do anything which in the opinion of the Authority, is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to-

(a) The accomplishment of the purposes mentioned in s. 65 (1) [National Park purposes]

(b) The conducting of any functions conferred on it by virtue of any other enactment.

The Local Government Act 2003 (LGA 2003)

- 8.3 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes: 2021 Edition (CIPFA TM Code). The CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities: 2021 Edition (CIPFA Prudential Code). Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments was revised as from 1st April 2018.
- 8.4 Equality implications – The equality and human rights impact of the recommendations of this report have been assessed as having no adverse impact on any group or individual.
- 8.5 Financial implications – Managing and overseeing treasury activities is an important way to reduce financial risk.
- 8.6 Risk management implications – Treasury management carries risks relating to the security and liquidity of investments and changes in interest rates. These risks are managed through the approved Treasury Management Strategy and the arrangements with Somerset Council, with security and liquidity taking priority over investment return. No breaches of the Authority’s Treasury Management Strategy or Prudential Indicators occurred during the first six months of the year.
- 8.7 Climate implications – This report does not have an adverse impact on our ability to respond to climate change.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Treasury management activity during the first six months of 2026/27 has remained in line with the Authority’s approved strategy and Prudential Indicators. The Authority earned net investment income of £63,952 from an average cash balance of £3.25m, achieving an average return of 3.97%. This was above both the overnight SONIA rate and average Bank Rate for the period and represents a good return on the Authority’s available cash balances whilst maintaining the priority of security and liquidity.

Report Author

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21 October 2026

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Money Market Data and PWLB Rates

Background papers

None

Appendix 1**Money Market Data and PWLB Rates**

The average low and high rates correspond to the rates during the financial year-to-date, rather than those in the tables below.

Table 1: Bank Rate, Money Market Rates (BID Rates)

Date	Bank Rate	O/N Rate	7-day Rate	1-month Rate	3-month Rate	6-month Rate	12-month Rate
01/04/2026	3.75	3.69	3.71	3.73	3.94	4.14	4.49
30/04/2026	3.75	3.66	3.70	3.70	3.90	4.19	4.56
31/05/2026	3.75	3.69	3.70	3.74	3.88	4.03	4.35
30/06/2026	3.75	3.68	3.73	3.74	3.87	4.04	4.30
31/07/2026	3.75	3.67	3.72	3.71	3.85	4.14	4.45
31/08/2026	3.75	3.77	3.72	3.72	3.91	4.15	4.50
30/09/2026	3.75	3.88	3.71	3.72	4.02	4.34	4.78
Minimum	3.75	3.63	3.62	3.70	3.81	3.99	4.24
Maximum	3.75	3.88	3.73	3.80	4.04	4.39	4.82
Average	3.75	3.68	3.71	3.74	3.90	4.14	4.48
Spread	0.00	0.25	0.11	0.10	0.23	0.40	0.58

Table 2: PWLB Borrowing Rates – Fixed Rate, Equal Instalment of Principal (EIP) Loans

Change Date	Notice No	4½-5 yrs	9½-10 yrs	19½-20 yrs	29½-30 yrs	49½-50 yrs
1/04/2026	128/26	5.24	5.40	5.86	6.19	6.42
30/04/2026	166/26	5.44	5.60	6.07	6.41	6.63
31/05/2026	204/26	5.19	5.38	5.86	6.20	6.45
30/06/2026	248/26	5.10	5.30	5.77	6.12	6.37
31/07/2026	294/26	5.38	5.60	6.07	6.42	6.67
31/08/2026	334/26	5.42	5.66	6.14	6.48	6.73
30/09/2026	378/26	5.79	6.01	6.39	6.67	6.87
	Low	5.08	5.26	5.73	6.06	6.29
	High	5.85	6.07	6.43	6.71	6.90
	Average	5.36	5.56	6.03	6.37	6.61
	Spread	0.77	0.81	0.70	0.65	0.61

Table 3: PWLB Borrowing Rates – Fixed Rate, Maturity Loan

Change Date	Notice No	4½-5 yrs	9½-10 yrs	19½-20 yrs	29½-30 yrs	49½-50 yrs
01/04/2026	128/26	5.38	5.84	6.35	6.43	6.21
30/04/2026	166/26	5.58	6.05	6.57	6.64	6.43
31/05/2026	204/26	5.36	5.83	6.38	6.47	6.24
30/06/2026	248/26	5.27	5.75	6.29	6.39	6.18
31/07/2026	294/26	5.58	6.05	6.59	6.68	6.45
31/08/2026	334/26	5.63	6.12	6.65	6.74	6.52
30/09/2026	378/26	6.00	6.37	6.81	6.87	6.57
	Low	5.24	5.70	6.22	6.31	6.09
	High	6.05	6.41	6.84	6.90	6.68
	Average	5.54	6.01	6.53	6.62	6.39
	Spread	0.81	0.71	0.62	0.59	0.59

Exmoor National Park Authority

3 November 2026

Agenda Item 9

Exmoor National Park Management Plan - Progress & Highlights Report 2025/26

Report of the Head of Climate, Nature, and Communities

Purpose of Report

To present Members with the annual Progress and Highlights Report on the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025–2030, outlining progress towards its aims, objectives and targets in its first year of delivery.

Recommended Decision

That the Authority:

1. CONSIDER and NOTE the progress made during the first year of implementation of the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025–2030 by a range of partners against the aims set out within the Exmoor National Park Management Plan.
 2. ENDORSE the continued partnership approach to delivery during 2026/27, including strengthening delivery planning, partner reporting and evidence against Management Plan targets.
-

1. Background

- 1.1 The Authority adopted the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025–2030 in July 2025 and formally launched it at a public event in October 2025.
- 1.2 The Plan is also described as a Partnership Plan for Exmoor, recognising that achieving its ambitions depends upon action by a wide range of organisations, communities, businesses and land managers and cannot be delivered by the Authority alone. It is a plan for the place, and not any single organisation.

2. Progress and highlights report 2025/26

- 2.1 This first year of delivery has moved the new Management Plan from ambition into action. Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) and partners have progressed delivery planning and action plans, secured programme funding and undertaken practical activity across nature recovery, climate resilience, access, heritage, farming, skills and engagement.
 - 2.2 One year on from the public launch of the plan, a ‘Highlights and Progress report’ has been published (see appendix one).
 - 2.3 The report is available as a designed digital PDF (and as more accessible web content too) at <https://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/management-plan>.
-

- 2.4 The report runs through each of the plan's six core objectives and highlights key issues in relation to Exmoor around each aim, before presenting a series of case studies from a wide range of partners, delivering against each of the aims within the plan.
- 2.5 The report demonstrates positive momentum across the breadth of the Management Plan, with significant practical delivery already taking place alongside the establishment of the partnerships, programmes and monitoring arrangements needed for longer-term delivery. The scale and diversity of activity set out in the Progress Report demonstrate the value of the partnership approach.
- 2.6 Given our delivery plans and monitoring framework are still emerging (see section 3 below) this first year report combines quantitative indicators with the case studies as evidence of activity, rather than presenting a complete performance assessment against every target. It is illustrative, and not exhaustive, of the breadth and depth of work taking place across the National Park.
- 2.7 The report provided the focus for a celebration event, held at Porlock Village Hall on Exmoor Day (19 October), to which partners, stakeholders and all those with an interest were invited, with around 70 in attendance.

3. Future delivery

- 3.1 In addition to delivering action, ENPA has been working with partners this year to prepare delivery plans for each aim. These plans will be published in the new year to identify the actions needed to meet the targets, the mechanisms for delivery, potential funding opportunities and realistic timescales.
- 3.2 With limited resources and capacity, we need to be clear about where our collective effort can have the greatest impact. The plans will help prioritise the actions most likely to make a real difference against the targets. They will also highlight gaps in delivery - areas where partners can come together to develop new projects, provide support or establish new areas of work.
- 3.3 We are also developing a monitoring framework with a consistent set of indicators and data to show whether progress is on track and where further action is needed. The first year has highlighted that data maturity varies between targets. Some measures have established baseline datasets, while others require further development.
- 3.4 We hope to begin collecting data against the targets so that we can report on more specific progress next year, working with partners and aligning this work with Defra's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework.

4. Legal and policy considerations

- 4.1 Strategic alignment – The National Park Management Plan is the most important strategic document for the National Park, providing a shared long-term vision and setting out key aims and objectives in pursuit of the delivery of National Park Purposes
- 4.2 Legal implications – The Authority is required under Section 66 of the Environment Act 1995 to prepare and publish a National Park Management Plan and to review it at intervals of no more than five years.
- 4.3 Equality implications – There are no foreseen adverse impacts on any protected group(s). Engagement through the outreach work within the plan is designed to have a positive impact on protected groups. A key aim for the Plan is to deliver a Welcoming

National Park for All, building on the Authority's commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion. There are no implications for the Human Rights Act.

- 4.4 Financial implications – The Management Plan is a partnership plan for the National Park and delivery is therefore dependent upon the actions and resources of a range of organisations, not solely the Authority. Individual programmes and projects are subject to their own funding arrangements.
- 4.5 Risk management implications – The principal strategic risk is that the scale and pace of collective delivery is insufficient to achieve the Plan's 2030 and longer-term targets. Developing stronger delivery planning, partner reporting and monitoring will help the Authority and its partners identify areas where progress requires additional attention.
- 4.6 Climate implications – The Plan includes objectives and targets to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The first annual Progress and Highlights Report provides an important opportunity to take stock one year after the launch of the new Management Plan.
- 5.2 This report highlights the progress made during the first year of delivery by a wide range of partners. It demonstrates the value of collaboration and the commitment of so many people who care deeply about Exmoor. It also demonstrates substantial activity across all six thematic aims and, importantly, significant delivery by organisations and individuals beyond the National Park Authority.
- 5.3 The report provides a useful baseline from which the Authority and its partners can increasingly assess outcomes rather than simply activity. The focus for the coming year should therefore be not only to maintain delivery momentum, but to strengthen the shared delivery programme and the evidence that enables partners and Members to understand whether Exmoor is collectively on course to achieve the ambitions set for 2030.

Report Authors

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19 October 2026

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Exmoor National Park Management Plan – Progress & Highlights Report 2025/26

Background papers

- Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025-30 – Authority report, July 2025

Exmoor National Park

Management Plan 2025-2030

Progress & Highlights Report 2025/26





Foreword

One year on from the launch of the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025-2030, we are pleased to present this first Annual Progress Report.

The Management Plan, known as the Partnership Plan for Exmoor, sets out a shared vision for the future of our National Park and the collective action needed to conserve and enhance its special qualities while supporting thriving communities, businesses and livelihoods. It was developed with the recognition that the challenges facing Exmoor, from nature loss and climate change to rural isolation and economic pressures, cannot be addressed by any one organisation alone.

This report highlights the progress made during the first year of delivery by a wide range of partners, land managers, community groups, businesses, volunteers and public bodies. It demonstrates the value of collaboration and the commitment of so many people who care deeply about Exmoor.

While much remains to be done, there are encouraging signs that together we are moving in the right direction. We thank everyone who has contributed so far and look forward to building on this momentum over the years ahead as we continue working towards a greener, wilder, and more accessible Exmoor; and a home to thriving communities.

Andrea Davis
Chairman



Sarah Bryan
Chief Executive



Andrea Davis

S. Bryan



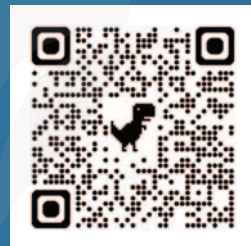


The Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2025-2030

The National Park Management Plan sets out a bold, collaborative vision for Exmoor. Its overarching vision is: “Exmoor National Park is a beautiful landscape, leading the response to climate change and nature recovery. It is a place where nature can thrive, proud of its cultural heritage, welcoming to all, and home to thriving local communities with a low-carbon economy benefiting from Exmoor’s natural and cultural capital”.

The plan is for the National Park as a whole, bringing together numerous partners and stakeholders to care for Exmoor in a collective effort.

The plan includes six aims, as well as a seventh aim focused on place-based delivery, with a series of objectives underneath these aims.



Further information on the Plan and its delivery can be found at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/Management-Plan

Year One Progress

This first year of delivery has moved the new Management Plan from ambition into action. Since adoption in July 2025 and launch in October 2025, ENPA and partners have been planning delivery, developing actions plans, and securing programme funding. Alongside this planning there have been some significant practical actions delivered across nature recovery, climate resilience, access, heritage, farming, skills and community engagement.

In the following sections we look at some of the key statistics in relation to each aim and its respective objectives as well as a series of case studies to highlights just some of the work being done by partner to further the plan's vision.

Looking ahead, partners will continue to collaborate to sharpen the shared delivery programme, strengthen partner reporting, build clearer evidence against targets, and keep communicating the benefits for nature, climate, heritage, communities and the local economy.

Contents



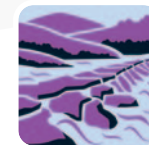
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Aim B: A net zero National Park, mitigating and adapting to climate change 11



Aim C: Healthy natural resources 16



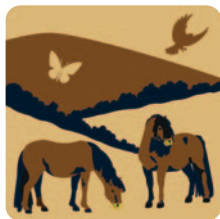
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Aim E: A welcoming place for all, that people feel connected to, improving their health and well-being 23



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Aim A: A nature-rich landscape

- Exmoor’s rich mosaic of wildlife habitats are enhanced, extended, well-connected, and resilient to climate change, forming a network of nature-rich areas with blurred edges, with corridors linking them and stretching across the National Park boundary
- Wildlife is thriving with a greater abundance and diversity of species that can easily move across the landscape and adapt to a changing climate

6 |



93 ha of new wildflower meadows under restoration



30% of the National Park is priority habitat



70% of knotweed and skunk cabbage sites treated



14% SSSI features on track to achieve favourable condition



44,500 ha is under Agri-Environmental Schemes



22% of Exmoor currently protected for nature (30by30)



63 ha wildlife-rich habitat outside SSSIs restored



29% SSSIs in favourable condition



Case Studies:

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

The Devon and Somerset strategies were formally adopted, setting biodiversity priorities and mapping where habitat recovery actions should take place, providing a strong foundation for restoring nature across the two counties.



Landscape Recovery Schemes

Three schemes have been submitted, covering a quarter of the National Park. The Holnicote River Corridors LRS to the east of the Park covers 5,000 ha of land owned by the National Trust, Porlock Manor Estate and Exmoor National Park Authority, setting out long-term plans with tenant farmers and communities for nature-rich, resilient river corridors and their surrounding catchments. Reviving Exmoor's Heartlands LRS aims to restore the ecological function, resilience and beauty of the central moorlands of Exmoor National Park and its surrounding farmland, in a large 11,000 ha partnership between 22 farmers, commoners, and ENPA, delivering peatland and heathland restoration, increased tree and woodland cover, and maintaining viable farming businesses. The 1,400 ha Arlington LRS, is a partnership between the National Trust and 19 land managers to reconnect habitats between the estate and the West Exmoor Coast through woodland, river and grassland restoration, regenerative farming and species recovery.

Wildlife-Rich Habitat Fund

A new £30 million UK government initiative established to restore and create wildlife-rich habitats across England's National Parks and National Landscapes. On Exmoor, funding will help to create new wetlands, woodlands, orchards, species-rich grasslands, restore rivers, and carry out feasibility for future projects to create more habitat over the 3 years of the fund.





Farming in Protected Landscapes

Funding supported farmers and partners to deliver practical nature recovery through 52 projects, including meadow, pond, orchard and hedgerow restoration; tree planting and wood pasture; improved grazing and soil and water management; and control of invasive non-native species. In total FIPL supported 1,803ha of land across Exmoor in 25/26 including 63ha of wildlife rich habitat created or restored outside of SSSIs.

Meadow restoration

The Sowing the Seeds project received a significant boost through sponsorship from Buckleys Bees and a three-year donation from Burge's Meadows to support delivery. New meadow owners have been brought on board, and a meadows celebration day at Driver showcased restoration work with a wide range of landowners and partners.



Exmoor Nature Festival 2026

A 2-week festival, designed to help people discover more about wildlife and habitats, connect with nature and unwind in Exmoor's beautiful settings featured more than 50 events engaging over 2,000 people. Festival highlights included family fun days, wildlife walks, forest bathing, volunteering opportunities, farm tours, outdoor yoga, tree trails, bat walks, creative workshops and citizen science activities. The fortnight concluded with the Exmoor Society's Big Nature Day at Nettlecombe Court, bringing together hands-on activities, talks, performances and nature-based experiences.

Species reintroductions

Huge steps were made towards nature recovery on Exmoor with the reintroduction of three once-lost species: **Pine Marten**, **White-tailed Eagles** and **Beavers**; and ongoing feasibility work on the potential for other species such as **Water-Voles** and **Marsh Fritillary Butterflies**.



- The **Two Moors Pine Marten** project, a partnership between Devon and Somerset Wildlife Trusts, ENPA, the Vincent Wildlife Trust, released 19 Pine Martens on Exmoor in the autumn of 2025. The exciting confirmation that kits have since been born marks the first successful breeding on Exmoor for over a century.



- In February 2026, a family of **Beavers** was released into the wild at the National Trust's Holnicote Estate, marking their return to Exmoor after more than 400 years. As natural ecosystem engineers, the Beavers will help create wetlands, boost biodiversity and make the River Aller catchment more resilient to floods and drought.

- Six young **White-tailed Eagles** were released on Exmoor in summer 2026, returning Britain's largest bird of prey after more than 200 years. Their return is the result of a partnership between the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, Exmoor National Park Authority and Forestry England and will support natural ecological processes and biodiversity, while inspiring people and creating wildlife-tourism opportunities.





Aim B: A net zero National Park, mitigating and adapting to climate change

- Exmoor is a net zero National Park, reducing greenhouse gas emissions to a minimum level and locking up carbon in peatlands, trees, soils and plants
- Exmoor's natural and historic assets, local communities and businesses are adapted and resilient to climate change

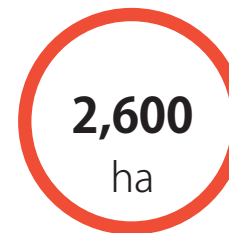




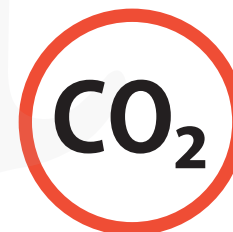
Summer rainfall may be reduced by up to 36% due to climate change



The frequency and intensity of storms is increasing



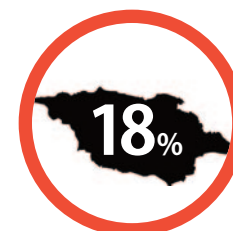
2,600ha of peatland is under restoration on Exmoor



The main sources of carbon emissions on Exmoor are from agriculture, visitor & residents travel, and energy



The average summer day on Exmoor could be 4°C warmer due to climate change



18% woodland and tree cover



Over 17,000 trees planted

Case Studies:

Carbon emissions

Overall carbon emissions from Exmoor National Park increased slightly in 2023 and 2024 (the last 2 years that there are figures for) compared to 2022. The main factors leading to these increases are the number of visitors coming to Exmoor, particularly as people mainly travel by car, alongside emissions from energy consumption by households and businesses. However, emissions from agriculture fell, and the amount of carbon being sequestered in woodlands, trees, hedgerows and soils increased.



Reducing lighting and emissions

Devon County Council has reduced the amount of energy used for street lighting through the dimming of street lighting, adding to the existing part-night switch off. Residential streetlights in rural areas are dimmed to 40% of output between 7pm to midnight, and switched off completely until 5:30am. This also supports the wider environment through reducing light pollution, helping protect nocturnal wildlife and supporting biodiversity in both urban and rural areas.

Greenhouse gas emission reductions

Exmoor National Park Authority continued to cut its greenhouse gas emissions, due to lower emissions from buildings and a greater proportion of business travel being undertaken in electric vehicles, avoiding 25,000 kg of carbon from being emitted into the atmosphere. Additional renewable energy capacity was installed with a solar array powering the tree nursery at Exford.





Peatland restoration

Over 300 ha of restoration works has been carried out on Exmoor's peatlands by the South West Peatland Partnership over the last 3 years. Monitoring is highlighting the benefits this is bringing to nature, including thriving populations of dragonflies. Monitoring of National Trust sites at Alderman's Barrow, Chetsford Water and Holnicote showed restored areas holding water during drought and reducing flood risk. Plans for future peatland restoration were progressed through Exmoor Pioneers (funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund) and Reviving Exmoor's Heartlands Landscape Recovery Scheme.

Temperate rainforest creation

Somerset Wildlife Trust, with the support of Aviva (and Exmoor National Park), purchased land to create new temperate rainforest near Haddon Hill in the south-east of the National Park. This transformative project will see a new 50 ha woodland comprised of oak, hazel, lime and alder, supporting a distinctive woodland ecology. The new woodland will also improve habitat connectivity, connecting to nearby ancient woodland, creating an extensive and dynamic wildlife-rich landscape as well as additional benefits such as natural flood management.



Expanding tree and woodland cover

Plans for expanding tree and woodland cover were progressed through development of the new Exmoor Woodland Strategy due for completion by the end of 2026. The pipeline for new woodlands includes Forestry England's 21-hectare Blackwell Wood, 45 ha of new temperate rainforest at Haddon by Somerset Wildlife Trust and Exmoor National Park Authority and further wood-pasture and applied nucleation at Long Holcombe. The National Trust planted over 7,000 trees across its Exmoor Estate, with plans for further planting by 2030. The National Trust and Exmoor National Park Authority tree nurseries are working with volunteers to collect seeds and grow trees of local provenance that are well adapted to the Exmoor landscape but also able to adapt to uncertain future climate scenarios, to use in future woodland and tree planting schemes.

Farming in Protected Landscapes

FiPL supported six projects that increased understanding of farm emissions and carbon storage, and funded farmers and partners to plant 7,889 trees, 523 metres of hedgerow and restore 1,556 metres of hedge.



Preparing for climate change

A partnership climate risk assessment identified threats to habitats, heritage, farming, access, infrastructure and communities. Somerset Wildlife Trust's Act to Adapt process is supporting communities across Somerset to adapt to climate change, including working with the local community in Porlock to identify practical actions they can take.

Wildfire management

The heightened risks of wildfires from the changing climate were highlighted during the heatwaves and drought during 2026. The Fire services lead the response to wildfire planning and control, working with landowners, farmers and commoners. Exmoor National Park Authority supports this work through helping the fire service to map key infrastructure such as water supplies, rendezvous points and access tracks, and providing public information via various media and onsite signage including extreme fire warnings. Whilst Exmoor was fortunate to avoid any major wildfires over the past year, the risk remains very real. Plans for long term land management through Landscape Recovery Schemes and Countryside Stewardship provide the opportunity to build resilience to wildfire, drought and flooding by holding more water on the land such as through peatland restoration and woodland creation which are proven barriers to wildfire.





Aim C: Healthy natural resources

- Exmoor’s soils, air and water resources are healthy, resilient and support naturally functioning ecosystems



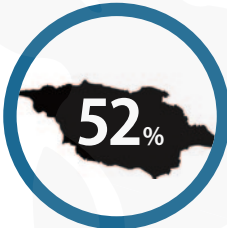
Exmoor’s rivers were polluted by 6,290 hours of sewage spills



Exmoor’s protected heathland and woodland nature conservation sites are being impacted by air pollution levels, particularly emissions from agriculture



Chemicals used in flea and tick treatments for pets have been found in Exmoor’s rivers



52% of Exmoor’s monitored rivers, waterbodies and coastal or transitional bodies achieve ‘high’ or ‘good’ ecological status



River levels in Spring 2025 were less than half the usual levels



Case Studies:

**Waters of Exmoor Campaign**

The Exmoor Society launched its Waters of Exmoor campaign in 2025, working with others to improve the quality of Exmoor's rivers and coast. The campaign is pressing for better regulation of 'spot-on' flea and tick treatments which contain powerful neurotoxic insecticides that harm wildlife, contaminate rivers and pose risks to human health. The Westcountry Rivers Trust is undertaking river quality monitoring on Exmoor for Exmoor National Park Authority to identify levels of various harmful chemicals found in veterinary medicines and pet treatments. The monitoring will feed into a national project being run by Natural England to gather evidence on the impact of these chemicals in the environment.

Rivers at Risk

The Campaign for National Parks' Rivers at Risk report found a declining trend in National Park water quality due to pollution from the water industry and land management.

**Air Quality Management**

Exmoor National Park Authority produced a pioneering Air Quality Management Strategy, the first for a National Park. Funded by Natural England, the study assessed levels of nitrogen and ammonia pollution, identified the key emission sources and set out the need for coordinated local and national action to deliver improvements in air quality across the National Park and protect Exmoor's special ecosystems. Local monitoring of air quality is now underway at 19 sites across the National Park to help target measures to reduce pollution.

River Restoration

The National Trust's river restoration project on the Holnicote Estate has created 7 ha of new wetland habitats, enhanced by the recent release of Beavers into the wild. The wetland is helping to slow the flow of the River Aller, reducing the risk of flooding to the local community, and is also maintaining better water levels during drought periods. The site is now attracting a wide variety of wildlife such as Water Voles, Eels and a range of birds including the rare Black Crowned Night Heron.



Investing in farm resources

Farming in Protected Landscapes funding has supported farmers and land managers to enhance soils and water resources. In 2025-26 FiPL supported 7 projects to reduce flood risk, restore rivers, streams and waterbodies; created 10 ponds; and helped to improve soil health over 886 ha of agricultural land.

The Salmon run

The annual Salmon Run traces the endangered Atlantic salmon's epic 43-mile migration upstream along the River Exe, from Exmouth to its spawning grounds on Exmoor. Organised by Wild Running with Tidelines and Westcountry Rivers Trust, this part ultra-marathon, part community festival, highlights the salmon's struggle against rising temperatures, pollution and broken weirs, raising awareness of the challenges salmon face and how people can help protect the river and this keystone species. Runners were welcomed at the finish in Dulverton by Westcountry Rivers Trust, Friends of the River Exe, Exmoor National Park Rangers, and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra outreach.





Aim D: A cared for landscape and heritage

- Exmoor's unspoilt natural beauty, tranquillity, openness, wildness and dark night skies are celebrated, cared for, and enjoyed
- Exmoor's irreplaceable historic environment and cultural heritage is cared for, celebrated and plays a key role in informing our future





9 distinctive landscape
character types



18,768 hectares
of moorland



55km of
coast



c4,000km of hedgerows
and boundary features



200 Scheduled
Monuments



748 listed
buildings



17 Conservation
Areas



Europe's first International
Dark Sky Reserve

Case Studies:

Caring for heritage at risk

Exmoor Pioneers completed its first year of projects caring for heritage at risk. This included establishing a Monument Management Scheme for 26 heritage assets with the support of Historic England, alongside volunteer projects to record farming heritage and use lidar evidence to identify previously unrecorded archaeological features. The Pinkery Canal archaeological investigation, the first detailed investigation for around 50 years, used modern archaeological and environmental techniques to explore England's highest canal and the landscape sealed beneath its banks. A public open day enabled visitors to see the excavation, meet specialists and learn how pollen, soils and peat reveal Exmoor's changing landscape.



A dynamic landscape - Porlock Marsh

A Doverhay Museum exhibition: Porlock Marsh - 30 years of a changing coastline marked the changes since the 1996 breach in the shingle ridge, exploring how tidal inundation transformed Porlock Marsh from freshwater grazing land into saltmarsh. The exhibition helped celebrate the area's distinctive natural and cultural heritage and showed how understanding past landscape change can inform its future care.

Restoring a designed landscape

Volunteer work parties, local contractors and the Ada in Porlock group continued restoring historic paths, viewpoints and planting associated with the nineteenth-century Ashley Combe designed landscape. Seeds from surviving Ada Lovelace-era trees were collected and germinated to help reinstate the gardens' historic character.





Celebrating and protecting our Dark Skies

The 2025 Dark Skies Festival - the largest programme to date with over 70 events - brought together stargazing, science, wildlife, storytelling and cultural activities, helping residents and visitors enjoy Exmoor's internationally important night skies and understand the need to reduce light pollution. Dark-sky-friendly lighting continued to be promoted through planning, with more than 140 planning permissions including lighting conditions, helping prevent unnecessary light pollution and conserve the character of the International Dark Sky Reserve.

Supporting farming heritage

Farming in Protected Landscapes supported practical projects to restore historic farm buildings and leats, revive traditional orchards and meadows, establish wood pasture, lay hedges, plant trees and improve access - helping conserve Exmoor's distinctive landscape features and heritage.



Signs of the time

A renewed partnership approach between Exmoor National Park Authority and the highway authorities to care for historic rural roads and settlements promotes sensitive repairs, local materials and reduced road clutter, markings and unnecessary lighting, helping conserve the character of Exmoor's historic villages, lanes and streetscapes.



Aim E:

A welcoming place for all, that people feel connected to, improving their health and well-being

- More people from a broader range of backgrounds are connected with, inspired by, and care for Exmoor, improving their health and well-being and providing a “Natural Health Service”
- There are more opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to explore and connect with Exmoor, developing skills and knowledge, and taking an active role in the future of Exmoor
- Public paths, open access land, recreational facilities and popular sites are well maintained and accessible for all to experience and enjoy Exmoor
- Exmoor is promoted and managed as a regenerative tourism destination, providing a great visitor experience, leaving the environment in a better state, and positively contributing to the well-being of local communities





2.6m visitor days
with economic
impact of **£249m**



Exceptional visitor
satisfaction - over **99%**
rating their experience as
good or very good.



Exmoor National Park
Centres welcomed over
145,000 visitors for
inspiration and
information in 2025



7 Exmoor Youth Board
Members recruited, giving
18-26-year-olds a stronger
voice in the future of the
National Park



6 accessibility initiatives
across Exmoor supported
through Defra's Access
for All funding



995 nights under the
stars by young people
staying at the Pinkery
Centre for Outdoor
Learning



1,786 young people on
educational day visits
supported by ENPA



1,325km of paths, with **86%**
considered 'easy to use' and
78% of the distance of
Public Rights of Way step
and stile free.

Case Studies:

Good Tourism Plan and Pay with Exmoor Care

ENPA and tourism partners published a shared plan for a regenerative, productive and resilient visitor economy. Its flagship Pay with Exmoor Care scheme was piloted in the summer of 2026 to reward visitors for positive actions such as litter picking, volunteering and sustainable travel, helping tourism benefit Exmoor's environment and communities.



Stronger partnerships for the visitor economy

Exmoor is now covered by two VisitEngland accredited Local Visitor Economy Partnerships: Somerset & Exmoor and Devon & Partners. Bringing together Visit Exmoor, ENPA, Destination Management Organisations and public bodies, they provide a stronger framework for shared priorities, resources and targets, while improving accessibility, sustainability, visitor experience and support for local businesses and communities.

Promoting local food and drink

Eat Exmoor, a joint initiative between Visit Exmoor and ENPA, continued to promote local producers, cafés, pubs, restaurants and retailers. The 6th Eat Exmoor guide by Visit Exmoor encouraged visitors to spend locally and experience Exmoor's food culture. ENPA also worked with producers and hospitality businesses to improve local product branding, while Rachel Gilmour MP hosted an Exmoor food and drink showcase at the House of Commons in April 2026.





Exmoor Young Rangers

The Young Rangers Programme continues to develop with support from the Exmoor Pioneers project, working with local secondary schools in the greater Exmoor area to provide practical activities, residential experiences and skills development.

A natural health service

Nature Prescriptions continued with health coaches from the West Somerset Primary Care Network, offering supported outdoor activities as part of people's wellbeing plans. Welcome to Exmoor days also helped people facing social, practical or financial barriers enjoy the health benefits of the National Park.



Access for All

Partners improved access through physical works and new resources to help more people experience Exmoor. ENPA worked with Calvert Exmoor on accessible, volunteer-led birdwatching walks at Wistlandpound, while South West Lakes Trust maintained accessible paths and Trammer hire at Wimbleball Lake. ENPA also developed a sensory story to help autistic visitors, families, people with learning disabilities and people living with dementia prepare for their visit. Defra funding supported further improvements, including an accessible room and pond path at Pinkery, a path at Oakbeer Wood, new seating in Snowdrop Valley and accessibility surveys of public toilets.

Porlock Marsh boardwalks

Almost 200m of new boardwalks improved year-round access to Porlock Marsh. To the east, the National Trust installed a new board and worked with local young people to create words and artwork for the handrail, inspired by the marsh. To the west, ENPA created a new boardwalk, funded by the South West Coast Path Association and CareMoor donations via Best of Exmoor, improving access to an area often inaccessible without wellies.



Maintaining paths and adapting to extreme weather

Rangers and volunteers kept inspections up to date and restarted Path Fixer events. Major works included a new safer, more accessible bridge at Cloutsham Splash in partnership with Somerset Council and the replacement of the Danesbrook bridge after a flash flood swept it away. Preparatory work also progressed for a replacement Hinds Pitt Bridge on the Tarr Steps circuit.

Car-free access along the coast

Somerset Council and Devon County Council jointly supported key bus routes, including the summer 300 service linking Lynmouth with Ilfracombe and Minehead, providing an important sustainable travel option for visitors and communities.





Aim F

A great place for people to live, work and do business

- Exmoor's communities and economy are sustainable and resilient, supporting the transition to a low carbon economy and lifestyles, and providing new opportunities, skills and employment



Over **1,200** businesses within the National Park, 37% home based



339 local businesses promoted through the Rural Enterprise Exmoor business Directory



£45k raised through CareMoor for Exmoor in 25/26 with **20** businesses acting as CareMoor Champions



Affordable housing pipeline of **18** new dwellings (including 8 self/custom build)



£520,842 of funding allocated via Farming in Protected Landscapes, delivering **52** projects across the National Park, supporting **79** farming businesses



Case Studies:

Pioneering new pathways to Exmoor careers

The Exmoor Pioneers project helped young people discover local careers and build specialist and transferable skills through careers fairs, talks, group work experience, Young Rangers activities and practical volunteering, responding to evidence that over a quarter of rural Exmoor businesses struggle to recruit suitable labour. The project also expanded paid traineeships for young people in engagement, woodland management, forestry, environmental conservation and heritage skills. SS&L, Somerset Council and partners have also developed the Exmoor Supported Internship Programme to help young people with SEND access meaningful employment.



Creating a pipeline of affordable homes

Housing work continued with councils, communities and housing partners. Existing parish surveys have helped initiate homes with local-need ties, while schemes permitted or under construction include social-rent, self-build and other affordable homes intended to help people remain in Exmoor communities.

Housing needs survey

To contribute to the evidence base for future planning and housing delivery, Exmoor National Park Authority worked in partnership with Somerset Council and North Devon Council to undertake the Exmoor Housing Need Survey in early 2026. The survey invited anyone who lives on, works on, or has a strong connection to Exmoor to provide information about their current and future housing needs. Nearly 400 responses were received. The findings will help inform the review of the Exmoor Local Plan and support future decisions about the location and type of housing required within the National Park.





Championing the needs of young people

Exmoor Young Voices has continued to champion the needs and aspirations of young people living and working across the National Park. Building on its established work around affordable housing and opportunities for young adults, EYV has broadened its focus to engage more children, young people and families. During the year, the group has supported wider community initiatives demonstrating how youth-led action can strengthen community resilience and help make Exmoor a place where younger generations can live, work and thrive.

Backing young entrepreneurs

The Exmoor Society's Pinnacle Award supported young people aged 18-35 to establish or grow Exmoor-based businesses. The 2026 award offered grants of up to £7,000, helping young entrepreneurs build livelihoods that contribute to the local economy and care for the National Park.



Exmoor Hill Farming Network

The Network provides trusted, farmer-led training, peer support and knowledge exchange for around 480 farming businesses across Greater Exmoor. Its 2025/26 programme covered habitat and woodland management, moorland fire risk, livestock welfare,

natural capital, supply-chain opportunities and traditional skills such as hedge laying, helping farms adapt to environmental, economic and climate pressures.



Bringing People Together

A range of partnership events brought Exmoor communities together including: the Rural Enterprise Exmoor Day, which connected around 100 local businesses to share knowledge, build networks and explore opportunities for a resilient, low-carbon rural economy; Exmoor Hill Farming Network events, including wellbeing-focused social gatherings such as a summer BBQ attended by over 200 people from the farming community; Exmoor Young Voices' first Family Fun Day for local families; Somerset Council's Local Community Networks covering the Somerset area of Exmoor; and; The Visit Exmoor Exchange, which brings tourism providers together ahead of the visitor season.



Our partners

Delivery involves many partners working together across Exmoor from different sectors. A Steering Group consisting of the following organisations helped develop the plan:



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