

# Partnership Fund

## Annual Report 2016/17



For more information contact:

Philip Kiberd

**Funding Officer**

Exmoor National Park Authority

Exmoor House

Dulverton

TA22 9HL

01398 322237

[PartnershipFund@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:PartnershipFund@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

Cover photo: Viewing the Knight Family Archive prior to cataloguing (PF16-18).

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## Introduction

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***The Exmoor National Park Partnership Fund is available to support projects that achieve National Park purposes and provide community and economic benefits.***

*The Partnership Fund, established in 2011, is the main grant funding programme provided by the National Park Authority. The Fund continues to invest in good ideas, providing an open approach, based on a partnership with applicants to shape and deliver projects that can have a sustainable beneficial impact on the National Park.*

*The fund is provided by the allocation of part of the Authority's discretionary budget and is open to communities, voluntary organisations, businesses and individuals. There is an element of the overall budget which is 'top sliced' at the start of the financial year for core commitments and a balance is available for funding within the Partnership Fund which can be applied to from both internal and external bids.*

## Summary Figures

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Expressions of Interest received: **23**

Projects funded: **9**

Total offered: **£39,679.50**

Mean grant offered: **£4,408**

Largest single grant offered: **£20,000**

Smallest grant offered: **£1,000**

Number of external applications offered funding: **8**

Number of internal applications offered funding: **1**

Estimated **£10,440** in-kind funding contributed

Estimated **£51,003** match funding secured

Average intervention rate: **49%**

**Note:** The above figures cover grant offers made in the year 2016-17. The figures are estimates based on the details provided by applicants at application stage on which funding decisions are made. Over the course of a project there may be some variance in the actual spend and match funding which is tolerated within acceptable limits.

# Fund criteria

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The overarching focus of the fund is the achievement of National Park purposes with a weighting to projects that also provide community and economic benefits. Applications are assessed against essential and desirable criteria and how they help deliver the priorities within the Partnership Plan 2012-17.

## **Essential Criteria**

To qualify for funding a project must:

- further one or both National Park purposes:
  - Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the National Park
  - Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public;
- contribute to the achievement of strategic priorities set out in the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan;
- demonstrate community involvement or support; and
- comply with state aid rules.

## **Desirable Criteria**

In addition to the Essential Criteria listed above, weighting will be given to those projects that demonstrate:

- tangible economic and community benefits;
- that other funding has been sought or they have little access to other funding;
- lasting benefits beyond the initial funding period;
- innovation or the use of best practice;
- opportunities for others to learn from the project.

# Partnership Fund Committee

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The Partnership Fund Committee acts as the grant panel for the Partnership Fund. It considers and determines all applications (internal and external) that seek over £2,500 (smaller grants are delegated to the Chief Executive and reported to the Committee).

In 2016/17 the following Members of the National Park Authority served on the Partnership Fund Committee:

**Chair:**

Mr Robin Milton

**Deputy Chair:**

Mr Alan Wright <sup>1</sup>

**Committee Members:**

Mr Martin Dewdney

Mr Richard Edgell

Mr Michael Ellicott

Mr John Patrinos

Mrs Linda Blanchard

Mr Martin Ryall

## Contribution to National Park purposes

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The overarching aims of the fund are to help deliver against National Park purposes:

1. To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of Exmoor National Park.
2. To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Exmoor National Park by the public.

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<sup>1</sup> To 31 October 2016

All projects supported in 2016/17 were scored as contributing to both National Park purposes. To secure support projects need a majority scoring of either high or medium in their contributions.

## Grant offers 2016/17

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Partnership Fund grant-aid received an allocation of £80,000 for 2016/17. Weighting was therefore given to small grants within the delegated £2,500 limit. Over the financial year, the Partnership Fund allocated £39,679.50 of grant-aid to nine (9) projects. This has helped lever in a further £61,443 of in-kind and cash investment for Exmoor.

Two large grants were awarded in 2016/17. These were PF16-03, a grant of £20,000 to the West Somerset College Farm, and PF16-10, a reallocation of grant funding of £5,500 towards bird survey work from a 2015/16 funded project (PF13-27 Game Impacts Study) that no longer needed the grant.

Seven (7) small grants of up to £2,500 were offered in 2016/17. These grants were determined by the Chief Executive as 'delegated' grants allowing the applications to be fast tracked with a minimum of paperwork for applicants. All delegated decisions are reported to the Partnership Fund Committee.

These small grants, although relatively low in cash value, help to achieve great results, very often matching significant community fundraising efforts, demonstrating good value for money and helping to engage a broad spectrum of people in delivering National Park purposes.



**Table 1 - 2016/17 Grant Allocations**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Partnership Fund contribution</b>	<b>Total project value</b>	<b>Status as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017</b>
<b>(PF15-31) XMAN Kids Event</b>	Grant-aid was awarded towards the development of a children's 'duathlon' event for Exmoor, using the special landscape qualities to engage young people and families with the National Park.	<b>£2429.5</b>	£9130	Completed
<b>(PF16-01) Exmoor Closewool Pedigree Register</b>	Funding was provided to support the creation of a Pedigree register for Devon Closewool Sheep on Exmoor. This will enable sheep to be traceable, and allow breeders to have a pedigree history to refer to when selecting new stock for their flocks. This project is designed to help protect the Devon Closewool Sheep Breed, a Rare Breeds Survival Trust (RBST) watchlist breed, from extinction.	<b>£2500</b>	£5715	In progress
<b>(PF16-02) PleasureDome Theatre – Valley of Rocks Production</b>	A contribution was made toward the establishment of the Valley of Rocks as an outdoor theatre venue and to the production of Lorne Doone in 2017 as a joint community and professional theatre company production.	<b>£2500</b>	£14705	In progress

<b>(PF16-03) College Farm</b>	A grant was made to secure additional time to work with partners to explore future viability options for the West Somerset College Farm. The college matched the grant enabling the facility to remain open for 12 months, allowing those students part way through courses to complete them.	<b>£20000</b>	£40000	Completed
<b>(PF16-07) Barbrook Village Hall</b>	Grant-aid was awarded for repair work on the Village Hall to replace rotten cladding, floor timbers and overhaul the metal sheet roof. Barbrook Village Hall is a rare surviving example of a late 19 <sup>th</sup> /early 20 <sup>th</sup> century tabernacle community building and part of the characteristic landscape of Barbrook.	<b>£2000</b>	£3623	In progress
<b>(PF16-10) Bird survey - reallocation</b>	Funds were allocated to bird survey work following the return of a grant previously issued in 2015/16 for a study of Game Shoot Impacts (PF13-27). This project included an element of ecological assessment and the reallocation allows this to be completed.	<b>£5500</b>	£5500	In progress
<b>(PF16-15) Avalon Charcoal and Bio-char</b>	A contribution was made towards the purchase of a biscuit breaker to develop an animal feed charcoal process from waste and unwanted timber from Exmoor woodlands; including those owned by the	<b>£2000</b>	£5000	Completed

<b>'biscuit breaker'</b>	National Park Authority. This will assist the development of a new market opportunity for waste timber on Exmoor.			
<b>(PF16-18) Knight Archive cataloguing</b>	A rare collection of Knight Family archive material was donated to Exmoor National Park in 2016. This collection contains much important material relating to the purchase and development of the Exmoor Forest and the Knight Family Estate at Simonsbath. A small grant was awarded to the Exmoor Society for their Archivist to complete an initial catalogue of the collection and identify conservation needs prior to depositing with the Somerset Heritage Centre.	<b>£1750</b>	£1750	Completed
<b>(PF16-21 ) Bog Asphodel Research</b>	Funding was given towards research on the impact of peatland restoration on the distribution of bog asphodel. Bog asphodel is potentially toxic to sheep and cattle and the research will describe the distribution and growth patterns of Bog Asphodel on shallow re-wetted peatland, and link this to livestock grazing patterns. The information gained will be used to inform best practice for upland land managers.	<b>£1000</b>	£15700	In progress

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Exmoor National Park Authority  
Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL  
Tel: 01398 323665  
email: [info@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:info@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)