

# Exmoor National Park

## Income Generation Strategy

### 2025-2030



October 2025

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# 1. Vision

To be more enterprising in our work, increasing income generation to make meaningful and measurable contributions to our purposes

The vision aims for a focus on becoming more enterprising, rather than specifically commercial. Enterprising refers to being able to think of and carry out new and challenging activities, particularly those aimed at generating income. As a public body, the National Park Authority has limited scope for activities that are solely or primarily commercial in nature. Instead, the goal is to generate income to help cover core service delivery costs, by adopting enterprising approaches and exploring alternative methods.

# 2. Introduction

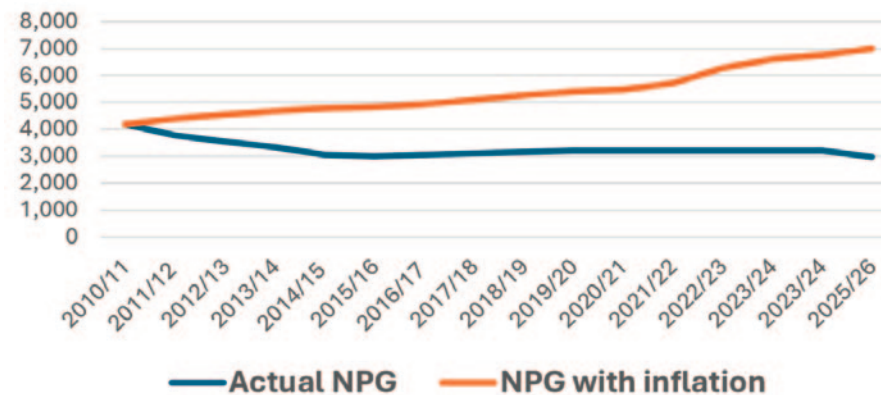
For over a decade, Exmoor National Park Authority has faced increasing financial pressures due to a real-terms reduction in our National Park Grant (NPG) from Defra amidst rising costs.

The purpose of this strategy is to supplement income in addition to our Defra grant in order to continue to deliver against our statutory National Park purposes and our objectives to fulfil the vision of the Exmoor National Park Management Plan. Increasing and diversifying our income will help to build organisational resilience and increase efficiencies and effectiveness through more stable long-term funding.

In 2025/26 the Authority's National Park (revenue) Grant was reduced to £2.96m following 7 years of flatlined funding. Previous funding to the Authority was as high as £4,18m back in 2010/11.

If the grant in 2010/11 had been maintained in line with inflation (based on RPI) it would have been worth almost £7m in 2025/26, representing a real terms reduction of over 57%.

Inflated NPG compared to Actual

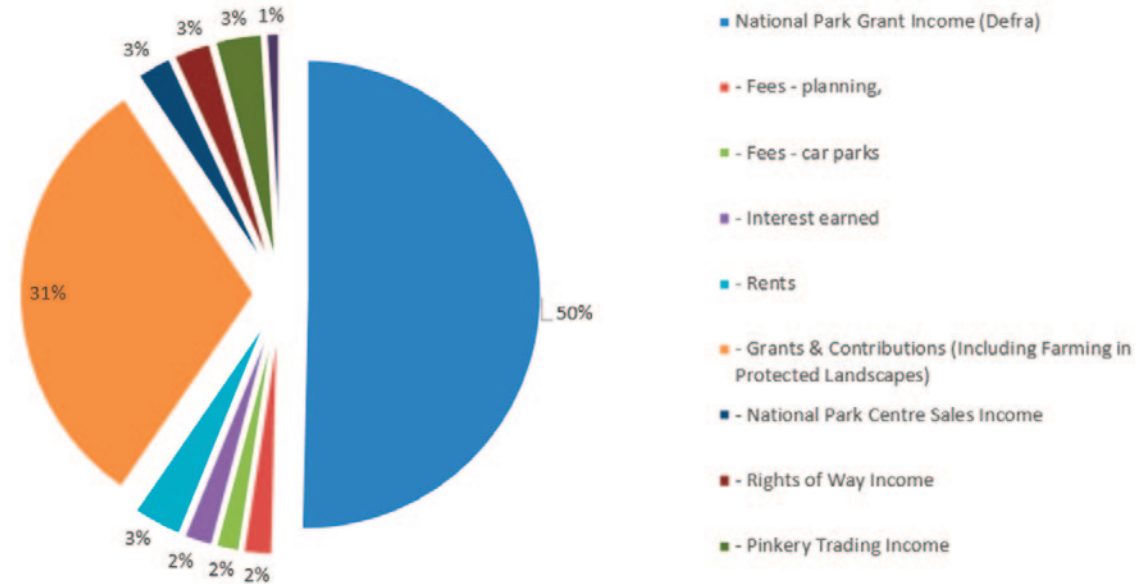


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Government have clearly set out their wish for National Park Authorities to raise additional income to supplement their core work, including the funding of research into opportunities. In 2015 a 'Function Specific General Power of Competence' was introduced for National Park Authorities permitting NPAs to do "anything it considers appropriate for the purposes of the carrying out of any of its functions". In practice this means we can enter into commercial delivery provided there is a link back to our core purposes. In December 24 Government announced their intention to introduce a more 'general' power of competency for NPAs which will "clarify their legal framework, removing restrictions which prevent an entrepreneurial approach...". A general competency (as opposed to a Function Specific General Competency which is tied to the delivery of our purposes) is expressed as the power "to do anything that individuals generally may do".



MTFP income 2025/26



Over the last 10+ years the Authority has sought to pursue income generation as a corporate priority. There are many examples that have been developed and that have contributed to us significantly increasing the proportion of income from sources other than our core National Park Grant. In 2010/11 our NPG represented 75% of income, while we forecast it to be 50% in 2025/26.

Much of our income generation work has been undertaken ad hoc with varying degrees of prioritisation amongst teams and at times a lack of consistency to approach across the Authority.

This strategy will sit above the individual work streams, to ensure we maximise our non-NPG income and contribute towards mitigating future savings gaps. Income generation alone won't eradicate our financial pressures, but a more enterprising approach to our work will pay dividends.

### 3. Purpose of this strategy

- To help us think and act more entrepreneurially
  - Setting out our principles
  - Considering change management and training needs
  - Ensuring we align our approach and balance between the need to generate income vs our core public service provision
  - Identifies risks and market opportunities
  - Setting targets and appetite to risk
- To draw together disparate activity into one overview for consideration by
  - All staff, with oversight from Leadership and Delivery teams.
  - Members

Defra and partners as appropriate

- To celebrate success and consider response to challenges
- To ensure there is consistency in our approach to income generation.

### 4. Objectives

1. **To secure greater financial resilience through increased income generation activity.**  
This will include more efficient ways of working to reduce operating costs and full cost recovery as appropriate for the Authority
2. **To deliver a balanced approach to generating new sources of income while delivering against National Park purposes as a public service.**  
Income generation needs to support our core work and not detract from it.
3. **To develop a more enterprising culture.**  
Supporting our Members, staff and volunteers to grow and develop skills to remove barriers to income generation.

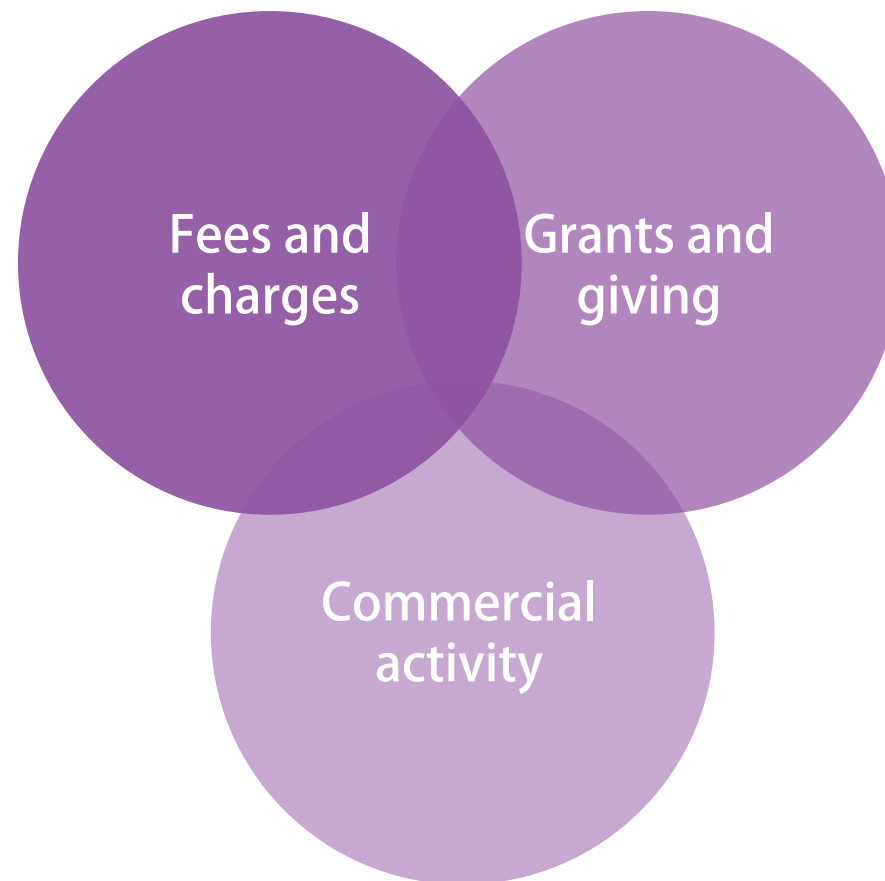
**Target**  
Our goal is that the National Park Grant (NPG) accounts for less than 50% of our income, while maintaining real terms spending power against the 2024/25 baseline.



## 5. Approach

Below we identify the main areas where we can look to generate external income:

- Fees and charges
  - Statutory Fees – for example planning fees. These are set by Central government, but our actions can potentially influence the levels of income received.
  - Discretionary fees – for example car park changes, licensing of activities on Authority owned estate, educational visits
- 6 | ● Grants and giving
  - Non-core NPG public sector funding (e.g. Rights of Way support, central government grants)
  - Lottery and Trusts grants
  - Donations and gifts - generally channelled via our CareMoor for Exmoor scheme
- Commercial activity
  - Rents – from our estate (both land and premises)
  - Sponsorship and Advertising sales
  - Sales – e.g. retail and Pinkery Centre.

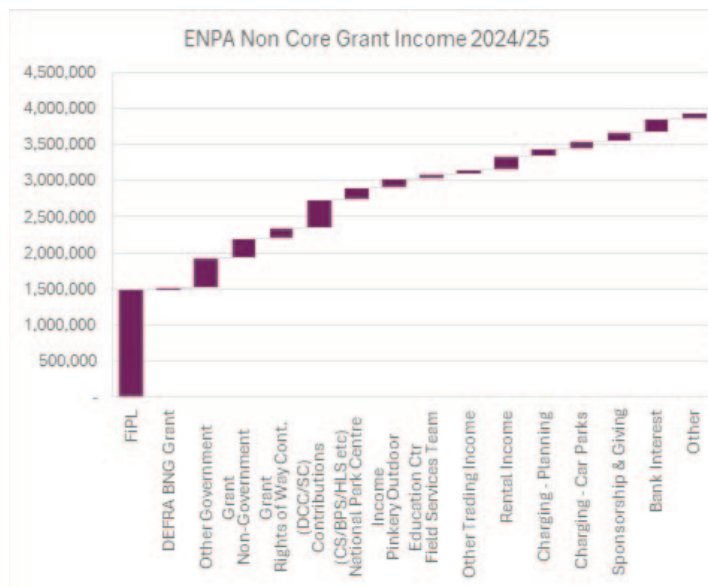


Our approach to developing income generation will follow the 4-steps below:



The graph below illustrates the income secured in 2024/25 from sources other than our National Park Grant. There will be some income areas where we have little to no influence over, and such areas are not considered in this strategy (for example we currently gain some income from renewable energy, e.g. Feed in Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive. These are historic opportunities, and we have no opportunity to grow these).

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As part of the delivery of this strategy it is proposed to develop mini business plans for each identified income generation opportunity ('business activity') we will be pursuing, including a summary of key challenges, opportunities and risks, as well as key actions to explore over the next 18 months.

Although each aspect of external income generation holds significance, upon completion of the business plans we will assess the prioritisation of these specific areas to determine which should be pursued more proactively and review this annually.

### Income vs profit vs efficiencies

Our focus here is on generating external income – i.e. money received by the Authority beyond our National Park Grant. In order to generate this income, there will be costs involved. To try and accurately measure these costs in all areas would be challenging and disproportionality expensive to estimate. The bulk of costs are attributable to staff time and many of our income generation activities are also delivering against our core purposes (not solely focused on generating income).

There are a few considerations here:

- Opportunity Costs – i.e. what else staff could spend their time on. However, without additional income some activities can't be sustained. It will be a task for Managers and Section Heads to monitor delivery of our core work alongside income generation activity to ensure the correct balance is struck.
- There are occasions when we are undertaking more commercial work - in these instances we can measure and monitor profit margins.
- Efficiencies and savings (e.g. delivering work in house, reducing overheads etc) are important but are about how we use our income, and not in themselves generating new income into the organisation.

The following examples seek to highlight the issues of income vs profit and efficiencies with three live case studies from ENPAs work.

**Example one:  
Planning Fees**

We earn c.£85k through planning fees. These are a statutory fee, and as such the levels are set centrally by Government. However, the costs of providing a planning service are in excess of £400k, with the vast majority of these costs attributable to staffing costs. Therefore, it is an income, but no profit is made.

**Example two:  
In-house estates work**

Traditionally work on our estate has often involved the use of external contractors. In recent times, as a response to financial pressures, a greater proportion of our estates work is completed in-house by our Field Services Team (FST) with an internal recharge. This provides cost savings to those commissioning work, and helps support the financial resilience of our Field Services but is not (in itself) generating new income streams into the Authority. Rather it is a more efficient use of finite resources and a good example of a more enterprising approach to delivering our work, with other benefits in addition to cost savings.

**Example three:  
Retail sales in National Park Centres**

The primary role of our Centres is to deliver our 2nd purpose of promoting understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of Exmoor. Staff are principally employed to deliver this information service and retail sales are a way of offsetting some of the costs. In this instance therefore it wouldn't be appropriate to include staff time when considering the retail function. But where goods are purchased for resale, we measure the gross profit as well as the income, with the aim of growing our income while retaining (or improving) our margins.

## 6. Guiding principles

The following principles are intended to guide our income generation work and ensure a consistency in approach across the Authority.



1. **A focused means to an end** - Income generation can be viewed by some as separate from our core work. It can be seen as an additional burden or contrary to the public service nature of our roles. However, income generation should be seen as integral to supporting our service delivery by staff, Members and volunteers, and not an end goal in itself. We should only pursue opportunities where it can be clearly demonstrated that the income will help us achieve our core purposes. Our Organisational Development strategy (2023-2026) highlights the need for training around entrepreneurial and commercial thinking.

2. **Fair, transparent and proportionate** - Equity needs to be factored into our decision making, and we need to ensure a standard approach to our application of charging and when we do / don't charge for specific services or offer discretionary discounts on fees etc. While there may at times be commercial sensitivities we should be as open and transparent as we can. In some cases, a sliding scale of charges may be appropriate, whereby charges are lower where other quantifiable benefits in the delivery of National Park purposes can be demonstrated.

3. **Sustainable** - Not only should we ensure that activities are environmentally sustainable and compatible with our purposes, but we also need to ensure we have sufficient staff capacity to deliver (recognising that dedicated time is often needed to generate income in addition to service delivery).

4. **Rationale for charging** - We should be able to clearly demonstrate what the rationale for charging, or not, is for any service. Charging should always be considered where:

- There is a legal power (or lack of legal barrier)
- A charging scheme is cost effective to operate
- It is feasible to exclude nonpayers from using services

5. **Resourced** - Developing income generation activities, especially in new areas, will not be cost free and the Authority needs to be in a position to 'invest to generate' whether that be finances and or time/capacity.

6. **Evidence led** - Income generation activities should have a clear strategic case and a clear plan for execution. Defining the business case should draw on quality data, and an assessment of what the Authority can do in any such area.

## 7. Appetite for risk

Income generation is not a risk-free activity. It is often said you need to “Speculate to Accumulate” and there is a strong link between risk and reward. Key risks include:

- Reputational
- Capacity
- Financial

ENPA has defined its risk appetite statements as follows:

- ENPA has no appetite for safety risk exposure that could result in injury or loss of life to public, staff or members. Safety drives all major decisions in the organisation.
- ENPA is willing to accept, in some circumstances, moderate risks in additional income generation or cost saving initiatives where returns are probable or where benefits to our core purposes remain. We do not set strict thresholds, with each opportunity considered on its merits, but it is accepted that as the value of investment increases so too should our level of cautiousness.
- ENPA will accept minimal negative impact on reputation with any of its key stakeholders, and will only tolerate minimum exposure i.e., minor negative media coverage, limited impact on employees, or political impacts. It should be noted that while risk can be assessed and managed it is unlikely that any income generation work would be completely risk-free.

## 8. Monitoring, Oversight and Delivery

We all have a responsibility to support income generation and grow income where appropriate.

Delivery Team Managers should have an oversight of areas appropriate to their teams, working with other specialists as appropriate to support staff to develop and deliver income through the course of their roles.

Leadership Team have a key role to play in terms of supporting delivery teams, setting reasonable targets and allocating resources and most importantly setting a culture that supports and encourages enterprise.

Our Members play a crucial role providing oversight and scrutiny and are ultimately responsible for the organisation. The full Authority will sign off this strategy and any future reviews and will receive an annual progress update. In addition, our Members will review and agree our fees and charges each year.





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