

Exmoor National Park

Recruitment Pack

Senior Local Plan Officer

37 hours per week (part-time hours considered)

3-year fixed term contract



Welcome Message

Thank you for your interest in the role of Senior Local Plan Officer.

What makes Exmoor National Park such a special place?

Exmoor is designated a national park in recognition of its beautiful landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage.

Exmoor has moorlands, woodlands, high cliffs, wooded coast and farmland, shaped by people and nature over thousands of years. It is a landscape of tranquillity and peace as well as a great place to walk, ride and explore nature. Exmoor was also the first international dark sky reserve in Europe. The National Park includes small towns, villages, and farmsteads as well as listed buildings and structures and ancient monuments.



Our vision is that Exmoor remains a beautiful landscape, leading the response to climate change and nature recovery, a welcoming place for all, as well as a great place to live work and do business.

The Senior Local Plan Officer will play a pivotal role in supporting the development of Exmoor National Park Authority's (ENPA's) Local Plan to enable this vision and further National Park purposes. This role will enable you to use your planning skills and experience to protect and enhance Exmoor's nationally important landscape, heritage and historic buildings and support nature recovery. This requires a creative and innovative approach to the development of the plan in terms of research, analysis, consultation, communication and finding policy solutions which also address the challenges faced by our local communities living in a remote, sparsely populated rural area with small settlements and with a particular focus on delivering affordable housing, supporting a nature-rich National Park, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

You will join a fantastic team of skilled and committed staff that are passionate about Exmoor's landscapes, wildlife and nature recovery and its local communities and who want to make a difference.

If you would like an informal discussion about the position, please contact Ruth McArthur, Policy and Community Manager, on 01398 322253, or Ellie Woodcock, 01398 322231. We look forward to hearing from you.



Sarah Bryan, Chief Executive



Background Information



Exmoor is one of 15 National Parks in the UK. They are areas of protected countryside that everyone can visit and where people live, work and shape their landscapes.

Exmoor was designated as a National Park in 1954. Since then, the co-ordination of work to achieve National Park purposes in the area has been undertaken by local government, and since 1997 by a free-standing Exmoor National Park Authority.

Exmoor National Park Authority works to achieve the two National Park purposes:

"To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park"

"To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public"

In delivering National Park purposes, the Authority has a duty to help to foster the social and economic wellbeing of local communities. All planning applications within the National Park area are determined by the National Park Authority which is the sole local planning authority for the area. Planning policies are there to ensure both rural prosperity and the protection and enhancement of the special character of Exmoor.

There are 22 Members on the Authority Committee which meets up to 12 times a year – 5 parish members, 2 district council members, 8 unitary members, 2 county council members, and 5 Secretary of State appointed members.

For further information about the National Park Authority: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

NATIONAL PARKS
Britain's breathing spaces



Our Staff

We employ a staff team of around 80 undertaking a range of functions that support owners and managers of land and heritage assets; people who live, work, and run businesses in the National Park; and people who make use of the opportunities for learning and enjoyment, both residents and visitors alike.

Our support staff within Finance, Facilities, Corporate support, IT, HR, and Member support help provide the infrastructure and support that is essential to delivering the vision and priorities of Exmoor. In addition, we have staff engaged in partnership projects and seasonal work.



The Policy and Community team sits within the wider Climate, Nature and Communities Section and works alongside the Development Management team.

As a small organisation, we work across all Sections and Teams drawing on the skills, knowledge, experience, and professionalism of our colleagues, to deliver our purposes and the aims of our current Corporate Plan which reflects the National Park Management Plan aims:

A nature-rich landscape

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

Healthy natural resources

A cared for landscape and heritage

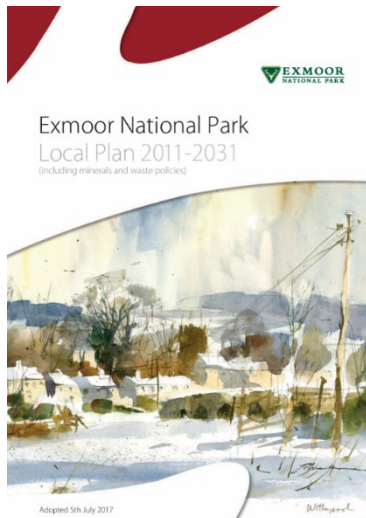
A welcoming place for all, that people feel connected to, improving their health and wellbeing

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

A highly performing organisation

As part of the National Park family, we also benefit from a wider network of professionals.

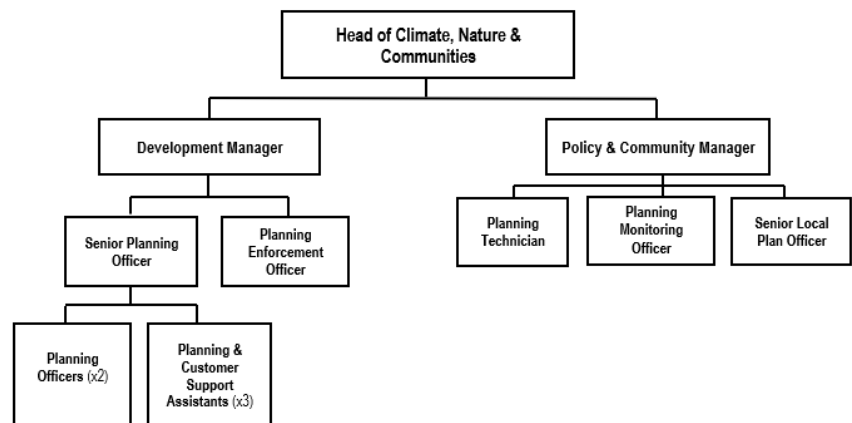
Exmoor's Local Plan



The Local Plan is prepared by the Policy and Community team by a small core team of two officers which sits within and works closely with the wider planning team of development management officers, planning technician, enforcement, and planning admin.

Exmoor is a highly performing local planning authority – last year 95% of all non-major applications were decided in time.

As part of the planning team, you will join a positive, proactive supportive group of officers. The team also benefits from the expertise of in-house colleagues on landscape, heritage, ecology, and recreation as well as from IT, communications and member support.



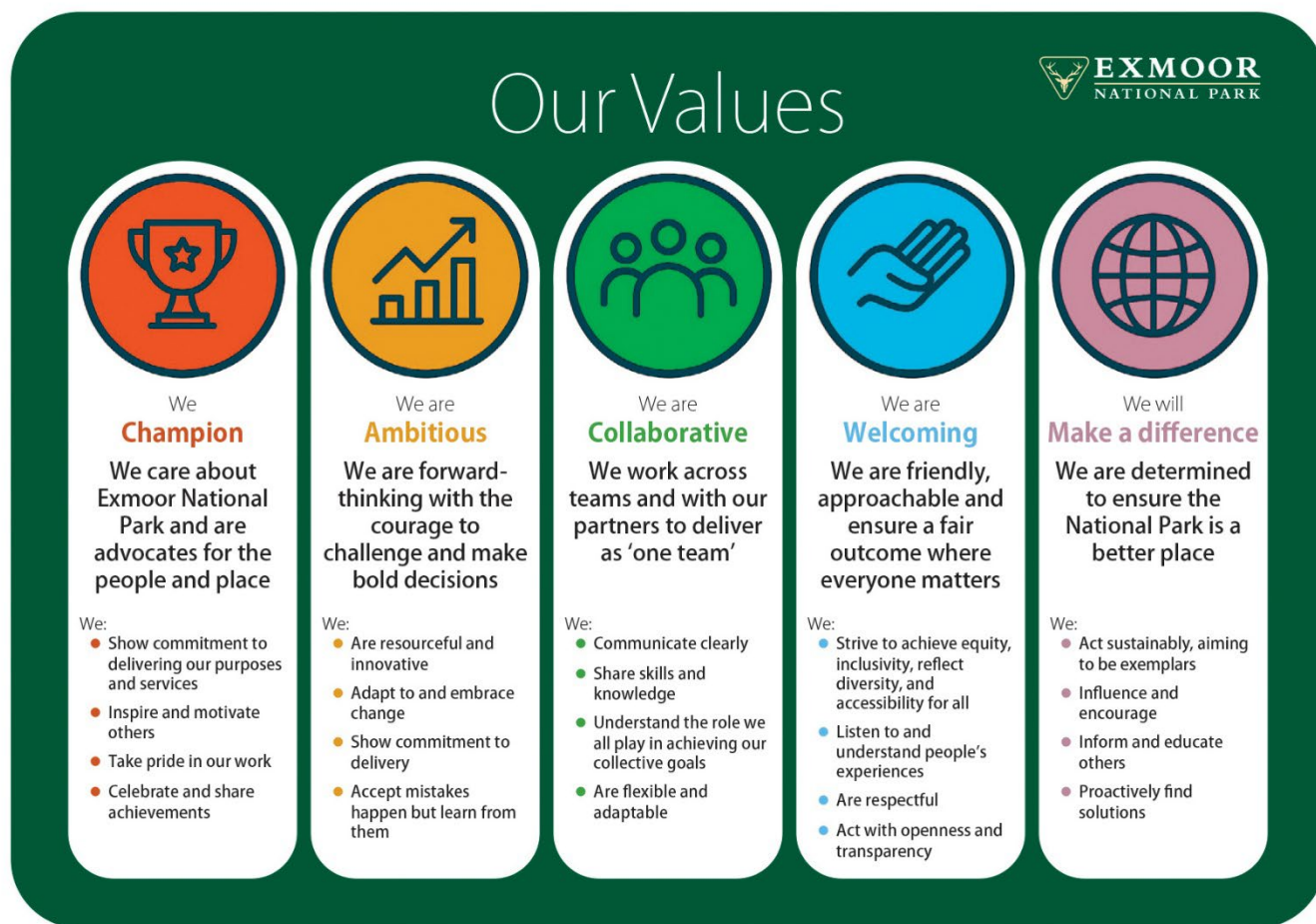
The Planning Committee is a sub-committee of the National Park Authority which operates differently from other planning authorities in that it includes representatives from the constituent Somerset and Devon local authorities, parishes and Secretary of State appointees to represent the national interest. The Authority is not affected by local government reorganisation with secure funding for the next three years.



For more information, please visit our [website](#).

Our current Local Plan can be found [here](#).

Exmoor National Park Authority values



Working for us

Our head office is based in the town of Dulverton, set in a beautiful, wooded valley, beside the river Barle. Other sites include the Exford Depot based in the rural village of Exford, our Pinkery Centre for Outdoor Education based on a wild and open moorland near Simonsbath, and our National Park Centres – one in Dulverton, one in the historic village of Dunster, and one in the seaside town of Lynmouth.

We provide a generous annual leave allowance plus bank holidays (both pro rata if part-time), a Local Government pension scheme, paid sickness leave, parental leave, time off for dependents, time off to attend dentist, doctor and hospital appointments, and compassionate leave opportunities.

Staff well-being is important to us, and we understand that life throws us a curveball sometimes. Therefore, we always do our best to ensure that staff are supported and can enjoy a work-life balance.



We promote flexible working and our general approach is that some staff are in the office for some of the week but work from home on other days. This post could be worked remotely with occasional time in the office; although at times in person will be required.



We are a Mindful Employer that is 'Positive about Mental Health' and raises awareness of mental health in the workplace. We have trained Mental Health First Aiders and a 24/7 independent and confidential employee helpline. Managers and staff will also attend training opportunities to increase their awareness of mental health in the workplace.

You will have an induction to help you to learn more about the organisation, your area of work and the work undertaken by other sections. We also try and arrange for you to spend time with a colleague, which is an opportunity for Exmoor to be explored. Your manager will support you in developing your skills and you are encouraged to feedback on your progress.

This support continues through regular reviews.



We hold regular staff study days, this may be the whole organisation or as a team/section, giving you the opportunity to get together with your colleagues from across the organisation to learn and see something new about Exmoor.

The Society for National Parks Staff (SNPS) is a group that all National Parks employees can join for only £5 a year. There are opportunities to visit other National Parks, take part in activities to



develop your knowledge of National Parks, whilst having fun and building new friendships.

We have a Women's Workplace Forum which provides a safe space for women across the organisation to share their experiences, develop skills and confidence and provide allyship.

Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Oversight Group meets regularly where it focuses on the organisation's aims in this area, provides an opportunity to listen to and learn from a diverse range of people and their experiences, which in turn raises awareness and informs us about where we can improve our services.

We also have a newly established Youth Board which gives young people a say in our work whilst developing their own skills and experience.

Job description

Job title: Senior Local Plan Officer

Reports to: Policy and Community Manager

Section: Climate, Nature and Communities

Main purpose of job

- To support the Policy and Community Manager to carry out the Exmoor National Park Local Plan review by managing and updating the Local Plan project plan and timetable to meet review milestones.
- Preparing a Local Plan that is found to be sound and meets legal requirements including statutory National Park purposes and duty.

Key outcomes

- The Authority's role and statutory duties as Local Planning Authority are achieved in terms of an up-to-date adopted development plan and policies for Exmoor National Park underpinned by effective evidence, partnership working, engagement and monitoring systems.
- Local Plan policies provide for development on Exmoor that safeguards the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and contributes to the social and economic well-being of National Park communities.

Responsibilities and duties

1. **Local Plan review and policy development** - Support and work with the Policy and Community Manager to review the Local Plan as the statutory development plan for the National Park by:
 - Managing, updating, and publishing updates on the project plan and timetable for Local Plan preparation to adoption including 'Gateways'.
 - Ensuring the plan preparation process and evidence meet legal requirements and the Local Plan tests of soundness.
 - Updating, commissioning and managing technical studies, including overseeing /commissioning Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulations Assessments or successor requirements; evidence and research and preparing topic papers.
 - Preparing and drafting sections of the Local Plan
 - Representing the National Park Authority at Local Plan Examination Hearings.
2. **Local Plan review advice and communication** - As part of Local Plan review:
 - Provides technical advice and guidance on planning policy for the Authority including staff and Leadership Team.

- Coordinates with and consults Authority staff including liaises with Development Management officers and other National Park Authority specialist officers regarding planning policy, consultation and communications.
- Provides advice to Authority members and attends and advises members at Planning Policy Advisory Group meetings to guide Plan preparation and writing and attend and present reports and recommendations at Authority meetings.
- Communicates and disseminates planning policy to a range of audiences including Parish, Town Councils and the local community as part of engagement and consultation for the Local Plan review to meet statutory requirements and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

3. Other Statutory Local Plan review requirements

- Works proactively with partner authorities to meet statutory requirements e.g. representing the National Park Authority and engages with neighbouring authorities preparing Local Plans and Minerals and Waste Plans
- Represents the National Park Authority in wider partnerships including producing or signing up to statements of common ground and memoranda of understanding.

Required skills, knowledge, and experience

- Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) recognised planning degree and postgraduate planning diploma or master's degree.
- Professional membership of the RTPI.
- Proven track record of excellent project management skills
- Ability to set and work to deadlines and self-motivation to prioritise work commitments and manage multiple/competing work demands.
- Tactful approach to working with colleagues and members to ensure Local Plan timetable deadlines and milestones are met.
- Extensive and wide-ranging understanding of the planning process, planning legislation, government policy and guidance and procedures for which significant professional experience is necessary.
- Knowledge of National Park/protected landscape and environmental legislation is desirable.
- Considerable analytical skills to analyse information to identify key issues and test options or solutions.
- Decision-making experience and ability to deal with complex and sensitive policy issues.
- Excellent information technology skills including Microsoft Office, the use of planning software applications and mapping software e.g. QGIS.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills to a variety of audiences using persuasive language to present, explain and defend an approach or policy proposal.

- Excellent written skills using clear, concise and unambiguous language, in particular the use of precise and appropriate written English for clear and robust planning policies and reports.
- Ability to manage confidential information appropriately and within GDPR requirements.
- A valid driving license.

Personal attributes

- A professional, positive and proactive approach to work.
- Personal drive and the ability to maintain commitment despite setbacks or problems.
- Innovative in seeking and finding agreed solutions.
- An excellent communicator with listening skills
- Ability to relate well to a range of people.
- A tactful, diplomatic approach and negotiation, persuasion and conflict management skills.
- A collaborative worker that can work within multi-disciplinary teams.
- Able to work outside normal office hours.

Key employment terms

Post title: Senior Local Plan Officer

Office location and travel: The postholder will be employed by Exmoor National Park Authority and will be based at the Authority's headquarters at Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9HL.

The postholder will work from other places of employment both inside and outside the National Park boundary, including site visits, meetings, and working from other National Park premises. The Authority has pool cars available to use but if one is not available, business mileage incurred on these journeys will be reimbursed at the agreed mileage rate.

Conditions of service: In accordance with the Scheme of Conditions of Service agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Administrative, Professional, Technical and Clerical Services as adopted by the Park Authority together with other local conditions of service set out in the Park Authority's HR Policies and Procedures.

Contract status: This is a 3-year fixed term contract.

Disclosure and Barring Check: This post does not require a Disclosure and Barring Check.

Restrictions: This is a [politically restricted post](#).

Grade and salary: The grade for the Senior Local Plan Officer is G with a current full-time equivalent salary range of £37,280 to £41,771 per annum. The pay award for 2026/27 is currently being negotiated.

Hours of work: The hours of work are 37 per week but we would also consider part-time hours. The Authority's flexible working arrangements will apply to this role and will be a mix of office and home working. We expect the postholder to limit working from home during their first few weeks to introduce them to their duties and to build working relationships with their colleagues.

Probationary period: The appointment will be subject to a probationary period of 16 weeks, with a possible extension of a further 4 weeks when the employee has almost, but not quite, reached the standards required.

Leave entitlement: The annual leave full-time equivalent entitlement is 30 days plus bank holidays. The leave year is from 1 April to 31 March.

Pension: The post is superannuable under the Local Government Pension Scheme, and you will automatically be admitted to the pension scheme but can choose to opt out.

Privacy, Data Protection, Equity and Right to Work in the UK

Privacy and data protection

We process personal data relating to those we employ for employment purposes, to assist in the running of the authority and/or to enable individuals to be paid. The collection of this information will also be of benefit in:

- improving the management of workforce data
- enabling development of a comprehensive picture of the workforce and how it is deployed
- informing the development of recruitment and retention policies
- allowing better financial modelling and planning
- enabling monitoring of selected protected characteristics

The personal data includes identifiers such as name, date of birth, payroll (SAP) number, personal characteristics such as gender, disability, and ethnic group, plus qualifications, performance, and absence/occupational health information.

We will not share information about you with third parties without your consent unless the law allows or requires us to, or we are required to share it to manage your employment contract with us. When we do share your data, it will be via encrypted email software or password protected files.

We are required to share some of your personal data with:

- HMRC
- Outsourced HR and Payroll Services (currently Somerset Council and Devon County Council)
- Peninsula pensions who administer the Authority's pension scheme
- Local Government Audit and fraud detection teams
- Occupational Health service provider (when required)

We store information relating to job applicants for 6 months and for employees for 6 years post-employment. Data is stored electronically on ENPA servers. The employee records have access restrictions meaning only HR staff can view and process it. Physical records are stored in the HR office within locked filing cabinets.

WR Group (WRG) provides ENPA with a recruitment system to manage its recruitment and advertising services. In relation to the General Data Protection Regulations, ENPA is the Data Controller. As the Data Processor, WRG will process personal data on behalf of ENPA, only for the purposes of carrying out the Services Agreement.

If you require more information about how we store and use your personal data or would like to request that your details be removed, please contact the HR Officer.

Equity

Exmoor National Park Authority intends to ensure that no employee or job applicant should receive less favourable treatment than another on grounds of sex, marital status, age, racial origin, disability, sexual orientation or political or religious belief. Its recruitment practices will exclude all assumptions, preferences or judgements that are not strictly job-related. Information provided will be treated as confidential.

The Authority is a [Disability Confident](#) accredited employer and is a signatory on the [Charter for Employers Positive about Mental Health](#). If you require information about this post or an application form in a different format or would like help to access the recruitment process, please contact Ellie Woodcock 01398 322231 or email ewoodcock@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Working in the UK

Anyone recruited to work in the UK must have the right to work before employment starts. British and Irish citizens can usually prove this through acceptable documents, while many other applicants will need to evidence their immigration status, often using the Home Office online right-to-work checking service.

Exmoor National Park Authority does not currently hold a sponsor license. If a successful applicant requires sponsorship to work in the UK, the Authority will need to consider whether the role and applicant meet the relevant visa requirements and whether to apply for a sponsor license. Employment cannot commence unless the individual has valid permission to do the work in question.

Before any offer of employment is confirmed, the Authority will carry out right-to-work checks in line with current Home Office guidance. Applicants should refer to the latest [GOV.UK](#) guidance on proving the right to work in the UK and visa/immigration requirements.

How to apply

Please complete and submit the online application on Webrecruit by clicking on the link to apply on our Jobs pages on the Website. Please ensure you address all elements of the responsibilities and knowledge, skills, and experience. **Please note that we do not accept CVs.**

If you want to apply in a different way, please contact the HR Officer to discuss an alternative arrangement - Ellie Woodcock – 01398 322231, ewoodcock@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Closing date for applications: 7 September 2026 (midnight)

Interviews are planned for: 14 October 2026