



Delivering for Dartmoor

2012



Welcome to a progress report on the fourth and penultimate year of work to deliver the aspirations of the Management Plan for Dartmoor (2007-2012). This newsletter illustrates just some of the activity undertaken by partners from a wide range of organisations and communities that are working to achieve the aims and objectives of the Plan.

Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2007 - 2012





Ambition reference

- L** Landscape
- HW** Habitats and Wildlife
- WE** Water Environment
- AH** Archaeological Heritage
- A** Enabling Access
- LE** Learning and Education
- RE** Recreation and Enjoyment
- T** Tourism
- ND** New Development
- LM** Land Management
- CW** Community Well-being
- E** Energy
- MT** Military Training

 **Cross-cutting theme:**
Climate Change



Black-a-tor Copse © Adrian Oakes

Progress Report

This newsletter gives a taste of the progress being made towards achieving the ambitions of the *Dartmoor National Park Management Plan* (DNPMP) during Year 4. The DNPMP is a plan for Dartmoor National Park - the place, not just for Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA), and numerous partners, organisations and communities are contributing to achieving the objectives which it contains. Monitoring of progress is carried out annually by a Delivery Board, comprising representatives from over 18 organisations and partners. The Board also considers the evidence provided by the *State of the Park Report*, which was reviewed and updated at the end of 2010. Further information about the Board and the *State of the Park Report* can be viewed online at www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

A searchable register is available on DNPA's web site, where a 'traffic light' system illustrates the progress status of each of the 373 goals or 'means to achieve' actions. As we move towards the end of this Plan's lifetime, achievements by all partners demonstrate the progress that is being made. There are, and will continue to be, real challenges as the impacts of a less favourable financial climate are felt. However, the strength of this Plan continues in the partnership of organisations and communities who are working together in pursuit of agreed goals for the benefit of Dartmoor. Records are continually being updated but at the time of publication, work is in progress on over 68% of objectives, with 19% completed.

Broken down by category:

- Sense of Place - 70% of planned actions are in progress, and 15% completed**
- Access for All - 75% of planned actions are in progress, and 21% completed**
- Communities & Business - 56% of planned actions are in progress, and 22% completed**

Please see the DNPA web site www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk for more details.



Dartmoor Mires Project

The Dartmoor Mires Project was launched early in 2011 as a partnership between Dartmoor National Park Authority, Natural England, South West Water, the Environment Agency, Dartmoor Commoners' Council and the Duchy of Cornwall.

The restoration plan was drawn up by the Project partnership in consultation with local graziers, and a wider range of partners ensured that historic, biodiversity, recreation and military interests were also taken into account. Research work and surveys have been undertaken to provide baseline information, and hydrological monitoring is planned for a site at Broad Down.

Several weeks' practical work by specialist contractors, using machinery adapted for working on bogs, was successfully finished in November 2011 at Winney's Down, supervised by DNPA staff to ensure that the special ecological and historic qualities are protected. Careful monitoring of the effects is ongoing.



Visit You Tube or DNPA web site to watch a short film about **Dartmoor Mires Project Winney's Down**
Visit the web site and just type in the title of the film.

Winney's Down bog restoration project © DNPA



AH Importance of William Crossing's resting place recognised

The recent designation of Mary Tavy as a Conservation Area has enabled active preservation and enhancement of the special historic interest of the area. Specialist staff from DNPA's Conservation Works Team carried out work to protect important headstones in Mary Tavy churchyard, including the resting place of famous Dartmoor writer William Crossing. The monuments, comprising enclosed burials with important headstones protected by structures set on granite curb stones, were on the Listed Buildings At Risk register.

The work involved removing or cutting back trees, clearing scrub, and repairs to granite bases and enclosing structures. Overhanging branches close to William Crossing's grave were also cut back to improve its setting. The grave itself is in need of further attention as the headstone and enclosing curb are showing signs of movement.

Improvements to access and a new granite waymarker showing an appropriate route through the churchyard and access to the Crossing grave will also take place. The local community in Mary Tavy, West Devon Borough Council, St Mary's Parochial Church Council and the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Diocese of Exeter have partnered DNPA in organising this work.



Crossing's grave at Mary Tavy churchyard © DNPA



L Highway Management

A Protocol on Highway Management in Devon's Protected Landscapes has been adopted by Devon County Council and endorsed by Devon's protected landscape management bodies, including DNPA. It is part of a wider project to establish an understanding and improved working arrangements between protected landscape managers and the highway authorities.

The vision is for a rural highway network that is managed and maintained to conserve and enhance Devon's outstanding landscape quality and local distinctiveness, whilst delivering a safe and convenient network for all users and modes of transport. Accompanying guidance presents best practice advice to Devon's highway managers, protected landscape managers, contractors, parish councils and other parties involved in the management and maintenance of the rural highway network.



A Dartmoor rural road © DCC

ND Design Guide



The Management Plan places great store on ensuring that a high standard of design in development is encouraged on Dartmoor and believes that a design guide is one suitable way of achieving this. With this in mind, Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) commissioned architectural and planning consultants, Stride Treglown, to prepare the guidance on its behalf. The draft guidance was published for consultation and, following consideration of the comments, DNPA has agreed to proceed towards adoption.

The main purpose of the document is to provide advice for those seeking planning permission from DNPA for development proposals, including applicants, architects and agents. In this capacity, the adopted guide will be a supplementary planning document providing additional policy guidance and will sit below the more general policies contained in other planning documents such as the DNPA's Core Strategy.

However, apart from this more formal role, it is also hoped that the document will influence those who are carrying out more minor changes to their buildings by providing ideas and inspiration, and also encourages a greater interest in the National Park built environment, by all. The initial section of the guide seeks to raise an appreciation of Dartmoor and what makes it special. Subsequent sections provide advice on building design to meet the challenges of climate change and design guidance on the most common types of development proposal. The final section offers ideas on best practice in the design and individual building details such as doors and windows.

When adopted, the design guide will be freely available.



LM **HW** **L** Dartmoor Farming Futures - an update

The Dartmoor Farming Futures project provides a unique opportunity for commoners to design and then trial a new approach to agri-environment. As the existing ESAs (Environmentally Sensitive Areas) schemes come to an end, and in most cases are replaced by Higher Level Stewardship (HLS), concerns were raised by DNPA and the Dartmoor Commoners' Council on the appropriateness of the new scheme.

The project started last year and provided an opportunity for two groups of active graziers from two areas of common land to design a new scheme. This was completed in May 2011. The new design is based around a set of outcomes agreed between the commoners and Natural England. The new scheme offers no prescriptions, leaving agreement on the appropriate land management and stocking to the commoners and land owners. It is up to the commoners to decide on the most appropriate grazing to deliver the outcomes.

In August Natural England agreed to a trial of the new approach. One of the groups of commoners, from the Haytor and Bagtor commons, has written a set of outcomes to be offered to Natural England in November 2011. Once agreed, the trial can commence. It is also hoped to trial the new scheme on the Forest of Dartmoor. The Forest Trustees support this proposal and hope to start the trial under the umbrella of their HLS scheme which is scheduled to start in April 2012. Meanwhile work has begun on preparing for this exciting opportunity to demonstrate that the graziers do know how to manage the commons in ways that will benefit the impressive range of public benefits to be found there.

Dartmoor commoner © John Waldon

TR **E**

Dark Skies

Devon County Council is running a programme to implement part-night lighting in residential areas to reduce carbon emissions, electricity costs and light pollution. About 1,000 lights across more than a dozen communities on Dartmoor have been changed from all-night long to lighting between dusk and 12.30 am and again from 5.30 am until dawn.

Switching off the street lighting during the quietest parts of the night has helped restore tranquillity and views of the night sky within the National Park. A further 1,000 lights will be converted on Dartmoor as the programme continues.



Lighting © DCC



Enjoy coffee and cake, Holne tea room © DNPA

CW Holne community shop and tearoom

Faced with the loss of their only village shop and café last autumn, the small Dartmoor communities of Holne and neighbouring Scoriton have rallied together to re-open it as a community venture. Realising that it lay at the heart of the village, a group of dedicated and skilled volunteers, with support from DNPA, successfully launched the Holne shop and tearoom, stocking a range of basics and locally sourced goods and gifts, and open daily, it is proving popular with local residents and visitors alike. The launch of a Community Share Issue provided an opportunity to become a member of the 'Holne Community Shop and Tearoom Industrial and Provident Society' which will run the shop and tearoom as a social enterprise.

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Haytor Hoppa

2011 is the final year of guaranteed funding from the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund, Devon County Council and the DNPA; it has also been the most successful of the three years to date. Over 2,500 passengers have enjoyed using the Hoppa during the summer with almost universal positive feedback. A new enhancement was to trial a series of evening excursions, giving people an opportunity to visit Dartmoor at night. The three excursions featured a guided walk and then finished at a different local pub so that the local economy also benefited. The excursions were a Widecombe walk and talk, a photography masterclass at Hound Tor and to finish a Dartmoor Legends walk from Jay's Grave to Bowerman's Nose. Feedback from passengers highlighted how they couldn't access Dartmoor without services such as the Hoppa, and it is hoped that funding will be secured to run the Haytor Hoppa in 2012.

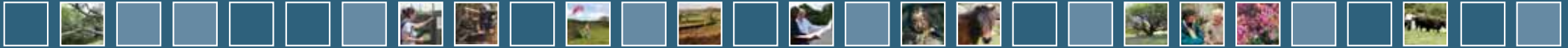
RE Active Dartmoor

With funding from the Dartmoor LEAF and the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund, the Dartmoor Partnership has published an activity map for visitors to Dartmoor. This allows visitors and locals to easily explore all the opportunities for recreation on Dartmoor either under their own steam or through an activity provider; where to hire equipment; where to find refreshments and accommodation and be able to create an itinerary online.



This is coupled with a new magazine, *Active Dartmoor*, produced twice yearly by the publishers of the Dartmoor Magazine.

The web site and magazine work in tandem to promote Dartmoor responsibly and give everyone a real taste of all the recreational opportunities.



Micro-hydro system at Old Walls © DNPA



Identifying hydropower opportunities

The Environment Agency is building on the work carried out by the national Opportunity Mapping for Hydropower exercise. The aim for Dartmoor is to help steer external engagement on hydropower and provide further clarity to developers. Each of the sites originally identified as having potential for generation will gradually be assessed. The Agency wants to give a better indication early on of which sites have good potential for generation without causing unacceptable damage to the environment.

Sites will be colour coded on a map:

RED - very difficult to develop hydropower without risk of unacceptable damage to the environment

AMBER - some potential for developing hydropower dependent on a very well designed scheme - likely to require mitigation measures such as habitat restoration, fish pass, etc

GREEN - good potential for developing hydropower with a well designed scheme



Dartmoor Circle

Dartmoor Circle published its first Delivery Plan early in 2011, which identified actions in respect of renewable energy generation, local food production and waste reduction. Renewable energy was an urgent priority because the feed-in tariff rates which support them will be reduced from the end of March 2012. Local food is of great interest to many community groups, and as one of many food activities, the Ivybridge group PL21 held its third Local Food Forum, with apple pressing, carrying on a local tradition going back hundreds of years. Bovey Climate Action's community garden, located in the walled garden at Parke, has had raised beds installed to improve accessibility, and will sell surplus produce to passers-by. One of the main activities in respect of waste was to make the views of local people known regarding a proposed incinerator and associated waste tipping in Buckfastleigh. In the coming year, the focus on renewables is likely to increase, as the Renewable Heat Incentive is introduced.



Bronze Age hut circle cleared of gorse © DNPA



Monument Management Scheme

EH and DNPA archaeologists continue to work closely together to improve the condition of scheduled ancient monuments so they can be removed from the 'at risk register'. One way this is delivered is through joint funding of the Monument Management Scheme, an annual project for archaeological conservation works and projects to monuments 'at risk'. This year the scheme has provided funding for 7 projects, and as a result these monuments have been removed from the 'at risk register'. The scheme was the first of its kind in England and has been adopted by many other local authorities.



HW Plantation Ancient Woodland restoration plans brought forward by Plant Health Orders

The last two stands of larch owned by DNPA have now been felled. One area was clean, the other was felled as a contiguous cull following an outbreak of *Phytophthora ramorum* (Sudden Oak Death) within 100m on neighbouring land. To help restrict spread the Forestry Commission is serving plant health orders on any confirmed infection sites, usually trying to help landowners to fell prior to the main sporulation periods in spring and autumn growth periods, when damp misty conditions are ideal for carrying the spores onto neighbouring sites.

Sanduck woodland is registered as Ancient Woodland so even the larch, which allow many of the relic ancient woodland communities to flourish, was destined to be replaced by native woodland tree species over time. Current guidance is to achieve this through a series of thinning allowing change to occur slowly rather than the sudden shock of clear felling and the associated influx of bramble and other fast invading species that can have a detrimental impact on the slow moving/growing woodland species. One area will be deer fenced subject to Forestry Commission funding and planted mainly with hazel as a working coppice, and the other steeper site will be planted with a native mix including oak, ash, birch rowan and hazel at wide spacing, accepting regeneration where establishing.



Larch felling © DNPA

RE T

England's last wilderness gets 21st century upgrade



The Dartmoor Partnership, official tourism organisation for Dartmoor, is bringing 21st century technology to Dartmoor with its own iPhone app, allowing visitors and locals alike to access information on what to do, where to stay, where to eat and drink, walks and events.



The new Dartmoor iPhone app, the first tourism app for the South West, aims to make Dartmoor more accessible, reaching a whole new audience. As iPhones have built-in geo-locating technology, users will be able to tap on the app and bring up a wealth of local information. If a visitor finishes a walk and is looking for the nearest pub, this information will be available in seconds. It works in tandem with the newly launched www.dartmoor.co.uk web site which offers a whole host of additional information, including interactive mapping, downloadable routes, walks, cycle routes, places to swim, access for wheel chairs, and much more.



This is just one of the new resources that Dartmoor will enjoy as part of the Active Dartmoor project. The Dartmoor Partnership is developing the project over the next three years, raising the profile of Dartmoor as a centre for activity. Funded by Greater Dartmoor LEAF, the Duchy of Cornwall, West Devon Borough Council and Dartmoor National Park Authority, the project also includes the production of an *Active Dartmoor* magazine, available on subscription and in many outdoor shops on Dartmoor.



Clearing gorse around a hut circle © Natural England

AH Safeguarding Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are over 1,200 Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) on Dartmoor, ranging from prehistoric monuments to 20th century industrial remains. Unfortunately, due to the increasing amount of scrub and bracken around some sites, English Heritage has classified a large number of these monuments as 'at risk'.

Through the partnership working of Natural England and Dartmoor National Park Authority, a register of the top 35 SAMs most in danger of being obscured, and potentially damaged by vegetation, has been drawn up and these have been targeted for remedial works through agri-environment scheme funding.

During 2010/11, scrub from 39 SAMs on Dartmoor was removed by volunteer groups and contractors enabling greater visibility and interpretation of the monuments and enabling them to be down-graded from the Dartmoor 'at risk' register.

These sites varied tremendously in size, from isolated burial cairns on Raddick Hill to large archaeological landscapes such as Kes Tor. Over time new SAMs at risk are added to the hit list for remedial works so work continues to ensure funding and willing helpers are at hand to carry out these important tasks, ensuring the preservation of the internationally important historic features.



Ashburton Futures ACE project

Ashburton Futures is one of the local climate change action groups that make up Dartmoor Circle, a social enterprise working to reduce carbon emissions and improve people's lives on Dartmoor. Ashburton Futures has undertaken a number of projects over the last year, including developing more local food-growing opportunities and launching Ashburton Community Energy (ACE).

ACE has instigated a community bulk purchase scheme for solar photovoltaic and solar thermal panels. The scheme enabled residents to club together to install similar schemes and benefit from the resulting economies of scale and increased negotiating power not available to them as individual customers. This makes the installations more cost effective for the customer and also helps the supplier to reduce costs, and their carbon footprint too!

This approach also enabled DNPA to engage effectively with schemes, agreeing the best siting for panels and ensuring that any wildlife interests such as bats were protected. Interestingly, not one proposal was prevented by the imposition of any planning requirements. Recommendations were made regarding the timing of work on certain properties to avoid disturbing rare bats, following survey work undertaken by the Authority's ecologist who was also delighted to offer additional advice on how to make the bats more welcome when asked by some householders.

Future ACE projects may include a scheme for installing solar energy as part of a community investment in the town, and exploring how Ashburton homes can become cosier and more affordable to heat.



Bioblitz species identification © SWLT



Burrator Bioblitz

Utilising the 'Bioblitz' idea (where people work together to find and record species in a set location over a defined time period) SWLT organised an event in August 2011 from 10am - dusk at Burrator, in the Arboretum. The Arboretum is an area on the north-eastern side of the reservoir, replanted after the catastrophic storm of 1990. Although containing some non-native tree species, the area has become a wildlife haven, benefiting from habitat management over the last two years by the Trust's biodiversity project.

Recording sessions were led by experts in their field and included mosses, amphibians and reptiles, plants, fungi, butterflies, otters, bats and moths, along with a pond dipping session. In total over 140 different species were recorded on the Bioblitz day, and the full list is available to view on SWLT's biodiversity web page.





MT L Progress on Okehampton Camp Landscaping Plan

When the Army started to build Okehampton Camp in 1892, its appearance would not have been a high priority, and not until the 1980s was the first attempt made to fit the Camp into the landscape, with a regimented line of conifers forming a screen, and angular conifer blocks planted within the Camp becoming an eyesore in their own right.

In 2004, the MOD prepared the Okehampton Camp Landscape Plan as a result of a planning condition. The aim was to replicate the pasture within nearby enclosed farmland, mixed with the woodland found on the hill below the Camp. The previously neatly mown grassland is now grazed by sheep, giving a more uneven appearance, and saving a huge amount of grounds maintenance money. New broadleaved trees were planted and have now become well established, and the conifer trees are being progressively removed. At night, the bright lights of the Camp made it stand out, but wherever possible these lights have been removed so that much of the Camp is in darkness.

Okehampton Camp was one of the first purpose built training Camps and many of the buildings are historically significant. The MOD and DNPA are working to agree a Historic Building Conservation Plan which will identify unimportant redundant buildings for removal in the future, as well as agreeing a standard of maintenance of the more significant buildings.

Much progress has been made since the Landscape Plan was written, but it is necessary to monitor its effectiveness and update it from time to time. MOD are in the process of undertaking this task, and the result should be a further reduction on the impact of the Camp on the adjoining moorland.



Okehampton camp fence line © MOD



LE Ranger Ralph's John Muir Award

For eleven years DNPA has run a very successful Ranger Ralph Club engaging with children aged 5 - 12 years and their families. The Authority has wanted to explore 'extension activities' to engage at a deeper level and allow older children to achieve whilst retaining a relationship with DNPA. In summer 2011, a John Muir Award (JMA) programme was piloted. It included evaluative work to help DNPA develop future JMA programmes, and participating DNPA staff also undertook the award.

The Award encourages people of all backgrounds to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places through a structured yet adaptable scheme. It is not competitive, and aims to develop an understanding of, and responsibility for, a chosen wild place or places. For some this may offer an opportunity to explore values and spirituality.

Four Challenges are at the heart of each John Muir Award, and each participant must:

- **Discover** a wild place
- **Explore** its wildness
- **Conserve** take personal responsibility
- **Share** experiences

The discovery element on the first day of the pilot looked at Dartmoor's special qualities including the remote landscape, unique wildlife and human cultural heritage over the last 5,000 years through a day's exploration. Drawing on some of the 'deeper' experiences from the first day the participants were provided with a range of suggestions for exploring and deepening their relationship with 'our wild space'. Conservation work undertaken at Newbridge included fire-pit restoration to repair scorch and burn damage from portable BBQs, and litter picking on land and also as a snorkelling exercise to 'dredge' rubbish from the river.

A celebration event encompassed presentation workshops allowing each family/individual to share with the rest of the group with emphasis on photos /words/ drama, and with the specific aim of coaching all participants to develop a personal JMA reflection. The democratic evaluation allowed children an equal voice to their parents, and really brought home the development of relationships within and between families, and between individuals and the environment. It gives much food for thought for the future.



John Muir conservation workgroup © DNPA



Delivery Board Partners

- Community Council of Devon
- Dartmoor Access Forum
- Dartmoor Circle
- Dartmoor Commoners' Council
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Dartmoor Partnership
- Devon County Council
- Duchy of Cornwall
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Ministry of Defence
- Natural England
- National Trust
- South Hams District Council
- South West Lakes Trust
- South West Water
- Teignbridge District Council
- West Devon Borough Council

For further information

The *Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2007 - 2012* is available on-line at www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk or in hard copy from Dartmoor National Park Authority Headquarters, Parke, Bovey Tracey or the High Moorland Visitor Centre, Princetown. For more information on *Dartmoor National Park Management Plan* progress visit www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

This newsletter has been prepared with help from Delivery Board Partners including:



If you would like this document in large print, other formats or another language, please contact us. We will do our best to help.

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Front cover image Bellever Tor © Adrian Oakes

