



**EXMOOR**  
**NATIONAL PARK**

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24 June 2020

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**To: All Members of the Exmoor National Park Authority**

A meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority will be held via Lifesize Video Conferencing software on **Tuesday 7 July 2020 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 Corporate 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 Judy Coles on 01398 322250 or email [jcoles@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:jcoles@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)).

Please be aware that this is a public Authority Meeting and will be **audio and video recorded**. We will make the recordings 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 Facebook and Twitter or other 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](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)).

Sarah Bryan  
Chief Executive

## AGENDA

The first section of the meeting will be chaired by Mr R Milton, the Chairperson of the Authority. If the Chairperson is absent, the Deputy Chairperson shall preside.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

### 2. Declarations of Interest/Lobbying of Members/Unaccompanied Site Visits

Members are asked to declare:-

- (1) any interests they may have in relation to items on the agenda for this meeting;
- (2) any lobbying by anyone concerned with a planning application and any unaccompanied site visits where contact has been made with any person concerned with a planning application.

(NB. When verbally making these declarations, members are also asked to complete the Disclosures at Meetings form – attached for members only).

### 3. Chairperson's Announcements

4. **Minutes**
  - (1) To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Authority held on 2 June 2020 (Item 4).
  - (2) To consider any Matters Arising from those Minutes.

5. **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.

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**Agenda items relating to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority for the National Park area including determination of planning applications.** This section of the meeting will be chaired by Mr S Pugsley (Deputy Chairperson (Planning)). If the Deputy Chairperson (Planning) is absent, the Deputy Chairperson of the Authority shall be preside.

6. **Development Management:** To consider the report of the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development on the following:-

Agenda Item	Application No.	Description	Page Nos.
6.1	6/25/20/101	Proposed removal of 4 feed bins and erection of 4 new feed bins at alternative site. Retrospective – Lillycombe Farm, Oare, Minehead	1 – 10
6.2	6/3/20/101	Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling – Springhayes, Exton, Dulverton	11 - 28

7. **Site Visits:** To arrange any site visits agreed by the Committee (the reserve date being Friday 31 July (am)).

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The remaining section of the meeting will be chaired by Mr R Milton, Chairperson of the Authority. If the Chairperson is absent, the Deputy Chairperson of the Authority shall preside.

**8. 2019/20 Outturn – Budget Performance and Reserves:**

- (1) To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer on the Budget Performance and Reserves (Item 8.1)
- (2) To consider the report of the Chief Finance Officer on the Statement of Accounts (Item 8.2)

**9. Corporate Plan Report 2019-2020:** To consider the report of the Chief Executive and Head of Strategy and Performance (Item 9).

**10. Any Other Business of Urgency**

Further information on any of the reports can be obtained by contacting the National Park Authority at the address and telephone numbers at the top of the agenda. Details of the decisions taken at this meeting will be set out in the formal Minutes which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. In the meantime, details of the decisions can be obtained from Judy Coles, Corporate Support Officer, at Exmoor House.

## ITEM 4

### EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the Exmoor National Park Authority held on Tuesday, 2 June 2020 at 10.00am via Lifesize Video Conferencing software.

#### PRESENT

Mr R Milton (Chairperson)	
Miss A V Davis (Deputy Chairperson)	
Mr S J Pugsley (Deputy Chairperson (Planning))	
Mrs L Blanchard	Mrs F Nicholson
Mr M Ellicott	Mr J Patrinos
Mr N Holliday	Mr P Pilkington
Mr J Holtom	Mr M Ryall
Mr J Hunt	Mrs E Stacey
Mr M Kravis	Mr N Thwaites
Mrs C M Lawrence	Mr V White
Mr E Ley	

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Edgell, Mr B Revans and Mrs S Takle

#### 142. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

In relation to Item 8 – Internal Audit Review, Miss A V Davis declared a personal interest as a family member works for the Devon Audit Partnership.

#### 143. CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Authority meetings are currently being held via Lifesize Video Conferencing software, in accordance with Standing Orders and the Formal Meetings Protocol, details of which are available on the Authority's website.
- A reminder that the meeting was being video recorded and the recording would be uploaded to the Authority's website within 72 hours.
- Recognition was given to the valuable work being carried out by the Authority in conjunction with Visit Exmoor, to engage with the local community on the Exmoor Covid-19 Tourism Response and Recovery Plan.
- This would be the last meeting for two of the Authority's Secretary of State appointees - Mr Nick Holliday (joined April 2009) and Mr Martin Ryall (joined April 2016). Further discussion would take place under Any Other Business.
- Best wishes were extended to Hazel Union, the Authority's Solicitor, as this would also be the last meeting she would attend for some time, due to impending maternity leave.

#### 144. MINUTES

- Confirmation:** The **Minutes** of the Authority's meeting held on 14 May 2020 were agreed and signed as a correct record.
- Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.

**145. PUBLIC SPEAKING:** See Minute 146 for details of public speakers.



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**Items relating to the Authority's role as sole local planning authority for the National Park area including determination of planning applications.** This section of the meeting was chaired by Mr S J Pugsley, Deputy Chairperson (Planning).

## **DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

### **146. Application No. 6/27/20/105**

**Location: The Culbone, Porlock to Lynton Road, Porlock**

**Proposal: Proposed replacement of 5 no. windows and 1 no. external door.**

**Retrospective**

The Authority considered the **report** of the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

#### **The Authority's Consideration**

The Committee's attention was drawn to a minor error in a sentence within paragraph four on page five of the report, which had resulted in a double negative. The sentence should read: "Officers do not agree that the uPVC units have resulted in an enhancement of the aesthetics of the building, for the reasons set out in this report, and the loss of traditional materials merely erodes the understanding of a place or building."

#### **Public Speaking:**

- (1) Mr J Payne, Chair of Oare & Culbone Parish Meeting and Neighbour
- (2) Mr K Bateman, Bateman Hosegood, Applicant's Agent

<b>RESOLVED:</b> To refuse planning permission for the reasons set out in the report.
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Mrs L Blanchard, Mrs C Lawrence, Mr R Milton and Mrs F Nicholson did not vote on Agenda Item 6.1 above, as they were not present for the duration of the item.

### **147. Application No. GDO 20/05**

**Location: Driver Farm, Simonsbath, Minehead**

**Proposal: Prior notification for the proposed partial demolition and replacement of existing barn (30.48m x 9.14m) together with erection of extension (27.43m x 1.52m)**

The Authority considered the **report** of the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

<b>RESOLVED:</b> To confirm that prior approval is not required for the reasons set out in the report.
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Mrs C Lawrence and Mrs F Nicholson did not vote on Agenda Item 6.2 above, as they were not present for the duration of the item.

**148. SITE VISITS:** There were no site visits to arrange.

The meeting closed for recess at 10.59am and reconvened at 11.10am.

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The remaining section of the meeting was chaired by Mr R Milton, Chairman of the Authority.

#### **149. INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW**

The Authority received the **report** of the Internal Auditor and the Chief Finance Officer.

##### **The Authority's Consideration**

The Committee wished to formally record their thanks to the Chief Finance Officer and his team for their hard work in ensuring the Authority continues to operate financial systems and controls to a high standard.

##### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) To receive the Internal Audit report for 2019/20 and to note the Work Programme planned for 2020/21.
- (2) To thank the Chief Finance Officer and his team for their hard work in ensuring the Authority continues to operate financial systems and controls to a high standard.

Mrs F Nicholson did not vote on Agenda Item 8 above, as she was not present for the duration of the item.

#### **150. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME:**

The Authority received the **report** of the Chief Finance Officer.

##### **The Authority's Consideration**

The Head of Finance and Operations advised the Committee that the total cost of Members' expenses for the year was £82,210, a decrease of 2%, rather than the figures stated in the report presented.

**RESOLVED:** To note the amounts paid to Members in 2019/20 through the Scheme for Members' Allowances.

#### **151. ANNUAL TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

The Authority received the **report** of the Head of Finance & Operations

**RESOLVED:** To note the Treasury Management Outturn for 2019-20.

#### **152. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF URGENCY:**

- On behalf of all Members, the Chairperson thanked Mr Nick Holliday and Mr Martin Ryall for their valuable contribution to the work of the Authority during their years of service as Secretary of State appointees.
- Mr Holliday and Mr Ryall briefly address the Committee in turn.

The meeting closed at 11.57am  
(Chairperson)

# 6.1



## Committee Report

Application Number:	6/25/20/101
Registration Date:	13-Jan-2020
Determination Date:	09-Mar-2020
Applicant	Mr R Martin
Agent:	Mr K Bateman, Bateman Hosegood
Case Officer:	Kieran Reeves
Site Address:	Lillycombe Farm, Oare, Minehead, TA24 8JP
Proposal:	Proposed removal of 4 feed bins and erection of 4 new feed bins at alternative site. Retrospective.
Recommendation:	Refusal
Reason for bringing before Authority Committee:	Oare Parish Meeting has a view that is contrary to the recommendation of Officers

### Relevant History

6/25/16/102 – Proposed installation of a mobile telecommunications mast and ancillary equipment (24m high lattice mast above ground, supporting radio equipment and cabinet) – Approved on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016

6/25/00/105 – Proposed erection of 10m lattice tower with three no. digital radio antennas and one no. 300dia microwave dish – Approved on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2001

6/25/00/102 – Proposed extension to barn for agricultural storage and seasonal use for livestock – Withdrawn on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2001

6/25/99/102 – Proposed extension of building, seasonal use for livestock and installation of sheep dipping/handling facilities – Withdrawn on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2000

GDO 96/03 – Proposed two extensions to existing building – Approved on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1996

### Site Description & Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the retention of four feed silos at the Lillycombe Estate which is situated between Porlock and County Gate. The site of the silos is next to agricultural buildings that are located to the north of Lillycombe House. There is also a 24 metres tall telecommunication mast present near to the silos. The site is

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also near Quarter Barrow and is within a row of tumuli, two of which are Scheduled Monuments.

The four replacement feed silos are typical cylindrical structures that are constructed from metal. They have varying heights. One silo has an approximate height of 6.8 metres, two silos have approximate heights of 7.8 metres and the fourth silo has an approximate height of 9.7 metres. This is contrary to the submitted Planning Statement that states that all four silos are 6.1 metres tall. All four silos have been constructed on a new concrete base that was laid to facilitate their siting.

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### Consultee Representations

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**Oare Parish Meeting** – I contacted you in late March in order to communicate that we, as residents of Oare and Culbone, are entirely supportive of Lillycombe’s planning application for their grain silos in their feed and works facility in Culbone. However, it has come to my attention that there is some resistance from the ENPA to the scheme. As Chair of Oare and Culbone Parish Meeting, I would like to make our position entirely clear on this - we believe the scheme should be approved without any further delay for these reasons:

- 1) I have visited the site myself and cannot see how it may be considered as detrimental to the environment - especially as it is adjacent to the radio tower which is possibly more than twice as high.
- 2) The silos are not visible from any footpath or any of the most commonly used parts of the area.
- 3) In my opinion, any costs associated with lowering the silo would be entirely disproportionate to the benefits of doing so.
- 4) The Lillycombe shoot is the area's ONLY major employer and brings a significant income into this, a relatively poor parish. Their investment should be applauded, not thwarted. The grain silos are an integral part of their business operation.
- 5) I am aware of similar plants in the Hollam shoot outside Dulverton which, like the Lillycombe silos, are hidden from the general public and touristic interests.
- 6) My own involvement in the hospitality business would preclude me from supporting anything that had a detrimental effect on the environment, which is our only attraction.

Other local residents (CCed here) are co-signatories to this email. No doubt I could gather further supportive signatures were it not for being the height of the lambing season. I hope that this makes our position absolutely clear and the Authority Committee approves the application as soon as is practicable in the current conditions.

**SCC Highway Authority** – No observations.

**Historic England** – On the basis of the information available to date, we do not wish

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to offer any comments. We suggest that you seek the views of your specialist conservation and archaeological advisers, as relevant.

**ENPA Senior Landscape Officer – Site Context:** The application site forms the northern extent of Lillycombe Farm, a group of non traditional farm buildings to the northern side of the A39 public highway at Oare and forms part of the wider Lillycombe Estate. This is an isolated building grouping in a ridge of highly elevated and exposed ground (410m AOD) in the open countryside. There are designated heritage assets immediately to the east of the application site and the area is within Section 3 land defined as 'Woodland'. There is an existing telecommunications mast to the south east of the application site adjacent to existing farm buildings.

Landscape Character: The application site is within Exmoor Landscape Character Type F 'Enclosed Farmed Hills with Commons'. Key features of this landscape character type are a broad rolling terrain of hills and ridges; land use typically permanent pasture; and a regular pattern of late enclosure fields on higher ground. This is an area rich in cultural heritage with designated sites within and in very close proximity to the application site. The surrounding mature pine woodland is a distinctive feature to this elevated location because of its height and form due to the exposed location. With the adjacent Culbone Hill, the application site forms the high point of a ridge of elevated ground between the vast open moorland to the south of the A39 and the steeply descending coastal cliffs to the north. The wider landscape is of exceptional quality, typifying the special qualities of the National Park.

Visual Amenity: The site is visible from the public highway where adjacent to the access track leading to the site, and from the wider landscape including the areas of open moorland and access land on the approaches from Brendon Common. This is an area of high visual quality with far reaching panoramic views in all directions. The existing telecommunications mast on the site is visible from an extensive area.

Comments: This retrospective proposal presents a development change in a highly sensitive location due to its elevation, topography, the quality of the surrounding wider landscape and the significant historic environment interests in this area. The proposal has resulted in insensitive and expansive excavation and construction works that do not seek to either conserve or enhance the surrounding landscape character or quality. The development impact is increased by the taller height of one of the four installed feed bins (contrary to the Planning Statement submitted for the application which states all four bins are the 6.1m in height) at a height of approximately 10.5m, above the ridge line height of the associated group of farm buildings. It is unclear what purpose further excavation works to the west of the feed bin location contribute in delivering the outlined needs of this application and further increase the impact of this development change. Additionally, the location of the new feed bins separated from the main farm buildings further increases the area of development change.

It is considered a more sensitive and careful approach could have resulted in a less impactful development change if the height of the bins and the location of these within

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the wider holding had been fully planned prior to installation works being carried out. As presented, the addition of four new feed bins with no associated mitigating proposals, results in unnecessary harm to the landscape character including historic context and to the wider visual quality of the National Park landscape.

**ENPA Wildlife Officer** – No observations.

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### Representations

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No public representations received at the time of writing of this report.

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### Policy Context

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#### **Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031**

GP1 – General Policy: Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development

CE-S1 – Landscape and Seascape Character

CE-D1 – Protecting Exmoor’s Landscapes and Seascapes

CE-S2 – Protecting Exmoor’s Dark Night Sky

CE-S6 – Design and Sustainable Construction Principles

SE-S1 – A Sustainable Exmoor Economy

SE-S3 – Business Development in The Open Countryside

SE-S4 – Agricultural and Forestry Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

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### Planning Considerations

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The main material planning considerations in the case is the principle of development, the design, scale and materials, and the impact on the landscape and neighbouring amenity.

#### **Principle of Development**

The four silos that this application seeks to retain are used for agricultural purposes and for commercial purposes in relation to the game shoot that functions at the Lillycombe Estate. As such, two key planning policies are considered to be Policies SE-S3 and SE-S4 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031.

Policy SE-S3 states that proposals for extensions to existing business sites or buildings that are well-related to an existing group of buildings on a farmstead or in a hamlet where there is an existing dwelling will be permitted in accordance with Policy SE-S1 and where the scale and appearance of the development are compatible with local landscape character.

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Policy SE-S4 states that permission will be granted for new or replacement buildings or structures where it can be demonstrated there is a functional need for the building or structure and its size and scale is commensurate with the demonstrated need. Further to this, in the case of new buildings or structures, the site should be related physically and functionally to existing buildings associated with the business.

The silos have been erected in close proximity to the main farm buildings for the Lillycombe Estate. The application papers explain that the silos are partly used to store feed for the sheep that are kept on the farm holding. On the basis of this information, there is an asserted agriculturally functional need for the silos and the Local Planning Authority has no evidence to dispute this.

In terms of the storage of pheasant feed, the silos' location close to the existing farm buildings (not in an isolated location) means that as an extension to the existing commercial pheasant operation of the estate their use for such purposes is considered to be compliant in principle with Policy SE-S3.

Overall, Officers consider that the retention of these four silos for storing feed associated with agricultural and game shooting purposes is acceptable and compliant in principle with the Local Plan, subject to other material planning considerations being satisfied.

### **Design, Scale and Materials & Impact on Landscape**

The design and materials of the four silos are considered to be typical for this form of development, where the emphasis is on function over aesthetics. The metal construction in the form of cylindrical structures is considered to be acceptable when having regards to this fact.

In terms of the consideration of the scale of the development and its impact on the landscape and seascape, it is important to note that the site is within the Heritage Coast designation and Policy CE-S1 states that development proposals within this landscape designation should also have regard to, and be appropriate in terms of impact on, and the conservation of, significant landscape and seascape attributes.

Policy CE-D1 states that within Exmoor's Heritage Coast development should be appropriate to the coastal location and conserve the undeveloped nature of the coast consistent with Heritage Coast purposes.

The Authority's Landscape Officer has advised that the application site is within Exmoor Landscape Character Type F 'Enclosed Farmed Hills with Commons', which is characterised by its broad rolling terrain of hills and ridges, land uses that are typically permanent pasture and a regular pattern of late enclosure fields on higher ground. It is also stated this is an area rich in cultural heritage with designated sites within and in very close proximity to the application site. There are tumuli to the east and west of the site. Two of the tumuli are Scheduled Monuments, one is approximately 300 metres to the east and the other is approximately 375 metres to

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the west. The Landscape Officer goes on to advise that the application site forms the high point of a ridge of elevated ground between the vast open moorland to the south of the A39 and the steeply descending coastal cliffs to the north, and that the wider landscape is of exceptional quality, typifying the special qualities of the National Park

The agricultural buildings that the silos have been erected near are understood to have a maximum height of approximately 6.5 metres. It is understood that silos will typically be taller than barns but the tallest silo (approximately 9.7 metres) is considerably taller and out of scale with the buildings that it is used partly in association with. This has a negative impact on the landscape character as it is not considered to be an appropriate scale for this form of development, particularly on an elevated site within the open countryside of Exmoor's coast.

The Landscape Officer has commented that this retrospective proposal presents a development change in a highly sensitive location due to its elevation, topography, the quality of the surrounding wider landscape and the significant historic environment interests in this area.

Officers acknowledge that the silos are not overtly visible from the wider landscape due to the mature pine planting that surrounds the majority of the site. However, it should be taken into account that this pine planting has a finite life and it is likely that the trees will be felled, thereby opening the site to the wider landscape, including the open access land to the south. The retention of the silos is heavily reliant on the planting and should it be removed, which the applicant could do outside the controls of the planning system, then the silos would need to be appropriate in relation to their associated built form, the existing agricultural buildings in this case, to avoid harm to the landscape and visual amenity. As raised above, the tallest silo is out of scale with the nearby buildings and its presence on this elevated coastal site would visually jar significantly.

The proposed retention of the silos is not considered to cause a level of material harm to the Scheduled Monuments that are to the east and west of the site. Historic England have confirmed that they do not wish to provide specific comments on this application. The tallest silo is visible from the Monument to the east but the distance is considered to be such that it would not have a direct impact on its setting. However, the scale of the development is considered to impact on the overall historic landscape character of this site, which is within a belt of historic tumuli along the ridge of this elevated landscape. This contributes to the overall landscape character impact.

Officers consider that the retention of a 9.7 metres high silo would not be appropriate to the coastal location and would fail to conserve the undeveloped nature of the coast consistent with Heritage Coast purposes. Officers also consider that it fails to be sympathetic to the landscape and seascape character of the site due to its scale.

As stated by the Landscape Officer, it is considered a more sensitive and careful approach could have resulted in a less impactful development change if the height of



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the bins can be addressed. Officers are supportive of the principle of the applicant's proposal, but extensive discussions have taken place about reducing the height of the tallest silo to potentially lead to an acceptable scheme and the applicant has been reluctant to consider such an alternative, with cost being cited as the main reason. Officers understand that there will be a cost associated with replacing the 9.7 metres silo with a more appropriately scaled silo but the applicant should be aware that these works were carried out without planning permission and this brings risk, including the additional cost that can be occurred to remove the development or replace it with a more acceptable alternative.

Officers also acknowledge that the four silos have been erected near to a 24 metres high telecommunication mast. However, Members are respectfully requested to note that this mast causes harm and the presence of this individual harm does not mean that any other development that is considered to cause harm as well, which Officers consider the retention of the tallest silo to cause, is automatically acceptable. The introduction of a further out of scale structure is considered only to exacerbate the harm and causes an unacceptable landscape impact when both are read within the landscape.

The public benefit associated with the retention of these feed silos is considered to be minimal and limited to the applicant. When taking into account the great weight to be applied to the protection and conservation of the National Park's protected landscape and scenic beauty, as required by Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the retention of this development and the harm it causes to landscape character is considered to outweigh any identifiable public benefit that would arise from this development.

### **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

The four silos have been erected within the open countryside, away from residential properties. The silos' significant physical separation from any residential property means that the silos do not impact on neighbouring amenity as a result of overbearing or loss of light. However, this does not outweigh the harm to the landscape identified earlier in this report.

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### **Human Rights**

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report.

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### **Conclusion**

The principle of the retention of these four feed silos is considered to be acceptable. However, the scale of the development within this elevated coastal location, which is within the Heritage Coast designation, is considered to cause material harm to the character of the landscape due to the particular height of the tallest silo. As set out in this report, there is not considered to be a level of public benefit that outweighs the

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great weight to be applied to the protection and conservation of the National Park landscape, and the presence of the telecommunication mast near to the silos is not considered to mitigate this harm and it is actually considered that the cumulative impact of it together with the tallest silo adds to the wider landscape harm.

Officers have engaged with the applicant to proactively seek a way forward to find a potentially acceptable scheme, but these discussions have reached a conclusion where the original proposal has been retained and Officers, therefore, bring this application before Members with a recommendation of refusal for the reason set out below.

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### Recommendation

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Refuse for the following reason:

1. The scale of the tallest silo, standing at 9.7 metres, is not considered to be sympathetic to the character of this remote site in the open countryside or the wider coastal landscape. It is out of scale with the agricultural development on the site that it is partly associated with.

The silo has been erected within an area which relies heavily upon mature conifer planting that partially surrounds the site in order to provide any form of screening. These conifer trees are likely to have a finite life and once removed this elevated site, and the tall structure within it, would be exposed to the wider landscape, including the open access land to the south, causing harm to the landscape and visual amenity due to the tallest silo being out of scale with the agricultural development that it partly relates to.

When having regards to the great weight to be applied to the conservation and protection of the National Park's protected landscape and scenic beauty, as required by Paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the retention of these silos, within the Heritage Coast designation, would be contrary to Policies GP1, CE-S1, CE-D1, CE-S6, SE-S1, SE-S3 and SE-S4 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031, and Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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### Informatives

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#### **Positive and Proactive Statement**

This Authority has a pro-active approach to the delivery of development. Early preapplication engagement is always encouraged. In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, in determining this application, Exmoor National Park Authority has endeavoured to work positively and proactively with the agent/applicant, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure that all relevant planning considerations have been appropriately addressed to

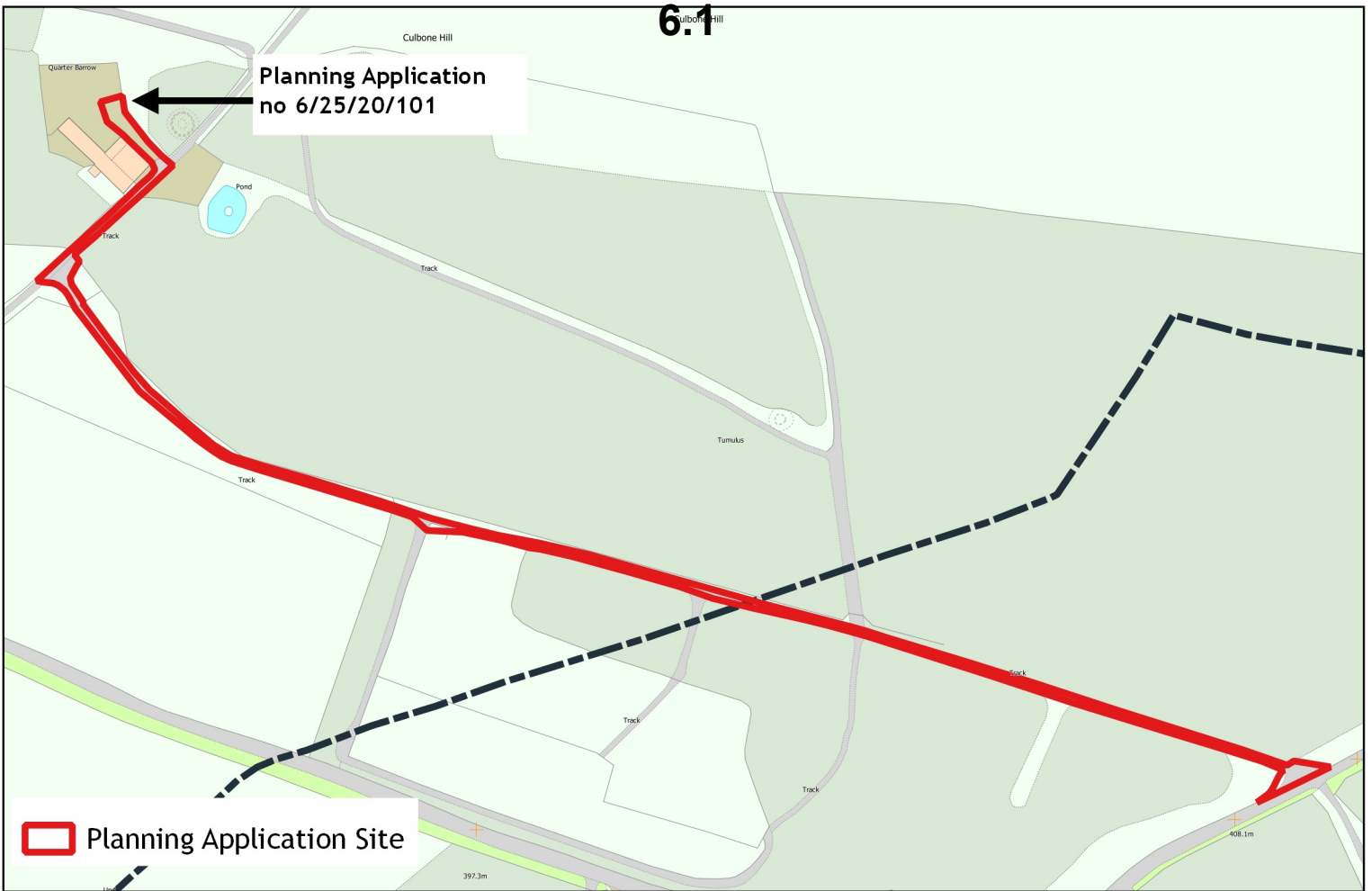
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achieve a positive outcome. In this case, the planning objections to the proposal could not be overcome.

### **Appeal to the Secretary of State**

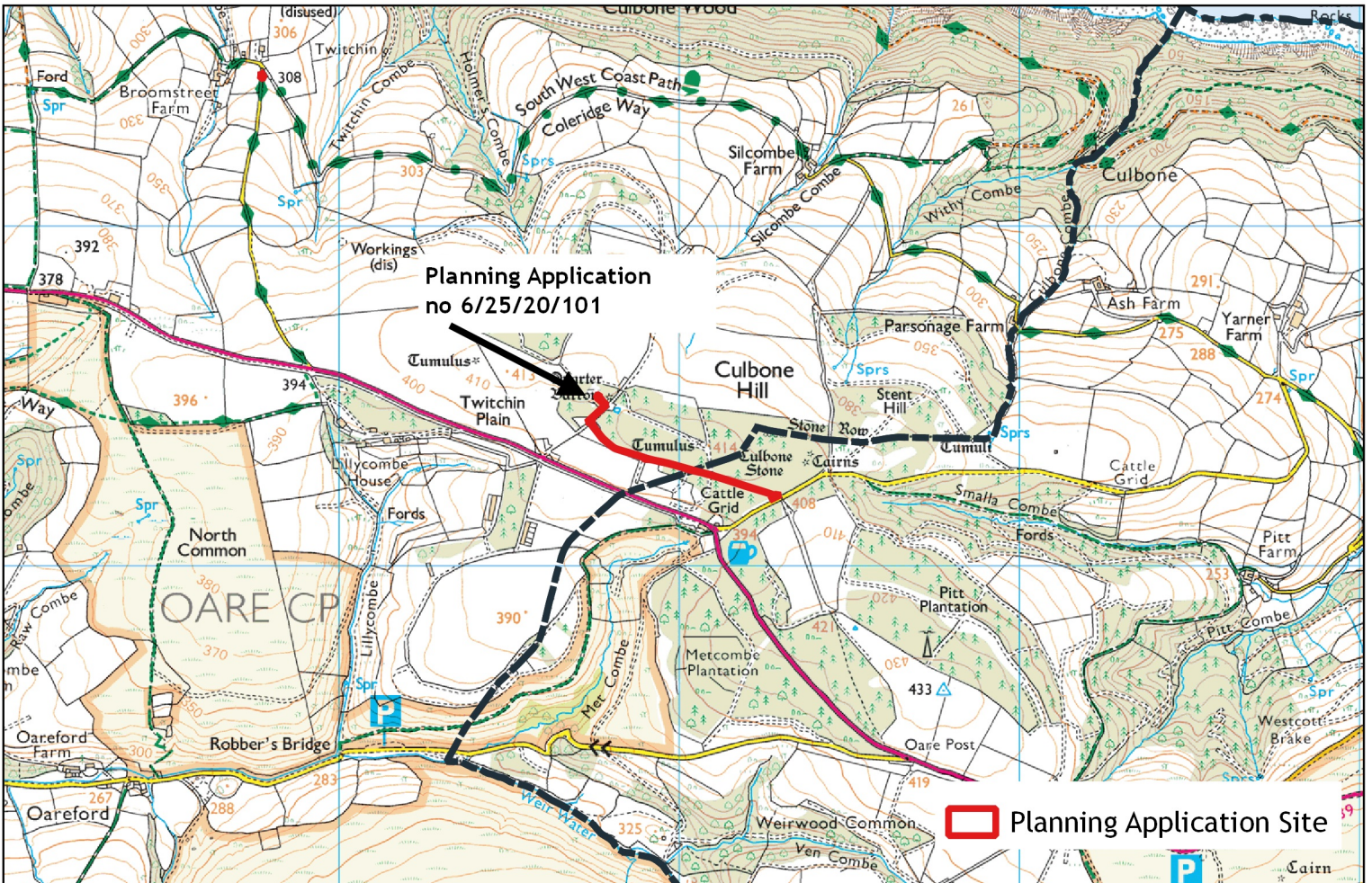
If you want to appeal against your Local Planning Authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.



Site Map

Scale 1:3,000

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Overview Map

Scale 1:20,000

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## 6.2



### Committee Report

Application Number:	6/3/20/101
Registration Date:	25-Jan-2020
Determination Date:	14-Feb-2020
Applicant	Mr S Gammon
Agent:	Mr B Dinnis, Acorn Rural Property Consultants
Case Officer:	Kieran Reeves
Site Address:	Springhayes, Exton, Dulverton, TA22 9LD
Proposal:	Proposed demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling.
Recommendation:	Refusal
Reason for bringing before Authority Committee:	Brompton Regis Parish Council and Exton Parish Council both have a view that is contrary to the recommendation of Officers

### Relevant History

6/3/19/105 – Certificate of Lawfulness for erection of extensions to dwelling and double garage in accordance with planning permission 6/3/98/107 – Approved on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

6/3/10/101 – Renewal of planning permission 6/3/04/124 (erection of replacement two storey dwelling following demolition of existing bungalow) – Approved on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2010

6/3/04/124 – Proposed erection of replacement two storey dwelling following demolition of existing bungalow – Approved on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2005

6/3/03/115 – Erection of two storey dwelling following demolition of existing bungalow – Withdrawn on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2003

6/3/98/107 – Proposed extensions to dwelling. Demolition of existing garage and erection of double garage and erection of barn – Approved on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1998

### Site Description & Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the demolishing of an existing dwelling at Springhayes (formally known as Springfield Farm) and the erection of a replacement dwelling. The existing dwelling is a single storey dwelling that is finished in render and is located on the southern side of Armoor Lane, opposite Higher Weekfield Farm. To

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the rear of the dwelling is an attached garden room with a polycarbonate roof. The nearest residential property is the farmhouse at Higher Weekfield Farm.

Planning permission was granted in 1998 under application reference 6/3/98/107 for the erection of extensions to the dwelling and the erection of a new garage and a barn. The barn has been constructed and a certificate of lawfulness application was granted last year under application reference 6/3/19/105, which formally confirms that this 1998 planning permission is still extant.

The proposed replacement dwelling would be two storeys with the lower floor partially built into the ground. The upper floor would be finished in painted render under a natural slate roof and the visible elevations of the lower floor would be finished in natural stone. The proposed dwelling would have a similar floorspace to the floorspace of the existing dwelling if the 1998 extensions were constructed. The proposed dwelling would have an attached garage.

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### Consultee Representations

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**Brompton Regis Parish Council** – Consultation response dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020

– Support the application as a great improvement on the existing building and a welcome step to environmentally friendly and sustainable buildings.

Consultation response dated 10<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Agreed by email consultation that it has no objection to the amended information supplied.

**Exton Parish Council** – Consultation response dated 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 – Support this application on the grounds that it would be an eco-friendly build, would be smaller than the footprint granted in previous applications and would be an improvement on what is currently there.

Consultation response dated 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – See no reason why they should change their original decision to support this application.

**SCC Highway Authority** – Consultation response dated 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – Standing advice applies.

Consultation response dated 9<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Standing advice still applies.

**ENPA Landscape Officer** – Site Context: The site is located south of Armour Lane, Exton at an elevation of 355m AOD and with a southerly aspect. Access is via an existing vehicular drive from the public highway. The site is bounded to the north by a beech hedgebank (parish boundary) with field hedges enclosing the boundaries to the east and south of the triangular site. With the immediate neighbouring property, Higher Weekfield on the northern side of Armour Lane, these two properties form a small and isolated grouping in an open and rural landscape.

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The existing property is a small scale bungalow and is located towards the northern boundary of the site. An associated grouping of outbuildings and yard area is located to the east of the site and is accessed via the application site.

Landscape Character: Located within Exmoor Landscape Character Type (LCT) F - 'Enclosed Farmed Hills with Commons', defining characteristics of this LCT include a broad rolling terrain of hills and ridges, woodland and intermittent mature trees. These elements define a sense of place and provide local distinctiveness to this eastern area of the National Park.

Visual Amenity: Given the elevated nature of this application site, long range views of this location and its immediate surroundings are experienced from a range of viewpoints including the open access land at Winsford Hill and Mounsey Hill Gate. More immediate views of the site from Armoor Lane are currently screened by mature boundary vegetation to the property boundaries.

The application proposes the demolition and replacement of the existing dwelling with a new building. The scale and massing of this new dwelling as submitted is greater than that of the existing dwelling and the combined impact of this needs to be fully taken into consideration given the elevated aspect of this site when seen from the wider landscape. The increase of built form in this isolated and elevated location impacts on the open and rural character of the surrounding landscape. The cumulative aspect of this proposed development when seen in conjunction with the neighbouring property needs to be addressed to ensure the special qualities and landscape character of the National Park landscape are conserved and enhanced.

The plans outline a proposed ridgeline that is a maximum of 3.46m above the surface level of Armoor Lane and presents as a small increase on the existing ridgeline height. The large proportion of glazing to masonry, as detailed on the 'Proposed Plan and Elevations' drawing raises a similar concern. The visibility of this site from long range views will be significantly increased by having a such proportionately large areas of glass. The potential for reflective glare created by this design detail needs to be addressed. Additionally, the design detail of extensive glazed balconies to the first floor area is untypical of the Exmoor rural vernacular.

It is presently unclear if the access shown from eastward side the property leading to Armoor Lane is intended to be for vehicle access. The northern boundary of the site demarcates the historic parish boundary between Exton and Brompton Regis parishes. Given there is existing vehicle access into the property, it would not be in the interest of conserving or enhancing the landscape character of the National Park to support the removal of a section of this hedgebank to facilitate an additional access.

The external lighting proposals need to comply with the Local Plan policy CE-S2 'Protecting Exmoor's Dark Night Sky' which seeks to reduce light spillage and eliminate all unnecessary forms of artificial outdoor lighting. The proposals as shown,

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in addition to large areas of panel glazing providing light spill, introduce external lighting that does not comply with the policy. Further consideration of this should be sought.

The site plans outline an extended area of garden breaking through an existing boundary hedge into adjacent fields. This hedgeline follows the field pattern boundary found on the OS First Edition Map (1880's), and given the open and rural aspect of this application, works that have the potential to further domesticate this location would not be seen to contribute to conserving the landscape of the National Park. Further clarification on this point should be sought from the applicant.

Overall, the replacement of the existing dwelling has the potential to have a neutral impact on the surrounding landscape. However, the design and scale of the proposal as outlined in the points above will result in wider landscape impacts that do not seek to conserve or enhance the character of the National Park landscape and mitigation of these elements should be sought.

**ENPA Wildlife Officer** – Richard Green ecology carried out a bat and bird survey of the building at Springfield, Armour Lane, Exton, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9LD on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020, followed by a bat emergence survey of the building in June 2019. The results of the surveys were as follows:

- No evidence of bat use was found during the preliminary survey or during the bat emergence survey. The building was initially considered of low suitability to support roosting bats. In accordance with bat survey guidelines (Collins, 2016) one bat emergence survey of the building was undertaken to give confidence in a negative assessment of bat use.
- The remains of an old bird's nest were found in a damaged soffit on the west elevation of the bungalow.

### Recommendations

To comply with local and national policy, wildlife legislation, and the requirements of the mitigation hierarchy and for biodiversity net gain, please attach the following conditions to the planning permission if granted.

### Bats

Due to the opportunistic behaviour of some bats species, including pipistrelles, along with the site's location set within habitats that will support bats, please attach the following informative to any planning permission granted:

- The developers and their contractors are reminded of the legal protection afforded to bats and bat roosts under legislation including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. In the unlikely event that bats are



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encountered during implementation of this permission it is recommended that works stop and advice is sought from a suitably qualified, licensed and experienced ecologist at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Bats and lighting

Due to the presence of the foraging and commuting habitats for bats, artificial lighting of the trees or boundary vegetation will be restricted. Therefore, if external lighting is proposed please attach the following condition:

- Prior to occupation, a “lighting design for bats”, following Guidance note 8 - bats and artificial lighting (ILP and BCT 2018), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The design shall show how and where external lighting will be installed (including through the provision of technical specifications) so that it can be clearly demonstrated that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory or having access to their resting places. All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the design, and these shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the design. Under no circumstances should any other external lighting be installed without prior consent from the local planning authority.

Reason: In the interests of the ‘Favourable Conservation Status’ of populations of European protected species and in accordance with SENPA Local Plan: Policy CE-S3 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

### Birds

- No removal of any areas of hedgerows, trees or shrubs around the site, and the demolition of the building shall take place between 1st March and 31st August inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check for active birds’ nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared or works to or demolition of buildings commences and provides written confirmation that no birds will be harmed and/or that there are appropriate measures in place to protect nesting bird interest on site. Any such written confirmation should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority by the ecologist. In no circumstances should netting be used to exclude nesting birds.

Reason: In the interests of nesting wild birds and in accordance with ENPA Local Plan: Policy CE-S3 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.

### Biodiversity Enhancement (Net Gain)

As enhancement and compensation measures, and in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), please apply the following conditions to any planning permission granted.

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- The following will be integrated into the design of the buildings and site plans:
- A Habibat 001 bat box, or similar, will be built into the structure at least four metres above ground level and away from windows of the west or south facing elevation.
  - A cluster of two Schwegler 1a swift bricks, or similar, built into the wall at least 60cm apart, at least 5m above ground level on the north facing elevation of the new dwelling.
  - Installation of 1 x bee brick built into the wall about 1 metre above ground level on the south or southeast elevation of the new dwelling or garage.
  - All new shrubs to include high nectar producing to encourage a range of invertebrates to the site, to provide continued foraging for bats. The shrubs must also appeal to night-flying moths which are a key food source for bats. The Royal Horticultural Society guide, “RHS Perfect for Pollinators, [www.rhs.org.uk/perfectforpollinators](http://www.rhs.org.uk/perfectforpollinators)” provides a list of suitable plants both native and non-native.

Photographs of the installed features will be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

Reason: In accordance with Government policy for the enhancement of biodiversity within development as set out in paragraph 170(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework

Provided the above conditions are applied as worded, I have no objection to this application.

**Wessex Water** – Consultation response dated 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 – Wessex Water has no comments to make on this application as according to our records the existing property is served via a private water supply system. The sewer service provider for this area is South West Water.

Consultation response dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – The previous comments made by Wessex Water remain valid.

**South West Water** – Consultation response dated 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – No comment to make.

Consultation response dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 – No comment to make.

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### Representations

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One public representation has been received in relation to this application. The authors express their support for the application as they consider that the proposed dwelling will enhance the appearance of the application site and it will be an

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improvement on the existing dwelling and the extensions previously approved by the planning authority to enlarge it.

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### Policy Context

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#### **Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031**

GP1 – General Policy: Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development

CE-S1 – Landscape and Seascape Character

CE-D1 – Protecting Exmoor’s Landscapes and Seascapes

CE-S2 – Protecting Exmoor’s Dark Night Sky

CE-S3 – Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

CE-S6 – Design and Sustainable Construction Principles

CC-S1 – Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

CC-S6 – Waste Management

CC-D5 – Sewerage Capacity and Sewage Disposal

HC-D15 – Residential Extensions

HC-D17 – Replacement Dwelling

RT-D12 – Access Land and Rights of Way

AC-D2 – Traffic and Road Safety Considerations for Development.

AC-S3 – Traffic Management and Parking

AC-D3 – Parking Provision and Standards

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is also a material planning consideration.

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### Planning Considerations

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The main material planning considerations in this case are the principle of development, the design, scale and materials, and the impact on the landscape, neighbouring amenity, biodiversity and highway safety.

#### **Principle of Development**

The application is for the erection of a replacement dwelling. Policy HC-D17 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 - 2031 states that proposals for the erection of a replacement dwelling will be permitted where the existing dwelling:

- is not listed or considered to be of historic or architectural importance worthy of conservation;
- has an adverse impact on the character and visual amenity of the area; and
- the residential use has not been abandoned.

The existing dwelling was constructed in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. As an unremarkable bungalow that does not appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey maps, the existing dwelling is considered to have limited historic or architectural merit that would warrant its retention. It is considered that a replacement

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dwelling could be erected in place of the existing dwelling that would relate better to its surroundings and the local vernacular and would provide a more energy efficient building that would benefit the environment. The existing bungalow does have some architectural relation to other single storey residential buildings in the wider area but it is considered that there is potential for a replacement dwelling to be provided with positive impact on the visual amenity of the locality.

The property is understood to have been unoccupied for approximately the last year, but this period of non-occupancy is not considered to constitute abandonment of the existing dwelling.

Taking the above into account, it is considered that the proposed replacement of the existing dwelling is acceptable and policy compliant in principle, subject to other material planning considerations being satisfied.

### **Siting of Replacement Dwelling**

Policy HC-D17 states that the replacement dwelling should be sited on or close to the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless alternative siting would provide benefits for landscape, wildlife or cultural heritage.

The replacement dwelling would be sited in the same position as the existing dwelling, which is acceptable in principle, in accordance with Policy HC-D17.

### **Design, Scale and Materials of Replacement Dwelling & Impact on Landscape**

Policy HC-D17 states that the replacement dwelling should accord with the design and sustainable construction requirements of Policy CE-S6. The policy also states that the replacement dwelling should be no larger in size than the original dwelling or 93 square metres gross internal area, whichever is the larger, and that it should reflect the massing and scale of the original dwelling.

The policy conflict that arises from the proposed development is that the replacement dwelling (not including attached garage) would have a floorspace that is approximately 54% larger than the existing dwelling, which is approximately 130 square metres. As such, the application does not comply with the size requirements of Policy HC-D17.

The construction of a replacement dwelling that has a floorspace that is larger than the dwelling it would replace is contrary to Policy HC-D17 of the adopted development plan. However, Officers consider that the proposed development is not a departure from the development plan as it is a matter of detail that is the issue and not the principle of the proposed development as a whole. As such, the application has not been advertised in accordance with Article 15(2)(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015.

The applicant has asserted that the Local Planning Authority should deviate from the requirements of the Policy HC-D17 on this particular matter as a planning application

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for extensions to the dwelling (ref. 6/3/98/107), which was granted in June 1998, forms a material fallback position.

It is noted that Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) sets out that in dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to –

- a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application;
- b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- c) any other material considerations.

It is also noted that Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) sets out that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

As mentioned above, planning permission was granted on 10<sup>th</sup> June 1998 for the erection of extensions that would exceed the 35% floorspace allowance permitted by the current residential extensions planning policy, Policy HC-D15 of the Local Plan. This planning permission was due to expire on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2003. However, a certificate of lawfulness was granted on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019, under application reference 6/3/19/105, which confirmed that the permission has been lawfully commenced through the erection of the barn that formed part of the application proposal. As such, the historic planning permission for the erection of extensions to the dwelling is extant and forms a material planning consideration. The question is whether the planning permission forms a material fallback or not.

The following two court cases are considered to be relevant to determining whether or not the historic planning permission for the extension of the existing dwelling forms a material fallback or not.

*In R (on the application Zurich Assurance Ltd T/A Threadneedle Property Investments) v North Lincolnshire Council [2012]* a challenge was made by Zurich to a decision by North Lincolnshire to grant planning permission for an out of town retail development on an existing garden centre site. One of the grounds of Zurich's challenge was that the Council had wrongly taken into account the potential for a fallback open retail scheme. This fallback was claimed to arise because the garden centre had, for many years, sold a wider range of goods than was permitted by the conditions imposed on its planning permission.

While Zurich sought to argue that the committee should have been advised that they could only take a fallback into account if it were a realistic possibility, the Court rejected this; finding that the fallback does not have to be probable or even have a high chance of occurring. Instead, the Court held that, in order to be a material consideration, a fallback only has to have "more than a merely theoretical prospect".

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While the likelihood of the fallback occurring may affect the weight to be attached to it, the Court did not feel it affected its status as a material planning consideration.

In *Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council [2017]* it was clarified when a fallback development may be a material planning consideration for an alternative development scheme. This decision confirmed the legal considerations in determining the materiality of a fallback position as a planning judgement were:

- the basic principle is that for a prospect to be a “real prospect”, it does not have to be probable or likely: a possibility will suffice;
- there is no rule of law that, in every case, the "real prospect" will depend, for example, on the site having been allocated for the alternative development in the development plan or planning permission having been granted for that development, or on there being a firm design for the alternative scheme, or on the landowner or developer having said precisely how he would make use of any permitted development rights available to him under the GPDO. In some cases that degree of clarity and commitment may be necessary; in others, not. This will always be a matter for the decision-maker's planning judgment in the particular circumstances of the case in hand.

Taking into account the above case law, it is considered that there must be a realistic possibility of the 1998 permission for the extensions to the existing dwelling being carried out in their entirety for the permission to form a material fallback position. As such, the Local Planning Authority has sought a structural report from the applicant that demonstrates that the existing dwelling is structurally capable of being extended in the manner that was approved under the 1998 permission.

A structural report has been carried out by Simon Bastone Associates Ltd, who are civil structural consultants. The report details that the two historically approved extensions can be constructed as independent additions with no significant additional load applied to the existing roof, walls or foundations. The internal openings between the extensions and the existing dwelling can also be “readily undertaken”. It is also stated that there is no reason to believe that the works to construct the attached garage cannot be undertaken. Through the submission of this structural report, Officers consider that should this current application be refused, then there is a realistic possibility that the works approved under the 1998 permission can be physically carried out in their entirety and there is no reason to conclude that the applicant would not carry out these previously approved works. As such, the 1998 planning permission for extensions to the dwelling is considered to form a material fallback position.

Having regards to the provisions of Section 70(2) of the TCPA 1990 and Section 38(6) of the PCPA 2004, this material fallback position is important in the determination of the application and means that the Local Planning Authority could approve the application, notwithstanding the overall floor space of the dwelling and

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the matters this brings under Policy HC-D17 of the adopted development plan, subject to there being very special circumstances.

There are various factors to consider when deciding whether the material fallback forms a strong enough case for the Local Planning Authority to deviate from the requirements of the adopted development plan.

The applicant asserts that the fact that the Authority has previously approved the erection of a replacement dwelling that is larger than the existing dwelling forms a strong case to deviate from the Local Plan. For reference, planning permission was granted in 2004 for the erection of a two storey replacement dwelling under application reference 6/3/04/124. This planning permission was renewed in 2010 under application reference 6/3/10/101. However, Officers do not consider that the planning permission and the renewal of the permission provide significant support to approve this current application for a larger replacement dwelling. The original planning permission was granted in the period of the Local Plan that was in effect prior to the previous Local Plan that was replaced in 2017. The Local Plan policies at that time were different to the current Local Plan policies and the permission was approximately 16 years ago. In addition, it is important to remember that each planning application should be determined on its own individual merits. Had these old permissions been implemented prior to their expiry, then these previous decisions could form a material consideration in the determination of this current application. However, the original 2004 permission and the 2010 renewed permission have both lapsed and are no longer extant. As such, they can only be afforded limited weight in the determination of this current application.

Paragraph 148 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that *the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.*

The applicant assures Officers that the proposed replacement dwelling would be built to a very high environmental specification. It is noted that the 2019 sales particulars for the existing dwelling has an Energy Efficiency Rating of F and an Energy Impact (CO<sub>2</sub>) Rating of G. The existing dwelling has a negative impact on the environment, and it is understood that there is limited scope to increase the energy efficiency of the existing dwelling to the level that the proposed replacement dwelling would achieve. Taking into account the requirements of Paragraph 148 of the NPPF, it is considered that the proposed dwelling's substantially better energy efficiency must weigh in favour of approving the proposed development as an alternative to the established material fallback.

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Officers also consider it to be necessary to have regards to the extensions policy of the Local Plan given that the proposed development relies on a material fallback that results from extending the existing dwelling. The 1998 planning permission was for two extensions that would result in a 54% increase in the floorspace of the existing dwelling. Should such an application come before the Local Planning Authority under the current adopted development plan, then it would significantly exceed the 35% floorspace allowance of Policy HC-D15. The applicant seeks to rely on a historic planning permission that is contrary to the current adopted Local Plan. Officers consider that it should have some relevance in the determination of this planning application, but it should be given limited weight against the proposed development.

The various appeal cases that relate to larger replacement dwellings being proposed based on a material fallback position have only been approved where there have been very special circumstances found to exist where there has been a genuine fallback position which would cause greater harm to the landscape than the proposed replacement dwelling. This is particular important when considering that the site is situated in a protected landscape, and as such regard should be had to the great weight required to be applied to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic in National Parks under Paragraph 172 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 170(a) states that *planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).*

Paragraph 172 states that *great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.*

In terms of the overall design of the proposed development, Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that *permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).*

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *in determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.*



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Turning to the design of the proposed development first, the replacement dwelling would have a character that is not in keeping with the local vernacular of a dwelling within the open countryside of the National Park. The Authority's Landscape Officer advises that the design detail of extensive glazed balconies to the first floor area is untypical of the Exmoor rural vernacular. This is not necessarily fatal to a proposal if a contemporary version of the local vernacular can be provided. However, the proposed development in this case is not considered to take reference from, or make a contemporary reflection on, the recognised rural vernacular. It is neither a traditional form of residential development nor a sympathetic contemporary take on the traditional residential vernacular.

The proposed dwelling consists of a two storey building, which is at odds with the form of the existing dwelling (a matter that is a cause for concern under Policy HC-D17, which requires the form and massing of the existing dwelling to be maintained). When viewed from the nearby bridleway the proposed two storey form and numerous connected roofs with low pitches would not be recognised as an in keeping design. In addition, the proposed dwelling would have extensive areas of glazing and large expanses of glazed balconies. This particular matter has been raised with the applicant and some amendments have been made to the glazing, but the issue is considered by Officers to still remain. There is also the issue of a flat roof section that would be the primary noticeable feature when approaching the replacement dwelling. The Exmoor National Park Design Guide seeks to avoid the use of flat roofs. Lastly, the use of aluminium for the windows and doors would be at odds of Policy CE-S6's call for the use of traditional and naturally sustainable construction materials.

Taking all of these elements together, Officers consider that the design fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, and it appears that proper consideration has not been given to local design standards. The proposed dwelling is not considered to be an outstanding or innovative design which helps raise the standard of design more generally in an area, and it is considered that it would not fit in with the overall form and layout of its surroundings.

Turning back to the matter of landscape impact, the Authority's Landscape Officer has advised that *the scale and massing of this new dwelling as submitted is greater than that the existing dwelling and the combined impact of this needs to be fully taken into consideration given the elevated aspect of this site when seen from the wider landscape*. It is stated by the Landscape Officer that *the increase of built form in this isolated and elevated location impacts on the open and rural character of the surrounding landscape and the cumulative aspect of this proposed development when seen in conjunction with the neighbouring property needs to be addressed to ensure the special qualities and landscape character of the National Park landscape are conserved and enhanced*.

These comments do not take account of the material fallback position provided by the 1998 permission for extensions but it should be noted that the proposed development

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does result in a visual increase in massing and scale over the built form that is currently on site, and this would have a landscape impact over the existing built form, as advised by the Landscape Officer.

The Landscape Officer has identified that the proposed replacement dwelling would be visible from long range views, but the applicant disputes this by stating that the long range views would not see the dwelling itself. These disputed comments aside, what is clear is that the site and the replacement dwelling would be visible from the nearby public bridleway (reference DU 1/26).

It is noted that the proposed replacement dwelling would have a ridgeline that is slightly higher than the existing dwelling, with or without the extensions approved in 1998. The existing dwelling, with or without the 1998 approved extensions, is/would be single storey, whereas the proposed replacement dwelling would be seen as a two storey dwelling on its most prominent elevation, with an element of the living accommodation built into the ground. This would be noticeable from the aforementioned public bridleway. It is acknowledged that the massing of the existing dwelling with the 1998 extensions would be a longer, more squat form when viewed from the bridleway but this is considered to work better with the existing built form of the site and the wider horizontal emphasis of the surrounding landscape features. The glazing and glazed balconies on the southern elevation would increase the visual intrusion of the built form on site from the bridleway and would jar over the simple, more in keeping appearance of the existing dwelling with the 1998 extensions. The Landscape Officer advises that *the design and scale of the proposal as outlined in the points above will result in wider landscape impacts that do not seek to conserve or enhance the character of the National Park landscape and mitigation of these elements should be sought*. There is also the consideration for Members that the incompatible design of the replacement dwelling would mean that the character of the site, no matter whether the site is visible or not, would be impacted on negatively by the proposed replacement dwelling.

Overall, Officers consider that the proposed development would not lead to an enhancement over the material fallback position of the existing dwelling with the approved 1998 extensions. Having regards to previous appeal decisions, the lack of enhancement, or even a potential harm caused by the design issues, means that the special circumstances required to deviate from the Local Plan is negatively impacted on.

As set out above, the 1998 planning permission granted under application reference 6/3/98/107 forms a material fallback position that potentially permits a deviation from the floorspace requirements of Policy HC-D17 of the Local Plan. However, there needs to be a consideration whether special circumstances are present that allow this deviation to take place. In favour of the proposal is the environmental benefits that would arise from the proposed development, which is supported by Paragraph 148 of the NPPF. However, against the proposal is the conclusion made by Officers that an enhancement of the landscape would not occur as a result of the proposal and this

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has been shown in appeal decision to be necessary. Having regards to the Officers' consideration of design, it can actually be judged that harm to the landscape surrounding the site would arise from the proposed development. Given that the National Park is a protected landscape and great weight must be applied to protecting and conserving its landscape and scenic beauty, this must weigh significantly against the proposed deviation from the Local Plan.

On balance, Officers consider that there are not strong enough special circumstances for the Local Planning Authority to deviate from the floorspace requirements of Policy HC-D17 and allow a larger dwelling than currently exists on site. The Local Plan should not be deviated from by forming another material consideration that permits it by virtue of Section 70(2) of the TCPA 1990 and Section 38(6) of the PCPA 2004

### **Impact on Neighbouring Amenity**

The nearest property to the application site is Higher Weekfield, which is on the opposite side of the public highway from the site, with a significant distance and substantial mature planting between the two properties. The proposed replacement dwelling would not increase overlooking, overbearing or loss of light on this neighbouring property or any other properties. As such, the proposed development is not considered to cause material harm to neighbouring amenity.

### **Impact on Biodiversity**

The Authority's Wildlife Officer has advised that a bat and bird survey was carried out in May 2020, followed by a bat emergence survey of the existing dwelling in June 2019. It is explained that the results of the surveys were that there was no evidence of bat use found during the preliminary survey or during the bat emergence survey. The building was initially considered of low suitability to support roosting bats. In accordance with bat survey guidelines (Collins, 2016), one bat emergence survey of the building was undertaken to give confidence in a negative assessment of bat use. It has also been explained that the remains of an old bird's nest were found in a damaged soffit on the west elevation of the bungalow.

Having regards to the above findings, the Wildlife Officer has recommended that if planning permission is granted then a condition is attached to restrict works to outside the bird nesting season and another condition is attached that requires ecological enhancement measures to be carried out. It is also recommended that an informative is attached that draws the applicant's attention to the legal protection afforded to bats and their roosts.

The applicant has questioned the practical ability to carry out the ecological enhancement as specifically set out by the Wildlife Officer. Officers have discussed this matter with the applicant and it has been agreed that a pre-commencement condition could be attached instead that requires the applicant to agree a series of ecological enhancement measures with the Authority prior to commencing the development, should Members be minded to approve the application.

## 6.2

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With the attachment of the above mentioned pre-commencement condition, the bird nesting condition and the recommended bat informative, Officers consider that the proposed development would not materially impact on the site's wildlife interests.

### **Impact on Highway Safety**

There would be a decrease in the number of bedrooms at the property from four to three as a result of the proposed development. The size of the bedrooms in the existing dwelling compared to the bedroom sizes in the proposed replacement dwelling would suggest that there would be a similar amount of bed space. As such, there is unlikely to be a material increase in vehicular movements to and from the property

The existing parking provision on site would be retained to ensure that there is sufficient parking and turning space within the property to prevent vehicles parking or manoeuvring on the highway, or vehicles egressing from the site in reverse.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would not cause material harm to highway safety.

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### **Human Rights**

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The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and Equalities Act 2010 have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report.

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### **Conclusion**

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The principle of replacing the existing dwelling with a new dwelling is considered to be compliant with Policy HC-D17 of the Local Plan. The siting of the new dwelling and its impact on other material planning considerations, namely the impact on neighbouring amenity, biodiversity and highway safety, are also considered to be acceptable and compliant with the Local Plan.

The issue arises with the scale of the replacement dwelling and its impact on the landscape. Officers acknowledge that there is a material fallback position that has been created through a 1998 planning permission for extensions to the existing dwelling. However, the appeal cases on this particular matter demonstrate that there should be special circumstances that allow the deviation to be permitted. Numerous references are made in relevant appeals that the proposed replacement dwelling should provide an enhancement of the landscape over the material fallback position. In this particular case, as detailed in this report, Officers consider that on balance an enhancement of the landscape would not occur as a result of the proposed development. Officers have in fact found issues with the overall design of the dwelling and this would cause harm to the site's immediate surroundings. Officers therefore recommend that planning permission be refused for the reason set out below.

## 6.2

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### Recommendation

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Refuse for the following reason:

1. By reason of inappropriate design, form, scale, low roof pitches, materials, including high levels of glazing and glazed balconies, the proposed replacement dwelling is considered to be unsympathetic to the local traditional building vernacular and character and to be harmful to the visual amenity of the locality, failing to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies GP1, CE-S1, CE-D1, CE-S6 and HC-D17 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031, and Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It is acknowledged that the historic planning permission for extensions to the existing dwelling that was granted in 1998 under planning application reference 6/3/98/107 forms a material fallback position. However, the various appeal cases on larger replacement dwellings that rely on material fallback positions demonstrate that such applications have only been allowed at appeal where there has been special circumstances that warrant a deviation from the adopted development plan, and that this includes an enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape. When having regards to this, the proposed replacement dwelling would not constitute an enhancement of the character and appearance of this protected landscape over the material fallback position. Taking into account all material factors, is considered that, on balance, there is not considered to be a sufficient special circumstance in this case that allows the Local Planning Authority to approve the application contrary to Policy HC-D17 of the Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2011 – 2031.

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### Informatives

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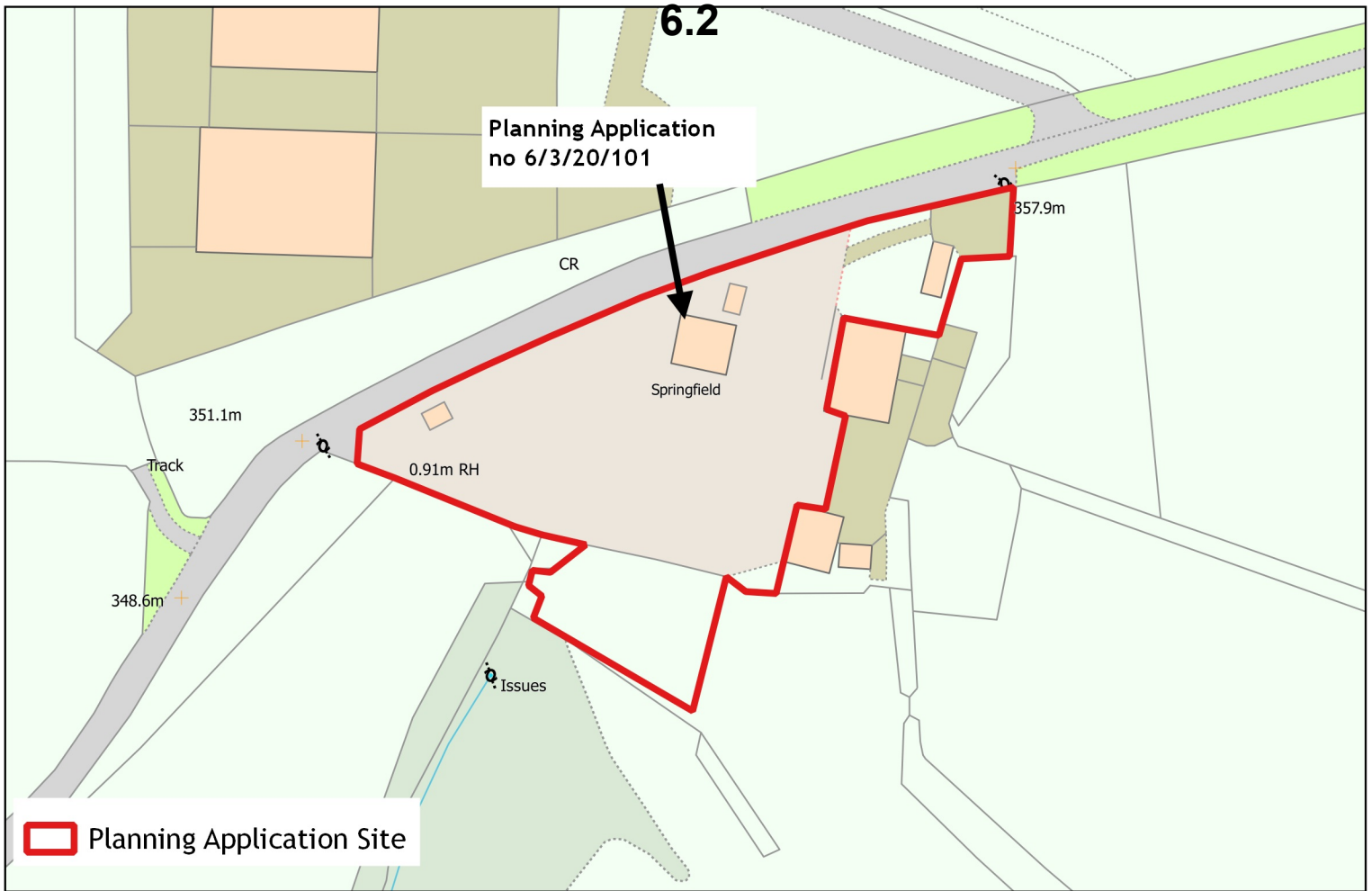
#### **Positive and Proactive Statement**

This Authority has a pro-active approach to the delivery of development. Early preapplication engagement is always encouraged. In accordance with the requirements of Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, in determining this application, Exmoor National Park Authority has endeavoured to work positively and proactively with the agent/applicant, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, to ensure that all relevant planning considerations have been appropriately addressed to achieve a positive outcome. In this case, the planning objections to the proposal could not be overcome.

#### **Appeal to the Secretary of State**

If you want to appeal against your Local Planning Authority's decision then you must do so within 6 months of the date of this notice.

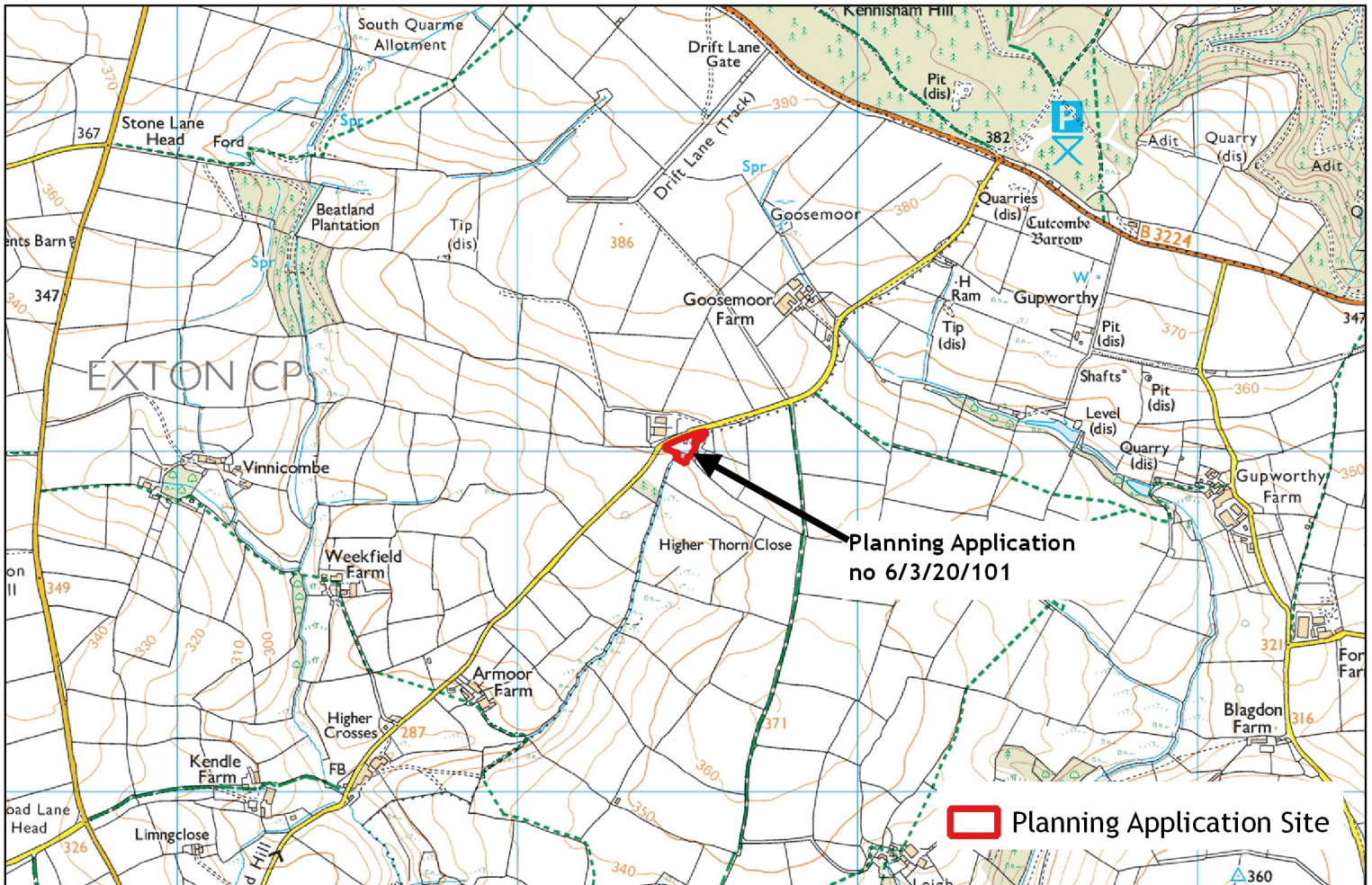
Planning Application no 6/3/20/101



Site Map

Scale 1:1,250

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Overview Map

Scale 1:20,000

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## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

7 July 2020

### 2019/20 OUTTURN – BUDGET PERFORMANCE AND RESERVES

#### Report of the Chief Finance Officer

**Purpose of Report:** To report on the outturn for 2019/20 compared with the revised and original budgets and to note the position of reserves.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Authority is recommended to:

- (1) NOTE the financial performance for 2019/20
- (2) APPROVE the adequacy of the General Fund Balance at 31 March 2020; and
- (3) APPROVE the transfers between reserves.

**Authority Priority:** Achieve by providing core services; getting best value from our resources and improving our performance.

**Legal and Equality Implications:** Local Government Act 2003, Parts 1-3 (Capital Finance, Financial Administration and Grants), Sections 1-39.

Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, Part 2 (Financial Management and Internal Control).

The equality and human rights impact of the recommendations of this report have been assessed as having no adverse impact on any particular group or individual.

**Financial and Risk Implications:** The outturn for the year is within the overall net budget of the Authority which is the National Park Grant from Defra.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The 2019/20 revenue budget was agreed on 5 February 2019 and was revised by the Authority in November. 2019/20 was the final year of the four-year settlement from Defra.
- 1.2 The finances of the Authority are structured in terms of the core budget, contributions to reserves, top sliced (fixed term) programmes and the small grants scheme. This report is also structured according to those categories. This report will highlight areas of variation or discretion that has been applied in financing in year spend and managing the use of reserves. This report needs to be read in conjunction with the Corporate Plan 2019/20 – Priority Achievements which details the non-financial results for the year.
- 1.3 In addition to the £3.211m of National Park Grant, in 2019/20 the Authority earned another £1.330m across all services and funding streams. This covers traded income, external grants and contributions, fees and interest.

- 1.4 A major theme this year in closing the old year accounts is anticipating and preparing for the financial impact of the pandemic. As such this report recommends certain allocations across the core budget, reserves and partnership funds. This includes a plan for the anticipated impacts of COVID-19 to the Authority, additional support to the community and funds are also set for impacts as yet unknown.
- 1.5 The financial impact on the Authority has been moderated by over £100k support from the government in the form of Business Rates relief, and retail and hospitality grants. The Authority has not 'furloughed' any staff nor is it seeking any additional support from Defra to maintain operations.
- 1.6 There are greater adjustments to funds than is usually the case at this point in the financial cycle. This is because of the late budget settlement and the pandemic.

## **2. CORE BUDGET OUTTURN 2019/20**

- 2.1 Appendix 1 summarises budget performance for 2019/20 and shows the actual spending for the year against the original and revised budgets. The overall position for 2019/20 is an outturn of £2,764,228 against the approved revised net budget of £2,825,200. This is the position after appropriations to and from reserves have been made to meet specific funding requirements and to fund project work throughout the Authority.
- 2.2 The underspend of £60,972 is transferred to general balances in the first instance. The underspend is because the Authority has either deferred or avoided filling certain vacancies as changes to the organisation are considered. Additionally, external income in car parking, Development Management, Sustainable Development and Education activities proved resilient.
- 2.3 There are a few variations over £5,000 between the final budgets and the actual spend at Cost Centre level and these are:

### Education & Volunteers

- The £8k underspend was due to the income that was delivered, in excess of budget.

### Information & Interpretation Management

- The £10k underspend was due to the vacancy in the head of service post. £10k was also transferred to the NPC Spend to Save reserve to aid with the cost of COVID-19 related adaptations to the centres.

### The Pinkery Centre

- The deficit was largely caused by the £10k loss of income in March related to the pandemic. Without this the Centre would have delivered a small trading deficit of £4k which is the same as the previous year. The 2019/20 deficit will be met from other areas in Support to National Park Users so that funds set aside for a potential overspend can be applied in 2020/21 when we know there will be significant pressure.

### Planning Policy & Community Management

- The service underspent by £9k due to staff vacancies. External contributions from DCLG have been transferred to the Planning Policy reserve also.



## Finance & IT

- There was an underspend as Interest Receivable was higher than anticipated and hardware budgets were not fully required.

2.4 Aside from spend from the Core Budget the Authority also provides budget for contributions to Fixed Term Programmes, Reserves and the small grants scheme. These are detailed in Appendix 2.

### **3. FIXED TERM PROGRAMMES**

3.1 The original fixed term programmes budget for 2019/20 was £148,600. Appendix 2 details the schemes approved against the 2019/20 Budget and their associated spend to the end of the year. There was also spend in 2019/20 against schemes that had been approved in previous years. A large proportion of this relates to staff employed to implement DEFRA's 8 Point Plan for National Parks.

3.2 Approvals that are no longer required have been transferred to General Balances. Other unspent approvals have been transferred to an alternative reserve if their objectives are closely aligned. This is detailed in Appendix 2.

3.3 This outturn also recommends some transfers from within Fixed Term programmes to meet the anticipated deficit on the Outdoor Education Centre at Pinkery in 2020/21 as educational visits have been so affected by the pandemic. £70k has been found by bringing together two year's (2019/20 and 2020/21) annual deficit provision and by finding an additional £40k from schemes where the funding is no longer required. The Centre is also able to avoid paying Business Rates (£9k saving) and is due to receive a £25k grant due to business disruption. The Authority is therefore making a significant step towards meeting the deficit in 2020/21 if these recommendations are accepted.

### **4. RESERVES**

4.1 Reserves play a major role in understanding how Exmoor National Park budgets, finances spend, meets future obligations and receives external contributions. A detailed analysis of the reserves held at 31 March 2020 is shown in Appendix 3. Over 2019/20 reserves reduced by £99,902 from £2,985,020 to £2,885,118.

4.2 As part of setting the budget for 2019/20 there was a £187,700 contribution to reserves. There were also certain transfers between reserves at the point when the 2019/20 budget was revised as £30k was found for the Ash Die-Back work and 6 fixed term contracts in areas such as engagement and volunteering were extended for another year.

4.3 The Authority does not present a capital budget within either the Original Budget in March or the Revised Budget in November although a Capital Strategy is now detailed when the forward budget is set. Capital schemes either have a unique Authority paper or are reasonably small scale in nature. Capital spend in 2019/20 is listed below and was funded from reserves or external grants:

- £277k on White Rock Cottage in Simonsbath
- £55k at Weir Cleave.

4.4 There was also significant spend on schemes that were not classified as capital. This includes the procurement and implementation of the new planning system and replacement solar pv panels at the Pinkery Centre. There were no capital receipts in 2019/20. Capital works have now begun on Woodside Bridge also.

4.5 Appendix 3 also details certain recommended transfers between reserves to ensure that resources are allocated in line with need. The column 'Outturn Transfer between Reserves', suggests certain virements between reserves which are listed below. Members are asked to approve these changes.

- Of the in-year contributions to Caremoor (£49,334), £30k has been transferred to Rights of Way, £10k to Ashcombe Gardens reserve and £2.5k for Historic Signposts. The remainder is set aside for nature and dormice specifically and kept within the reserve.
- £50k from General Balances to the Estates Reserve as there are a number of pressures arising. Members will be asked to formally approve any new schemes.
- Another £50k from General Balances to the General Contingency to maintain General Balances at an appropriate level.
- £50k from Headwaters PR19 to the General Contingency also. These last two allocations to the Contingency Fund are necessary to ensure that there are sufficient funds to meet future pressures. Possible claims on this include costs related to Ash Die-Back, the further extension of fixed term contracts, to balance the budget in 2021/22 and future costs of COVID-19 that are not predictable at this time.
- Some of the remaining balance on the existing Headwaters scheme are recommended to be transferred to Environmental Resilience (£20k) and Simonsbath Project Delivery (£20k). The first of these will provide resources that will allow the Authority to support certain actions related to the Climate Change declaration and the second transfer mentioned is to complete the costs of the scheme at White Rock Cottage.
- There are also the reserves transfers referred to in 2.3 (NPC Spend to Save) and 3.2 above.
- It is also recommended that New Audience Fund be renamed the Engagement and Outreach Reserve. This will broaden the reserves scope.

4.5 The balance on the General Fund is the amount held in reserve to meet any unforeseen or exceptional items of expenditure or to provide working capital. The balance of the General Fund at 31 March 2020 of £325,494 is in line with the forecasts contained in the Medium-Term Financial Plan. This sum is considered adequate to maintain the financial viability, security and stability of the Authority and provide working capital.

## **5. SMALL GRANTS SCHEME**

5.1 £50,000 was set aside when the 2019/20 budget was determined. £13,160 has been allocated to schemes. Of the remainder, £6.8k is to be transferred to general balances, £10k is recommended to be transferred to meet the anticipated Pinkery overspend described in 3.3 and £20k is to be retained to provide support to community and social enterprises impacted by COVID-19. The £20k allocated to the small grants scheme in 2020/21 has also been earmarked for this purpose. The Authority has already received the first claims against this.

5.2 A paper detailing the work of the Small Grants Scheme in 2019/20 is shown at Appendix 4.

**G Bryant**  
**Chief Finance Officer**  
**June 2020**

Section	Budget Heading	2019/20 Original Budget £	2019/20 Revised Expenditure £	2019/20 Revised Income £	2019/20 Revised Budget £	2019/20 Actual £	Variance between 19/20 Revised and 19/20 Outturn
Support to Land Managers	Access & Recreation	129,000	159,200	-29,000	130,200	128,738	-1,462
	Archaeology & Historic Environment	72,600	73,300	-1,200	72,100	67,637	-4,463
	Field Services	257,800	286,100	-22,000	264,100	261,872	-2,228
	Conservation Advice & Support	304,300	313,800	-10,200	303,600	307,250	3,650
	Rangers	126,800	151,700	-18,000	133,700	132,171	-1,529
<b>Support to Land Managers Total</b>		<b>890,500</b>	<b>984,100</b>	<b>-80,400</b>	<b>903,700</b>	<b>897,667</b>	<b>-6,033</b>
Support services to the Community	Development Management	314,200	346,600	-77,000	269,600	266,788	-2,812
	Sustainability & Economy	67,000	70,500	0	70,500	66,774	-3,726
<b>Support services to the Community Total</b>		<b>381,200</b>	<b>417,100</b>	<b>-77,000</b>	<b>340,100</b>	<b>333,562</b>	<b>-6,538</b>
Support to National Park Users	Education & Volunteers	57,700	59,900	-2,000	57,900	49,428	-8,472
	National Park & Information Centres	130,100	275,300	-133,700	141,600	137,280	-4,320
	Information & Interpretation Management	201,900	201,400	0	201,400	191,686	-9,714
	Pinkery	0	140,000	-140,000	0	13,527	13,527
	Visitor Facilities	33,200	93,200	-60,000	33,200	32,377	-823
<b>Support to National Park Users Total</b>		<b>422,900</b>	<b>769,800</b>	<b>-335,700</b>	<b>434,100</b>	<b>424,297</b>	<b>-9,803</b>
Corporate & Customer Support	Legal Support	65,000	65,000	0	65,000	63,687	-1,313
	Strategy & Performance	204,800	209,200	0	209,200	205,676	-3,524
	Planning Policy & Community Management	98,900	98,900	0	98,900	90,363	-8,537
	Finance and ICT Services	348,800	369,500	-20,000	349,500	333,418	-16,082
Land and Property Services	Land and Property Services	14,000	277,200	-242,000	35,200	35,272	72
<b>Support Services Total</b>		<b>731,500</b>	<b>1,019,800</b>	<b>-262,000</b>	<b>757,800</b>	<b>728,415</b>	<b>-29,385</b>
Corporate Management	Corporate Management	128,800	124,500	0	124,500	122,132	-2,368
	Historic Pensions Contributions	140,000	140,000	0	140,000	140,000	0
	Corporate Subscriptions	36,000	31,000	0	31,000	27,693	-3,307
	Members	94,300	94,000	0	94,000	90,461	-3,539
<b>Corporate Management Total</b>		<b>399,100</b>	<b>389,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>389,500</b>	<b>380,286</b>	<b>-9,214</b>
<b>Total Core Budget</b>		<b>2,825,200</b>	<b>3,580,300</b>	<b>-755,100</b>	<b>2,825,200</b>	<b>2,764,228</b>	<b>-60,972</b>

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

**ITEM 8.1 - APPENDIX 2**

**2019/20**

ORIGINAL BUDGET **386,300**

**LESS: Contributions to Reserves**

Corporate Equipment & Vehicle Replacement	50,000
Internship and Trainee Fund	15,000
Get Involved Continuation	7,700
Estates Reserve	115,000
	<u><b>187,700</b></u>

**LESS: Top sliced Programmes**

	Spend 2019/20	Balance Remaining	Treatment of Balance on the Scheme
Historic Buildings Officer post	30,000	30,000	- Approval all spent
Tourism	20,000	18,750	1,250 Balance kept within Programmes - Fixed Term
Hill Farm Network	19,000	19,000	- Approval all spent
Potential Pinkery overspend	15,000	-	15,000 Balance kept within Programmes - Fixed Term
Education Outreach continuation	10,000	10,000	- Approval all spent
Housing Network Coordinator	10,000	50	9,950 Balance kept within Programmes - Fixed Term
Research & Data Gathering	10,000	10,000	- Approval all spent
Economy Project Officer	8,000	8,000	- Approval all spent
Naturally Active in Later Life	5,000	5,000	- Approval all spent
Website Development	5,000	-	5,000 Unallocated funds transferred to IT & Web Reserve
SERC/DBRC Bio-records	5,000	2,500	2,500 Balance kept within Programmes - Fixed Term
STEAM	4,000	1,750	2,250 Balance kept within Programmes - Fixed Term
Ponies	3,000	-	3,000 Unallocated funds transferred to Estates Reserve
Planning Fee Reimbursement Fund	2,500	1,540	960 Unallocated funds transferred to General Balances
Joint committee	2,100	1,400	700 Unallocated funds transferred to General Balances
	<u><b>148,600</b></u>	<u><b>107,990</b></u>	<u><b>40,610</b></u>

**Spend from Previous Year's Fixed Term Allocations** **55,182**

**Total Spend in 2019/20 on Fixed Term Priorities** **163,172**

**LESS: Partnership Fund - small grants scheme**

Poetic celebration of life on Exmoor 2	2,500	65	2,436	Balance kept within Programmes - Small Grants
Roadwater Community Shop	2,500	2,500	-	Approval all spent
Wimbleball Sailability	2,500	2,500	-	Approval all spent
MED Theatre	2,160	-	2,160	Balance kept within Programmes - Small Grants
Ancient Woodland Inventory Review - Devon	2,500	-	2,500	Balance kept within Programmes - Small Grants
Exmoor Lamb	1,000	482	518	Balance kept within Programmes - Small Grants
Unallocated budget	36,840	-	36,840	Split between Community Support for CV19 (£20k), provision for Pinkery overspend (£10k) and added to General Balances (£6.8k)
	<u><b>50,000</b></u>	<u><b>5,547</b></u>	<u><b>44,454</b></u>	

**Spend from Previous Year's Small Grants Allocations** **32,435**

**Total Spend in 2019/20 on Small Grants** **37,981**

**2019/20 Programmes & Partnership Fund** **386,300**

**EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY  
ANALYSIS OF RESERVES**

	Balance 31/03/19	2019/20 Original Budget Allocations	2019/20 In- Year Reserve Transfers	Current Balance	Transfers to Reserves 2019/20	Transfers from Reserves 2019/20	Outturn Transfers between Reserves 2019/20	Balance 31/03/20
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>REVENUE EARMARKED RESERVES</b>								
<b>Support to Land Managers</b>								
Ashcombe Garden Restoration	10,253			10,253		-10,253	10,000	10,000
Mire - Archaeology	29,758			29,758				29,758
Headwaters of the Exe	147,139		-30,000	117,139		-48,408	-40,000	28,731
Headwaters of the Exe 20/21 - 25/26 (PR 19)	50,000			50,000			-50,000	0
Heritage Projects	81,495			81,495	6,414	-8,300	-27,500	52,109
Deer Monitoring Study	13,424			13,424				13,424
Woodland Mgt Reserve	25,784		30,000	55,784		-5,000		50,784
External Funding Bids	23,274			23,274				23,274
Rights of Way	181,263			181,263	70,400	-22,000	30,000	259,663
Simonsbath Project Development	4,017			4,017		-4,017		0
Simonsbath Project Delivery	190,084			190,084		-177,292	20,000	32,792
Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme	25,244			25,244		-14,000		11,244
<b>Support to National Park Users</b>								
Caremoor For Exmoor	11,611			11,611	49,334	-3,429	-42,500	15,016
National Park Centres spend to save	7,336			7,336	10,000			17,336
Get Involved Programme	50,068	7,700	10,000	67,768		-29,092		38,676
Toilet Upgrade Programme	15,000			15,000				15,000
Health & Well-being	36,954		11,000	47,954		-25,183		22,771
Engagement & Outreach (New Aud Fund)	12,411			12,411	3,500			15,911
<b>Support to the Community and Business</b>								
Development of Planning Service	54,794			54,794	10,000	-23,537		41,257
Conserv Area Appraisals & Neighbourhd Plan	22,283			22,283			-10,000	12,283
Dunster Action Plan	21,189			21,189				21,189
<b>Strategy &amp; Performance</b>								
Environmental Resilience	0			0			20,000	20,000
IT and Web Development	87,175			87,175			5,000	92,175
Corporate Equipment & Vehicle Replacement	112,425	50,000		162,425		-3,000		159,425
Planning Policy	127,910			127,910	17,446			145,356
Research & Development	42,049			42,049		-10,000	9,652	41,701
Improving and Innovating/ Spend to Save	131,106			131,106		-45,000		86,106
Internship and Trainee Fund	44,813	15,000		59,813		-16,280		43,533
Authority Estate	126,751	115,000		241,751	22,177	-90,500	53,000	226,428
	<b>1,685,608</b>	<b>187,700</b>	<b>21,000</b>	<b>1,894,308</b>	<b>189,271</b>	<b>-535,291</b>	<b>-22,348</b>	<b>1,525,940</b>
<b>PROGRAMMES &amp; PARTNERSHIPS</b>								
Programmes - fixed term	242,805	148,600	77,000	468,405		-163,172	21,003	326,236
Partnership Fund/ small grants scheme	74,077	50,000		124,077		-37,981	-26,840	59,256
Programmes & Partnership Earmarked - County	90,000			90,000				90,000
	<b>406,882</b>	<b>198,600</b>	<b>77,000</b>	<b>682,482</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-201,153</b>	<b>-5,837</b>	<b>475,492</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND AND CONTINGENCIES</b>								
General Fund	336,337			336,337	60,972		-71,815	325,494
Contingency Fund - General (pf uncommit)	456,193		-98,000	358,193			100,000	458,193
Contingency Fund - Legal	100,000			100,000				100,000
	<b>892,530</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-98,000</b>	<b>794,530</b>	<b>60,972</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28,185</b>	<b>883,686</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>2,985,020</b>	<b>386,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,371,320</b>	<b>250,243</b>	<b>-736,444</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,885,118</b>

Table 1 - 2019/20 Small Grant Allocations

Project	Summary	Partnership Fund contribution	Total project value	Partnership Fund intervention rate	Progress update
<b>PF19-02</b> <b>Poetic celebration of life on Exmoor 2</b>	Grant to develop an audio-visual presentation of Exmoor poems and deliver poetry workshops for Exmoor audiences.	<b>£2500</b>	£4000	63%	In progress
<b>PF19-04</b> <b>Roadwater Community Shop</b>	Contribution to the redevelopment of Roadwater Community Shop and creation of a local information hub	<b>£2000</b>	£232,500	1%	Work completed and the community shop is open for business.
<b>PF19-05</b> <b>Wimbleball Sailability</b>	Grant toward the purchase of a second accessible boat to allow more people with disabilities to enjoy Wimbleball	<b>£2500</b>	£23,540	11%	Boat purchased and set for launch in the spring 2020.
<b>PF 19-06</b> <b>MED Theatre</b>	Grant support to deliver a residential theatre workshop at Pinkery for young people.	<b>£2160</b>	£3092	70%	In progress
<b>PF 19-07</b> <b>Ancient Woodland Inventory Review - Devon</b>	Contribution toward a reappraisal of Ancient Woodland on the Devon side of Exmoor.	<b>£2500</b>	£100,000	3%	In progress
<b>PF 19-08</b> <b>Exmoor Lamb</b>	Support toward the marketing and promotion of Exmoor lamb.	<b>£1000</b>	£2630	38%	In progress
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£13,160</b>	£352,202	31%	

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

7 July 2020

### 2019/20 OUTTURN – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

#### Report of the Chief Finance Officer

**Purpose of Report:** To note the 2019/20 Statement of Accounts that will be presented to the External Auditors for audit.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Authority is recommended to CONSIDER and NOTE the Statement of Accounts for 2019/20.

**Authority Priority:** Achieve by providing core services; getting best value from our resources and improving our performance.

**Legal and Equality Implications:** Local Government Act 2003, Parts 1-3 (Capital Finance, Financial Administration and Grants), Sections 1-39.

Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011, Part 2 (Financial Management and Internal Control).

The equality and human rights impact of the recommendations of this report have been assessed as having no adverse impact on any particular group or individual.

**Financial and Risk Implications:** The financial and risk implications are shown throughout the report.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 For the last three years the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 have required the responsible Finance Officer to produce and certify the Statement of Accounts by 31 May and for the Authority to adopt the audited Statement of Accounts by 31 July. In Exmoor this responsibility is delegated from the Authority to the Final Accounts Committee. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these dates have been temporarily revised to 31 August for the draft accounts and a target date set of 30 November for final publication. This Authority has endeavoured to continue to publish the draft accounts as soon as was practicable.
- 1.2 The certified Statement of Accounts for 2019/20 that has been produced has been presented to the External Auditor for consideration. The Auditor is required to issue an audit report giving their:
- opinion on whether the financial statements presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority as at 31 March 2020; and
  - conclusion on whether the Authority has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

## **2. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

- 2.1 The format and content of the Statement of Accounts comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019 (the Code) – and are required to present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority at 31 March 2020 and its comprehensive income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020.
- 2.2 As Chief Finance Officer, I signed off the accounts on 12 June 2020.
- 2.3 Members will note that the net worth of the Authority has increased by £0.4m to £11.9m. This is due to an increase in the Land and Buildings Valuations.
- 2.4 Members of the Authority will note that the accounts have been prepared on a 'going concern' basis. This is based upon the fact that the Authority has a balanced MTFP, a robust budget setting process, ongoing funding streams and reserves that are adequate to meet challenges that arise. The 'going concern' basis assumes that the Authority will continue for the foreseeable future.
- 2.5 There are no significant changes to the structure of the accounts for 2019/20. Technical accounting changes that were due to be introduced were instead deferred.

**G Bryant**  
**Chief Finance Officer**  
**June 2020**



# Exmoor National Park

## Statement Of Accounts 2019/20

**Gordon Bryant**  
Chief Finance Officer

**Sarah Bryan**  
Chief Executive



**UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS****2019/20****CONTENTS**

<b>SECTION</b>		<b>PAGE</b>
1	Narrative Report	3
2	Statement of Responsibilities	9
3	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	10
4	Movement in Reserves Statement	11
5	Balance Sheet	12
6	Cash Flow Statement	13
7	Notes to the Accounts	14
8	Annual Governance Statement	43

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20

### NARRATIVE REPORT

#### Introduction

1. The Authority was created and given powers under the Environment Act 1995 and came into existence on 1 April 1997. The Act sets out two primary purposes for Exmoor National Park Authority ('the Authority'):
  - To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park area; and
  - To promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities.
2. In carrying out these purposes the Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities in the National Park and is the Planning Authority under the Town and Country Planning Acts for the National Park area.
3. Exmoor National Park Authority is required under section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995 to produce a National Park Management Plan (the 'Partnership Plan') and State of the Park report and review them every five years. The National Park Authority is responsible for preparing the Plan, but it is developed in consultation with partner organizations, communities, visitors and businesses and will be delivered with a wide range of partners. The fundamental basis for the Plan, and for the work of the National Park Authority, are the National Park statutory purposes and duty. Evidence from the updated State of the Park report forms an important basis for the review of the Partnership Plan, and ongoing monitoring. In April 2018 the [Partnership Plan](#) 2018-23 was published by the Authority. This sets out the Vision and Ambitions for the National Park under three themes of 'People, Place and Prosperity'.

#### Governance

4. The Annual Governance Statement is included within this publication but does not form part of the Authority's accounts. The Annual Governance Statement is found at the back of this document and explains the:
  - Scope of responsibilities;
  - Governance Framework; and
  - Significant governance issues and challenges faced by the Authority.
5. An enhanced governance relationship with Defra began in 2019/20. This included an annual formal agreement and additional reporting requirements.

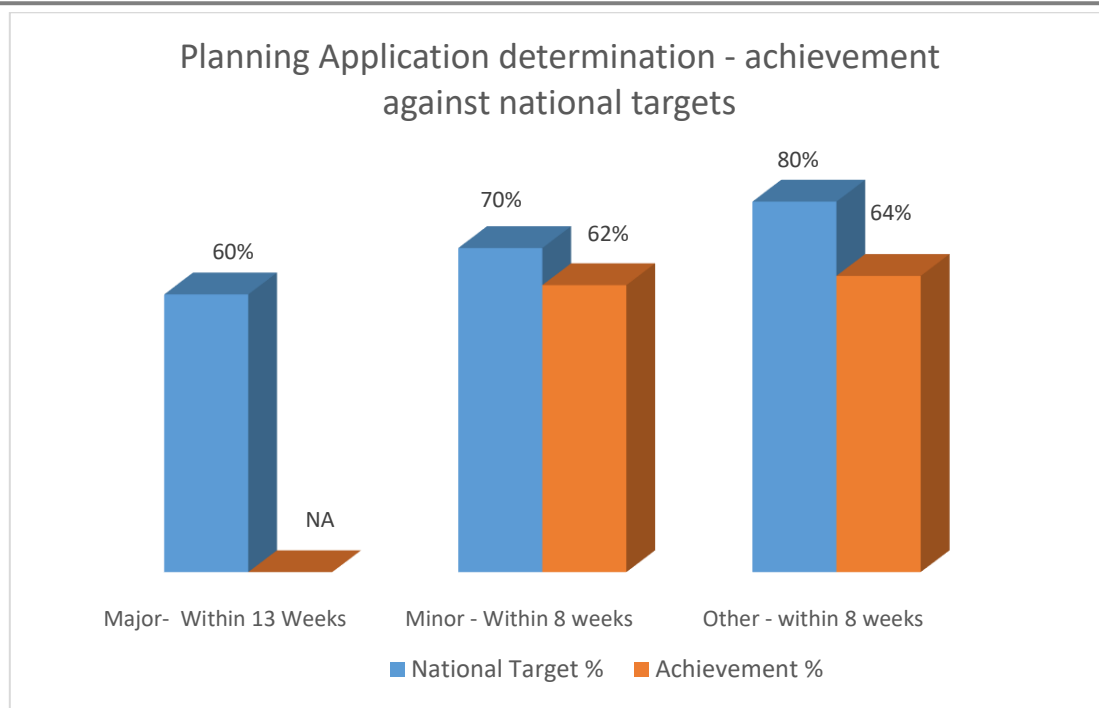
## Organisation

- To achieve the purposes and duty described in 1 and 2, the organisation is structured in terms of Support to Land Managers, Support to National Park Users and Support to the Community and Business.

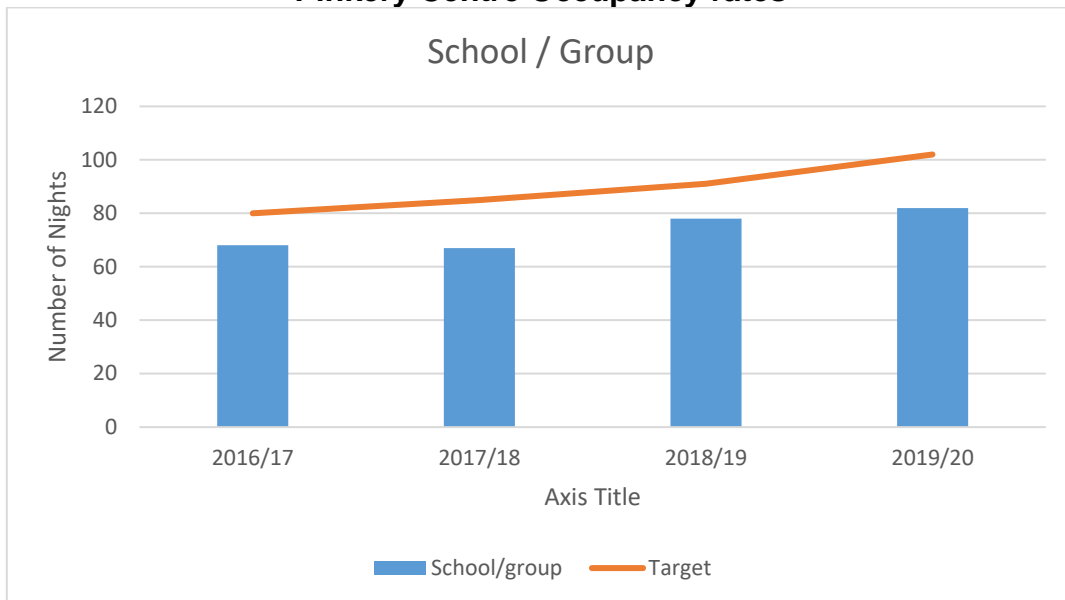
## Performance

- 2019/20 saw the completion of the single year Corporate plan for the Authority. A mid-year report of progress in implementing the previous Business Plan was taken to the Authority in December 2019, and the full report will go to the Authority in July 2020. Progress against key corporate indicators is given in the charts below. Performance is monitored quarterly by Leadership Team to ensure that the actions within the Corporate Plan are being achieved and, if necessary, to provide an opportunity for resources to be re-allocated or to review the proposed action.
- Performance against the Key Corporate Indicators begun to be impacted in 2019/20 by the Coronavirus outbreak towards the end of the year. Staff have predominantly been working from home as Exmoor House, the National Park Centres and the Outdoor Education Centre at Pinkery have been closed. However the Authority quickly developed a Covid Response Fund to support local community groups and we are in the process of producing a recovery plan. Performance will be impacted to a greater extent by Coronavirus in 2020/21. For an analysis of performance in 2019/20 that goes beyond the Key Corporate Indicators please look to the Authority report that will be submitted in July.

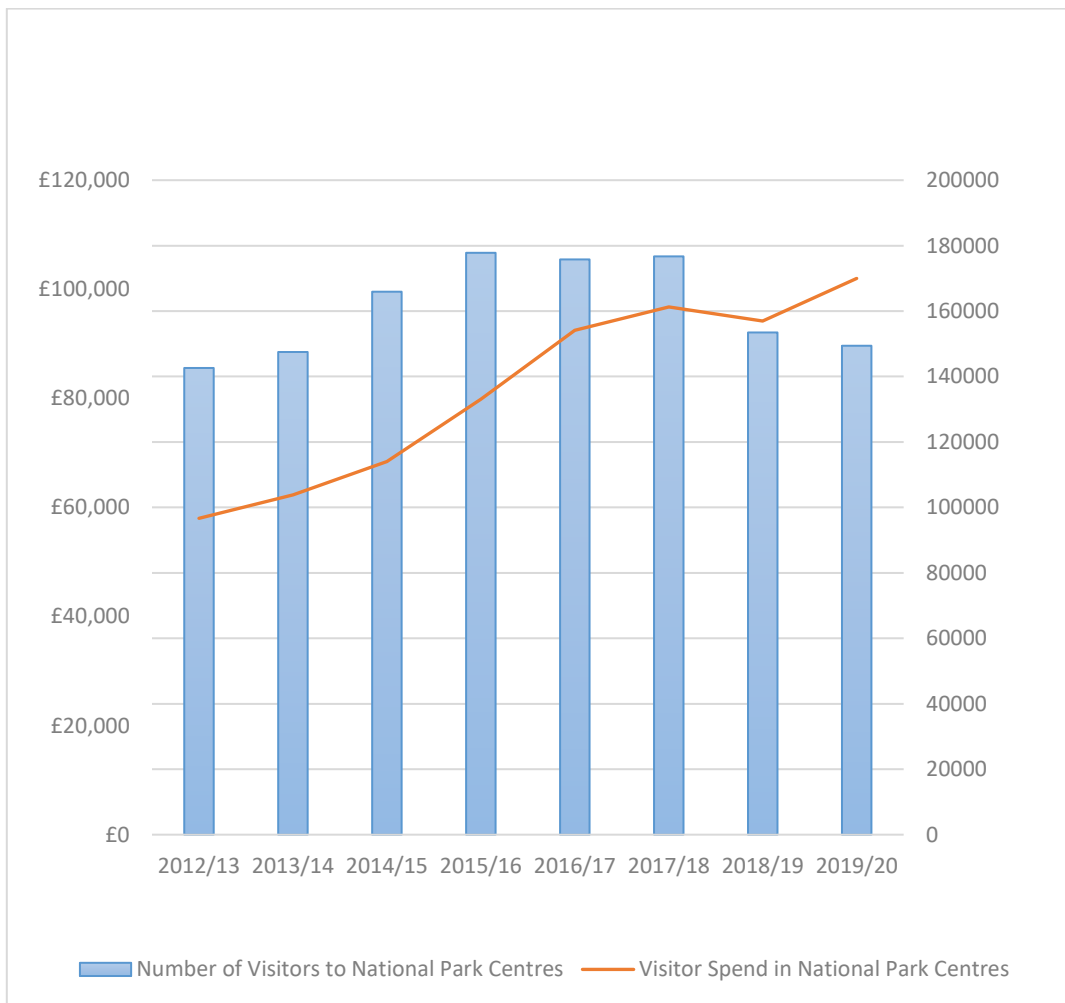
### Key Corporate Indicators 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020



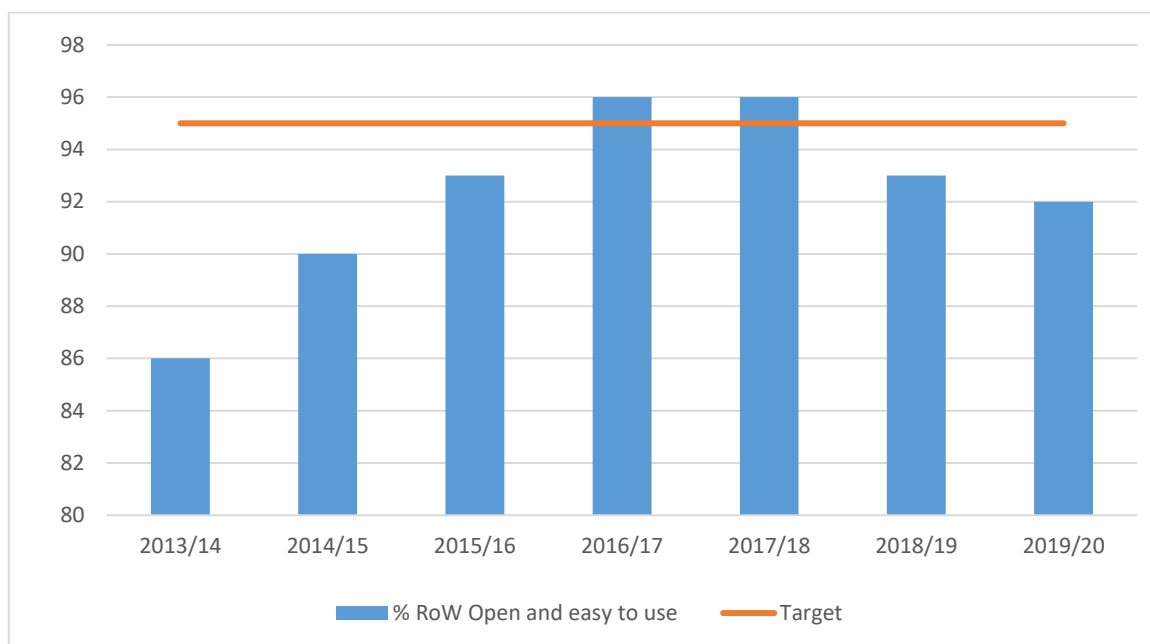
### Pinkery Centre Occupancy rates



### National Park Centre Visitor Numbers and Income Trend



## Rights of Way Open and Easy to Use Score



9. 2019/20 is notable for being the year when significant refurbishment of White Rock Cottage took place, a new planning system was introduced and the Authority began to manage the impact of Ash Die-Back on its Woodland Estate. It was also the final year of the Headwaters program with South West Water to improve water quality in the river Exe and its catchment. Further work was undertaken at Weir Cleave and the Outdoor Education Centre at Pinkery.

### Financial Statements

10. Information relating to financial performance for the year ended 31 March 2020 is contained in the following statements:

#### **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (page 10);**

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation.

The Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement shows a surplus for 2019/20 of £0.391m. This contrasts with a surplus of £0.596 for 2018/19.

#### **Movement in Reserves Statement (page 11);**

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed between general fund and other 'unusable' reserves. The statement shows how the movements in year of the Authority's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return the amounts chargeable to government grants for the year. The Net Increase/Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movements in the year following those adjustments.

General Fund and earmarked reserves fell by £100k over the course of 2019/20 to £2.884m and unusable increased over the same period to £9.0m from £8.5m. The

reduction in usable reserves was primarily due to the completion of schemes described in section 8 of this Narrative Report.

### **Balance Sheet (page 12)**

This statement shows the values as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Authority. The net assets of the Authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Authority.

Exmoor has £11.9m of assets in excess of its liabilities at the end of 2019/20. This is an increase of £0.4m which is primarily due to an increase in the value of Land and Buildings. The Authority owns £18.8m of Property, Plant and Equipment however many of these assets could not be realized at this level. Covenants attached to certain assets mean that they can only be sold to similar organizations and for the notional sum of £1.

### **Cash Flow Statement (page 13)**

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities.

The statement shows how the amount of Cash and Cash Equivalents fell by £37k over the course of 2019/20.

## **Financial Performance**

11. The revenue budget for 2019/20 was agreed on the 5 February 2019. Resources were applied to meet the purposes and duty described in 1 and 2. The approved budget was constructed across two themes:
  - A Core Budget with expenditure of £3,599,600 and income of £774,400 giving a net requirement of £2,825,200;
  - A Partnership budget involving expenditure of £386,300 of which £148,600 was top-sliced for priority elements, £50,000 set aside for small grants and £187,700 added to reserves.
  
12. The Authority considered a revised budget and reviewed the elements of the budget at its meeting on 5 November 2019. Funds were shifted between expected underspends and reserves to meet some of the initial costs related to Ash Die-Back, extend six fixed term contracts for a year and meet some of the increase in staff costs due to Job Evaluation.
  
13. The key financial outcomes for the year ended 31 March 2020 are:
  - Transfers from reserves to support spending during the year amounted to £100,000. The most significant involved the use of the Estates and Simonsbath Development Reserve. The Programmes top slice was continued to be used to implement DEFRA's National Park Plan.
  - The revenue outturn for the year recommends that funds are redistributed towards the Contingency, Environmental Resilience and Estates Reserves and to meet Coronavirus related costs and support. These include setting money aside for the anticipated large deficit at the Pinkery Outdoor Education Centre, adaptations to the National Park Centres and further support to community organisations.



- The core budget shows an underspend for the year of £61,000 when compared with the revised budget. The reconciliation between this surplus and that shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account is as follows:

	£000	£000
<b>Net Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income &amp; Expenditure Account</b>		<b>447</b>
<i>Non Cash Transactions</i>		
Reverse Depreciation & Impairment charges	(53)	
Reverse IAS19 Pensions transactions	(519)	
Net transfers from earmarked reserves	(161)	
Add in Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue	243	
Add in Capital Expenditure funded from Capital Grants	88	
Movement in Employee absence Accrual	(13)	
Downwards Revaluation of Assets	(93)	
<b>Management Accounts Budget Surplus</b>		<b>(61)</b>

14. The Authority has an excellent record in managing its financial affairs within its resources, and in 2019/20 has performed well, against the original and revised budgets set.

## Financial Outlook

15. For the previous four years the Authority has had some success in managing resources and meeting obligations in the context of a slightly increasing National Park Grant. This abruptly changed when setting the 2020/21 budget as the underlying, ongoing funding from Defra was reduced by 5%. We do not know what the level of funding will be from 2021/22 onwards and there is no reason to think that the previous level of funding will be reinstated.
16. Funding also had to be found during the 2020/21 budget setting process for the increased costs related to the Pension Fund valuation and for the costs related to the first two years of Job Evaluation being implemented. There are four more years of JE still to be resourced and the staff and members pay award looks likely to come in higher than was forecast.
17. At the point when this Narrative Report is produced, we would hope that the scale and scope of the financial and associated challenges related to the Coronavirus outbreak are known. This has significantly impacted upon traded income at the National Park Centres and at Pinkery. Car parking income is also down. However as described in section 12, we have a plan for meeting these losses and would hope that the usual visiting and trading patterns will return. We are also due to receive over £100k from governmental support related to the pandemic.
18. There are therefore lots of cost pressures and risks to funding in the short and medium term. However, the Authority continues to maintain a solid financial position and opportunities from the Glover Review, the new Agricultural support system and the UK's exit from the European Union will arise.

G Bryant  
Chief Finance Officer  
June 2020



**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20****2. STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES****2.1 The Authority's Responsibilities**

The Authority is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority that officer is the Chief Finance Officer.
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and to safeguard its assets; and
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

**2.2 The Chief Finance Officer's Responsibilities**

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom: A Statement of Recommended Practice (the CODE).

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Chief Finance Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent, and
- complied with the local authority CODE

The Chief Finance Officer has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date; and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**2.3 Declaration of the Chief Finance Officer:**

**I certify that this Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and that it gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Exmoor National Park Authority as at 31 March 2020 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020.**

**G Bryant**

**Chief Finance Officer: ..... Date: 12 June 2020**

## Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from National Park Grant. National Park Authorities receive National Park Grant and raise other income to cover expenditure in accordance with statutory requirements; this may be different from the accounting cost. The taxation (government grant) position is shown in both the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the Movement in Reserves Statement.

2018/19				2019/20		
Gross Expenditure £000	Gross Income £000 (Notes 10 & 11)	Net Expenditure £000		Gross Expenditure £000	Gross Income £000 (Notes 10 & 11)	Net Expenditure £000
1,438	(416)	1,022	Support to Land Managers	1,435	(487)	948
548	(130)	418	Support to the Community	494	(166)	328
1,290	(387)	903	Support to National Park Users	951	(341)	610
1,350	(314)	1,036	Support Services	1,373	(289)	1,084
289	-	289	Corporate Management	263		263
270	(12)	258	Partnership Fund	238	(17)	221
<b>5,185</b>	<b>(1,259)</b>	<b>3,926</b>	<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>4,754</b>	<b>(1,300)</b>	<b>3,454</b>
7	-	7	Other Operating Expenditure (Note 12)	9	-	9
235	(26)	209	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure (Note 13)	225	(30)	195
-	(3,157)	(3,157)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (Note 14)	-	(3,211)	(3,211)
<b>5,427</b>	<b>(4,442)</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services</b>	<b>4,988</b>	<b>(4,541)</b>	<b>447</b>
		(1,077)	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment (Notes 22 & 23)			(596)
		(504)	Remeasurement of Net Defined Benefit Liability/ (Asset) (Note 35)			(242)
		<b>(1,581)</b>	<b>Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>			<b>(838)</b>
		<b>(596)</b>	<b>Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure (Surplus)/Deficit</b>			<b>(391)</b>

## Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed into 'General Fund Balance' (i.e. Earmarked Reserves and the General Fund proper which can be applied to fund expenditure) and other 'unusable' reserves. The statement shows how the movements in year of the Authority's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return the amounts chargeable to government grants for the year. The Net Increase/Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movements in the year following those adjustments.

	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Total Usable reserves £000	Unusable Reserves £000	Total Authority Reserves £000
<b>Balance at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>3,030</b>	-	<b>3,030</b>	<b>7,902</b>	<b>10,932</b>
<b>Movement in reserves during 2018/19</b>					
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(985)	-	<b>(985)</b>	1,581	<b>596</b>
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 20)	939	-	<b>939</b>	(939)	-
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease)</b>	<b>(46)</b>	-	<b>(46)</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>596</b>
<b>Balance at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>2,984</b>	-	<b>2,984</b>	<b>8,544</b>	<b>11,528</b>
<b>Movement in reserves during 2019/20</b>					
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(447)	-	<b>(447)</b>	838	<b>391</b>
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 20)	347	-	<b>347</b>	(347)	-
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in 2019/20</b>	<b>(100)</b>	-	<b>(100)</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>391</b>
<b>Balance at 31 March 2019 (Notes 21 and 30)</b>	<b>2,884</b>	-	<b>2,884</b>	<b>9,035</b>	<b>11,919</b>

## Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Authority. The net assets of the Authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves the Authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves is those that the Authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

31 March 2019 £000		Notes	31 March 2020 £000
17,985	Property, Plant & Equipment	22	18,765
81	Heritage Assets	23	81
<b>18,066</b>	<b>Long Term Assets</b>		<b>18,846</b>
60	Inventories	-	74
350	Short Term Debtors	26	256
2,800	Cash and Cash Equivalents	27	2,763
80	Assets Held for Sale	24	80
<b>3,290</b>	<b>Current Assets</b>		<b>3,173</b>
(24)	Receipts in Advance	-	(16)
(243)	Short Term Creditors	28	(246)
<b>(267)</b>	<b>Current Liabilities</b>		<b>(262)</b>
(9,561)	Other Long Term Liabilities	35	(9,838)
<b>(9,561)</b>	<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>		<b>(9,838)</b>
<b>11,528</b>	<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>11,919</b>
2,984	Usable Reserves	21,29, 30	2,884
8,544	Unusable Reserves	31	9,035
<b>11,528</b>	<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>11,919</b>

### Authorised for Issue

The un-audited Accounts were authorised for issue by Gordon Bryant, Chief Finance Officer (s.151 Officer) on 12 June 2020.

## Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Authority are funded by way of grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Authority. Investing Activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Authority's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicating claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Authority.

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
<b>985</b>	<b>Net (surplus) or deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>447</b>
	<i>Adjustments for-</i>	
(1,095)	Non Cash Movements (Note 37)	(741)
<b>(110)</b>	<b>Net Cash flows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>(294)</b>
255	Investing Activities (Note 38)	331
-	Financing Activities (Note 39)	-
<b>145</b>	<b>Net (increase)/decrease in Cash and Cash equivalents</b>	<b>37</b>
2,945	Cash and Cash Equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	2,800
<b>2,800</b>	<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b>2,763</b>
<b>145</b>	<b>Net (increase)/decrease in Cash and Cash equivalents</b>	<b>37</b>

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2019/20

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

#### Note 1: Accounting Policies

##### i **General Principles**

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Authority's transactions for the 2019/20 financial year and its position at the year-end 31 March 2020. The Authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices under Section 21 of the 2003 Act primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2019/20 (The Code) supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IRFS) and statutory guidance issued under section 12 of the 2003 Act.

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared using the going concern and accrual basis. The historical cost convention has been applied, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

##### ii **Accruals of Income and Expenditure**

Activity is accounted for in the year it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Authority transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Authority.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Authority can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Authority.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.
- Small amounts outstanding at year end are treated on a payments basis. In total, these do not have a material effect on the year's accounts.

iii **Cash and Cash Equivalents (Note 27)**

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature in no more than three months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value. In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Authority's cash management.

iv **Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors**

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment. Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the Authority's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied. Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

v **Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets**

Services and support services are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding fixed assets during the year:

- depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service
- revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off.

vi **Employee Benefits (Notes 16,19)**

Benefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Authority. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Authority to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy and are charged on an accruals basis to the Service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Authority is demonstrably committed to the termination of the employment of an officer or group of officers or making an offer to encourage voluntary redundancy.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable

by the Authority to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and to replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable at the year-end.

#### Post Employment Benefits

Most employees of the Authority are members of the following pension scheme:

- The Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by Peninsula Pensions.

The scheme provides defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees who worked for the Authority.

#### *The Local Government Pension Scheme*

**The Local Government Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme:**

- The liabilities of the SCC LGPS pension fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc. and projections of earnings for current employees.
- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate based on the indicative rate of return on high quality corporate bond (annualised yield at the 20-year point on the Merrill Lynch AA-rated corporate bond yield curve).
- The assets of SCC pension fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair values.
  - quoted securities – current bid price
  - unquoted securities – professional estimate
  - unitised securities – current bid price
  - property – market value
- The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into seven components:
- **Service Cost comprising:**
  - Current service cost: the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year which is allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked.
  - Past service cost: the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years will be debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs.
  - Net interest on the defined liability: i.e. net interest expense for the authority – the change during the period in the net defined liability that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined liability at the beginning of the period, taking into account any changes in the net defined liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.



- **Remeasurement comprising:**
  - The return on plan assets: excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined liability – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
  - Actuarial gains and losses: changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- Contributions paid to the Somerset County Council pension fund:
  - Cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

*Discretionary Benefits*

The Authority also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

vii **Events After the Balance Sheet Date (Note 5)**

Events after the balance sheet date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

- those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events
- those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the Statement of Accounts.

viii **Financial Instruments (Notes 25 and 34)**

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost.

Financial assets are classified on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cashflow characteristics: there are three main classes of financial assets measured at:

- Amortised cost
- Fair value through profit and loss (none)
- Fair value through other comprehensive income (none)

Our business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cashflows. Financial assets are therefore classified at amortised cost (bank deposits and debtors).

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised in the Balance Sheet when we become party to the contractual provisions of the instrument and are initially measured at fair value. They are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits are made to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES for interest receivable, based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. Any gains and losses that arise on derecognition are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES.

Expected Credit Loss Model - we recognise expected credit losses on financial assets held at amortised cost either on a 12-month or lifetime basis and also applies to lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors). Impairment losses are calculated to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place due to default. Credit risk plays an important part in assessing losses. Where risk has increased significantly since initial recognition, losses are assessed on a life-time basis. Where risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on the basis of 12 month expected losses. If expected losses are not material then no allowance will be made.

**ix Government Grants and Contributions (Note 18)**

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, government grants and third party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Authority when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the Authority will comply with the conditions attached to the payments and
- the grants or contributions will be received.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as creditors. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (attributable revenue grants and contributions) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

**x Inventories**

Inventories held for resale at the three National Park Centres are included in the Balance Sheet at cost. The cost of inventories is assigned using the weighted average costing formula.

**xi Property, Plant and Equipment (Note 22)**

Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial year are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment.

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits

or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred.

### De-minimus

Expenditure below £5,000 on property, plant and equipment is treated as revenue expenditure and is charged to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement in the year that it is incurred.

### Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising the purchase price and any costs attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (i.e. it will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the Authority).

Assets are then carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost
- all other assets – fair value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV)

Where there is no market-based evidence of fair value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of fair value. Where non-property assets that have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for fair value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at fair value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their fair value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for by:

- where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains)
- where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Revaluation Reserve contains revaluation gains recognised since 1 April 2007 only, the date of its formal implementation. Gains arising before that date have been consolidated into the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Impairment

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for by:

- where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains)
- where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. An exception is made for assets without a determinable finite useful life (i.e. freehold land and certain Community Assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction).

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- dwellings and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer
- vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the asset

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with an amount equal to the difference between current value depreciation charged on assets and the depreciation that would have been chargeable based on their historical cost being transferred each year from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

### Disposals

Where an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Assets Held for Sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals (if any) are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve, and can then only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Authority's underlying need to borrow (the capital financing requirement) (England and Wales)]. Receipts are appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against National Park Grant, as the cost of fixed assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

### Non-current assets-held-for-sale

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an asset-held-for-sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less costs to sell.

## xii **Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets (Note 36)**

### Contingent Assets

Contingent assets are disclosed by way of note where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Authority a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Authority.

### Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the authority a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the authority. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts.

## xiii **Reserves (Notes 20, 21, 29, 30)**

The Authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against National Park Grant for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Authority.

## xiv **Heritage Assets (Note 23)**

The Authority's Heritage Assets are assets held by the Authority principally for their contribution to knowledge and/or culture. They are recognised and measured in accordance with the Authority's accounting policies on Property, Plant and Equipment. The authority only recognises two Heritage Assets; the Brendon Hill Incline and the Simonsbath Sawmill. These are recognised at historic cost as there is no market for such assets and no estimate could be made for their rebuild costs as such assets are no longer being built.

## **Note 2: Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted**

The 2019/20 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting requires the Authority to identify any accounting standards that have been issued but have yet to be adopted and could have a material impact on the accounts.

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) requires the disclosure of information relating to the expected impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard which has been issued but is yet to be adopted by the 2019/20 Code. The Code also requires that changes in accounting policy are to be applied retrospectively unless transitional arrangements are specified, this would result in an impact on disclosures spanning two financial years.

IFRS16 Finance Leases was to have been introduced in the 2020/21 code. However CIPFA has since deferred the start date until 1 April 2021. The impact of IFRS 16 has not yet been fully assessed and work will be undertaken to inform the impact on the 2021/22 Accounts. Work has been undertaken to identify the number of leases this will cover. This change is not expected to have a material impact on the Authority's financial position or performance.

## **Note 3: Critical Judgements in applying Accounting Policies**

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 1, the Authority has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

- The accounts have been prepared on a going-concern basis. The concept of going concern assumes that the Authority, its functions and services will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. There is no indication that Defra or Central Government intends to abolish National Park Authorities. Defra has also provided a letter of assurance that it will provide funding to National Park Authorities and the Broads Authority to ensure that CV19 financial impacts do not directly result in redundancies or prevent an authority from maintaining a balanced budget in the financial year 2020/21.

## **Note 4: Assumptions about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty**

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Authority about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

One item in the Authority's Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2020, for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in forthcoming financial years, is as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Uncertainties</b>	<b>Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions</b>
<b>Pensions Liability</b>	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of actuaries is engaged to provide the Authority with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effects of the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, a 0.1% increase in the discount rate assumption would result in a decrease in the pension liability of £460K. However the assumptions interact in complex ways. During 2019/20, the Authority's actuaries advised that due to estimates being adjusted (as a result of experience and updating the assumptions) the net pension liability had increased by £0.277m.

## **Note 5: Events after the Balance Sheet Date**

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Chief Finance Officer on 12 June 2020. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2020, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

## **Note 6: Related Parties**

The Authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Authority or to be controlled or influenced by the Authority. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Authority might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Authority.

### *Central Government*

Central government has effective control over the general operations of the Authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Authority operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants. Grants received from government departments are set out in the subjective analysis in Note 18 on Grant Income.

### *Members*

Members of the Authority have direct control over the Authority's financial and operating policies. 12 of the Authority's members are also elected members of other local authorities within Devon and Somerset. The Authority's Standing Orders requires a register to be kept of members disclosable pecuniary interests and declarations of related party transactions in a register of interests. In addition members are asked to declare separately any transactions with the Authority. A summary of the Members' allowances paid in 2019/20 is shown in Note 15.

### *Officers*

Officers of the Authority are bound by the Authority's Code of Conduct which seeks to prevent related parties exerting undue influence over the Authority. Senior Officers are required to declare any transactions with the Authority. No transactions have been disclosed.

The Authority's transactions with the Somerset County Council Pension Fund are detailed within Note 35 to the Financial Statements.

## **Note 7: Expenditure and Funding Analysis**

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, other grants and contributions, sales, fees and charges) by the Authority in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the Authority in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Authority's service areas. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2018/19				2019/20		
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £000	Adjustments between Funding & Accounting basis £000 (Note 8)	Net Expenditure in the CI&ES £000		Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £000	Adjustments between Funding & Accounting basis £000 (Note 8)	Net Expenditure in the CI&ES £000
870	152	1,022	Support to Land Managers	1,113	(165)	948
380	38	418	Support to the Community	298	30	328
540	363	903	Support to National Park Users	532	78	610
961	75	1,036	Support Services	957	127	1,084
253	36	289	Corporate Management	240	23	263
225	33	258	Partnership Fund	201	20	221
<b>3,229</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>3,926</b>	<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>3,341</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>3,454</b>
(3,183)	242	(2,941)	Other Income & Expenditure	(3,241)	234	(3,007)
<b>46</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>447</b>
<b>(3,030)</b>			<b>Opening General Fund Balance</b>	<b>(2,984)</b>		
46			Deficit on General Fund in Year	100		
<b>(2,984)</b>			<b>Closing General Fund Balance</b>	<b>(2,884)</b>		

#### Note 8: Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis 2019/20.

Adjustments from the General Fund to arrive at the CIES amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (note a) £000	Net change for Pensions Adjustment (note b) £000	Other Differences (note c) £000	Total Adjustments £000
Support to Land Managers	(254)	85	4	(165)
Support to the Community	2	27	1	30
Support to National Park Users	27	49	2	78
Support Services	40	83	4	127
Corporate Management	-	22	1	23
Partnership Fund	-	19	1	20
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>(185)</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>113</b>
Other Income & Expenditure	-	234	-	234
<b>Surplus/ Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>(185)</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>347</b>



Adjustments from the General Fund to arrive at the CIES amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (note a)	Net change for Pensions Adjustment (note b)	Other Differences (note c)	Total Adjustments
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Support to Land Managers	29	121	2	152
Support to the Community	(6)	44	-	38
Support to National Park Users	288	74	1	363
Support Services	(42)	116	1	75
Corporate Management	-	36	-	36
Partnership Fund	-	32	1	33
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>697</b>
Other Income & Expenditure	-	242	-	242
<b>Surplus/ Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>939</b>

**a) Adjustments for Capital Purposes** - this column adds in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in the services line

**b) Net Change for Pensions Adjustments** - Net change for removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income:

- **For services** - this represents removal of the employer pension contributions made by the Authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs
- **For Financing and investment income and expenditure** - the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the CIES

**c) Other Differences** - other differences debited / credited to the CIES and amounts payable / receivable to be recognised under statute i.e. accumulated absences.

### **Notes Supporting the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement**

#### **Note 9: Material Items of Income and Expenditure**

There are no material items to disclose in 2019/20.

#### **Note 10: Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature**

2018/19 £000	Expenditure	2019/20 £000
2,500	Employee Benefits Expenses	2,619
2,527	Other Service Expenses	2,027
165	Depreciation, Amortisation & Impairment	117
235	Interest Payments	225
<b>5,427</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4,988</b>
	<b>Income</b>	
(1,259)	Grants, Fees, Charges and other Service Income	(1,300)
(3,157)	Government Grants & Contributions	(3,211)
(26)	Interest & Investment Income	(30)
<b>(4,442)</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(4,541)</b>
<b>985</b>	<b>(Surplus)/ Deficit on the provision of service</b>	<b>447</b>

## Note 11: Segmental Income

### 2019/20

	<b>Grants &amp; Contributions</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Charges</b>	<b>Sales Income</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Support to Land Managers	(454)	(28)	-	(5)	<b>(487)</b>
Support to the Community	(14)	(152)	-	-	<b>(166)</b>
Support to National Park Users	(25)	(193)	(93)	(30)	<b>(341)</b>
Support Services	(121)	(3)	-	(165)	<b>(289)</b>
Corporate Management	-	-	-	-	-
Partnership Fund	(17)	-	-	-	<b>(17)</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(631)</b>	<b>(376)</b>	<b>(93)</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(1,300)</b>

### 2018/19

	<b>Grants &amp; Contributions</b>	<b>Fees &amp; Charges</b>	<b>Sales Income</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Support to Land Managers	(388)	(23)	-	(5)	<b>(416)</b>
Support to the Community	(4)	(126)	-	-	<b>(130)</b>
Support to National Park Users	(58)	(212)	(87)	(30)	<b>(387)</b>
Support Services	(147)	(13)	(1)	(153)	<b>(314)</b>
Corporate Management	-	-	-	-	-
Partnership Fund	(4)	-	-	(8)	<b>(12)</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(601)</b>	<b>(374)</b>	<b>(88)</b>	<b>(196)</b>	<b>(1,259)</b>

## Note 12: Other operating expenditure

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
-	(Gains)/Losses on the disposal of non-current assets	-
7	IAS19 Administration expense	9
<b>7</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

## Note 13: Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
235	Net interest on the net defined pensions liability	225
(26)	Interest receivable and similar income	(30)
<b>209</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>

## Note 14: Taxation and non-specific grant incomes

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
(3,157)	Non-ring fenced government grants	(3,211)
<b>(3,157)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(3,211)</b>

## Note 15: Members Allowances

The Authority paid the following amounts to members of the Authority during the year:

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
15	Special Responsibility Allowance	16
59	Basic Allowance	59
10	Allowance for mileage	7
<b>84</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82</b>

## Note 16: Officers' Remuneration

The following table discloses detail of remuneration to the Authority's senior employees who earned over £50,000. There were no senior employees earning over £150,000:

	Salary, Fees and Allowances £000	Expense Allowance £000	Total Remuneration (excl. pension contribution) £000	Pension Contribution £000	Total Remuneration including pension contribution £000
Chief Executive – 2019/20	74	-	74	11	85
Chief Executive – 2018/19	72	-	72	11	83

The number of employees whose remuneration, excluding employer's pension contributions, was £50,000 or more in bands of £5,000 (including those detailed in the above table) were:

2018/19 Number of employees	Remuneration band	2019/20 Number of employees
-	£50,000 - £54,999	-
-	£55,000 - £59,999	-
-	£60,000 - £64,999	-
-	£65,000 - £69,999	-
1	£70,000 - £74,999	1
-	£75,000 - £79,999	-
-	£80,000 - £89,999	-

## Note 17: External Audit Costs

The Authority has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts, certification of grant claims and statutory inspections and to non-audit services provided by the Authority's external auditors:

2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
9	Fees payable to Grant Thornton with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor.	10
<b>9</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

## Note 18: Grant Income

The Authority credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2019/20:

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<b>Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income</b>		
National Park Grant – DEFRA	3,157	3,211
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,157</b>	<b>3,211</b>
<b>Credited to Services</b>		
Brownfield Register – CLG	4	2
Custom Build Grant - CLG	30	15
Rural Crime Grant – Police Community Trust	-	3
English & SW Coast Paths – Natural England	24	-
Land Management Project – Natural England	5	-
Tests and Trials – DEFRA	-	20
Health & Wellbeing – Somerset County Council	40	-

Mend Our Mountains - BMC	-	35
Monument Management Scheme – Historic England	45	8
Historic Buildings Officer funding – Historic England	5	-
Coast Path & Landscape Monitoring – Natural England	-	22
Historic Signposts – Heritage Lottery Fund	22	-
Forestry Grant – Royal Forestry Grant	-	10
Woodland Improvement Grant – RPA	-	17
White Rock Cottage Development - RPA	-	88
Basic Payment & Higher Level Stewardship Scheme – RPA	100	100
Countryside Stewardship – RPA	48	48
Long Holcombe – RPA	-	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>371</b>

### Note 19: Termination Benefits

The number of exit packages with total cost per band and total cost of the compulsory and other redundancies are set out in the table below:

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band £000	
	2018/19	2019/20	2018/19	2019/20	2018/19	2019/20	2018/19	2019/20
£0 - £20,000	-	-	1	-	1	-	14	-
£20,001 - £40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£40,001 - £60,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£60,001 - £80,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£80,001 - £100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

### Notes to Support the Movement in Reserves Statement

#### Note 20: Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Authority in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Authority to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

2019/20	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Movement in Unusable Reserves £000
<b>Adjustments to Revenue Resources:</b>			
<u>Amounts by which income &amp; expenditure included in the CIES are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:</u>			
Pension Costs	519		(519)
Holiday pay	13		(13)
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account)	58	88	(146)
<b>Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>(678)</b>
<b>Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:</b>			

Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(243)	-	243
<b>Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital resources</b>	<b>(243)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>243</b>
<b>Adjustments to Capital Resources:</b>			
Application of Capital Grants to finance Capital Expenditure	-	(88)	88
<b>Total Adjustments to Capital Resources</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(88)</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(347)</b>

2018/19	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Movement in Unusable Reserves £000
<b>Adjustments to Revenue Resources:</b>			
<u>Amounts by which income &amp; expenditure included in the CIES are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:</u>			
Pension Costs	665	-	(665)
Holiday pay	5	-	(5)
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account)	524	-	(524)
<b>Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(1,194)</b>
<b>Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:</b>			
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(255)	-	255
<b>Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital resources</b>	<b>(255)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>255</b>
<b>Adjustments to Capital Resources:</b>			
Application of Capital Grants to finance Capital Expenditure	-	-	-
<b>Total Adjustments to Capital Resources</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(939)</b>

#### Note 21: Transfers to/ from Earmarked Reserves

The Authority's reserve balances are continually reviewed to determine the appropriate level and use. We regularly establish new reserves, assess the appropriate level of existing reserves or cancel reserves that have met their objective. Our reserves are made up as follows:

- General Reserve (unallocated) – this is the minimum level required to maintain working balances (in accordance with CIPFA guidance).
- Partnership Fund Reserves (allocated) – these sums are set aside to meet one-off priorities that assist in the delivery of the Partnership Plan.
- Earmarked Reserves (allocated) – these consist of ring-fenced grants and contributions received from third parties, sums set aside for capital schemes and commitments against future obligations.

- Capital Grants – these include funds received from external organisations towards investment in assets.

It can therefore be seen that the majority of our Reserve Balances are “allocated”. The following table sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund balance in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in year.

	Balance at 31 March 2018 £000	Transfers between Reserves £000	Transfers In 2018/19 £000	Transfers Out 2018/19 £000	Increase/ Decrease (-) in useable Reserves 2018/19 £000	Balance at 31 March 2019 £000	Transfers between Reserves £000	Transfers In 2019/20 £000	Transfers Out 2019/20 £000	Increase/ Decrease in useable Reserves 2019/20 £000	Balance at 31 March 2020 £000
Earmarked Reserves	2,169	179	478	(584)	73	2,242	1	376	(535)	(158)	2,084
Partnership Fund Reserves	551	(125)	206	(225)	(144)	407	71	198	(201)	68	475
General Fund Balance	310	(54)	79	-	25	335	(72)	62		(10)	325
Capital Grants Unapplied	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	88	(88)	-	-
<b>Total Useable Reserves</b>	<b>3,030</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>(809)</b>	<b>(46)</b>	<b>2,984</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>(824)</b>	<b>(100)</b>	<b>2,884</b>

## Notes to Support the Balance Sheet

### Note 22: Property, Plant and Equipment

#### Movements on Balances

	Land & Buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant & Equipment £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total £000
<b>Cost or Valuation 1 April 2019</b>	<b>17,831</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,147</b>
Additions	55	-	277	332
De-recognition – Disposals	-	(74)	-	(74)
Reclassifications (to)/ from held for sale	-	-	-	-
Revaluation Increase/ decrease (-):				
- to Revaluation Reserve	595	-	-	595
- to Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of service	(93)	-	-	(93)
Other movement in cost of valuation	(20)	-	20	-
<b>Cost or Valuation 31 March 2020</b>	<b>18,368</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>18,907</b>
<b>Accumulated depreciation 1 April 2019</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(162)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(162)</b>
Depreciation Charge	(63)	(53)	-	(116)
Derecognition - Disposals	-	74	-	74

Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	11	-	-	11
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of services	52	-	-	52
<b>Total Depreciation at 31 March 2020</b>	-	(141)	-	(141)
<b>Net Book Value at 1 April 2019</b>	17,831	154	-	17,985
<b>Net Book Value at 31 March 2020</b>	18,368	101	297	18,766

	Land & Buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant & Equipment £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total £000
<b>Cost or Valuation 1 April 2018</b>	17,151	744	-	17,895
Additions	114	76	-	190
De-recognition – Disposals	(70)	(504)	-	(574)
Reclassifications (to)/ from held for sale	(80)	-	-	(80)
Revaluation Increase/ decrease (-):				
- to Revaluation Reserve	1,083	-	-	1,083
- to Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of service	(367)	-	-	(367)
<b>Cost or Valuation 31 March 2019</b>	17,831	316	-	18,147
<b>Accumulated depreciation 1 April 2018</b>	-	(577)	-	(577)
Depreciation Charge	(76)	(89)	-	(165)
Derecognition - Disposals	-	504	-	504
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	14	-	-	14
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of services	62	-	-	62
<b>Total Depreciation at 31 March 2018</b>	-	(162)	-	(162)
<b>Net Book Value at 1 April 2018</b>	17,151	167	-	17,318
<b>Net Book Value at 31 March 2019</b>	17,831	154	-	17,985

### Depreciation

The following useful lives and depreciation rates have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

- Land and Buildings: 40-80 years
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment: 5-10 years

### Revaluations

The Authority carries out a valuation programme which ensures all Property, Plant and Equipment is measured at fair value in accordance with IAS16 and revalued at least every five years. We are currently revaluing assets every year to ensure that the values stated are materially correct. The valuation date is the 31<sup>st</sup> March. For 2019/20 the valuation was

carried out by our in-house Land and Property Manager, Mr Matt Harley MRICS FAAV an accredited member of the RICS Valuer Scheme in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors – the RICS Valuation – Global Standards January 2020, Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) accounting code and the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and the RICS Code of Measuring Practice. In 2019/20 condition and measured surveys of the Authority’s public conveniences were undertaken by Mr S I Shortridge BSc FRICS of Underwood Wright Chartered Surveyors. An additional benefit of this work was that it confirmed the remaining physical life of these assets.

There was a capital commitment at the 31 March 2020 of £53,778 towards Woodside Bridge in Lynmouth.

### Note 23: Heritage Assets

	<b>Heritage Assets £000</b>
<b>Cost or Valuation 1 April 2019</b>	<b>81</b>
Additions	-
Revaluation Increase/ decrease (-):	
- to Revaluation Reserve	-
- to Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of service	-
<b>Cost or Valuation 31 March 2020</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Cost or Valuation 1 April 2018</b>	<b>19</b>
Additions	70
Revaluation Increase/ decrease (-):	
- to Revaluation Reserve	(6)
- to Surplus/ Deficit on the provision of service	(2)
<b>Cost or Valuation 31 March 2019</b>	<b>81</b>

### Note 24: Assets Held for Sale

<b>31 March 2019 £000</b>		<b>31 March 2020 £000</b>
-	<b>Balance outstanding at the start of the year</b>	<b>80</b>
80	Assets newly classified as held for sale	-
-	Assets sold	-
<b>80</b>	<b>Balance outstanding at the end of the year</b>	<b>80</b>

### Note 25: Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are defined as contracts that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

#### Financial Assets: Amortised Cost

<b>31 March 2019 £000</b>		<b>31 March 2020 £000</b>
2,800	Comingled Fund	2,800
-	Cash in hand and at bank	-
328	Contractual Debtors	239
<b>3,128</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,039</b>



## Financial Liabilities: Amortised Cost

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
-	Bank Overdraft	(37)
(203)	Contractual Creditors	(204)
<b>(203)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(241)</b>

## Interest and Investment Income:

The (gains) and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments is as follows:

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
(26)	Interest Income	(30)
<b>(26)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(30)</b>

Financial assets and liabilities are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value has been assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining life of the instrument using the following assumptions:

- The fair value of trade and other receivables and payables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount
- The fair value of cash deposits is taken to be the cash balance as at 31 March

## Note 26: Debtors

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
118	Central government bodies	104
117	Other local authorities	5
25	Public corporations and trading funds	19
90	Other entities and individuals	128
<b>350</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>

## Note 27: Cash and Cash Equivalents

The balance of Cash and Cash Equivalents is made up of the following elements:

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
-	Bank Current Accounts	(37)
2,800	Co-mingled fund held by Somerset County Council	2,800
<b>2,800</b>	<b>Total Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>	<b>2,763</b>

## Note 28: Creditors

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
(37)	Other local authorities	(51)
(40)	Public corporations and trading funds	(42)
(166)	Other entities and individuals	(153)
<b>(243)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>(246)</b>

## Note 29: Usable Reserves

Movements in the Authority's usable reserves are detailed in the Movements in Reserves Statement and in notes 20 and 21.

### Note 30: Capital Grants

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
-	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	-
-	Capital grants received	(88)
-	Capital grants used to finance spend	88
-	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	-

### Note 31: Unusable Reserves

31 March 2019 £000		31 March 2020 £000
(10,217)	Revaluation Reserve	(10,813)
(7,928)	Capital Adjustment Account	(8,113)
9,561	Pensions Reserve	9,838
40	Accumulated Absences Account	53
<b>(8,544)</b>	<b>Total Unusable Reserves</b>	<b>(9,035)</b>

#### Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Authority arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- Revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost
- Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation, or
- Disposed of and the gains are realised.

The Reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
<b>(9,141)</b>	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(10,217)</b>
(1,644)	Upward revaluation of assets	(759)
568	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the provision of Services	163
<b>(1,076)</b>	<b>Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>(596)</b>
-	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	-
-	Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	-
-	<b>Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account</b>	-
<b>(10,217)</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(10,813)</b>

## Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions. The account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement.

The Account contains accumulated gain and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Authority.

The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

Note 22 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
(8,196)	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	(7,928)
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:	
89	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	53
369	Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	93
65	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	-
(7,673)		(7,782)
-	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	-
(7,673)	<b>Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year</b>	(7,782)
<b>Capital financing applied in the year:</b>		
-	Use of Capital Grants to finance capital expenditure	(88)
(255)	Capital Expenditure charged against the General Fund	(243)
(7,928)	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	(8,113)

## Pensions Reserve

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Authority accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources

the Authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
9,400	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	9,561
(504)	Remeasurement of net defined liability	(242)
1,096	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the CI & E	962
(431)	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(443)
9,561	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	9,838

#### Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2018/19 £000		2019/20 £000
35	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	40
(35)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(40)
40	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	53
-	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements.	-
40	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	53

#### Note 32: Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below, together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Authority that has yet to be financed. The Authority remains Debt Free throughout the periods contained in this Statement of Accounts and therefore does not have incurred expenditure yet to be financed.

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<i>Capital Investment</i>		
Property, Plant & Equipment	190	331
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	65	-
<i>Sources of finance</i>		
Capital Receipts	-	-
Government Grants and other contributions	-	88
Sums set aside from revenue	255	243

### **Note 33: Impairment Losses**

The Authority did not recognise any impairment losses during 2019/20 (2018/19 £0k). Impairment losses are recognised as part of the valuation of the authority's non-current assets.

### **Note 34: Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments**

The Authority's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks:

- Credit risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due
- Liquidity risk – the possibility that the Authority may not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments
- Market risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates and stock market movements

The Authority's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Risk management is carried out by the Chief Finance Officer, under policies approved by the Authority. The Authority has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management and as part of this approves an annual Treasury Management Strategy and Practices which sets out the policies on borrowing, investment, credit risk and interest rate exposure.

#### **Credit Risk and Expected Credit Loss Allowances**

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Authority's customers. This risk is minimised through the Authority's Annual Investment Strategy and investment solely within the Somerset County Council Co-mingled Fund.

Amounts arising from expected credit losses would normally be established for investments and debtors based upon estimates of the losses that might be incurred if those owing money to the Authority fail to pay it back. As our primary counter party is a public body and as statute prevents a local authority from default, we have concluded that the expected credit loss is not material and therefore no allowance has been made.

The Authority's standard terms and conditions for payment of invoices (trade receivables) are 28 days from invoice date. Low risk, no history of default and with signed agreements in place with third parties, we have concluded that the expected credit loss is not material therefore no allowance has been made.

#### **Liquidity Risk**

The Authority has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available when needed. Surplus cash is invested using an overnight clearing system operated by Somerset County Council.

All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year. The Authority currently has no borrowings and so there is no significant current or future risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments.

#### **Market Risk**

The Authority is currently debt free and does not have any investments in equity shares or financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies. Market Risk is therefore limited to Interest Rate Risk on our cash investments.

- Interest Risk

In terms of short-term cash investments, the variable rate of interest earned on surplus funds moves during the year and any assumptions in annual budgets are made cautiously based

on current market and treasury forecasts. A 1% movement in interest rates would result in approximately £30,000 more or less than budget if investments were held for a year.

### Note 35: Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in Pension Schemes:

As part of the terms of employment of its officers, the Authority makes contributions towards the cost of post-employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Authority has a commitment to make the payments that needs to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Authority participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme that is administered locally by Somerset County Council. This is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Authority and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.

A judgement in the Court of Appeal about cases involving judges' and firefighters' pensions (the McCloud/ Sargeant judgement) has the potential to impact on the Authority. The cases concerned possible age discrimination in the arrangements for protecting certain scheme members from the impact of introducing new pensions arrangements. As the Local Government Pension Scheme was restructured in 2014, with protections for those members who were active in the Scheme at 2012 and over the age of 55, the judgement is likely to extend to the Scheme.

In 2018/19 we made allowance for the potential impact of the McCloud & Sargeant judgement and is therefore included in the starting position for this year. No decisions have been made about the remedies that would be required or the extent to which additional costs would fall on the Authority.

It should be noted that the estimated potential impact for the Authority as calculated by the Actuary has also been based on analysis carried out by the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) and our own employer liability profile.

#### Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits

We recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid out as pensions. However, the charge we are required to make is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movements in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance through the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<i>Service Cost</i>		
• Current Service Cost	854	728
• Past Service Costs (including curtailments)	-	
<b>Total Service Cost</b>	<b>854</b>	<b>728</b>
<i>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</i>		
• Net interest on the defined liability (asset)	235	225
• Administration expenses	7	9
<b>Total Net Interest</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>1,096</b>	<b>962</b>

<i>Remeasurement of the Net Defined Liability Comprising:</i>		
• Return on plan assets excluding amounts included in net interest	(323)	1,051
• Experience gain/(loss) on defined benefit obligation	-	
• Actuarial losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	(1,259)	1,274
• Actuarial losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	1,078	(2,734)
• Other actuarial gains & losses on assets	-	157
<b>Total re-measurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income</b>	<b>(504)</b>	<b>(242)</b>
<b>Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>720</b>
<b>Movement in Reserves Statement</b>		
• Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(1,096)	(962)
<b>Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:</b>		
• Employer's contributions payable to scheme	431	443

**Pension Assets and Liabilities in Relation to Post-Employment Benefits Recognised in the Balance Sheet**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
Present value of funded obligation	(21,785)	(21,387)
Fair value of employer assets	12,513	11,841
Present value of unfunded obligation	(289)	(292)
<b>Net Liability Arising from Defined Benefit Obligation</b>	<b>(9,561)</b>	<b>(9,838)</b>

**Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation):**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<b>Opening Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(21,280)</b>	<b>(22,074)</b>
Current service cost	(687)	(728)
Interest cost	(538)	(528)
Change in financial assumptions	(1,078)	2,734
Change in demographic assumptions	1,259	(10)
Experience loss / (gain) on defined benefit obligation	-	(1,274)
Estimated benefits paid net of transfers in	512	302
Past service costs, including curtailments	(167)	-
Contributions by scheme participants	(118)	(125)
Unfunded pension payments	23	24
<b>Closing Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(22,074)</b>	<b>(21,679)</b>

**Reconciliation of the Movements in Fair Value of the Scheme (plan) Assets:**

	2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000
<b>Opening Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>11,880</b>	<b>12,513</b>
Interest on assets	303	303
Return on assets less interest	323	(1,051)

Other actuarial gains/(losses)	-	(157)
Administration expenses	(7)	(9)
Contributions by employer including unfunded	431	443
Contributions by scheme participants	118	125
Estimated benefits paid plus unfunded net of transfers in	(535)	(326)
<b>Closing Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>12,513</b>	<b>11,841</b>

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the authority has to pay post-employment (retirement) benefits. The total liability of £9,838k (2018/19 £9,561k) has a substantial impact on the net worth of the authority as recorded in the Balance Sheet, resulting in the overall balance of £11,919k (2018/19 £11,528k). However, arrangements for funding the deficit mean that the financial position of the Authority remains healthy.

**The Local Government Pension Scheme's assets consist of the following categories, by proportion of the total assets held:**

	2018/19		2019/20	
	£000	%	£000	%
Equities	8,746	70%	7,986	67%
Gilts	711	5%	776	7%
Other Bonds	1,143	9%	1,187	10%
Property	1,089	9%	1,123	10%
Cash and cash equivalents	824	7%	769	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,513</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11,841</b>	<b>100%</b>

- The deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme will be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees (i.e. before payments fall due), as assessed by the scheme actuary
- Finance is only required to be raised to cover discretionary benefits when the pensions are actually paid.

The total contributions expected to be made to the LGPS by the Authority in the year to 31 March 2021 is £488k.

### **Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities**

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years' dependant on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. The LGPS liabilities have been assessed by Barnett and Waddingham, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the County Council Fund being based on the latest full valuation as at 31 March 2019.

**The principal assumptions used by the actuary have been:**

<i>Mortality assumptions</i>	2018/19	2019/20
Retiring today:		
• Men	22.9	23.3
• Women	24.0	24.7
Retiring in 20 years:		
• Men	24.6	24.7
• Women	25.8	26.2
Rate of Inflation (RPI/CPI)	3.4%/2.4%	2.65%/1.85%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.9%	2.85%
Rate of increase in pensions	2.4%	1.85%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.40%	2.35%
Take-up of option to convert annual pension into retirement lump sum	50%	50%
Take-up of active members to pay 50% contributions for 50% benefits	10%	10%



The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analysis below is based on reasonably possible changes to the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit cost method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in 2018/19.

<b>Sensitivity Analysis</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	21,219	21,679	22,149
Projected service cost	648	666	684
Adjustment to long term salary increase	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	21,723	21,679	21,635
Projected service cost	666	666	666
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	22,107	21,679	21,260
Projected service cost	684	666	649
Adjustment to mortality age rating assumption	+1 Year	None	-1 Year
Present value of total obligation	22,497	21,679	20,892
Projected service cost	687	666	646

### **Note 36: Contingent Liabilities/Assets**

Devon County Council agreed as part of its Investing in Devon Programme to grant the sum of £600,000 to support the refurbishment, improvement and adaptation of Lynmouth Pavilion. A contingent liability exists as part of the grant conditions require that in the event of the premises ceasing to be used as a visitor and interpretation centre and learning hub during the period of 20 years from the date of completion of the Project the Grantee shall repay the Grant to the Council but subject to a reduction of five per cent for each complete year which has elapsed following the date of completion of the project. With the completion date being the 8 August 2013 at the balance sheet date a contingent liability exists for £420,000.

The Authority is owed over £90k in relation to a long running listed buildings enforcement case. Whilst the Authority has received some monies in respect of this case and will eventually recover the money in full, given the protracted nature of this case over the last 10 years, recovery of the costs may take some time.

## Notes to Support the Cash Flow Statement

### **Note 37: Cash Flow Statement – Adjustments to surplus or deficit on the Provision of Services for non-cash movements**

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
(89)	Depreciation and Amortisation	(53)
(369)	Impairment and Downward Valuations	(93)
(665)	Actuarial Charges for Retirement Benefits	(519)
(7)	Increase/(Decrease) in Inventory	14
97	Increase/(Decrease) in Debtors	(94)
3	(Increase)/Decrease in Creditors & Receipts in Advance	4
(65)	Capital Grants & Contributions credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services	-
-	Carrying amount of Non-Current Assets de-recognised	-
<b>(1,095)</b>		<b>(741)</b>

### **Note 38: Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities**

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
255	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	331
-	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	-
<b>255</b>	<b>Net cash flows from investing activities</b>	<b>331</b>

### **Note 39: Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities**

<b>2018/19 £000</b>		<b>2019/20 £000</b>
-	Cash receipts of short and long-term borrowing	-
-	Other receipts from financing activities	-
-	Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases	-
-	Repayment of short and long-term borrowing	-
-	Other payments for financing activities	-
-	<b>Net cash flows from financing activities</b>	<b>-</b>

## **ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

### **1. Scope of responsibility**

- 1.1 Exmoor National Park Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2 In discharging this overall responsibility, the Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3 Exmoor National Park Authority has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. A copy of the code can be obtained from the Chief Executive, Exmoor House, Dulverton, TA22 9HL. This statement explains how the Authority has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulations 4(3) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 in relation to the publication of an annual governance statement.

### **2. The purpose of the governance framework**

- 2.1 The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and the culture and values, by which the Authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and the leads the community. It enables the Authority to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Authority's policies and aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3 A governance framework has been in place at Exmoor National Park Authority for the year ended 31 March 2020 and up to the date of approval of the Corporate Plan and statement of accounts.

### **3. The Governance Framework**

- 3.1 The key elements of the governance framework include:
  - A National Park Partnership Plan that contains a vision, priorities and a corporate strategy to meet National Park purposes;
  - An annual review of the Authority's priorities as contained in the National Park Partnership Plan;
  - The production of a Medium Term Financial Plan taking account of the anticipated level of National Park Grant;

- The production of a Corporate Plan that includes data on performance and objectives both achieved and planned;
- Committee papers that are linked to National Park Partnership Plan or Corporate Plan objectives and in compliance with equality and human rights legislation;
- Standing orders and financial regulations to regulate the conduct of the Authority's affairs;
- A Scheme of Delegation which sets out the functions and workings of the Authority and the powers delegated to Committees and the Chief Executive;
- Formal codes of conduct which define the standards of personal behaviour of members and staff. The code for Members was initially adopted in 2012 along with the establishment of a Standards Committee comprising 5 Authority members and the appointment of an "Independent Person" under the provisions of the 2011 Localism Act. A further process was the provision of guidance on the registration of interests. This was reviewed and refined in August 2012 with recommendations to Authority for standards arrangements and for the provision of member training on the new standards regime;
- Responsibility for audit matters are retained by the Authority;
- A Solicitor and Monitoring Officer who has a statutory responsibility supported by the Chief Finance Officer and financial regulations to ensure the legality of transactions, activities and arrangements the Authority enters;
- Financial management arrangements of the Authority which conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2010) ;
- A Complaints procedure and a whistle-blowing policy in place for members of the public, members, staff or contractors;
- An Anti Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy;
- An ICT Acceptable Use Policy;
- Risk Management Policy, Registers and Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery systems which are approved, in place and subject to annual regular review;
- Extensive arrangements for partnership working on a range of projects. Partnership working is crucial to the achievement of the priorities set out in the National Park Partnership Plan.
- A staff performance and development review process which identifies training and development needs;
- Training, briefing and induction programmes for members; and
- Wide consultation with interested parties and an Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum meets to engage with the community and a Local Access Forum considers access and rights of way issues. Numerous diverse organisations are represented on these consultative mechanisms.

#### **4 Review of Effectiveness**

- 4.1 Exmoor National Park Authority has responsibility for conducting at least annually, a review of effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Chief Executive and Heads of Section within the Authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the annual report on internal audit, and by the Annual Governance Report of the external auditors.
- 4.2 The process that has been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework is:

- The adoption of an updated Code of Corporate Governance in March 2017 with an annual review by the National Park Authority carried out by the Authority's Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to ensure compliance with the Code and audited by the Chief Finance Officer;
- Adoption of Standing Orders, the scheme of delegation and financial regulations which are periodically reviewed, updated and approved;
- Reports to the Authority on performance management including sustainability and the corporate planning and performance framework;
- Annual reports presented to the Authority in respect of internal audit which is a contracted service, and from the external auditor appointed by the Audit Commission;
- Annual reports presented to the Authority on risk management, performance indicators and treasury management; and
- An internal audit service is contracted from the Devon Audit Partnership and an annual work programme is agreed with the Chief Finance Officer with the internal auditors producing an annual report covering their activities for presentation to the Authority.

## **5. Significant governance issues**

5.1 In general the governance and internal control systems within the Authority are working effectively and have been reviewed by the Solicitor and Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer and are independently validated by the internal and external auditors. As a consequence of certain Internal Audit findings, the Authority has undertaken a review of Safeguarding policies and practices.

5.2 During 2020/21 the Authority will be:

- Continuing the communication and implementation of the 2018-23 National Park Partnership Plan;
- Producing guidance on the recently adopted Local Plan;
- Working with Defra to deliver the eight points of the National Parks Plan;
- Monitoring new legislation and changes in policy to ensure that account is taken of the impact on National Parks and National Park communities;
- Responding to the Glover review;
- Continuing to operate within limited resources while increasing revenue from alternative sources;
- Implement the results of the job evaluation review;
- Continuing to develop customer service standards and culture; and
- Monitoring the performance of the Corporate Plan.
- Abide by the working arrangements determined by law and recommended guidance in the context of the current pandemic.
- Implement the updated Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Await the results of the new funding settlement
- Deliver savings related to the reduction to the underlying 2020/21 budget.
- Manage the in year financial impact of cv19.
- Continue to engage and communicate flexibly while making best use of technology.
- Assess the national impact of national parks experiencing financial discomfort as a result of cv 19.

5.3 We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our annual review.

**Signed** .....  
Mrs S Bryan, Chief Executive                      R Milton, Chairman

**Date** .....

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

7 July 2020

### CORPORATE PLAN REPORT 2019-2020

#### Report of the Chief Executive and Head of Strategy and Performance

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:** To report to Members achievements in delivering the Corporate Plan for the period April 2019 to March 2020.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Authority is recommended to:

1. NOTE the achievements in delivering the Authority's key commitments set out in the Corporate Plan 2019-2020.
2. DELEGATE to the Finance and Performance Advisory Panel and Leadership Team further scrutiny of Authority performance across the Corporate Plan 2020-2021 actions for the reporting period to 31 March 2021.

**Authority Corporate Plan:** The Corporate Plan 2019-2020 outlines the priorities for the Authority for the period to March 2020 and sets out how the Authority will lead delivery of the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2018-23.

**Legal and Equality 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 carrying out of any functions conferred on it by virtue of any other enactment.”

**The equality impact of the recommendations of this report has been assessed as follows:** 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.

**Consideration has been given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and an assessment of the implications of the recommendations of this report is as follows:** There are no implications for the Human Rights Act.

**Financial and Risk Implications:** No financial or risk implications have been identified. Performance management exerts a positive influence on financial and risk management.

**Climate Response:** During the Plan period the Authority declared a Climate Emergency. The Corporate Plan includes many actions which will contribute to the Authority's response, and a specific action plan is being prepared.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The 2019-2020 Corporate Plan was approved by the Authority on 2 April 2019. It set out the key priorities for the Authority for the period of the plan.
- 1.2 Performance is monitored quarterly by Leadership Team to ensure that the actions within the Business Plan are being achieved and, if necessary, to provide an opportunity for resources to be re-allocated or to review the proposed action.
- 1.3 This end of year report provides an overview of key achievements during the year, and reports on performance against key corporate indicators. There have been some significant achievements throughout the year, and good progress against delivery of the majority of the actions in the Corporate Plan 2019-20. Further details are given in Section 3 below. The areas where there has been lack of delivery, either due to slippage in timescales or actions not progressed, are primarily due to staff capacity issues arising from vacancies being held or posts deleted due to budget constraints, and staff absences.
- 1.4 The worldwide Covid-19 pandemic took hold during the last few weeks of Quarter 4, and following the Government lockdown in March 2020, the Authority closed all premises including offices, Field Services depot, National Park Centres, Pinkery Outdoor Education Centre, car parks and toilets, and cancelled all events. Many staff moved to home-working, although some (particularly field based, outreach and visitor services staff) were unable to continue their work from home, and many others were only able to work part time from home due to caring and home-schooling responsibilities. There will inevitably be an impact on delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities as a consequence, and this will be reported to Members separately, with an update on the 2020-21 Corporate Plan.

## 2. Corporate Plan at a Glance

- 2.1 The [Corporate Plan](#) outlines the priorities for the Authority for the period April 2019 to March 2020. It continues to closely follow the priorities set out by Defra in its 2016 *8-Point Plan for England's National Parks* whilst recognising that 2019/20 is likely to be a period of change and transition for the Authority.
- 2.2 The actions within the plan follow the Exmoor National Park [Partnership Plan](#) ambitions and are grouped as follows:



# Corporate Plan at a Glance



## 3. Performance Report - Key Priorities

3.1 An assessment against the actions within the plan are outlined below. In addition to the numerous successes marked in green, areas where progress was not on target are marked in amber and include areas where there was not as much progress as expected, timetables slipped, or where progress was not made due to factors

outside the Authority's control. Actions marked red are those which were not completed or progressed, these primarily relate to reductions in staff capacity where vacancies were not replaced due to budget constraints.

### 3.2 People – The Exmoor Experience

- A wide range of **volunteering opportunities** to support National Park purposes have been supported through the Get Involved Programme, delivering:
  - A total of 587 volunteer days organised or supported by ENPA, with 115 of these days attended by 'under-represented groups'
  - 60 guided walks with 489 participants, raising nearly £1,000 for CareMoor
  - ENPA's Wildwatch public engagement events programme remains popular with over 61% of the content being delivered by partner organisations and 5 new 'Discover' events added this year.
  - The number of active ENPA volunteers remains stable and sustained at 296
  - A volunteer group was established at Ashcombe Gardens in Simonsbath
- **Health and Wellbeing benefits** from Exmoor have been promoted through the FUN Project (Families United through Nature) targeting communities West Somerset. 32 activities have been delivered involving 808 children. The Team also worked with communities from the Hamp Estate in Bridgwater and the Halcon Estate in Taunton to support confidence in the outdoors and supported visits to Exmoor. We have continued to support a range of groups including work with Devon Recovery Learning who use the environment of Exmoor to support mental health recovery.



*Volunteers carrying out path repairs at Weir Water, and families from the FUN project enjoying a visit to Exmoor.*

- Our **Learning and Outreach service** had another busy year with new schools and returning ones (approximately 6,000 young people engaged). This included enabling new residential visits to Pinkery from schools in Bristol and Barnstaple funded through Forest Holidays. Our new online education resource on Porlock Marsh won an award at the Geographic Association. The team have led on the commissioning and delivery of a new national education resource for all UK National Parks due to be launched in summer 2020, with Exmoor as one of the key enquiries.
- The **National Park Centres** have seen a slight 2% fall in visitor numbers compared to last year – this is part of an ongoing trend, and also due to the impact of the two week closure of all three Centres at the end of the period due to Covid-19 (see Figure 1, Appendix 1). Despite this, net income is up 9% and spend per visitor has

increased 11%. This is a strong performance and provides a solid base for future work to reverse the long-term fall in visitor numbers

- We continue to deliver a broad programme of **public engagement events** including:
  - Over 100 public events with over 3,000 people attending
  - The Historic Buildings Festival (September 2019) was a success with 18 events taking place over 7 days involving an estimated 500 people
  - The Dark Skies festival (October 2019) involved 50 events including 14 run by ENPA, attended by around 2,000 people.
- • There were mixed results for bookings for **Pinkery Outdoor Education Centre**. Bookings were down on occupancy targets for 2020, particularly the exclusive hire and special bookings (for example Airbnb) as shown in Figure 2, Appendix 1. The reasons behind this are not clear as the same advertising was used as previous years so it could indicate a changing market, also eight group bookings in March were lost due to Covid-19. However, more positively, school bookings are still on the increase. Overall numbers of people visiting totalled 1,481 including 593 through exclusive hires and 88 through Duke of Edinburgh bookings. The team continued to develop options for Pinkery including discussions with potential partners. A draft development plan is underway and further meetings planned with Pinkery Steering Group to take things forward.

### 3.3 People – Well-managed Recreation and Access

- • An annual programme of inspections and works are undertaken to maintain and improve the **Public Rights of Way network**, and 92% of these are open and easy to use (see Figure 3, Appendix 1). This is a slightly below our target of 95% but is still a significant achievement. There are no current restrictions on Access land. A number of path diversion orders have been successfully completed including on Alcombe Common, Hunters Inn, Parracombe and Trentishoe. Two long-term permitted path agreements were secured for popular routes in the Barle Valley and Snowdrop valley. A 4km section of public footpath on National Trust land in Martinhoe (known as The Carriageway), has been upgraded to public bridleway. Network improvements have been made including replacement of the bridge at Edgcott (Exton) as well as several smaller ones and installation of a new footbridge to replace stepping stones at Timberscombe. Other access improvements include replacing or removing stiles in Martinhoe and Luxborough, and installing dog gates on stiles at Treborough.
- **Major path repairs** were completed as part of the Headwaters of the Exe project. The overall impact of the project included repairs to 6km of paths (exceeding the target of 4.3km) with a total investment of £103,000, half of which was funded by South West Water.





*Path restoration carried out as part of the Headwaters of the Exe project*

- The team continues to provide support to Natural England for the implementation of the Exmoor stretch of the **England Coast Path**. The report is still awaiting approval from the Secretary of State. Meanwhile, planning applications are being prepared for several sites where changes to the Coast Path route are being proposed.
- **Woodside Bridge** has progressed well with the fundraising target being exceeded, and works will be completed in Quarter 1 2020-21.
- 45 **large recreation events** took place, all of which have had some degree of consultation with ENPA, within minimal complaints from landowners or the public. Information for communities on our website has been further improved in response to concerns about a road cycle event.
- The **Field Services Team** are behind with general work such as gates, stiles and bridges, partly due to putting a greater emphasis on paring over the last two summers, which was compounded by bad weather during Quarter 3 and 4. Only 56% of network faults were resolved within 3 months, compared with the 80% target. Progress has been further impacted by Covid-19 impacts on staff and work arrangements. However the team are working hard to catch up and a new system is being looked at for next year.
- Promote **10 accessible walks** - all on site assessment works have been completed for the selected 'Exmoor's Top Walks'. A full mock-up of the online/printed support materials for the Simonsbath routes is being worked up as a test model before rolling this out further to all of the selected routes. External funding of £22,500 has been secured for enhanced deliverables (including videos, marketing and business engagement) and retail options explored and agreed for printed guides. However there has been limited progress on completing the 10 route profiles due to staff capacity. It is intended that these will be prioritised in Q1 20/21 to tie in with tourism recovery work.
- Progress has been made with the **family friendly cycle trails**, with all first stage landowner consultations completed. The public consultation phase has been postponed due to Covid-19, but work continues on the route designs and internal planning consultations.
- **Great Bradley Bridge** has been frustrated by delays with the Environment Agency and Natural England licencing process.

### 3.4 People – Thriving Tourism built on Sustainability

Highlights:

- The initial project developing the **English National Experience** was completed with all outcomes met or exceeded. This involved supporting experience providers to engage with the overseas travel trade and to reach new audiences in the USA, Germany and Australia. Good progress has been made sustaining the collection and building a legacy on the initial grant funded investment. There is a clear opportunity to develop the experiences for a domestic market should funding become available.
- **Ranger Experience Days** were successfully established with high occupancy in excess of 90% and positive feedback. Following completion of the programme the results were evaluated and revised plans prepared for 2020 /21 to include a smaller number of higher priced public tours and options for bespoke trips. Profits from the programme were allocated for public engagement work.
- A comprehensive programme of events was run on the **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lorna Doone**, with strong community and business engagement and an opportunity to promote Exmoor's cultural heritage to visitors who took a strong interest. Some events and opportunities are being continued by partners as a legacy of renewed interest in Lorna Doone.
- Phase 2 of the **Eat Exmoor** project has focused on supporting local retailers in promoting and adding value to local produce. New Eat Exmoor Point of Sale information and leaflets were distributed to community shops with very positive feedback on the immediate impact this had on sales of local produce. A successful lamb tasting event was held and a video produced to present the opportunity of Exmoor branded lamb to wholesalers and buyers and to better promote Exmoor Lamb as a product in its own right. A further series of CareMoor Dining events have been planned with industry partners.



*Eat Exmoor lamb tasting event and Buy Local promotion at community shops*

- There were mixed results in developing the **Pinkery short activity breaks** due to other commitments including the Big Picnic. Four weekends with three programmes were confirmed but three had to be cancelled due to lack of uptake or capacity to pursue. One family weekend was held with 50% occupancy. A review was completed and a revised offer developed for 2020-21, building on learning from the pilots. However, to date, these have been impacted by Covid-19.



- After initial problems with the Interreg bid, funding was secured from Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership for a two year project to support **Astro Tourism**, running from January 2020. Good progress has been made developing a revised project including a Dark Sky Friendly Business Scheme and potential Dark Sky Walk. Funding was also secured for a local Astro Tourism project being delivered in 2020/21.
- Limited progress was made with '**green tourism**' training for local tourism providers due to team capacity. However, training opportunities have been provided as part of other programmes including the Discover England Fund, Eat Exmoor, and Dark Skies work.

### 3.5 Place – Celebrated Landscapes

Highlights:

- A programme of events for the **Year of Green Action** was implemented by partners in the Learning and Engagement Network. A very successful **Big Picnic** was organised by ENPA in July 2019 on behalf of all UK National Parks to celebrate their 70th anniversary. Their Royal Highnesses Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall attended the event along with many local people, partner organisations and school children.



*HRH Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall cutting the National Parks 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake and crowds enjoying the Big Picnic at Simonsbath*

- In April 2019 work began on a major conservation project to conserve **White Rock Cottage** and the former Simonsbath School to enable their use as a community space and interpretation facility. The work to the buildings - funded by Western Somerset LEADER programme, ENPA and CareMoor - was completed in December. In February 2020 an inaugural open evening was held by the local community. It is hoped that the buildings will soon be transferred to the Simonsbath & Exmoor Heritage Trust (which received charitable status in December 2019). In March 2019 a group of volunteers began to gradually open up the Picturesque gardens in nearby Ashcombe which date to the 1820s and are associated with White Rock Cottage. The work – which is being guided by the **Ashcombe Gardens Restoration Plan** - is progressing well with paths having been cleared and replanting begun. This work will continue through 2020 and beyond.

- An initial desk study and literature review of **heather moorland** was undertaken along with a rapid overview of vegetation change which revealed increasing environmental pressures. No further progress was made due to staff capacity being diverted to the Environmental Land Management Scheme Test and Trial project. Further discussion is required on climate change policy with regards to swaling which is a crucial component of managing heather moorland.
- Opportunities for revenue and **landscape enhancement projects** have been scoped for ENPA land at the Valley of Rocks, and at Culbone although these have not progressed as quickly as hoped. A land visioning exercise was completed with the National Trust on North Hill to ensure a cohesive approach to future management of the site.
- The action to develop measures to replace **character trees outside woods** has been put on hold due to reduced capacity in the woodlands team.

### 3.6 Place - Wildness & Tranquillity, Dark Night Skies and Sensitive Development

Highlights:

- There has been continued roll out of the **Landscape Character Assessment** and engagement with partner organisations, applicants, landowners and agents on using the LCA as a useful tool and guidance to help deliver sensitive and sympathetic change and practice, including its use in development management, future land management, and climate action planning.
- The annual report of **Exmoor's Dark Skies Reserve** status was submitted to the International Dark Skies Association outlining activities and measures taken to continue educating and raising awareness. ENPA has been sharing experience of the Dark Skies Reserve with other National Parks interested in developing their own Reserves, and exploring options to collaborative on initiatives such as lighting guidance.
- Following a successful Design seminar in autumn 2018, a **Design Working Group** was established and met in June 2019 (attended by external practitioners, ENPA Members and officers). Action points included partnership working with historic building and civic trusts. Since then, this action has not progressed due to changes in personnel and lack of capacity.

### 3.7 Place – Valued Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage

Highlights:

- A number of conservation works have been carried out as part of Historic England's **Monuments Management Scheme** including Lyncombe bridge (grade II\*), Timberscombe drinking trough and St Leonards Well as well as other consolidation works to Berry Castle, Oldbury Castle, Wimersham Common, and Barlynch Priory. A report has been submitted to Historic England requesting Monument Management Scheme funding for 22 at risk or vulnerable structures including chest tombs, bridges and lime kilns for 2020/2021.



*Before and after conservation works at Barlynch Priory*

- The five-yearly **listed building condition report** was completed. 47 listed buildings are at risk and 108 are vulnerable. Loss of traditional features is increasing. Discussions with Members and parish councils has been delayed by Covid-19. **Conservation Area assessments** have been completed and draft guidance documents on Conservation Areas produced. The need for Article 4 directions in some areas was identified and presented to Members with further training and better public guidance to follow in 2020/21.
- The new **Historic Environment Record Website** was completed and an audit carried out for Historic England.
- **Exmoor Mires historic environment project** work has made good progress through surveys undertaken at South Regis and Castle Common, and a research project on Codsend. Significant research was undertaken on the Knight landscape, and links with the documentary record.
- **Rapid coastal zone assessment study** – initial enquires were made to Historic England on potential funding but no further progress has been achieved.

### 3.8 Place: Rich in Wildlife

Highlights:

- ENPA is working closely with partners in progressing plans **for nature recovery** on Exmoor, including on our own Estate. The Nature Conservation Advisory Panel has been working with a wildlife illustrator to develop a **vision for ecological recovery networks on Exmoor**. The draft illustrations for the Exmoor Nature Recovery vision were agreed along with text for the accompanying vision document. There has been extensive consultation with other Partnership Plan groups and internal colleagues, which has helped to gain overall support from these groups and specialists.
- The **Exmoor Non-native Invasive Species (ENNIS)** project was established with two project officers appointed and a Steering Group set up. Around 35 volunteers signed up to help with signal crayfish monitoring and invasive plant survey. There has been fantastic delivery of targets in the first year of the project with knotweed and skunk cabbage treated, the first Rootwave trials for treatment on organic sites taking place, the 5th year of the River Barle Signal Crayfish Project undertaken, Himalayan balsam pulled on the River Barle and feasibility studies started for



invasive plants and signal crayfish on other rivers. The lockdown in March 2020 due to Covid-19 impacted on the delivery of the project, but the team have found new ways to deliver certain aspects of the project whilst the use of volunteers is on hold. Targets have been adjusted accordingly with the funder and negotiation is underway regarding potential additional funds for a 6-month extension to the project from the end of March 2021.



*Survey work on the Rive Haddeo and River Barle for the ENNIS project*

### 3.9 Prosperity – Working Landscapes

Highlights:

- ENPA worked with the Exmoor Hill Farming Network to secure Defra funding for an **Environmental Land Management Scheme Test and Trial**. Natural capital registers were produced for 28 land holdings and around 15 had farm visits which took place before the Covid-19 lockdown. The remaining 'meetings' took place remotely and the findings are being reported back to Defra. Assessment of landscape priorities for delivering natural capital has also progressed. Key policy and guidance has been reviewed and partners engaged in this process. Some landscape scale natural capital mapping has been produced and remainder is underway and on target for delivery in the first quarter of 2020/21
- Our engagement with the Exmoor **game shoot** industry has continued throughout the year. Complaints vary and can often be very localised. Game shoots on Exmoor are largely operating as they have done for many years however there are various changes in shoot ownership and some positive UK industry developments around reducing antibiotic use, gun cartridge plastic waste, and moving away from lead shot. The British Game Alliance assurance scheme has some potential but is yet untested in terms of driving substantial environmental outcomes. Defra is undertaking a review into releasing gamebirds on or near protected sites though no outcome is expected until autumn 2020 at the earliest. Our landscape monitoring and other relevant ongoing evidence gathering continues and we have sought legal advice around planning controls.



*Monitoring change in landscape character associated with game shoots*  
©Historic England 2012, 27468\_003 (photographer Damian Grady)

- The **Exmoor Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme** was successfully delivered with the full £20k funding committed.
- The five year **Headwaters of the Exe project** funded by South West Water and ENPA was successfully completed with targets met or exceeded, and drawn to a close. A total of 50 farm holdings were visited by advisors and Water and Environment Plans produced. Woodland advice was delivered by FWAG SW working closely with ENPA's woodland officers. 12 woodlands were visited through the project, several of which contain game shoots, with 10 plans produced. 31 grant applications were received, of which 23 were delivered and 5 will be carried out as part of the next funding programme. Examples of eligible works include covered manure stores to enable separation of clean and dirty water, fencing to enable natural woodland regeneration adjacent to watercourses and provision of water troughs, for example on high land to enable livestock to be kept away from watercourses during times of high rainfall. During the five year programme, a total of 22 events were held for land managers in the catchment, attended by a total of over 300 people. The monitoring programme established through Headwaters of the Exe and undertaken by the University of Exeter, South West Water and the Riverfly Partnership has provided a useful baseline of information and has enabled the detection of some early results.



*Works funded by Headwaters of the Exe project to reduce run-off and diffuse pollution to improve water quality*

- ENPA's three **Exmoor pony herds** continue to be monitored and cared for in the usual manner. All passed inspection, and a number of filly foals are helping to replenish the declining Haddon bloodline. Plans for this year's breeding have been interrupted by Covid-19 restrictions.
- Limited **Countryside Stewardship advice** was given regarding Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and no further advice was requested by landowners or statutory agencies.
- The annual **swaling report** was completed with all the burning carried out across the National Park mapped and made available on the website. Staff continued to work with the fire service on fire plans for moorland areas and support moorland managers with swaling through loan of equipment.
- On promoting **sustainable local timber** there was a successful audit by the Soil Association Woodmark for the 'Grown in Britain on Exmoor' scheme, and the Exmoor Group continues but we have not been able to develop the group or expand its activities as a vehicle to promote local timber due to reduced capacity. ENPA timber sales have picked-up and we have used this as one way of promoting local timber. The Woodside Bridge project provided some useful publicity for use of local timber. Timber income has picked up again due to the additional capacity in the team provided by the Woodlands and Forestry Intern, with Volume and value of timber sales at (£12,109 / 258 m<sup>3</sup>), up from last year (£8,100, 142 m<sup>3</sup>).
- There has been limited progress working with partners to investigate opportunities for **integrated catchment management**. ENPA hosted a seminar for partners to scope the opportunities on Exmoor, and we await next steps from the Environment Agency. Follow up work on woody material in Exmoor's rivers has been unable to be developed further due to reduced capacity.
- The **Exmoor Pony genome project** remains at risk due to technical setbacks. A promising alternative sample testing option was found but this was shortly before Covid-19 lockdown and the impact on the project is currently unknown.



### 3.10 Prosperity – Working Landscapes

Highlights:



A research project on **Rural Enterprise Exmoor** was successfully delivered to provide enhanced business intelligence, informing future work programmes and a more integrated approach to economic support and development management work. This has been an immensely valuable piece of work and has provided strong evidence and insight in Exmoor's businesses and economy, particularly the micro-businesses which form a significant part of the local economy but do not appear on official statistics. A second phase will be undertaken in 20/21 and an update produced in light of Covid-19 impact on the economy

- A joint National Parks position paper has been drafted on **post-Brexit Rural Development** funding opportunities in National Parks. UK Government proposals on the anticipated Shared Prosperity Fund are still awaited.

### 3.11 Prosperity – Thriving Communities

Highlights:

- A small grants programme was successfully delivered via the **Partnerships Fund** supporting community efforts to further National Park Purposes including cultural events and facilities, improved accessibility for disabled users at Wimbleball, updated Ancient Woodland inventory, and promotion of Exmoor lamb.
- Ongoing work to support delivery of **affordable housing** for local communities includes ensure a rolling programme of housing needs surveys at five-year intervals, we now have up to date surveys across the majority of parishes. Officers are supporting parishes to bring affordable housing sites forward in Cutcombe and surrounding parishes and in Parracombe, and continue to work closely with Housing Authorities and local providers.
- We continue to support **Exmoor Young Voices (EYV)** and others to promote the delivery of Custom/Self Build dwellings including a tour of completed dwellings with EYV. Preparations were made for a summit with EYV setting out how ENPA and other organisations can support young people to access housing, this was delayed due to Covid-19.
- Implementation of the **Local Plan** continued, through policy advice on planning applications, and on-going liaison with Duty to Co-operate partners. Joint work on housing projections continues, and consultation responses submitted on Somerset West and Taunton Council's Local Plan review Issues and Options / Statement of Common Ground and draft Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The **Exmoor Rural Worker Guidance** was consulted on and adopted by Members as SPD in February 2020.

- The **Exmoor Rural Crime Initiative** meets twice a year and provides a good forum for partnership working and a supportive network to land owners to help them overcome rural crime. Grants have been received from Devon and Cornwall and Avon and Somerset Police for £5,500 to help tackle fly tipping, poaching, illegal off-road driving and cold calling. Poaching continues to be a significant issue. The relationships established through this partnership have proved vital in proactively managing on the ground issues following the Covid-19 pandemic.
- We secured funding from the West Somerset Community Led Housing Fund for a three year **Rural Housing Enabling Service** and Exmoor Rural Housing Network co-ordinator. However we have encountered problems in securing a provider, and are working closely with the Housing Authority to find an alternative solution. In the meantime, meetings of the Exmoor Rural Housing Network have been delayed.

### 3.12 Prosperity – A Valued Asset

Highlights:

- Significant collaborative working has taken place throughout the year across the National Park family and with other Protected Landscapes. **The Protected Landscapes Review** by Julian Glover was published in September 2019, with a mixed reaction from Members, officers and partners. Work has continued to feed into the Government’s response and assess how ENPA’s corporate priorities align with the recommendations, with a number of actions already underway in response to these. Preparations and planning began for hosting the **National Parks UK Conference** in 2021, although these have been put on hold due to Covid-19.
- Exeter University’s South West Environment and Economic Partnership team completed a report on **natural capital accounting** for Exmoor and Dartmoor National Park Authorities. This highlighted some of the limitations of this approach, particularly with data availability and inconsistent methodologies. This learning has fed into the Defra ELMS Tests and Trials work and will also inform future work on State of the Park reporting.



Good progress has been made encouraging greater use of the Exmoor **‘Dream Discover Explore’ brand** by local businesses, especially around the ‘Produced in’ version being used increasingly by local retailers and food producers through the Eat Exmoor work.

- Significant work has been undertaken to influence the **Heart of the South West Local Economic Partnership’s** (LEP) Local Industrial Strategy. There is a limited focus on rural areas, but it includes some hooks for the National Park through its headline ambition of delivering ‘Clean Growth’. The LEP is also involved in the Rural Enterprise Exmoor project.

### 3.13 Prosperity – Monitoring and Research

Highlights:

- A number of areas of monitoring work are ongoing and specific research to address gaps in our evidence base for the **State of the Park Report**. We are exploring the use of remote sensing data for monitoring land use / vegetation change in the

National Park and also for natural capital registers. Natural England funded landscape monitoring including changes arising from shoot activity, and further evidence is being gathered. A review of moorland evidence was also started.

- We continue to support ongoing monitoring of Exmoor ponies and deer. Deer numbers are stable although autumn stag numbers are down and large numbers of fallow deer were recorded on the eastern side of the National Park, which is a growing trend. TB in deer has been raised as an increasing issue and was discussed at a well-attended meeting of the Exmoor Parish & Consultative Forum in January 2020. Follow up work has been delayed due to the Covid-19 lockdown.

### 3.14 Corporate Priorities -Transition to a new funding era

Highlights:

- All the necessary **financial planning** and analysis was completed, including the financial impact of the Job Evaluation review, the Pensions Fund revaluation and meeting funding pressures arising in-year. Forward budgeting for 2020/21 had to take account of the less stable funding position and late notification of National Park Grant. The process of keeping costs and funding in balance is ongoing and has increased in difficulty and complexity as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic becomes clearer and as previously unknown costs crystalize.
- A series of successful **CareMoor** appeals raised just under £50k over the year through proactive development of targeted campaigns such as Woodside Bridge, and opportunities including the Donate a Gate dedications scheme. Future ability to maintain growth in CareMoor funding is however under threat without a dedicated External Funding Officer.



*CareMoor's Donate a gate Scheme*

- Work continues to grow our **income base**. We have benefitted from Forest Holidays and Clif Bar funding via National Parks Partnerships, plus support to secure Big Picnic Sponsorship (Tarmac). Local sponsorship was secured from Airband (Dunster Show / Dark Skies Festival) and Exmoor Trim (Ranger Experience days). Further work is underway to explore other income generating opportunities including our charging policy for planning discharge of conditions / pre-app advice and car parking.
- A new Service Level Agreement was signed with Devon County Council to provide **Procurement services** and rolled out with staff.

### 3.15 Corporate Priorities - work with communities and partners to deliver the Partnership Plan

Highlights:

- The **Partnership Plan** groups meet twice a year and help to oversee delivery of the Partnership Plan. A progress update is planned for 2020/21.
- A review of the **Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum** was completed, and the recommendations implemented resulting in some minor changes to the frequency and format of meetings, including moving to paperless meeting in line with the Authority's climate emergency declaration.
- We continue to support the **Exmoor Hill Farming Network** and **Exmoor Young Voices**. The EHFN has undertaken a governance review and successfully set up as a Community Interest Company. The EHFN is working closely with ENPA on the Defra Test and Trials to input into the design of future environmental land management schemes.

### 3.16 Corporate Priorities – Develop and maintain effective and efficient services

Highlights:

- Various activities have taken place during the year to **develop and support our staff team**. The job evaluation review was a significant piece of work for all staff and was completed in quarter two following the appeals process. Updates of HR policies are ongoing, with reviews completed and rolled out to staff on Health and Safety, Lone working and Personal Safety. Staff training during the year included mental health first aiders and new first aiders, plus a Mindful Employer workshop for all staff, as well as specific training to meet individual staff needs. Staff and Members also received data protection training. Following an audit, the safeguarding policy has been reviewed and signed off by Leadership Team, although training is yet to be organised due to Covid-19 restrictions. Two staff away-days were organised to enable cross-team learning and team-building, and a weekly email update initiated to communicate key achievements and activities.
- ENPA continues to provide **opportunities for young people** interested in a career with National Parks. In 2019 the Field Services Apprentice completed their apprenticeship. The Land and Property Intern's placement ended in August 2019 and a new Intern started in September 2019. A second externally funded Woodlands and Forestry Internship went on to gain fixed term employment with us. During the summer we hosted students from local schools on a one-week work experience programme. The Authority was also represented at a careers event at Minehead Middle School and a second event at Butlins was cancelled due to Covid-19. The national Countryside Worker apprenticeship standard is awaiting ministerial sign off and was due to commence at the end of July 2020 (prior to Covid-19).
- During the year there have been a number of changes to the **Authority Membership**, with five new Members joining (three District Council and two Parish Council representatives) and all attended Induction Training prior to taking part in their first Authority Meeting. The overall number of meetings supported during the year included 13 Statutory Meetings, three Exmoor Consultative & Parish Forum meetings, three Member Study Tours, one Member training session and seven Member Site Visits.



- Efforts continue to be made to build a more **positive perception of the planning service**. Positive news stories are being communicated as they arise including some engagement through social media with local businesses. The team continues to work closely with Exmoor Young Voices and Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum on planning matters and also to form a closer working relationship with the National Trust through regular meetings. The perception of planning however has been adversely affected by a decline in performance which originated with reduced capacity within the Planning and Customer Support team (driven by budget constraints) and was exacerbated by transitioning across to a new IT planning system, despite the hard work and efforts of the team to mitigate these impacts. Performance is down against national targets for determining planning applications, as shown in Figure 4 Appendix 1. We have received a large number of concerns and negative comments regarding processes, which the team has been working hard to rectify. We have increased capacity within the team to deal with the backlog of applications and are seeing improvements as a result, although the pressure in meeting statutory deadlines then transfers to the planning officers, and we are looking at how to address this. It is hoped that once initial teething problems are sorted, the new IT planning system will improve processes, and with the measures implemented and continuing commitment of the team, that performance will improve and confidence from customers will then return.
- Work continues to **improve and simplify our processes**. Due to budget constraints a completely new intranet system had to be discounted, but improvements to the current system were implemented although this has been slower than hoped due to technical difficulties. Changes were made to our website platform provided collectively for all National Park Authorities, this took longer than expected but is due for completion in the first quarter of 2020/21 and should not affect users of the website or change how it looks.

### 3.17 Corporate Priorities – Manage the Authority’s Estate and operations

#### Highlights:

- Future options for the **Pinkery Outdoor Education Centre** were developed and a workshop was held in July 2019 with Members. Further work was then undertaken to develop a draft development plan to consider what “tooling up” might look like and informal meetings held with a range of potential partners to look at future collaboration and to explore best practice and systems. Work has started on internal and external improvements and repairs, taking advantage of closure of the Centre in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 lockdown.
- Significant progress has been made exploring future priorities and management for **ENPA owned land assets**. A Land Choices exercise was completed with ENPA and National Trust leading to preparation of a draft joint management plan for North Hill. Two land visioning workshops were held with Members and staff to explore opportunities for other ENPA assets. This will be taken forward in 2020/21.
- Exemplary management of the **ENPA woodland estate** continues. ENPA owns and manages 600 ha of some of the most valuable woodland in the National Park. All of ENPA’s woodland is in positive management. We have a 10 year Forestry Commission approved plan of operations, a 5 year higher level Countryside Stewardship scheme (2017 - 22) and work with partners including Plantlife, Butterfly Conservation, Woodland Trust, Forestry Commission, Natural England, and others to deliver the outcomes agreed in these plans and our long term woodland strategy. Actions to deliver the Countryside Stewardship obligations have been down slightly



due to reduced capacity but have included extensive beech seedling control in the Barle Valley and Hawkcombe Wood National Nature Reserve, invasive species control in Ashcombe and Culbone, silvicultural transformation (thinning and selective felling) in Burr ridge Wood, Moor Wood and Hawkcombe. The period saw increased activity around ash dieback response and planning for some major works. A complete Tree Risk Assessment has been completed over all ENPA properties. Most hazards have been dealt with and the survey revealed significantly fewer trees with recordable defects which can be attributed to the thorough and robust approach taken by the woodland team to identify and deal with risks to limit ENPA liabilities. Activities to deliver the Plantlife programme include detailed survey of sites in the Barle Valley and Hawkcombe and a carefully specified work programme including selective felling and pollarding. All these sites will be re-surveyed to establish the effectiveness of the work.



*Tree felling works at Newgate Plantation due to Ash Dieback*

- Ongoing maintenance of the ENPA estate this year included:
  - Final phase of rock slope stabilisation work at Weir Cleeve and follow-up work completed.
  - 12 month inspection undertaken of work completed in summer 2018.
  - Condition surveys of Driver farmhouse, all public toilets and 7-9 Fore St completed and works being prioritised. Plans prepared for repair and alteration of main stock building at Driver farm.
  - Old mine workings resurvey report received and actions being implemented including improved signage and some additional fencing.
  - Refurbishment of Porlock Weir public conveniences completed.
  - Completed comprehensive schedule of private water supplies (maintenance programme and statutory compliance).
  - New solar PV panels installed at Pinkery
  - Work by external specialists to monitor the condition of the revetment wall at the Incline continued with a repeat survey (6 month intervals).
  - Metal fuel tank at the Sawmill identified as potentially hazardous; replacement needs planning permission.
  - The 'Dead House' at Exmoor House dry-lined to provide additional storage.

- Plastic Free Exmoor – the Authority was registered as part of the North Devon Plastic Free Community. An internal Action Plan has been produced and to date 3 businesses have signed up with actions to become Plastic Free. A Plastic Free Exmoor leaflet was produced.
- • A review of the **Authority's assets** is on-going but has progressed slowly due to other priorities and lack of capacity. A new Acquisitions and Disposals policy was signed off by the Authority in May 2019. A comprehensive schedule of assets is being compiled which assesses each asset against the criteria set out in the policy and recommends retention or disposal. About 30% of the assets on the register have been assessed to date. The approach taken and format used were reviewed in early March and some changes agreed. A new template has been designed but further work on the asset review has been delayed by the Covid-19 lockdown and more urgent tasks such as the annual revaluation of property assets.

**Clare Reid, Head of Strategy and Performance**

**Hazel Malcolm, Business Support Officer**

**Ellie Woodcock, HR Adviser**

July 2020

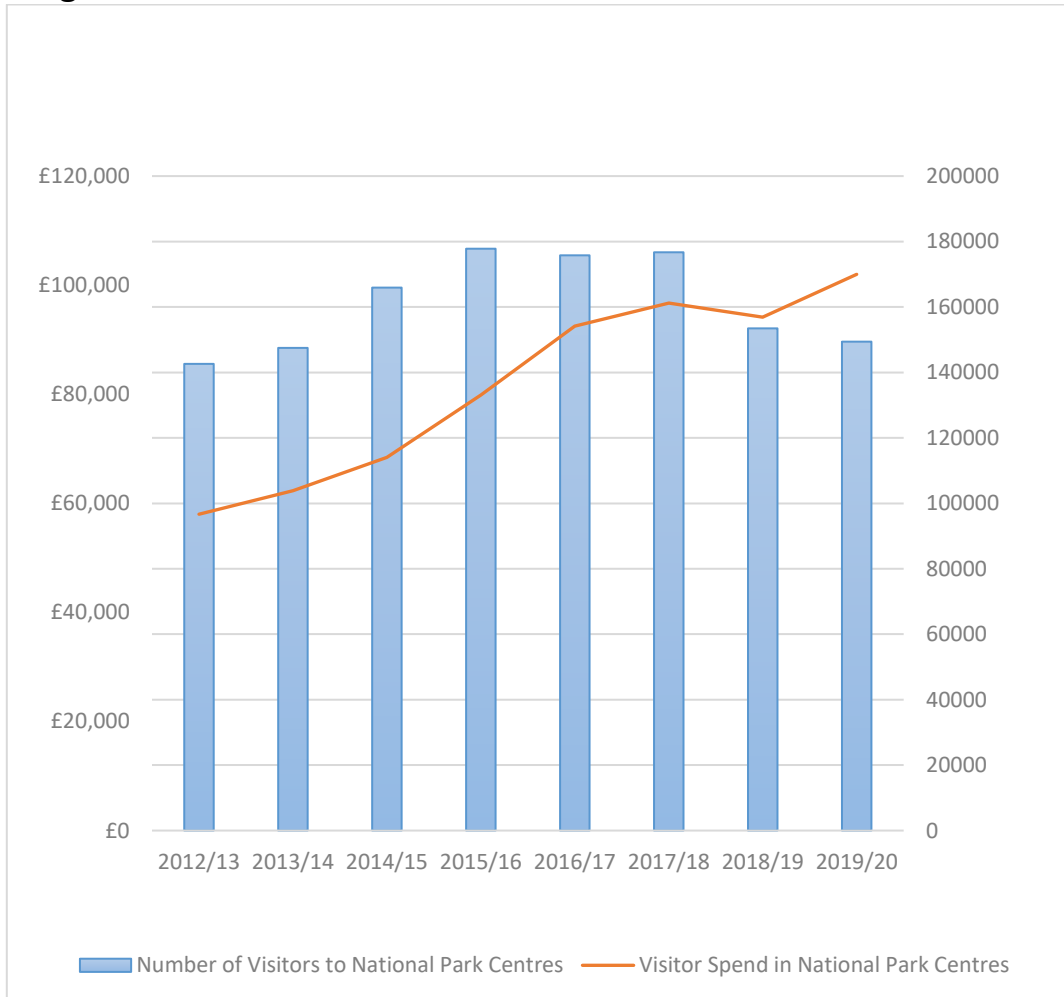
**Background papers on which this report, or an important part of it are based, constitute the list of background papers required by Section 100 D (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to be open to Members of the public comprise:**

Corporate Plan 2019/20

8-Point Plan for England's National Parks – March 2016 (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)

Key Corporate Indicators 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

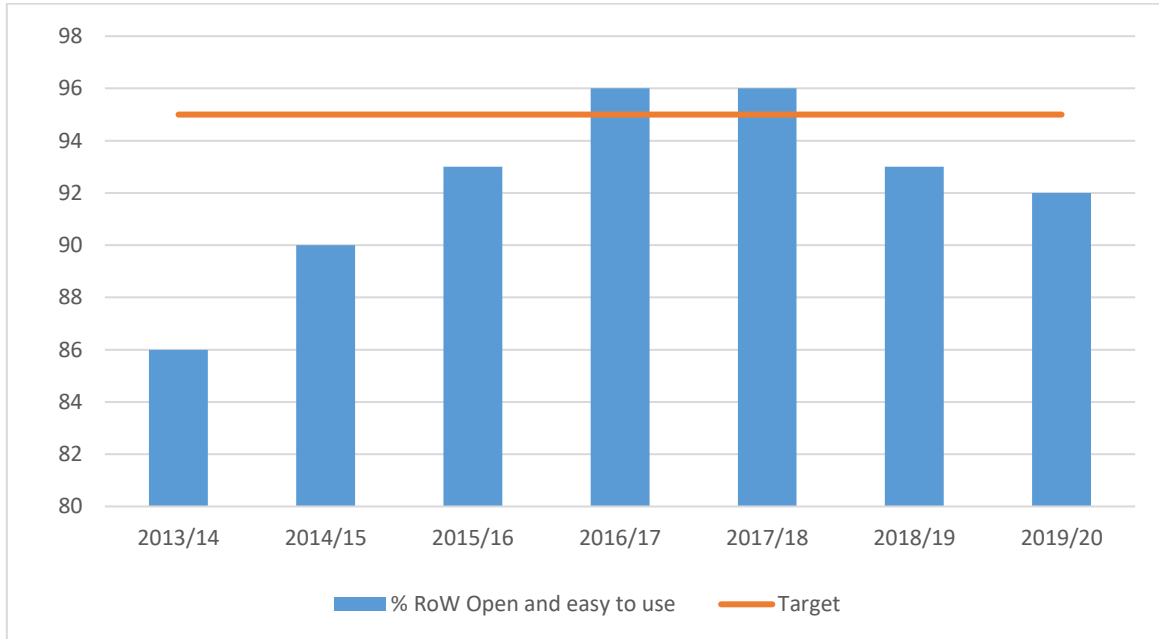
**Figure 1: National Park Centre Visitor Numbers and Income Trend**



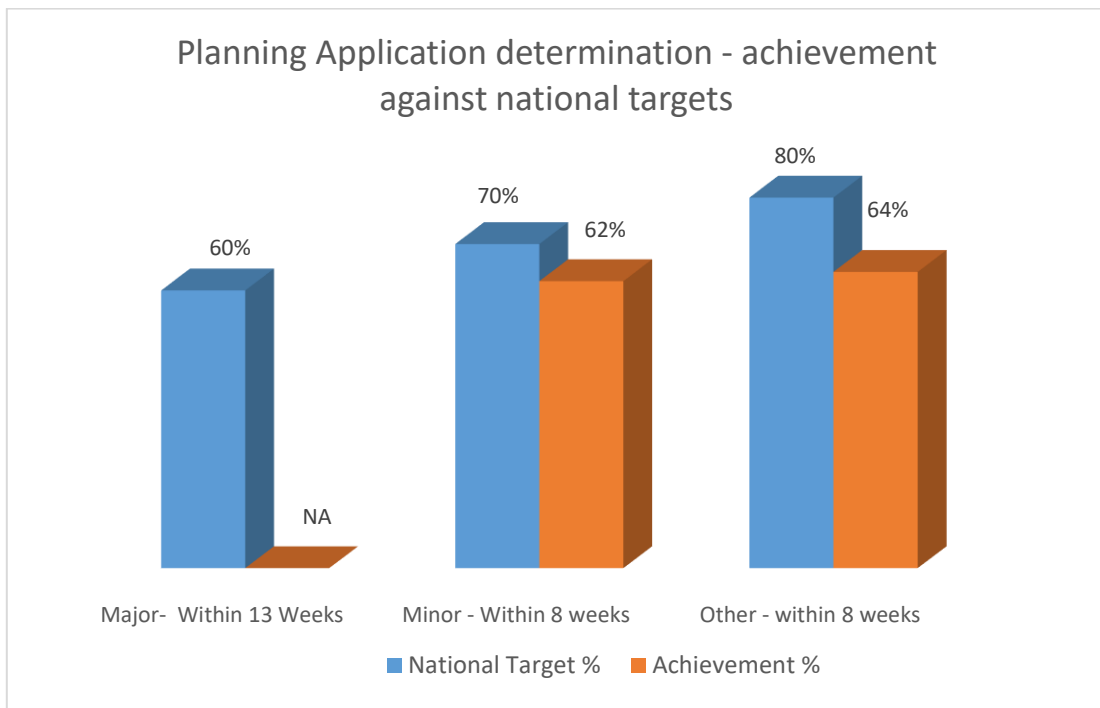
**Figure 2: Pinkery Centre Occupancy Rates (number of nights)**



**Figure 3: Rights of Way Open and Easy to Use Score**



**Figure 4: Planning Application determination – achievement against National targets**



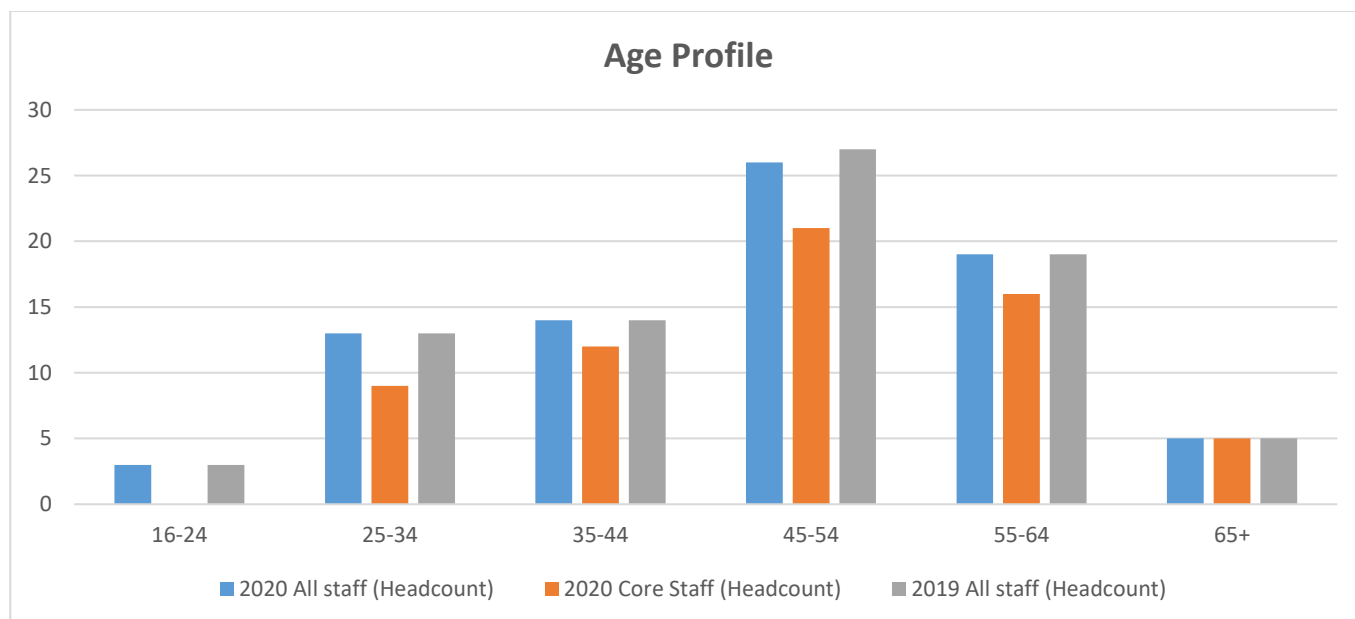
## Employee Profile - 31 March 2020

A summary of the employee demographics and key indicators of organisation wellbeing for the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

### Number of Employment Contracts Held (in post 31 March 2020)

Core Staff		
Section	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent
Support to Land Managers	22	20.70
Support to National Park Users	14	9.86
Support to the Community and Business	12	11.80
Strategy and Performance	5	4.40
Finance and Operations (includes ICT)	6	5.60
Land and Property Services	3	2.60
Chief Executive	1	1.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>55.96</b>
<i>Vacancies (Head of Information &amp; Communication; Senior Planning Officer, Funding Officer)</i>	3	2.60
<b>Non-Core (Seasonal/Project/Partnership/trainee) contracts</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13.14</b>

### Age Profile (Staff in post 31 March 2020)

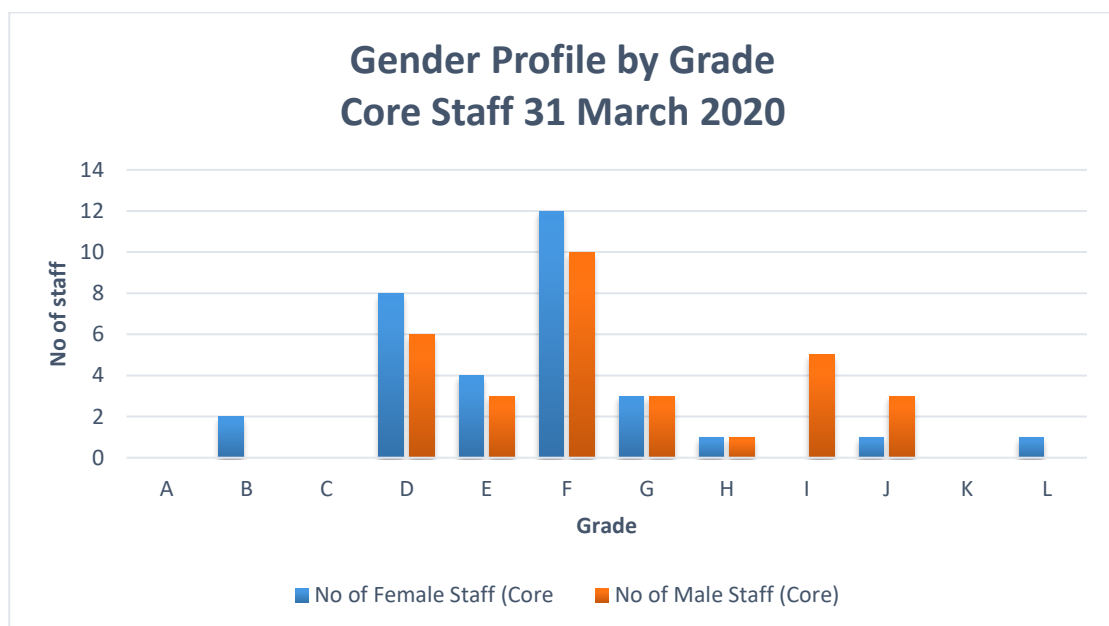


The Authority's stability index has lowered again this year (70% of core staff have over 3 years of service, 77% at 31 March 2019). The majority of staff are aged over 45 years. This experienced work force is a significant strength of the Authority, but a limiting factor to people joining the Authority to start their career. The number of staff in the over 45 groups may

indicate a future risk with experienced staff potentially choosing retirement at a similar time. An intern joined the Land and Property team on a one-year placement that is due to end in July 2020. A new Land and Property Intern was due to start at the end of the summer; however, due to unforeseen circumstances this is no longer going ahead. We will consider recruiting a student next year. We are recruiting a Conservation Intern but due to Covid-19, the recruitment process is on hold until restrictions have been lifted.

### Gender Profile by Grade – Core Staff (31 March 2020)

Core Staff Gender Profile (By Grade)			
Grade	Top of Pay Scale £	Female Staff	Male Staff
A	17711	0	0
B	18426	2	0
C	19171	0	0
D	21166	8	6
E	24799	4	3
F	28785	12	10
G	33799	3	3
H	39782	1	1
I	46122	0	5
J	53484	1	3
K	Not used	0	0
L	82995	1	0
<b>Total Posts</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Average (mean) salary 2019/20 (based on top salary point for each grade)</b>		<b>Female £29,014</b> <small>£27,272 without CE post included</small>	<b>Male £32,951</b>



The overall mean gender pay gap<sup>1</sup> has increased to 11.9% (from 5.91% in 2019). During 2019 the Authority undertook a job evaluation review across the whole organisation and



<sup>1</sup> The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees

adopted a new pay and grading scale that reflected both the NJC pay agreement for 2018-2020 and the job evaluation scoring. Just under half the job roles evaluated increased in grade, and just over half stayed the same. Only one job role was downgraded. Whilst this saw an increase in salaries at the lower grades, it also saw salary rates increase at senior management level and the Authority still has fewer female staff employed in posts in the upper middle or upper quartile of salaries.

#### Numbers of female and male per quartile of grades (core staff)

Quartile Data	Women	Male	All	% Women	% Male
Lower (A-C)	2	0	2	100	0
Lower Middle (D-F)	24	19	43	56	44
Upper Middle (G-I)	4	9	13	31	69
Upper (J-L)	2	3	5	40	60
	32	31	63	51	49

The median pay gap<sup>2</sup> is more typically used as a measure nationally as outliers can skew the mean, particularly in small data sets such as these. **The Authority's median gender pay gap is 0%.** According to the ONS<sup>3</sup>, the gender pay gap nationally based on median hourly earnings for full time employees was 8.9% in 2019.

	Authority Median Hourly Earnings (March 2020)	Change in Gap from 2019/20	UK Median Hourly Full Time Earnings (April 2019)
	£14.92	0%	£13.97
	£14.92	0%	£15.34

#### Declared Disability (All staff in post 31 March 2020)

Physical	1	<b>7.5% of the total staff group declare a disability</b> A disability may be defined as "A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities"
Progressive conditions e.g. MS, cancer	3	
Sensory	1	
Mental Health	0	
Learning Difficulties	0	
Other	1	

<sup>2</sup> The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full-pay relevant employees and that of female full-pay relevant employees

<sup>3</sup> ONS data 2019:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/genderpaygapintheuk/2019>



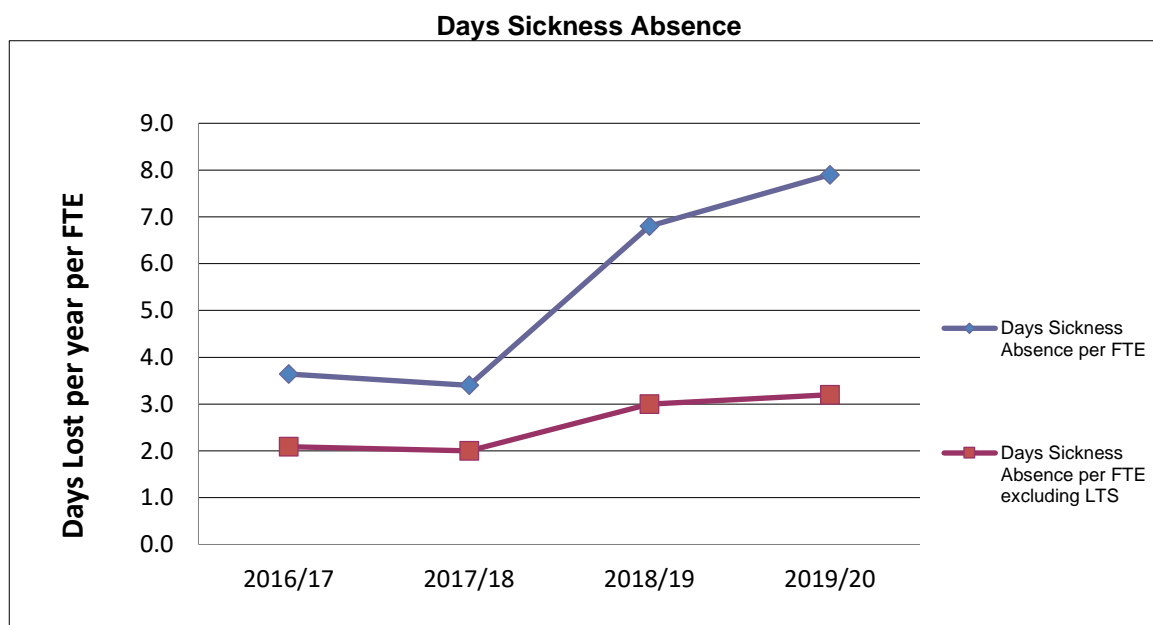
### Ethnicity (All staff in post 31 March 2020)

White	British	80	<b>100% of employees identify themselves as white British</b> Comparative data: population of the national park =97%; and regionally (SW) = 92%
	Irish and wider European	0	
Asian or Asian British		0	
Black or Black British		0	
Chinese or Chinese British		0	
Gypsy		0	
Mixed Ethnicity		0	

### Reported Absence Due to Sickness (All staff)

Reported Annual Sickness Absence (all staff)					
Year End March:	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
Total Days lost through sickness absence	506	478	214	259	438
Total Days lost excluding LTS*	206	212	129	149	221
<b>Total Days per FTE</b> (Avg. FTE over year)	<b>7.9</b>	<b>6.8</b>	3.0	3.6	6.21
<b>Total Days per FTE excluding LTS</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	1.8	2.1	3.1

\*LTS=Long Term Sick (20 consecutive working days or over)



73 separate occasions of sickness absence were reported (compared to 92 in 2018/19). 43 staff Members had no reported sickness absence during this period. Sickness levels have increased for another year. This is due to an increase in the number of days taken per employee but remain lower than 20 days (from which point, absence is deemed long-term sickness absence). This year the Authority recorded 28 absences for cold, cough and influenza, a decrease from 41 in 2018/19. In 2019/20, the Authority introduced reimbursement for flu vaccinations for staff who were not eligible for the vaccine. 14 staff Members (17.5%) reclaimed their vaccination costs. During the last quarter of 2019/20, the Authority had two Members of staff self-isolating for 14 days due to coronavirus, but both were able to work from home.

According to the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development, the average level of employee absence in the UK is 5.8 days per employee, much lower compared to the Authority's 7.9 days. The [Office for National Statistics](#) estimate a lower rate of 4.4 days per employee.

**Reported Accidents/Incidents (All staff and volunteers)**

During the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 there were:

- 5 staff accidents
- 3 public accidents
- 1 volunteer

**Cause of injury**

Slips, trips and falls	3
Fall from height	1
Office equipment/materials	3
Other	2 (dog bites)

**Resulting Injury**

Bruise	5
Cuts	3
Musculoskeletal	1

2 public accidents (emergency services were called for one, another was taken directly to A&E) were required to be reported as RIDDOR – these were public accidents where the emergency services were required.

All accidents and incidents, whether or not they result in injury or are considered a 'near-miss', are reported at the Authority's quarterly Health and Safety Committee and, where necessary, modifications to processes to prevent reoccurrence and to control risk.

## Customer Feedback Report 2019-20

A summary of the compliments, complaints, freedom of information requests and survey results for the period 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020

### Customer Compliments

Below are a sample of the 64 written compliments received in 2019/20, many relating to The Big Picnic. We receive many more through the visitor books in National Park Centres, calls to our offices or in conversation with officers in the field. It is apparent that our staff take pride in the work they do and strive to offer good service.

I have just sent a donation to CareMoor and wanted to express our deep appreciation of the work done by the Park Authority. – **All Staff**

I wondered if you might be able to pass on my thanks to the interview panel for meeting with me today, and I also wanted to say thank you to you and the rest the team for being so friendly and welcoming today. – **Strategy and Performance**

Ref the Big Picnic: You and all your staff deserve a huge thank you from members for their exceptional contribution to yesterday's event. As well as the messages you have been copied into I have received numerous texts and emails all expressing thanks to ENPA for the quality and organisation of yesterday's celebration Please pass my thanks on to everyone - they should be very proud of themselves. – **All Staff**

Just a short note to thank you for your recommendation and support for the last tail of our planning application for xxxxxxxx which as you can imagine we are so happy that all has worked out at the end. - **Planning**

I would like to congratulate the Historic Environment team on another successful Forum held last week in Dunster. The team consistently attract an audience of just short of one hundred amateur and professional archaeologists and provide them with a varied and interesting programme which bring people up to date with the latest research on Exmoor. This year the team running the event was small and they coped with everything from registration, serving tea and coffee, tricky IT and sound systems and presenting their own research. All this and they kept smiling and polite to throughout. They must have been exhausted at the end of the day. – **Historic Environment**

This is just to thank you for a brilliant Dark Sky Festival and in particular the four events I attended - the walk from Webbers Post to Dunkery Beacon, the walk from Exford on the 21st and with visiting grandchildren, the Planetarium and children's event at Porlock. We were all inspired to do our own dark sky walk the next day when there were clear skies over Wiveliscombe. Magic for 9 and 7 year olds who live in London ! – **Support to Community and Business**

Many thanks from The xxx for all the work that the Police have done as well as the National Park Rangers who have been fantastic. Lets hope that the message goes out that this is no

longer a pushover spot. Some quick and intelligent action by all concerned. – **Recreation and Access**

Thank you and all concerned for such a wonderful volunteer's Christmas celebration. We enjoyed the walk, the quiz, food and company. It couldn't have been better. We hope you all enjoy a very happy Christmas. – **Get Involved**

Thank you all for coming yesterday. The students loved it and it sounds like it was really helpful for them in a number of ways – boosting their confidence, helping them think about their options and inspiring them about their futures. – **Education**

## Formal Customer Complaints

From time to time Officers deal with concerns and issues raised by members of the public but these are usually resolved at an informal stage without the need to invoke the formal complaints procedure. The Authority received 4 complaints regarding the provision of its services via the formal complaints procedure as follows:

Reason for the Complaint	Date	Authority Response
Planning – various complaints against failure to follow procedures	June 2019	The Authority investigated the complaints which were from the same person. This complaint went to the Local Government Ombudsman, where there was no fault found in how the Authority dealt with a planning application and there were no findings of maladministration.
Complaint about delays to Planning caused by ENPA SLA Ecologist on bat surveys	June 2019	The Authority investigated the complaint and found that Officers had followed correct legal procedures. This information was relayed to the complainant.
The Head of Planning demonstrated bias towards an application	July 2019	The Authority investigated the complaint. No Bias was found which was relayed to the complainant.
Enforcement – alleged Breach of Planning complaint from a neighbour	March 2020	The Authority investigated the complaint and found that correct planning policy and procedures had been followed.

## Customer Surveys

It has not been possible to analyse customer survey information from Planning Applicants due to lockdown following Covid-19. This will be reported to members in due course once restrictions are lifted.

## Freedom of Information Requests

The Authority received 29 requests for information using the Freedom of Information Act 2000/Environmental Information Regulations 2004

FOI / EIR Requests 2019/20	
Data/Information Requested	Authority Response
First Aid Training	Information Disclosed
Enforcement Notices against Short Term Lets	Information Disclosed
Amount Spent on External Consultants	Information Disclosed
Ecologists Employed	Information Disclosed
Housing Land Survey	Information Disclosed
NPA Land and Property	Information Disclosed
Number of Tree Preservation Orders administered by the NP	Information Disclosed
Cost of a planning application	Information Disclosed
Planning information relating to an application	Information Disclosed
Self Build	Information Disclosed
Roadside Advertising	Information Disclosed
EIR on Trail Hunting	Information Disclosed
Number of complaints against the Culbone Inn	Information not Disclosed - Exemption Sec 30(1) applied
Self Build	Information Disclosed
HR and ICT	Information Disclosed
Self Build	Information Disclosed
Self Build	Information Disclosed
EIR on Trail Hunting	Information Disclosed
EIR on Trail Hunting	Information Disclosed
Number of complaints by Visitors to the NP	Information Disclosed
Number of complaints against the Culbone Inn	Information not Disclosed – Reiterated Exemption Sec 30(1)

**FOI / EIR Requests 2019/20**

<b>Data/Information Requested</b>	<b>Authority Response</b>
Communications and Telephony	Information Disclosed
Nitrogen and phosphorous pollution in or near Natura 2000 sites in England	Information not held
Blue Badge Applications	Information not held
First Aid and Mental Health Training	Information Disclosed
Conservation Areas	Information Disclosed
ICT	Information Disclosed
ICT Back up Policy	Information Disclosed
Hectares of woodland created	Information Disclosed