

Exmoor National Park
Historic Environment Report Series No 31

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2024-2033



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Exmoor National Park
Historic Environment Report Series

This report series includes interim reports, policy documents and other information relating to the historic environment of Exmoor National Park.

Further hard copies of this report can be obtained from the Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record: Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset. TA22 9HL email her@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk, 01398 322273

This report has been compiled by Shirley Blaylock (formerly Senior Conservation Officer, Historic Environment) building on previous Research Frameworks, the results from a series of Research Framework webinars held in 2021, and input from Exmoor National Park's Historic Environment Advisory Group. We greatly appreciate the contribution of all those taking part in the webinars and commenting on the draft reports.

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Contents

	Page
List of Abbreviations	
Contributors	
Summary	1
This Document	1
Exmoor National Park Statutory Purposes	1
Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2018-2023	2
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PART 1: THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2024-2033	
Vision	4
What is the historic environment?	4
Why is Exmoor’s historic environment special?	4
The Purpose of Research	5
Regional frameworks and strategies	5
Research Priorities for Exmoor 2024-2033	6
Key Methods and Techniques	17
Specific Actions and Areas for Development	18
Projects suggested to meet Research Framework Objectives	19
<hr/>	
PART II: REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN DELIVERING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2017-2021	
Is the Vision set out in the Historic Environment Research Framework 2017-2021 being achieved?	28
A Review of progress on advancing The Historic Environment Research Framework 2017-2021 priority by priority	29
Review of the Key Methods and Techniques 2017-2021	58
Progress against Specific Actions and Areas for Development 2017-2021	60
Research Projects which contributed to delivering the Research Framework 2017-2021	61
References	64

List of Abbreviations

DAS	Devon Archaeological Society
DNPA	Dartmoor National Park Authority
DMAG	Dunster Museum Archaeology Group.
EDG	Early Dunster Group
ENPA	Exmoor National Park Authority
HEAG	Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Advisory Group
HER	Historic Environment Record
MMS	Monuments Management Scheme (Historic England)
NDAS	North Devon Archaeological Society
OSL	Optically-Stimulated Luminescence
PAHS	Parracombe Archaeological and History Society
PDAS	Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society
PSANHS	Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society
RCZAS	Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey
SANHS	Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society
SWARF	South West Archaeological Research Framework (Webster, 2007)
SWHT	South West Heritage Trust
SWPP	South West Peatland Partnership

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THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR EXMOOR 2024-2033

SUMMARY

This document builds on the past Historic Environment Research Frameworks and research priorities for Exmoor (ENPA 2004, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2017). The report is presented in two parts: firstly, the identified research priorities for Exmoor's historic environment for the next ten years, 2024-2033 (PART I), and secondly a summary of the progress made in achieving the objectives identified in the Framework in 2017-2021 (PART II).

The aim is for the Research Framework to be formally revisited and updated after five years in 2028. The Research Framework is available via the National Park Authority's website: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk. For further information, or if you would like to bring areas of current research to our attention, please contact Exmoor's Historic Environment Team.

THIS DOCUMENT

The Research Framework for 2024-2033 (PARTs I and II) has been produced by the Historic Environment Service at Exmoor National Park Authority informed by a series of online webinars held in 2021 to review progress and set new objectives, involving a range of stakeholders: local individuals, researchers, groups and bodies as well as local, regional and national agencies and local authorities. The starting point was a review of progress made against the Historic Environment Research Framework 2017-2021; the vision, priorities and objectives.

This document is not an exhaustive, detailed account of all research, but a broad overview of the identified opportunities and the most significant progress since 2017. It was noted that activities were severely restricted during the period of the pandemic. The Historic Environment Advisory Group and some attendees have since reviewed and commented on a draft of this report. Some references have been updated for this final copy in 2024. The Framework is intended to guide and assist in the prioritising of research into the historic environment for:

- i) the benefit of the community of Exmoor,
- ii) those who have a role in the management and curation of the resource
- iii) anyone who is interested in Exmoor and its past.

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK STATUTORY PURPOSES

The Research Framework is guided by the statutory purposes for which Exmoor is designated as a National Park:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities by the public.

It has been delivered in part through objectives and targets in the Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017.

EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2024-2028

This is the key document that sets out in detail how Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) and its partners work together to support National Park purposes over these five years.

In terms of research, (which includes both monitoring and understanding), the Plan states that 'further targeted research and scientific analysis is essential to increase our understanding of the past. It is also crucial to make this information widely available to the public through the Historic Environment Record (HER).' It goes on to say that: 'we need to ensure that the whole of our historic and built environment is understood, well-managed, better protected and celebrated. We also need to ensure that Exmoor's cultural landscapes, customs and traditions are more widely known, and continue to tell the fascinating stories of its history and communities.' Another fundamental aspect of the past is that it should be used to inform decisions we make about future land management – the past should help us make sense of the present and we should learn from the successes and failures of the past in order to make the right decisions about the future. Accurate and objective understanding of the past is crucial to this aspect.

The Plan also challenges us to 'embrace opportunities for further research as part of landscape initiatives such as peatland restoration and landscape recovery'.

FRONT COVER

A view over Shoulsbarrow Castle, Challacombe

© HSWPP / SUMO GeoSurveys

PART I

THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2024-2033

VISION

Research which shows how people from the past lived, worked and died on Exmoor; shaping its environment and landscape and adapting to its challenges. This vision is to be achieved by:

- A series of multi-disciplinary research projects, drawing on and helping to develop up-to-date methodologies.
- Research carried out by a broad spectrum of individuals, groups, societies and organisations; involving the local community wherever possible to provide a range of learning opportunities for all.
- A continuing, rigorous re-appraisal of our knowledge and resource.
- High quality research informing and supporting equally high quality sustainable management of the historic environment.
- Interpretation accessible to all that flows from and closely reflects the results of this up-to-date, high quality research.
- The results of research disseminated in a timely fashion in a variety of media.
- An Historic Environment Record for Exmoor National Park which underpins and pools the research of individuals and organisations, by being up-to-date and accessible to all.

WHAT IS THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT?

Exmoor's historic environment comprises the entire historic and prehistoric landscape: archaeological sites and monuments, buried archaeological deposits, historic buildings, historic field patterns, objects and artefacts, historical sources, customs and traditions, and oral history. It also includes waterlogged deposits, such as coastal marshes and upland peat bogs and valley mire sites and other soils and sediments which contain information about past environments.

WHY IS EXMOOR'S HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SPECIAL?

- It uniquely contributes to Exmoor's special character, through the use of local building materials, and through the past management of the entire landscape (moorlands, woodlands and farmed land)
- Exmoor is a marginal landscape (and has a resulting dynamism in terms of past farming systems and settlements). Related to this, it also contains relict landscapes from prehistory to medieval times, the level of survival of which is only paralleled on other uplands. These landscapes are a very rare survival nationally

- It has a great palaeo-environmental resource and potential for further study
- It has a dispersed settlement pattern, representative of the south west of England
- Exmoor's coastline, which plays a major part in its economy and tourism industry, has a high concentration of historic features (which play an especially significant role in shaping its distinctiveness)

THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Exmoor's landscape has been profoundly shaped by people over the last 8000 years. The layers of previous human activity contribute to the variety of Exmoor's landscape and its special qualities; they also tell the story of human exploitation and activity on and around the moor through time. The purpose of research into the historic environment is to improve understanding of the physical remains in the landscape, both above and below ground. Research should also be directed towards artefacts and artefact collections, as well as historical archival and oral sources. Through better understanding, improved management strategies can be put in place which will help to conserve the resource. The interpretation that flows from high quality research will shape our view of Exmoor's past and build an appreciation of Exmoor's special qualities today.

REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIES

The Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the South West Archaeological Research Framework (SWARF) was published in 2008 (Webster C J ed). Although it now requires updating, it provides the regional context for the Exmoor Historic Environment Research Framework. Relevant research themes from SWARF are indicated below. In setting priorities for research into Exmoor's historic environment a two way process is essential: firstly, regional, national (and international) research frameworks and strategies will help to focus priorities for Exmoor, but equally from within Exmoor the nature of the evidence itself and the expertise of those engaged in its study, identify priorities for research. It is therefore important that Exmoor's and other sub-regional research frameworks seek to pursue a more nuanced approach in balance with and supplementing wider priorities.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR EXMOOR 2024-2033

Objective 1: Chronology

To improve the chronological framework by increasing the number of landscapes, sites, structures, places and artefacts dated by reliable archaeological methods. To make this objective explicit in project designs to ensure that adequate funding is included.

SWARF research aim 16 (p281)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Opportunities should be explored to take advantage of significant recent developments in scientific dating, especially OSL and Stable Isotope dating. Few scientific dates are sought for the Roman, medieval and later periods and there is great potential in this area especially in cross referencing to documentary sources and to improve the dating of pottery typologies and other artefacts.

The publication of the tephra analysis so far undertaken and further research of this internationally important resource is a priority. The 'Reclaiming Exmoor Project' included tephra dating from 1610 and 1947, and also the archival record of the Knights' activities, comparing the dated work with archaeological evidence and the palaeo-environmental impact. There are opportunities for further cross-disciplinary research such as this.

The Early Dunster Project continued until the end of 2023 and final reports are awaited. The project included a programme of dendrochronology in buildings funded by Historic England. The Early Dunster Group research included refining the dating of the use of carpentry techniques and jointing styles with the aim of building a local typology together with archival research. There is much potential for further dendrochronological work across Exmoor.

Objective 2: Heritage at Risk

The elements of the historic environment (landscapes, archaeological features, buildings, artefacts and deposits) which are at risk from external threats (including sea level rise, coastal erosion, flash flooding, climate change and changes in farming practice, land use, vegetation cover and development) should be identified and appropriately studied. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape are particularly vulnerable - such as stone settings. Research should include designated and non-designated sites; identify sites, areas and site types most at risk, their significance and the key issues or threats. Research into management options and their effectiveness is also required. It is recognised that Exmoor has many undesignated sites and buildings that are likely to meet the criteria for designation and need assessing.



Evaluation trench excavated in a suspected prehistoric burnt mound near Withypool (c) SWPP



Colton Farm Barns



Historic farm buildings often have high landscape value, but are increasingly vulnerable



Inside a WWII Radar Station, similar to the one that survives on North Hill

SWARF research aim 23 (p285)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Condition surveys of nationally designated sites need to be maintained on their five-yearly cycle to identify trends and inform conservation work. The Scheduled Monument Condition Survey is due and is a priority. The next Listed Buildings Condition Survey is due in 2024 - 2025. Continued and new condition and recording surveys of types of monuments particularly at risk is desirable and could be extended (e.g. stone settings, chest tombs).

The RCZAS Phase 2 and the identified 9 areas of research from the RCZAS Phase 1 remain priorities for completion. Coastal industry (especially the mining landscape), Porlock Bay and marsh and coastal designed landscapes are high priorities. The impacts of active processes such as natural coastal realignment and the potential for inland initiatives such as river realignment require appropriate assessment and mitigation programmes. The recording of features at risk of climate change and increased (flash) flooding is required such as bridges and weirs.

Further research is required into the impacts of landscape change on the historic environment, including the historic farmed landscape, for example through changing agricultural practice, nature recovery initiatives, increased tree planting and peatland restoration, including the assessment of potential below peat archaeology. Some undesignated extensive sites such as relict field systems, peat-cutting and water meadow systems may be particularly affected. Flint scatter sites are poorly understood, and little recent documented field work has been undertaken in this area. Arable land and the farming landscape is generally less well researched with the potential for sites to remain unrecorded at times of change. Less well-known minor 'designed landscapes' and gardens are poorly understood and recognised on Exmoor, particularly along the coast which leaves them vulnerable to uninformed change and further research and record is required.

Condition surveys of buildings have highlighted the vulnerability of small structures such as chest tombs, bridges and boundary stones which are often poorly recorded. A lack of appropriate designation can increase the risk from development. Research of buildings where there is development pressure is required, particularly farm buildings, ecclesiastical and other community buildings but also small domestic buildings. Wider use of dendrochronology would improve understanding of the significance of vulnerable buildings.

The development of a Local Heritage List in conjunction with Somerset and the South West Heritage Trust was a key area of work for 2022-3. The framework for the Local Heritage List is now in place there is considerable opportunity for local involvement in nominating and recording suitable sites.

Objective 3: Relict Prehistoric Landscapes

Exmoor's relict prehistoric landscapes are a remarkable survival but our understanding of them is still fragmentary. As there is relatively little excavation on Exmoor there is scope for strategic excavation to recover dating evidence to place sites in a tighter chronological framework, to better understand form and function and the relationship of individual sites with the wider landscape and for comparison outside Exmoor. Further palaeo-environmental sampling from archaeological deposits during excavation and from mire sequences is required to develop our understanding of contemporary environments, changing woodland cover, the nature of prehistoric farming and climatic and population density changes and impacts. Other studies might include how stone settings, barrows and cairns, and possible burnt mounds relate (if at all) to settlement evidence; the reason for the apparent near absence of Neolithic monuments on Exmoor (lack of dating of the possible Tor enclosure at Hangman Hill); whether the absence of field systems at some settlement sites indicates pastoralism or other or seasonal use of these sites. The origin and evolution of Iron Age enclosures and their landscape context merits further study.

SWARF research aims 3 (p276), 25 (285), 28 (p 286), 54 (p292), 57 (p293)

Projected focus 2024-2033

It is important to link this objective with those for Chronology and the re-assessment of museum and archival collections (Objectives 1 & 4) and maximise the use of existing material including palaeo-environmental collections. The publication of projects remains a priority, in particular the publication of work at Hawkcombe Head and Farley Water is important for understanding the Mesolithic on Exmoor. Recommendations for further research were identified in the Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Project and the Phase 1 Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey and these need to be further pursued. The Longstone Landscape Project use of ground penetrating radar survey (the first on a barrow in the SW) proved successful and wider use of radar is recommended. The later prehistoric period has had little focus, with little recent work on hillslope enclosures and their date and function. The available Lidar data remains to be systematically examined and may be fruitful for the prehistoric period. Palaeo-environmental research is beginning to connect environmental ebbs and flows with human expansion and contraction and this and understanding what phases of natural regeneration looked like in the past need further exploration and linking with changes experienced today. There has been little recorded fieldwalking of arable areas to complement the results of field survey of the upland areas, sites in these areas may be poorly identified and more at risk of from development and changes in land use, especially tree planting. There is scope for comparing sites discovered through aerial photography and Lidar with those discovered through field survey.

Objective 4: Museum and Archival Collections

There is a wealth of information held in existing collections, many of which require more detailed cataloguing and re-analysis. There should be an attempt to identify and record the collections that are in private hands. The results of this work should be published and publicly available. Archival documentary resources are valuable in understanding the historic landscape and drivers of change and further study of public and private collections in relation to the historic landscape is required.

SWARF research aim 5 (p278) and 11 (p280)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Further work is needed in re-examining lithic collections and relating them to their site location. Recommendations for further study were identified in the Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Project and remain to be pursued. Scoping work to assess and catalogue the material housed in museums and private collections is required. This would inform appropriate strategies for their study. The collections of material from excavations at the two Roman Fortlets in Devon, held in Barnstaple, are worthy of re-examination. There are questions about medieval ceramics on Exmoor, including production sites, yet to be answered. Much more could be done to celebrate the material culture associated with sites on the Exmoor HER website. There is much scope for volunteers and community groups to undertake cataloguing and archive work. Finders of artefacts are encouraged to report finds to the local Portable Antiquities Scheme Finds Liaison Officer so that these are recorded, analysis of the type and context of reported finds from Exmoor would be worthwhile.

Objective 5: Landscape Based Research

Exmoor comprises distinctive types of historic landscapes defined in Exmoor's Historic Landscape Characterisation mapping and Exmoor's Landscape Character Assessment – there is a need to refine the approach to Exmoor so that it explicitly recognises the fine-grained nature of these cultural landscapes.

SWARF Research aim 1a (p274)

Projected focus 2024-2033

With climate emergency and nature recovery initiatives driving change on a landscape scale, understanding Exmoor's past landscapes and how they evolved is key to informing future landscape proposals. Our moorland and farming landscapes need to be understood as cultural landscapes. For more recent centuries our understanding can be further enhanced by linking the surviving documentary evidence to the palaeo-environmental resource and interpretation of the landscape as undertaken in the 'Reclaiming Exmoor'

project. A systematic analysis of the available Lidar data across Exmoor and an evaluation of Exmoor's Historic Landscape Characterisation mapping to assess whether the data can be enhanced and presented in a more accessible way are also priorities.

Palaeo-environmental research (mentioned in Objective 3 above), is beginning to connect environmental ebbs and flows with human expansion and contraction and this and understanding what phases of natural regeneration in the landscape looked like in the past need further exploration.

Objective 6: The Roman Period

To further our understanding of Exmoor during the Roman period by carrying out research into the nature of military occupation, by investigating settlement and land use evidence and by extending the research begun by the Exmoor Iron project into the iron industry during this period. A fundamental part of achieving this objective is the publication of the existing research.

SWARF research aim 50 (p291)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Modern application of Lidar analysis has much potential for augmenting the military period map of Exmoor and also the context of evidence already recognised. Some tentatively identified features require further field evaluation, including the road network. The identification of Roman period settlement and land use and their degree of continuity both from the Iron Age and into the early medieval period requires further examination, and Lidar analysis may also be fruitful here. An assessment of existing material in museum and private collections and the existing palaeo-environmental resource is required (see objective 4). Publication of past work such as the Exmoor Iron Project, related ceramic assemblages and the surveys of Rainsbury fort remain key priorities.

Objective 7: The Origin and Development of Settlements

Understanding the origin, development and morphology of settlements are central themes to the understanding of Exmoor's historic environment. Multi-disciplinary projects are required to investigate abandoned and existing settlements as well as settlement patterns on Exmoor. This work should include:

- i. research into settlement morphology and characterisation,
- ii. research into the significance of Dunster as a medieval town and other settlements through building recording, historical research and selective excavation,

- iii. multi-disciplinary projects to investigate the origins of existing settlements and settlement patterns on Exmoor
- iv. research into post-medieval desertions, which are a common feature of Exmoor's landscape, to analyse these sites: their origins, their longevity, form and ultimately the reasons for failure (amalgamation, changing patterns of farming etc).
- v. research into place-names; their meaning and origin

SWARF research aims 4f (p278) and 7 (p279)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Building recording including through community projects and development control has produced some outstanding results and needs to be continued and extended to other settlements or parishes. Community 'test-pit' projects have shown post-medieval results to outweigh medieval evidence which needs further probing and reports of the projects in Dulverton (2010) and Porlock (2014) need completing. The resourcing of the voluntary sector to enable high quality buildings survey and research work is important. The HER could reflect work being done in this area perhaps as subject or project themes. Research into medieval and post-medieval desertions is desirable. Further work on the derivation of place names is also required as our current understanding is based on limited work from the 19th and early 20th century.

Objective 8: Resource Exploitation and Industry

Exmoor's abundant natural resources include minerals, marine resources, water, woodlands and moorlands as well as clean air and wild resources. Priorities for research include mining centres such as Combe Martin and Bampfylde. There is also a need for industry specific research, for example into the lime industry, harbours and havens, the woodland industry, the iron industry.

SWARF research aim 38 (p288) and 47 (p291)

Projected focus 2024-2033

Publication of Exmoor Iron remains a priority. There is a need for greater understanding of the mining features on the moorland especially in the light of work by Exmoor Iron at Roman Lode. Research into coastal subjects following recommendations in the RCZAS (also priority 2) remains to be undertaken. Greater knowledge in the National Park HER of adjacent projects such as silver mining research in Combe Martin is desirable. Studies such as dendrochronology may give a greater understanding of past woodland management and an assessment of current knowledge would identify whether further research or synthesis of past woodland management is required since

the work by Cannell (2005). Natural Capital studies (as reflected in the 25-year environment plan) highlight resources such as water and clean air. Exmoor's plentiful supply of water was vital to many of Exmoor's past industries and there is much archaeological evidence for its management and use as a source of power. Future initiatives for managing Exmoor's water for flood alleviation, adaptation to climate change and for nature recovery may have an impact on the archaeological evidence for the use of water and waterpower, and this requires assessment and is an opportunity for further research in association with Objective 2. The clean and sea air may be linked to past tourism attraction or health facilities such as sanatoria. The evidence for the use of Exmoor's wild resources could be usefully researched or synthesised such as evidence for collecting wortleberries (including for dye for RAF Uniforms) or sphagnum moss.

Objective 9: Farming & Land Management

Most of Exmoor is farmed land (or has formerly been so). The biggest changes to the landscape are caused by farming and land management practice. Priorities for research are Exmoor's medieval (?) field systems, the stock (including ancient breeds), field gutter systems, reclamation, customs and traditions associated with the farming industry. Recent environmental change and human adaptation to and influence on that change is also a key priority. Long term ecological and climatic records should be used to give a context to recent land management and climatic change (the last 500- 1000 years).

SWARF research aims 42 and 43 (p290)

Projected focus 2024-2033

The Leverhulme funded 'Reclaiming Exmoor' project completed 2022 provided a greater understanding of the motivation and influences on the enclosure and development of the Royal Forest and the consequent ecological change. Initiatives are being developed to address the climate change and nature recovery emergencies within Exmoor National Park. These could have significant land management and landscape impacts and assessment of the impact of schemes should provide an opportunity for greater study of field systems and lower lying farmed landscapes as well as upland areas. Traditional farmsteads and their buildings are also under pressure from development. Their relationship with traditional farming and their land holding, and how traditional land management contributes to Exmoor's cultural heritage is a key area for future research. The use of the palaeo-environmental record to understand further the history of activities such as swaling and grazing, and the examination of heathlands as cultural artefacts should be explored. Lidar analysis was not included as part of Exmoor's National Mapping Programme and could provide extensive material for the analysis of the farmed landscape. Past agricultural

innovation and linked technological innovation on Exmoor could be further researched. Some aspects of the past farmed landscape, such as field gutter or catch water systems, are particularly threatened by initiatives such as grassland improvement or woodland creation and their current condition and survival is poorly understood.

Objective 10: Communication, Transport and Trade

The infrastructure of the historic landscape (roads, railways, other routeways, harbours and means of communication) is fundamental to its working especially in a remote area such as Exmoor. They have a huge impact on trade and travel. Understanding trade links with other areas and the import and export of goods and materials are priorities for further research.

SWARF research aims 15.2.4

Projected focus 2024-2033

Greater study of coastal infrastructure & bridges is required especially in the context of coastal and climate change. There are considerable repairs to bridges each year especially parapets mainly following vehicle collisions. It is thought that few are adequately recorded, and many are vulnerable to further damage from vehicles and climate change (Heritage at Risk Objective 2). Most shipwrecks fall outside the National Park, which ends at the Mean Low Water mark, although studies of shipping and the use of harbours contribute to knowledge of trade and connections with Exmoor. The further use of Lidar analysis could further expand our knowledge of all types of roads and routeways from the Roman period onwards. More recent systems of communication such as telephone boxes, letter boxes and road signage are or may come under threat of removal as their use declines, and a record of them and their settings should be undertaken before further loss. There has been loss of related features such as petrol stations. Past trade links need further research through documentary sources as well as material remains such as pottery, especially for periods or products for which there is little or no documentary support.

Objective 11: Ritual and Religion

Ritual and religion may be conveniently divided into pre-Christian and the Christian continuum. The priorities for research in the prehistoric era are stone settings and standing stones; and burial- or barrow- related monuments. For the post Roman period religious buildings, features and artefacts of all denominations and faiths continue to deserve study.

SWARF research aim 55 (p292)

Projected focus 2024-2033

The focus on moorland and prehistory has momentum and is producing good results and this work needs to be continued in the current period of pressure for change on moorland areas. There has been progress with recording prehistoric ritual landscapes and features, but synthesis is required especially with increased understanding of how function can change through time and how single features can have multiple phases. There is a lack of evidence of religious practice in the 1st Millennium BC to 200AD on Exmoor. Any potential evidence for religious belief or burial in the later prehistoric and Roman period requires special attention.

Early Christianity, holy wells, churchyards and the fabric of standing churches should continue to be the focus of research and recording. Other areas that have received much less attention need addressing such as non-conformism and the resultant churches and chapels and how they are affected by change of use and conversion. Further study of chapels, memorials and collating evidence of other faiths could be undertaken.

Objective 12: Estates and Designed Landscapes

Exmoor's estates and their designed landscapes have profoundly influenced the character of the National Park. Research is required to characterise the various estates – their architecture, design and designed landscapes – through historical research and fieldwork. More detailed investigation at some sites should inform their future management. Out of such work should come an analysis of the character and influences on Exmoor designed landscapes and how they reflect (or not) national trends. On Exmoor, at least 25 estates and designed landscapes have been identified, and all require some level of investigation.

Projected focus 2024-2033

Priorities for research are: Ashley Combe, Ashcombe/Simonsbath, Chagot House, Combe Sydenham, Glenthorne. Many less well-known sites are poorly recognised and researched, particularly along the coast which leaves them vulnerable to uninformed change and further research and record is required. Consider the development of a local register of designed landscapes with specialist partners. A synthesis and understanding of designed landscapes as an Exmoor group and collation of any historic research undertaken on the larger estates is required. There is scope for a concentrated study of the coastal designed landscapes especially in terms of the picturesque. The majority of the designed landscapes are not designated (there are only 2 Registered Parks and Gardens on Exmoor) and many are vulnerable to coastal change or other pressures. Further study is required to identify their significance and inform responses to potential landscape change through climate change,

development or initiatives such as woodland creation. There is considerable scope for researching the history of estates including the workforce and the changing management of estates to include the more recent acquisition of estates (or parts of them) by the National Park and National Trust. Small vernacular details on estates such as gate styles, their catches and piers or posts or other distinctive estate features are easily lost and require recording.

Objective 13: The Built Environment

Vernacular styles, other styles, traditional building methods. Priorities for research are: thatch (specifically to identify thatched buildings on Exmoor, and locate examples of smoke blackened thatch), traditional building techniques, medieval buildings on Exmoor, historic farm buildings, buildings associated with the Arts & Crafts movement.

Projected focus 2024-2033

Completion of reports and synthesis of the recording work, undertaken by the Early Dunster Group, including integration of the results of dendrochronology, is awaited. There are further opportunities for dendrochronology across Exmoor. Recording in association with development through the planning system and HER enhancement is crucial. Further research on smoke-blackened thatch and roofs is still required with no definitive list of these on Exmoor yet developed. Street furniture such as traditional signposts, phone boxes and post boxes are increasingly under threat. Certain building materials and types such as corrugated iron and Dutch barns are also vulnerable to loss, as are redundant farm buildings. There are opportunities for themed studies such as further work on Chapels and community buildings. A focus on estates and estate buildings (e.g. Glenthorne, Lillicombe, Ashley Combe, Knight Estate, Acland Estate) with some work on comparison, architects and influences is required. Further assessment for designation of the built environment is required including for a Local Heritage List.

Objective 14: Social History

To support the community, individual as well as academic research of the wealth of social history information available, especially from the past 200 -300 years, which reflects great changes on Exmoor. Research should include documentary and illustrative sources as well as oral recording of memories. The farming life, normal everyday lives as well as more privileged inhabitants and settlers could be more fully researched and linked to how their activities are reflected in Exmoor's settlement pattern, landscapes and prosperity. The perception of Exmoor changes, as do the reasons people stayed, came or settled here and this requires further analysis.

Projected focus 2024-2033

There is significant progress in certain areas with some academic and local projects, and further publications are expected. The U3A Knight transcription project has shown what valuable work can be achieved by community groups and there is scope for similar projects. Work on the Reclaiming Exmoor Project has looked at perceptions of the landscape and environment in the 19th century and how actions are legitimised in an era of colonialism. Making existing recorded oral history work accessible is required. A forum for encouraging and sharing research undertaken by individuals and groups would be useful, with collation of what is being done by groups (such as Exmoor Society, Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage and Friends of Simonsbath Sawmill) across Exmoor. There is much scope to include social history and oral history recording into many projects and link with physical remains. Recording grave and memorial stones may have been undertaken by different individuals and groups. It would be useful to have this collated and identify and fill gaps. Other aspects for further research could be the development and changes in attraction for tourism on and around Exmoor, and the context and perceptions of leisure and sporting activities such as horse riding, hunting, fishing, nature and wild landscapes.

Objective 15: Exmoor's Military Heritage

Investigation into the military use of Exmoor from the medieval period onwards. A priority for research is WWII where Exmoor has significant and extensive remains. Training grounds from the 19th century onwards could be further studied.

Projected focus 2024-2033

Further research should follow from the survey scoping WWII resources (SEM8193). Research into the two World Wars overlaps with priority 14 (Social History), and any opportunities for oral history recording including childhood memories should be maximised. There is scope for research into e.g. use of sphagnum moss in WWI and other special uses of Exmoor for the war effort such as housing of mules etc. This priority should include the Civil War which needs more focus.



Cleeve Abbey - outside Exmoor National Park, but several of its granges lie high on the Brendon Hills



Community evaluation of a suspected prehistoric burnt mound near Withypool (c) SWPP 2



Prehistoric standing stones, so distinctive of Exmoor's archaeology, are very vulnerable

KEY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Research priorities need to be delivered through appropriate methodologies and the use of effective techniques on Exmoor is still a priority. Research ideas should ideally incorporate some of the following methods and techniques:

1. Integrated, multi-disciplinary approach

Should bring together building recording, landscape survey, fieldwalking, historical research, artefact analysis and palaeo-environmental studies.

2. Scientific dating

There is still a need for scientific dating on key sites and further use of newer techniques such as optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) dating

3. Remote sensing

Standard geophysical methods are proving highly useful on Exmoor, but more work needs to be done. In particular, the use of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) needs to be developed. There is now a very extensive air photographic collection for Exmoor held in the Historic England Archive. The work should continue and needs to target a wide range of research projects. Work should also continue on photographing levelled sites. A key research tool for Exmoor is the LiDAR coverage for the moorland area. Coverage of the entire National Park at a grade suitable for identifying archaeological features is still required. Further interrogation of LiDAR and the use of drone survey (UAV, photogrammetry) could be extended. Ground based photogrammetry allowing 3D models to be developed, can be used for recording sites and buildings.

4. Palaeo-environmental sampling

Exmoor is rich in wetland deposits, such as blanket bogs, valley mire sites and coastal wetlands. Sampling is particularly required where the relationship between cultural remains and environmental sequences is or can be clearly established. Bioarchaeological and geoarchaeological sampling appropriate to the research questions asked should be an integral part of evaluations and excavations.

5. Selective excavation at key sites

Many of Exmoor's monument categories (such as hut circles, barrows and hill-slope enclosures) have not been examined by excavation. Selective excavation is needed at representative sites to examine questions about form and function and to establish dates.

6. Dendrochronology on buildings

More dendrochronological sampling is required as part of project and recording work on Exmoor's historic buildings and this will help to develop the reference chronology for north Devon and west Somerset. It may also help in understanding past woodland management.

7. An Historic Environment Record to assimilate information

The Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record and website are key research tools for those working on Exmoor's historic environment. The HER needs to be up-to-date and to incorporate a suite of evidence sets.

8. Detailed building recording

Detailed surveys of historic buildings are being carried out on Exmoor, but much more work on this area needs to be done.

9. Fieldwalking

A systematic fieldwalking programme is required on Exmoor to reveal new sites and boost artefact assemblages. There is particular scope here (and on excavations) for the involvement of young people and the local community, as well as archaeological societies.

10. Geochemical survey

Geochemical survey to identify areas of metal working has been carried out and has revealed very positive results at a number of locations, including on hill-slope enclosures, and to identify areas of activity on iron working sites. Further work is required to test and develop this method and to refine interpretation in conjunction with geophysical survey, to better understand when and where it is appropriate to use it.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Continue and further develop the existing network of research projects
 - a. develop a resource assessment for Exmoor
2. Encourage others to undertake projects on Exmoor.
 - a. Develop and extend links with academic institutions, agencies, other local authorities, groups and societies, individuals and the local community.
 - b. Encourage the setting up of archaeological and local history projects by local groups, archaeological societies and schools, and support existing projects, especially in recording, monitoring and the use of commonly available technology; photography is an under-used resource and could be used more by volunteers, community groups and interest groups.
 - c. Encourage greater synthesis of previous work and the processing and publication of existing material and research.
3. There should be better funding for research projects
 - a. Explore and pursue funding streams for research into Exmoor's historic environment
 - b. Work with partners such as Historic England, the AHRC, Medieval Settlement Research Group, and academic institutions as well as other

local funding streams such as the Maltwood Fund, the Malcolm MacEwan Trust, and the Exmoor Society.

4. Raise awareness of historic environment research

- a. Promote academic and popular publications on Exmoor's past, including field guides and leaflets, and through the HER
- b. Encourage specialised walks and talks
- c. Continue to hold events sharing research such as the Exmoor Archaeology Forum
- d. Use the Historic Environment Review and /or the website to publish a summary of recent research
- e. Further and promote the Research Framework

5. Foster communication between groups researching Exmoor's Historic Environment by

- a. Seminars or workshops held on research themes or project areas to progress or share knowledge in an area of research.
- b. Encourage the development of other formats or networks for communication such as social media or on-line fora.

6. Develop a landscape scale approach to research through development of historic landscape characterisation.

PROJECTS SUGGESTED TO MEET RESEARCH FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1: Chronology

- Publication and development of tephra analysis
- Dendrochronological analysis on a range of buildings across Exmoor and a synthesis and analysis of existing results
- Dating of post-Roman periods including artefacts
- Publication of 2020 work at Codsand including OSL results

Objective 2: Heritage at Risk

- RCZAS Phase 2
- Synthesis and evaluation of previous monitoring at Porlock Marsh and a new assessment
- Listed Building Condition Survey
- Scheduled Monument Condition Survey

- Principal Archaeological Landscape Condition Survey
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Assessment for designation of significant sites and buildings, including for the Local Heritage List
- Assessment, recording and condition surveys of site types at risk such as stone settings, coastal designed landscapes, chest tombs, traditional farm buildings, bridges and weirs
- The impacts or potential impacts of landscape change on the historic environment, including through climate change, agricultural practice, peatland restoration and other nature and climate recovery initiatives and how conservation of the historic environment can work in harmony with other conservation objectives.
- Assessment and recording of the historic environment in proposals for development and new schemes.

Objective 3: Relict Prehistoric Landscapes

- Publication of work on Mesolithic sites at Brendon Common, Farley Water and Hawkcombe Head
- Synthesis of Mesolithic activity on Exmoor
- Completion of Longstone Landscapes surveys and report
- Completion and report on excavation evaluation at Codsend 2020
- A focus on the Iron Age period and dating of hillslope enclosures
- Completion of the Timberscombe Enclosure excavation report
- Completion of Codsend 2020 evaluation excavations
- Land use and landscape change in the Neolithic to Bronze Age transition
- Further geophysical survey and lidar analysis, including of 'blank' areas

Objective 4: Museum and Archival Collections

- Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Phase 2
- Assess and catalogue archives in museum and private collections and develop strategies for their study
- Re-examination of the material collections from the coastal Roman fortlets
- A study of medieval Exmoor ceramics and production sites

- Analysis of material reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the location and context of discovery on Exmoor

Objective 5: Landscape Based Research

- Understanding Exmoor's past landscapes and how they evolved, to inform future landscape proposals
- Understanding what past phases of natural regeneration in the landscape looked like
- Assessing moorland and farming landscapes as cultural landscapes.
- Linking documentary evidence for change to field evidence
- A systematic analysis of Lidar data across Exmoor
- An evaluation of Exmoor's Historic Landscape Characterisation mapping to assess whether the data can be enhanced and presented in a more accessible way

Objective 6: The Roman Landscape

- Analysis of Lidar data
- Field evaluation / ground truthing of remote sensing and other modelling results
- A re-assessment of existing material including palaeo-environmental material
- Publication of the Exmoor Iron project results
- Publication of Rainsbury fort surveys

Objective 7: The Origin and Development of Settlements

- Completion of work and reports in Dunster with synthesis of results
- Completion of Dig Dulverton (2010) and Dig Porlock (2014) reports
- Building recording through community projects continued and extended to other settlements or parishes.
- Community 'test-pit' projects have shown post-medieval results to outweigh medieval evidence which needs further probing
- Research into medieval and post-medieval desertions
- Further work on the derivation of place names

Objective 8: Resource Exploitation

- Publication of Exmoor Iron.
- Greater understanding of the mining features on the moorland and periods of exploitation especially in the light of work at Roman Lode.
- Research into coastal subjects following recommendations in the RCZAS (also priority 2)
- Using dendrochronology to give a greater understanding of past woodland management
- An assessment to identify whether further research or synthesis of past woodland management is required since the work by Cannell (2005).
- Assessment of archaeological evidence for water management and water power in association with Objective 2.
- The value of open spaces and clean and/or sea air to past tourism or health facilities or perceived health benefits on Exmoor.
- The evidence for the use of Exmoor's wild resources could be usefully researched or synthesised such as evidence for collecting wortleberries (including for dye for RAF Uniforms) or sphagnum moss.

Objective 9: Farming and Land Management

- Assessment of the impact of landscape change schemes on field systems and lower lying farmed landscapes as well as upland areas.
- The relationship of farmsteads and their buildings and features with traditional farming and their land holding, and how traditional land management contributes to Exmoor's cultural heritage
- The use of the palaeo-environmental record to understand further the history of activities such as swaling and grazing,
- The examination of heathlands as cultural artefacts should be explored.
- Lidar analysis of the farmed landscape.
- Past agricultural innovation and linked technological innovation on Exmoor
- An evaluation of the threats to aspects of the past farmed landscape, including field gutter or catch water systems, by initiatives such as grassland improvement or woodland creation, and their current condition and survival, identifying significant survivals.

Objective 10: Communication, Transport and Trade

- A rapid survey of Exmoor's bridges of all types to include photographs, including details of interesting areas and inscriptions. This could be extended to include river crossings and fords.
- Study of coastal infrastructure especially in the context of coastal and climate change.
- Most shipwrecks fall outside the National Park which ends at the Mean Low Water mark however studies of shipping and the use of harbours would contribute to knowledge of trade and connections with Exmoor.
- The further use of Lidar analysis could further expand our knowledge of all types of roads and routeways from the Roman period onwards.
- A record of telephone boxes, letter boxes and road signage (not included in the Historic Signpost Project) and their settings, before further loss.
- Past trade links need further research through documentary sources as well as material remains such as pottery, especially for periods or products for which there is little or no documentary support.

Objective 11: Ritual and Religion

- Non conformism on Exmoor and a rapid survey of Chapels and how they are affected by change of use and conversion
- Further recording of prehistoric ritual landscapes and features, and synthesis, with understanding of how function can change through time and how single features can have multiple phases.
- Evidence of religious practice in the 1st Millenium BC to 200AD on Exmoor.
- Early Christianity, holy wells, churchyards and the fabric of standing churches require research and recording.
- Study of memorials and memorial stones
- Collating evidence for other faiths.

Objective 12: Estates and Designed Landscapes

- Priorities for research are: Ashley Combe, Ashcombe/Simonsbath, Charget House, Combe Sydenham, Glenthorne.

- The development of a local register of designed landscapes with specialist partners.
- A synthesis and understanding of designed landscapes as an Exmoor group and collation of any historic research undertaken on the larger estates
- A concentrated study of the coastal designed landscapes especially in terms of the picturesque.
- The history of estates including the workforce and the changing management of estates to include the more recent acquisition of estates (or parts of them) by the National Park and National Trust.
- Small vernacular details on estates such as gate styles, their catches and piers or posts or other distinctive estate features are easily lost and require recording.

Objective 13: The Built Environment

- Completion of reports and synthesis of the recording work, undertaken by the Early Dunster Group, including integration of the results of dendrochronology
- Dendrochronology across Exmoor.
- Recording of buildings in Exmoor's settlements and parishes could be extended
- Research on smoke-blackened thatch and roofs with the development of a definitive list
- Recording of street furniture such as traditional road signs, phone boxes and post boxes
- Certain building materials and types such as corrugated iron and Dutch barns are also vulnerable to loss and need recording, as are redundant farm buildings.
- There are opportunities for themed studies such as further work on Chapels and community buildings.
- A focus on estates and estate buildings (e.g. Glenthorne, Lillicombe, Ashley Combe, Knight Estate, Acland Estate) with some work on comparison, architects and influences is required.
- Assessment for designation of the built environment including for a Local Heritage List.

Objective 14: Social History

- Identification and transcription of significant archives
- Making existing recorded oral history work accessible and an evaluation of what has been undertaken.
- A collation of the work being undertaken by groups (such as Exmoor Society, Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage and Friends of Simonsbath Sawmill) across Exmoor.
- The inclusion of social history into more projects linking with physical remains.
- Recording grave and memorial stones may have been undertaken by different individuals and groups. It would be useful to have this collated and identify and fill gaps.
- The development and changes in the attractions for tourism on and around Exmoor, and the context and changing perceptions of leisure and sporting activities such as horse riding, hunting, fishing, nature and wild landscapes.

Objective 15: Exmoor's Military Heritage

- Further research to follow from the survey scoping WWII resources (SEM8193).
- Research into the two World Wars overlaps with priority 14 (Social History), and any opportunities for oral history recording including childhood memories should be maximised.
- There is scope for research into e.g. use of sphagnum moss in WWI and other special uses of Exmoor for the war effort such as housing of mules etc.
- The history and archaeology of the Civil War on Exmoor.

PART II

A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ADVANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2017 -2021

IS THE VISION SET OUT IN THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2017-2021 BEING ACHIEVED?

The following table summarises the vision for the Research Framework 2017-2021 and shows whether that vision is being achieved, and if not, why not.

VISION	EVIDENCE	
A series of multi-disciplinary research projects, drawing on and helping to develop up-to-date methodologies.	South West Peatland Partnership projects Reclaiming Exmoor Project Collaborative PhD Research and academic research projects	Achieving
Research carried out by a broad spectrum of individuals, groups, societies and organisations; involving the local community wherever possible to provide a range of learning opportunities for all.	Early Dunster Group University of Brighton University of Exeter University of Plymouth Individual researchers	Achieving
A continuing, rigorous re-appraisal of our knowledge and resource.	HER Audit 2019-2020 Research Framework webinars 2021	Achieving
High quality research informing and supporting equally high quality sustainable management of the historic environment	Monuments Management Scheme Listed Buildings Condition Survey Scheduled Monuments Condition Survey (slow progress) Signpost Volunteers	Partly achieving
Interpretation accessible to all that flows from and closely reflects the results of this up-to-date, high quality research.	Field Guide and leaflets Publications HER Website	Achieving
The results of research disseminated in a timely fashion in a variety of media.	HER Website, project and local group and society websites Archaeology Forum, talks, lectures and Webinars Academic publications Some projects remain unpublished	Partly achieving

VISION	EVIDENCE	
An Historic Environment Record for Exmoor National Park which underpins and pools the research of individuals and organisations, by being up-to-date and accessible to all.	HER website is a well-used public asset constantly enhanced by revision and new data. Further work to follow from the results of the 2019-2020 HER audit and research results.	Partly achieving

A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN ADVANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2017 -2021 PRIORITY BY PRIORITY

Each 2017-2021 research priority is followed by known developments or actions towards advancing the priority and a summary derived from the group online discussions in March - July 2021, with some updates to 2024.

Objective 1: Chronology

To improve the chronological framework for archaeological sites and buildings by increasing the number of sites, structures and places dated by reliable archaeological methods, and to make that objective explicit in project designs to ensure that adequate funding is included. Where Exmoor’s archaeological monuments have been dated scientifically, the dates do not accord precisely with comparable monuments from the south-west region. Analysis is required to examine this apparent divergence and to understand what it actually means.

SWARF research aim 16 (p281)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

developing further Exmoor’s tephra chronology is of international significance. There is still a lack of dendrochronology and dating of buildings and artefacts including ceramics. These areas need development and are relevant to current building recording projects and settlement investigation. As only small areas are subject to archaeological excavation the amount of appropriate material available to sample is generally very small so opportunities for development of scientific dating strategies should be maximised. There is a need to re-examine collections from previously investigated sites and apply specific questions to the existing dataset, especially palaeo-environmental sample cores, and to gain new samples from known archaeological sites. More work should be done to consider Exmoor in its wider regional and national context.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
<p>Tephrochronology: tephra was first identified in Roman Lode (Matthews 2009). Eight peat sequences examined since contained tephra. Carey et. al. (2020) and Ombashi (2020) reference tephra.</p>	<p>Publication of work by Dr Alison MacLeod awaited. There is strong potential for cross-referencing sequences against securely dated layers giving international significance to the deposits. Wide sources for recorded deposits: Iceland, North America, Mediterranean, Azores. SWPP funded much of the research. Reclaiming Exmoor Project also used the data.</p>
<p>Dendrochronology: Time Team and Early Dunster Project programmes of dating in Dunster in association with historic building recording (Ainsworth et. al. 2019, Moir 2015a, 2015b, 2016). Good range of dates C13th – C14th and a good cluster of medieval hall houses identified, one of the best groups in the country.</p>	<p>Early Dunster Project with funding from Historic England continued to 2023 and further results awaited. Potential for oxygen and carbon stable isotope dating being researched. Possibility of refining dating of use of carpentry techniques and jointing styles with scientifically dated samples. Historic England are revising dendrochronology guidance.</p>
<p>Radiocarbon dating: dates from Wintershead and Spooner’s Moor and Hawkcombe published (Carey, C., et. al. 2020), Samples from excavations of possible timber buildings at Timberscombe Church produced 8th century date (Brigers, J., 2021). Dating of the Culbone Cist burial (Parker-Pearson, M., et al. 2019)</p>	<p>SANHS Maltwood Fund also funded dates for the Battlegore barrow just outside ENP which has relevance to Exmoor’s Barrows (Jones, A.M, Quinnell, H., et al. 2021) More dating of Roman and Post Roman sites desirable.</p>
<p>Optically-Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) dating: A study examining early soils and dating the farmed (prehistoric) landscape at Codsand Moor produced one broad date so far (unpublished).</p>	<p>Codsand Project 2020, University of Brighton and SWPP</p>



Peatland restoration work near Challacombe (c) SWPP



Recently planted willow behind wooden blocks as part of peatland restoration work at Alderman's Barrow Allotment (c) SWPP



Fish traps exposed at low tide near Gore Point



Ivy Cottage

Summary: Good progress has been made in many areas (especially in the use of dendrochronology) and the use of new techniques is emerging and being further explored. The publication of tephra analysis and further research is a key area for progress. Work by the Reclaiming Exmoor Project, the Early Dunster Project and the Codsend project continued into 2022 / 3 and further results and reports are awaited. Further work in dating post-Roman periods including artefacts is required. Revision of objective for 2024-2033 proposed and agreed.

Objective: 2. Heritage at Risk

The elements of the historic environment (landscapes, archaeological features, buildings, artefacts and deposits) which are at risk from external threats (including sea level rise, coastal erosion, flash flooding, climate change and changes in farming practice, land use, vegetation cover and development) should be identified and appropriately studied. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape are particularly vulnerable - such as stone settings. Research should include designated and non-designated sites; identify sites, areas and site types most at risk, their significance and the key issues or threats. Research into management options and their effectiveness is also required. It is recognised that Exmoor has many undesignated sites and buildings that are likely to meet the criteria for designation and need assessing.

SWARF research aim 23 (p285)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

The Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey (RCZAS) Phase 1 will identify sites at risk in the coastal zone and make recommendations for further work to be taken forward in Phase 2. The results of the monitoring programme at Porlock Marsh need synthesis and evaluation. These and other projects should inform the forthcoming Marine Plan (Marine Management Organisation) which should be completed by 2020. Focus is also required on the potential impacts of climate change on inland areas for example the impact of flash flooding from rivers especially on bridges and buildings and increased levels of regenerating woodland, scrub and bracken. Other potential threats to heritage assets include the conversion and updating of traditional buildings the impact of which on historic fabric is currently poorly understood. Recording and sampling of heritage assets at risk is required as well as assessment for greater designation or protection. Excavation and environmental analysis should be undertaken where appropriate on damaged sites as part of conservation work. Rapid condition surveys of Scheduled Monuments and Listed Buildings should continue on their 5 yearly cycle to identify threats and monitor issues and trends. The non-moorland PALs required a condition survey.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
RCZAS Phase 1 survey (Pink, 2018)	Completed, 9 research priorities identified. Phase 2 to be undertaken.
Listed Buildings Condition Survey 2018-2019 (Thurlow, 2020)	Report Completed March 2020
Scheduled Monument Condition Survey	Last undertaken 2015. Survey undertaken of about a quarter of sites since. New survey due.
Stone Settings Condition Survey (Fuller 2018)	Report Completed Dec 2018
Historic England Heritage at Risk Surveys	Published annually in October indicates damage trends, vegetation issues are significant (scrub / bracken)

Summary: Condition surveys are producing up to date assessments of condition and risks and causes of harm especially on designated sites and these need to be maintained on their five-yearly cycle to identify trends and inform conservation work. The RCZAS identified 9 areas of research and these remain priorities. The themes identified as most at risk need addressing. Coastal Industry (especially the mining landscape) is poorly understood. Porlock Bay and marsh remains a priority because of its high significance and the active processes such as natural coastal realignment and the potential for inland initiatives such as river realignment. The results of the monitoring programme at Porlock Marsh need synthesis and evaluation. Coastal designed landscapes (including planting) are only partially recorded and at risk of coastal change. Assessment and recording of features at risk of climate change and increased (flash) flooding is required, bridges and weirs etc may be particularly at risk and poorly recorded. Further research is required into the impacts of landscape change on the historic environment for example through changing agricultural practice and increased tree planting, including the assessment of potential archaeology below peat. Building Condition surveys have highlighted the vulnerability of small structures such as chest tombs which are often poorly recorded. Lack of appropriate designation can increase the risk from development. Research of buildings where there is development pressure is required, particularly farm buildings, ecclesiastical and other community buildings but also small domestic buildings. Wider use of dendrochronology would improve understanding of the significance of vulnerable buildings.

Objective 3 Relict Prehistoric Landscapes

Exmoor's relict prehistoric landscapes - standing stones, barrows and cairns, hut circles, field systems and hill-slope enclosures - are a remarkable survival. Some aspects of the prehistoric landscape have been covered under other research priorities in this document. However, it is important to pull together these separate strands and to see them in the context of the wide resource. Exmoor's prehistoric landscapes have received little attention in the past, with the result that chronologies are inadequate and the form and function of monuments requires further recording and analysis. Priorities include selective excavation to recover dating evidence to place sites in a tighter chronological framework and to better understand form and function. Further palaeo-environmental sampling is required – both from archaeological deposits during excavation and from mire sequences – to develop our understanding of contemporary environments, and in particular changing woodland cover and the nature of prehistoric farming (there is some evidence for pastoralism in the Bronze Age on Exmoor, but how extensive was this? What was the balance with arable cultivation?). Other issues might include: the function and date of stone settings and how they relate (if at all) to settlement evidence; the apparent absence of Neolithic monuments on Exmoor; whether the absence of field systems at some settlement sites indicates pastoralism or seasonal use of these sites.

SWARF research aims 3 (p276), 25 (285), 28 (p 286), 54 (p292), 57 (p293)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Although much work has been undertaken there is still much to be done to further this objective. Dating and chronology remain problematic and levels of archaeological excavation able to answer specific questions are low. Further synthesis of existing research and material and a focus on specific aims or techniques to explore questions is required. Some work is commencing such as the 'Understanding Exmoor's Barrows' project (2016). Support for local groups such as Longstone Landscape Group is important. Greater use of geophysical survey and lidar is recommended. Some work has indicated landscapes buried by peat development and this needs more analysis. More targeted work is needed on how and when the blanket peat developed as it appears to develop at different times and to link this to known archaeological sites. The palaeo-environment research needs to be linked to past grazing and other management regimes e.g. swaling. Could the relative past grazing levels be compared for example in the Bronze Age and Medieval periods? This could link to other interests such as farming and landscape studies.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Mesolithic sites: work on Brendon Common, Farley Water and Hawkcombe Head, led by Dr Paula Gardiner include geophysical survey and small-scale excavation	Publication awaited. Geophysical survey undertaken over flint scatter on Brendon Common, Edwards, M. Substrata (2019)
Neolithic and Early Bronze Age landscapes: Doug Mitcham (2016) PhD	Digital copy deposited with HER
Stone Settings: Survey (Fuller, 2018) has advanced our understanding of the condition of these monuments. Some survey work undertaken by Hazel Riley (2020) as part of the Monuments Management Scheme clarifies the record of selected settings. Sandy Gerrard's 'The Stone Rows of Great Britain' project https://stonerows.wordpress.com/ is ongoing.	A number of Sandy Gerrard surveys have been deposited with the HER
Burnt Mounds: Buried soils were analysed at Spooners burnt mound and a possible site at Farley Water (Carey 2020) More probable burnt mounds have been identified in Exmoor's upland headwaters. Hazel Riley (2022) has recorded at least one example during a walkover survey on Ilkerton Ridge at the headwaters of the Barbrook. A further probable burnt mound has been identified in advance of SWPP mire restoration work near Withypool. This has been investigated by geophysical survey (Edwards 2023).	Forthcoming palaeo-environmental work by Ralph Fyfe on a peat sequence near to the Withypool burnt mound has the potential to reconstruct past woodland changes and their relationship to the monument. Upland streams on Exmoor are an important landscape for the preservation of burnt mounds within the South West, unlike moorland headwaters in Dartmoor and Cornwall where the extraction and processing of minerals is likely to have removed such remains (Riley 2014)

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Palaeo-environment and past grazing: Havananda Ombashi (2020) PhD on later prehistoric period, later Neolithic to Iron Age and the role of grazing in uplands, looked at Great Buscombe, Codsend and Spooners, and developed a climate change record at The Chains for last 2500 years	Ombashi (2020), potential publication/s to follow. The technique of detailed sampling provided clear phases of activity and less intensive pressure creating 'passive rewilding' which appear to align with population trends from demographic studies. Work supported by SWPP.
Barrows/ Cairns: Understanding Exmoor's Barrow's Project assessment (Kirkham, G., and Jones, A.M., 2016) led to further work on museum collections. Longstone Landscapes project surveys (ongoing), and reassessment of Chanter's excavation at Chapman Barrows published (Balmond, 2020). Selected surveys for recording condition, recent discoveries and reinterpretation (Riley 2019, 2020). Riley identified three types of BA funerary monument at Monkham Hill.	Paper published on Battlegore, Williton (Jones, A.M, Quinnell, H., et al. 2021). Historic England has supported survey work on Scheduled Monuments through Monuments Management Scheme. Funding required for further work. Longstone Landscapes Project have one barrow remaining to survey.
Field Systems: Chris Carey, Brighton University and SWPP Codsend landscape evaluation excavations on relict field system in 2020, including OSL dating (awaiting publication).	Potential for further work at the planning stage.
Iron Age: Cow Castle Geophysical Survey, (Edwards 2021)	Funded by Honeymead Trust. Occupation activity indicated.

Summary: The publication of work at Hawkcombe Head and Farley Water is important for understanding the Mesolithic on Exmoor. Progress has been made in surveys and research of late Neolithic to Bronze Age sites and landscapes, particularly through PhD research and developments in palaeo-environmental studies, although excavation is very limited. Further work looking at the Neolithic to Bronze Age transition and land use and landscape change would be useful. The results from detailed work looking at the effects of prehistoric grazing on landscape can help inform current landscape change more fully. The Iron Age period has had little focus and the dating of hillslope enclosures is still poorly understood. Still much potential for greater use of geophysical survey and lidar. Little work in farmed landscape such as field walking.

Objective 4. Re-assessment of existing Museum Collections

There is an urgent need for existing collections of artefacts to be re-analysed. These include ceramic and flint assemblages. There should also be a concerted attempt to identify collections that are still in private hands. The results of this work should be published and made publicly available.

SWARF research aim 5 (p278) and 11 (p280)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

This remains a priority and there are opportunities here for working with local museums and volunteers or placements with appropriate support. Lithics were studied as part of a collaborative PhD (Douglas Mitcham University of Leicester) priorities for further study / analysis are required. Recent studies (e.g. routeways and turf cutting) have shown the potential for Exmoor collections to be held in regional and national museums and more may be held in private collections. Results should aim to enhance the 'virtual museum' side of the website. Some significant work is commencing such as the 'Understanding Exmoor's Barrows' project (2016) which is re-examining material from excavated sites in and around the National Park.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
A pottery type series is being developed for Somerset	Some funding from Historic England.
Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Project (Kirkham, G., and Jones, A.M., 2016)	23 museums contacted to understand the resource from excavations in the greater Exmoor area and a catalogue produced. Funding allowed a study of the Battlegore (Williton) material (St Gray excavations 1931) now published (Jones, A.M, Quinnell, H., et al. 2021)
Culbone Cist, radiocarbon dated and analysed as part of the Beaker People Project (Parker-Pearson, M., et al. 2019)	The burial was also the focus of a 'take one object' project at Taunton Museum
Private collection of medieval tile from Barlynch Priory analysed (Allan, J. and Keen, L. 2021)	Small collection of previously uncatalogued material. Analysis funded by Historic England and ENPA Monuments Management Scheme at Barlynch Priory 2018-2020.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
The material from the 2000/2001 excavations at Ley Hill deserted medieval settlement has been published (Richardson, I.J. 2019)	
Neolithic and Bronze Age lithic collections were studied as part of Phd. Thesis 2016/7. (Mitcham, D., 2016)	

Summary: There has been good progress in the study of the Neolithic and Bronze Age lithic collections and material from excavated barrows. Further work is needed in relating lithic collections to their site location and in following up work identified in the Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Project. Work to assess and catalogue the material in general housed in museums and private collections is required. This would inform appropriate strategies for their study. There are 7000 records of items related to the word 'Exmoor' in the collections at Taunton Museum, including tiles, glass plate negatives and some natural science collections. The collections of material from excavations at the two Roman Fortlets in Devon held in /// - are worthy of re-examination. There are questions about medieval ceramics on Exmoor, including production sites, yet to be answered. A start has been made highlighting finds from Exmoor on the ENPA HER website but much more could be done to celebrate the material culture associated with the sites. Archival documentary resources could be included as part of this objective. There is much scope for volunteers and community groups to undertake cataloguing.

Objective 5: Landscape Based Research

There are various elements of this approach. The first recognises the need to use the Historic Landscape Characterisation tool to develop a series of specific research questions. The second recognises that Exmoor comprises a number of distinct historic landscapes – there is a need to refine the approach to Exmoor so that it explicitly recognises the fine-grained nature of these historic landscapes.

SWARF Research aim 1a (p274))

Projected focus 2017-2021:

This objective is to promote the use of Exmoor-wide techniques to interpret the landscape on a wide scale. Targeted survey and analysis of LiDAR and the development or revision of Exmoor HLC is needed. An effective HLC needs consideration and means for appropriate development.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Neolithic and EBA landscape PhD thesis (Mitcham, D., 2016)	
Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey Phase One Desk-top Survey (Pink, F., 2018)	
Reclaiming Exmoor Project (Baker, L., et al. 2023; Rowney, F. M., et al. 2023)	Focussing on the former Exmoor Forest with an examination of the palaeo-environmental impacts of the Knight landscape and documentary research and analysis of the Knight period.

Summary: there has been little progress on Exmoor-wide research, comprehensive Lidar and Historic Landscape Characterisation analysis since 2017, and these remain priorities. An evaluation of Exmoor’s Historic Landscape Characterisation mapping to assess whether the data can be enhanced and presented in a more accessible way is still required. A number of projects have progressed study and understanding of more localised areas (as above) including the landscape and study of the Exmoor Forest in the historic period.

Objective 6. The Roman landscape

To further our understanding of the Roman landscape of Exmoor by carrying out research into the nature of military occupation on and around Exmoor, by investigating native settlement and by extending the research begun by the Exmoor Iron project into the iron industry during this period. A fundamental part of achieving this objective is the publication of the existing research carried out by the Exmoor Iron Project.

SWARF research aim 50 (p291)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Publication of Exmoor Iron and curation of the archive needs to be achieved. Specific questions should be applied to the existing dataset of the palaeo-environmental material and to strategically sample known sites. There is potential for results from the study of museum and private collections and in the context of some recent work just outside the National Park e.g. at Brayford.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
<p>Roman Roads: Lidar analysis has identified sections of a Roman road from Exeter to Williton, possibly to Watchet. Lidar and various modelling techniques are suggesting routes linking Old Burrow, Martinhoe Beacon, along the Exmoor coast, Herner and Rainsbury forts (Parcero-Oubina, C., Smart, C., and Fonte, J., 2023).</p>	<p>Small section suggested through National Park in Elworthy Parish. Analysis by Steve Kaye and recorded on Somerset and Exmoor HERs. Planning related evaluation inconclusive (Pink et al 2020 and Rainbird 2020, 2021). University of Exeter research</p>
<p>Re-assessment of the Roman fortlets at Martinhoe and Old Burrow reviews the evidence and suggests they are likely to be built as a pair observing small landing places, in use before AD75. Local influence / builders and co-operation also suggested (Symonds 2018). A brief re-examination of pottery from the fortlets indicates both the small collections are military period date range (Rainbird and Quinnell 2018).</p>	<p>Research related to a site at Trews Lane, Fremington near Barnstaple</p>
<p>Possible earthworks to SW of Old Burrow visible on Lidar are suggested as a possible construction camp. Kaye, S., (2018)</p>	<p>Needs further investigation.</p>
<p>Erosion consolidation works at Old Burrow recorded part of the outer rampart in an erosion scar and small samples were taken of the probable rampart material and buried soil. (Allen, A. 2020)</p>	<p>Work funded through Countryside Stewardship. Samples require assessment.</p>

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
A climate change record developed at The Chains for last 2500 years. Palaeo-environmental work has included data for the Roman period but it has not been a focus. Ombashi, H. (2020) PhD thesis	University of Plymouth
Just outside the National Park at Dunster Beach a collection of Roman pottery and other artefacts were recovered from cliff erosion and subsequent geophysical survey has recorded settlement evidence.	Finds on display in Dunster Museum, pottery 2nd to 3rd century AD. Recorded on Somerset HER (sites 32999, 36338). Work by Dunster Museum Archaeology Group.
PAS recorded a Jupiter figurine from Brompton Regis parish	https://www.exmoorher.co.uk/roman-jupiter-figurine



Mounsey on Dulverton tithe Map c.1840

Summary: The application of Lidar analysis across the SW region is producing new evidence and still has much potential on Exmoor. The work on roads is encouraging, further detailed results supported by field survey is required for the road network to be mapped on the HER. The recent identification of a possible auxiliary fort at Herner near Barnstaple and work elsewhere is changing the military period map of the region and the context of the evidence on Exmoor. The identification of Roman period settlement on Exmoor and the potential for continuity from the Iron Age in settlement and land use requires further examination. A re-assessment of existing material such as museum and private collections and the palaeo-environmental resource is recommended. Publication of past work such as Exmoor Iron Project and the survey of Rainsbury fort remain priorities.



Possible peat drying platform near Challacombe (c) SUMO GeoSurvey for SWPP



Early Neolithic Willow recovered during peatland restoration work at Aderman's Barrow Allotment (3940-3650 Cal BC) (c) SWPP

Objective 7: The Origin and Development of Settlements

Understanding the origin, development and morphology of settlements are central themes to the understanding of Exmoor's historic environment. Multi-disciplinary projects are required to investigate abandoned and existing settlements as well as settlement patterns on Exmoor. This work should include:

- i. research into settlement morphology and characterisation,
- ii. the origin and evolution of Iron Age enclosures and their landscape context,
- iii. research into the significance of Dunster as a medieval town and other settlements through building recording, historical research and selective excavation,
- iv. multi-disciplinary projects to investigate the origins of existing settlements and settlement patterns on Exmoor
- v. research into post-medieval desertions, which are a common feature of Exmoor's landscape, to analyse these sites: their origins, their longevity, form and ultimately the reasons for failure (amalgamation, changing patterns of farming etc).
- vi. research into place-names; their meaning and origin

SWARF research aims 4f (p278) and 7 (p279)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Building recording is beginning to increase our understanding in this area and needs to be continued. Community 'test-pit' projects have shown post-medieval results to outweigh medieval evidence which needs further probing. The resourcing of the voluntary sector to enable high quality buildings survey and research work is important. Some work remains to be completed, for example Ley Hill excavation report. HER needs to reflect work being done in this area e.g. making data such as the VCH studies on markets more widely available perhaps as a subject theme. Progress needed on research into Iron Age sites and medieval desertions. Further work on place names is also required as our current understanding is based on limited work from 19th and early 20th century.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Time Team Digital Village Project in Dunster (Ainsworth, S, et al., 2019)	Report includes discussion of development of Dunster, summary of building recording including dendrochronology results and test pitting since 2013.
Ley Hill deserted medieval settlement (Richardson, I., 2019)	Excavations of a small deserted 13-14th century hamlet includes finds and environmental analysis
Early Dunster Project (Richardson, I., 2021; SANHS Building Research Group, Early Dunster Project unpublished reports, 2020, 2022a, 2022b, 2023)	SANHS project with Historic England 'Early Fabric in Historic Towns' funding and support. Recording and analysis of historic buildings, scientific dating especially dendrochronology, public engagement including recording training, interpretation and dissemination of results. Includes recording and analysis of Dunster Castle Gatehouse as well a number of medieval buildings in Dunster
Development control work e.g.: Luttrell Arms, Dunster; Church Cottage, Parracombe; Ivy Cottage, Parracombe; Dunster buildings; Bidgoods, Bury;	
Timberscombe Church evidence for earlier buildings or possible timber church with C8th radio carbon date (Brigers, J., 2021)	
Art in Support of Improved Understanding of the Changing Character of Exmoor	Understanding Exmoor through art, looking at art work 1770s to present to show how the landscape and settlements changed, funded by the Exmoor Society

Summary: Dunster has been the focus of significant research of historic buildings and town morphology initially by the Time Team Digital Dig Village project and more recently by the Early Dunster Project (SANHS). The results show Dunster to have an outstanding survival of medieval buildings, increasingly well dated by dendrochronology. Ley Hill deserted settlement is the only site of this type to have been excavated on Exmoor and has provided invaluable material, dating evidence and an example of village life at this time enabling comparison with the earliest surviving standing buildings on Exmoor. Recording in association with development work on buildings (including churches) is providing valuable information on the development of Exmoor's settlements. Community test pit projects at Dulverton and Porlock require report completion. It is suggested that point ii of the Objective (the origin and evolution of Iron Age enclosures and their landscape context) is better included as part of Objective 3: Relict Prehistoric Landscapes.

Objective 8: Resource Exploitation

Exmoor's abundant natural resources include minerals, marine resources, woodlands and moorlands. Priorities for research include mining centres such as Combe Martin and Bampfyld. There is also a need for industry specific research, for example into the lime industry, harbours and havens, the woodland industry, the iron industry.

SWARF research aim 38 (p288) and 47 (p291)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Publication of Exmoor Iron remains a priority. There is a need for greater understanding of the mining features on the moorland especially in the light of work by Exmoor Iron at Roman Lode. The study of peat extraction demonstrates the potential for developing knowledge in areas subject to little previous study, such as others listed above. Research into coastal subjects may develop in future with priority 2. Greater knowledge in NP of adjacent projects such as Silver Mining research in Combe Martin is desirable. Funding & a focus on woodlands is required; related studies such as dendrochronology may give a greater understanding of past woodland management. Sources of flint used by prehistoric societies requires further study.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Lithics: the source of material is a mixture of local coastal pebbles and nodular flint and chert from outside Exmoor. Progress has been made through the excavation of the Mesolithic site at Farley Water and with Doug Mitcham PhD thesis (Mitcham, D., 2016)	Awaiting publication of Mesolithic excavations at Hawkcombe Head and Farley Water
Water: ongoing research by the Dulverton Weir and Leat Conservation Trust (DWLCT) into waterpower and related mills in Dulverton and a rapid study of the Dulverton Laundry building for ENPA (Watts, M., 2018).	
The 'Reclaiming Exmoor' project is researching the use of the resources of the former Royal Forest post 1820 by the Knight family. (Baker, L., 2023) Riley (2019b) linked Knight exploitation with field remains	Universities of Exeter and Plymouth project 2020-2022. Includes the Knights exploring the use of peat, lime and iron deposits as well as extensive water management.

Summary: Publication of Exmoor Iron remains a priority. There is a need for greater understanding of the mining features on the moorland especially in the light of work by Exmoor Iron at Roman Lode. Research into coastal subjects may develop in future with priority 2. Greater knowledge in NP of adjacent projects such as Silver Mining research in Combe Martin is desirable. Related studies such as dendrochronology may give a greater understanding of past woodland management and an assessment of current knowledge would identify whether further research or synthesis of past woodland management is required since the work by Cannell, J. (2005). Natural Capital studies (as reflected in the 25 year environment plan) highlight resources such as water and clean air. Exmoor's plentiful supply of water was vital to many of Exmoor's past industries and there is much archaeological evidence for its management and use as a source of power. Future initiatives for managing Exmoor's water for flood alleviation, adaptation to climate change and for nature recovery may have an impact on the archaeological evidence and this requires assessment and is an opportunity for further research. The clean and sea air may be linked to past tourism or health

such as sanatoria. The evidence for the use of Exmoor's wild resources could be usefully researched or synthesised such as collecting wortleberries (including for dye for RAF Uniforms) or sphagnum moss. As flint and chert is not geologically sourced on Exmoor and was collected as beach pebbles or sourced from outside Exmoor, it is suggested that objectives for the study of the sources of lithics is included in Objectives 3 and 4.

Objective 9. Farming & land management 2017-2021

Most of Exmoor is farmed land (or has formerly been so). The biggest changes to the landscape are caused by farming and land management practice. Priorities for research are Exmoor's medieval (?) field systems, ancient breeds, field gutter systems, reclamation, customs and traditions associated with the farming industry. Recent environmental change and man's adaptation to and influence on that change is also a key priority. Long term ecological and climatic records should be used to give a context to recent land management and climatic change (the last 500- 1000 years).

SWARF research aims 42 and 43 (p290)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

The 200th anniversary of John Knight acquiring the Royal Forest in 2020 could be a stimulus to researching the reclamation features and other engineering works surviving on Exmoor for which there is currently little understanding. Greater connection between cultural heritage, traditional and past farming practice and how this is reflected in the fabric of our landscape and buildings needs to be achieved. An understanding of this in the context of climatic and environmental changes is essential.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Palaeoenvironmental research into the role of upland grazing in the later Neolithic to Iron Age (Ombashi H., 2020)	PhD thesis (University of Plymouth) Part SWPP funded (Great Buscombe, Codsand, Spooners)
A climate change record at The Chains extending back 2500 years (Ombashi H., 2020)	PhD thesis (University of Plymouth) Part SWPP funded
Ecological change following drainage in the past 500 -1000 years (Ricksy Ball etc)	Plymouth University with SWPP (proof of concept)

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Leverhulme funded project 'Reclaiming Exmoor' looked at the motivation and influences driving the 19th century enclosure of the former Royal Forest and the ecological impacts (Baker, L. et al., 2023; Rowney, F.M. et al. 2023)	Two-year project commenced November 2020. Two post- doctoral researchers one looking at ecological change (University of Plymouth) and historian drawing on Knight Archive (University of Exeter)
Comparison of the archaeological legacy of the Knights in current moorland areas against the documentary record (Riley, H., (2019b)	Funded by SWPP
Transcription of scans of the Knight papers. Archive of papers etc now deposited with Somerset Archives and Local Studies.	Minehead U3A & ENPA
A study examining early soils and dating the farmed (prehistoric) landscape at Codsand	Started 2020, University of Brighton and SWPP
The National Trust Riverlands Project is using auguring to study landscape change in the River Aller system	

Summary: Significant progress is being made in advancing understanding of the management of moorland and its ecological impact, from prehistoric grazing to 19th century drainage and enclosure particularly within the former Royal Forest. The multi-disciplinary approach and close working between organisations and researchers has been exemplary in this area. The enclosed farmed landscape, traditional farming and the cultural heritage of farming appears to have received less attention.

Objective 10: Communication, Transport and Trade

Most of Exmoor is farmed land (or has formerly been so). The biggest changes to the landscape are caused by farming and land management practice. Priorities for research are Exmoor’s medieval (?) field systems, ancient breeds, field gutter systems, reclamation, customs and traditions associated with the farming industry. Recent environmental change and man’s adaptation to and influence on that change is also a key priority. Long term ecological and climatic records

The infrastructure of the historic landscape is fundamental to its working especially in a remote area such as Exmoor and has a huge impact on trade and travel. Understanding trade links with other areas and the import and export of goods and materials are priorities for further research.

SWARF research aims 15.2.4

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Greater study of coastal infrastructure & bridges is required especially in the context of coastal and climate change. Past trade links need further research through documentary sources as well as material remains such as pottery, flint and stone (source analysis) especially for periods or products for which there is little or no documentary support. Modern forms of communication such as telephone and signage should be included here.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Study of moorland packhorse routes (Riley, H., 2016)	
Building record associated with the replacement of the original glass light at Foreland Point (Trinity House, 2020)	Development Management report through planning
Exmoor Society study of 'postie' routes across Exmoor and early post offices.	Unpublished
Study of Exmoor’s traditional signposts as part of Exmoor’s Historic Signpost Project (Blackman et al. 2019)	
Roman Roads (as above in Objective 6)	Research by individuals and University of Exeter 'Understanding Landscapes' project

Summary: There are considerable repairs to bridges each year especially parapets mainly following vehicle collisions. It is thought that few are adequately recorded and many are vulnerable to further damage from vehicles and climate change (link with Heritage at Risk Objective 2). Most shipwrecks fall outside the National Park which ends at the Mean Low Water mark although studies of shipping and the use of harbours contribute to knowledge of trade and connections. The further use of Lidar analysis could further expand our knowledge of all types of roads and routeways from the Roman period onwards. More recent systems of communication such as telephone boxes, letter boxes

and road signs are or may come under threat of removal as their use declines and a record of them and their settings should be undertaken before further loss. There has been loss of related features such as petrol stations. Consider combining with Objective 8.

Objective 11: Ritual and Religion

Ritual and religion may be conveniently divided into pre-Christian and Christian. The priorities for research are: stone settings and standing stones generally, burial mounds: barrows and cairns, early Christianity, churches and churchyards, holy wells.

SWARF research aim 55 (p292)

Projected focus 2017-2021:

The focus on moorland and prehistory has momentum and is producing good results and this work needs to be continued. Other areas that have received much less attention need addressing such as non-conformism and the resultant churches and chapels and how they are affected by change of use / conversion; early Christian memorial stones; later memorials, other faiths.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Much overlap with Objectives 2 & 3 for prehistoric landscapes. The focus on prehistory and moorland has been continued with the 'Understanding Exmoor's Barrows' project (Kirkham, G., and Jones, A.M., 2016) and PhD research (Mitcham, D., 2016). Surveys contributing include the Parracombe Archaeology and History Society continuing the Longstone Landscapes Project on recording the Chapman Barrows and associated research (Balmond, F., 2020). Recording on individual barrow sites by Hazel Riley as part of management of Scheduled Monuments (Riley, H., 2017; 2019a) with new interpretations. Recording by Sandy Gerrard's 'Stone Rows of Great Britain' project (Gerrard, S., ongoing, with an emphasis on landscape setting and significance), Standing Stone Conditions surveys and reports (Fuller, J., 2018; Riley, H., 2020).	Chapman Barrows survey nearing completion.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Jupiter Figurine – Haddon Hill (chance find)	Portable Antiquities Scheme
Dunster Priory: Time Team (Ainsworth, S., et al (2019) and Early Dunster Project recording (latter in progress), plus a watching brief (Brigers, J.L., 2018)	
Archaeological watching briefs associated with work at churches has produced valuable results (e.g. Brigers, J., 2019; 2021)	Evidence for early burials and potentially earlier church found at Timberscombe (8th century timber structures and medieval and early medieval burials) and Brompton Regis (burials cut by the construction of the 13th century tower foundation and some possible earlier structural remains).
Barlynch Priory – mainly consolidation for MMS but small additional observations of fabric and collation of source material and study of medieval tiles (Allan, J. and Keen, L. 2021)	
Research and recording of buildings includes apotropaic marks	
Confirmation of location of Independent (possibly Countess of Huntingdon Connexion) or Baptist chapel and grave yard, Sanctuary Lane, Brompton Regis (MEM24652)	

Summary: There has been progress with recording prehistoric ritual landscapes and features but synthesis is required especially with increased understanding of how function can change through time and how single features can have multiple phases. There is a lack of evidence of religious practice in the 1st Millennium BC to 200AD on Exmoor. Work in this area in Devon and Cornwall may enlighten our understanding.

Building recording has taken place at Dunster Priory and more limited recording at Barlynch Priory where a study of a collection of tile fragments indicates distinct periods of investment and sources of tile coming from Somerset and Exeter workshops. Recording has included graffiti at Parracombe Church with the Devon Historic Graffiti Survey run by the Devon Archaeological Society and with the Early Dunster Project run by SANHS.

Chapels remain poorly recorded and as they are often undesignated loss can occur without record (suggested project).

Objective 12: Estates and Designed Landscapes

Exmoor's estates and their designed landscapes have profoundly influenced the character of the National Park. Research is required to characterise the various estates – their architecture, design and designed landscapes – through historical research and fieldwork. It would lead to more detailed investigation at some sites, and should seek to influence their future management. Out of such work should come an analysis of the kind of styles that are being used on Exmoor and how they reflect (or not) national trends. On Exmoor, at least 25 estates and designed landscapes have been identified, and all require some level of investigation. However, priorities for research are: Ashley Combe, Dunster, Simonsbath House, Chargot House, Combe Sydenham, Nettlecombe, Glenthorne.

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Further research into 'at risk' landscapes e.g. Ashley Combe. The Simonsbath work is beginning to understand the Knight endeavours but more work needed and the 200th year anniversary of the acquisition of the estate in 2020 is a good context for further research. Here some specific questions e.g. survey of boundaries would be very useful in drawing out 19th designed landscape from farmed landscape. Consider the development of a local register of designed landscapes with specialist partners. Synthesis and understanding of designed landscapes as an Exmoor group and collation of any work undertaken on estates is required.



Ridge and Furrow south of Bradymoor © Chris Chapman 2013



Signposts project, conserving this iconic aspect of Exmoor's historic environment, and raising the profile of placenames.



Palaeoenvironmental sampling of a valley mire sequence at Alderman's Barrow Allotment undertaken by Wessex Archaeology (c) SWPP

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Reclaiming Exmoor Project looked at development of former Royal Forest (Knight Estate)	2 yr 2020-2022 Leverhulme funded Universities of Plymouth and Exeter
ENPA land ownership visioning and ENPA and NT coastal visioning projects are including designed elements and landscape	Ongoing
Ashcombe: Simonsbath designed landscape (Riley 2015)	Restoration plan developed, excavations of part of path network
Ashley Combe: ENPA uncovered former path network. Recording by Hazel Riley, including the limekiln at Worthy.	
Dunster: Parkland Plan being developed and Dunster Museums Archaeology Group have undertaken Geophysical survey of former gardens and other studies of Dunster Park	Plan for Countryside Stewardship, in progress
Glenthorne: Surveys of sections of path network, recording of bathhouse to inform new Coast Path	
Lee Abbey: Survey of area affected by proposed coast path	
Simonsbath: Graham Wills publication on Exmoor Carpenters and ongoing work on the biographies of some of the Knight Estate workers	
A List of known and potential designed landscapes and gardens has been developed from records held on the HER	

Summary: Notable progress with the Dunster Parkland Plan to inform Countryside Stewardship and with the development of a restoration plan at Ashcombe. There has been more gradual and to some extent piecemeal progress in research on the coastal designed landscapes especially in relation to the development of the new England Coast Path. Some small 'lost' or fragmentary designed landscapes have been added to the HER at Combe Park and Venne. There is scope for a concentrated study of the coastal designed landscapes especially in terms of the picturesque. An Exmoor register of designed landscapes would be a useful addition to the HER or considered for the Local Heritage List. There is considerable scope for researching the history of estates including the workforce and the changing management of estates to include more recent acquisition of estates by the National Park and National Trust. Small vernacular details on estates such as gate styles, their catches and piers or posts or other distinctive estate features are easily lost and require recording.

Objective 13: The Built Environment

Vernacular styles, other styles, traditional building methods. Priorities for research are: thatch (specifically to identify thatched buildings on Exmoor, and locate examples of smoke blackened thatch), traditional building techniques, medieval buildings on Exmoor, historic farm buildings, buildings associated with the Arts & Crafts movement.

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Historic building recording is a significant priority as is increasing public awareness of the significance of Exmoor's historic buildings. There is much scope for themed work of poorly researched areas e.g. thatched buildings, building materials, historic farm buildings, memorials and landscape furniture. There is also scope for wider awareness, dissemination and use of previous work undertaken by bodies such as the National Trust and groups such as SANHS.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Condition survey of Listed Buildings included under Objective 2	Some funding from Historic England.
Conservation Area Appraisals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appraisals produced by Nigel Pratt adopted following some minor amendments ● Survey of other settlements to assess suitability for Conservation Area status ● Draft Conservation area appraisals for Winsford and Simonsbath ● Article 4 survey for Porlock and Porlock Weir 	Work continued by T Thurlow Winsford designated a Conservation Area in 2023. Simonsbath not adopted as a Conservation Area.
Dunster: Time Team Digital Dig Village Dunster Project now completed and published. The Early Dunster project continue to end 2023, surveys include recording traditional carpentry techniques, and at least 24 houses are believed to be based on the medieval cross-passage or open-hall layout. Significant advances with dendrochronology as part of these above projects. Dunster Castle Bastian Tower / folly record. Various additional development related surveys in Dunster (14 High St, Priory Gate, 4 The Ball)	Ainsworth, S., et al (2019) Moir, A., 2015a, 2015b, 2016 Richardson, I., 2021 SANHS Building Research Group, Early Dunster Project, 2020, 2022a, 2022b, 2023 Gibson, G., 2019 The National cruck database is underused

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
<p>Planning and development control related reports such as Heritage Statements and building recording are providing valuable record e.g. above and e.g. Heritage Statements and impact assessments: Glenthorne, Oatway, The Great House Timberscombe, The Tors Hotel, The Lynch, Dulverton PO, Longstone Wells Farm,</p> <p>Building Recording: Little Stamborough, Withycombe Farm (Challacombe), West Lynch House, Woodliving, Bidgoods, Glasses Farm, Dulverton Laundry, The workshop (Roadwater Manor Mill), Nettlecombe House, Simonsbath House, Driver Farm, Duredon Farm, Great Nurcott, White Rock Cottage (revised 2016), The Cottage (Porlock), Crossacres Selworthy, Throat Farm</p>	See Exmoor HER website
Study of Exmoor's traditional signposts as part of Exmoor's Historic Signpost Project	Blackman et al. 2019
<p>HER enhancement work, especially relating to farmsteads and settlements, referring to historic mapping and reports/published work. There has been a focus on enhancing HER data on Wootton Courtenay, Exford and community buildings</p> <p>Exmoor Society members are looking into researching linhays, and in Devon, Martin and Sue Watts are developing a linhay database</p>	

Summary: Significant progress has been made, especially in Dunster with the Time Team project and the work of the Early Dunster Group who have looked at over 40 buildings, with increasing numbers of buildings with medieval fabric being identified and dated. There are further opportunities for dendrochronology across Exmoor. Recording in association with development through the planning system and HER enhancement is crucial. Further research on smoke-blackened thatch and roofs is still required with no definitive list of these on Exmoor yet developed. Street furniture such as traditional signposts, phone boxes and post boxes are increasingly under threat. Certain building materials and types such as corrugated iron and Dutch barns are also vulnerable to loss, as are redundant farm buildings. There are opportunities for themed studies such as further work on Chapels and community buildings. A focus on estates and estate buildings (e.g. Glenthorne, Lillicombe, Ashley Combe, Knight Estate, Acland Estate) with some work on comparison, architects and influences is required. Further assessment for designation of the built environment is required including for a Local Heritage List.

Objective 14: Social History

A priority for future research is the development of tourism on and around Exmoor. This should be seen also in the context of leisure and sporting activities such as horse riding, hunting and fishing.

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Work is needed to build on, collate and disseminate the oral history recording work already undertaken. Collation of what is being done by groups (such as Exmoor Society, Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage and Friends of Simonsbath Sawmill) across the NP is required. There is a need to ensure that past work has a long term future through appropriate archiving and curation. Photography is an underused source of information and defined projects could engage community groups and special interest groups

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
Early Dunster Project (SAHNS) Research into the inhabitants of the buildings being recorded, and aspects of their lives.	Various reports
Knight papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● U3A transcribing project ● Reclaiming Exmoor Project (Universities of Exeter and Plymouth) 	Recently discovered Knight papers now deposited in Somerset Archives. The Reclaiming Exmoor Project focussed on the former Exmoor Forest in the 19th century Knight period, using documentary and palaeo-environmental analysis. Baker, L., et. Al. (2023) Rowney, F.M., et. al. (2023)
Research and publications on Simonsbath estate workers e.g. carpenters and Thomas Timmins research by Graham Wills	Wills, G., (2018)
Timberscombe History Group are undertaking various aspects of local social history research	
Art in Support of Improved Understanding of the Changing Character of Exmoor (McInnes 2021)	Understanding Exmoor through art, looking at art work c1770s to now to show how the landscape and settlements changed funded by Exmoor Society, shows aspects of social history through art

Summary: The objection has a narrow focus and requires review to reflect farming, normal lives, colonialism, influences on settlement and tourism and other aspects. There is significant progress in certain areas with some academic and local projects. Work on the reclaiming Exmoor Project has looked at perceptions of the landscape and environment in the 19th century and how actions are legitimised in an era of colonialism. Little progress may have been made on making earlier recorded oral history work accessible, although there may be much work being undertaken by individuals and groups that isn't coming to the attention of ENPA and other participants in the webinar. There is much scope to include social history into many projects and link with physical remains. Recording grave and memorial stones may have been undertaken by different individuals and groups. It would be useful to have this collated and identify and fill gaps.

Objective 15: Defence and Offence

Investigation into the military use of Exmoor. A priority for research is WWII where Exmoor has significant and extensive remains, especially those relating to training grounds.

Projected focus 2017-2021:

Further research should follow from the survey scoping WWII resources (SEM8193). This priority should include the Civil War and other periods of conflict which need more focus. Research into the two World Wars overlaps with priority 14 (Social History), and any opportunities for oral history recording including childhood memories should be maximised. There is scope for research into e.g. use of sphagnum moss in WWI and other special uses of Exmoor for the war effort such as housing of mules etc.

PROGRESS 2017-2021	NOTES
World War Two Stirling crash site near Bridgetown, research into the crash and the casualties	Bob Brown (2019) (MEM24877). A memorial boulder and cross have been position near and on the site.
Research on the Roman coastal fortlets	Symonds, Matthew, (2018) A composite Coastal Cordon on Exmoor? Exploring Local Influence on First-Century A.D. Fortlet Use, Britannia 49, 53-77
Lee Abbey, some WWII features including a possible search light	Riley (2017)
Dunster Museum Archaeology Group researching Civil War activity and potential earthworks both C17th and C13th	
General ongoing development of HER, interpretation at North Hill	

Summary: There has been relatively little recent research in this area and many of the previous areas of focus remain. It was agreed to remain the objective as one to reflect specific military activity from medieval and later periods, with prehistoric and Roman activity being reflected in Objectives 3 and 6 respectively.

REVIEW OF THE KEY METHODS AND TECHNIQUES 2017-2021

Research priorities need to be delivered through appropriate methodologies. The use of innovative and effective techniques is still a priority. Research ideas should ideally incorporate some of the following methods and techniques:

1. Integrated, multi-disciplinary approach

Progress: many projects continue to be exemplars of this such as SWPP projects, Reclaiming Exmoor Project, Collaborative PhD Research and other national academic research projects for example the Beaker People Project. It remains key to our working methodology.

2. Scientific dating

Progress: much of Exmoor's archaeology remains dated by analogy with similar sites elsewhere or by object typology. There is still a need for scientific dating on key sites. The re-examination of some museum collections has been welcome. The use of tephrochronology has continued in research contexts. Radiocarbon results of selected sites is invaluable and would be useful to extend. Progress is limited as there is relatively little archaeological excavation.

3. Remote sensing

Progress: Standard geophysical methods continue to prove highly useful on Exmoor, More work needs to be done in particular the use of Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR). It has not been possible to continue the Aerial Photography programme since 2017, previously undertaken in collaboration with Historic England. The farmed landscape with extensive pasture would be useful areas for further research. The non-moorland areas of the National Park need the same level of high resolution LiDAR survey as the moorland areas. Work should also continue on photographing levelled sites. The use of 'drone' survey for some sites has been undertaken by the SWPP.

4. Palaeo-environmental sampling

Progress: much work has been continued particularly as part of SWPP projects but as previously, sampling is particularly required where the relationship between cultural remains and environmental sequences is or can be clearly established. Appropriate Bioarchaeological and geoarchaeological sampling should be an integral part of evaluations and excavations.

5. Selective excavation at key sites

Progress: many of Exmoor's monument categories (such as hut circles, barrows and hill-slope enclosures) have not been examined by excavation. Selective excavation is needed at representative sites to examine questions about form and function and to establish dates. This objective remains.

6. Dendrochronology on buildings

Progress: considerable work has been undertaken at Dunster and occasionally elsewhere, but the objective remains and needs to widen across Exmoor to help to build the reference chronology for north Devon and the west Somerset areas.

7. An Historic Environment Record to assimilate information

Progress: the development of the HER and associated publicly available website www.exmoorher.co.uk are significant achievements. The Historic Environment Record is a key research tool for those working on Exmoor's historic environment. An audit was undertaken in 2019-2020 and the work identified in this needs to be progressed, continuing to bring the resource up-to-date and to incorporate a suite of evidence sets.

8. Detailed building recording

Progress: Considerable progress is being made with the work of the Early Dunster Group and Time Team Dig Dunster Project. Additional significant recording has been undertaken mainly via the Planning process. This work highlights what little has been studied to date and the huge potential for further work.

9. Fieldwalking

Progress: some work has been undertaken however it remains that a systematic fieldwalking programme is required on Exmoor to reveal new sites and boost artefact assemblages. There is particular scope here (and on excavations) for the involvement of young people and the local community, as well as archaeological groups and societies. This would increase our understanding of the farmed landscape where little work has been undertaken to date.

10. Geochemical survey

Progress: Further work is required to test and develop this method and to refine interpretation in conjunction with geophysical survey, so that it is better understood when and where it is appropriate to use it as a standard part of the archaeological repertoire.

PROGRESS AGAINST SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT 2017-2021

- 1. Continue and further develop the existing network of research projects**
The development of a resource assessment for Exmoor has not yet been undertaken and would still be a useful tool for assessing knowledge and research and highlighting gaps. The Archaeology Forum and webinars have showcased recent research and provided an arena for debate and discussion.
- 2. Encourage others to undertake projects on Exmoor.**
The Universities of Exeter, Plymouth, Brighton and Bristol have been engaged in field work and research on Exmoor with some ongoing. There are a number of thriving local groups and societies researching their local areas, particularly in Dunster, Timberscombe and Parracombe and the Exmoor Society has led or funded research projects across Exmoor. There is still a need for greater synthesis of previous work and the processing and publication of existing research.
- 3. There should be better funding for research projects**
Funding remains an issue and can be hard to gain. However, projects have been funded through organisations such as the AHRC, Historic England, Exmoor Society, National Heritage Lottery Fund and small funds such as the Maltwood Fund. The South West Peatland Partnership has funded much research related to peatlands and for survey and mitigation work.
- 4. Raise awareness of historic environment research**
The Exmoor Archaeology Forum and other public talks, conferences and webinars have continued to provide a useful way of promoting the results of recent research, including those organised by the Early Dunster Group and Exmoor Society. Walks and talks are held by a number of groups and local communities and research has also been highlighted at events such as Heritage Open Days. The Research Framework is available on the ENPA Website.
- 5. Foster communication between groups researching Exmoor's Historic Environment.**
The Archaeology Forum and other seminars, webinars and workshops held on research themes or projects have shared knowledge to other researchers and the public. More could be done in other formats or networks for communication such as social media or on-line fora.
- 6. Develop a landscape scale approach to research by development of historic landscape characterisation.**
No progress has been made in this area.



Willow (*Salix*) recovered from Alderman's Barrow Allotment during peatland restoration work
(c) Wessex Archaeology



Sister's Fountain on the Glenthorne estate



St Giles Hawkrigde

RESEARCH PROJECTS WHICH CONTRIBUTED TO DELIVERING THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK 2017-2021

Art in Support of Improved Understanding of the Changing Character of Exmoor Exmoor Society funded project in partnership with ENPA, led by Robin McInnes, using artwork and images from 1770s to the present day.

Ashcombe gardens and designed landscape, Simonsbath – a garden and landscape laid out by the Knight family in the 1820s but never fully realised. The ENPA project was set up to investigate and renovate the gardens and landscape working with the local community and volunteers.

Beaker People Project a collaborative research project between many institutions and museums to analyse Beaker period burials from the UK. Led by M. Parker Pearson the research included the burial from the Culbone Cist now housed at the Museum of Somerset.

Devon Historic Graffiti Survey - a DAS project to identify and record the historic graffiti in Devon's churches. St Petrock's Church, Parracombe survey by PAHS

Dulverton Weir and Leat Research Trust established in 2015 and formed into a Trust in 2016 set up to research and find ways of conserving the town's weir and leat system.

Dunster Museum Archaeology Group formed in 2016 to research the history of Dunster and area, including field walking, field survey and geophysical survey.

Early Dunster Project 2018-2023, part of SANHS Historic Buildings Group, was awarded funding in 2018 by Historic England as part of the Early Buildings in Historic Towns Initiative. This was to investigate the early building fabric in Dunster and interpret the early phases of each building to gain a better understanding of the early town. Over 30 buildings have been surveyed with selected dendro-dating also taking place. A number of reports have been produced.

Exmoor's Historic Signpost Project – an ENPA Heritage Lottery funded project in collaboration with Somerset County Council and SWHT, 2017-2019, to renovate and research traditional roadside fingerposts with community volunteers.

Exmoor Mesolithic Group – volunteer team lead by Dr Paul Gardiner working on Hawkcombe Head, Brendon Common and Farley Water including geophysical survey and small-scale excavation.

Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record, the continued development of a public HER as a fundamental tool in managing, conserving and researching Exmoor's historic environment, publicly available on a website. An audit to identify and prioritise future direction was undertaken in 2019-2020 with funding by Historic England.

Exmoor Society projects including 'Art in Support of Improved Understanding of the Changing Character of Exmoor', 'Understanding Exmoor's Special Qualities through using Archives', 'Unlocking Exmoor's Heritage' and the Then and Now Project.

Historic England Heritage at Risk – a register of nationally designated sites considered at risk, published annually.

Land use change during late prehistory on Exmoor, H., Ombashi, University of Plymouth, collaborative PhD.

Listed Building Condition Survey – a ENPA rapid condition survey of listed buildings on Exmoor surveyed 2018-2019 with a report providing a summary of findings and recommendations for action.

Longstone Landscapes Project – initiated under a Heritage Lottery Funded scheme based at ENPA 2010-2015 known as the Heart of Exmoor Project. Research and survey have been continued by PAHS.

Minehead & District U3A – Knight Family Archive Transcription Project – a shared learning project with ENPA 2019-2022, transcribing over 450 documents, mainly letters, dating from 1819 to 1880s.

Monuments Management Scheme – Historic England financially supported conservation scheme focussed on designated heritage at risk, working with Exmoor National Park Authority and other landowners.

Neolithic-Early Bronze Age landscapes of Exmoor, D Mitcham, Leicester University, collaborative PhD.

Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey – an assessment of sites along the coast and the threats they face was begun by ENPA in 2014 and in 2015 funding was secured from Historic England for ENPA to undertake a Phase 1 (desk based) Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment Survey in 2016. Phase 1 report published 2018.

Reclaiming Exmoor Project 2020-2022 - Leverhulme funded project looking at the motivation and influences driving the 19th century enclosure of the former Royal Forest and the ecological impacts. Universities of Exeter and Plymouth.

South West Peatland Partnership - aims to restore the peatlands of Exmoor to healthy condition. The Historic Environment is a key component of the project. Prior survey to inform management plans, mitigation work, and research has examined a number of landscapes, sites and issues.

Standing Stones Condition Survey 2017-2018 – undertaken by an ENPA Intern with the assistance of volunteers and supported by Historic England via a Capacity Building Grant

History Group for Timberscombe, Wootton Courtenay and Neighbours – a group who explore, enjoy and record local history.

Stone Rows of Great Britain Project - a project begun in January 2012 recording and researching the stone alignments in the UK. The Exmoor Stone Settings have been included in the project where they include at least three stones in a line. Led by Dr Sandy Gerrard.

Understanding Exmoor's Barrows Project – set up to identify and assess archaeological materials from Early Bronze Age barrows held in museums and other institutions from sites within the Exmoor National Park and the greater Exmoor region.

Unearthing Dunster, Time Team Digital Dig Village Project 2012-2018 – investigating the buried archaeology, townscape, and early standing buildings of Dunster.

Winsford Archive - The archive conserves and enhances the cultural heritage of Winsford, making it a useful source of information to the inhabitants and visitors.

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