



Exmoor National Park Authority

Recruitment Pack

Planning Officer



Working
together
for **Exmoor**

Welcome Message

Thank you for your interest in our vacancy with Exmoor National Park Authority. We are looking to appoint a Planning Officer to join our Development Management Team.

What makes Exmoor National Park such a special place? A unique landscape of moorland, woodland, valleys, and farmland, shaped by people and nature over thousands of years. Where high cliffs plunge into the Bristol Channel. On Exmoor, it is still possible to find tranquillity and peace as well as rediscover your sense of adventure, to catch a glimpse of wild red deer, be amazed by dark skies full of stars, and explore villages full of character.

Our vision is to ensure Exmoor National Park has a thriving living landscape and is a place where people can enjoy and benefit from Exmoor's special qualities and sustainable communities. Our Development Management team play a key role in the achievement of this vision and make a real difference to our local communities.

In addition, the Authority works with others to help foster sustainable rural development by promoting partnership working and encouraging leadership and contribution from all those involved in this beautiful area.

We have a fantastic staff team who are skilled and committed to the best outcomes for Exmoor. If you have degree in Town and Country Planning or equivalent experience, have excellent communication skills and a team worker, and feel that you have the skills and experience to join the team, then I hope you will explore these pages further and apply for this post.

If you would like an informal discussion about the position, please contact Joe White, Development Manager, on 01398 322256.

We look forward to hearing from you.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bryan', written in a cursive style.

Sarah Bryan
Chief Executive

Background Information



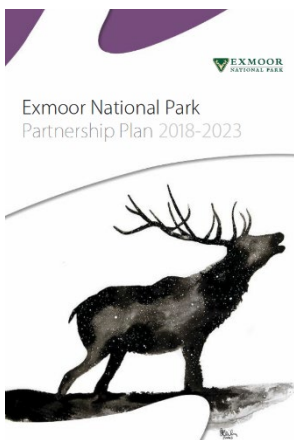
Exmoor is one of 15 National Parks in the UK. They are areas of protected countryside that everyone can visit and where people live, work and shape their landscapes.

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

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

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

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



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

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



For further information about the National Park Authority:

Go to our website www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Our Staff

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

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



The post of Planning Officer sits within the wider Climate, Nature and Communities section, and will deliver our planning service as part of the Development Management team.

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

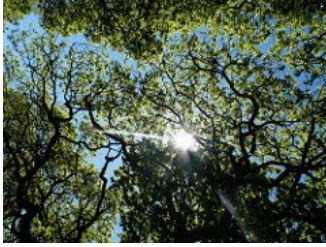
1. A clear response to the nature and climate crises.
2. A welcoming place for all, improving people's health and well-being.
3. A cared for landscape and heritage.
4. A place of flourishing, vibrant communities, and businesses.
5. A highly performing estate, delivering National Park purposes.
6. A great organisation to work for.

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

Working for us

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

We provide an annual leave allowance plus a pro rata entitlement to bank holidays, a pension scheme, paid sickness leave, parental leave, time off for dependents, time off to attend dentist, doctor and hospital appointments, and compassionate leave opportunities.



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

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

This support continues through regular reviews.

We try to hold two staff study days a year and this is an opportunity to get together with your colleagues across the Authority to learn and see something new about Exmoor.



The Society for National Parks Staff (SNPS) is a group that all National Parks employees can join for only £5 a year. There are opportunities to take part in activities to develop your knowledge of National Parks, whilst having fun and building new friendships.

Job description

JOB TITLE: Planning Officer

REPORTS TO: Development Manager

SECTION: Climate, Nature and Communities

GRADE: F

MAIN PURPOSE OF JOB

To assist in delivering an effective, efficient and community focused planning service, which seeks to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment of the National Park.

Key outcomes

- The impact of development is managed to protect Exmoor's special qualities.
- Development is managed to ensure it contributes to the social and economic well-being of the National Park communities.
- Applicants/service users receive a professional, friendly and effective planning service.
- Statutory targets are met.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

1. Processes planning, listed building, advertisement, and other applications within statutory deadlines. This involves checking the applications on submission to ensure all details are correct, visiting all sites for detailed assessment, and taking digital images for possible committee presentation.
2. Negotiates with applicants and agents when necessary to agree changes in design or other details in line with policy or to meet the views of statutory consultees. Sometimes negotiations, particularly around contentious issues that can bring conflict.
3. Inputs information on each application into the planning data base and makes recommendations on applications for Development Manager to issue decision notices under delegated powers.
4. Drafts reports and presents for planning committee consideration of an application when necessary.
5. Provides a 'first contact' point for public enquiries relating to planning permission and procedure for development proposals.
6. Offers guidance and advice to the public and agents in person, both in the office and on site and by letter/telephone/email on whether planning permission is required and how to apply.
7. Contributes to other work within Development Management and Enforcement. For example, provides office cover, preparation of appeal statements, performance monitoring data collation and representing the Authority at appeal when required.
8. Proactively monitors and checks development sites to ensure that proposals are carried out in accordance with permissions and conditions attached to consents. Records site visit details and follow up variances from approved plans and conditions to ensure compliance. Maintains records systems and schedules for monitoring of sites. Produces performance data and reports for monitoring function.
9. Initiates personally and following representations, investigations into alleged breaches of planning control under the Planning Acts. Assists with interviewing complainants and witnesses, surveys, collates, researches, and analyses information in relation to statutes, past history, case law and precedent, and assesses whether a breach of planning control has taken place and advises the Development Manager, and/or the Head of Climate, Nature and Communities, on action to remedy the breach.

REQUIRED SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERIENCE

- Degree in Town and Country Planning or equivalent experience.
- RTPI qualified and Member or working towards/prepared to work towards RTPI qualification and Membership.
- An understanding of National Park purposes and planning in protected landscapes.
- Able to prioritise and meet statutory targets and deadlines.
- Able to make logical decisions, and mediate and negotiate in a persuasive and professional manner.
- The ability to negotiate, work objectively and remain calm when faced with conflicting opinions and challenging and potentially obstructive customers.
- Able to recognise problems and recommend solutions/strategies on a range of issues according to established policies and conditions.
- Able to give advice and make decisions autonomously within a defined policy and legislative framework.
- The ability to respond to changing priorities to meet strict deadlines.
- Able to manage own workload and 'lone work' to conduct site visits.
- Good level of IT competence, especially Windows based software.
- Able to research, analyse and present work and conclusions from information in a systematic, clear and relevant form.
- An understanding of analytical techniques and the ability to undertake surveys and research activities.
- A UK valid driving license. (Access to a private vehicle would be preferable as the post requires travel to remote areas. A pool car will be available for most pre-planned journeys.)

Desirable

- Experience using a Geographical Information System (GIS).

Key competencies

- A team worker.
- Customer-focused.
- Excellent, clear and tactful communication skills at any level.
- A patient and diplomatic manner.
- Problem-solving and analytical skills.

Key employment terms

Post title: Planning Officer

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

The postholder may be required to work from other places of employment such as other National Park Centres to provide cover, or to attend training and meetings. Pool cars are available for use and business mileage incurred for these journeys using private vehicles will be reimbursed at the agreed casual mileage rate.

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

Contract status: This is a permanent contract.

Grade and salary: The grade of a Planning Officer is F with a current full time equivalent salary range of £31,586 to £35,235 per annum. New employees are normally started at the bottom of the salary scale.

Hours of work: The hours of work are 37 per week under the Authority's flexible working arrangements.

Probationary period: The appointment will be subject to a probationary period of up to 6 months.

Leave entitlement: The annual leave entitlement for this post 30 standard working days plus bank holidays. The leave year is from 1 April to 31 March. The number of public/bank holidays may vary annually depending on the number of recognised English bank holidays falling within the leave period.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- HMRC
- Outsourced HR and Payroll Services (currently with SCC and DCC)
- Peninsula pensions who administer the Authority's pension scheme
- Local Government Audit and fraud detection teams

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

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

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

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

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

Working in the UK: Freedom of movement between the UK and EU has ended and the UK has introduced a new immigration system. Anyone recruited from outside the UK (excluding Irish citizens) need to meet certain requirements and apply for permission first.

The Authority does not hold a sponsor license. For more information about the new rules on recruiting people from outside the UK - please visit [Browse: Visas and immigration - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-and-immigration) for more information.

Before you are offered employment, we are required to carry out document checks to ensure that you are entitled to work in the UK. Please click on the following link to see what documents are accepted. [Right to Work Checklist.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

How to apply

Please complete and submit your application online by clicking on the link provided on our website, ensuring you address all elements of the responsibilities and knowledge, skills, and experience.

Please note that we do not accept CVs.

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

The closing date for applications is midnight on 27 November 2024.

Interviews are planned for Wednesday 4 December 2024.