

# ITEM 9

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

19 April 2011

### AUTHORITY PRIORITIES AND BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2011/12

#### Report of the Chief Executive

**Purpose of Report:** To seek Member approval for the proposed Authority priorities and business plan for 2011/12.

**Legal and Equality Implications:** Section 65(4) Environment Act 1995 – provides powers to the National Park Authority to *“do anything which in the opinion of the Authority, is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to-*  
*(a) the accomplishment of the purposes mentioned in s. 65 (1) [National Park purposes]*  
*(b) the carrying out of any functions conferred on it by virtue of any other enactment.”*

**Financial and Risk Implications:** The business plan sets out the proposed work programme for the forthcoming financial year and the outline budget.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** It is recommended that the Authority:

1. APPROVES the priorities and business plan for the Authority for 2011/12.
2. AUTHORISES the Chief Executive to make further minor changes, publish the Plan and implement the programmes set out in the plan.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The draft business plan for the Authority for 2011/12 is attached to this report. The Plan departs from the format used in recent years and is structured around the new staff teams that have been adopted as part of the spending review process.

## 2. EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY PRIORITIES FOR 2011/12

2.1 The proposed priorities for the Authority in 2011/12 are set out on pages 5-7 of the draft plan. These are taken from the priorities for 2010-12 approved by the Authority in April 2010. The work programmes set out in the draft plan focus on these Authority priorities.

**Nigel Stone**  
**Chief Executive**  
**7 April 2011**

**Exmoor National Park Authority  
2011-12 Business Plan**

**DRAFT  
7 APRIL 2011**

# Exmoor National Park Authority

## 2011-12 Business Plan

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## Welcome to our Business Plan...

We are now entering the final year of the Exmoor National Park Management Plan period from 2007 to 2012. The ambitious plan has succeeded in bringing together the efforts of a wide range of local government, national agencies, voluntary sector and business organisations in a common purpose of 'enhancing the qualities that make Exmoor special'. 2010/11 was a very successful year for attracting additional resources to the National Park including:

- The Heritage Lottery Fund confirming a contribution of £662,500 towards the Moorland Landscape Partnership programme. The project has commenced, and 3 project staff recruited. The overall programme is worth £860,000 over three years.
- South West Water has committed more than £2 million to peatland restoration and improving the quality of the freshwater environment over the next five years. This project is underway.
- Securing £400,000 for low-carbon projects in communities across Exmoor National Park from the Department of Energy and Climate Change. These projects were completed in the year.
- Securing £600,000 from Devon County Council towards the new Exmoor Coast National Park Centre that will be established in the Lynmouth Pavilion. Work has commenced with the appointment of project managers and architects for the scheme.
- Securing over £2.5 million from the Forestry Commission for grants to woodland owners to help manage woodlands in the National Park. Plus £250,000 over 5 years for improvements to the Authority's woodlands and £90,000 towards a new three year programme to develop the role of new and existing woodlands in helping to meet our energy needs.

The National Park Authority has a key role in the achievement of these programmes and we will be seeking to ensure that the resources will help provide lasting benefits to Exmoor's communities.

2011/12 will be a challenging time as the Coalition Government's public sector spending reductions make an impact on the capacity of the National Park Authority. The implementation of organisational change and a review of various alternative ways to achieve the Authority's objectives and priorities will be a significant feature for the year.

The National Park Authority is well placed to demonstrate the good value that it provides for the resources allocated by government and to respond to budgetary change. One clear message is that we will be doing what we can to focus the resources in areas that will make the most difference and sustain the momentum of improvement and achievement that we have achieved in recent years.

John Dyke  
Chairman

Nigel Stone  
Chief Executive (National Park Officer)

# Introduction

**Exmoor National Park** was designated as a National Park in 1954 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The purposes of National Park designation as amended by the Environment Act 1995 are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park area
- To promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities

Exmoor covers 693 km<sup>2</sup> of West Somerset and North Devon. The varied countryside includes moorland, woodland, farmland, river valleys and 60 km of magnificent coastline. About 10,900 people live in the National Park which receives an estimated 2 million visitor days each year.

**Exmoor National Park Authority** was established as an independent authority in 1997 under provisions set out in the Environment Act 1995. The Act sets out two primary duties for the authority:

- To accomplish national park purposes and, in doing so,
- To seek to foster the social and economic well-being of local communities in the National Park.

**Our vision** emerged after extensive public consultation and engagement of a wide range of partner organisations in formulating the Exmoor National Park Management Plan in July 2007. The Management Plan sets out a statement of the special qualities of the National Park and a vision to:

***Enhance the qualities that make Exmoor special***

**Our values** should be reflected throughout the work of the Authority:

**Sustainability:** using resources responsibly, cost effectively and efficiently and providing a model for more sustainable ways of working

**Customer focus:** being responsive to the needs of the public, partner organisations and each other and going the extra step to engage people in our work

**Respect:** treating everyone, both within and outside the Authority, with respect and providing equality of opportunity for all

**Improvement:** actively seeking ways to improve our services and performance, seeing problems as challenges not obstacles in an environment that encourages people to be flexible and innovative

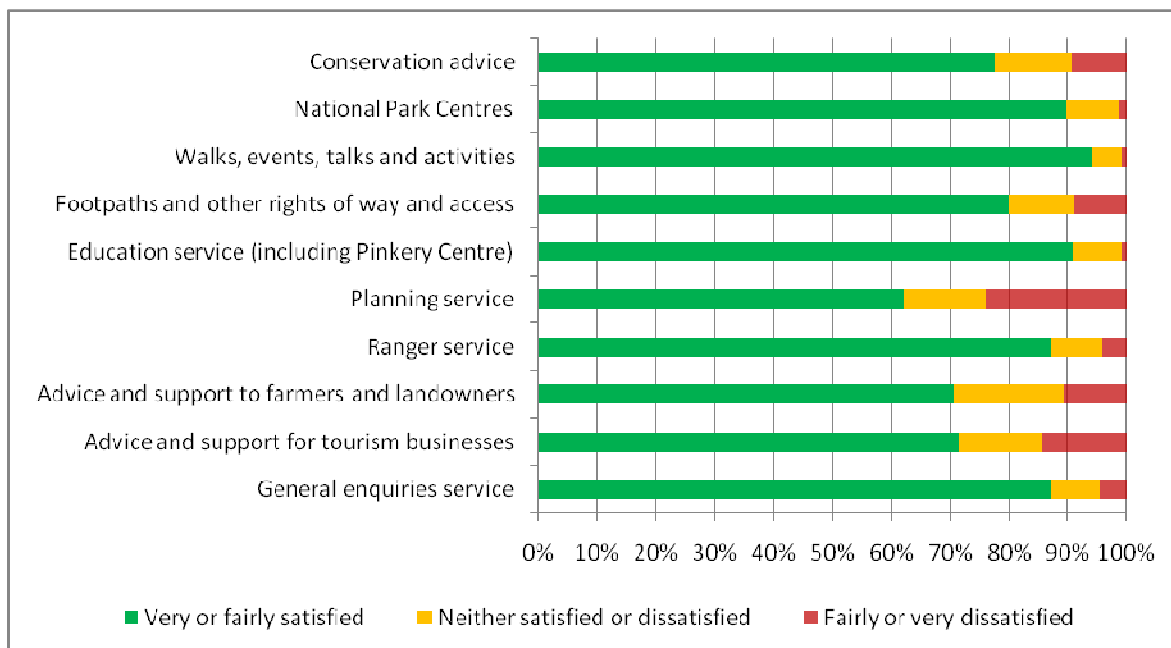
**Professionalism:** providing a high quality, professional service based on high standards and excellent communications

**Team Work:** working together to achieve the Authority's objectives, supporting colleagues and committing to achieving the Authority's vision

## The services we provide

Exmoor National Park Authority provides a range of services to residents and visitors to the National Park. A **residents' survey** [1] published in March 2010 indicated that these services have a high uptake amongst residents with generally high satisfaction levels. However, we are constantly seeking to monitor and improve the quality of these services.

**Figure 1 – Satisfaction levels for users of Exmoor National Park Authority service (from Residents Survey 2010)**



## Our priorities

In order to provide a focus for its work the National Park Authority has adopted the following priorities for 2010-12:

### **Enhancing Exmoor's special qualities**

#### **1. Increased support for the conservation management and public enjoyment of Exmoor's moorlands:**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Work with moorland owners and farmers to secure increased funding and support for moorland management
- Help to increase the skills and capacity for moorland management including swaling

#### **2. Support for livestock farming**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Lobby for greater financial support for Exmoor farmers including an increased level of single farm payment and proper reward for the many public benefits that hill farmers deliver such as:

- Healthy and high quality food,
- Maintaining landscapes and biodiversity,
- Safeguarding our cultural heritage,
- Providing clean water and reducing flood risk
- Helping lock up carbon and tackle climate change
- Providing opportunities for access and recreation
- Support targeting of Environmental Stewardship and ESA conservation management plans via Natural England and encourage local uptake of Upland Entry Level Stewardship
- Support the Exmoor Hill Farm Project to help enhance the profitability of Exmoor farms

### **Achieving accessibility and enjoyment for all**

#### **3. Providing a first class Rights of Way network**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Continue maintenance and improvement of public rights of way so that, by the end of 2011 at least 95% of public rights of way meet ease of use criteria

#### **4. Working with young people and non-traditional audiences**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Undertake an education programme reaching at least 3,000 young people
- Support the Mosaic Project seeking to increase awareness and visits to Exmoor National Park by people from black and minority ethnic communities

### **Responding to climate change**

#### **5. Commence a strategy to enable the National Park to become carbon-neutral by 2025**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Engage local communities in developing a strategy for achieving a low-carbon National Park by 2025 building on the achievements of the Low-Carbon Communities Challenge programme funded by Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC)
- Assess the impact of climate change on the National Park and report (to Defra) with proposals and policies for mitigating these impacts
- Continue a programme towards achieving 'zero-carbon' operation of the Authority by 2020
- Achieve low-carbon operation at the Pinkery education centre

## **Achieving a sustainable economy and thriving community**

### **6. Improving prospects for young people**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Support land based vocational training opportunities through the West Somerset Community College Farm Unit
- Help deliver up to 10 apprenticeship opportunities through the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership

### **7. More affordable housing**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Continue to support the North Devon, West Somerset and Exmoor Rural Housing Project
- Work with the local community and housing authorities to encourage local affordable housing proposals so that by the end of 2012, at least 60 new affordable homes will have been completed in the National Park since 2007

### **8. Sustainable tourism development**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Support the Exmoor Tourism Partnership's promotion and marketing action plan
- Commence work to provide an enhanced National Park Centre on the Lynmouth Pavilion site by the end of 2012

### **9. Review of local planning policies**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Engage local communities in the review of planning policies to be included in the new Local Development Framework

## **Improving our services**

### **10. Increased engagement with the resident community:**

In 2011/12 we will seek to improve our engagement with the resident community through:

- Attendance at local shows and circulation of *Park Life*
- Planning surgeries at Lynton and Porlock
- Five meetings of the Parish & Consultative Forum a year
- Holding an open meeting so that any member of the public can raise any matter relating to the National Park Authority
- Greater involvement by young people in shaping the Authority's policies and priorities

### **11. Improved customer service**

In 2011/12 we will:

- Incorporate service improvements based on the findings of the 2010 resident survey and customer feedback



# Responding to the Government Spending Review to 2014/15

Following the general election in May 2010, the coalition government undertook a review of all public expenditure with the aim of reducing the annual funding deficit. In December 2010, indicative figures provided by Defra showed a cash reduction in the Defra Grant to National Park Authorities of 21.5% over the 4 years to 2014/15 in addition to the cut of 5% in National Park Grant in 2010/11.

The confirmed figure for National Park Grant in 2011/12 is £3,764,715. A reduction of just over £400,000 compared to the starting position for 2010/11.

## Impact on the Authority and the National Park

The main item of core expenditure for the National Park Authority is in staff costs and overheads. The reduction in grant funding is likely to lead to a reduction of around 20 jobs (based on full time equivalent -FTE) by the end of March 2014, from 79.1 FTE at the start of the current year (April 2010). This represents a return to staffing levels in the early 1990s, before the National Park Authority became fully independent and took responsibility for services such as legal, personnel, health and safety advice which had hitherto been provided through Somerset County Council.

By the end of 2010/11 the Authority was on target to reduce the number of core staff by more than 10 through people moving on to new jobs and through retirements and voluntary redundancies. We will continue to only fill vacancies when it is essential and to redeploy existing staff where possible.

The National Park Authority is determined to minimise any adverse impact of the funding reductions on the delivery of frontline services and achievement of National Park purposes and key activities will continue, including:

- completion of the new National Park Information Centre in Lynmouth - this project will provide economic as well as environmental benefits; the funding from Devon County Council and the National Park Authority is committed, and the project has support from the community
- continuing to offer free advisory services wherever possible for farmers, business and local communities, including advice on planning
- continuing maintenance of public rights of way in partnership with Somerset and Devon County Councils
- continuing to help fund locally led projects, building on the success of the Sustainable Development Fund and supporting local groups and organisations who are seeking to achieve National Park objectives

In addition, the reductions in National Park Grant will not impact on partnership projects such as the 'Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership' being funded by Heritage Lottery Fund and the 'Exmoor Mires-on-the-Moors' funded by South West Water

## **A year of review and change**

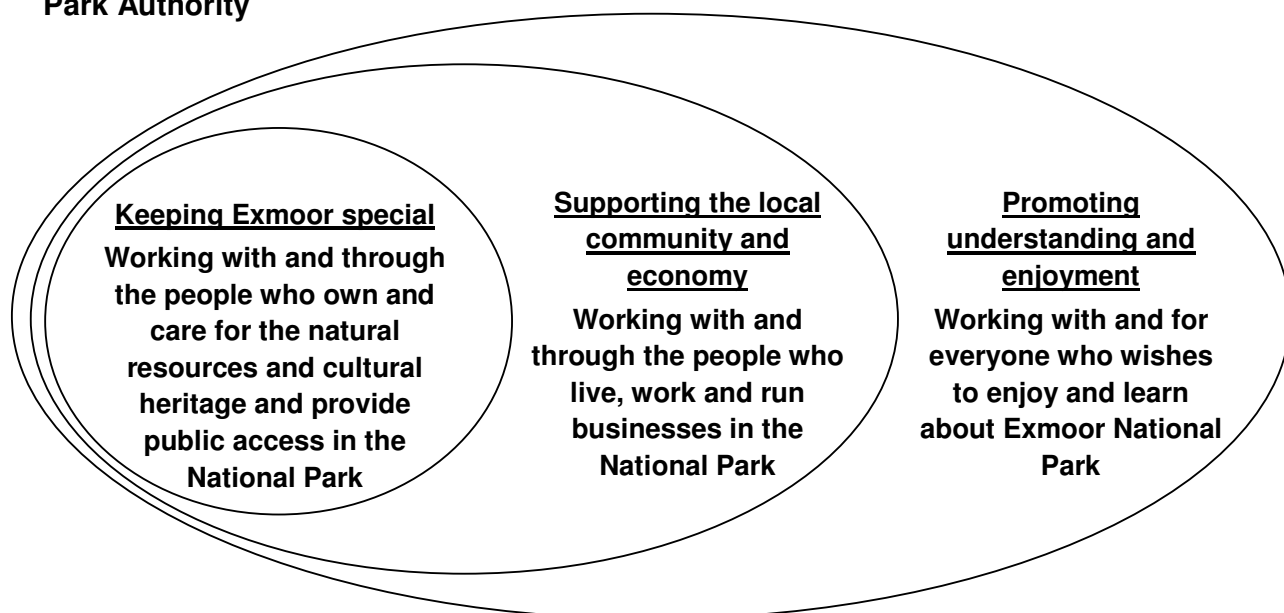
The 'flat-line' reduction in National Park Grant to 2014/15 and the savings already made in core expenditure during 2010/11, mean that there is time during the next 12 months to review all Authority services and activities in order to establish new ways of doing things at less overall cost. This will include a review of the National Park Management Plan.

We are looking for the most cost-effective ways to undertake our work and already commission services from local authorities, including finance services from Somerset County Council; legal services from Devon County Council, and listed building advice from Taunton Deane Borough Council.

The Authority has supported a proposal to move to a structure based on key communities in the National Park:

- Owners and managers of land and heritage assets in the National Park
- The wider resident community and people who live and work in the National Park
- People who make use of the opportunities for learning and enjoyment that the National Park provides be they local residents in or close to the National Park or visitors from further afield – the 'users' of the National Park.

**Figure 2 - The key communities providing the focus for future work of the National Park Authority**



In a departure from the recent format for the business plan, the plan for 2011/12 is based around the revised structure of the Authority with sections focusing on:

- Support to land managers
- Support to the community
- Support to National Park users
- Support services

In addition, the Authority will be establishing a temporary 'Transition Team' outside the core revenue budget. The make up of this team will vary in line with the programme of organisational review over the next two years. From April 2011, the Head of Corporate Support will be redeployed to head up the Transition Team.

### **Organisational review timetable**

The following timetable was adopted at the Exmoor National Park Authority meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 in order to implement the organisational changes required to adapt to the new financial environment created by the reductions in National Park Grant:

#### March 2011

- establish revised leadership team
- commence review of all staff work programmes to reflect changes in line management and to provide the basis for the forthcoming twelve months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011
- commence review of organisational structures for administration and in-house support functions

#### April 2011

- implement moves to new sections and new line management arrangements
- finalise service plans and business plan for 2011/12
- consult on proposed new organisational structures for administration and in-house support functions
- commence a detailed review of other ways of achieving Authority objectives and priorities including joint working, partnership development and delegation etc. with completed assessments by 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011
- commence a review of the Exmoor National Park Management Plan looking forward to the next five years from 2012-2017 with target completion date of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011

#### July 2011

New organisational structures for administration and in-house support functions to come into operation

#### February 2012

Consult on proposed organisational changes based on new service priorities and in line with the revised National Park Management Plan and the new financial environment for the 3 outward-facing sections, i.e. 'Support to Land Managers'; 'Support to the Community', and 'Support to National Park Users'

#### May 2012

Implement organisational changes based on the responses to the consultations.

## **A. Support to Land Managers**

**Focus on Keeping Exmoor special - Working with and through the people who own and care for the natural resources and cultural heritage and provide public access in the National Park**

### **Main functions:**

- Farming, forestry and field sports liaison and support
- Land management support – moorland, woodland, coast and farmland
- Landscape and wildlife conservation advice and support
- Conservation of the historic environment advice and support
- Public access management including rights of way and access land
- Website for land managers

### **Key communities:**

- Farmers and land managers
- Woodland owners
- Field sports interests including local hunts; shoot owners and managers, and riparian/fishing rights owners
- Owners of cultural heritage (e.g. listed buildings and ancient monuments)

### **Key outcomes from Exmoor National Park Management Plan**

- Profitable and competitive farming, forestry and land management enterprises in Exmoor National Park are playing a lead role in conserving and enhancing Exmoor's landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage, and are making a major contribution to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park
- Exmoor's distinct and diverse landscape in good condition and an increased awareness of its importance
- An increased extent of wildlife habitats in good condition and thriving populations of native plants and animals that are most valued nationally and locally
- An enhanced knowledge of the historic environment of Exmoor; increased awareness of the value of its cultural heritage, and the most important historical sites, settlements, buildings and features conserved and their historical character retained
- Exmoor's air, water and soil are of high quality and we will be closer to achieving a carbon-neutral National Park to help tackle climate change
- A warm welcome and high quality experience for everyone who visits Exmoor seeking inspiration, tranquillity and active outdoor recreation in the National Park

## Key services:

- Provide **landscape advice** to the Authority, to planning officers, other organisations and to the public.
- Provide **woodland management advice** to the owners and managers of woodlands and those involved in forestry and woodland products
- Provide advice on **trees and tree planting** particularly in respect of trees on development sites and in connection with tree planting for landscape enhancement
- Respond to requests for consent to lop, top or fell trees covered by **Tree Preservation Orders** or for work on trees in **Conservation Areas**.
- Provide **wildlife and habitat conservation advice** to land and property owners and managers.
- Provide curatorial advice to all – as first point of contact – for the conservation of the **historic environment** of the National Park
- Provide advice on **management of ancient monuments and listed buildings**
- Maintain the **Exmoor Historic Environment Record** to provide access to information on archaeology, historic buildings and the historic landscape across the National Park.
- Inspect and lead on maintenance and improvement to the **Rights of Way network** including minor maintenance and major works and legal work relating to obstructions and diversions etc.
- Liaise with the managers of **shoots** to support good conservation management, and good relations with local communities and recreational users.
- Provide support for the **Exmoor Local Access Forum** and ensure that **Access Land** in the National Park remains accessible and monitor and provide up-to-date information on Access Land restrictions and closures. Process and review restrictions.
- Provide a limited **advisory service for event organisers** to encourage well managed events that are not damaging to landscape or vulnerable habitats, or to farming and land management.

## Work programme for 2011/12 – priority actions and targets

<b>Priority 1 - Increased support for the conservation management and public enjoyment of Exmoor's moorlands</b>		
In 2011/12 we will:		
	Work with <b>moorland owners and farmers</b> to secure increased funding and support for moorland management. Including support for the Brendon Commons Council pilot [E2.2; A2.1; B1.1] <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Help to increase the skills and capacity for <b>moorland management</b> including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the <b>Exmoor Fire Partnership</b> to develop longer term proposals for the management of moorland vegetation to reduce fire risk and support annual swaling programme [B5.2]</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moorland Management Grant Scheme being funded by the National Park Authority and administered by Exmoor Hill Farm Project [E2.2]</li> <li>• Working with the Moorland Landscape Partnership including support for 'Moorkeepers' and moorland apprenticeship scheme [H3; A2]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Maintain communications with moorland owners and managers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaison over the <b>Moorland Unit Maps</b> and taking opportunities to implement improvement actions [A2.1]</li> <li>• Organising meetings of the <b>Exmoor Moorland Initiative Board</b> [A2]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Continue to progress the <b>Moorland Case Studies</b> programme to assess the impact of <b>swaling</b> on moorland invertebrates and flora [A2.3]</p> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Work with the <b>Exmoor Mire Restoration Project</b> including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attending meetings of the Delivery Group</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding the historic environment of the moorlands [</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Historic Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Work with <b>Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership</b> to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconditioning Moorlands Project [A2.4; A2.6].</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead Officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Views of the Moor Project and in particular to record, by oral history interviews, aspects of the history and management of Exmoor moorland [C5.7]</li> <li>• The Treeless Forest Project [C1.4, C5.7]</li> <li>• The Discover Prehistory Project [C1.4, C5.7]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Develop the <b>Local List for Exmoor</b> based on criteria developed during 2010-11 and in the spirit of the national Heritage Protection Reforms with a focus on moorland areas [C2.3, C3.2]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Conservation Adviser (Archaeology)</b></p>	
	<p>Provide archaeological advice to support the <b>Conserving the Moorland Past Project 2011 – 2013</b> (Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership) [C2.2, C2.3]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Work with Natural England and other partners to encourage the adoption of the <b>Exmoor Principal Archaeological Landscapes</b> to guide moorland conservation management [C2.3]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Conservation Adviser (Archaeology)</b></p>	
	<p>Work with English Heritage to complete a study on the archaeology of <b>moorland reclamation</b> on Exmoor [C5.8]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b></p>	

<b>Priority 2 - Support for livestock farming</b>		
In 2011/12 we will:		
	Continue to support the <b>South West Uplands Federation</b> to develop measures that assist the long-term viability of upland farming [E2.2] <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Support <b>targeting of Environmental Stewardship</b> and ESA conservation management plans via Natural England and encourage local uptake of Upland Entry Level Stewardship [E2.3] <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Continue to support the <b>Exmoor Hill Farm Project</b> to provide improved access to training support and funding for farmers and land managers [E2.4] <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	

<b>Priority 3 - Providing a first class Rights of Way network</b>		
By end of 2011 we will continue the partnership with Devon and Somerset County Councils to:		
	Maintain <b>public rights of way network</b> to ensure at least <b>95%</b> of public rights of way meet ease of use criteria [G1.1] and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resolve 20 off-line issues</li> <li>• Survey 50% of rights of way as part of a rolling biennial survey</li> <li>• Seek improvements to the network through permitted agreements and dedications</li> </ul> <b>Lead Officer: Access and Recreation Manager</b>	

<b>Priority 5 [part] - Commence a strategy to enable the National Park to become carbon-neutral by 2025</b>		
In 2011/12 we will:		
	Set up <b>low carbon land management group</b> to develop actions in response to Exmoor National Park Carbon Neutral Programme [E3.1]. <b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager with Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Work with Exmoor Hill Farm Project to facilitate delivery of a programme of <b>low carbon farming</b> events and activities [E3.1] including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 <b>carbon audits of farms</b></li> <li>• Research into the potential <b>markets for sheep wool</b> (e.g. loft insulation, meat box packaging, fabric etc).</li> <li>• The opportunity provided by the <b>Renewable Heat Incentive</b>.</li> </ul> <b>Lead Officer: Low Carbon Communities Officer with Natural Environment Manager</b>	

	<p>Launch a new <b>Exmoor Woodland Partnership</b> project in collaboration with the Forestry Commission to explore the potential of woodlands and forestry to contribute to achievement of a carbon-neutral National Park [B1.1; E3; E2.4; E1.3; E1.4]</p> <p><b>Lead officer: Woodland Officer</b></p>	See below
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<b>Other priority actions:</b>		
	<p><b>Review</b> the support and services provided to farmers and land managers in the National Park.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Natural Environment Manager, Historic Environment Manager, Access and Recreation Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Provide content for the <b>new Authority website</b> based on the needs of farmers and land managers in the National Park.</p> <p><b>Lead Officers: Natural Environment Manager, Historic Environment Manager, Access and Recreation Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Launch a new <b>Exmoor Woodland Partnership</b> with Forestry Commission including support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of woodlands in storing carbon and providing woodfuel</li> <li>• Exploring the potential for higher value uses of locally grown timber</li> <li>• Continuation of <i>Rhododendron</i> control [B3.2]</li> <li>• Continuation of 'Exmoor Woodcert' [B1.1; E3; E2.4; E1.3; E1.4]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Woodland Officer</b></p>	
	<p>Maintain links with those involved in <b>forestry and woodland management</b> in the National Park including the delivery of Forestry Commission responsibilities including the control of <i>Phytophthora</i></p> <p><b>Lead officer: Woodland Officer</b></p>	
	<p>Maintain links with those involved in game shooting through the <b>Greater Exmoor Shooting Association</b>.</p> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Work with the <b>Exmoor and District Deer Management Society</b> by developing a deer health database, supporting the annual deer count and attending the annual meeting [B2.12]</p> <p><b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b></p>	

## Work programme for 2011/12 – other actions and targets

### LANDSCAPE

	<p>Support the work of the <b>Exmoor Landscape Advisory Group</b> and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and publish the <b>Exmoor Landscape Action Plan</b> [A1.1]</li> <li>• Complete <b>Exmoor Landscape Perceptions Study</b> in partnership with the Exmoor Society [A4.1 – 4.3]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Landscape Officer</b></p>	
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	Submit the <b>Dark Sky Reserve</b> bid and promote <b>Exmoor's dark skies</b> through astronomy events in partnership with other bodies [A3.2; A4] <b>Lead officer: Landscape Officer</b>	
	Support work of Devon and Somerset hedge groups and "hedgelink" in lobbying for sustainable hedge-bank management. <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	

## WILDLIFE

	Work with the <b>River Exe Project</b> and, in particular, consider how its work might be continued when the current funding ends. [B1.9; D1.2]. <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Review the <b>Two Moors Threatened Butterflies Project</b> [B2.7]. <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Continue to be a partner in the <b>Exmoor Knotweed Control Partnership Project</b> [B3.1] <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager</b>	
	Continue to support the achievement of targets in the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2007-12 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responding to the completed <b>County Wildlife Site Survey</b> [B1.2; B1.7; B2.6]</li> <li>• <b>Exmoor Natural History Society</b> recording of non native species and assessing the impact of <b>woodland coppicing at Hawkcombe National Nature Reserve</b> on invertebrates, flora and birds [B2.1; B3.3; B4.3]</li> <li>• <b>Somerset Ornithological Society</b> monitoring of key sites for moorland birds, including nightjar [B4.3]</li> <li>• Protecting endemic <b>whitebeams</b> through practical woodland management work at Culbone Wood [B2.13]</li> <li>• Continued <b>phenological studies</b> to monitor the effects of climate change on woodland and hedgerow trees [B5.3]</li> <li>• Volunteers monitoring <b>dormice</b> and <b>waxcap fungi</b> populations [B2.5; B2.6]</li> </ul> <b>Lead officer: Natural Environment Manager, Woodland Officer and Education Support Officer</b>	

## HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

	Work with partners to achieve priorities in the <b>Historic Environment Research Framework 2010-15</b> [C1.1, C1.2, C1.4, C1.6] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b>	
	Assist the publication of a book on the <b>West Somerset Mineral Railway</b> [C2.4] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b>	

	Support the University of Bristol in completing an Archaeology Field school at <b>Hawkcombe Head</b> during 2011 [C1.4, C5.7] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b>	
	Prepare reports on <b>Larkbarrow, Timberscombe</b> and <b>Brendon Common</b> and complete the archiving of information on these sites [C5.1] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b>	
	Implement the strategy for <b>Scheduled Monuments At Risk</b> . <b>Lead Officer: Conservation Adviser (Archaeology)</b>	
	Commence a ' <b>Buildings At Risk</b> ' survey in partnership with English Heritage [C3.1] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Manager</b>	
	Lead a community based archaeology project in Dulverton and work with the local community in Dulverton to record culture and traditions through oral history interviews through the <b>Dig Dulverton Project</b> [C5.7] <b>Lead Officers: Historic Environment Manager</b>	
	Develop the <b>Exmoor National Park Historic Environment Record</b> by setting up its website and incorporating thematic content [C5.1] <b>Lead Officer: Historic Environment Record Officer</b>	

#### **AIR, WATER AND SOIL QUALITY AND WASTE MINIMISATION**

	Seek up to date information from the Environment Agency and local authorities on the <b>quality of air, water and soils</b> on Exmoor on an annual basis. <b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager</b>	
	Arrange a workshop for planners, agents and architects on the use of local <b>sustainable construction materials</b> , support the completion of <b>sustainable construction case studies</b> and publish on the website. <b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager</b>	

## **B. Support to the Community**

**Focus on Supporting the local community and economy - Working with and through the people who live, work and run enterprises in the National Park**

### **Main functions:**

- Sustainable / low carbon economy linked to Exmoor's special qualities
- Community planning
- Development management
- Website for the resident community including planning services
- Tourism business liaison

### **Key communities**

- Residents of the National Park
- Businesses and employers

### **Key outcomes from Exmoor National Park Management Plan**

- By 2020 Exmoor's communities retain a continuity of connection with the land; people have access to affordable services and facilities, and there is a strong, diverse and sustainable economy that benefits from and contributes to the care and appreciation of Exmoor National Park

### **Key services:**

- Provide **pre-application planning advice**
- Determine **planning applications** in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan to ensure that the special character of Exmoor is maintained and enhanced.
- Pro-actively **monitor** larger scale and controversial development sites to ensure compliance with approved plans and conditions,
- Investigate alleged **breaches** of Planning and Listed Building Consent and resolve breaches of control through appropriate actions dependent on circumstances including negotiations, submission of applications, and where expedient, the serving of enforcement and other notices.
- Develop **planning policies** that protect and enhance the beauty of the Exmoor National Park and support a thriving economy and sustainable communities, ensuring there is enough affordable housing to meet the needs of local communities and provide access to services and facilities. Planning policies are currently documented in the Local Plan which will eventually be replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF), a suite of National Park Authority planning documents that will guide planning decisions.

- Lead on the new **localism, Big Society and neighbourhood planning** initiatives.
- Work in partnership to implement **conservation area enhancement schemes** and community development projects.
- Facilitate community, business and visitor engagement in activity that contributes to **sustainable development** within the National Park.

### **Work programme for 2011/12 – priority actions and targets**

#### **Priority 9 – Review of local planning policies**

In 2011/12 we will:

	<p>Engage local communities in the review of planning policies to be included in the new <b>Local Development Framework</b> by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing a draft Core Strategy and Development Management policies</li> <li>• Undertaking a public consultation with local communities; businesses; landowners and managers; parish and town councils and other interested parties.</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead Officer: Policy &amp; Community Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Review the <b>National Park Management Plan</b> and establish a ‘Partnership Plan for Exmoor National Park’ with support and engagement from local communities; businesses; landowners and managers; parish and town councils, key public agencies and other interested parties.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Chief Executive</b></p>	

#### **Priority 10 – Increased engagement with the resident community**

In 2011/12 we will seek to improve our engagement with the resident community by:

	<p>Ensuring that there are good communications and high levels of customer satisfaction with the processing and determination of planning applications and continue to provide advice through weekly planning surgeries in Lynton and Porlock</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Development Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Attendance at local shows in North Devon, Dunster and Exford</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Interpretation manager</b></p>	
	<p>Production and circulation of two editions of <i>Park Life</i></p> <p><b>Lead Officer: External Relations Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Greater involvement by young people in shaping the Authority’s policies and priorities</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Running a community archaeology project in Dulverton</p> <p><b>Lead officer: Historic Environment Manager</b></p>	

### Priority 6 – Improving prospects for young people

In 2011/12 we will:

	Support <b>land based vocational training</b> opportunities through the West Somerset Community College Farm Unit. <b>Lead Officer – Education Manager</b>	
	Help deliver up to <b>10 apprenticeship opportunities</b> through the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership. <b>Lead Officer – Education Manager</b>	

### Priority 7 – More affordable housing

In 2011/12 we will:

	Continue to support the North Devon, West Somerset and Exmoor <b>Rural Housing Project</b> [H1.1]. <b>Lead Officer: Policy &amp; Community Manager</b>	
	Work with the local community and housing authorities so that by the end of 2012, at least <b>60 new affordable homes</b> will have been completed in the National Park since 2007 [H1.2]. <b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to the Community</b>	
	Provide comprehensive pre-application planning advice on potential sites to individuals, Housing Providers and parish / town councils [H1.1; H1.2]. <b>Lead Officer: Development Manager</b>	

### Priority 8 – Sustainable tourism development

In 2011/12 we will:

	Support the <b>Exmoor Tourism Partnership</b> including relevant actions set out in the ETP Action Plan <b>Lead Officer: Sustainable Economy Officer</b>	
	Deliver 4 ' <b>Exmoor Awareness</b> ' events for tourism providers. <b>Lead Officer: Sustainable Economy Officer</b>	
	Monitor trends in the <b>tourism economy</b> through the STEAM methodology and publish a ' <b>State of Tourism</b> ' update <b>Lead Officer: Sustainable Economy Officer</b>	
	Attend the Devon County Show and Bath & West Show to promote Exmoor National Park (in partnership) <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation manager</b>	
	Produce and distribute the <b>Exmoor Visitor 2012</b> and help achieve regional and national media coverage for the National Park <b>Lead Officer: External Relations Manager</b>	
	Progress the development of the <b>Lynmouth Pavilion Project</b> . <b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to National Park Users</b>	

**Priority 5 [part] – Commence a strategy to enable the National Park to become carbon-neutral by 2025**

In 2011/12 we will:

	<p>Engage local communities in developing a strategy for achieving a low-carbon National Park by 2025 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the 6 communities engaged through the <b>Low Carbon Communities Challenge (LCCC)</b> and organising <b>3 study tours</b> to showcase projects funded through the <b>LCCC</b> [D3.4]</li> <li>• Supporting 3 further communities to deliver local engagement plans and develop further community low carbon initiatives [D3.3]</li> <li>• Developing proposals for a new <b>Carbon-neutral Exmoor Fund</b> to support the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency by local communities and businesses [D3.1; D3.5]</li> <li>• Launching a package of support for <b>low carbon initiatives for communities</b> and businesses funded by Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) [D3.1; D3.4; H3.5]</li> <li>• Supporting the <b>Dartmoor and Exmoor Low Carbon Festival 2011</b> [D3.4]</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager and Low Carbon Communities Officer</b></p>	
	<p>Facilitate <b>training for local energy businesses</b> to enable them to install good quality wood heating and solar (PV and thermal) systems etc. [D3.4]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Organise an event for tourism businesses to publicise and explain the proposed <b>Renewable Heat Incentive</b> [D3.4; D3.5]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Low Carbon Communities Officer</b></p>	

**Other priority actions:**

	<p><b>Review</b> the support and services provided to community and business in the National Park.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to the Community</b></p>	
	<p>Provide content for the <b>new Authority website</b> based on the needs of communities and businesses in the National Park.</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to the Community</b></p>	
	<p>Develop links and engagement with the business community and investigate the options for securing support for projects that contribute towards sustainable economic development in the National Park including through the <b>Local Enterprise Partnership</b> for Devon and Somerset [H3.1; H3.2]</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Sustainability and Economy Manager</b></p>	
	<p>Deliver <b>CareMoor</b> and secure at least £5,000 for access and conservation projects</p> <p><b>Lead Officer: Sustainable Economy Officer</b></p>	

## C. Support to National Park Users

Focus on Promoting understanding and enjoyment - Working with and for everyone who wishes to enjoy and learn about Exmoor National Park

### Main functions:

- Visitor liaison
- Volunteer support
- Information provision
- Schools and colleges
- Communications
- Events and festivals
- Website for National Park users

### Key communities

- Recreational users, e.g. walkers, horse riders etc.
- Visitors
- Young people
- Non-traditional audiences
- Communities close to Exmoor

### Key outcomes from Exmoor National Park Management Plan

- A warm welcome and high quality experience for everyone who visits Exmoor seeking inspiration, tranquillity and active outdoor recreation, provided by a sustainable tourism and recreation economy in harmony with local communities and the environment, and contributing to the achievement of a carbon-neutral National Park
- Increased public awareness and enjoyment of Exmoor National Park, particularly by young people and non-traditional users, leading to greater understanding of Exmoor and its way of life and a wider appreciation of the contribution that National Parks make to quality of life

### Key services:

- **Education service** including provide support to teachers that enables them to inspire and teach children about the special qualities of Exmoor National Park and provision of a residential Outdoor Education Centre at Pinkery that delivers experiential education in an inspiring and sustainable way.
- **Talks, walks, events and activities** that offer a range of opportunities for people to experience the special qualities of the National Park

- **Presence at shows and events** in partnership where appropriate (e.g. North Devon, Exford, Dunster, Devon County, Bath and West).
- **Volunteering** opportunities throughout the National Park working closely with local partners including The National Trust, Crown Estate and South West Lakes Trust
- An **outreach service** with partners such as GEEF and the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme, that encourages enjoyment and understanding of Exmoor's special qualities by non traditional user groups.
- A network of **National Park Centres** which provide a range of information and interpretation about the National Park and how to enjoy its special qualities.
- Support for a network of **Local Information Centres** and **Local Information Points** within the National Park that supplement the work of the National Park Centres.
- **Information and interpretation** about the National Park that is responsive to user requests and reflects user needs, including through the Web Site, publications, events and other media; produce key publications: Exmoor Visitor and Park Life
- An **external relations** service including liaison with local and national media and other key partners (e.g. Exmoor Tourism Partnership, UK Association of National Park Authorities)

### **Work programme for 2011/12 – priority targets and actions**

<b>Priority 4 – Working with young people and non-traditional audiences</b>		
In 2011/12 we will:		
	Maintain contact with <b>all schools within the National Park</b> through events and activities organised by the National Park Authority [F2.1]. <b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b>	
	Support, in partnership, a minimum of 2 events organised by <b>Greater Exmoor Environmental Education network</b> [F2.1; F2.2] <b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b>	
	Support <b>Big Moorland Day</b> and other <b>education projects</b> organised with partners and Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme [F2.1; F2.2] <b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b>	
	Respond, as appropriate, to requests to support <b>day visits from schools, youth groups and organisations</b> within the Greater Exmoor area involving a minimum of 400 participants (a 20% reduction compared to 2010/11) [F2.2, F2.3] <b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b>	
	Support the final year of the <b>Mosaic BME Project</b> including preparation of an exit strategy jointly with Dartmoor National Park Authority [F3.1] <b>Lead Officer: Education Manager</b>	



	Continue to develop <b>volunteering</b> opportunities through the Exmoor Conservation Volunteer Partnership and support <b>volunteer opportunities</b> developed through the Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership [F5.3] <b>Lead Officer: Education Support Officer</b>	
	Ensure that existing <b>accessible rights of way</b> are publicised and promoted in appropriate formats, media and outlets [G3.2] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	
	Support <b>disabled users and groups</b> to access Exmoor National Park through Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme and via ROW improvements [G1.1, G3.2] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	
	Provide a <b>residential experience</b> for at least 2000 people learning about and enjoying Exmoor National Park at Pinkery Centre [F5.1] <b>Lead Officer: Pinkery Centre Manager</b>	

<b>Other priority actions:</b>		
	<b>Review</b> the support and services provided to National Park users. <b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to National Park users</b>	
	Develop and launch the <b>new Authority website</b> and provide content based on the needs of users of the National Park [F5.4] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	
	Complete <b>investment programme at Pinkery Centre</b> to make the facility fit for purpose as per agreed works identified and within agreed budgets and undertake a review of Pinkery Centre management options including proposals for 'break even' financial plan [F5.1] <b>Lead Officer: Head of Support to National Park Users</b>	
	Provide improved public conveniences at <b>County Gate</b> . <b>Lead officer: Head of Transition Team</b>	
	Maintain current information provision through a network of three <b>National Park Centres</b> at Lynmouth, Dunster and Dulverton [F5.4] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	
	Maintain current information provision, in partnership, through support for <b>Local Information Centres</b> at Porlock and Combe Martin, a minimum of 12 <b>Local Information Points</b> and liaison with Minehead VIC [F4.3, F4.4] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	
	Deliver a programme of walks and events [F5.4] <b>Lead Officer: Interpretation Manager</b>	

## D. Support Services

### Focus on:

- **Providing excellent customer service and high levels of customer satisfaction for people making contact with the Authority**
- **Achieving high standards in financial management and ICT support and**
- **the best use of Authority land and property assets**

The support services for the Authority are delivered through three support teams:

- Corporate and customer support
- Finance and ICT services
- Land and property services

### Main functions:

<b>Corporate and customer support</b>	<b>Finance and ICT services</b>	<b>Land and property services</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Centralised administration support</li> <li>• Personnel</li> <li>• Member services</li> <li>• Freedom of Information</li> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety policy</li> <li>• Equalities</li> <li>• Staff development and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial management and annual accounts</li> <li>• Internal audit</li> <li>• ICT services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset management including all land and property</li> <li>• Facilities management</li> <li>• Offices and staff accommodation</li> </ul>

### Key services - corporate and customer support:

- Respond effectively to people who **contact** the National Park Authority via telephones or by visiting Exmoor House
- Manage response to all requests made under the **Freedom of Information Act**
- Manage responses to all **complaints** made about the Authority's policies or activities
- Act as a first point of contact by person, phone, letter and e-mail for members of the public wishing to gain **planning information, clarification, planning history and application forms**.

- **Validate planning applications** in accordance with national and local checklist requirements advising applicants and agents of any further information requirements to validate the application.
- Provide an **administrative support service** to all staff including typing; organising mail-shots; creation and upkeep of databases; minute taking; project administration support; photocopying and scanning documents, and file/record keeping.
- Provide a **personnel service** including employment policies; employee relations; recruitment and selection of staff; staff learning and development; maintaining an overview of staff health, safety and welfare matters, and ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Provide **support to Authority members** including arranging all statutory meetings; ensuring that the necessary notices are displayed and that papers are in the public domain within statutory requirements; providing meeting agendas and reports of meetings, and implementing the Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- Oversee **legal services** being provided by Devon County Council, including conveyancing and property services; legal notices; preparation of agreements under s.106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 etc.
- Monitor Authority **performance** and reporting to the Resources and Performance Committee and Leadership Team progress with the annual Business Plan and Improvement Plan etc.

### **Key services - Finance and ICT services:**

- **Financial management** including Medium Term Financial Plan and Annual Budget; budgetary control; treasury management; preparation of Annual Accounts; internal audit etc.
- **Information and Communications Technology (ICT)** support including maintaining the operation and development of computer networks and telephone systems, ensuring business continuity and disaster recovery.

### **Key services - Land and property services:**

- **Property management** – optimising the performance of the Authority's estate of 120 owned and rented land and properties in delivering national park purposes
- **Facilities management** – ensuring that all Authority premises are safe, clean and adequately maintained
- Ensuring that the **Authority's environmental performance** meets high standards including reducing the Authority's energy use and emissions so that its operations are zero carbon by 2020; achieving a reduction in the consumption of paper and other consumables, and reducing official miles travelled by car.

## Work programme for 2011/12 – priority targets and actions

### Priority 10 – Increased engagement with the resident community

In 2011/12 we will seek to improve our engagement with the resident community by:

	Holding five meetings of the Parish & Consultative Forum <b>Lead Officer: Corporate Support Officer</b>	
	Holding an open meeting so that any member of the public can raise any matter relating to the National Park Authority <b>Lead Officer: Chief Executive</b>	

### Priority 11 – Customer service excellence

In 2011/12 we will:

	Incorporate service improvements based on the findings of the 2010 resident survey and customer feedback <b>Lead Officer: Corporate &amp; Customer Support Services Manager</b>	
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### Priority 5 [part] - Commencing a strategy to enable the National Park to become carbon-neutral by 2025

In 2011/12 we will:

	Achieve low-carbon operation at the Pinkery education centre <b>Lead Officer: Pinkery Centre Manager</b>	
	Continue a programme towards achieving zero-carbon status in the operation of the Authority by 2020 by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• further reductions in energy usage in Authority premises</li> <li>• assessing the potential for additional renewable energy infrastructure at Exmoor House and Exford Depot</li> <li>• increasing the use of video and tele-conferencing to reduce the need for travel to and from our offices</li> <li>• continuing a green travel plan for members and staff</li> </ul> <b>Lead Officer: Finance &amp; ICT Services Manager with Land &amp; Property Services Manager, and Business Support Officer</b>	

### Other priorities

In 2011/12 we will implement the **Improvement Plan** set out in the Authority's Annual Governance Report by:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to oversee progress in achieving the Management Plan targets and the accountability of the Authority and other lead organisations through a National Park Management Plan Implementation Board.</li> <li>• Continuing with individual Members performing the role of 'Lead Member' in respect of specified Management Plan subject areas.</li> <li>• Conducting a review of the National Park Management Plan covering the period 2012-2017.</li> </ul>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparing for a National Park Authority Performance Assessment, in common with the other English National Park Authorities, which is programmed to be carried out in October 2012.</li><li>• Responding to and implementing the outcome of the review by Defra of the governance arrangements for the National Park Authority.</li><li>• Reviewing all services and spending to ensure that the Authority operates within its reduced resources as a result of the Government's Public Spending Review covering four years to 2014/15.</li><li>• Meeting the requirements of the Localism Act expected in 2011, where applicable to National Parks.</li><li>• Reviewing Standing Orders, the Scheme of Delegation and the Financial Regulations.</li><li>• Continuing to develop customer service standards and culture.</li><li>• Monitoring and ensuring compliance through service plans for all the essential services that the Authority provides.</li></ul> <p><b>Lead officer: Business Support Officer</b></p>	
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## **E. Other activities and programmes**

The preceding sections set out the role and work programmes for the five core services of the Authority. During 2011/12 and 2012/13, the Authority will also maintain a 'Transition Team' to help ensure the effective reorganisation of the Authority as it adapts to progressively lower National Park Grant funding in future years.

### **Transition Team**

**Focus on supporting the transition to a smaller organisation focused on service delivery and with new ways of working**

#### **Functions:**

- Support the review of Authority services and activities and the transition to a smaller organisation
- A varied range of specific and time-limited activities outside of the core functions

#### **Staff complement:**

Staff will be deployed into and out of the transition team in line with the programme of organisational review over the next two years. The team is 'non-core' meaning that posts in the transition team will take up non-core roles that are time-limited and funded outside the core revenue budget. From April 2011, the Head of Corporate Support will be redeployed to head the Transition Team.

### **Partnership projects hosted by Exmoor National Park Authority**

As well as the core staff and functions set out in the previous sections, the Authority hosts a small number of projects and partnership initiatives that are making an important contribution towards achieving National Park purposes and the priorities set out in the Exmoor National Park Management Plan. The projects being hosted by the Authority in 2011/12 are set out below.

#### **Moorland Landscape Partnership**

The Exmoor Moorland Landscape Partnership Scheme is a £864,000 initiative to help people look after, enjoy and learn about the 19,000 ha of beautiful moorland of Exmoor.

The Scheme, which was launched in January 2011, has been developed by a partnership of twelve organisations: Active Exmoor, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Exmoor Society, Exmoor Trust, Field Studies Council, The National Trust, National Farmers Union Natural England, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and West Somerset Community College - with Exmoor National Park Authority acting as Lead Partner.

There are three specific Programmes in the Scheme. The first programme will help more people to access, understand and enjoy Exmoor's moorlands. This programme will help create new links with surrounding communities; improve access particularly for people

with disabilities, and provide more opportunities for schools, colleges and volunteers to be involved in visiting, studying and recording the history and wildlife of moorlands.

The second programme is aimed at providing practical support for moorland management and provides funding to employ 3 local people to act as part-time 'moorkeepers' and 3 moorland apprenticeships for local young people as well as funds to help moorland managers work together; provide a training programme, and to run a programme of moorland management demonstration events.

The third programme will help to tackle eyesores and other problems such as erosion; to fund conservation work at moorland archaeological sites, and to help Exmoor pony owners and support this iconic native breed.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is contributing £500,000 (58%). £106,000 (12%) has been secured from the Leader 4 Torridge and North Devon Action Groups and the Western Somerset Local Action Group funded by Defra and the European Commission through the Rural Development Programme for England. The National Park Authority is contributing £125,000 (15%); the Exmoor Sustainable Development Fund £55,000 (6%); the Exmoor Society £42,000 (5%); English Heritage £11,000; the Exmoor Trust and the Environment Agency each putting in £10,000, and Malcolm MacEwen Trust £3,000.

## **Carbon Neutral Exmoor**

Carbon Neutral Exmoor is supporting the transition of Exmoor into a low carbon economy and community over the next few years. The project has been set up to deliver the aspiration of achieving carbon neutrality for the National Park by 2025. It aims to support communities and land managers in developing and implementing a wide range of low carbon initiatives.

A Low Carbon Communities Officer is being employed by the National Park Authority to help deliver this project. The three-year post is being funded by the National Park Authority together with funding from the Rural Development Programme for England Local Action funding stream. The officer is working with communities within the National Park to help lower costs, develop job opportunities and reduce reliance on fossil fuels in meeting heating and electricity needs in the National Park.

## **Rural Housing Project for North Devon, West Somerset and Exmoor**

The Rural Housing Project is an independent project that aims to help local people to remain living and working in their local community. The project undertakes housing needs surveys in partnership with parish and town councils and supports local councils, registered housing providers and self-builders through the development process. This includes assessment of possible housing sites and liaison over land ownership and preparation of planning applications.

Two members of staff are employed by the Project which is hosted by Exmoor National Park Authority. Funding is provided by councils in North Devon and West Somerset and contributions from registered housing providers.

## Use of our resources

Figure 3 provides a forecast of the Authority budgets to 2014/15. This **Medium Term Financial Plan** is based on the indicative levels of National Park Grant provided by Defra in December 2010.

**Figure 3 - Medium term Financial Plan 2011/12 to 2014/15 – cash basis**

	2010/11 Revised £'000	2011/12 projected £'000	2012/13 projected £'000	2013/14 projected £'000	2014/15 projected £'000
<b>Income</b>					
<b>National Park Grant (Defra)</b>	<b>3779</b>	<b>3765</b>	<b>3551</b>	<b>3337</b>	<b>3123</b>
Sustainable Dev't Fund (SDF)	200				
- Fees - planning,	55	70	70	70	70
- Fees - car parks	31	38	38	38	38
- Interest earned	35	30	25	20	15
- Rents	75	117	122	122	127
- Other (Inc. Pinkery and NPCs)	200	193	193	193	193
- Grants	44	44	44	44	44
- Rights of Way Income	84	87	87	87	87
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4503</b>	<b>4344</b>	<b>4130</b>	<b>3911</b>	<b>3697</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b>Core budget - Pay</b>					
Current Establishment	2466	2490	2535	2606	2681
Staffing reductions achieved		-225	-229	-233	-237
Staffing reductions to be achieved		-75	-300	-422	-434
<b>Target Pay Budget</b>	<b>2466</b>	<b>2190</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Core budget Non-Pay</b>					
Indirect Staffing costs	54	54	54	54	54
Member costs	137	113	112	114	117
Premises costs	148	171	174	178	181
Travel / vehicle costs	200	185	189	192	196
Equipment	298	303	308	313	317
Contracted work (e.g. audit fees, legal services)	149	235	240	244	249
Consumables	60	56	57	58	60
Misc.	77	79	80	82	83
Contingencies	48	0	0	0	0
Toilet & car park costs	130	115	117	119	122
Savings to be achieved - Pinkery			-10	-20	-35
<b>Total non-pay budget</b>	<b>1301</b>	<b>1310</b>	<b>1321</b>	<b>1336</b>	<b>1345</b>
<b>Total Core Budget</b>	<b>3767</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>3327</b>	<b>3287</b>	<b>3355</b>
<b>Discretionary / Project Budget</b>					
Discretionary	735	592	542	442	342
Sustainable Development Fund - grants & admin	200				
<b>Total discretionary budget</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>342</b>
<b>Transitional Funding</b>	<b>-199</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>182</b>	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>4503</b>	<b>4344</b>	<b>4130</b>	<b>3911</b>	<b>3697</b>



## Core income

The planned budget for Exmoor National Park Authority in 2011/12 is £4,344,300. This figure includes National Park Grant and the more predictable core income streams but excludes any external project funding which goes through the Authority accounts as this total varies considerably from year to year and is not predictable.

National Park Grant is received from central government through the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). In 2011/12 Defra will be providing £3,764,715 for National Park purposes including provision for Sustainable Development Funds. This represents a reduction of 5.4% in cash terms (i.e. excluding the effects of inflation) on National Park Grant for 2010/11.

In addition, both Somerset and Devon County Councils provide an annual grant to the Authority towards fulfilling their duties in maintenance of the public rights of way network in the National Park. The National Park Authority spends considerably more than this sum to achieve a high standard of rights of way as an important contribution towards access and enjoyment of the National Park and support to the tourism economy.

## Core staff

Staff and accommodation costs make up the largest proportion of Authority expenditure. The core staff requirement to deliver the core services of the Authority and achieve the objectives set out in the Exmoor National Park Management Plan 2007-2012 was set at 91 in a full staff review in 2007. This included part-time and seasonal workers and was the equivalent of 79.1 full-time (FTE) posts.

During 2010, it became clear that funding to the Authority would reduce and this will require a reduction in the number of staff. Over the past year the Authority has sought to reduce overall core staff numbers by not filling vacancies when they arise and by offering voluntary redundancy. These mechanisms plus retirements and redeployment to the transition team meant that, by the end of March 2011, the number of core staff had decreased by 14 to 77 (69.4 FTE).

Although this represents a reduction in core staff capacity of 12%, this does not lead to a similar overall level of financial savings. For example, in some instances external suppliers have been commissioned to provide services where the Authority no longer employs staff directly. The costs of commissioning external services are kept as low as possible but it does reduce the cost saving that would otherwise arise from not refilling a post. Examples include legal services and historic buildings advice. The full range of outsourced services at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 is set out in figure 4.

**Figure 4 - Outsourced services at end of March 2011**

Partner organisation	Service provided
Somerset County Council	Payroll; Finance systems; Treasury Management; Personnel advice and Health & Safety; Internal audit; e-mail service and internet access; motor vehicle procurement, servicing and maintenance; agency agreement for rights of way maintenance and improvement

Devon County Council	Agency agreement for rights of way maintenance and improvement; Legal services
West Somerset Council	Toilet cleaning contract in West Somerset; Car Park pay-and-display management; Local Development Framework evidence pay-and-display management; Local Development Framework evidence
North Devon Council	Local Development Framework evidence
Taunton Deane Borough Council	Listed buildings advisory service
Lynnton & Lynmouth Town Council	Car Park pay-and-display management
Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA)	Web portal and website services
Forestry Commission	Agency for felling licences and woodland grant scheme; Ancient Woodlands project
English Heritage	Monument Management Scheme
The National Trust; Crown Estate; South West Lakes Trust	Volunteering partnership
Local shops; Combe Martin VC; Porlock VC	Local Information Points

Other opportunities to outsource services will be explored as part of the reviews being undertaken in 2011. Key criteria will be the ability to provide an acceptable service while reducing costs.

## **Members**

The National Park Authority has 22 members including 16 nominated by local county, district and parish councils and 6 'national' members appointed by the Defra Secretary of State. Resources allocated to member support in 2011/12 include a budget of £104,000 to cover member allowances, travel costs, subsistence and attendances at a National Park Authorities' workshop. This represents a decrease of £20,000 (16%) compared to 2010/11 following the decision by members to reduce the rates for travel and the rates for special responsibility allowances.

Early in 2011, Defra undertook a consultation on the governance of National Park Authorities and invited individual Authorities to submit proposals for changes in the make up of the Authority membership. A decision on the submission provided by Exmoor National Park Authority is expected from Defra during 2011.

## **Discretionary (project and programme) expenditure**

The remaining expenditure is allocated to projects and programmes, many of which are carried out in partnership with other organisations to achieve a high level of leverage on programme funds. The discretionary budget for 2011/12 is £592,000. This incorporates Sustainable Development Fund and compares to £935,000 in 2010/11.

As part of the funding settlement for 2011/12, Defra removed the 'ring-fence' around Sustainable Development Fund to enable greater flexibility by National Park Authorities. However, Defra indicated that it expects each Authority to operate a grant scheme and the Authority will be building on its good experience with Sustainable Development Fund and adopting a more open approach to the allocation of the majority of its discretionary funding in future years. This will involve the establishment of a Funding Panel of 5 members to consider applications for funding from communities and external organisations as well as internal bids. The priority for funding will be projects that achieve National Park purposes and provide community and economic benefits.

In addition to the core staff complement, at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 the Authority employed 7 staff on funded projects. Project staff posts are on commensurate terms and conditions to those of core staff except that the posts are limited to the period where specific project funding is available. In the majority of cases where the National Park Authority is the employer of project staff the posts are funded from a number of sources.

### **Reserves**

As a prudent financial management measure the Authority seeks to maintain a General Fund Balance of £300,000 which represents around 3 weeks' average expenditure. For larger projects and programmes and partnership projects funds received in advance of expenditure are allocated within specific project reserves. This approach enables the Authority to provide for larger scale projects by setting aside funding over a number of years.

### **Improving efficiency**

The Authority continuously reviews its expenditure to seek efficiencies that enable the continuation or improvement of services at reduced cost. The savings are allocated to other priorities including the projects programme. Over the three years from 2007/8 to 2009/10 efficiency savings totalling £247,000 were achieved. The Authority has set a cumulative target for a further £266,000 over the three years from 2010/11 to 2012/13.

A significant proportion of recent efficiency savings have been made by taking advantage of improvements in technology changes such as 'virtualisation' of computer systems and participating in new procurement partnerships such as the Office of Government & Commerce (OGC).

In addition, the Authority is actively exploring opportunities to deliver services more efficiently through shared services and with other organisations. Examples include items in figure 4.

### **Core budget for 2011/12**

A summary of the core budget for the financial year, 2011/12 is provided in figure 6. The figures are provided on a cash basis with an allowance for inflation of 2% between years.



# Achievements in 2010/11

Recent business plans have used the challenges identified in the Exmoor National Park Management Plan to provide the structure for the Authority's work programme. This short summary of achievements in 2010/11 follows that structure.

## Enhancing Exmoor's special qualities

### Some achievements in 2010/11:

- Support given to the **Exmoor Hill Farm Project**. This aims to increase access for Exmoor farmers to funding opportunities, particularly where funding can help improve the profitability of livestock production.
- Approximately **£6 million** was received by Exmoor farmers and landowners from **agri-environment schemes** managed by Natural England
- The new **Cutcombe Livestock Market** was completed (the Authority committed £100,000 from Sustainable Development Fund) and the provision of **12** affordable homes and space for new business premises commenced on the former market site.
- High profile promotion of Exmoor's '**dark skies**' maintained to support bid for designation as a "Dark Skies Reserve".
- Partnership with Forestry Commission attracted successful grant applications worth **£2.5 million to woodland owners** in the Exmoor area over the lifetime of the schemes.
- **100% SSSI** land in Exmoor National Park Authority ownership **in favourable or improving condition** as assessed by Natural England.
- **Heritage Lottery Fund** awarded over **£600,000** for a Landscape Partnership scheme to help conserve Exmoor's moorland. The 3 year project commenced.
- Continuation of **Knotweed** and **Rhododendron** control programmes.
- The Forestry Commission agreed to fund **£250,000** of work over 5 years to improve woodlands owned by the Authority
- Support given to Phase 2 of the **Exmoor Peatland Restoration Project**. The catchment restoration work helps to reduce erosive run-off, increases carbon storage and benefits moorland habitats.
- **Over 6,800** customer contacts by the planning team, **295** planning applications determined over the year with **68%** of minor applications (target 70%) and **84%** of other applications (target 80%) determined within 8 weeks.
- The **National Mapping Programme Project** was completed for Exmoor in July 2009 to provide the first comprehensive map of Exmoor's archaeology from air photographs. Further funding was obtained from English Heritage for a book focusing on the way farming transformed Exmoor's landscape from the medieval to the Victorian period. The text of this book was completed in January 2011 and will be published shortly.
- A **Moorland Management workshop** was held in December 2010 to explore local concerns around the management of moorland in the National Park and this has been

followed up with a range of practical measures including greater support for swaling with local land manager.

- A series of events, attended by around **450** people, were held to coincide with National Parks Week (cultural heritage) and the Festival of British Archaeology. These included open days and events at the excavations of the prehistoric enclosure at Timberscombe.
- The **£750,000** Heritage Lottery Fund supported **West Somerset Mineral Railway** Project was completed. It achieved Highly Commended in the RICS Building Conservation Awards.
- The **11<sup>th</sup> Exmoor Archaeology Forum** was held in association with the Somerset Archaeology and Natural History Society, and was supported by 130 delegates.

### **Achieving accessibility and enjoyment for all**

#### **Some achievements in 2010/11:**

- **2,622** people engaged through **Pinkery Education Centre**, including:
  - 36 Schools (1,536 participants) residential
  - 20 YHA groups (524 participants) residential
  - Camping use (124 participants)
  - Day users (156 participants)
  - Perambulation (282 participants)
- **Education Service** delivered:
  - **39** events and activities including Big Red Day and involving **813** young people from Exmoor National Park schools
  - **42** events and activities involving **1,578** young people from the greater Exmoor area
- **2,035 volunteer days** completed by the **Exmoor Conservation Volunteer Partnership**.
- The **'Mosaic' Project** has supported **21** events involving **322** people from BME communities and 'hard to reach' young people
- **157** public walks, activities and events involving **3,454** participants
- **93%** of public rights of way meeting 'ease of use' standards in survey during the year.
- **10** major works projects completed to improve PROW condition.
- **19** locations where the public right of way was reinstated on the definitive line.
- **5.1** km of paring to overhanging vegetation on PROW.
- The Authority acquired the **Pavilion** building in **Lynmouth** and commenced work with surveyors and architects to plan its transformation into the Exmoor Coast National Park Centre. Devon County Council is providing a grant of £600,000 towards the cost of this work.
- **170,924** people using **National Park Centres** over the year (180,822 in 2009/10)

### **3. Responding to climate change**

#### **Some achievements in 2010/11:**

- A report by Forum 21 was published for consultation setting out the **carbon-emissions** for Exmoor National Park and proposing measures to help achieve a carbon-neutral National Park by 2025.
- Successful implementation of Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC)'s **Low Carbon Communities Challenge** project which provided **£400,000** for community renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across the National Park.
- The Authority appointed a **Low Carbon Communities Officer** whose role includes helping communities and land managers develop projects aimed at saving energy.
- A successful **Low Carbon Festival** was held jointly with Dartmoor.
- The **Sustainable Development Fund** supported the Two Moors Festival Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show. The exhibit, which won a Gold Medal, aimed to raise awareness of the cultural qualities of the South West.

### **4. Achieving a sustainable economy and thriving community**

#### **Some achievements in 2010/11:**

- Feedback reports produced for all of the **21** local public consultations on the new **Local Development Framework (LDF)** and which were attended by **958** local residents.
- **20 new affordable homes** were granted planning permission during the year and **12 new affordable homes** at Barnes Close Mead, Dulverton received confirmation of funding from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA).
- Support for the **Exmoor Tourist Association** (as part of the Exmoor Tourism Partnership) media contract resulting in more than **60** regional and national print articles promoting Exmoor and **5** radio packages
- **87** Authority news releases issued during the year resulted in at least **229** printed articles specifically and, in partnership, at least **565** printed articles, **6** radio packages and **5** TV items.
- The National Park Authority procured goods and services worth approximately **£1,283,650** in 2010/11 with the majority (**£812,300**) spent in Devon and Somerset including **£206,000** with local businesses in the National Park and surrounding area.
- **92% of planning applicants expressed satisfaction** with the service that they had received in a survey undertaken between 1 July 2009 and 31 December 2010.
- **19** projects provided with grants from the Exmoor National Park Sustainable Development Fund.