

INTRODUCTION

Background

This Landscape Conservation Action Plan (LCAP) has been produced by Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) for the *Moor than meets the eye* Landscape Partnership. The Round 1 application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was prepared by Alison Kohler (DNPA Director of Conservation and Communities) who has continued to oversee the development of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The Landscape Partnership area lies within Dartmoor National Park, an area designated for its outstanding natural beauty and the opportunities it provides for outdoor recreation. This area is regarded to be one of the best landscapes in the country; it contains some of the most treasured habitats (and the species they support) and has some of the best preserved archaeology in western Europe. But there are risks and threats to this landscape and the communities who help maintain it. There are also opportunities to inspire a range of people to help us look after the landscape and to forge a new relationship between the landscape and people's lives.

One of the catalysts for the *Moor than meets the eye* Landscape Partnership has been the demand for investment in the landscape that has come from those living and working in the area or adjacent to it. The Dartmoor National Park Forum helped identify the risks to the natural, built and cultural heritage detailed below. They also outlined a need to engage local communities and visitors in the 'story of the landscape' (how it has evolved, the interaction of people and place) and an opportunity to harness people's interest in the landscape in its future management.

For the natural heritage there are a number of key risks, including:

- deterioration of wet valley systems which support a range of flora and fauna some of national and international significance.
- deterioration of haymeadows has continued often because of the small and fragmented nature of sites
- a decline in the lichen community in the Bovey valley which needs management to protect their long term presence
- management being in place to help the red backed shrike create a stronghold in the area since it returned to Dartmoor in 2010
- developing management proposals to protect existing and potential maternity roosts for the nationally scarce Barbastelle bat in the woodlands of the Bovey Valley

For the cultural and built heritage the key risks include:

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- the Landscape Partnership area contains 70 monuments registered at high or medium risk on the Heritage at Risk Register – more than 50 of these do not have a management plan or proposed management prescriptions in place
- the built environment is at risk from the lack of traditional skills and an awareness amongst building owners/occupiers of the need for traditional skills when maintaining/developing such buildings
- the lack of ability to realise the full potential to develop a unique example of a Dartmoor longhouse as a visitor attraction
- there is also a general threat to the landscape character from changing agricultural practices, with past problems of overgrazing now changing to undergrazing and an associated spread of gorse and bracken and a general increase in vegetation which threatens archaeological remains and important habitats and species.

Our knowledge of the area remains incomplete. We do not fully understand the 'needs of nature', the extent of archaeological remains etc and this incomplete knowledge is potentially putting heritage at risk. Despite being recognised as an internationally important area for archaeological remains, there is a lack of detailed archaeological information for certain parts of the Partnership area which may risk those landscapes being damaged or lost the Whitehorse Hill recent finds would indicate that there are areas of further archaeological significance, which are currently unknown.

Whilst a cherished and much visited landscape, many visitors (locals and tourists), and even some local communities, are unaware of the 'story of this landscape'. Most visitors are transient, and travel through admiring the scenery but unaware of the story behind it and the opportunities to explore and understand. There is a need to better explain the story of the landscape. There is also a linked opportunity to support existing local community groups to help to manage this landscape by providing training in traditional skills, co-ordinating volunteer opportunities and enabling them to tell the story of the landscape.

There is a clear need to provide training in traditional skills and promote awareness of these skills in maintenance of land or property to ensure that our heritage is conserved. There is also a threat to the landscape and heritage of the area from the decline and loss of traditional 'customs'. Our work with local history societies and volunteer groups has identified a specific need to share expertise and skills amongst, and across, community groups – to help them learn from each other.

The experience of the partners indicates that Landscape Partnership Scheme funding will address the needs and demand identified at a landscape-scale and in an integrated manner. Without funding for *Moor than meets the eye* many opportunities will be lost; the condition of the ancient landscape will continue to deteriorate, the wildlife and habitats will remain fragmented, the built environment will lose its character leading to the erosion of sense of place, and the large potential audience will remain unaware of the full 'story of the landscape'.

There is a set of clear inter-related needs and demands that underpin these projects. The needs and demands are evidenced by survey work, professional experience and the views of local stakeholders engaged during the development of the Scheme.

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The Plan has been compiled by the *Moor than meets the eye* Project Manager, who has previously worked on the Druridge Bay 'Coal and Coast' Landscape Partnership LCAP for Northumberland Wildlife Trust and the Druridge Bay Partnership. He has also managed a number of area based projects including the two Community Forests in North East England and establishing the Countryside Service for the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the forerunner of the AONB Service).

The Plan includes contributions from DNPA specialist officers including Jane Marchand (Senior Archaeologist), Keith McKay (Historic Buildings Officer), Brian Beasley (Trees and Landscapes Officer), Norman Baldock (Senior Ecologist), Andrew Watson (Head of Recreation, Access and Estates), Kerenza Townsend (Communications Officer – Projects and Design) and Andy Bailey (*Moor than meets the eye* Community and Events Officer). Contributions have also been made by Simon Lee (Natural England) and David Rickwood (Woodland Trust), with John Weir (former DNPA Head of Communications) contributing the section on the *Moor than meets the eye* area's cultural heritage.

Who participated and who was consulted

During the Stage 1 application we engaged the local community and other key stakeholders through workshops and presentations at the National Park Forum. Proposals were discussed at the annual Volunteer Co-ordinators Meeting and the annual Voluntary Wardens meeting. Key organisations (from local stakeholder groups to statutory agencies) were involved in the development of the bid through a series of workshops and meetings. We also sought the involvement of key individuals (primarily landowners) to ensure their buy in during the development of the Stage 1 application.

During the work on developing *Moor than meets the eye*, the scheme has been overseen by a Landscape Partnership Board which has been advised by a Local Stakeholders Group. The Board comprises representatives of delivery partners, line managers, specialist advisors and representatives of the farming community, and the Local Stakeholders group has been made up of 15 members with representation from at least 8 representing local community interests and at least 8 representing user or other interests.

Landscape Partnership Board

Kevin Bishop	Chief Executive (National Park Officer, DNPA)
David Lloyd	Member, DNPA
Alison Kohler	Director of Conservation and Communities, DNPA
Layland Branfield	Deputy Chairman, Dartmoor Commoners Council
Andy Bradford	Dartmoor Farmers Association
Stella West-Harling	Vice Chair, Dartmoor Partnership
James Paxman	Chief Executive, Dartmoor Preservation Association
Ian James	Principal Engineer, Devon County Council

Tom Stratton
Ruth Garner

Land Agent, Duchy of Cornwall
Principal Advisor Heritage at Risk,
English Heritage

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Phil Morton
Simon Lee
Peter Exley
James Platts
David Rickwood

Head of Recreation and Public Affairs, West
England District, Forestry Commission
Senior Reserves Manager, Natural England
Public Affairs Manager, RSPB
Head of Resource Planning, South West
Lakes Trust
Site Manager (Devon), Woodland Trust

Local Stakeholders Group

Local Communities

Geoffrey Fenton
Hazel Jones
Peter F Mason
Sylvia Phillips
Margaret Rogers
Julian Tope
John Willis

User/Interest Groups

Anne Came
George Coles
Sue Eberle
Tom Greeves
Julia Lewis
Nigel Rendle
Patrick Simpson
Brendan Stone

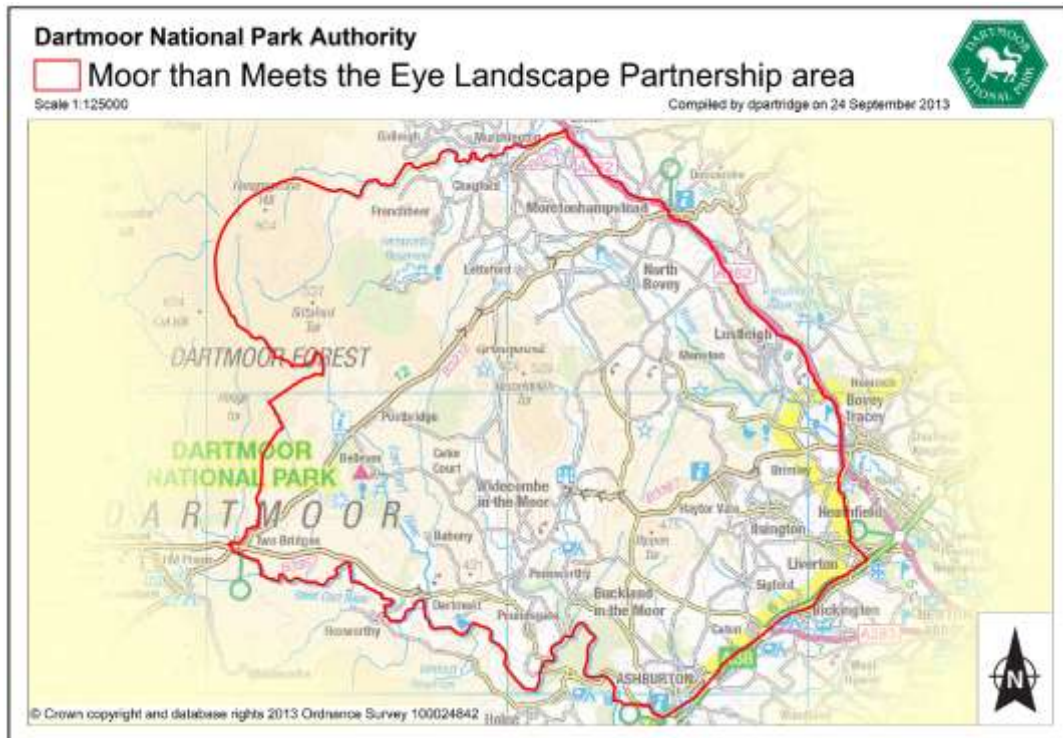
Discussions have taken place with a range of landowners and interest groups in and around the area, and there have been a series of Open meetings taking in Moretonhampstead, Postbridge, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Lustleigh, Leusdon and Ashburton. Natural England and the Woodland Trust have held separate consultations for project proposals for the East Dartmoor National nature Reserve.

The scope of the plan, including the extent of the Landscape Partnership area

The *Moor than meets the eye* Landscape Partnership area is the south east corner of Dartmoor National Park, located in Devon, south west England. The area is bounded by significant geographical features (the A38 at its southern boundary, the River Dart on its western boundary, the River Teign on its northern boundary and the A382 Bovey Tracey to Chagford road on its eastern boundary). Plymouth is 35 miles west and Exeter and the M5 north 20 miles east. The towns of Plymouth, Exeter, Torbay, Newton Abbot, Teignmouth, Totnes, Tavistock and Okehampton and a population of over 675,000 people are within 30 minutes drive from the centre of the area.

The *Moor than meets the eye* area is 280 square km (27,722 hectares) and reflects the interrelationship of open moorland blocks, valley systems and enclosed land that reflects the landscape integrity of the area and its interrelation with the people who have lived and worked here for over 4,000 years. It is one that local people and visitors can relate to and support; it exemplifies all the landscape qualities associated with the area: moorland and tors, the moorland edge with its characteristic pattern of scattered dwellings, stone walls and small towns, and the transition into steep sided river valleys flowing off the moor.

You can literally walk through time in this area: passing examples of Bronze Age and industrial remains on the high moorland, through the medieval landscape of the moorland edge and down the valleys to the age of the railway which brought Victorian tourists to the area. The routeways that link the high moor to the valleys are often ancient ceremonial routes or latterly routes to markets. The link between high moor and the valleys is intrinsic and important in telling the story of the landscape, how it evolved and how it is managed.



Links to other planning work, in particular the Landscape Character Assessment

The Landscape Conservation Action Plan has used the *Landscape Character Assessment for Dartmoor*, produced in 2010 by Land Use Consultants for the Dartmoor National Park Authority, as the basis for understanding the landscape of the area. This identifies Landscape Character Types and for each of these identifies its key characteristics, outlines the valued attributes, describes its current landscape condition, lists potential forces for change and details a strategy for management. An important decision in selecting the area for *Moor than meets the eye* was to include a full range of these to show the varied landscapes of the National Park, and these include:

- Unsettled High Upland Moorland
- Upland Moorland with Tors
- Upland River Valleys
- Moorland Edge Slopes
- Upper Farmed and Wooded Slopes
- Lowland Plain

Development work for *Moor than meets the eye* has taken place during the period when the Dartmoor National Park Management Plan (*'Your Dartmoor': Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2014 – 2019*) was also being produced and so there are a number of links between the two with *Moor than meets the eye* being identified as a potential delivery vehicle for 26 of the 162 actions in the Management Plan. Other relevant DNPA documents and plans are listed below.

Scheme Description

The *Moor than meets the eye* Landscape Partnership will help people:

- learn about and learn from the past
- understand, appreciate and enjoy the cultural and natural environment now
- develop projects and skills to sustain the area's heritage for future generations.

The vision for *Moor than meets the eye* is:

"Our vision is for the unique historic landscape of south east Dartmoor to be recognised as a truly special place: one where wildlife thrives, heritage is conserved and appreciated, and people draw inspiration and value from the landscape, today and for future generations.

It is an area where local residents, businesses, farmers, visitors and agencies work together to share, understand and appreciate the importance of this landscape and together have the skills and opportunities to contribute to its future."

This is also an opportunity to look at ways of developing innovative projects that can be used elsewhere in Dartmoor National Park.

The Landscape Partnership Scheme takes the form of a book with seven chapters. These come together to tell a compelling story of an integrated living landscape - where people understand, enjoy, contribute to and therefore value the rich mosaic of our natural and built heritage.

The book "*Moor than meets the eye - the story of people and landscape over 4,000 years on Dartmoor*" has the following chapters:

1. Unveiling and conserving the Bronze Age archaeology of the high moor and forests
2. Learning about, conserving and sharing medieval Dartmoor and valuing local heritage
3. Discovering lost industrial landscapes
4. Moving in the footsteps of the Victorians
5. Making important connections - across the landscape and across generations
6. Exploring Dartmoor's Treasures
7. The Future - sustaining heritage businesses and moor skills.

This vision will be achieved through the Landscape Partnership Scheme's main objectives of:

- To conserve the unique historic landscape and its natural habitats which tell the story of human influence over thousands of years.
- To significantly enhance physical and intellectual access to the heritage landscape for everyone to enjoy.
- To develop new ways to increase community involvement and understanding of the historic and natural landscape and improve the ability of local people to share, celebrate and enjoy their local landscape.
- To provide local communities, businesses, land managers, guides and local property owners with enhanced skills, confidence and enthusiasm to contribute to the conservation of our built and natural heritage.
- To sustain a living and working landscape by encouraging and facilitating business opportunities that capture the value of the landscape.
- To develop a well trained and co-ordinated volunteer workforce to help conserve and interpret the area's heritage both now and in future years.

Gaps in the plan, including any limitations etc.

As one of the members of the Local Stakeholders Group put it 'Moor than meets the eye has certainly stirred up a great deal of interest'. The level of funding available through the Landscape Partnership Grant Scheme inevitably, and rightly, has generated ideas and enthusiasm, especially where the contributions of communities to development of projects is important. Some of these proposals cannot always be included in the Scheme either because the budget and grant can only be spread so far or because proposals fall outside HLF's guidance for Landscape Partnership Schemes.

This doesn't mean that those proposals are not without merit, and therefore the Landscape Partnership needs to support those whose projects fall outside of the Scheme in seeking ways in which those projects can be delivered to meet the criteria of other funders, or in identifying solutions that may require agreement rather than funding.

Important documents that support the Plan

The following documents support the Plan:

Dartmoor Biodiversity Partnership
Dartmoor National Park Authority

The State of Dartmoor's Key Wildlife 2011
Dartmoor National Park Management Plan
2007 – 2012
Local Development Framework: Core
Strategy Development Plan Document 2006
– 2026
Recreation and Access Strategy for
Dartmoor 2011 – 2017
Development Management and Delivery
Development Plan Document (2013)
'Your Dartmoor': Dartmoor National Park
Management Plan 2014 – 2019
Fernworthy Reservoir Management Plan
2010 - 2014

South West Lakes Trust

The following reports have been produced during the development of *Moor than meets the eye*:

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Resources4Change	<i>Moor than meets the eye</i> Audience Development Plan for Dartmoor National Park Authority
Power Marketing Imagemakers	<i>Moor than meets the eye</i> Skills Audit Report Interpretation Strategy – <i>Moor than meets the eye</i> Landscape Partnership
Wildlife Woodlands Ltd	Bellever and Postbridge Landscape and Access Plan.
Kate Measures Consulting	<i>Moor than meets the eye</i> : East Dartmoor NNR including Bovey Valley Woods – project consultation and plan
South-West Landscape Investigations	The Archaeology of Fernworthy Forest, Dartmoor, Devon

In addition to these, Dartmoor National Park Authority has also received the following reports which support the development activity for *Moor than meets the eye*:

Fiona Fyfe Associates	Historic Environment Character Assessment
Keystone Historic Buildings Consultants	Higher Uppacott, Widecombe-in-the-Moor: A Conservation Plan for the Dartmoor National Park Authority
Van der Steen Hall Architects	Higher Uppacott: Report on Condition