



Dorset National Landscape

Dorset National Landscape Partnership
Hosted by Dorset Council
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Dorset National Landscape Board Meeting, 10.00am, Thur 28th Nov 2024

**Dorchester Cricket Club Pavilion, Sawmills Lane (off Weymouth Avenue)
DT1 2RZ**

The meeting will start at 10.00 am sharp; the meeting room will be open from 0945. If you are unable to attend it would be helpful if you could send a briefed representative or an update. Please send apologies to Kate Townsend on kate.townsend@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	TITLE	Purpose
1000	-	Chairman's welcome, introduction & apologies	
1005	-	Minutes of the last meeting	
1010	-	Introduction to the National Landscape, Partnership & Board for new members	Info
1020	1	Delivering the National Landscape Management Plan - team activity update featuring projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature Buddies Nature Calling 	Info
1100	2	Proposal to bid for funds: Landscape Recovery	Decision
1110	3	Proposal to bid for funds: Landscape Connections	Decision
1120		Break	
1140	4	Forestry England's Wild Core Areas	Info
1200	5	Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Info
1220	6	2025-2030 National Landscape Management Plan	Info
1230	7	Budget headlines for '25-'26	Decision
1240	-	Partners' 2-minute updates	
	-	Any other business	
1300	-	End of meeting	

APPENDIX 1: further team activity detail

Proposed dates of next meetings:

	Spring	Winter (TBC)
National Landscape Steering Group	24 th April 2025	21 st October 2025
National Landscape Partnership Board	22 nd May 2025	20 th November 2025

NB the Steering Group is a small group that sets the agenda for the Board. If you wish to have items added to the agenda for the Board, please send suggestions to [Tom Munro](#) or the [Chairman](#) before the date of the Steering Group meeting, so they may be considered for timetabling on the Board agenda.

Minutes of the Dorset National Landscape Partnership Board Meeting, 16th May 2024 (Cricket Club Pavilion, Weymouth Avenue, Dorchester)

Board attendance:

Organisation	Representative	Status	2024-05
Independent chair	Dr Phil Sterling	Voting member	Present
Council for the Protection of Rural England	Dr Guy Dickinson	Voting member	Present
Country Land and Business Association	Will Bond	Voting member	Present
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Peter Bowyer	Voting member	Apologies
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Chris Turner	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Piers Brown	Voting member	Apologies
Dorset Council	Cllr Roland Tarr	Voting member	Present
Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership	Luke Rake	Voting member	Present
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Will Bond	Voting member	Present
Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society	Jeremy Pope	Voting member	Apologies
Environment Agency	Keith Calder	Voting member	Apologies
Forestry Commission	Roly Boughton	Voting member	Apologies
Historic England	Ross Simmonds	Voting member	Apologies
Historic England	Sasha Chapman	Voting member	Present (virtual)
National Farmers' Union	Tim Gelfs	Voting member	Apologies
Natural England	Emma Tomlin	Voting member	Apologies
Natural England	Tania Carvisiglia	Voting member	
The National Trust	Hannah Jefferson	Voting member	Present
Dorset Race Equalities Council	Vacant	Voting member	
Jurassic Coast Trust	Lucy Culkin	Attending member	Present
Dorset Wildlife Trust	Imogen Davenport	Attending member	Present
Dorset Council	Giles Nicholson	Supporting Officer	Present
Dorset Council	Hilary Jordan	Supporting Officer	
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Maria Clarke	Supporting Officer	Apologies
Country Land and Business Association	Mark Burton	Supporting Officer	Apologies
National Farmers' Union	Gemma Harvey	Supporting Officer	Present
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Neil Wedge	Supporting Officer	
LAF	Janet Davis	Supporting Officer	Present

Dorset National Landscape Team: Tom Munro (Manager), Sally King (Visitor, Tourism & Access Manager), Julie Hammon (Stepping into Nature), Caroline Richards (Dorset Food & Drink), Sue Dampney (Culture, Communications & Learning Officer) Ian Rees (Countryside Officer), Jill Hearing (Project Officer), Kate Townsend (Project Support Officer), Richard Brown (Planning Officer).

Guests: Dr Sam Rose (West Dorset Wilding), Roger Bond (Normtec)

Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

Keith Calder will be retiring in June and no longer sitting on the Board, but the EA will appoint a new representative in due course. Nick Squirrell attended on behalf of Emma Tomlin as Representative of Natural England.

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held in Nov. 2023 were agreed as a true record.

Cllr Roland Tarr reported that following the recent local elections this would be his last meeting. His replacement will be Cllr Ben Wilson. The Chair thanked him for his valuable contributions to the Board.

Post-election update: Dorset Council has appointed the following members to the Board: Cllr Nick Ireland (Council Leader, lead member for the Environment & Crossways ward), Cllr Ben Wilson (South East Purbeck ward) and Cllr Jane Somper (Beacon ward).

1. Dr Sam Rose: Brit Catchment Recovery Project

Link to presentation [here](#)

[West Dorset Wilding](#) is a landowner initiated and led charity focussing on the Brit Catchment area working to expand natural process led restoration, regenerative agriculture and reconnection with nature for wellbeing. The major landholdings involved are the Mapperton Estate, Crutchley Estate and Symondsburry Estate. To date successful projects include: a beaver wild release consultation, dam capacity mapping and feasibility studies, annual breeding bird surveys and tree, hedgerow and woodland baseline mapping for carbon.

These studies fed into the group's successful Local Recovery Partnership bid. [The Brit Catchment Recovery Project](#) is one of 34 projects awarded Defra funding in this round. Following a summer of intensive initial consultation with farmers & landowners in the catchment, 53 farmers have signed up to the initial 2-year project development stage (PDS) currently in progress. This is in preparation for the implementation stage, starting in April 2026 lasting for 20/30 plus yrs. It's an ambitious project, covering 11,500 ha with broad aims to improve biodiversity, increase carbon capture, improve water quality, maintain food production, improve flood management and to bring socio-eco. benefits to the area. A large set of supporting actions has been developed to achieve these aims including beaver & vole release, deer management, 'Flying pig' club, ponds, wetland creation. A new staff team has been set up to support the work. Sam can be contacted [via email](#) with any queries.

Comments:

- a. CllrRTarr: I think a long-term plan is feasible based on previous access projects I've set up. Although we're moving into to a new period of government, at Dorset Council the budget is fixed for 12 months which can't be altered so don't be disappointed if grant structure can't change. SRose: Access is a sensitive issue, but positive areas in the catchment such as a cycle way through Mapperton. We'll work with landowners on this in the plan.
- b. GNicholson: There's some quick wins you could do. SRose: I'll link in with you.
- c. CllrRTarr: I'd like to see tourists arriving by sustainable travel means.
- d. NSquirrell: Want to encourage landowners to be accessible and welcome tourists, and harness benefit by selling local products from the farm to them etc. SRose: we have to provide some match to government funding with green finance. Wellness and access to the countryside should be included in the figures.

2. Delivering the Management Plan

TM presented the Dorset National Landscape team delivery report. He also asked the board to consider three additional recommendations in addition to those in the circulated board papers in support of new projects:

- Brit Catchment Natural Flood Management,
- Nature Buddies
- For a new bid to the 3rd round of funding for Landscape Recovery when it opens.

a. Ian Rees: Natural Flood Management Programme

Link to presentation [here](#)

Ian explained that pre-Landscape Recovery Bid we were working with West Dorset Wilding (WDW) and Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) on flood defence issues with the Environment Agency, employing a consultant geomorphologist to do some data capture, ground truthing, and analysis.

This project aims to reduce flood risk in the Brit Catchment, particular around the Bridport area at the bottom of the catchment, caused by high intensity rainfall from storms and high surface flow from land use. The geomorphologist identified some specific fields deemed to be at high risk and looked at historical channel changes. This information coupled with other data identified 33 locations, working with 17 landowners, where issues could be addressed. Solutions include leaky dams to slow the water and trap

sediment and more area-based schemes with changes to land use, for example sediment ponds and flood plain reconnection at key locations.

On the back of this work, the group put in an Expression of Interest to the Environment Agency's Natural Flood Management Programme which was successful. Great news for the team, who now have until September to finalise details and install monitoring measures to prove the effectiveness of the measures. Installation will be from September to March 2027. It is a partnership approach with WDW, DWT and Citizen Scientists. They also intend to use the project as a demonstration to other farmers. The value of scheme: delivery of measures is £280,000 for 3 years, £215,000 for monitoring and evaluation and £127,000 for staff time, design work, etc. Total investment £673,000.

Ian asked for Partnership Board support for the development and delivery of this project in order to formalise the process with Dorset Council.

Comments:

- a. HJefferson: Any complexity over double funding for the 2 projects? IRees: We are in contact with NE / Defra. TMunro: Different elements will show as different funding streams. IRees: that will be behind the scenes, we will present it as one project so as not to confuse those involved.
- b. LRake: Don't presume government departments talk to each other! Many stackable benefits from this project.
- c. NSquirrel: Countryside Stewardship rates have increased, important that landowners are aware of the range of options available to them. IRees: This is a capital project but for long term maintenance this will come in. Plan to set up a steering group which could include NE.
- d. GHarvey: important to have funding in place for landowners to implement the change after the work of this project has been undertaken. IRees: Long term maintenance is an important consideration; this is where Landscape Recovery come in too.
- e. CllrCTurner: Shouldn't water companies be financing such projects? TMunro: There are national conversations being had that need to be followed up with some local opportunities.

b. Roger Bond: Fingerpost Project

Link to presentation [here](#).

This project started 10 years ago to assist with the restoration of traditional fingerposts which had fallen into disrepair across the county. In this time over 350 restorations have taken place. Roger and his small band of volunteers are able to advise and assist local parish councils on restoration works. Funding coming from local funds / donations, assisted by contributions towards some materials from the Dorset National Landscape team and fingerposts grants from Dorset CPRE. Works are carried out using traditional, durable materials. Long term maintenance is down to the local parish. These iconic posts are viewed with much local pride and fondness. Link to the [Dorset Fingerpost Project](#).

Comments:

- a. Cllr CTurner: Who keeps the signs cleaned and where do you get your letters? RBond: we advise those involved to clean them and there are some 'unknown' helpers too! Letters are from Coles Casting.
- b. NSquirrel: Are the signs mapped? RBond: Yes, there is a database with grid references. NS: Could they be added to Dorset Explorer?
- c. GNicholson: It would be easy to get it added to Dorset Explorer. Contact the GIS team.
- d. Cllr RTarr: the refurbished sign near Culliford Tree looks great and locals are proud of it. Could additional information be added to a post eg. National Cycle Routes? RBond: Potentially, if the Parish Council request it.
- e. JDavis: What is the significance of a red post? RBond: I think it marks a staging post for prisoners.

In addition, Tom reported the good news that this week The Stepping into Nature team bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund has been successful. They have been awarded funding for an additional 2 years to continue their project works, which includes new work on Nature Buddies. He asked for the Partnership Board's support for the project so it can be ratified by Dorset Council.

RESOLUTION:

The Board acknowledges significant progress towards delivering the Management Plan. The Board also supports the team to develop and deliver:

- **Brit Catchment Natural Flood Management,**
- **Nature Buddies**
- **a new bid to the 3rd round of funding for Landscape Recovery (when it opens).**

3. Partnership accounts 2023-24

TM presented the paper.

Comments:

- a. P Sterling: These accounts demonstrate excellent value for money.

The Board commended the funding leverage demonstrated by these accounts.

4. Sue Dampney: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion statement update

Sue reported that formalising a new EDI framework is in progress, aligning with the Management Plan review and will include creating a strong EDI steering group. Involving diverse voices in decision making progresses across the National Landscape family as well as through our local project work, in particular Flavours, Nature Buddies and Nature Calling projects. The team have been actively targeting underrepresented groups through these projects, as well as projects we support through the Access for All fund, the Sustainable Development Fund and FIPL Young Explorers. We're also supporting and learning from Purbeck National Trust's work with young people. Comms work is rolling out with a National welcome campaign in the pipeline along with plans internally to make our website more accessible. The team have benefitted from some nationally supported EDI training recently.

5. Terms of Reference update

TM presented the paper. He explained that following the rebrand it is necessary to update the Terms of Reference by amending all references to National Landscape to Dorset National Landscape. Along with a couple other minor edits to clarify the selection of representatives from Dorset Council and DAPTC.

RESOLUTION:

The Board approves the edits to the Terms of Reference.

6. Interim Management Plan

TM presented the paper. Due to the delayed Management Plan review he explained that Lord Benyan had advised National Landscapes to draw-up an Interim Management Plan. The plan was presented to the board for approval, to become adopted primarily by Dorset Council, to ensure the policies in the existing Management Plan (2019-2024) remain valid.

Comments:

- a) IDavenport: Suggested the phrase 'nature recovery' be included in the vision under Mission?
- b) NSquirrel: Suggested to add in a bullet point 'to fund the right mitigation measures'

RESOLUTION:

The Board approves the Interim Management Plan, subject to the suggested additions and recommends its adoption by relevant partners.

7. Management Plan Review

TM presented the paper. A May 2025 Partnership board meeting will take place as usual, but an extraordinary meeting of the Board will be called late September 2025 to review the draft Management Plan. Meantime Tom will work with the Steering Group (DC, NE, Dr Phil Sterling) to establish a review group for the Management Plan process.

Comments:

- a) HJefferson: the Team are welcome to hold some Talking Tent consultation events at National Trust sites.

RESOLUTION:

The Board approves the proposed intention to review the Management Plan, the timeline for review and the broad outline of the process.

8. Legislation update: LUR Act amendments to the CROW Act (Richard Brown)

Richard explained that as of 26th December 2023, any relevant authority (as per CROW Act) discharging a function which affects a Protected Landscape must 'seek to further the purposes of the designated area'. In Dorset National Landscape the focus being on 'conserving and enhancing natural beauty'. This is more focused and pro-active than former duty to 'have regard' to the purpose. The official guidance has not yet been published by Defra, but a draft had been circulated which outlined ideas and potential approaches, for example seeking mitigation and enhancement measures. The draft guidance noted that this should be an active duty and that reasonable steps must be taken to explore how decisions and actions can both avoid harm to the National Landscape and go beyond this to achieve gains. Once Defra has finalised the new guidance it will be circulated to the Board and to those parties it affects the most e.g. local planning authority, Town and Parish Councils.

Comments:

- a. CllrRTarr: Byway approval at Winterborne Abbas disrupting quiet enjoyment of Countryside, would that count under this?
- b. GNicholson: A Byway is a legal process, based on evidence, hence historical considerations important. RB: In making any order the Council must take into consideration this new order, but we don't know specifically about using it in such a context as yet. GN: Byways do give a lot of people who don't have access to the countryside that access.
- c. HJefferson: Would this give the Team more access to Biodiversity Net Gain development money?
- d. CllrCTurner: In Beaminster call to change a footpath into a BOAT. We need more clarity on what the situation is to be assured that designation adhered to. GN: Clear info on Dorset Explorer but a request can be submitted to get it changed. CllrRTarr: This is wrong and should be changed.
- e. TMunro: Going forward there will be greater evidence in documenting the decision-making process.
- f. NSquirrell: NE has rushed out some guidance to answer queries and are also referring them to the National Landscape Management Plan. This puts weight behind the National Landscape teams and advisors making case law and gives a stronger voice from the National Landscape teams themselves.

Partners' 90 second updates

NSquirrell: Wytch farm project is an area of review one of 12 national projects cited as best practice.

HJefferson: Welcomed NT Director General for a visit, showing her Dorset NT sites and exchange information. A new 10 yr. strategy coming in January. Cow & calf safety in particular on hillforts as bare land tenancies. The impact of erosion by storms is very noticeable and taking up more Trust time.

CllrCTurner: New council in Beaminster, hoping to progress better landscape use and better planning. Will be taking up issue of new housing with DC as concerned by the potential impact of commuters and lack of local facilities.

GDickinson: 2 Battery Energy Storage System applications have been submitted near Chickerell. One was thrown out but the other still ongoing. They are very dangerous in themselves (fire risk) and may encourage more solar panel applications too.

LRake: Funding for LEP ceased last month. Main focus is now careers and development. Wessex Internet have won a major government contract for the installation of superfast broadband focused in south and west Dorset which may impact on duties to improve / enhance the National Landscape. Home working may also increase as a result.

GNicholson: Following recent elections DC now have a Lib Dem majority. Cllr John Andrews will replace Cllr Ray Bryan for the Environment portfolio [*update: Cllr Andrews is lead member for Place Services, with Cllr Ireland lead member for Environment*]. New leader is Cllr Nick Ireland. More of an emphasis on west Dorset, bought forward Net 0 target for DC to 2035, and Dorset as a whole 2045 so believe environment and climate focus, positive for NL team and the value for money you bring. Be aware that DC has a budget

pressure. ROWIP will be published later this year. Cut & collect on verges continues this year and aiming to massively increase both wildlife value and have a positive effect on climate change.

CllrRTarr: New councillors for partnership board are Cllr Nick Ireland, Council Leader and Cllr Ben Wilson from South East Purbeck.

IDavenport: Alongside NE we have purchased land at [Lyscombe](#) and will be managing the site. Launch last week. Successful in bid to Defra Species Survival Fund which will fund work at Lyscombe and 17 other sites to increase species biomass. Currently recruiting for 2 new roles – 1 at Wild Woodbury and another at Lyscombe. Peat project going well and is in second year, funded by Defra. Supporting DC with Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

JDavis: Advisory remit to DC/BCP. Working on Sustainable Transport Plan, commenting on felling applications. Levelling Up and Regeneration Act duty means we are restricted, but could we impose traffic regulations as a solution? Looking forward to ROWIP publication.

WBond: Transition funding from EU to UK is really hitting home now and is an incentive for farmers to re-think how managing farms. Some new schemes from government but all slightly disjointed and little cohesion on the income side. Flooding has had an impact on farmers, and if this happens again could be a breaking point for some who need to generate income as opposed to capital projects.

GHarvey: Recent farmer survey shows national confidence at lowest level and extreme weather and payments are a concern. In arable section it's been a difficult drilling season, less crops in ground and more land given over to sustainable farming incentive (ELMS). Likely to see an increase in sign-ups to this scheme over the coming year. Expecting more option announcements in June, alongside Countryside Stewardship. Poole Harbour nutrient management scheme (75% of farmers) – but issues with the data collection tool. EA have removed some mitigation measures and as a result there's been an increase in leaching figures this year. Farmers dissatisfied and EA have come under ministerial scrutiny. Agreement to improve the tool put in place to increase confidence amongst farmers and hopefully we will see those involved remaining in the scheme. Disseminating livestock worrying messages and will share details.

LCulkin: 6-yr periodic report submitted to UNESCO. Shocking how site has destabilised. In light of this 2 new projects underway. The first is a protected site strategy; mapping changes and predicting future change. The results of which will form a new plan around supplementary planning guidance eg. Ammonite pavement in Lyme. The second is an EA mitigation project around sea defences. Sidmouth is a case study – sea defences being put in and will report on how we learn from that. Have employed a new geologist. On the back of these new projects we have proposed a delay to the upcoming Management Plan review. Plans for a visitor centre and museum progressing well. Weymouth location and decision will be made soon on this.

SChapman: (written report) Provided statutory advice and grant funding for several FiPL schemes in the National Landscape; Holditch Tower, Winterbourne Clenston Barn, Culliford Tree Barrow. A Countryside Stewardship Scheme at Came Down is underway which includes the removal of trees, geophysical survey and meshing of the barrows to protect them from the badgers that are very much in occupation of one of the group. The cleared areas will then be managed as glade within the wider woodland to protect the archaeology and improve habitat and ecological diversity. There are also lots of previously unrecorded WWII structures in the woods that are being recorded as part of the project to help prevent accidental damage. We are supporting Dorset Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dorset with regards to Heritage Crime reporting. At Arne Moors we have provided advice to the Environment Agency regarding impact to the historic environment. As a statutory consultee we have been providing input into the new Shoreline Management Plans. We are a consultee with regards to Countryside Stewardship applications where there are heritage assets and will be providing advice on the ELMS schemes, Sustainable Farming Incentive as well as Landscape Recovery. All alongside our Development Advice with regards to the planning system in Dorset.

9. Any other business

None

ITEM 1: DELIVERING THE DORSET NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN: MID-YEAR REPORT

ITEM FOR	Information	REPORT BY	Dorset National Landscape team
SUMMARY	The National Landscape team is leading, coordinating, promoting and supporting delivery of the actions and intent of the National Landscape Management Plan as the central part of its core duties and through specific projects.		
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Delivery based on agreed budget and business plan.		
RECOMMENDATION	The Board approves and notes the progress made towards delivering the Management Plan 2019-2024		

This new presentation format is hopefully more digestible. Further detail is appended to the rear of these papers.

1.1. NATURE

The National Landscape’s wealth of wildlife is one of the outstanding qualities that underpin its designation, including the extent and diversity of semi-natural habitats and the wide array of species. The UK’s most diverse grid square (vascular plants and mammals) is in the Dorset National Landscape to the south and west of Wareham.

The National Landscape team leads strategic nature-focused partnerships in Wild Purbeck and the Dorset Downs and Vales Conservation Forum, and contributes to many others (SNCI Forum, Jurassic Coast Nature Recovery Network, Dorset Local Nature Recovery group, Dorset Local Nature Partnership, etc).

The National Landscape Partnership also directs significant funding towards nature outcomes through Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL), the Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Enhancement Fund and other ad hoc funding streams.



a. PURBECK HEATHS 'SUPER' NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE (NNR)

Dorset National Landscape Team Manager chairs the Purbeck Heaths NNR Steering Group and the Wilder Grazing Unit Working Group. These groups bring together the landowning bodies to oversee and implement delivery of the NNR Management Plan and the specific objectives of the wilder grazing unit. A key principle across the heaths is to reinstate natural processes at this landscape scale, alongside enhancing people's engagement and opportunities to connect with nature. The following working groups report to the steering group:

- People & Engagement, developing a joint visitor management strategy and an ambitious engagement strategy
- Monitoring & Research, including the development and support of the independent Purbeck Natural History Forum which enables and supports ecological monitoring volunteering across the seven land holdings making up the NNR and into the surrounding area.

Highlights:

- Planned for March-April 2024 is a large-scale drone survey of deer to inform the NNR's deer management plan and a wider deer management strategy.
- Plans are developing to extend the [Dorset Open Spaces Public Spaces Protection Order](#) to include the Purbeck Heaths NNR and many more high nature value heathland sites vulnerable to wildfire

The partners' commitment to the restoration of natural processes at scale, and the innovations in monitoring and research are seen as a national exemplar. The Purbeck Heaths NNR is a frequently visited site by others seeking to adopt similar approaches in other parts of the country.

b. WEST DORSET RIVERS & COASTAL STREAMS

The Dorset National Landscape is the catchment host for the [West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams](#) operational catchment, and supports action to improve the condition of our rivers and streams, guided by issues appraisals that are updated every five years.

Two communities have been particularly motivated to improve their rivers: those along the River Asker, and those along the River Char, and we are expanding our efforts to the communities along the Swan Brook too, in partnership with Swanage Town Council, Planet Purbeck, and the National Trust. Through partnership working with [Dorset Wild Rivers](#), we have supported landowner advice, improved land management, habitat management, river restoration, and invasive species control. We also support the community-led 'Clean Rivers of West Dorset' group, which is engaging with the new MP for the area, Edward Morello.

A focus over the past year has been on the wider River Brit Catchment, which includes the Simene, Mangerton and Asker as well as the Brit. We have led a successful bid to the Environment Agency for a Natural Flood Management Project. At the same time, West Dorset Wilding have successfully secured funding from Defra for the Brit Catchment Recovery Project. We are leading on citizen science initiatives in Bridport and have trained a cohort of volunteers to better understand the threats facing the rivers. In supporting these citizens, we are also working on the establishment of a community laboratory.

Highlights:

- We have been successful with gaining approval for Phase 2 of the Brit Catchment Natural Flood Management project from the Environment Agency. This means we now have full approval for the project to proceed. Work over the past six months has been focussed on:
 - Establishing a project steering group
 - Formally securing landowner permission
 - Appointing monitoring experts to deliver the requirements of the Environment Agency. We have appointed Hydro-International to do the hydrometric monitoring and Exeter University to undertake data analysis.
 - Setting up a volunteering network to undertake water quality and habitat assessments. 17 have signed up so far.

- We are working with Pineapple Estate to establish a community laboratory for river testing. This will be up and running by March 2025.
- We are a partner in the Swanage Streams Partnership, which is taking a community-led approach to tackling issues on the Swan Brook and other local streams. An issues appraisal has been written and the launched at an event on the 26th November. Other partners are Planet Purbeck, National Trust, and Swanage Town Council.
- We continue to work with Dr Peter Stone and the Environment Agency to better understand the impact and movement of sediment within the Brit catchment, with the aim of reducing the management burden on Bridport's flood defences.
- With Blackdown Hills National Landscape and East Devon National Landscape, we have been successful with a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop a project focussed on improving the health of the River Axe, and engaging communities about the river's special qualities. The project is called 'Rivers Run Through Us'. The development grant is for £250,000, and upon successful completion will unlock a further £1.2M. The development phase is two years.

"We know how important it is to protect our natural heritage and we are pleased to support this project that will engage local communities with the restoration of the River Axe. It's through initiatives like this that we can make a real difference, by helping people better understand, and care for, the heritage on their doorstep. We look forward to working with the project team to progress their plans to apply for a full grant at a later date."

Stuart McLeod, Director England - London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund

www.dorset-nl.org.uk/project/rivers

c. WYTCH FARM LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS ENHANCEMENT FUND

The Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Enhancement Fund was established through a section 106 agreement associated with a planning application to extend the working life of the Wytch Farm oilfield by a further 20 years, the fund opened in January 2018. Perenco, the oilfield operator, provided a sum of £1.7 million for landscape, biodiversity, and sustainable transport projects to enhance the landscape. Since then, there have been a total of 38 successful project applications, 29 of these have been completed and there are 9 currently in progress. To date, a total of **£1,641,853.63** grant funding has been offered, towards total project costs of **£4,001,653.16**.

Highlights:

- Dorset **Peatland Restoration project** has had lots of news coverage ([Press Release](#) | [Media](#) | [National Trust](#), [Dorset Peat Partnership receives funds for £1million project](#) | [Bournemouth Echo](#), [Rare species set to benefit from £1m Dorset peatland restoration - BBC News](#)) produced a short video [The Dorset Peat Partnership \(youtube.com\)](#) and NE have launched a game for young people 'Peat the Lapwing' <https://sea-bunny-stories.itch.io/peatlands>



- **Purbecks Precious Past** – Veteran Tree project delivered a total of **86 events** (x6 training, x3 guided walk, x12 seed gathering, x17 surveys, x23 Veteran tree surveys, x24 tree nursery days) involving at least **x50 individuals** (no repeats), **376 trees surveyed** and **1000+ volunteer hours!**



See an emerging list of case studies on the National Landscape website:

[Case study: Destination Kimmeridge](#)

[Case study: RSPB Arne Middlebere 'Lookout' | Dorset National Landscape](#)

d. LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

National Grid, through their [Landscape Enhancement Initiative](#), have supported three projects in the Dorset National Landscape that enhance landscape around their infrastructure. These are focussed in and around the Marshwood Vale and along the South Dorset Ridgeway, and consist of meadow restoration, dry stone wall restoration, hedgerow planting and management, river restoration, and other beneficial activities that deliver management guidelines set out in our [Landscape Character Assessment](#).

Two projects have completed delivery, with one – Linking Chalk, River & Vale – underway. The projects are delivered in partnership with local farmers and landowners, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West and the National Trust. In total we have secured £600,000 of investment from the National Grid, matched by £300,000 of in-kind support, resulting in £1M of investment in the protected landscape since 2018.

Delivery completed to date:

- 50m dry stone wall restored
- 10ha of grassland restoration
- 1.9km of hedge laying
- 39 new hedgerow trees

Investment through the LEI has allowed us to deliver significant landscape enhancement in the Dorset National Landscape, and we hope to apply for further funding from the National Grid in the future to continue this good work.

[Reconnecting the Landscape | Dorset National Landscape](#)

e. NATURE RECOVERY PLANNING – local and national

Production of a Nature Recovery Plan is part of our [Colchester Declaration](#) commitment. Every National Landscape in England is committed to producing a plan that will set out the important areas for wildlife and opportunities for enhancing the landscape for them.

The Dorset National Landscape has developed a process through its draft Nature recovery Plan that is being incorporated into the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy, ensuring that our ambitions are aligned with this important new piece of guidance.

We are also required to produce Climate Change Adaptation Plans as part of the Protected Landscapes Targeting and Outcomes Framework and Third national Adaptation Programme. We are embarking on this process with the support of Dorset Council.

Highlights:

- *Representing Dorset National Landscape on the National Landscapes Association Climate and Nature Panel.*
- *Supporting Dorset Council's production of the Local Nature recovery Strategy by chairing the data and mapping expert advisory group and sitting on the land use group and overall steering group.*
- *Working with Dorset Council on the production of Climate Change Adaptation Plans.*

1.2. CLIMATE

The National Landscape Partnership has recognised the need to reduce emissions from this landscape, enhance carbon sequestration and storage and adapting the landscape and our activities to enhance resilience in the face of a changing climate. In addition, we recognise in both policy and practice the need for additional renewable energy generation, and support applications which are of the right scale and materials for their location. One of the major opportunities for this landscape is to harness natural solutions which store and sequester carbon as well as absorb water and mitigate extreme heat events.

The National Landscape team has also provided input to the Dorset Council Climate & Ecological Emergency Action Plan – the plan and reported actions can be found on the [Dorset Council website](#)

a. FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Farming in Protected Landscape (FiPL) is a national initiative funded by Defra through which the English National Landscapes and National Parks are supporting farmers, landowners and others to deliver projects which meet the programme's outcomes for People, Place, Climate and Nature. The scheme runs until March 2025 (4 years total), with a total grant funding pot of £2.3 million (Year 4 funds totalled £885k). 166 projects have been completed (116) or are live (50) with a further 2 submissions under assessment. It is anticipated that all funds will be utilised by end of programme with a broadly even split of spend between the four outcomes.

Highlights of 24/25 to date include showcasing the many FiPL project successes and encouraging moves to more regenerative farming methods through a series of workshops and farm walks with Pasture for Life, FWAG and many of our incredible farmers. Topics have included soil health, mob-grazing, dung beetles, agro-forestry, flax harvesting and processing, and an introduction to agro-ecology course.

[Dorset National Landscape FiPL webpage.](#) includes a series of films and case studies detailing key projects - [The Hogchester Meadows Expansion Project](#), [Farming, food and education at Middlebere & Turnworth](#), [Restoring the River Axe at Mosterton](#), [Sustainable Woodland Management around Hilfield, West Dorset](#) | [Dorset National Landscape](#) & [Investing in healthy soils on Dorset Farms](#) | [Dorset National Landscape](#)



b. COMMUNITY TREE PROJECT

Following consultation with parish and town councils, we have developed a project to support communities to plan for and plant trees that will contribute to nature recovery and survive our future climate, as well as being 'the right trees in the right places', appropriately cared for. The project is supported by Dorset Council, co-ordinated by the Dorset National Landscape Team, and covers the Dorset Council area. There are two main strands: a small grant fund to support the planning of tree planting projects, as well as community planting and engagement activities; and a pilot Volunteer Tree Warden scheme offering training and support for those parish and town councils who wish to participate.

Highlights:

- 20 volunteer tree wardens attended a workshop at Bere Marsh Farm with presentations from the Tree Council and Steve Maros, Dorset Council Arboriculture and Grounds Team Manager. A volunteer tree warden also gave a presentation on collaborative work in Dorset to conserve rare native black poplars.
- 5 projects have been approved for funding totalling £15,000 under the Dorset Community Tree Fund and are currently underway. Projects include support for two community orchards, a community tree nursery, and two schools projects (further details on one led by DNL below).
- Following on from the successful tree workshops with 5 primary schools in West Dorset last winter, we have just completed tree themed, curriculum linked workshops with 280 children in 8 primary schools, led by Rowan Beecham. Hands-on tree planting days with these schools are planned for Loders in February and Maiden Newton (details tbc). Photo: Tree workshop explorations (c) Thorners School



c. **LOW CARBON DORSET**

Beginning in January 2018 Low Carbon Dorset was originally run as a five-year programme of activities to help stimulate growth in Dorset's low carbon economy and reduce its carbon footprint, funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). With additional funding of £1.356M from the Shared Prosperity Funding from April 2023, the programme is continuing until March 2025.

The programme offers free technical support and grant funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to businesses, public-sector and community organisations across Dorset Council area. Dorset National Landscape sit on the grant decision panel.

Overall programme aims of the programme are:

- Increase uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy measure in Dorset to support our journey to net zero by 2050.
- Help Dorset business, community, and public sector organisations to reduce costs and carbon.
- Stimulate Dorset's low carbon economy and skills.
- Act as an enabler by demonstrating what works and stimulate innovation.

Low Carbon Dorset and Dorset Council are currently working on the future options for LCD and how it's invaluable can continue to support Businesses and Community Organisations after April 2025. This includes leveraging the UK SPF Funds transition plan (2025-26) in addition looking into new funding approaches.

Highlights:

Over the lifetime of the Low Carbon Dorset (January 2018-present), it has delivered:

- 281 grants awarded totalling £7.32M, and £23.1M total investment in low-carbon projects in Dorset.
- 10,563 tonnes annual reduction of CO₂e; 14.13MW of renewable energy capacity installed; 67 homes with improved energy efficiency
- £17.3m total investment in low-carbon projects in Dorset

Activity and Outputs – 1 April 2024 – present

- 73 applications for support from Dorset's business, community, and public sector organisations.
- 54 grants awarded totalling £740k.
- £1.76M total investment.
- 121 tonnes annual reduction of CO₂e (completed projects).
- 0.42MW of renewable energy capacity installed (completed projects).



Dorset Solar Limited



Maiden Newton Village Hall

<https://www.lowcarbondorset.org.uk/>

1.3. PEOPLE

This section explores the team's work in helping people make a connection to this nationally-important landscape and its special qualities. Some activities are specifically focussed on reaching underserved audiences in support of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion principles.

Team members provide strategic input to Health & Nature Dorset, the Dorset Tourism Association, Food from England, etc.

a. STEPPING INTO NATURE/Nature Buddies Network

Stepping into Nature is in transition where it will still exist as a project but is no longer the lead project. The Nature Buddies Network project will work with partners to develop a network of trained volunteers who enable a person, on a one-to-one basis or as part of a small group, to overcome barriers to taking part in nature-based activities, such as a lack of confidence to get outside, to explore natural spaces and built heritage and to connect with nature.

Highlights:

- £248,810 was secured from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver the Nature Buddies Network to June 2026.
- Kate Townsend has joined to team as the new Project Coordinator in replacement to Steph Aburrow who left in August to a new role with Devon National Landscape.
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme to help adults with disabilities explore and understand the farming environment in Dorset, and train and support farmers to safely run farm events, opening the countryside to a wider range of people is continuing in its delivery and:
 - From April we have delivered 17 visits and have a further 6 visits to deliver. This is made up of 11 Community Groups and 5 farms for these visits.
 - The community groups include; Weymouth Macular Support Group, Dorchester Macular Support group, Autism Unlimited, Deaf disabilities activities group, Vitality (Down Syndrome), START (a charity that supports people with mental health difficulties transition back into the community) , Harmony (a mental health support group), Dorset Blind Association (Poole group, Weymouth group and Portland group) and Bridport Blind Club.
'For prelingually Deaf people who are not able to reliably follow English in any format, a visit tailored to allow for their needs is essential. George made everything possible, he provided clear visual prompts, he gave them extra time to fully understand and ask multiple questions. This client group have a lust for learning, but this is not readily accessible to them due to the language barrier. However, on this occasion there were no barriers and the result of which was clear to see by all involved. We could not have asked for more.
- The Nature Buddies Network officially launched on 8th October with our first introduction webinar taking place and the launch of the Community Capital Access Funding.
- We are now working towards building the network with promoting Nature Buddies to organisations/groups across the health, nature and heritage sectors to join the Nature Buddies Network.

[More Nature Buddies information here](#)

b. VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Dorset's outstanding landscape is the main reason most people visit the area. The landscape underpins the tourism economy and plays a huge role in supporting local services. Visitor management is a loose term which encompasses many different projects. In essence, it is about managing the impact of visitors so that Dorset National Landscape retains its natural beauty and special qualities, while helping people to enjoy, understand and engage with the place. Given the popularity and volume of visitors to the coast, it is unsurprising that much of the work is focused along the Jurassic Coast. Dorset National Landscape, through the Visitor Tourism and Access Manager, oversees delivery of visitor management projects along the whole of the Jurassic Coast, including East Devon.

Work has mostly focused on:

- Reducing, rationalising and improving interpretation
- Replacing/ improving coastal safety signage
- Improving Access for All in the landscape through improved multi-user routes



Some of the new Charmouth panels, funded by Charmouth Parish Council

Highlights:

- 2 new (replacement) beach safety signs installed at Charmouth East and West Beach
- 6 new (replacement) interpretation panels Charmouth foreshore and village
- Replacement 'over stickers' showing new Dorset National Landscape branding at Wareham station
- Defra Access for All funding used to complete improvements to multi-user routes at Hilfield Nature Reserve
- 3 sections of public bridleway resurfaced and improved in Piddle Valley, thanks to £46,500 2024/25 Access for All funding. Pedestrians, including school children, were walking on the A road due to poor surfacing and mud along the paths. The new route links up three communities and runs parallel to the A road, providing a much safer and easier option for pedestrians
- 2024/25 Access for All capital projects underway at Kingcombe National Nature Reserve, Brownsea Island and Lulworth and due for completion March 2025

Full details in Appendix

"Sally really helped us to write and verify text on fossiling, geology and local wildlife. She then worked with graphic designers and signwriters to produce the most dramatic, beautiful and informative set of signs for the information cairns at the [Charmouth] Foreshore and in the centre of the village." Lisa Tuck, Charmouth Parish Council

c. ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

Finding out what young people think about the countryside was the starting point to a new strand of work aimed at increasing our engagement with 11-24 year olds.

The findings of the youth-led survey done in 2022 provided the evidence for a second FiPL grant award, to explore one of the priorities highlighted in the survey – the need for events focussed specifically at 11-18 year olds. Over the coming year, we will connect up with 3 youth groups to support them to create pilot age-appropriate events in their area. The first youth group was the Weymouth-based Curtain Raisers

drama group, who developed their first outdoor performance at Culliford Tree Barrow (which unfortunately was cancelled due to bad weather).

Highlights:

- Over 40 young people engaged in Event 1 outdoor drama performance.
- Over 20 young people engaged in Event 2 Buckland Newton camp out- Owl pellet dissection, star grazing, bird ID, bat detection, a campout and hedgehog monitoring
- No young people engaged with Event 3 'Farm Cast' at Bridport creative writing workshop outline with themes of owl cam, piglets, sunflowers, habitats, wheat, climate resilience and machinery!
- Over 30 young people engaged in Event 4 Wild Wilkswood big day out in Purbeck with axe throwing, welly whanging, Wildflower meadow catapulting, Wildlife boxes constructing, Bag & badge making, Bat walk and silent disco
- New partnership with Public Health Dorset, enabling us to provide tree focussed curriculum activities for Reception aged children in West Dorset.

"It has been such a steep learning curve for us with these events and we have learnt a huge amount! We also proud to have been at the launch of the NT led, Purbeck Nature Network which is now working as a partnership to deliver family based activities and enable young people to spend more time outdoors."
Caroline Kelly, Dorset National Landscape Wild Purbeck co-ordinator



Event 1 rehearsals



Event 2 at Buckland Newton



Event 4 at Wilkswood, Purbeck

d. **DORSET NATIONAL LANDSCAPE FUND**

To help keep the National Landscape special for future generations, each year the Dorset National Landscape Fund (previously called Sustainable Development Fund) supports projects that will help to conserve, enhance, protect and celebrate the National Landscape by furthering the aims of the Management Plan.

Highlights: In 2024/25 we are delighted to have offered £37,500 of funding to support 15 community-led projects to help deliver the Management Plan. Project activity will include nature recovery, greenspace enhancement, access enhancement, heritage conservation, awareness-raising and celebration of place.

A selection of case studies of several previous projects supported by the Sustainable Development Fund [here](#)



e. **FLAVOURS: A taste of Dorset's outstanding landscape**

The FLAVOURS programme is delivered by a partnership of the Dorset National Landscape, Dorset Race Equality Council, Activate Performing Arts and Dorset Food and Drink. Supported by FIPL and the National Lottery Heritage Fund the programme is building relationships between Dorset's communities of ethnic diversity and refugees and the landscape, its nature and the organisations and individuals that manage it.

Due to an underspent budget, an extension of activity is being sought to carry activity on into May 2025.

Highlights - Cumulative Impact and Future Plans

With 9 community outings across venues like Durlston Country Park, Thorncombe Woods, and Kingston Maurward, FLAVOURS has fostered cross-cultural connections and celebrated Dorset's landscapes. Upcoming events include a Dorset Apple Cake competition with Unity in Vision, seasonal gatherings, and continued efforts to bridge communities through nature and shared experiences.

Co-Creation

- We are well-positioned to confidently expand the co-created phase of the FLAVOURS project, following a successful season that introduced a thoughtfully curated menu of locations and resources. This season's efforts will hopefully result in a toolkit of places and spaces tailored for our stakeholders and community groups, providing a solid foundation for continued engagement, repeat visits to venues and collaboration.
- In late November, we plan to host a 'Fusion Dorset Apple Cake' competition and celebration, connecting with local orchards to highlight how different communities use apples in their traditional foods and recipes. It's more than just cake -it's a way to share and celebrate our cultural flavours.

f. **PROMOTING THE National Landscape**

Engaging people in the landscape is central to many of our projects but we also ensure core communication and engagement work reaches out to people who live, work or visit the National Landscape, often linking to local and seasonal opportunities as they arise.

The Take a Dorset View Photo Competition exhibition was set up at Dorset County Hospital (April – July 2024) and Durlston Country Park (October - November 2024). A Private View for the photographers and also a Photographer Workshop were further engagement activities held at Durlston.

Social media engagement has increased over the summer due to active projects and campaigns.

- Increased engagement across all social media platforms: total followers for Facebook 5,346, Instagram 2347, X 9537 .
- New social media campaigns focussed on Nature Buddies, River Droplet, Nature Calling, FIPL case studies, Beautiful Places to Explore reels, Take a Dorset View Photo Competition exhibition, event promotion, news and updates.
- Dorset Magazine continues to support us with a page or spread dedicated to the Dorset National Landscape and planning 2025 content is underway.

Website: www.dorset-nl.org.uk **Facebook:** @DorsetNL **Instagram:** @dorsetnationallandscape **X:** @Dorset_NL

1.4. PLACE

This section encompasses the team’s role in place-making – input to the planning system and conserving, enhancing and promoting the area’s culture and heritage.



a. PLANNING PROTOCOL WORK

The Team received over 150 consultations between April – October 2024, which represents a slight decrease from the preceding year, which was the busiest on record. If consultations continue to be

received at a similar rate, the tally for the year will be in the region of 260, which would be the second highest number recorded. The consultations include both planning applications and consultations from organisations such as the Forestry Commission and statutory undertakers, particularly electricity and water companies.

Highlights:

- Major renewable energy proposals within and close to the National Landscape are an ongoing area of interest. The developer who had proposed a solar farm at Cruyton, near to Maiden Newton has expressed a desire to resubmit an application. This follows an unsuccessful appeal that was recovered by the Secretary of State, with the the proposal eventually refused, going against the recommendation of a planning inspector.
- A public inquiry will be held into the Council's refusal of the redevelopment proposals for Knoll House Hotel, in Studland, in December 2024. The Team objected to the proposal and have been supporting preparations for the appeal.
- The Team continues to receive a notable number of applications for felling and replanting of woodlands affected by Ash Dieback, as well as for the creation of entirely new woodlands. We are working to seek positive management of woodlands that have often been undermanaged, whilst achieving a diverse and resilient mix of restocking and new planting, with a preference for native broadleaf species.

b. DORSET FOOD & DRINK

FLAVOURS continues to enrich the culinary landscape of Dorset Food & Drink by exploring and celebrating diverse flavours, while fostering deeper connections to nature and the countryside within local communities. Both projects highlight Dorset's unique culinary and cultural identity, and effective management remains key to ensuring their continued success.

- The future of Dorset Food & Drink CIC depends on its ability to navigate current challenges and adapt to a changing environment. Striking a balance between daily operations, strategic planning, and staying competitive will be key to its ongoing success. Innovation, clear communication, and strong strategic partnerships are essential to maintaining our role as a vibrant force within Dorset's food and drink community. However, this ambition places considerable pressure on the current Coordinator, whose time and capacity are stretched across multiple priorities.
- Dorset Food & Drink is at a pivotal moment, where refining offerings to align with the current financial climate and exploring potential collaborations within the broader Dorset food and hospitality sector are vital. This aligns with our ongoing partnership with corporate sponsor NFU Mutual Wessex.
- With an increasing number of players entering the 'local food space', competition for local businesses and sponsorship support is intensifying. With more events now filling the Dorset calendar, the competition for producers and artisans becomes fiercer.

Looking ahead to 2025, it's essential to evaluate what Dorset Food & Drink represents. We need to reassess our identity in relation to:

- Our members
- The wider public
- Potential corporate partners
- Other Dorset Council & BCP projects to explore business opportunities, collaborations, and trade expos for those ready to expand.

This reflection will help refine our strategy and ensure Dorset Food & Drink continues to thrive in an evolving landscape.

Potential partners include food charities, local food organisations, and those focused on food security, local procurement, health, wellbeing, and nature. Collaboration with farmers, growers, and other relevant stakeholders will enhance support for Dorset businesses and communities, fostering a more sustainable and interconnected local food network.

Highlights:

- Despite having to cancel our first event of 2024 at Abbotsbury SubTropical Gardens because of flooding caused by the unceasing rainfall at Easter, Dorset Food & Drink went on to deliver a successful season of events including the Abbotsbury Swannery Food & Craft Fair, The Dorset Food & Arts Festival and a Winter Food Fair at Athelhampton.
- Working closely with the Dorset Growth Hub to offer themed focused networking sessions to DF&D members. Continued collaboration with the Artisan Markets in Dorset: Sherborne, Shaftesbury, and Dorchester. Where regular trading opportunities for DF&D members are ongoing.
- Ongoing collaboration with Dorset Farmers Markets.
- Working with Dorchester Town Council to input into their local food, drink, and hospitality vision for the town in 2025.
- Showcasing and working with some of the local food businesses we met via our FLAVOURS work - and collaborations offering them pitches at our food fairs, markets and events.

c. ART IN THE LANDSCAPE

Nature Calling - Dorset National Landscape is one of the six hubs of activity aimed at engaging and inspiring people who are not regular visitors to the countryside, culminating in a large-scale art activity in September 2025. We have commissioned writer Louisa Adjoa Parker, who is talking to people who live and work in the National Landscape at the moment and will finalise her written piece in December. Radical Ritual have been commissioned for the Artist Commission, which will work with communities in Yeovil in May/June 2025 and present a large-scale artwork in August / September 2025. Activate Performing Arts are the lead producer supporting us with this work. <https://www.naturecalling.org.uk/> <https://dorset-nl.org.uk/project/nature-calling/>

Photo – Louisa Adjoa Parker (c) Robin Mills

To support the launch of the new Valley to Market Trail, we worked with artists Lorna Rees and Amanda Moore to create a temporary Sitting Space at Frampton Millenium Green in September 2024. Called River Droplet, the installation shone a light on the rare chalk streams of the Dorset National Landscape and food production in the Frome Valley. Participation from locals and visitors was strong and we are using it as a pilot project to consider other Sitting Spaces in the future. <https://dorset-nl.org.uk/river-droplet/>

Photos – artist Lorna Rees; River Droplet installation; cyclists at open day all (c) Dorset National Landscape

Support the Bridport Town of Culture initiative, we successfully commissioned and installed a new temporary outdoor photography exhibition along the promenade in West Bay. England on Sea by photographer Brent Jones has been seen by 1000s of people during its time in West Bay (August – December 2024) and we are working with other National Landscapes to find other suitable locations for it to tour. <https://dorset-nl.org.uk/news/england-on-sea/>

Photo – photographer Brent Jones with England on Sea exhibition (c) Dorset National Landscape

Highlights:

- Over 50 writers and artists applied for the Nature Calling Commissions
- Over 400 people took part in River Droplet activities at Frampton Millenium Green in September.
- Installation of England on Sea outdoor exhibition at West Bay as part of Bridport Town of Culture



d. HISTORIC BUILDINGS RESTORATION GRANT

The Historic Building Restoration Grant (HBRG) is an additional £10 million capital grant scheme that was introduced in late 2023 which could fund up to 80% of costs towards restoration of historic buildings in the Protected Landscape. The programme has been delivered using the FiPL mechanism, and within Dorset NL, two projects have been awarded funds;

- Grade 1 Listed Manor Barn at Winterborne Clenston – following the FiPL funded Emergency Works at Winterborne Clenston Barn in 23/24, an HBRG grant has been awarded for up to £618k to deliver a detailed management plan and initial restoration works in 24/25 (if sufficient match funding can be sourced in time).

- Westlears Cobb Barn within the Forde Abbey estate – an HBRG grant for £90k will support works to re-roof and restore this barn, taking into account protected species requirements.

All works have to be completed by end of March 2025.

e. DORSET FINGERPOST PROJECT

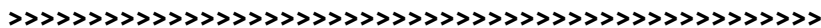
Fingerposts are an iconic, traditional feature of the Dorset countryside. Many have fallen into disrepair and Dorset Council no longer has a remit to restore them. Working with expert Roger Bond (Normtec) and his band of volunteers we are able to support & subsidise their restoration.

Highlights:

- 15 completed Fingerposts from 12 different parishes include. Chesil Bank, Evershot, West Morden and Hilfield, and 2 maintenance repairs to fingerposts at Silverlake.
- Restoration of Evershot cast iron fingerpost was a culmination of 2 years hard work (see photos). This fingerpost is likely only one of two remaining of the earliest iron Dorset fingerposts and likely predates all other designs. It was cast iron from 'top to toe' although in a very poor state, two fingers and the finial was missing. Roger managed to track down a broken bracket and one of the fingers via locals and then engineer new fittings.
- 11 restorations currently in progress.
- New website created: <https://www.dorsetfingerpostrestorers.co.uk/>

“Our enthusiastic Fingerpost Champions, ably supported by Roger Bond, Normtec, with funding from the CPRE are restoring Dorset’s iconic fingerposts for future generations to enjoy.”

Find out more about the [Dorset Fingerpost Project](#)



ITEM 6: MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

ITEM FOR	Information	REPORT BY	Dorset National Landscape Manager
SUMMARY	This paper summarises responses gathered to an informal consultation of community stakeholders at recent Annual Forum meetings. It also clarifies the touch points for Board members with the review process. While a few stages are requirements of the full board, others are optional for Board members to engage with.		
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Management Plan review is costed into the 25-26 outline budget		
RECOMMENDATION	The Board notes the initial community feedback and the various touch points in the review process.		

6.1. Annual Forum feedback

- a. Attendees at the recent Dorset National Landscape Annual Forums were asked:
 - If resources were unconstrained, what would you like to see done/fixed?
 - What achievable actions could be taken to take steps towards achieving the above?
 - What are your favourite places / aspects of the Dorset National Landscape?

- b. Over 400 individual responses were collected, summarised as follows

- c. In answer to the 'big vision' action, unconstrained by resources:
 - **Biodiversity and Habitat Restoration:** Focus on creating biodiversity plans for farms, restoring wildflower meadows, woodlands, and waterways, and improving connectivity for species. Emphasize nature recovery and habitat protection, including water vole recovery and reducing landscape devastation by industrial agriculture.
 - **Climate Resilience and Sustainable Farming:** Transition to sustainable farming practices, manage water and flood risks, and build resilience to climate change. Encourage regenerative farming, soil health, and reduce pollution from agriculture.
 - **Pollution Control and Clean Water:** Address pollution in rivers and seas, ban harmful herbicides, and improve air quality. Implement proper drainage systems for new developments and clean up litter in the countryside.
 - **Renewable Energy and Green Infrastructure:** Promote renewable energy sources like solar panels and wind turbines. Encourage green roofs, re-wetting landscapes, and restoring peatlands. Oppose environmentally harmful projects like incinerators.
 - **Sustainable Transportation:** Enhance public transport, cycle routes, and pedestrian pathways. Promote electric buses, affordable public transport, and reduce car dependency. Reopen rail lines and improve connectivity for rural areas.
 - **Community Engagement and Education:** Support nature and art education, establish coordinating groups for sustainable transitions, and promote local food growing. Encourage volunteer engagement and provide project officers for on-ground support.
 - **Housing and Land Use:** Renovate empty housing stock, stop building on floodplains, and support sustainable local housing. Influence national land use plans to prioritize biodiversity and nature recovery.
 - **Public Access and Recreation:** Maintain and improve footpaths, bridleways, and rights of way. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and promote outdoor activities for health and wellbeing.
 - **Local Economy and Food Systems:** Support local food production, storage infrastructure, and farmers' markets. Encourage sustainable tourism and promote local agricultural education and apprenticeships.
 - **Governance and Regulation:** Ensure effective regulation of the natural environment, protect rights of way, and establish new contracts with rural businesses to support nature recovery initiatives.

- d. In answer to potential short-term actions

- **Biodiversity and Habitat Restoration:** Actions include rewilding areas, planting hedges, restoring river ecology, and removing invasive species.
 - **Sustainable Agriculture and Land Use:** Encouraging better farm practices, supporting small farms, and promoting sustainable co-housing.
 - **Climate Adaptation and Mitigation:** Emphasizing the need for adaptation strategies to handle extreme weather, promoting renewable energy, and implementing flood management practices.
 - **Community Engagement and Education:** Involving local communities in environmental actions through citizen science, educational programs, and public forums. This includes engaging schools, parish councils, and organizing guided walks.
 - **Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure:** Advocating for improved public transport, creating cycleways, and maintaining public amenities like toilets.
 - **Policy and Governance:** Pushing for policy changes at local councils regarding second home ownership, regulating polluters, and encouraging building on brownfield sites.
 - **Health and Well-being:** Linking environmental actions to health benefits, such as engaging with GP practices to promote outdoor activities and supporting mental health through nature connections.
 - **Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction:** Promoting solar panels, wind farms, and taxing carbon emissions from dairy farms.
 - **Water Management:** Improving water quality, encouraging fish passage, and restoring floodplains. This includes partnerships with water companies and citizen science initiatives for monitoring pollution.
 - **Cultural and Heritage Connections:** Supporting arts and heritage projects that connect communities to their landscapes, such as the Talking Tent and Artsreach programs.
- e. Attendees' important places/features/attributes:
- **Wild Places and Biodiversity:** wild areas and diverse ecosystems, such as Jurassic cliffs, reedbeds, and various wildlife habitats. These areas support species like otters, kingfishers, and starlings, contributing to biodiversity.
 - **Access and Footpaths:** access to the countryside through footpaths and networks, ensuring everyone can enjoy natural landscapes and the benefits they offer.
 - **Cultural and Historical Landscapes:** integration of cultural, historical, and archaeological elements within the landscape, including ancient trees, hillforts, and historical monuments, which add to the area's unique character.
 - **Agriculture and Land Management:** sustainable farming practices, organic farming, and the balance between agriculture and biodiversity. It also covers the role of small-scale agriculture in maintaining a healthy environment.
 - **Community and Wellbeing:** community involvement, local food production, and the positive impact of nature on health and wellbeing. It also includes the role of arts and cultural organizations in enhancing the landscape.
 - **Environmental Protection and Conservation:** importance was placed on the existing protection measures for important landscapes, habitats, and biodiversity, including initiatives like dark sky preservation, floodplain management, and conservation of chalk streams and river catchments.
 - **Tourism and Economy:** economic benefits of tourism and the need for low-impact, sustainable tourist accommodations. It also mentions the importance of attracting diverse communities to enjoy and support the local environment.
 - **Aesthetic and Emotional Value:** Captures the emotional and aesthetic appreciation of the landscape, including the beauty of sunrises and sunsets, the tranquility of rural areas, and the sense of space and peace they provide.
- 6.2. **Partnership Board role in Management Plan review**
- a. The Management Plan is the single most important document for the designation and the landscape which it covers. They are statutory; National Park Authorities, the Broads Authority, and Local Authorities with National Landscapes (or Conservation Boards where established) are required by law to produce them, and to review them every 5 years.

defined in the Defra MoA and as such provide guidance on minimum standards to allow successful operation of a National Landscape unit and the delivery of the National Landscape Management Plan.

- b. SDF: The SDF was established as a Ministerial initiative and has political support. Defra believes the previous success of SDF will ensure its continuation in a meaningful way without the need to impose minimum levels of spending, which would go against the ethos of an interdependent and trusting relationship with National Landscape Partnerships. Individual SDF initiatives will be identified as part of an National Landscape’s programme of work. SDF will remain as a visible funding stream in the National Landscape family and should continue to be recorded and good practice registered to inform Defra and key partners. There are opportunities to use SDF to add value by encouraging greater uptake of innovative, often community-based, projects. The SDF programme has associated guidance prepared by Natural England which steers the kinds of projects to be developed. This guidance was revised in 2009 to place greater emphasis on encouraging innovation and risk-taking, as well as meeting National Landscape Management Plan objectives. These risk and innovation elements help clarify the distinction between SDF and other funding streams. Innovative SDF projects should be assessed from local, regional and national perspectives. We make SDF available to projects through a competitive process.
- c. PROJECTS: National Landscape Partnerships are free to determine how they use resources to deliver projects. If 100% National Landscape project funding is the only way to achieve the desired outcome, this is for the Partnerships to decide in developing their programme. Defra believes that delivery of National Landscape Management Plan objectives is generally greater and more sustainable if undertaken in partnership, particularly for large scale or landscape scale projects. It therefore encourages all National Landscape Partnerships to use their project funding to help lever in additional resources. The ability and willingness of partners to contribute to projects will be variable from partner to partner and from year to year. It is recognised that staffing costs can be met by project funding.

7.2. Current year as basis of assumptions: Defra core contributions

- a. Core contributions from Defra must not exceed 75% total core spend.
- b. The Dorset National Landscape Partnership receives a core grant of £283,704.71
- c. In this current financial year, we also receive £123,979.30 ‘revenue uplift’ and £123,979.30 ‘capital uplift’. All is assigned to in-year activity. We are not anticipating having these grant streams in 25-26.
- d. This is also accompanied by FIPL (£1,061,535) and Access for All (£121,461.14). Whether we are to receive any grant under these headings will be determined by Defra’s business planning process.

7.3. Current year as basis of assumptions: Core match funding

- a. In the current financial year, the Dorset National Landscape Partnership receives a contribution of £53,600 from Dorset Council. This alone is insufficient to make the required 25% match.
- b. The team has a core income target of £22,000 to make up the necessary match. In reality this requires team members to extract project management income to support the core budget, which in effect reduces capacity for non-project delivery.

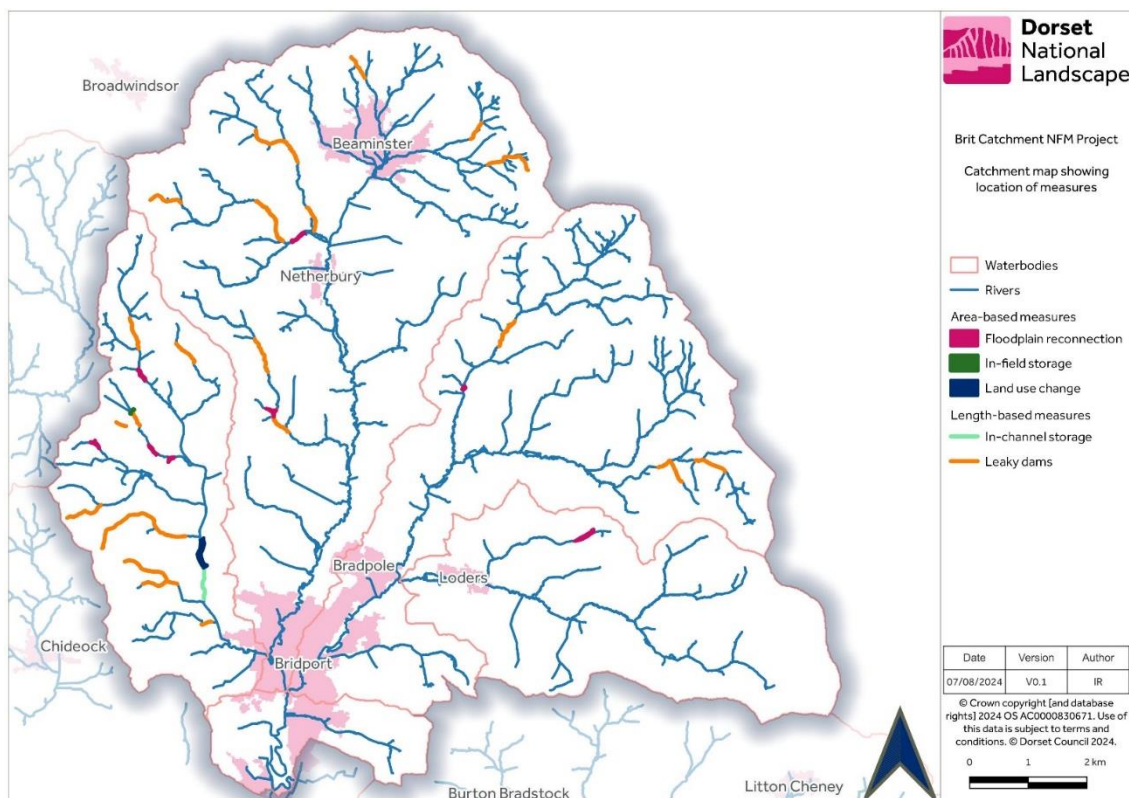
7.4. Staffing costs

While the impact of the National Insurance uplift has yet to be fully determined, the core staffing costs are assumed to be 15% higher than last financial year.

7.5. INCOME FORECAST

	Source	£
LA & Treasury income	Defra TOTAL	£ 283,705
	Dorset Council	£ 56,300
	Other income / reserve	£ 54,000
	TOTAL non-Defra income	£ 110,300
	TOTAL	£ 394,005

- Investment in the wider Brit catchment, which includes the Rivers Brit, Simene, Mangerton and Asker, will support flood risk reduction in Beaminster, Netherbury, and Bridport. It will help reduce the management burden on the flood defences in Bridport. It will also make the landscape more resilient to future climate change. Investment aligns with the Brit Catchment Landscape Recovery scheme that has recently been awarded funding to develop a landscape vision for the next 25 years.
- Our bid included several methods of Natural Flood Management that will be installed at strategic locations throughout the catchment. A significant element of the project is to monitor the effectiveness of these interventions, so that Natural Flood Management can play an increasing role in managing flood risk into the future.
- The River Brit proposal includes a number of potential solutions that range from the simple to the more complicated:
- Five hectares of floodplain reconnection, lowering riverbanks to allow more water onto the floodplain, and stored in wetland areas, scrapes, and ponds. This increases storage capacity of flood waters in time of need.
 1. 15.5km of leaky dams to slow the flow of water through the catchment, trapping sediment along the way.
 2. Three hectares of land use change that will support storage of excess rainfall in the field. This includes reversion of arable and intensively managed grassland to semi-natural grassland and wetlands.
 3. Two in-field flood storage areas, small bunds that will hold back water on high-risk overland flow routes.
- The total value of delivering the project is £665,000, with £625,000 requested from the Environment Agency. Match funding is provided by partner time, Farming in Protected Landscape, and future maintenance costs.
- £160,000 is earmarked for delivery of Natural Flood Management measures. £360,000 will establish a robust monitoring network using water level and flow measuring equipment as well as citizen scientists to look at water quality. £104,000 is set aside for project management and £41,000 has been spent on developing the project, formalising designs and securing permissions.



WYTCHE FARM LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS ENHANCEMENT FUND

Detailed outputs and outcomes: Funded projects include

- FWAG - Currenden Farm hedge planting Phase2 Hedge planting 260 (m) & Fencing 520 (m)
- DC Purbeck Park (Norden) to Studland cycleway Access Improvement (m) TBC
- FWAG - Kingswood Hedge Project Hedge Restoration (74 m), Hedgerow Trees x 8 & Hedgerow Fencing (249 m)
- Purbecks Invasive Plants-audit & control Phase2 Small plants (38 locations)R&hoddi management (total restoration 17 Ha)
- NT_Beryl Bikes to Studland Staff time, Access_Bikes x 10 & Access_Bike Bays x 4
- Lulworth Lake Rhododendron Management (2 Ha)
- FWAG_Rempstone Hedge Phase3 Hedge Restoration (288 m), Hedgerow planting (472 m), & Hedgerow Fencing (1520 m)
- DC_Sharford Bridge Access Improved - Causeway installed (10m)

LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

Detailed outputs and outcomes:

Magical Marshwood Vale

Delivered over the course of four years:

- Restored 16.4 hectares of lowland meadow and 7.2ha of scrub clearance, giving a total of 23.6ha of meadow restoration.
- 2,155 metres of hedge laying.
- 129 hedgerow trees have been planted
- 72 Orchard trees have been planted.
- 8 ponds have been restored.
- 150m of river restoration is complete.
- Established a wild daffodil nursery at Washingpool Farm to supplement future meadow restoration with locally grown plants.
- 45 volunteer sessions with 635 attending totalling 3,235 hours.

Reconnecting the Ridgeway

Total project outputs delivered over three years:

- 1,850m of hedgerow laid
- 1,600m new hedgerow planted
- 6 standard hedgerow trees planted
- 3 trees conserved by pollarding and 1 fenced for protection from stock
- 4.2ha species-rich grassland managed for scrub
- 2.2ha grassland enhanced through flower-rich seeding and 8.4ha with diverse herbal ley and wild bird seed mix
- 2 new ponds created
- 200m dry stone wall restored
- 1 stile and dog-hatch installed to improve access on Eggardon Hill

Linking

To be delivered over the coming two and a half years:

- Plant, protect and manage 60 hedgerow oak trees
- Lay 1,270 metres of hedgerow
- Restore 140m of drystone wall
- Restore 7 ha of semi-natural grassland
- Undertake 4.7 ha of scrub clearance to ensure no loss of important grassland habitat
- Enhance management of 10 ponds and wetlands for wildlife, particularly great crested newts
- Create 0.75ha of wildlife corridors to increase habitat connectivity

CLIMATE

FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

Some highlights from 24/25 to date:

Outputs relating to the four themes include:

Nature

- Four projects focussing on surveys and creating habitat for Duke of Burgundy and Marsh Fritillary butterflies have been delivered with new colonies discovered.
- More wildflower rich grassland created in 2024 season, with aim to have created over 30ha during FiPL programme.
- 352 walnut, apple, pear, cherry, cobnut, medlar and plum at 7 new orchard sites will be planted this winter, making total number of fruit trees planted in programme 652 across 15 sites.

Climate

- FiPL will have planted over 11km of new hedgerow by the end of the programme.
- Third season of innovative hemp growing trial underway plus new flax growing initiative.
- A second 100m+ stretch of the river Axe restored so that it connects with the floodplain, preventing flooding downstream, capturing carbon and increasing biodiversity.
- Pasture for Life peer mentoring and farm workshops series has continued to encourage the uptake of regenerative farming.

People

- Projects have been supported which include elements to widen participation in the Protected Landscape including outreach to disadvantaged school children via the Kingfisher Awards Scheme, working with Dorset Race Equality Council, Dorset Food and Drink Nature Buddies, plus the residential stays offered at Madgalen Farm for groups including disadvantaged children, young carers, refugees, and children who have been trafficked into the UK.
- 67 educational school visits some including additional food preparation and cooking sessions will have been delivered within 24/25 financial year making FiPL programme total 183.

Place

- HBRG grant awarded to Westlears Cobb Barn, Forde Abbey to restore structure whilst being mindful of bat populations.
- HBRG grant awarded for Winterborne Clenston Grade 1 listed barn to have a full management plan drawn up.

COMMUNITY TREE PROJECT

Detailed outputs and outcomes:

- Engaged with 65 parishes via an online survey to find out their needs related to tree planting.
- Key areas of support were identified as:
 - Introduction to the challenges of tree planting and management
 - Training in site selection and woodland design
 - Support for tree planting and aftercare
 - Support for Tree Wardens
 - Grants towards tree planting, aftercare, and tree nurseries
- £2,000 secured from Public Health Dorset to help deliver an education programme, piloted at four West Dorset primary Schools.
- Engaged educational consultant Rowan Beecham, to develop and deliver this programme of works.

PEOPLE

STEPPING INTO NATURE

Detailed outputs and outcomes:

[For the full Stepping into Nature 2022-23 report please view our slide deck.](#)

VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Detailed outputs and outcomes:

Interpretation and signage

- 6 new (replacement) interpretation panels installed Charmouth foreshore and village, and 2 new (replacement) beach safety signs installed at Charmouth East and West Beach, working with relevant partners such as Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre, the Jurassic Coast Trust and RNLI. These were fully funded by the Parish Council, including a Project Management fee to Dorset National Landscape for managing and delivering the project
- Replacement 'over stickers', showing new Dorset National Landscape branding, professionally attached to welcome and orientation signage at Wareham station

Access for All project (Defra funded)

- Defra Access for All funding (£50,000) used to complete improvements to multi-user routes at Hilfield Nature Reserve
- 3 sections of public bridleway resurfaced and improved in Piddle Valley, thanks to £46,500 2024/25 Access for All funding. Pedestrians, including school children, were walking on the A road due to poor surfacing and mud along the paths. The new route links up three communities and runs parallel to the A road, providing a much safer and easier option for pedestrians
- 2024/25 Access for All capital projects underway at Kingcombe National Nature Reserve, Brownsea Island and Lulworth and due for completion March 2025. These include:
 - All-terrain tramper route heading west from Lulworth Cove to a new viewing and turning point
 - Brownsea Island improved access to the Tern Hide
 - Kingcombe National Nature Reserve access ramp, boardwalk and track improvements
- A small amount of Access for All funding has been used to investigate the location of a gas main running through the proposed site for route improvements from Chideock to Quarry Hill. 8 test holes to find the gas main were completed. SGN advice is that a further 4 holes are needed to get the complete picture

FLAVOURS

Details of this financial year's activity:

May 2024: Ukrainian Community Picnic at Durlston Country Park

The FLAVOURS team hosted a picnic at Durlston Country Park for over 86 members of the Ukrainian community in Dorset. Many wore traditional Vyshyvanka, celebrating Ukrainian heritage. Storytelling by Martin Maudsley, translated by community leader Maryna, added depth, while Iryna from The Sunflower Cafe provided specially decorated Honey Cakes. Attendees shared stories and expressed gratitude for the tranquil setting. This gathering led to connections with the Swanage Ukrainian Group, opening doors for future collaborations.

June 2024: Cultural Family Day at Thorncombe Woods

In collaboration with Unity in Vision, FLAVOURS organised a day for families from Bournemouth and Weymouth to enjoy Thorncombe Woods. Activities included a nature walk, games, and a shared picnic featuring dishes prepared by Unity in Vision families. Children delighted in nature art, exploring the woods, and a pond adventure. Participants expressed appreciation for the day and suggested incorporating music at future gatherings. Plans for a Dorset Apple Cake competition emerged from this event, encouraging community involvement in traditional baking.

July 2024: Community Outing at Kingston Maurward College

In the summer sunshine, over 73 participants from Unity in Vision joined FLAVOURS at Kingston Maurward College. With vibrant gardens and scenic grounds, participants enjoyed a group picnic, nature activities, and

