



# Dorset National Landscape

Dorset National Landscape Partnership  
Hosted by Dorset Council  
County Hall, Dorchester DT1 1XJ

tel: 01305 228246  
web: [www.dorset-nl.org.uk](http://www.dorset-nl.org.uk)

**Dorset National Landscape Board, 10.00am, Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025**

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

The meeting will start at 10.00 am; 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 Caroline Richards on [caroline.richards@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.richards@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

## AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	TITLE	Purpose
1000	-	Chairman's welcome, introduction & apologies	
1015	-	Minutes of the last meeting	
1025	1	Purbeck Together – Climate Action Fund bid led by National Trust	Info
1030	2	Team activity update, featuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 24-25 Annual Review</li><li>• Farming in Protected Landscapes &amp; Historic Buildings Restoration Grant</li><li>• Access for All projects</li></ul>	Info
1115	3	Partnership accounts 2024-2025	Decision
1130		BREAK	
1145	4	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Info
1200	5	2025-2026 Defra funding update, including capital fund proposals	Decision
1215	6	Management plan review <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• draft vision</li><li>• approach to public consultation</li></ul>	Decision
1230	-	Partners' 2-minute updates	
1250	-	Any other business	
1300	-	End of meeting	

APPENDIX 1: further team activity detail

### Proposed dates of next meetings:

**Tues 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2pm: Single-issue meeting to approve a consultation draft Management Plan 2026-2031**

	Winter	Spring (TBC)
AONB Steering Group	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2026
<b>AONB Partnership Board</b>	<b>20<sup>th</sup> November 2025</b>	<b>18<sup>nd</sup> May 2026</b>

If you wish to have items added to the agenda for the Board, please ensure suggestions are sent to [Tom Munro](#), [Caroline Richards](#) or the [Chairman](#) at least 7 days before the date of the Steering Group meeting which precedes the Board meeting, so they may be considered for timetabling by the that group.

# Minutes of the Dorset National Landscape Partnership Board Meeting, Thursday 28th November 2024 (Cricket Club Pavilion, Weymouth Avenue, Dorchester)

## Draft minutes

### Board attendance:

Organisation	Representative	Status	2024- 11
Council for the Protection of Rural England	Dr Guy Dickinson	Voting member	Present
Country Land and Business Association	Will Bond	Voting member	Present
Country Land and Business Association	Mark Burton	Supporting Officer	Apologies
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Peter Bowyer	Voting member	
Dorset Association of Parish & Town Councils	Cllr Chris Turner	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Nick Ireland	Voting member	Apologies
Dorset Council	Cllr Ben Wilson	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Cllr Jane Somper	Voting member	Present
Dorset Council	Giles Nicholson	Supporting Officer	Present
Dorset Council	Hilary Jordan	Supporting Officer	
Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership	Luke Rake	Voting member	Apologies
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Will Bond	Voting member	Present
Dorset Local Nature Partnership	Maria Clarke	Supporting Officer	Apologies
Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society	Jeremy Pope	Voting member	Present
Dorset Natural History & Archaeological Society	Claire Dixon	Voting member	Present
Dorset Race Equalities Council	Jonathan Burke	Voting member	Present
Dorset Wildlife Trust	Imogen Davenport	Voting member	Present
Environment Agency	Vacant	Voting member	
Forestry Commission	Roly Boughton	Voting member	Apologies
Historic England		Voting member	Apologies
Independent chair	Dr Phil Sterling	Voting member	Present
Jurassic Coast Trust	Lucy Culkin	Attending member	Apologies
Local Access Forum	Janet Davis	Supporting Officer	Present
National Farmers' Union	Tim Gelfs	Voting member	Present
National Farmers' Union	Gemma Harvey	Supporting Officer	Present
Natura England	Ian Alexander	Supporting Officer	Present
Natural England	David Charman	Voting Member	Present
The National Trust	Hannah Jefferson	Voting member	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), Rachel Janes (FiPL Officer).

**Guests:** Amy Smith, Dorset Council and Mark Warn, Forestry England

### Welcome, introductions and apologies

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

David Charman attended as representative of Natural England.

This is Jeremy Pope's last meeting; he will be handing over to Claire Dixon.

### Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

**The minutes of the meeting held in May 2024 were agreed as a true record.**

**Tom Munro gave an introduction to the team, their work and the role of the Partnership Board.**

**Presentation [here](#)**

Comments:

CLlrCTurner: What is the security of DC funding received by the team in these difficult financial times? TM: It's set as a contribution to the partnership and part of an ongoing process. It's a tough budget but believe the financial contribution we receive will be maintained; confirmation of funding expected in January.

GNicholson: DC recognise the value in income and investment (leverage) bought in by the team – it's a very good multiplier for the investment.

TM: DC contribution £56,300 and turnover £2.3m by the team (delivery of nature recovery and landscape enhancement)

PSterling: Majority of funds turned over within Dorset and helping local rural economy.

## **1. Delivering the Management Plan**

TM presented the Dorset National Landscape team delivery report which featured additional presentations from the team.

### **a. Julie Hammon: Nature Buddies**

Link to presentation [here](#)

Julie gave an overview of the [Nature Buddies Network](#), a new project which follows on from the work of Stepping into Nature. This project is funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and will run until June 2026. The aim of the project is to set up a network of specially trained Nature Buddy volunteers who are dedicated to breaking down barriers hindering individuals from taking part in nature based activities, working with them on a 1 to 1 basis, over a set period of time to help them build confidence and skills to get out into nature.

Nature Buddies volunteers will be embedded within existing befriending/volunteer organisations or set up within health, nature and heritage organisations and activity providers across Dorset / BCP and will be fully supported by the project team to do this. At this initial stage the team are looking for [host organisations](#) to work with. Julie asked the board to get in touch with herself or Kate Townsend if they are interested in finding out more or becoming a host via email or completing this [form](#).

Julie also asked if members could circulate the information on Nature Buddies to any contacts they think could be interested in becoming part of the Network, in particular at this stage as a host. An information sharing webinar scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

### **b. Sue Dampney: Nature Calling**

Link to presentation [here](#)

Dorset National Landscape has been selected by the National Landscapes Association to be one of 6 hubs of enhanced funding and activity in the Nature Calling national arts project. We are working with artists to connect with underserved communities in Yeovil on the northern boundary of the National Landscape. The project in Dorset centres around 2 artist commissions. The first is with poet and writer Louisa Adjoa Parker who has been meeting people (in particular those whose voices are seldom heard) to produce a poem to be launched in January 2025. The larger artist commission has been awarded to Becca Gill who is bringing together a team of experienced artists to work with diverse communities from the Yeovil area to create the work in Spring / Summer 2025. Taking their inspiration from the Cerne Abbas Giant and the historic landscape, they will create a giant-scale temporary art installation based on the game Consequences.

The installation will be unveiled to audiences in 3 locations across the National Landscape in late August and September, aiming to reach an audience of 5000 across all the activities. The finale in Dorset will contribute to a Nature Calling season of performances and installations from other Hubs and smaller commissions from the National Landscape family.

#### **Comments:**

GHarvey: Concerned the right to roam will be promoted if Nick Hayes is involved. SD Assured this would not be the case.

PSterling: Congratulated the team of the work undertaken, in particular the major achievements of the FiPL team. There have been some staff changes - Caroline Richards to Project Support Officer, Kate Townsend to Stepping into Nature Project Coordinator. Steph Aburrow has taken a new role with East Devon National Landscape. He thanked her for all the excellent work she did for Stepping into Nature.

**Comments:**

JPope: History of Red Fingerposts – in key places so seen for executions. PSterling: Also for driving stock, by colour as could not read. TM: Transportation ships - stops on route for prisoners.

JDavis: Access for All Funding: pleased Piddle Valley has been resurfaced. How was the decision made to fund this project? TM it's short-term funding so no long-term governance, we have worked on projects with partners we know we can deliver. SKing They have to meet a strict criteria for Access for All requirements and DC's ranger team are key delivery partners aware of the local issues.

TGelfs: What is the timing and purpose of the deer survey? TM better deer management, covering 80,000ha in West Dorset. Cllr B Wilson: Is this with landowner permission. TM: Yes it is. TGelfs: Disease amongst deer is a major concern.

IAlexander: The team represent phenomenal value for money. DC are buying a huge resource for such little investment.

**RESOLUTION: The Board acknowledges significant progress towards delivering the Management Plan.**

## **2. Proposal to Bid for Funds: Landscape Recovery Project**

TM presented the paper.

**Comments:**

CllrBWilson: Do we understand why we were unsuccessful first time round and what needs changing? TM: yes, our presentation of the climate impact of deforestation mitigated against peat restoration outputs was not clear enough, although we were disappointed with the assessment made of this. I Alexander: we are doing significant works on carbon sequestration so will present it differently next time around.

CllrBWilson: Is new submission going to be significantly different? TM: At the moment we don't think so but depends on the criteria.

GHarvey: Is this in partnership with National Trust. TM: Yes, the Purbeck Heaths Partnership includes conservation organisations, some private estates, tenants and owner occupiers. GHarvey: Have the National Trust engaged with tenants and have any issues been addressed? I Alexander: NT doing a lot to assist tenants to adapt to post Brexit agriculture if they want to. TM: Lots of land in this area is marginal land so well suited for nature management as a major source of guaranteed farm income.

**RESOLUTION: The Board supports the development of a bid for the third round Landscape Recovery pilot by the Purbeck Heaths partnership.**

## **3. Proposal to bid for funds: Landscape Connections**

TM presented the paper.

**Comments:**

WBond: Supportive of the sensible length of time to develop and implement this. TM: Will additionally help increase capacity on our Management Plan consultation process.

CllrCTurner: 12-15 months is not a long time? TM this is for the audience development phase which if successful will lead to funding for an 8-10 year programme of works.

IDavenport: I would like to add in DWT support in the development of this initiative and could potentially help with capacity in development phase and staff time for match.

**RESOLUTION: The Board supports the submission of a bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a development phase project which would lead to a longer term Landscape Connections programme.**

## **4. Mark Warn: Forestry England's Wilder Forest Areas.**

Link to presentation [here](#)

Mark gave an overview of the work being done by Forestry England on Wild Core areas both nationally and locally. The Forest Wilding Programme is being funded by DEFRA for 5 years and is based on FE national policies: Growing the Future 2021-2026 and Biodiversity Plan 2021- 2026. It concentrates on 3 principal strands – Wild Core areas, species reintroductions and SSSI condition in Thetford Forest. Nationally the country is split into 4 districts / Wild Core areas making up 8000ha in total. All areas are SSSI designated and have a mix of forest and open habitats and potential for expansion with partnerships. We are South District / Wild Purbeck Core Area, covering 2232ha and link into existing local initiatives include. Wareham

Arc Landscape Recovery Scheme. In each Wild Core Area the aim is to rebuild biodiversity through restoring natural processes. Forestry management will be adapted to Low Impact Silvicultural System but will still provide high quality timber. This will be achieved by restoring open heathland and wetlands, removing non-native tree species (rhododendron), increased diversification of tree species and the introduction of conservation/wild grazing. Encouraging the reintroduction of missing key species; beavers, white tailed sea eagles, pine martens and wildcats is underway. Likewise translocations of some of the smaller ecosystem engineers such as the wood ant, soil and fungi are happening. This is an ambitious project and hopes to set the blueprint for future forestry management.

**Comments:**

WBond: Looking at your proposals and thinking how a decade ago you were thinking about selling off the estate; this is quite a transformation. MW: an exciting time and commitment made by Senior Team that this is the direction we are following.

GDikinson: What is veteranisation of trees? MW Creating ecological opportunities by providing holes/cracks fissures in the trees for birds, bats, fungi etc

JDavis: Are there implications for public access? MW: Visitor engagement key particularly with regards to herd grazing.

CllrCTurner: Have you considered the introduction of wild hogs? MW: it's being considered nationally but Wild Boar are classified under the Dangerous Animal Act so although they are a missing species of ecological engineers, domestic pigs are the only option for bare ground grazing at the moment (such as in the Purbeck Heaths NNR).

CllrBWilson: Are your plans to restore hydrology linked into any broader plans across the area? MW: Not within own estate but we are liaising with EA and partners through the Wareham Arc project around the Sherford River.

CllrCTurner: What are the chances for producing disease resistant ash trees in this country? MW: Not established in UK yet but we are not clearing all diseased ash in the hope of some resistance developing overtime. PSterling: Greater variety of species the further west you go therefore stronger likelihood of becoming resistant over time.

## **5. Amy Smith: Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**

Link to presentation [here](#)

LNRS plans are underway across England. DC are coordinating the Dorset County strategy, working closely with BCP Council, Natural England and a wide range of stakeholders. It includes a map and description of the current state of nature in Dorset, looks at the opportunities/activities to aid nature recovery and maps high opportunity areas. Based on input from these organisations 12 draft priorities have been compiled alongside maps and supporting docs. These will be considered for approval by DC before going out to public consultation, finalised and published in Autumn 2025.

**Comments:**

TGelfs: Are the impacts of food production being looked at? Concerned that land needed to produce food is going out of production in favour of nature restoration. Has a study been done on this and the potential jobs / skills that will be lost? AS: depending on the on-farm conditions and opportunities, different farmers can do it in different ways alongside productive agriculture.

HJefferson: I think the Nature Recovery Network is where we can make a difference, protect land for farming, and work together to be nature friendly.

IAlexander: Some areas now have animals grazing on them which previously didn't, bringing agricultural back into the landscape. TGelfs: It's whether it's producing enough food. IALexander: And rural livelihoods. TGelfs: We could become short of food as we rely on imports.

## **6. 2025-2030 National Landscape Management Plan**

Tom explained how the recent Annual Forums held in Wareham, Dorchester and Bridport had provided useful feedback as an initial consultation for the upcoming Management Plan Review, a summary of which is provided in the meeting papers. Specialist topic groups will be set up in the Springtime, which board members are warmly invited to join and participate in. They will be convened for planning, farming, woodland & forestry, nature, historic environment, physical access, learning and engagement. They'll

broadly be asking members what has changed and what should our priorities be. Please let Tom know if you are interested in taking part so you can get involved in the relevant area. In June the draft plan will be produced and come to board for consideration, it'll then go out for public consultation in the summer. We will also invite board members to share this with their organisations and relevant contacts and supply feedback. In November the draft plan will be brought to the board meeting for approval, at that point subject to any further changes and it will be ready for implementation and adoption by organisations. (see papers)

#### **Comments**

**CLlrCTurner:** Against solar panels in preference of wind turbines. Electric buses are also not viable at this stage due to topography.

**GDikinson:** Better to have solar panels / vegetation on roofs.

**TMunro:** These are comments from the Annual Forums, more debate to have, no answers as yet.

**CDixon:** Interested in being part of the groups.

### **7. Proposed budget for 2025/26**

TM presented the paper.

**Comments:** None

**RESOLUTION: The Board approves the proposed budget and funding priorities for next financial year.**

### **8. Partners updates**

**IAlexander:** Transition happening across the sector from nature conservation to nature recovery, organisations are working together at a larger scale so a much more powerful way of acting. Government set 30/30 target which we currently fall far below, but ambitious work is happening across many organisations to increase it, including with private sector owners. We need to be ambitious to meet the target.

**DCharman:** DEFRA has announced the Sustainable Farming Incentive is now fully open online. Expecting Higher Tier announcement soon. Capital Grants 2024 closed except Woodland Tree health grants & Protections and Infrastructure, Management Plans.

**WBond:** Farmers and Land Managers involved in lots of partnership projects such as Wareham Arc, Wild Purbeck etc which open up new opportunities thus positive. Poole Harbour Nitrates - the nitrate leaching tool widely used in the catchment and impact is significant and will see a reduction in algal blooms over time. Confidence in sector low following budget announcement eg grants closed / BPS.

**JPope:** Lucy of JCT is leaving the Trust at the end of the year.

**JBurke:** Pleased with the impact of the FLAVOURS project and delighted it will continue. Seen an increase in diverse communities in the landscape.

**GHarvey:** Farmer confidence seriously low following the budget (no increase in budget) and new reforms around inheritance tax, NFU are challenging the figures quoted as changes will adversely affect many farming families. President of NFU has met with PM. Defra have closed capital grant applications which was a key area to raise revenue by undertaking works for the environment.

**CDixon:** The museum can tell the story of the county, next year exhibition 'Jane Austen by the Sea' and a piece on Wild Swimming. Interested to collaborate with more with the team. 'The Proceedings' is our academic review and would welcome submissions on Natural History.

**CLlrJSomper:** Impressed by output of the team. Given lots to read, not sure how to disseminate it to communities as difficult to pinpoint key points and language can be quite technical. Is there a way to present it in a less daunting way that won't put people off? Also keen to support farmers with words and actions.

**CLlrBWilson:** In July a Nature State of Emergency was passed by the Council, which included a full commitment to Dorset National Landscape and Nature Recovery and it embeds Nature Recovery at heart of all planning decisions. Purbeck Local Plan has been passed and has protections for the National Landscape. Moving forward with Dorset Wide Plan (2027) and communicated to government that land across Dorset is highly designated and protected making it unsuitable for their proposed planning targets. We need to be aware that these mandatory housing targets will come into effect next year.





## Delivering the National Landscape Management Plan - annual report for 2024-2025

ITEM FOR	Information	REPORT BY	Dorset National Landscape team
<b>SUMMARY</b>	The National Landscape team is leading, coordinating, promoting and supporting delivery of the actions and intent of the Management Plan as the central part of its core duties and through specific projects.		
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	Delivery based on agreed budget and business plan.		
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	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.

### 2.1. NATURE

The AONB'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 AONB to the south and west of Wareham.

The AONB team leads strategic nature-focussed 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 AONB 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:

- The country's first wild release beaver licence was granted to National Trust for the Purbeck Beaver project, with [pairs being released in Littlesea and elsewhere in the Studland](#) wetland system.
- In March 2025 a large-scale drone survey of deer was undertaken to inform the NNR's deer management plan and a wider deer management strategy. Results are being shared with stakeholders.
- 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. A public consultation on this proposal is complete; a recommendation to extend the existing orders and to add a new order for additional sites is going to Dorset Council's Cabinet in June.
- As the UK's first 'super' NNR, the Purbeck Heaths NNR is frequently used as a learning base for others seeking to do similar. Among others the Purbeck Heaths NNR Partnership has provided information and support to the Kent Downs and Arnside & Silverdale National Landscapes, and the area played host to the National Heathlands Conference in September.

*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.*

#### WEST DORSET RIVERS & COASTAL STREAMS

- b. 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:

- Successfully delivered Phase 1 of the Brit Catchment Natural Flood Management project, including securing landowner permissions for the 35 sites and installing 27 river level monitors.
- Having completed Phase 1, we will move into delivery of Phase 2 from April 2025. This will include the installation of 32 Natural Flood Management Measures covering 16km of river and 5ha of floodplain. We will also closely monitor their effectiveness with the support of Exeter University.
- Completed five years of delivery as part of Dorset Wild Rivers, in partnership with Dorset Wildlife Trust and Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West. The combined efforts over the five years are set out in the appendix.
- Secured a further five years of funding from Wessex Water to enable the continuation of the Dorset Wild Rivers Partnership, now expanded to include the National Trust. This is for £25,000 per annum.
- The Landscape Lab is now in place, and we are working with Pineapple Estate to roll out this community facility.
- 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 26<sup>th</sup> November. Other partners are Planet Purbeck, National Trust, and Swanage Town Council.

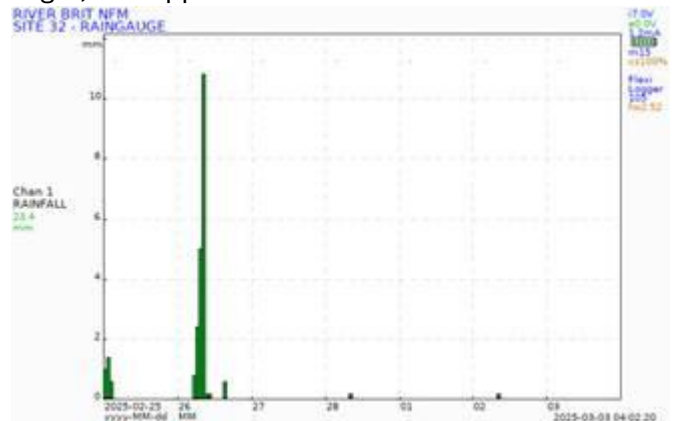
- We continue to work with Dr Peter Stone and the Environment Agency to better understand the impact and movement of sediment within the Brit catchment, with the aim of reducing the management burden on Bridport's flood defences. A headline figure is that on average 6,000 tonnes of sediment is lost to the River Brit every year, and 80% of this movement happens in only 5% of the year, mainly October and November.
- 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're thrilled to announce the arrival of The Landscapes Lab, a project close to our hearts, working alongside National Landscapes to help protect the land we love. We're passionate about finding practical ways to support healthier ecosystems and support agriculture. That's why it was a huge honour to get involved in this project - it's a chance to bring people together to learn, research, and take action. This new space will be a hub for the community—welcoming volunteers, farmers, and students to explore the science behind a thriving environment."*

Hannah Dyke, Operations manager, Pineapple Estate



The Landscape Lab © Ian Rees



Rainfall in the Brit captured using new rainfall gauge



Reconnecting the River Simene to its floodplain © Peter Stone



Happy volunteers, despite the rain, at a training session © Caroline Pearce

[www.dorset-nl.org.uk/project/rivers](http://www.dorset-nl.org.uk/project/rivers)



## 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

c. total project costs of £4,001,653.16.

The pot is effectively closed to new applicants, having allocated the available fund.

### 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 5 project case studies on the National Landscape website [Wytch Farm Landscape and Access Enhancement Fund](#) | [Dorset National Landscape](#)

## LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

National Grid, through their [Landscape Enhancement Initiative](#), have supported three projects in the Dorset AONB 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](#).

- d. 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.

Linking Chalk, River & Vale outputs delivered to date:

- 80m dry stone wall restored
- 3 ponds restored
- 2.8ha scrub managed to support grassland restoration
- 0.35ha wildlife corridor enhanced for nature

*Investment through the LEI has allowed us to deliver significant landscape enhancement in the Dorset AONB, 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.
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy is now out for consultation at: [Dorset's local nature recovery strategy](#) until the 30<sup>th</sup>
- July Working with Dorset Council on the production of Climate Change Adaptation Plans.

## 2.2. CLIMATE

The AONB 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 AONB 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](#)

### **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 has now been extended to run until March 2026 (5 years total), with a total grant funding pot of £3.3 million. £1.28 million was allocated and spent in Year 4 (including £403k for 2 Historic Buildings Restoration Grant (HBRG) projects – see later section). In 2024/25, FiPL attracted £277k of cash match funding in addition to direct farmer/applicant funds.

172 projects in total have been completed since 2021 (72 in Year 4). Highlights include:

- The Hogchester Farm & Dorset Wildlife Trust Brush-harvester project has now created over 26ha of new wildflower meadows at 50 sites.
- 11 kilometres of hedgerows have been planted, with a further 4.5 kilometres of hedgerow restored and 6000 trees planted (including 709 orchard trees).
- 66 projects have aimed to reduce flood risk and 64 have increased understanding of carbon in the farmed environment.
- Several projects are contributing to efforts to secure the future of the Duke of Burgundy butterfly in one of its last remaining metapopulations, with over 30 landowners involved.
- New classroom built at Tom and Sophie Gregory's Home Farm, Sadborow, and 94 educational farm visits delivered in 24/25.
- Overall, there have been 261 unique beneficiary farm businesses (76 in Yr 4, with 48 of those new to working with the Protected Landscape. FiPL has helped create three farm clusters and supported six others.
- 77 projects have contributed to making farm businesses more sustainable and nature friendly. Farmers have been supported to move to regenerative farming through a series of workshops and farm visits, many facilitated by Pasture for Life and FWAG. Topics have included soil health, mob-grazing, dung beetles, agroforestry, flax harvesting and processing, and an introduction to agroecology course. A peer mentoring programme has been delivered, as well as one to one advice given on subjects such as soils and nutrient baselines.

[Dorset AONB FiPL webpage](#). includes a series of films, a downloadable pdf detailing all 172 projects 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](#)





Photo credits: top left Tim Williams, bottom right Ellen Rignell, all others Rachel Janes

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 West Dorset primary schools last winter, a second round of workshops has been delivered involving 280 children across 8 primary schools and concluding with two tree/hedge planting days in Loders and Maiden Newton.



### LOW CARBON DORSET

c. 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 April 2023-March 2025. A further one-year transition has been agreed that will continue the programme until March 2026 (amount of finding tbc).

The programme has provided free technical support and grant funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects to businesses, public-sector and community organisations across Dorset Council area. The current programme will continue to provide free technical support but grant funding will be limited to micro/small businesses only. 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 to reduce costs and carbon.
- Stimulate Dorset's low carbon economy and skills.
- Act as an enabler by demonstrating what works and stimulate innovation.

#### Highlights:

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

- 289 grants awarded totalling over £7.4M investment in low-carbon projects in Dorset.
- 1090 applications for support from Dorset's business, community, and public sector organisations.
- Over 10.5 tonnes annual reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e
- 15.95MW of renewable energy capacity installed
- 67 homes with improved energy efficiency
- Over £30m total investment (grant + match funding) in low-carbon projects in Dorset
- You can view projects on Dorset Explorer here: [Climate and Ecology](#)

#### Activity and Outputs – 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

- 106 applications for support from Dorset's business, community, and public sector organisations. Business – 66, Community – 34, Public Sector – 6; 58 grants awarded totalling £764k.
- £1.9M total investment.



- 795 tonnes annual reduction of CO2e (completed projects).
- 2.95MW of renewable energy capacity installed (completed projects).



Dorset Solar Limited



Hydro Screening Unit at Town Mill, Lyme Regis



Solar Canopy and EVCP at Sherborne Town Council



Solar PV at Gold Oak Country Cabins

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

### 2.3. 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.

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

#### 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:

- The Farming in Protected Landscapes programme finished in March 2025 this programme supported 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 2024 we delivered 26 visits in total. 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.
  - *'The farmers went above and beyond to make us welcome, tell us about the farm, keep us hydrated (with their own apple squash!) and feed us with delicious, home grown food, including bread made from their own flour. '*



- Final feedback gathered from the farmers and groups taking part highlighted how important the role of facilitator helped to ensure successful visits took place and how without this additional support capacity would mean that they would not always be able to organise such visits themselves.
- Since launching in October Nature Buddies Network has:
  - Delivered 4 webinars (with more planned) to: Organisations/Hosts, Volunteers, Referrers
  - Attended 3 events to promote the scheme
  - Spoken to 14 potential hosts
  - With 4 waiting to sign up to the scheme (Upton Country Park, National Trust, (walks), Southwest Coast Path Coastal Connectors, Bere Marsh Farm)
  - Nature Buddies has also partnered with Volunteer Centre Dorset to deliver from home Nature Buddies including Walk from Home Buddies & Nature at home buddies

Over the next year we will continue to work towards building the network with promoting Nature Buddies to organisations/groups across the health, nature and heritage sectors to join the Nature Buddies Network.

The team has also engaged with an external evaluator Inside Heritage who will work with the project team to:

- Create a simple Evaluation Framework detailing methods of data capture
- Assist the client team in data capture and create or tweak evaluation tools as needed
- Produce a short high-level Interim Report giving a first indication of the level of evidence against the project's intended outcomes and reflection on the effectiveness of the Nature Buddies Network model. This will include any tweaks and changes which can be made during the remaining life of the funded project to make it more effective and/or efficient
- Produce an End-of-Project Evaluation Report including evidence against outputs and outcomes and any major lessons learnt and/or recommendations for future programmes. Potential to include an Innovation History charting how the Nature Buddies Network model has evolved
- Including a final presentation to the Steering/Advisory Group on key findings and recommendations.



## 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. Since 2023, a focus of the work has been on improving access to the landscape for everyone by working with partners to deliver exciting new access

- b. improvements. Dorset National Landscape, through the Visitor Tourism and Access Manager, also oversees delivery of visitor management projects along the whole of the Jurassic Coast, including East Devon.

Work has mostly focused on:

- Improving Access for All in the landscape
- Reducing, rationalising and improving interpretation
- Replacing/ improving coastal safety signage



Boardwalk improvements at Kingcombe



Work underway at Chideock

Highlights:

- Access for All funding has been put to good use in six locations, including:
  - Chideock has seen a new multi-user route providing a safe off-road route towards Bridport. This has fulfilled a long-held ambition of the local community who have been campaigning for such a route for 10 years.
  - Brownsea Island has a new access ramp into a popular viewing hide, while Kingcombe National Nature Reserve have been able to improve access for all to the Visitor Centre and the toilets.
  - The Piddle Valley now has a safe resurfaced route, connecting villages and routes to school.
- A new safety sign at Eype has been designed and installed to replace an old one which was falling onto the beach, and an additional small double-sided sign has been installed to warn people there is no beach access to West Bay and to use the South West Coast Path.
- Budleigh Salterton, on the Jurassic Coast, has a new, replacement interpretation panel about the fascinating fossil roots which can be seen on the sea front.
- There are six new (replacement) interpretation panels at Charmouth foreshore and village



- Two new (replacement) beach safety signs have been installed at Charmouth East and West Beach
- Replacement 'over stickers' at Wareham station showcase the new Dorset National Landscape branding

Full details in Appendix

*"Many many thanks for backing our project!.... It's wonderful, a miracle and it's going to make such a difference to our village."*

*Will, Chideock village local interest group*

## 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.

- c. 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



d. Event 4 at Wilkswood, Purbeck



### **DORSET NATIONAL LANDSCAPE FUND**

The Dorset National Landscape Fund, formerly the Sustainable Development Fund, annually supports projects that conserve, enhance, protect, and celebrate the National Landscape. This initiative ensures the area remains special for future generations by advancing the goals of the Management Plan.

Highlights: In 2024/25, the Dorset National Landscape Fund proudly allocated £37,500 to support 15 community-driven projects, advancing the goals of the Management Plan.

These initiatives focus on nature recovery, greenspace enhancement, access improvement, heritage conservation, awareness-raising, and celebrating Dorset's unique landscapes.

The funded projects include the Brit Water Voles, Dorset Dry Stone Wall Association, Wraxall Yard Workshops, Bridport Town Council, Thriving Wild, Buckland Newton Family Hub, Emerald Ant, Langton Herring Map, Pymore Reed Bed, Bridport Swift Town, Listening Landscapes, Bridport Youth Dance, Char Dragon Fest, Planet Purbeck Festival, and Arts in Hospital.

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

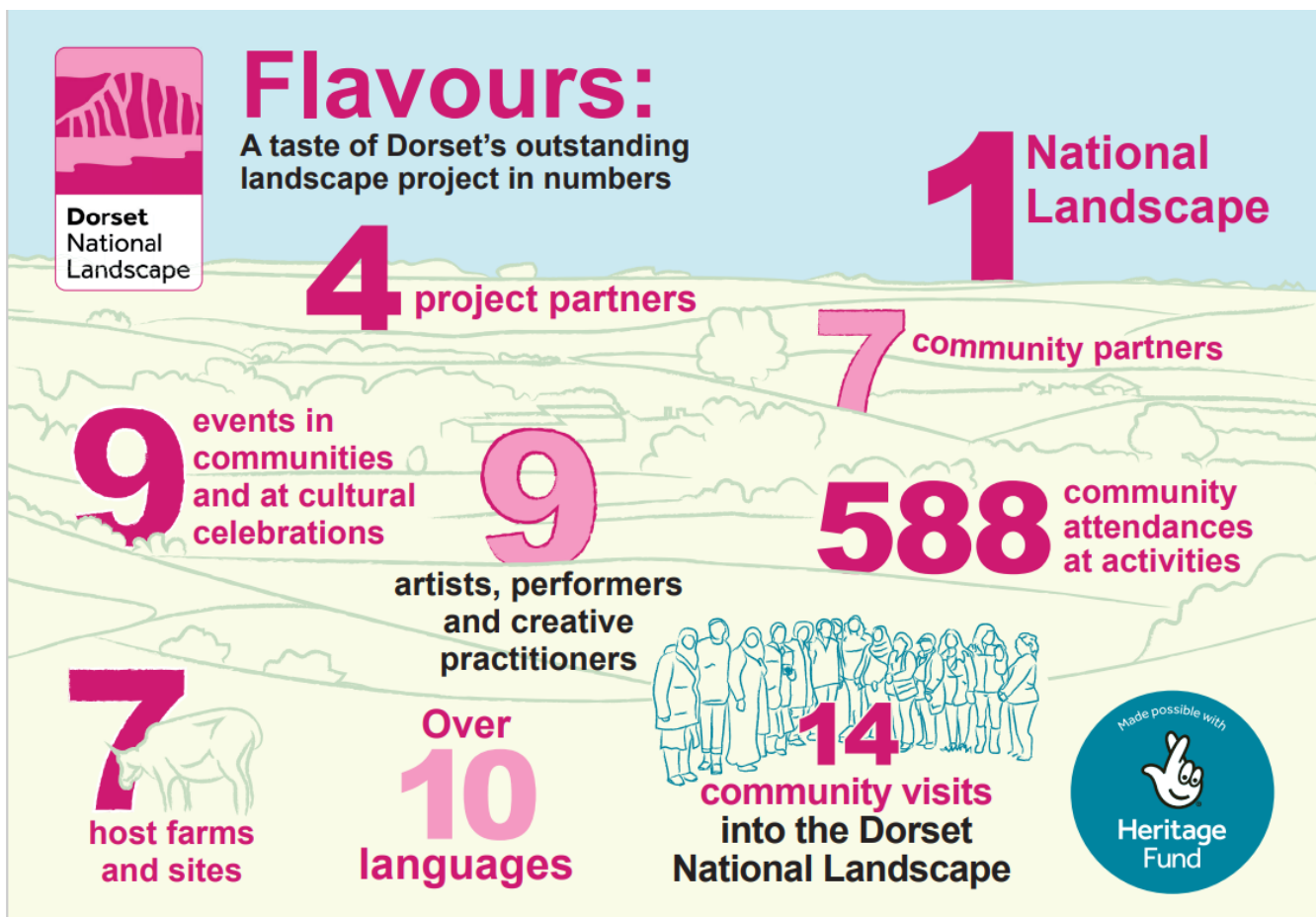




### FLAVOURS: A taste of Dorset's outstanding landscape

The FLAVOURS programme is led by the Dorset National Landscape, in partnership with Dorset Race Equality Council, Activate Performing Arts, Dorset Food and Drink and with support from BPC Indian Community and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The programme is building relationships between Dorset's ethnically diverse communities and the landscape.

During 2024, the Flavours project worked with 8 communities and developed successful visits to the countryside, provide rich experiences for communities and partners alike. FLAVOURS continues to spark vibrant cross-cultural connections through 9 community outings at stunning Dorset locations like Durlston Country Park, Thorncombe Woods, and Kingston Maurward.



The project over-delivered on targets and also underspent on budget, which has enabled an extension of activity ending in October 2025. Engagement with our Flavours community groups is already underway for 2025, with a season of trips to favourite and new venues being planned for spring and summer. A Fusion Dorset Apple Cake bake off with Unity in Vision at the One World Festival in August is planned. A toolkit

tailored for our stakeholders and community groups, providing a solid foundation for continued engagement, repeat visits to venues and collaboration.

#### **FOOD TRAIL – Maiden Newton to Dorchester route**

In 2024 the Dorset National Landscape team secured support from Dorset's Rural Prosperity Fund to create a new food trail. Largely using the infrastructure of the Frome Valley cycleway, this project set out to highlight the route as a way of understanding the food heritage of the area. Route marking, an information board and a paper publication were created over this year.

f.



#### **PROMOTING THE AONB**

- g. 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 AONB, 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.

A new Explore leaflet has been developed and will be distributed in May 2025, which includes a newly designed map. Further upgrade work has been done to the Dorset National Landscape website (including accessibility audit).

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 6095 Instagram 2494, X 9000+ (though no longer using this channel regularly).
- 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. New campaigns have been developed to highlight the special qualities of the National Landscape.
- Dorset Magazine continues to support us with a page or spread dedicated to the Dorset National Landscape throughout 2024 and a good range of articles planned for 2025..

Website: [www.dorset-nl.org.uk](http://www.dorset-nl.org.uk) Facebook: @DorsetNL Instagram: @dorsetnationallandscape X: @Dorset\_NL



## 2.4. 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 264 consultations from April 2024 – March 2025, this being the second largest number on record (with the preceding year having been somewhat higher). These consultations include planning proposals, felling licences, woodland management plans, marine licence applications and requests from statutory undertakers, particularly electricity distribution companies. The majority of consultations relate to planning proposals and, in order to ensure that the Team is focussed on those proposals where our input is most needed, we have been working with managers within the planning department to raise awareness on when to consult us, with guidelines being focussed on major applications and/or applications where it can be foreseen that impacts on natural beauty may be significant.

#### Highlights:

- Major renewable energy proposals within and close to the National Landscape are an ongoing area of interest, with Battery Energy Storage applications within the setting of the National Landscape being an area of increased interest. There has been some reduction in the number of solar farm proposals being handled by the Team, although the developer who had proposed a solar farm at Cruxton, near to Maiden Newton has resubmitted an application for a similar proposal, following their earlier unsuccessful appeal.
- Following a public inquiry into the Council's refusal of the redevelopment proposals for Knoll House Hotel, in Studland, the Inspector subsequently dismissed the appeal, due to concerns



about the scale and character of the proposals. The Team hopes that the owners will be looking to develop revised proposals of a more sensitive nature.

- 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.

### **DORSET FOOD & DRINK**

The future of Dorset Food & Drink CIC (DF&D) is still dependant 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. This ambition placed considerable pressure on the current Coordinator, whose time and capacity was stretched across multiple priorities.

b.

In 2025, Dorset Food & Drink will evaluate its core identity, and strategically reposition itself to align with its evolving goals and values to better serve:

- Our member community
- The wider public
- Potential corporate partners
- The food conversations and ambitions of Dorset Council, Visit Dorset, BCP and other nearby regional food projects projects. (Hampshire Fare, Devon Food & Drink and Food Works in Exeter) To explore business opportunities, collaborations, and meet the buyer showcases for food and drink businesses ready to expand.

During the January DF&D AGM, the Board engaged in transparent discussions on future steps, deciding to maintain the pause on formal memberships temporarily. This pause allows time to reflect and define a clearer long-term vision for Dorset Food & Drink.

Instead of managing memberships, we are now channelling our efforts into sharing food and drink stories while maintaining a more understated online presence. This adjustment allows us to remain agile, focusing on high-value activities for our community, such as hosting events and promoting Dorset's exceptional food, drink, and hospitality businesses.

Highlights:

- The 2025 Dorset Food & Drink events season kicked off with the Abbotsbury SubTropical Gardens Easter Food Fair. As long-term venue partners we curate the stalls and entertainment offer for this well attended and supported event.
  - Our 2025 core events include: The Abbotsbury Swannery Food & Craft Fair, The Dorset Food & Arts Festival and a Winter Food Fair at Athelhampton.
- c.
- Ongoing collaboration with Dorset Farmers Markets.
  - Working closer with Dorchester Town Council to input into their local food, drink, and hospitality vision for the County town in 2025 - now enhanced with our Shared Prosperity Funded [Valley to Market Food Trail](#).

### **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 commissioned writer Louisa Adjoa Parker, who talked to a range of people who live and work in the National Landscape and published her prose poem inspired by the Dorset National Landscape today as part of a national promotion of the writing programme in January. You can read 'This patch of land' and more about this commission here [Louisa Adjoa Parker - Dorset Nature Calling writer | Dorset National Landscape](#) .

Radical Ritual have been commissioned for the Artist Commission, which will culminate in September. Inspired by the enduring mystery of the Cerne Abbas Giant, Radical Ritual Artistic Director Becca Gill and team are working with the local community in Yeovil to devise and create a monumental new mythical creature for the Dorset National Landscape. The presentation of a large-scale artwork in September 2025 during the Inside Out Festival. 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

**River Droplet** - 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

**England on Sea** - 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 Farm Barn, Winterborne Clenston – following the national FiPL funded Emergency Works in 23/24, a national HBRG grant of £317k was awarded to deliver a further phase of stabilisation works and a detailed management plan to enable Clenston Trustees to raise funds for the full structural repair of the barn.
- Westlears Cobb Barn within the Forde Abbey estate – an HBRG grant for £90k supported works to re-roof and restore this barn, taking into account protected species requirements.

e.

The HBRG programme has now finished.

**DORSET FINGERPOST PROJECT**

Dorset's iconic fingerposts, timeless fixtures of the rural landscape, have faced significant decline, with many in disrepair. As Dorset Council no longer oversees their maintenance, restoration efforts rely on community dedication. In partnership with Roger Bond of Normtec and his skilled team of volunteers, the Dorset National Landscape are proud to fund and support the restoration of these historic landmarks, safeguarding Dorset's cultural heritage for future generations.

Highlights:

- Restoration of 27 fingerposts and 12 brackets across various Dorset locations, including Chesil Bank, Burton, Hillfield, Higher Waterstone, Portesham, Broadwindsor, Evershot, West Morden, Lytchett Matravers, Hilton, Marnhull, Corsecombe & Halstock, Manston, Winterbourne Stickland, Netherbury, Bradford Abbas, Ansty, Gillingham, The Ridgeway, Cheselbourne, Comptons, Toller & Wynford, and Beaminster.

- "Our dedicated Fingerpost Champions, expertly guided by Roger Bond of Normtec and supported by CPRE funding, are revitalising Dorset's historic fingerposts for the enjoyment of future generations."*



PEOPLE: Stepping into Nature © Ben Ingram Curtain Raisers at Culliford Tree Barrow © Mike Pettidemange  
PLACE: Inside-Out-Dorset Activate Performing Arts Wild Woodbury © Jayne Jackson Dorset Finger Posts  
2.4e © Roger Bond. *All other photos taken by Dorset AONB Team*

ITEM 3:

<b>ITEM FOR</b>	Information	<b>REPORT BY</b>	Dorset National Landscape Manager
<b>SUMMARY</b>	The Dorset National Landscape team continues to be successful in demonstrating good funding leverage in terms of income generated from a modest local contribution to the core budget. Below is a draft account summary which will be presented to Defra as per our reporting requirements.		
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	This is a report on past income and expenditure, so has no implications on future funding		
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	The Dorset National Landscape Board commends the funding leverage demonstrated by these accounts		

a. It should be noted that a significant contributor to reducing core staff costs is the allocation of time and cost towards FIPL for time committed by core staff. This amounted to around £24,000.

### 3.2. TOTAL EXPENDITURE

27



		DIRECT VALUE						INDIRECT VALUE			TOTAL VALUE
		Defra grant									
		Core	RDEL uplift	CDEL uplift	Access for All	FIPPL	Other cash	Total direct spend	Partner spend & in kind contribs	Volunteer value	Total indirect spend
CORE	Spend line										
	Staff wage costs (incl pension & Employer's NI)	£ 181,418					£ 51,064	£ 232,481			£ 232,481
	Travel & Training	£ 6,325					£ 1,780	£ 8,105			£ 8,105
	Office accommodation & printing, etc	£ 3,637					£ 1,024	£ 4,661			£ 4,661
	Partnership comms	£ 5,183					£ 1,459	£ 6,642			£ 6,642
	Partnership running costs (incl subs for NLA etc)	£ 4,278					£ 1,204	£ 5,482			£ 5,482
	Monitoring & research	£ 3,110					£ 875	£ 3,986			£ 3,986
	CORE total	£ 203,951					£ 57,406	£ 261,357			£ 261,357
	DNL Community Fund	£ 25,417	£ 15,000				£ -	£ 40,417	£ 48,229	£ 24,312	£ 72,540
	Fingerpost project			£ 17,409			£ -	£ 17,409	£ 18,500	£ 2,500	£ 21,000
	Dorset Food & Drink	£ 5,000	£ 6,000				£ 24,395	£ 35,395			£ -
	Wild Purbeck						£ 119,716	£ 119,716	£ 461,701	£ 10,750	£ 472,451
Community Woodlands						£ 25,567	£ 25,567		£ 5,260	£ 30,827	
Stepping into Nature/Nature Buddies	£ 6,000	£ 22,000	£ 16,586			£ 79,989	£ 126,576	£ 18,369	£ 9,210	£ 27,579	
Dorset Rivers	£ 4,000					£ 17,048	£ 21,048	£ 912,419		£ 912,419	
Visitor Management	£ 5,009	£ 15,000				£ 1,656	£ 21,665			£ -	
Landscape Enhancement Initiative - Marshwood						£ 3,545	£ 3,545			£ -	
Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve	£ 5,000					£ 569	£ 5,569			£ -	
Farming in Protected Landscapes					£ 1,490,095	£ -	£ 1,490,095	£ 243,209	£ 49,450	£ 292,659	
Site access enhancements via Litter Free Dorset						£ 8,883	£ 8,883			£ -	
Landscape Enhancement Initiative - Linking						£ 32,891	£ 32,891	£ 8,167	£ 26,625	£ 34,792	
Youth						£ 9,832	£ 9,832			£ -	
FLAVOURS	£ 5,000	£ 5,000				£ 34,336	£ 44,336			£ -	
EDJ-General	£ 2,490					£ -	£ 2,490			£ -	
Capital projects fund		£ 611	£ 52,457			£ 35,527	£ 88,594	£ 28,560		£ 28,560	
Natural Flood Management Project (rev)						£ 45,604	£ 45,604	£ 2,184		£ 2,184	
Natural Flood Management Project (cap)						£ 147,225	£ 147,225			£ -	
Triple Axe	£ 2,000					£ -	£ 2,000			£ -	
Nature Calling	£ 13,833	£ 6,178				£ 42,383	£ 62,395			£ -	
Planning projects	£ 6,005					£ -	£ 6,005			£ -	
Comms projects		£ 27,425				£ -	£ 27,425			£ -	
Sitting Spaces		£ 26,765				£ -	£ 26,765			£ -	
Access for All			£ 35,527	£ 118,324		£ -	£ 153,851			£ -	
Food Trails						£ 28,910	£ 28,910			£ -	
PROJECTS TOTAL	£ 79,754	£ 123,979	£ 123,979	£ 118,324	£ 1,490,095	£ 658,076	£ 2,594,207	£ 1,741,338	£ 128,107	£ 1,869,445	
CORE + PROJECTS	£ 283,705	£ 123,979	£ 123,979	£ 118,324	£ 1,490,095	£ 715,482	£ 2,855,564	£ 1,741,338	£ 128,107	£ 1,869,445	
										£ 4,725,009	

### 3.3. INCOME SOURCES (core & projects)

	Income source	Total £
Defra grant	Core	£ 283,705
	RDEL uplift	£ 123,979
	CDEL uplift	£ 123,979
	Access for All	£ 118,324
	FIPL	£ 1,490,095
Other sources of income	Environment Agency	£ 192,829
	Wytch Farm s106	£ 119,716
	National Lottery Heritage Fund	£ 114,325
	Dorset Council	£ 58,106
	National Landscapes Association	£ 42,383
	National Grid	£ 36,436
	Defra CDEL (internal reallocation)	£ 35,527
	Rural England Prosperity Funding	£ 28,910
	Forestry Commission (DC reserve)	£ 25,567
	Dorset Food & Drink CIC	£ 24,395
	Dorset Catchment Partnership	£ 17,048
	FIPL (internal reallocation)	£ 9,832
	COMF (covid response)	£ 8,883
	Core reserve	£ 956
	Miscellaneous income	£ 569
	TOTAL	£ 2,855,564

### 3.4. SUMMARY

- a. Total direct spend by the AONB Partnership is £2,855,564 (core and projects)
- b. Total 'added value' makes the effective total £4,725,009; the additional £1,869,445 is derived from £128,107 in volunteer time and £1,741,338 in partner spend on joint partnership and granted projects. Over £1.3 million of this value comes from two programmes the Partnership supported: the Peat Partnership (via a Wytch Farm grant) and the Dorset Rivers programme in which we are an active partner alongside others.

### 3.5. LEVERAGE RATIOS

Direct spend

- b.
- Core funds from Defra & Dorset Council represented 11.9% (£1 → £8.39)
  - Defra core contribution represented 9.9% (£1 → £10.07)
  - Dorset Council core contribution represented 2.0% (£1 → £50.59)

Total value, including volunteer and partner spend

- Core funds from Defra & Dorset Council represented 7.2% (£1 → £13.89)
- Defra core contribution represented 6.0% (£1 → £16.65)
- Dorset Council core contribution represented 1.19% (£1 → £83.70)

[illegible]

## LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY

ITEM FOR	Information	REPORT BY	Dorset Council Nature Recovery Officer
SUMMARY	The LNRS has been drafted and is now out for public consultation. The National Landscape team has been closely involved in its development.		
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	None directly for the National Landscape Partnership, although the team and its initiatives and the funds channelled through the partnership represent a great opportunity for delivery.		
RECOMMENDATION	The Partnership notes the public consultation.		

[illegible]

## 2025-2026 DEFRA FUNDING UPDATE

ITEM FOR	Decision	REPORT BY	Dorset National Landscape Manager
SUMMARY	The Dorset National Landscape Partnership received the letter of intent (to provide funds for 25-26) from Defra on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025. This report gives a brief overview of the Defra funding envelope. Part of this total is allocated as Defra CDEL funds for capital spend. Some options for spend are proposed; the Partnership is invited to discuss those.		
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	Defra funds are offered in a number of strands, as set out below. CDEL is for capital expenditure (e.g acquiring, creating or enhancing an asset), RDEL is for revenue spend (e.g. staff time, feasibility studies, etc).		
	Core RDEL	£283,705	
	Core CDEL	£375,717	
	Access for All CDEL	£198,874	
	FIPL RDEL	£267,567	
	FIPL CDEL	£530,048	
	TOTAL	£1,655,911	
RECOMMENDATION	The Partnership Board approves the recommended capital fund projects		

### 5.1. Background

- a. The National Landscape network has been pressing for better funding for these areas, and has gained more traction on this since the Landscapes (Glover) Review demonstrated the extent to which they are underfunded.
- b. Defra's budgets are constrained, but there is proportionally more CDEL (capital) funding available than RDEL (revenue).
- c. Defra has started to take more of a commissioning approach to Protected Landscape grant – increasingly, the various pots from which we are supported require spend on specific outputs, rather than on priorities within our locally-approved Management Plan. Despite this, there continues to be a good correlation, and some freedom in how the monies are spent.

## 5.2. This year's offer

- a. Our core offer remains flat. While this is in fact a real terms cut (particularly with increased National Insurance costs), this contrasts with a cut to the National Parks' core RDEL budget.
- b. The £375,717 CDEL grant replaces 'uplift' funding in the last financial year of just under £124k RDEL and £124k CDEL. This reflects the challenging internal budget within Defra during this Spending Period.
- c. This year's Access for All offer is about £80k greater than last year's.
- d. Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) funds have reduced from last year, and a much greater proportion of the grant is CDEL this year.



### 5.3. Capital fund criteria

NB criteria for all other strands remain the same as previous years.

Defra's offer stipulates that the core CDEL grant must be spent on capital items within two workstreams:

- a. To support the government's 30x30 ambition. The aim for this fund is to enable sites to move towards eligibility for inclusion as a 30x30 site. In order to do this, a site must pass certain criteria within 3 themes:
  - Purpose: will the site's management objectives deliver conservation outcomes?
  - Protection: will the conservation effort be sustained over a long term (20+ years), and will it be protected against loss or damage?
  - Management: ownership and governance arrangements enable the site's management for conservation outcomes.
- b. Spend to save, spend to earn, or spend 'to avoid unnecessary use of RDEL'. This criterion was developed mainly for the National Parks, where Defra perceive inefficient use of RDEL and wish to encourage further income-generating opportunities.

#### 5.4. Capital fund opportunities

Without advertising the fund, various funding opportunities have come forward from partner organisations and via the FIPL grant enquiry system. These are:

- a. 30x30: A request for £250,000 to support one of two land acquisition targets by the National Trust. This would be a small contribution towards the total; other support likely to be found from nutrient neutrality funding.
- b. 30x30: A request to support DWT to purchase a cut-and-collect Rytec tractor attachment to enable more grassland restoration in partnership with Hogchester Meadows. An 80% (non-commercial) offer would be around £20,000.
- c. 30x30: A request to support further restoration of the river Axe downstream of Mosterton. This would extend previous restoration projects where the riverbed has been raised by introducing woody debris and stone, reconnecting the river with its floodplain – to great effect. The amount required depends on extent of the project but is likely to be between £25,000 and £55,000.
- d. Avoid unnecessary use of RDEL: continued support for the popular fingerpost project would fall into this category: we would usually support this programme with a grant from core funds (RDEL in years prior to last); supporting this also saves Dorset Council expenditure on fingerpost (and milestone) upkeep. An allocation of around £15,000 would be sufficient.

[illegible]

## MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

<b>ITEM FOR</b>	Decision	<b>REPORT BY</b>	Dorset National Landscape Manager
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<p>The team are currently working on a draft for public consultation. This will come to the Partnership Board in June for final amendments and approval.</p> <p>This item introduces an emerging new vision for the landscape, and proposes the process for public consultation.</p>		
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>We are likely to require small-scale spend on animation for consultation events, and the final plan's publication will need some budget for design/print and online presentation.</p>		
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<p>The Partnership Board approves the emerging vision and public consultation outline.</p>		

### 6.1. Current progress

- a. The team has been engaging partners for input on the vision, overarching issues and opportunities, topic-based issues and opportunities, policy framework and actions

- b. A draft is coming together for presentation to the Board for discussion and approval as a consultation draft on the 24th June (2pm). The target date for sending this out to the Board is 3rd June
- c. Public consultation period is to be 14th July – 7th September
- d. A schedule of responses to the public consultation and amendments to the draft will be presented to the Board at the meeting on the 20th November
- e. This will feed into Dorset Council's adoption process for the Cabinet meeting on the 9th December

## 6.2. **Emerging draft vision**

The Dorset National Landscape Partnership is working towards a future in which the management of the landscape and designation enables people to live in harmony with nature. The vision is for a stunningly beautiful, well-protected landscape in which:

- Nature thrives, not just in protected areas and reserves but across the whole landscape, coast and adjacent seas. There is a well-linked, expanded network of high-quality habitats managed at a scale which allow functioning natural processes. Water is clean in our wetlands, streams, rivers, and sea, supporting all life. Streams and rivers are naturalised and healthy throughout our catchments. Woodlands are expanded and many more trees are evident in the landscape, providing timber, fibre, fruit, nuts and forage, as well as spaces for people and nature.
- Climate change has stabilised by achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions in all sectors – energy, buildings, transport and land use. The landscape is resilient against climate shocks by widespread use of nature-based solutions and healthy agricultural soils. There is active adaptation to coastal change for nature and people, enabling natural processes to continue.
- Good quality food is produced by regenerative, resilient and sustainable farming which focusses on soil health and has a net benefit for climate and nature.
- Heritage assets are well cared for, and our cultural heritage is celebrated; it is easy to experience the time depth of this special place.
- A landscape-based, circular economy provides a range of profitable livelihoods, supporting thriving communities and enhancing the place it relies upon. Jobs in the farming, forestry, nature, heritage, visitor economy and cultural sectors are well-rewarded, well-respected and offer a wealth of opportunities for young people and new entrants. There is enough housing to meet a genuinely local need; new build includes locally grown timber and fibre.
- Everyone can freely experience, engage with, learn about and celebrate the area's outstanding natural beauty and get involved in its enhancement as local residents and welcomed visitors. The landscape's outstanding natural and cultural heritage inspires ongoing engagement, learning, research and artistic endeavour.

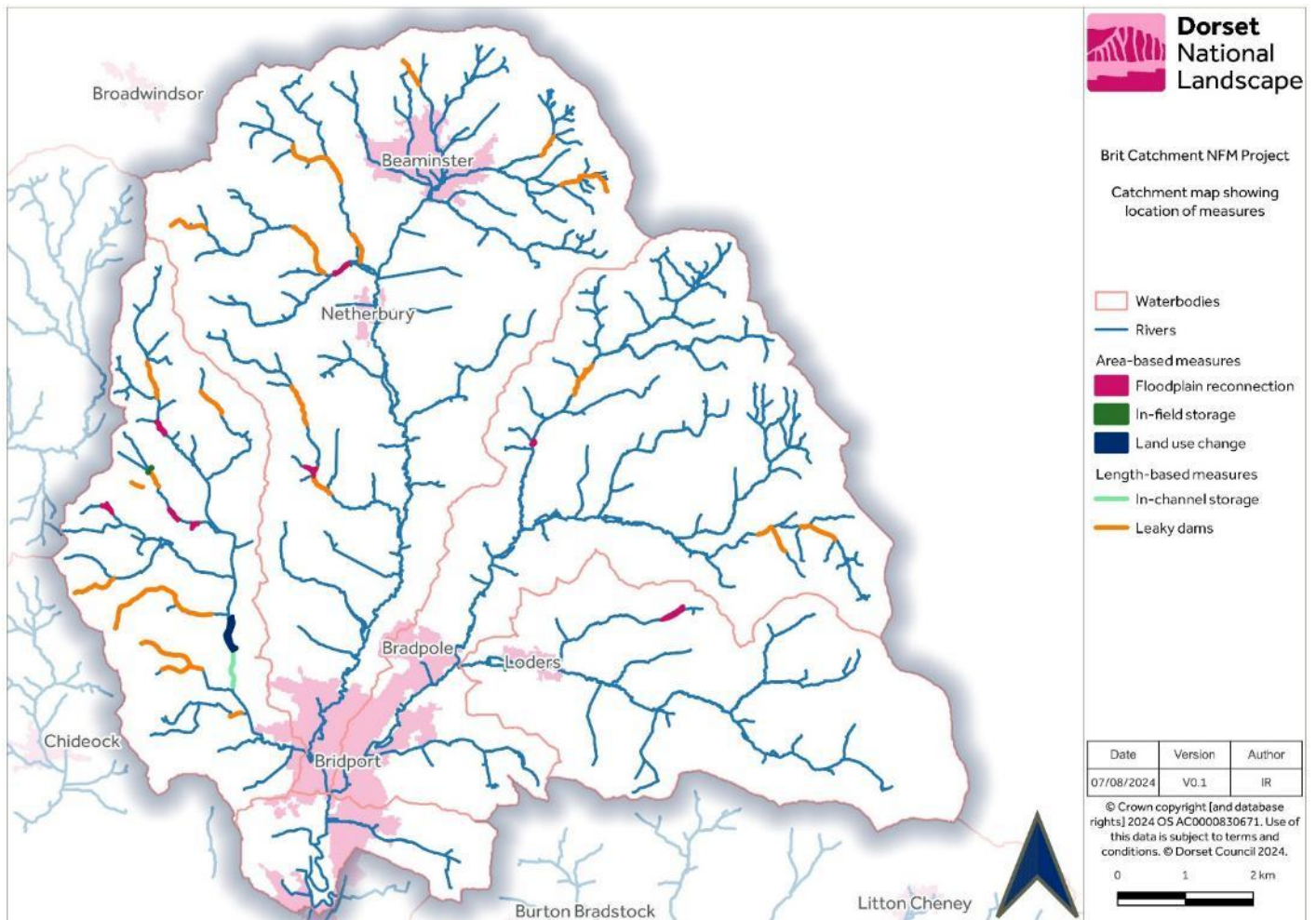
## 6.3. **Public consultation**

- a. The team is receiving support from Dorset Council's consultation team, and will develop a communications strategy in partnership with Dorset Council's communications team. Partners will get directly notified of the opening of the consultation.
- b. An online questionnaire will be developed with and hosted by Dorset Council's consultation team. A key objective is to enable in-depth responses as well as light touch responses.
- c. Quantitative data and qualitative output will be gathered.
- d. For each of the main sections respondents will be asked the extent to which they support on a 0-5 rating. There will be free text boxes to enable people to respond to prompts to add:



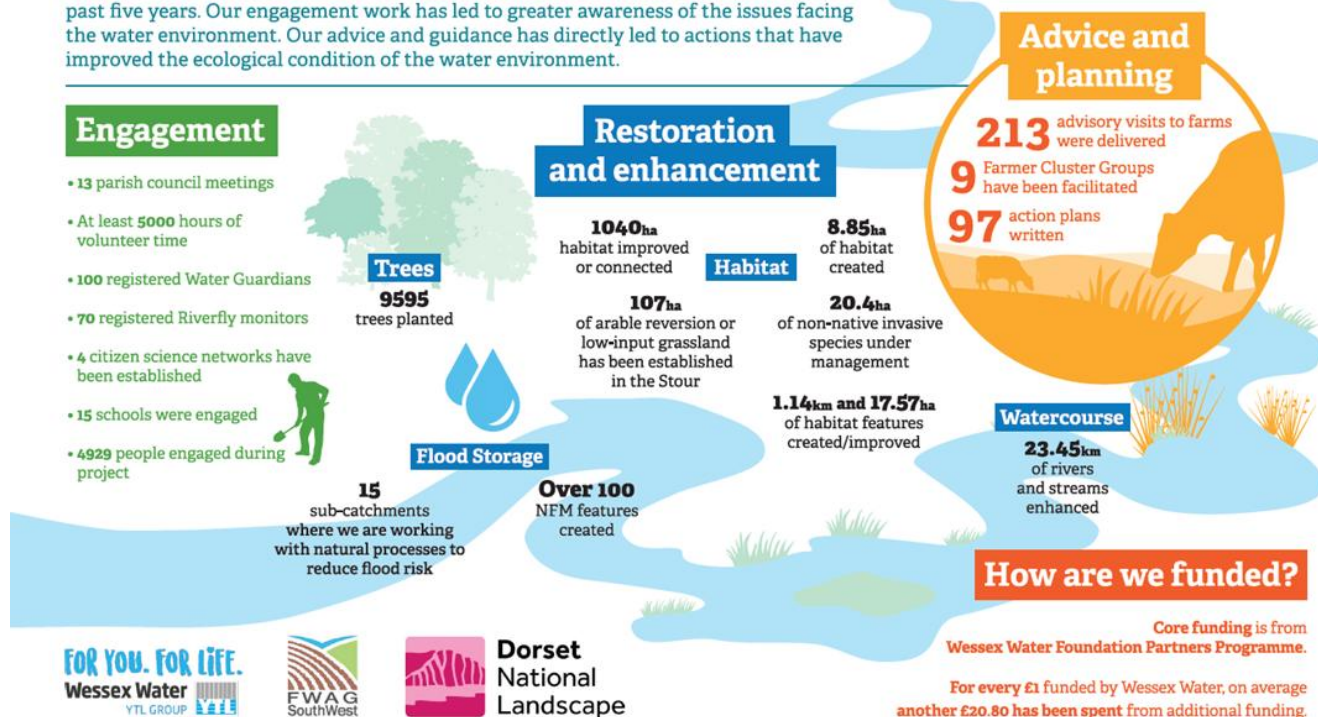


- Two in-field flood storage areas, small bunds that will hold back water on high-risk overland flow routes.
- The total value of delivering the project is £665,000, with £625,000 requested from the Environment Agency. Match funding is provided by partner time, Farming in Protected Landscape, and future 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.
- 



# Dorset Wild Rivers 2020-2025 Achievement Highlights

The following highlights were delivered by the Dorset Wild Rivers partnership over the past five years. Our engagement work has led to greater awareness of the issues facing the water environment. Our advice and guidance has directly led to actions that have improved the ecological condition of the water environment.



## 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) Rhoddi 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 24/25 highlights 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 over 30ha created during FiPL programme.
- 409 walnut, apple, pear, cherry, cobnut, medlar and plum at 9 new orchard sites were planted, making total number of fruit trees planted in programme 709 across 17 sites.

#### Climate

- FiPL has planted over 11km of new hedgerow in the first 4 years of the programme (2925m in Year 4).
- Third season delivered 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.
- 94 educational visits some including additional food preparation and cooking sessions will have been delivered within 24/25 financial year making FiPL programme total 210.
- New classroom built at Tom and Sophie Gregory's Home Farm, Sadborow.

#### 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.

#### LOW CARBON DORSET

The Low Carbon Dorset website hosting has moved to Dorset Council.

[Low Carbon Dorset - Dorset Council](#)

LCD Exhibition - An exhibition of professional photographs, telling the story and outcomes of the EU funded Low Carbon Dorset programme, through the people and places supported was held in 2024. Beginning in July 2024 to exhibition continues to travel across the County and is currently visiting libraries. The following locations have so far hosted the LCD exhibition:

Bridport Arts Centre, Durlston Country Park, Swanage, Verwood Hub, Sherborne Abbey, Dorset History Centre, Dorchester, National Trust, Kingston Lacy, Jubilee Pavilion, Lyme Regis, Weymouth Library, Wimborne Minster, County Hall, Dorchester and Upton Library.

[Our journey to net zero - Dorset Council](#)



Official event launch at Kingston Maurward College.



Upton Library April 2025

## 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

- A new safety sign at Eype has been designed and installed to replace an old one which was falling onto the beach, and an additional small double-sided sign has been installed to warn people there is no beach access to West Bay and to use the South West Coast Path.
- Budleigh Salterton, on the Jurassic Coast, has a new, replacement interpretation panel about the fascinating fossil roots which can be seen on the sea front.
- 6 new (replacement) interpretation panels have been installed at Charmouth foreshore and village, and 2 new (replacement) beach safety signs are now in place at Charmouth East and West Beach, working with relevant partners such as Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre, the Jurassic Coast Trust and RNLI.
- Replacement 'over stickers', showing new Dorset National Landscape branding, professionally attached to welcome and orientation signage at Wareham station

Our work to improve signage is always done in partnership, usually comes out of a request for help, and is almost always funded by partners, with a small project management fee to Dorset National Landscape.

#### Access for All projects (Defra funded)

- After a delay due to uncertainty on the exact location of mains gas, the creation of a brand new multi-user route running from Chideock to Quarr Lane has been completed. The route is nearly a mile in length (will hopefully be extended with the next round of A4A funds) and has been wholeheartedly welcomed by the local community. The views are amazing too!
- Multi-user routes have been resurfaced and improved at Hilfield Nature Reserve and West Bay. The latter links to a well-used tramper route from Highlands End holiday park, greatly widening opportunities for exploration for everyone, and offering fantastic sea views
- 3 sections of public bridleway have been resurfaced and improved in the Piddle Valley. 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
- At Brownsea Island, we funded improved access to the Tern Hide which means everyone can now enjoy this peaceful spot
- At Kingcombe National Nature Reserve, a new access ramp with oak handrails into the Visitor Centre, boardwalk and track improvements, new surfacing for easy access to the toilets and new nonslip treads on boardwalks down to the river have made the site safer and much more accessible for everyone.

#### 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 a honey-tasting session with beekeeper Ahmed. Despite an unexpectedly large turnout, the event ran smoothly, with enthusiastic discussions for future visits. Photographer Lara captured family moments amid the beautiful setting, leaving attendees with cherished memories.

##### September 2024: Women's Retreat at Durlston Country Park

FLAVOURS hosted a women-only day at Durlston Country Park, providing a valuable day for relaxation and connection in nature. The Women enjoyed guided walks, mindfulness exercises, and a shared lunch, despite rain in the afternoon, which led to creative indoor activities. Rain capes thoughtfully provided by FLAVOURS encouraged further outdoor exploration, with some women expressing interest in revisiting with family.



#### October 2024: Brazilian Children's Day at Upton Country Park

FLAVOURS welcomed children from a Brazilian Saturday school to Upton Country Park, where they enjoyed nature activities, including bug hunts, woodland art, and an interactive acoustic session. A picnic by a Brazilian caterer and teacher-led games created a joyful atmosphere, leaving children and parents excited for future nature visits.

#### PROMOTING THE AONB

The team undertook a series of Annual Forum talks in Bridport, Blandford and Furzebrook to an audience of parish & town councillors, Dorset Council members and members of community groups and partner organisations. Audience numbers were fair (c 65 people in total) but engagement was good; attendees provided feedback to a series of questions related to future activity:

- Working landscape: Community Trees, citizen science, targeting of FIPL
- Accessing, enjoying & understanding: Access for All investment, Nature Buddies hosts/volunteers, Talking Tent events, youth/multicultural groups
- Planning for landscape quality: contributing to a debate about how to achieve the balance between enabling renewable energy and landscape/visual impact, farm diversification and the extent to which it can support sustainable farm business, and an offer of assistance to Neighbourhood Planning groups.