

## Exmoor National Park Authority (NPA) Exmoor Panel Update 20/06/19

**Rural Worker and Succession Farm Dwelling Guidance Consultation:** Draft guidance has been published for public consultation from **7<sup>th</sup> May until Wednesday 31st July 2019**

The consultation can be found on the ENPA website <http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/rural-worker-and-succession-farm-dwelling-guidance-consultation> and copies of the reports are available at:

- Exmoor House in Dulverton;
- the National Park Centres at Dulverton, Dunster and Lynmouth;
- Lynton and Porlock libraries; and
- Somerset West and Taunton Offices in Williton and North Devon Council Offices in Barnstaple.

The response form is also available to view and download. If more space is needed then further forms can be printed or photocopied or additional sheets appended.

**Comments can only be made on the draft guidance as the Local Plan is already adopted and therefore it does not form part of the consultation.** This is explained in a “Quick Guide” document which can be found here: [http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1615564/Rural-Housing-Quick-Guide-and-diagram.pdf](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1615564/Rural-Housing-Quick-Guide-and-diagram.pdf)

There is also a “Frequently Asked Questions” document can be found here: [http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1615537/Rural-Housing-FAQ-for-web.pdf](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1615537/Rural-Housing-FAQ-for-web.pdf) and

The draft document intends to assist those who are seeking to provide a rural worker or succession farm worker’s dwelling – this includes guidance for farm and forestry workers for the younger generation taking on the farm business. It therefore sets out detailed guidance on the practical aspects of making planning applications for new homes for those working in land based businesses in the National Park. Adopted Local Plan policies require such development to meet certain tests and the draft guidance explains in more detail how these issues should be addressed. It also explains size requirements and provides advice on location, siting and design considerations.

The document is intended to be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to enable greater weight to be given to it when deciding relevant planning applications.

**Housing:** Since 2005, over 200 local people on Exmoor have benefitted from locally tied affordable homes. Some have been self-build, some delivered by private developers or landlords and others by housing associations.

The Exmoor Rural Housing Network has looked to help find solutions. The Network provides a forum for a number of Exmoor based organisations with an interest in housing. Action has included recruiting and training 'Local Housing Contacts' to act as a link within communities and help signpost households to the appropriate organisations.

Over the last couple of years, households in most Exmoor parishes have also received a housing need questionnaire, enabling up to date information on the number, type and size of affordable homes needed.

The next steps are to work jointly with the community to address any need identified. This is already underway for the parishes of Cutcombe, Exford, Exton/Bridgetown, Luccombe, Luxborough, Timberscombe, Winsford and Wootton Courtenay who, following a 2018 survey have set up an affordable housing group with the National Park Authority to identify solutions.

**Self Build Tour:** We have also been working with Exmoor Young Voices, jointly organised a tour to visit local need self-build homes on Exmoor to help others considering this approach. It was felt this had been very useful – in particular in the opportunity to see real life examples of floorspace and some of the ways that home builders had found to maximise space including through layout and the use of outbuildings.

**Rural Enterprise Exmoor:** This is early information for local business, those who are self-employed, or are local entrepreneurs about a new project launching later this summer – Rural Enterprise Exmoor.

This research focused project aims to help the National Park and partners to better understand the breadth and depth of business activity within the National Park, gain representative views of the business community and identify key challenges and opportunities to support the Exmoor economy in harmony with its National Park status.

Data from the Office of National Statistics suggests there are some 800 businesses operating on Exmoor – but this is largely derived from VAT registrations, PAYE and / or business rates meaning several of our small enterprises with no formal staff, operating under the VAT threshold without businesses premises are not picked up.

Although the National Park Authority is not the sole economic development body for the area, we recognise that the NPA has a role to play, through facilitation of

planning, making the links and providing a rural voice. This initiative is being conducted in partnership and with support from other bodies such as the District Councils, Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and the West Somerset Opportunities Area. Collectively working alongside the private sector, we hope to refresh our approach to supporting enterprise in this rural area whilst conserving the special qualities of the National Park. As with any area there are obvious challenges and opportunities associated with being based in the National Park but if we don't know who is out there and what they're doing it is difficult to establish what opportunities there are to support them. "

The project will build on the work of the New Economics Foundation conducted over 10 years ago to establish a Greater Exmoor Sustainable Economy Strategy. Work will be starting in July running over an estimated 12-month period to complete an audit of local business activity, gather representative views through surveys, workshops and focus groups and develop a refreshed strategic approach going forward. This approach will consider business views, the role of the Park Authority and partners. It will be used to guide future project development and to feed into the work conducted by others. IF you wish to be kept informed of the work as the project develops please email [RuralEnterprise@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:RuralEnterprise@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk) or call 01398 323665.