

ATTP Operational Group Progress Report

14 September 2011

1. Communications (WA/JW)

a) PR Department

Press coverage is consistent and relevant, helping to promote both the Partnership and the work being done, as well as promoting Dartmoor to a wider audience. This development of the PR department was a direct result of the DP Strategy where it was deemed that a move towards better communication and a raised profile would ensure greater reputation and more members.

We now have an approved PR/Comms Plan for the Active Dartmoor project and Will is working to schedule, generating press coverage. This is done in a number of ways:

i) Business to business e-newsletter

This is circulated every other week and incorporates all member news, updates and benefits. Latest info includes the AGM, guide advertising, the new website, pocket guides and Active Dartmoor.

ii) Consumer e-newsletter

The latest edition of the newsletter was circulated in July and as a result we have seen an increase in visitors to the website of 3,000. Articles included Facebook page and the opportunity to be interactive about Dartmoor, special offers, things to do, events and activities as well as a look at Dartmoor in summer time and the iPhone app. This newsletter is issues to over 3,000 people.

iii) Facebook and Twitter pages

Both social networking sites have proved to be really successful and we have many members supporting the pages as well as the general public. The Fb page is updated every few days, which automatically updates Twitter. We are finding that we receive a good deal of feedback and interaction from members of the group, including opinions on things to do, photos, points of view, legislation etc. We are currently promoting the iPhone app, the magazine and a new photo competition on the Fb page.

b) National/international press coverage & raising the profile of Dartmoor

We continue to provide information for national and international media for features on Dartmoor, working alongside Devon and the other ATPs to promote the county. Current projects include:

- Four page article in Trail on Dartmoor walks
- Two articles in The Times – getting away from it all on Dartmoor
- Devon Life – iPhone app review
- Countryfile Magazine – spooky Dartmoor
- iPhone app – Countryfile, National Trust magazine, Okehampton Times, Tavistock Times, Princetown Times

2. Marketing

a. Material material

i) Visitor's Guide: the 2011 Dartmoor Visitor's Guide is being distributed to all TICs throughout the UK and is available online as a digi brochure on both www.dartmoor.co.uk and www.visitdevon.co.uk.

We have been monitoring requirements for the guide through TICs and take up is remaining at a good level.

Advertising for the 2012 Dartmoor Visitor's Guide is well underway. Moira, Rica and Will are contacting businesses to ensure we reach our sales target of £30,000. The new guide will be ready for issue in December 2011.

ii) Attractions & Activities Map

The new Attractions & Activities map was delivered Wed 7 September. The map has had a complete overhaul to bring it in line with branding and other marketing material. We have new editorial to reflect the Active Dartmoor element, much more focus on outdoor adventure. We also have articles on the new www.dartmoor.co.uk

website, the Active Dartmoor magazine and the Dartmoor iPhone app. 45,000 copies have been printed and are being distributed to businesses across the moor and at events.

iii) Food & Drink Directory

The 2011 publication includes an advert for the DFA and the new iPhone app. It is being distributed across the moor by Carolyn. It is also available online as a digital brochure on www.dartmoor.co.uk

iv) Stickers, badges: being distributed at all events and available to members

v) Window Stickers: distributed to all new and existing members who do not wish to have a plaque

vi) Plaques: distributed to members using Carolyn, DP staff and DNPA Rangers.

vii) Competitions:

- **Enjoy Dartmoor:** We are running a competition for DNPA's guide, which will include a two night stay on Dartmoor and entry into the House of Marbles.
- **Facebook:** we are running a photography competition on Facebook. The prize is a photography course with Tony Cobley (member) and DP gets access to lots of Dartmoor images. This is being advertised within the consumer newsletter, on Facebook and on the website.

viii) DNPA Visitor Centre: Presence in terms of DP branded wall to be provided at Postbridge and Haytor – confirmed by DNPA. Date TBC

ix) Developing the Dartmoor logo as a marque of Dartmoor: now appearing on the back of Jail Ale beer and on the reverse of Jail Ale crisps, Contemporary Craft Fair marketing material, Dartmoor Classic bags and marketing material and Dartmoor maps.

x) www.dartmoor.co.uk hoarding. We have a free hoarding at Whitehouse services. There is the possibility of producing a large advert directing passing traffic to www.dartmoor.co.uk for visitor information.

b. Distribution:

Carolyn continues to fulfil the role of distribution for the Partnership. Carolyn distributes our pocket brochures across the moor to local businesses and is also now delivering our Dartmoor Partnership plaques to members. Carolyn continues to provide WA with businesses that she thinks might be interested in joining the Partnership.

The publications that are distributed are as follows:

Activities & Attractions map

Food & Drink Directory

Ad-hoc promotional flyers and leaflets

All pocket publications are being distributed to Okehampton & Tavistock TICs, as well as DNPA Visitor Centres.

c. Active Dartmoor

We have completed Q2 of the Active Dartmoor project. All is ahead of schedule in terms of website development, thanks to NT and JW completed the second financial return Jul 12. We received £17,639.31 on 12 August as per our project plan.

Quick summary of the project...

The Partnership is managing the project, financially and practically but we are very much working in tandem with Dartmoor Magazine. The main aim is to raise the profile of Dartmoor as a centre for activity, to provide the missing link in the service we already provide to locals and the general public. We are in the process of adding an interactive map to our website which will have downloadable routes, cycle ways, bridleways, climbing spots, kayaking information, accommodation en route, kit hire, events in the area, flora and fauna, travel information and the like. This will be backed up with a twice yearly Active Dartmoor Magazine, the first of which has been produced (Apr 2011) and the second due out 15 September. Funding is still not confirmed for all three years due

to economical instability. However, we do have funding from our partners DNPA (through DSDF), WDBC, GD Leaf and Duchy of Cornwall.

- **Website**

JW has been adding all editorial pages, proofing and working with NM to ensure the website is of the highest possible standard when we go live. JW, NT and her staff have added walking and cycle routes and although there is some way to go, the website is really taking shape. We have had to delay the launch of the site due to other elements taking over but we are still ahead of the planned schedule with our funders. Date scheduled to go live is provisionally booked for beginning Oct.

Magazine

The first edition of Active Dartmoor magazine (ADM) was issued in April. Initial feedback was excellent and the magazine looks really professional. We have received free advert and editorial in ADM which is due out 15 Sept. There will be greater web presence and reference to online version of the mag. We now have an Active Dartmoor section on the website. A SLA has been drawn up to ensure that the relationship between Active Dartmoor magazine and www.dartmoor.co.uk continues to grow after the project has finished. Active Dartmoor magazine is being promoted in the Food & Drink Directory, the Attractions & Activity map, all PR and marketing activity, as well as on the website.

JW to update on Active Dartmoor project at board meeting 14 September

3. Events (including local food)

Hosting:

Coming up:

AGM – 27 Sep

Workshops for extranet (Autumn)

Recently attended:

Dartmoor Classic – June

Coming up:

Widcombe Fair – 13 September

Haldon Hill Open Day – DNPA attending on DP's behalf

All other local events will have a DP presence going forward thanks to DNPA who will take our brochures along with their DNPA caravan.

4. Websites

www.dartmoor.co.uk

The www.dartmoor.co.uk website is going from strength to strength. Since our launch in July 2009, we have generated **120,000 in the first year, increasing to 136,000 in 2011**. This is excellent when the site is so new. We are getting really positive feedback from the general public, members and the media and the site is being used more and more as a source for information. Compared to 2010, (which was a good year) we are **up 31%** on visitors (Jun-Aug) with more new visitors and people staying longer on the site.

SEO

We constantly appear high on the search results for 'dartmoor' and all things relating to visiting Dartmoor (Dartmoor accommodation, Dartmoor activities etc). We do undertake ongoing SEO work to ensure that the site is always as optimized as possible. We also monitor the site daily through Google Analytics which provides us with detailed information of visitor numbers and stats to the [dartmoor.co.uk](http://www.dartmoor.co.uk) site. We are encouraging our members to use Google Analytics for their own sites and have been offering to assist with any business owner who would like help setting this up.

Where we are now...

Active Dartmoor project has meant that we have funding to redevelop the www.dartmoor.co.uk website, adding new functionality which will build on the work already done. The skeleton of the site is now complete and NT, WA and JW have begun populating with walks, bridleways, canoeing, climbing information, cycle paths etc, as well as additional environmental information, more events etc. JW has almost completed the editorial pages, as well as adding images to all of the main pages and proofing the site for errors and changes required. We have a proposed date of end Sept to complete the project, however, there will still be a great deal to add to the site after this date. A presentation of the website will take place at the board meeting.

As part of the Active Dartmoor project, we have funding to undertake extensive SEO work on the new site. This will be taking place as we develop the site and will be fully optimized when we go live.

Discoverdartmoor.com

As part of the Active Dartmoor project and website redevelopment, we have agreed that www.discoverdartmoor.com will be turned off and all pages redirected to www.dartmoor.co.uk.

Website stats:

Dartmoor.co.uk

Unique visits/month

Dartmoor.co.uk Unique visits/month	2009	2010	2011
January	3,859	7,102	10,336
February	4,119	8,214	9,273
March	4,768	9,200	10,262
April	4,458	9,286	11,673
May	4,734	10,565	15,933
June	4,848	10,220	13,134
July	5,330	12,301	15,088
August	10,566	13,747	17,446
September	5,302	9,414	
October	6,076	9,458	
November	5,217	6,299	
December	4,007	4,781	

Snapshot of www.dartmoor.co.uk

Average time on site: 3 mins + 58 secs

Average page views: 6

Bounce rate: 40%

New Visits: 73%

Referring sites: 24.13%

Direct traffic: 7.12%

Search engines: 68.45%

Top searches for dartmoor.co.uk:

Where to stay/camping

Where to stay

What to do

Wild Camping

4. Local food & drink

Dartmoor Farmers Association

We are working hard at the Partnership to ensure that we promote the DFA at every opportunity, encouraging our tourism members to buy local food and to spread the word of the DFA to their guests. DP has supported the DFA in their RDPE bid to further develop the brand, and continues to offer marketing support by way of promotional opportunities at events, press coverage and newsletter. Andy Bradford has been elected as a board director for the Partnership and will represent the DFA, providing an update. This is a very positive development and Andy is really welcome on the board.

Below highlights some of the local food initiatives that have been taking place and are planned for the future:

Membership: DFA has two year membership with DP. We are now in to year three with no payment as yet

Advertising:

- Free full page advert in Food & Drink directory 2011
- Quarter page advert in the Guide in the food & drink section – distributed to all TICs in the UK throughout the year

Website: DFA has a prominent presence on the dartmoor.co.uk website with a direct link through to their website booking pages.

PR: Devon with Kids Footprints Guide, Devon Life, Western Morning News, Good Food Show, Okehampton Times

Events: Showcase Day, networking events, Dartmoor on Your Doorstep, AGM

It was agreed that Richard Dean and WA to work on relationship to exchange information. WA contacts RD on a weekly basis for an update on progress/to find out if there is anything he can promote or write about.

6. Membership & Quality

a) Membership

Lead: JW

Membership retention

All information about the membership scheme can be found in the Membership section of the website. All details of benefits and costs and opportunities are well communicated through the business e-newsletter. Feedback in the office through members has been very positive and we have received very little criticism of the scheme. We have lost some members through organic loss but membership figures have increased from 2010 which is excellent news. We have maintained less than a 10% loss in membership figures, however, membership income has decreased.

It was agreed at the last board meeting in July that fees should be increased for 2011/12 beyond that which was agreed in 2010. There will be an increase of £20 on all membership fees with a discount for those paying on time. This new fee structure will take effect from 30 September 2011. JW has amended all membership documents in preparation and Moira has amended all spreadsheets to reflect the new fees.

Simon Cross has been producing a membership document which will be circulated prior to the September board meeting. This proposal is an additional and new way to recruit members to the Partnership and should bring in a welcome income when it is very much needed.

Membership figures (as of September 2011)

Joined: 2 (since July board meeting)

Left: 4 (since last board meeting)

Serviced 138

Self catering 126

Caravan & camping 21

Accommodation total 285

Attractions 46

Activities 33

Retail 43

Eating Out 51

Attractions, activities and retail total: 173

Total Tourism members 458

Associate members 1

Dartmoor Farmers 30

Trade members 83

Grand total 572*

Joint Dartmoor Partnership + Visit Devon website entries 127

*We have managed to increase membership numbers in 2010/11 which is excellent. We have done this through providing better value for money and real, tangible benefits to members.

Visit Devon

We are offering members a presence on the Visit Devon website at £40 + VAT per member. This is excellent value and is going extremely well. We are meant to reach a target of 135 businesses and have achieved 127 to date. We are finding that this is of great benefit to members and no selling is required.

b) Quality – local inspections

The local inspection scheme is running smoothly with no issues at present. Local delivery of national standards has now been approved. A proposal for delivering that local scheme across Devon has begun but is in the early stages at present. Rosie Bates at Visit Devon has confirmed that all progress will be communicated but nothing has been confirmed at present.

In the meantime, JW has made changes to the Inspection Disclaimer to incorporate the new Energy Performance Certificate. JW Has also communicated the changes to members through the newsletter and added information to the website: <http://www.dartmoor.co.uk/site/membership/training-events-and-news/>

7. Sustainability

Dartmoor First

DNPA and DP are promoting Dartmoor First on the websites, through staff, rangers, inspectors and the member newsletter. There are now 66 businesses with the award. The award is being promoted at all events. All Dartmoor First award winners have an additional presence on the www.dartmoor.co.uk website. This award will be promoted highly within the Active Dartmoor project.

8. Financial Control

Budget

The budget for 2010-14 was produced and agreed in March 2010. We have been continuing to work within that budget successfully. Based on this four year budget, a new agreed monthly budget has been produced which Moira is working to effectively and is presented at each board meeting.

We are this year, 2011, standing alone financially and this is not easy. Not only have we lost funding from DNPA and WDBC, we have additional core items to cover that were previously paid for direct by WDBC (web hosting and distribution). Changes in the economic environment, the loss in funding and the new Active Dartmoor project over the last year have meant that the budget needs to be reviewed and changes made.

We now have in place Alan Knight, treasurer, who is working hard to produce a Long Term Plan for 2012 onwards as well as producing a monthly forecast for the board. We have also been developing ways to earn additional income so that we are not as reliant on membership for survival. These are:

- **Sponsorship**

We are approaching large relevant organizations to ask for sponsorship, support etc.

- **Featured business advertising on the website**

As part of the Active Dartmoor project and the website redevelopment, we have been able to add the functionality of advertising on our website. Work is being undertaken now and will be live by October. Fees for advertising were approved at the July board meeting. Once the website is live we will communicate advertising opportunities to members.

- **Additional marketing work for other organizations**

We have been asked to work with other organizations such as Dartmoor Way. If they gain funding, we will have a role in marketing the route on the www.dartmoor.co.uk website and this will bring some additional income to the Partnership.

- **Project work**

It took a year to gain funding and approval for the Active Dartmoor project, which began in Jan 2011. The project will take place over three years and totals £130,000 in funding. The project will not only bring additional income to the Partnership, it will also help to raise the profile of Dartmoor and generate new business members as a result.

9. Monitoring

a) STEAM (Richard Drysdale): DNPA has been using STEAM to monitor visitor numbers and bed bookings over the past three years. We have the latest figures and RD has provided an overview. The overall trend is positive but Serviced Accommodation took a dip in 2009 but non-serviced increased. This was higher than the national average but did follow the national trend – people self-catering rather than staying in hotels. Presuming that 2010 is positive it would show increased visitor figures year on year since the Partnership was in place...a good thing.

b) A survey was circulated to members to gather feedback on online bookings. This was specifically for the Active Dartmoor project and website development to gain an idea of how members might utilise the online booking facility on the www.dartmoor.co.uk site.

10. Business Support

Liaison with the Devon DMO

a) Nadine Trout represents Dartmoor on the board of Visit Devon and the marketing group. We are selling advertising space on the Visit Devon site and this is going extremely well. Visit Devon continues to act as a voice for Devon, promoting the region to a national and international audience.

b) Visit Devon has an excellent PR Agency, A Head for PR, who DP utilise as much as possible. We are currently in discussion with them about Active Dartmoor and how to promote the iPhone app.

11. Internal structure of Dartmoor Partnership

The Dartmoor Partnership Strategy 2010-14 was produced and agreed by the board in March 2010. Since that date we have been working to achieve the aims and objectives, putting changes in place internally and streamlining the organization. The main aims were as follows:

Communicate with members to maintain stability and ensure satisfaction. This is being achieved through our e-newsletter, regular email updates and daily contact with members. We receive good feedback and no longer have complaints on a daily basis, as was the case when the Partnership first formed. We have in excess of 90% retention of members which shows that they are happy with the service they are getting. Lastly more businesses than previously are taking advantage of their benefits and opportunities which shows an understanding of membership.

Reformulate membership packages to reflect the true cost. Again this has been achieved at the 2010 renewals. As per the strategy, we are due to increase membership rates again in 2011, offering a discount for those that return payment within 30 days.

Reduce overheads as a % of the budget and increase communications outside of the region. Again, this is being achieved. We underwent a complete audit of the core spending within the company and cut spending where we could. Banking costs were reduced, phone and internet companies changed, business rates reduced, distribution costs discounted. We are looking at further ways to reduce overheads such as joining office space with other organizations.

Communications were increased outside of the region by appointing a Membership & Communications Officer to develop a PR Department within the Partnership. We now achieve good coverage locally, regionally and nationally and work well with Visit Devon and the other ATPs.

Source alternative funding streams while achieving “green” status. We have achieved this through our Active Dartmoor project. We are also developing online advertising and sponsorship facilities on the www.dartmoor.co.uk website which will bring additional income to the Partnership over time. All of these alternative income streams are online and reduce the amount of paper that is used within the office. We have developed an environmental policy which is being adhered to by all staff and we are working towards being as paperless as we can be.

Concentrate our efforts on PR/web development and sustainability. Similar to above, we are developing the www.dartmoor.co.uk website as part of the Active Dartmoor project. The additional functionality will enable us to generate additional income which will assist us in becoming sustainable financially. Alongside the online development, we now have an established PR Department (all be it small). PR is the greatest tool in raising the profile of the Partnership and of Dartmoor for very little or no outlay at all.

Become more efficient and effective with a greater level of delivery through increased skills and more streamlined systems & processes. We have made significant changes to the workings of the Partnership. Membership was streamlined making administering the paperwork much less time consuming. Our Membership Officer left the Partnership and was replaced with a new role, that of Membership & Communications. These staff changes were crucial to ensuring the Partnership was more efficient and effective. There is significantly reduced duplication of work and the standard of delivery is much higher. Businesses are contacting the office to find out about joining which is a direct result of developing a PR Department.

We now also process the banking and the wages online. However, there are still efficiencies to be made. The financial process is outdated and both Moira and JW would welcome an experienced financial mind overhauling the systems that are in place. This should now be possible with the appointment of Alan Knight as treasurer. A meeting took place on 20 June to discuss all finance elements.

It was agreed at the last board meeting (11 May) that each director would take on projects on behalf of the Partnership, in an effort to offer assistance to the small in-house team. The roles are as follows:

Marketing:

Keith Green
Jackie Dawes
Stella West-Harling

Commercial:

Simon Cross

All elements:

Nick Smith

Membership:

Caroline LeMessurier

Barry Bennett

Financial:

Keith Green

Alan Knight

Dartmoor Farmers Limited:

Andy Bradford

Keith Green

Richard Drysdale

Each project will be identified as and when something arises at the board meeting and the relevant working group will spend time working on a paper which will be presented at the following board meeting for approval.

Whilst there is still a great deal of work to do, a huge amount of change has taken place and we are making significant steps towards a financially independent future.