



## Haytor Case Study

An example of a heavily used site with access to the High Moor, looking at Lower Haytor car park and the Information Centre.

### Introduction to Haytor

Haytor is the most prominent landmark in South Devon. From the top of Haytor you can see much of South Devon. It is popular attraction and has been since Victorian times. The area is access land, Common land and one of the few areas actually owned by the National Park Authority. The local farmers that have the right to graze their cattle, sheep and ponies are called the commoners. These animals have grazed the area for thousands of years and are the main way the moorland is managed. The area around the Tor is an isolated part of the high moor containing many of Dartmoor's typical granite features both natural and man made.

### Information Centre

Good quality information is one important way to influence and manage the visitors. Visitors are encouraged to enjoy Dartmoor fully, but in a way that does not conflict with our duty to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park. The new visitor centre not only serves the visitors to Haytor Down, but lies on an important route into moor and is also used by people visiting the attractive village of Widecombe in the Moor.

### Toilets

Toilets are an essential facility in a location used by thousands of visitors. They are expensive to build and maintain at a high standard, and are often taken for granted. If toilets are closed it rapidly leads to unpleasant and unhygienic conditions around the site. The only problem is that toilets attract even more visitors to a site.

### Car Park

An area of tarmac may not look that remarkable but on the difficult waterlogged Dartmoor conditions it took a considerable effort to create this car park. The limited capacity of the parking area is the simplest way the National Park Authority has of controlling the maximum numbers of visitors to that site. The size of the car park is linked to what the Authority considers the visitor "carrying capacity" for the area.

### Coach Parking

The car park is a popular starting point for school groups and other coach parties going for walks on the moor. A new area of tarmac was created off the Common land behind the Information Centre. This allows three coaches at a time to unload their groups without being seen for miles around and blocking the other cars in the car park.

### Cattle Grid

Grazing cows, sheep and ponies are the main way that farmers manage the moorland and they have done this for thousands of years. Visitors are newcomers that need to make way for these important

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animals. To keep the livestock on the common and separate them from dismounting coach parties we have constructed a cattle grid at the entrance to the coach parking area.

### Information signboard

The centre is not always open so visitors need to be able to find some information at all times. This is done with an information signboard. It has an explanation of the main features of interest around Haytor. It has a map showing which areas of land are access land, which are private property and where the public have rights of way. This helps find there way around and avoid trespassing on local resident's private property.

One part of the sign contains advertisements for nearby businesses which provide goods and services for visitors and tourists. This indicates the importance of visitor's spending money to the local economy and to create employment for local people.

### Bus Stop

The sign announcing the bus service represents considerable investment and planning that has gone into providing public transport. To make tourism on Dartmoor more sustainable and reduce the carbon footprint of tourism in the National Park, visitors are encouraged out of their cars and onto buses. The 'Haytor Hoppa' is one scheme to try and do this.

### Banks and boulders

The most effective way of managing the behaviour of visitors is by good design and practical landscaping. The small banks and granite boulders around the car park as well as the **Roadside Banks** are the most effective tools we have. When we control where and how many people can park at any one place and subtly direct where walkers can walk away from the car park with features like the **Stone Gateway** they are not being bullied or badgered into doing the right thing.

### Ice Cream Van

On sunny days the visitors to the car park may well want an ice cream, this creates a commercial opportunity so the National Park has sold the rights to sell ice cream to the highest bidder. In return they provide a permanent spot and do not let other traders on the car park. The van driver has to provide a wind proof litter bin and checks and clears the car park of any litter caused by the ice cream Van.

### Bike and horse tethering posts

This is an encouragement to people using the facilities who have come here on bicycles or on horseback.

### Swaling

Swaling is the name for controlled burning on the moorland, which is used by the local farmers in the winter, to clear the older gorse bushes, which in turn allows fresh new plant growth. The livestock prefers to graze the younger fresher plants.

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### Traffic Counter

This is a method allowing the National Park to estimate the numbers of people using the site and comparing the use of the area in different seasons, years, or under different weather conditions. The Information Centre also counts the number of people passing through its doors

### Path Restoration work

Under very wet or very dry conditions thousands of people's feet can destroy the plant cover which is mainly grass along the paths. Exposed soil or peat erodes rapidly with running rain water creating an ugly mess with gullies, mud and loose boulders. To minimize the damage and repair the area while continuing to allow people across takes careful management. The National Park Authority restores paths by:

- reseeding with our moorland grass seed mix,
- laying turf brought in from elsewhere,
- widening paths to spread the load.
- laying down grass drains to divert the running water,
- putting down flat granite stepping stones to save the grass.

### New Wall

When the National Park Authority needs to rebuild or carry out new works they will try to use traditional local materials and skills that blend into the surroundings as shown by this wall/bank/ hedge.