



# State of the Park Report 2025

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

# INTRODUCTION

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Dartmoor National Park has witnessed some significant challenges over the past five years, each leaving its mark on this special place. This State of the Park Report is a comprehensive assessment of Dartmoor's current condition, and highlights both the successes and the vulnerabilities that lie within this landscape.

It is important that we monitor the condition of Dartmoor over time. The State of the Park report's purpose is to provide as good a picture as possible, particularly in relation to the special qualities of the National Park  $\Delta$ . It contains information from a range of sources. However, it is important to understand that we cannot measure everything.

The State of the Park report provides important evidence which influences and informs the preparation of the Dartmoor National Park Partnership Plan (Management Plan)  $\Delta$ . The Partnership Plan sets out the long-term vision for Dartmoor and the outcomes that National Park Authority and stakeholders will work towards to deliver the Vision for Dartmoor and National Park purposes  $\Delta$ .

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

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The chapters relate to the Dartmoor Partnership Plan and each chapter starts with the Vision for 2045 for that theme.

This report is interactive, when read as a PDF. Each chapter can be accessed at any time by clicking on the links to the left. These will take you the start of that chapter. You will always know which chapter you are in as there will be a coloured box beside the link on the left. The report also contains some clickable links which will take you to other parts of the report. Links will look like this  $\Delta$ .

All the chapters have been designed with a consistent format. The first page of each is an infographic highlighting key data. Each image has an interactive link to the relevant parts of the chapter. The second page includes a list of the contents of that chapter, where the issues are explored in more detail.

For ease of reading, any notes have been created as endnotes which will be found at the end of the report, grouped under the themes. We have also offered a set of links to other relevant reports and sources of information. The data within the initial infographics is not attributed. However this can be accessed by clicking on the graphic which will take you to the part of the chapter where the data is referenced.

Unless otherwise stated, data used has been the latest available up to April 2024.

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# CREDITS

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This report has been prepared by Dartmoor National Park Authority in collaboration with Ash Futures ([www.ashfutures.co.uk](http://www.ashfutures.co.uk))

Thanks especially to:

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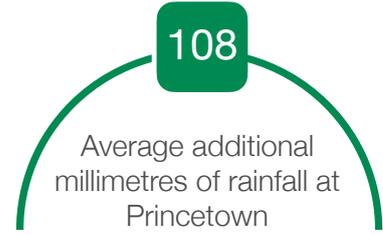
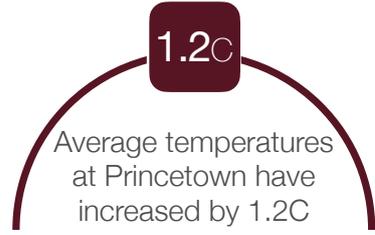
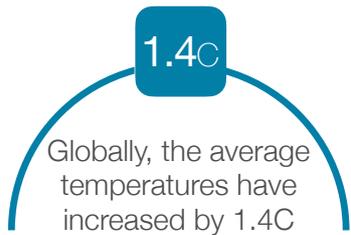
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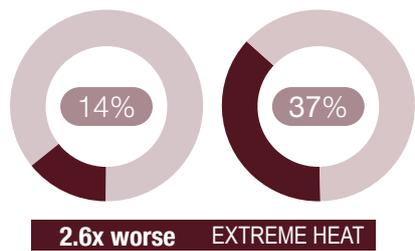
# A BETTER RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

## VISION FOR 2045

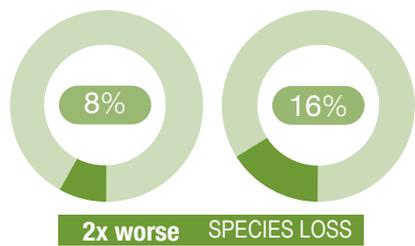
Dartmoor will have met the vision to be carbon negative. The National Park will play a significant role as a carbon sink through peatland restoration, woodland management and creation, with sustainable farming and land management practices to increase soil carbon. The successful impacts of mitigating climate change that cut-across all aspects of the Partnership Plan and the Local Plan, will be realised.



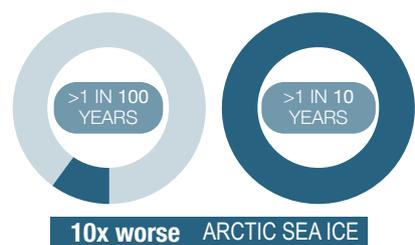
### HALF A DEGREE MATTERS - THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 1.5C AND 2C OF WARMING



Global population exposed to severe heat at least once every five years.

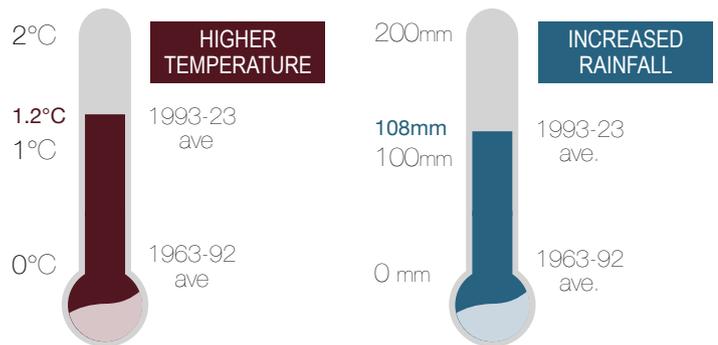


Plants that lose at least half of their range

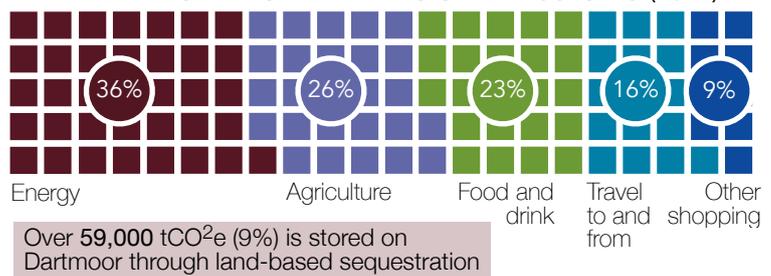


Number of ice free summers in the Arctic Ocean

### CHANGES TO CLIMATE IN PRINCETOWN



### BREAKDOWN OF DARTMOOR EMISSIONS (2022)



**633,439**  
tCO<sub>2</sub>e



**TOTAL NET GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FOR DARTMOOR**

### PEATLAND RESTORATION

**TOTAL PEATLAND RESTORED OR UNDER RESTORATION (SINCE 2009)**      **1,210 ha**

**947 ha**      **UNDER RESTORATION (AUGUST 2020 - MARCH 2024)**

# A BETTER RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

This section contains information on:

- [Global and national emissions](#) Δ.
- [Changes to Dartmoor climate](#) Δ.
- [Greenhouse gas emissions on Dartmoor](#) Δ.
- [Mitigation and adaptation on Dartmoor](#) Δ.
- [Farming in Protected Landscapes](#) Δ.

## Global and national emission

The Paris Agreement of 2015<sup>1</sup> set out a series of global and national plans to reduce greenhouse gases by 2050 in order to be able to stay within a limit of 1.5C average global temperature increase.

Since then, the world has actually increased its overall levels of greenhouse gases. Although the 1.5C assessment is made over a period of a decade, **we have now at passed that 1.5C limit for a full year<sup>2</sup> - 25 years earlier than planned.<sup>3</sup>**

### GLOBAL AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES

- above pre-industrial average (°C)



## UK emissions

The UK annual average temperature was 9.97C for 2023, which is just 0.06C below the record high of 10.03C in 2022. This continues an observed warming of the UK climate since the 1960s.<sup>4</sup>

So far in the 21st century, in the UK, **13 years have exceeded what was the hottest year of the 20th century.** Human-caused climate change is estimated to have **increased the likelihood of a year as warm as 2023 by a factor of more than 150.<sup>5</sup>**

## Changes to Dartmoor climate

Dartmoor plays a crucial role in delivering national and international climate commitments. It has rich carbon stores, including peatlands, woodlands and hedgerows, that are crucial carbon sinks for achieving net zero targets.

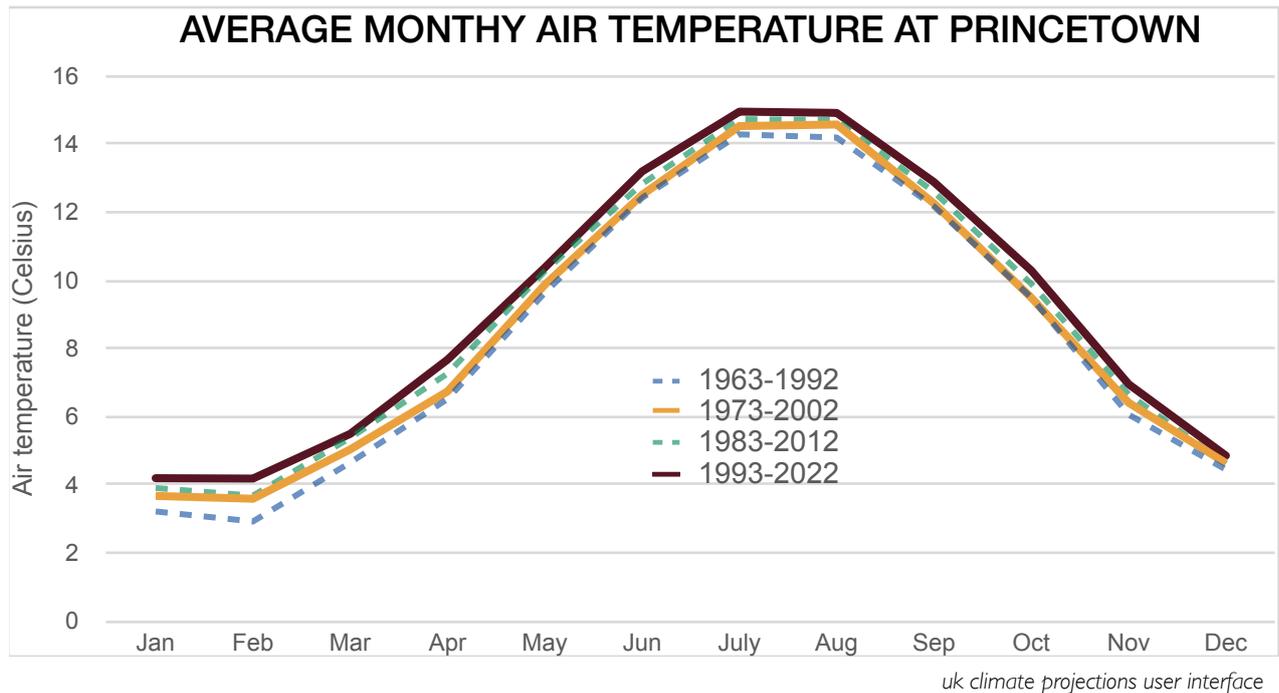
Developing a Dartmoor wide response to Climate Change will be shaped by key policies and research, including:

- DEFRA's Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies

- 30 by 30 commitment to protect 30% of the UK's land for nature by 2030
- Research carried out by Small World Consulting that provides an evidence-based pathway for National Parks to become net carbon sinks by 2050.

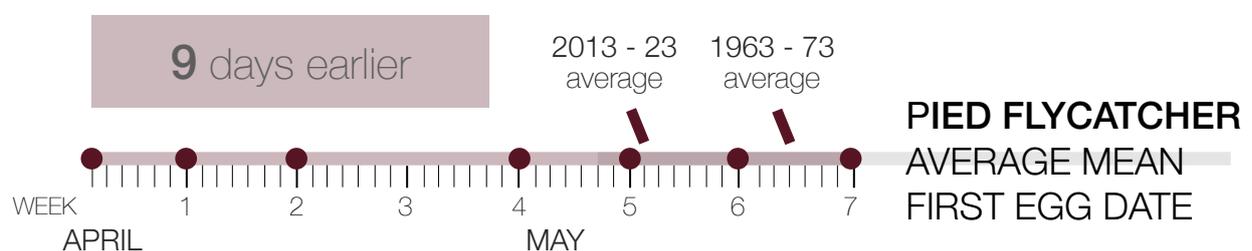
The evidence and key policy drivers will guide how Dartmoor should be managed for climate mitigation and adaptation and the development of its net zero pathway.

Available trend data for Princetown shows that Dartmoor is experiencing moderate climate change impacts. The average monthly air temperature at Princetown has increased, particularly during the Spring months. The air temperature for April has been an average of 1.2 degrees Celsius higher in the years between 1993 and 2022 than between 1963 and 1992.



Similar data shows **average rainfall in Princetown has also increased over time in both winter and summer months**. Between 1993 and 2002 Princetown experienced an average of 108mm more rain in December, January and February than between 1963 and 1992.

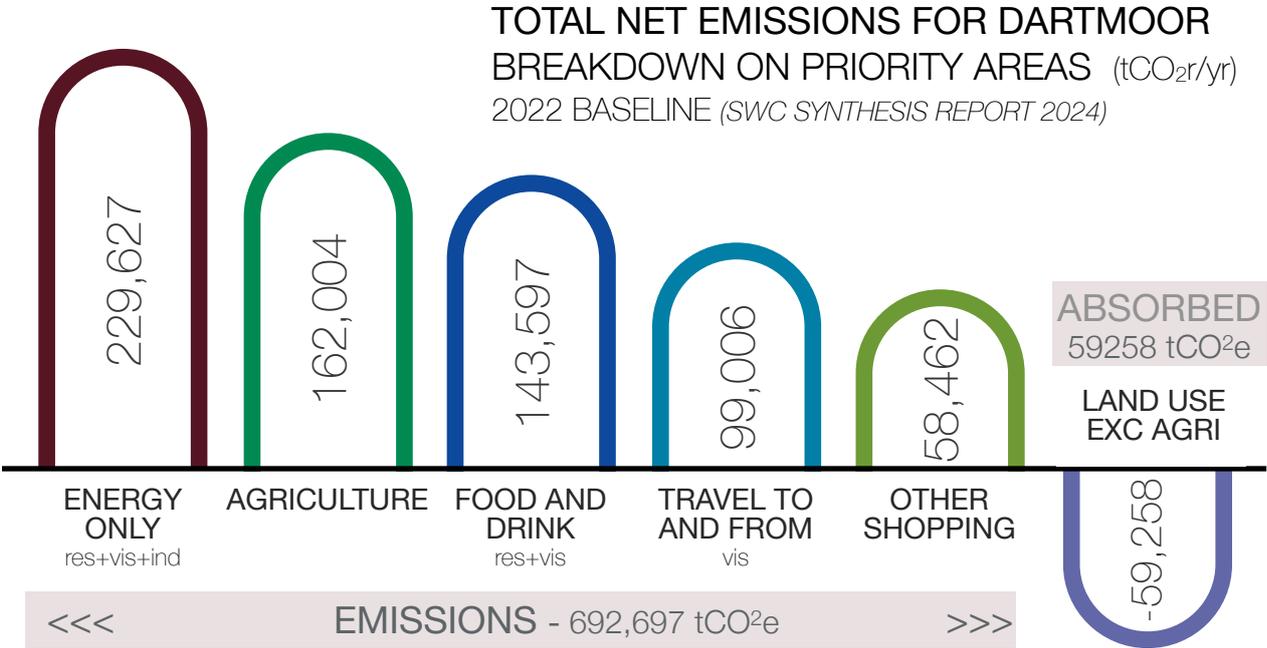
Changes in the climate can have profound impacts on the behaviour of species and ecosystems, with research indicating that the ongoing rising temperature is causing some bird species to lay eggs earlier in the year.<sup>6</sup> Although there is variation in how early the first egg is laid, the nesting season for the Pied Flycatcher is advancing to earlier in the year, with **the average mean first egg date for 2013-2023 being 9 days earlier than the average for 1963-1973**. This is largely attributed to these birds adapting to the higher spring temperatures.



## Greenhouse gas emissions on Dartmoor

Research carried out by Small World Consulting has provided Dartmoor with a carbon baseline and emissions breakdown.<sup>7</sup> The greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment focuses on six priority areas using a consumption-based model: what residents and visitors buy and do within the National Park and how visitors travel to and from Dartmoor.

In 2022, the greenhouse gas emissions baseline for Dartmoor was estimated to be 692,697 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e). However, land management can form part of the solution to reaching net zero as carbon can be sequestered (absorbed) by trees, hedgerows, grasslands and other healthy soils. It is estimated that 59,257 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e is stored on Dartmoor through land-based sequestration - **bringing the net figure to 633,439 tCO<sub>2</sub>e**. The largest emissions categories on Dartmoor are energy, agriculture and food and drink. Detailed results and a technical explanation of the calculation can be found in the full report by SWC.<sup>8</sup>



## Mitigation and adaptation on Dartmoor

### Land-based carbon stores - peat

The natural environment plays a vital role in tackling the climate crisis, as **healthy ecosystems take up and store significant amounts of carbon in soils, sediments and vegetation**.<sup>9</sup> Peatlands are areas of land with a naturally accumulated layer of carbon rich, partially decayed vegetation or organic matter and are formed under waterlogged conditions.<sup>10</sup> Their high carbon density means peatlands are significant carbon stores. However, as damaged and degraded peatlands are major sources of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions,<sup>11</sup> it is imperative that peatlands are appropriately restored and managed. **Research has found that less than 1% of Dartmoor’s peatlands are intact**.<sup>12</sup> Restoration is hugely important in protecting the existing carbon store and to promote carbon sequestration.

**1,210 hectares of peatland has been under restoration since 2009.**<sup>13</sup>

## Land-based carbon stores - headwaters

Improving natural flood management provides a range of benefits in combating climate change. It can help restore peatland, manage flooding from more intense rainfall and provide drought resilience during drier summers.

In the five years between 2018 and 2023, the Dartmoor Headwaters Pilot has delivered, in partnership, a range of improvements to manage water levels and river flows on the Mardle, Dean Burn, Colly Brook, Black Brook and Hanger Down. The project trialled the use of different materials for creating small dams, alongside a series of tree planting schemes.

### DARTMOOR HEADWATERS PILOT ACHIEVEMENTS (2023)

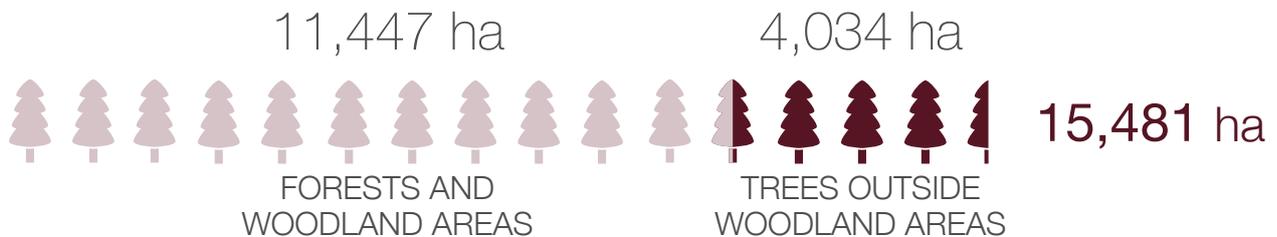


*Dartmoor Headwaters NFM*

## Land-based carbon stores - woodland

Trees are important in absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and they are a key part of offsetting emissions from other activities on Dartmoor. Approximately, 15% of Dartmoor is under tree cover (15,481 ha).

### TREE COVER ON DARTMOOR



National Forestry Inventory, Forestry Commission

## Farming in Protected Landscapes

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) is a grant scheme for National Parks and National Landscapes supporting projects that enhance the natural environment, mitigate climate change, support nature-friendly farm businesses, improve access opportunities and protect the quality and character of the area.<sup>14</sup>

On Dartmoor, up to March 2024, the **Climate** strand delivered a number of outputs.

FIPL - CLIMATE

- 01 ) **46 hectares**  
of new woodland created
- 02 ) **69 hectares**  
of existing woodland managed
- 03 ) **21 hectares**  
of newly planted orchards and fruit trees
- 04 ) **5 projects**  
to reduce the risk of wildfire
- 05 ) **7.5 hectares**  
of new wetland created
- 06 ) **2 hectares**  
of existing wetland managed
- 07 ) **2,096 hectares**  
of land under regenerative farming techniques
- 08 ) **15 projects**  
to improve soil health
- 09 ) **23 projects**  
to reduce potential risk of flooding
- 10 ) **37 projects**  
to improve understanding of climate and carbon emission

# BETTER FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

## VISION FOR 2045

The National Park will be a place that the next generation can thrive in: a place to call home, a place to work, a place to explore and a place to protect and understand. The next generation will be supported on Dartmoor through reliable infrastructure and services, viable jobs and diverse career opportunities. Communities will thrive, traditions will be alive and there will be widespread recognition of the rural skills on offer.

There will also be a future for the environment and heritage of Dartmoor, it will be protected, enhanced and understood by all. Everyone will have the opportunity to visit and experience Dartmoor and it will remain one of Britain's breathing spaces.

7%

More people on Dartmoor will be over 65 in 2035 than in 2021

1.2°C

1.2°C average temperature increase at Princetown

65

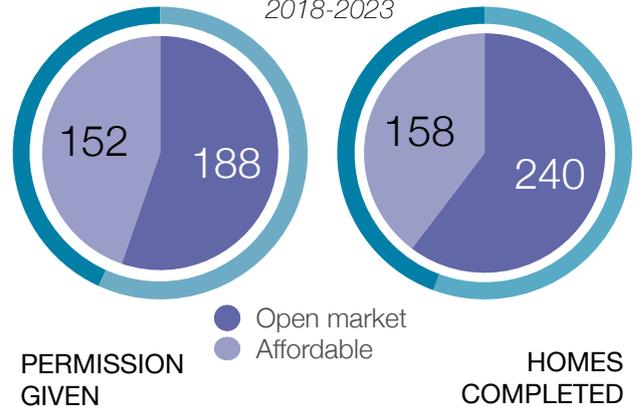
65 new homes are needed on Dartmoor each year until 2036



### WELCOME TO DARTMOOR WALKS

### MORE AFFORDABLE HOMES

2018-2023



### COMMUNITY WORKSPACES - IN AND AROUND DARTMOOR



### PEOPLE FROM MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS ON DARTMOOR



### LEARNING ABOUT DARTMOOR - FIPL PROJECTS 2019-24



Within the Partnership Plan, the Next Generation Manifesto lists a number of calls to action. It is recognised that due to capacity and resources some of these sections don't have clear data supporting the work that has taken place. Data will be linked to relevant part of the report where possible but more robust monitoring is required to recognise the work taking place to deliver for this Partnership Plan and any new iteration.

### Infrastructure and Services

- Digital connectivity is essential for local residents, businesses and visitors. Improve mobile phone coverage, internet / broadband reliability and speed;
- Provide good public transport throughout the year, connecting settlements within the National Park and surrounding areas.

### Communities

- Digital connectivity can only go so far. Young people need activities and social opportunities to help them feel part of the community, as well as avoiding feelings of isolation and issues with mental health.

### Housing

- Many young people are finding it difficult to stay in their communities. There needs to be a better understanding of young people's housing needs and support / signposting to how to access housing.

### Job Opportunities and Skills

- Develop a Dartmoor scheme linking local schools and colleges to local employers to provide opportunities for young people through apprenticeships, internships and work experience;
- Ensure that traditional skills and knowledge are passed on to the next generation and there are opportunities for young people that want to get into hill farming.

### Businesses

- Promote a spirit of entrepreneurship on Dartmoor with funding and support to encourage young people to start their own businesses;
- Provide community workspaces and hubs that are desirable to work in, connected, and encourage creativity, innovation and collaboration.

### Dartmoor's Natural and Cultural Heritage

- Help us (young people) to learn about what is special about Dartmoor and how we can help to conserve and enhance it;
- Be bold and innovative to conserve and enhance the National Park for the next generation, to ensure that it is in better condition;
- Provide opportunities for us (young people) to get involved with conservation projects.

### Opportunities to Experience Dartmoor

- Use social media to improve communication about how we (young people and users) can access and enjoy the National Park responsibly;
- Develop a Dartmoor Ranger App with information about the local area, projects, routes and sensitivities that gives people the confidence to visit Dartmoor and use it in the right way;
- Create a series of waymarked routes to help people to feel more confident exploring Dartmoor, and to make it more accessible.

### Understanding and Respect

- Provide opportunities for shared understanding between different groups and with local communities;
- Identify ways to help visitors and user groups to understand the role farming plays in managing the landscape.

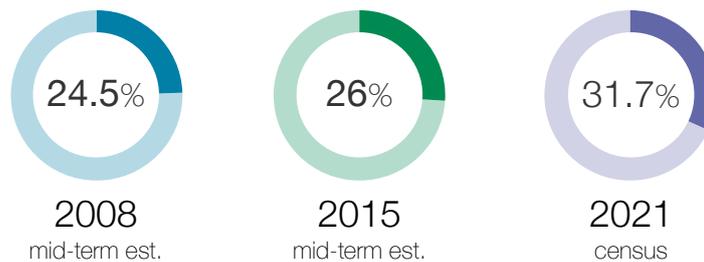
## Infrastructure and Services

Digital connectivity is improving all the time with better 4G and 5G mobile signals and gigabit capable broadband being delivered by private companies, with support from Building Digital UK Δ.

Public transport into and across Dartmoor is very limited and unsuitable for most commuting purposes Δ. Improvements to coverage and frequency will require public subsidy and innovative alternatives.

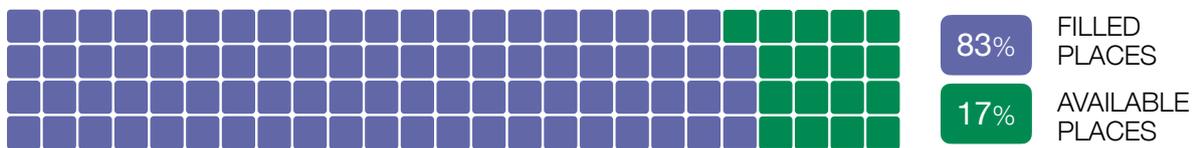
## Communities

In 2021, 31.7% of residents were retired, compared with 21.6% in England as a whole Δ. This is a significant increase since 2008 and 2015.



Primary and secondary education is available in and around Dartmoor, with schools having capacity to take more young people (83%). Given the aged demographic of Dartmoor it is important that opportunities are provided for young people to learn, enjoy and understand the special qualities of Dartmoor.

### AVAILABLE SCHOOL PLACES ON DARTMOOR

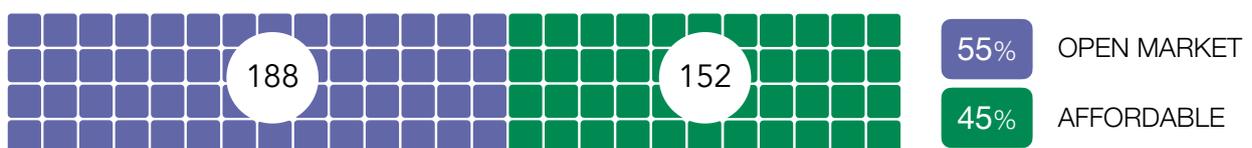


In 2023/24, in partnership, DNPA provided a range of outreach activities for 5 – 17 year olds. The outreach activities facilitated 6,256 days of engagement with young people Δ.

## Housing

Housing affordability ratios are very high on Dartmoor - at 12.3 (it costs, on average, 12.3 times the median salary to buy a house at median prices) Δ. Between 2018 and 2023, DNPA had given permission for 340 new homes, of which 152 are designated affordable Δ. This should enable more local young people to stay living within the National Park if they wish.

### PLANNING PERMISSIONS GRANTED FOR NEW HOMES (2018-2023)



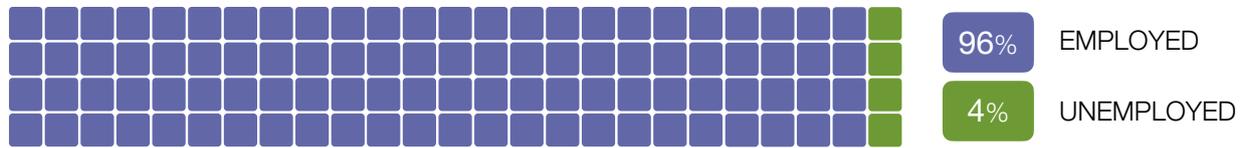
### PLANNING PERMISSIONS GRANTED FOR NEW HOMES (2011-2016)



## Job Opportunities and Skills

Dartmoor has high levels of working age employment, at 96%. Of these only 32.5% are employed full time; and 16.3% are self employed  $\Delta$ . Job opportunities are most likely within the biggest sectors on Dartmoor - tourism, farming, retail, education and care services.

### WORKING AGE EMPLOYMENT ON DARTMOOR



### Businesses

Co-working space is available within and close to Dartmoor. Members of Devon Work Hubs network<sup>15</sup> include Tavistock, Ivybridge and Buckfastleigh; while other spaces are available at Okehampton, Moretonhampstead and Ashburton. The Local Plan forecast that around 7,800m<sup>2</sup>, or 430m<sup>2</sup> per year, of replacement and additional employment floorspace is needed for future employment needs.

### COMMUNITY WORKSPACES AND HUBS - IN AND AROUND DARTMOOR



### Dartmoor's Natural and Cultural Heritage

The Farming in Protected Landscapes funding has enabled a number of projects which aim to help Dartmoor's special qualities be understood and protected by more people. These help improve understanding, increase engagement and educate young people and visitors.



To ensure that the National Park is left in better condition, partners are working on key activities to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In particular, working on Restoring the deep peatland, planting new woodland where appropriate and encouraging a more climate friendly approach to land management on Dartmoor.

## Opportunities to Experience Dartmoor

A number of projects have been delivered that are making Dartmoor more accessible, encouraging people to explore further afield. In the 2023 visitor survey (409 responses) 56% of visitors  $\Delta$  said they would welcome a smart phone app to help inform and guide them about what Dartmoor has to offer.<sup>16</sup>

DNPA has developed an erosion monitoring app, providing a citizen science approach to monitoring key erosion sites. It has also developed a walking app for Dartmoor, providing information on walking routes and responsible access. The app was publicly available at the end of 2024 and can be expanded to include other activities.



## Understanding and Respect

2.2% of the Dartmoor population are from minority ethnic groups, compared with 19.1% for England as a whole.<sup>17</sup> According to the 2023 visitor survey, 5% of the 409 respondents visiting Dartmoor were from minority ethnic communities  $\Delta$ .

### PEOPLE FROM MINORITY ETHNIC GROUPS ON DARTMOOR

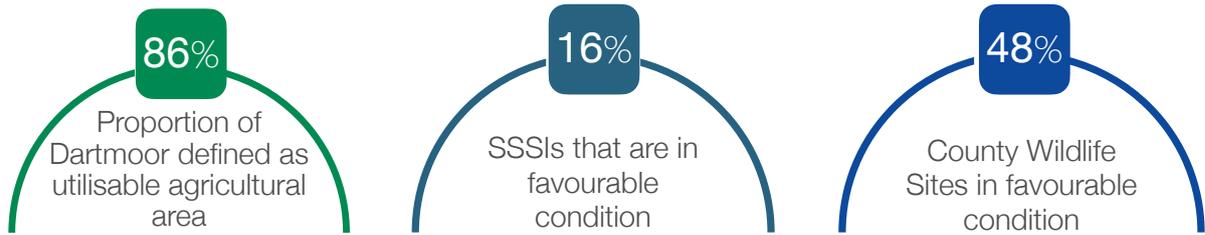


Our Upland Commons is running from 2021-2025 to help secure the future of upland commons on Dartmoor. Over 2,500 young people have engaged in educational events and activities through the project.

# BETTER FOR NATURE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

## VISION FOR 2045

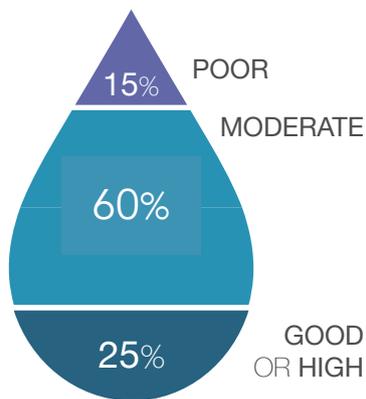
Dartmoor will continue to change at a landscape scale, with the abundance, diversity and distribution of biodiversity on Dartmoor adapting and evolving in response to climate change and the recovery of natural processes. Good land management and natural capital investment ensures habitats are protected, restored, maintained, cared for, expanded and connected; some areas becoming wilder as nature is allowed to take its course.



## THE CONDITION OF SSSIs ON DARTMOOR (2023)



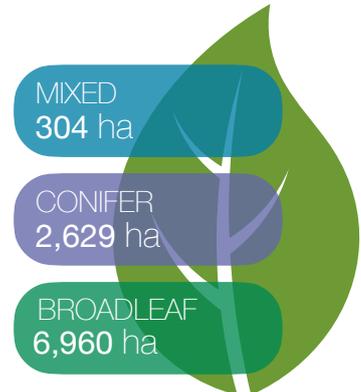
### CONDITION OF RIVERS (2022)



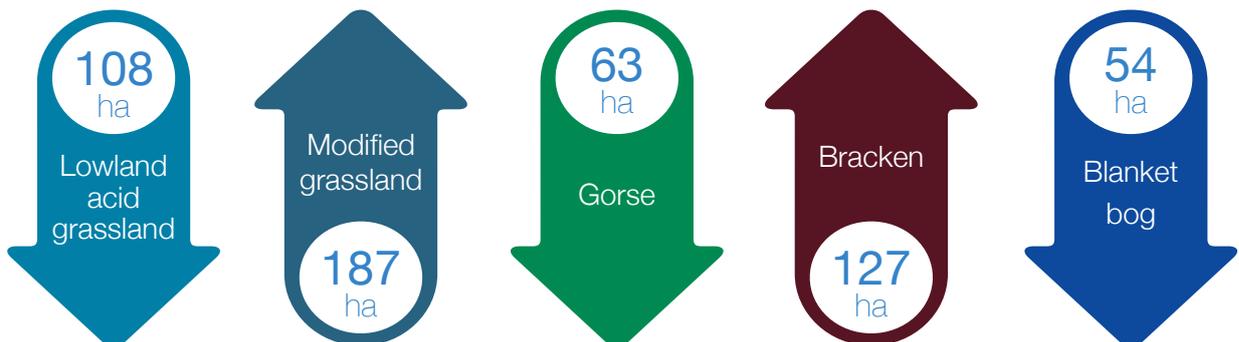
### PEATLAND RESTORATION (2023/24)



### WOODLAND TYPES (2022)



## CHANGES TO EXTENT OF HABITATS PREDICTED NET CHANGE (2023)



# BETTER FOR NATURE AND NATURAL BEAUTY

This section contains information on:

- [Environmental designations](#) Δ
- [Habitats](#) Δ
- [Woodlands](#) Δ
- [Landscape character](#) Δ
- [Water](#) Δ
- [Biodiversity](#) Δ
- [Peat](#) Δ
- [Air quality and dark skies](#) Δ
- [Special qualities](#) Δ
- [Farming in Protected Landscapes](#) Δ

## Environmental designations

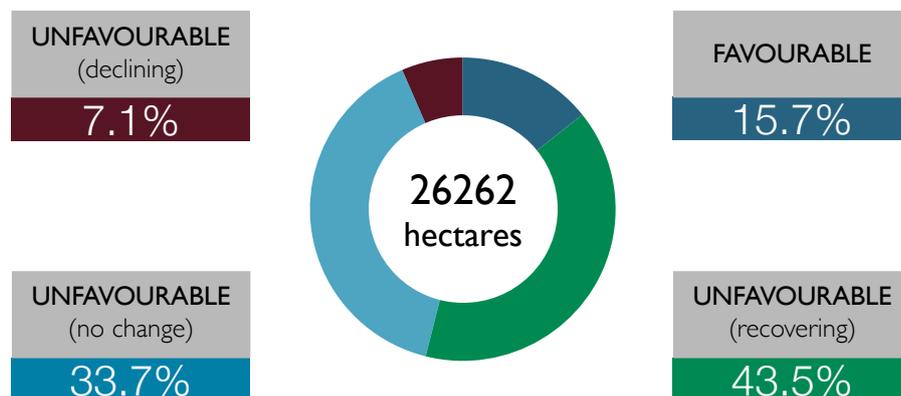
Apart from Dartmoor being a National Park, it has many areas within it that are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and County Wildlife Sites.

### Sites of Special Scientific Interest

SSSIs are areas of land which are of particular interest to science due to their flora, fauna, geological or physiological features. A SSSI is a formal conservation designation with legislative protection which means landowners must appropriately manage those sites in order to conserve their special features. In the 1980s, large areas of Dartmoor's open moorland were designated as SSSIs, reflecting the importance of Dartmoor's moorland landscape.

In 2023, 26,262 ha of Dartmoor National Park was designated as a SSSI (27.6% of the total land area).<sup>18</sup> In 2023, 59.2% of the SSSIs on Dartmoor were assessed as in 'Favourable' or Unfavourable (recovering) condition. In 2016, 98% of the SSSI area was assessed as in either Favourable or Unfavourable (recovering) condition. The significant changes reflect a reassessment of SSSIs on Dartmoor.

### CONDITION OF SSSI's ON DARTMOOR 2023



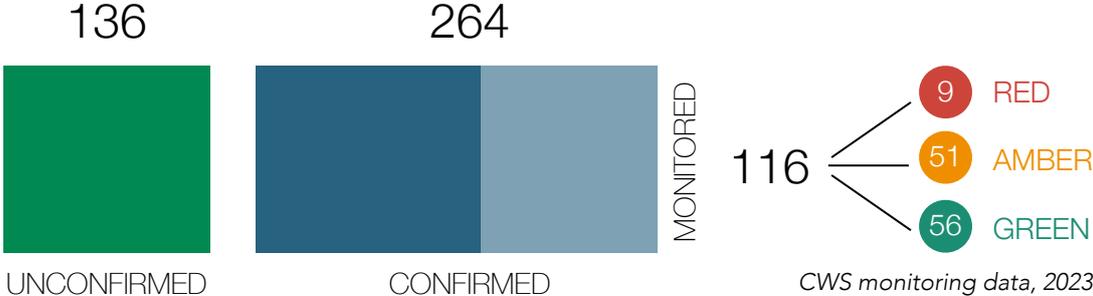
Natural England. National Park Family indicators 2023

There are six notified SSSIs within Dartmoor comprising 64 sub units.<sup>19</sup> These are North Dartmoor (18), South Dartmoor (14), East Dartmoor (22), Dendles Wood (4), Tor Royal Bog (2) and Wistmans Wood (4).

### County Wildlife Sites

County Wildlife Sites (CWS) are non-statutory designations which identify areas of land that are significant for wildlife and have high nature conservation importance. Unlike SSSIs, County Wildlife Sites are not legally protected, however they generally complement SSSIs by acting as buffer zones and wildlife corridors. **Dartmoor National Park contains 264 confirmed county wildlife sites totalling 2,759 ha of land.** There are a further 136 unconfirmed sites totalling 1,073 hectares. The habitat condition of a sample of confirmed CWS is assessed each year which gives an indication of whether past management has made a positive impact on the habitats. **Of the 116 sites monitored since 2009, 56 were found to be in favourable condition ('green'), 51 were in fair condition ('amber') and 9 were in declining condition ('red').**

### CONDITION OF COUNTY WILDLIFE SITES



### Habitats

Dartmoor is of significant biological importance and is internationally recognised for its variety of habitats including blanket bogs, valley mires, wet and dry heaths, ancient oak woods, lowland pastures and rhôs pastures which provide home to a range of rare and common plant and animal species. These special habitats are the result of Dartmoor’s natural geology and the influence of human settlement on Dartmoor over thousands of years.

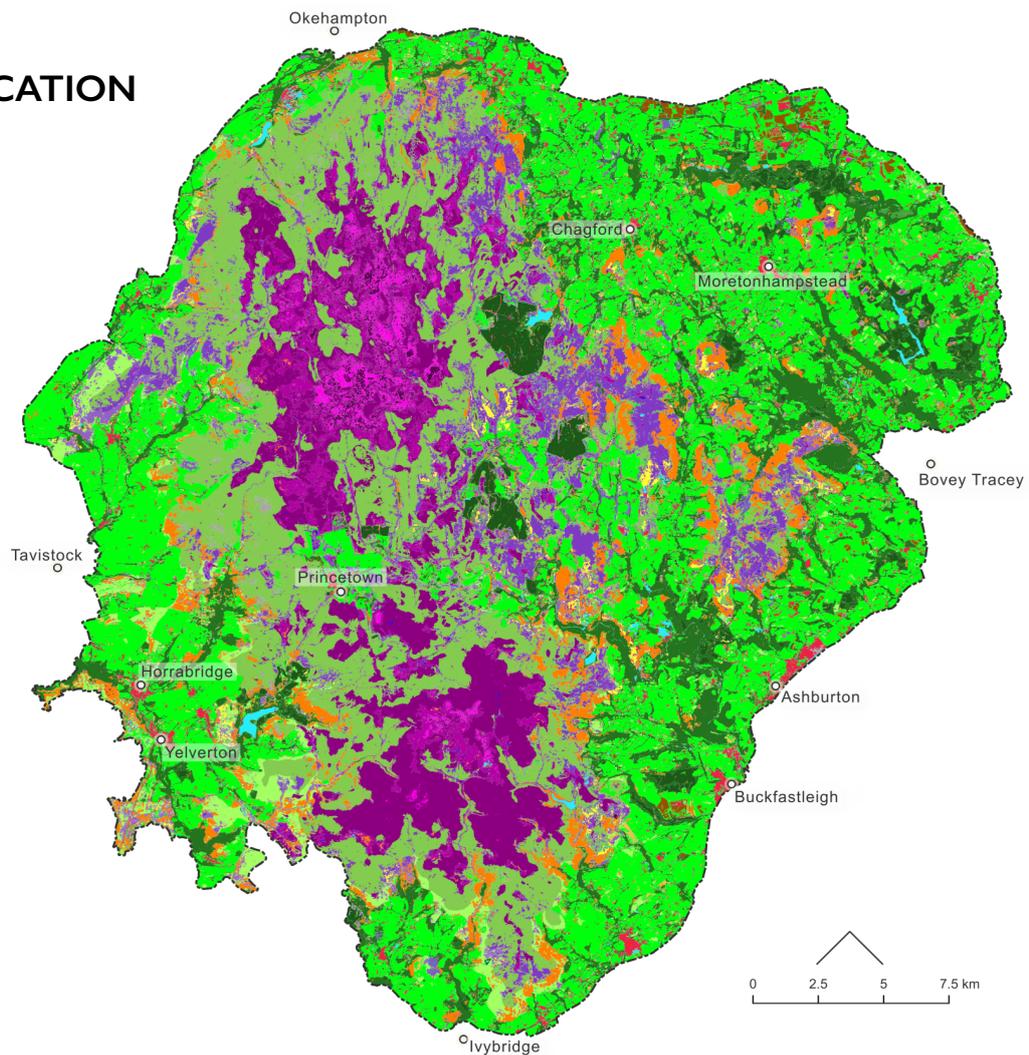
Habitats provide the building blocks of a functioning ecosystem and supply essential public goods including clean air and water. Dartmoor’s key habitats include:

- Upland heathland – covers most of the open moor which is not covered in deep peat. Characterised by dwarf shrubs, particularly heather and western gorse.
- Blanket bog – areas of peatland formed above 400m on the open moor which are important in storing carbon
- Valley mire – areas of water-logged deep peat in valley bottoms and natural basins
- Grass moor and bracken – grasses which grow over mineral soil or shallow peat which is frequently invaded by bracken
- Rocky outcrops – rocks, tors and boulders dominate the landscape and form important wildlife habitats

- Caves and mines – caves and abandoned mines provide important habitats to species including greater horseshoe bats and blind shrimps
- Lowland heath – characterised by heathers, gorse and grasses and lie below 250m usually in low-nutrient soils.
- Rhos pasture – species-rich moor grass and rush pastures away from the open moor.

Of particular importance are the internationally recognised peat blanket bogs, valley mires and wet heathland. They provide conditions for key plants, birds and insects species - such as sphagnum moss, sundew, dunlin and dragonflies. Equally importantly, they are capable of locking away large quantities of carbon, acting as a carbon sink.<sup>20</sup> However, many of these habitats on Dartmoor are in poor condition and need extensive work to restore them.

## HABITAT CLASSIFICATION SWEEP 2023



SWEEP Habitat Classification 2023

<span style="color: #90EE90;">■</span> Lowland acid grassland	<span style="color: #006400;">■</span> Coniferous woodland	<span style="color: #6A5ACD;">■</span> Purple moor grass and rush pastures
<span style="color: #90EE90;">■</span> Upland acid grassland	<span style="color: #8A2BE2;">■</span> Lowland Heathland	<span style="color: #4169E1;">■</span> Flushes, fens, marsh and swamp
<span style="color: #FF8C00;">■</span> Bracken	<span style="color: #8A2BE2;">■</span> Upland Heathland	<span style="color: #8B4513;">■</span> Cropland
<span style="color: #FFD700;">■</span> Lowland meadows	<span style="color: #FFFF00;">■</span> Gorse scrub	<span style="color: #DC143C;">■</span> Urban
<span style="color: #FFA500;">■</span> Upland hay meadows	<span style="color: #FF00FF;">■</span> Blanket bog (H7130)	<span style="color: #A9A9A9;">■</span> Inland rock
<span style="color: #00FF00;">■</span> Modified grassland	<span style="color: #800080;">■</span> Acid grass over degraded blanket bog	<span style="color: #00CED1;">■</span> Rivers and lakes
<span style="color: #3CB371;">■</span> Upland oakwood	<span style="color: #800080;">■</span> Heathland over degraded blanket bog	
<span style="color: #006400;">■</span> Other broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland	<span style="color: #4B0082;">■</span> Unvegetated degraded blanket bog	

Dartmoor National Park Authority have worked in partnership with South West Partnership for Environmental and Economic Prosperity (SWEEP) to develop a Habitat Classification tool for Dartmoor. The tool uses satellite imagery combined with LiDAR data to predict the most likely habitat classification for every 100m<sup>2</sup> of the Dartmoor National Park area. The tool is run annually and allows for change to be monitored over a much larger area than otherwise could be achieved manually. Ground truthing of the mapping imagery is also being carried out.

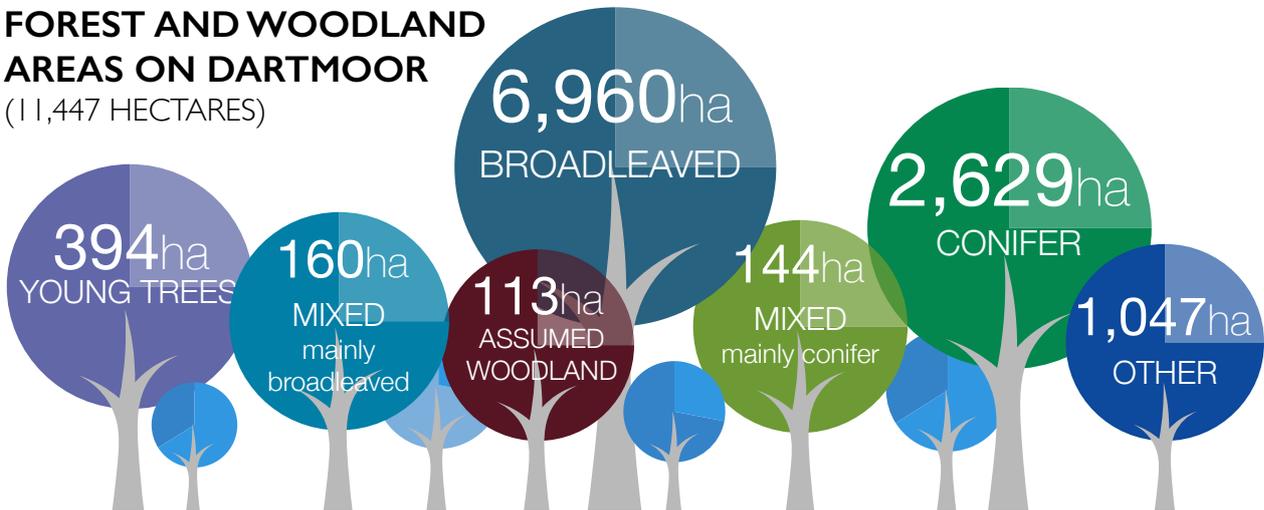
### NET HABITAT CHANGE ON DARTMOOR between 2018-2020 and 2020-2022

Habitat class	Net change Ha	Habitat class	Net change Ha
Lowland acid grassland	-107.79	Upland heathland	-38.81
Bracken	127.32	Gorse	-62.73
Upland acid grassland	-41.76	Blanket bog	-54.16
Lowland meadows	-0.3	Purple moor grass and rush pastures	-38.42
Upland hay meadows	-6.77	Flushes, fens, marsh and swamp	-9.74
Modified grassland	186.77	Cropland	32.99
Upland oakwood	0.23	Acid grass over degraded blanket bog	-0.45
Other broadleaved, mixed, yew woodland	48.07	Heathland over degraded blanket bog	33.64
Coniferous woodland	22.94	Unvegetated degraded blanket bog	14.46
Lowland heathland	-37.64		

#### Woodlands

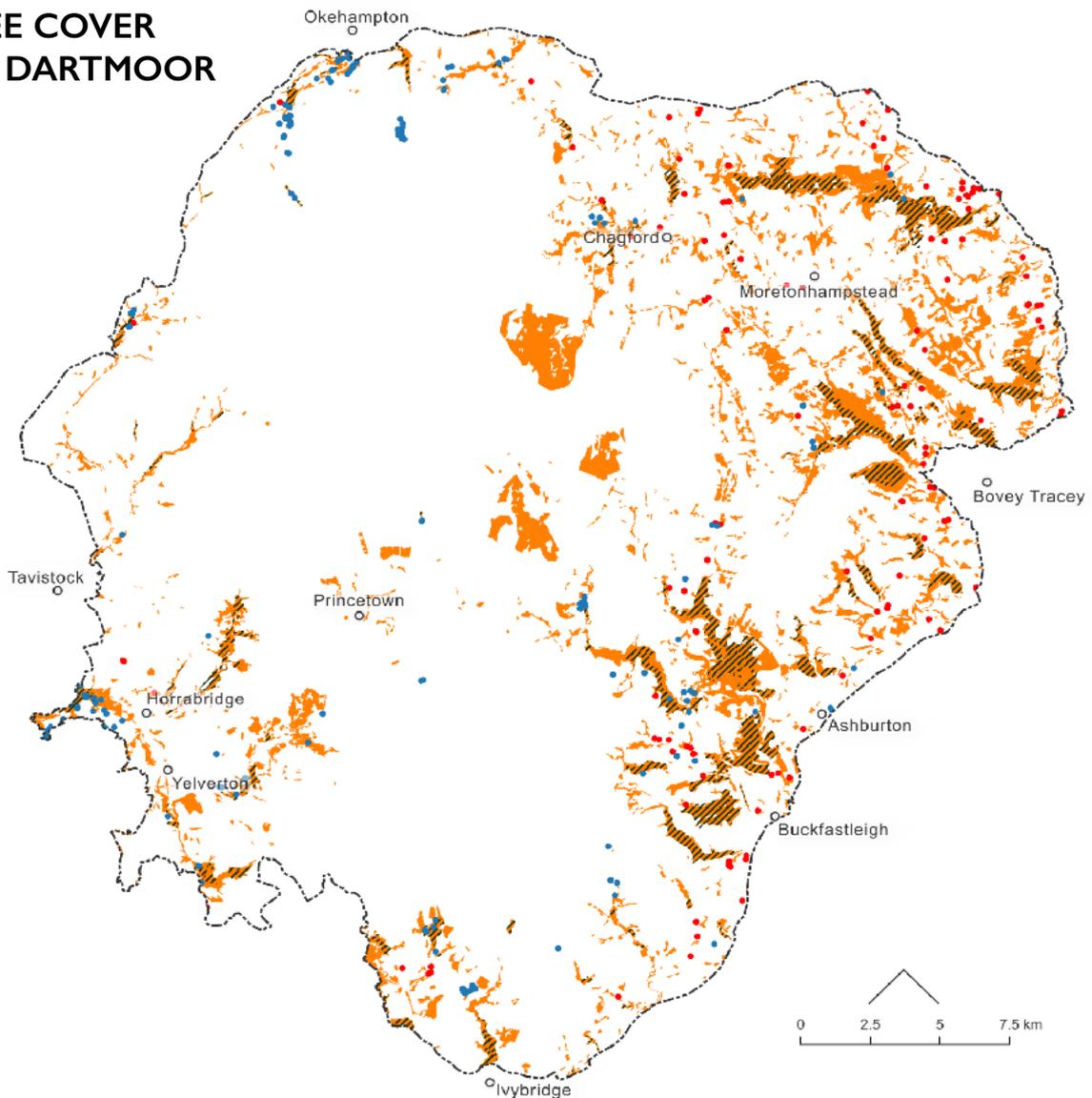
Forests and woodland areas on Dartmoor cover a total of 11,447 hectares, or 12% of the total area of the National Park; and including trees outside of designated woodland brings the total to 15,481 hectares. For context, moorland covers 46,000 hectares. A proportion of the total woodland area is classed as ancient semi-natural woodland (2,206 hectares) or plantations on ancient woodland sites (750 hectares) - totalling 3.1% of the National Park area.

#### FOREST AND WOODLAND AREAS ON DARTMOOR (11,447 HECTARES)



National Forestry Inventory, Forestry Commission 2022

# TREE COVER ON DARTMOOR 2022



## Woodland

- Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory
- Natural England Priority Habitats Inventory - Traditional Orchards
- ▨ Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory
- Forestry Commission National Forest Inventory England 2022  
All Woodland (excluding Felled/Ground Prep)

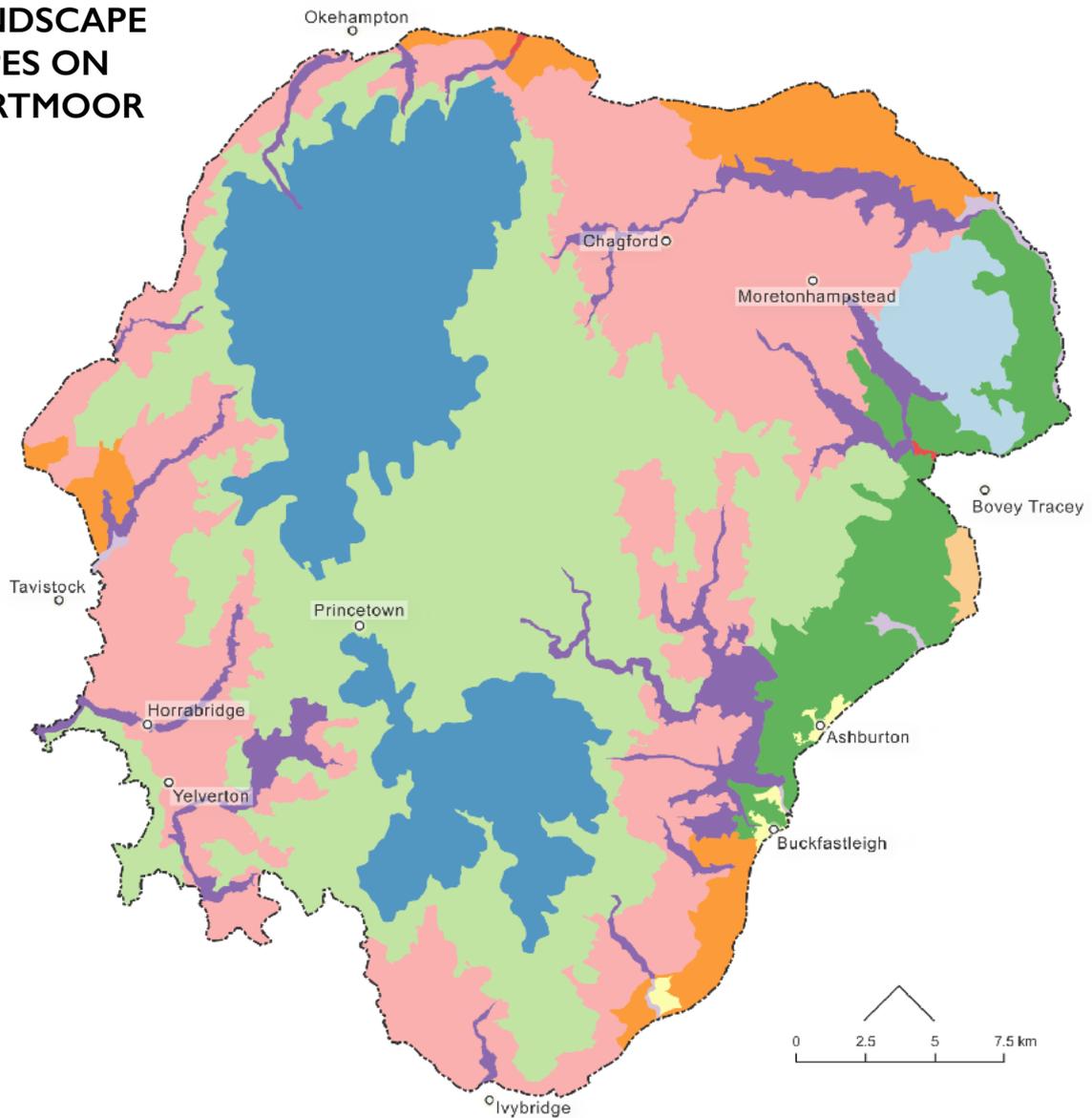
There are 129 orchards registered, covering a total area of 60 hectares. Orchards can support a wide range of wildlife as well as a diverse mosaic of habitats including fruit trees, scrub, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, orchard floor habitats, fallen deadwood and other habitats such as ponds.<sup>21</sup> Although once a common feature across lowland Dartmoor, traditional orchards have become increasingly rare largely due to a lack of demand for cider apples leading to neglect and abandonment.

Dartmoor’s woodland provides a range of important public goods including biodiversity, flood mitigation and carbon storage. However, they are threatened by a number of pests and diseases. The main threats are physical damage from deer and squirrels and tree disease from *Phytophthora ramorum* in larch, ash dieback, acute oak decline and sweet chestnut blight.

Dartmoor National Park is the largest upland area in southern England and is recognised as one of the UK’s finest landscapes. Dartmoor’s landscape has been shaped by human activity over thousands of years leaving a rich cultural heritage, distinct flora, fauna, and geology of international conservation importance.

Dartmoor’s 2017 Landscape Character Assessment breaks down the National Park’s landscape into distinct landscape character types.<sup>22</sup>

### LANDSCAPE TYPES ON DARTMOOR 2017



**Landscape Character Types**

- 1J: Farmed and Forested Plateau
  - 1K: Unsettled High Upland Moorland
  - 1L: Upland Moorland with Tors
  - 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
  - 3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes
  - 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
  - 3E: Lowland Plains
  - 3F: Settled Valley Floors
  - 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
  - U: Urban

Dartmoor has a number of Special Qualities of which Dartmoor's landscapes are one.<sup>23</sup> At the highest level, they include:

- open, windswept upland moors with far reaching views and a sense of remoteness and wildness, distinctive granite tors surrounded by loose rock or 'clitter', and large expanses of grass and heather moorland, blanket bogs, and valley mires providing habitats for rarities including Vigur's eyebright and southern damselfly;
- sheltered valleys with upland oak woodland, rhôs pasture and fast-flowing boulder-strewn rivers, home to characteristic wildlife including the pied flycatcher and salmon, and rare species such as the marsh fritillary butterfly; and
- enclosed farmland with small irregular pasture fields bounded by dry stone walls and hedge banks providing a mosaic of different wildlife habitats, including hay meadows and species rich dry grasslands with wildlife such as the greater butterfly orchid.

A number of trends and pressures are likely to impact on Dartmoor's landscape character in the future.

## Water

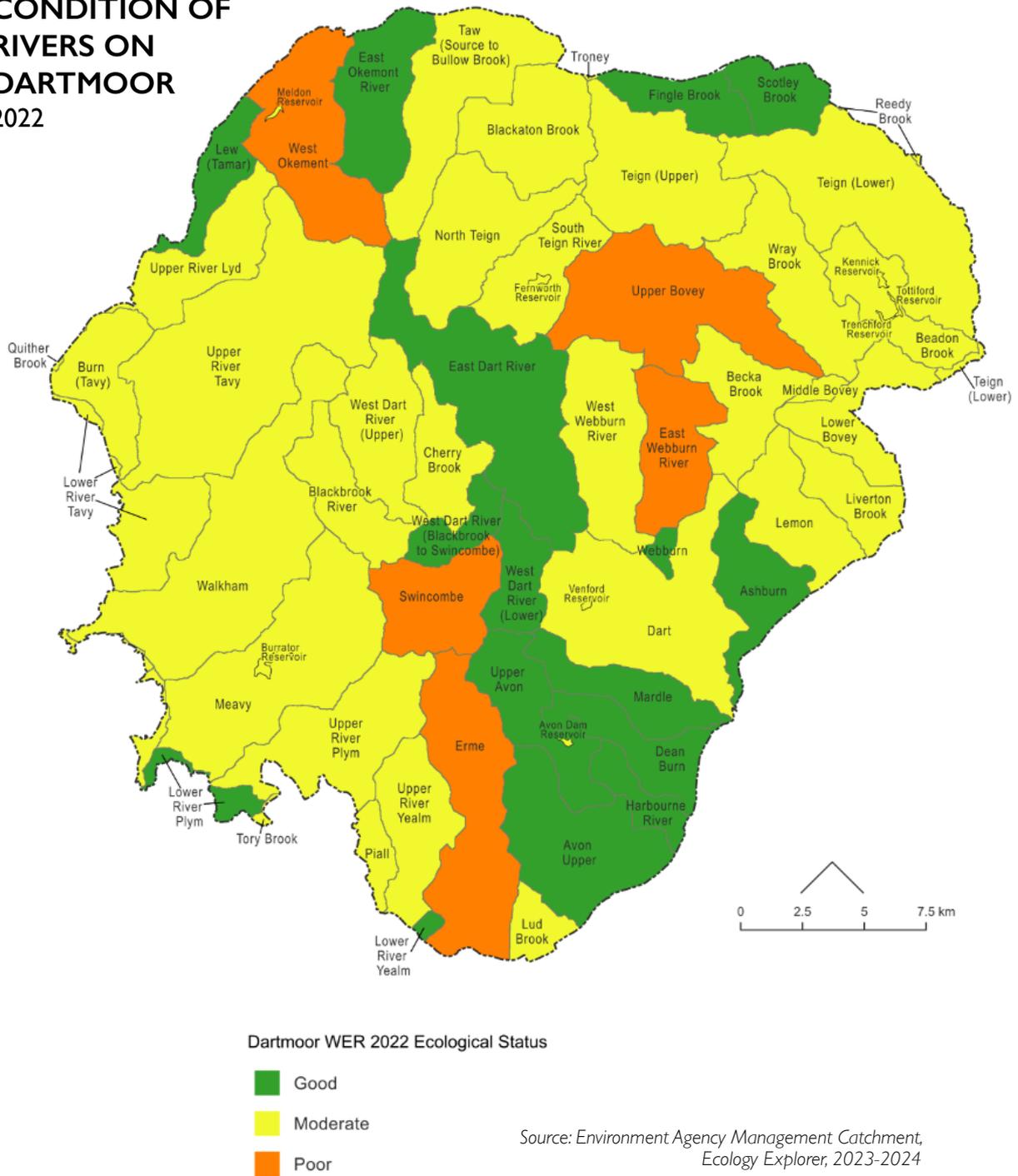
The water sources of Dartmoor are of huge regional importance, providing 45% of South West Water's daily water supply to domestic and business customers across Devon and Cornwall and small parts of Dorset and Somerset. Most of Devon's rivers rise in the high moorland and Dartmoor is also criss-crossed by leats that divert and manage the flow of water across parts of the Moor.

In total there are **550 kilometres of water courses on Dartmoor**. Data is collected from over 100 extraction points by the Environment Agency as part of its obligations under the Water Environment Regulations (WER).<sup>24</sup> Its Ecology Explorer tool allows the selection of sections of rivers that are in the National Park, offering a clearer picture of the health of Dartmoor waterways and bodies. The rating categories are: Poor, Moderate, Good and High. **About 25% of water courses have a good or better ecological status; 60% have a moderate ecological status and about 15% are rated as poor.** Water quality data is being collected for a variety of purposes, including environmental surveillance, discharge compliance, WER classifications and investigations, and ground water quality.

Water Body	Ecological Status	Invertebrates
Avon Dam Reservoir	Moderate	Moderate
Burrator Reservoir	Moderate	Moderate
Fernworthy Reservoir	Moderate	Good
Kennick Reservoir	Moderate	Moderate
Meldon Reservoir	Moderate	No data
Tottiford Reservoir	Moderate	No data
Trenchford Reservoir	Moderate	No data
Venford Reservoir	Moderate	Moderate

River and length examined	Ecological Status	Invertebrates
Ashburn 18.0 km	Good	High
Dart 38.7 km	Moderate	High
Dean Burn 8.6 km	Good	High
East Dart 26.6 km	Good	High
East Webburn 8.0 km	Poor	High
Erme 18.9 km	Poor	Good
Erme (Lower) 2.06 km	Moderate	High
Fingle Brook 7.6 km	Good	High
Harbourne 21.4 km	Good	High
Mardle 10.8 km	Good	Good
Meavy 15.9 km	Moderate	High
Plym (Upper) 14.2 km	Moderate	Moderate
Scotley Brook 6.7 km	Good	Good
Swincombe 9.6 km	Poor	Moderate
Tavy (Lower) 28.6 km	Moderate	Good
Tavy (Upper) 28.7 km	Moderate	Good
Teign (Lower) 36.3 km	Moderate	Good
Teign (Upper) 8.4 km	Moderate	High
Upper Avon 29.9 km	Good	High
Upper Bovey 16.9 km	Poor	High
Walkham 22.6 km	Moderate	Good
Webburn 2.2 km	Good	Good
West Dart 4.8 km	Good	High
West Okement 21.1 km	Poor	Good
West Webburn 11.0 km	Moderate	Good
Yealm (Upper) 9.7 km	Moderate	High

# CONDITION OF RIVERS ON DARTMOOR 2022



## Biodiversity

It has been widely acknowledged that the UK is in a state of ecological crisis and is considered one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Since 1970, the UK has experienced a 38% decline in species abundance, 54% decline in flowering plant species distribution, 29% decline in small mammal species distribution, 16% of species are threatened with extinction and 2% have become extinct.<sup>25</sup> This overall decline in biodiversity is predominantly attributed to human activities, particularly land use and climate change.

## Wildlife on Dartmoor

Dartmoor encompasses vast expanses of wildlife-rich habitat, yet **longstanding concerns remain over the poor ecological condition of many of these areas and the declining populations of key species**. Once a stronghold for diverse wildlife, Dartmoor now faces the loss or near loss of several important breeding populations, including golden plover, red grouse, and ring ouzels. These declines reflect that Dartmoor is not immune to the wider ecological crisis.

### Invasive species

Invasive non-native species are a threat to Dartmoor's wildlife and habitats as they displace plants and disrupt ecosystems by out-competing native flora and fauna.<sup>26</sup>

The Dartmoor Invasives Project, in its sixth year, has been dealing with Himalayan balsam, Giant Hogweed and American skunk cabbage in three separate catchments. These are the West Dart headwaters around Princetown, the River Avon at South Brent and the Wray Brook at Lustleigh. This project, which benefitted from partnership funding, has made good progress with the help of local volunteers.

As well as helping directly to reduce the impact of these invasive plants in these areas of the National Park, the Project has also encouraged landowners to carry out their own control in places with some able to get FiPL grants to help pay for this work. **Between 2019 and 2023, 586,417 plants of the three target species have been removed** within the focused catchments.

### INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL



*DIP Year 5 report, 2023*

### Bird populations

Reporting on bird numbers relies on both formal and casual surveys and observations. The most comprehensive review is from Devon Birds who prepare an annual report covering Dartmoor.<sup>27</sup>

Dartmoor's wildlife and, in particular, the bird populations have been impacted by air pollution, land use demands and climate change. For example, **the number of breeding Dunlin pairs on Dartmoor has shown a positive response following peatland restoration**; wintering flock of Ringed Plover have been recorded for the first time in 2023/24 and Firecrest breeding territories have increased substantially.

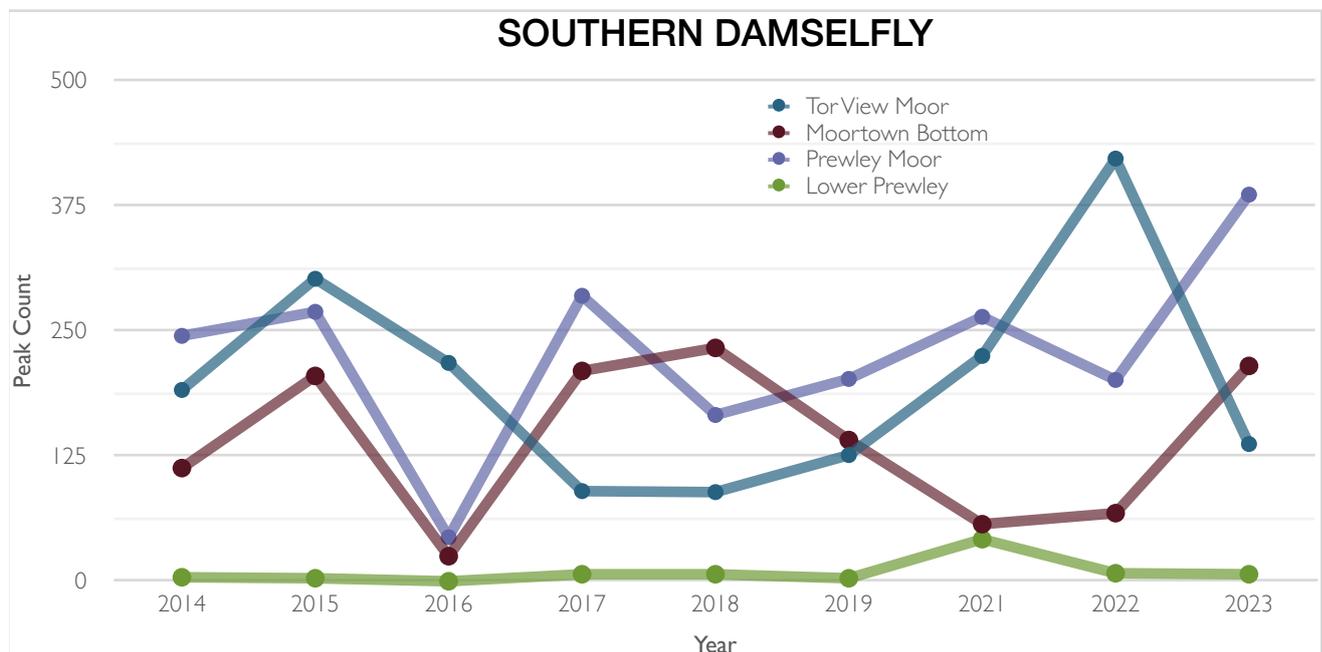
However, some species have suffered. For example, despite Dartmoor being a stronghold in the South West, **Whinchat locations have reduced from 164 to 60**,<sup>28</sup> echoing the national decline of 57% between 1995 and 2020. There has been **a severe decline in Ring Ouzel numbers, from over 20 breeding pairs to a single breeding pair** in three of the last four years.<sup>29</sup>

## Invertebrate populations

### Southern Damselfly

In 2023, the Southern Damselfly was present in good numbers at three out of the four monitored sites; Tor View Moor, Moortown Bottom and Prewley Moor. Numbers remain low at Lower Prewley however, at an average of 11, and have not exceeded the peak count of 42 in 2021 since monitoring began. Despite being in good management, this site appears to only be utilised by strays from the preferred nearby site of Prewley Moor.

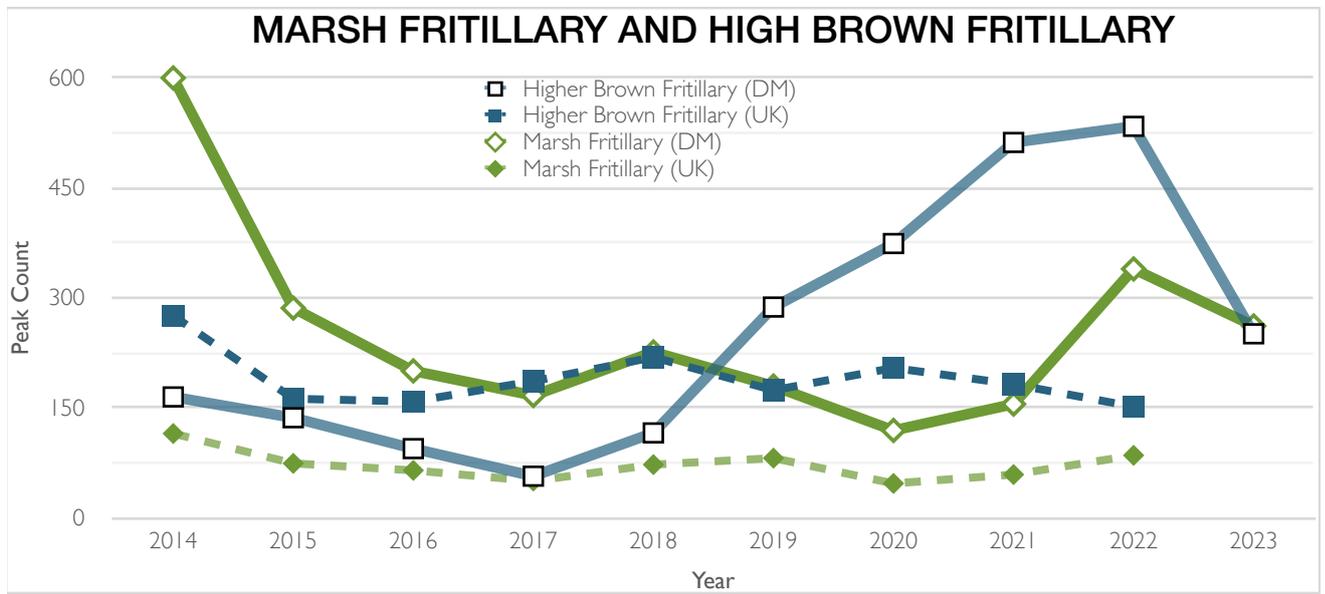
After a record count at Tor View Moor in 2022, numbers were down in 2023. However, this does not appear to be a cause for concern - 2023 figures still fall within the annual fluctuation recorded over the monitoring period (although are below the average), and invertebrate populations often experience a reduction in numbers after bumper years. Both Moortown Bottom and Prewley Moor demonstrate an increase on the previous year, with the latter having the highest number recorded at that site to date.



### Marsh Fritillary and High Brown Fritillary

Marsh Fritillary continues to be recorded across four metapopulation networks, although numbers at two of the networks, in the Tor Valley and Tavy Valley, are currently at a low ebb. The other two networks, the Fernworthy-Long Lane and Postbridge-West Webburn, have well connected habitat patches and numbers are currently strong. Adult butterflies and/or larval webs were recorded at thirty sites in 2023. The long term trend for Marsh Fritillary in Dartmoor is positive - an increase of 503%, compared with 16% decline nationally (2005-2022).

High Brown Fritillary numbers remain buoyant, although in 2023 the butterfly did not fare as well as in recent years. The butterfly is regularly recorded in two networks, in the Dart Valley (nine sites) and in the Walkham Valley (three sites), and it is occasionally recorded in the Haytor network, as in 2023 with sightings from Hisley Wood and Pinchaford Common. The long term population trend shows a Moderate 181% increase since 2002, compared with 39% increase nationally.



## Peat

It is estimated that **Dartmoor National Park has about 15800 ha of peat, over 0.4m deep**,<sup>30</sup> storing 13.1 megatonnes of carbon. An area of 2900 ha or 9.2% of the peat extent was identified as significantly and directly ecohydrologically degraded by erosional gullies, peat cuttings, drainage ditches and bare peat. Functionally intact blanket bog covers 360 ha or 0.8%, however, it is fragmented and often surrounded by ecohydrologically degraded peat.

There is considerable work being done to restore and improve the area of deep peat, with **1,205 hectares under restoration since 2009. 947 hectares of restoration works have taken place between 2020 and 2024.**

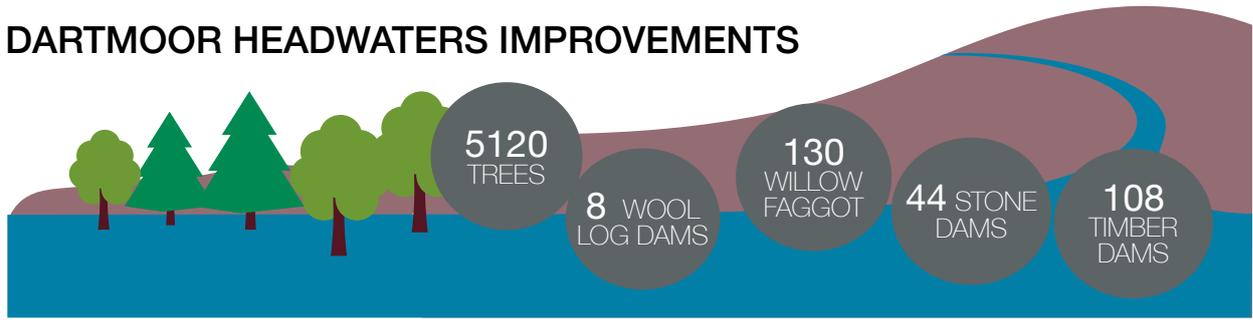
### PEATLAND ON DARTMOOR (2020)



*Dartmoor Deep Peat Extent and Condition Mapping*

Work has also taken place at the headwaters of several rivers and streams to maintain moisture and improve drainage in ways that are more beneficial to improving the peat reserves.

### DARTMOOR HEADWATERS IMPROVEMENTS



## Air quality and Dark Skies

One of the important features of Dartmoor is the quality of the air. In general, once up onto the high Moor, the air quality improves. Around the periphery of the National Park, the proximity of the trunk roads and major settlements (Plymouth, Exeter, Tavistock and Okehampton) have a greater impact.

The main air quality testing point on Dartmoor is at Yarner Wood - where they have been sampling hourly since 1987. **On every measure, in 2022, except Ozone, Dartmoor has significantly cleaner air than either Exeter or Plymouth.**

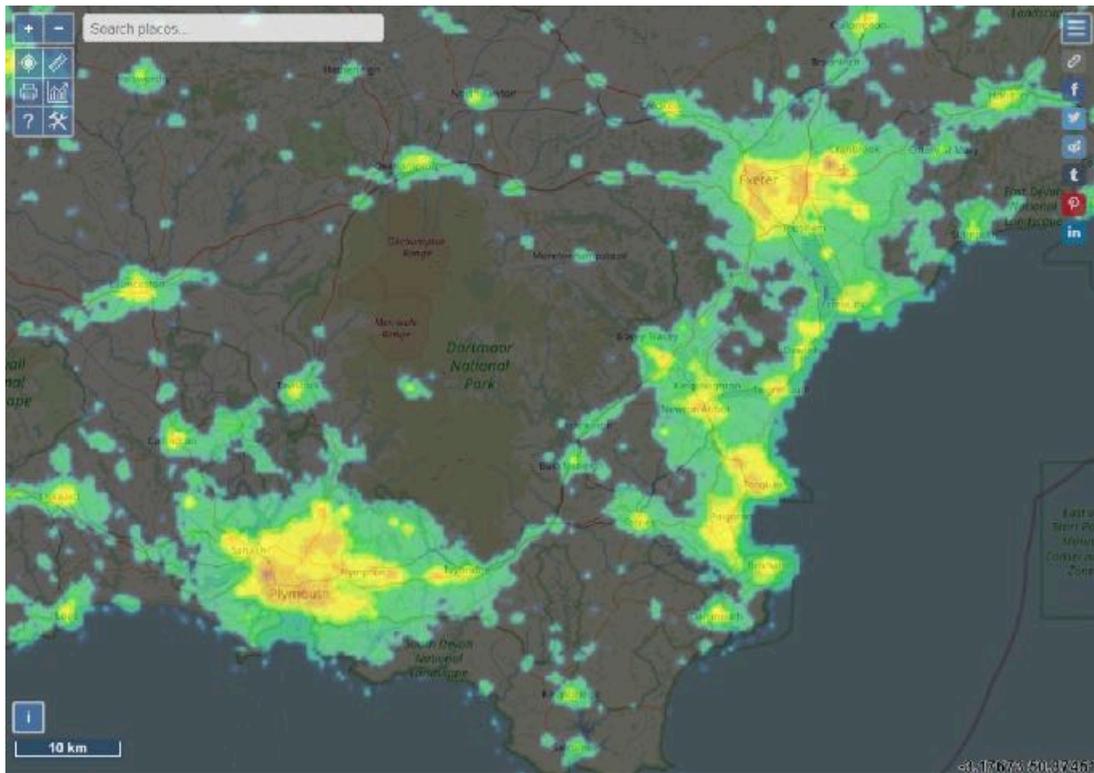
### ANNUAL MEAN BACKGROUND POLLUTION LEVELS

DARTMOOR Yarner Wood		PLYMOUTH Centre		AIR QUALITY MONITORING	EXETER Centre	
Nitrogen dioxide	<b>3.18</b>	Nitrogen dioxide	<b>10.74</b>		( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Nitrogen dioxide
Nitrous Oxide	<b>4.02</b>	Nitrous Oxide	<b>14.59</b>	( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Nitrous Oxide	<b>10.88</b>
PM 10	<b>4.73</b>	PM 10	<b>7.98</b>	(Particulate Matter > 10 microns)	PM 10	<b>7.61</b>
PM 2.5	<b>2.49</b>	PM 2.5	<b>4.17</b>	(Particulate Matter > 2.5 microns)	PM 2.5	<b>4.10</b>
Benzene	<b>0.15</b>	Benzene	<b>0.28</b>	( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Benzene	<b>0.24</b>
Sulphur Dioxide	<b>0.50</b>	Sulphur Dioxide	<b>1.72</b>	( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Sulphur Dioxide	<b>1.05</b>
Arsenic	<b>0.29</b>	Arsenic	<b>0.35</b>	( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Arsenic	<b>0.43</b>
Lead	<b>1.47</b>	Lead	<b>2.71</b>	( $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Lead	<b>3.30</b>
Ozone	<b>10.71</b>	Ozone	<b>8.21</b>	(Days above 120 $\mu\text{g}/\text{M}^3$ )	Ozone	<b>9.13</b>

DEFRA, UK Air Information Resource, Ambient Air Quality Map

Dartmoor's dark night skies (areas where light pollution does not noticeably disturb the view of the stars at night) are central to the National Park's sense of tranquillity and wildness. Dark night skies can easily be diminished by intrusive development and light pollution within Dartmoor and beyond its boundaries.

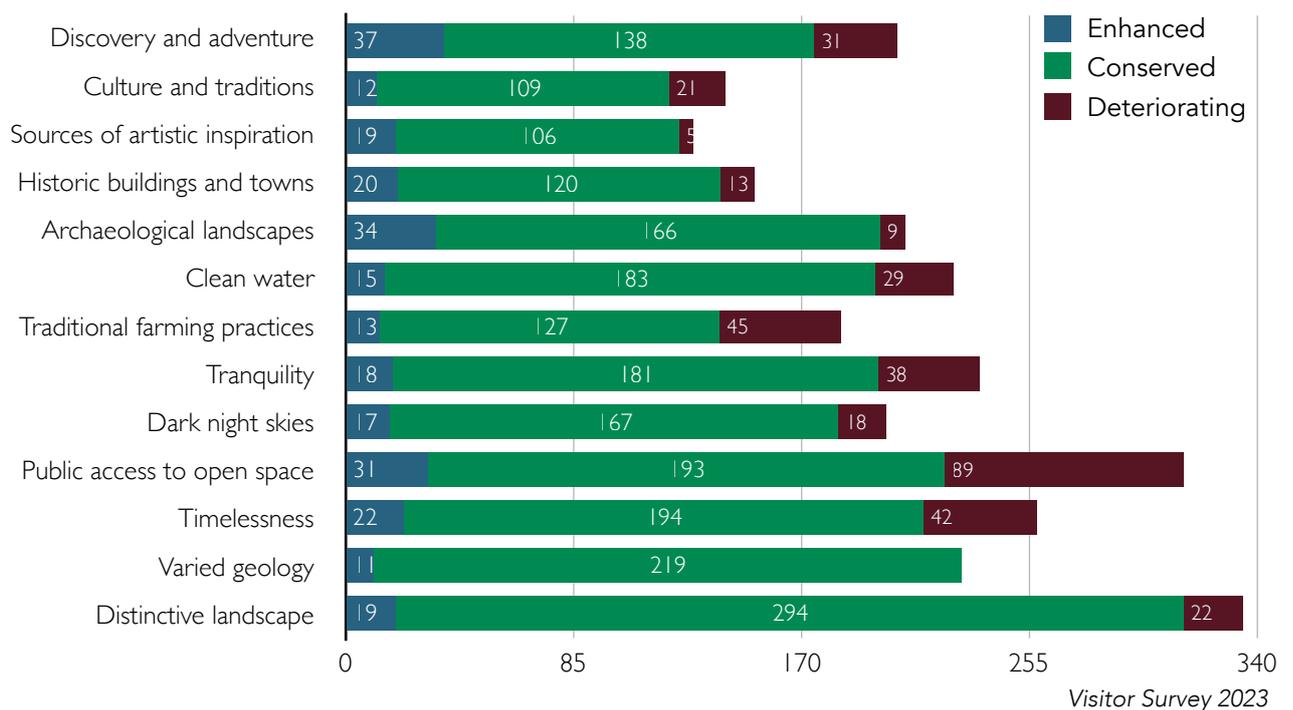
**The level of light pollution within Dartmoor is generally low**, with pockets primarily concentrated at HM Prison Dartmoor in Princetown and larger settlements, particularly around the periphery of Dartmoor, such as Tavistock and Okehampton. The impact of light pollution from nearby urban centres of Plymouth, Exeter and Newton Abbot is also shown on the map below.



Special qualities

Dartmoor’s special qualities are critically important, not just for their own sakes, but to attract visitors and strengthen the local economy. When asked, **most visitors felt that Dartmoor’s distinctive landscape is being conserved**. However there are concerns about aspects of Dartmoor’s special qualities - public access to open space, farming practices, the sense of timelessness, tranquility, and a sense of discovery and adventure.

ISSUES IMPACTING VISITOR EXPERIENCE (2023)



# Farming in Protected Landscapes

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) is a grant scheme for National Parks and National Landscapes supporting projects that enhance the natural environment, mitigate climate change, support nature-friendly farm businesses, improve access opportunities and protect the quality and character of the area.<sup>31</sup>

On Dartmoor, up to 2024, the **Nature** strand delivered a number of outputs.

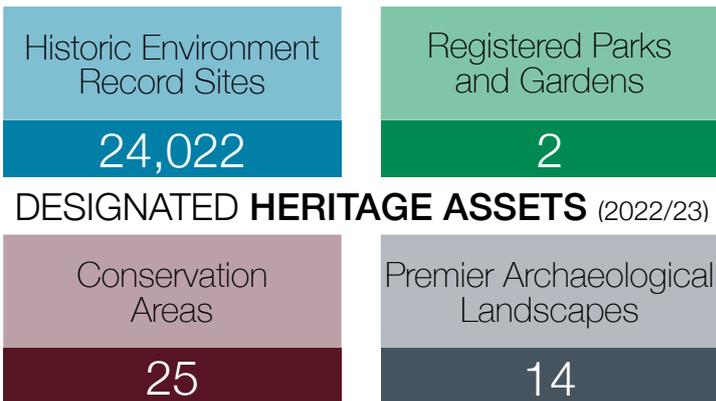
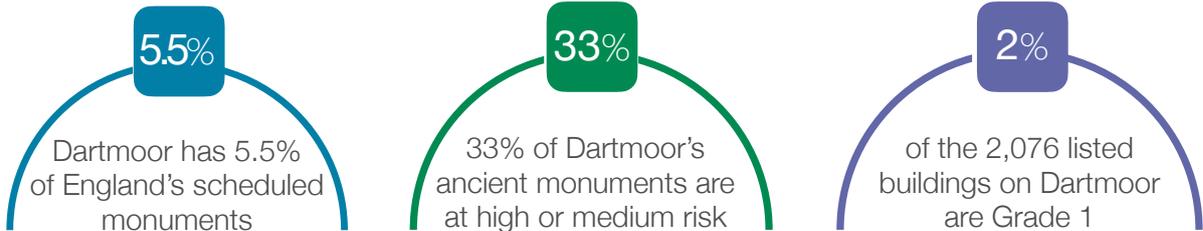
FIPL - NATURE

- 01 ) **2,581 m** of hedgerows planted
- 02 ) **2,045 m** of existing hedgerow restored
- 03 ) **4,167** new trees planted
- 04 ) **5 projects** to protect and enhance rivers
- 05 ) **66 ha** of new habitat created for biodiversity
- 06 ) **3,339 ha** of habitat managed for biodiversity (exc.SSSIs)
- 07 ) **1.2 ha** of land managed for invasive species
- 08 ) **16** ponds created or restored

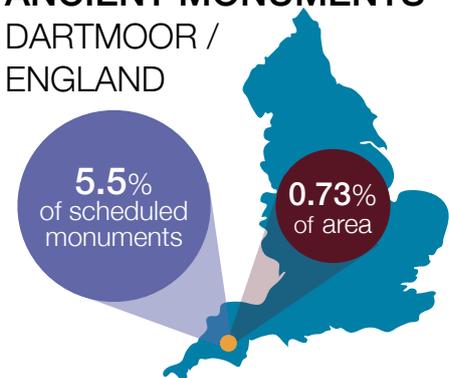
# BETTER FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

## VISION FOR 2045

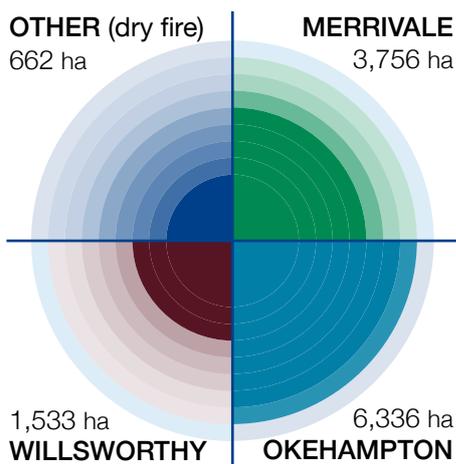
Dartmoor's cultural heritage is protected, well managed and in good condition. It is actively researched, and local communities, visitors and other stakeholders' value, understand and are engaged with Dartmoor's rich cultural history which contributes to the sense of place. Dartmoor's historic built environment, areas of high significance are managed as a priority concern, but elsewhere the management of the historic environment will be carefully integrated into other conservation projects and concerns.



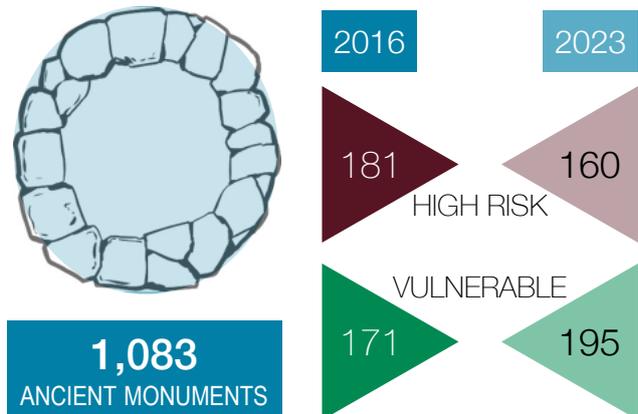
## ANCIENT MONUMENTS DARTMOOR / ENGLAND



## MILITARY TRAINING AREAS



## SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS AT RISK



## LISTED BUILDINGS ON DARTMOOR



# BETTER FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE

This section contains information on:

- Listed buildings  $\Delta$
- Archaeology and scheduled monuments  $\Delta$
- Farming in Protected Landscapes  $\Delta$
- Military ranges  $\Delta$

Local heritage plays an essential role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment.<sup>32</sup> The UK's National Parks are home to some of the most important historic buildings and archaeological sites which contribute greatly to the UK's rich cultural history.

## Listed buildings

Conservation Areas are well-established Designations employed to manage areas of special architectural or historic interest. **Dartmoor contains 25 Conservation Areas**, for which Conservation Area Character Appraisals identify and define the special interests of each area and help to identify ways in which the character can be preserved or enhanced. Dartmoor's conservation areas underwent a process of review in 2023.

Listing buildings are those with special architectural or historical interest.<sup>33</sup> Listing covers a wide variety of buildings including vernacular, religious and industrial structures. Not all listed buildings are centuries old and many are still in use, but they are generally over 30 years old.

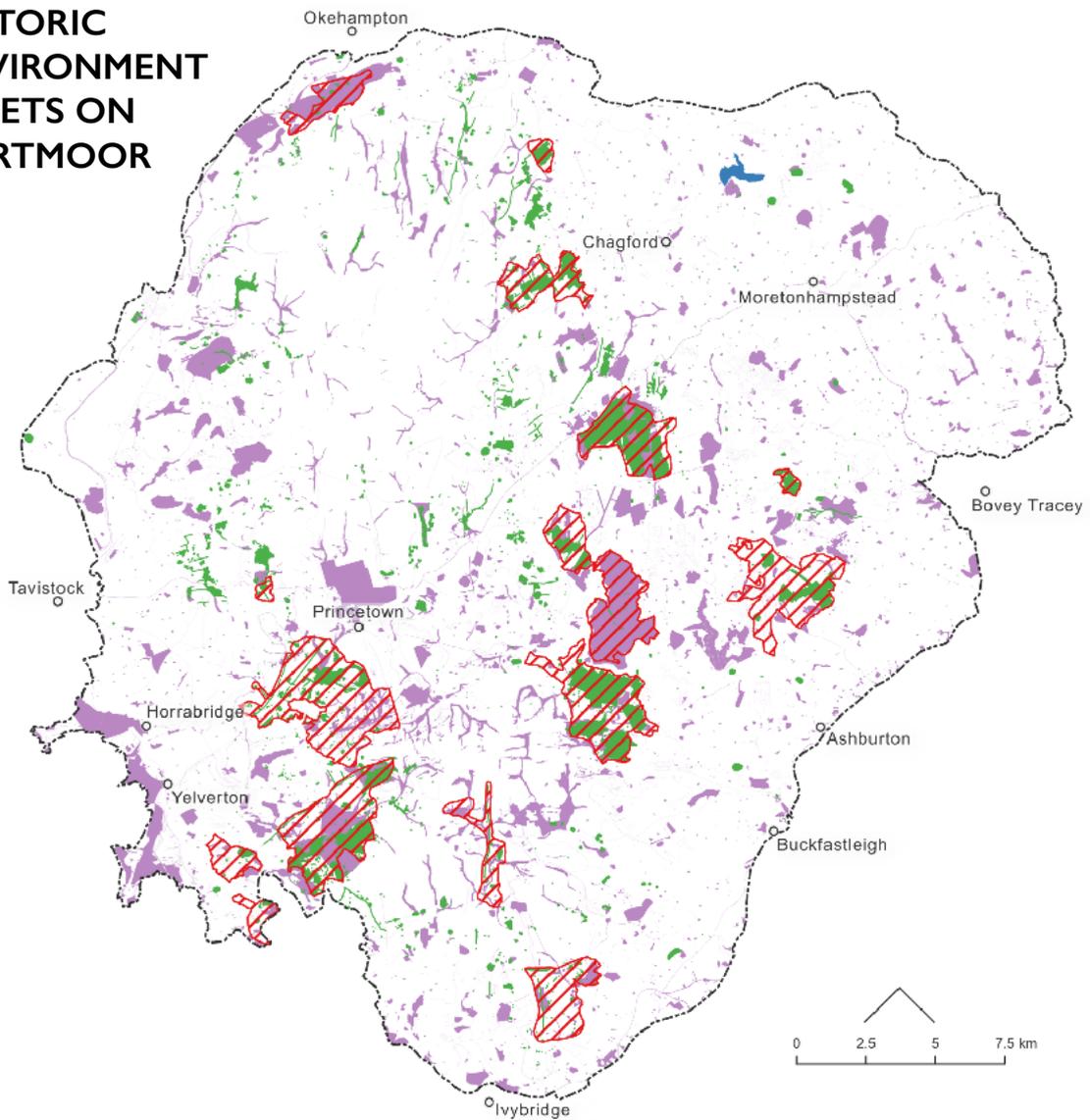


**Of the 2,076 listed buildings in Dartmoor National Park, 92% are grade II, 6% grade II\* and 2% are grade I structures.** The process of listing provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, or enhanced, in a way which is consistent with their significance.<sup>34</sup>

## Archaeology

The National Park's archaeological remains range from Mesolithic flint scatters, Bronze Age cists, stone rows and hut circles to deserted medieval settlement and field systems and the remains of the tin mining industry. These well-conserved historical features give the National Park strong links to its past human settlement. Scheduling is the process through which nationally important sites or monuments are given statutory protection. **Dartmoor National Park contains 5.5% of all England's scheduled monuments** in 0.7% of England's area and contains more scheduled monuments than any other National Park in England, demonstrating the density and wealth of Dartmoor's archaeology.

# HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT ASSETS ON DARTMOOR 2023

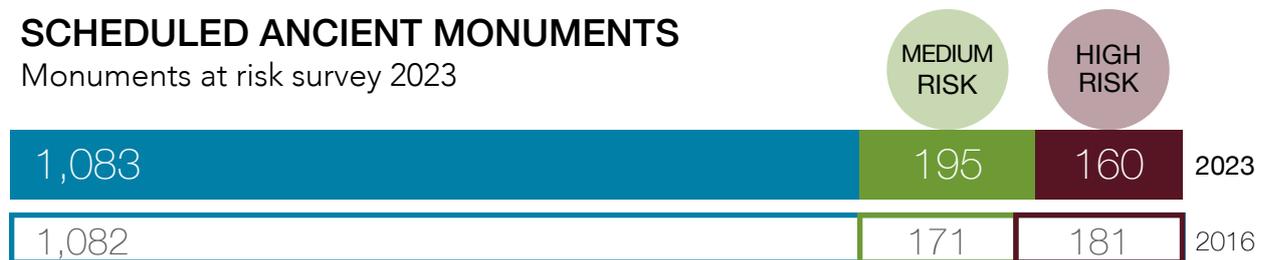


- Historic Environment
-  Premier Archaeological Landscapes
  -  Historic England Registered Parks and Gardens
  -  Historic England Scheduled Monuments
  -  Historic Environment Records

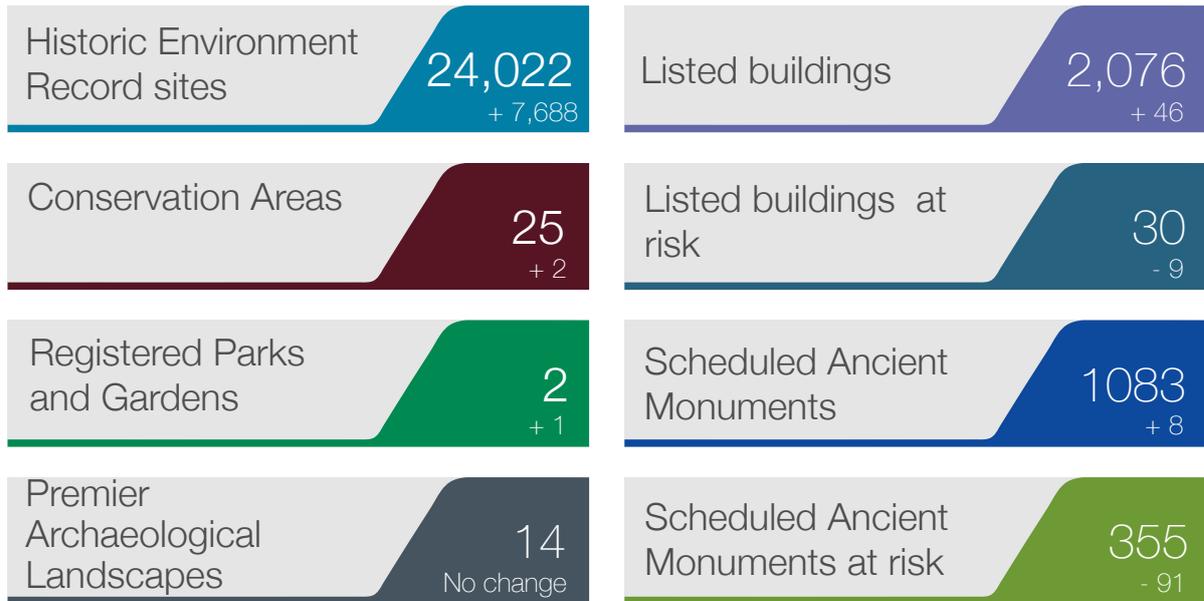
The condition of scheduled monuments is monitored through a 'Monuments at Risk Survey'. **Of Dartmoor's 1,083 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 160 are at high risk and 195 are vulnerable** (medium risk). DNPA Archaeologists have identified vegetation encroachment as one of the main threats. Of the scheduled monuments at 'medium to high risk', **12 have been conserved during the last 3 years**.

## SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENTS

Monuments at risk survey 2023



## DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS (2022/23) CHANGE SINCE 2010

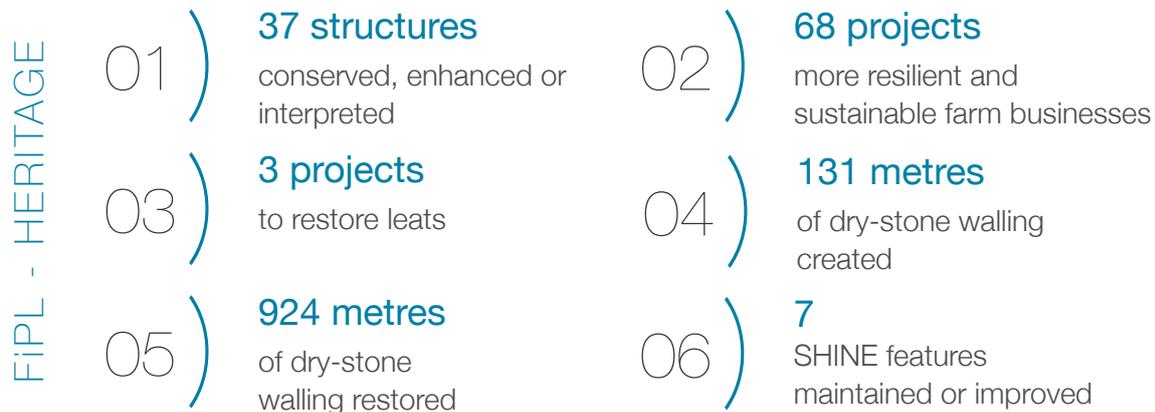


DNPA Annual Monitoring Report 2022/23

### Farming in Protected Landscapes

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) is a grant scheme for National Parks and National Landscapes supporting projects that enhance the natural environment, mitigate climate change, support nature-friendly farm businesses, improve access opportunities and protect the quality and character of the area.<sup>35</sup>

On Dartmoor, up to 2024, the **Heritage and Place** strand delivered a number of outputs.



SHINE - Selected Heritage Inventory for Natural England

### Military ranges

Dartmoor has been a key location for military training since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. **The Dartmoor Training Area comprises of a total of 11,667 ha.** However, with attached areas such as encampments, the total MoD area on Dartmoor is 13,198 ha. Approximately 88% is owned by the Ministry of Defence, with the remaining training area used under the licenses and tenancies from the respective landowners, the largest of which is the Duchy of Cornwall. This is a slight reduction following the expiry of the lease for Cramber Tor in February 2024.

Training Area Name	Size (ha)	Other training / transport areas	Size (ha)
Okehampton – Live Firing Area	6,336 ha	Areas attached to but outside live firing including encampments	1,521 ha
Merrivale – Live Firing Area	3,756 ha		
Willsworthy – Live Firing Area	1,533 ha		
Ringmoor – Dry Training Area	610 ha	<b>Total MOD areas on Dartmoor</b>	<b>13,198 ha</b>
Sheepstor – Dry Training Area	52 ha		
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,677 ha</b>		

Dartmoor’s training area at present is predominantly used by personnel from all services on foot with portable weapons and equipment.

### ACTUAL FIRING AS % OF DAYS LICENSED FOR LIVE FIRING



### ACTUAL FIRING AS % OF DAYS PUBLISHED

Ministry of Defence

The MoD is licenced for a certain number of live firing days. It only uses a proportion of these. The MoD publishes all the days that it intends to ‘live fire’ - not all of these are taken up.

Live firing takes place within three training ranges on the north moor (Okehampton, Merrivale and Willsworthy). For safety purposes, these areas are closed to the public when live firing is programmed. When not in use, live firing ranges can be used for Dry Training which has no impact on public access.

Military training can be divided into Live Firing (which on Dartmoor consists of light arms firing live projectiles) and Dry Training which incorporates all types of other training including the use of blank ammunition and pyrotechnics (but excluding live projectiles).

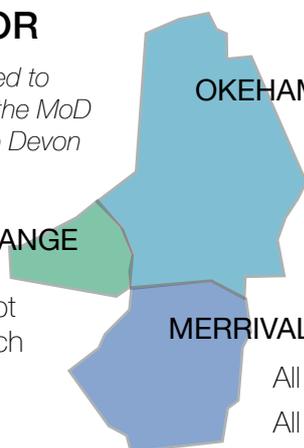
Since 2017, the level of use of the days licensed for live firing has remained broadly the same on Dartmoor, at about 50%.

## PUBLIC ACCESS TO MILITARY RANGES ON DARTMOOR

*In all cases, it is advised to check in advance on the MoD website or BBC Radio Devon*

### WILLSWORTHY RANGE

All weekends, except 2nd weekend of each month.  
All of August.



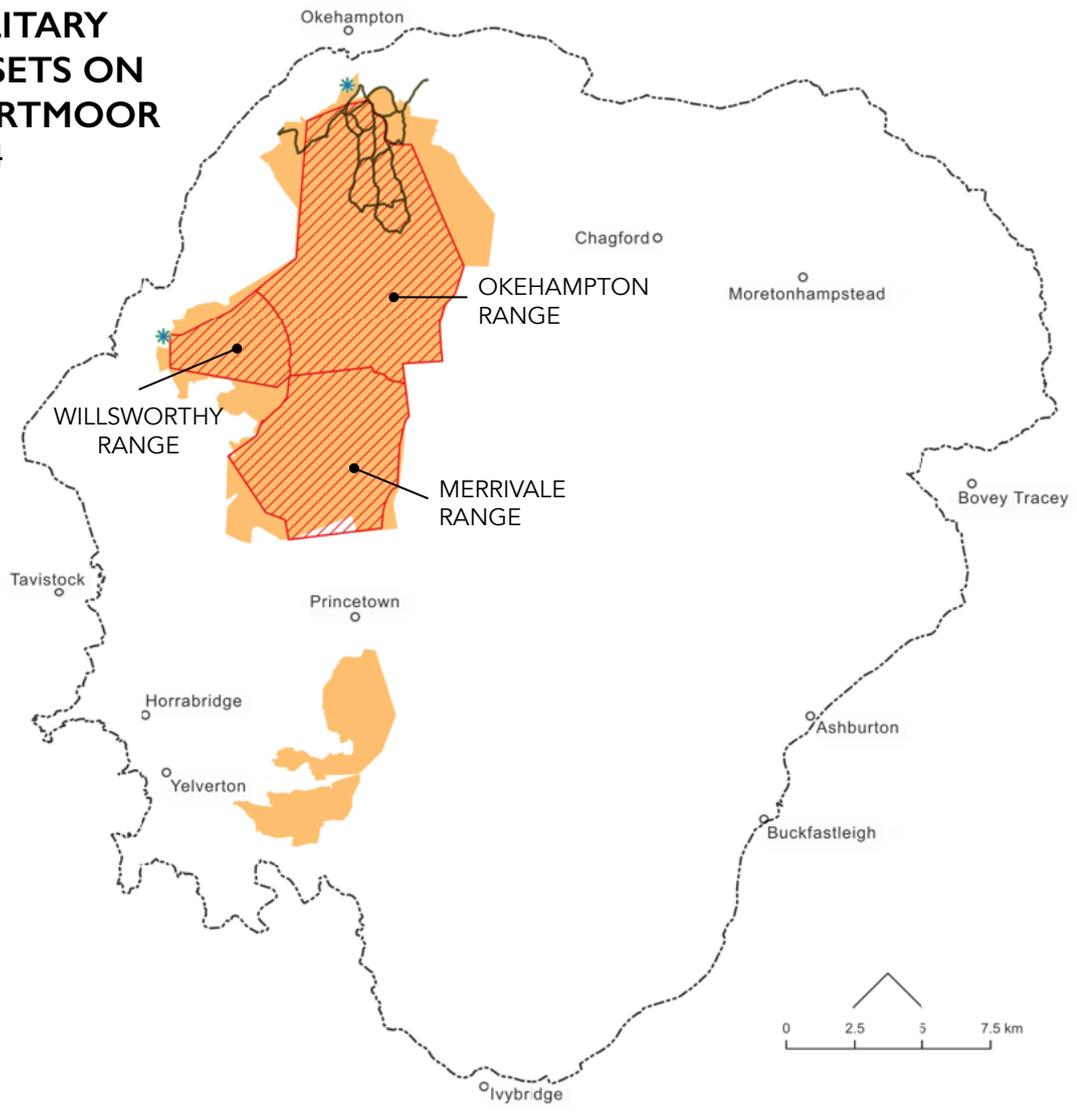
### OKEHAMPTON RANGE

All weekends.  
All Mondays.  
All of April, May, July and August.

### MERRIVALE RANGE

All weekends.  
All Mondays.  
All of August.

# MILITARY ASSETS ON DARTMOOR 2024



- Military Infrastructure**
- \* Camps
  - Military Ring Road
  - ▨ Military Danger Area
  - Training Areas

# BETTER FOR PEOPLE

## VISION FOR 2045

People from all backgrounds and ages are enjoying the National Park. They undertake activities of their choice consistent with Dartmoor's Special Qualities and benefitting their health and well-being. Visitors are spread out through time and space and arriving by sustainable transport. Everyone is able to find peace and solitude and some areas are quiet, as sanctuaries for nature. Visitors leave no trace; they understand and respect the environment, each other and the people living and working here.

3.1m

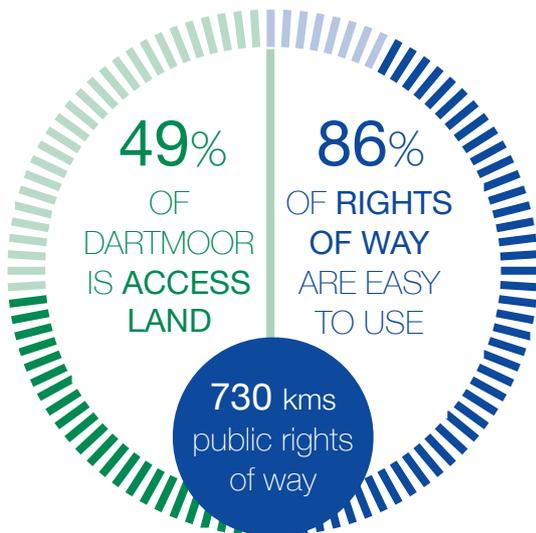
Almost 3,100,000 people visited Dartmoor in 2023

38

Kilometres of Miles without Stiles routes created

7756

Young people engaged in a range of outreach projects



STATED THAT NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION IS IMPORTANT

### DARTMOOR'S SPECIAL QUALITIES SEEN AS DETERIORATING

Visitor survey

- Public access to open space
- Traditional farming practices
- Sense of tranquility
- Water quality and cleanliness
- Sense of timelessness
- Adventure and discovery

5,261 days

age 5-17  
2022/23

6,256 days

age 5-17  
2023/24

3,339 days

VOLUNTEERS

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LITTER



TOO MANY VISITORS



POOR PARKING



SPEEDING VEHICLES



DOG BEHAVIOUR



### TOP 5 ISSUES IMPACTING VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Visitor survey

This section contains information on:

- access  $\Delta$
- recreation  $\Delta$
- community outreach  $\Delta$
- Farming in Protected Landscapes  $\Delta$

## Access

Much of Dartmoor is wild and rugged terrain. It is important that everybody who wants to visit Dartmoor is able to do so and can enjoy the benefits that a visit to this special landscape can offer, including benefits to people's health and well-being. **Around 49% (or 46,666 ha) of the National Park is designated Access Land**, of this 35,301 ha are common land and 11,365 ha are open country.<sup>36</sup> The National Park also has **730 kms of Public Rights of Way - with 89% being surveyed as 'easy to use'**.<sup>37</sup> This includes 354 kms of footpaths, 360 kms of bridleways and 19 kms of byways.

In order to improve the accessibility of Dartmoor National Park to people of all physical abilities, a project called Miles Without Stiles has been developed. **This project provides easy-access routes in locations across the National Park** allowing exploration for people with limited mobility of some of Dartmoor's hidden gems and wide-open vistas. **12 routes have been successfully established within Dartmoor since 2020**. All routes are without steps, stiles or steep gradients.

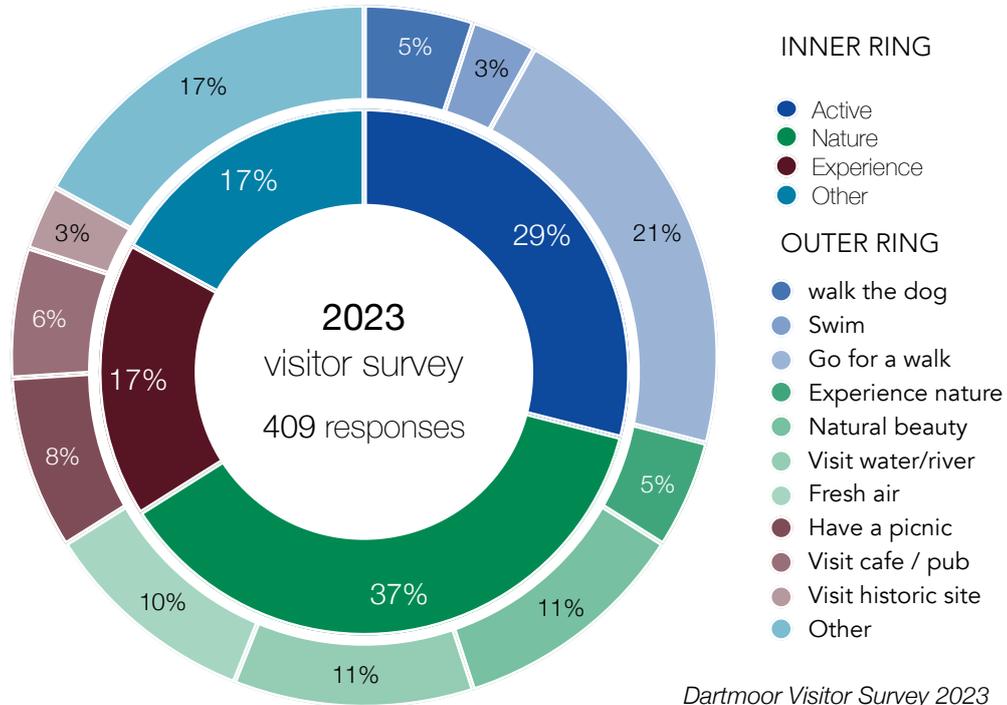
### ACCESSIBLE ROUTES (Miles without Stiles) 2024

Kms	LOCATION
2	YARNER WOOD
1	BRENT ISLAND
1	BURRATOR ARBORETUM
2	NORSWORTHY BRIDGE TO DEANSCOMBE
4	SHIPLEY BRIDGE TO AVON DAM
2	LONGTIMBER WOODS
8	PRINCETOWN TO NUN'S CROSS
4.5	BELLEVER FOREST
2	HAYTOR QUARRY
10	OKEHAMPTON MILITARY RING ROAD
1	FERNWORTHY RESERVOIR
0.5	BLACKINGSTONE ROCK
<b>38</b>	

Visitors and locals have a great affinity with the natural environment on the Moor.

When asked what activities they had or would undertake during their visit,<sup>38</sup> 37% were engaging with nature; 29% were engaging in physical activity (often in nature); 16% were involved with a more organised activity; and the rest (17%) were undertaking a range of other recreational activities.

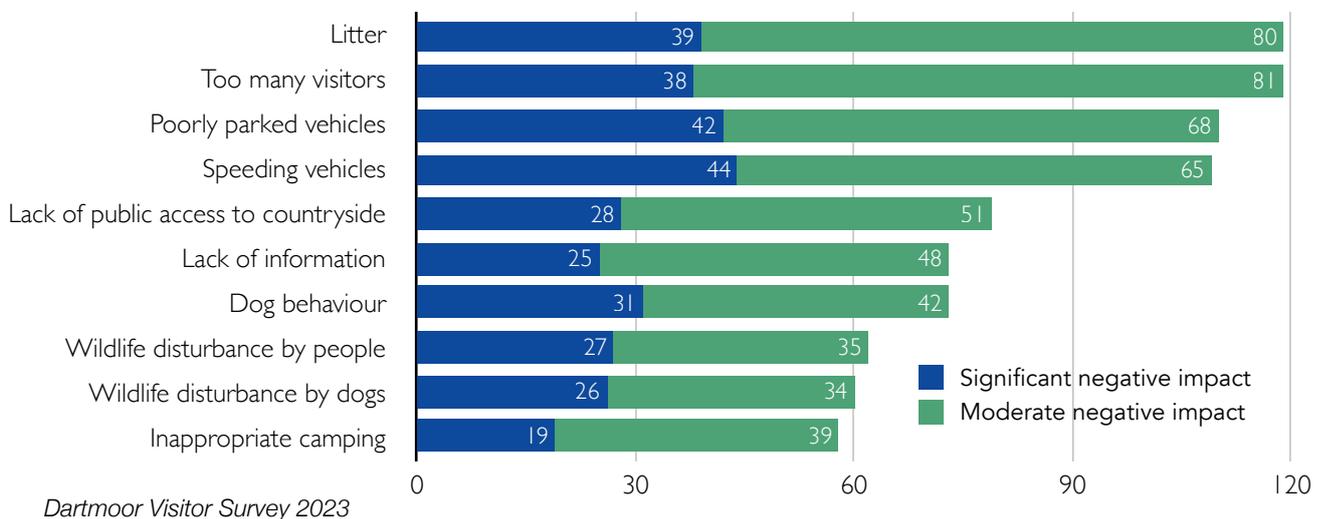
### RECREATION ACTIVITIES



Most people living in and visiting the National Park feel that Dartmoor’s special qualities are being conserved. However there are concerns, in particular, about a deterioration of access to open space; traditional farming practices; tranquility; a sense of timelessness and clean water.

The top ten issues which impact on the visitor experience are shown in the graph below.

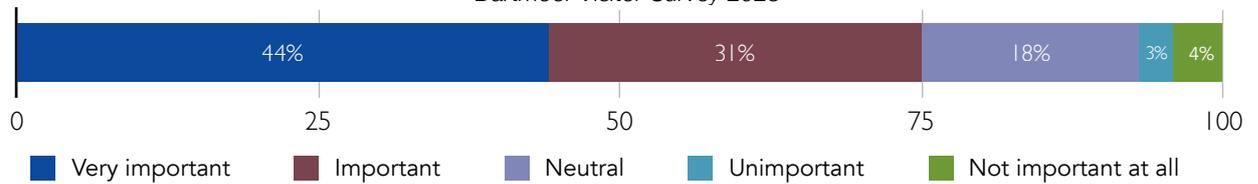
### ISSUES IMPACTING VISITOR EXPERIENCE (2023)



Most people felt that Dartmoor’s special designation as a National Park was an important factor in deciding to visit the area.

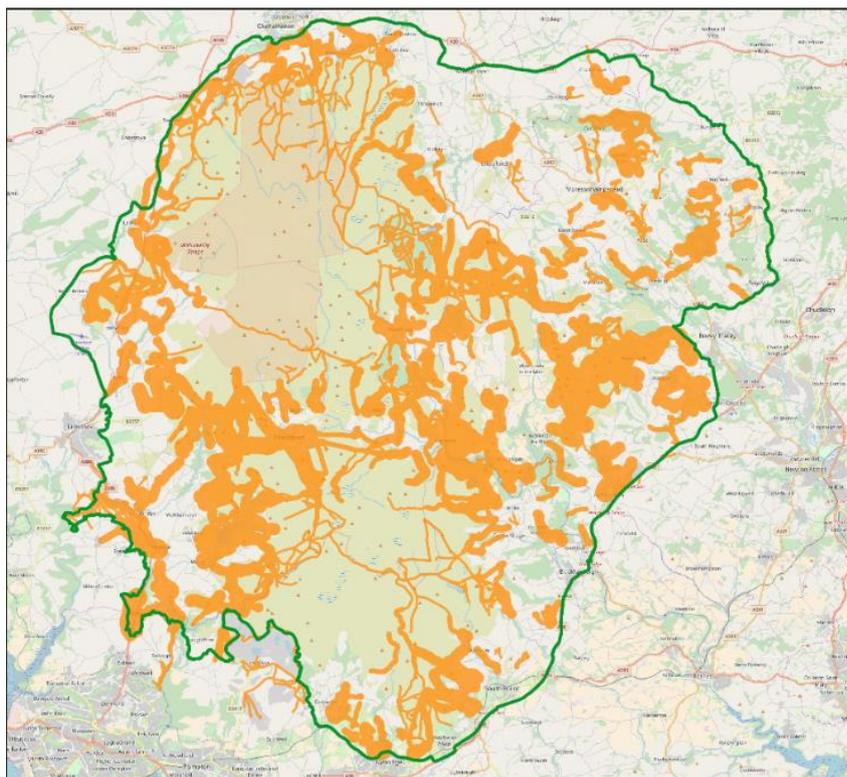
## IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION

*Dartmoor Visitor Survey 2023*



There remains a risk that the popularity of the National Park will undermine its special qualities. In work conducted by the University of Exeter,<sup>39</sup> the estimated increase in footfall across key locations. Burrator, Haytor and Princetown stand out as high intensity locations. By 2039, fairly substantial increases in footfall intensity are expected in several locations across the National Park with peak increases of around 25 persons per hour at peak times. Not surprisingly, the locations attracting the largest increases in footfall are those that are also currently most attractive to visitors.

## ESTIMATED GROWTH IN FOOTFALL 2019 TO 2039



### Legend



*SWEEP report 2018*

## Community outreach

It is widely recognised that childrens’ experience with the natural environment changes with age,<sup>40</sup> with nature experience changes being identified across four age groups summarised as:

- Early childhood: age of wonder
- Middle childhood: age of physical engagement
- Adolescent/teenage years: age of detachment because of increasing socialisation; and
- Post 19 years old: age of re-engagement, leading to adult values, attitudes, and actions.<sup>41</sup>

DNPA's outreach and engagement team seek to offer different learning experiences in order to improve understanding of the National Park's Special Qualities and establish a connection with nature for children at a young age. They do this through visiting local schools on Dartmoor, running family friendly events and supporting community partners. The team offers opportunities for young people to get more involved through the Ranger Ralph Club for 5-11 year olds and the Dartmoor Youth Rangers which offers practical conservation tasks for 12-17 year olds. They also run specialist projects including Girls Do Dartmoor which helps teenage girls develop their self confidence and resilience through connection to the outdoors.

The number of activity days for participants overall has varied between 693 (during Covid) and over 9,500. **In 2023/24, the team had 6,256 days engaging with young people.**



### ENGAGEMENT WITH 5-17 YEAR OLDS 2023/24

		Community events	School engagement	Total
aged 5 - 11	events	13	69	<b>82</b>
	person days	251	5,091	<b>5,342</b>
aged 12 - 17	events	45	17	<b>62</b>
	person days	665	249	<b>914</b>

Many local people also participate in the management of the Moor by offering their services as volunteers. The number of **volunteering days the Authority organised / supported was 3,339 for 2023/24.**

### Farming in Protected Landscapes

Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) is a grant scheme for National Parks and National Landscapes supporting projects that enhance the natural environment, mitigate climate change, support nature-friendly farm businesses, improve access opportunities and protect the quality and character of the area.<sup>42</sup>

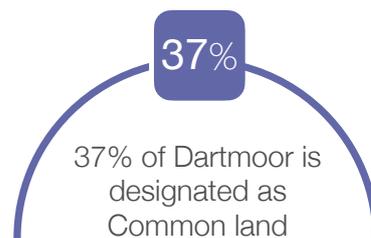
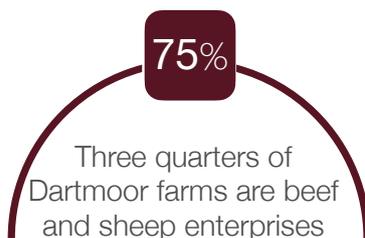
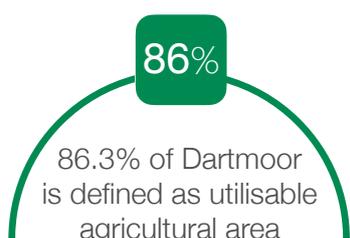
On Dartmoor, up to 2024, the **People** strand delivered a number of outputs.

- 01 ) **700 metres** of existing permissive path improved or better managed
- 02 ) **17 projects** delivering educational visits
- 03 ) **20 projects** to make the landscape more inclusive for visitors
- 04 ) **40 projects** supporting greater public engagement in land management
- 05 ) **145 volunteers** engaged through the FiPL programme
- 06 ) **150 days** for educational visits, visitor days and open days

# BETTER FOR FARMING

## VISION FOR 2045

Farming and forestry systems will sustain a high-quality natural environment; they will store and sequester carbon, produce healthy food, high quality fibre and other products, be economically viable and deliver a wide range of public goods. Visitors, policy makers and local communities will understand the central role that farming, and forestry play in producing food and a range of environmental goods, including landscape character and that this relationship between people and the land is a rich and valuable part of our cultural heritage. Better understanding and appreciation has led to valuing Dartmoor, and a desire to buy and invest locally.



## FARMING IN PROTECTED LANDSCAPES

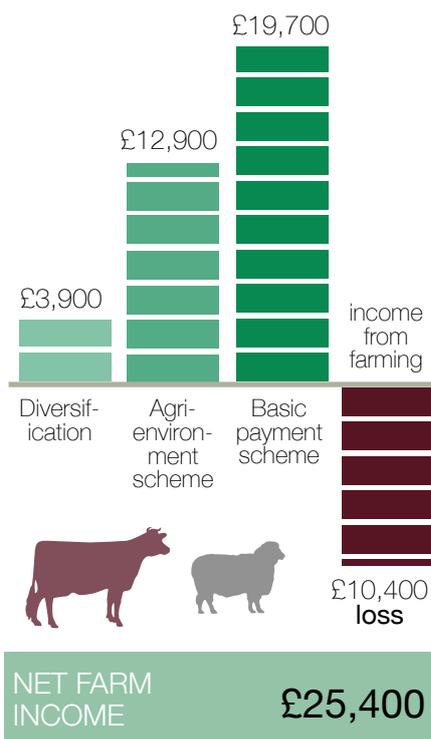
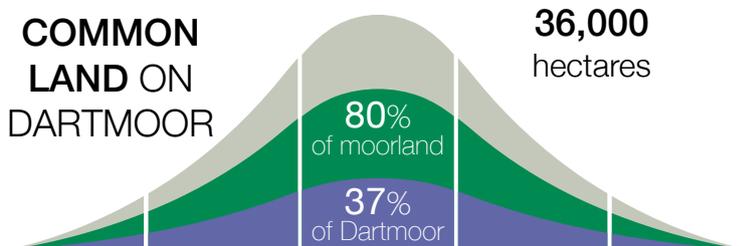
achievements to April 2024



## COMMONERS ON DARTMOOR

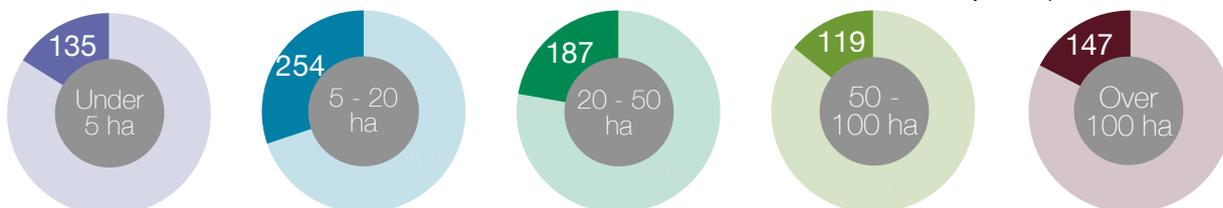


## COMMON LAND ON DARTMOOR



**LESS FAVOURED AREAS FARM BUSINESS INCOME**  
(UK wide 2022/23)

## FARM HOLDINGS ON DARTMOOR, BY SIZE (2021)



# BETTER FOR FARMING

This section contains information on:

- Farming on Dartmoor  $\Delta$
- Farm incomes  $\Delta$
- Agri-environment schemes  $\Delta$
- Farm holdings  $\Delta$
- Common land  $\Delta$
- Farming entrants  $\Delta$
- Farming in Protected Landscapes  $\Delta$

## Farming on Dartmoor

Farming has shaped the landscape, culture and heritage of Dartmoor over hundreds of years. Of Dartmoor's 95,500ha area, **86% of the National Park is defined as utilisable agricultural area.**<sup>43</sup> A majority of the utilisable agricultural area is unenclosed moorland and rough grazing (49% of the National Park) and the remaining 37% is enclosed farmland, mostly permanent pasture. Sustaining traditional pastoral systems is a key component in maintaining Dartmoor's Special Qualities. It can provide:

- a local food source reared to high welfare standards
- natural services such as water provision, water storage flood mitigation, carbon storage to mitigate climate change and valuable habitats to support priority species
- extensive grazing of the commons, which manages large areas of open access land, mitigates fire risk and helps conserve archaeological landmarks in a cost-effective way
- maintained public access to large tracts of Dartmoor
- locally distinctive and traditional breeds

**Most farming on Dartmoor is centred around livestock production and pastoralism** as naturally poor land grade, altitude and conditions are not able to support other options. Moorland grazing on common land and newtakes is often supplemented by the use of better pastures on home farms and inbye land. **Cattle, sheep and ponies dominate the grazing on Dartmoor.** As they each graze differently, they can coexist and complement each other. **75% of Dartmoor's farm holdings are beef and sheep enterprises, or mixed.**<sup>44</sup>

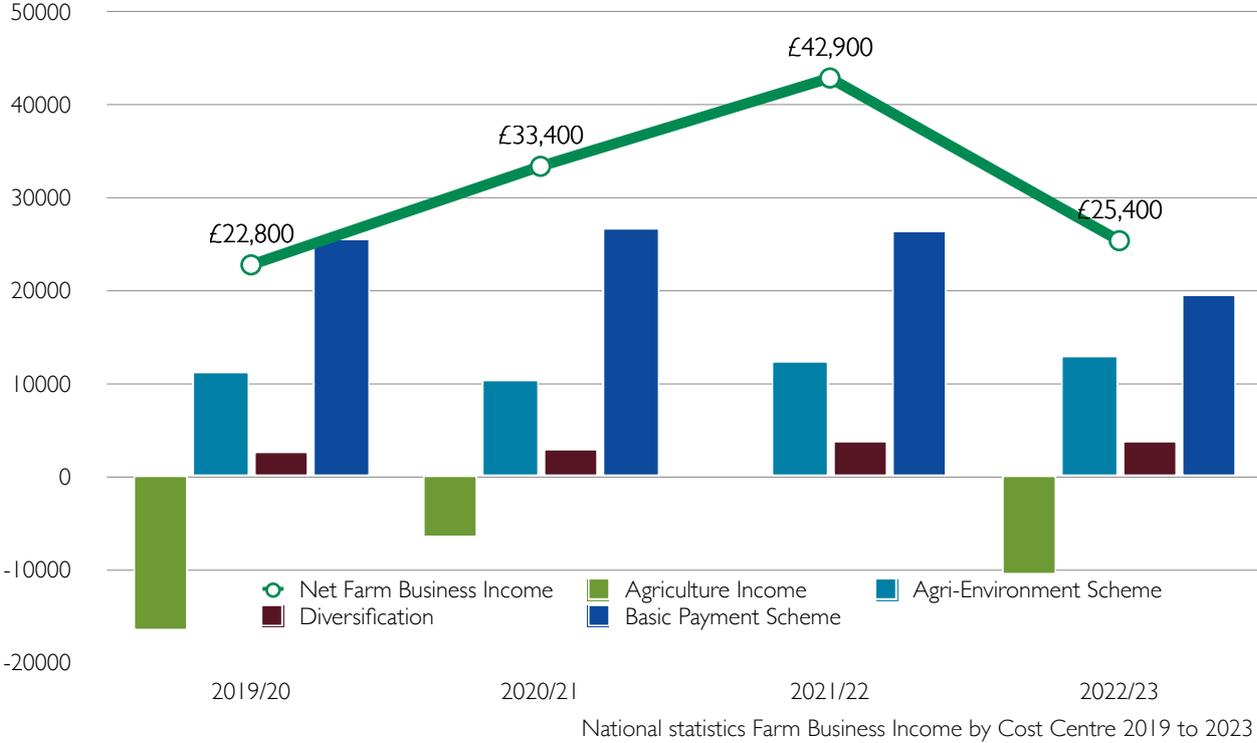
## Farm incomes

**The economics of farming on Dartmoor are extremely marginal.** Defra publishes national figures on Farm Business Incomes in England (the amount which must provide a return for unpaid family labour and the farmer's own capital).<sup>45</sup>

In 2021/22, Less Favoured Area (LFA) grazing livestock farms benefitted from very high output prices for both sheep and cattle, yet the average direct agricultural income for these farms was still only £200 for the year. Income from agri-environmental activities was £12,300. The Basic Payments Scheme (BPS) contributed £26,500 and diversified

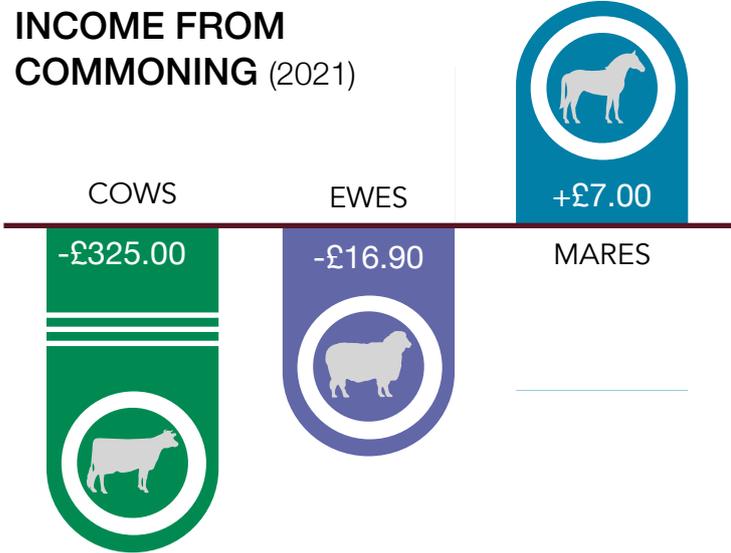
income £3,900, giving a total average income of £42,900. For 2022/23, the figures show a net loss of £10,400 from agricultural activities. Basic Payment Scheme income fell by just under a quarter from 2021/22 to £19,700, diversified income was £3,300 and income from agri-environmental activities rose slightly to £12,900. Average total farm business income was £25,400, down 41% on 2021/22.

### LESS FAVOURED AREAS FARM BUSINESS INCOME



Our Upland Commons Project commissioned the Duchy Rural Business School and the Vice Chair Dartmoor Commoners Council to carry out the Cost of Commoning Survey.<sup>46</sup> Data was collected over three years, 2021 - 2023 from fifteen farms who graze livestock on Dartmoor common land. The aim was to highlight the true cost of grazing livestock on the common and inform future Agri-environment intervention rates. These figures (which included a cost for the farmer’s own labour) showed an annual net loss of £325.00 per cow and £16.90 per ewe. Mares made a small positive return of £7.00.

### AGRICULTURAL INCOME FROM COMMONING (2021)

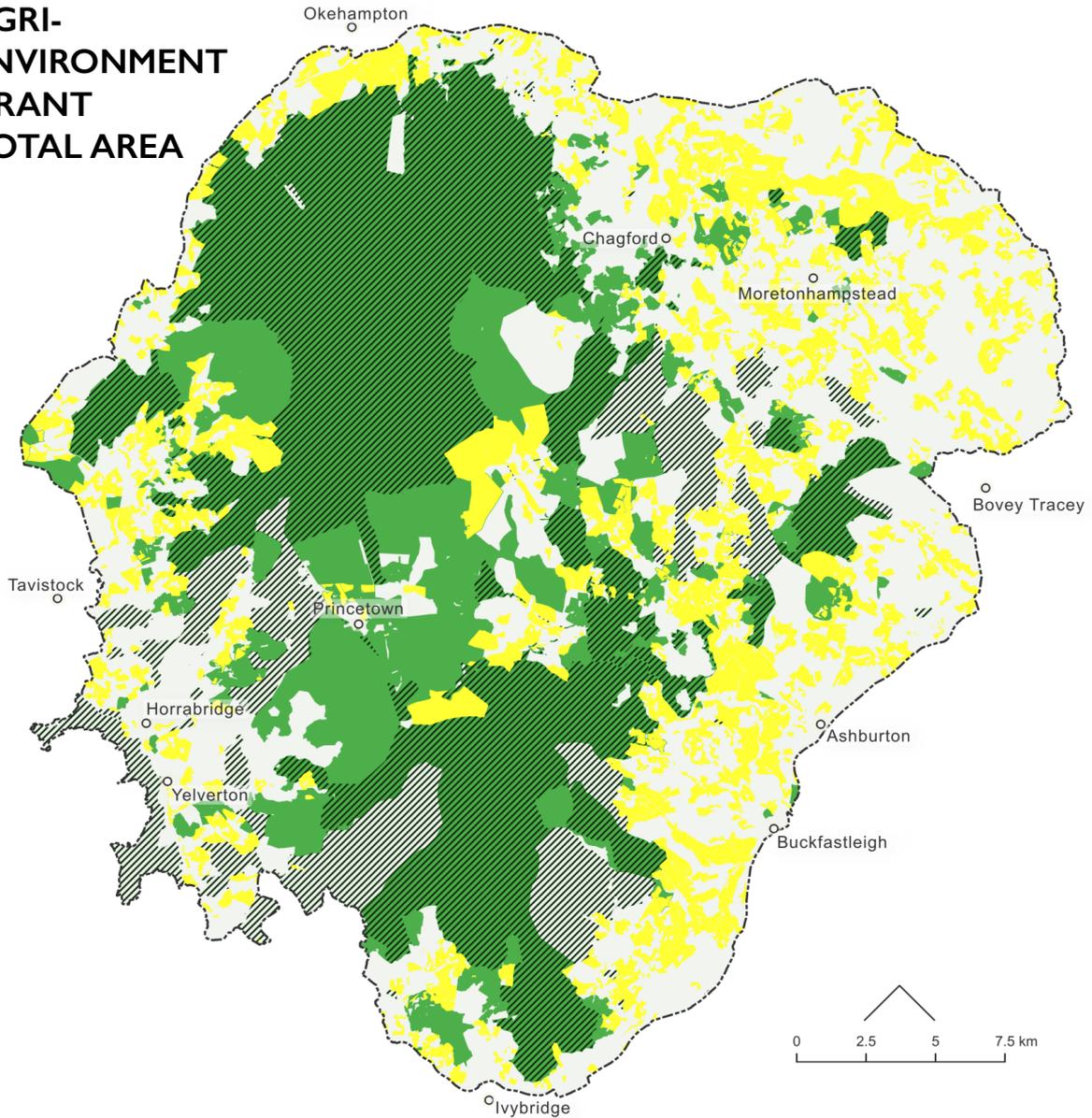


## Agri-environment schemes

Agri-environment schemes (AES) are optional Government programmes established alongside the BPS to encourage agricultural sustainability through enabling farmers to manage their land in environmentally sustainable ways.<sup>47</sup> Existing AES options either fall within Environmental Stewardship (ES) or Countryside Stewardship (CS).

The areas of Dartmoor National Park within the multiple tiers of ES and CS are highlighted on the map below. **The extent of Dartmoor National Park's land area within AES agreements has significantly decreased over time, as have the costs for AES, particularly since 2019.**

### AGRI- ENVIRONMENT GRANT TOTAL AREA

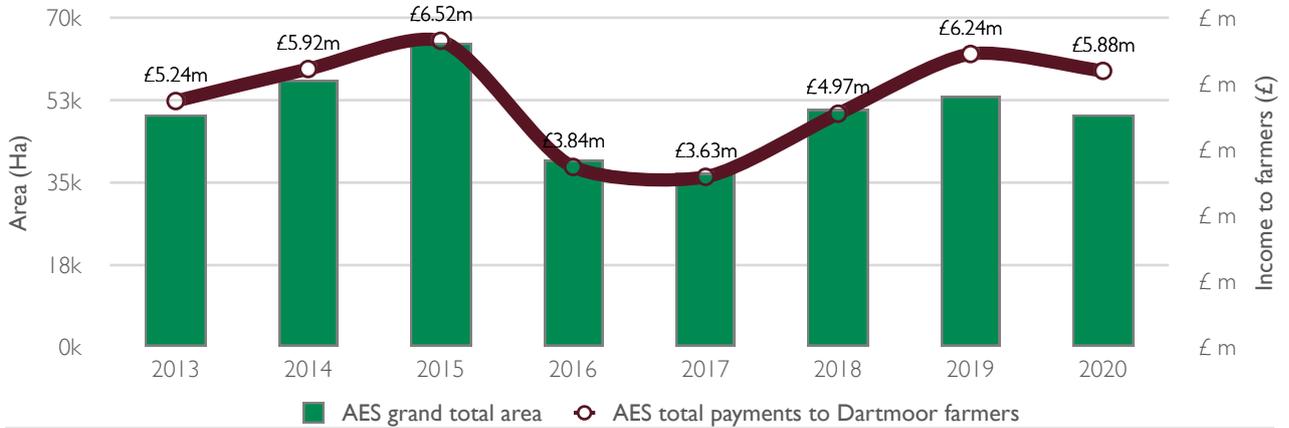


#### Agri-Environment Schemes

-  Registered Common Land
-  Countryside Stewardship Agreement Management Areas
-  Environmental Stewardship Agreements (Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship)

89% of Dartmoor National Park is classed as a Severely Disadvantaged Less Favoured Area (SDA) for farming,<sup>48</sup> areas where conditions such as altitude, high rainfall, steep slopes and poor soils severely limit productivity. 34% of Dartmoor farms are tenanted,<sup>49</sup> reflecting the national average. 37% of Dartmoor's area comprises common land, privately owned land where "commoners", have rights over the land predominantly for grazing animals.<sup>50</sup>

### AES TOTAL AREA / INCOME TO DARTMOOR FARMERS



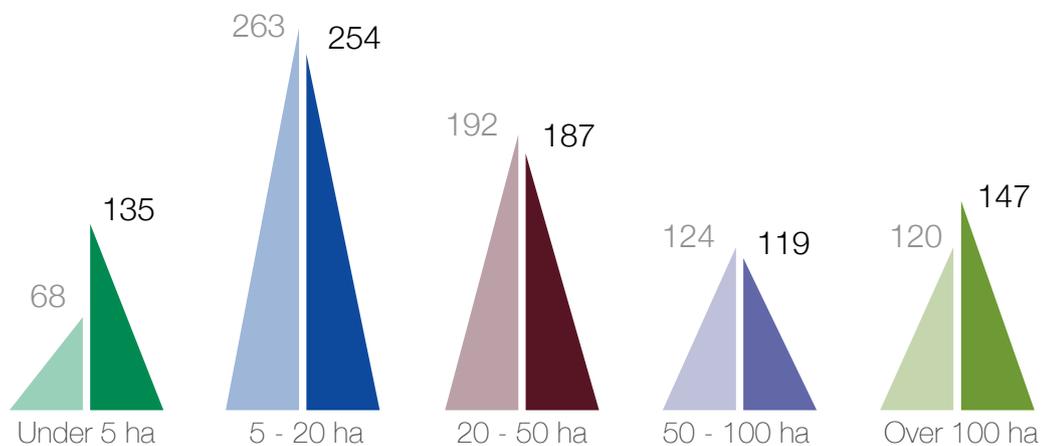
Defra, Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes

### Farm holdings

The trend of increasing farm holding sizes and reduction in smaller holdings between 2009 and 2016 changed abruptly in 2021 as some larger holdings were split up - boosting the number of smaller holdings. The reasons for this are unknown but could be fuelled by uncertainty as well as an increasing number of landowners seeking maximum sale price for agricultural land. Sub-division of holdings into smaller agricultural units could have contributed towards the rise in agricultural workforce on Dartmoor. However, it may also have been driven by the availability of grant programmes to complete, for instance, fencing or walling. In 2010 there were 1,547 people employed within farming businesses on Dartmoor; and this increased to 1,892 by 2021.

### FARM HOLDINGS ON DARTMOOR, BY SIZE

(L) 2010 (R) 2021



Defra, Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June 2023

## Common land

37% of Dartmoor National Park's total land area, and 80% of the moorland, is common land,<sup>51</sup> subdivided into 90 Home Commons and the Forest of Dartmoor.<sup>52</sup> The Forest is the largest common on Dartmoor, encompassing the highest parts of the moorland and covering 11,000ha.<sup>53</sup> Many of these commons have no physical boundary between them and they are generally managed by grazing animals (cattle, sheep and ponies) provided by the commoners.

Grazing on Dartmoor commons is an important land management technique with a rich cultural heritage. Recent years have seen a decline in the number of active graziers on Dartmoor commons. **Of 850 registered commoners with grazing and other rights on Dartmoor, it is estimated only 130 are actively using these rights.**<sup>54</sup>

### COMMONERS ON DARTMOOR



DNPA (2019) Farming and Forestry Review Paper

Fewer active graziers on Dartmoor commons will make it more challenging to manage these areas in the future. Common land is a significant source of archaeological remains and biodiversity as well as being an important grazing resource for many upland and tenant farms on Dartmoor, particularly on the high moor.

### Farming entrants

The UK farming sector is experiencing a decline in the number of young people seeking a career in farming and agriculture.<sup>55</sup> **In 2021, nationally, 42% of farmers were aged 60 or older and 11% aged under 30 years.**<sup>56</sup>

A decrease in the number of young people looking to enter farming as a profession risks loss of knowledge and skills on Dartmoor.

### Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) funding

The Defra-funded Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme is a grant scheme for National Parks and National Landscapes that will run until March 2025. It supports projects that enhance the natural environment, mitigate climate change, support nature-friendly farm businesses and farm diversification, provide public access opportunities and protect the quality and character of the area.<sup>57</sup> The designation of our protected landscapes recognises their exceptional value for landscape, nature and cultural heritage. They have been shaped by generations of farmers and a resilient, sustainable approach to land management sits at the heart of their future.

The FiPL programme approach blends national and local priorities. Contributions to nature recovery and climate resilient businesses, heritage conservation and better access for people to enjoy our protected landscapes all feature in programme delivery.

Progress made with FiPL funding is shown in the relevant parts of the report: **Better response to climate change** Δ; **Better for nature and natural beauty** Δ; **Better for cultural heritage** Δ and **Better for people** Δ.

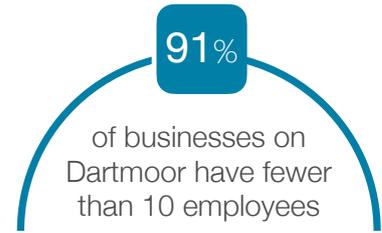
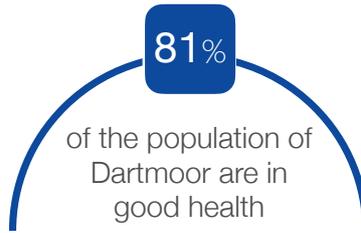
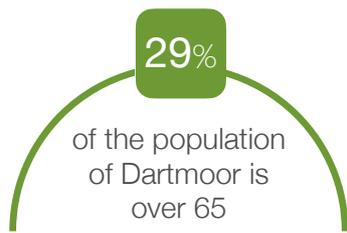
The outcomes highlighted below are totals for the whole programme to the end of 2023/24.

Management improvement on SSSIs	New wetland created	Soil health projects	Hedgerows planted	Projects reducing flood risk
6,273 ha	7.5 ha	15	2,581 m	23
New trees planted	Projects reducing wildfire risk	Biodiversity enhancement	Woodland created	Dry stone walling restored
4,167	5	3,339 ha	46 ha	1,055 m
Farmers engaged in programme	Volunteers within programme	Total projects supported	Total projects completed	Area of land supported
129	145	117	71	25,869 ha

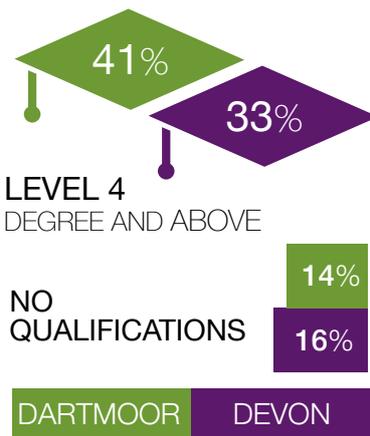
# BETTER FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITIES

## VISION FOR 2045

Dartmoor's communities are thriving and engaged in caring for the National Park, they have ready access to quality affordable housing, and the services and facilities they need, and are able to make sustainable travel choices. New development in the National Park is of the highest quality, efficient, and conserves and enhances natural and heritage assets. Dartmoor's diverse economy fosters traditional sectors and productive, innovative and resilient enterprise. Dartmoor's outstanding natural and cultural capital acts as a catalyst for inward investment and prosperity, encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship.



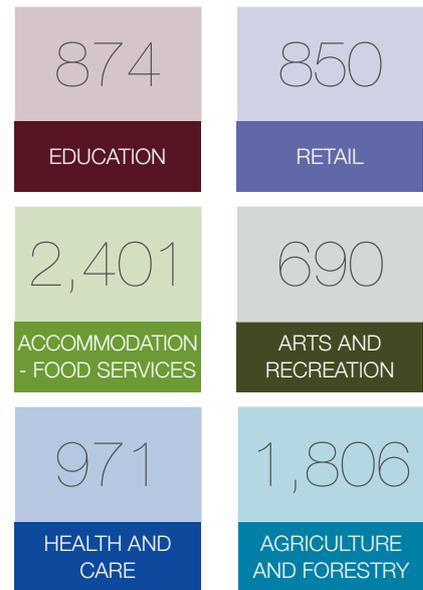
### QUALIFICATIONS ON DARTMOOR 2021



### WHERE VISITORS TRAVELLED FROM



### EMPLOYEES IN SIX KEY SECTORS



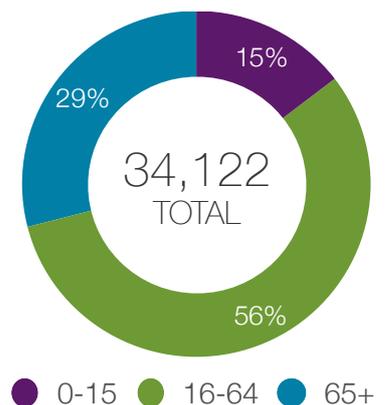
### MEDIAN HOUSE PRICES 2023



### HEALTH ON DARTMOOR 2021



### DARTMOOR'S POPULATION 2021



This section contains information on:

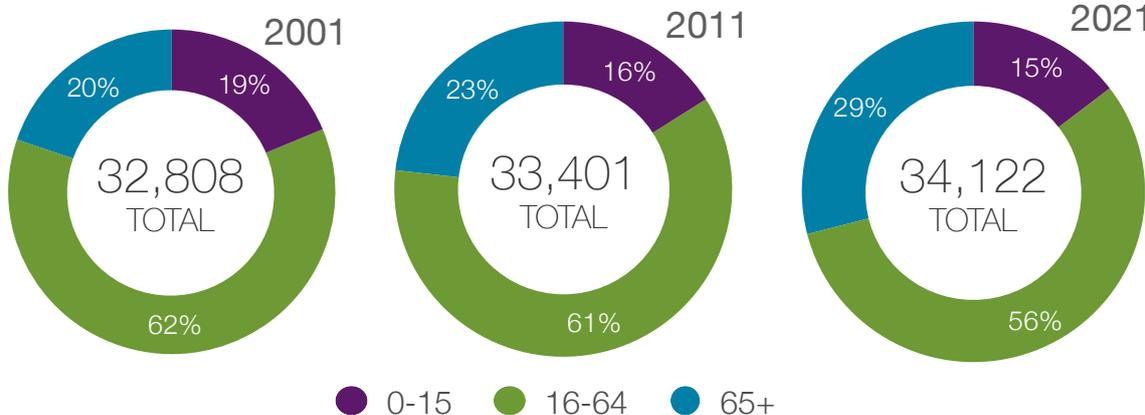
- population Δ
- qualifications Δ
- health and disability Δ
- deprivation Δ
- housing Δ
- economic activity Δ
- business size Δ
- economic sectors Δ
- tourism Δ
- the impact of Covid-19 Δ
- development Δ
- infrastructure Δ

## Resident population

The 2021 Census<sup>58</sup> indicated there are an estimated **34,122 people living within Dartmoor National Park**. This number has slightly increased since 2011 (33,401). **The average age is 48**, compared with 41 across England as a whole.<sup>59</sup>

The proportion of people aged over 65 in England and Wales increased from 16.4% in 2011 to 18.6% in 2021 indicating that nationally, the population is ageing.<sup>60</sup> National Parks are generally characterised by an older age structure than the wider population, meaning the issue of an ageing population is particularly acute in these locations. Overall, the proportion of **Dartmoor's population aged 65+ has increased over time from 19.8% in 2001 to 23.2% in 2011 and 29% in 2021**. Alongside the increase in older residents, the proportion of working age people (those aged 16-64) living within Dartmoor has decreased over time. **56.4% of Dartmoor's population was of working age in 2021**, compared to 60.8% in 2011 and 61.5% in 2001.

### DARTMOOR'S GROWING AND AGEING POPULATION 2021 census



This reduction of working age residents leads to shortages in labour and skills making it challenging for Dartmoor's businesses to recruit staff and continue to grow and prosper.

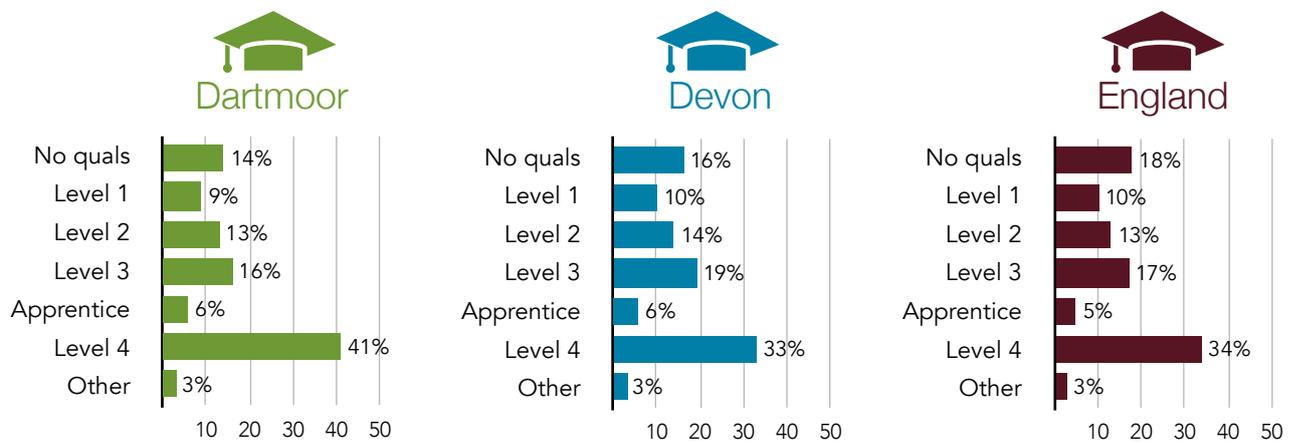
A changing age profile additionally influences the types of businesses and services in demand within Dartmoor, with an older population creating extra demand for services such as residential care and assisted living. These services can be particularly difficult to deliver in deeply rural locations. The high proportion of over 65s in the Dartmoor population looks set to continue.

### Qualifications

Overall, **Dartmoor is characterised by a well-qualified local resident base.**<sup>61</sup> The proportion of residents with qualifications of level 4 (degree level) and above is 8% higher in Dartmoor compared to Devon and the South West and 7% higher than that for England. As well as this, the proportion of the population with no qualifications or qualifications lower than level 1 (GCSEs) is less than the regional and national figures.

**Dartmoor schools are at 83% capacity.**<sup>62</sup>

### QUALIFICATION LEVELS ONS 2021 census

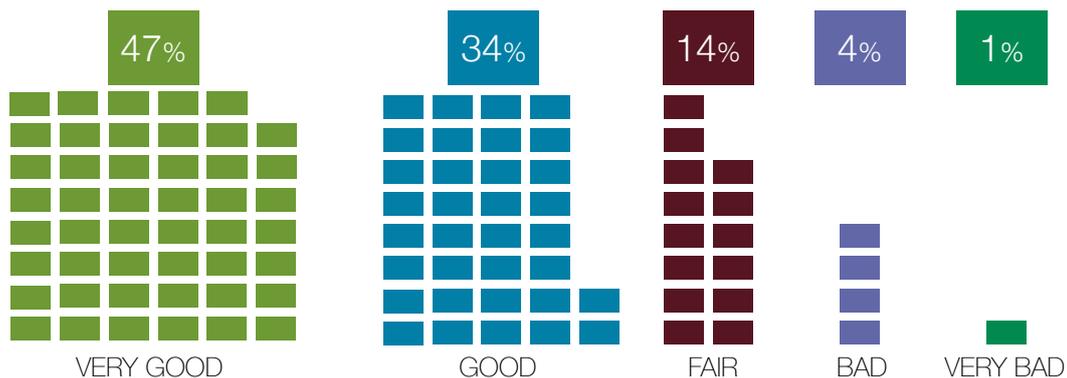


### Health and disability

Health on Dartmoor is consistent with national figures, with over **80% of Dartmoor residents reporting good or very good health**, and just over 5% reporting bad or very bad health.<sup>63</sup>

**Just over 20% of Dartmoor residents are registered as 'disabled'** under the Equality Act.<sup>64</sup> 79.5% are not registered as disabled, though 8.5% of those have a long-term mental or physical condition which does not have a major impact day to day.

### HEALTH OF DARTMOOR RESIDENTS ONS 2021 census

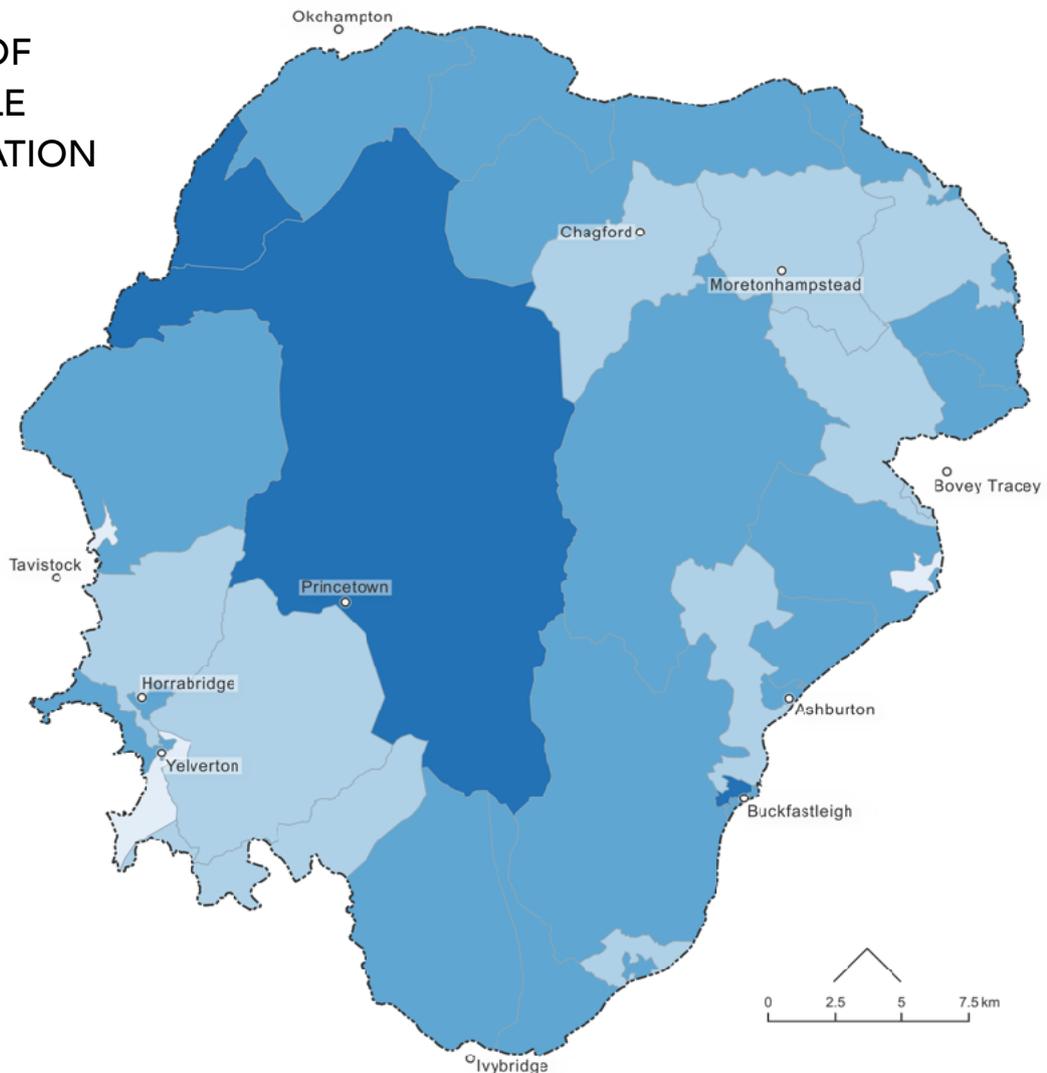


## Deprivation

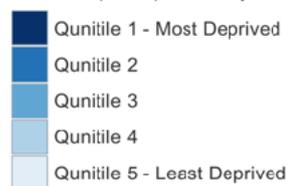
The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) provides an overall measure of relative deprivation for each Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) in England. IMD is based on 39 separate indicators organised across seven distinct domains: income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services and living environment.

### INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION (IMD)

by quintiles  
2019



Index of Multiple Deprivation by LSOA 2019

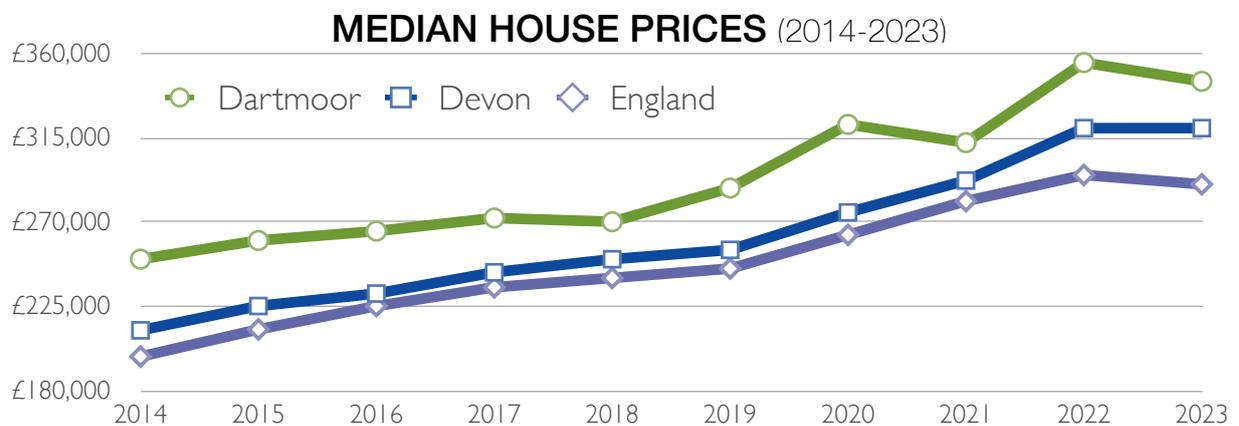
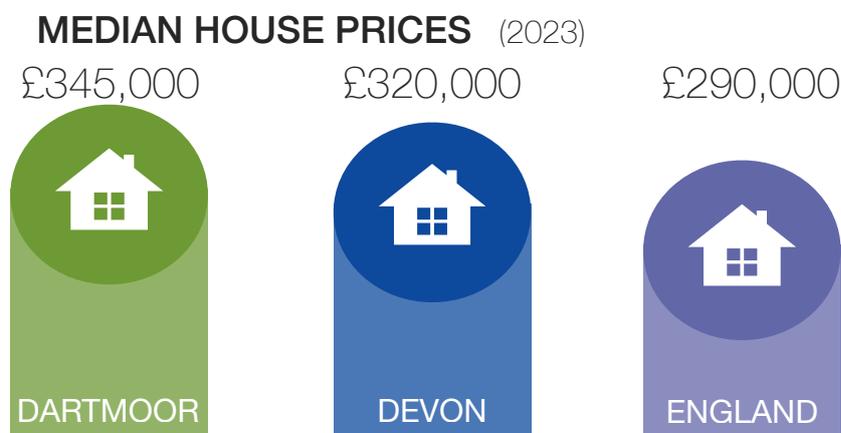


The average Index of Multiple Deprivation score for Dartmoor is 18.2 which is lower than that for England as a whole, at 21.7. The IMD score increased slightly from 2017 (when it was 17.1). However, there is some variation across the Park with 8% of Dartmoor LSOAs within the second most deprived quintile - covering the Buckfastleigh and Princetown (rural) areas. Rural areas, like Dartmoor, tend to score most highly on deprivation indicators such as income, access to services and employment.

## Housing

Dartmoor is additionally characterised by under-occupied housing stock. **Almost half of Dartmoor's housing stock has an occupancy rating of 2+** (2 or more bedrooms than is recommended for the number and composition of occupants) compared to 36% for England<sup>65</sup>. This means that housing within Dartmoor is being less effectively used.

Houses within the English National Parks tend to attract a premium and, although house prices have risen nationally, **properties within Dartmoor have remained 11% to 26% more expensive than the national average over the previous 9 years.**<sup>66</sup> Within Dartmoor, the 2023 median house price was £355,000, £25,000 higher than the median for Devon and £55,000 higher than the median for England and Wales.<sup>67</sup> High property prices out of step with local earnings make it increasingly difficult for local people and workers to live inside the National Park and makes the delivery of affordable housing a high priority for Dartmoor.

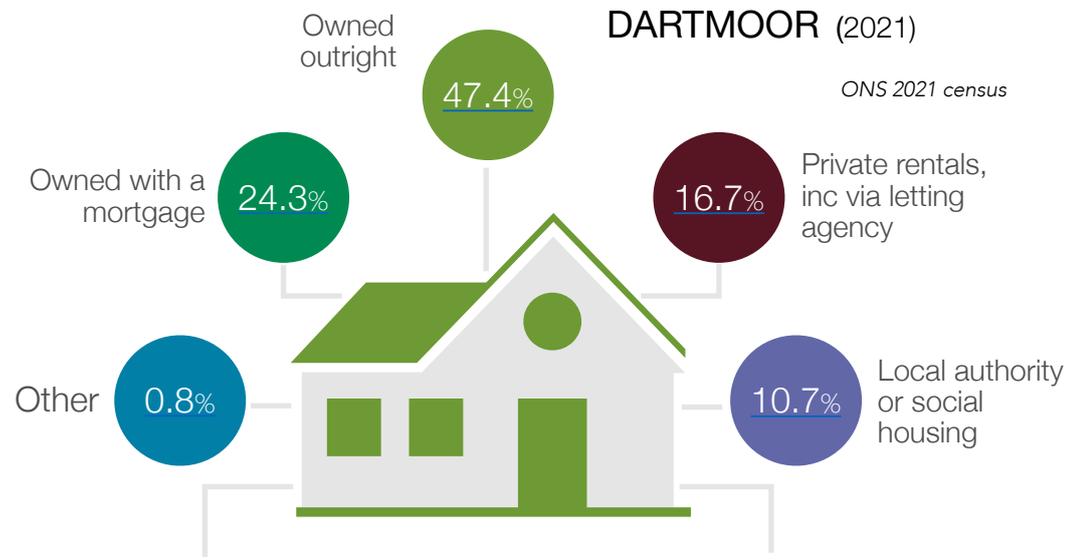


High property prices out of step with local earnings make it increasingly difficult for local people and workers to live inside the National Park and makes the delivery of affordable housing a high priority for Dartmoor. In 2023, the median workplace-based earnings were £29,071 resulting in **an affordability ratio (house price to earnings) of 11.87 in Dartmoor, compared with 10.22 for Devon and 8.26 for England.**

Most homes on Dartmoor are owned outright, or with a mortgage. This is probably a reflection of the relatively large share of the population that is over 65 or retired  $\Delta$ . Most homes on Dartmoor are houses, with **a higher than average number of detached homes - 48.3%**. Semi-detached (24.3%) and terraced (22.4%) make up most of the rest, with the remaining being purpose-built flats or converted buildings.

## HOUSEHOLD TENURE ON DARTMOOR (2021)

ONS 2021 census



### Economic activity of residents

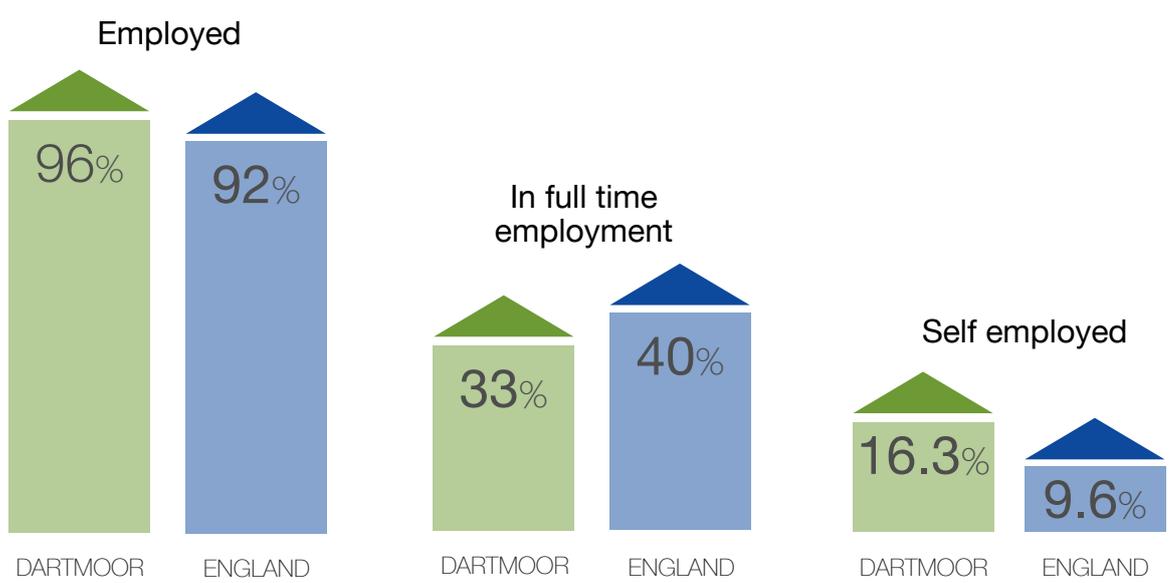
The proportion of Dartmoor’s population who are economically active (those aged over 16 who are working or looking for work) is lower than both regional and national figures. This can largely be attributed to Dartmoor’s ageing population, but can also be a consequence of long-term ill health, being a student or homemaker. However, **Dartmoor is also characterised by high employment rates, at 96%.**

**Dartmoor’s economic profile is characterised by a high level of self-employment,** with the 2021 Census indicating that 16.3% of the population are self-employed.<sup>68</sup> Dartmoor has a lower level of full-time employment (32.5% of economically active population) compared with that of England (40.3% of economically active population).

## DARTMOOR’S ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION

as a proportion of the economically active population

ONS 2021 census



## Business size

ONS data shows that there were **2,115 PAYE registered businesses operating in Dartmoor in 2022**. Many micro or sole trader enterprises are not included in this total.

In Dartmoor National Park, between 2016 and 2022, the number of registered businesses decreased by 55 and the number of establishments increased by 20. The majority (91%) of registered businesses in 2022 were micro businesses, with between 0-9 employees, which represents a slight reduction (3%) since 2016. The high prevalence of smaller businesses within Dartmoor reflects national rural trends, with data indicating that **28.1% of people were employed in micro businesses in rural areas in 2022**, compared with 19.4% in urban areas.<sup>69</sup> Challenges within rural locations including a more limited labour market supply and sparsity in business networking can make it difficult for businesses to grow in scale.<sup>70</sup> **Only 1% of registered businesses within Dartmoor had over 50 employees, which is a 25% reduction since 2016**, and no registered businesses had over 250 employees in 2022.

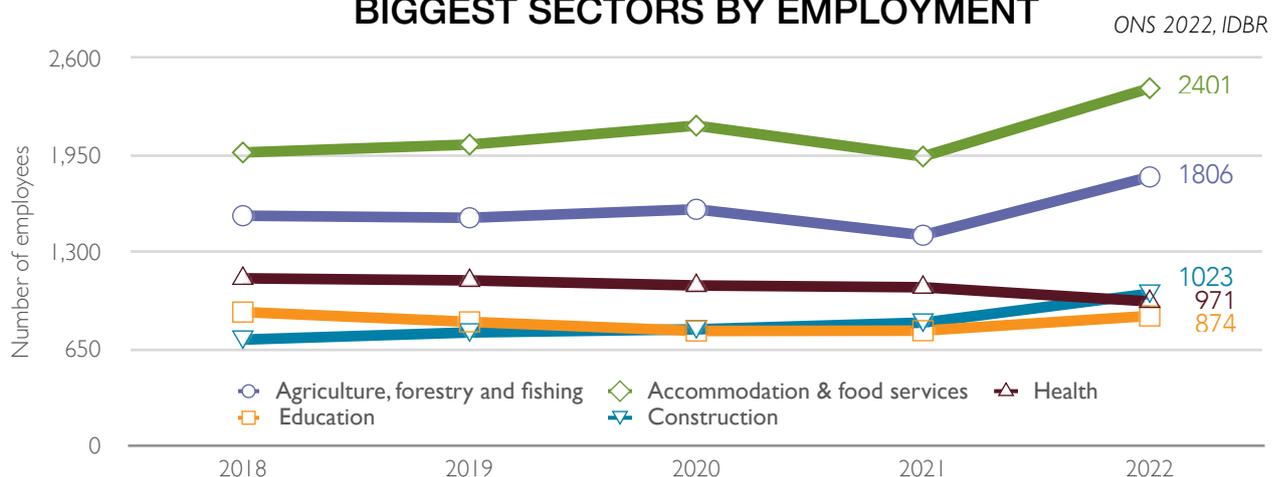
### BUSINESS SIZE



## Economic sectors

**Dartmoor is characterised by a relatively diverse economy.** Several sectors have experienced economic growth including traditional agriculture and tourism alongside a strong creative sector and a growing number of technical and IT businesses.<sup>71</sup> The top five sectors for employment numbers within Dartmoor are shown below. It should be noted that self-employed workers are not included.

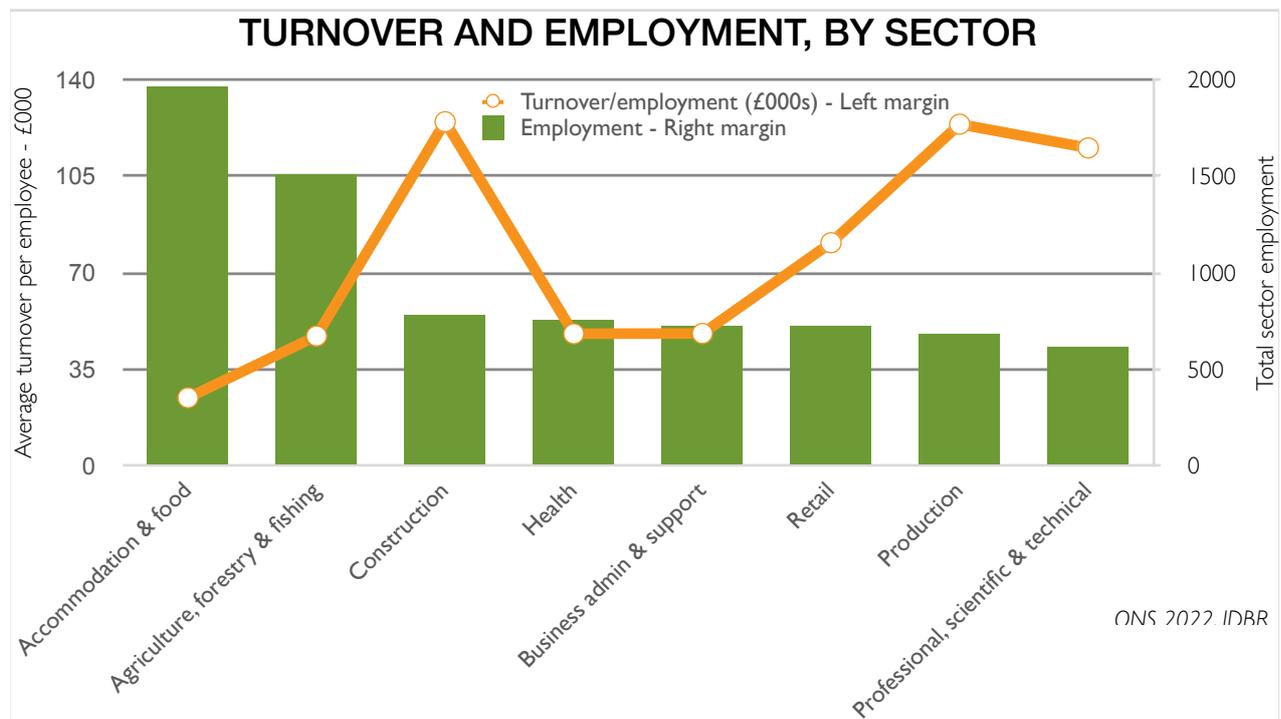
### BIGGEST SECTORS BY EMPLOYMENT



The number of employees and businesses within each sector largely remained the same between 2018-2020, before an overall reduction in employees and businesses was experienced between 2020 and 2021. Due to the restrictions in place during the pandemic, the hospitality sector experienced the largest economic decline of all sectors in the UK during this period.<sup>72</sup> **Dartmoor's accommodation and food services (hospitality) sector followed this trend and experienced the largest overall decline in employees (-9.7%)** of all sectors within Dartmoor between 2020 and 2021. However, 77% of sectors within Dartmoor experienced growth in employee and business numbers between 2021 and 2022, indicating that Dartmoor's economy was continuing to grow following the pandemic.

There are variations in turnover between sectors and variations in average turnover per job within Dartmoor. Many of the National Park's sectors with the highest number of jobs including agriculture and accommodation are those with the lowest average turnover per employee.

The three sectors with the highest average turnover per employee (construction, production and professional, scientific and technical) only account for 19% of jobs, yet account for 34% of total turnover.



The high proportion of low-value sectors such as agriculture and hospitality within the National Park is reflective of rural economies nationally. Although rural areas contain a wide range of businesses, the constraints of geography and scale along with lack of affordable housing and limited transport networks mean **many rural economies face significant productivity challenges.**<sup>73</sup>

## Tourism

In 2023, there were **3.09 million people who visited Dartmoor National Park,**<sup>74</sup> attracted by the area's wildlife, natural beauty, tranquillity and cultural heritage. According to the STEAM data, the tourism sector employs 2,691 people - more than any other sector

within the National Park. The economy on Dartmoor is heavily reliant on the tourism industry and it is important that tourism can help to increase understanding of the National Park without causing damage to its special qualities.

### VISITORS TO DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK (2023)

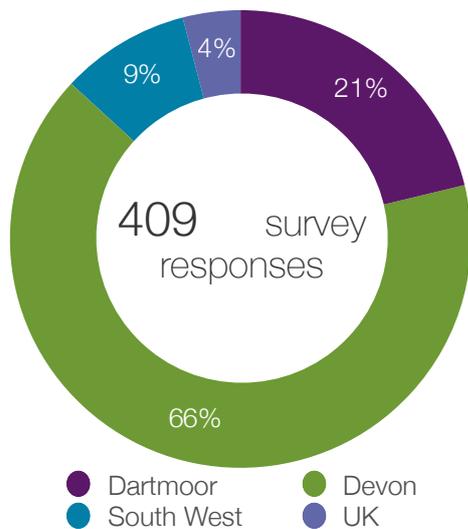


STEAM data for Tourism 2023

The 3.09 million visitors in 2023 were an increase from 2.64 million total visitors in 2022; and those people spent nearly four million days in the National Park. Importantly for the local economy, 460,000 people stayed overnight in hotels, campsites, bed and breakfast establishments and self catering properties. This contributed to a visitor spend on Dartmoor of £226 million, a 46% increase from 2017 (£154 million).<sup>75</sup> The number of staying visitors to Dartmoor National Park has remained relatively consistent between 2016 and 2023, with a decline in 2020 due to the pandemic.

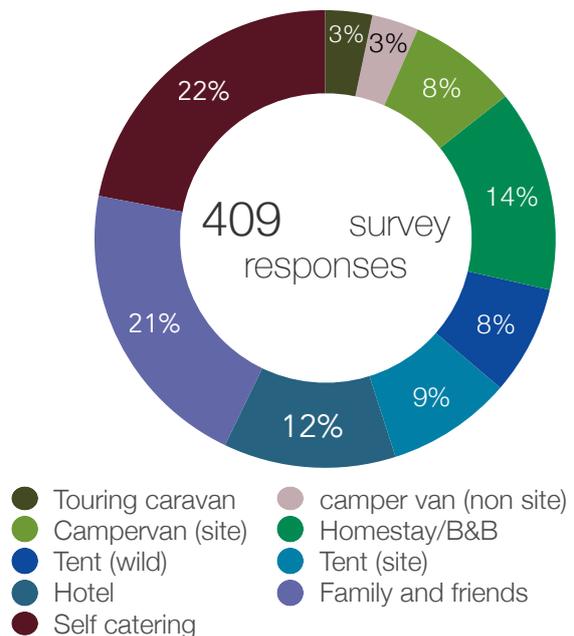
The DNPA Visitor Survey 2023 provides a rich source of information but on a relatively small base of respondents. The survey indicates that 5% of visitors were from a minority ethnic group.

#### WHERE VISITORS TRAVELLED FROM



DNPA Visitor survey 2023

#### WHERE VISITORS STAYED



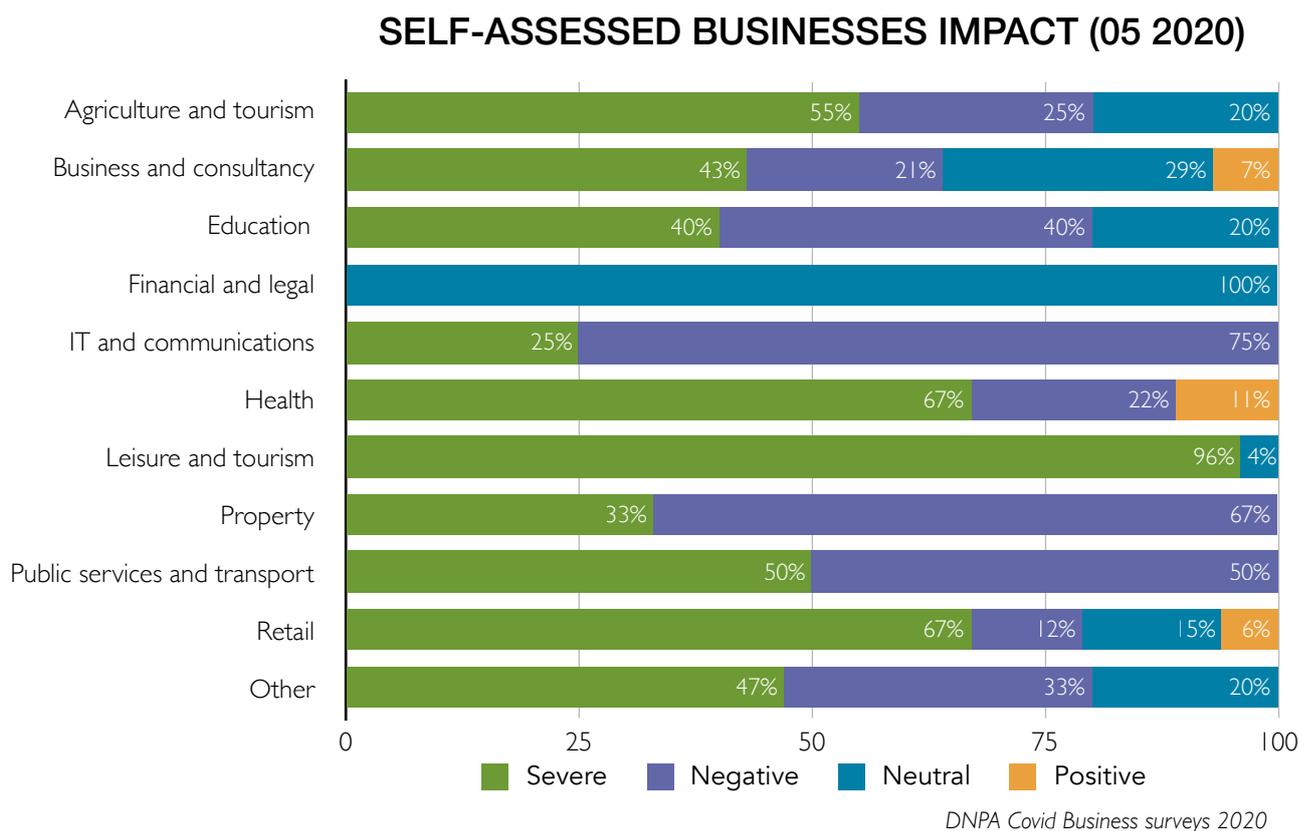
## The impact of Covid 19 on business

Business surveys showed that the most impacted sectors during the first 6 months of Covid were Leisure and Tourism, and Health and Retail.<sup>76</sup> **About a third of businesses on Dartmoor had to close for a time during the lockdown periods.** Some of those were able to re-open immediately, for many it took three months or more to reopen. **Business sentiment improved significantly during 2020.**

Businesses that continued to stay open during lockdown were primarily outdoor based, for example farming or tree surgery. Some businesses operating face-to-face pre-Covid (eg private teaching classes) moved online. Most hospitality and accommodation establishments opened as soon as permitted to do so.

By October 2020, a number of improvements were noted. **Most business have seen a same or better summer seasons than in 2019.** Businesses were attracting more local customers, domestic visitors and 'staycationers'. Interaction with the public on online platforms during lockdown has increased business since restrictions were lifted. The main issues faced by Dartmoor businesses during this time were: a loss of orders, customers and contracts; finance and cash flow; staffing and supply chain problems.

The disproportionate impact of Covid on different sectors is seen in the chart below.



Analysis of the October 2021 survey suggests **Dartmoor businesses saw an increase in prosperity compared to the twelve months previous.**<sup>77</sup> In terms of economic development, a clear focus from business owners has been on the advancement and development of their businesses. Other key finds from the survey include a perceived lack of public transport and provision for green transport across Dartmoor, and a desire to reduce the environmental impact of their businesses.

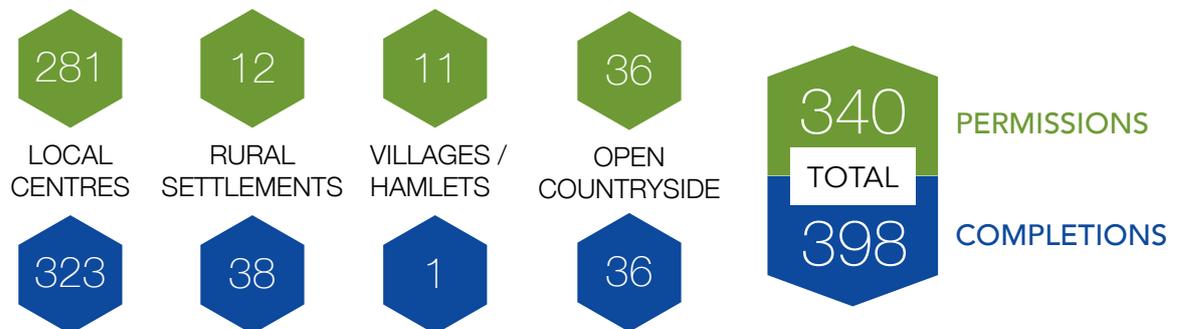
## Development

Given the designation of Dartmoor as a National Park, development within the Park boundaries is relatively limited. Most building, whether housing or commercial, takes place in or close to the small towns on Dartmoor.

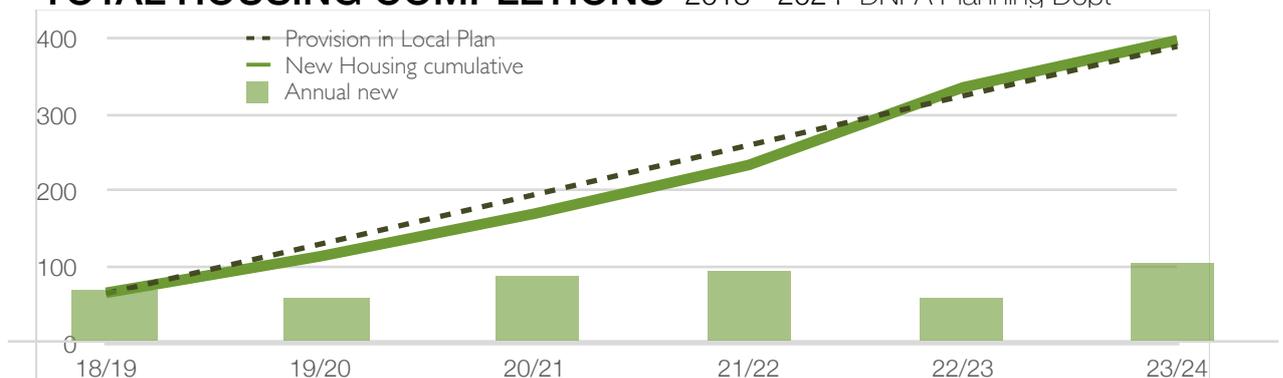
The Local Plan covers the period 2018 to 2036 and sets out what development can and cannot occur within the National Park. The Local Plan is the starting point for making decisions on all planning applications in the National Park.

The Local Plan makes provision for 65 dwellings per year and requires that 45% of these are affordable housing. In the five years between April 2018 and March 2024, **398 homes were completed with 158 of these being affordable homes for local people**. The level of affordable housing delivered fluctuates year by year due to the small number of sites which are developed in the National Park and the impact that the larger sites have on overall numbers. Currently, the delivery of affordable housing is slightly under the indicative level set by the Local Plan.

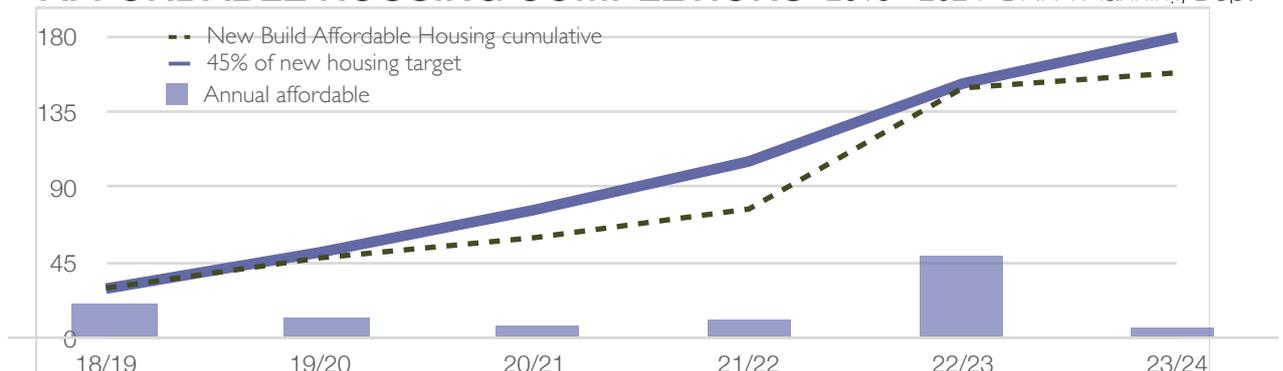
### HEADLINE HOUSING FIGURES 2018 - 2024 DNPA Planning Dept



### TOTAL HOUSING COMPLETIONS 2018 - 2024 DNPA Planning Dept



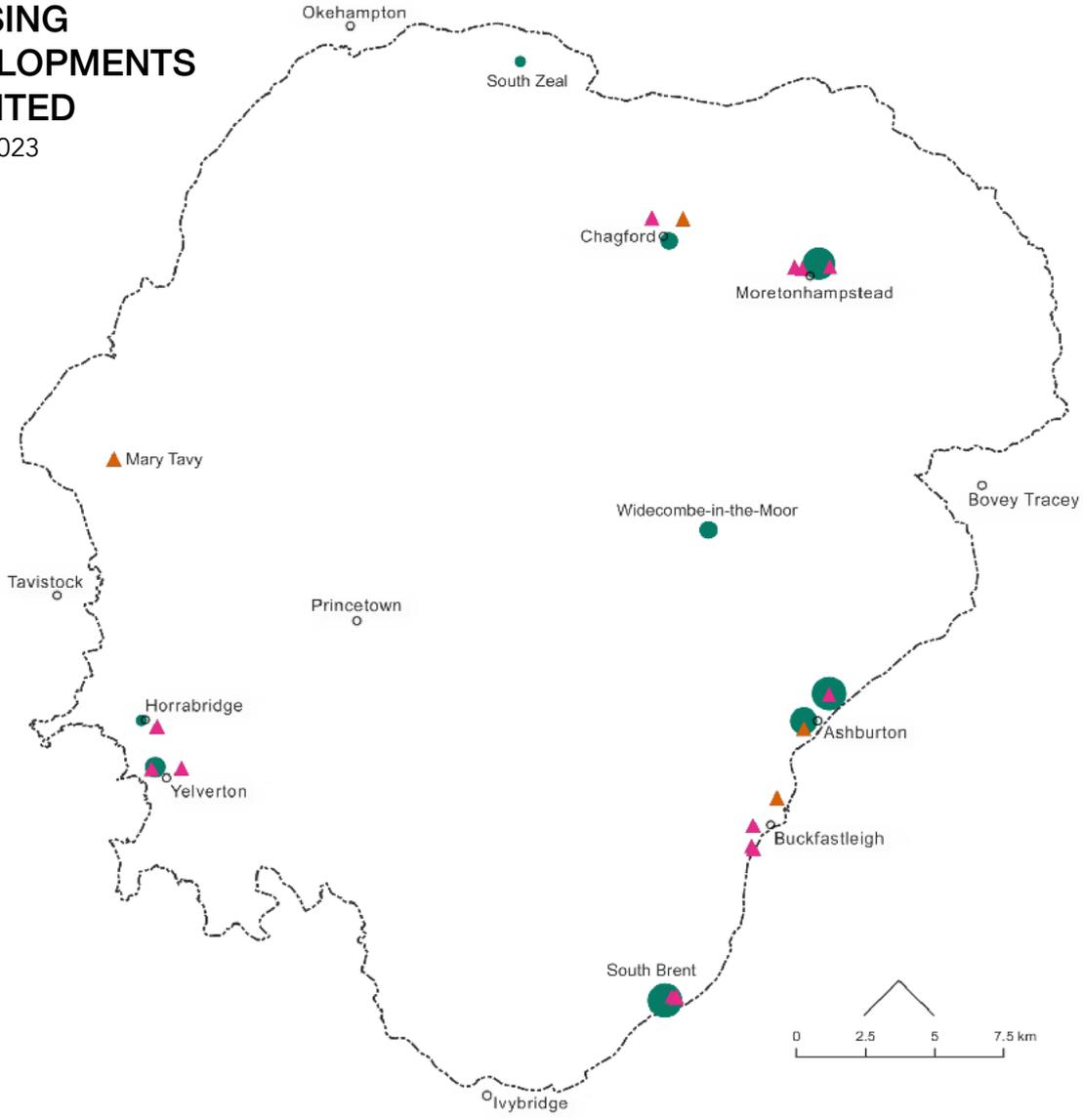
### AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPLETIONS 2018 - 2024 DNPA Planning Dept



Dartmoor is facing demographic challenges to which the planning system needs to respond. Dartmoor has an ageing population. It is forecasted that by 2035, **between 36% and 40% of Dartmoor’s population will be aged 65 and over.**<sup>78</sup> Older people require services such as home care which can be difficult to deliver in rural locations.

The Local Plan forecast that around 7,800m<sup>2</sup>, or 430m<sup>2</sup> per year, of replacement and additional employment floorspace would be required to capture the economic growth projected over the plan period, 2018-2036. **Since 2017 around 700m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace has been delivered per year** to contribute to these indicative targets.

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS GRANTED 2019 - 2023



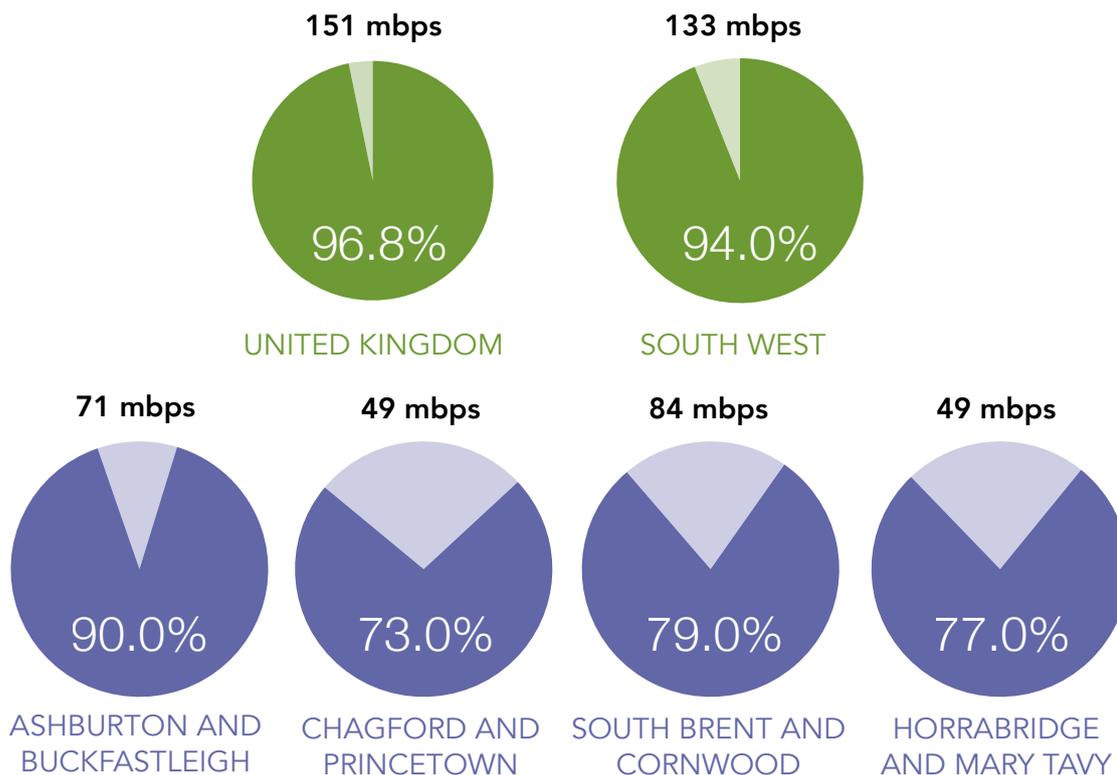
**Planning**

- Local Plan Site Allocations
  - ▲ Housing Development Site
  - ▲ Mixed Use Development Site
- Housing Developments Granted 2019-2023
  - 5 dwellings
  - 10
  - 20
  - 40 dwellings

## Broadband

Availability of broadband connectivity and mobile connection is vital to enable rural businesses to thrive and ensure the growth of the rural economy. Overall, high speed broadband and mobile phone networks are typically less available in rural areas compared with urban areas. A recent report published in the House of Commons Library showed comparative broadband speeds (megabits per second [mbps]) in key settlements in and around Dartmoor.<sup>79</sup>

### ACCESS TO SUPERFAST BROADBAND - key settlements



Access to broadband and mobile signals is particularly important for the farming sector. The farming industry is experiencing major policy reform which will require access to digital technologies. There will be risks if rural broadband and mobile connectivity are not improved.<sup>80</sup> Broadband UK is extending funding to make many more premises on Dartmoor gigabit enabled.<sup>81</sup>

## Mobile

The landscape and difficulties with locating masts within the National Park mean that for large areas of the National Park 'line of sight' between masts is hard to achieve. As a result, there are limited areas of signal availability, with large areas of the landscape unable to have mobile phone network connections.

Some improvements have been made through the 'Mobile Boost Scheme' from 'Connecting Devon and Somerset' which provides vouchers for the equipment that can pick up and amplify an available signal outdoors and transmit it to inside a property.

There are 16 masts within the National Park, of which three masts provide the Emergency Services Network (ESN). The Home Office has agreed that these masts – where possible – can be shared with Mobile Network Operators (MNO's), which could potentially increase signal availability in very rural areas.

## EV charging

As the use of electric vehicles increases towards 2030, the charging infrastructure needs to provide local residents and visitors with opportunities to recharge their vehicles. For some visitors, the availability of EV charging will influence decisions of where to take a UK vacation. **Dartmoor has an increasing network of public chargers** - provided by DNPA and others.

DNPA	Other publicly available <i>(* maybe available only to customers)</i>	
Haytor VC – 2	*Ilington Country Hotel – 2	Whitehouse Services – 2
Postbridge VC – 2	*Riverside B&B – 2	*Klondyke House – 3
Princetown VC – 4	*Bovey Castle Hotel – 3	*Blackadon Barn Cottages – 2
Meldon Reservoir VC – 4	Stableyard CP, Chagford – 1	Mardle CP, Buckfastleigh – 3
	WDBC CP, Chagford – 2	Salmon's Leap, Buckfastleigh – 32
	Stone Lane Garden Centre – 2	*River Dart Country Park – 2

## Road use

The roads across central Dartmoor have a speed limit of 40 miles per hour - for good reason. The free grazing cattle, sheep and horses often congregate near the roadside and sometimes decide to sit, sleep or walk on the roadway. In addition, there are large numbers of visitors, especially at certain hot spots, and a wide variety of wildlife.

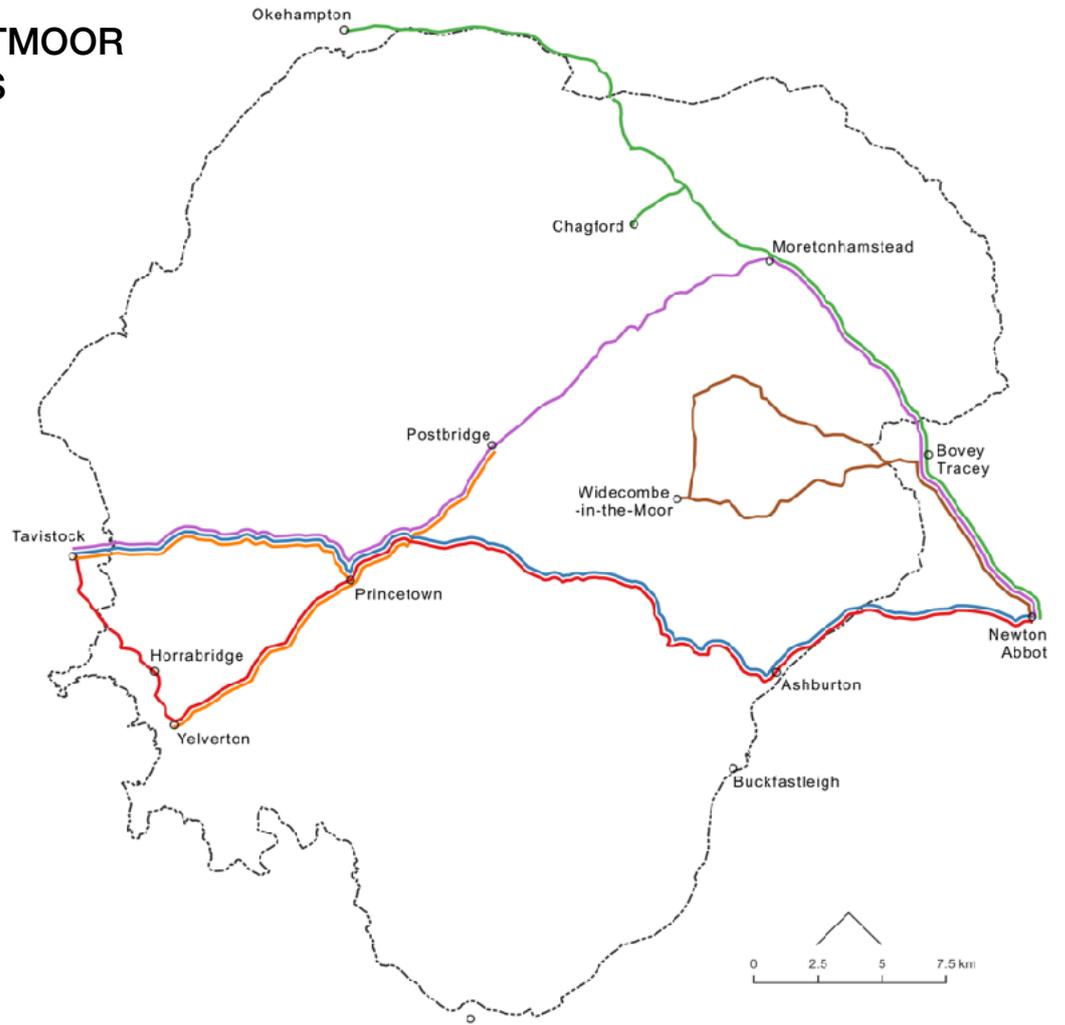
In the five years from 2019 to 2023, **there were 140 reported road traffic accidents**, of which three were fatal; 41 caused serious injuries and 96 caused slight injuries. This excludes the A386. Automatic speed sensors monitor the speeds of passing vehicles. In the month 22nd March to 21 April 2021, for instance, the Haytor sensor found that the average speed was 39.7mph. **However, the 6% of vehicles exceeding the limit were checked at an average speed of 61mph.**

## Public Transport

Dartmoor is reasonably well served with bus transport options along the main routes around the periphery of the Moor - A38, A30 and A386. **Bus services across the Moor are much more infrequent.**

Service	Operator	Days	Frequency	Note
98	Plymouth City Bus	MTWTFSS	4	to Princetown. Once a day beyond to Yelverton
113	Tavistock Community Transport	W	1	
171	Country Bus	MTWTF	1	
172	Country Bus	MTWTF	1	
178	Country Bus	MTWTFSS	2	Once a day between Moreton and Okehampton
271	Country Bus	Sa	4	

# CROSS DARTMOOR BUS ROUTES



## Bus Services

- 98 - Tavistock to Yelverton, via Princetown and Postbridge
- 113 - Tavistock and Newton Abbot, via Yelverton, Princetown, Ashburton
- 171 - Tavistock to Newton Abbot, via Princetown, Moretonhampstead, Bovey Tracey
- 172 - Newton Abbot and Tavistock, via Princetown, Ashburton
- 178 - Newton Abbot to Okehampton, via Bovey Tracey, Moretonhampstead and Chagford
- 271 - Haytor Hoppa Newton Abbot to Widecombe, via Bovey Tracey

## LINKS

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[Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021 - 2026](#) Δ

[Dartmoor Local Plan 2018 - 2036](#) Δ

[Dartmoor National Park Authority Annual Review 2024](#) Δ

[Dartmoor Economic Profile 2016](#) Δ

[Acorn Profile - Covid 19 recovery 2020](#) Δ

[Farming in Protected Landscapes programme - year 2 update 2023](#) Δ

[Independent review of protected site management on Dartmoor 2023](#) Δ

[Dartmoor Visitor Survey 2023](#) Δ

[A Landscape Character Assessment for Dartmoor National Park 2017](#) Δ

[The Cost of Commoning on Dartmoor 2021-23](#) Δ

[Land Use Emissions Baselines & Targets for UK National Parks – Synthesis Report 2024](#) Δ

# ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-68110310>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://climate.copernicus.eu/copernicus-summer-2024-hottest-record-globally-and-europe>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://www.carbonbrief.org/met-office-a-review-of-the-uks-climate-in-2023/>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://www.carbonbrief.org/met-office-a-review-of-the-uks-climate-in-2023/>
- <sup>6</sup> Bates, J. M., Fidino, M., Nowak-Boyd, L., Strausberger, B. M., Schmidt, K. A. and Whelen, C. J. (2022) *Climate change affects bird nesting phenology: Comparing contemporary field and historical museum nesting records*, *Journal of Animal Ecology*
- <sup>7</sup> *Land Use Emissions Baselines and Targets for UK National Parks – A Synthesis Report*. Small World Consulting. 2024
- <sup>8</sup> *Land Use Emissions Baselines and Targets for UK National Parks – A Synthesis Report*. Small World Consulting. 2024
- <sup>9</sup> Natural England (2021) *Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence (second edition)*
- <sup>10</sup> (2011) *IUCN UK Commission of Inquiry on Peatlands*. IUCN UK Peatland Programme, Edinburgh.
- <sup>11</sup> (2021) *England Peat Action Plan*
- <sup>12</sup> [https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/research/microsites/creww/miresprojectreports/Dartmoor\\_Deep\\_Peat\\_Extent\\_and\\_Condition\\_Mapping.pdf](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/research/microsites/creww/miresprojectreports/Dartmoor_Deep_Peat_Extent_and_Condition_Mapping.pdf)
- <sup>13</sup> South West Peatland Partnership
- <sup>14</sup> Defra (2023) *Get funding for farming in protected landscapes*
- <sup>15</sup> <https://devonworkhubs.co.uk/find-your-devon-work-hub/>
- <sup>16</sup> DNPA Visitor survey 2023
- <sup>17</sup> National Park Residents Census 2021
- <sup>18</sup> Natural England (2023) *Nature on Dartmoor*
- <sup>19</sup> *Independent review of protected site management on Dartmoor - GOV.UK.pdf*
- <sup>20</sup> LUC (2017) *A Landscape Character Assessment for Dartmoor National Park*
- <sup>21</sup> [1] Natural England (2010) *Biodiversity studies of six traditional orchards in England*
- <sup>22</sup> LUC (2017) *A Landscape Character Assessment for Dartmoor National Park*
- <sup>23</sup> [1] *The Special Qualities were established through consultation on the Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-26*
- <sup>24</sup> *Water Environment (Health of Dartmoor waterways and bodies)*
- <sup>25</sup> <https://nbn.org.uk/news/state-of-nature-2023/>
- <sup>26</sup> [1] UK Parliament (2022) *Invasive non-native species*
- <sup>27</sup> *Dartmoor Bird Report 2023*
- <sup>28</sup> *Whinchat Range Changes on Dartmoor 2023*
- <sup>29</sup> *Fiona Freshney surveys and reporting 2024*
- <sup>30</sup> *Dartmoor Deep Peat Extent and Condition Mapping (exeter.ac.uk)*
- <sup>31</sup> Defra (2023) *Get funding for farming in protected landscapes*
- <sup>32</sup> *Historic England (2021) Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage*
- <sup>33</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>
- <sup>34</sup> *Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) Historic Environment: Advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment*
- <sup>35</sup> Defra (2023) *Get funding for farming in protected landscapes*
- <sup>36</sup> *Access Land on Dartmoor is land with a designated right of access under the Dartmoor Commons Act 1985 and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act, 2000 (CRoW Act)*
- <sup>37</sup> *Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework 2023-2024*
- <sup>38</sup> DNPA Visitor Survey 2023
- <sup>39</sup> *SWEEP 2018. Population Futures and Dartmoor National Park*
- <sup>40</sup> *Natural England (2019) Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment*
- <sup>41</sup> *Natural England (2022) How the natural environment can support children and young people*
- <sup>42</sup> Defra (2023) *Get funding for farming in protected landscapes*

<sup>43</sup> [Natural England \(2016\) Protected Landscapes Framework](#)

<sup>44</sup> [Defra \(2023\) Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June](#)

<sup>45</sup> [National statistics Farm Business Income by Cost Centre 2019 to 2023](#)

<sup>46</sup> <https://foundationforcommonland.org.uk/project-reports/the-cost-of-commoning-on-dartmoor>

<sup>47</sup> [Arnott, A., Riddell, G., Emmerson, M. and Reid, N. \(2022\) Agri-environment schemes are associated with greater terrestrial invertebrate abundance and richness in upland grasslands. Agronomy for Sustainable Development](#)

<sup>48</sup> [Less Favoured Areas \(England\) Defra](#)

<sup>49</sup> [Defra \(2023\) Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June](#)

<sup>50</sup> [DNPA \(2006\) Dartmoor Commons Factsheet](#)

<sup>51</sup> [Dartmoor Commons Act 1985 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>52</sup> [Foundation for Common Land Commons in Dartmoor](#)

<sup>53</sup> [Dartmoor Moorland Vision and Dartmoor Farming Futures Evaluation 2021](#)

<sup>54</sup> [DNPA \(2019\) Farming and Forestry Review Paper](#)

<sup>55</sup> [Farming UK \(2022\) UK farming faces 'talent drought' as young people steer away](#)

<sup>56</sup> [Office for National Statistics The occupations most dependent on older and younger workers](#)

<sup>57</sup> [Defra \(2023\) Get funding for farming in protected landscapes](#)

<sup>58</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(2021\) Census](#)

<sup>59</sup> [Defra 2024. Stat\\_18\\_pltof\\_average\\_age\\_data\\_april\\_2024](#)

<sup>60</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(2023\) Profile of the older population living in England and Wales in 2021 and changes since 2011](#)

<sup>61</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(2021\) Census](#)

<sup>62</sup> [Defra 2024. Stat\\_24\\_pltof\\_pupils\\_data\\_july\\_2024](#)

<sup>63</sup> [ONS 2021 census](#)

<sup>64</sup> [ONS 2021 census](#)

<sup>65</sup> [Office for National Statistics \(2021\) Census](#)

<sup>66</sup> [ONS Median house prices for administrative geographies, March 2024 edition https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/medianhousepricesforadministrativegeographies](#)

<sup>67</sup> [HM Land Registry \(2023\) Price Paid Data](#)

<sup>68</sup> [Office for National Statistics Census 2021](#)

<sup>69</sup> [DEFRA \(2022\) Rural business statistics](#)

<sup>70</sup> [Parliament Access to skills and rural business support](#)

<sup>71</sup> [DLP Planning \(2018\) Employment Land Review](#)

<sup>72</sup> [House of Commons Library \(2022\) Hospitality industry and Covid-19](#)

<sup>73</sup> [Rural Services Network \(2021\) Cultivating rural growth: Recognising and addressing the post-pandemic rural productivity challenge](#)

<sup>74</sup> [STEAM data 2023](#)

<sup>75</sup> [STEAM data 2023](#)

<sup>76</sup> [DNPA Covid Business surveys 2020](#)

<sup>77</sup> [287% of business owners surveyed described their 2021 summer trading as excellent, good or fair. Businesses who define the impact of covid as 'Severe' has decreased from 30% to 18% in 12 months.](#)

<sup>78</sup> [Edge Analytics \(2016\) Dartmoor National Park Demographic Forecasts](#)

<sup>79</sup> [Commons Library: 'Constituency data: broadband coverage and speeds', published July 2024](#)

<sup>80</sup> [NFU \(2023\) 2022 Digital Technology Survey Results](#)

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/project-gigabit-framework-agreement-openreach>