

# General Information

## Dartmoor Factsheet



Covering an area of 368 sq miles (954 sq km), Dartmoor contains the largest and wildest area of open country in the south of England. By virtue of its outstanding natural beauty it is one of the National Parks of England and Wales. *The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949*, made provision for the designation of National Parks in England and Wales. Between 1951 and 1957 ten National Parks were confirmed. In 1989 another area, the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, was given National Park status. In 1999 the Government announced that two new National Parks in England are to be created (South Downs and the New Forest).

Unlike many National Parks in other countries, for example the USA, the National Parks in England and Wales are not owned by the state. The term National means that they have been identified as being of importance to our national heritage and as such are worthy of special protection and attention. Within each National Park there are many landowners, including public bodies and private individuals. National Parks are places where people live and work. The statutory purposes of the National Parks as stated in the *Environment Act, 1995* are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks.
- to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Parks by the public.

The National Park Authorities also have a duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.



### Topography

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Highest pt. | High Willhays 621m (2,039ft) asl SX 579 893 |
| Lowest pt.  | Doghole Bridge 30m (98ft) asl SX 843 817    |
| Land over   | 150m (492ft) - 81% of the National Park     |
| Land over   | 300m (984ft) - 51% of the National Park     |
| Land over   | 460m (1,509ft) - 13% of the National Park   |

### Principal Rivers & Valleys

|              |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Ashburn      | East Webburn | Taw          |
| Avon         | Lemon        | Teign        |
| Bovey        | Lyd          | Walkham      |
| Dart         | Meavy        | West Okement |
| Erme         | Plym         | West Webburn |
| East Okement | Tavy         | Yealm        |

### Geology

A large part of Dartmoor (65%) is made up of granite, an igneous rock which was intruded some 295 million years ago. This great granite core is surrounded by sedimentary rocks including limestones, shales and sandstones belonging to the Carboniferous and Devonian periods. Those nearest the granite intrusion were altered (metamorphosed) by intense heat and pressure and chemical reactions.

## Tors

There are over 160 tors on Dartmoor.  
The principal ones are:

| Tor              | Height above sea level | Grid Reference |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| High Willhays    | 621m (2,039ft)         | SX 580 892     |
| Yes Tor          | 619m (2,030ft)         | SX 581 901     |
| Great Links Tor  | 586m (1,924ft)         | SX 551 867     |
| Fur Tor          | 572m (1,876ft)         | SX 588 830     |
| Great Mis Tor    | 539m (1,768ft)         | SX 562 770     |
| Great Staple Tor | 455m (1,493ft)         | SX 542 760     |
| Haytor           | 454m (1,490ft)         | SX 757 770     |
| Hound Tor        | 448m (1,469ft)         | SX 743 790     |
| Sharpitor        | 402m (1,320ft)         | SX 559 703     |
| Sheeps Tor       | 320m (1,050ft)         | SX 565 683     |
| Vixen Tor        | 320m (1,050ft)         | SX 542 742     |

## Climate

The climate of Dartmoor, dominated by the south-westerly winds, is cool and wet. The high moorlands of the north west and southern central areas where the altitude exceeds 450m (1,500ft) have the most severe climatic conditions.

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Rainfall | Princetown<br>- 2150mm (83in) average           |
| Rainfall | Widcombe-in-the-Moor<br>- 1581mm (61in) average |
| Snow lie | Lowland<br>- fewer than<br>5 days per annum     |
| Snow lie | Highland<br>- average 15-20 days                |
| Snow lie | Summits - average 30 days                       |
| Sunshine | 3-4 hours daily average                         |



## Settlements

The main settlements in the National Park are: Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, Yelverton, Horrabridge, South Brent, Christow and Chagford.

Total population of the National Park:  
about 33,000

Population of Ashburton (largest settlement)  
about 3,500.

## Major Land Use

|                                       |  | % of total National Park |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Moorland<br>(including rough grazing) | 48,450 hectares<br>(119,720 acres)         | 47%                      |
| Farmland                              | 33,041 hectares<br>(81,644 acres)          | 38%                      |
| Forestry/Woodland                     | 11,152 hectares<br>(27,557 acres)          | 11%                      |
| Reservoirs                            | 209 hectares<br>(516 acres)                | 1%                       |
| Other (inc villages)                  | 2577 hectares<br>(6368 acres)              | 3%                       |
| Common Land                           | - approx 34,878 hectares<br>(86,186 acres) | 38%                      |
| The Duchy of Cornwall owns            | 28,328 hectares<br>(70,000 acres)          |                          |

Approximate amount of Duchy of Cornwall owned land which is common land. 20,000 hectares (49,419 acres)

## Access

**Rights of Way** There are over 448 miles (721km) of linear access in the National Park. A number of access agreements have been negotiated and, under the *Dartmoor Commons Act, 1985*, there is legal public access to all Dartmoor common land. Byelaws exist to regulate this access.

### A & B Class Roads

#### Parts or all of:

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| A38   | Exeter-Plymouth                        |
| A30   | Exeter - Okehampton - Launceston       |
| A386  | Sourton - Roborough Down<br>- Plymouth |
| A382  | Bovey Tracey - Whiddon Down            |
| B3212 | Moretonhampstead - Yelverton           |
| B3357 | Tavistock - Dartmeet                   |
| B3193 | Teign Valley                           |
| B3387 | Bovey Tracey -<br>Widcombe-in-the-Moor |

# Reserves & Protected Areas

## National Nature Reserves

East Dartmoor Woods & Heath includes Bovey Valley & Yarner Wood & Trendlebere Down 366 hectares 904 acres

Dendles Wood 29 hectares 72 acres

Black Tor Copse 29 hectares 72 acres

Wistman's Wood & Longaford Newtake 170 hectares 420 acres

## Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

There are over 40 locations within the Dartmoor National Park covering 26,169 hectares (64,664 acres). The two main sites of North Dartmoor and South Dartmoor total over 20,000 hectares (49,420 acres).

## Devon Wildlife Trust Reserves

Dart Valley 290 hectares 717 acres

Lady's Wood 3 hectares 7 acres

Dunsford Wood 57 hectares 141 acres

Mill Bottom 6 hectares 15 acres

Blackadon 37 hectares 91 acres

Lower East 2.5 hectares 6 acres

Lounston

## Land Ownership

### National Trust Areas

Holne Woods 69 hectares 170 acres

Lydford Gorge 48 hectares 119 acres

Plym Estate 237 hectares 586 acres

Teign Valley 165 hectares 408 acres

Trowlesworthy

Warren 1,349 hectares 3,333 acres

Hembury 163 hectares 403 acres

Castle Drogo 308 hectares 761 acres

Milfordleigh 7 hectares 17 acres

Wheal Betsy 1 hectare 2 acres

Woodcock Wood 8 hectares 20 acres

Ministry of Defence trains on 12,906 hectares (31,891 acres) made up of freehold, leasehold and licensed areas. Of this total 10,871 hectares (26,862 acres) is used for live firing purposes.

South West Water owns 4,421 hectares (10,924 acres) of land including 8 reservoirs.

Forestry Commission owns 1,359 hectares (3,358 acres) of land leasehold, plus 381 hectares (941 acres) freehold.

Duchy of Cornwall owns 28,328 hectares (70,000 acres).

## Dartmoor National Park Authority

Apart from a variety of small sites (mainly car parks) the National Park Authority owns 1,451 ha (3,587 acres) including:

Holne Moor & Woods 783 hectares 1,935 acres

Haytor 421 hectares 1,040 acres

Wray Cleave 31 hectares 77 acres

Sanduck Wood 12 hectares 30 acres

Casely Wood 8 hectares 20 acres

Dendles Waste 80 hectares 198 acres

Whiddon Scrubbs 8 hectares 20 acres

Blackingstone Rock 5 hectares 12 acres

Plasterdown 93 hectares 230 acres

Trendlebere 10 hectares 25 acres

## Ancient Monuments

Dartmoor's landscape is of great archaeological importance, with over 10,000 entries on the County Sites and Monuments Register. There are over 1,000 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and this figure rises each year. There are also over 2,500 buildings which are Listed because of their architectural or historic interest.

## Stately Homes

CASTLE DROGO - owned by the National Trust, approx. 105,000 visitors per annum.

## National Park Administration

Designated 1951, 4th National Park to be designated in England and Wales.

### Principal Legislation

*National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949*

*Countryside Act, 1968*

*Town & Country Planning Act, 1971*

*Local Government Act, 1972*

*Local Government Act, 1980*

*Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981*

*Dartmoor Commons Act, 1985*

*The Town & Country Planning General Development Order, 1988*

*Dartmoor National Park (Designation)*

*Variation Order, 1990*

*Environment Act, 1995*

**Management** *The Environment Act, 1995* established a new free-standing Authority for Dartmoor which took over the administration and management of the National Park on 1 April 1997. For 45 years previously, Devon County Council had administered these functions.

The National Park Authority comprises 26 members. Seven members are appointed by Devon County Council, seven by the District Councils (three from West Devon Borough Council, three from Teignbridge District Council and one from South Hams District Council). Twelve members are Government appointees, five of whom represent parish council interests. The other seven Government appointees are persons, usually local, with specialist knowledge of, or a particular interest in, the National Park. They are appointed for a three year period and help provide the balance of local and national interests that is essential to the management of a National Park.

**Staff** There are about 85 permanent staff and other temporary and part-time staff are employed. The main areas of work are: Planning; Information; Education; Interpretation; Conservation; Recreation Management; Rangers; Ground Services and Administration.

## Visitor Services

Information Services: 4 National Park Information Centres; 12 Village Information Points; 4 Community Information Points and several other Centres supported by the National Park Authority.

Information enquiries by telephone to: (01822) 890414.

**Guided Walks** Under the direction of knowledgeable guides, walks of various lengths are held throughout the year. Details of the programme are published in *The Dartmoor Visitor*.

**The Dartmoor Visitor** Free information newspaper, published bi-annually.

Suitable for visitors and local people.

**Education Services** Provide information and trips for schools and individual learners.

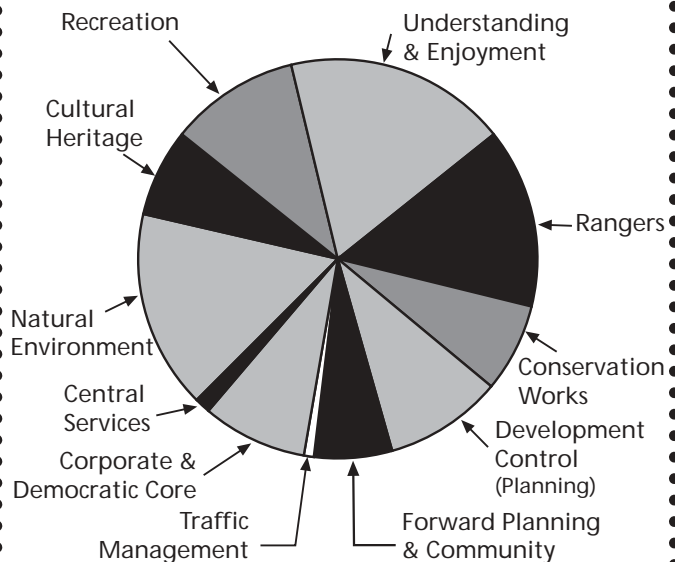
A variety of publications are available.

## Finance 2004/ 2005

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is undertaking a three year trial in which they provide 100% of National Park's funding. In the past Defra provided 75% of National Park funds direct with a further 25% being given to local authorities (District and County Councils) to pass on to their National Parks.

|                                       |                   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Defra funding</b>                  | <b>£3,765,325</b> |
| Gross Income                          | 573,297           |
| Budget Management Fund from resources | 195,460           |
| <b>Gross Expenditure</b>              | <b>£4,534,082</b> |

## How do we spend the money?



### Useful web links for further information:

- Other factsheets:**
  - Other factsheets give specific information about the range of subjects.  
<http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/dnp/factfile/homepage.html>
- Other publications:**
  - Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2001*  
<http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/dnp/planning/mplan.html>

For further information, and a list of other Fact Sheets available, contact the:

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