

General Information



Dartmoor Factsheet

Covering an area of 954 sq km (368 sq miles), 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 were to be created. The New Forest National Park was designated in 2005 and the South Downs National Park was created in 2009.

Unlike many National Parks in other countries, for example the USA, the National Parks in England, Wales and Scotland 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 English and Welsh 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) above sea level SX 579 893
Lowest pt.	Doghole Bridge 30m (98ft) above sea level 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 - 2,150mm (83in) average
Rainfall	Widcombe-in-the-Moor - 1,581mm (61in) average
Snow lie	Lowland - fewer than 5 days per annum
Snow lie	Highland - average 15-20 days
Snow lie	Summits - average 30 days
Sunshine	3-4 hours daily average



Settlements

The National Park is sparsely populated. The main settlements are: Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, Yelverton, Horrabridge, South Brent, Christow and Chagford. Smaller villages and hamlets meet the remaining housing need. Total population of the National Park is about 34,000 based on estimates from 2001 Census data.

Population of Ashburton (largest settlement) is nearly 4,000 (2001 Census data).

Major Land Use

		% of total National Park
Moorland (including rough grazing)	48,450 hectares (119,720 acres)	47%
Farmland	33,041 hectares (81,644 acres)	38%
Forestry/Woodland	11,152 hectares (27,557 acres)	11%
Reservoirs	209 hectares (516 acres)	1%
Other (inc villages)	2,577 hectares (6,368 acres)	3%
Common Land	- approx 34,878 hectares (86,186 acres)	38%
The Duchy of Cornwall owns	28,328 hectares (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.

New walking rights on Dartmoor specifically arising from the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000*, as from 28 August 2005, extend to approximately 7,000 hectares. Generally, accessing Dartmoor's open country is relatively straightforward. However, because of the *Dartmoor Commons Act*, the open access situation on Dartmoor is different from that for the rest of the country.

A & B Class Roads

Parts or all of:

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

Reserves & Protected Areas

National Nature Reserves

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

Dendles Wood 29 hectares 72 acres

Black-a-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 and Listed Buildings

Dartmoor's landscape is of great archaeological importance, with over 17,500 entries on the Historic Environment Record. There are over 1,200 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. Some of these buildings are private houses but others are open to the public, for example Castle Drogo owned by the National Trust, has approx. 115,000 visitors annually and Buckfast Abbey attracts 400,000 visitors each year.

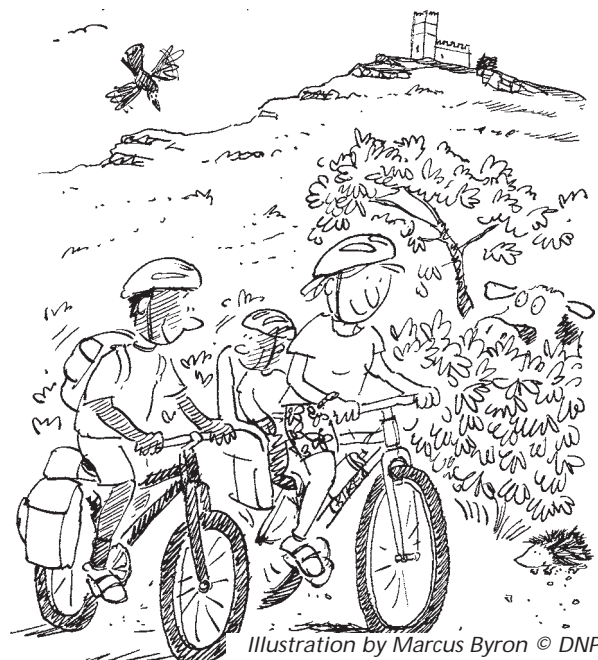


Illustration by Marcus Byron © DNPA

Dartmoor National Park Authority

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 22 members. Six members are appointed by Devon County Council, and six by the District Councils - three from West Devon Borough Council, two from Teignbridge District Council and one from South Hams District Council. The remaining ten members are Government appointees. Four of these represent parish council interests and are nominated by the parish councils on Dartmoor. The nominations are then approved by the Secretary of State. The other six members are directly appointed by the Secretary of State for national interests and are persons, usually local, with specialist knowledge of, or a particular interest in, the National Park. Members are usually appointed for an initial period of up to 4 years with the option of re-appointment for a period of up to ten years and help provide the balance of

local and national interests that is essential to the management of a National Park.

The Members meet once a month to take specific planning decisions and also provide overall guidance on policy and strategy for the Authority. They are similar in function to Governors of a school.

Details about Dartmoor National Park Authority Member meetings can be found on-line at: <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/index/aboutus/authoritymeetings.htm>

Staff There are about 100 permanent staff and other temporary and part-time staff are employed. The main areas of work are: Planning; Information; Education; Interpretation; Biodiversity; Farming; Recreation; Tourism; Rangers; Conservation Works and Administration.

Visitor Service Dartmoor National Park Authority operates 3 National Park Information Centres and supports 5 Community Information Points. Information enquiries by telephone to: (01822) 890414.

The Dartmoor Guide Free information newspaper, published bi-annually. Suitable for visitors and local people.

Finance Most of the money that the National Park Authority requires comes directly from Government through the core National Park Grant from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Some further income is generated through sales, fees and charges. Defra supplies additional funds to support the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund.

Full details about how much income we have and how it is spent can be found on-line in the annual Business Plan by following this link:

http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/index/aboutus/au-theauthority/au-corporateplanning_process.htm

Useful web links for further information:

- Other factsheets:**
 - Other factsheets give specific information about the range of subjects.
<http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/lab-factsheetshome.htm>
- Other publications:**
 - Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2007-2012*
<http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/pl-dnmpgmtplan.htm>
 - Dartmoor National Park Authority Business Plan*
This is updated every year and can be found online at http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/index/aboutus/au-theauthority/au-corporateplanning_process.htm

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

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