



DARTMOOR LOCAL PLAN
guiding planning applications in Dartmoor National Park

TOPIC PAPER 7

Transport

September 2019

This topic paper provides an overview of the issues and evidence used to inform Dartmoor National Park's local plan review.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Objectives

- 1.1.1 This Topic Paper is one of ten topic papers which form part of the evidence base that support the emerging Dartmoor National Park Local Plan. These topic papers have been produced to coordinate and consolidate some of the evidence used in drafting the emerging local plan. All the topic papers are available to view online at:

<http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/living-and-working/planning/planning-policy/background-evidence>

- 1.1.2 The purpose of this topic paper is to gather evidence and serve as a starting point for developing planning policies related to transport. Invariably the paper will cover issues which overlap or compete with those in other parts of the evidence base (e.g. spatial strategy, plan viability, economy). In light of this the topic paper's aims are to:
- review relevant legislation and policy which set the statutory framework for the local plan;
 - review the current Dartmoor National Park Authority policy framework and its effectiveness at resolving transport issues
 - draw on a wide range of source material including research, guidance and best practice to inform policy development;
 - recommend how to best adapt policy so it ensures due consideration is given to transport priorities and identifies opportunities to enhance them in the future
- 1.1.3 The topic paper has been updated throughout the course of the local plan review to reflect new evidence or changes to national guidance or policy. The views of the local community, key stakeholders and partner organisations who have an interest in the future of Dartmoor National Park also form part of the evidence base for the local plan. The Authority has therefore welcomed comments on this Paper. The following summarises the changes made in each version:

Version	Changes made
Version 1 April 2018	Original topic paper
Version 2 December 2018	Updated to reflect 2019 NPPF
Version 3 September 2019	Update on Regulation 18 comments, climate change and allocated site opportunities

2 National, Regional and Local Context

2.1 National Policy and Guidance

- 2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ states that 'significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes' (paragraph 103). It also states planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities (paragraph 104).
- 2.1.2 The NPPF requires that developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment (paragraph 111). NPPF paragraph 105 sets

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

out the criteria local planning authorities should consider when setting local parking standards. The NPPF also states that local planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users (paragraph 98).

- 2.1.3 The English National Parks and the Broads Circular 2010² sets out the Government's vision for the English National Parks. The vision aspires for the National Parks to be pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living, including through promoting sustainable and low carbon transport.
- 2.1.4 The Circular recognises that the main transport routes through National Parks are governed largely by external considerations, and the Circular's objectives will require partnership working with Local Authorities, Transport Authorities (in Dartmoor's case, Devon County Council) and other statutory bodies and stakeholders.
- 2.1.5 The Circular has a strong presumption against any significant road widening or the building of new roads through a National Park unless it can be shown there are compelling reasons for the new or enhanced capacity and with any benefits significantly outweighing the costs. When assessing options for dealing with increasing demand for access to and within National Parks, Transport Authorities are expected to have considered demand management measures before proposing new infrastructure. This includes by considering sustainable transport methods such as car club and sharing schemes or improved cycling or walking connections.
- 2.1.6 Guidance on transport planning matters can be found in National Planning Practice Guidance³ (NPPG) and the Manual for Streets.
- 2.1.7 NPPG³ highlights the need for local plans to be supported by a robust evidence base which enables an assessment of the transport impacts of both existing development as well as that proposed, and can inform sustainable approaches to transport at a plan making level. This guidance also includes advice on how to carry out Transport Assessments to support local plans. It is important to recognise in this context, that government expects evidence supporting local plans to be proportionate. In the National Park context, where the level of development and scale of transport issues is comparatively low, an appropriate level of evidence should inform policy review.
- 2.1.8 The Manual for Streets 1⁴ and 2⁵ and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges⁶ provide national level guidance on the design of highways and the public realm.

2.2 *Regional Context*

- 2.2.1 Devon County Council (DCC) is the Highway Authority for Devon County. The 2011 – 2026 third Local Transport Plan for Devon and Torbay⁷ (LTP3) is a joint plan for the region which promotes an integrated and cross-boundary approach to transport. The plan sets out the main transport priorities and the infrastructure needed to support future growth. The LTP3 was

² Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2010) 'English National Parks and the Broads UK Government Vision and Circular 2010'

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets-2>

⁶ <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/index.htm>

⁷ Devon County Council (2011) 'Local Transport Plan: Devon and Torbay Strategy 2011 – 2026'

written with close integration from the emerging Local Development Frameworks (Local Plans) at the time.

2.2.2 The key objectives for the LTP3 are as follows:

- Deliver and support new development and economic growth
- Make best use of the transport network and protect the existing transport asset by prioritising maintenance
- Work with communities to provide safe, sustainable and low carbon transport choices
- Strengthen and improve the public transport network
- Make Devon the 'place to be naturally active'

2.2.3 The LTP3 includes the Dartmoor settlements of Ashburton, Buckfastleigh and Moretonhampstead as 'Market Towns' where the vision is for communities to be supported in making best use of the existing road, rail, bus networks, and cycle and footpaths. Dartmoor's smaller settlements are not large enough to be recognised in this strategic plan.

2.2.4 The LTP3 identifies the National Parks as being a key draw for tourists and day trippers, with high quality cycle routes and public rights of way being important to the local economy and public health and wellbeing.

2.2.5 The LTP3 states partnership working with National Park Authorities, Parish and Town Councils will play a key role in maintaining Devon's Public Rights of Way network. However, it also concedes that budget reductions will mean it will not be possible to maintain high accessibility standards across the whole county.

2.3 *Local Context*

2.3.1 The National Park Authority is a special Authority with particular purposes that differentiate it from a District Council. The National Park Authority is not a Highway Authority.

2.3.2 The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for National Park Authorities in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public

When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national parks.

2.3.3 The National Park Management Plan 2014 - 2019⁸ sets out the strategic plan for the National Park and guides organisational decision making in the National Park. Although it is not in itself a material consideration for planning application decisions the Management Plan does

⁸ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2014) 'Dartmoor National Park Management Plan 2014 - 2019
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include relevant evidence to inform the Local Plan. The Management Plan highlights the following issues which are of relevance to this transport topic paper:

- high reliance on the private car for transport in the National Park and that this has been exacerbated by reductions in public transport in and around the National Park
- increase in the number and scale of large recreational events
- difficulties faced by certain sectors of society accessing the National Park
- impacts of traffic at peak periods, particularly high vehicle speeds causing livestock deaths and large vehicles causing noise and infrastructure damage

- 2.3.4 The National Character Area profile 150 for Dartmoor⁹ identifies high-level strategic opportunities for environmental enhancement in the National Park. The profile states increasing provision of sustainable transport will be a key means of managing recreational opportunities in the National Park and thereby protecting, managing and enhancing the tranquil character of Dartmoor's landscapes.
- 2.3.5 The Recreational and Access Strategy for Dartmoor 2011 - 2017¹⁰ sets out a vision for informal recreation and access on Dartmoor and provides policies on how DNPA will manage recreation. The strategy identifies transport as a barrier preventing people, particularly young children, from enjoying Dartmoor and that buses represent the only transport option for those without access to a car. The strategy states the Highway Authority will be supported in developing and promoting a core network of recreational public transport emanating from the gateway towns. DNPA is currently considering whether/how to review the Recreation and Access Strategy alongside the review of the National Park Management Plan.
- 2.3.6 The Authority's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)¹¹, Issues Paper Consultation¹² and Site Options consultation has identified that many of Dartmoor's communities feel there is a need for transport improvements in their communities, mostly through the provision of additional car parking. These settlements include the local centres of Ashburton, Horrabridge, Moretonhampstead and South Brent, and the rural settlements of Bridford, Christow, Dunsford, Lustleigh, Mary Tavy, Peter Tavy, Sourton, South Tawton, South Zeal, Sticklepath and Walkhampton. Currently, the only settlement where a need for additional car parking has been formally identified through a Transport Assessment is Ashburton.
- 2.3.7 The IDP also identifies a range of other transport infrastructure as being desirable or essential over the next plan period. These projects range from additional foot/cycle paths, railway development and sustainable transport projects.

⁹ Natural England (2014) 'National Character Area Profile: 150 Dartmoor'

¹⁰ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2011) 'Access and Recreational Strategy for Dartmoor 2011 - 2017'

¹¹ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) 'Infrastructure Delivery Plan'

¹² Dartmoor National Park Authority (2016) '[Issues Paper](#)'

3 The Road Network

Cars and pedestrians: Getting the balance right

Cars and road transport have revolutionised our lives, giving us wonderful freedom and increasing opportunities. Good transport is a fundamental component of modern life and the planning of our settlements should rightly be designed to allow for everyday use of cars by residents.

However, the convenience of good road transport comes with costs which need to be balanced against the benefits:

- A car takes up 50-100 times more land area than a pedestrian. Designing for the car does not make efficient use of land and does not generally lead to the intimate and pedestrian friendly streets highly valued on Dartmoor.
- Making it easy to travel by car discourages walking, cycling and other more sustainable forms of transport. It can also make settlements more transient, discouraging social life and diminishing vibrancy.
- High speed or heavy traffic is dangerous for people and wildlife and can segregate communities.

Although emissions are improving, road transport has a significant impact on air quality. Road transport alone makes up 25.6% of Dartmoor's carbon footprint¹³ and pollutants have significant implications for human health. Vehicle emissions also contribute to nitrogen deposition which is known to disadvantage the slow-growing, smaller and low-growing species typically found in Dartmoor's rare and valued habitats¹⁴.

3.1 The Road Network and Spatial Strategy

- 3.1.1 The vast majority of transport within Dartmoor National Park is reliant on the existing road network. Outside the National Park the A38 and A30 trunk roads bound the National Park to the south and north respectively. The principal roads within Dartmoor National Park are the A386 and A382 running north south to the west and east of the National Park respectively. Access to the high moor is principally achieved by two B-roads which cross the moor from east to west. Whilst B class roads, these roads still have a number of pinch points and characteristics which make them characteristically rural roads.
- 3.1.2 Beyond the handful of A and B roads Dartmoor's isolated nature means much of the road network comprises narrow winding country lanes bounded by high hedgebanks which generally have limited capacity to accommodate significant traffic growth. These narrow winding lanes make significant contributions to the National Park's character and in many cases have historic and cultural significance in their own right. The Circular has a strong presumption against significant road widening or building of new roads and there is also very limited funding for such work in the Local Transport Plan. As such, over the next plan period the Highway Authority will seek to protect and maintain Dartmoor's road network broadly in its existing form. The Highway Authority has agreed a protocol¹⁵ which sets out working

¹³ 'A Review of Devon County Council's Climate Change Strategy'

¹⁴ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[Natural Environment Topic Paper](#)', Section 10.1

¹⁵ Devon County Council (2011) '[Highway Management in Devon's Protected Landscapes: The Protocol](#)'

arrangements in Devon's protected landscapes to ensure the purposes of designation are respected.

3.1.3 Small scale road network improvements may be possible to achieve access to development sites delivering affordable housing or other significant public benefits required by policy. Large scale road improvements to enable access to such development sites are not generally cost-effective. The costs of such works generally outweigh and compromise the delivery of public benefits, such as affordable housing, on the small scale development sites experienced in the National Park. Significant improvements and modernisation of the highway network can also impact upon the National Park's landscape character. The Authority's Landscape Character Assessment¹⁶ identifies small narrow winding roads as a key characteristic of many of the Landscape Character Types.

3.1.4 For the reasons above an important element of the Local Plan's spatial strategy is to focus growth in settlements with good access to the road network, local services, shops and facilities, including sustainable transport connections. There are many legitimate reasons for focusing growth in existing centres, in transport terms these reasons include:

- Reducing the need to travel
- Ensuring development sites are serviced to the best possible extent by existing transport infrastructure
- Avoiding the cost of significant new transport infrastructure which would be costly and difficult to deliver given the heavily constrained nature of the National Park
- Using s106 contributions from new development to help alleviate existing transport issues
- Improving public transport access and viability of services

3.1.5 This approach is consistent with the NPPF, which states:

"The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between

¹⁶ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[Landscape Character Assessment](#)'

urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making” (NPPF paragraph 103).

- 3.1.6 Highway safety and traffic are material considerations in respect of decision making. The NPPF 2019 is clear though, in the way in which development proposals should consider highways impacts. It states:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe” (NPPF paragraph 109)

- 3.1.7 It is important that highways issues are therefore genuinely understood and taken into account and therefore highlights the importance of Transport Statement and Transport Assessments (see below).

- 3.1.8 Table 1 summarises the road access Dartmoor’s Local Centres have.

Table 1 –Dartmoor’s Local Centres and road access

Local Centre	Road Access
Ashburton	A38 (Trunk Road)
Buckfastleigh	A38 (Trunk Road)
Chagford	B3206 (B Road)
Horrabridge	A386 (A Road)
Moretonhampstead	A382 (A Road)
Princetown	B3212 (B Road)
South Brent	A38 (Trunk Road)
Yelverton	A386 (A Road)

Recommendations for policy

- 3.1.9 There are sound transport reasons which support the National Park’s spatial strategy to focus growth in existing settlements with good transport connections and access to shops, services and facilities.
- 3.1.10 The small scale growth planned and its focus in settlements with established highway access means that, strategically, the general constrained capacity of the National Park’s existing highway infrastructure should not prevent planned growth. This is not to say transport issues do not exist in the National Park, but that transport issues should not strategically prevent the small growth planned.
- 3.1.11 There will inevitably be cases where site specific transport issues will need to be assessed and resolved and in some cases there will be existing settlement wide transport issues which new development can help alleviate, such as car parking. Section 5 discusses the planning policy tools which can help support these aims.

3.2 Monitoring of the Road Network

- 3.2.1 Use of the National Park’s road network is monitored by Automatic Traffic Counters (‘ATCs’) maintained by Devon County Council. There are 10 counters within or on roads leading to the National Park from which data can be gathered. The counters’ locations are shown in Figure 1.
- 3.2.2 Trend data from the counters can be seen in Table 4 and Table 5, showing average annual daily flow and average summer (August) daily flow respectively. The data shows that overall traffic levels have been fairly consistent throughout the National Park with modest increases

and decreases in places. The most pronounced trend is the increase along the A386 south of Tavistock.

- 3.2.3 Summer trends broadly reflect annual trends, with the overall levels of traffic remaining relatively static albeit with a slight decline. On average the summer counts are approximately 10% higher than the annual averages.
- 3.2.4 Speeding vehicles within the National Park's 40mph speed restricted zone is a recurring problem and leads to highway safety issues, particularly increasing the risk of livestock road deaths. Data from three speed visors is available in and show that up to 38% of vehicles regularly exceed the 40mph speed limit. The Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society monitor road livestock deaths and their data recorded 160 deaths in 2016 and 132 deaths in 2017.

Table 2 - Speed visor data¹⁷

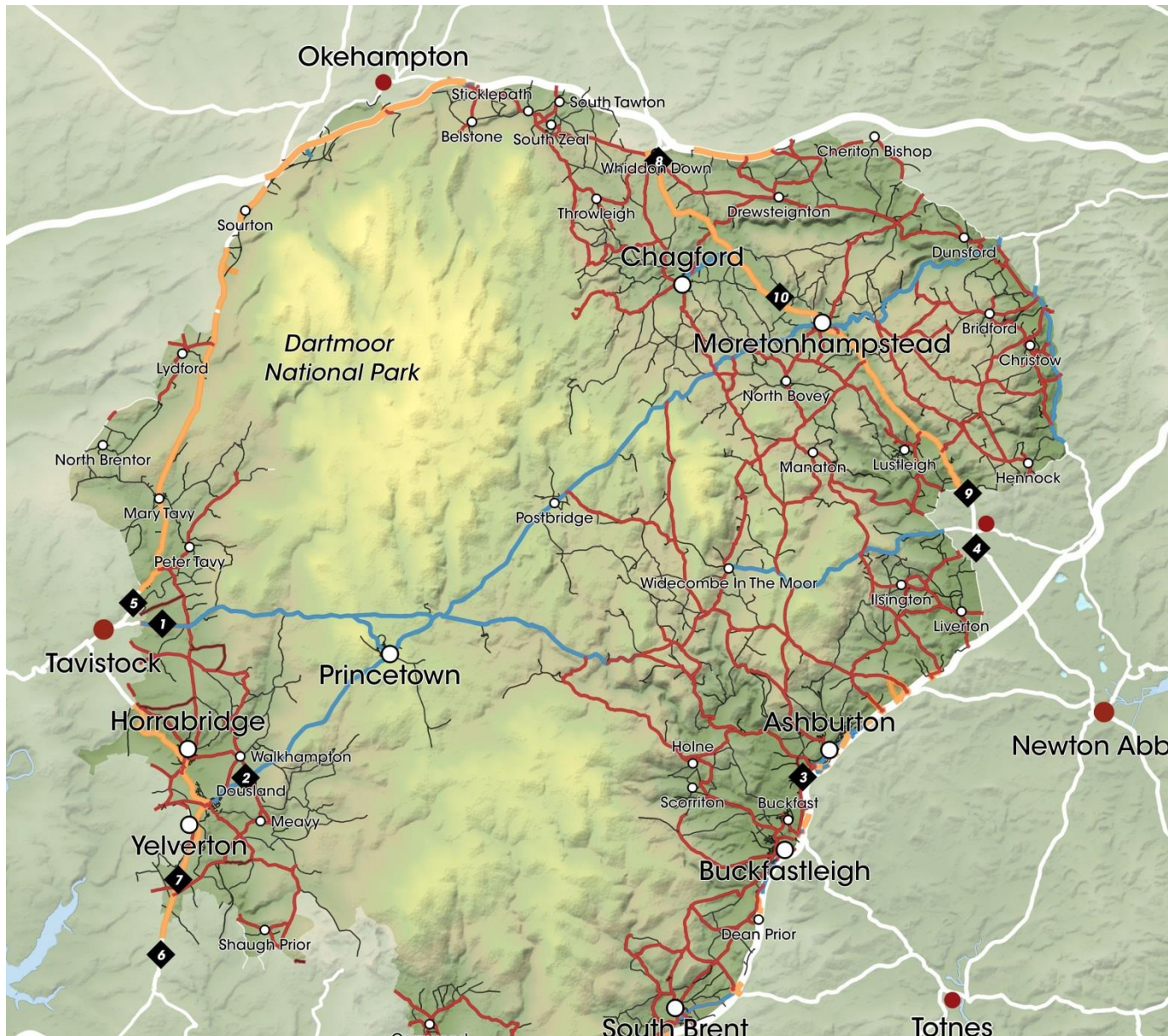
Location	Percent of cars violating speed limit
Bennet's Cross	38%
Sharpitor	37%
Haytor	14%

- 3.2.5 Some highway monitoring stations on the A386 and A382 record numbers of passing heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). HGV data from these monitoring stations is shown in Table 3. The data indicates overall HGV levels have been consistent and are relatively low (albeit it is recognised this may not be the local perception). The presence of a distribution company in Moretonhampstead is likely responsible for a higher proportion of HGVs north of Moretonhampstead.

Table 3 - Proportion of HGVs recorded at monitoring stations

Ref	Location	2013	2014	2015	2016	Average
6	A386 Roborough	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%
7	A386 S. of Yelverton	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	1.3%	1.25%
10	A382 N. of Moretonh'st'd	2.6%	3.8%	2.3%	2.5%	2.8%

¹⁷ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[State of the Park Report](#)'



Legend

Key Settlements

- Key Settlements Outside National Park
- Local Centres
- Rural Settlements

Road Network

- A Road
- B Road
- C Road
- Unclassified
- ◆ Highway Monitoring Stations

- National Park Boundary
- Road Network outside National Park

Figure 1 - Dartmoor National Park Road Network and Settlement Hierarchy



Table 4 – Average daily traffic flow at traffic monitoring stations

Ref	Location	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% change
1	B3357 Moorshop	2550	2430	2618	2510	2313	2208	2199	2283	2350	2414	-5.33
2	B3212 Dousland	4010	3900	4062	4000	3993	3867	3887	4051	4100	4189	+4.46
3	C178 Ashburton	3000	2970	3074	2900	3021	2774	2880	2883	2962	3142	+4.73
4	B3387 W. of B. Tracey	3060	2930	2854	2850	2854	2758	2909	3217	3074	3308	+8.1
5	A386 N. of Tavistock	6658	6513	6609	6614	6422	6400	6454	6510	6535	6474	-2.76
6	A386 Roborough	17780	18110	18382	18260	18282	17932	18077	18524	18808	18774	+5.59
7	A386 S. of Yelverton					16277	16048	15222	16373	16696	16598	+1.9
8	A382 S. of W. Down	3390	3230	3384	3420	3380	3279	3361	3412	3523	3478	+2.6
9	A382 N. of B. Tracey	3880	3770	3758	3670	3674	3615	3647	3674	3640	3666	-5.52
10	A382 N. of Moretonh'st'd							911	1033	1077	1087	+19.3
											Average	+3.3

Table 5 - Average Summer (August) Daily Flow

Ref	Location	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% change
1	B3357 Moorshop	3440	2920	3137	3010	2861	2652	2978	2819	2837	2985	-13.22
2	B3212 Dousland	4620	4070	4331	4340	4227	4159	4365	4407	4493	4632	+0.26
3	C178 Ashburton	4430	3902	4150	4040	3933	3585	3981	3659	3943	4372	-1.3
4	B3387 W. of B. Tracey	4090	3560	3551	3700	3483	3254	3337	3621	3645	4100	+0.25
5	A386 N. of Tavistock	7301	6710	6946	6927	6724	6669	6769	6719	6938	6958	-4.7
6	A386 Roborough	19593	18124	18797	18739	18838	18461	18643	18860	19491	19454	-0.71
7	A386 S. of Yelverton					16782	16505	16907	16921	17303	16933	+0.9
8	A382 S. of W. Down	4160	3850	4163	4060	4162	3774	4038	3983	3959	4029	-3.15
9	A382 N. of B. Tracey	4670	4350	4540	4300	4296	4017	4154	4116	4030	4134	-11.48
10	A382 N. of Moretonh'st'd											
											Average	-3.68

4 Sustainable transport

4.1 Public Transport

- 4.1.1 In the National Park public transport principally comprises bus services and the national rail network. The availability of public transport within the National Park is limited to bus services, or linkages with rail or bus services on the fringes of the National Park. Due to the National Park's isolated nature and disperse population bus services are often subsidised and often do not offer daily services or work time connections.
- 4.1.2 Figure 2 shows an overview of Dartmoor's bus network coverage and the frequency of services. Dartmoor's best served settlements are Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Horrabridge, South Brent and Yelverton.
- 4.1.3 Notwithstanding the provision of public transport services it is also important to understand people's use of available services. Table 6 shows the chosen means of travelling to work for people living in Dartmoor's Local Centres. The overview shows there is very poor use of available bus services for travelling to work. Poor use may be for a variety of reasons, including lack of work time connections and that desired destinations are not available. The overview does not show use of public transport for non-work related travel.

Table 6 – Working population's means of travelling to work in Dartmoor's Local Centres (%) (Census 2011)

Local Centre	Private Vehicle	Bus, Minibus or Coach	Walk or cycle	Home worker
Ashburton	69.8	1.8	15.9	10.8
Buckfastleigh	71.8	2.9	15.4	8.9
Chagford	52.4	1.3	25.2	18.9
Horrabridge	79	5.8	6.4	6.7
Moretonhampstead	59.9	1.5	23.1	12
Princetown	57.3	1.9	33.8	4.6
South Brent	75.5	2.3	12.2	8.8
Yelverton	71.9	4	9.5	12
Average	67.2%	2.7%	17.7%	10.3%

- 4.1.4 None of the National Parks settlements have direct national rail network access, the nearest railway stations are at Ivybridge and Okehampton. There is a heritage line which shuttles between Buckfastleigh and Totnes, it is not considered a viable commuting option. Future potential rail projects are likely to have the most significant effect on the National Park.
- 4.1.5 The most significant potential project being one of the options to improve resilience at the Dawlish coastal route where there are high maintenance costs and the line was damaged in 2014 disrupting rail services to West Devon and Cornwall. The Peninsula Rail Task Force¹⁸ were set up as rail improvement campaign partnership to ensure future rail disruption is avoided. It comprises Cornwall Council, Cornwall and Scillies LEP, Devon County Council, Heart of the South West LEP, Plymouth City Council, Somerset County Council and Torbay Council. Their strategy for achieving this, 'Closing the gap'¹⁹, includes a long term strategy (2030+) for completion of an alternative/additional route to the north of Dartmoor through

¹⁸ <https://peninsularailtaskforce.co.uk/>

¹⁹ Peninsula Rail Task Force (2016) '[Closing the gap – The South West Peninsula strategic rail blueprint](#)'

Okehampton, Coleford Junction and Tavistock. There are currently no funds committed against this project and no certainty it will come forward. The Authority commissioned a scoping report which provides advice on the implications of opening the alternative rail line²⁰.

- 4.1.6 Facilitated through the local plan covering West Devon (outside the National Park) and enabled by new development, a new station and additional commuter services are planned between Okehampton and Exeter. This proposal should be supported in principal and provides another opportunity to have sustainable transport access close to the National Park. There may be future opportunities to review, from Okehampton, other connections either by bus or cycle, which make this most of this opportunity.
- 4.1.7 There is a small portion of land beside the rail line at South Brent which is currently allocated for the potential re-opening of South Brent station. The land is located immediately adjacent to the national rail network and represents the only land option which could potentially support rail access at South Brent. On this basis it is a precious resource which should continue to be safeguarded in case the project came forward in the future.

Regulation 18 (first draft) consultation) - response

- 4.1.8 At Regulation 18 (first draft) consultation it was highlighted that there exists an opportunity to be clearer and more proactive in relation to sustainable transport policy.
- 4.1.9 Whilst there is limited opportunity to provide new public transport within the National Park, it could be better recognised within the Local Plan that many opportunities exist to improve cycling and walking routes, in a way which is consistent with National Park purposes and Dartmoor's special qualities. Redundant rail lines have provided opportunities for recreational trails within the National Park. The success of Drake's Trail, the Granite Way and the Wray Valley Trail could be recognised further through a safeguarding of any potential strategic routes, and opportunities to link these. Whilst it is not necessarily realistic to identify these specifically (although some may be apparent through the Infrastructure Delivery Plan) a more generic reference to safeguarding opportunities would provide some appropriate higher level protection. It is of course important to recognise that an approach such as this does require an important element of realism and deliverability; clearly proposals should not be refused, or areas or sites held in abeyance where there is not a reasonable prospect of a scheme being delivered.
- 4.1.10 In response to this it is proposed to include a transport policy in the local plan. A transport policy within the local plan could set out a more positive statement of the Authority's support

²⁰ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2015) '[Devon Main Line Route Options](#)'
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for sustainable transport within the National Park, providing a key rationale and justification which relates to the overall strategy. A sustainable transport policy should:

- Provide a positive statement of the need to support sustainable transport opportunities within the National Park
- Note the need to safeguard opportunities for sustainable transport connections through good decision making
- Recognise the importance of cycle and walking connections as part of new development
- Provide a more robust reference to Transport Assessment and Transport Statement requirements (see below) compared with the current reference in supporting text only.

Recommendations for Policy

- 4.1.11 Whilst the planning system cannot require provision of public transport it can ensure that development occurs in locations where it is most likely there will be public transport connections in the future. In so doing it can also help the viability of such services.
- 4.1.12 The Local Plan should continue to prioritise growth in centres with better access to public transport and support infrastructure which improves access to it. However there should be an understanding that use of such services may well be poor and the planning system is powerless to protect such services into the future.
- 4.1.13 Opportunities exist on the fringes of the National Park to improve public transport connections. These should be supported where they are consistent with the National Park's special qualities, and opportunities to improve walking and cycling connection with this should be facilitated through safeguarding of opportunities, development contributions and continued partnership working.
- 4.1.14 Opportunities to improve walking and cycling, and supporting the transition to lower carbon technologies for the private vehicle, usage are likely to have a greater and more certain impact on sustainable transport within the National Park.

4.2 Recreation and sustainable transport

- 4.2.1 National Parks are an invaluable recreational resource for the general public and promoting such opportunities is a core purpose of the Authority.
- 4.2.2 Significant population growth is occurring and planned within the Plymouth and Exeter Strategic Housing Market Areas. Much of this development is close to Dartmoor's borders and will likely put additional recreational pressure on the National Park.
- 4.2.3 Although many people are involved in physical and inherently sustainable activities during their trips to Dartmoor (e.g. walking, cycling, running, kayaking) the vast majority arrive by car. There are few significant public transport options providing access to Dartmoor and for many visitors transporting bikes, kayaks or other recreational equipment public transport is not a convenient or realistic option. It is therefore reasonable to assume visitor car trips are also likely to continue to increase over the plan period. Figure 3 shows a 21% increase in cars visiting Haytor visitor centre car park between 2012 and 2017.

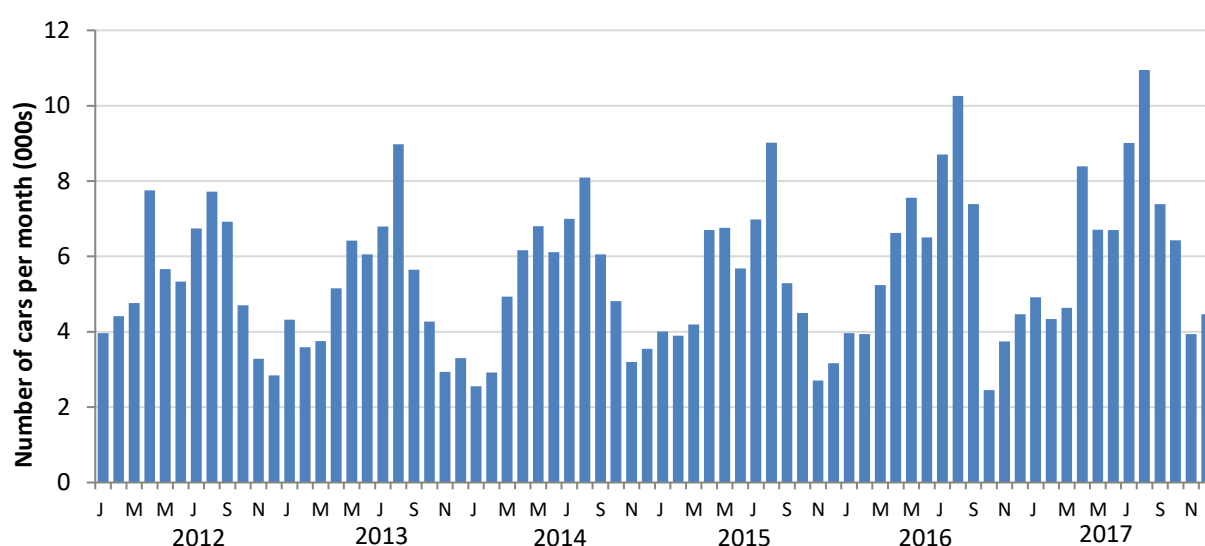


Figure 3 - Haytor Visitor Centre car park visitors (cars per month)

- 4.2.4 The key facilities which support recreational visitors to Dartmoor include car parking, toilets, information provision, cafes and refreshments, good networks of paths and trails nearby for walking, cycling and horse riding. The Dartmoor settlements which serve as recreational hubs, as identified in Dartmoor's Recreation and Access Strategy²¹, are Ashburton, Chagford, Widecombe in the Moor, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, Postbridge and Yelverton. Burrator is also a significant hub. Outside the National Park Bovey Tracey, Okehampton and Tavistock are also important.
- 4.2.5 Supporting the growth of recreational hubs and helping them respond to increases in visitor numbers should effectively concentrate visitors to centres where their impacts, transport, recreational, environmental or others, can be properly managed. This approach also reduces

²¹ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2011) 'Recreation and Access Strategy for Dartmoor 2011 – 2017'

visitor's impacts elsewhere in the National Park. The Local Plan's transport policies can support these hubs through supporting:

- provision of additional parking;
- sustainable transport development, including public transport and improved recreational infrastructure, such as footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths; and
- tourism businesses which provide sustainable tourism options, such as guiding services and bicycle hire and repair.

4.2.6 Other ways these hubs can support visitors, through commercial development, will be discussed in the Economy Topic Paper.

4.2.7 Visitors arriving by coach and caravan can create transport issues on Dartmoor's narrow roads. The Authority's Coach Driver's and Motorhome Guide'²² was produced to aid traffic management. It is a guide to accessible roads for coaches and motorhomes and also recommends informal one way systems. In some recreational hubs with specific tourist draws coach parking can be a consideration for traffic management and parking requirements. Communities have a good track record of identifying where this is an issue which needs to be addressed.

Recommendations for Policy

4.2.8 An important component of current Local Plan policy (DMD39) is to allow for car parking development to be justified for both community need and tourist demand. This supports the ability for communities to respond to recreational demand and should be retained. Car park development is discussed further in section 5.1.

4.2.9 Support should also be given to recreational infrastructure and associated business which can support sustainable tourism and transport options in recreation hubs.

4.2.10 Local Plan policy should encourage the development of sustainable transport options throughout Dartmoor. However, Local Plan policy must also acknowledge it is powerless to protect these services and given the current public spending climate it is highly likely the car will remain the primary mode of transport for visitors to Dartmoor in the future.

4.3 Low carbon transport

4.3.1 In May 2019 the UK Parliament approved a motion declaring a climate change emergency and for the Government to achieve net zero emissions before 2050. The motion was approved without a formal vote and demonstrates the will of the House of Commons but does not legally compel the Government to act.

4.3.2 In July 2019 DNPA declared a climate emergency, signed the Devon Climate Declaration and agreed to continue to work with the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group (DCERG) to collaborate on producing a Devon-wide Carbon Plan. Within the Local Plan there is a range of policy opportunities to seek to reduce the impact the National Park, its residents business and visitors, have upon climate change.

4.3.3 Improving people's access to viable and attractive low carbon transport options is a key part of trying to put the National Park and the UK on a path to a low carbon future. For the

²² Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[Coach Driver and Motorhome Guide for Dartmoor](#)'
Transport Topic Paper September 2019

purposes of this topic paper (in the National Park context) the following transport options are considered low-carbon:

- Walking and cycling
- Hybrid, full electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles

- 4.3.4 The provision of walking and cycling links is principally achieved through improvements to the Public Right of Way network which is discussed in detail in Section 5.6.
- 4.3.5 There are very significant challenges in delivering innovations in low carbon transport. Our existing vehicles, fuels and infrastructure are long established, and our economy, business and lifestyle rely upon them. Many people see little reason to make greener travel choices due to a number of factors, such as not having access to, not being able to afford or being unaware of, lower carbon options.
- 4.3.6 It is important the Local Plan enables these challenges to be overcome and does not unnecessarily restrict or prevent low carbon solutions being found. This particularly applies to innovations in domestic vehicle transport which represent one of the largest sources of carbon emissions in the National Park.
- 4.3.7 The New Automotive Innovation Growth Team's (NAIGT) independent report on the future of the automotive industry sets out the industry developments needed to meet the Government's legally binding reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of 80% by 2050²³. Figure 4 sets out the vehicle development road map needed to meet these targets, including hybrid, full electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. Of relevance to the Local Plan is the electrical charging infrastructure needed to support these technological developments. The relatively remote nature of the National Park, its dispersed population and environmental constraints

²³ [UK Climate change Act 2008](#)

means there are likely to be significant cost and feasibility issues which will likely prevent hydrogen fuel cell infrastructure roll-out over the next plan period.

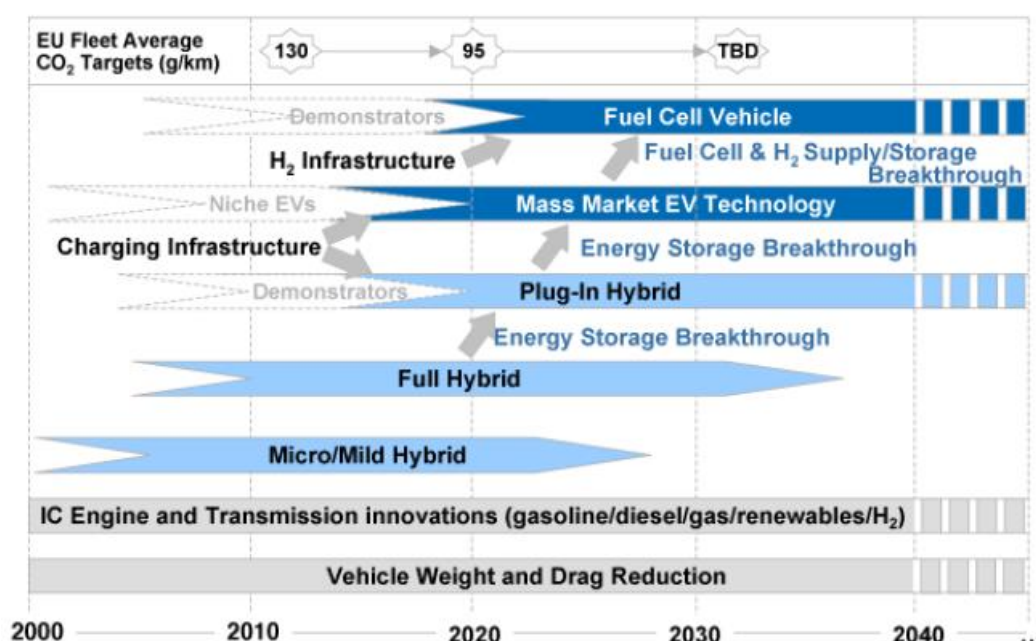


Figure 4 - Low carbon vehicle development roadmap (NAIGT)²⁴

- 4.3.8 In 2017 there were over 120,000 plug-in electric vehicles registered on the UK's roads, an increase of 600% from 2014²⁵.
- 4.3.9 In 2011 the installation of in-wall and upstand electric vehicle charging points in off-street parking and Local Authorities installing electric vehicle charging points on-street were made permitted development²⁶. There are currently approximately 8,800 publically accessible charging points (15,000 charging connectors) in the UK²⁷. Dartmoor National Park's supply of charging points is significantly more limited and their installation should be encouraged.
- 4.3.10 Given the significant take-up in electric vehicles there is an opportunity for the local plan to require that a certain proportion of new development provides electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs), either as passive or active charging points. Active points are fully wired and ready to use. At passive charging points the infrastructure is installed, but electricity supply not activated and necessary charging equipment may not be supplied.
- 4.3.11 The provision of EVCPs has clear and tangible benefits for further encouraging the take-up of low carbon transport throughout the National Park and should be encouraged by the Local Plan.
- 4.3.12 The costs of EVCPs is generally low for private open access off-street facilities (generally £500 - £1,000). The Government's Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme (EVHS) currently

²⁴ New Automotive Innovation and Growth Team (NAIGT) (2016) ['An Independent Report on the Future of the Automotive Industry in the UK'](#)

²⁵ [Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders](#)

²⁶ [SI 2011 2056 - The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(Amendment\) \(England\) Order 2011](#)

²⁷ Zap Map (2018) ['Charging Point Statistics'](#)

provides grant funding of up to 75% towards the costs of installing charge points at domestic properties across the UK. Public restricted access up-stand facilities are more costly at £2,000 - £3,000.

Regulation 18 (first draft) consultation) - response

- 4.3.13 Following the first draft consultation it is recognised that there is an opportunity to make clear that policy 4.5 (Electric Vehicle Charging Points) also applies to public car parks, furthermore it was commented that the provision should not automatically exclude parish/town councils from the need to support this policy.

Recommendations for Policy

- 4.3.14 Local Plan policy should support provision of low carbon infrastructure including cycling and walking links and electric vehicle charging points where these conserve and enhance the National Park's Special Qualities.
- 4.3.15 The possibility of requiring a proportion of all new residential and commercial development to provide passive or active electric vehicle charging points should be investigated further through viability testing. As a minimum the Local Plan should encourage passive charging infrastructure to be installed in all new residential and employment development and in conjunction with new off-street public car parking.

5 Transport and Accessibility

5.1 Car Parks and On-street Car Parking

- 5.1.1 Dartmoor's dispersed settlement pattern and low density population inevitably leads to a significant reliance on the private car for personal mobility and as a consequence there is high demand for parking in many settlements.
- 5.1.2 Many parking issues in the National Park are associated with Dartmoor's historic settlements where road configurations and widths have remained little changed for decades or even centuries. Inevitably such settlements cannot always easily accommodate the level of parking demanded in the modern day, but their character is nevertheless fundamentally important to the National Park's special qualities.
- 5.1.3 There is no hard data on Dartmoor's parking resource and for the most part the Authority relies on consultation with communities to identify parking issues and opportunities for new development to help alleviate them. Resolving day to day on-street parking and highway safety issues is the responsibility of the Highway Authority (Devon County Council).
- 5.1.4 Car ownership levels provide a proxy which we can use to begin to understand the context. Nationally car ownership has increased year on year since the end of the Second World War,

except in 1991. Over the last twenty years the national vehicle stock has increased 42%, see Figure 5.

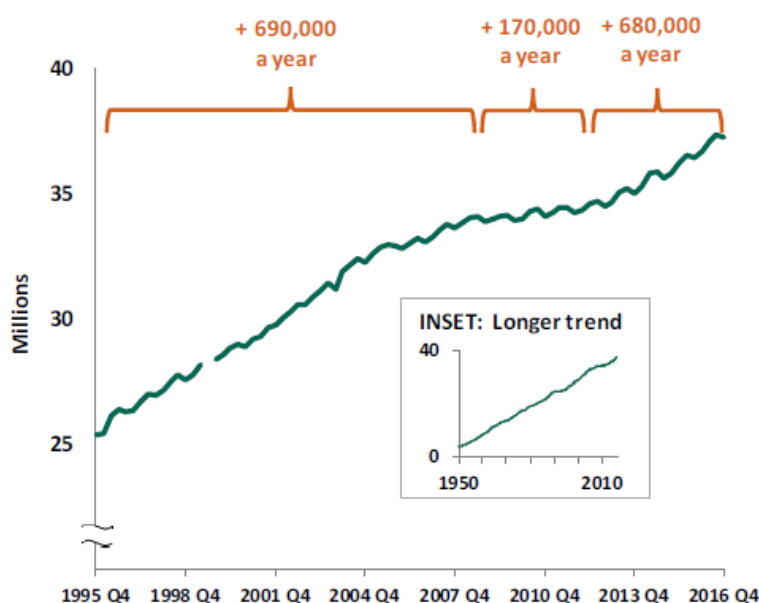


Figure 5 - Licensed Vehicles in Great Britain 1994-2016 (Source: Department of Transport)

- 5.1.5 Across the National Park car and van ownership has increased at a similar rate to the national average. Between 2001 and 2011 car and van ownership increased by 14.39% across the National Park and 15.06% across England and Wales. However within the National Park the uplift in ownership varies significantly. Figure 6 shows the increase in car and van ownership throughout the National Park between 2001 and 2011. The most significant areas of uplift are in the Teign Valley near Moretonhampstead, Christow and Dunsford, and north of Ashburton. Dartmoor Forest, Shaugh Prior and Chagford have also experienced increases greater than the national average. The reason for these increases isn't known, but it is likely caused by increased out-commuting trends experienced in these areas.
- 5.1.6 Some of the communities which have identified the need for additional car parking are in parishes which have experienced above average increases in car and van ownership, including Ashburton, Moretonhampstead, Christow and Dunsford. Notwithstanding this self-assessed need, many communities do not currently have sufficient access to funding to progress car park infrastructure.
- 5.1.7 On-street parking is the most efficient form of parking in terms of land take, however, in the National Park's small and historic settlements there are often recurring capacity issues. Reports of cars parking inconsiderately and blocking highway access for other road users and emergency vehicles are common. Heavy on-street parking can also have a significant impact on the historic character of the National Park's settlements. The Highway Authority does review parking restrictions in response to complaints, including through the creation of yellow lines where known pinch points exist. Although the Local Planning Authority does not have powers over on-street parking restrictions it is worth mentioning Historic England's design guidance²⁸. The guidance recommends avoiding double yellow lines in Conservation Areas or other sensitive areas, but when essential exploring more discrete alternatives such as making them primrose in colour.

²⁸ Historic England (2017) 'Streets for all 2 Parking restriction without yellow lines'
Transport Topic Paper September 2019

Regulation 18 (first draft) consultation) - response

- 5.1.8 Further to public consultation on the first draft Local Plan it is recommended that there is a clearer read-across between the car parking policy (Policy 4.5(1)) and that relating to flood risk/sustainable drainage (Policy 1.1(1)). As such there is an opportunity to insert a reference within policy (4.6(2)) public car parks) to a need for sustainable drainage systems.

Recommendations for policy

- 5.1.9 The need for car parks remains a 'hot issue' in the National Park's settlements and it is important for the Local Plan to consider this as much as it is able. The Local Plan should continue to have positive policies towards the development of car parks within and adjacent to settlements where there is an evidenced need from within the community or due to the recreational pressure from visitors throughout the year (not just summer peaks). Policy should require all car park development to relate well to existing settlements in design terms and conserve landscape character.
- 5.1.10 Further opportunities to pro-actively support the provision of car parks would be beneficial in facilitating delivery and should be explored. In particular the cross-subsidising of car park infrastructure through provision of open market housing development should be investigated within the Housing Topic Paper and viability assessment. Due to the difficulties many communities experience funding much needed car park development the requirement for electric vehicle charging points should not apply to Parish Councils or charitable, not for profit organisations, but should be encouraged.

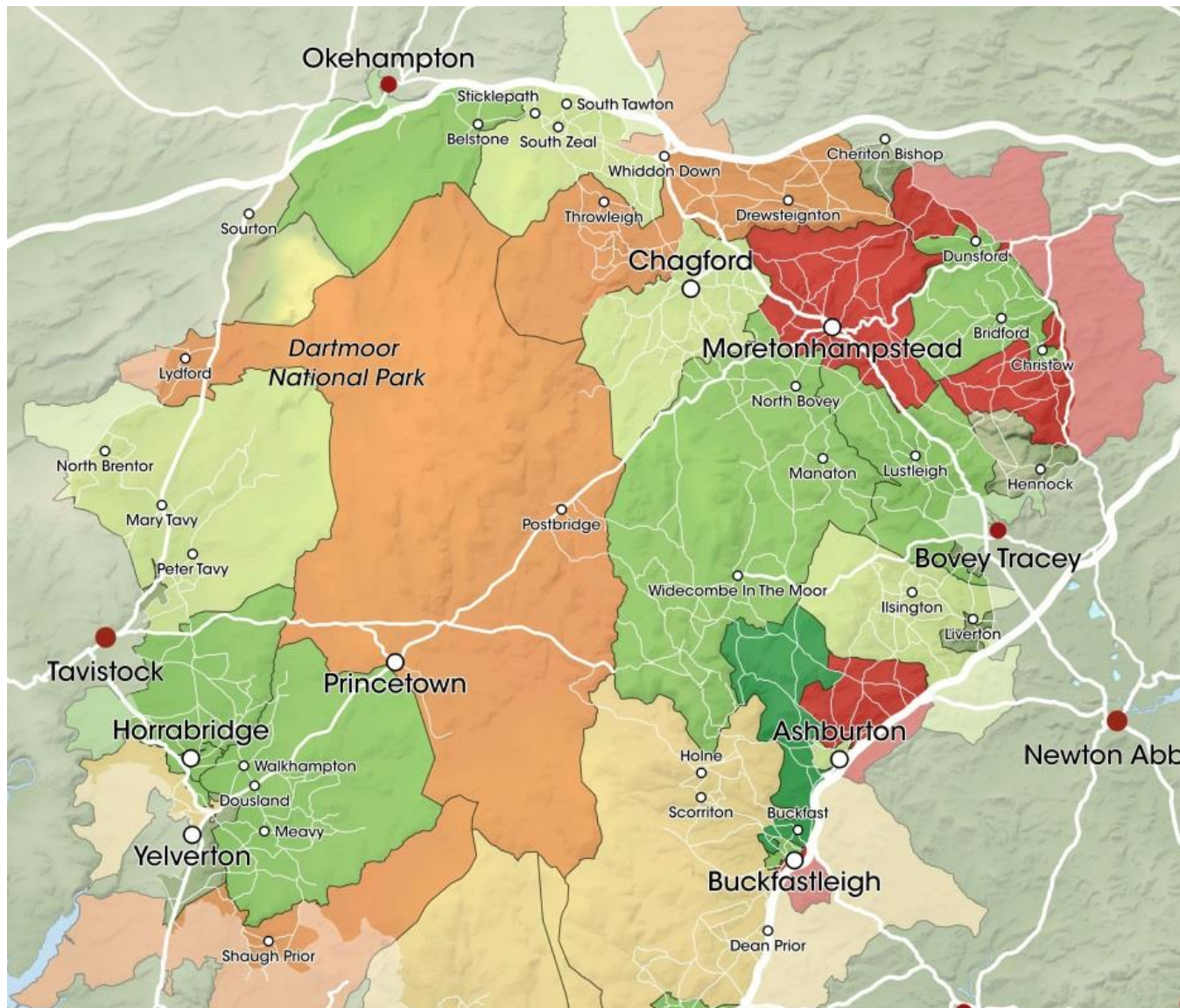


Figure 6 - Increase in car and van ownership between 2001 and 2011



Legend

Key Settlements

- Key Settlements Outside National Park
- Local Centres
- Rural Settlements

Increase in car & van ownership 2001-2011

- 3 - 5 %
- 5 - 10 %
- 10 - 15 %
- 15 - 20 %
- 20 - 25 %

Other Features

- National Park Boundary
- Road Network

5.2 *Transport Statements and Transport Assessments for New Development*

What are Transport Statements and Transport Assessments?

Transport Statements and Transport Assessments are used to assess the transport implications of a development and help ensure any impacts are mitigated and access to the site and local area remain safe for all people.

A **Transport Assessment** is a comprehensive and systematic process that sets out all transport issues relating to a proposed development and identifies what measures will be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme in relation to all forms of travel.

A **Transport Statement** is a 'lighter touch' evaluation of transport impacts and is used in cases where the anticipated transport impacts are limited and the level of assessment needs to be proportionate to the proposed development's potential impacts.

- 5.2.1 The NPPF paragraph 111 states that Transport Statements and Transport Assessments are necessary to support applications for all developments generating significant amounts of movement. NPPG (Reference ID: 42-009-20140306) states in determining whether a Transport Assessment or Statement will be needed for a proposed development local planning authorities should take into account the following considerations:
- the Transport Assessment and Statement policies (if any) of the Local Plan;
 - the scale of the proposed development and its potential for additional trip generation (smaller applications with limited impacts may not need a Transport Assessment or Statement);
 - existing intensity of transport use and the availability of public transport;
 - proximity to nearby environmental designations or sensitive areas;
 - impact on other priorities/strategies (such as promoting walking and cycling);
 - the cumulative impacts of multiple developments within a particular area; and
 - whether there are particular types of impacts around which to focus the Transport Assessment or Statement (eg assessing traffic generated at peak times).
- 5.2.2 In the National Park the decision to require Transport Statements or Transport Assessments to support planning applications is made on a case by case basis and informed by the above criteria.
- 5.2.3 Existing policy requires that applications for Major Development are supported by a Transport Assessment, but otherwise allows flexibility in requiring provision of this evidence.

Recommendations for Policy

- 5.2.4 Future policy should remain flexible in requiring submission of transport evidence so that decisions on the appropriate level of assessment can be made on a case by case basis, with regard to local circumstances, a development's potential impact and with advice from the Highway Authority. This allows the test for whether a proposal would generate 'significant' movements to be locally appropriate and if necessary lower where there is already limited road capacity or cumulative development has created issues which need to be addressed strategically.
- 5.2.5 Major Development is not generally appropriate in the National Park other than in exceptional circumstances and such development is highly likely to have significant and/or unique

transport implications in the National Park context. This justifies the retention of a clear policy expectation for such proposals to be supported by a transport assessment.

5.3 *Parking Provision for New Development*

- 5.3.1 The level of car parking provision which should be provided within new development is a matter for the Local Planning Authority to determine through the policies of the local plan.
- 5.3.2 The historic nature of Dartmoor's settlements and housing stock means car parking was not a principal consideration. Terrace houses without off-street parking and narrow streets with little capacity for on-street parking is a common occurrence across Dartmoor, as it is across Devon. In most circumstances there is little scope to adapt these houses and settlements to meet modern car parking standards.
- 5.3.3 Where off-street parking is insufficient, poorly laid out, inconvenient or perceived to be unsafe residents will generally prefer to park on-street. Problems occur when there is insufficient on-street capacity to meet demand. Poorly parked cars can often contribute to the dangers faced by other road users and can inhibit emergency vehicle access. In addition, randomly parked cars can be visually intrusive and impact on the character of the National Park's Conservation Areas.
- 5.3.4 It is imperative the layout of new development provides sufficient on-site parking to meet residents' requirements and ensures there is no unnecessary over-spill onto streets which are already under parking pressure.
- 5.3.5 The Authority's existing car parking standards are set out in Policies DMD40 and DMD41, see Table 7. These standards reflect the rural nature of the National Park and the dependency many have on the car.

Table 7 – DNPA existing parking standards (residential standards are minimum and non-residential standards are maximum)

Use	Spaces required	Operational servicing
Detached or semi-detached dwellings	2	n/a
Bedsits, flats and terraced dwellings	1.5	n/a
Shops and professional services (A1/A2)	1 / 14m ² 1 staff space / 100m ²	>1000 m ² Supermarkets 1 lorry space
Restaurants and cafes (A3/A4)	1 / 5.5m ² dining area 1 / 2m ² drinking area Staff parking 10% of above	1 lorry space
Business (B1)	1 / 28m ²	1 lorry space Light industry – 1 lorry space per 1000m ²
General Industrial (B2)	1 / 32.5m ²	1 lorry space / 100m ²
Storage and distribution (B8)	1 / 200m ²	
Hotels (C1)	1 / bedroom Restaurant and bar as above Staff parking 10% of above	1 lorry space

- 5.3.6 The approach of standardising minimum residential has broadly been appropriate over the last plan period and has ensured there is a clear expectation of provision whilst allowing flexibility. Although a weakness of the current residential standards is that they are not directly related to a dwelling's potential number of occupants (i.e. bedroom numbers). Setting maximum non-residential car parking standards has similarly been successful and ensured that the proportion of land set aside for parking in new non-residential development is limited

to reflect the character of the built environment. Parking associated with cafes and restaurants which have the potential to draw significant numbers of visitors can also present an issue for small settlements and minimum standards for these types of premises should be considered.

- 5.3.7 There are a variety of different residential standards applied by Local Authorities in the area, see these compared in Table 8. As expected rural Authorities with higher car dependence and therefore have higher parking standards.

Table 8 - Residential parking standards outside Dartmoor National Park

Local Authority	Residential Parking Standards	
Plymouth City Council	1 bed	1
	2 bed+	2
Exeter City Council	Per dwelling	1.5
South Hams District Council	Case by case and PPG13	
Mid Devon District Council	Per dwelling	1.7
West Devon Borough Council	Per dwelling	1.5
Teignbridge District Council	1 bed	1
	2-3 bed	2
	4+ bed	3
	Visitor	1 per 10 units
Devon County Council Highway Design Guidance	If within curtilage:	
	1-3 bed	2
	4+ bed	3
	If communal: per dwelling	
		1.5/2

- 5.3.8 The new Local Plan needs to ensure that the standards are applied flexibly in the following circumstances:
- where it is not possible to provide on-site parking (e.g. a conversion in a restricted town centre location) the availability and proximity of public car parking and the views of the Highway Authority should be taken into account to determine reasonably appropriate parking provision
 - lower car parking provision should be supported on developments with good access to sustainable transport, as a minimum this should include public transport with work-time connections, and walking and cycling links
 - higher car parking provision should only be supported where justified by robust and convincing evidence
 - higher levels of cycle parking should be encouraged
- 5.3.9 Just as important as the number of parking spaces provided, is the design of parking spaces and their relationship with the surrounding environment. The allocation of too much land for parking provision is just as undesirable as too little land. The design of parking spaces should be informed by and closely follow the design standards set out in Devon County Council's Design Guide²⁹.
- 5.3.10 The risk of vandalism and theft increases the further the vehicle is from the dwelling, therefore layouts which include parking within the curtilage of dwellings, or communal parking

²⁹ Devon County Council (1996) '[Highways in Residential and Commercial Estates](#)'
Transport Topic Paper September 2019

immediately outside dwellings should be preferred. In all circumstances parked cars should be visible from a habitable room window.

Recommendations for Policy

- 5.3.11 The current approach of adopting local parking standards should be continued so that there is a clear benchmark expected of future development. Such a standard should be directly related to the potential number of occupants within a proposed dwelling. In review of all available evidence it is proposed the following residential parking standards be pursued in the new local plan:

Dwelling Size	Parking Standard*
1 bedroom	1
2-3 bedrooms	2
4+ bedrooms	3

* Excluding on-street visitor parking at 1 space for 10 dwellings.

- 5.3.12 Maximum commercial parking standards have successfully allowed parking standards to be applied flexibly in response to local circumstances and ensure parking provision is modest and appropriate for the National Park. Such an approach should be continued, although opportunities to simplify the current standards should be taken and flexibility should be allowed where there is robust justification within a Transport Assessment.
- 5.3.13 Policy should allow for the standards to be applied flexibly with regard to the local circumstances set out in 5.3.8.

5.4 Access onto the Highway

- 5.4.1 The way in which domestic, commercial or agricultural vehicles access the highway is an important design feature across the Park both in terms of highway safety and landscape character.
- 5.4.2 Small and modest field accesses, normally no more than 3.5m wide and with weathered timber or metal gates, providing access to fields and rural properties are common throughout the National Park. They form part of the winding lanes enclosed by thick hedgerows which are such an important feature of the National Park's tranquil and rural character³⁰. Accesses and hedgebanks can be centuries old and can include historic features such as granite gateposts. Hedgebanks can also support important habitats and species, including ancient and veteran trees. The prevalence of the modest field access on Dartmoor demands it should not be overlooked when considering development proposals.
- 5.4.3 Planning applications requesting increases to the width of rural accesses, improvements to drainage and access ramps are common to accommodate larger modern vehicles and farm machinery. In these circumstances the role of the planning system is to support improvements which conserve the National Park's tranquil and rural landscape character and maintain highway safety.

Recommendations for Policy

- 5.4.4 The Authority's existing policy on highway access, Policy DMD38, has proved robust for the above purposes and has been tested successfully at appeal. The policy should therefore be

³⁰ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[Landscape Character Assessment](#)'
Transport Topic Paper September 2019

broadly retained although opportunities to incorporate it into a broader transport policy should be investigated.

5.5 *Signs and Advertisements*

- 5.5.1 The entire National Park is designated as an Area of Special Control for Advertisements because it is considered its scenic, historical, architectural and cultural are so significant that a stricter degree of advertisement control is justified in order to conserve visual amenity. The designation imposes stricter limits on the permitted height and size of advertisements which are deemed to have consent in the National Park (see [Government Advertisement Regulation Guidance](#)³¹). The designation allows the Authority to give express consent for:
- notices about local events or activities;
 - advance or directional signs which are reasonably required;
 - an advertisement needed for public safety reasons; and
 - an advertisement in any of the deemed consent classes if it is considered reasonable for the normal limits on that class to be exceeded.
- 5.5.2 The Authority's existing policy DMD36 in combination with guidance in the Design Guide³² have proven adequate for determination of applications for express advertisement consent for on-site advertisements.
- 5.5.3 The Authority's approach to advance signs, set out in Policy DMD37, only allows advance signage for businesses with direct access onto a county road or tourist businesses without direct access onto the route network. Applying this policy has been problematic as it favours certain businesses, either tourist businesses or those close to county roads, without justification.
- 5.5.4 The proliferation of signage is an on-going issue in the National Park, particularly on A and B roads (county roads). Advance signage can have a significant impact on the National Park's rural and tranquil character, both in isolation and cumulatively. The increased pressure for signage is identified as a force for change in the 2017 Landscape Character Assessment³³. When lit advance signs can also contribute to light pollution.
- 5.5.5 With permitted development rights being extended to redundant modern and traditional agricultural buildings allowing change of use to various commercial uses, it is likely that isolated businesses could become more prevalent over the next plan period. Alongside this it is reasonable to assume the demand for advance signage will also increase.
- 5.5.6 Advance signage in the form of brown tourist signs can be applied for via the Highway Authority and have significantly less harm than a bespoke sign.

Recommendations for Policy

- 5.5.7 In view of the significant harm advance signage can cause to the rural character and tranquillity of the National Park it is recommended that Local Plan policy considers supporting only high quality on-site signage for businesses which cannot easily be seen from the route

³¹ Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) '[Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers](#)'

³² Dartmoor National Park Authority (2011) '[Dartmoor National Park Design Guide](#)'

³³ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2017) '[Landscape Character Assessment](#)'

network. In such an approach off-site advance signage would only be supported where they are essential for the needs of highway safety.

5.5.8 The economic impact of this approach will be considered further in the Economy Topic Paper.

5.6 Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

5.6.1 The Public Right of Way (PRoW) network supports a range of activities and sustainable transport connections which support the healthiness, wellbeing and sustainability of the National Park's communities. Footpaths and bridleways provide a principal means by which many people access and experience the National Park. As well as being one of the key ways people experience the National Park's Special Qualities, they are a Special Quality in themselves and are referenced as such in the National Park Management Plan³⁴.

5.6.2 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF requires that planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

5.6.3 Current planning policy DMD42 protects PRoW open to vehicles from increases in vehicular traffic which would be to the detriment of its users. The policy is functional, although not well used. It is also arguable that current policy does not go far enough to ensure that development in close proximity to the PRoW network in the open countryside has special regard to its impact on views and the National Park's other Special Qualities, particularly landscape character, tranquillity and dark night skies.

5.6.4 In the open countryside isolated agricultural field shelters, equestrian stables and associated paraphernalia and visual clutter will most likely have the potential to impact on the tranquil and rural character of the PRoW network. Within and adjoining settlements the PRoW network may still have valuable views which are worthy of protection.

5.6.5 Throughout the National Park new development should also be encouraged to improve the PRoW network, particularly by improving connectivity and extending existing provision. There are significant opportunities through new development to future proof pedestrian permeability, and provide new connections which enable and encourage walkable communities and development. Providing safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle connections which follow desire lines has the opportunity to reduce in particular, short journeys made by car.

5.6.6 Devon County Council 'Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy (2015)'³⁵ recognises:

"Investing in cycling extends the travel options available to people for journeys to work, school, business and shopping purposes. Our walking and cycle network supports our economy and enables people to enjoy being active for leisure and sport. Cycling supports the local economy in urban and rural areas; supports local businesses and property values by reducing vehicular traffic and congestion; it boosts the economic productivity of a healthy and

³⁴ Dartmoor National Park Authority (2014) '[Your Dartmoor – National Park Management Plan 2014 – 2019](#)'

³⁵ Devon County Council (2015)
<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/documents/s11335/Cycling%20and%20multi-use%20trail%20network%20strategy.pdf>

satisfied workforce, and enables disadvantaged groups to gain access to training and employment opportunities”

- 5.6.7 DNPA should recognise opportunities for joint working both through the local plan and in its own actions, continuing the positive approach to date and the success stories of multi-use trails and long distance routes funded and implemented within the National Park.

Recommendations for Policy

- 5.6.8 In reviewing the Local Plan, consideration should be given to furthering the protection given to the PRoW network and ensuring its character and views are not harmed by development and opportunities to enhance the network are taken. Policy should require that Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments consider the PRoW network as a sensitive receptor.
- 5.6.9 Enhancement of the PRoW network, including improved connectivity, should form part of the Local Plan's design principles. In particular new connections and opportunities should be taken to ensure that new development leave space for pedestrian and cycle connectivity, providing permeable development which encourages walking and cycling.
- 5.6.10 Where specific opportunities exist to provide pedestrian/cycle connections between new development schemes allocated in the Local Plan, these should be stated within the allocation. Specific examples/opportunities may include, subject to their identification:
- Thompson's, Moretonhampstead – connection with the Wray Valley Trail
 - Crannafords,, Chagford – connection between the town centre and the employment site
 - Yelverton, Binkham Hill – linkage with Woodman's Corner
 - Lower Green/Palstone Lane, South Brent – linkages between successive estate development
 - New Park, Horrabridge – linkage with recreation ground
 - Axminster spinning works, Buckfast – connection between the Abbey, town, and railway, via the river