

Local Plan 2026

Scoping Consultation



What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan sets out the policies used to determine planning applications. It guides the scale, type and location of development in the National Park and shapes how development should be designed. Its purpose is to balance the needs of local communities with the conservation and enhancement of this nationally important landscape.

Why review the Local Plan?

We are legally required to review the Local Plan every five years to ensure its policies are effective. Since adoption, national planning policy has evolved, with a greater focus on housing delivery.

The Government is also introducing National Development Management Policies (NDMPs), which will carry the same weight as local policies. As these are not yet finalised, their full implications are unclear and will be considered later in the plan making process. It is likely the new Local Plan will contain fewer policies, avoiding duplication of national requirements.

What are we consulting on?

This scoping consultation seeks your views on:

- Developing the Local Plan vision
- Scope and content of policies
- How we engage with you

What happens next?

Your views will play an important role in shaping the preparation of the Local Plan. By sharing your ideas and priorities, you will help us identify which policies need to be reviewed, what new issues the new Local Plan should address, and what evidence is needed to support its development.

Following this consultation, we will publish a Consultation Statement explaining what we heard and how your feedback has influenced the preparation of the Local Plan 2026 and our Engagement Strategy. This will be published ahead of the next stage of consultation in June 2027.

For an overview of the key stages of the local plan preparation and timings click [here](#).

Stay involved

At the end of the survey there is the opportunity to sign up for further updates.

Developing the Local Plan vision

We already have a collective vision for Dartmoor National Park, developed through public consultation, stakeholder engagement and collaboration with partners. It sets a shared direction for everyone who helps shape Dartmoor's future, looking ahead to 2045. This vision will provide the foundation for the new Local Plan, guiding the changes that planning policy seeks to deliver.

To deliver the Vision for Dartmoor, partners have identified seven key themes that describe the changes they want to see by 2045. Not all these changes can be delivered directly through planning policy. The Local Plan can influence where development happens, how places are designed, how communities grow, and how the National Park responds to challenges such as climate change, housing needs and nature recovery.

We want to hear your views on which key themes and changes the Local Plan should focus on. Should it address all seven themes equally? Are there particular types of development that should be encouraged to help deliver the vision?

To help inform this discussion, we have prepared a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis based on evidence gathered through the [State of the Park Report](#), [Local Plan monitoring](#), and [workshops](#) held during the development of the Partnership Plan.

THE VISION FOR DARTMOOR

Dartmoor is a thriving and resilient landscape of moors and valleys, where nature, farming, communities and heritage flourish - where everyone feels welcome to live, work or visit.



The seven key themes

A Better Response to Climate Change

Dartmoor is a net carbon sink, playing a leading role in responding to climate change. Peatland restoration, woodland management and creation, and sustainable land and farming practices store carbon, water and strengthen soils and ecosystems. Climate action is embedded across all activities, with landscapes, habitats, communities and infrastructure adapting to a changing climate and strengthening resilience for nature, communities and future generations.

Question 1: Which parts of this theme should the new Local Plan focus on, and what should the Local Plan do to become more resilient to climate impacts?



Better For The Next Generation

Dartmoor is a place where the next generation can live, work, explore, and care for a climate-resilient landscape. They are supported by reliable services, housing, and viable jobs and career opportunities that enable them to build their lives locally. Young people are empowered to shape and benefit from a resilient future for the National Park.

Question 2: How should the new Local Plan respond to the “Better for the Next Generation” theme?



Better For Nature And Natural Beauty

Dartmoor's landscapes function as a rich, diverse and resilient living system, enabling nature to recover and thrive. Natural processes are enhanced and allowed to function at scale, shaping the landscape through healthy water, soils, vegetation and wildlife interactions. Habitats are protected, regenerated and reconnected so nature can flourish and adapt in a changing climate. The diversity and abundance of wildlife is increasing across a mosaic of dynamic habitats, supporting healthy ecosystems for future generations.

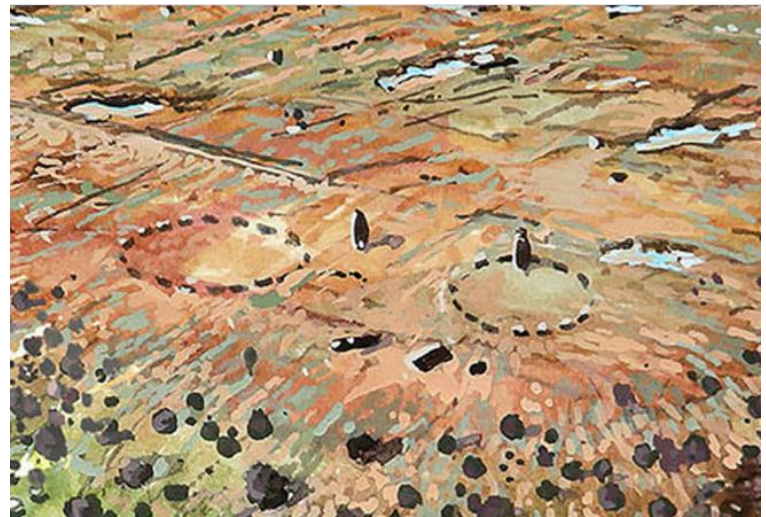
Question 3: Which parts of the “Better for Nature and Natural Beauty” theme should the new Local Plan prioritise, and what should planning policy do to help nature recover, habitat reconnect and Dartmoor’s distinctive natural beauty be conserved and enhanced?



Better For Cultural Heritage

Dartmoor's internationally important cultural heritage is protected, in good condition, and valued by local communities, visitors, and stakeholders. It is widely understood, with continued research deepening knowledge, appreciation, and engagement. The historic environment is conserved as part of a wider living landscape, where cultural and natural heritage are interdependent and thrive together. Traditional skills that sustain this heritage are recognised, supported, and passed on to future generations.

Question 4: Which parts of the “Better for Cultural Heritage” theme should the new Local Plan prioritise, and what should planning policy do to help conserve, enhance and better understand Dartmoor’s historic environment and cultural heritage?



Better For Farming And Forestry

Farming and forestry systems produce healthy food and timber while sustaining a high-quality natural environment and adapting to climate change. They store carbon, remain economically viable, and deliver a wide range of public goods. They also support opportunities for farming succession and new entrants. In doing so, they underpin Dartmoor's cultural heritage and landscape, biodiversity, resilient rural communities, and strong connections between people and the land.

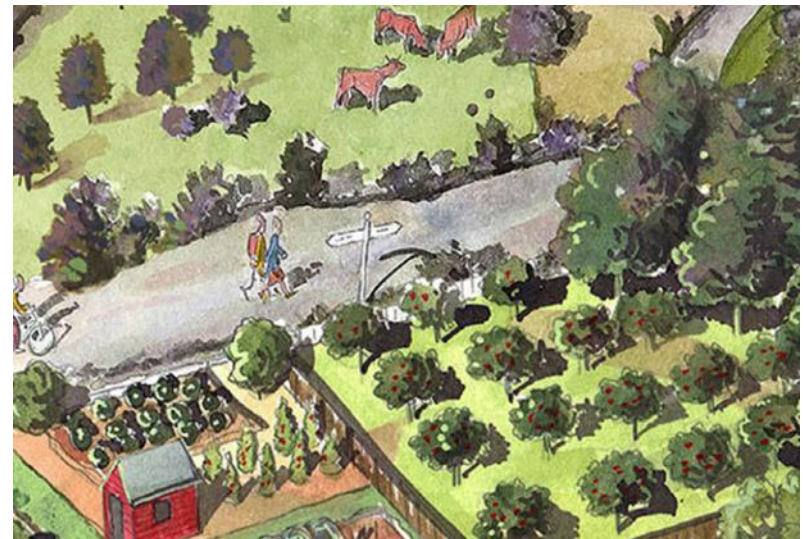
Question 5: Which parts of the “Better for Farming and Forestry” theme, should the new Local Plan prioritise, and what should planning policy do to support viable farming and forestry, while helping to deliver nature recovery, climate resilience, carbon storage, landscape management?



Better For People

Dartmoor's diverse and unique landscape is respected as an important resource for recreation and leisure, enabling people from all backgrounds and ages to access and enjoy the National Park and benefit from its special qualities. Dartmoor is valued and understood beyond its boundary as well as within it. People take part in activities that respect Dartmoor's character and support their health and wellbeing. Everyone can find peace and tranquillity, with some areas remaining quiet as sanctuaries for nature, and people respect the environment, local communities and each other.

Question 6: Which parts of the “Better for People” theme, should the new Local Plan prioritise, and what should the new Local Plan do to help people enjoy and understand Dartmoor, improve health and wellbeing, and respect its landscape, wildlife and communities?



Better For Business And Communities

Dartmoor's communities are thriving and engaged in caring for the National Park, with access to affordable housing, essential services, facilities and sustainable travel options. New development is of the highest quality, energy efficient and adapted to climate change, conserving and enhancing natural and heritage assets. Dartmoor's diverse and resilient economy supports thriving rural businesses across traditional and emerging sectors, attracting investment into the area and sustaining long-term prosperity in line with its valued natural and cultural assets.

Question 7: Which parts of the “Better for People” theme should the new Local Plan prioritise, and what should planning policy do to support communities, businesses, services and sustainable travel options whilst protecting the National Park’s special qualities?



Scope and Content of the Local Plan

Introduction

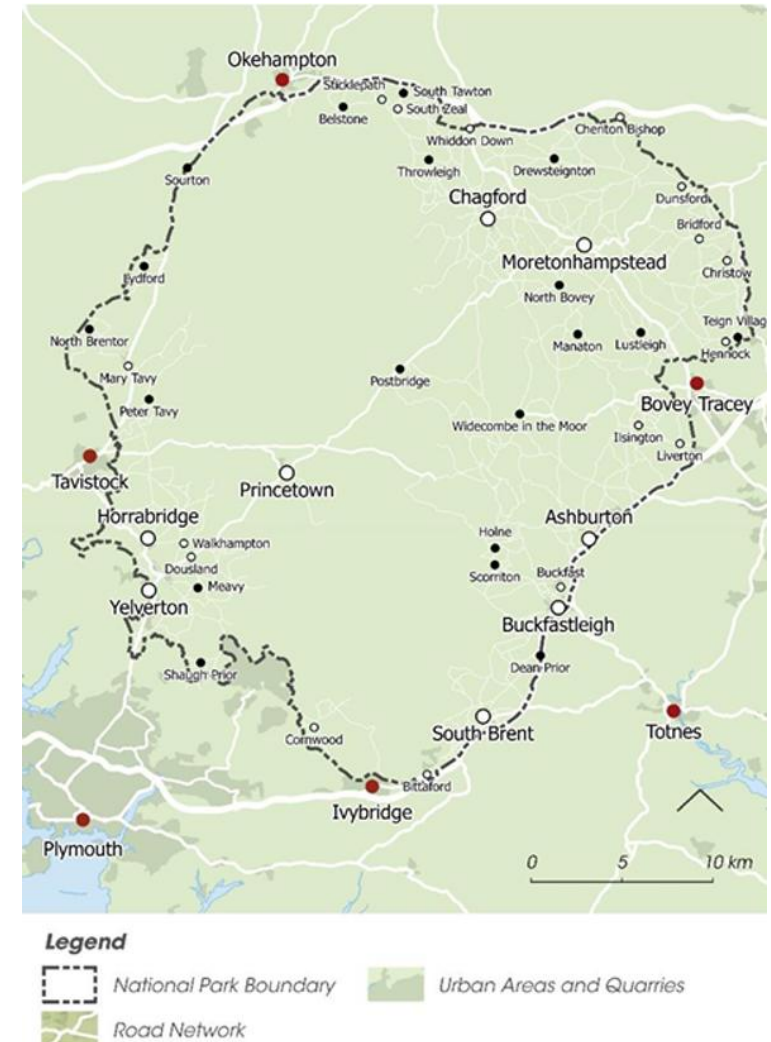
National policy sets a framework for the topics that should be covered in a Local Plan including: planning for a range of housing needs, addressing infrastructure requirements, provision of land for business and employment, supporting town centres, promoting healthy environments, mitigating and adapting to climate change, managing flood risk and coastal change, promoting sustainable transport, achieving well-designed places, and conserving and enhancing natural and historic environments. Our current Local Plan covers these topics, and we'd like to hear your views on what you think is currently working well, where the Local Plan could do more and any other comments.

To help you comment, we have provided a brief overview of each chapter setting out the types of matters that are considered.

Spatial Strategy

Development within the National Park is focused on protecting its Special Qualities while meeting the needs of local communities. Priority is given to reusing brownfield land and existing buildings, with major development permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Housing, employment and infrastructure growth is directed to the most sustainable settlements, with the largest share taking place in Local Centres, smaller scale development in Rural Settlements to meet local needs and only limited affordable housing or small business growth in Villages and Hamlets. Outside these settlements, development is generally restricted to supporting farming, forestry and other rural land-based enterprises where a countryside location is essential. All new development must achieve high standards of design, accessibility and sustainability, be informed by a thorough understanding of its site and surroundings and protect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

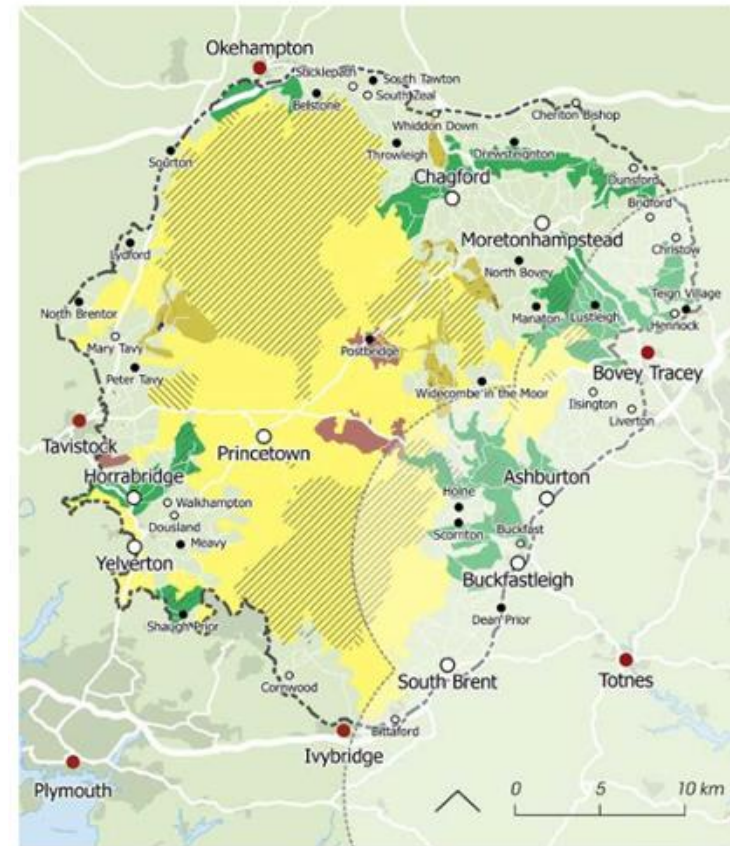
Question 8: How well does the current spatial strategy guide the right type of development to the right places in Dartmoor, and what changes, if any, should be considered in the new Local Plan?



Environment

Dartmoor National Park Authority aims to ensure that all new development conserves and enhances the National Park's natural, historic, and cultural environment. Development should meet high standards of environmental responsibility, sustainability, and innovation as well as minimise the impact on and adapt to climate change. It should protect and strengthen habitats, species, ecological networks, and geodiversity along with conserving or enhancing Dartmoor's distinctive landscape character, tranquillity, and dark night skies. Proposals affecting heritage assets must respect their significance, safeguard the historic environment, and, where possible, deliver positive improvements that enhance cultural heritage, support heritage at risk, and promote public understanding and enjoyment.

Question 9: How well do the current environment policies prioritise nature, alongside protecting and enhancing Dartmoor's natural, historic and cultural environment, and what, if anything, should the new Local Plan do differently or give greater priority to ?



Map 2.1 Designated Wildlife Sites and Key Wildlife Areas

Legend

Key Wildlife Areas

- Moorland
- Woodland
- Rhos Pasture
- Wet Woodland
- Dry Grassland

Designated Wildlife Sites

- SAC and SSSI
- SSSI only
- South Hams SAC Greater Horseshoe Bat Consultation Zone

Key Settlements

- Local Centres
- Rural Settlements
- Villages and Hamlets
- Outside National Park

Other Features

- Road Network
- Urban Areas and Quarries
- National Park Boundary

Housing

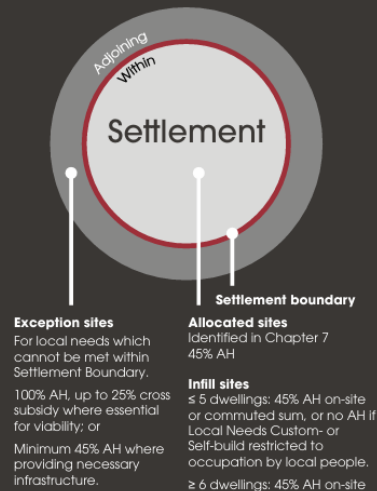
Dartmoor National Park's housing strategy prioritises the delivery of affordable, sustainable and well-designed homes that meet the needs of local people as demonstrated by either a current housing needs assessment or evidence from the Housing Register. Policies aim to provide a mix of house types, sizes, and tenures to support younger families, enable older residents to remain in their communities, and ensure homes are accessible, adaptable and sustainable. The current strategy provides for 65 new homes each year and follows the Park's spatial strategy. Development is focused in Local Centres and Rural Settlements and should comprise 45% affordable housing or local needs custom and self-build. Smaller-scale development, if appropriate, is supported in Villages and Hamlets and should deliver 100% affordable housing or local needs custom and self-build. New housing in the open countryside is generally limited to supporting farming, forestry, and other rural enterprises with a need for worker housing. Extensions or replacement homes are carefully controlled to preserve the availability of smaller, more affordable housing.

Question 10: How well do the current housing policies meet the needs of Dartmoor's communities, and what changes, if any, are needed to support affordable, sustainable and locally needed homes?

Housing Strategy Summary Diagram

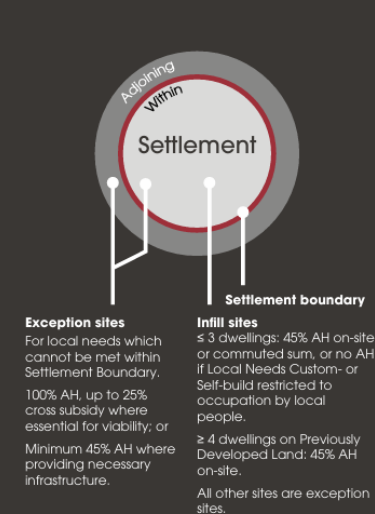
Local Centres

Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Chagford, Horrabridge, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, South Brent, Yelverton



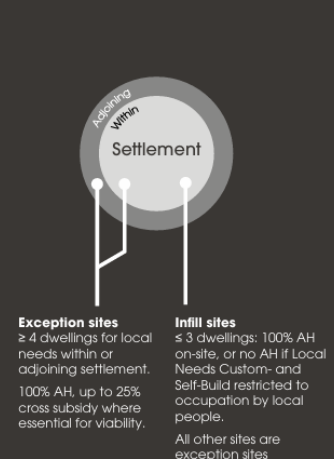
Rural Settlements

Bittaford, Bridford, Buckfast, Cheriton Cross / Bishop, Christow, Cornwood, Dousland, Dunsford, Hennock, Ilington, Liverton, Mary Tavy, South Zeal, Sticklepath, Walkhampton, Whiddon Down



Villages and Hamlets

Belstone, Dean Prior, Drewsteignton, Holne, Lustleigh, Lydford, Manaton, Meavy, North Bovey, North Brentor, Peter Tavy, Postbridge, Scorriton, Shaugh Prior, Sourton, South Tawton, Throwleigh, Widecombe-in-the-Moor



Communities, Services and Infrastructure

The current Local Plan supports new services and facilities, including for transport, education, health, community, culture, sport and recreation purposes, within classified settlements. Proposals that would result in the loss of valued community services, facilities, or infrastructure will be resisted.

Opportunities for new sustainable transport networks including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle infrastructure, are supported where they meet the needs of the National Park.

New development should be located to maximise the use of sustainable transport to mitigate climate impacts and should contribute to necessary infrastructure, provide appropriate parking, minimise congestion and include measures to mitigate any increased recreational pressure on Dartmoor.



Question 11: How well do the current policies support Dartmoor's communities, services and infrastructure, and what changes, if any, are needed to help communities remain sustainable, connected and resilient?

Economy

Non-residential business and tourism development is supported within and adjoining Local Centres and Rural Settlements where it is of an appropriate scale and use. In Villages, Hamlets, and the open countryside, the focus is on expanding existing businesses, reusing redundant buildings, supporting farm diversification, and enabling low-impact enterprises that promote the quiet enjoyment and understanding of the National Park. New tourist accommodation should be located in Local Centres and Rural Settlements, with countryside provision limited to the conversion of suitable historic buildings close to existing tourist services. Development for agricultural, forestry, and other land-based businesses is supported where it meets a demonstrated need, conserves or enhances the National Park's Special Qualities, and respects its environment. Cultural and artistic proposals that contribute to the National Park's purposes are also supported.

Question 12: How well do the current economy policies support a resilient, sustainable and locally distinctive Dartmoor economy, and what changes, if any, are needed in the new Local Plan?

Economic Strategy Summary Diagram

Local Centres

Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Chagford, Horrabridge, Moretonhampstead, Princetown, South Brent, Yelverton



Allocated sites
Identified in Chapter 7

Business and tourism development
New businesses and expansion of existing

Town centre
Change of use between Class A1-4 uses allowed.
The last general store, shop or public house is protected.

New town centre uses >150m² should be located in the town centre first.

Rural Settlements

Bittaford, Bridford, Buckfast, Cheriton Cross / Bishop, Christow, Cornwood, Dousland, Dunsford, Henneck, Ilington, Liverton, Mary Tavy, South Zeal, Sticklepath, Walkhampton, Whiddon Down



Business and tourism development
New businesses and expansion of existing

Town centre
Protection of the last general store, shop or public house.

New town centre uses >150m² should be located in the town centre first.

Villages and Hamlets

Belstone, Dean Prior, Drewsteignton, Holne, Lustleigh, Lydford, Manaton, Meavy, North Bovey, North Brentor, Peter Tavy, Postbridge, Scrimton, Shaugh Prior, Saurton, South Tawton, Throwleigh, Widecombe-in-the-Moor



Business and tourism development
Expansion of existing businesses.

New businesses only through conversion of redundant buildings, suitable historic buildings preferred.

Minerals, Waste and Energy

Where possible, identified minerals and waste needs should be met outside the National Park. The Local Plan allows mineral extraction if development:

- Impacts upon the environment and communities are minimised
- It provides materials for distinctive character conservation
- A specific mineral cannot be found elsewhere

All development within the National Park should minimise waste generation during both construction and operation, with most waste processing and management taking place outside the National Park. However, small-scale community-based reuse, recycling and composting facilities will be supported where they are located within or adjacent to the communities they serve and primarily manage locally generated waste.

Renewable development will be encouraged where it is not Major Development and it does not harm Dartmoor's Special Qualities or environment.

Question 13: How well do the minerals, waste and energy policies minimise the impact of minerals operations, reduce waste and support renewable energy, and what changes, if any, are needed in the new Local Plan?



Towns, Villages and Development Sites

The Local Plan identifies the most appropriate locations for new housing and employment to promote a sustainable pattern of development. This chapter outlines settlement boundaries for Local Centres and Rural Settlements which are used to categorise whether development sites are within, adjoining or outside a settlement. Sites for housing and employment development are allocated in Local Centres with site-specific requirements provided for each. Allocations include sites at Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Chagford, Horrabridge, Moretonhampstead, South Brent and Yelverton, and a redevelopment opportunity in Mary Tavy, are identified to meet a local need for affordable housing. The chapter is informed by settlement profiles which identify housing and infrastructure needs, and available facilities and services. These are published [online](#).

Question 14: How well do the current settlement boundaries and site allocations support sustainable development in Dartmoor's towns and villages?

How to identify land

This graphic shows how land around settlements is identified as within, adjoining or in the open countryside.



How we engage with you

Question 15: How and where can we best reach people about the new Local Plan? Please score the effectiveness of each method according to your preference (1 being your most preferred and 8 your least preferred).

- Emails/ Newsletter
- Letters
- Social media
- Videos
- Dartmoor National Park website
- Webinars
- Drop in Events:
 - Parke
 - Community centres / village halls
- Dedicated workshop events:
 - Parke
 - Community centres / village halls
- Other (please specify)

Question 16: Do you have anything else to add on how we can involve you throughout the Local Plan preparation process?

Question 17: Do you have any comments on how this consultation has been publicised?

About You

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide the organisation name and contact details. This allows us to effectively provide an audit trail of how we have engaged with statutory consultees and allows us to contact you for further clarification or on-going dialogue where needed.

Question 18: Name of organisation (if applicable):

Question 19: Email address for organisation:

Question 20: In the new system the right to speak at the Local Plan Examination is extended to anyone who submits a response at any consultation stage. If you may want to speak, please ensure you complete this question. Do you wish to be notified as the Local Plan progresses through the following stages? Please tick all that apply:

- consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence
- the publication of observations or advice from the Planning Inspectorate after Gateway 2
- the consultation on the proposed local plan
- the submission of the proposed local plan for independent examination
- when details of the independent examination are available
- if the independent examination is paused for further work
- if additional documents for the independent examination are published
- the publication of the recommendations and reasons of the independent examiner
- the adoption or approval of the local plan

Question 21: Your name and address or email to be notified (if applicable)

The following questions are non-mandatory but help us to better understand how well we are engaging with our communities and how we can improve.

Question 22: Which of the following best describes your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Another gender identity
- Prefer not to say

Question 23: Which age group are you in?

- under 18 years old
- 18 -25 years
- 26-45 years
- 46-65 years
- 66-85 years
- 86 years +
- Prefer not to say

Question 24: Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

- White
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

About You

Question 25: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

The Equality Act (2010) defines a disability as "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Question 26: Which of the following best describes your connection to Dartmoor National Park?

- I live in Dartmoor National Park
- I work in Dartmoor National Park
- I visit Dartmoor National Park
- Prefer not to say

Question 27: Your postcode:

Data Protection Statement

Dartmoor National Park Authority must comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). This means that the Authority has a duty of care towards the personal data that it collects and uses. The data collected will only be used for the purpose of informing the Authority of views on the draft planning policy documents, for contacting you in regard to your comments on the draft planning policy documents or updating you on the progress of the Local Plan. Please view our [Forward Planning Privacy Notice](#) for more details.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey

Responses to this consultation should be received no later than **Sunday 23rd August 2026**. Responses can be submitted by email to forwardplanning@dartmoor.gov.uk

Alternatively, responses can be posted to: Dartmoor National Park Authority, Parke, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 9JQ

Please ensure you reference each question number in your response.