



# **PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY 2018 TO INFORM THE REVIEW OF 'YOUR DARTMOOR' – THE NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN**



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**‘YOUR DARTMOOR’ PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY RESULTS**  
**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**  
**March 2019**

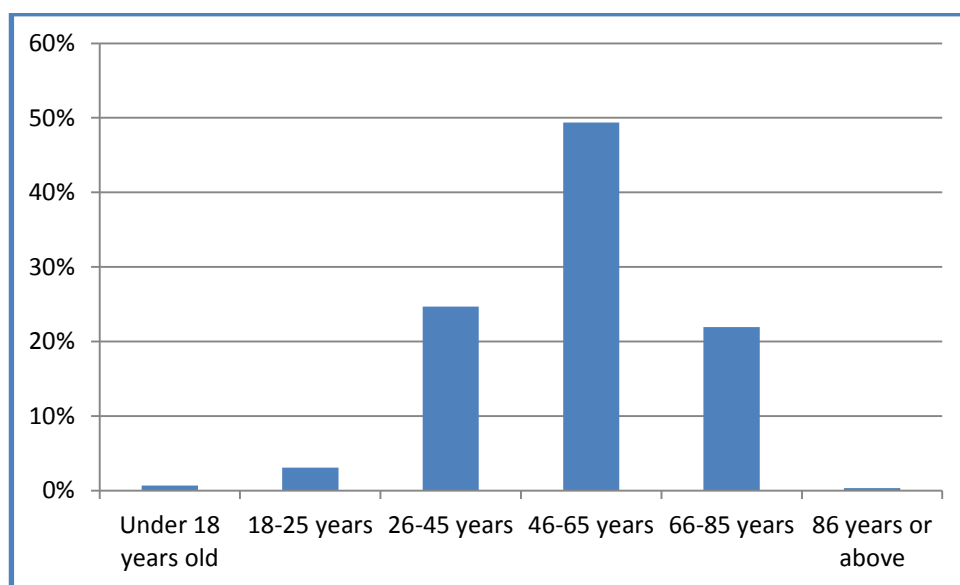
**1. Background to the Management Plan Review**

- 1.1. Under section 66(1) of the Environment Act 1995 each National Park Authority (NPA) is required to prepare and publish a National Park Management Plan (Management Plan) for its Park and review it every five years. Although preparation of the Management Plan is the prime responsibility of the NPA, its preparation needs actively to engage and gain support of all key stakeholders who will assist in its delivery. The current Management Plan: ‘*Your Dartmoor*’ was ‘approved’ by the Authority in November 2013 and runs until 2019.
- 1.2. A review of the Management Plan is underway, with the initial focus on developing a shared Vision for the future of Dartmoor. Between June and November 2018, a series of seven Dartmoor Debates were held in order to engage with a wide range of key partners and organisations, who collectively form the ‘communities of interest’ for Dartmoor. These included five themed Debates, covering:
- **Dartmoor’s future economy**
  - **Cultural heritage**
  - **The future of farming and forestry on Dartmoor**
  - **Understanding and enjoyment**
  - **Natural environment**
- 1.3. Two further cross-cutting Debates were also held:
- **Next Generation**
  - **DNPA members and staff**
- 1.4. A total of around 180 people from 85 different organisations, groups and businesses attended the Dartmoor Debates. There was a high level of engagement at the Debates with good conversations amongst the participants, and positive feedback.

**2. Public Opinion Survey**

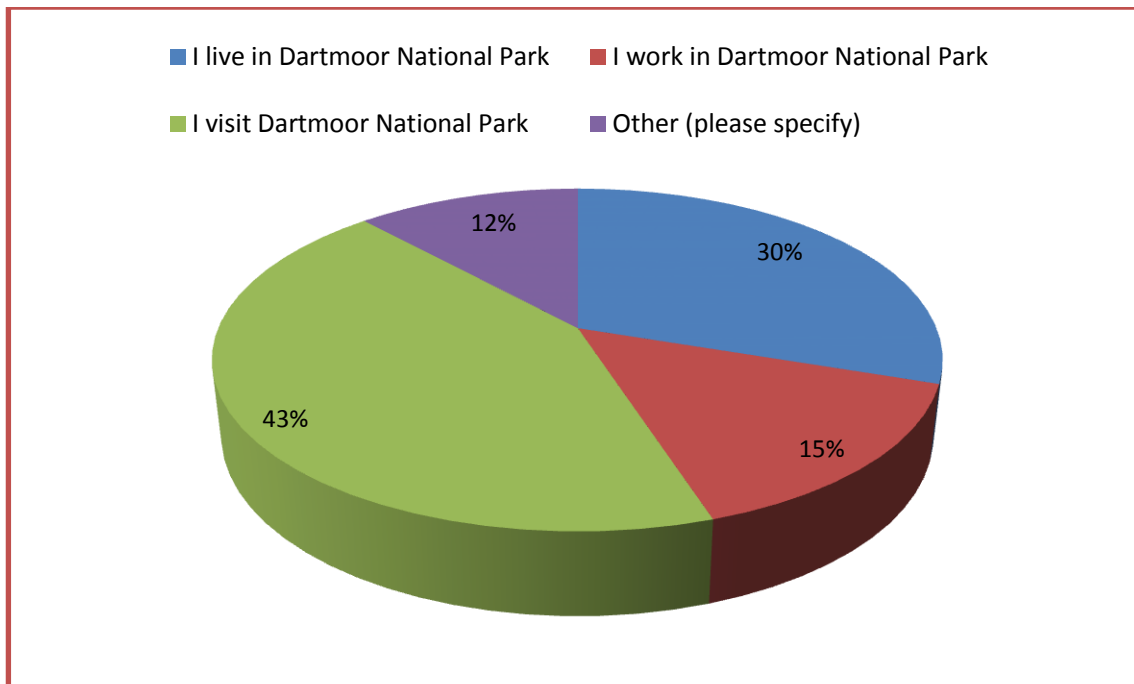
- 2.1. The Dartmoor Debates were aimed at working with the communities of interest who will be key to helping deliver the Management Plan. In order to gather views more generally from local communities, National Park users and others with an interest in the future of Dartmoor, a public opinion survey was also undertaken. The survey questions are given in **Appendix 1**

- 2.2. The survey ran from 25 October to 30 November 2018. It was widely publicised via social media, at the Dartmoor Debates, and with Parish and Town Councils. Hard copies were available at the National Park Centres and DNPA Outreach van. **A total of 654 responses were received.**
- 2.3. The majority of respondents were over 45 years old, although a reasonable proportion (29%) were aged 45 or under.
- 2.4. A separate survey was carried out with schools visiting the National Park, but only 18 responses were received and the results of these surveys are not included here.



**Figure 1: Age range of people responding to the survey**

- 2.5. A high proportion of respondents who provided information about themselves live in and/or work in the National Park (45%), similar to the number of those who visit Dartmoor (43%). A lot of those stating 'other' live close by the moor or were born here. Note there is overlap between the categories and some respondents live and work in the National Park, or work in and visit it, and it was not mandatory for respondents to share this information with us.
- 2.6. From those who provided details of their postcode, the majority were from Dartmoor and the surrounding area including Exeter, Plymouth, Torquay, and Devon. Further afield respondents came from Taunton, Isles of Scilly, Wales, the South East, London, Lancashire, Scotland. There were very few overseas respondents but they did include people from Germany and the USA.

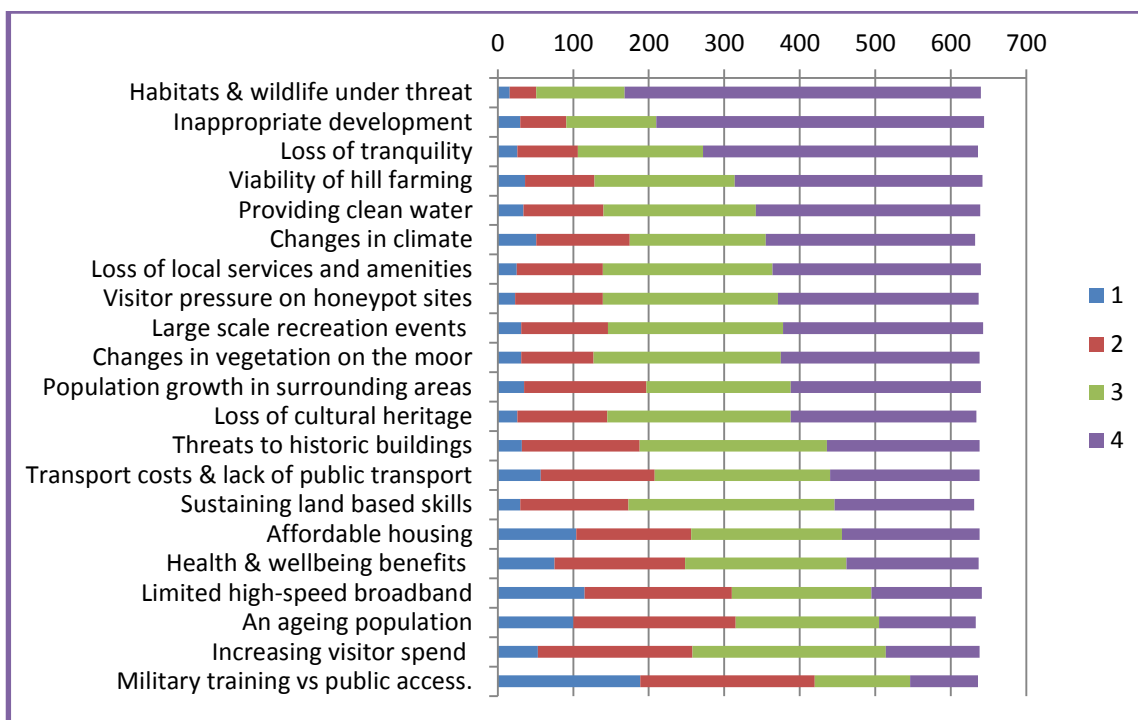


**Figure 2: Proportion of respondents who live in, work in or visit Dartmoor**

2.7. The results from the survey are provided in the sections below.

### **3. Issues affecting Dartmoor National Park**

3.1. People responding to the survey were asked to indicate how important they felt a number of issues were to Dartmoor National Park, on a scale of 1 - 4, with 1 being 'not important', and 4 being 'very important'. These issues were similar to the ones in a survey carried out in 2012 so that a comparison could be made to see whether there were any significant differences in what people were concerned about. The issues covered a range of topics including the natural environment and cultural heritage; recreation and access; land use and management; as well as issues affecting local communities and businesses such as housing, local facilities, and public transport.



**Figure 3: Responses to Q1 How important do you think these issues are for Dartmoor (on a scale of 1 - 4, with 1 being ‘not important’, and 4 being ‘very important’)? Ranked in order of the most ‘very important’ (4) scores**

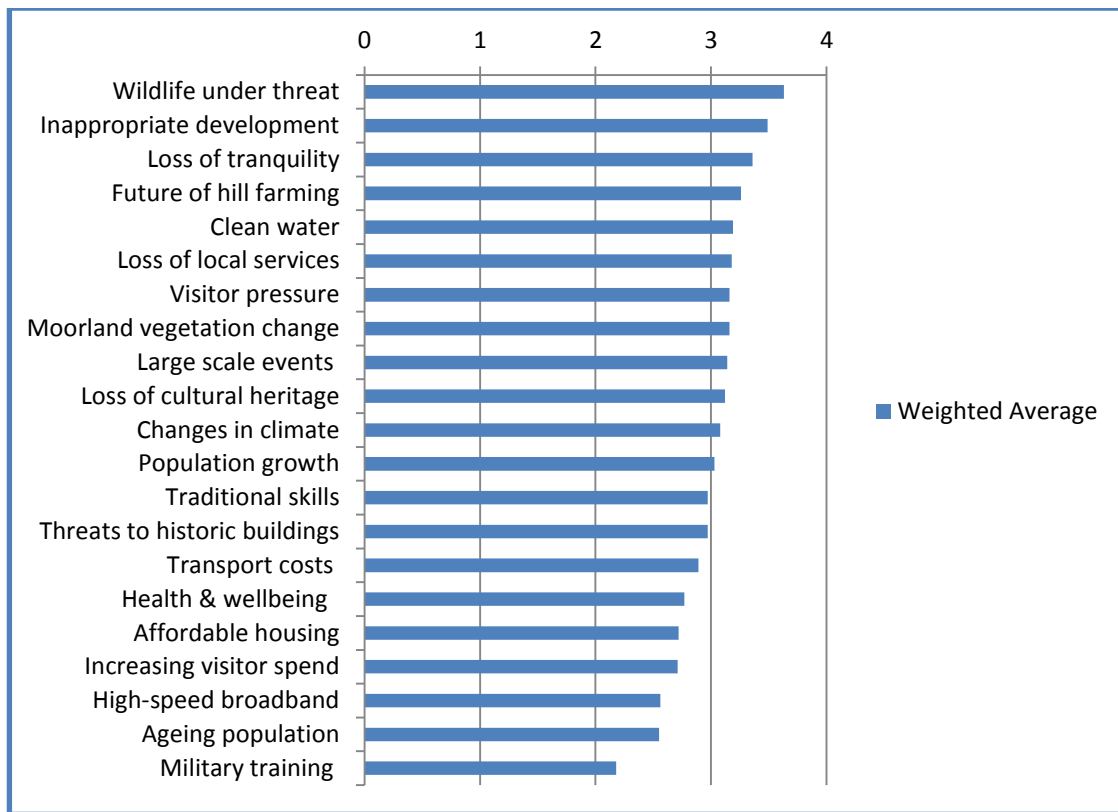
- 3.2. The top five issues considered to be ‘very important’ in 2018 were broadly similar to the survey that was carried out in 2012, although the order of ranking has changed. Interestingly the issue of visitor pressure on ‘honeypot’ sites did not appear in the top 5, instead the provision of clean water was considered to be ‘very important’.

Ranking	2018	2012
1	Habitats and wildlife under threat	Threats from inappropriate development
2	Threats from inappropriate development	Future viability of hill farming
3	Loss of tranquillity	Visitor pressure on ‘honeypot’ sites
4	Future viability of hill farming	Habitats and wildlife under threat
5	Providing clean water	Loss of tranquillity

**Figure 4: Comparison of top five issues from the public opinion surveys in 2018 and 2012**

- 3.3. When compared to the weighted average of all the results, the top five issues are the same, but some of the lower rankings change, although nothing particularly significant to note. For example ‘changes in climate’ ranks lower

(10<sup>th</sup> rather than 6<sup>th</sup>) and 'loss of cultural heritage' is higher (10<sup>th</sup> rather than 12<sup>th</sup>).



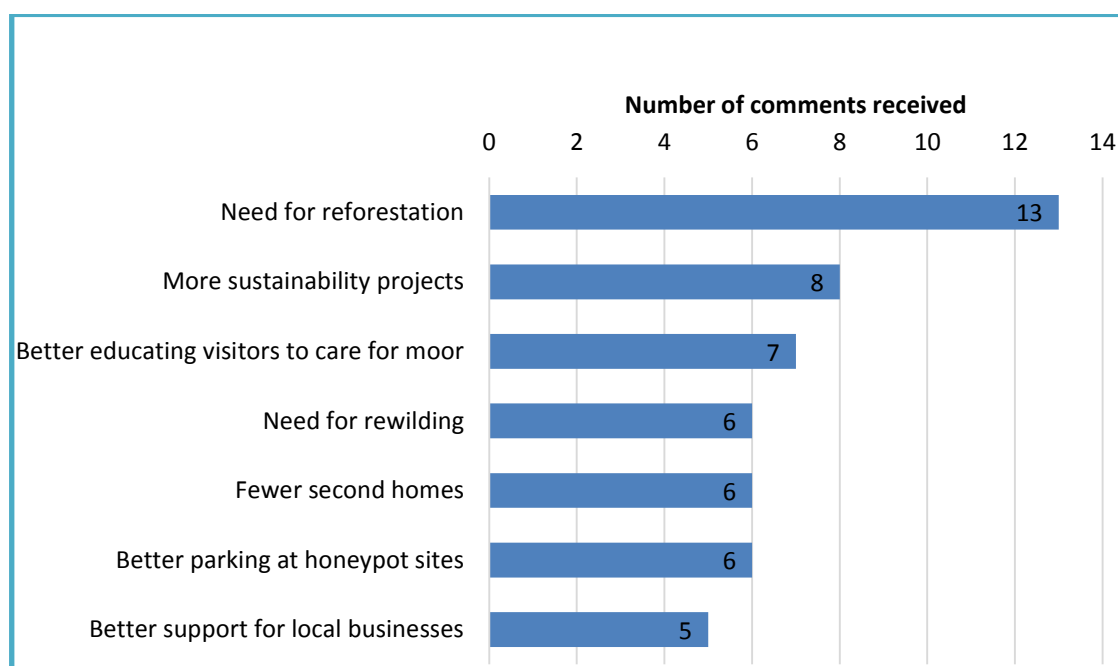
**Figure 5: Weighted average of the results for Q1. How important do you think these issues are for Dartmoor? (on a scale of 1 - 4, with 1 being not important, and 4 being very important)**

- 3.4. When a comparison between responses from people who live in, work in or visit Dartmoor National Park (DNP) is made, there are some differences. For visitors, issues regarding loss of local services and facilities, and lack of public transport are, perhaps unsurprisingly, less important. For people who work in Dartmoor, issues of visitor pressure and managing impacts of recreation events rank less highly particularly when compared with people living on Dartmoor, who are likely to experience negative effects for example traffic and congestion. Those who work in Dartmoor also place a higher value on sustaining land based and building skills.
- 3.5. Surprisingly, the limited high-speed broadband is not considered a particularly important issue for most respondents (18<sup>th</sup>), even those who live on Dartmoor (17<sup>th</sup>), and this has dropped slightly since the 2012 survey (14<sup>th</sup>). It is also surprising that the need for affordable housing does not feature higher for people who live in Dartmoor (14<sup>th</sup>), particularly when compared with visitor responses (9<sup>th</sup>).

<b>Rankings:</b>	<b>Most important (All)</b>	<b>Weighted average (All)</b>	<b>People who live in DNP</b>	<b>People who work in DNP</b>	<b>People who visit DNP</b>
<b>Habitats and wildlife under threat</b>	1.	1	1	1	1
<b>Threats from inappropriate development</b>	2.	2	2	2	2
<b>Loss of tranquillity</b>	3.	3	3	5	4
<b>Future viability of hill farming</b>	4.	4	4	3	3
<b>Providing clean water</b>	5.	5	5	4	7
<b>Changes in climate</b>	6.	10	9	7	5
<b>Loss of local services and amenities</b>	7.	6	6	6	12
<b>Visitor pressure on 'honeypot' sites</b>	8.	7	10	13	11
<b>Managing the impacts of large scale recreation events taking place on Dartmoor</b>	9.	9	8	14	10
<b>Changes in vegetation on the moor</b>	10.	8	7	9	8
<b>Future population growth in surrounding areas</b>	11.	12	11	8	6
<b>Loss of cultural heritage</b>	12.	10	12	12	13
<b>Managing threats to historic buildings</b>	13.	14	15	18	18
<b>Rising transport costs and lack of public transport</b>	14.	15	16	16	19
<b>Sustaining land based and building skills</b>	15.	13	13	11	17
<b>Need for affordable housing</b>	16.	17	14	10	9
<b>Promoting health &amp; well-being benefits from access to Dartmoor</b>	17.	16	20	17	16
<b>Limited high-speed broadband</b>	18.	19	17	15	15
<b>An ageing population</b>	19.	20	18	19	14
<b>Increasing the level of visitor spending to support the local economy</b>	20.	18	19	20	20
<b>Conflict between military training and public access</b>	21.	21	21	21	21

**Figure 6: Rankings for issues listed in Question 1, with comparison of results from respondents living in, working in, and visiting Dartmoor**

- 3.6. Conflict between military training and public access is consistently at the bottom of the rankings and so does not seem to be an issue of significant concern to the public at this point in time.
- 3.7. Not everyone provided information about whether they lived in, worked in, or visited Dartmoor and so the rankings from these responses are not directly comparable with the overall results. However, they do give some indication of the varying concerns of people who live or work on Dartmoor, and those who visit.
- 3.8. Question 1 also included a section for 'other issues' not listed, which was completed by 134 respondents (20% of total survey respondents). Figure 7 summarises the most common themes communicated. It is worth noting that answers relating to reforestation used a range of terms, whereas all answers relating to rewilding used this specific term.

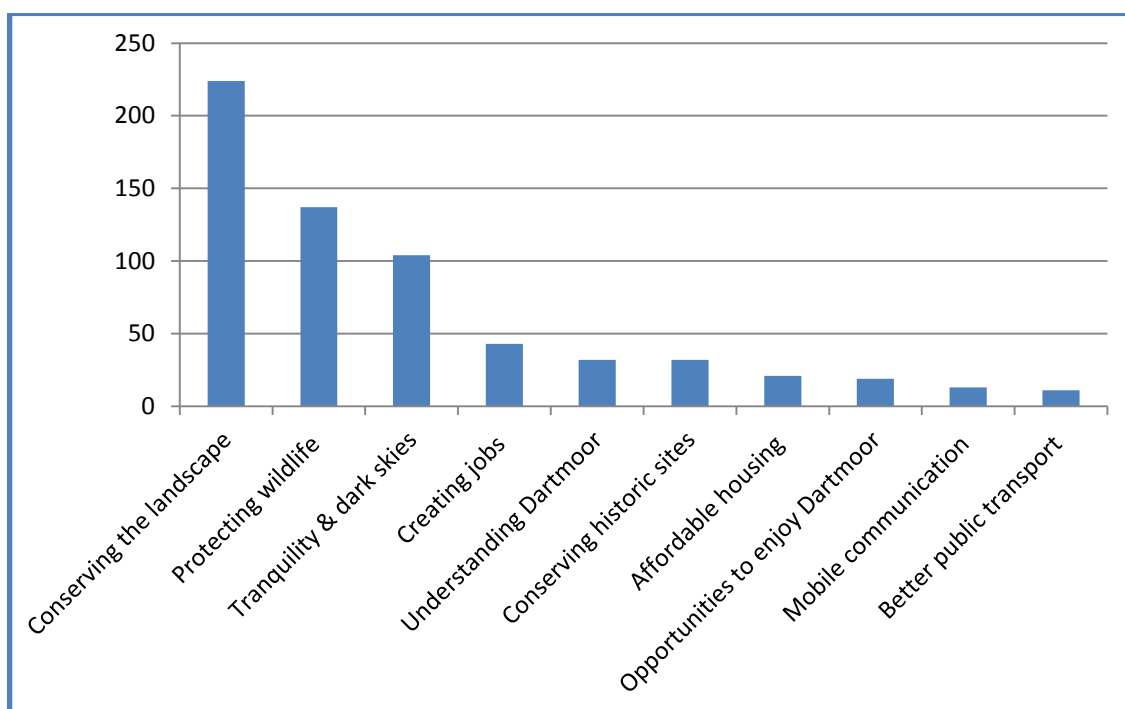


**Figure 7: Summary of common themes in answer to 'Other issues affecting Dartmoor'**



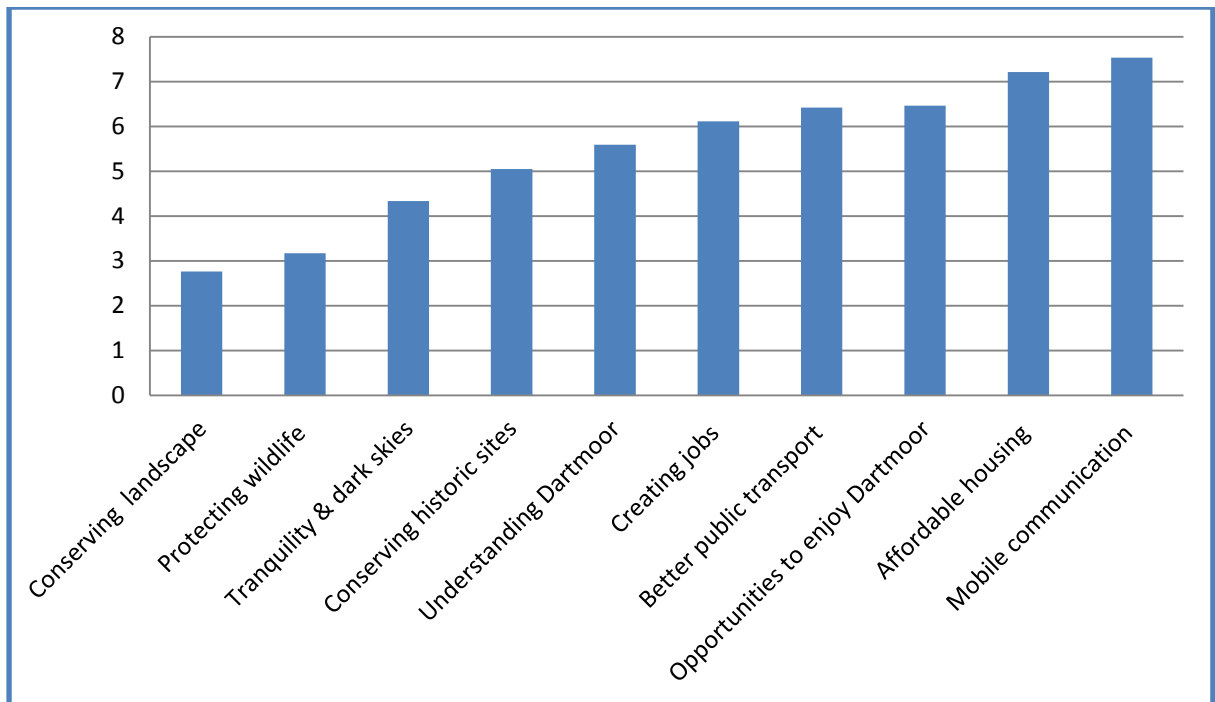
## 4. Priorities for Dartmoor

- 4.1. Question 2 asked people responding to the survey to rank a number of statements in order of importance to Dartmoor. They were required to rank these in order from 1 to 10 (with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least), to provide an indication of the relative importance of the statements.



**Figure 8: Number of respondents who ranked each statement as 'most important' (No.1)**

- 4.2. The top three statements are consistent between the two graphs shown in figures 8 and 9, and there were far more people (over 100) who ranked these as most important (ranked 1<sup>st</sup>) than the other statements, which all had fewer than 50 people ranking them as their top priority. The full results are given in **Appendix 2**.
- 4.3. When considering the weighted average of scores, the 'conservation of historic sites' ranks higher (i.e. it was generally ranked 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> by respondents although not many ranked it as the most important statement), and similarly 'better public transport' ranks higher. By comparison, 'creating jobs' and 'affordable housing' rank lower. It is interesting to note that 'mobile communication' ranks towards the bottom of the priorities, again suggesting that this is not seen as a significant issue on Dartmoor.



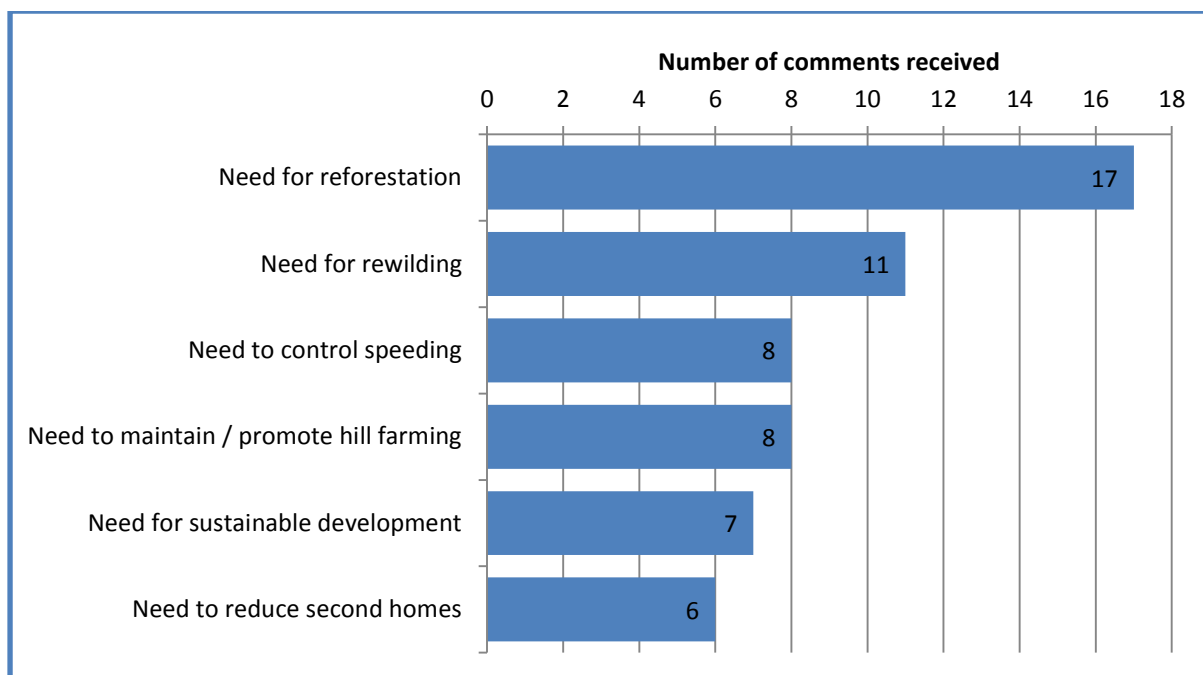
**Figure 9: Weighted average of rankings for each statement (*the smaller the number the more important it was considered to be*)**

- 4.4. The responses to Question 3 from people who live in, work in or visit Dartmoor were also compared, looking at the number of people who ranked each statement as the most important (No.1). The top four statements were the same irrespective of whether people lived in, worked in or visited Dartmoor. There were some differences, for example people living in or working in Dartmoor felt that affordable housing was more important than those visiting. Visitors also felt that helping more people to understand Dartmoor, and creating opportunities for everyone to enjoy Dartmoor were more important. Creating better internet and mobile communication, and better public transport links were consistently towards the bottom of the rankings.

	Rankings:			
	All responses	Live in	Work in	Visit
Conserving the landscape	1	1	1	1
Protecting rare and declining wildlife species	2	3	2	2
Protecting Dartmoor's tranquillity and dark skies	3	2	3	3
Creating jobs within Dartmoor National Park	4	4	4	4=
Helping more people to understand and value Dartmoor	5=	9	6	4=
Conserving historic sites and landmarks	5=	6	7	6
Building affordable housing within Dartmoor National Park	7	5	5	9
Creating opportunities for everyone to enjoy Dartmoor	8	10	8	7
Creating better internet and mobile communication access for rural areas	9	7	9	10
Developing better public transport links	10	8	10	9

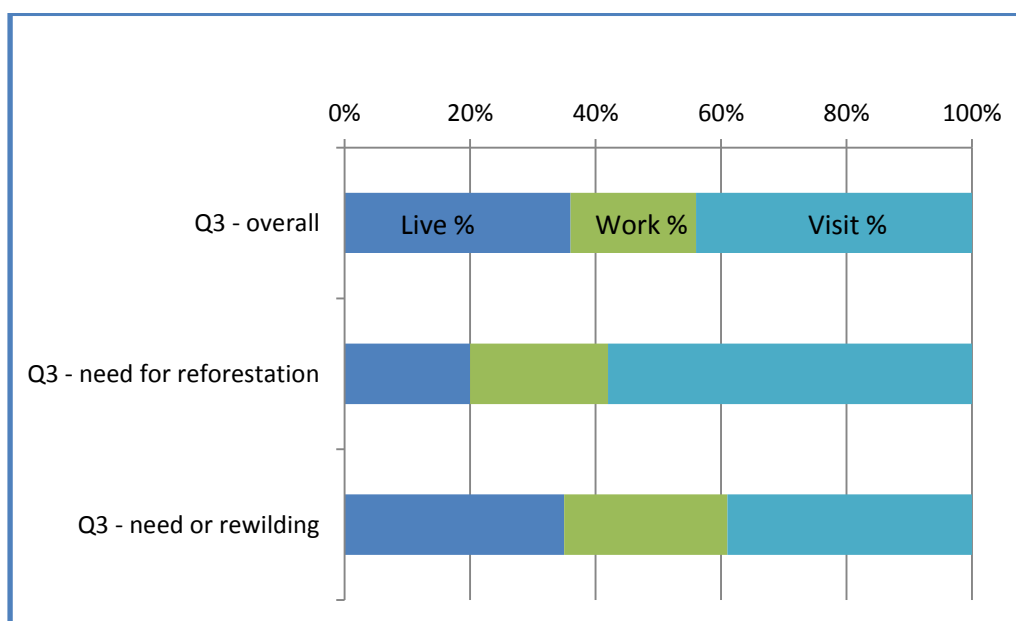
**Figure 10: Comparison of top rankings for Question 2 by people who live in, work in and visit Dartmoor**

- 4.5. Question 3 served as a place for respondents to communicate important issues for Dartmoor not mentioned in Question 2. A total of 197 respondents (30% of total respondents) left comments which covered a range of topics, with the top five themes summarised in Figure 11.
- 4.6. 17 people communicated the need for reforestation on Dartmoor, though various terms were used including 'woodland regeneration', 'more woodland', 'return to natural woodland', 'tree planting', and 'woodland creation'. 11 comments mention the need for rewilding on Dartmoor, and all use this terminology. Better controls on speeding, the need to maintain hill farming, the need for sustainable development, and a reduction in second homes also repetitively emerged as important issues for Dartmoor which were not covered in Question 2.



**Figure 11: Summary of Common Themes in Answer to Question 3 ‘Have we missed anything in question 2 which you feel is important for Dartmoor’**

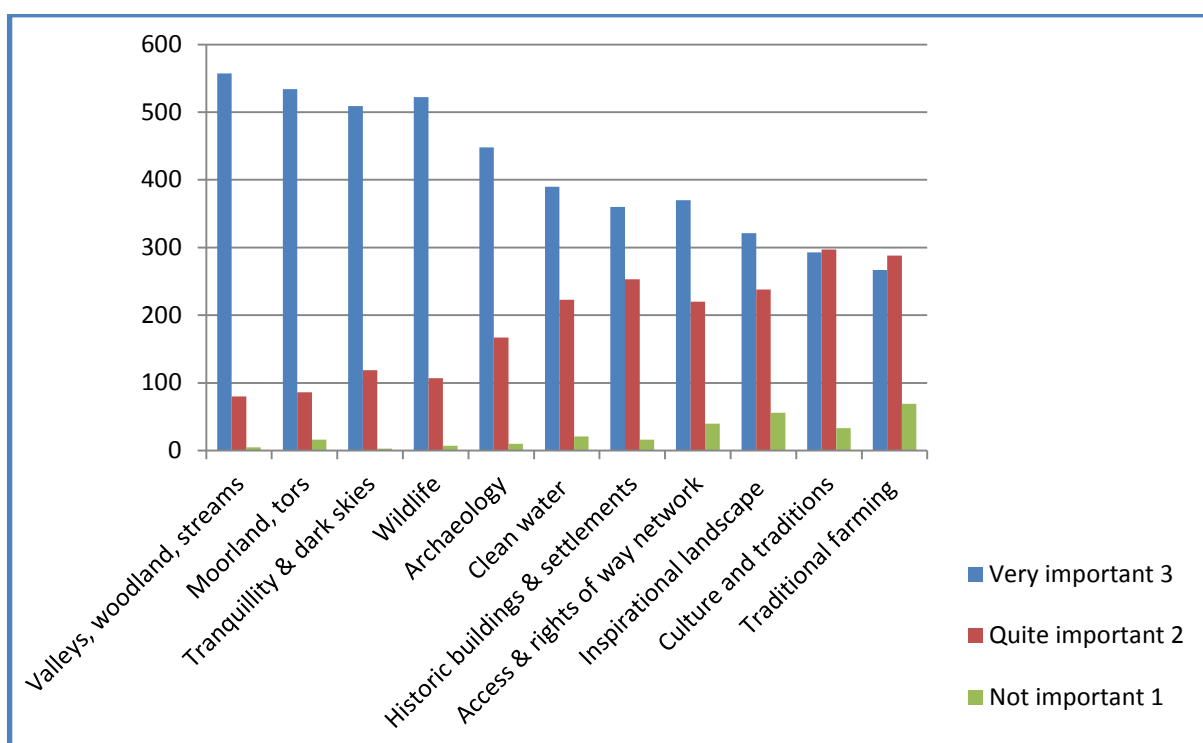
4.7. For the top two themes of reforestation and rewilding, we also looked at the proportion of respondents giving these answers that live in, work in and visit Dartmoor National Park. Figure 12 shows that a much higher percentage (58%) of visitors feel there is a need for reforestation, compared with residents (20%) and workers (22%). Interestingly, the need for rewilding was expressed by both residents (35%) and visitors (39%) in similar proportions.



**Figure 12: Comparison of responses to Question 3 from people who live in / work in / or visit Dartmoor National Park**

## 5. Dartmoor's Special Qualities

- 5.1. The Dartmoor National Park Management Plan<sup>1</sup> defines the 'special qualities' which identify what is distinctive about Dartmoor, and help to identify what is most important to be conserved, enhanced and enjoyed. People responding to the survey were asked to state how important Dartmoor's special qualities were to them (*not important, quite important, very important, no opinion*). There were no restrictions to this question, so people could indicate that all the special qualities were very important to them if they wished. The full responses are given in **Appendix 3**.



**Figure 13: Responses to Question 4: 'How important are these special qualities of Dartmoor to you?'**

- 5.2. The responses to this question clearly highlight that the majority of people consider the natural environment and cultural heritage special qualities such as landscapes, tranquillity, wildlife and archaeology to be very important. However, there is little recognition of the link between traditional farming and land management, which were more likely to be considered as 'quite important', yet are crucial to the maintenance of the special qualities that people felt were 'very important'. Similarly, the access and rights of way network, which enables people to enjoy the special qualities, is not valued as highly.

<sup>1</sup> 'Your Dartmoor' <http://www.yourdartmoor.org/about/special-qualities>

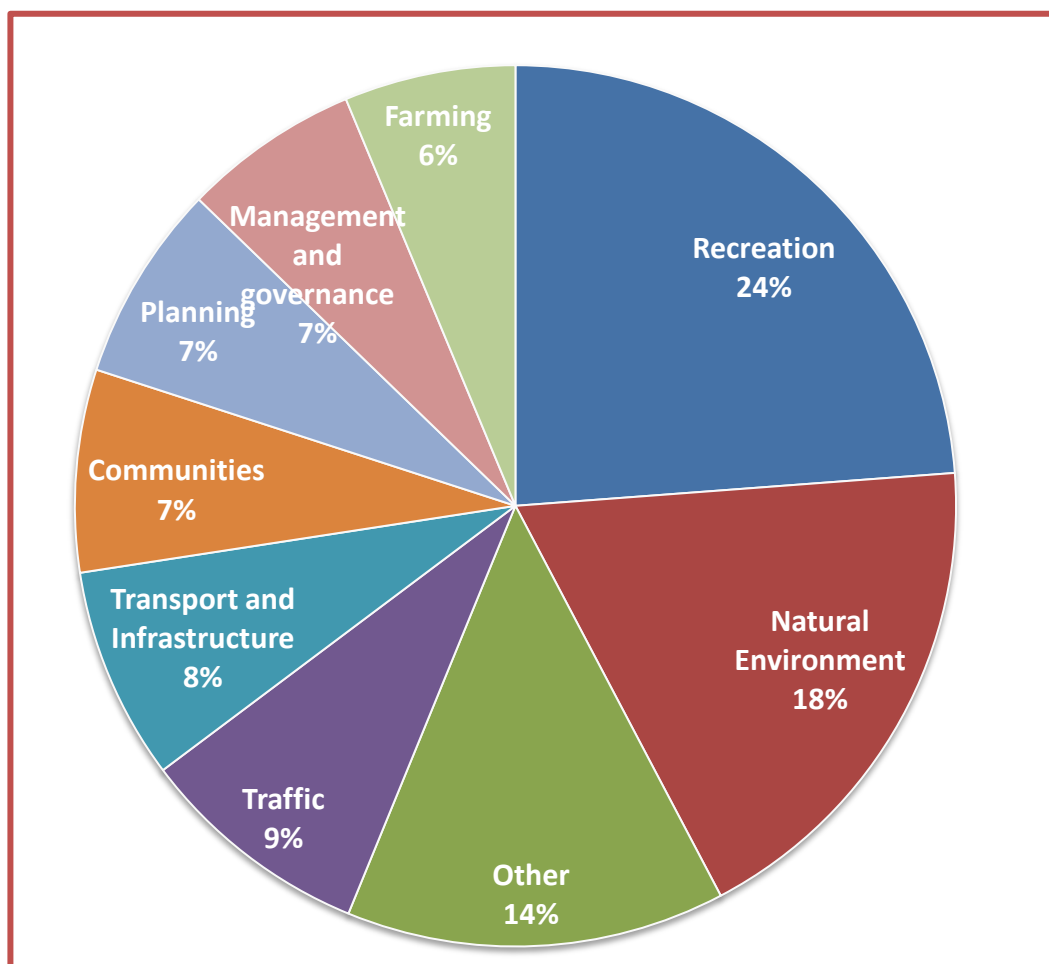
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- 5.4. There is a lot of similarity between the two word clouds, for example with words such as 'wild', 'space', 'freedom' commonly used. 'Tranquillity' and 'landscape' appear more prominently in the 2018 results, whereas 'access' and 'natural' are less obvious.

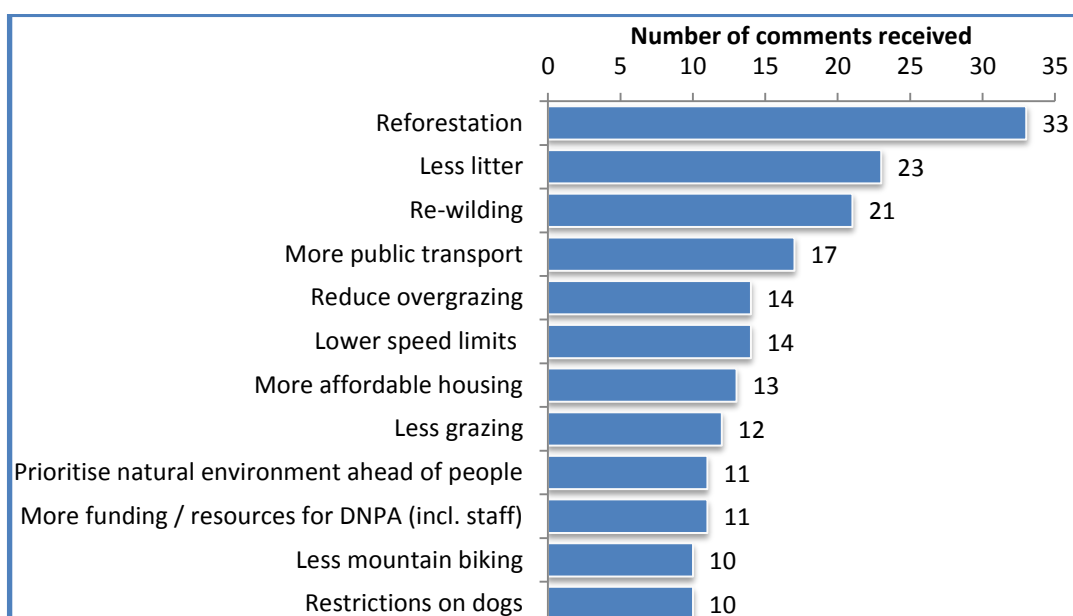
## 6. What would make Dartmoor National Park better?

- 6.1. People responding to the survey were also asked whether there was anything in their opinion that would make Dartmoor National Park better. 448 people (68% of total respondents) responded to this. Due to the large volume of responses, answers were first grouped into broad categories, see Figure 15 for the results of this exercise. The most common 'category' was recreation and access which amounted to 24% of responses; followed by natural environment (18%); traffic (9%); and transport and infrastructure (8%). Communities (including housing, 7%); planning (7%); management and governance (7%); and farming (6%) were also common 'categories'.



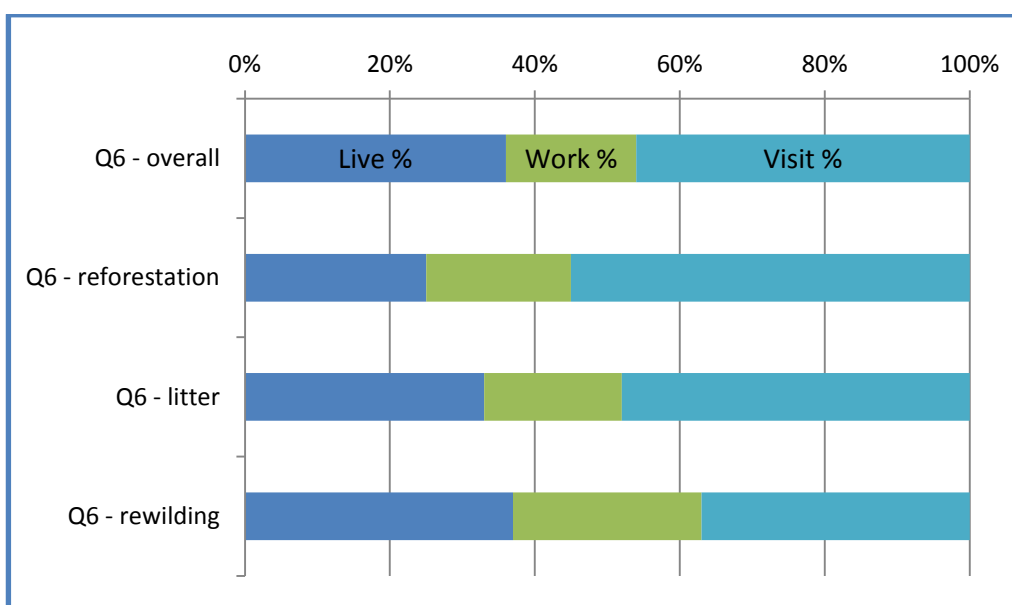
**Figure 16: Responses to question 6 grouped into broad categories**  
***'Is there anything in your opinion that would make Dartmoor National Park better?'***

- 6.2. We also looked more specifically at ‘common themes’ within these categories. Themes which occurred with a frequency of 10+ are shown in Figure 17. The most common themes related to reforestation, litter and rewilding.



**Figure 17: top responses to question 6 ‘Is there anything in your opinion that would make Dartmoor National Park better?’**

- 6.3. For the top three common themes of reforestation, litter and rewilding, we also looked at the proportion of respondents giving these answers that live in, work in and visit Dartmoor National Park. Figure 18 shows that a high percentage (55%) of those who gave answers relating to reforestation were visitors; while both visitors and residents contributed equally (37%) to answers relating to rewilding. This follows the same pattern as the results for Question 3.

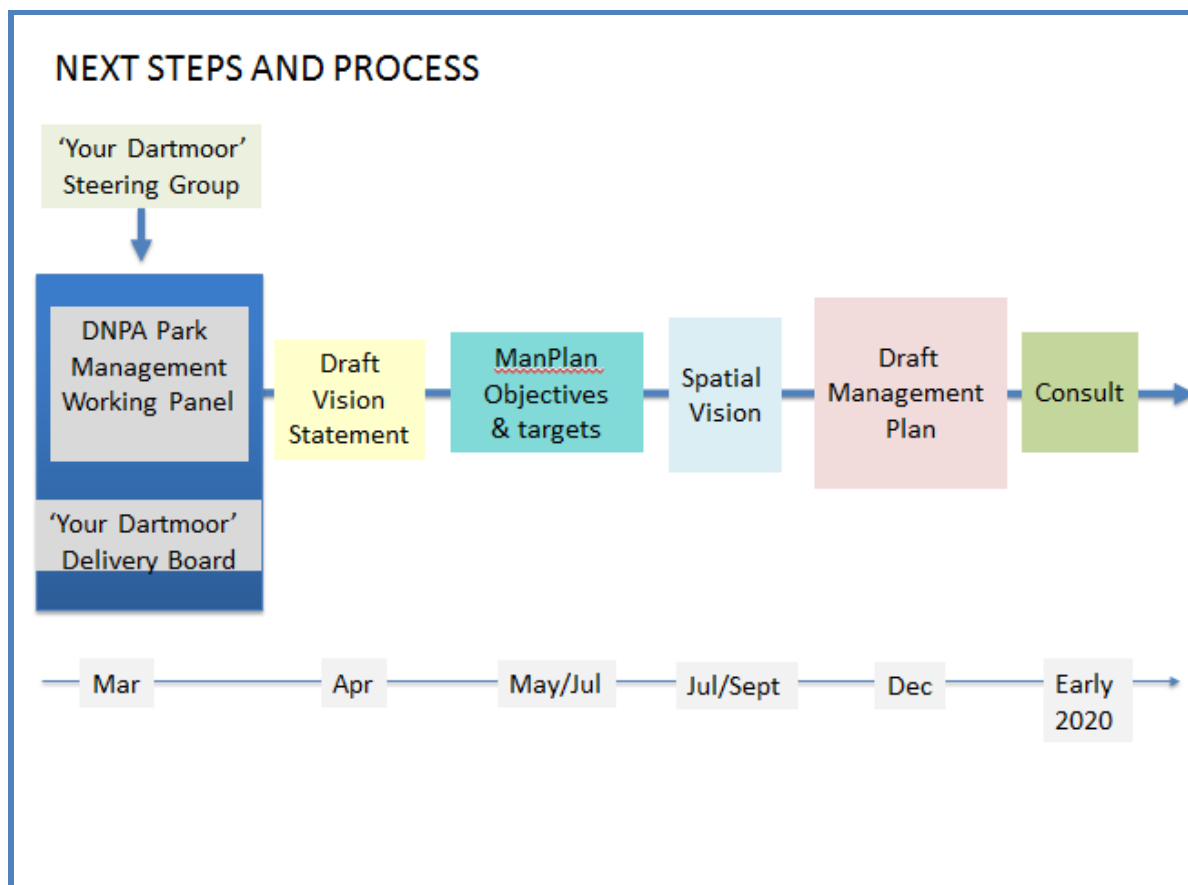


**Figure 18: Comparison of Responses to Question 6 by People who live in / work in / visit Dartmoor**



## 7. Next steps

- 7.1. The Dartmoor Debates and public opinion survey have generated a wealth of information and views to inform preparation of the new Dartmoor National Park Management Plan.
- 7.2. The first stage will be to develop a draft Vision for discussion with the Management Plan Steering Group (including participants from the Dartmoor Debates), and DNPA members in spring 2019.
- 7.3. Work to review the Management Plan itself will take place during the rest of 2019. There will be a period of public consultation on the draft Management Plan. An updated Management Plan will be completed in early 2020.



## **Appendix 1: Survey Questions**

# Dartmoor Debates

## A 25 year vision for Dartmoor

### Survey

‘Your Dartmoor’ – the five year Dartmoor National Park Management Plan is the strategic plan for the National Park – a Plan for all who care about Dartmoor and its future. The current plan expires at the end of 2019 and work is underway to review and update the plan for 2020 and beyond. We would like to hear your views about the National Park and what you think should be the long term vision for Dartmoor, and the focus for the next five year Management Plan

We would like to hear your views about the National Park and what you think should be the long term vision for Dartmoor, and the focus for the next five year Management Plan. This survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. You can respond to as many of the following questions as you wish.

1. How important do you think these issues are for Dartmoor? <i>(on a scale of 1-4, with 1 being not important, &amp; 4 being very important)</i>	1	2	3	4
Threats from inappropriate development				
Future viability of hill farming				
Visitor pressure on 'honeypot' sites				
Habitats and wildlife under threat				
Loss of tranquility				
Managing the impacts of large scale recreation events				
Changes in vegetation on the moor				
Sustaining land based and building skills				
Future population growth in surrounding areas				
Loss of local services and amenities				
Need for affordable housing				
Rising transport costs and lack of public transport				
An ageing population				
Limited high-speed broadband				
Managing threats to historic buildings				
Providing clean water				
Loss of cultural heritage				
Increasing the level of visitor spending to support the local economy				
Changes in climate				
Promoting health & wellbeing benefits from access to Dartmoor				
Conflict between military training and public access				
Other (please specify)				

<b>2. Please rank these things in order of importance to Dartmoor</b> <i>(with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least)</i>	Rank
Creating jobs within Dartmoor National Park	
Conserving the landscape	
Developing better public transport links	
Building affordable housing within Dartmoor National Park	
Protecting rare and declining wildlife species	
Creating opportunities for everyone to enjoy Dartmoor	
Helping more people to understand and value Dartmoor	
Creating better internet and mobile communication access for rural areas	
Conserving historic sites and landmarks	
Protecting Dartmoor's tranquillity and dark skies	

**3. Have we missed anything in question 2 which you feel is important for Dartmoor?**

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<b>4. How important are these special qualities of Dartmoor to you?</b> <i>Put an X in the box that applies for you</i>	Not Important	Quite Important	Very Important	No opinion
Open windswept moorland, granite tors				
Sheltered valleys with upland oak woodland and boulder filled streams				
Distinctive and characteristic wildlife, home to many rare and common species				
Clean water – gathered from the moor in reservoirs to provide much of the water supply for Devon				
Enclosed farmland and traditional farming practices				
Timelessness, sense of space, remoteness and tranquility with dark night skies				
One of the most important archaeological landscapes in western Europe – particularly the Bronze Age and medieval periods right through to an industrial past				
A wealth of historic buildings and structures, scattered farmsteads, hamlets, villages and towns				
An inspirational landscape – inspiring myths and legends, art and literature				
Opportunities for discovery, challenge and adventure for all – supported by access to the open moor and an extensive public rights of way network				
Resourceful rural communities with distinctive culture and traditions, characteristic ways of life, local crafts, fairs, food and drink				

5. Please describe in *three words* what is special to you about Dartmoor National Park.

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6. Is there anything in your opinion that would make Dartmoor National Park better?

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Thank you for taking the time to fill in the questionnaire, please use the space below to add any comments, questions or queries you have in regards to Dartmoor National Park.

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If you are willing – we would like to find out a bit more about you....

**In which age range are you? (tick the appropriate box)**

- ☐ Under 18 years old
- ☐ 19 – 25 years
- ☐ 26 - 45 years
- ☐ 46 - 65 years
- ☐ 66 – 85 years
- ☐ 86 years +

**Please tick which of the follow applies to you (tick all that apply)**

- ☐ I live in Dartmoor National Park
- ☐ I work in Dartmoor National Park
- ☐ I visit Dartmoor National Park
- ☐ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide us with the first half of your postcode** \_\_\_\_\_

The information that you provide will be used to inform the Dartmoor National Park Management Plan review. If you would like to be kept informed about the review, please tick this box ☐ and provide a contact email address:

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

We will only contact you about the Management Plan review and will keep your contact details until the new Management Plan is completed in 2020



**Appendix 2: Question 2. Please rank these things in order of importance to Dartmoor (with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least). All responses**

	Most important					Least important				
Answer Choices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Conserving the landscape	224	142	78	67	27	18	10	19	7	13
Protecting rare and declining wildlife species	137	167	104	60	58	28	21	11	15	8
Protecting Dartmoor's tranquillity and dark skies	104	103	117	83	45	33	32	29	41	53
Creating jobs within Dartmoor National Park	43	28	36	53	69	78	95	94	84	36
Helping more people to understand and value Dartmoor	32	30	58	75	125	84	82	46	45	41
Conserving historic sites and landmarks	32	55	106	124	69	51	54	57	52	25
Building affordable housing within Dartmoor National Park	21	38	27	35	39	51	69	66	104	171
Creating opportunities for everyone to enjoy Dartmoor	19	22	31	51	73	127	73	79	85	63
Creating better internet and mobile communication access for rural areas	13	9	22	31	52	58	72	105	103	162
Developing better public transport links	11	27	47	39	75	89	106	111	71	44

**Appendix 3: Question 4 How important are these special qualities of Dartmoor to you? (All Responses)**

	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Quite important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>No opinion</b>	<b>weighted average</b>
<b>Sheltered valleys with upland oak woodland and boulder filled streams</b>	5	80	557	3	2.87
<b>Open windswept moorland, granite tors</b>	16	86	534	8	2.83
<b>Timelessness, sense of space, remoteness and tranquillity with dark night skies</b>	3	119	509	13	2.83
<b>Distinctive and characteristic wildlife, home to many rare and common species</b>	7	107	522	6	2.82
<b>One of the most important archaeological landscapes in western Europe particularly the Bronze Age and medieval periods right through to an industrial past</b>	10	167	448	20	2.74
<b>Clean water gathered from the moor in reservoirs to provide much of the water supply for Devon</b>	21	223	390	10	2.60
<b>A wealth of historic buildings and structures, scattered farmsteads, hamlets, villages and towns</b>	16	253	360	15	2.58
<b>Opportunities for discovery, challenge and adventure for all supported by access to the open moor and an extensive public rights of way network</b>	40	220	370	15	2.56
<b>An inspirational landscape inspiring myths and legends, art and literature</b>	56	238	321	26	2.49
<b>Resourceful rural communities with distinctive culture and traditions, characteristic ways of life, local crafts, fairs, food and drink</b>	33	297	293	23	2.47
<b>Enclosed farmland and traditional farming practices</b>	69	288	267	19	2.37