

ALLY KOHLER

DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY



Recreation 2030

Past Present and Future: Changing Trends and new Challenges

Leather Tor © Thomas Dobner

Where to start?



Change 1975 and 2018



Population Growth 17%

Members of Caravan and Camping Club up 308%

RSPB membership up 390%

Ramblers Association up 281%

Cyclist Touring Club up 169%

British Horse Society up 274%

Changing infrastructure



- 400 Country Parks created 1970 and 2008
- 1977 Cyclebag formed – Sustrans. NCN 1995
- 2001 - 2004 242 school playing fields were sold off
- 2000 CROW ACT
- 1990 Mountain biking started. Coed De Brenin first FC hub 1999.

Changing activities



- Late 1990's www
- 1998 Walking for Health
- 2000 - 2008 Bradley Wiggins effect
- 2004 Parkerun now 350,000 people
- Themed family activities
- Scouts up annually since 2015
- By 2007 Social media reach out and influence



Dartmoor trends



Visitor numbers fairly stable over past 10 years

Physical activity is the main reason for people to come to the NP – not scenery and landscape (1994 survey)

Walking and running most popular activities 78 % increased since 1994 (53%)

Recreation events growth (peaked in 2013 at 73) but size of events up by 66% in 15 years. More commercial

Type of event changing: walking down by 15% running up by 228%

93% visitors still arrive by car

87% visitors over 35.



Emerging trends?



Electric Bikes
Camper Vans
Wild camping and...
not so wild camping



Connecting with Nature
Forest Bathing
Quick fix experience and
adventure seekers
Extinction Rebellion

Summary



Growth in outdoor recreation and people more active
Growth in events - road running boom to trail running
A generation that need something planned and safe
Motivated by health and activity not landscape and scenery
Informal clubs versus traditional membership.

Seeking experiences and lifestyle
More older people enjoying countryside



Some things stay the same!

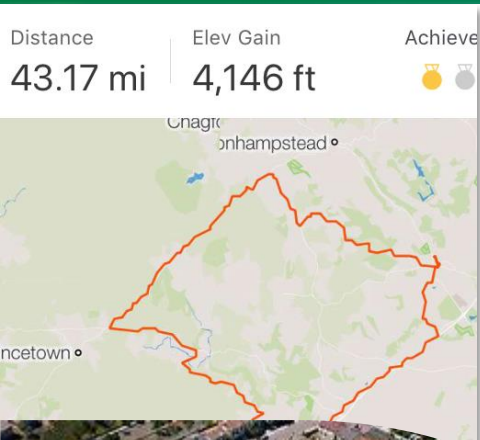


Most people still use a car

Still lower participation from minority ethnic groups , people on low incomes and people with disabilities



Future Policy Drivers



- 25 Year Environment Strategy
- Climate Emergency
- Nature Emergency
- Health Prevention 2020
- 2107 Walking and Cycling Strategy



Dartmoor Specific



8 Point Plan for National Parks
Glover Review

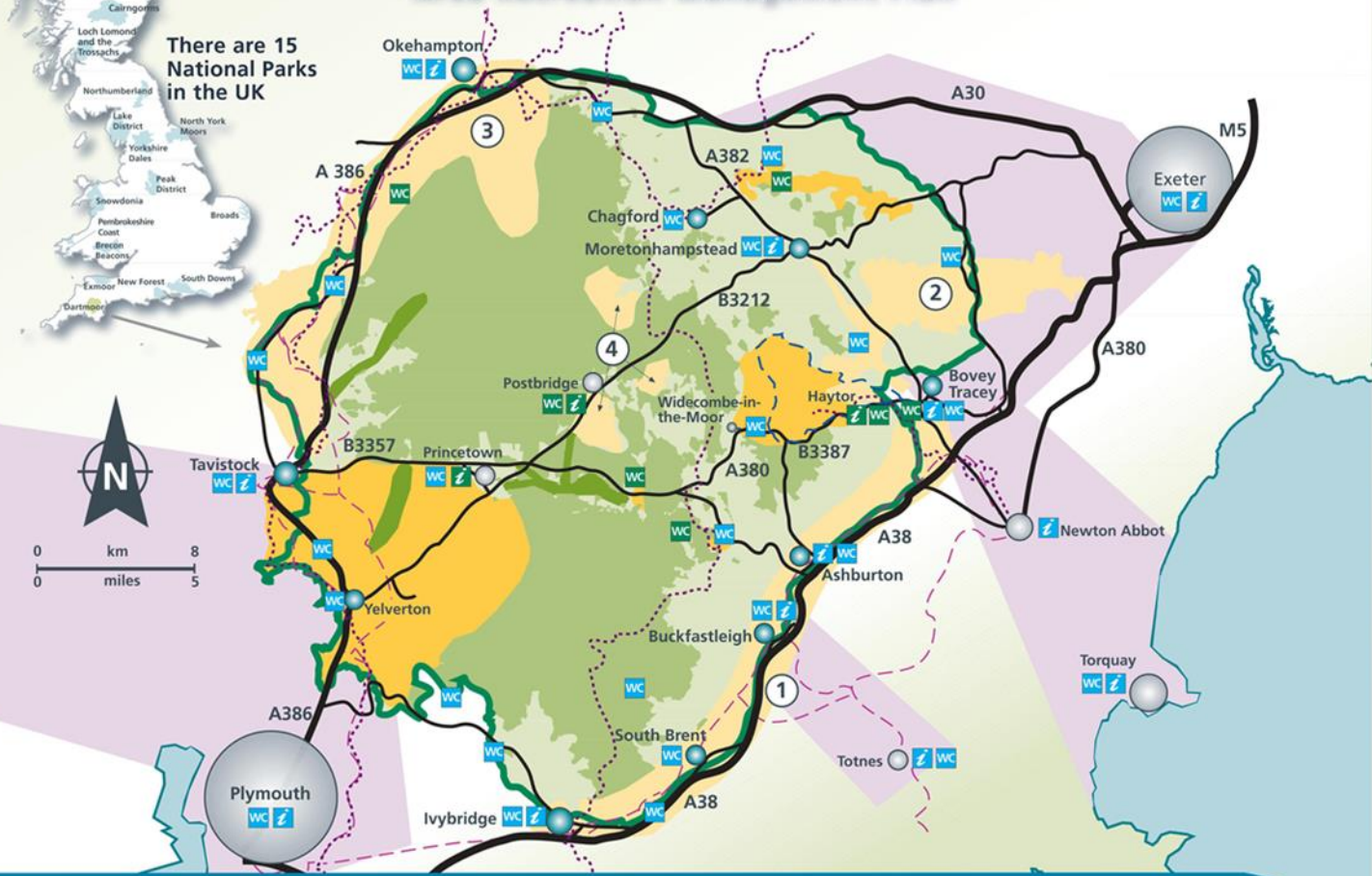
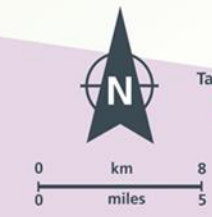
Predicted growth in visitors - Dartmoors hinterland
housebuilding leading to population growth of 13%



Dartmoor

Area Recreation Management Plan

There are 15 National Parks in the UK



Key

- Areas of Heavy Recreation Use**
Already attract a wide range of users. High quality visitor infrastructure will be provided at key access points within these areas and resources allocated for maintenance. Area management plans will be required to conserve and enhance special features.
- Areas for Exploration and Tranquility**
Moorland areas where infrastructure is carefully located at key access points and moor gates. Users will need to navigate and plan their own routes or go with a guide. Events and group activities will be carefully managed, especially in the bird breeding and lambing season.
- Quiet Areas**
These areas provide wildlife havens and solitude. Legal access will be maintained but recreational infrastructure will be minimal. Guided and self-guided walks and events will be discouraged.
- Areas of Opportunity** (see left inset for detail)
These areas offer scope for increased use if managed sustainably with improved recreation infrastructure.
- Linking Town and Country**
Provision of sustainable and transport links for example walking, cycling and public transport.
- Enclosed Land**
Existing public rights of way will be maintained.
- Dartmoor National Park Boundary**
- Key Market Towns (Gateways)**
- Other settlements**
- Toilets Maintained by DNPA**
- Toilets Maintained by Others**
- Information Centres Maintained by DNPA**
- Information Centres Maintained by Others**
- Bus Network**
- Haytor Hoppa Route**
- Long Distance Walking Routes**
- Cycle Routes**

Shading of all areas is diagrammatic and proposed management prescriptions relate to land where there is currently public access.

Areas of Opportunity

- 1** **Southern Town Corridor** To develop walking and cycling links utilising Public Rights of Way and UUCRs (green lanes) and public transport
- 2** **Eastern Woods and Reservoirs** To improve opportunities for informal recreation and develop walking and cycling opportunities linked to key market towns and public transport
- 3** **North and West Dartmoor** To promote the existing recreational route network, develop new links and circuits, and attract new audiences
- 4** **High Dartmoor Forests** Make better recreational use of Forestry Commission forests and opportunities to link them

Areas of Opportunity and hubs – some good progress but related to external funding

Austerity – PROW not maintained to previous standards. Erosion increasing

Public Transport – reduced not enhanced

Heavily Used Sites - more resources required and more detailed management plans for future

Zones -helped prioritize NPA spending. Lack of partnership approach. Heat maps show increasing use of Areas for Exploration and Tranquility.



Future Challenges



- **Car parks** on main road axis **full on** sunny days all year round. **Most people arrive by car.**

How do we **plan for projected growth** **mitigate** any negative impacts and increase positive benefits

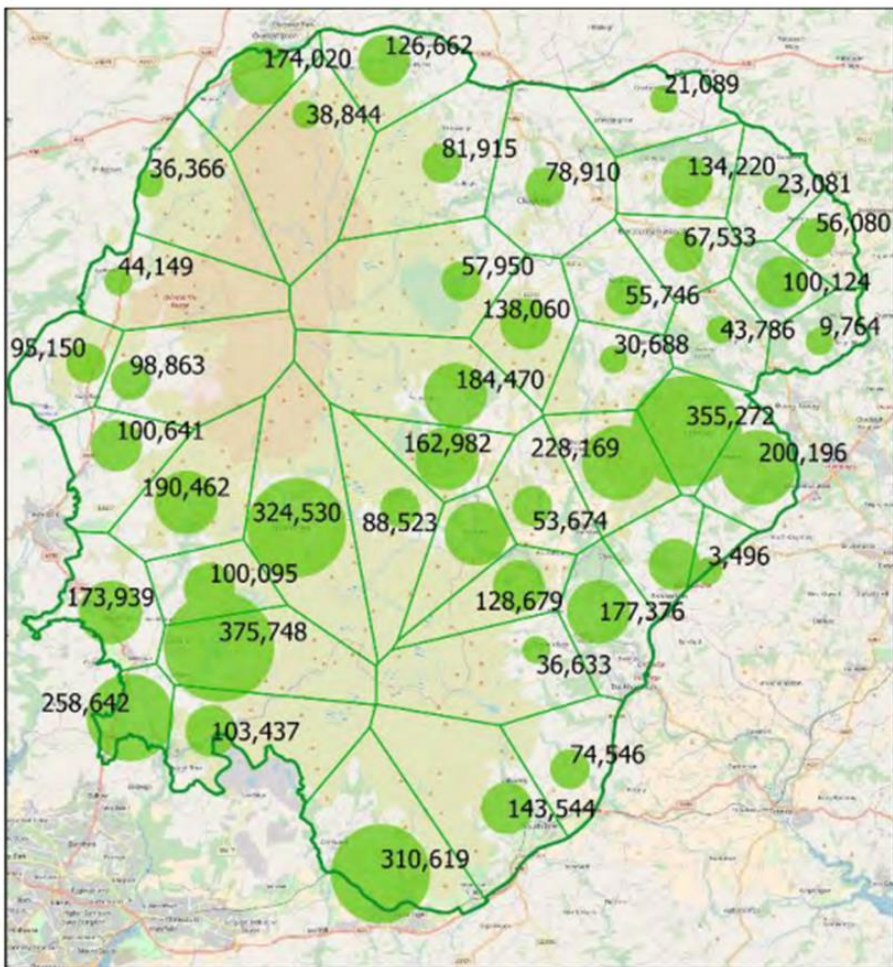
- **Cycling a success:** more people enjoying the NP by bicycle but also seen by some as a problem

Litter, dogs , animal accidents increasing and more to come ?

- Understanding/planning for **future recreation trends.**



Summary – Dartmoor Debates



Plan for growth – the route to the NP is as important

Zoning and balance : traffic free links, more off road cycle routes. Nature needs a rest too! Site management.

Enable don't control

Welcome all – young , old, active, sedentary

Engage younger generation – the future

Improve Understanding

Emerging Strategy



- How do we plan for more growth on Dartmoor when car parks are already full?
- How can our strategy support climate emergency policies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- How do we provide opportunities for sustainable access to and around the National Park and make it attractive to potential users?
- How do we utilize the opportunities offered by new technology?
- What new partnerships and collaboration?
- How can we best contribute to improve health of the nation?



Emerging Strategy



People from all backgrounds have opportunities to experience Dartmoor and all visitors get a positive welcome; they understand their responsibilities to care for the National Park, act as ambassadors and contribute towards its stewardship. Increasing visitor numbers are positively managed so that people can still enjoy the National Park in a variety of ways but nature is given space to thrive. There is less conflict and a **greater mutual understanding** between those who visit and those who live and work here.

Positively manage increase in visitors



We need to look outward – partnerships and collaboration
Green space in new development and informed decisions
Linking town and country.
Areas of Opportunity – Buffer zones and Interception Sites
Managing visitors in time and by activity
Town hubs



Helping Nature Thrive



Nature Recovery Areas' where public access will not be encouraged or promoted.

At a landscape and site based scale

Programmes of activity to help connect people to nature through our information, events and activities.



Ambitious about transport



More buses to and around Dartmoor (dual functional practically useful for local residents).

New technology to improve services and reduce carbon emissions.

Network of electric charging points for cars and e-bikes.

Safe walking and cycling networks – to and through the Park - National Park Routeways.



Improved Welcome for all



Engage with user groups
Guide and support first
time users – review
signage and welcome at
key sites



Reaching out to new
audiences
Don't demonise

A Focus on Young People



Young people from all backgrounds have opportunities to enjoy Dartmoor – not just for a night under the stars



..... but to build a long lasting relationship with the place ! Work with young people to design activities

What are young people saying?



Everyone has the opportunity to visit Dartmoor.

Support and enable **different users** and promote a **variety of experiences** on Dartmoor

Encourage users to **deepen and diversify** their experiences.

Opportunities for **wilderness** experiences are maintained.

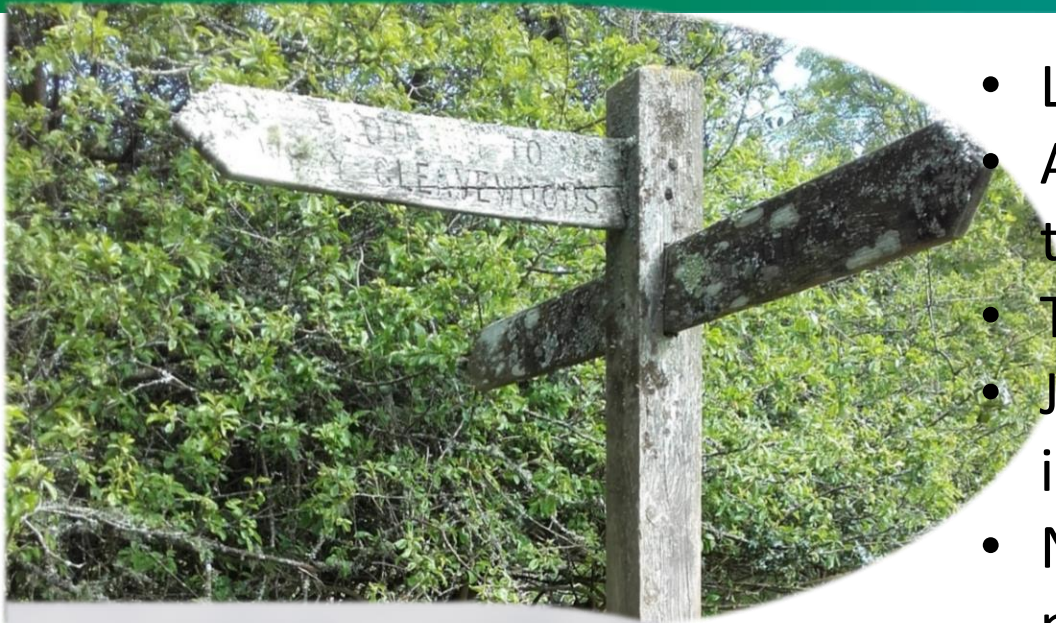
Particular focus on **events and activities** aimed at the younger generation.

Dartmoor provides **health and wellbeing** benefits to local people and visitors

Widespread understanding of Dartmoor and what it makes it special (inc **role that farming** plays and **traditional skills**)

Mutual respect and understanding between and among different user groups and local communities **Constructive relationships** are built across all users of Dartmoor.

How do we get there?



- Looking out and looking in !
- A focus on where people start their journey not the destination
- The whole visitor journey
- Joined up approach to information and communication
- New collaborations and partnerships
- Making outreach and engagement core work
- Finding income to deliver
- Thinking differently – twinning.



What can we learn from the past?



Widening access

Many examples MOSAIC, Stepping Stones but we need **long term interventions** – this needs to be core work - not short term funding

Public Transport

Again many examples, Haytor Hoppa – people will use it but not financially viable - **are we willing to invest?**

Changing Behaviour

Good infrastructure is important – right place right time – NCN, FC hubs
Capital funding is often forthcoming
We need to understand **peoples motivations**
Parkerun has worked – **social, drop in activity and feeling welcome.**

We can find answers!

Questions to ponder



Will numbers continue to grow – active oldies?

Will climate emergency encourage people to leave their cars behind?

Will nature emergency encourage people to re-connect?

Will electric bikes/cars ever be affordable to help solve our accessibility issues?

Can we scale up outreach interventions to widen visitor base, support social prescribing and be sustainable ?

How can we improve our communications reach in a technology driven world?

Is the quick fix experience here to stay or are we moving to real experiences ?

Is management in time feasible at a landscape rather than site based scale?

How big a role do fashion and celebrities have on trends?



Thank You

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