

September  
2018

# State of Dorset

## Natural and Historic Environment



Dorset County Council  
for the Dorset Council area

In this bulletin Dorset refers to the Dorset Council area coming into effect 1st April 2019 unless stated otherwise

Dorset's natural and historic environment makes a huge contribution to health and personal wellbeing.

Dorset's natural systems provide a wide range of essential goods (food, fuel, productive soil, clean air and water) and beneficial services (pollination, flood alleviation, climate regulation and tranquillity). These are taken for granted, but they need a combination of public, private and voluntary action to maintain them.

The contribution of our natural and historic environment to the economy is often overlooked.

The high quality natural environment that is so cherished by people living and working in Dorset means that we work hard to deliver mechanisms such as the Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework to ensure that development is led sustainably.

Big Numbers Box

**66%** Reduction in waste sent to landfill in Dorset in the last 10 years

**6%** Of energy production from renewable sources

**5%** Of all nationally protected ancient monuments are in Dorset

**90%**

Of Dorset residents said that the environment was an important factor in their decision to live in Dorset.

**54%** Of county covered by Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation

Low carbon economy growth faster than the wider economy by **4x**

### Box 1: The Natural Environment

- 90% of the DCC Dorset area's residents surveyed said the environment was an important, very important or crucial factor in their decision to live in Dorset. In addition, businesses report a demonstrable positive impact from both the Jurassic Coast and the AONB.<sup>1</sup>
- Dorset contains part of England's only natural World Heritage Site and two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, covering 54% of the Dorset Council area.<sup>2</sup>
- Whilst making up only two per cent of the area of England, Dorset holds five per cent of its nationally protected ancient monuments. However, a quarter of these are 'at risk'.<sup>3</sup>
- All of the Dorset coast (excluding the town seafronts) is recognised in national or international designations for its unique landscape, scenic quality, wildlife and geological formations.<sup>2</sup>



### Sources

- 1 'Dorset's Environmental Economy', Ash Futures for Dorset County Council, Dorset AONB, Jurassic Coast WHS, Dorset LNP, 2015
- 2 Dorset Databook 2011, Dorset County Council (recalculated)
- 3 The National Heritage List for England (NHLE), Historic England, [Searched 29/11/17]
- 4 The Clean Growth Strategy, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 12/10/2017
- 5 Dorset Waste Partnership
- 6 Public Health and Landscape, Creating healthy places, Landscape Institute, November 2013



## Box 2: Economy and wellbeing

- DCC Dorset's environmental economy is worth between £0.9bn and £2.5bn per annum, about 8-10% of the overall economy. It also supports between 17,000 and 61,000 jobs in the economy.<sup>1</sup>
- The low carbon economy has the potential to grow by 11% per year between 2015 and 2030 - four times faster than the rest of the economy.<sup>4</sup>
- The amount of waste sent to landfill in the Dorset County Council area has dropped by around 66% in the last 10 years and continues to decline year on year.<sup>5</sup>
- The physical and mental health benefits of access to nature are well documented, as are the negative impacts of environmental inequality. Improving access to green infrastructure therefore offers the potential to extend these benefits, particularly in areas where access is poor.
- The landscape can reduce the need for expensive public health interventions. Local public health spending on the landscape can be 27 times more cost effective than clinical interventions.<sup>6</sup> Greater wellbeing also contributes to higher productivity and economic gain.

% Reduction in amount of  
Waste going to landfill in Dorset



## Box 3: Energy

- Climate change will continue and whilst CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in Dorset are falling, in line with the government's targets for 2020<sup>7</sup>, further reductions are required to meet tougher emission targets for 2050<sup>8</sup>. The Paris Agreement aims to limit warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
- Renewable energy production has increased in Bournemouth, DCC Dorset and Poole from 0.95% of local energy consumption in February 2011 to 5.5% in March 2016. However, Dorset still lags behind Cornwall and Devon who continue to lead on renewable energy generation in the SW.<sup>9</sup>

Renewable energy % of  
consumption



## What are we doing about it?

The council is committed to reducing its carbon footprint. As our buildings make up a significant proportion of this, renewable energy solutions have an important role to play in our overall strategy, alongside energy efficiency measures.

The Dorset Waste Partnership promotes recycling by running promotional campaigns and providing incentive schemes for composting bins and 'real' nappies.

The Dorset AONB is hosted by the council and undertakes projects such as 'Stepping into Nature' which is helping to deliver health and wellbeing benefits for Dorset's older people, including those living with dementia.

We employ a team of Rangers who work to conserve Dorset's natural environment and keep public rights of way open. There is also an apprentice scheme to help young people kick-start a career in environmental conservation.

The council's Natural Environment Team manage the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol. This scheme ensures that protected species which may be affected by planning applications are protected from harm by agreeing a particular methodology to avoid impact or on-site mitigation.

### Sources

7 UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2014, Department of Energy & Climate Change.

8 The Carbon Plan: Delivering our low carbon future, Department of Energy & Climate Change, 2011.

9 Renewable energy - A local progress report for England, Regen SW, 2016.