

May 2022

State of Dorset

Natural and Historic Environment



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

92% Reduction in waste sent to landfill compared to 10 years ago. Only 3% of waste is now sent to landfill¹⁰

6% Of energy production from renewable sources

5% Of all nationally protected ancient monuments are in

Listed Buildings in Dorset **9,227**

90%

Of Dorset residents said the environment was an important factor deciding to live in Dorset

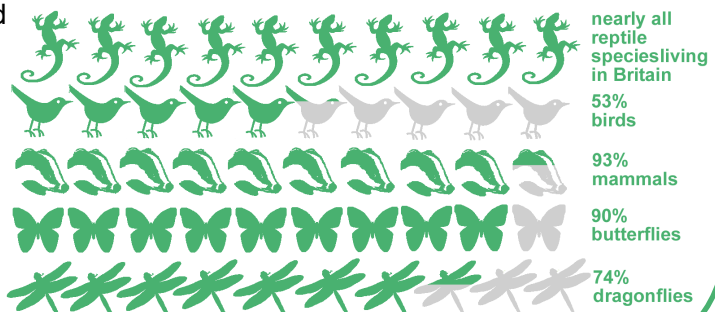
54%

Of county covered by Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation

Box 1: The Natural Environment

- 90% of Dorset'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.¹
- 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.²
- Dorset is home to 9,227³ Listed Buildings of which 249 are Grade I which are of exceptional interest and may be of significant national importance. 5% of all national protected monuments are in Dorset.
- 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.²

Dorset is home to...



Sources

*includes Christchurch

- 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, 2022
- 4 The Clean Growth Strategy, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 12/10/2017
- 5 Public Health and Landscape, Creating healthy places, Landscape Institute, November 2013

Box 2: Economy and wellbeing

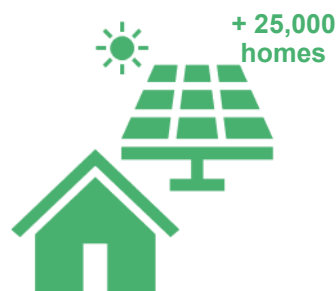
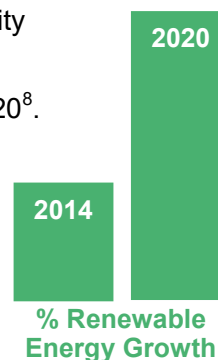
- Dorset's* environmental economy is worth between £0.9bn and £2.5bn per annum, about 8-10% of the overall economy. It also supports between 17,000 and 61,000 jobs in the economy.¹
- The low carbon economy has the potential to grow by 11% per year between 2015 and 2030 - four times faster than the rest of the economy⁴.
- 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 interventions⁵.

% reduction in amount of waste being sent to landfill¹⁰



Box 3: Natural Environment and Renewable Energy

- Climate change will continue and CO² emissions have not reduced from 0.7kt per kilometre since 2016 in Dorset⁹. Further reductions are required to meet tougher emission targets for 2050⁶. The Paris Agreement aims to limit warming to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
- Dorset is in the top 15% of over 400 areas in the UK for renewable electricity generation⁸.
- Renewable energy generation has increased 250% between 2014 and 2020⁸.
- However, while renewable energy production has increased, Dorset was lagging behind Cornwall and Devon in 2016 on renewable energy production, who are the leaders in the SW^{7,8}.
- Much of Dorset is protected as nationally important and with heritage assets, including: listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields, so planning permissions must be carefully considered to ensure they continue to be protected.
- Three new projects in Dorset this year in Tadmoll, Sherborne and Blandford to generate solar renewable energy will together generate enough electricity to power approximately 25,000 homes. Balancing any negative environmental impacts in local authority planning processes enables growth of the renewable industry, whilst reducing harmful carbon emissions for the long term⁸.



Sources

*includes Christchurch

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

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

8 Dorset is one of the UK's top areas for renewable energy generation, Dorset Council News, 25/03/2022

9 UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2019

10 2011 compared to 2021, Dorset Council