

December
2023

State of Dorset

Natural and Historic Environment



Dorset's natural and historic environment makes a huge contribution to health and personal wellbeing, as well as to the economy.

Our 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).

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

3% Of waste is sent to landfill compared to 35% 10 years ago

20% Local renewable generation as % of total electricity consumption¹²

5% Of England's ancient monuments are in Dorset

90% of residents prioritised the environment in choosing to live here

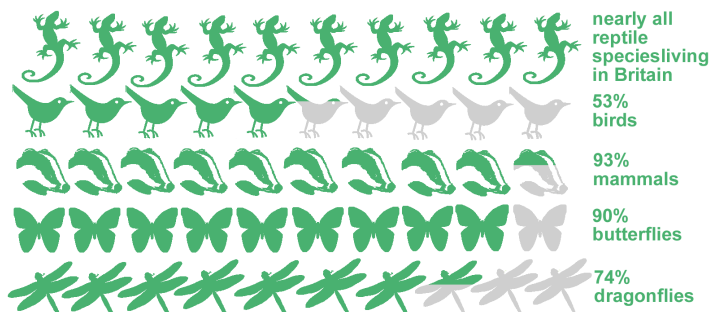
54% Of county covered by Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation

Listed Buildings in Dorset **9,215**

Box 1: Landmarks & Landscapes

- 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 9,215 Listed Buildings of which 245 are Grade I.³ 5% of all national protected monuments are in Dorset.
- Dorset's coast 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, 2023
- 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. It also supports between 17,000 and 61,000 jobs in the economy.¹
- The low carbon economy could grow by 11% per year between 2015 and 2030 - four times faster than the rest of the economy.⁴
- A green job is one that protects or restores the environment, including those that mitigate or adapt to climate change. This is a new area of research, but the ONS estimates that around 4% of jobs nationwide fall within this category.¹¹
- Access to nature has physical and mental health benefits, so improving access is important in reducing environmental inequality.
- 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 waste sent to landfill¹⁰



Box 3: Climate and Renewable Energy

- Dorset's greenhouse gas emissions fell by over 4% from 2019-2021, and by a third since 2005. But much more is required, and reductions in county emissions are off target to get to net zero by 2050
- Dorset produces far more renewable electricity than most local authorities in England, at 328,383 MWh in 2022.
- Dorset's renewable energy capacity continues to increase. It now stands at 347 MW (2022), an increase of 16% in a year.⁸
- While renewable energy production has increased, Dorset continues to lag behind Cornwall and Devon who are the leaders in the SW.⁹
- Four wind turbines at Alaska Wind Farm have been installed at Masters Quarry near Wareham. Along with the site's 90,000 solar panels, it will generate enough power to power 20,000 homes. It will also see 13 hectares converted back to traditional heathland that will be home to rare species, whilst profits will help fund conservation work in East Stoke.¹²

298 MW 347 MW



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 Renewable electricity by local authority 2014 - 2022, Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ)

9 UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2021, (DESNZ)

10 Recycling Team, Dorset Council

11 Experimental estimates of green jobs, UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

12 Sustainability Team, Dorset Council