

Throughout this document ‘Devon’ refers to the administrative area of Devon County Council and ‘Torbay’ refers to the administrative area of Torbay Council. Italic hyperlinks will open the interactive Devon County Council Environment Viewer.

Economic Prosperity, Health & Wellbeing

The quality and character of Devon and Torbay’s rural and urban landscapes has long been recognised as a valuable asset. Countryside, coast and beaches are the top attractions for visitors to the south westⁱ meaning that landscape directly underpins an annual £2.1 billion (per annum) spend in Devon, Plymouth and Torbayⁱⁱ representing 11% of total employmentⁱⁱⁱ as well as indirectly supporting the remainder of the economy by attracting people to live and work in the area^{iv}. At the same time, the landscape is under



Galmpton Creek in the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

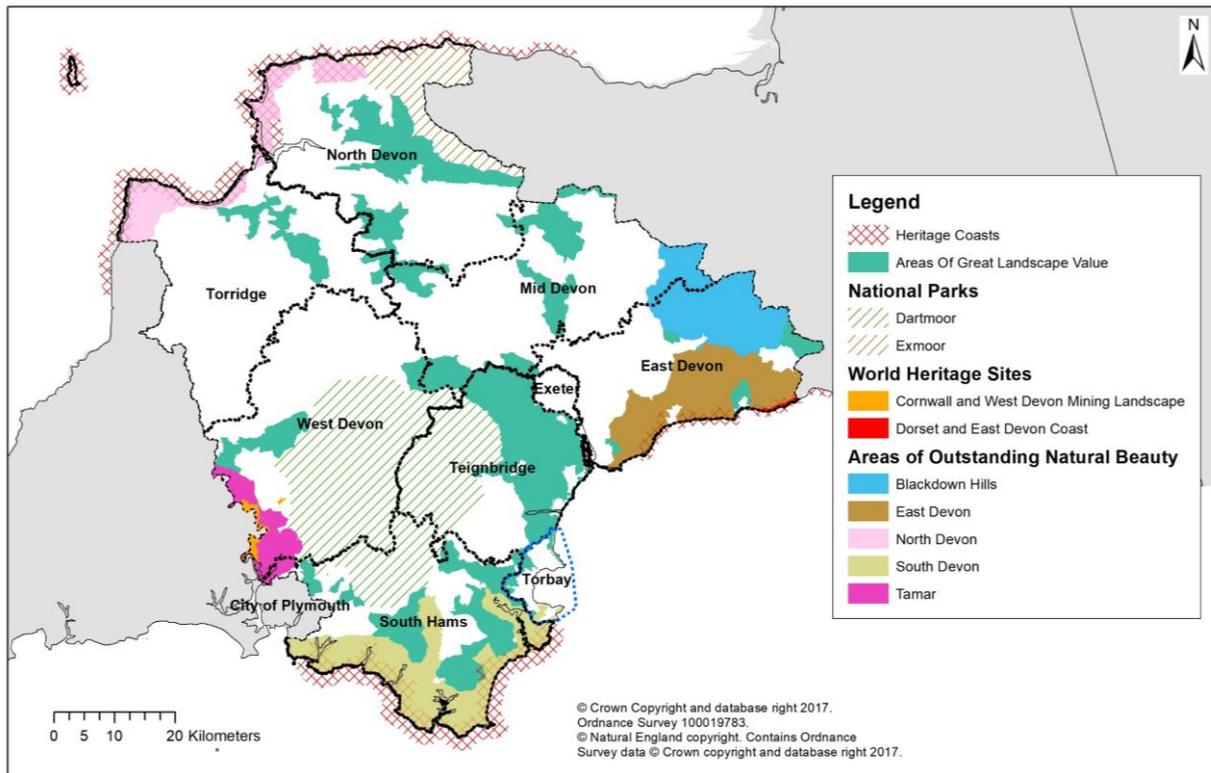
continuous pressure for change from development, changes in land management practices, and the effects of climate change. Devon and Torbay’s rural landscapes are heavily influenced by their patchwork of agricultural activity and the continuation of agri-food industries is vital for the conservation and enhancement of the landscape. The county has four times more agricultural activity than the national average^v.

Landscapes perceived as beautiful, tranquil and ‘natural’ can improve mental wellbeing, by reducing stress and evoking positive emotions, and help improve physical fitness by providing inviting and inspiring environments to exercise^{vi}. Access to the coast and countryside, such as via the public rights of way network, is important for these benefits to be fully realised and to contribute to minimising the £105 billion cost of mental health conditions to the wider England economy^{vii} and £198m cost of obesity to NHS Devon^{viii} each year.

Growth in visitor numbers and the resident population will exert further pressure on Devon and Torbay’s landscape; this needs to be managed carefully to maintain the high quality and distinctive character of the landscape to secure future economic prosperity and health and wellbeing. Expenditure by South West Coast Path users has increased by £118 million between 2010 and 2015 to £500m, with visits increasing by 11%.^{ix} In 2014 the total day visits to Devon was 30 million with 8 million visits to the countryside and 8 million visits to the coast, totaling a spend of £1.4b.^x

Distinctive and Valued Landscapes

The diversity of landscapes in Devon is striking, whether it is the open windswept high moors of Dartmoor and Exmoor, the rugged coastlines of rocky cliffs and sweeping bays, secluded valleys, rolling hills of traditionally managed farmland, or its rich historic character. Dartmoor alone boasts over 160 tors and 18 principal rivers and valleys ranging in altitude from 2,039ft at High Willhays to just 98ft at Doghole Bridge^{xi}. Devon and Torbay contain a number of valuable landscapes which have been designated in recognition of their international, national and local significance (Map 1^{xii}). In total, 35% of Devon and Torbay is covered by [landscape designations](#)^{xiii}.



Map 1 – Nationally and Internationally Designated Landscapes

Devon's two national parks have a total area of 1,644 km². Covering an area of 954 km², Dartmoor contains the largest and wildest area of open country in the south of England. There are also five Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) with a total area of 1,144 km² namely the Blackdown Hills AONB, East Devon AONB, North Devon AONB, South Devon AONB (which crosses the Torbay and Devon border) and the Tamar Valley AONB^{xiv}. The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site recognises the transformation of the landscape in the 18th and early 19th centuries as a result of rapid growth in the pioneering copper and tin mining industries^{xv}.

Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment and Related Tools



The picturesque fishing village of Clovelly is one of the most iconic settlements in the North Devon AONB

Devon's and Torbay's landscape character assessments describe the variations in character between different areas and types of landscape. Defining the distinctive character of landscapes is important, whether outstanding, everyday or degraded.

The special qualities of landscapes also need to be defined if they are to be sustained for future generations to enjoy. Landscape character assessments provide an evidence base

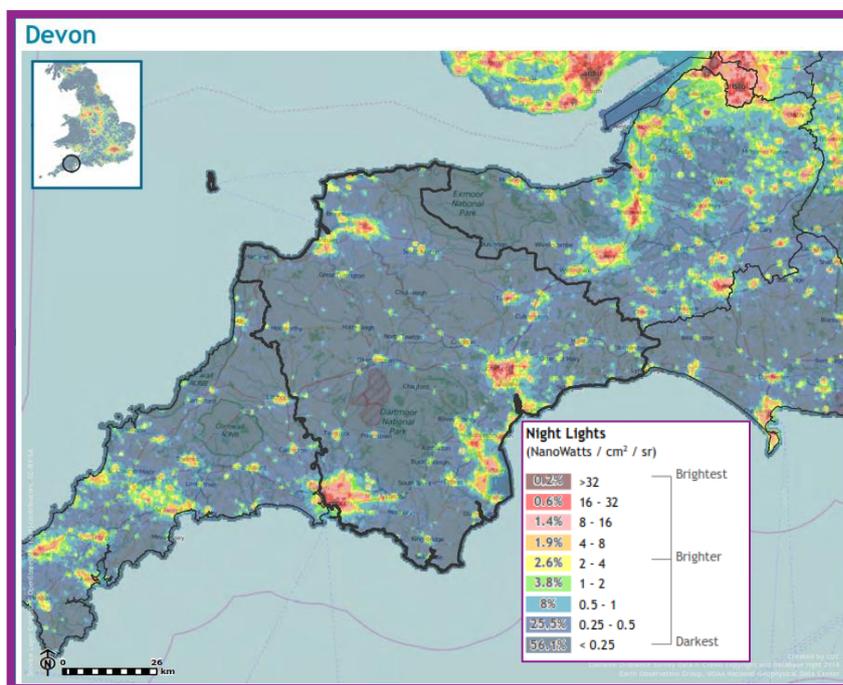
for this for use in local development plans and land management, articulating what people perceive as

distinctive and special about all landscapes in Devon and Torbay. They also set out strategies and guidelines for the protection, management and planning of the landscape. Further information is available at www.devon.gov.uk/landscape and www.torbay.gov.uk/landscapecharacterassessment.

The [North Devon and Exmoor Seascape Character Assessment](#) has identified Special Character Areas which lie within Devon from Lynmouth to Hartland Race (Torrige).

Forces for Change

Common pressures on landscapes in Devon and Torbay include the influence of the urban fringe and sprawling urban centres, noise (tranquillity is discussed in the Air Quality and Noise section), light pollution and recreational pressures from tourism^{xvi}. Emerging pressures include the effects of climate change, alterations to agricultural practices and the development of the renewable



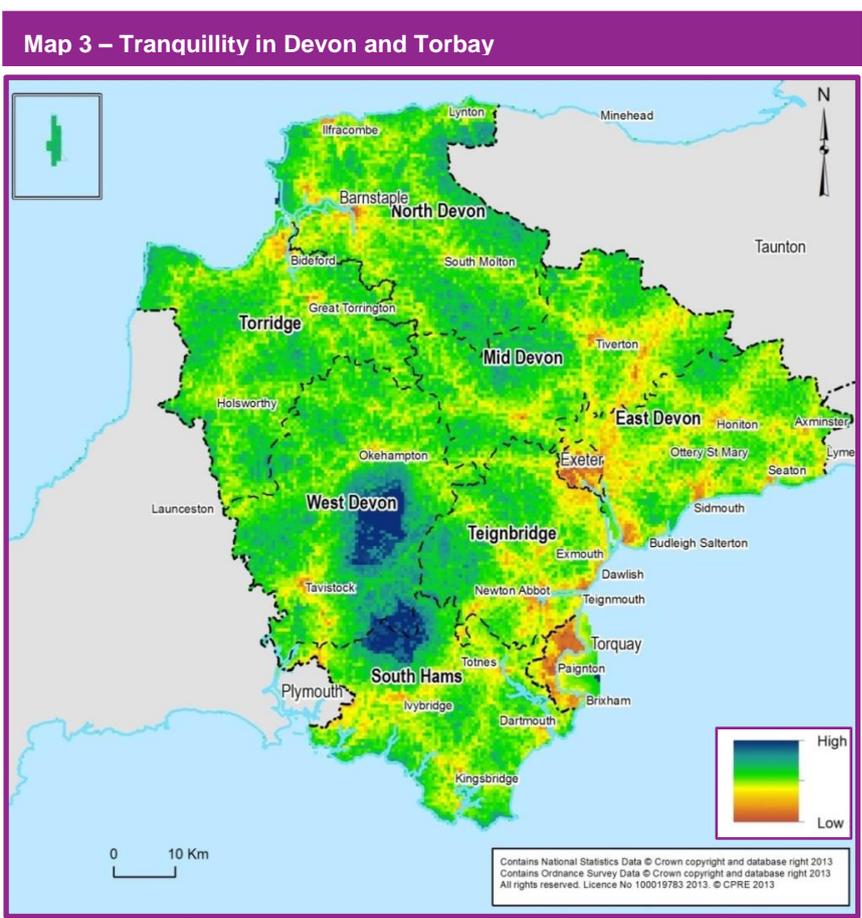
Map 2 – Dark Skies Mapping

energy sector – discussed in more detail in the Climate Change and Energy section. The Campaign to Protect Rural England hosts an up-to-date map of renewable energy planning applications and development across Devon which can be located [on their website](#): Other forces for change relate to biosecurity and the risk of disease on indigenous tree species that make a major contribution to our landscape, for example Ash Dieback and Sudden Oak Death.

There are confirmed cases of Ash Dieback in Devon, both within plantations and in the wild, and this is of great concern in the next few years given the high proportion of Ash in Devon's woodlands, hedgerows, parks and gardens.

Dark Skies

Dark, starry nights have inspired humans for thousands of years. Gazing at the universe has sparked the imaginations of poets, artists, musicians, philosophers, scientists and explorers for millennia. Yet diffuse light pollution from urbanisation has eroded the natural darkness of the night sky to a great extent over much of the UK. The Campaign to Protect Rural England has [published maps](#) (2016) showing effects of light pollution on skies. Map 2^{xvii} shows satellite data results for Devon and Torbay, illustrating that the rural areas of Devon away from main urban centres and road corridors in the mid, north and south of the county still offered dark skies. The effects of light pollution will continue to increase given plans for major urban extensions and growth points extending into rural areas of Devon. The National Planning Policy Framework addresses this issue by requiring the impacts of light pollution to be limited through good design. CPRE mapping of dark skies does not however, take into account DCC's policy of switching off street lighting away from A roads at 0030 GMT as the survey itself is undertaken at 0130 GMT. Devon County Council, along with many other local councils, has a policy to minimise light pollution in all its operations, including highway lighting. The Authority has also undertaken a programme of part-night street lighting working with parishes to switch off street lighting in the early hours of the morning. Whilst this programme is economically driven it will have the effect



of reducing light pollution in many rural areas of Devon. The design of lighting to serve new development in Devon is also carefully considered in order to protect Devon's remaining areas of inherently dark landscapes.

In 2012, the Campaign to Protect Dark Skies identified the UK's best places to view the night sky, factoring in both light pollution and cloud cover. Parts of Devon emerged as some of the best places, including parts of Exmoor, Dartmoor, South Hams, West Devon and the Hartland coast. Using this data, Exmoor National Park made a successful bid to the International Dark-Sky Association to become the first International Dark Skies Reserve in Europe^{xviii} Dartmoor National Park is also considering applying for Dark Skies status.

Tranquillity

The Campaign to Protect Rural England has defined areas of tranquillity based on the levels of noise and visual intrusion from major infrastructure such as motorways and A roads, urban areas and airports^{xix}. Table 1^{xx} shows a gradual increase in the area of Devon disturbed by noise and visual intrusion between the 1960s and 2007. Data for Torbay is unavailable. The most rapid increase has been between the early 1960s and 1990s, during which a 154% increase in land area affected by noise and visual intrusion occurred. This was a time during which Devon became more urbanised, the M5 Motorway was constructed and the A38, A380 and A30 roads were dualled.

Map 3^{xxi} illustrates the 2007 [tranquillity levels](#). It shows that the sparsely populated areas of central Devon are the most tranquil, including Dartmoor National Park. The areas with the lowest level of tranquillity follow the network of major roads in Devon as well as urban settlements.

Coast

There are three heritage coastlines in Devon, the North Devon Heritage Coast, East Devon Heritage Coast and South Devon Heritage Coast. The North Devon Heritage coast

stretches from Ilfracombe to Lynton and on into Exmoor National Park. This coastline is largely undeveloped meaning it retains its historic legacy including various features such as lime kilns, fishing villages and has a high level of public access which encourages visitors.

The Jurassic Coast is a World Heritage site which stretches from Orcombe Point near Exmouth through to Swanage in Dorset. This diverse coastline includes a variety of rock types including sandstone, limestone and clay. These different rock types make for an incredible coastline including many coastal features such as sea stacks in Ladram Bay made of sandstone. Much of the Jurassic Coast is located in the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Another World Heritage Site unique to both Devon and Cornwall is the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, this landscape was created in the 18th and 19th century through the growth of the copper and tin mining industry. In Devon this includes the Tamar Valley Mining District with Tavistock, this includes the Devon Great Consols which was the largest copper mine in this site.

Early 1960s		Early 1990s		2007		Change 60s –90s	Change 90s – 2007
591km ²	9%	1,511km ²	22%	2,104km ²	31%	154%	40%

- ⁱ South West Tourism (2009) *Visitor Profiling*. South West Tourism. Available at: <http://www.swtourismalliance.org.uk/research-facts-and-figures/non-regular-research-projects/>
- ⁱⁱ South West Tourism (2008) *Value of Tourism 2008*. South West Tourism. Available at: <http://www.swtourismalliance.org.uk/research-facts-and-figures/regional-tourism-data/>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Devon County Council (2008) *Tourism*. Devon County Council. <http://www.devonomics.info/prosperity/sectors-tourismjobs> (Accessed: 13/08/2013)
- ^{iv} Primelocation.com (2013) cited in Grant, S. (2013) *Totnes and Topsham among the Best Places to Live in the UK*. This is South Devon. March 19th. Available at <http://www.thisisdevon.co.uk/Totnes-Topsham-named-best-places-live-UK/story-18461187-detail/story.html#axzz2cb889XtJ> (Accessed: 21/08/13)
- ^v Devon County Council (2010) *Devonomics: The Devon Economy at Your Fingertips*. Devon County Council. Available at: <http://www.devonomics.info/sites/default/files/documents/Devonomics%20Consultation%20Final.pdf> (Accessed: 21/08/13)
- ^{vi} Abraham, A. et al. (2010) 'Landscape and Wellbeing: A Scoping Study on the Health-Promoting Impact of Outdoor Environments', *International Journal of Public Health*, 55 (1), 59 - 69
- ^{vii} Network of Public Health Observations (2012) *Community Mental Health Profiles 2013 - Devon*. Network of Public Health Observations. Available at: <http://www.nepho.org.uk/cmhp/index.php?pdf=E10000008>
- ^{viii} NHS Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (2012) *Devon Specialist Obesity Service Specification*, NHS Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. Available at: http://www.devonpct.nhs.uk/Library/Treatments_commissioning_policies/Devon_Specialist_Obesity_Service_Specification.pdf (Accessed: 21/08/13)
- ^{ix} South West Research Company (2016) *South West Coast Path Monitoring & Evaluation Framework: Year 5 (2015) Key Findings Summary*. Available at: https://www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk/media/uploads/swcp_year_5_analysis_summary_-_key_findings.pdf
- ^x The South West Research Company, Produced on behalf of the Devon Tourism Partnership. (2015) *The Economic Impact of Devon's Visitor Economy 2014* Visit Devon, South West Research Company.
- ^{xi} Dartmoor National Park Authority (2005) *General Information*. Dartmoor National Park Authority. Available at: <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/learningabout/lab-printableresources/lab-factsheetshome/lab-generalfactsheet> (Accessed: 16/09/2013)
- ^{xii} Devon County Council (2013) *Data supplied by Devon County Council*
- ^{xiii} Local Nature Partnership (2013) *Devon's Landscapes*. Devon County Council. Available at: <http://www.naturaldevon.org.uk/devons-landscapes/> (Accessed: 04/03/2014)
- ^{xiv} Devon County Council (2007) *Devon's Outstanding Landscapes*. Devon County Council. Available at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/devonaonbsleaflet.pdf> (Accessed: 16/10/2013)
- ^{xv} UNESCO (2013) *Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape*. UNESCO. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1215>
- ^{xvi} Devon County Council (2013) *Devon's Landscape Character Assessment*. Devon County Council. Available at: http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm
- ^{xvii} Campaign to Protect Rural England (2013) *Dark Skies*. Data available at: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/dark-skies> (Accessed: 15/05/2013)

New Data:

Campaign to Protect Rural England (2016) *Dark Skies*. Data available at:

<http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>

^{xviii} Exmoor National Park (Unknown) *Exmoor's Dark Skies*. Exmoor National Park. Available at: <http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/visiting/things-to-do/stargazing> (Accessed: 5/03/2014)

^{xix} Campaign to Protect Rural England (2013) *Developing an Intrusion Map of England*. CPRE. Available at: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/tranquil-places/item/1790-developing-an-intrusion-map-of-england> (Accessed: 16/09/2013)

^{xx} Land Use Consultants (2007) *Developing an Intrusion Map of England*. CPRE. Available at: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/tranquil-places/item/download/303> (Accessed: 16/09/2013)

^{xxi} Campaign to Protect Rural England (2007). *Tranquillity Map England*. CPRE. Available at: <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/tranquil-places/item/1839->