

# ***A Vision for the Dartmoor National Park in 2027***

At the very centre of Dartmoor stands one of the many great granite outcrops that give this National Park its unique character. Gaunt against the skyline, it appears like a huge monument to the primeval world, surrounded by the wind-tugged heather. But it is not just the rock itself that is impressive. Go there and you will be surrounded by the ancient landscape of deep valleys and rock-crested hills, long-established hill farms and the buried remains of our Bronze Age predecessors. You can follow the horizon full circle, turning beneath the vast freedom of the sky, while breathing the pure, clear air of the moor. To be there gives you the reassurance that the world need not be over-crowded, polluted and dominated by consumerism. If a glint of sunlight catches a distant tractor, reminding you that this is part of a working community, it is nevertheless still a place where you can find solitude and nature thrives. Few depart without a better sense of themselves and what they cherish most, despite the pressures of the modern world.

The tor and its surroundings epitomise what makes Dartmoor a national asset. But even this is not the whole story. From the blanket bogs and valley mires to the high moors, woodland and enclosed fields: Dartmoor National Park remains a unique and varied landscape, with habitats of international importance, an extraordinary range of wildlife and wide expanses of wildness. It is also a cultural landscape, where extensive archaeological remains testify to generations of human activity. At the same time it is a place where people live, work and play, with consequent competing demands on resources.

Farming and tourism are encouraged and balanced, both to manage the landscape and to enable it to be enjoyed. The conservation of the ancient fabric of the towns, villages and farmsteads remains a high priority, as does the protection of the moor from creeping urbanisation, such as light pollution and highway infrastructure. A modest degree of expansion is allowed in the larger settlements, to accommodate new employment and to provide housing for a thriving local population. A responsible use of natural resources and a commitment to generating energy in sustainable ways is fostered in order to minimise damage not only to Dartmoor but to the wider environment.

Crucial to all of this is the continuing relationship between the local communities and the National Park itself. Both the working economy and the National Park's cultural identity are vested in the local people. They provide the continuity, support and living heritage that make each place much more than a mere location on a map.

This vision for the Dartmoor National Park is therefore one of balance, in which both stability and change are beneficial to local people and visitors alike, and the special qualities of Dartmoor are preserved for future generations as well as for those who visit and live in the National Park today.

For more information regarding the Dartmoor National Park Authority and to assist participants in their understanding and enjoyment of Dartmoor's special qualities see [www.dartmoor.gov.uk](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk). If you would like to volunteer to undertake some conservation work with Rangers please email [rsteemson@dartmoor.gov.uk](mailto:rsteemson@dartmoor.gov.uk) or phone 01626 831006