



A lot has happened since the National Park Team's Spring Newsletter and we hope you enjoy this update.

The Dorset Council has declared a **climate emergency** and many understandably think that this should be allied to an environment emergency as the challenges of climate change/ecology/environment are inextricably interlinked. **A feature article below summarises how a National Park, as a close and supportive partner of the Dorset Council, communities and other stakeholders, would help all of Dorset to meet these linked challenges as well as contribute to fresh thinking on the opportunities a green and more sustainable economy can offer for our communities and businesses.** A briefing paper for the Dorset Council is on the NP website:

<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Climate-and-Environmental-Emergency>

The interim findings of the **Glover Review of Designated Landscapes** were published on 16 July in an exchange of letters between the Review's Chairman, Julian Glover, and the Secretary of State for the Environment:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review>

We welcome Julian Glover's call "...to reignite the fire and vision which brought this system [of designated landscapes] into being in 1949." A Dorset National Park should be central to a new and exciting vision for our county, our communities, businesses and all who live and work in and visit the area. We also welcome the call that our designated landscapes should take a lead in the response to climate change and become leaders in Nature Recovery Networks. And we endorse the Review's statement: "At the very least we want to see existing budgets for National Parks secured in real terms and sustained for a further five-year period. Any new National Park designations must be funded with additional money not from the current budget." We look forward to the final report this autumn, the 70th anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

We urge both the Glover Review and the Government to support our long-overdue National Park, which is widely recognised as the **outstanding candidate to be England's next National Park**. The area has exceptional geodiversity, beautiful and diverse landscapes, the greatest biodiversity in Britain and "gold standard" heritage. Our spectacular World Heritage Coast would double the extent of coastline currently in England's National Parks, and we have an unparalleled range of recreational opportunities inland, coastal and offshore.

We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to achieve a well-resourced National Park which would make a real and positive difference for our communities and environment. A National Park would work in partnership and bring additional resources and expertise to help ensure a thriving future for our communities and economy, health and livelihoods, our environment and wildlife offshore as well as onshore.

We want to **build on successes**, including the positive approaches to planning characterised by the South Downs National Park. This is, like Dorset, a living, working, farmed landscape with important towns and other communities. That NP promotes the development of homes and workspaces for local people, including genuinely affordable homes, and helps farmers and land managers to diversify their businesses as well as secure farm funding support. The SDNP recognises that farmers and landowners are the custodians of the countryside and wants to help them thrive and succeed. Our website contains various reports and case studies on what has been achieved in the South Downs; see for example:

<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/New-Farming-Case-Studies>

Together with councils, communities and businesses across Dorset, we can build on these achievements with a **21st century National Park partnership that is appropriate for Dorset**. The National Park would be a close, supportive partner for the Dorset Council and communities, working to a shared agenda and bringing additional resources to support local services. Together, the Dorset Council and the National Park (with the additional resources and expertise it would bring) can deliver a better planning service - responsive, seamless, streamlined and more efficient - across all rural Dorset with a shared planning team and no duplication.



Our councils, businesses, Local Enterprise Partnership and Local Nature Partnership are considering **the future direction of our economy** in the context of a government requirement to produce a draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). A National Park would be a key player in such strategies for the future. Planning to capitalise on all that a National Park would offer should be factored into all thinking and plans, including an appropriate and relevant rural strategy as part of a Dorset-wide LIS.

As independent reports (on the NP website) have shown, a National Park would offer great opportunities and benefits for the economy county-wide, throughout rural Dorset and the conurbation. It would **attract genuinely additional funding**, put the area more on the international business map and help to grow the economy in ways we need – **adding value and boosting productivity, profitability, jobs and skills**. With a National Park, Dorset has the potential to be a leader in the green economy. A feature article below summarises the economic benefits of a National Park.

The Dorset & East Devon National Park could be the first to help coordinate the work of various agencies and organisations that operate **at the interface between land and sea** as well as to bring coherent, joined-up thinking for our ecosystems. The National Park offers a unique opportunity to help better coordinate across on-shore and off-shore agencies and interests, with improved coherence and efficiency to everyone's benefit, including those who make their living along the coast such as in-shore fishermen. The National Park website features a recent independent report on the **potential marine dimension of the proposed National Park**

<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Off-shore-and-On-shore>



Our National Park could be a beacon for others in showing how to better integrate thinking and actions at the interface between land and sea.

**Dorset CPRE** supports the proposal for a Dorset National Park which would work with our councils, communities and other stakeholders including businesses, farmers, landowners, societies and agencies, for living, working, thriving, successful and sustainable communities, environment and economy throughout Dorset. CPRE would wish the National Park to include as much as possible of rural Dorset. To assist the Glover Review and to facilitate further detailed assessment, CPRE commissioned Jo Witherden, an experienced and respected Dorset planner, to review the evidence, based on the key criteria for National Park designation. Her report provides wide-ranging evidence to support CPRE's case for the designation of a National Park for rural Dorset:

<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/The-case-for-rural-Dorset>

The report recommends that work continue with a view to extending the evidence available, with the participation of councils, communities, societies and individuals. This current report, and the growing evidence base which would result from an ongoing project, have the potential to make a valuable contribution to the Dorset Council and other stakeholders in their future work, including the preparation of a new Dorset Local Plan. CPRE has called on the Government and the Glover Review to give the proposed Dorset National Park their full support.

## The Dorset Council: A Climate and Environment Emergency

The Dorset Council has declared a Climate Emergency and many understandably think that this should be allied to an environment emergency as the challenges of climate change/ecology/environment are inextricably interlinked.

This emergency calls for fresh thinking and a new strategic vision about the linked challenges of climate emergency, environment, and ecology. Dorset's exceptional biodiversity, geodiversity and landscape diversity are spectacular and world class. They are a vital national as well as local asset. Yet Dorset's environment and wildlife continue to suffer degradation and remain under serious continuing pressure. Climate change makes them even more vulnerable. But it can also stimulate fresh thinking.

We cannot lose these jewels in the national crown. A National Park, as a close and supportive partner of the Dorset Council, communities and other stakeholders, would help all of Dorset to meet the linked challenges as well as contribute to fresh thinking on the opportunities a green and more sustainable economy can offer for our communities and businesses, including farmers. A National Park would attract new investment, support local jobs and skills and bring additional government funding for a shared agenda. It would promote health & wellbeing and

help to raise awareness and understanding of the linked challenges we face. A National Park would work with all partners to reverse ecological decline and invest in and enhance our environment, natural capital and ecosystem services such as clean water and carbon capture in soils and woodland. It would work with councils and others to develop sustainable, locally appropriate policies, for example for transport, energy and tourism.

Our world class environment is Dorset's greatest asset. A National Park, core funded by central government, can help conserve and enhance this asset for the benefit of our communities and economy and the nation. It could be the delivery agent for much of the Council's work on the environment, heritage and tourism, and contribute to the delivery of key services, thus strengthening the development and sustainability of rural communities. A National Park would bring resources and expertise to build on the best that is being achieved elsewhere. We need the government to approve a National Park which is well-resourced to work with and support the Dorset Council, communities and other partners to address the complex challenges that we face together. A National Park would help us all to pass on our environment in a better state for future generations.

See the full briefing paper at:

<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Climate-and-Environmental-Emergency>

## A National Park: Some Benefits for Farmers

At the suggestion of the CLA and NFU, various reports and case studies have been compiled on how farmers and landowners interact with the South Downs National Park (SDNP). This is England's most recent National Park and, like Dorset, is a farmed, working, living landscape with some substantial towns and other communities.

The following are some salient facts taken from these reports:

- ▶ The SDNP established early in its life an independent Land Management Group to which all landowners and farmers belong. The Group is consulted on proposed NP policies and plans and helps guide future policies and funding priorities, including through workshops and working breakfasts.
- ▶ The SDNP has helped its farmers secure 20% of Stewardship funding in the South East region, though the South Downs covers only 10% of the area under agreement.
- ▶ Additional funding has been secured for schemes such as improved water quality, chalk grassland, woodland management, heathland conservation, sustainable transport, as well as heritage tourism.
- ▶ Some two thirds of the SDNP is now included in farmer-led farm clusters which help achieve landscape scale conservation and specific environmental aims, and which have the ability to bid for and secure additional agri-environmental funding.
- ▶ The SDNP has worked with farmers, landowners, the CLA and NFU to propose a pilot Environment Land Management Scheme (ELMS) which is tailor-made to meet the needs of local farmers and facilitate access to new "public benefit" farm funding. The proposal includes agri-environment solutions which take full account of farmers' expertise and ideas to improve productivity and resilience, enhance income and reduce costs for participating farm businesses including through farm diversification and the conversion of redundant buildings.
- ▶ This bid has passed an initial sift (along with the bids from other NPs whereas half the bids submitted by other organisations have been rejected). The future focus on public benefit farm funding makes it all the more urgent for Dorset to have similar schemes in place to achieve environmental and ecosystems aims. This should be an early priority of a Dorset NP, working in close partnership with the CLA and NFU.
- ▶ Reports on the Dorset National Park website summarise how the SDNPA works in partnership with farmers and landowners, the CLA and NFU, for sympathetic planning approaches and to secure funding for environmental and ecosystems schemes.  
See: <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Farming-and-Land-Management>
- ▶ Case studies on the Dorset National Park website give examples of farm diversifications, barn conversions, a rural business park and a visitor experience centre, all of which have been supported and enabled by a supportive approach to planning.  
See: <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Farming-Case-Studies>  
<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/New-Farming-Case-Studies>  
<https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/meet-the-farmers>

A National Park can help secure a thriving future for Dorset's farmers and land managers.



# The Economic Benefits of a Dorset National Park

## 1. Strengthening Natural Capital

Dorset's natural capital is its greatest economic asset. Our communities and economy depend on the vital ecosystem services it provides (including clean air and water, healthy soils and food, woodlands and other means of carbon capture, wildlife including pollinators, and open-air recreational opportunities). A National Park would help Dorset recognise the value of this natural capital and provide a focus for conserving, enhancing and investing in this.

## 2. A Partner in an Economic Strategy for Dorset

The National Park would be a strategic partner and delivery agent for a successful and sustainable Economic Strategy for rural Dorset and county-wide. Working with councils, communities, businesses and the Local Enterprise and Nature Partnerships, a National Park would help boost productivity, profitability, employment and skills and help Dorset to attract and retain successful businesses and provide opportunities for young families. It would create opportunities to grow the green economy and help make the area a leader in this field.

## 3. Developing the Dorset Brand

A National Park would strengthen Dorset's brand nationally and internationally, and provide opportunities for a range of businesses, adding value for communities and the economy. It could assist the development and marketing of local products and supply chains.

## 4. Attracting Investment

A National Park would strengthen efforts to attract both private sector inward investment and increased government investment. In a survey by Bournemouth University, more than 50% of businesses reported that the quality of the natural environment was one of the main reasons for conducting business in Dorset (Trends in Natural Capital... Valuing Nature Research Report, BU, June 2019) Small businesses thrive in National Parks. They contribute three times as much to business turnover in English NPs as in the UK overall. Evidence shows that businesses value the quality of the landscapes and consider National Park designation has a positive impact on their business.

## 5. Adding Value to the Tourism Sector

Tourism is a major sector in Dorset's economy. A National Park would provide a major boost to the sector, helping to add value to its tourism offer and facilitate sustainable growth through:

- Developing a Dorset-wide tourism strategy and enhancing the Dorset brand
- Encouraging higher value year-round tourism including eco/heritage/cultural tourism
- Supporting skills development and tourist information
- Developing and consulting on sustainable tourism and transport policies and helping to manage tourism pressures.

## 6. Adding Value to the Land-based Sector

Agriculture and forestry are at the heart of the rural economy. But businesses face ongoing economic challenges, including changes in farm funding and uncertain market conditions. A National Park would help farmers and land managers to maximise the uptake of "public benefit" farm funding, e.g. by helping to develop locally relevant environmental land management schemes (ELMS) and helping farmers to diversify, convert redundant buildings and add value to rural produce. In the South Downs NP, farmers secured twice the agri-environment funding that might have been expected based on the area involved.

## 7. Planning for sustainable development

A National Park would facilitate sustainable development and support the development of housing, including truly affordable homes, and workspaces that communities need. National Parks have a specific remit "to proactively respond to local housing needs". This would help retain and attract young families. The South Downs NP worked with communities and assisted over 50 Neighbourhood Plans as part of preparing its partnership Local Plan.

## 8. Strengthening local communities and improving rural service delivery

Working in partnership with the Dorset Council and other local stakeholders, a National Park would contribute to the delivery of rural services, strengthening the development and sustainability of rural communities. The National Park would be core funded by central Government. It could be the delivery agent for much of the Council's work on the environment, heritage and tourism, thus releasing Council resources for other priorities across the county.

## 9. Benefiting the whole economy and population of Dorset

A National Park would be an asset for the county as a whole, working in close and supportive partnership with councils, communities, businesses, land managers and others, to benefit all who work in, live in and visit the county, in rural and urban areas alike.

Read the full briefing paper at <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Economic-Benefits-of-a-NP> and the full report by Cumulus Consultants at <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/single-post/Economic-Benefits>

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