

Introduction

This report summarises the mapping process that has been undertaken to support the Blackdown Hills AONB Environmental Land Management Scheme Trial (2020).

Environmental Land Management Scheme Trial 2020

This Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) trial for the Blackdown Hills AONB is part of a National Association of AONBs (NAAONB) collaboration, 'Farming for the Nation: AONBs as Test Beds for a new Environmental Land Management System', that includes a selection of AONBs from across England. This project has been set up

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under Devon County Council, via the Blackdown Hills AONB, and is supported by Defra funding (administered and led by the National Association of AONBs). The purpose of the 18 month project is to work in collaboration with other AONBs to trial elements of the Environmental Land Management Scheme. The scheme is expected to move into a series of pilots from 2021 onwards and then be rolled out in 2024/25. The role of the NAAONB is to collate, administer and provide coordination of the participating AONBs.

Mapping to Support Natural Capital Understanding and Site Selection

A series of data collation and mapping exercises have been carried out to support the project. The first phase involved gathering and mapping datasets to highlight the distribution and condition of natural features across the AONB, with close consideration to the benefits they provide to the wider community. These maps will be reviewed by the project partners and used to inform the selection of priority areas within the AONB, where farmer engagement and advice will be focused.

These AONB-scale maps support the development of a Landscape Spatial Framework that will be closely linked to the Blackdown Hills AONB Management Plan.





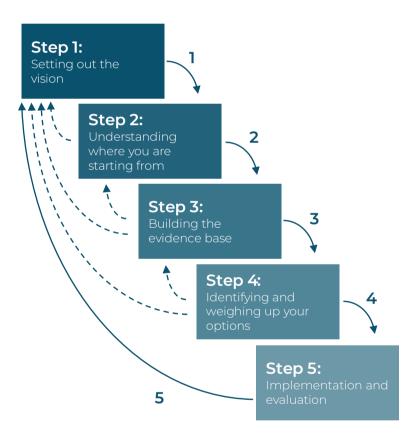
A Natural Capital Approach

The Blackdown Hills AONB ELMS Trial is based on a natural capital approach.

The Natural Capital Committee defines natural capital as 'the elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions.'

The committee recommend following the steps below in order to successfully take a natural capital approach to environmental projects. This includes working with stakeholders to find shared priorities, understand the current situation, make use of the best available evidence and then work collaboratively to plan and take action.

This report focuses on steps 2 and 3 of the natural capital process, describing the distribution and condition of natural features (assets) across the landscape and exploring how this relates to the services and benefits they provide to the local community.



Adapted from the Natural Capital Committee's publication 'How to do it: a natural capital workbook'

Data Limitations

The maps and tables presented throughout this report are based upon the best available data, within the time and budgetary scope of the project. There is a wide variety of datasets available to use for natural capital mapping projects; however they are often limited, for example in terms of restricted access, spatial resolution or extent, accuracy, or frequency of updates. The Blackdown Hills AONB ELMS team will be assessing the advantages and limitations of all of the project work, including data, evidence and mapping, as part of the trial.

Report Structure

This report describes the mapping process that has been undertaken to support the Blackdown Hills AONB ELMS trial 2020. The mapping process comprises two key phases:

- AONB-wide broad-scale mapping to understand natural capital distribution, condition and associated ecosystem services and benefits, to support the selection of priority areas.
- 2 x priority areas finer-scale mapping to understand the aforementioned natural capital characteristics in more detail and support farm advisor activities.

This report focuses on the first phase; the AONB-wide mapping for priority area selection. Each mapping phase follows the process described below.

Mapping Process

1. Overview Maps

A selection of maps describing the broad character of the AONB, including landscape character, population distribution and land use.

2. Natural Asset Quantity

Mapping the quantity and spatial distribution of a range of natural habitats and features across the landscape.

3. Natural Asset Quality

Mapping the condition of natural assets.

4. Ecosystem Services and Benefits

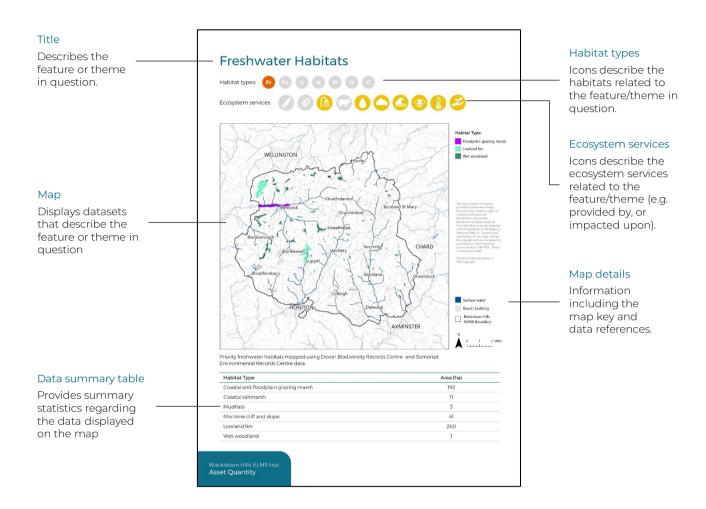
Using datasets to explore how well the natural assets are performing key functions and assessing the level of ecosystem services and benefits received by local communities.

5. Priority Areas for Action

Using the datasets to support the identification of priority areas for action.

Map Format

The majority of maps in this report are presented using the 'report card' style layout shown below. Each report card shows a map and key data layers for the feature/theme in question. It also highlights which habitat types and ecosystem services are relevant to this feature.



Habitats Key:



G Grassland

w Woodland

c Coastal

Fa Farmland

Mountain, moor & heath

U Urban

Ecosystem Services Key:



Materials (timber, hay etc.)



Water quality



Climate regulation



Crops



Air quality



Cultural services



Water supply



Flood protection



Reared animals (livestock)



Biodiversity

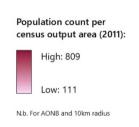
Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

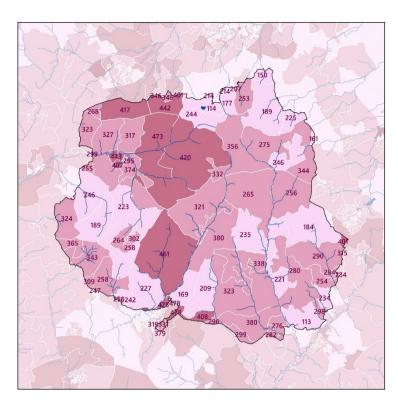
Covering an area of approximately 370 km², the Blackdown Hills AONB is situated in East Devon, bordering both Devon and Somerset. It was designated in 1991 for its isolation, tranquillity and quintessential English countryside, as well as its biological and geological diversity.



Population

The 2011 UK Census provides population counts per Census Output Area (as shown on the map). The total population count for output areas that intersect the AONB is relatively small (~23,000), with larger conurbations (including Taunton and Honiton) situated just outside the AONB boundary. The most densely populated areas within the AONB are found within Dunkeswell and Hemyock.

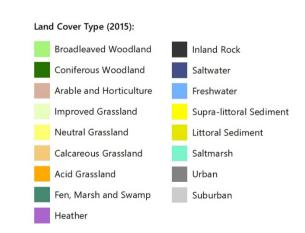


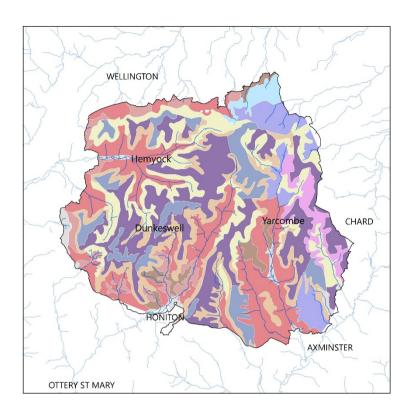


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Land Use

The CEH Land Cover Map 2015 is derived from satellite data and shows the 'UK Biodiversity Action Plan Broad Habitats' classes. The AONB is largely dominated by improved grassland, with arable farms interspersed primarily around the centre and east. There are a number of woodlands, as well as natural grasslands and wetlands.





Soil Type

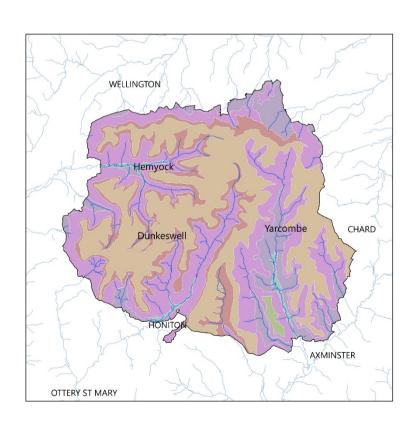
There is a wide variety of soil types in the AONB, owing to the unique geology of the area. Soil type (as well as condition) is a hugely important factor influencing water quality, flooding and productivity, as well as other ecosystem services.



Land Character

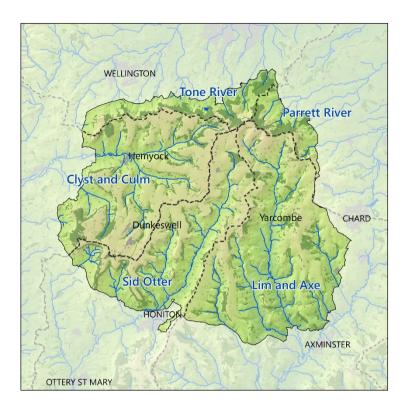
Devon's landscape character assessment divides the county into discreet landscape character units, based on their distinctive identities. There are 37 Landscape Character Types across Devon, 7 of which are present within the AONB.

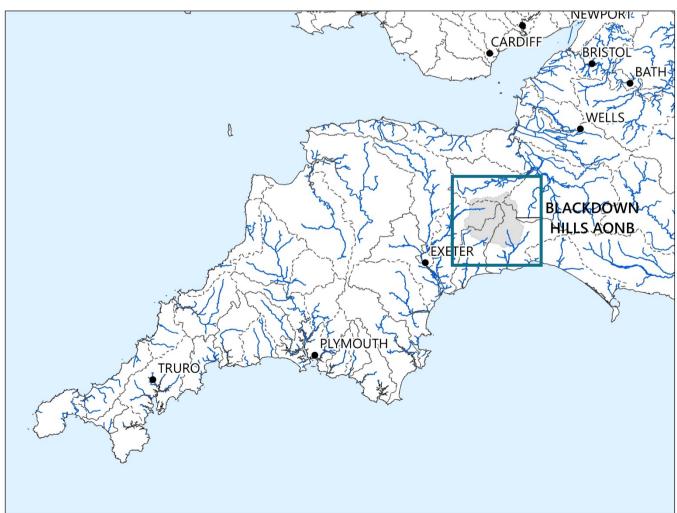




River Catchments

The Blackdown Hills AONB is hydrologically connected to five distinctive river systems, contributing flow to the rivers Tone, Parrett, Culm, Otter, and Axe. The map to the right shows these river catchment boundaries (based on Environment Agency Operational River Catchments). This unique position means that is connected to both the north and south coasts. River catchment boundaries are important considerations for land management options, as land-based activities can have a significant impact on the quantity and quality of water downstream.





Asset Quantity

This chapter displays a range of maps and tables describing the quantity and spatial distribution of natural assets across the Blackdown Hills AONB. It includes a range of broad habitat types, as well as physical terrain characteristics. The ecosystem services provided by each of these asset types are highlighted in the key. The quantity of natural assets has a significant influence on the degree of ecosystem services they provide and subsequently the level of benefit received by local populations.



Freshwater Habitats

Habitat types:























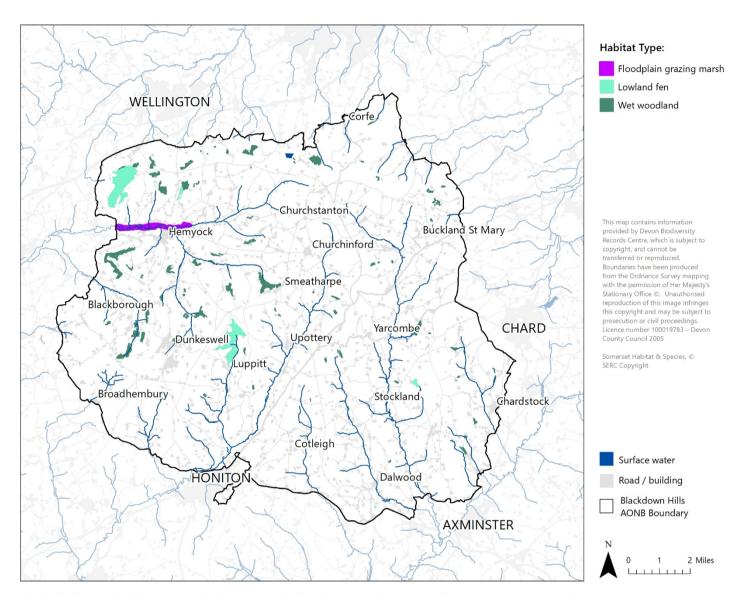












Priority freshwater habitats mapped using Devon Biodiversity Records Centre and Somerset Environmental Records Centre data. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Habitat Type | Area (ha) |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Floodplain grazing marsh | 65 |
| Lowland fen | 268 |
| Wet woodland | 392 |

Terrestrial Habitats

Habitat types:

























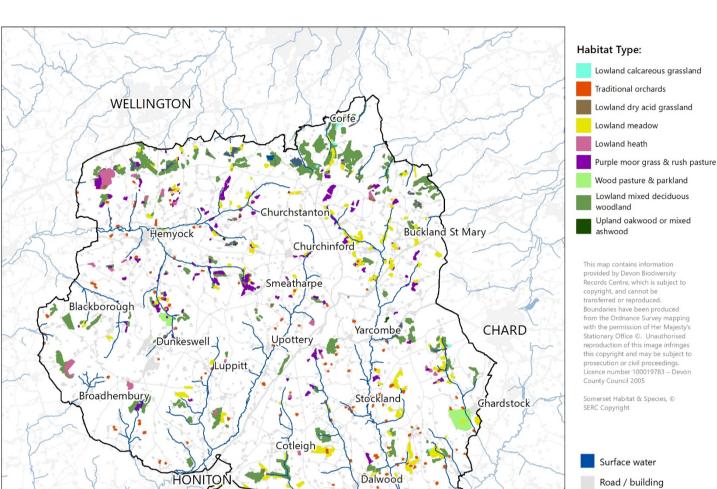












Priority terrestrial habitats mapped using Devon Biodiversity Records Centre and Somerset Environmental Records Centre data. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Habitat Type | Area (ha) |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Lowland calcareous grassland | 5 |
| Traditional orchards | 50 |
| Lowland dry acid grassland | 28 |
| Lowland meadow | 376 |
| Lowland heath | 108 |
| | |

| Habitat Type | Area (ha) |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Purple moor grass and rush pasture | 293 |
| Wood pasture & parkland | 127 |
| Lowland mixed deciduous woodland | 920 |
| Upland oakwood or mixed ashwood | 4 |

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Blackdown Hills **AONB Boundary**

0 1 2 Miles

Farmland

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:











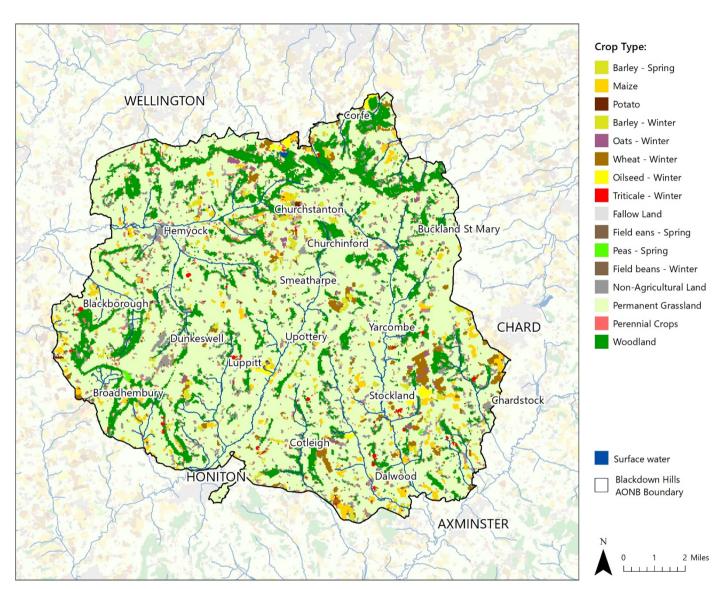












Distribution of crop types mapped using the Crop Map of England (CROME) 2019. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Crop Type | Area (ha) |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Barley – Spring | 208 |
| Maize | 1,036 |
| Potato | 73 |
| Barley – Winter | 365 |
| Oats – Winter | 96 |
| Wheat – Winter | 772 |
| Oilseed – Winter | 160 |
| Triticale – Winter | 22 |
| Fallow Land | 104 |

| Crop Type | Area (ha) |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Field beans – Spring | 12 |
| Peas – Spring | 30 |
| Field beans – Winter | 53 |
| Non-Agricultural Land | 2,249 |
| Permanent Grassland | 26,178 |
| Perennial Crops | 863 |
| Woodland | 5,102 |

Soils

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:











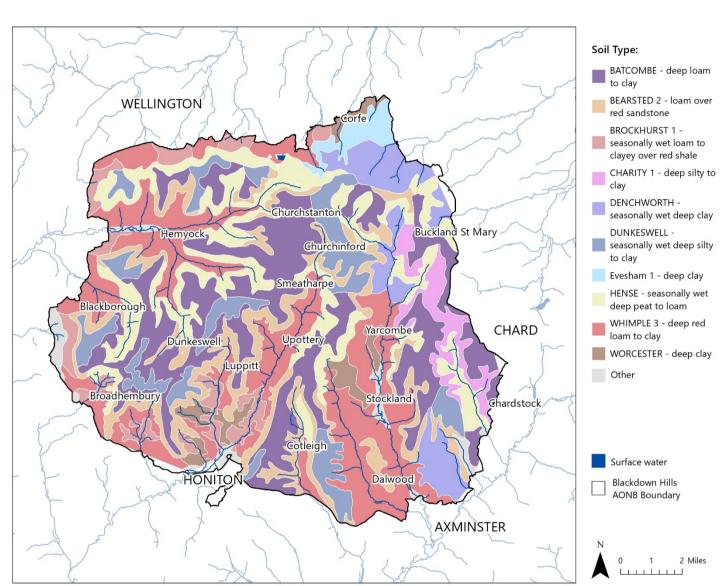












Dominant soil association type mapped using Cranfield University NSRI's NATMAP Vector dataset. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Soil Type | Area (ha) |
|---|-----------|
| BATCOMBE – deep loam to clay | 7754 |
| BEARSTED 2 - loam over red sandstone | 4555 |
| BROCKHURST 1 - seasonally wet loam to clayey over red shale | 1652 |
| CHARITY 1 - deep silty to clay | 1187 |

| Soil Type | Area (ha) |
|--|-----------|
| DENCHWORTH - seasonally wet deep clay | 2181 |
| DUNKESWELL - seasonally wet deep silty to clay | 3186 |
| Evesham 1 - deep clay | 640 |
| HENSE - seasonally wet deep peat to loam | 5450 |
| WHIMPLE 3 - deep red loam to clay | 8403 |
| WORCESTER - deep clay | 938 |

Urban Natural Spaces

Habitat types:













Ecosystem services:









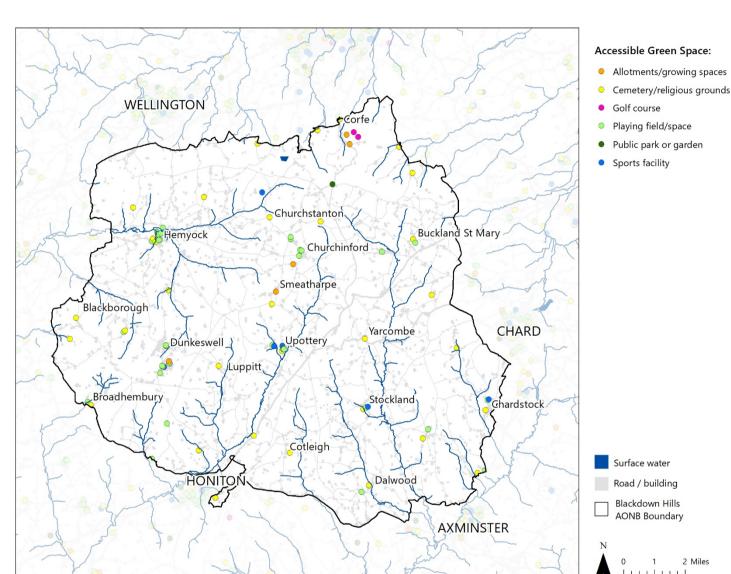












Accessible urban green spaces mapped using Ordnance Survey's Open Greenspace dataset. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Green Space Type | Count |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Allotments/growing spaces | 5 |
| Cemetery/religious grounds | 15 |
| Golf course | 40 |
| Playing field/space | 29 |
| Public park or garden | 3 |
| Sports facility | 2 |

Cultural & Historic Natural Spaces

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









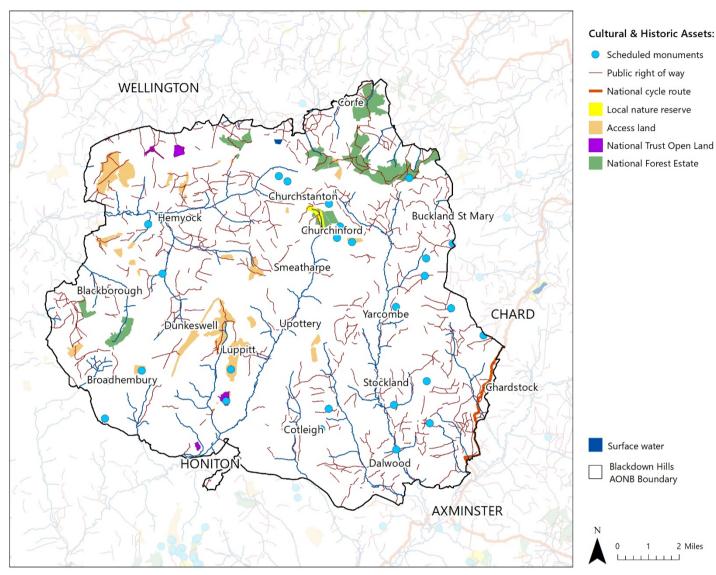






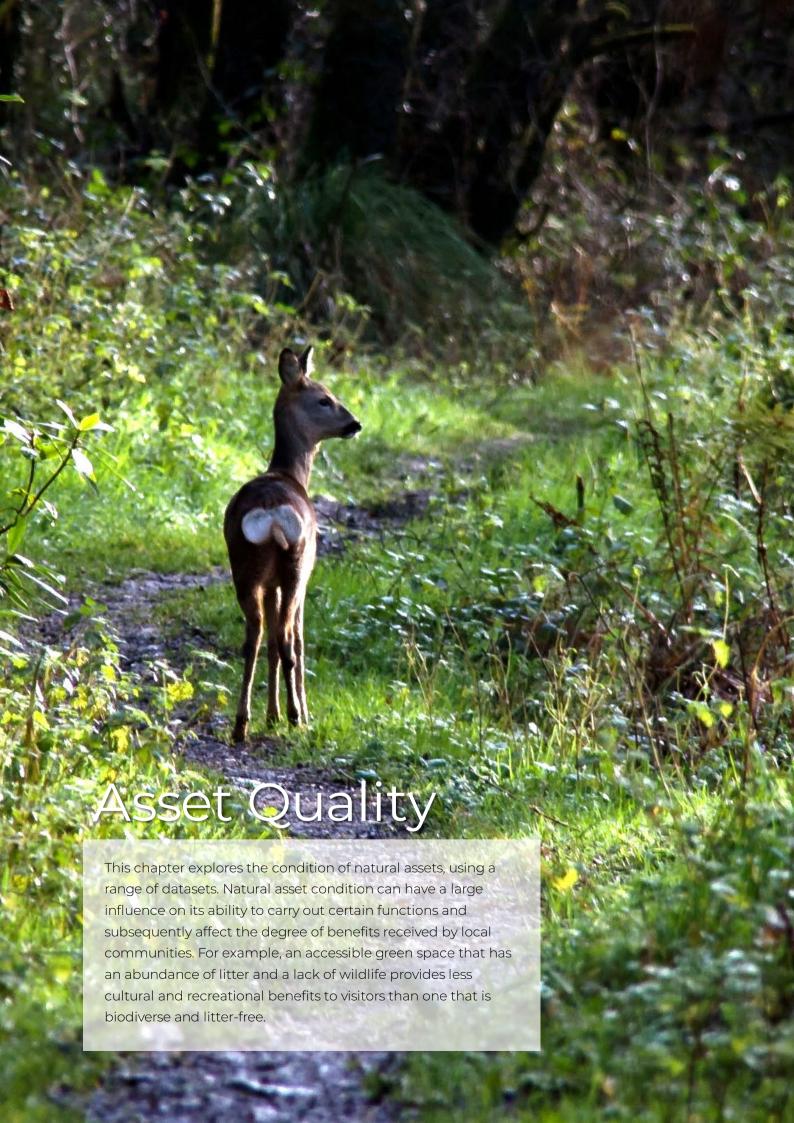






Cultural and historic natural assets mapped using a range of datasets. A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Asset Type | Count / length (m) / area (ha) |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Scheduled monuments | 26 |
| Public right of way | 435,027 |
| National cycle route | 4,547 |
| Local nature reserve | 22 |
| Access land | 641 |
| National Trust Open Land | 65 |
| National Forest Estate | 1,081 |



Condition of Rivers

Habitat types:

































Ecosystem services:







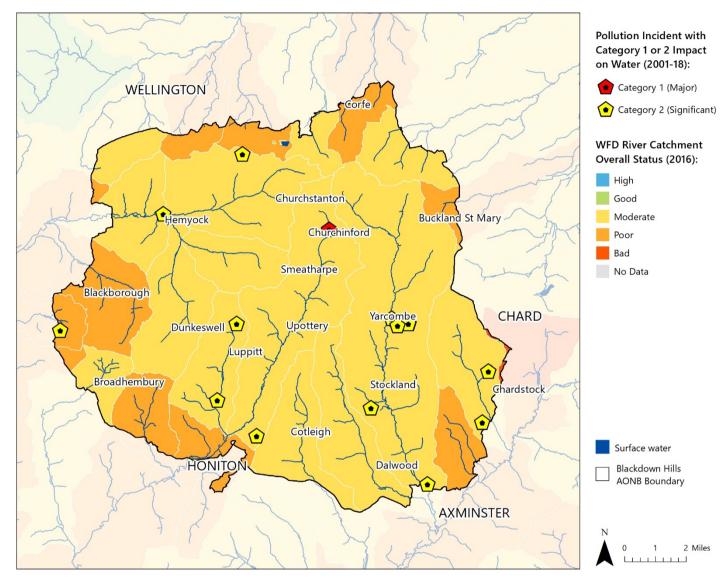












| Count |
|-------|
| 1 |
| 15 |
| |

| River Catchment Overall Status | Area (ha) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| High | 0 |
| Good | 2 |
| Moderate | 29,979 |
| Poor | 6,947 |
| Bad | 40 |

Condition of Groundwater

Habitat types:













Ecosystem services:









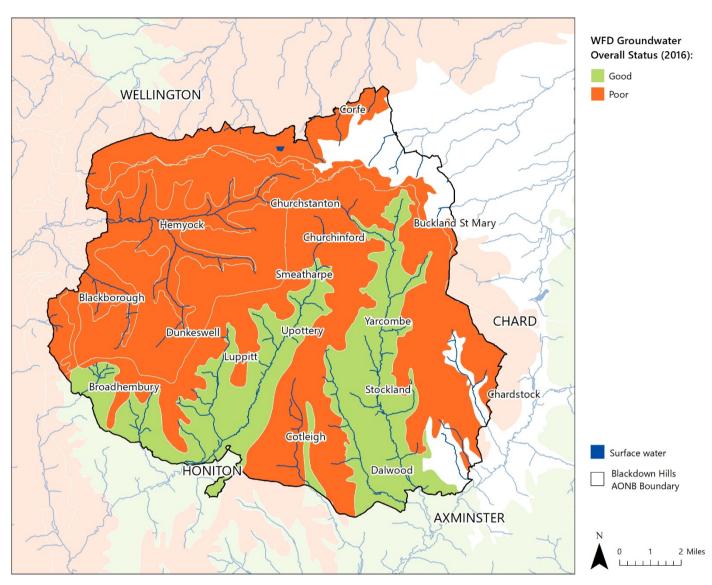












| Groundwater Overall Status | Area (ha) |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Good | 9454 |
| Poor | 25,166 |

Condition of Vegetation

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









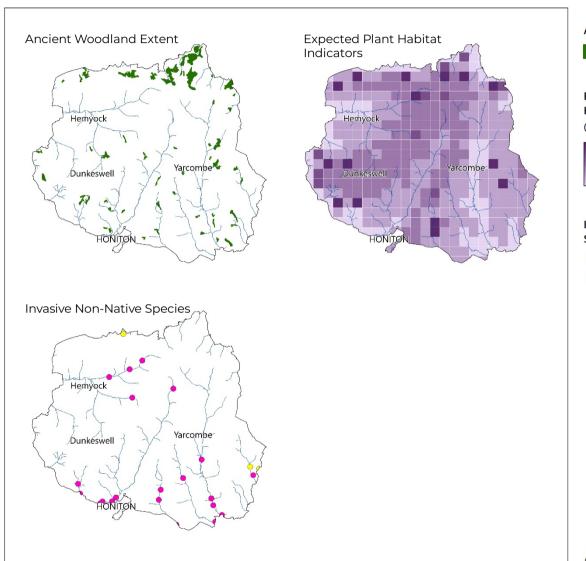












Ancient Woodland:

Ancient woodland

Expected Plant Habitat Indicators: (% of indicators present)

High: 4.6





Low: 1.4

Invasive Non-Native Species:

O Japanese Knotweed

Himalayan Balsam

| Ancient Woodland | Area (ha) |
|------------------|-----------|
| Ancient woodland | 867 |

| Species | Count |
|-------------------|-------|
| Japanese Knotweed | 2 |
| Himalayan Balsam | 40 |

Condition of Habitats for Wildlife

Habitat types:













Ecosystem services:









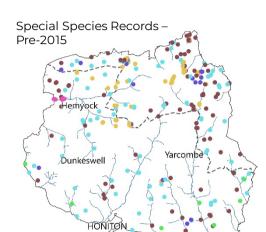














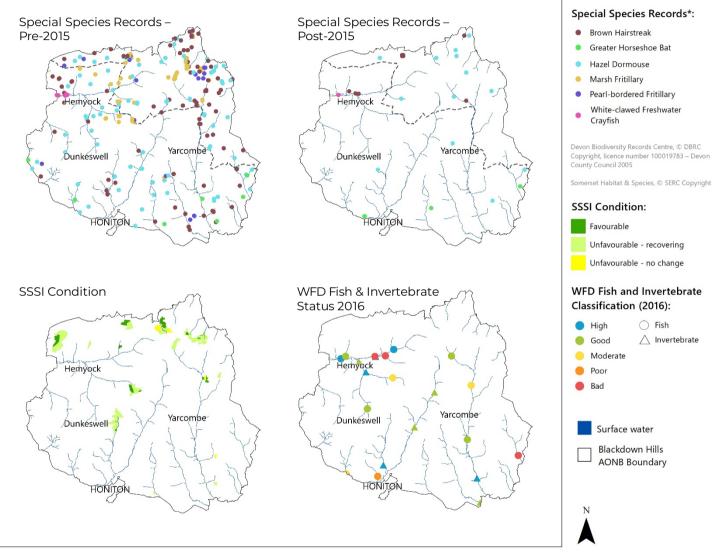












A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40. Please note: the collection of Special Species Records varies between the counties of Somerset and Devon.

| Species | Pre-2015 | Post-2015 |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Greater Horseshoe Bat | 9 | 6 |
| Brown Hairstreak | 179 | 12 |
| Hazel Dormouse | 420 | 129 |
| Marsh Fritillary | 46 | О |
| Pearl-bordered Fritillary | 298 | 0 |
| White-clawed Freshwater Crayfish | 51 | 2 |

| SSSI Condition | Area (ha) |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| Favourable | 122 |
| Unfavourable – recovering | 477 |
| Unfavourable – no change | 40 |

| Classification | Fish | Invertebrate |
|----------------|------|--------------|
| High | 2 | 4 |
| Good | 4 | 4 |
| Moderate | 2 | 0 |
| Poor | 1 | 0 |
| Bad | 3 | 0 |
| | | |

Condition of Agricultural Land

Habitat types:













Ecosystem services:











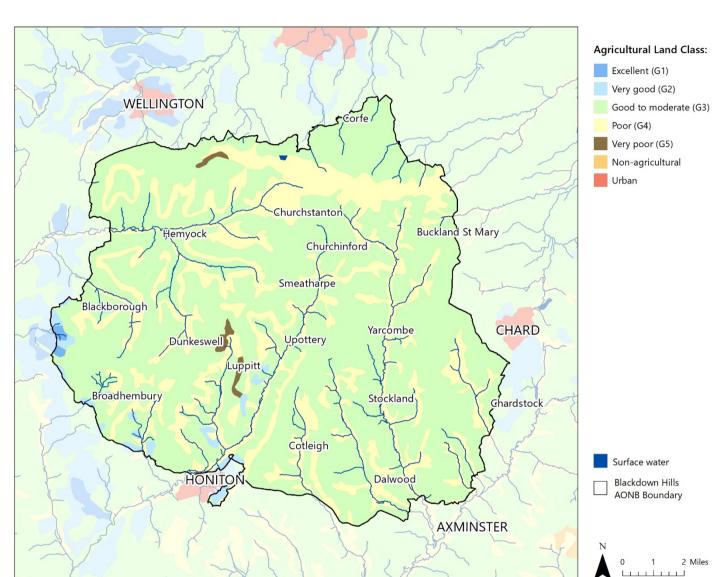












| Agricultural Land Class | Area (ha) |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Excellent | 68 |
| Very good | 533 |
| Good to moderate | 25,894 |
| Poor | 10,295 |
| Very poor | 168 |
| Non-agricultural | 0 |
| Urban | 0 |

Condition of Soil

Habitat types:





















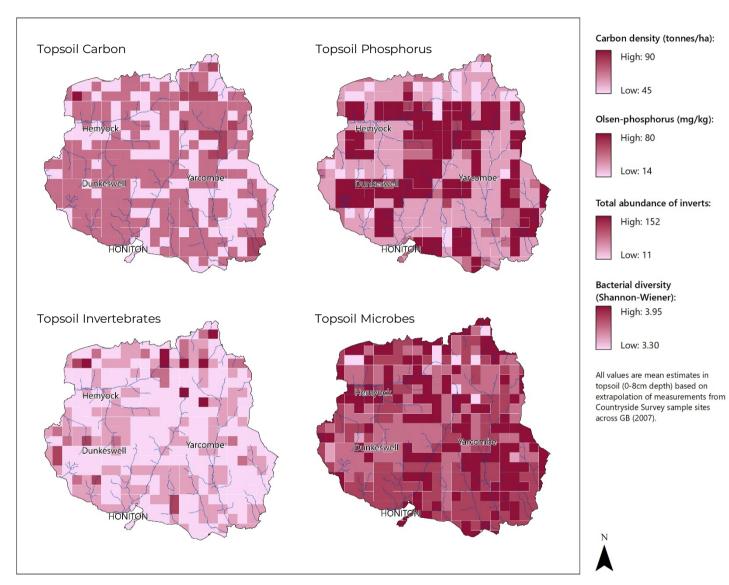












A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

Natural England & UKCEH Natural Capital Maps

In 2016, Natural England and UKCEH collaborated on a project to produce a suite of England-wide natural capital maps, at a 1km scale. The mapping used CEH's EcoMap tool and incorporated additional datasets (including CEH Countryside Survey sample data) to produce maps of natural capital and their underpinning ecosystem services. The suite of ten maps include; soil carbon, soil nitrogen, soil pH soil phosphorus, soil bacteria, soil invertebrates, headwater stream quality, carbon in vegetation, nectar plant diversity for bees, and plant indicators for habitats in good condition.

More information can be found here:

https://eip.ceh.ac.uk/naturalengland-ncmaps/reportsData

Condition of Historic Assets

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









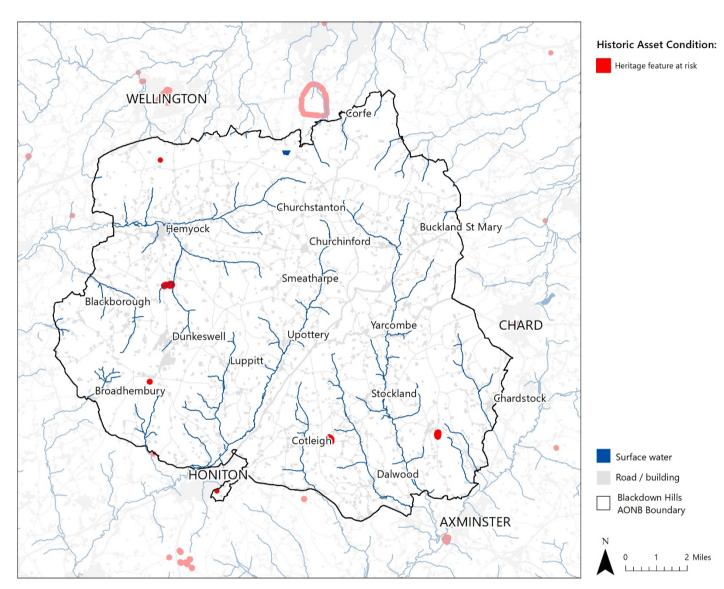












| Historic Asset: | Count |
|--------------------|-------|
| Scheduled Monument | 12 |





Drinking Water Supply

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









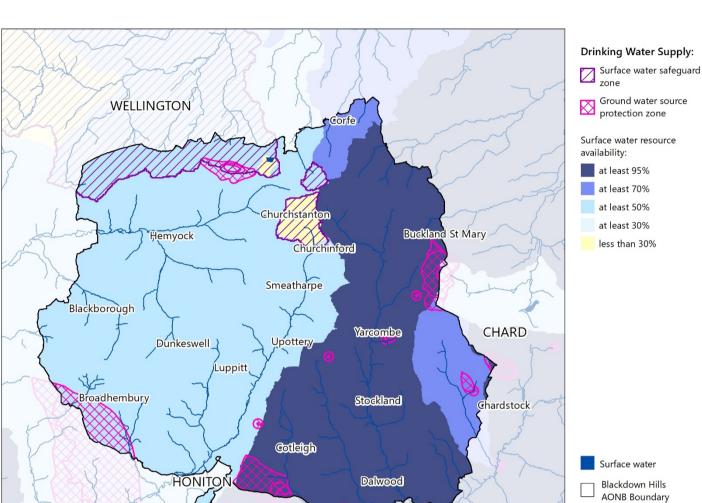












A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

| Drinking Water Supply | Area (ha) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Surface water safeguard zone | 2,273 |
| Ground water source protection zone | 2,656 |

| Surface water resource availability | Area (ha) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| At least 95% | 13,501 |
| At least 70% | 2,619 |
| At least 50% | 20,278 |
| At least 30% | 0 |
| Less than 30% | 560 |

2 Miles

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Flood Risk (Fluvial)

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









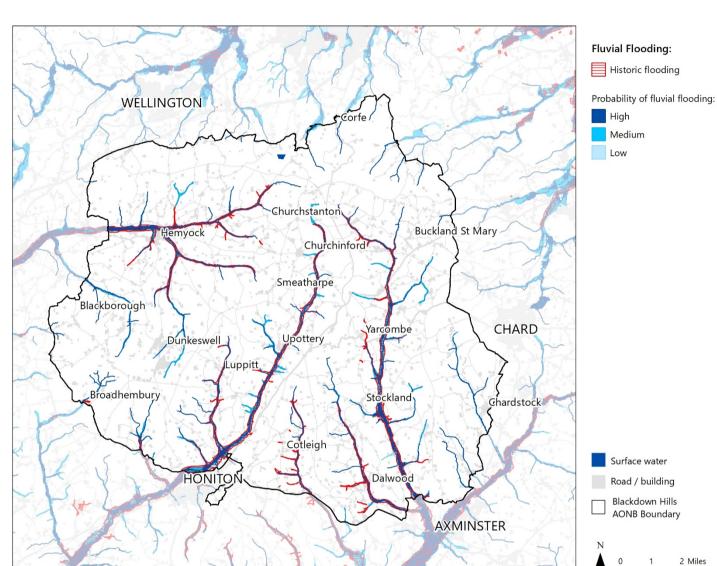












| Fluvial Flooding | Area (ha) |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Historic flooding | 1,019 |

| Probability of fluvial flooding | Area (ha) |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| High | 549 |
| Medium | 453 |
| Low | 351 |

Biodiversity

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









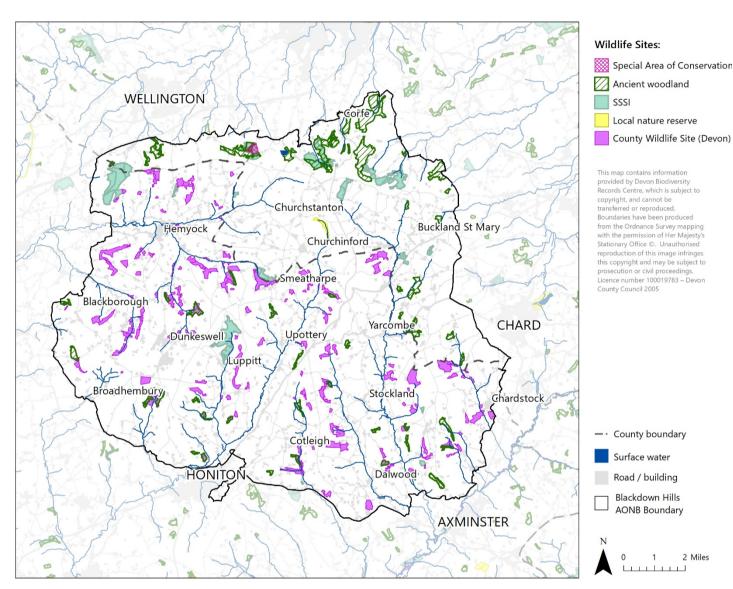












| Wildlife Sites | Area (ha) |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Special Area of Conservation | 20 |
| Ancient woodland | 867 |
| SSSI | 639 |
| Local nature reserve | 22 |
| County Wildlife Site (Devon) | 1,251 |

Materials, Crops and Livestock

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:











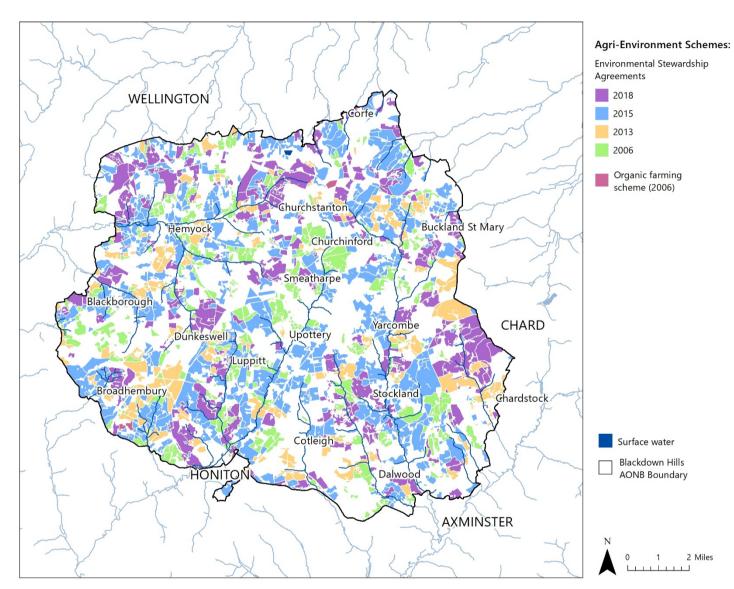












| Environmental Stewardship Agreements | Area (ha) | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| 2018 | 5,376 | | |
| 2015 | 14,043 | | |
| 2013 | 12,581 | | |
| 2006 | 11,452 | | |
| Organic farming scheme | 492 | | |

Materials, Crops and Livestock (cont.)

Habitat types:













Ecosystem services:









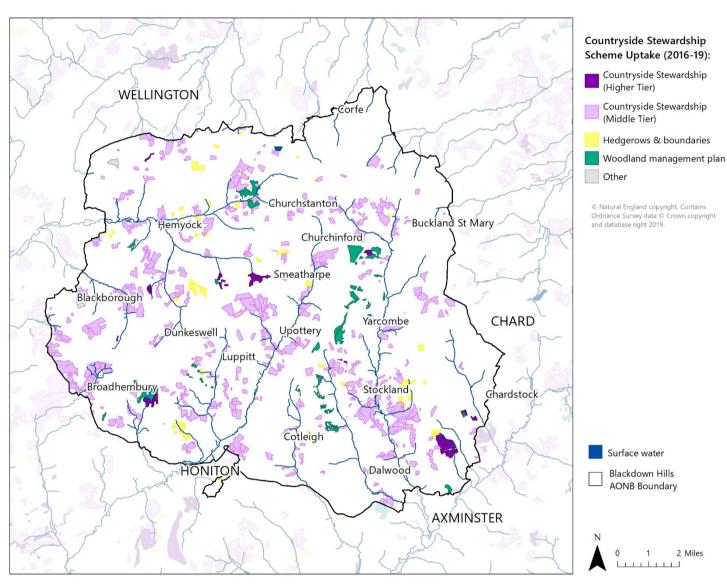












| Countryside Stewardship Scheme Uptake | Area (ha) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Countryside Stewardship (Higher Tier) | 223 |
| Countryside Stewardship (Middle Tier) | 4,029 |
| Hedgerows & boundaries | 210 |
| Woodland management plan | 322 |
| Other | 0 |

Materials, Crops and Livestock (cont.)

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:











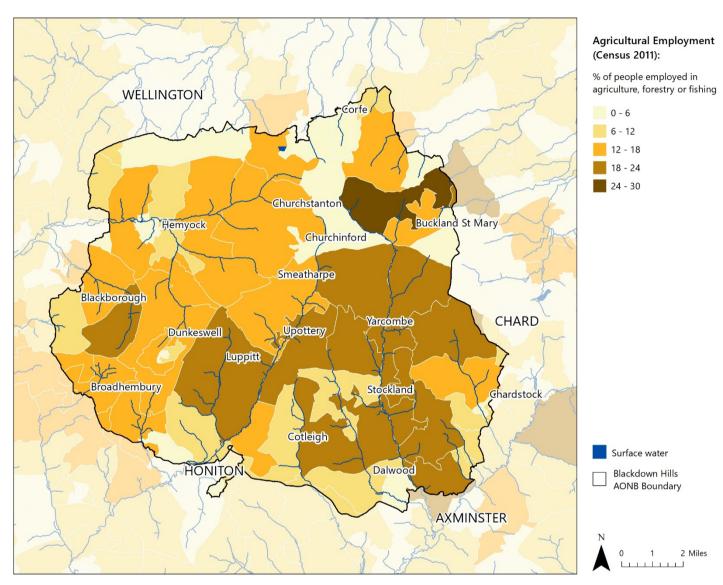












| Agricultural Employment | Area (ha) |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| 0-6 | 4,307 |
| 6 – 12 | 5,746 |
| 12 –18 | 14,003 |
| 18 – 24 | 11,887 |
| 24-30 | 1,016 |

Air Quality

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:









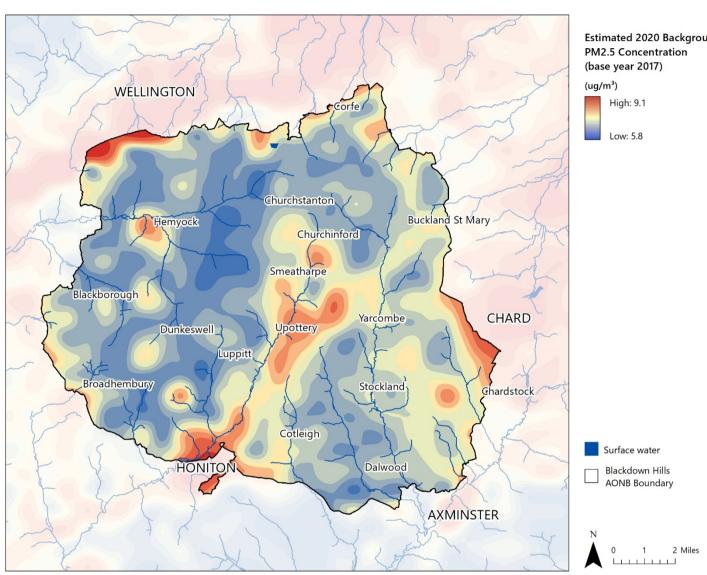












Estimated 2020 Background

A complete list of data sources is included on pages 39 and 40.

Defra UK-AIR Background Air Quality

Defra UK-AIR provides a range of air quality datasets including 2017-based background maps for years 2017 to 2030 for NO_x , NO_2 , PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$. The 2017 reference year background maps are based on monitoring and meteorological data for 2017.

More information can be found here:

https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/lagm-background-home

Carbon Storage

Habitat types:















Ecosystem services:







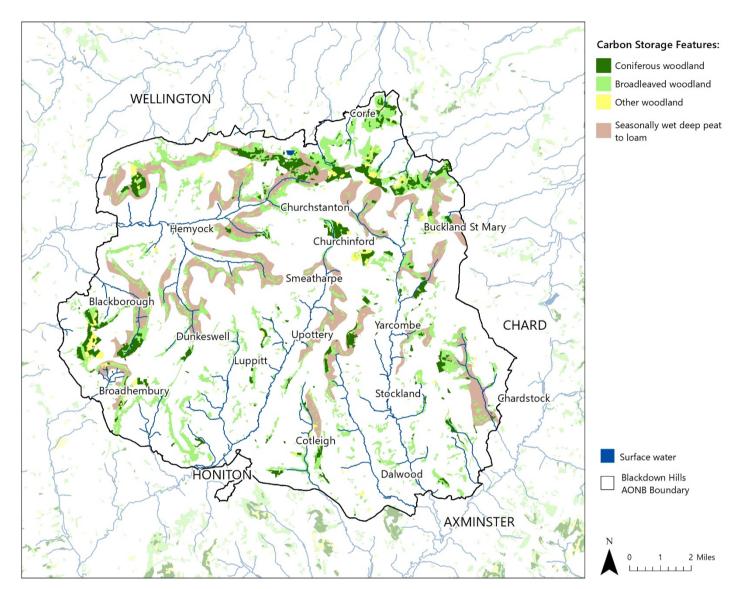




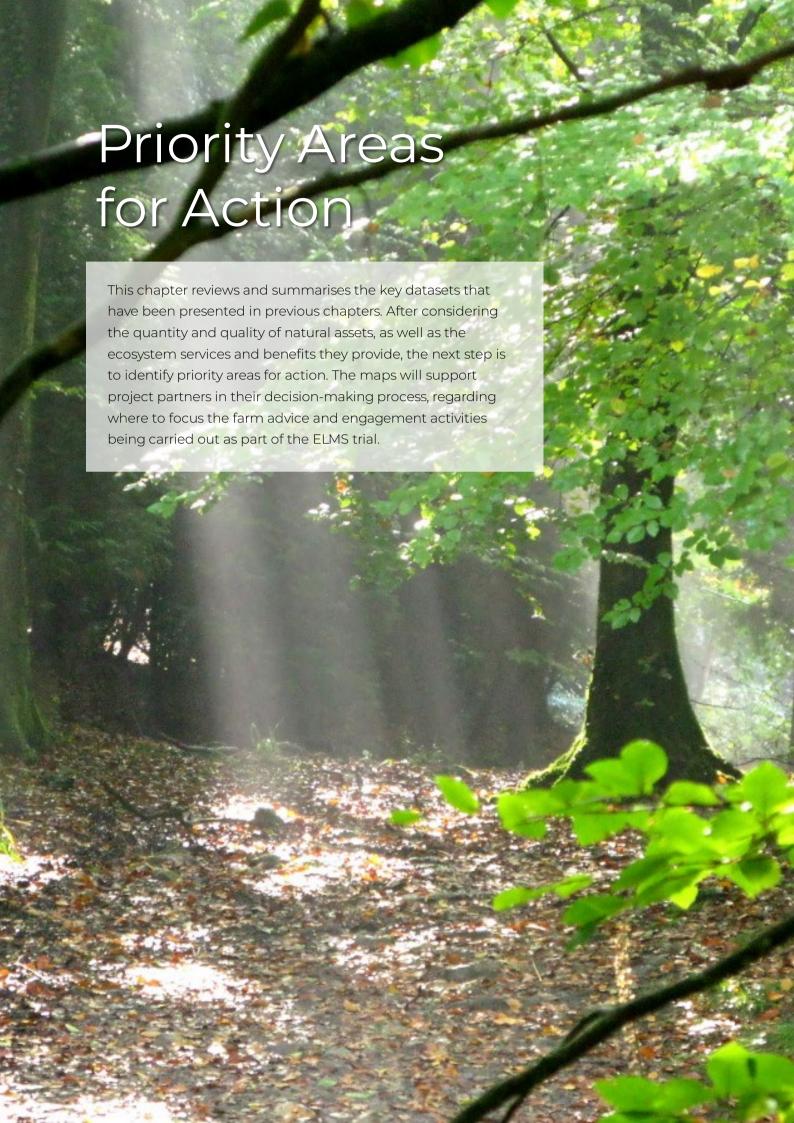








| Carbon Storage Features | Area (ha) |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Coniferous woodland | 1,189 |
| Broadleaved woodland | 3,892 |
| Other woodland | 318 |
| Seasonally wet deep peat to loam | 5,450 |



Mapping Priority Areas for Action

The maps and datasets presented throughout this report are important for understanding natural capital within the Blackdown Hills AONB. This information collectively provides a broad understanding of spatial patterns in the character and condition of natural assets and the services they provide.

The next step is to use this collection of data to identify priority areas for action on the ground. To support this decision-making process, the following pages present some of the key datasets, summarised by hydrological catchment boundaries (a useful spatial unit for environmental management) and classified into five priority classes; very high; high; medium; low; very low. This mapping exercise allows the user to quickly visualise and compare broad patterns across a collection of datasets. It is not intended to replace closer inspection of previous maps and data.



The map above shows the hydrological catchment boundaries (WFD river water body catchments) used in this mapping exercise.

Water Quality









No. of category 1+2 pollution incidents (2001-18).





Area of maize (2019) (ha).

| Priority class | | Very high High Medium Low Very low | - | >160 120-160 80-120 40-80 |
|-------------------|-----|--|---|------------------------------------|
| | - (| Very low | - | 0-40 |
| | ١. | v Ci y i C v v | | 0 10 |

Mapping Priority Areas for Action

Water Resources



Surface water resource availability (% of time).

Priority Class High - Less than 30% High - At least 30% Medium - At least 50% Low - At least 70% Very low - At least 95%



Area of drinking water protected areas (ha)

Very high - >450
High - 300-450
Medium - 150-300
Low - 0-150
Very low - 0



Flood Risk



No. of properties at fluvial flood risk.

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{Priority} \\ \text{Priority} \\ \text{class} \\ \end{array} \begin{cases} \text{Very high} & - & >90 \\ \text{High} & - & 60-90 \\ \text{Medium} & - & 30-60 \\ \text{Low} & - & 0-30 \\ \text{Very low} & - & 0 \\ \end{cases}$



Area of agricultural land at fluvial flood risk (ha).

Habitats and Biodiversity



Area of priority habitats (ha).

Priority depth of the second s



Area of unfavourable SSSI condition (ha).

Priority (Very high - >60 High - 400-60 Medium - 20-40 Low - 0-20 Very low - 0



Area of wildlife designations (ha)

Mapping Priority Areas for Action

Materials, Crops and Livestock

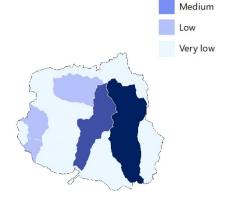


Area of arable land (2015) (ha).



Area of pastoral land (2015) (ha).

Priority delays a series of the series of th



Priority Class:

Very high

High

Area of land in Countryside Stewardship scheme (ha).

Air Quality



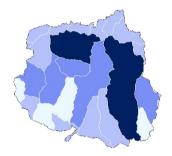
Average PM2.5 Concentration (2020) (ug/m 3).

Climate Regulation



Area of woodland (ha).

Priority Class Very high - >600
High - 450-600
Medium - 300-450
Low - 150-300
Very low - 0-150



Area of peaty soils (ha).

Cultural and Historic



Area. of scheduled monuments (ha).

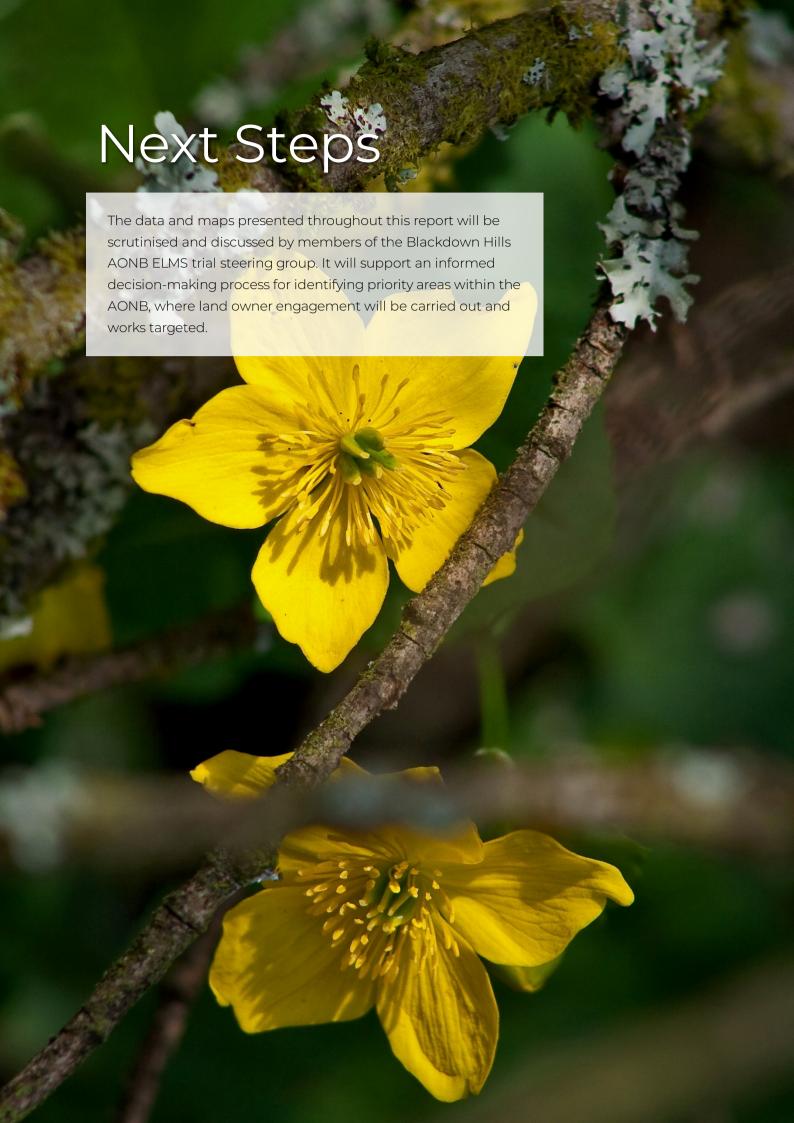
 $\begin{array}{c} \text{Priority} \\ \text{Class} \end{array} \left\{ \begin{array}{lll} \text{Very high} & - & >6 \\ \text{High} & - & 4\text{-}6 \\ \text{Medium} & - & 2\text{-}4 \\ \text{Low} & - & 0\text{-}2 \\ \text{Very low} & - & 0 \end{array} \right.$



Density of Public Rights of Way (m/ha)



Area of access land (ha)



Dataset Sources

Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH)

• Land Cover Map 2015

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Rowland, C.S.; Morton, R.D.; Carrasco, L; McShane, G.; O'Neil, A.W.; Wood, C.M. (2017) Land Cover Map 2015 (vector, GB). NERC Environmental Information Data Centre.

CEH and Natural England

· Expected plant habitat indicators

Maskell, L.; Henrys, P.A.; Norton, L.; Smart, S. (2016). Model estimates of expected diversity of positive plant habitat condition indicators. NERC Environmental Information Data Centre. https://doi.org/10.5285/cc5ae9b1-43a0-475e-9157-a9b7fccb24e7

Topsoil carbon; topsoil phosphorus, topsoil invertebrates; topsoil microbes

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Cranfield University NSRI

NATMAP Vector

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Devon Biological Records Centre

- Priority habitats (Devon)
- Special species records (Devon)
- County Wildlife Sites (Devon)

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Devon County Council

- Devon Landscape Character Type
- Public Rights of Way

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Environment Agency

- Operational river catchment boundaries
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- WFD river catchments cycle 2
- WFD monitoring site data 2016
- Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy for surface water (cycle 2)
- Ground water source protection zones
- Historic flooding
- Surface water safeguard zones
- · Risk of flooding from rivers and sea

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· Pollution incidents

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• WFD surface waterbody status 2016

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- WFD ground water catchments cycle 2
- WFD ground waterbody status 2016

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National Forest Inventory

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National Forest Estate

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· Scheduled monuments

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• Heritage features at risk

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National Trust

· National Trust Land Always Open

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Natural England

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- · Ancient woodland
- CROW access land
- Countryside Stewardship Scheme 2016
 Management Areas
- · Local nature reserves
- SACs
- SSSI units

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· Agricultural land classification

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NBN Gateway

• Invasive non-native species records

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Nomisweb

- Census 2011 population count
- Census 2011 employment sector

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Office for National Statistics

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Ordnance Survey

- · Vector Map District
- Open Greenspaces
- Terrain 50
- Open Rivers
- Boundary Line
- Open Map Local

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• Crop Map of England 2019 (CROME)

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Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC)

- · Priority habitats (Somerset)
- · Species records (Somerset)

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 Estimated 2020 background PM2.5 concentration (base year 2017)

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