

AVON GREEN BELT

Land Area: 71,672 hectares

(4.48% of total green belt land and 0.5% of the total land area of England)



What kind of place is the Avon Green Belt?

- Plays an important role in Bath's designation as a World Heritage Site.
- **Restricts the outward expansion** of Bristol and separates Bristol from Bath
- Very accessible, with highest density of the National Cycle Network and over **1,804 km of public rights of way**.
- The land cover includes proportionally **more improved grassland** than England as a whole, and significantly less arable or semi-natural grassland.
- The majority (59%) of the Green Belt is classed as 'neglected' but it also has the **most 'enhancing'** (or improving) landscape of any Green Belt.

Green Belts:

Total area of all Green Belts in England is **1.6 million ha** (13% of England's total land area)

Green Belt fact sheets covered in this series:

England

Avon

Burton/Swadlincote

Cambridge

Gloucester/Cheltenham

Hampshire/Dorset

London (Metropolitan)

North West

Nottingham/Derby

Oxford

South & West Yorkshire

Stoke-on-Trent

Tyne & Wear

West Midlands

York

These fact sheets support the reports:

- Nature Conservation and Recreational Opportunities in the Green Belt (2016); with ADAS
- Green Belts: A Greener Future (2010); a joint report with Natural England

Download the reports from www.cpre.org.uk

Nature conservation*



2,291 ha (2.3%) are registered as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**. There are 306 ha of Local Nature Reserves.

13 priority habitats cover 9,856 ha.

1,838 ha are **ancient woodland** with 50,253 ha (53.3% of the Green Belt area) of land designated as Community Forest. This covers 70% of the Avon Green Belt.

1,156 ha is owned by the National Trust and 68 ha by the Woodland Trust.

13% (compared with 8% of land nationally), or 8,855 hectares of the land area is **broadleaf and mixed woodland**.†

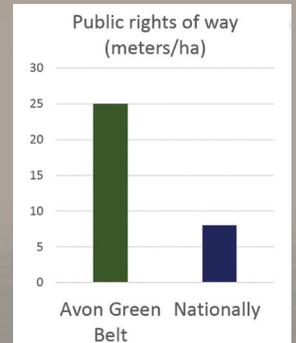
Public access and recreation*



Second highest density of public rights of way across all Green Belts. Including a long distance Community Forest path links many areas with surrounding urban communities (www.forestofavon.org.uk)

There are **184 km of the National Cycle Network**, the highest density of any Green Belt.

852 ha of open access land, 310 ha of Country Parks and 1,966 ha is Registered (historic) Park and Garden.



Agriculture†



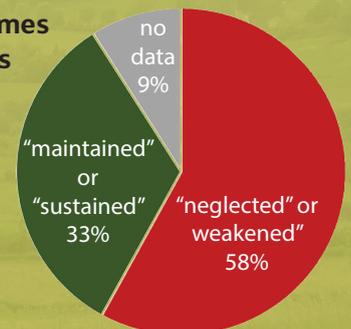
11% is Grade 1, Grade 2 or the 'best and most versatile' **agricultural land**. Compared with 17% of land nationally.

72% is currently in agricultural use, compared with 71% of land nationally

58% of the total agricultural land‡ is subject to Natural England funding '**agri-environment schemes**'. (67% of agricultural land nationally, and 53% of all Green Belt agricultural land, is subject to agri-environment schemes).

Landscape quality†

Enhancement programmes could focus on the areas classed as 'neglected' or 'weakened' where the current condition of agricultural land and field boundaries such as hedgerows are the main concerns.



22% (14,549 ha) of the Avon Green Belt coincides with land designated as an **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**. Compared to 16% total AONB cover in England.

Green Belt threats snapshot

Local Plans (Source: CPRE, State of the Green Belt 2018)

18,050 homes proposed in the Green Belt in local plans, up from 13,050 in 2017, with 8,550 of these allocated within the West of England spatial plan. 35% (5,985) of the homes proposed **could be affordable** if targets are achieved. In 2017, local councils could be set to **receive £85.6 million** through the New Homes Bonus as a result of Green Belt development proposals.

Planning Applications (Source: Glenigan, in State of the Green Belt 2018)

Since 2009, over **3,500 units have been approved** on green belt land, 62% (over 2,200) of which have been on greenfield sites. Applications outline that the proportion of affordable housing should be 25%, which raises to 34% on greenfield sites. This would lead to a total of 884 houses. In 2017, only 58 affordable homes had been built so far.

*These figures are from CPRE's report with ADAS, *Nature Conservation and Recreational Opportunities in the Green Belt* (2016)

† These figures are from CPRE and Natural England's report *Green Belt: A Greener Future* (2010)

‡ Note that the total for agricultural land on which the percentage covered by agri-environment schemes is based is higher than the total for agricultural land currently in use. This is because a small area of land classed as 'agricultural' is not currently in use.