

State of the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



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September 2018

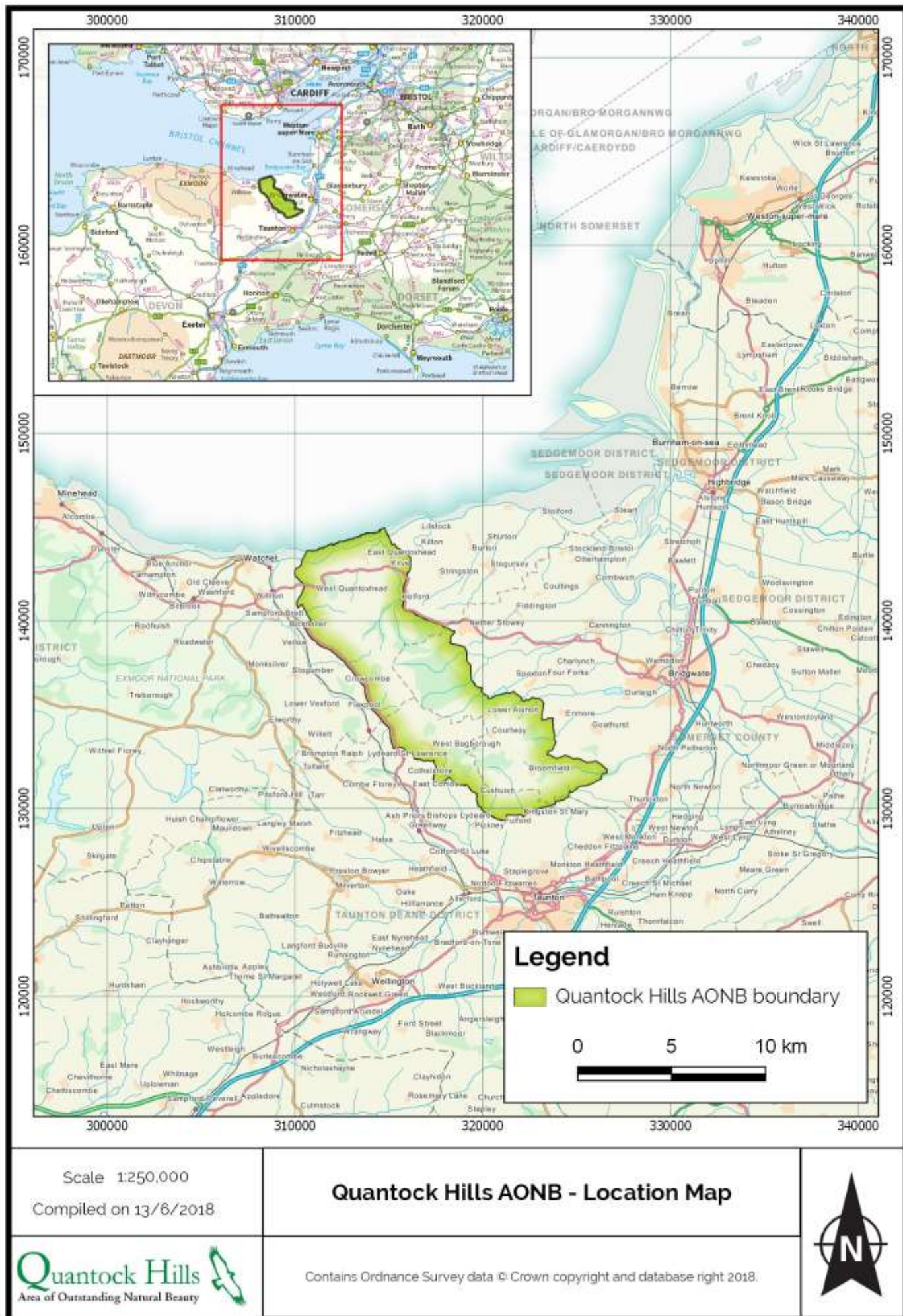
State of the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

In July 2018 the Quantock Hills AONB Service commissioned **David Dixon and David Partridge** to source, collate and present selected datasets to provide evidence in support of the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan review.

While much of this work is evidenced throughout the Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24 this paper draws the indicator tables, data and maps together in one document. The commission requested data from 2016/17 where possible alongside comparable data from 2009, where such exists, or to alternative baselines against which comparisons / trends can be identified.

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1. Water Quality

Trend:



A number of the water bodies that rise on the Quantock Hills watershed are monitored for ecological and chemical condition.

Whilst the chemical condition of the selected Quantock streams are all defined as in 'Good' condition in 2016., there is a good deal of variation in the ecological condition both between the streams selected and across the timeframe 2009—2016. The overall condition of streams in the AONB remain of concern with three of the six streams selected classified as in 'Poor' condition in 2016. Trend Wise two of the six selected streams are deteriorating having moved from either 'Good' to 'Moderate' or 'Moderate' to 'Poor' over the period 2009—2016. Only one of the six streams selected is showing overall improvement between 2009—2016, suggesting that the ecological issues are yet to be addresses successfully.

Wessex Water primary concern on the Quantock Hills is nutrient and sediment run off into the streams.

Back Stream Tone Catchment	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Moderate	Poor	Good by 2027
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Moderate	Poor	Good by 2027

Kilve Stream—Somerset West Streams	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Poor	Poor	Moderate by 2027
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Poor	Poor	Moderate by 2027

Doniford Streams—Somerset West Streams	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Good	Moderate	Moderate by 2015
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Good	Moderate	Moderate by 2015

Durleigh Brook Parrett Catchment	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Moderate	Moderate	Good by 2027
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Moderate	Moderate	Good by 2027

1. Water Quality

Petherton Stream Parrett	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Poor	Poor	Good by 2027
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Poor	Poor	Good by 2027

Cannington Brook—Parrett Catchment	2009 cycle	2016 cycle	Target
Ecological	Poor	Moderate	Good by 2021
Chemical		Good	Good by 2015
Overall	Poor	Moderate	Good by 2021

Source:

Catchment Data Explorer: <http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning>

What's in my back yard: <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/default.aspx>

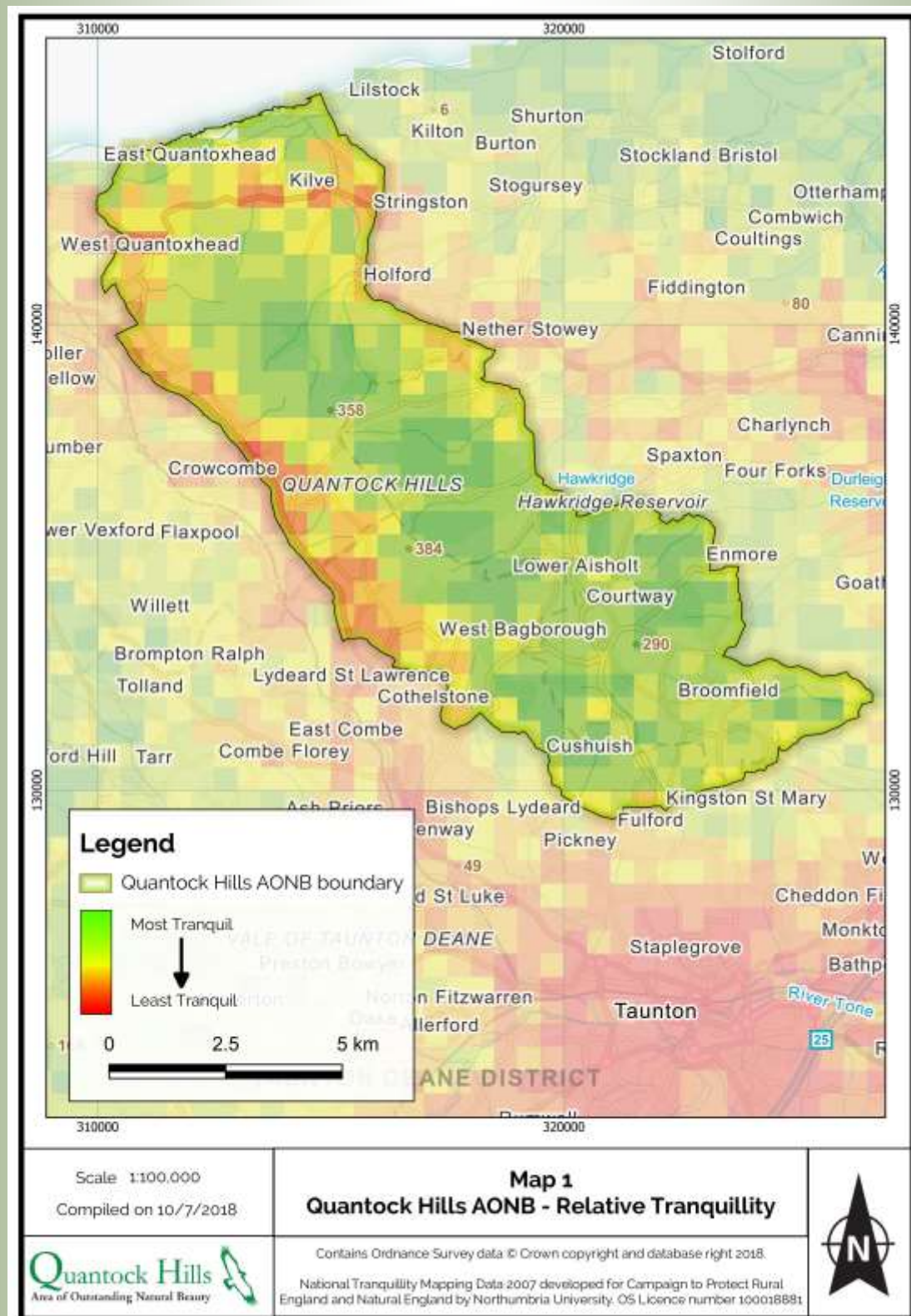


2. Tranquillity

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) funded and produced data on Tranquillity, publishing their data in 2006. They have so far been unsuccessful in in getting Government support and update programme so are considering funding an update again themselves in the near future.

From the CPRE website: *"In 2005-06 CPRE worked with Natural England and Newcastle & Northumbria Universities to produce new tranquillity maps that are still useful today. Published in 2006 and 2007 these illustrate how fragmented tranquillity has become in the countryside, and identified relatively unspoilt areas that needed stronger protection. "*

CPRE supplied the digital copy of the 2007 tranquillity data which David Partridge cut to the Quantock Hills AONB boundary. Each pixel represents an area 500m x 500m in size.

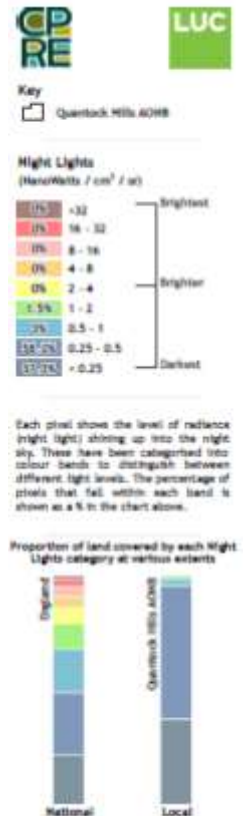


3. Light Pollution

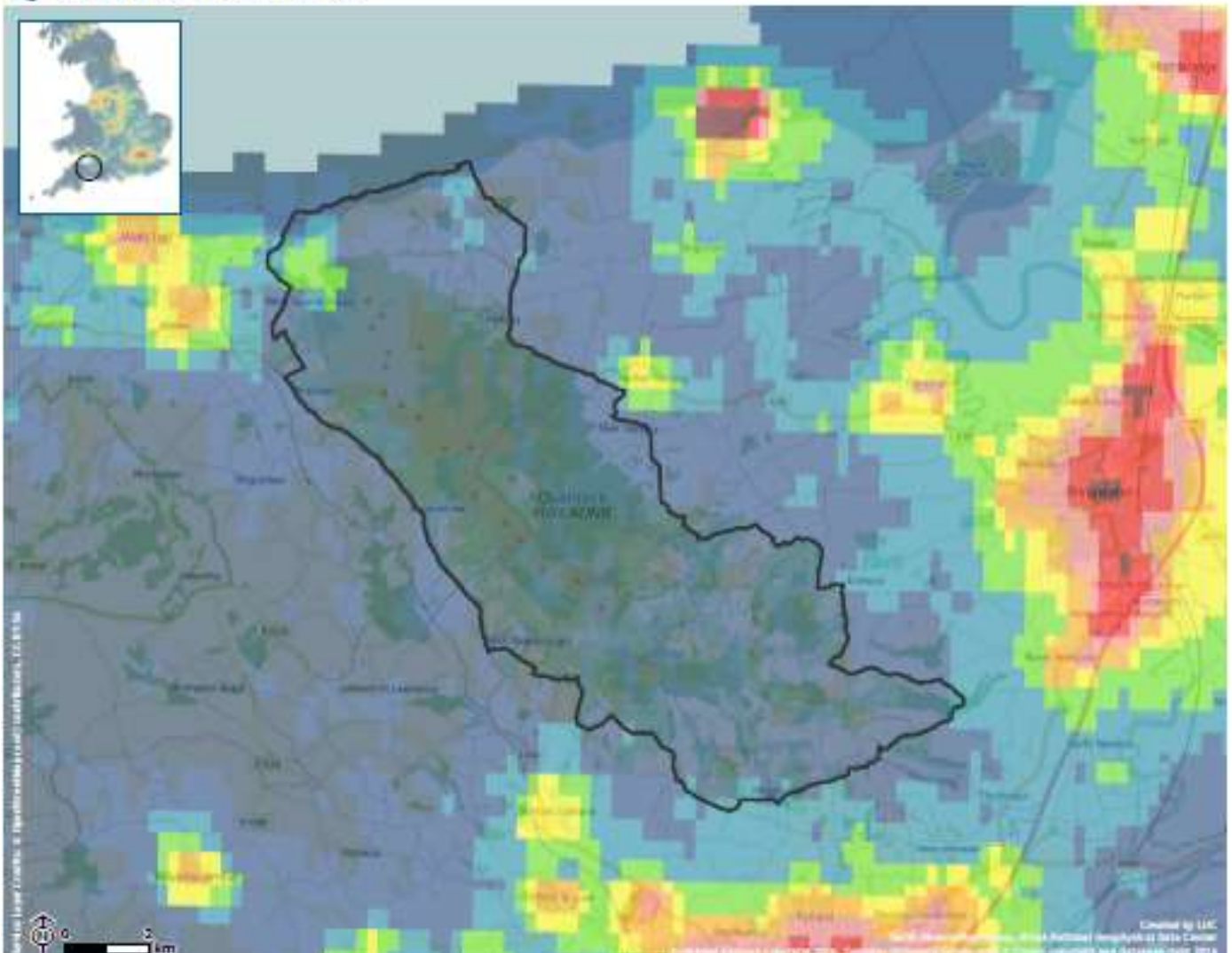
Campaign to Protect Rural England are no longer updating their light pollution mapping but have interactive maps online. The maps were produced with LUC in 2016 from data captured in 2015 and the report and online mapping is available through the website <http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>

Comparisons with previous datasets collected in 2000 and 2003 shows an increasing light level being experienced in the fringe areas of the AONB, which is impacting on the core AONB area.

Trend: 



Quantock Hills AONB



4. Condition of Historic Assets

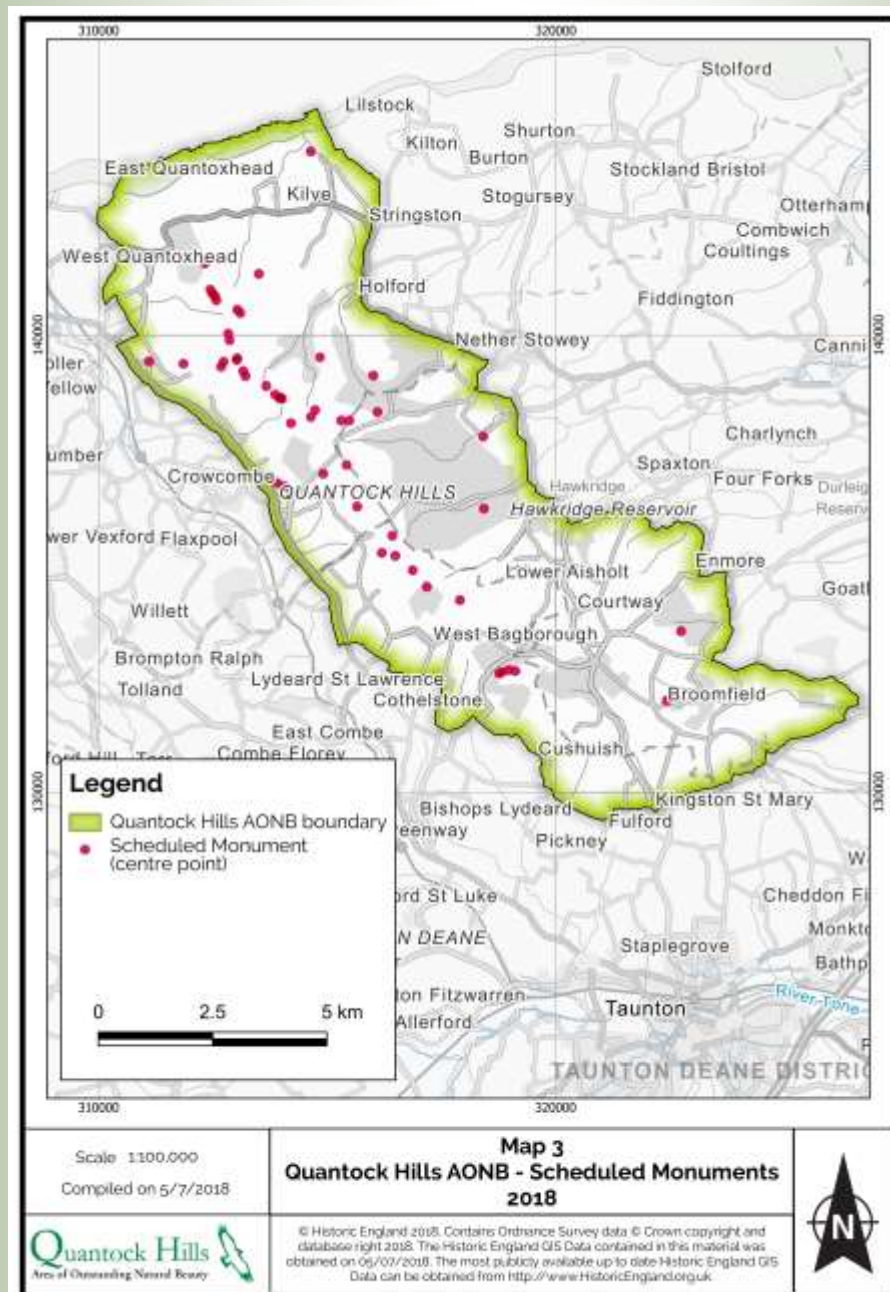
Trend:



During the period 2009 to 2018 there has been 2 new heritage features scheduled. Due to more robust monitoring 8 further Scheduled Monuments have been added to the Heritage At Risk Register compiled by Historic England. For Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens there has been no change in number on the registers or the number on the Heritage At Risk Register.

4.1 Scheduled Monuments

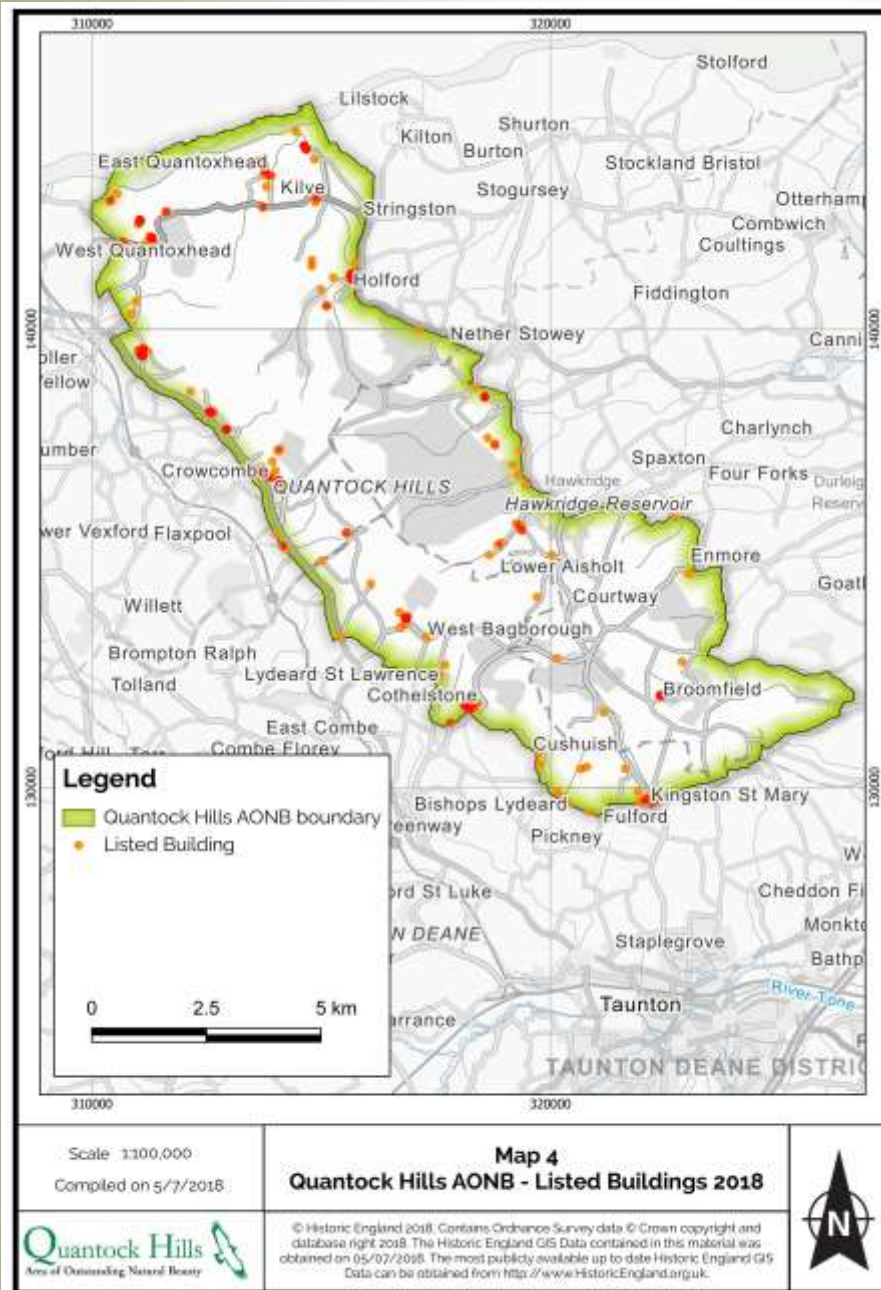
	Number of monuments	Area of monuments (Ha)	Area of AONB (Ha)	% of AONB coverage by Monuments	Number at Risk
2009 Quantock Hills AONB	49	20.38	9,916Ha	0.21	1
2018 Quantock Hills AONB	51	20.46	9,916Ha	0.21	9 (17.6%)
Change	+	+	n/c	n/c	+



4.2 Listed Buildings

Trend 

	Grade 1	Grade 2*	Grade 2	NG	Total	Number at Risk
2009 Quantock Hills AONB	8	29	172	0	209	2
2016 Quantock Hills AONB	8	27	170	0	205	2
Change	n/c	-	n/c	n/c	-	n/c



4.3 Scheduled Parks and Gardens

Trend 

	Number of Parks and Gardens	Area (Ha)	% of coverage of AONB	Number at Risk
2009 Quantock Hills AONB	3	208.15	2.10	1
2016 Quantock Hills AONB	3	208.15	2.10	1
Change	n/c	-	n/c	n/c



5. Populations

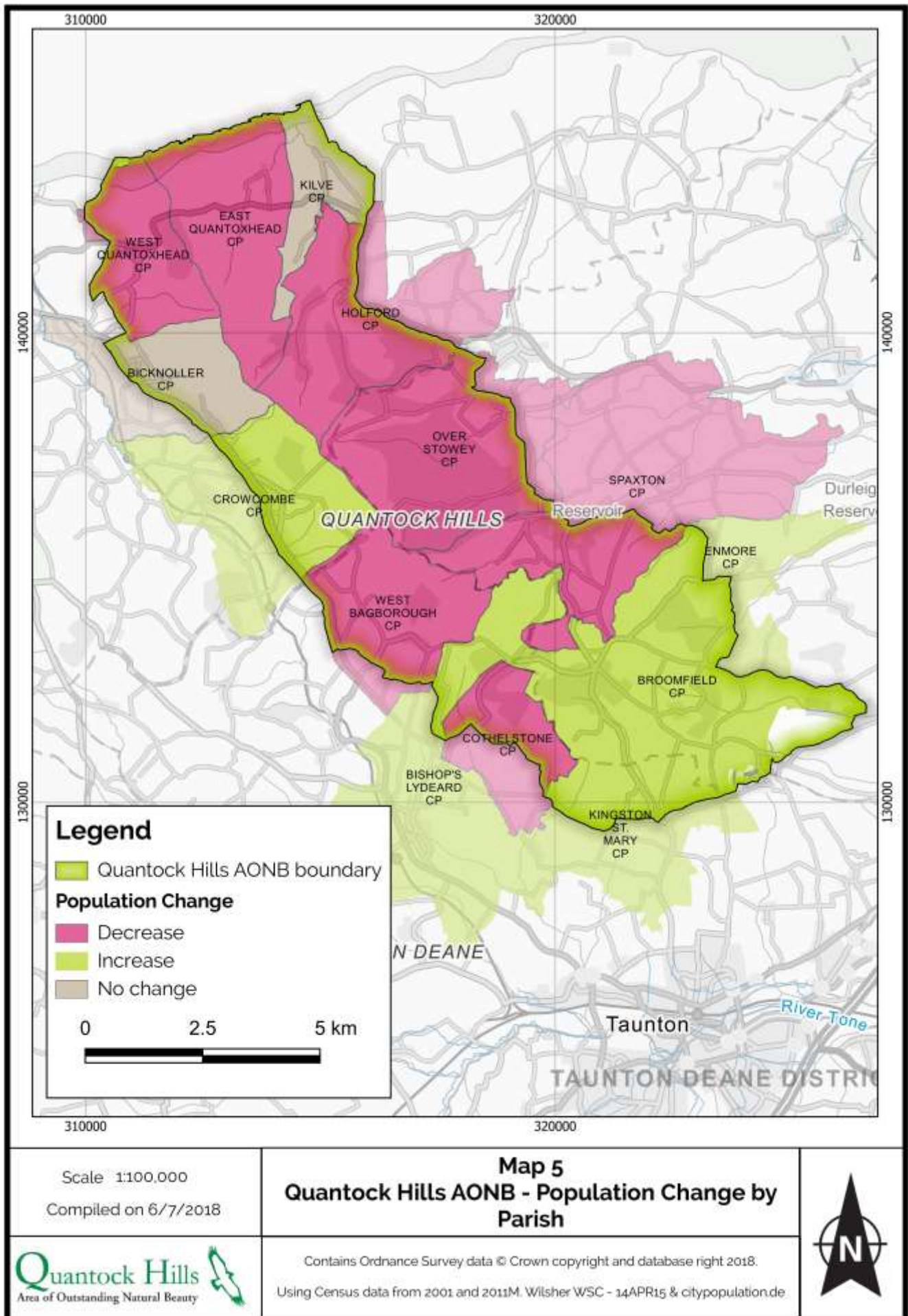
Overall a picture of declining populations across the majority of Quantock Hill AONB parishes. A 1.7% reduction in population in the AONB area. The decline in populations has taken place for most of the rural parishes, especially in the core area of the Quantock Hills AONB. This contrasts with the larger more peripheral AONB parishes, such as Bishops Lydeard which has a growing populations. NB—a significant area of Bishops Lydeard falls outside the AONB boundary.

Using Census data from 2001 and 2011.

Note—These are whole parish figures and not cut to the AONB boundary. Data for North Petherton and West Monkton not included due to very small overlap with AONB area.

Parish	Population (2001 Census)	Population (2011 Census)	Change
Bicknoller	371	371	n/c
Bishops Lydeard	2,689	2,839	+
Broomfield	208	249	+
Cothelstone	126	111	-
Crowcombe	477	489	+
East Quantoxhead	111	104	-
Enmore	233	241	+
Holford	302	276	-
Kilve	378	378	n/c
Kingston St Mary	892	921	+
Over Stowey	357	352	-
Spaxton	1,021	1,012	-
West Quantoxhead	390	343	-
West Bagborough	381	358	-
Total	7,938	7,803	-

5. Populations



6 Agri-environment investment

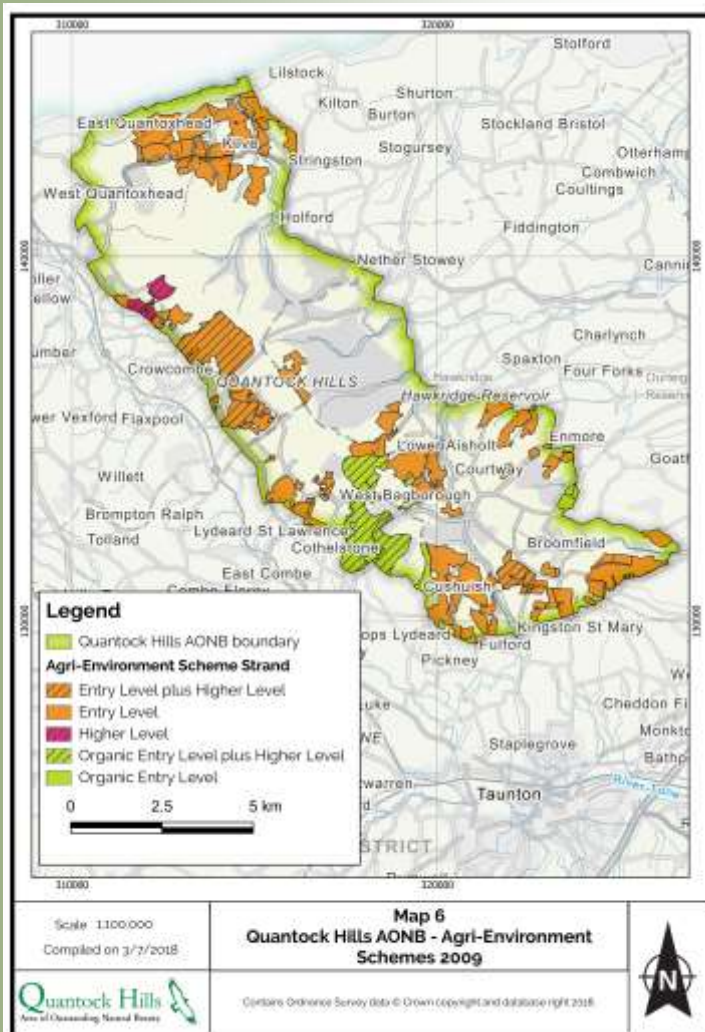
6.1 Land under Agri-environment schemes

Data includes area of land managed under agri-environment schemes which include Countryside Stewardship Schemes (CSS), and Environmental Stewardship (ES). The figures are expressed as a percentage of the area of the Quantock Hills AONB and as a percentage of the Utilisable Agricultural Area within it.

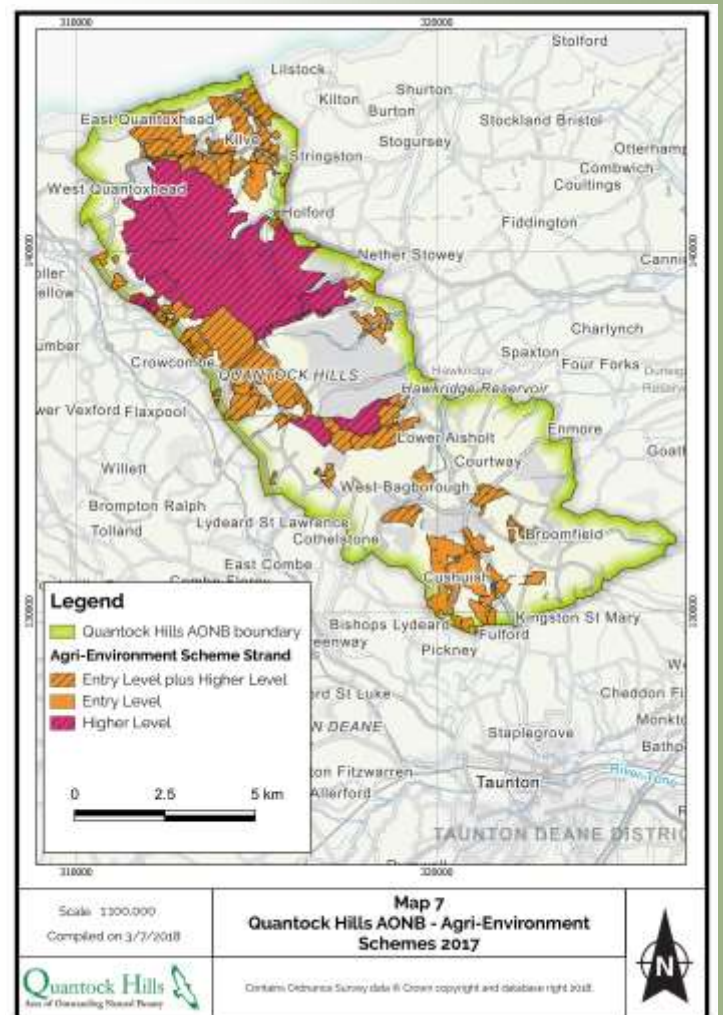
Note—The 2017 data above has had a ‘strict cutting’ method applied rather than taking the data direct from the MEOP spreadsheet which over-reports areas that straddle the AONB boundary.

Agri-environment Scheme Area	2009	2017	Change
Total area in Agri-environment agreements as % of AONB area	24%	36%	+
Total area as % of the total useable agricultural area	35%	51%	+

2009



2017



6.2 Total annual value of Agri-environment Schemes

Trend: 

Data includes area of land managed under agri-environment schemes which include Countryside Stewardship Schemes (CSS), and Environmental Stewardship (ES). 2017 GIS data from 01/03/2017.

The 2017 data has had a 'strict cutting' method applied rather than taking the data direct from the MEOPI spreadsheet which over reports areas straddling the AONB boundary.

Values for cost per hectare have been calculated from the MEOPI 2017 spreadsheet using their area and payment values. This cost per hectare for each scheme strand has then been used as a proxy and applied to the areas measured using the 'strict cut' GIS data from 2009 and 2017.

Agreement types	2009		2017		Change
	Area (Ha)	Value (£)	Area (Ha)	Value (£)	
ELS + HLS	375	35,481	1,281	£121,052	+
ELS	1,599	47,118	521	15,340	-
HLS	57	3,387	1,758	102,427	+
OELS + HLS	335	46,144	No data	0	-
OELS	52	2,819	No data	0	-
Total		134,949		241,445	+

7 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

Trend:

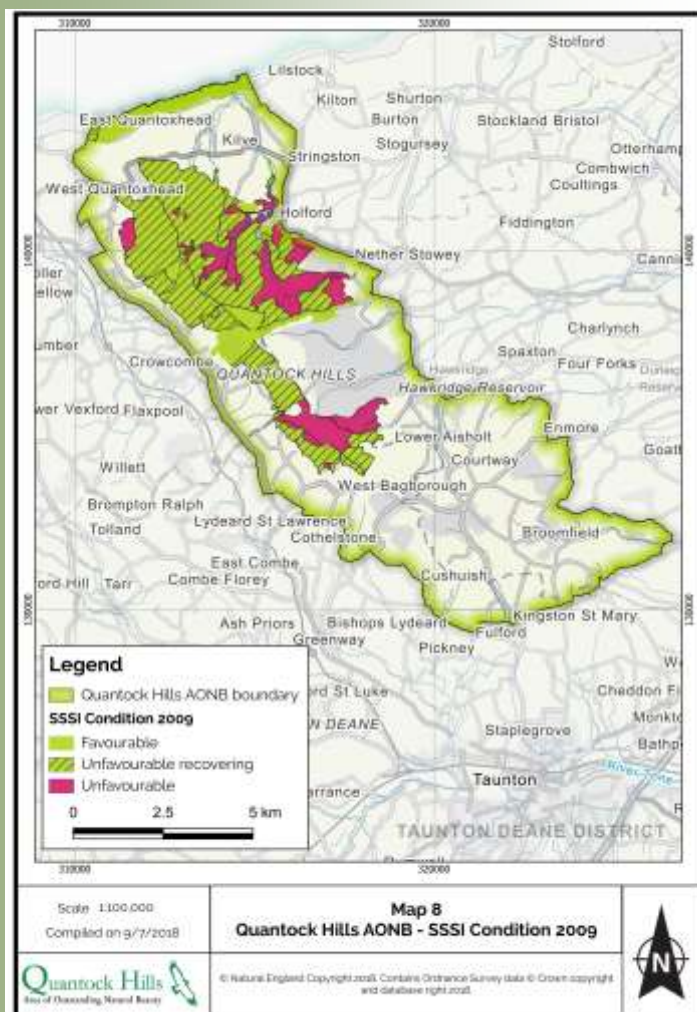


7.1 SSSI condition assessment

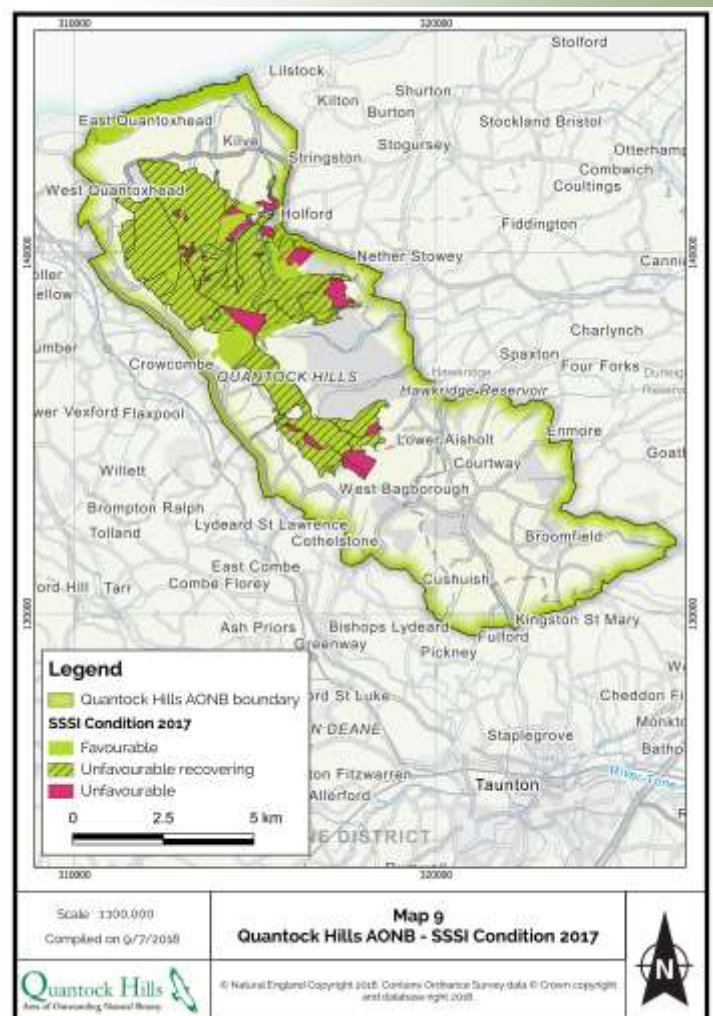
Using NE GIS data from 2009 and 2017 for all SSSI's within the Quantock Hills AONB Boundary. Overall shift is positive with a reduction of SSSI area being classed as 'Unfavourable no change' or 'Unfavourable declining'

SSSI Condition	2009	2017	Change
Favourable	412Ha	431Ha	+19Ha
Unfavourable recovering	1,636Ha	2,004Ha	+368Ha
Unfavourable no change	487Ha	187Ha	-300Ha
Unfavourable declining	134Ha	47Ha	- 87Ha

2009



2017



7.2 SSSI condition by broad habitat type (2017)

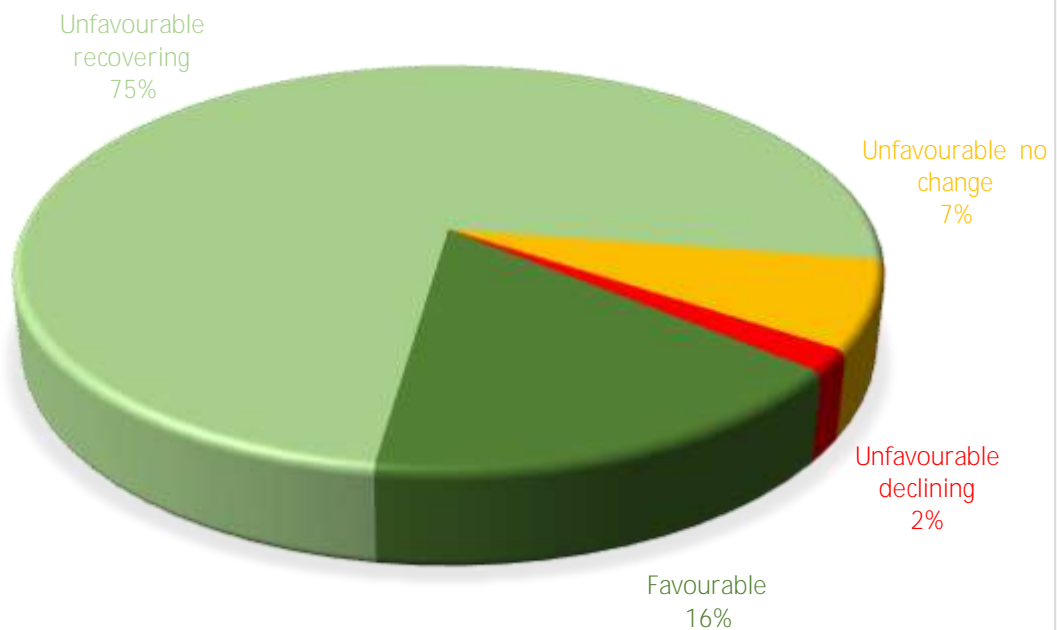
Trend: 

The data below shows the condition of the SSSI broad priority habitat types for 2017.

No data available for 2009.

SSSI Condition	Habitat Type. Area (Ha) and %					
	Acid Grassland	Bogs—Lowland	Broadleaf Mixed Wood-land	Dwarf Shrub Heath—upland	Earth Heritage	Total
Favourable	0Ha / 0%	4Ha / 16%	101Ha	136Ha / 8%	190 / 100%	431Ha
Unfavourable recovering	35Ha / 62%	4Ha / 16%	426Ha	1,539Ha / 87%	0Ha	2,004Ha
Unfavourable no change	13Ha / 23%	16Ha / 64%	89Ha	77Ha / 4%	0Ha	186Ha
Unfavourable declining	8Ha / 14%	1Ha / 4%	24Ha	13Ha / 1%	0Ha	46Ha
Total	56Ha	25Ha	631Ha	1,7657Ha	190Ha	2,667Ha

QUANTOCK HILLS AONB SSSI - CONDITION



8. Woodlands

Trend:



8.1 Woodland types and change in areas

Figures from National Forestry Inventory (NFI) supplied by Forestry Commission. Limited change with very slight increase in woodland cover overall and slight increase with woodland in active management.

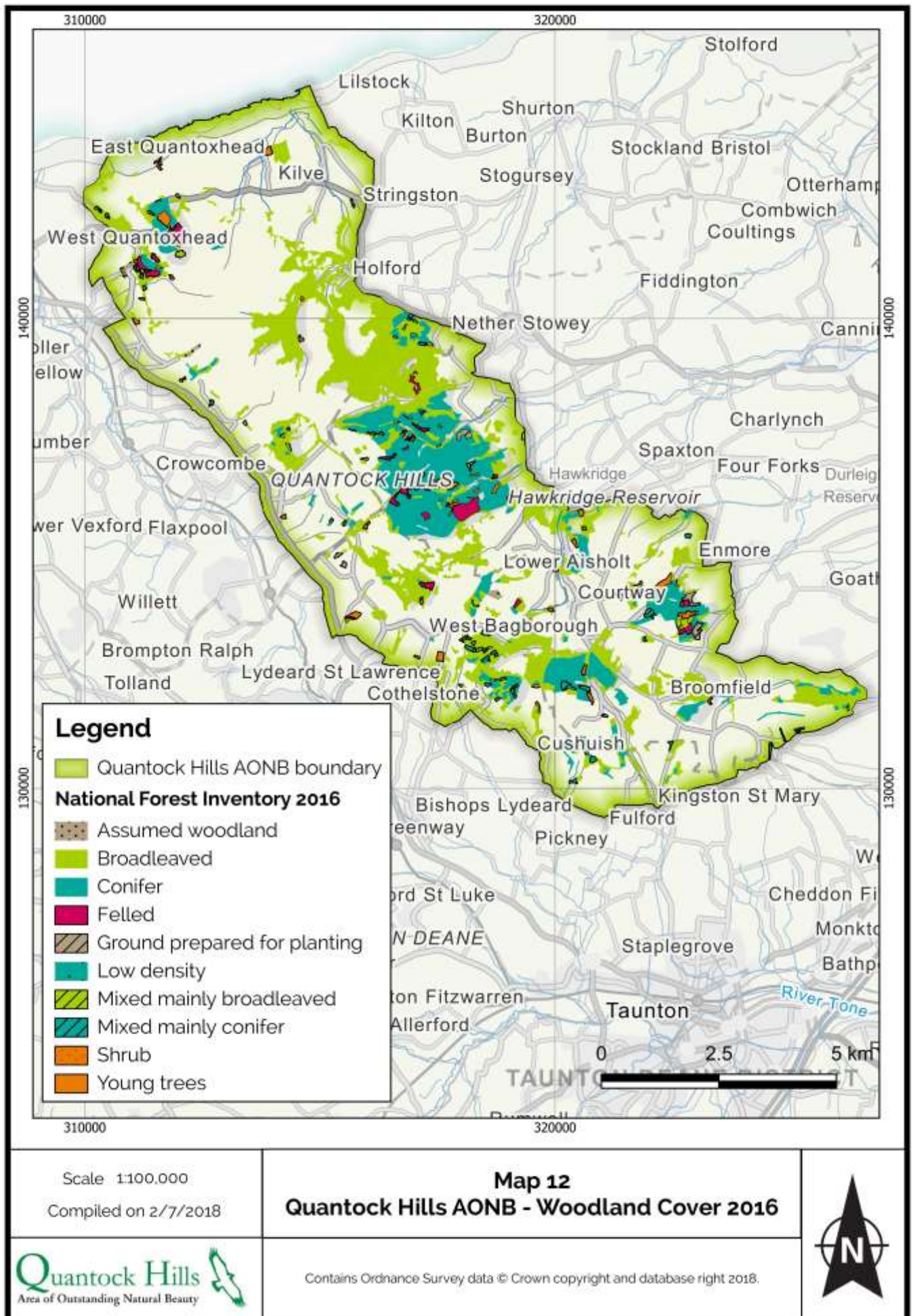
Type of Woodland	Area in Ha (2011)	Area in Ha (2016)	Change
Broadleaf	1,563Ha	1,567Ha	+
Conifer	880Ha	849Ha	-
Mixed, mainly broadleaf	38Ha	43Ha	+
Mixed, mainly conifer	40Ha	40Ha	-
Felled	40Ha	69Ha	+
Shrub land	7Ha	7Ha	-
Young trees	58Ha	61Ha	+
Low density	-	2Ha	+
Ground prepared for planting	14Ha	17Ha	+
Total area of Woodland	2,663Ha	2,670Ha	+

8.2 Woodland under management

	Area in Ha and as % of all	Area in Ha and as % of all	Change
Actively Managed woodland	1,367Ha / 51%	1,412Ha / 54%	+
Unmanaged woodland	1,291Ha / 49%	1,217 / 46%	-



8. Woodlands—map of Woodland types



9. Access

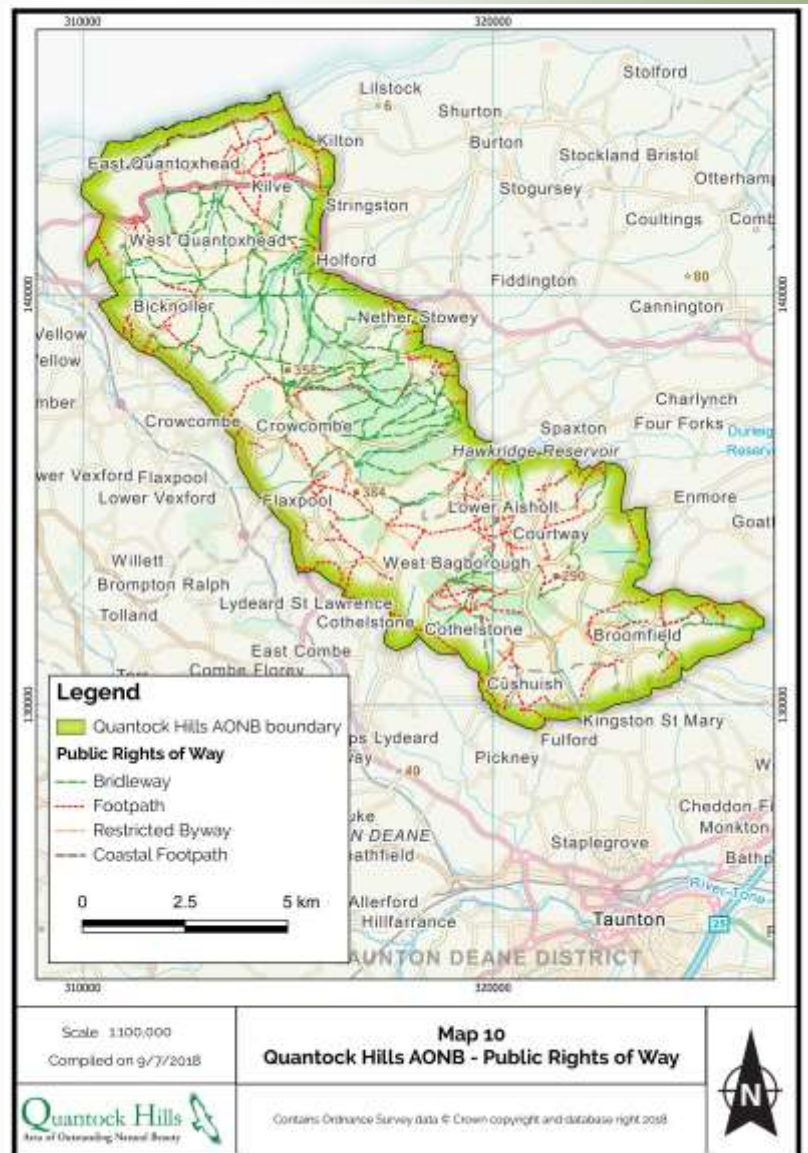
Trend 

9.1 Public Rights of Way in the Quantock Hills AONB

Status	Length (km)
Footpath	99.4km
Bridleway	123.3km
Restricted Byway	24.7km
Total	247.4km

9.2 National Trails in the Quantock Hills AONB

The English Coast Path National Trail travels for 6.048km in the Quantock Hills AONB.



10 Development

	Built Stock 2001— 2011 (1)	Stock 2001 (2)	Built Stock % pa (3)	Net Change 2001—2011
Quantock Hills AONB	37	1,161	0.35	191

NOTES

Source—Land Use Change in Protected Areas 2001—2011, P Bibby. DEFRA (2016)

- 1) Number of newly built dwellings reported in DCLG's Land Use Change Statistics (LUCS).
- 2) Number of self-contained units of occupation (SCUOs) as estimated by residential delivery points (dwellings) in the Postcode Address File (PAF) for 2011
- 3) Expression of newly built dwellings (estimated on the basis of LUCS) as an annual rate relative to the stock of SCUOs indicated by PAF for 2001.
- 4) Net change in the number of SCUOs (dwellings) over the period 2001—2011. The figure will also include demolition of existing property, subdivision and amalgamation of units and changes from and to non-residential use as well as new

