

# 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](http://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**.<sup>†</sup>

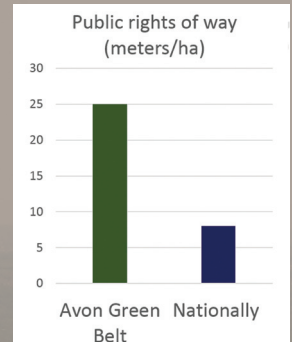
## Public access and recreation\*



**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](http://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<sup>†</sup>



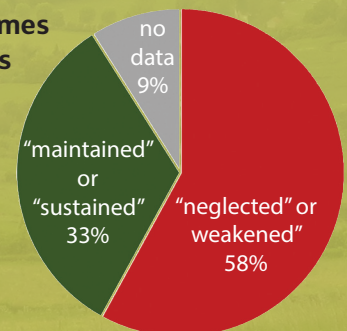
**11% is Grade 1, Grade 2** or the 'best and most versatile' **agricultural land**. Compared with 17% of land nationally.

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

**58%** of the total agricultural land<sup>‡</sup> 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<sup>†</sup>

**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)

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

<sup>‡</sup> 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.