Tamar Valley
National
Landscape



June 2026

Tamar Valley National Landscape **An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan No.6** 2026 - 2031

People and Place

The TVNL is home to around 11,755* residents, with an older-than-average population and a high proportion of rural households. Most residents live in small communities with high car ownership and a growing number working remotely. These characteristics shape how people interact with the landscape and highlight the importance of accessible, inclusive tourism and wellbeing opportunities that reflect local needs and lifestyles. Across the Tamar Valley, a range of large estates and farms play an important role in the landscape stewardship and public engagement, including places where community involvement and partnership working are increasingly shaping how land is cared for and enjoyed.

The Tamar Valley is widely recognised as an oasis of tranquillity, valued by residents and visitors for its scenic beauty and peaceful atmosphere. Its tourism infrastructure remains low-key and sympathetic to the Valley's heritage and landscape. The Visit Tamar Valley Association (VTV) supports tourism providers across the National Landscape.

With growing interest in natural and cultural heritage, and rural tourism, and increasing domestic travel driven by rising costs and environmental awareness, the Valley is likely to see a rise in visitor numbers. Tourism plays a vital role in the local economy, as highlighted by reports commissioned by the National Landscape and partners. Sustainable and sympathetic nature tourism in the Tamar Valley is vital for nurturing deeper connection between people and place, honouring the rich natural heritage while promoting meaningful reconnection with the environment. By valuing our intertwined relationship with the natural world, we foster stewardship, wellbeing and a lasting sense of belonging.

There is scope to continue investing in facilities and support local services, with a focus on year-round visitors who can help sustain accommodation providers and local food producers. While sustainable transport options such as the Tamar Valley railway line, river access and cycling routes offer opportunities to reduce car dependency, some communities are less able to reach them. Extending the reach and inclusivity of sustainable and active travel networks is a key objective in neighbourhood plans, and there is the need to ensure residents and visitors can reliably connect with local facilities and attractions.

The Tamara Coast to Coast Way, a long-distance walking route from the South to North Coast, showcases the Valley's rich landscapes and heritage. Walking and nature-based activities offer significant wellbeing benefits, and there is scope to expand ecotherapy approaches using the Valley's peaceful landscapes and soundscapes.

** This is a decrease from the figure quoted in the previous management plan of 16,500. Defra has provided this figure based on the Census 2021, cut to the edge of the National Landscape area and excludes previously included wider parish populations.*

Community challenges identified in Neighbourhood Development Plans

Housing and affordability

There is a limited housing stock in the Tamar Valley and housing is increasingly unaffordable for local residents, especially young people and key workers. There is an affordability ratio of 10 based on the average house price within the area of around £200,000 to £340,000 (mid-range 3 to 4 bed family house) and average income.

Access to services and infrastructure

Rural isolation affects access to healthcare, education and employment. Limited public transport and digital connectivity are recurring concerns in community feedback.

Aging population

The average age is 49, significantly above the national average. There are fewer working-age residents and a growing need for age-friendly services and housing.

Employment and economic resilience

Decline in traditional employment such as farming, and a shift towards home-working and micro-enterprises, with low average earnings. There is a need for support for sustainable tourism, creative industries and green jobs.

Climate change, adaptation and nature recovery

Communities are concerned about flooding, soil degradation and biodiversity loss. There is strong support for regenerative agriculture, tree planting and habitat restoration.

Cultural identity and heritage

Desire to protect and celebrate local heritage, including mining heritage and landscape character. Community-led placemaking and events are seen as vital for wellbeing and cohesion.

Community engagement and governance

Neighbourhood Development Plans highlight the importance of local voice in planning and landscape management.

Tamar Valley Community Insights

This section provides an overview of the people who live, work, and shape our community, highlighting key demographic characteristics that inform planning and decision-making.

Key population indicators

Indicator	Value
Population	11,755 (Census 2021, Defra cut to edge)
Average age	49 (England 40.5)
Population over 65 years old	3,638
Population 19 and under	2,041
Ethnicity	98% white (England 81%)
Average income in 2021	£25,200 pa
Average income 2025 (2.5% annual growth rate)	£27,816 pa* (England £37,430)
Average mid-range house price	£200,000 – £340,000
Average house affordability ratio	10 (England average 8)

** Average earnings within the TVNL area in 2021 was £25,200, by applying annual growth rate of 2.5%, the projected average income in 2025 would be £27,816.*

Population profile comparison

Indicator	Cornwall	Devon	England
Population aged 15 and under	15.7%	15.2%	18.5%
Population aged 16-64	56.7%	55.7%	62.3%
Population aged 65+	27.6%	29%	19.2%
Disabled under the Equality Act	21%	21%	23%
General health – bad / very bad	5.8%	5.3%	6.2%
General health – good / very good	79.9%	80%	74%
Economically inactive 16-64	22.4%	22.4%	21.6%
Economically inactive 16+	45%	44.5%	39%

Census 2021 indicators

Indicator	Tamar Valley	England
Households in deprivation	50.2%	48.4%
Average deprivation decile	6	5.5
Ethnic group: white	97.7%	81%
No religion	43.1%	36.7%
Main language English	99%	90.8%

Total businesses by sector

Sector	Cornwall	Devon	England
A, B, D, E – agricultural, energy and water	2.2%	1.4%	2.1%
C – manufacturing	8.4%	2.5%	5%
F – construction	10.4%	4%	12.6%
G, I – distribution, hotels, restaurants	20.1%	21.5%	18.4%
H, J – transport and communication	6.5%	7.7%	9.3%
K, L, M, N – finance, real estate, professional and administrative	12.3%	13.5%	33.1%
O, P, Q – public administration, education and health	35%	40%	6.5%
R, S, T, U – other	5%	4.4%	13%

Occupation profile

Occupation	Cornwall	Devon	England
Managers, directors and senior officials	12.6%	14.3%	11%
Professional	18.6%	25.3%	25%
Associate professional and technical	12.9%	12.1%	13%
Administrative and secretarial	9.1%	8.4%	10%
Skilled trades	14.4%	11.6%	9%
Caring, leisure and other services	9.7%	8.7%	9%
Sales and customer services	7.4%	6.8%	8%
Process, plant and machinery operatives	6.3%	4.1%	6%
Elementary	9.1%	8.5%	10%

Vision statements from Neighbourhood Plans within the Tamar Valley National Landscape

Calstock Vision Statement

By 2030, Calstock Parish will be a community with an excellent quality of life: living in decent homes in settlements that retain their rural character; supported by a thriving rural economy; benefitting from adequate social, transport and physical infrastructure; respecting and protecting the distinctive landscape, environment and heritage of the area; and, instigating and implementing plans that respond to the challenges of the climate crisis.

Landrake & St Erney Vision

By 2030 Landrake and St Erney will continue to be a beautiful rural Parish, proud of its special landscape, natural environment and quiet, historic village setting. The community will be content that they have the levels of housing, employment and infrastructure that they require.

Landulph Vision

In 2030 Landulph Parish will be a vibrant rural community comprising heritage, built and natural environments. Within this envelope, farms and small businesses will thrive, producing a balanced economic and social community.

The Vision for Stoke Climsland

Our Vision for 2030 and beyond is that Stoke Climsland Parish will be a well-designed, well-connected parish that: has a distinct sense of local identity and supports a busy, active and dynamic community with a strong sense of community spirit; is a pleasant and tranquil place to live, work and visit; meets the needs and aspirations of local people, offering an appropriate choice of homes, jobs and community facilities; contributes to national and international measures to tackle the causes of the climate crisis and is resilient to the impacts of climate change; celebrates and cares for its environment, heritage and landscape.

The Vision for Saltash

By 2030 Saltash will be an envied riverside town, being greener, more inclusive and prosperous in all aspects, with a reinvigorated Town Centre and Waterfront, award-winning new housing, a diverse economy, with an excellent quality of life and lifestyle for all ages.

The Vision for Tavistock

In 2034, Tavistock is a sustainable, thriving market town that benefits from and safeguards its natural and built historic environment, riverside setting, green spaces and surrounding moorland landscape and has responded positively to the challenges posed by our changing climate.

Tavistock retains its renowned town centre and markets which showcase a diverse range of sustainable businesses to serve the community and maintains high-quality community facilities and infrastructure that promote the health and well-being of residents.

Tavistock has a variety of sustainable and accessible homes designed to meet the needs of a balanced community, developed with respect for the character and heritage of the town.

Travel within and around the town is convenient by healthy and sustainable means accessible to all and the town is well-connected to Plymouth and other nearby communities by public transport.

Parks, allotments, and other green spaces in Tavistock are protected and maintained to promote active outdoor pursuits, mitigate the effects of climate change and increase biodiversity.

Maker-with-Rame / Sheviock / Millbrook / Antony / St John

Rame Peninsula Vision

In 2030, the Rame Peninsula's natural environment and built heritage will define the area. Villages will be thriving with healthy balanced communities, and the area will have a vibrant and viable local economy in which local people of all ages can fulfil their potential.

Lezant Parish – The Vision

Lezant Parish will continue as a welcoming and cohesive community that respects our rural way of life and yet is open to innovative ideas to improve the economic, physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of its inhabitants, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural environment for future generations.

The Bere Peninsula Vision Statement

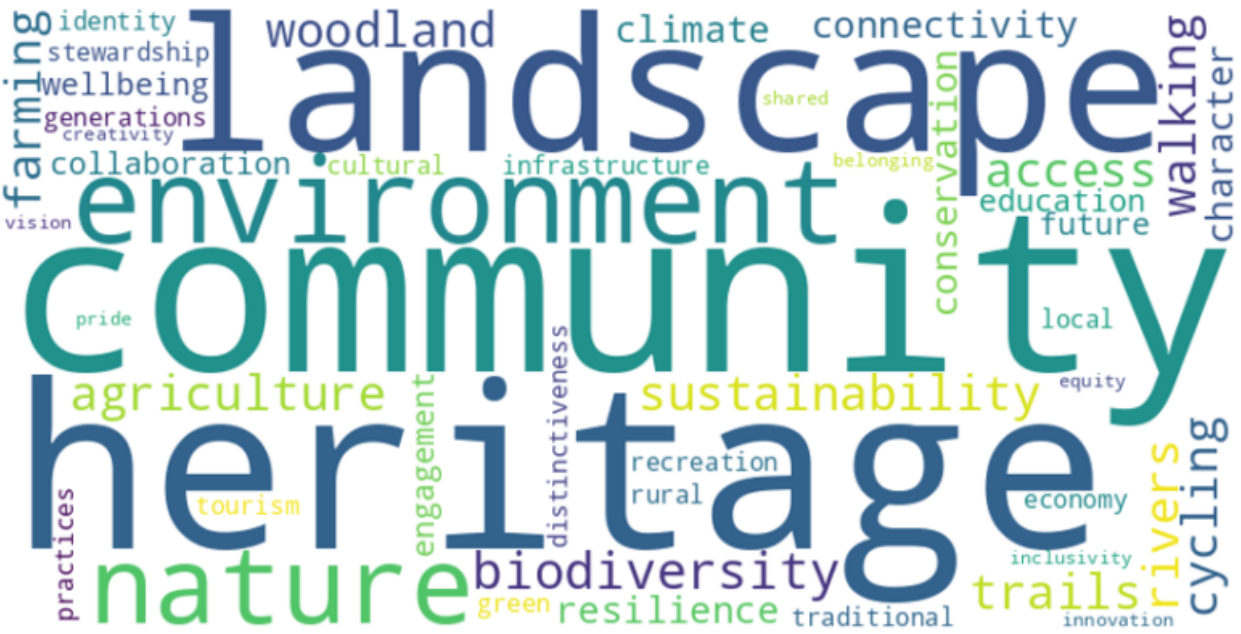
Enabling planned development to meet local needs within the constraints imposed by the Tamar Valley AONB, Cornwall and West Devon Mining World Heritage Site, Conservation Area and SSSI designations as well as the relevant AONB and WHS management plans and Government and Local Authority policies.

Enhancing the active, thriving and vibrant community spirit of the present.

Protecting and maintaining the acclaimed environmental and historic heritage of this special inland peninsula with its sense of isolation, scenic beauty and individuality.

Milton Abbot, Chillaton and Kelly

In 2034 we will have safeguarded our rural environment and economy, through facilitating new homes that meet local needs, whilst having a minimal impact on their surroundings and supporting thriving sustainable local communities.



Word cloud illustrating key themes and priorities identified through the Tamar Valley National Landscape Neighbourhood Development Plan visions.

A Distinctive and Internationally Important Historic Landscape

The Tamar Valley has a strong and remarkable heritage which is intrinsically connected to its special landscape qualities. The landscape reflects both natural and human influences, shaped by settlement and land use that follow the area's geology and topography. The international significance of our mining legacy was one of the key qualities reflected in the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site, inscribed by UNESCO in 2006.

The earliest evidence of human activity in the Tamar Valley survives in the form of a probable Neolithic Long Barrow on Kit Hill, constructed around 6000 years ago and marking the first farming settlers in the landscape. This was followed 2000 years later by a group of Bronze Age barrows in the same area, suggesting that permanent settlements were now well established. Further traces of prehistoric activity survive in the presence of numerous Rounds and late Iron Age to Romano-British period settlements, demonstrating an established farming community by this time. Recent research has revealed previously unrecorded Roman activity around Calstock, where a first century fort suggests activity linked to nearby silver mines.

During the medieval period, Tavistock Abbey, founded in 968CE, played a central role in the region's economy, controlling agriculture, fishing, and mining until the dissolution of monasteries in the sixteenth century. This period shaped the Tamar Valley's rural landscape, with extensive Cornish hedges and Devon banks enclosing small fields, particularly on the slopes, which remain intact today. Field boundaries reflect the changing use of the landscape, from medieval strip-based fields around Latchley to late enclosures from the time of the Industrial Revolution to the north of St Ann's Chapel. The development of settlements indicates changes in employment and the economic and social success of communities. Field patterns representing the legacy of miners' smallholdings are of particular importance and have been identified as a key and threatened part of the cultural landscape in the Tamar Valley.

Many of the Tamar Valley's buildings have grown from the very landscape in which they are placed. Building materials were sourced from local quarries and woodlands, lime mortar burnt at a nearby quay, bricks made in village brickworks, or slate brought in from Mill Hill near Tavistock. The removal of these materials from the landscape has itself created character, for example resulting in wildlife-rich habitats in abandoned quarries.

The Tamar River was the main transport route due to the steep terrain and poor roads. Before the Industrial Revolution, it facilitated imports of limestone, timber, dried fish, and cider while exporting local goods. Sailing barges from Calstock carried trade up and down the river, and lime kilns, small quays, and ferry crossings lined the shores, evidence of which still exist, such as Weir Quay.

By the early twentieth century, market gardening flourished, especially in the Bere Peninsula and Tamar south of Calstock. Early growing crops gave producers a two-week advantage, with apples, cherries, strawberries, and fresh flowers transported from Bere Alston Station to Covent Garden. Cider making, brewing, and jam bottling also thrived. As the railway system declined, market gardening contracted, leaving fewer orchards in the valley. Much of the land reverted to agriculture, while in some places, woodlands regenerated over former daffodil fields.

The rich legacy of the Tamar Valley's varied past still shapes current interactions with the landscape. A unique historic daffodil collection of over 100 varieties was identified as part of the 'Heralds of Spring' project, a significant number dating back to the First and Second World Wars. There are opportunities to expand this work further along with other forgotten legacies of the market gardening era, including fruiting hedgerow trees and heritage crops. Through revitalising and re-establishing former market gardens and orchards, to providing recreational routes through its industrial heartland, the living history of the valley still shapes and influences future land management and embraces continuing innovation. In 2025 the Tamara Landscape Partnership ran a trial to assess the commercial viability of the reinstated Calstock's historic ferry route, now a solar-powered ferry for river day trips and river crossings.

Much of the diverse and important buried and built heritage is recognised through statutory and non-statutory designations. Many of the area's Scheduled Monuments relate to mining heritage, but the range of Scheduled Monuments also highlights the depth of history in the landscape from prehistory through to the Second World War. The non-designated elements of the landscape are often the most locally cherished and represent the cultural, social and economic history of a particular locality. However, these are perhaps the assets most at threat as they are often offered no protection or are disregarded – but without them the character of the National Landscape and our understanding of landscape development would be entirely different.

View the Historic Environment Records for both Devon and the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly via these two links:
Historic Environment Record (HER) – Devon County Council (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=dydcfqguh3) and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly's Historic Environment (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=p8n6rgqies)

Stat 8: Designated Heritage Assets

- 1 Grade I Registered Parks and Gardens
- 2 Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens
- 27 Scheduled Monuments
- 29 Grade I Listed Buildings
- 47 Grade II* Listed Buildings
- 572 Grade II Listed Buildings
- 1 World Heritage Site

Historic England’s Heritage At Risk Register (2025)

- 11 Scheduled Monuments
- 8 Listed Buildings

Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site

The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site encompasses some 20,000 hectares across 10 Areas of Cornwall and West Devon. The Tamar Valley Mining District with Tavistock (Area 10), has significant landscape overlap with TVNL as well as with its aims and objectives around nature, climate, people and place. Around 32km² (16.5%) of the TVNL intersects with World Heritage Site Area 10 and the statutory protection afforded to National Landscapes can be considered as a useful additional protection for some mining landscapes. The mining heritage of the Valley is one of its key qualities reflected in UNESCO’s inscription of the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site in 2006.

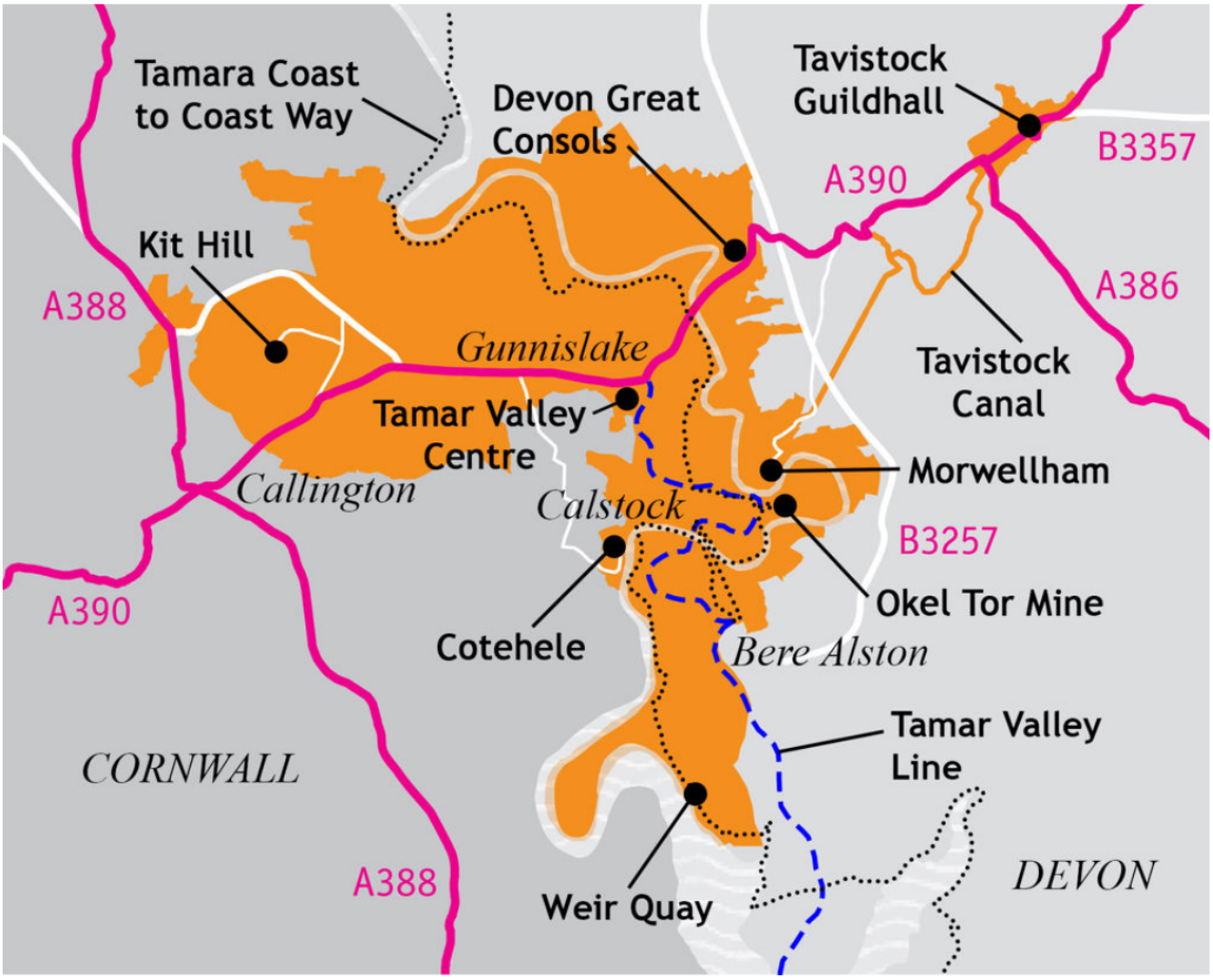
The Tamar Valley experienced extensive mining activity throughout the 18th and 19th centuries particularly, and the resultant combination of housing, Methodist chapels, mine chimneys and associated infrastructure has created a distinctive mining landscape with stories to tell of the people who helped shape the place. In 1844, rich copper deposits were found at Devon Great Consols Mine, leading to the development of over a hundred active mines. Morwellham Quay was a thriving copper trade hub, but its importance diminished after the Plymouth-Tavistock stretch of the South Devon Railway opened in 1859. In 1903, the Devon Great Consols mines officially closed and, although tin and arsenic continued to be extracted until around 1925-30, Morwellham Quay ceased functioning as a commercial port. At its peak, Tamar shipping rivalled the Mersey, with Morwellham Quay considered the second most significant port south of the River Exe.

The UNESCO designated World Heritage Site is defined through this range of mining related sites and features known as Attributes and many of these are to be found within the Tamar Valley. Cornish-type engine houses and related mine buildings are perhaps the most apparent of these, but the former mining settlements, mineral railways and quays on the Tamar are also essential aspects of the Valley’s historic metalliferous mining. As a consequence, the Site supports a fascinating variety of flora and fauna shaped by the unique geology and mining heritage. Mine spoil hosts lichens and mosses, more widely the site provides nesting ground and support bats such as the Greater Horseshoe bat which use abandoned mine workings to roost.

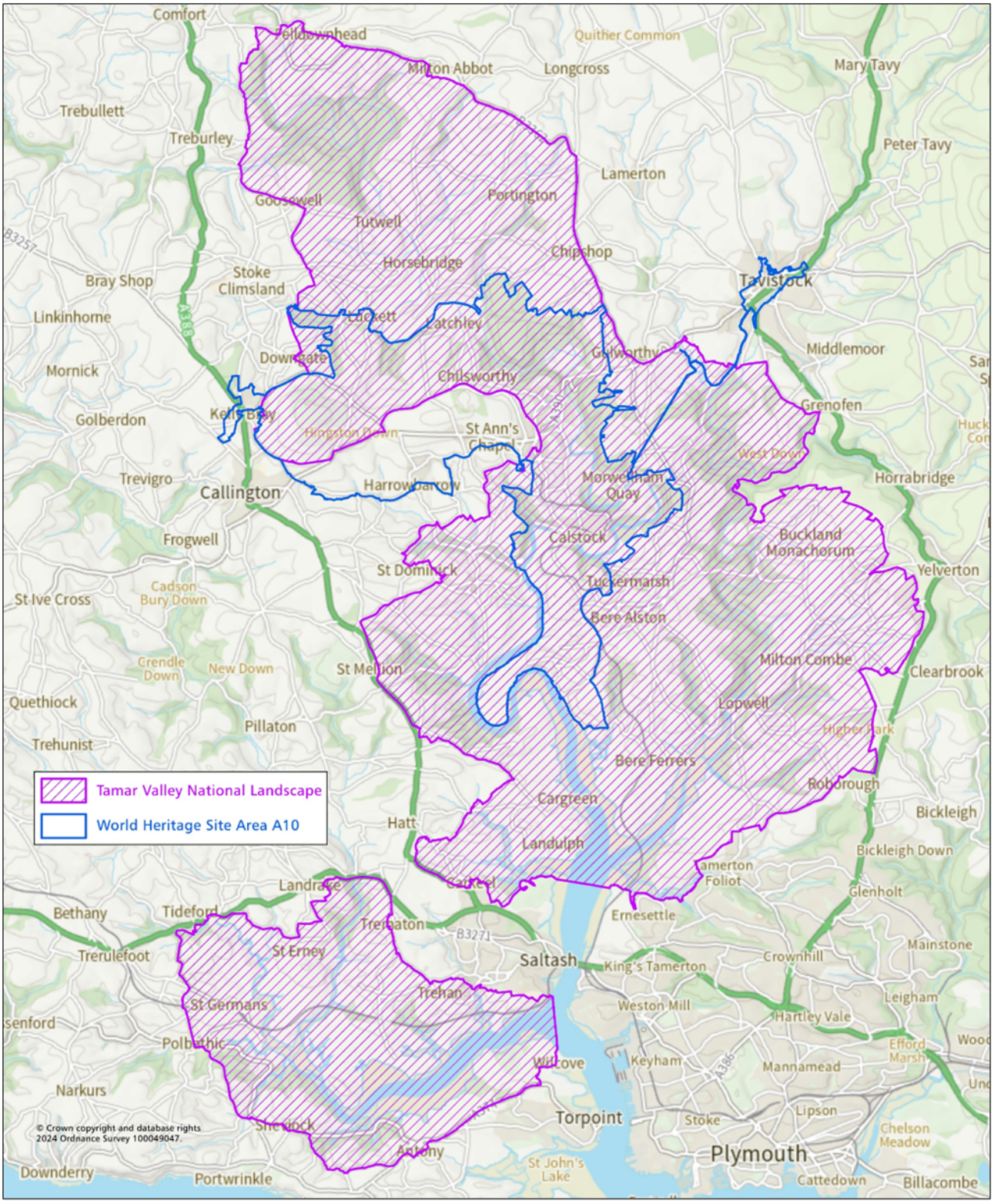
The Cornubian Orefield within Cornwall and Devon possesses around half of the UK total of known mineral species, and the World Heritage Site contains extensive secondary mineral deposits as mineral waste dumps associated with either underground development or mineral processing. These mineral waste dumps are important historic context for the mines with which they are associated and are also part of the World Heritage Site's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), or international importance. Secondary mineral deposits are increasingly being recognised as heritage assets, with Devon County Council's Minerals Plan enabling Prohibition Orders to revoke existing planning permissions for the removal of aggregates from mine tips in the Tamar Valley, and the Cornwall Minerals Safeguarding DPD acknowledging that historic mine dumps in the Site are potentially heritage assets.

By working together, we are promoting the sustainable management and conservation of this globally significant industrial heritage, alongside the other key features and characteristics across the Tamar Valley. The WHS Inscription further strengthens the importance of the heritage in the National Landscape by recognising its international importance and provides additional means of sharing, reinforcing and promoting to a wider audience and securing this special place for future generations.

Link to information on the Tamar Valley Mining District with Tavistock:
A10 Tamar Valley Mining District with Tavistock – Cornish Mining World Heritage Site (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=cgj4pzsbbr)



Tamar Valley Mining District with Tavistock (Area 10), showing key settlements, transport routes and mining heritage locations within the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.



Map showing the overlap between the Tamar Valley National Landscape and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (Area 10).

People Case Studies

Tamar Valley River Festival

Calstock community festival linking arts with the landscape in 2024. Read more > (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=fykftj79zb)

Training for Tomorrow: Building Resilience in the Tamar Valley

Upskilling individuals, strengthening communities and landscapes for the future by delivering training and accreditation in traditional rural skills. Read more > (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=9b4e229ca8)

Place Case Studies

Tamara Coast to Coast Way

A long-distance walking route following the River Tamar, stretching about 87 miles. Read more > (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=tqbto8ftnd)

Monument Management Schemes with Historic England

Improving the management and protection of seven sites on Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register. Read more > (https://nrkmf.nimsite.uk/?tvnl_go=t0vqiytxti)



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Date of Adoption:
June 2026

If you require information in a different format – for example in braille, large print, paper copy or other languages, please contact:

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