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What are National Parks?



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National Parks are areas of exceptional natural beauty which benefit from special protection and management, with great opportunities for everyone to enjoy the outdoors.

The National Park Authorities are here to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Parks
- Promote understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities
- the communities within their boundaries.

There are 15 National Parks in the UK, 3 of which are in Wales: the Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia and the Pembrokeshire Coast.

This leaflet aims to be a quick guide to Wales' three National Parks and the YHA for Community Champions with the Mosaic project and anyone else interested to visit or get involved with one of the three National Parks in Wales.



Snowdonia National Park Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri

What's special about Snowdonia?

Snowdonia's landscape is unique. Its nine mountain ranges cover approximately 52% of the Park and include many peaks that are more than 3,000 feet (915m).

Snowdonia is a delightfully varied landscape of steep river gorges, waterfalls and green valleys. Oak, ash, rowan and hazel woodlands are found scattered throughout the Park - and the beautiful Dyfi, Mawddach and Dwyryd estuaries plus 23 miles of coastline and sandy beaches contribute to the overall diversity of the landscape.

History is all around you in Snowdonia: the landscape illustrates the history of the area through Stone Age burial chambers, Roman forts, churches, castles, slate quarries and other industrial works. It is located in the ancient Kingdom of Gwynedd and is a stronghold of 'Cymraeg', the Welsh Language. The Welsh name for the National Park is Eryri (The Highland).



Key areas of Snowdonia

- The northernmost area is the most popular with tourists, and includes (from west to east) Moel Hebog, Mynydd Mawr and the Nantlle Ridge; the Snowdon Massif; the Glyderau; and the Carneddau. These last three groups are the highest mountains in Wales, and include all Wales' 3000-foot mountains.
- The southernmost area includes Cadair Idris. the Dyfi hills, and the Aran group, including Aran Fawddwy, the highest mountain in the United Kingdom south of Snowdon.
- The park's entire coastline is a Special Area of Conservation, which runs down to the mid-Wales coast and contains valuable sand dune systems as well as Wales' famous coastal path.
- The park's natural forests are of the mixed deciduous type, the commonest tree being the Welsh oak. Birch, ash, mountain-ash and hazel are also common.

5 top things to do in Snowdonia National Park



Be inspired in Cwm Idwal

Cwm Idwal is a spectacular hanging valley surrounded by some of the highest peaks in Snowdonia: it is a classic example of a landscape dramatically sculptured by ice thousands of years ago. The cwm forms a magnificent amphitheatre behind the glacial lake of Llyn Idwal, where fresh water flows from mountain waterfalls.

It's located 5 miles to the south of Bethesda and only around 20 mins from the A5 road. There is a new visitor's centre with an

interpretation room, toilets and food kiosk at the start of the path up to Cwm Idwal. Take the short walk up to the lake, picnic on it's shores. Or if you're feeling adventurous make this the start of a longer walk in the stunning Glyderau Mountains.

http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/article-1356405528159/

Row a boat on Llyn Tegid

Llyn Tegid is the largest natural lake in Wales, and is home to the ancient fish the Gwyniad. It is located at the edge of the historic town of Bala.

Once upon a time, where Llyn Tegid lies today was the old town of Bala, submerged according to legend. Row a boat and perhaps you'll hear to old spirits of the Lake. Read about it here:

http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/visiting/places-to-visit/llyn-tegid/legends. The lake is also great for picnics, short walks and even swimming!

For more information on hiring boats visit http://www.balawatersports.com/ or for fishing permits balaangling@fsmail.net



Learn about local history at the Slate Museum in Llanberis

Local films, daily slate splitting demonstrations by Quarry Craftsmen and giant waterwheel - the largest of its kind in mainland Britain. Other favourites at the Museum include the Chief Engineer's House and the Quarrymen's Houses - re-erected stone by stone at the Museum and refurbished to show key dates in the slate industry's history.

There is a cafe and shop on site.

Entry is free! Easter-October: Open 10am-5pm daily. November-Easter: Open 10am-4pm Sunday-Friday.

Contact: 0300 111 2 333

http://www.museumwales.ac.uk/slate/





Be spellbound at Castell v Bere

Carys Dafydd's favourite site! Deep in the mountainous heart of south Snowdonia, nestling at the foot of Cader Idris, near Llanfihangel-y-Pennant lie the ruins of Castell y Bere. An atmospheric site, it is an outstanding example of a stronghold of the native Welsh princes, and an illuminating contrast with the castles of their English adversaries. Open daily from 10am-4pm. Entry Free!

For directions to the castle visit CADW's website http://cadw.wales.gov.uk/daysout/castell-y-bere/?lang=en





Try biking on the Mawddach Trail

The Mawddach Trail is a stunning multi-use path following the old disused railway line along the edge of the beautiful Mawddach estuary for 9 miles between Dolgellau and Barmouth, giving you the chance to experience some of Snowdonia's splendour, striking scenery and beautiful wildlife. The traffic-free route is clearly marked and fairly flat. It is suitable for walkers, cyclists and wheelchair users. The trail can be joined

at several points, including Morfa Mawddach and Penmaenpool. Bus services run on either side of the estuary, and there are train stations at Morfa Mawddach and Barmouth.

http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/visiting/walking/Easy-Leisure-Walks/Mawddach-Trail To hire a bike - http://www.dolgellaucycles.co.uk/hire.cfm

Community Champion, Tahira, recommends eating in the community cafe at Beddgellert and hiring a bike from Beddgellert Bikes there! http://www.beddgelertbikes.co.uk/

6 Quick Guide to Wales' National Parks for Community Champions

Practical information

Contact details for key members of staff in NPA for visits

Carys Dafydd, Community Officer	01766 772269 Carys.Dafydd@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
Warden Service	http://www.eryri-npa.gov.uk/visiting/warden-service/Meet-The-Wardens		
Access Officer, Peter Rutherford	01766 772258 Peter.Rutherford@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
Snowdonia reception	01766 770274 parc@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
Visitor Centres			
Betws y Coed Visitor Centre	01690 710426 TIC.BYC@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
Beddgelert Visitor Centre	01766 890615 TIC.Dolgellau@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
Dolgellau Visitor Centre	01341 422888 TIC.Beddgelert@eryri-npa.gov.uk		
	www.eryri-npa.gov.uk		
	http://www.facebook.com/visitsnowdonia		
http://twitter.com/visitsnowdonia			
	https://www.youtube.com/user/visitingsnowdonia		

Get involved!

Spend a day doing conservation in stunning places! Contact: Cymdeithas Eryri /Snowdonia Society 01286 685498 info@snowdonia-society.org.uk http://www.snowdonia-society.org.uk/?lang=eng

Have your say about Snowdonia National Park - take part in consultations. Contact: Carys Dafydd, Community Officer for further information -01766772269 Carys.Dafydd@eryri-npa.gov.uk

Want to discuss National Park governance or policy? Contact Ifer Gwyn, Principal Policy Officer 01766772536

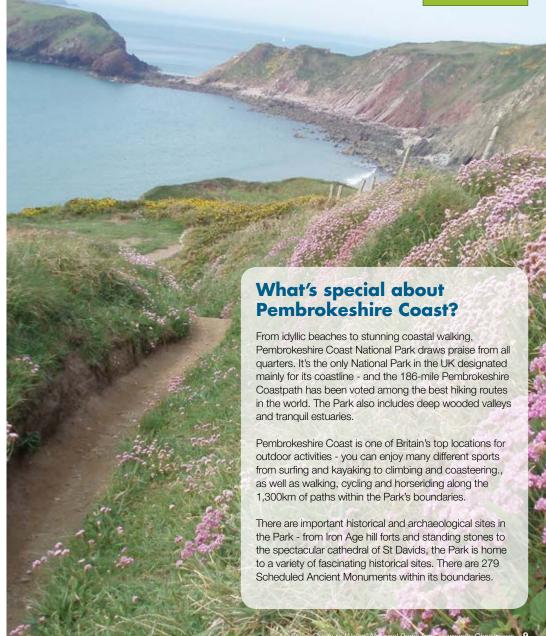
Other key local contacts

http://www.snowdonia-active.com/ Portal to outdoor activities in north Wales http://www.partneriaeth-awyr-agored.co.uk/ A partnership which works with local outdoor activity clubs to improve opportunities for more local people in Wales to achieve their potential through outdoor activities

http://www.ramblersnorthwales.org.uk/ North Wales Ramblers http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/wales/ The National Trust

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Parc Cendlauthol Arfordir Penfro





Key areas of Pembrokeshire Coast

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park is Britain's only truly coastal National Park, covering 240 sq. miles (620 sq km) of spectacular landscape around Wales' south-western shore. The Park has around 186 miles of coastline and coast path.

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park has a wonderfully varied cultural landscape of hills, valleys, cliffs, beaches, rivers and lakes. Added to this is the unmistakable human influence of thousands of years of endeavour - farm land, buildings, roads, hedgerows, woodlands, grasslands, earthworks, castles, standing stones all monuments to our industry.

The Park has four distinct sections. Running clockwise around the coast, these are:

- 1. The south Pembrokeshire coast, including Caldey Island:
- 2. The Daugleddau estuary;
- 3. The St Bride's Bay coast, including the coastal islands;
- 4. The Preseli Hills.





5 top things to do in Pembrokeshire Coast National Park



Walk and discover

Walking provides a great way to explore the amazing landscape of the National Park, with hundreds of miles of footpaths there are locations and levels of difficulty to suit all. Use the links below to find out about a walk to suit you and your group.

17 short walks around Pembrokeshire. All of them are accessible for pushchairs or wheelchairs. You can download the card for each walk

which gives directions and details on how to get there. http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default. asp?PID=389. For example get great views of the beach at Bosherton Lily Ponds on a 3 mile walk. Get there using the Coastal Cruiser bus service from Pembroke Dock

For lots of other walk ideas, you can download route maps and instruction cards from the Pembrokeshire Coast NPA website. http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=401

Outdoor pursuits

Why not try coasteering, kayaking, surfing or one of the many other outdoor pursuits available across the National Park. Coasteering is great for gaining confidence in the water and team building with a group.

Enjoy Pembrokeshire:

http://enjoy.pcnpa.org.uk/new_site/default.asp?pid=2



Visiting the Islands

Pembrokeshire's coast is dotted with islands - excellent for wildlife and a visit will provide a memorable experience.

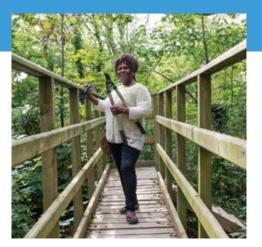
The islands were named by the Vikings who sailed along this coast in the 8th to 10th centuries, though Caldey and Ramsey have older Welsh names reflecting early Christian tradition. The islands were inhabited far back in



prehistory, and most were farmed well into the 20th century. Today, many are nature reserves and all but Caldey are uninhabited, apart from wardens and volunteers.

Caldey, Skomer and Ramsey are the easiest to visit, with daily boat trips from the mainland between Easter and October, but others can be seen at close guarters from a passenger boat.

Pembrokeshire's Islands: http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=371





Beaches and swimming

No trip to Pembrokeshire would be complete without a trip to the beach. Our favourite ones are Broadhaven, Tenby for ease of access and its close to the town and Marloes for beauty!

Champions recommend Fish and Chips on Broadhaven Beach from the excellent chippie there, and staying at Broadhaven YHA right next to the beach.

Beaches: http://enjoy.pcnpa.org.uk/new_site/default.asp?PID=14&show=map Swimming: http://enjoy.pcnpa.org.uk/new_site/default.asp?PID=18&show=map







Visit a heritage attraction

Pembrokeshire is well known for its castles, but there is a wealth of other historical interest – from ancient history through to the story of World War I & II in west Wales.

Try Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort, Carew Castle, Pentre Ifan, Pembroke Castl and Picton Castle (a great garden and an interesting painting of a son of the family adopted out of slavery)

Heritage in the park: http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=9

Community Champion, Sham recommends; 'Ty Canol woods for amazing ancient trees and fairy-tale scenery.'

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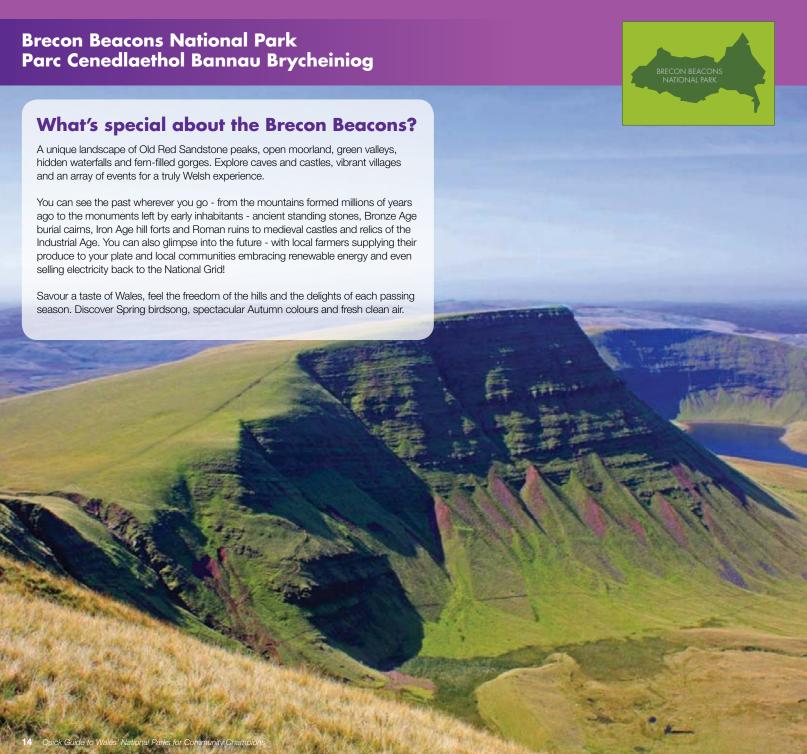
Practical information

Below are contact details for key members of staff - many of whom will be useful in planning a visit, finding out more about a particular aspect of the National Park or just to let us know you're visiting.

Visitor Centre and Attractions	Telephone	Email
Oriel y Parc visitor centre, St. Davids	01437 720392	info@orielyparc.co.uk
Tenby Visitor Centre	01834 845040	tenbycentre@pembrokeshirecoast.org.ul
Carew Castle	01646 651782	enquiries@carewcastle.com
Castell Henllys Iron Age Fort	01239 891319	celts@castellhenllys.com
Area Ranger team		
Hayley Barrett		
(South-west including Broad Haven)	07866 771123	hayleyb@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Haydn Garlick (South Area)	07773 797559	haydng@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
lan Meophan (West including St.Davids)	07977 531868	ianm@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Carol Owen (North Area)	07866 771166	carolo@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Libby Taylor (Ranger Manager)	07967 360689	libbyt@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Richard Vaughan (North Area)	07977 034985	richardv@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Discovery Ranger Team		
Paul Casson		
(Walk leader training, health and wellbeing)	07866 771107	paulc@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Rebecca Evans (Interpretation)	01646 624855	rebeccae@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Tom Iggleden (Inclusion and training)	07866 771190	tomi@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Jo Morgan (Discovery Team Support)	01646 624856	joannem@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Tom Moses (Inclusion)	07773 788205	tomm@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Graham Peake (Team Leader, volunteering	01646 624861	grahamp@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Jill Simpson (Interpretation)	01646 624855	jills@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Communications Team		
Marie Edwards (Manager)	01646 624824	mariee@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Medi George	01646 624867	medig@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
Janet O'Toole	01646 624823	janetoto@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
National Park Reception	0845 345 7275	pcnp@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk
National Park Governance/Members		
Janet Evans (Administration and Democratic Services Manager)	01646 624834	janete@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk

Get involved!

For more information about volunteering opportunities contact Graham Peake or Libby Taylor (contact details above)





Key areas of **Brecon Beacons**

The Waterfalls Country in the upper reaches of the River Neath is a remarkable area of waterfalls with an amazing biodiversity of over 600 plant species. There are many rare lichens and mosses that thrive on the moisture within the wooded valleys. The beautiful scenery and waterfalls make the area very popular for visitors.

The River Usk rises in the Black Mountain and flows through the Park to Abergavenny and finally enters the Severn Estuary at Newport. The whole river is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The main reason it was created a SAC is because of the migratory fish, salmon, bullheads, lampreys and twait (a type of herring). The fish spawn their eggs in the upper parts of the river so having clean water in the river is very important. Otters also live along the river, feeding on the fish.

The Black Mountains covers nearly 8,000 hectares of heather moorland between the River Monnow and River Usk. It's popular for it's amazing scenery and good upland walking.

Fforest Fawr Geopark, including Pen y Fan and Central Brecons, is Wales' first European Geopark. It coincides with the western half of the Brecon Beacons National Park and is a great place to start your exploration of the Earth's remarkable history. Fforest Fawr Geopark is Wales' first member of the European Geoparks Network and UNESCO Global Geoparks Network www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk

5 top things to do in Brecon Beacons National Park



The National Park Visitor Centre

An ideal starting point for exploring the National Park and Fforest Fawr Geopark with displays, publications and friendly staff to give information and advice. There are tea rooms serving local produce, spacious grounds, superb mountain views and leisurely walks on the adjoining common.

Craig-y-nos Country Park

Laid out in Victorian times by the famous opera singer Adelina Patti with 40 acres of woodland, meadows and riverside walks, the Country Park offers you a beautiful and peaceful retreat. Both Eco-Centres make a great day out for school groups.

Call 01874 620463 to find out more



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The Big Pit National Coal Museum or Big Pit

Take a tour round the old coal mines deep underground and learn about Wales' industrial heritage. Open 9.30-5.00 daily. Admission Free.

Community Champion, Basma recommends it;

'The Big Pit is amazing and you must not miss it. It is very historical and educational.'







'The Llangorse Lake is great and kids love the activity centre there' Jasmin, Mosaic project officer

The Waterfalls

The Brecon Beacons is famous for its waterfalls. A good place to start is the Waterfalls Centre in the village of Pontneddfechan. You can pick up good walking routes from the centre – both long and short to explore this beautiful area.

Visit the website for further information http://www.breconbeacons.org/waterfalls-centre-pontneddfechan

Blaen y Glyn Waterfall (pictured) near Talybont Reservoir is also a great place to visit.



The Mountain Railway

runs from Pant near Merthyr Tydfill along the full length of the Pontsticill Reservoir to Torpantau high in the Brecon Beacons. It's a steam train and the views are amazing. Tickets cost £13 return for adults. Reach there by public transport on the bus from Merthyr Tydfyll http://www.breconmountainrailway.co.uk/

Find further details on all these activities on http://www.breconbeacons.org/.

Practical information

Youth Hostels Association (YHA)



For visits and other outreach

Francesca Bell, Education Officer, Francesca. Bell@beacons-npa.gov.uk 01874 624437

NPA reception, enquiries@beacons-npa.gov.uk 01874 623366

Find out about Brecon Beacons National Park online

@BreconBeaconsNP.

https://www.facebook.com/breconbeaconsnationalpark

http://www.flickr.com/groups/breconbeaconspark/

http://www.breconbeacons.org/

http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/

Link to database of activity providers in NP

http://www.breconbeacons.org/group-activities-team-building

Get involved!

Volunteering and conservation: Much of the volunteer activity is practical outdoor work, and we are always keen to find new fit people to help out -there are also opportunities being developed for those of you who might be less active or who don't like getting wet.

Contact Jackie Thomas Jacqueline.thomas@beacons-npa.gov.uk 01874 62045 for further details

Want to discuss National Park governance or policy or take part in National Park Authority consultations? Contact Julia Gruffydd Julia.gurffydd@beacons-npa.gov.uk 01874 620400





The YHA offers affordable accommodation in amazing places all over the UK. You can hire individual beds, rooms or even book a whole hostel for a group. All hostels have self-catering kitchens and most also serve food. Hostels are big and small, in amazing rural locations and in city centres.

The YHA is a charity which aims to help all, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, and appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities, particularly by providing Youth Hostels or other accommodation for them in their travels, and thus to promote their health, recreation and education.

Find out more about the YHA or search for a hostel on their website: http://www.yha.org. uk/ You can sign up here for special deals. newsletters and voucher codes.

Each hostel has its own web-page which includes Manager recommendations on what to do in the area. Hostel managers always have deep knowledge of the local area as well and can give advice on what to do.

Get involved!

The YHA offers a wide range of volunteering opportunities including volunteer weeks, where you can help out at a hostel anywhere in the country. Visit http://www.yha.org.uk/volunteering for further details and sign up here too to receive regular updates.

If you're aged 16 to 25, you can also take part in the Youth Hostel's YHA Young Champions. YHA Young Champions is a network of young adults who make a big difference to the YHA. YHA Young Champions are involved in the decision making process of this national charity, and their ideas have changed the way that we operate. Find out more here: http:// www.yha.org.uk/volunteering/current-opportunities/ base-25

Contacts

James Hitchings is the Wales Operations Manager James.hitchings@yha.org.uk Contact individual hostel managers for information about their hostel. (visit YHA.org.uk for details) You can also check out the YHA on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/#!/WeAreYHA or follow on Twitter https://twitter.com/yhaofficial

Champion recommendations

Broad Haven YHA for great beach access (Pembrokeshire) http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/broad-haven Idwal Cottage YHA for fantastic location and snug feel (Snowdonia) http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/idwal Bryn Gwynant YHA for old country house, great grounds and fantastic location near Beddgellert (Snowdonia) http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/bryn-gwynant

Danywenallt YHA for old farmhouse accommodation in a great location (Brecon Beacons) http://www.yha.org.uk/hostel/danywenallt-national-park-study-centre







Campaign for National Parks

The Campaign for National Parks is an independent charity dedicated to campaigning to protect and promote all of the National Parks of England and Wales. We campaign to protect National Parks and keep them beautiful and safe. We also run the Mosaic programme which aims to increase engagement between people who have not visited National Parks before and National Park Authorities. We work with the National Park Authorities, the YHA and numerous community groups and other organisations to do this. We focus on black and minority ethnic communities and people aged 16 to 25. Mosaic in Wales ran from 2012-2015 and was funded by the Big Lottery People and Places fund.

For more information contact Sarah Wilson, Mosaic Proeict Manager: sarah@cnp.org.uk 020 7981 0890 Or info@cnp.org.uk @campaignforparks

https://www.facebook.com/CampaignforNationalParks

The Campaign for National Parks

5-11 Lavington Street. London, SE1 0NZ 020 7981 0890 info@cnp.org.uk www.cnp.org.uk

Quick Guide to Wales' National Parks Produced by the Campaign for National Parks Mosaic project.

Design: www.seascapedesign.co.uk



National Parks in England and Wales

- Northumberland National Park
- Lake District National Park
- Yorkshire Dales National Park
- North York Moors National Park
- Peak District National Park
- Snowdonia National Park
- 7. Pembrokeshire Coast National Park
- 8. Brecon Beacons National Park
- 9. The Broads
- 10. Exmoor National Park
- 11. Dartmoor National Park
- 12. New Forest National Park
- 13. South Downs National Park















