

ENVIRONMENT

- Natural/Landscape
- Biodiversity
- River Quality
- Built and Historic Environment

IW – Natural/Landscape

Percentage and total area of land within Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): 50%; 191 sq.km (Source: GIS analysis of MAGIC data)

Total area covered by Heritage Coast designation: 12124 ha

97.3% of the Island's coastline is designated as either SSSI or SAC.

Within its boundaries, the Isle of Wight contains a wide variety of natural, rural and urban landscapes. The Medina Valley runs into the centre of the Island and the Town of Newport from Cowes in the North. A range of chalk downs extending east-west from the Needles in the west to Culver Cliff in the east. The Isle of Wight is home to a particularly rich range of habitats and species. This is reflected in the fact that UK or European designations protect 70% of the Island.

The rich natural environment is one of the main attractions drawing people to the Island. Tourism is one of the Island's primary industries with the resident population more than doubling during the busy summer season in July & August.



IW – Biodiversity

A number of priorities have been identified for flora and fauna conservation on the island through Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP's). These include the following:

- Farmland
- Lowland heathland, lowland meadows, lowland wood pasture and parkland, lowland calcareous grasslands, lowland dry acid grassland.
- Red Squirrels
- Freshwater systems and wetlands
- Woodlands
- Maritime cliffs and slopes, coastal salt marsh, coastal sand dunes, coastal floodplain grazing marsh, saline lagoons, seagrass beds, mudflats and Solent coastal habitat.

Environment

data source: IWC Biodiversity Action Plans

IW – River quality

The main rivers on the Island are the Eastern Yar and Medina. Almost all of the southern half of the Island is located over a major aquifer. Regular sampling shows that surface water is of average quality. Some stretches of water show poor overall quality. Intensive horticulture and mixed farming practices have resulted in elevated pesticide concentrations and silting in the Eastern Yar catchment. Water abstraction and low river flows can exacerbate these problems.

Data source: Environment Agency

IW – Built and Historic Environment

Number of Conservation Area designation: 26

Number of listed buildings:

- Number of Grade I Listed Buildings: 28
- Number of Grade II* Listed Buildings: 59
- Number of Grade II Listed Buildings: 1840

Data source: IWC Archaeological Service

Number of designated Scheduled monuments: 119

Number of locally important sites of archaeological importance: 11499

Number of Nationally designated parks and gardens: 8

Number of locally important parks and gardens: 29

Total land area covered by National or locally important parks and gardens: 1032 ha/990 acres

Date Source: IWC Archaeological Service

