

Dorset County Council

STATE OF DORSET 2013



FOREWORD

The State of Dorset

Dorset County Council's Corporate Management Team recommends that a consistent and regularly produced evidence base should be available to members and colleagues, making use of statistical and contextual information to identify the main issues facing the county. This report has been produced by the Corporate Evidence Group through the Consultation and Research Group with contributions and support from colleagues across all directorates.

The primary uses of this report are expected to be

- to inform the corporate plan;
- to inform the budget setting process;
- and to support the development of projects under Meeting Future Challenges (phase two).

Additionally, the report will be used more widely, for example

- to provide a broad context of issues affecting Dorset for decision-makers;
- to help inform understanding of other reports and data analysis referring to these issues;
- to refer users to the key evidence sources available for use, for example, in funding applications, and a named contact for more information;
- to indicate evidence gaps where data and/or analysis may not be available to meet the needs of users, potentially highlighting a need for further research;
- to inform the Health and Wellbeing Board Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

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STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THE REPORT

The report can be split into two sections, the first of which can be used as a stand-alone summary of the key issues.

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Summary of key issues

Many of these issues will challenge service provision by the county council. There are three key questions to be asked:

- 1. Does Dorset County Council have a role to play with regard to this issue?**
- 2. If so, how important is this issue to the county council?**
- 3. What action will the county council take?**

Many issues are cross-cutting such as:

- Population change
 - the growing number of older people will impact upon service demands but could also provide a volunteer workforce;
 - the shrinking number of people of working age will affect recruitment and skills needs in firms;
 - the growing number of children will impact upon school rolls and therefore staffing, facilities and travel to school.
- Global environmental and economic pressures such as climate change demand a local response in terms of mitigation and adaptation.
- The quality of our natural environment limits the locations available for new development including employment land and housing but offers benefits and opportunities to both residents and businesses.
- Inequalities in health and well-being are evident within Dorset, often linked to health behaviours.
- Residents and businesses in rural areas may have constrained access to employment opportunities, services and customers.
- High property prices and rentals together with low wages affect residents and can lead to recruitment difficulties.

Demographic context

- Dorset has about 414,900 residents and an above average proportion aged 65 years or more – with growing service demands as their number increases. Services for older people, people with a physical disability and people with sight or hearing problems, (mostly aged 65 years or more), currently command almost 55% of the adult social care budget. However, this growth could potentially provide more volunteers.
- The number of children aged 0-4 years has increased and growth is expected to continue which will impact on school rolls and therefore school staffing, facilities and travel to school. This growth is not evenly distributed.
- A decline is expected in the number of people aged 16-64 years which will impact upon employers who may be challenged to recruit new staff with the right skills and replace the growing numbers of those retiring;
- Dorset has a net migration loss of those aged 16-24 years which may also impact upon recruitment and skills in the workforce but they could potentially return later in life having improved their knowledge and skills elsewhere.



The natural and historic environment

- Climate change will continue, and international and national policies demand that action is taken locally to mitigate and adapt to this change;
- Developing a greener, low-carbon economy and making more efficient use of natural resources offers significant economic opportunities as well as environmental benefits;
- Dorset's exceptional natural and historic environment presents many opportunities to improve social and economic well-being, but the environment needs continued good management and enhancement to secure these benefits;
- Global environmental and economic pressures will impact on Dorset's resilience to change and the well-being of communities which also require a local response;
- Dorset's environment makes a major contribution to public health and well-being, and improving access to green infrastructure offers opportunities to extend these benefits;
- Many environmental indicators in Dorset attest to the high quality of our environment but there are some significant areas for concern which require action and response.

The economy and labour market

- As public sector spending continues to be cut, local businesses and the voluntary and community sector may lose contracts and grant funding;
- Below average productivity in Dorset firms, above average employment in low-pay sectors and high part-time employment all contribute to low pay in the county – this adds to affordability problems and could give recruitment/retention difficulties;
- This is expected to continue as more than half our projected employment growth for the coming decade is for part-time jobs which are often seasonal and/or low paying;
- The constrained supply of employment land may make it hard for new businesses to move into Dorset or for growing businesses to move within the county;
- A growing proportion of Dorset's unemployed claimants have been out of work for at least a year – long term unemployment can erode both skills and confidence making it harder for people to return to work;
- More employers need to offer Apprenticeships as there are too many young people in jobs without training;
- Ageing of the workforce may lead to skills gaps if employers fail to recruit and train replacement staff.

Summary of key issues continued

Skills and learning

- As the education and training participation age rises, a particular challenge is that the proportion of young people in jobs without training is higher in Dorset than the national or regional average – access to information, advice and guidance as well as good quality education and training opportunities including apprenticeships is essential;
- Skills demands are rising and increased competition for entry into the labour market makes it even more important for young people to acquire a range of personal and transferable skills;
- Many adults in Dorset have no or low qualifications and yet more than half of current vacancies demand high level skills – our workforce needs to be equipped with the skills to meet employer needs.

Rural neighbourhoods

- The challenge of access to services and pressure on health and care services will grow as the number of older people in rural areas grows;
- A more limited range of opportunities and choice in employment and learning can disadvantage those living in rural areas.

Deprivation

- In Dorset, areas of multiple deprivation are largely located in the more urban areas but many of Dorset's rural communities are subject to significant deprivation in terms of barriers to housing and essential services;
- A growing proportion of children live in households in receipt of benefits;
- Those not online are more likely to be socially and/or economically disadvantaged: whilst the Superfast Dorset broadband project will widen access, it is likely to remain more expensive.

The built environment

- Affordability is the key issue for housing, with scarcity of supply, below average earnings and high prices and private rentals making it hard for Dorset residents to get on the property ladder. This could have implications for the retention or attraction of a skilled/graduate workforce;
- The demand for housing will continue to grow as the number of households expands, but residential build rates have been declining;
- Funding constraints continue to be a threat to highways maintenance and the provision of public and community transport.



Summary of key issues continued

Health and care

- Health inequalities are evident between the most and least deprived parts of the county;
- Disease prevalence in Dorset is higher than in England and increasing for a range of conditions as the number of older people in the population rises;
- Health related behaviours add to service demands, particularly in deprived areas – for example, the level of smoking in pregnancy is above the national average and, whilst alcohol consumption is below average in Dorset, alcohol related harm admission rates have doubled in less than a decade;
- Dorset has very effective drug treatment services, but challenges remain around older drug users with multiple complex needs as well as substance misuse issues amongst young people;
- Domestic violence impacts on the quality of life of an estimated 7,000 people in Dorset a year, mainly affecting women and children;
- Childhood obesity is a predictor of future health and there is a continued gradual increase in obese and overweight children both in reception and year 6 in Dorset;
- The number of people with long term problems requiring support is increasing, adding to service demands;
- Survival rates among young people with learning disability have improved and mortality among older adults has reduced, adding pressure to resources within learning disability services;
- Around 50 children in each school cohort are identified as having an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) with varying needs including tailored support for some.

Older people

- Ageing of the population means that a growing number of people will develop a long term illness or disability including dementia;
- An increase in the number of service users – particularly older people and individuals with a learning disability – will lead to an increase in the number of carers needing support;
- The number of alerts about potential abuse is rising – again particularly for older people and individuals with a learning disability – resources to deal with them are stretched even though not all alerts result in formal investigations.

Children

- The number of children looked after by Dorset County Council has increased to its highest level and the higher demand for places and supporting services – particularly for older children – is placing significant pressure on the local authority budget;
- There has been a steady increase in the uptake of Free School Meals but many of those eligible do not take them up and schools do not receive the associated funding.

Summary of key issues continued

Safety and freedom from fear

- The rate of crime is below average, except in Weymouth & Portland, although maintaining low levels of crime generally and addressing fear of crime remain ongoing challenges;
- Risks to individuals in Dorset continue to be posed by issues such as anti-social behaviour and domestic violence;
- Reduced revenue funding for road safety is the greatest risk to achieving targets in this area and Dorset's changing age structure with its increasing proportion of older residents together with an uncertain economy present a particular challenge for the future.

Leisure and culture

- A positive local impact on participation in culture and sport is evident following on from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Cultural Olympiad: the challenge is to harness this to promote and publicise culture and physical activity as a long term sustainable option for all;
- A key challenge is to engage those less likely to take part in cultural activities or sport such as those from deprived backgrounds and younger people, and remove perceived barriers for women;
- Cultural provision is supported through a multiplicity of partnerships so reduction in public sector resources may have a disproportionate impact on access to culture;
- The creative industries is a priority sector for the local economy and two key challenges are 1) to maximise the potential for arts and culture to: support commercial creative business; maximise the spill-over effects for tourism; and economic regeneration; and 2) make a clear and joined up offer to business and young people to increase Apprenticeships and skills development in the sector.



Our Dorset

Main Chapters and Key Facts

Demographic context

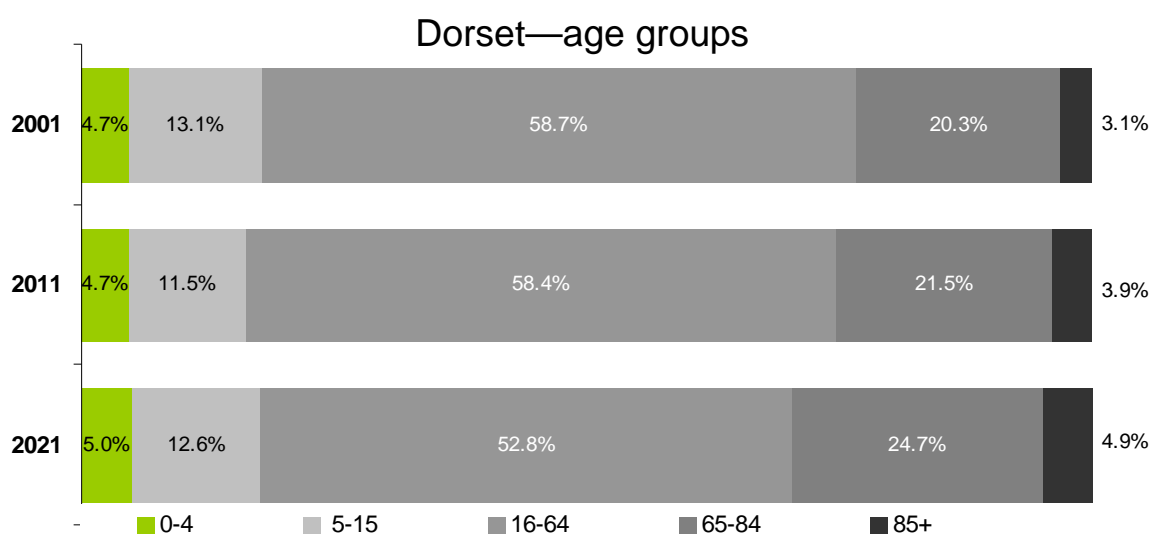
Demographic change will have a significant impact on the needs of Dorset residents and the demand for services: over the decade to 2011, the total population grew faster than had previously been expected, rising by about 22,000 to 412,900 in 2011 and rising to 414,900 in 2012. In-migration continues to drive population growth, with the greatest gains among 45-64 year old migrants. However, we have a net migration loss of those aged 16-24 years¹.

Dorset has an above average percentage of the population aged 65 years and above, with high life expectancy and ageing of the 'baby boom' generation contributing to the projected continued growth in the number of older people over the next 25 years. Particularly high growth in those aged 85 plus will lead to higher service demand from both older residents and their carers. In addition, more people are likely to be living alone and also are more likely to stay in their own homes putting further pressure on housing.



Whilst the number of older people is rising, further challenges exist in the recent unprecedented increases in birth rates leading to growth in the number of children aged 0-4 years which will impact on school roll numbers. Additionally, increasing numbers of children are expected to live in non-traditional family structures such as lone-parent or cohabiting couple households, which are growing in number. Families with lower incomes – including many lone-parents – are likely to make increased demands on council services specific to their needs.

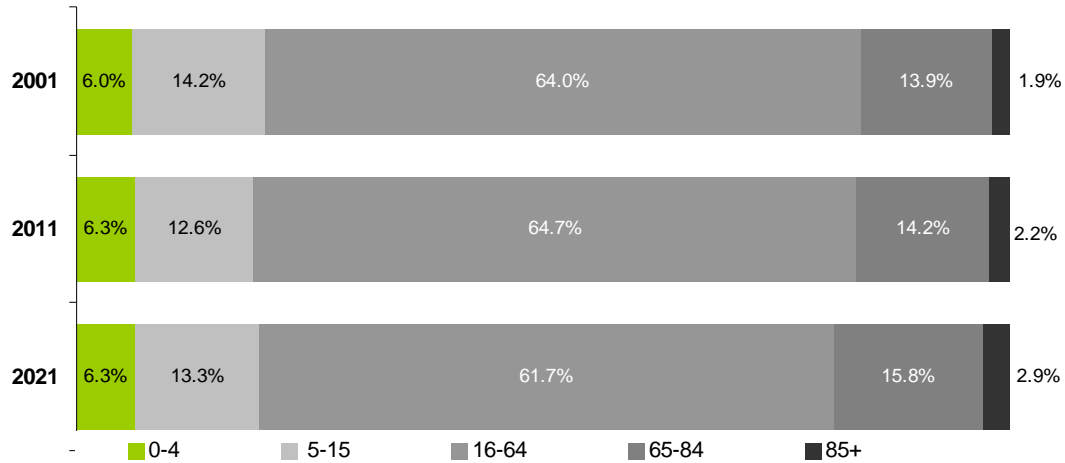
In contrast, a decline is expected in the number of people aged 16-64 years. This is contrary to the national trend and will exacerbate the difficulties employers may experience in trying to replace those leaving the workforce to retire, potentially leading to skills gaps.



¹ 2011-12 Migration Flows, ONS (note: migration data are to be revised to integrate migration trends over the last ten years – this will establish if these losses/gains are any greater than previous years)



England—age groups



Demographic key facts:

- Life expectancy at birth for both males (81.1 years) and females (85.1) is above the national average (England & Wales males 78.8 years and females 82.8) ²
- Within Dorset, life expectancy is highest in East Dorset and lowest in Weymouth & Portland;
- Dorset's population grew by 5.7% over the decade to 2011³ and is now almost 415,000;
- 26% of Dorset's population is aged 65+ (109,000) compared with 17% in England & Wales;⁴
- Over 2011-21, the number of those aged 65+ is expected to increase by 2.2% per annum, just above the England average of 2.1%⁵;
- Services for older people, people with a physical disability and people with sight or hearing problems, (mostly aged 65 years or more), currently command almost 55% of the adult social care budget⁶;
- Over 2011-21, those aged 0-4 years are expected to increase by 1.3%, above the England average of 0.9%⁷;
- Over 2011-21, those aged 16-64 years are expected to change by -0.4%, compared with the England increase of 0.4%⁸.

² ONS 2009-11

³ Mid-year estimates 2012, ONS

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Interim 2011 based population projections, ONS

⁶ *Adult Social Care Annual Report: The Local Account, April 2012 to March 2013*

⁷ Interim 2011 based population projections, ONS

⁸ Ibid

The natural and historic environment

A healthy natural environment is the foundation of a successful economy, thriving communities and personal well-being. Dorset's high quality natural and historic environment underpins economic and social well-being in the County and presents opportunities for employment, involvement, learning and leisure. This provides a rationale for its continued good management as well as protection for its own sake. However, the importance of our natural environment also limits the locations available for new development including employment land and housing. Dorset's natural systems provide a wide range of essential goods (food, fuel, productive soil, clean air and water) and beneficial services (pollination, flood alleviation, climate regulation and tranquillity). These are often taken for granted, but all require a combination of public, private and voluntary action to maintain them.



Dorset also has an exceptional concentration of environmental assets of local, national and international importance, making it an attractive place to live, work, visit and invest. There is considerable scope, however, for joining up fragmented natural areas and extending green infrastructure with benefits for people as well as wildlife. Dorset also has a wealth of historic landscapes and buildings which add to the unique character of our towns and villages and sense of place. Many represent significant attractions and provide opportunities for learning and discovery; others need protection or restoration to offer the same benefits.

Dorset's environment is a significant economic generator in its own right, but offers further opportunities for sustainable growth, with green technology, local produce, energy and tourism all providing potential for development. Across all business sectors, developing a low-carbon economy and making more efficient use of resources offers major economic opportunities as well as environmental benefits.

Access to the environment contributes substantially to health and well being, supports active lifestyles and a wide range of recreational and cultural activities. The physical and mental health benefits of access to nature are well documented, as are the negative impacts of environmental inequality. Improving access to green infrastructure therefore offers the potential to extend these benefits, particularly in areas where access is poor.



Many environmental indicators in Dorset attest to its high quality. This said, there are some significant areas for concern. The recent national *State of Nature*⁹ report showed how some 60% of UK plant and animal species have declined over the last 50 years and much of this is mirrored in Dorset. In other areas, Dorset has bucked national trends. Dorset's environment currently benefits from agri-environment schemes which support farming and wildlife, but future reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) could threaten this. Pollution from diffuse sources in the water environment, manifest in the algal blooms in Poole Harbour, also needs to be addressed to minimise impacts on human health and the environment.

Whilst the rate of global warming is thought to have slowed recently, it is still on an upward trend, and scientists retain a high level of confidence that this is due to man-made emissions of greenhouse gases. Dorset's contribution to global emissions is modest, but with fossil fuel supplies dwindling and prices rising, and concerns about energy security remaining, there are strong economic drivers to reduce energy use and develop renewable energy.



⁹ *State of Nature*, RSPB et al, 2013

Global environmental and economic pressures arising from consumption, such as the impacts of a changing climate and higher demand for food and natural resources in the developing world, will have impacts on Dorset requiring a local response. Extreme weather events, flood risk and coastal erosion are expected to increase and communities and public services will need to become more resilient to these changes. A well-managed environment can contribute to our ability to adapt – for example, managing the upper catchments of rivers to reduce flood risk downstream, or using locally grown biomass¹⁰ to meet energy needs.



There are therefore significant opportunities to use the environment to improve social and economic well-being – but the environment needs continued management, protection and enhancement to secure these benefits.

¹⁰ Biomass is biological material derived from living, or recently living, organisms – Biomass Energy Centre [Biomass](#)



Natural and historic environment key facts:

- Dorset contains part of England's only natural World Heritage Site and two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, covering 53% of the county¹¹;
- Whilst making up only two per cent of the area of England, Dorset holds five per cent of its nationally protected ancient monuments;
- The 'environmental economy' of the South West (agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy and tourism) has been estimated to contribute 15% to regional GDP¹² and over 12% of the regional economy of is estimated to rely directly on the land and landscape¹³;
- 30% of the services provided by the natural environment are in decline while 60% of UK plant and animal species have declined over the last 50 years¹⁴;
- 94% of Dorset residents agree with the statement 'A high quality natural environment is of great importance to me' – 61% 'strongly agree'¹⁵;
- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole are home to 85% of all species of mammals living in Britain, 90% of birds, 80% of butterflies, 70% of dragonflies and nearly all our reptiles and all of the Dorset coast (excluding the town seafronts) is recognised in national or international designations for its unique landscape, scenic quality, wildlife and geological formations¹⁶;
- Since 1800, 86% of Dorset's lowland heath has been lost to farming, forestry or development¹⁷ and significant areas of Dorset are classed as 'Nitrate Vulnerable Zones' hinting at pressure on the water environment;
- Between 2005 and 2010, there was an overall decrease in CO2 emissions in Dorset, although emissions remain well above the level considered necessary to avoid dangerous climate impacts;
- Renewable energy production has increased in Dorset from 0.95% of local energy consumption in February 2011 to 1.7%, but Dorset still lags behind the national renewable energy generation of 4.5% of total energy consumption and 11% of electricity from renewable sources¹⁸;
- Dorset's Comprehensive Climate Risk Assessment identified six priority areas for action: green infrastructure, highways, the built environment, public health, the local economy and planning.

11 Dorset Databook 2011, Dorset County Council

12 *The Natural Environment, the Rural Region and Regional Economic Development*, EKOS, 2003

13 *Stepping Forward, Best Foot Forward*, 2005

14 National Ecosystem Assessment, 2011

15 Dorset Citizen's Panel 27, Dorset County Council, September 2012

16 *Dorset Databook 2011*, Dorset County Council

17 Natural England/RSPB

18 Regen SW

The economy and labour market

The Dorset economy is not detached from the wider national and global economies and factors affecting these impact on us too. Government spending cuts in the public sector continue to affect the wider economy through sub-contracting and supply chain networks and reduced funding grants for the voluntary and community sector. Local procurement, particularly from smaller firms, keeps money in the local economy and helps to support existing jobs and create new jobs through supply chain activity and multipliers. The issue is in balancing the need for cost efficiencies with potential local economic benefits and compliance with EU rules.

Over the next decade, whilst the economy is expected to grow faster in Dorset than is expected nationally, our baseline position is below average in terms of output per hour worked and gross value added (GVA) per resident head. A below average proportion of total GVA is contributed in Dorset by high productivity industries such as finance, production, construction, and information & communication¹⁹. Employment in high value sectors such as advanced engineering and professional/technical services is also below average in Dorset and median pay overall is low. Strong employment growth is projected in the Dorset LEP area, but half of this will be for part-time jobs. One in ten new jobs will



be in the care industry, already subject to recruitment and retention difficulties with skills shortages and hard to fill vacancies²⁰, and three-quarters of care sector employment growth will be part-time.



Infrastructure is key to economic development. To allow existing businesses to move and expand and to attract new high value businesses we need an adequate supply of good quality employment sites and commercial premises. However, employment land supply is constrained in Dorset with competing demand for sites and also environmental restrictions. Better connectivity between businesses and their suppliers and customers would raise competitiveness, yet we have poor transport links – particularly north-south – and, as yet, patchy access to high-speed broadband, although this should improve over the next two or three years.

Whilst the unemployment rate is below average in Dorset, long term unemployment has risen steadily, particularly over the last 18 months. Both skills and confidence can erode when individuals are out of work and young people may later encounter difficulties settling into working life. The number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is below average in Dorset, but there are many young people in jobs without training and more good quality Apprenticeships are needed.

¹⁹ Drivers of productivity include investment, innovation, skills, enterprise, competition, size and proximity to population centres.

²⁰ UKCES Employment and Skills Survey 2011



There will also be growing demand to fill the posts of those retiring and this could lead to skills gaps. More than half of the net requirement for future jobs needs people qualified to at least level three. We need to ensure that our home-grown workforce is adequately skilled to meet this demand and, in order to retain our own skilled workers and to attract new highly skilled workers, we need an adequate supply of affordable, sustainable housing and good quality, higher pay jobs.

Economy and labour market key facts:

- In 2011, nominal GVA per hour worked in Dorset was indexed at 85.0 where UK=100²¹;
- 2011 GVA per resident head was £16,538 compared with £21,368 in the UK²²;
- Self-employment in 2011 was 12.5% in Dorset compared with 9.7% in England & Wales²³;
- 25,500 new jobs are projected in Dorset for 2011-21 (56,500 in the LEP area): growth of 1.3% pa in both, (0.7% pa in the UK)²⁴;
- 46% of employees work in knowledge driven sectors compared with 53% in Great Britain²⁵;
- 13 neighbourhoods in Dorset are in the most employment deprived 20% nationally²⁶;
- Median gross weekly pay for full time employees was £480 for Dorset residents compared with £508 in Great Britain and £459 for Dorset workers compared with £508 in Great Britain²⁷;
- On average in 2012, Dorset's unemployment rate was 5.1% compared with 8.0% in Great Britain²⁸;
- Long term claimants in Dorset rose from 8.5% (Jan 2012) to 18.5% in 18 months (+200)²⁹.

²¹ Sub-regional productivity 2011; ONS

²² Headline GVA at current basic prices, 2011; ONS

²³ Census of Population 2011, ONS

²⁴ Local Economy Forecasting Model (Dorset 2013), Cambridge Econometrics

²⁵ Business Register and Employment Survey 2012, ONS

²⁶ Indices of Deprivation 2010, DCLG (for local information see [D4U IoD 393039](#))

²⁷ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2012, ONS

²⁸ 16-64 unemployment rate, Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec 2012, ONS

²⁹ Long term claimants as a percentage of all claimants, ONS

Skills and learning

As new technologies continue to develop, the skills profile for future jobs rises and it is important to raise skill levels in the local labour force to allow workers to make the most of future opportunities – especially as growing numbers of skilled workers reach retirement age.

Whilst most Dorset residents are able to access education, skills and training relatively easily, some experience barriers such as those in rural areas, older people, the ill or disabled, those with care responsibilities, and some young people such as those in jobs without training; not in education, employment or training; or with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Whilst the level of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is below the national average in most parts of Dorset with Christchurch and Weymouth & Portland most likely to have higher levels, vulnerable young people, including teenage parents and care leavers, are more at risk of becoming NEET. The majority of young people continue in full time education or training after GCSEs (Year 11).



The retention of skilled young people is an issue for some employers so we need to ensure that employers are aware of the benefits of offering Apprenticeships so there are enough well-structured and supported placements available. Nevertheless, a large proportion of young people start in jobs without training – we need to eliminate this in order to reach the Government's aspirations for all 16 and 17 year olds to continue in education or training from 2015. Access to high quality, relevant education and training opportunities as well as information,

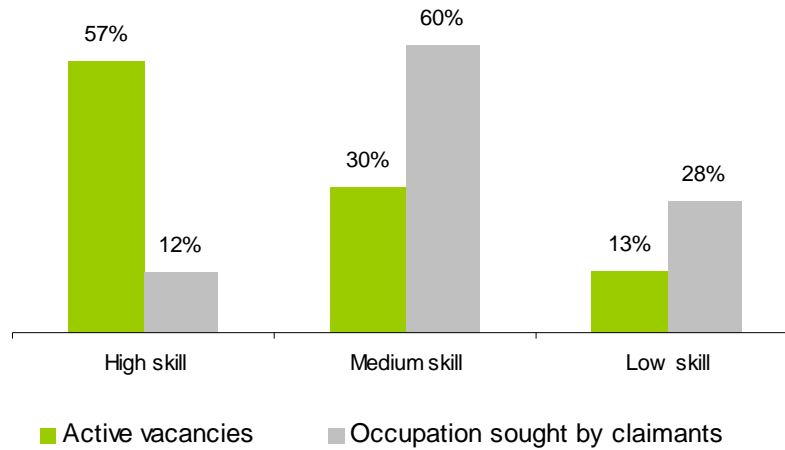
advice and guidance will be needed to motivate those who would have left education earlier.

Rising skill demands at work and higher levels of unemployment with increased competition for entry into the labour market make it even more important for young people to acquire a range of personal and transferable skills. These skills can be gained in many ways and the participation of young people needs to be encouraged through a range of opportunities such as work experience, traineeships or employability skills training.

There is still a large number of adults aged 16-64 years with no or low qualifications although the proportion is below the national average – a comparison of Census data from 2001 and 2011 shows a decline in the proportion, but not the number. A current snapshot of vacancies in the Dorset LEP area suggests that more than half demand high level skills and indicates a mismatch between the jobs available and the jobs being sought by unemployed claimants.



**Active vacancies and occupation sought by claimants
Aug/Sept 2013**



Skills and learning key facts:

- In April, Dorset had 4.5% of 16-18 year olds NEET compared with 5.9% in England³⁰;
- However, 10.3% were in jobs without training compared with 4.9% in England³¹;
- 87% of the year 11 cohort in 2012 continued in full time education³²;
- Seven per cent went into employment and almost two-thirds of these started Apprenticeships³³;
- Apprenticeship reform will take place from 2015-16 to new employer-led standards³⁴;
- Training in employment is most likely to be offered to males; full-time workers; public sector workers; those already qualified to NVQ4 or above³⁵;
- Those adults most likely to learn include the young, those in higher socio-economic groups and those who were in education at age 21³⁶;
- In 2011, 15% of Dorset firms had at least one employee who was not fully proficient³⁷;
- In 2012, about 13,800 Dorset adults aged 16-64 years (six per cent) had no qualifications compared to almost ten per cent nationally and a further 31,900 were qualified to only level one³⁸;
- Vacancies data indicate more than half of vacancies demand high level skills – but only about 12% of unemployed claimants were seeking jobs at this level³⁹.

³⁰ Dorset Quarterly Report, 16-18 year olds (academic age), April 2013, Ansbury

³¹ Ibid

³² Summary of Year 11 Destinations November 2012, Ansbury

³³ Ibid

³⁴ *The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan*, October 2013, HM Government [Future of Apps](#)

³⁵ *Employer Skills Survey 2011*, UK Commission for Employment and Skills [ESS 2011 England](#)

³⁶ NIACE Adult Learning Survey 2011 – from State of the South West 2012, SWO

³⁷ *Employer Skills Survey 2011*, UK Commission for Employment and Skills

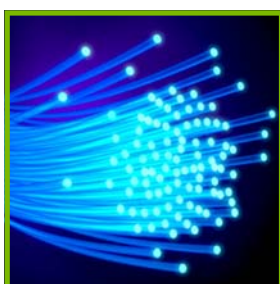
³⁸ Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec 2012, ONS

³⁹ DWP Universal Jobmatch data, September 2013 and Claimant data, ONS, August 2013

Rural neighbourhoods

Access to services can be a significant issue for people living in rural areas, particularly for those without access to a private vehicle. As the number of older people continues to rise, this will impact considerably upon health and care services, especially as more people are being helped to live independently for longer in their own homes. The greater spread of service users across rural areas will make provision harder to arrange for both public and private providers and more costly. Isolation may also be a more significant issue for people living alone in rural areas.

The choice of local employment in rural areas is likely to be limited and access to urban centres can be restricted, especially as there are continued threats to community transport funding. This can particularly affect the range of opportunities and choices available to young people as travelling to urban areas for learning, Apprenticeships or employment is likely to be more time-consuming and more costly. Workers in rural businesses may have more limited access to training in work as larger firms have a higher propensity to train staff and are most likely to be located in urban areas.



In rural locations, not only is transport more of a challenge, but there can be restricted access to technologies such as broadband and mobile phone coverage. More and more services are being provided online; more training is online; and more people are being encouraged to work at home: those with no or poor access will be disadvantaged.

Housing affordability is a significant issue across Dorset, particularly for young people. New housing development is most likely to be in or adjacent to current population centres making it hard for rural young people to continue to live in their home area, especially if access to high value employment opportunities is difficult.



Access to leisure and cultural facilities is similarly difficult from rural areas. Although many events are offered in villages, for example through Artsreach, the range is likely to be more restricted.

Rural neighbourhoods key facts:

- 59% of Dorset's population live in urban areas and 41% in rural areas⁴⁰;
- Over 2011-2021 in Dorset, the highest projected annual average change for those aged over 65 years is expected in North Dorset (2.6% pa) and West Dorset (2.4% pa);
- In 2011, 85% of Dorset households had access to a car or van compared with 74% in England & Wales – Weymouth & Portland had the lowest percentage at 75%⁴¹;
- In 2012 in Dorset, 1.0% of businesses had 100+ employees compared to 1.5% in Great Britain (Christchurch and Weymouth & Portland were highest at 1.2%)⁴²;
- Nationally, the incidence of training drops from around 96% of firms employing 100+ to just over half of firms with fewer than five employees⁴³;
- In 2012, lower end house prices were ten times higher than lower earnings in West Dorset and North Dorset, 11 times higher in Purbeck and Christchurch and 12 times higher in East Dorset compared with seven times in England as a whole⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ Census 2011, ONS, using the revised Rural Urban Classification as defined by DEFRA and ONS in 2013 with 'rural' defined as settlements with fewer than 10,000 population

⁴¹ Census of Population 2011, ONS

⁴² UK Business: Activity, Size and Location 2012, ONS

⁴³ UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2011 op cit, section 6.2

⁴⁴ Table 576 Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings, 2012, CLG

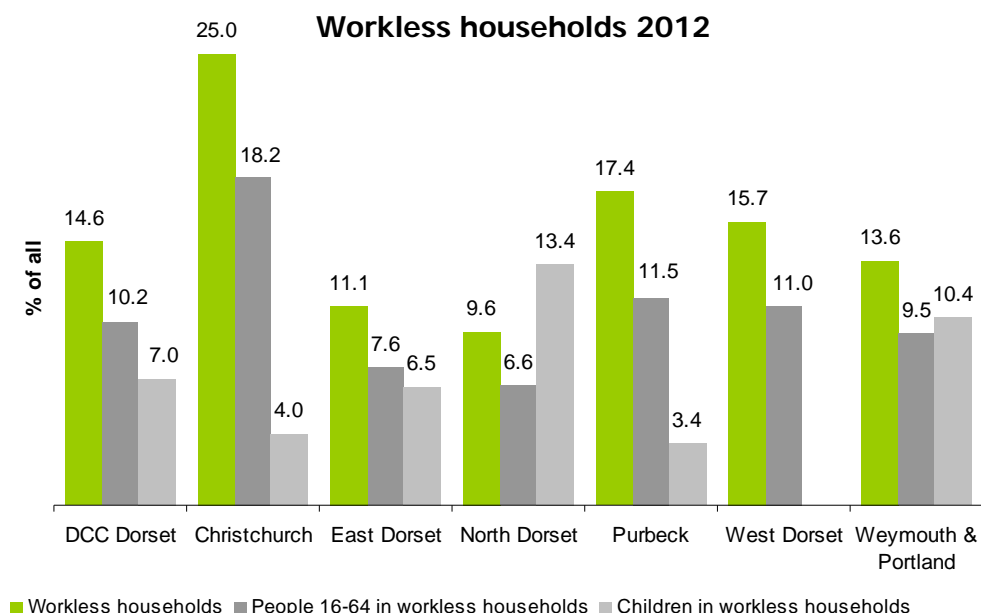
Deprivation

In Dorset, areas of multiple deprivation are largely located in the urban areas with some neighbourhoods in Weymouth, Portland, Bridport and Christchurch falling into the 20% most deprived nationally. However, many of Dorset's rural communities are subject to significant deprivation in terms of barriers to housing and essential services with 65 neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived nationally, spread across the rural area⁴⁵.

A growing proportion of children live in households in receipt of benefits. Changes in welfare policy now taking place will impact upon Dorset households with benefit caps, tougher penalties and the introduction of Universal Credit among other things. The impact of welfare reform is likely to be felt most in areas with high levels of worklessness. Whilst more people are expected to move into employment, not all will be able to and this could lead to increased demand for advice and support services.

We have an above average proportion of households in fuel poverty, but still only about half of Dorset's homes have basic wall insulation and two-thirds have effective loft insulation installed.

Those not online are more likely to be socially and/or economically disadvantaged including older people, the unemployed⁴⁶ and those with low earnings⁴⁷. The Superfast Dorset broadband project should open up access to more properties. However, although prices are falling, superfast broadband will, in all likelihood, remain more expensive than current packages.



Note: In West Dorset, the data for 'children' is suppressed due to small sample size

⁴⁵ Index of Deprivation 2010 Report, Dorset County Council, 2011

⁴⁶ Digital divide Royal Geographical Society

⁴⁷ Internet Access Quarterly Update, 2012 Q1, ONS



Deprivation key facts:

- There are thirteen areas in Dorset that are within the top 20% most deprived nationally for multiple deprivation, up from ten in 2007⁴⁸;
- Ten of these are within the urban borough of Weymouth and Portland and one in Christchurch;
- In contrast East Dorset has 35 neighbourhoods in the least deprived category;
- For the first time, two neighbourhoods in West Dorset fall into the top 20% most deprived, both within Bridport;
- Five neighbourhoods in Dorset fall into the top 20% nationally for income deprivation – four of these are in Weymouth & Portland;
- Barriers to housing and essential services is a significant area of deprivation for Dorset reflecting rurality and distance from services. Of the 65 Dorset neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived nationally for this measure, 23 are in West Dorset and 15 in North Dorset;
- 19.6% of Dorset children live in benefit-receiving households – up from 18.2% in the previous year⁴⁹;
- In Dorset, about 23,100 people and 4,000 children live in 17,000 workless households: 15% of these households were workless compared to 18% nationally⁵⁰;
- 49,400 Dorset households (15%) are in fuel poverty compared to 11% nationally⁵¹;
- More than 30,000 Dorset homes are considered hard to treat* as simple measures are not suitable⁵²;
- Compared with 21% nationally, Dorset had 13.7% of children under 16 living in poverty. The highest percentage was in Weymouth & Portland (19.8%)⁵³;
- Dorset County Council and BT have agreed a £31.75 million deal which will see high-speed fibre optic broadband becoming available to 97 per cent of premises in the county within three and a half years⁵⁴;
- For those hard-to-reach rural areas unable to receive superfast broadband, a service of at least 2mb will be provided⁵⁵.

*'Hard to treat' means difficult or expensive to improve, most commonly with no cavity walls to fill

⁴⁸ Deprivation data from The *Indices of Deprivation 2010 report*, Dorset County Council [D4U IoD 162073](#)

⁴⁹ DWP and Dorset County Council, 2012

⁵⁰ Workless households data 2012, ONS (households include at least one person aged 16-64 years)

⁵¹ Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2011, DECC (low income high costs indicator)

⁵² CPC report for DCC

⁵³ HMRC 2010 snapshot [Child poverty](#)

⁵⁴ Dorset County Council

⁵⁵ Dorset County Council

The built environment

Affordability is the key issue for housing, with scarcity of supply, below average earnings and competition arising from Dorset's appeal as a life-style destination. Growth in the number of households is expected to continue at a low level over the next twenty years and, combined with the growing proportion of single person households, this will add to the demand for new housing. However, over the same decade, residential build rates declined⁵⁶ and there are few vacant properties that could potentially be brought back into use. Average property sales continue to be sluggish and fewer social rent dwellings (the cheapest form of rented housing) are being built. This could have implications for economic performance and growth aspirations if housing supply hampers the ability of Dorset employers to retain or attract skilled workers, including graduates, due to the relative disparity of the cost of housing and income levels.



Whilst the size of the private rental sector has grown in response to unmet demand, the cost of private rental has also risen and it is estimated that around a quarter of households in Dorset cannot afford housing at current market prices or rents without some sort of subsidy such as local housing allowance. Government policy has also resulted in change in the public housing sector. Fewer social rent dwellings (the cheapest form of rented housing) are being built as Housing Associations are now encouraged to build Affordable Rent properties with rents up to 80% of market levels.

Outside the main urban centres of the South East Dorset conurbation and Weymouth, the settlement pattern is largely dispersed, comprising market towns and villages. Access to services can be particularly difficult for vulnerable people and those in rural areas without access to a car. Highways maintenance funding constraints continue to be a problem, particularly when extreme weather events, such as flooding, cause additional damage to highways adding to costs.

Funding is also a threat to the provision of public and community transport. This will be a continuing problem as the population ages and more people in rural areas – who are generally more car dependent – give up their cars and turn to public and community transport.

The links into and through Dorset are generally poor, particularly running north-south. Improvement of these would give greater reliability and shorter journey times. In addition, key transport corridors can become very congested, particularly at peak commuting times or with summer visitor traffic. Together, these can be a barrier to accessibility for residents, commuters and for businesses needing good transport links for deliveries and supply chain activities.



⁵⁶ Dorset County wide Monitoring Report 2011, Table 2.03 Net residential completions by Local Authority 2001 – 11



Dorset's high quality environment is an asset for residents and visitors and the setting of attractive settlements within nationally valued landscapes, internationally protected habitats and the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site contributes to the unique qualities of Dorset's natural and built environment. However, this also provides a challenging context within which to meet the needs of society and the economy, particularly in relation to the supply of housing. The sensitivities of heathland in particular impose locational constraints, in effect barring any housing within 400 metres of any European-designated heathland habitat, (a particular concern within the South East Dorset conurbation), and requiring a package of mitigation measures for residential development within five kilometres of such habitats.

The built environment key facts:

- In 2012 in Dorset, the ratio of lower end house prices to lower earnings was 9.8 compared with 6.6 in England⁵⁷;
- It is estimated that around a quarter of households in Dorset cannot afford housing at current market prices or rents without some sort of subsidy such as local housing allowance⁵⁸;
- The decade to 2011 saw growth in the number of households in Dorset at an annual average rate of 0.7%⁵⁹;
- In 2011, Dorset had about 180,200 households and this is expected to grow to around 195,000 by 2021⁶⁰;
- Over the last ten years, build rates have declined with the average number of dwellings built each year a third lower between 2006/07-2010/11 compared with 2001/02-2005/06⁶¹;
- Nationally, the proportion of new buildings built on previously developed land has risen – between 2001 and 2011 in Dorset, 70% of new and converted dwellings were built on previously developed land⁶²;
- The average price of a terraced house in August 2013 was £161,200 in Dorset, £38,200 higher than in England and Wales⁶³.

⁵⁷ Table 576 Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings, 2012, CLG

⁵⁸ Dorset Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011 Updates [D4U SHMA 404418](#)

⁵⁹ Census of Population 2011, ONS

⁶⁰ DCLG table 406 Household projections by district, 1991-2021 [Household projections](#)

⁶¹ Dorset County wide Monitoring Report 2011, Table 2.03 Net residential completions by Local Authority 2001 – 11.

⁶² Dorset County wide monitoring report 2011, Table 2.05 Percentage of new and converted dwellings (gross) on Previously Developed Land.

⁶³ House Price Index August 2013, Land Registry



Our Health and Well-being Main Chapters and Key Facts

Health and care

Health and well-being is influenced by many aspects of our lives including how and where we live, our work and our leisure activities. Dorset residents are generally healthy, with life expectancy at birth above the national average for both males and females. Disability-free life expectancy is also above average in most Dorset districts, but there is a difference of 13-17 years between this and life expectancy overall⁶⁴. As nationally, deaths from circulatory disease (including heart disease) and cancer remain the largest causes of death in Dorset⁶⁵, but overall age-standardised mortality rates are low compared to England and continue to fall⁶⁶.

However, the burden⁶⁷ of disease in Dorset is higher than in England and increasing for a range of conditions as the number of older people in the population grows. The prevalence of many long term conditions looks set to continue to rise and people may be affected by more than one condition, increasing the demand for health and social care services. Whilst Dorset is overall an affluent area, differences in socio-economic factors and the gap in life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas of Dorset contribute to health inequalities across the county.

Enabling healthy lives has focused in recent years on health related behaviours such as smoking, healthy eating, physical activity, healthy weight, good sexual health and alcohol consumption. Dorset compares well to England in all these areas, except for smoking in pregnancy which is above the national average. However, the issue of alcohol consumption is worsening in both Dorset and England with our admission rates for alcohol related harm doubling between 2002/03 and 2011/12. The highest rates for many of these issues are seen in Weymouth & Portland, our area of greatest deprivation. Individuals may be affected by more than one health behaviour issue but support for these individuals often uses a common approach and opportunities are being explored locally to bring together these strands.

Substance misuse can have a wide range of negative implications, as it can affect physical health and is linked to mental health problems, child care/neglect and crime. Patterns of drug use vary considerably by individuals' ages and backgrounds. In general, illicit substance use is most common amongst young adults aged 16-24, particularly in more deprived areas, but rates of use within this age group have fallen steadily over the past 15 years⁶⁸. Moreover, different substances have different patterns of use, with heroin more commonly used by older adults⁶⁹.



⁶⁴ Disability-free life expectancy (DFLE), 2007–2009, ONS

⁶⁵ Cause of deaths data 2011, ONS and Health Profile 2012: Dorset, Department of Health

⁶⁶ Mortality from all causes 2008-10 *Health and Social Care Information Centre and Health Profile 2012*: Dorset, Department of Health

⁶⁷ The number of people with the problem at one time

⁶⁸ *Crime Survey for England & Wales, 2012/13*, Table D03. Available from [Drug misuse](#)

⁶⁹ Hay, G. et al. (2013) *Estimates of the Prevalence of Opiate Use and/or Crack Cocaine Use, 2010/11*: Sweep 7 report, p.10



This is indicative of the changing substance misuse challenges facing Dorset and the country generally over the coming years. Drug treatment is shown to be highly beneficial and Dorset has some of the most effective and efficient adult treatment services in the country, although a number of key issues remain. Whilst high numbers of individuals have successfully completed drug treatment in recent years, there are still considerable numbers of older opiate users who pose particular challenges, with multiple complex needs and often associated health issues. Additionally, despite falling rates of use of heroin, there are also emerging concerns regarding younger people's use of substances such as mephedrone.

Parental substance use, particularly when combined with domestic abuse and parental ill health – the 'toxic triangle' – have a significant impact on children and young people, and these are common features of families requiring additional support from Dorset County Council and our partners. Intervening early in a child's life or when issues begin to emerge can help prevent the need for more expensive specialist services when problems get worse.

Similarly, identification of children in poverty, who may be at increased risk of negative health outcomes in later life, and early intervention can potentially have a significant impact. The local authority has a statutory duty under The Child Poverty Act 2010⁷⁰ to tackle child poverty. Another predictor of future health is childhood obesity. As part of the National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP), children's height and weight are measured in school in both reception year (4-5 year olds) and year 6 (10-11 year olds) on an annual basis. Although there has been no major change in Dorset rates since we began measuring this in 2007/08, the figures suggest a continued gradual increase in obese and overweight children both in reception and year 6.

Early identification of older people at high risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and/or chronic kidney disease is carried out through the Health Check programme which, in Dorset, has until recently been targeted at people in high risk groups. The programme is now the responsibility of the local authority and is being expanded to cover a broader population and to include alcohol and dementia elements. Where a high risk is identified, people are supported to reduce or manage their risk.

One in four people experience poor mental health during their life and many of these will have two or more psychiatric disorders, with an associated rise in functional disability and reliance on statutory services⁷¹. Local partners will all play a part in reducing discrimination associated with mental illness through promotion, prevention, early intervention, and community services. Developing real partnerships with service users and carers is key to supporting recovery and ensuring a good quality of life.

⁷⁰ [Child poverty](#)

⁷¹ PANSI Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information [Pansi](#)

Increased survival rates among young people with severe and complex disabilities and reduced mortality among older adults with learning disabilities will result in further demand for health and social care services. Housing aspirations for people with a learning disability have also changed over time and the preferred option of young people leaving the family home is now supported living packages in the community. The percentage of people with learning disabilities in paid employment is low in Dorset and the target for 2013/14 is to achieve six per cent of adults with a learning disability in paid employment. Public sector organisations, being the largest employers across the county, should be challenged to improve their low recruitment levels of individuals with a disability in line with corporate objectives.

The Government's vision is that all adults with autism are able to live within a society that accepts and understands them. In terms of future demand, around 50 children in each school cohort are being identified as having an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition)⁷². A service review found that there are pockets of good practice and that some people with ASC pan Dorset are able to, and do, access good quality services that meet their needs. However, it also provided evidence that good practice and access to appropriate services is not consistent.

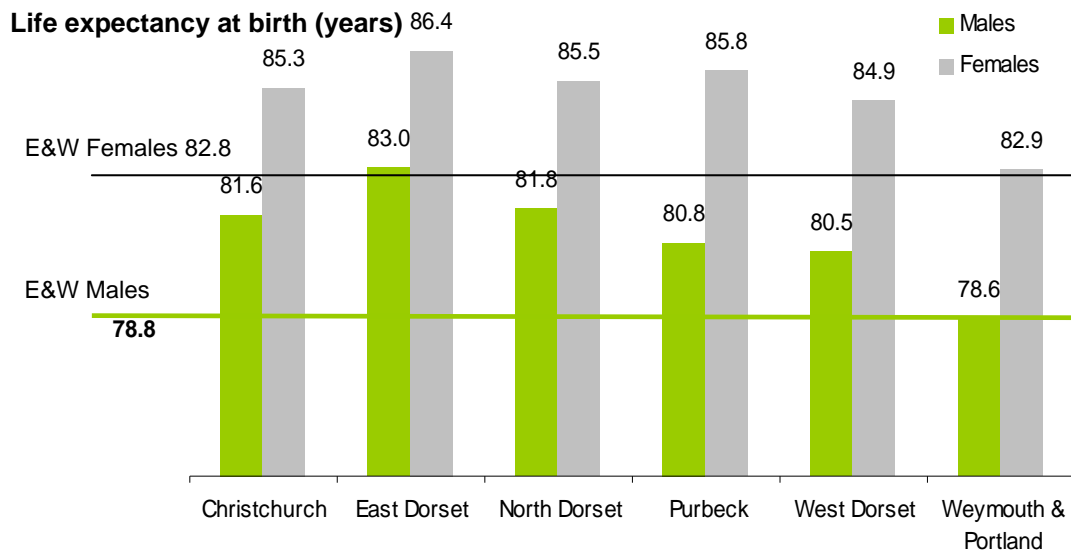
A positive perception of well-being is as important as good health itself and an above average proportion of Dorset residents aged 16+ have a high life satisfaction rating and feel that the things they do in their lives are worthwhile⁷³. However, there are likely to be differences between different groups: nationally, people aged 45 to 49 rated their life satisfaction lower than any other age group; Black people rated life satisfaction lower than any other ethnic group; and unemployed people rated life satisfaction below the level of those in employment⁷⁴.

⁷² *The Pan Dorset Adult Autistic Spectrum Condition Commissioning Strategy 2012-2015* [D4U ASC strategy 179581](#)

⁷³ Estimates of subjective well-being from the first annual experimental Annual Population Survey (APS) Subjective Well-being dataset, April 2011-March 2012, ONS

⁷⁴ *Personal Well-Being in the UK, 2012/13*, ONS [Personal well-being](#)





Source: ONS 2009-2011

Health and care key facts:

- Life expectancy at birth for Dorset males was 81.1 and for females 85.1 compared with 78.8 and 82.8 respectively in England & Wales⁷⁵;
- By 2020, we expect to see nearly 10,000 people aged 65 or over living with dementia locally⁷⁶;
- The gap in life expectancy between the most deprived and least deprived areas of Dorset has narrowed, but is 4.4 years for men and 3.5 years for women⁷⁷;
- 14.7% of pregnant women in Dorset smoke compared with 13.2% nationally⁷⁸;
- Smoking still causes 755 deaths per year in Dorset⁷⁹;
- In Dorset, for every £1 invested in adult drug treatment services, savings of £5.42 in health and crime costs are generated⁸⁰;
- There are 9,000 children in poverty in Dorset⁸¹;
- The South West has an above average 9.1% of people with learning disabilities in employment, compared to 6.9% nationally, but in Dorset, the percentage falls way below the national average, at three per cent⁸²;
- There are likely to be approximately 6,000 adults with an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) in the wider Dorset population, (including Bournemouth and Poole)⁸³.

⁷⁵ Life expectancy at birth 2009-2011, ONS

⁷⁶ Poppi Projecting Older People Information [Poppi](#)

⁷⁷ ONS 2009-11

⁷⁸ Phoutcomes 2011/12

⁷⁹ Phoutcomes 2011/12 and Health Profile 2012

⁸⁰ Calculated using the National Treatment Agency's 'Value for Money' estimation tool (See [Value for money](#))

⁸¹ HM Revenue and Customs, snapshot as at August 2010

⁸² Learning Disability Partnership Board 2012 returns

⁸³ Estimated prevalence rate of one per cent – Brugha et al, 2007

Older people

With a high proportion of older people and life expectancy in the county amongst the highest for the UK, the pressures on services for older people are ever increasing. Health, social care, housing and support options will all need to respond to this challenge with access to services being a particular issue in rural areas. In addition, a major shortfall in the number of people willing and able to work in the care industry is presenting a huge problem to providers, including agencies, establishments and hospitals.

As the number of older people grows, the number of individuals with a long term illness or disability will also grow with increased demands for care and support. The proportion of people with dementia roughly doubles for every five year age group: with extended life expectancy, the likelihood of developing dementia or severe cognitive impairment will increase⁸⁴. Low levels of dementia diagnosis may mean that some individuals and their families struggle to access the support they need. Sensory loss (visual and hearing impairment) increases with age and becomes a debilitating problem for many.



The personalisation agenda has meant a greater focus on choice and control for individuals. Whilst eligible individuals with a physical disability or mental health problems often choose to self-manage the personal budget allocated to them for social care support (via a Direct Payment), older people are more likely to receive care which is sourced and managed by Dorset County Council, following national trends.

A growing number of Direct Payment users and an existing high number of self-funders within the county who pay for their own care services, (either because they choose not to ask for help or are ineligible), means that there is an increasing need for market development within the independent sector. Dorset needs a diverse range of service providers offering choice to individuals who are arranging and/or buying their own support. This in turn drives a requirement for training and monitoring (by Dorset County Council and/or the Care Quality Commission) to maintain standards and avoid potential abuse or exploitation of vulnerable people. In addition, the strengthening of the requirement for Local Authorities to provide information and advice and assessments for any self-funders who want it is likely to increase the number of client contacts considerably following the implementation of the new Care Bill⁸⁵.

Enabling individuals to remain living in their own homes as long as possible facilitates choice and control and, hopefully, reduces demand for residential and nursing home placements. Services aimed at prevention and rehabilitation, such as the development

⁸⁴ 'Dementia before Death in Ageing Societies – the Promise of Prevention and the Reality', Brayne C et al, PLoS Med 3(10): e397 [Dementia before death](#)

⁸⁵ Care Bill (HL) 2013-14 [Care Bill](#)



of re-ablement⁸⁶ and Telecare⁸⁷ services, are particularly significant in terms of reducing the level of support required.

Issues such as social isolation, lack of transport, housing adaptations, access to healthy food options and the provision of information about welfare benefits and home safety are being addressed through information, advice and signposting, offered in Dorset through, amongst others, the Dorset Partnership for Older People Programme (POPP) initiative.

Pressure on adult safeguarding services has risen in recent years as a result of an increase in the number of alerts raised by individuals concerned about potential abuse of vulnerable adults. Older people and individuals with a learning disability were those most likely to be the alleged victims, with staff working in residential care settings the most frequent alleged perpetrators. Neglect was the most commonly cited category of abuse, followed by physical abuse and financial abuse.

The 2011 Census of Population indicated a growing number of informal carers in Dorset providing unpaid care to someone because of long-term illness, disability or old age. The majority of these carers (75%) would be signposted to information and advice but not in receipt of direct support from Dorset County Council. Of the remaining 25%, all would currently be entitled to an assessment of needs and support, (the entitlement is to become wider when changes are implemented both locally and nationally over the next couple of years), but only a small percentage (around 2.5%) would be in receipt of direct services provided or commissioned by the Council, (short breaks/respite, Direct Payments or emergency support).

⁸⁶ Short term, intensive services to help people remain in their own homes

⁸⁷ Telecare is a system of sensors that detect a range of emergency situations and either raise an alert within the home or alert a monitoring centre

Percentage of people providing unpaid care, 2011



Source: ONS, 2011 Census



Older people key facts:

- Over the decade to 2021 in Dorset, the number of people aged over 85 years is expected to increase by almost a third⁸⁸;
- The Alzheimer's Society predicts that one in three people over 65 will develop dementia before they die⁸⁹;
- Dementia diagnosis is 42% for the Dorset cluster (including Poole and Bournemouth) and just 34% for Dorset alone⁹⁰;
- In Dorset, 36.5% of adult service users had a personal budget in place as at the end of the 2012/13 financial year⁹¹;
- In the year 2012-13, 3,269 individuals received a re-ablement⁹² service for up to six weeks;
- Following re-ablement, 81% of individuals no longer had eligible on-going needs for support⁹³;
- In six months to March 2013, Dorset POPP were in contact with over 17,000 older people⁹⁴;
- In the year to 31 March 2013, a total of 1,918 safeguarding alerts were raised, of which 422 progressed to a formal investigation⁹⁵;
- In 2011 there were 49,300 unpaid carers in Dorset, an increase of 17% over 2001⁹⁶.

⁸⁸ ONS interim 2011 based population projections

⁸⁹ Alzheimer's Society [Alzheimers](#) from 'Dementia: What every commissioner needs to know', 2009

⁹⁰ National Dementia Strategy: Local Delivery Action Plan 2012/13 [Dementia local action plan](#)

⁹¹ Adult Social Care Annual Report – The Local Account, April 2012-March 2013 [D4U ASC local rep 187669](#)

⁹² Short term support to help people regain or develop new skills to become more independent and able to manage their daily lives

⁹³ Ibid

⁹⁴ Dorset POPP

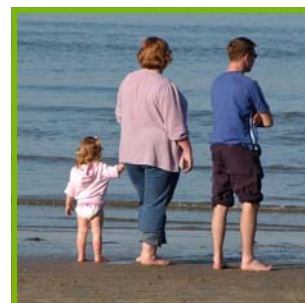
⁹⁵ Safeguarding Service, Dorset County Council Adult & Community Services

⁹⁶ Census of Population 2011 and 2001, ONS

Children

Early intervention to tackle issues such as child poverty, child development and health will help address issues of health and well-being in the long term. Identifying problems early and intervening effectively to prevent their escalation is essential if we are to support children and their families successfully. There is a strong evidence base that early intervention has benefits not only for the children and families involved but for communities generally because it reduces social problems and is generally more cost effective⁹⁷. It will be important in the future to ensure that services that are available to all children and families play a part in building resilience and identifying those most at risk of poorer outcomes later on, and that our resources are targeted where they are needed most to respond to risk and vulnerability.

Coming together to place families at the heart of the services we deliver will lead to greater coordination of service delivery and improved outcomes. Evidence suggests that smarter working with the whole family leads to improved outcomes and better value for money⁹⁸. It is recognised that some children and their families will require on-going support so it is important that there is a continuum of services that can meet the needs of more vulnerable groups over a longer period of time.



Children in care can have worse social, education and health outcomes than children who live with their families. The number of children looked after by Dorset County Council has increased to its highest level. There has also been an increase in referrals to social care services with child protection concerns over the past five years and an increase in the numbers on the child protection register. The proportion of children leaving care who are in suitable accommodation is lower than nationally and regionally. The increased demand for places for children entering care and supporting services – particularly for older children – is placing significant pressure on the local authority budget. There are a number of key issues affecting the demand for specialist support which include parental issues such as substance use, mental health and domestic abuse along with young people's issues such as risk-taking behaviours and housing needs.

Estimating prevalence and numbers of children and young people with physical disabilities is problematic due to varying definitions of disability. Using Office of National Statistics prevalence rates and population estimates, some approximate numbers can be calculated as a guide. In Dorset, it is estimated that there are around 15,800 children and young people with a mild disability and 5,600 with a severe disability. While the overall number of disabled children in the local population is not increasing, there is a rising trend in two areas – an increase in the number and life expectancy of children living with assisted technology and/or life limiting conditions and complex health needs and an increase in numbers of children and young people diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder.

⁹⁷ C4E0 – *Grasping the Nettle : early intervention for children, families and communities* [Grasping the Nettle](#)

⁹⁸ Research Review: Integrated pathways for Family Support, Institute of Public Care, 2011



The numbers of children with Statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) has been slowly reducing since 2008, with very small year on year decreases. The way that local authorities and health partners come together to support children with disabilities or those with special educational needs is changing with a move to a single plan that covers health, care and education. This will require commissioners and service providers to work more closely together than ever before.

Particular groups that are considered to be at greater risk of poorer outcomes, or more vulnerable, include those from more deprived socio-economic backgrounds, those with special educational needs, and children from particular ethnic groups. Eligibility for and uptake of Free School Meals can be used as a proxy measure to understand deprivation levels. Although the proportion of children claiming Free School Meals (FSM) in Dorset is lower than nationally, there has been a steady increase in uptake at both primary and secondary school. However, not all eligible pupils take up Free School Meals – this can mean a loss of valuable funding to schools. Reducing the attainment gap between those from vulnerable groups such as those eligible for FSM and those who are not is an important priority, particularly at GCSE level.

Early Years educational outcomes are good in Dorset; there has been an increase in the numbers and proportions of children achieving the expected outcomes at this stage and Dorset performs better than regional and national averages. This creates a good foundation to build on for future attainment. Good levels of attainment are essential for self-esteem and future employability, both of which contribute to overall well-being. In Dorset, pupil progress in English and Maths to the end of Key Stage 2 in 2012 is similar to the national average. In 2012, attainment of five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C was lower than nationally and regionally and Dorset ranked in the bottom quartile of performance. However, this is not a continuing trend: preliminary data for 2013 shows improved performance with Dorset results just above the national average. A national issue with the marking of GCSE papers resulted in the re-grading of papers in 2012 which had a large negative effect on Dorset pupils' achievement. A challenge for the local authority is the changing relationship with schools with the further development of the academies, free schools and studio schools programmes.



Children key facts:

- In March 2013 there were 361 children and young people in care in Dorset⁹⁹;
- The rate of looked after children rose from 39 per 10,000 children in 2012 to 47 in 2013¹⁰⁰;
- Child protection (S47) enquiries were 92 per 10,000 children in 2012 – up year on year since 2008¹⁰¹;
- The child protection rate was 41.5 per 10,000 children in 2012¹⁰²;
- 72% of children leaving care in 2012 went to suitable accommodation – below the national average¹⁰³;
- It is estimated that there are 600 families in Dorset with multiple and complex problems requiring support¹⁰⁴;
- Primary Free School Meal eligibility in 2013 was 12.0% compared to 18.1% in England¹⁰⁵;
- Secondary Free School Meal eligibility in 2013 was 9.7% compared to 15.1% in England¹⁰⁶;
- In 2012, there were 1,475 pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) which is 2.4% of the population¹⁰⁷;
- In 2012, the proportion of children who reached the expected level of achievement at Early Years Foundation Stage was 75% compared to 64% in England with Dorset performance second highest in the country;
- 25% of pupils eligible for Free School Meals in Dorset achieved five or more GCSEs at Grades A*-G compared to 36% nationally¹⁰⁸;



⁹⁹ Dorset County Council, electronic case recording system

¹⁰⁰ DFE (Research and Statistics Gateway SFR20-2012 lav2)

¹⁰¹ Dorset County Council, electronic case recording system

¹⁰² *Characteristics of Children in Need 2012*, DfE [Children in need](#)

¹⁰³ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁴ Troubled Families Unit, DCLG

¹⁰⁵ *Schools, Pupils and their characteristics*, DfE [Pupil characteristics](#)

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁰⁷ *Special Educational Needs in England, 2013*, [SEN in England](#)

¹⁰⁸ GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics 2012, DfE [GCSE pupil chars](#)



Children key facts *continued*:

- In 2012, expected progress in English to end of KS2 was 87% in Dorset compared to 89% in England¹⁰⁹;
- In 2012, expected progress in maths to end of KS2 was 85% in Dorset compared to 87% in England¹¹⁰;
- In 2012, 76.3% of KS4 pupils achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C compared to 81.8% in England¹¹¹;
- In 2012, 54.1% of KS4 pupils achieved five or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C including English and maths compared to 59.4% in England¹¹²;
- 85% of 19 year olds in 2012 in Dorset were qualified to level 2 compared to 84% in England¹¹³;
- 55% of 19 year olds in 2012 in Dorset were qualified to level 3 the same as England as a whole, but down one percentage point on 2011¹¹⁴.

¹⁰⁹ Performance tables 2012, DfE [Performance 2012](#)

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Ibid

¹¹² Ibid

¹¹³ DfE matched administrative data, table 15a [Matched admin data](#)

¹¹⁴ Ibid, table 17a

Safety and freedom from fear

Whilst recorded crime in Dorset is falling, maintaining low crime levels across all communities remains a significant challenge for partners. Helping communities feel safer is also an important consideration as fear of crime can erode quality of life. Recent survey findings show a sizable proportion of Dorset residents perceive crime levels to have increased over the previous year – indicative of a disconnection between perception and the actual crime picture¹¹⁵. This suggests that addressing attitudinal and confidence issues requires ongoing focus and reinforces the importance of partners continuing to publicise positive and accurate reassurance messages about crime to the public.



Despite falling crime levels, risks to individuals in Dorset continue to be posed by issues such as anti-social behaviour and domestic violence. The number of incidents of domestic violence has risen sharply in the county over the course of the last three years¹¹⁶. Whilst this increase is seen as a largely positive development – attributable to the increased provision of specialist support services giving victims confidence to report to the police, along with considerable improvements in both the recording and management of domestic violence within the police – it places increased demand on partnership resources. Risk management processes such as the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) support those at most serious risk of harm¹¹⁷ and offer protection to the most vulnerable victims. However, domestic violence remains largely hidden and it is estimated that much never gets to the notice of the police. Factors such as rurality and deprivation contribute significantly to the likelihood of being abused and domestic violence continues to impact on the health and life outcomes of victims¹¹⁸ and their children in Dorset¹¹⁹.

A domestic violence peer challenge was commissioned by Dorset County Council's Acting Director of Children's Services in April 2013. This yielded some positive feedback and highlighted areas where the Authority needs to further improve its response to domestic violence. This includes more detailed mapping of needs and resources, adopting a more child-centred outcomes approach, providing for victims with diverse needs, and ensuring that all partners, including health services, are engaged.



¹¹⁵ Dorset Community Safety Survey findings, Dorset Police,

¹¹⁶ Analysis of Dorset Police domestic violence incident data, 2010/11-2012/13

¹¹⁷ CAADA's report, *A Place of Greater Safety* (November 2012), estimated that 100,000 victims a year nationally are at high risk of harm or murder. In Dorset 300 high risk cases a year are heard at the MARAC.

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Barnardo's [Barnardo's](#)



Although the rate for serious and fatal road traffic casualties in Dorset remains above the England average, there has been a significant positive improvement in recent years with the medium to long term casualty trend continuing downward. Rurality is a factor in collision severity as a disproportionate number of crashes resulting in death or injury are on single carriageway, national speed limit rural A roads. Older casualties are more likely to suffer severe injuries due to frailty. A comprehensive review of the strategic approach to road casualty reduction is currently being undertaken by the Dorset Strategic Road Safety Partnership and Dorset County Council has recently updated its Road Casualty Reduction Plan (2013-2020) which sets out how it intends to meet its challenging casualty reduction targets in a time of reduced resources. A comprehensive evidence-based Partnership approach to addressing road casualty issues is considered the most effective way forward for the authority.

Safety and freedom from fear key facts:

- Recorded crime in Dorset in 2012/13 decreased by about 15% over the year – continuing a longer term decreasing trend seen since 2005/06 and reflecting the national picture¹²⁰;
- The rate of crime ranges from just over 28 offences per 1,000 population in East Dorset to 66 offences per 1,000 population in Weymouth & Portland¹²¹;
- Parts of Weymouth & Portland have been identified as key priority areas for focus by community safety partners, including Dorset Police¹²²;
- It is estimated that domestic violence potentially affects the quality of life of an estimated 7,000 people a year in the county, mainly impacting on women and children¹²³;
- More than two out of three fatalities in Dorset are on roads with a speed limit of 50mph or more, most of which are in rural areas¹²⁴.

¹²⁰ Derived from Dorset Police statistics and Crime in England & Wales data, ONS

¹²¹ Derived from statistics for the 2012/13 fiscal year provided by Dorset Police

¹²² Based on the findings of research undertaken by Dorset Community Safety Partnership, and Dorset Police, in 2013

¹²³ Estimate from Dorset Police from work undertaken for the *Dorset Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy 2009-11*

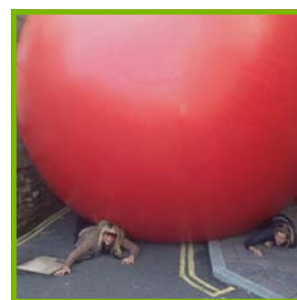
¹²⁴ *Road Casualty Reduction Plan 2013-2020*, Dorset County Council

Leisure and culture

The cultural experience in Dorset blends enjoyment, learning, history, the countryside and environment. Dorset enjoys sites and places of national and international stature which attract many visitors as well as local people, and the county has a celebrated literary heritage. Active enjoyment of our cultural landscape through walking and cycling supports healthy lifestyles, and promotes access and understanding of the need to conserve and maintain our environment.

Culture offers a range of opportunities for volunteering to support our heritage and landscape and to enable cultural activity. Culture has great potential to bring communities together and plays an essential role in improving places and lives.

A positive local impact on culture, sport and physical activity is already evident following on from our hosting of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The appetite for sport was clear with huge demand, especially for water-sports. Since then we have seen local sports clubs inundated with new interest and new local sport programmes have been heavily over subscribed. Maritime Mix, London 2012 Cultural Olympiad by the Sea was particularly successful in reaching non-arts attending audiences, and encouraging community participation in cultural events. These were almost exclusively free and staged in the open. The challenge is to harness this new inspiration and interest to promote and publicise culture and physical activity as a long term sustainable option for all. The development of cultural and sporting facilities and events and the skills, expertise and confidence to sustain them are important in establishing a lasting legacy from 2012.



The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) regards delivering sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs as one of the core principles of the planning system¹²⁵. However the cultural provision based on a standard list of cultural factors indicates a need for further development of cultural amenities in Dorset¹²⁶. A cultural infrastructure audit and assessment would provide an evidence base for development of cultural amenities in Dorset.

Whilst research in Dorset commissioned by the DCMS¹²⁷ shows above average engagement and participation in cultural and sporting activity here, this is proportionally greater amongst the affluent population, whilst people in more deprived circumstances and young people tend to be under represented. Women are most likely to perceive barriers to cultural activities¹²⁸.

¹²⁵ *National Planning Policy Framework*, March 2012 paragraph 17

¹²⁶ *Local Amenities Barometer*, Local Futures Group

¹²⁷ *Active People Survey* [Active People](#)

¹²⁸ Dorset Citizens' Panel April 2009, Dorset County Council



Activity within the voluntary and community sector is particularly diverse and culture and leisure is the top area of activity for the third sector in Dorset¹²⁹. The volunteer effort of local people both supports and expresses the sense of place and identity which is distinctive about Dorset. Arts centres and agencies, museums, sports leagues, learning providers, all would be unsustainable without their loyal volunteer force. Cultural provision is supported through a multiplicity of partnerships so reduction in public sector resources may have a disproportionate impact on access to culture.

Research indicates that the creative industries sector has above average GVA per job¹³⁰ and is growing faster in the South West region than in other parts of Britain. Although the economic downturn will, inevitably, have slowed this growth, it is essential that support for the sector is maintained. This will allow Dorset to take advantage of the stimulus to the economy that the sector provides and which will have been further supported by the increased profile for Dorset from the 2012 Games. Key challenges are (1) to maximise the potential for arts and culture to: support commercial creative business; maximise the spill-over effects for tourism; and economic regeneration¹³¹; and (2) to make a clear and joined up offer to business and young people to increase Apprenticeships and skills development in the sector.

Leisure and culture key facts:

- In 2012, there were over 100,000 visits to the sports arena on Weymouth beach – with free sports and have-a-go sessions including water sports;
- Positive written feedback was received from over 10,000 participants;
- Maritime Mix, London 2012 Cultural Olympiad by the Sea created the equivalent of 52 (temporary) F/T jobs, increased the GVA for Dorset by £2.5m. In addition it helped generate a minimum of £13 M for the tourism economy of Weymouth & Portland between September 2011 and September 2012¹³²;
- Overall 77% of people surveyed agree that access to cultural activities helps to make Dorset a better place to live and that engagement in cultural activities contributes to an improved quality of life¹³³;
- The Volunteer Centre Dorset records nearly 7,000 volunteers that support nearly 300 cultural organisations¹³⁴;
- Eight per cent of Dorset's employees work directly in leisure and tourism compared with about six per cent in Great Britain¹³⁵;
- Two per cent of Dorset's employees work in the creative industries compared with about four per cent in Great Britain¹³⁶.

¹²⁹ National Survey of Third Sector Organisations. Office of the Third Sector 2009

¹³⁰ Creative Industries Sector Research Paper, for Dorset LEP March 2012 (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy), p6

¹³¹ The contribution of arts and culture to the national economy. Centre for Economic and Business Research 2013

¹³² Full Maritime Mix report available at: [D4U Maritime Mix 410264](#)

¹³³ Dorset Citizens' Panel April 2009

¹³⁴ A full report on cultural volunteering is available at [D4U Cultural Strategy](#)

¹³⁵ Business Register and Employment Survey 2012, ONS

¹³⁶ Business Register and Employment Survey 2012, ONS – A broad definition of the creative industries is those goods and services in the creative sector: advertising, architecture, art and antiques, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, television and radio, performing arts, music and software and computer services which feature original creativity and generate intellectual property with a potential for wealth and job creation.

Key contacts by topic

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