



Shaping our future

working together to improve the quality of life in Dorset



Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010-2020

Contents

Vision	3
Foreword	4
Shaping our future	5
Dorset Strategic Partnership	6
Dorset places	7
Dorset people	8
Local challenges	10

Dorset priorities

Narrowing the inequality gap	13
Home and neighbourhood	14
Economy	15
Access	16
Safety	18
Environment	19
Culture	20
Community	21
Health and wellbeing	22
Children and young people	24
Older people	25
Olympic legacy	26

Making change happen	27
Need more information?	Back cover
Like to get involved?	Back cover

This is one of a suite of seven documents that make up *Shaping our future: Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 to 2020* which are all available electronically. They are the:

- Strategy (available in printed and text only versions as well)
- Highlights (available in printed version)
- Easy to read summary
- Evidence base
- Local issues paper
- Sustainability appraisal
- Equality Impact Assessment

Check our website for more information: www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp

For alternative formats see 'Like to get involved?' on the back cover of this document.

Our vision is



a living thriving Dorset where everyone has a part to play in creating a better quality of life.

Foreword

Dorset is a beautiful county with strong historic roots. A major national survey of local people recently showed that 89% of people are satisfied with their quality of life here. It is important to sustain and improve the quality of life in the decades to come.

However Dorset residents have also expressed concerns about life in Dorset. These include the lack of housing local people can afford to rent or buy and the need for better public transport, more access to services such as healthcare and sports and leisure facilities, and higher quality broadband.

Shaping our future, the sustainable community strategy for Dorset, articulates our vision and priorities for the county and how people want to see their quality of life improve over the next decade. It responds to changes since the publication of the previous strategy in 2007 such as demographic changes, the recession and the financial deficit, and to the policies of the coalition government.

Many people and organisations have been involved in developing the strategy. The Dorset Strategic Partnership has based the priorities on the views of local people and what they have told us recently about their lives and aspirations for the future, on local community plans, data-based evidence and existing local, regional and national strategies.

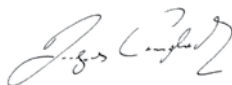
The challenges and needs identified in parish, neighbourhood, town, local area partnership and district plans all feed into the evidence used by the Dorset Strategic Partnership to develop *Shaping our future*, the sustainable community strategy for Dorset. We shall need to ensure that the processes at these various levels of community planning do not result in duplication but contribute to the strength, resilience and quality of life of communities of all kinds throughout Dorset.

Climate change remains a major global and local issue. The big challenges for Dorset are to reduce our contribution to climate change by reducing our carbon emissions through using less energy and other resources and to become more resilient to its impacts. The opportunities are huge in terms of increasing efficiency and becoming a leader in the skills and technologies required for a low-carbon future.

Throughout the life of the strategy there will be significant local and national challenges, including reductions in public spending. Public authorities will have fewer financial resources and will employ fewer people. At a time of scarce resources it will be all the more important to maintain a sense of ambition and to focus on priorities, but also to be realistic about what we can achieve.

It is critical that Dorset communities and the Dorset Strategic Partnership embrace innovation, creativity and a willingness to explore new ways to achieve our priorities together. Despite the national restrictions on public sector finance it is important that the Dorset Strategic Partnership addresses the priorities in the sustainable community strategy. The successful delivery of the strategy will depend on achieving low cost, local solutions and maximising local resources. The Dorset Strategic Partnership will support and develop the capacity of communities in order to help people to find and develop their own solutions.

Our website www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp includes supporting information for the strategy, namely the highlights, evidence base, a local issues paper, an equalities impact assessment, a sustainability appraisal and an easy to read summary.



Chair:
Angus Campbell



Vice-Chair:
Colin Brady



Secretary:
David Jenkins

November 2010

Shaping our future:

Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2010 -2020

What is it?

Shaping our future is about all of us working together to achieve the social, economic and environmental priorities of Dorset people, and so improve the quality of life for everyone, now and for the future. Committing to a sustainable community strategy means that we accomplish these priorities while safeguarding and enhancing the rich, spectacular and diverse environment of our county.

Local people and communities of all kinds are the foundation of *Shaping our future*. Their views, together with other research and an understanding of recent changes, such as the economic recession and reductions in public spending, have been the key to shaping our priorities for Dorset.

The strategy:

- Focuses on the challenges affecting the long term future of our county
- Describes our priorities and how we can achieve them.

We will address social and economic issues so that they support each other and work within environmental limits. It is vital that we find innovative ways of working that benefit all three parts of a sustainable community: society, the economy and the environment.

Making more efficient use of scarce financial and natural resources is fundamental to developing sustainable communities. It is also fundamental to addressing the economic and financial uncertainties currently faced by public services, businesses and communities in Dorset.

How is it used?

Shaping our future is a guide. It builds on the drive and passion of Dorset people to help everyone work together to make Dorset a better place to live. It enables people in community and voluntary groups, parish, town, district, borough and county councils, and health, fire and police services to work in collaboration on the priorities we have in common.

Together we can achieve far more using fewer resources than if we work separately. This approach is especially relevant given the tightened financial circumstances that all of us now face over the lifetime of the strategy.

The strategy:

- Empowers communities of all kinds to identify which of their priorities they hold in common with other communities in Dorset and then to make the best use of shared resources to achieve them.
- Enables public services to focus limited resources towards achieving the twelve priorities identified for Dorset.
- Tells the regional and national decision makers about our challenges, our plans and what Dorset has to offer.
- Informs the land use planning policies set out in the local development frameworks produced by each of Dorset's local planning authorities. The local development frameworks translate the priorities in the strategy into planning policies that can, for example, support the growth of the economy and provide sufficient housing.
- It also informs our work with Bournemouth and Poole through our Multi Area Agreement and the emerging local enterprise partnership.

Dorset Strategic Partnership

The Dorset Strategic Partnership brings together people and partners from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to realise a shared vision of 'a living thriving Dorset where everyone has a part to play in creating a better quality of life'.

Our role

- Encourage, help and involve people and organisations from all walks of life to take action to strengthen their communities and make them more resilient.
- To support and foster leadership skills to help communities of all kinds play a greater role in determining the shape and quality of their future.
- To foster and encourage the pooling and sharing of our resources and skills so we can achieve more with less.
- To co-ordinate action locally, regionally and nationally to advance Dorset's priorities.
- To ensure Dorset's voice is heard regionally and nationally.

Our commitment

The Partnership's driving force is to develop Dorset as a sustainable community. In doing this we are committed to:

- Keeping equality and diversity at the heart of every decision the Partnership and our partners make.
- Listening to what people and communities have to say and seeking out and listening to those whose voices are not always heard.
- Ensuring everyone can get involved in positively influencing Dorset's future.
- Communicating with people and communities about our strategy, our plans, our work and what we achieve by working in collaboration.
- Working with communities to further empower them to take greater responsibility for developing their own strategies and plans for community wellbeing.



Dorset places



Corfe Village

The traditional image of Dorset is a rural county with small historic towns, coastal resorts, idyllic villages and spectacular scenery. However, the South East Dorset conurbation, centred on Bournemouth and Poole, is by far the largest urban area, and where one-third of Dorset people live. Bournemouth and Poole have their own strategic partnerships and sustainable community strategies. The South East Dorset conurbation is the economic, social and educational hub of much of the area. Nearly one-third of the conurbation is made up of a group of towns which are, in many cases, physically joined to Bournemouth and Poole. Christchurch has an attractive and distinctive character and a thriving business community with many cutting edge specialist aviation and engineering firms. Other settlements include Wareham, Upton, Corfe Mullen, Wimborne Minster, Ferndown, West Moors, Verwood, St Leonards and St Ives. Wareham and Wimborne are ancient historic towns and important service centres.

The next biggest town in Dorset is Weymouth. Less than ten miles inland is the county town of Dorchester, which is a centre for administration, employment and shopping for the surrounding rural area.

Market towns such as Blandford Forum, Bridport, Gillingham, Shaftesbury, Sherborne and Swanage have been the social and economic focus for rural areas for many years. Such links extend beyond the county boundary. Salisbury and Yeovil, in particular, provide employment and services such as healthcare to communities in the north of the county.

Smaller towns and villages have been a major asset to the social and economic wellbeing of the county. While linked to larger market towns for higher level services, many of the more remote communities are relatively self-sustaining for employment and local services. In recent years however many shops, post offices and pubs have closed.

The diversity of the Dorset landscape ranges from its 87 mile Jurassic coastline to the internationally important habitats and rare flora and fauna further inland. This importance has been recognised in the designation of a World Heritage Site, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, eleven National Nature Reserves, 141 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 23 wildlife sites of international or European importance and 63 Regionally Important Geological Sites. The evolution of Dorset's landscape can be seen in a rich archaeological heritage of burial sites, hill forts and the ancient pattern of fields, woodlands, hedges, settlements and rights of way.

Dorset people



Charminster Fete

Our population:

- In the past ten years the population in Dorset has grown by 4.8% to 404,049 (2009).
- The county has a large proportion of older people with over 29% of Dorset residents over retirement age. (The national figure is 19.5%).
- There is a relatively low proportion of younger people. The proportion of residents in their twenties is 7.9% compared to 13.5% nationally.
- The over-representation in the proportion of older people in Dorset has been evident for some time, but the decline in the proportion of younger residents is more recent.

Diversity:

- Since the expansion of the European Union (EU) in 2004 more migrant workers have come to Dorset although the number registering to work in Dorset has dropped since 2007. They account for 40% of all registrations with the majority Polish nationals. The most widely spoken non English first language in Dorset schools is now Polish (20% of the total) – a further indication of the growing diversity of Dorset people.
- There is a small but growing ethnic minority population that made up 3.2 % of the population in 2001 compared to the figure for England of 13%. There is some indication that this may have doubled to about 6.5% (16% for England).



What is important to local people?

In the 2008 Place Survey residents were asked to list what makes somewhere a good place to live and to identify which of these things most need improving in Dorset.

You told us these things are important to you		You told us the things that most need improving in the county overall are	
	%		%
• The level of crime	56	• Activities for teenagers	46
• Health services	52	• The level of traffic congestion	40
• Affordable decent housing	38	• Road and pavement repairs	38
• Clean streets	35	• Public transport	37
• Access to nature	32	• Affordable decent housing	35
• Public transport	31	• Wage levels and the local cost of living	27
• Education provision	30	• Job prospects	25
• Shopping facilities	29		

These results vary across Dorset. Each area has distinctive challenges and within areas there are small pockets which face unique circumstances and challenges.

Where people live:

75% of people in Dorset live in urban areas and towns and 25% live in rural areas.



Local challenges

Local people and community partnerships in each district and borough have helped to identify the key challenges in their area through their parish and community plans.

North Dorset

- Very rural and sparsely populated with vibrant market towns, some of which are experiencing recent high population growth
- An ageing population and migration of young people out of the area
- High quality natural and built environment.

Key challenges for the district

- Providing affordable housing
- Improving transport and access to services, including access to vocational and skills training
- Ensuring access to high speed broadband across the area to support business growth.

West Dorset

- Largely rural with small market towns and the growing county town of Dorchester
- Largest district in Dorset with relatively low population density
- High quality built and natural environment
- Around three quarters of the area is covered by environmental designations, for example, AONB.

Key challenges for the district

- Affordable housing for local people, particularly for the young
- Sustainable transport and access to services, particularly for younger and older residents
- Safeguarding the environment.

Weymouth & Portland

- Largest urban area outside South East Dorset and an important seaside resort
- World class sailing venue staging the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic sailing events
- Two ports offering high speed ferry links to the Channel Islands and France from Weymouth and deep berthing at Portland Port.

Key challenges for the borough

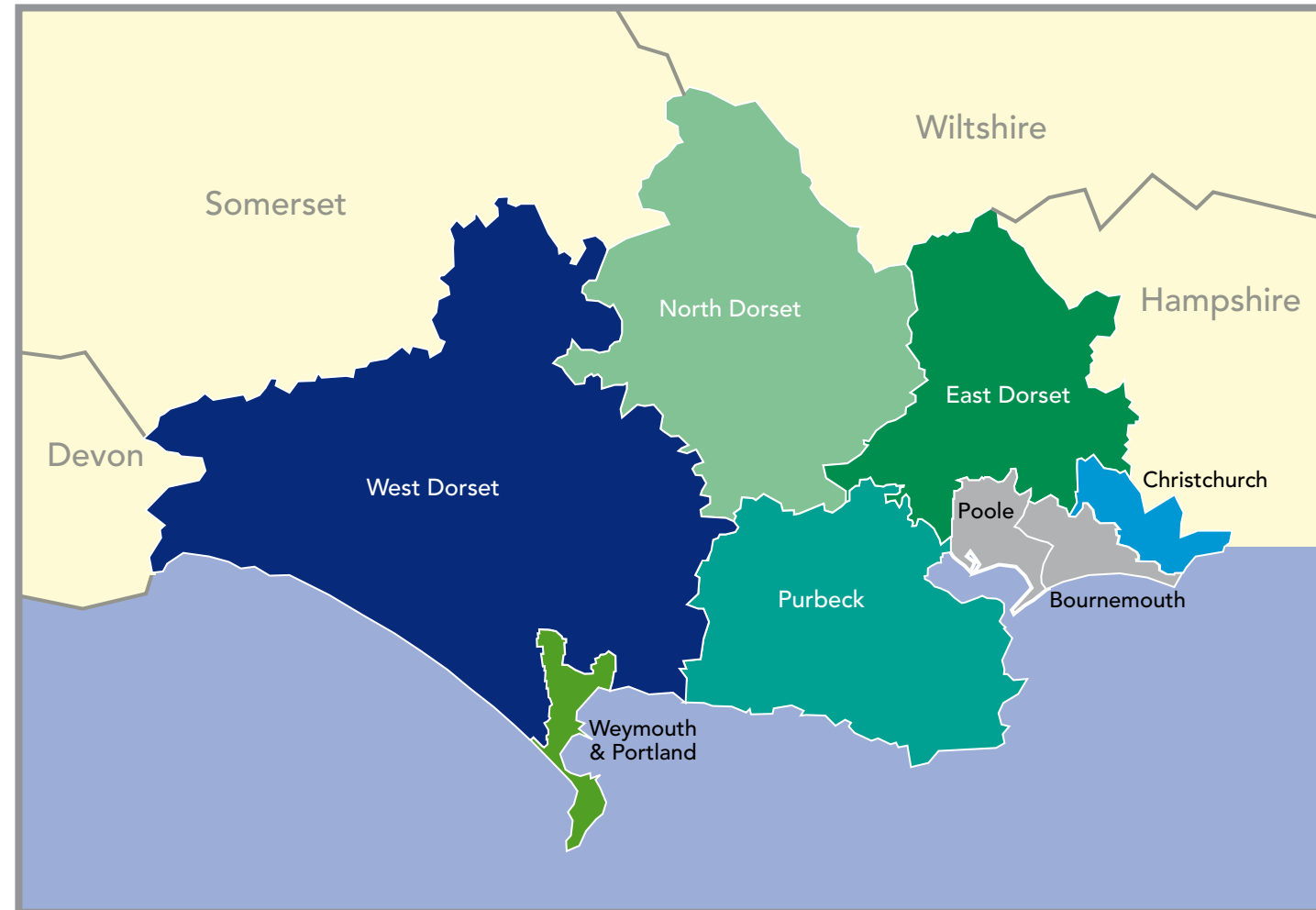
- Improving wage levels by broadening and strengthening the economic base
- Improving access to and the availability of affordable housing, particularly for young working households
- Dealing with pockets of deprivation, health and crime issues.

East Dorset

- Predominantly rural area with population and facilities centred on three towns and larger villages
- Outstanding landscape and natural environment
- Strongly influenced by proximity to Bournemouth and Poole conurbation and lack of a railway.

Key challenges for the district

- Reducing speed and volume of traffic, anti-social behaviour, fear of crime and threat to natural habitats
- Improving access to appropriate housing, health and wellbeing, open green spaces and sustainable transport.



Christchurch

- Historic town combining heritage, coastline, rivers and a natural harbour
- Has the highest proportion of people of retirement age and over in the UK
- Home to Bournemouth Airport whose passenger operations are forecast to increase and which provides the largest strategic employment site in the conurbation.

Key challenges for the borough

- Affordable housing
- Traffic congestion on the A35
- Transforming the town centres in Christchurch and Highcliffe
- Development of a Sustainable Urban Extension and Bournemouth Airport as an aviation and employment hub
- Climate change especially flood risk.

Bournemouth and Poole

Our neighbours Bournemouth and Poole share economic, social and environmental challenges with us. We work closely with them and our neighbouring counties to identify and address these challenges.

Purbeck

- One of the least affordable places to live in the UK
- One of the most bio-diverse districts in the country
- Outstanding landscape of international importance including World Heritage Coastline.

Key challenges for the district

- Providing affordable housing for local people that is sensitive to an environment of international importance
- Developing a knowledge economy to broaden employment opportunities whilst supporting traditional industries
- Sustainable transport to provide access to facilities and services and reduce congestion.

Dorset priorities



Dorset priorities

Narrowing the inequality gap so that people across Dorset have fairer access to opportunities which can improve their quality of life.



Challenges

- Dorset may seem like an affluent county but there are significant contrasts and people in some areas and groups suffer high levels of deprivation. Deprivation can affect all age ranges.
- Deprivation comes in different forms relating to income, employment, health, education, access to housing and services, crime, and living environment. People tend to experience more than one form of deprivation.
- In times of austerity some people can suffer more than others with those better off able to cope better than those who are already disadvantaged.
- Examples of deprivation and inequality:
 - In the least deprived area of East Dorset men live an average of seven years longer than in the most deprived parts of Weymouth and Portland.
 - Some individuals experience significant poverty and hardship throughout retirement; others are relatively well off in their early retirement years but have fewer financial resources in later years.
 - In rural areas people without private transport can be isolated, finding it difficult to access even basic services such as healthcare and essential shopping and young people find it difficult to get to leisure activities and potential jobs.
- Dorset's pockets of deprivation tend to be focused in towns but there is also rural deprivation.
- The causes of multiple deprivation are complex making it difficult to understand and to find solutions. Trying to solve one issue at a time is unlikely to be successful.

Challenges will be met when:

1. The voices of people experiencing inequalities are heard and they have opportunities to be more involved in improving their quality of life.
2. All Dorset people, whatever their background and circumstances, receive the information, advice and support they need to improve their lives.
3. In view of the economic climate, resources are better targeted at addressing inequalities in the most deprived parts of Dorset and to the most disadvantaged people and groups in Dorset.
4. Service providers work together to improve access to services, putting the needs of people at the centre of what they do, enabling people to exercise more choice and control.
5. Communities recognise inequalities and focus on making sure everyone has the opportunity to be involved in all aspects of community life.

Dorset priorities

Everyone can live in a good quality home and neighbourhood that meets their needs.



Wimborne

Challenges

- Homes in Dorset are among the least affordable in the country.
- Delivering sufficient affordable housing with appropriate infrastructure.
- There is limited suitable land available for development.
- Young people and young working families find it particularly difficult to afford suitable housing and may leave Dorset or continue to live with their parents.
- With a growing number of older people there will be increased demand for a variety of more accessible or supported housing.
- It can take too long for disabled people to get homes that meet their needs.
- The most vulnerable people often live in the poorest quality homes. 15% of vulnerable disadvantaged people live in inefficient poorly insulated homes and are at risk of fuel poverty.
- Households are not environmentally sustainable enough.

Challenges will be met when:

1. The gap between what Dorset people earn and the cost of housing narrows.
2. New ways are found to meet the need for homes for all Dorset people, whatever their background and circumstances. The number of affordable homes in rural and urban areas increases. The right mix of housing types and tenures attracts new investments, helps to retain young people and families and supports the economy.
3. Everyone can afford the reasonable costs of living in their homes for example maintenance, repairs, fuel and water.
4. Vulnerable and disadvantaged people have quicker access to more suitable homes and continued support to remain in their homes.
5. New housing has adequate infrastructure such as sustainable transport and good broadband and mobile telecommunication connections as well as access to jobs, services and quality greenspace. Housing complements the character of its surroundings and minimises the need for greenfield development.
6. Sustainable construction methods are used for new build and refurbished homes, resulting in an increase in the number of homes being made more efficient and affordable to run.

Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing provided to households whose needs are not met by the market.

Dorset priorities

A strong economy offers better job opportunities for people in Dorset.



Challenges

- Economic growth and how much people earn are both lower than the regional and national average.
- Some businesses do not consider Dorset a good place in which to invest and do business in. Reasons can include poor transport links, particularly to Bristol and the north, traffic congestion and inadequate telecommunications.
- Young people consider higher education, training and career opportunities to be limited in Dorset.
- There will be a loss of skills in the workplace as many Dorset people retire.
- Businesses tend to be small and business start ups are relatively low.
- While traditional employment in manufacturing and agriculture is declining, skilled manual and technical workers are needed, including those who can support business growth linked to Dorset's environment.
- The Dorset economy is currently heavily reliant on public service jobs. There needs to be a more balanced and resilient economy.
- Dorset's environment and culture have the potential to drive the economy forward while ensuring that economic growth takes place within environmental limits.
- Dorset's businesses are not environmentally sustainable enough.

Challenges will be met when:

1. The local economy strengthens with a focus on businesses and enterprises that build on knowledge and technologies linked to Dorset's environment (the Green Knowledge Economy). These businesses have local, national and global markets and include:
 - Renewable energy technology, climate change and environmental protection and enhancement
 - Agricultural diversity
 - The marine and aerospace sectors
 - Sustainable tourism and cultural industries.
2. Dorset people, especially young people, can upgrade their education, work skills and training to improve their employability in knowledge based sectors with higher pay.
3. Innovative employment and business options encourage more people to work.
4. Business infrastructure and connectivity upgrades include:
 - Improved sustainable rail, road and sea transport options for goods and people
 - Higher quality broadband and mobile phone coverage across Dorset
 - More quality employment land and premises in urban and rural locations to encourage reduced travel to work
 - Increased opportunities for business skills training and stronger links between further education and local economic priorities
 - Dorset businesses become more sustainable, producing fewer carbon emissions.

Dorset priorities

Dorset people can access work, education and training,



Sherborne

Challenges

- About 5,000 people in low income households are not within 30 minutes travel by public transport of a doctor's surgery. Accessing jobs, training, health care, leisure, essential shopping and other services can be difficult for many people.
- Rural people face rising transport costs and the movement of local services into towns. 58 rural post offices have closed since 1991, 77% of villages do not have a local store and almost 60% do not have a pub.
- Bus frequency and accessibility contribute to people's satisfaction with buses in rural Dorset being among the lowest in England.
- Those travelling by road face congestion in urban areas and unreliable journey times with high volumes of traffic on unsuitable roads.
- Access problems and lack of suitable transport are among the most frequently raised problems by older and young people, those on low incomes and disabled people.
- Road transport in Dorset is not environmentally sustainable enough and is responsible for 31.5% of Dorset's carbon emissions from the use of fossil fuel energy. There is a need to reduce the need to travel to improve Dorset's sustainability and to encourage the use of healthier, more sustainable modes of transport.
- High and volatile oil prices have increased transport costs for everyone and with the supply of oil world wide near its peak, this is likely to continue. Reducing the need to travel will increase sustainability and cut costs for Dorset people and businesses.
- Dorset has poor telecommunications, mobile phone and broadband communications. Mobile phone network coverage is not consistent. Broadband speeds in the rural areas in the county are slow.

healthcare, essential shopping and leisure opportunities.



Purbeck

Challenges will be met when:

1. Improvements are made to the ways in which we get services to people rather than people to services. In developing these improvements we will consider the needs of individuals and communities, the location of services, and wider choice of access such as broadband and telephone. Sustainable transport and improved transport infrastructure support essential travel, especially where it involves getting people to employment.
2. People know about the range of ways they can access services and opportunities and more support is available.
3. People have convenient access to multi-purpose venues providing services from a wide range of agencies and opportunities for leisure and cultural activities.
4. The integration of transport systems such as pavements, trails, cycle paths, roads, buses, trains and car sharing offers people convenient, safe, easy, affordable, healthier and sustainable journeys within Dorset and to neighbouring areas.
5. Transportation links to major regional, national and international locations are maintained and improved for people, businesses and organisations.
6. Everyone can get information from a single contact point on all forms of passenger transport services.
7. The Dorset Public Sector Network is used to develop opportunities for enhancing broadband provision for the benefit of residents and businesses in Dorset.

Dorset priorities

People are safe and feel safe in their communities.



Dorchester

Challenges

- Crime rates in Dorset are low and continue to fall but the fear of crime is high. Crime is not evenly distributed across the county.
- More urban areas generally experience higher rates of crime. However, in areas with low levels of crime, especially rural communities, people can feel their personal safety is threatened by minor crimes.
- Reducing anti-social behaviour and tackling violent crime, including domestic violence and abuse, are important to people.
- There are an increasing number of people in the community who are at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation because of relative isolation, unstable domestic circumstances or dependency on others.
- There are an increasing number of older people, disabled people and people from minority ethnic groups in Dorset. These are the most vulnerable groups in terms of crime and the fear of crime.
- The number of fires, including arson, has decreased but the number of people who have died in house fires in the past two years has increased.
- Road traffic accidents kill or seriously injure nearly 300 people a year – children, pedestrians and cyclists are especially vulnerable. Communities are concerned about road safety and speed, traffic congestion and the poor condition of some roads and pavements.

Challenges will be met when:

1. Local businesses and communities in both rural and urban areas are reassured that crime and anti-social behaviour are being dealt with effectively, reducing the fear of crime.
2. An increased focus on prevention leads to fewer people experiencing the effects of violent crime, particularly alcohol and drug related crime and domestic violence and abuse.
3. People known to be at risk are better protected and there is less discrimination and prejudice related crime.
4. Fewer people experience the effects of anti-social behaviour (for example vandalism and graffiti, anti-social drinking and intimidation). Communities receive support through the provision of positive activities, the creative use of planning and licensing legislation and measures such as community payback schemes.
5. The number of fires and related deaths, injuries and damage decreases and people take better preventative measures to protect their families, homes, communities and natural environments, such as heathlands, from fire.
6. Roads are safer and feel safer for everyone, especially after dark, and there are fewer road deaths and serious injuries. Measures include educating children in road safety, driver awareness courses, pro-active enforcement and improving the condition of roads and pavements.

Dorset priorities

Dorset's natural, built and historic environment is safeguarded and enhanced now and for the future.



Abbotbury Chapel

Challenges

- Sensitive and internationally protected habitats, such as heathlands, woodlands and estuaries, are close to major urban areas. However, high quality residential, commercial and industrial development is required for a sustainable future. The challenge is to integrate these successfully while safeguarding and enhancing the environment and achieving social and economic progress.
- Beautiful scenery can mask underlying issues about the health of our coast, rivers, soils and wildlife and the risk it faces from pressures like climate change and increases in the number of visitors.
- Dorset's natural, built and historic environment is a major economic, social and cultural asset, supporting tourism, agriculture and recreation, and attracting people to live, work and visit. The same people can put pressure on the environment they enjoy.
- As well as the global significance of climate change, it is a major challenge to Dorset's environment and our way of life. There is a likelihood of increased coastal erosion, flooding, reduced water supply, changing landscapes and changes to the economy that will affect health, buildings, communications, transportation, biodiversity and businesses.
- Demand for energy and water resources already has an adverse impact on the environment. As the population grows there will likely be an upsurge in the demand for energy and water resources and the need to deal more efficiently with more waste.

Challenges will be met when:

1. Further improvements are made in the understanding, protection, conservation and enhancement of Dorset's coast, countryside, marine and historic environments.
2. An economy based on environmental knowledge and skills develops in Dorset (the Green Knowledge Economy), for example, renewable energy.
3. Everyone has sustainable access to Dorset's environment for their health, wellbeing and enjoyment, is aware of its value and importance, and has the opportunity to contribute to its protection and enhancement.
4. People enjoy a high quality built environment with sustainable lifestyles, good provision of green space and stewardship of heritage assets.
5. Emissions causing climate change are reduced significantly and people find ways to adapt to its effects and to take advantage of its benefits.
6. Businesses, employers and householders are helped to make more efficient and sustainable use of natural resources, fuel and food. Dorset moves towards a low carbon economy which is less dependent on oil, reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering Dorset's waste to ensure that natural resources are used more efficiently.

Dorset priorities

Everyone has the opportunity to take part in cultural activities.



Ridgeway

Challenges

- Lots of people take part in cultural activities in Dorset but people in deprived circumstances and in minority groups tend to be less involved.
- It is hard for some people to access cultural activities, for example, because of a lack of appropriate transport and cost. There is a lack of appropriate facilities such as multi-use venues and play areas in many communities in Dorset. The costs of taking part can also prevent involvement.
- Some people find it difficult to find out about and to take part in the cultural activities that are available.
- Dorset's natural and built environment offers a wide range of activities. The challenge is to find ways for all people to access these by sustainable, affordable means of transport, especially those who are currently less active such as people with disabilities.

Challenges will be met when:

1. Barriers to taking part in cultural activities are reduced using sustainable options. These include more accessible information on what cultural activities are available, access to transport, more access to local facilities, adequate telecommunications and the costs of taking part.
2. The cultural, voluntary and community sectors develop the infrastructure and capacity to involve people who are less engaged in cultural activities such as young people and families.
3. Everyone can explore and learn from new cultural activities and benefit from culture's contribution to our well-being.
4. The diverse cultural offer in Dorset develops ways to remain viable and affordable to the community despite the reductions in public subsidy.
5. Everyone can contribute to and benefit from the world class opportunities provided by Dorset's cultural tourism, creative industries, the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic legacy.
6. Dorset's unique, world class cultural opportunities maximise their positive contribution to the local economy.

Culture is about activities such as exploring Dorset's distinctive places and heritage, sport and play, libraries, museums, festivals, music, visual arts, dance and drama.

Dorset priorities

Communities thrive: everyone feels they belong, can take an active part in community life and can influence decision making.



Bridport Market

Challenges

- The population is changing with increasing numbers of older people and increasing ethnic diversity.
- Access to services and community cohesion in rural areas is becoming increasingly difficult due to the closure of local amenities and gathering points such as post offices, shops and pubs and the lack of suitable transport.
- While two thirds of people feel they belong to their neighbourhood, some people, such as those from minority communities, young people and people who are isolated or on low incomes, feel less empowered.
- Voluntary and community organisations often feel that local public bodies could do more to listen to them and to support them so they can more effectively support and help people and communities.
- Given the restrictions on public sector finance there is a need to develop the resilience and self-sufficiency of local communities and their ability to address their own issues.

Challenges will be met when:

1. All Dorset people, whatever their background or circumstances, feel part of a self-sufficient and resilient community.
2. Public organisations support the work of the voluntary and community sector to work together, with town and parish councils, providing a stronger and stable infrastructure with the capacity to deliver more services and influence decision making.
3. Communities continue to prepare and implement community plans which make a positive contribution to the 'big society' by empowering people to improve their lives and neighbourhoods. There is increased participation in community planning and development by isolated and disadvantaged people.
4. Communities find new ways to expand the use of facilities such as schools, pubs, fire stations, churches, libraries and health centres, improving accessibility through the use of new and existing facilities for a variety of purposes.
5. Communities of all kinds obtain the learning and skills they need to make the best use of scarce natural and financial resources to build community cohesion and bring people together, empowering them to live more resilient, sustainable and self-sufficient lives.
6. More individuals from a diversity of backgrounds have the confidence to take part in community life in a way that is meaningful to them, for example, volunteering, and voting in and standing for election to county, district, borough, town or parish councils.

Dorset priorities

Everyone has the opportunity to live a long and healthy life.....



Godmanstone Walkers

Challenges

- Generally people in Dorset live longer than in other parts of the country but there are major differences within the county.
- Health inequalities exist throughout Dorset and are influenced by a variety of factors including people's social and environmental circumstances, genetics, lifestyle choices, transport choices and access to health services.
- The increasing number of older people in Dorset will require support and assistance with health and care services that meet their needs. This will be required against a backdrop of reduced public funding.
- Some care is provided by family members who may have poor health themselves.
- In Dorset there is a significant over-reliance on hospital care for older people. The majority of funding is spent on acute health services such as hospital care rather than early intervention and wellbeing services which may reduce the need for acute care.
- Some school age children are overweight or obese. If not helped, they will face the risk of illnesses in later life such as diabetes and heart disease.

..... and to receive high quality care that meets their needs.



Weymouth

Challenges will be met when:

1. People of all ages, whatever their background or circumstances, can achieve positive health, adopt healthy lifestyles and prevent illness in relation to healthy weight, alcohol and other substances, tobacco control and sexual health throughout their lives.
2. The inequalities in people's health and well-being in Dorset are reduced. There is improved understanding of and support for the most vulnerable groups such as people who are homeless, those with dementia and poor mental health, victims of domestic violence, substance users, disabled people, Gypsy and Traveller communities and those who are or have been in prison.
3. Agencies responsible for care, support and health prevent harm occurring. Everyone is responsible for safeguarding the health and well-being of children, young people and adults.
4. The growing number of older people in Dorset receive accessible high quality integrated health and social care in the community or at home when they require it.
5. Individuals live in a physical and social environment that improves health and wellbeing and they have access to an improved and more integrated range of local, personalised and accessible health promotion, prevention and treatment services and care options that suit their needs.
6. People's carers and families obtain suitable support.
7. More people are physically active, enjoying leisure and recreational activities in Dorset's natural environment.
8. All people have access to early intervention and preventative services leading to less need for people to be admitted to hospital or care services.
9. Local public services work together to help people take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, delivering an integrated health and wellbeing service which ensures that Dorset people live a long and healthy life with access to high quality services when required.

Dorset priorities

Children and young people realise their potential.



Challenges

- Children and young people receive a good education at school but fewer 17 year olds stay on in education than in similar areas.
- Young people find it hard to stay in Dorset because house prices are high compared to wages and opportunities for higher education are limited.
- Leisure and other positive activities for children and young people are often limited, particularly in rural areas. In a 2008 survey people ranked improving activities for young people as their highest priority for improving the quality of life in Dorset.
- Children and young people can feel that their voices don't count when decisions are made about things that affect them and that they are not actively involved in making things happen.
- Young people from low income families have lower educational achievement than the national average.
- Young people with learning difficulties and a disability have lower educational achievement than their peers.

Challenges will be met when:

- 1 Dorset is a better place to live when young as there are wider opportunities across the county for living and learning throughout childhood and into adulthood.
- 2 A greater number of children and young people in Dorset take up opportunities for learning at every stage and are supported to make the most of education and training once they reach 16, so that they achieve employment qualifications.
- 3 More children and young people can access a wider range of positive activities wherever they live in Dorset, especially those which take place in and respect Dorset's unique natural environment.
- 4 Children and young people, their families, their carers and their communities are aware of their rights and responsibilities and they actively participate in shaping outcomes which are important to them.
- 5 Young people who engage in antisocial behaviour are challenged and advised so that its impact on young people, families and communities is reduced.
- 6 Services with and for all children and young people have a focus on early intervention and prevention.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty which sets out the rights of every child and young person in order to have a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood.

Dorset priorities

Older people are healthy, active and independent in their communities.



Challenges

- Dorset has a high and growing number of older people. The number of people over 65 in the county is likely to grow by nearly a third in the next twelve years.
- Low retirement incomes and lack of knowledge of services and benefits can lead to financial worries and restricted access to health and welfare services.
- Experiencing age discrimination can take away confidence and power.
- Older people have valuable life experiences, knowledge and skills that can benefit communities.

Challenges will be met when:

All communities and service providers effectively meet the needs of older people, helping them to:

1. Feel safe and secure, feel free from discrimination and be socially integrated and not isolated.
2. Make a positive contribution to the community and experience fulfilment as a result.
3. Have good health in mind and body and have dignity, choice and control.
4. Have housing suitable for their needs and feel financially secure.

Dorset priorities

Dorset people experience lasting benefits from hosting the sailing events for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Weymouth and Portland.



Challenge

- Ensure that by hosting the Games Dorset's local priorities are addressed and lasting benefits are achieved.

Challenges will be met when:

1. Economy and infrastructure

- Improved transport infrastructure offers improved reliability and accessibility for people and goods.
- Economic opportunities are created for wider Dorset, with access to quality employment and more affordable housing, where young people can see they have a future.
- Digital and communication connectivity is improved across Dorset.
- High quality sustainable visitor accommodation, improved customer service and a warm welcome strengthen our reputation as a world class visitor destination.
- Weymouth and Portland becomes a centre of international marine and leisure excellence stimulating Dorset's economy, increasing pay levels and providing more year round employment.

2. Environment and sustainability

- Dorset makes a step change in improving its environmental and sustainability performance, including energy and water use, waste and recycling, travel, food, materials and wildlife.

- The local, national and international profile of Dorset and of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site is enhanced and sustained.

3. Education and skills

- Well trained and more highly skilled people are in work or volunteering to support local communities and sustain the local economy.

4. Culture and sport

- More people of all ages in Dorset develop active lifestyles through participation in cultural, sport, play and leisure activities.
- The creation of Europe's top international sailing venue benefits the whole of Dorset.

5. Community and wellbeing

- General levels of health improve and obesity rates decline in all ages through more healthy, active lifestyles.
- People's understanding of diversity and multiculturalism improves, with improved access and facilities in the area for visitors and local people with disabilities.
- The social and cultural fabric of Dorset improves.

Making change happen

From strategy to action

The Dorset Strategic Partnership will be judged by how well it empowers Dorset people and communities to step forward, take part and together achieve a better quality of life for everyone in our county despite the current challenging financial circumstances.

An integrated approach to sustainable development is vital in order to find innovative ways of working which benefit all three components of a sustainable community: society, the economy and the environment.

Shaping our future, the Dorset sustainable community strategy 2010 – 2020, will be delivered at the most appropriate level of community planning. Open and effective communications are essential to ensure this happens so communities are clear how they can be involved.

Our action plan will:

- Bring together the changes described in the sustainable community strategy with the people, communities, partners and organisations who want to make them happen
- Build on and link with the existing work being done
- Spell out the priorities and timelines to achieve change
- Be reviewed regularly and the results published.

It will be heavily influenced by the economic climate and the resources available.

Action through community planning

Community planning in Dorset operates at a number of inter-related levels.

- The Dorset Strategic Partnership addresses strategic challenges and issues on a county wide basis.
- There are six district/borough level arrangements. North Dorset has a 'partnership of partnerships', and in the five other districts and boroughs there are district and borough wide partnerships.
- At the very local level, there are some local area partnerships based in market towns and their surrounding parishes, and many communities also have a parish or town plan.

Need more information?

Check out our website at www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp

You will find more about:

- The Dorset Strategic Partnership
- Supporting documents for the sustainable community strategy including easy to read summary, highlights, the evidence base, the local issues paper, an equalities impact assessment and a sustainability appraisal
- Signposts to the evidence on which this strategy was based, including the views of local people, local community plans, data based evidence and local, regional and national strategies.

Like to get involved?

The Dorset Strategic Partnership and its partners help public authorities, volunteer and community groups, and the private sector to work together to achieve their shared priorities in this strategy – and to do this while making the best use of limited resources. If your group or organisation would like to work with us, please check out the information and signposts on our website at www.dorsetforyou.com/dsp

Help us to reach our vision of a living thriving Dorset where everyone has a part to play in creating a better quality of life.

Sam Fox-Adams Partnerships and Communities Manager
Email: s.fox-adams@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Telephone: 01305 224173
Address: Dorset Strategic Partnership, County Hall, Colliton Park,
Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ.

This information is also available in other languages, in large print, Braille or on audio tape. Please let us know if you need these or any other help.

November 2010