

HOUSING

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0 POLICY GUIDANCE.....	1
3.0 RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE	6
4.0 CONSULTATION: WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US.....	19
5.0 CONTINUED POLICIES	22
6.0 POLICY OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES CONSIDERED	23

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Housing Background Paper is one of a series of such papers which supplement the joint local plan. The Background Paper provides more detail on the justification and purpose of the housing policies contained in Chapter 5. The Background Paper explains how the policies have developed and evolved, whilst also providing a useful summary of the various studies and assessments which informed the development of these policies.

2.0 POLICY GUIDANCE

NATIONAL GUIDANCE: CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM

2.1 In plan-making, it is important to consider existing policies and guidance to ensure that the policies within the local plan are consistent with other plans and programmes.

PLAN OR PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
National Guidance		
National Planning Policy Framework, 2012	<p>There are a number of key principles within the National Planning Policy Framework which the government looks to local authorities to facilitate, including: To boost the supply of housing.</p> <p>To plan for a mix of housing</p> <p>To identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing to reflect local demand</p> <p>To set policies to meet affordable housing needs on site, or by off site provision or by financial contribution if it can be robustly justified.</p> <p>To encourage local people to take part in decision making through localism.</p>	<p>The Local Plan should: Objectively identify the market and affordable housing needs of the plan area.</p> <p>Plan for a mix of housing to meet these needs</p> <p>Identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing to reflect local demand</p> <p>Set policies to meet affordable housing needs on site, or by off site provision or by financial contribution if it can be robustly justified.</p> <p>Ensure that the planning</p>

PLAN OR PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
		<p>system plays an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.</p> <p>Encourage local people to take part in decision making through localism.</p> <p>To enable communities to develop their own plans and proposals through neighbourhood planning.</p>
<p>Planning Policy Statement for Travellers</p>	<p>The Government’s aim in respect of travellers’ sites are :</p> <p>that local planning authorities should make their own assessment of need for the purposes of planning</p> <p>to ensure that local planning authorities, working collaboratively, develop fair and effective strategies to meet need through the identification of land for traveller sites</p> <p>to encourage local planning authorities to plan for sites over a reasonable timescale</p> <p>that plan-making and decision-taking should protect Green Belt from inappropriate development</p> <p>to promote more private traveller site provision while recognising that there will always be those travellers who cannot provide their own sites</p> <p>that plan-making and decision-taking should aim to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and make enforcement more effective</p> <p>for local planning authorities to ensure that their Local Plan includes fair, realistic and inclusive policies</p> <p>to increase the number of traveller sites in appropriate locations with planning permission, to address under-provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply</p> <p>to reduce tensions between settled and traveller communities in plan-making and planning decisions</p> <p>to enable provision of suitable accommodation</p>	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <p>identify a way forward for the allocation of suitable gypsy and traveller sites.</p>

PLAN OR PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
	<p>from which travellers can access education, health, welfare and employment infrastructure</p> <p>for local planning authorities to have due regard to the protection of local amenity and local environment.</p>	
LOCAL GUIDANCE		
<p>Corporate Plans for West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council 2013-17</p>	<p>The objectives of the corporate plans include:</p> <p>Preventing homelessness and supporting communities to meet their housing needs</p>	<p>The Local Plan could:</p> <p>Facilitate delivery of housing and employment through allocation of land to help meet local needs</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p>
<p>West Dorset Community Plan, West Dorset Partnership</p>	<p>The vision for West Dorset includes aspirations that by 2026 it will be a district where:</p> <p>There is a variety of housing to meet a range of incomes, including enough affordable housing for those in need.</p> <p>People live, work and learn in more balanced communities with less need to travel; thriving market towns support the surrounding rural areas, and quality local facilities are accessible by a range of transport modes, including improved and more flexible public transport.</p> <p>The plan also includes a number of housing key aims including:</p> <p>increasing the amount of affordable housing across a range of tenures,</p> <p>and directing new housing provision, affordable and market, to meet local need or where it can help to provide a better balance of homes and jobs for all ages.</p>	<p>The Local Plan could:</p> <p>Facilitate delivery of a mix of housing through allocation of land to help meet local needs</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p> <p>Support the delivery of mixed use development and encourage development to be located where it is easily accessible.</p>
<p>The Community Plan for Weymouth & Portland 2013-2016, Weymouth & Portland Partnership</p>	<p>The Community Plan 2013-2016, contains a number of priorities for action which include:</p> <p>Improve the supply and quality of affordable housing for all</p>	<p>The Local Plan should:</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p>

PLAN OR PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
<p>Dorset Sustainable Communities Strategy 2010-2020, Dorset Strategic Partnership</p>	<p>The Strategy includes aspirational priorities that:</p> <p>Everyone can live in a good quality home and neighbourhood that meets their needs</p> <p>Dorset people can access work, education and training</p> <p>Communities thrive: everyone feels they belong, can take an active part in community life and can influence decision making</p>	<p>The Local Plan could:</p> <p>Facilitate delivery of housing and employment through allocation of land to help meet local needs</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p> <p>Enable local communities to take responsibility for local decision making by encouraging take up of Neighbourhood Plans</p>
<p>Weymouth & Portland Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2009-2012</p>	<p>Provide more affordable housing</p> <p>Improve the quality and energy efficiency of all housing</p> <p>Provide sustainable solutions to Homelessness</p> <p>Meet the housing needs of particular groups</p>	<p>The Local Plan could:</p> <p>Facilitate delivery of housing to help meet local needs</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p> <p>Include a policy to promote a mix of housing provision</p>
<p>West Dorset District Council's Housing Strategy 2008-2012.</p>	<p>Maximise affordable housing provision to meet identified need</p> <p>Support older people to live independently in suitable housing</p> <p>Prevent homelessness and provide a good quality service to people in housing need</p>	<p>The Local Plan could:</p> <p>Facilitate delivery of housing to help meet local needs</p> <p>Develop a policy base to secure more affordable housing as part of new developments</p> <p>Consider a policy which encouraged independent living for elderly people</p>
<p>'The Health & Community Strategy' – Dorset County Council & NHS Dorset December 2011</p>	<p>Its vision for community service can be summarised as follows:</p> <p>"The provision of high quality, responsive, person centred support to maximise individual's independence and well-being."</p> <p>The joint strategy states that commissioned services will:</p> <p>Build on the practice of care closer to home. Care will be delivered by competent health and social</p>	<p>This strategy will have an impact on the number of elderly people remaining in their own homes which will have an effect on housing demand and supply, as set out in the Sustainable Pattern of Development background paper. Also it will have implications with respect to the</p>

PLAN OR PROGRAMME	KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN
	<p>care services working together to offer maximum choice and control whilst effectively managing risk, optimising the person’s outcomes and well-being</p> <p>Deliver integrated health and social care locality based community services that improve the length and quality of life by achieving a shift from a system based on treating illness to one focused on keeping people well and independent</p> <p>Ensure that services support people to remain at home for as long as possible, and deliver safe and effective services. This will require a significant shift in care from hospital care to care closer to home; returning home is always the first choice</p>	<p>building of Extra Care Housing developments together with more intense community based services that can be delivered to people in their own homes.</p>

CONCLUSIONS – KEY AIMS

- 2.2 The Government’s key housing objective is to increase significantly the delivery of new homes. It aims to provide a choice of high quality homes, widening opportunities for home ownership and creating sustainable mixed communities. Aspirations of the community strategies share the Government’s desire to provide more affordable housing, as does the draft Corporate Plan. The corporate plan also places emphasis on the need for mixed housing provision to provide for balanced communities which again is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.3 The key aims for housing within the plan area are:
- To provide a continuous supply of housing land to help meet the needs of the plan area,
 - To secure provision of affordable housing wherever possible to assist in meeting local need,
 - To assist in developing balanced communities with a mix of type and size of housing to reflect local circumstances.

3.0 RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Housing policies included in the local plan have been informed by a number of research studies and surveys. The key evidence sources are as follows:
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update for the Dorchester/Weymouth Housing Market Area – Justin Gardner Consulting / Chris Broughton Associates - January 2012 (SHMA)
 - The Housing Need and Demand Survey (HNDS): For Weymouth & Portland Borough Council – Fordham Research - June 2008
 - The Housing Need and Demand Survey (HNDS): For West Dorset District Council – Fordham Research - June 2008
 - The Affordable Housing Viability Studies (AHVS) - Three Dragons Ltd– January 2010
 - The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) West Dorset – February 2011
 - The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Weymouth and Portland – December 2009
 - The West Dorset Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Study (CILVS) - BNP Paribas Real Estate UK - February 2012
 - Weymouth & Portland Community Infrastructure Levy Viability Study (CILVS) – BNP Paribas Real Estate UK - March 2012
 - ‘The Health & Community Strategy’ The Community Strategy for Health & Social Care Services– NHS Dorset & Dorset County Council – December 2011
 - Dorset-wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document – Issues and Options Consultation Document – Baker Associates -November 2011
 - A Review of Future Housing Requirements for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland – April 2013.
- 3.2 The SHMA and the HNDS specifically look at the likely overall proportions of households that require market or affordable housing and the size and type of housing required. The Affordable Housing Viability Study and the Community Infrastructure Levy Study both examine the economic viability of providing a proportion of affordable housing on general market housing sites. The SHLAA is a technical study of the theoretical potential of sites within the plan period for future housing development and is a requirement under national policy. The SHLAA is mentioned in more detail under the Sustainable Development Background Paper. The Health & Community Strategy provides a basis for understanding the emerging policy position from the local health and social care providers. The Issues and Options Consultation Document for the Dorset-wide Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Joint Development Plan Document provides some interesting information which sets a context to inform development of policies related to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
- 3.3 In addition to these studies and surveys, evidence is also taken from a number of different sources which have informed these documents such as data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and County Council demographic information.

3.4 The following sections draw from evidence within these documents to better understand the existing situation, future trends and likely requirements. They also provide the basis for assessing the deliverability of the plan’s housing policies and proposals.

THE EXISTING SITUATION

3.5 The results of the 2011 Census show that there were 160,200 people resident in the plan area. The **age profile of the population** is heavily focused towards older age groups with an estimated 12.2% of the population of the plan area being aged 75 and over (compared with 8% nationally) and 20.8% aged between 60 and 74 (compared with 14.6% nationally). The evidence from the qualitative research suggests that this is driven by the quality of the environment and that over the years there has been a significant migration of people into the area who have chosen to stay and retire there. Weymouth and Portland has a younger age structure than West Dorset which is typical when comparing urban and more rural areas. The qualitative evidence which informed the SHMA suggests that this is also due to Weymouth providing a source of cheaper housing which is suitable to younger age groups.

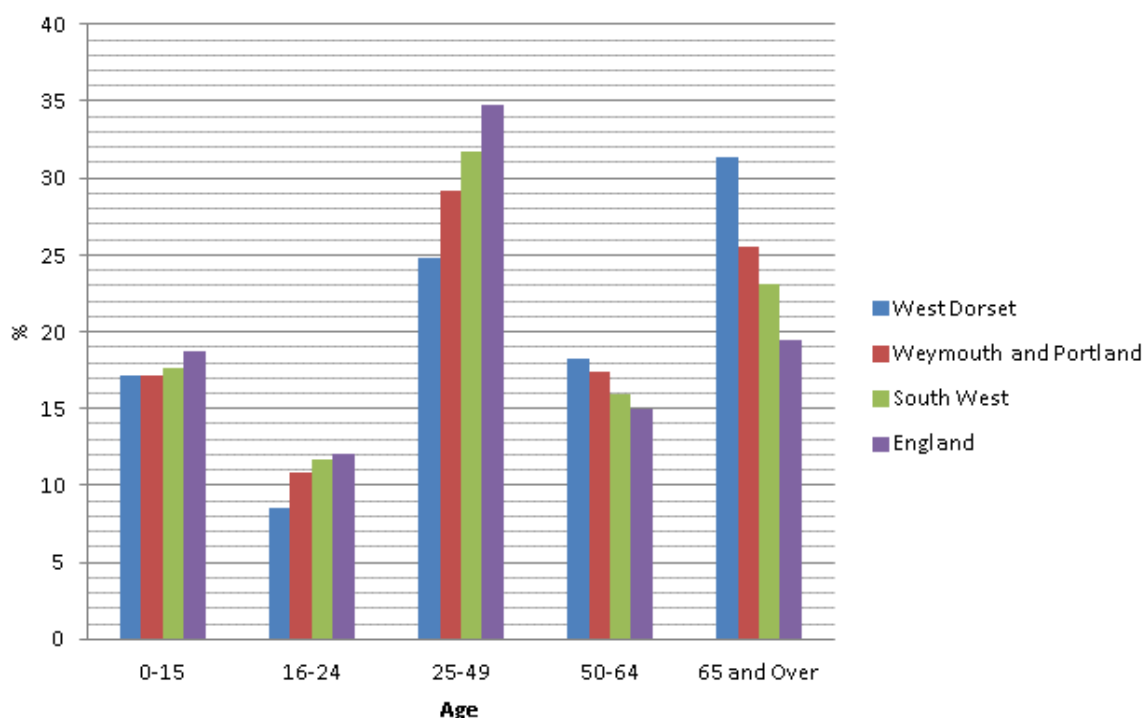


Figure 1. Age profile compared regionally and nationally (2011 Census)

3.6 The SHMA includes information regarding **types of housing**. The table below shows that the majority of households (58.8%) live in detached or semi-detached houses or bungalows with around 16% living in flats. The latest Survey of English Housing (SEH) suggests that nationally around 17% of households live in flats. Looking at different parts of the HMA we find that West Dorset has a particularly high proportion of detached houses and bungalows whilst Weymouth and Portland has a high proportion of terraced houses and flats. This reflects the socio- economic profile of the populations; the urban areas of Dorchester and Weymouth housing small younger economically active households and the rural areas with their market towns housing relatively wealthy retired in-migrants.

Dwelling type	West Dorset		Weymouth & Portland		HMA	
	Households	% of hhs	Households	% of hhs	Households	% of hhs
Detached house	12,893	28.7%	4,670	16.0%	17,563	23.7%
Semi detached house	9,288	20.7%	5,777	19.8%	15,065	20.3%
Terraced house	9,634	21.5%	8,729	29.9%	18,363	24.8%
Bungalow	7,487	16.7%	3,483	11.9%	10,971	14.8%
Flat/maisonette	5,590	12.5%	6,558	22.4%	12,148	16.4%
Total	44,892	100.0%	29,217	100.0%	74,109	100.0%

Figure 2. Dwelling Type by local authority, source SHMA drawn from Household Survey Data

3.7 The SHMA also considered tenure and dwelling type information. Households living in the owner-occupied sector are particularly likely to live in houses/bungalows. The social and private rented sectors contain a large proportion of flats.

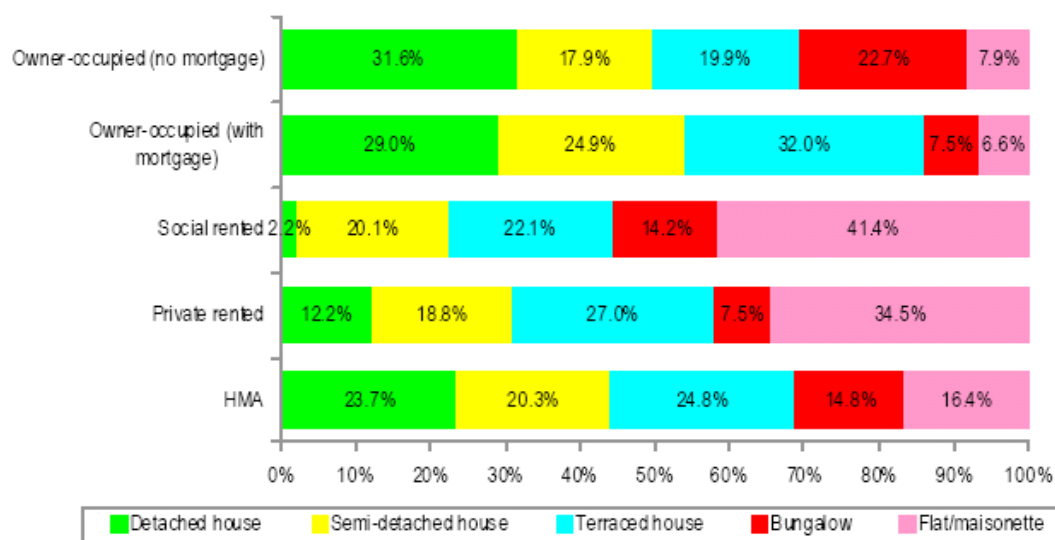


Figure 3. Dwelling Type by tenure, source SHMA drawn from Household Survey Data

3.8 The figure below is taken from the SHMA and shows comparisons of vacancy rates by area and by tenure of dwelling for 2010. The figure shows that vacancy rates overall are quite low with an average of 0.4% of public sector and 3.2% of private sector dwelling being empty – these compare with national averages of 1.6% and 3.6% respectively. Vacancy rates in West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland are broadly similar although public sector vacancy in Weymouth and Portland is notably higher than in West Dorset – this is mainly due to a particularly low figure in West Dorset and both local authorities show public sector vacancy rates that are well below regional and national averages.

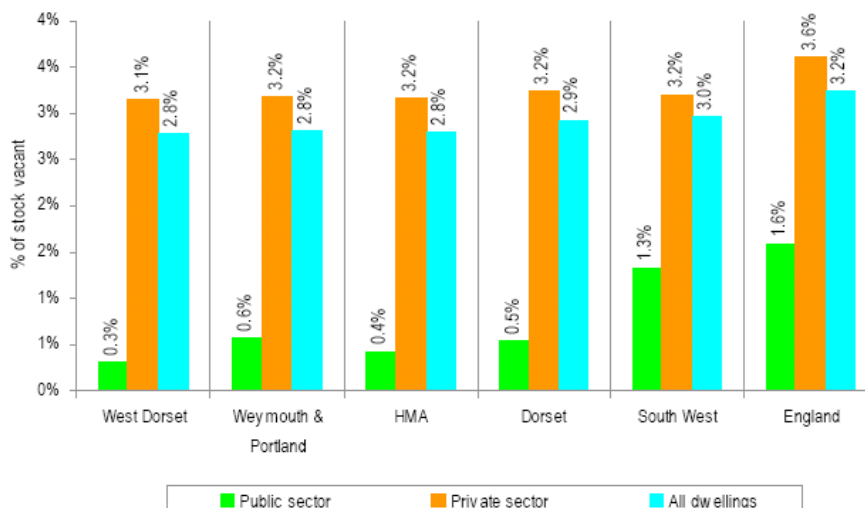


Figure 4. Vacancy rates by tenure, source SHMA drawn from CLG Live Tables

- 3.9 The Council Tax returns for the two councils reveal that in October 2011 there were 585 properties in WDDC and 372 properties in W&PBC that were recorded as Long Term Empty (LTE) properties. To be classed as LTE a property would have to be unoccupied and substantially unfurnished. Those properties would have been exempt from council tax for six months from the date of notification to the council but would be subject to full council tax after the six month exemption period. Consequently, it is often found that many properties that are recorded as being Long Term Empty on the council tax records are in fact in use but there has been no incentive to report the change in circumstances. Although it is evident that the council tax records may not provide an accurate record of empty properties within an area, they do provide an appropriate starting place.
- 3.10 Other sources of information used to assess empty property levels include stock condition surveys which most councils undertake periodically. Both councils have such surveys, which suggest that there are 140 empty properties in WDDC (2007) and 650 in W&PBC (2009). The discrepancy in the reported numbers from the council tax records is partly due to the adoption of different criteria to determine if a property is empty. Stock condition surveys tend to refer to signs of abandonment as an indicator of a property being empty.

CURRENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED

- 3.11 A Housing Need and Demand Survey was undertaken as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment in 2007/08. This study involved a detailed household survey across the plan area to help determine affordable housing requirements (both the backlog of need and future need). This section explains the current backlog of need. Future need is set out later in the document.
- 3.12 The final report included results using the CLG method⁷ which suggested that in **West Dorset** around 2,265 households were currently living in unsuitable housing – the main reason being special needs and/or mobility problems. Of these it was estimated that 1,520 would have to move home to find a solution to the unsuitability of which 60% are in housing need.

⁷ CLG method is published in the guidance note "Strategic Housing Market Assessment: Practice Guidance, March 2007". It requires assessments to calculate (backlog) need, available stock to offset need, newly arising (future need) and future supply of affordable units.

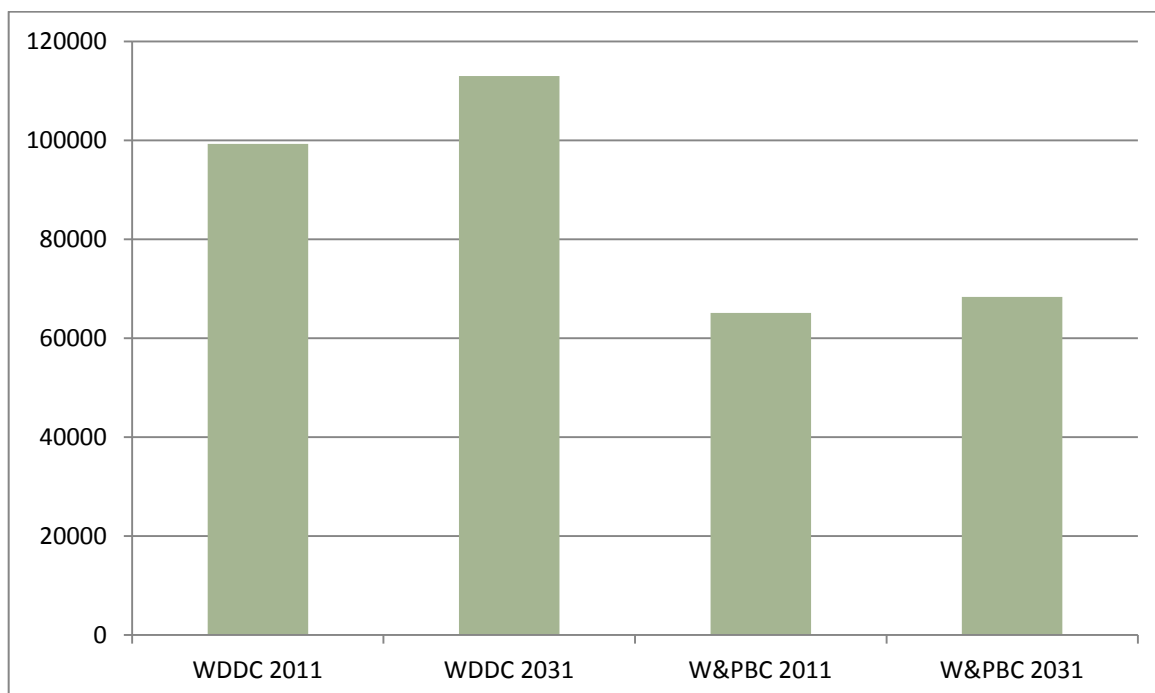
- 3.13 In **Weymouth & Portland** it was suggested that around 2,574 households in the Borough are currently living in unsuitable housing, again the main reason being special needs and/or mobility problems, followed by accommodation too expensive. It was estimated that 1,532 of the 2,574 households would need to move home to find a solution to the unsuitability. Of these 1,532 households, an estimated 73% cannot afford a suitable solution in the housing market without some form of subsidy and are hence considered to be in housing need.
- 3.14 In 2011, as part of the **SHMA work current affordable housing need was revisited**. This later work suggested that those households living in unsuitable housing had risen to 2,535 in West Dorset and 2,880 in Weymouth & Portland. For the plan area as a whole this totals 5,415. It is estimated in the SHMA that 63.9% of those unsuitably housed do not have an in-situ solution to their problems equivalent to 3,460. The ability of these households to afford entry level market housing of a suitable size was then tested. The results suggested that 2,512 households that are living in unsuitable housing need to move and cannot afford entry level market housing whether owned or rented.
- 3.15 Future affordable housing need is considered later in the document.

FUTURE PREDICTIONS:

CHANGING POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

- 3.16 The **population within the plan area is forecast to increase**. For the purposes of assessing future housing need, population and household projections are taken from the report ‘A review of future housing requirements for West Dorset and Weymouth and Portland (2013)’. This uses Interim 2011 trend projections extended over the plan period (2011-2031). These projections predict that the population of West Dorset will increase by 14% in the next 20 years, and that the population of Weymouth and Portland will increase by about 5%.

Figure 5. Population Forecast West Dorset & Weymouth & Portland(Source: SHMA 2012)



- 3.17 Components of change include births, deaths, in-and out-migration. The general pattern in the plan area is that in-migration exceeds out-migration and that deaths exceed births. In-

migration will continue to be the main driver for population and household growth. If we did not have this in-migration, the local economy would suffer as the resident population is ageing and we need people of working age to move into the area in order to sustain a labour force.

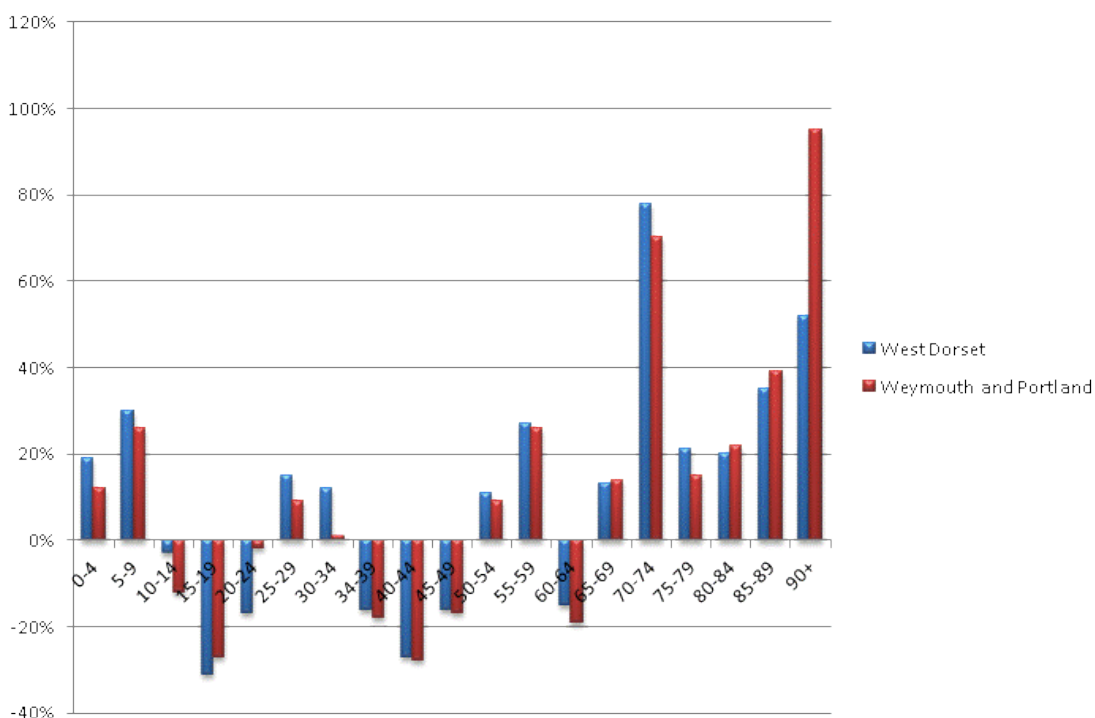
Figure 6 Population Change Summary (Source ONS/DCC)

3.18 The following table summaries predicted population change in the two authorities:

3.19 The figure below shows the percentage change in the population within each age cohort (five year age bands) from 2011 to 2021. The subsequent table records the change in age profile using broader age bands compared across different areas.

	West Dorset	Weymouth and Portland
	2011-2021	2011-2021
Natural Change	-2500	500
Births	9800	7400
Deaths	12300	7000
All Migration Net	9600	1100
Internal migration in	63100	32600
Internal migration out	-51000	-29600
International migration in	4000	2000
International migration out	-6000	-4000
Cross border migration in	2000	1000
Cross border migration out	-2000	-1000
Population Changes	7000	1500

Figure 7. Forecast Population Change by age group (2011-2031)



3.20 These projections show that over the next ten years in the plan area there is expected to be a dramatic increase in the population of those aged over 65 with especially high increases in the 90+ age band, and decreases (or only very modest increases) in the population of all other age groups. Interestingly the projections also show that if current trends continue then the number of people in key working age bands (i.e. those aged 16- 64) is likely to decline. The SHMA has acknowledged this as a risk for the plan area as it may face a

significant labour shortage which is likely to act as a barrier to economic growth. It is estimated that the population aged between 16 and 64 will decline by around 8% across the plan area. The dramatic increase in the population of those aged over 65 will have a profound impact on housing need within the plan area.

INCREASE IN THE NEED FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 3.21 The future need for affordable housing was estimated as part of the Dorset Survey and Housing Need and Demand undertaken in 2008 by Fordham Research following CLG guidance and updated as part of the SHMA 2011 update.
- 3.22 The future need for affordable housing has been based on survey information about past household behaviour in terms of moves to different accommodation. The future need for affordable housing is split in to two categories:
 - New households formation (x proportion unable to buy or rent in market)
 - Existing households falling into need
- 3.23 In **West Dorset** the data suggests that on an annual basis there will be 309 newly forming households requiring affordable housing and a further 692 existing households. The total future need for affordable housing is therefore estimated to be 1,001 units per annum.
- 3.24 The supply of affordable housing to meet this need has also been estimated from past trend data. This data suggests that the current stock of affordable housing is likely to provide around 348 units (337 social rented and 11 intermediate units i.e. shared ownership). It was also estimated that approximately a further 84 dwellings per annum could come forward. Hence it is estimated that the net annual need for additional affordable housing is 733 units.
- 3.25 In **Weymouth & Portland** the data suggests that on an annual basis there will be 316 newly forming households requiring affordable housing and a further 617 existing households. The total future need for affordable housing is therefore estimated to be 933 units per annum.
- 3.26 The supply of affordable housing to meet this need has also been estimated from past trend data. This data suggests that the current stock of affordable housing is likely to provide around 246 units (241 social rented and 5 intermediate units (i.e. shared ownership)). Hence it is estimated that the net annual need for additional affordable housing is in the region of 687 units (933-246).
- 3.27 The total net housing need in Weymouth and Portland is calculated by adding the net current need to the difference between the future need and supply. The total net annual housing need in Weymouth and Portland is therefore 904 units.
- 3.28 The 2011 SHMA Update reviewed this work and reassessed future affordable housing need. A comparison of annual estimate of future need by local authority of the two assessments is included below:

Annual estimate of future need by local authority				
Local authority		New households	Existing households	Total
West Dorset	2007	309	692	1,001
	2011	324	668	992
Weymouth & Portland	2007	316	617	933
	2011	358	598	956
HMA	2007	625	1,309	1,934
	2011	682	1,266	1,948

Source: Household Survey Data

- 3.29 The SHMA took the opportunity also to translate the backlog into annual need requirements to assess the net annual need for both authorities and the plan area as a whole.

Summary of housing needs estimates			
Element	West Dorset	Weymouth & Portland	HMA
① Backlog need (annual)	231	273	504
② Backlog supply (annual)	95	113	208
③ Net backlog need (annual) ① - ②	136	160	296
④ Future need (annual)	992	956	1,948
⑤ Future supply (annual)	375	212	587
⑥ Net future need (annual) ④ - ⑤	617	744	1,361
Total net annual need ③ + ⑥	753	904	1,657
Total net annual need (2007)	737	801	1,538

Source: Household Survey Data, CORE

- 3.30 In reality a number of households are likely to find solutions in the private sector (e.g. by spending a greater proportion of their income on housing than is recommended by the guidance) and the requirement for affordable housing will be lower, although still much higher than what is likely to be possible to achieve.

WHY SHOULD WE BUILD NEW HOUSES?

- 3.31 There are a number of important reasons why we need to consider building more homes in the plan area in the future. Firstly, there is the need to provide affordable homes both for those in the greatest need and also for those that need help getting onto the housing ladder. Secondly, to sustain and increase economic growth we need people of working age with a range of skills. It is predicted that by 2021, 39% of the population of West Dorset will be over the age of 60. In order to keep and attract working age people into the area housing needs to be made available in the most sustainable locations and at a range of costs in order to cater for different needs. Finally, the way in which we live may create additional housing need, for example the number of people living longer and more people living on their own. The amount of new housing we can accommodate is constrained by our duty to protect the outstanding natural environment, but if no or very little new development is planned then there will be adverse effects on our communities, particularly the young and those in affordable housing need.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing must be provided at a cost low enough for local people to afford whose needs are not met by the open market. It should remain at an affordable price (if it is practicable to apply suitable restrictions).

There are three main types of affordable housing; social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. Housing available for social or affordable rent is rented housing normally provided by registered providers and regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency. Intermediate housing can include shared equity products and leasehold shared-ownership schemes, discounted sale (with future sales restricted to the same discount). Low cost market housing, aimed at first time buyers, is not considered to be affordable housing as it does not remain affordable in the longer term.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON OPEN MARKET HOUSING SITES

- 3.32 One way of achieving affordable housing delivery through the planning system is by requiring that a proportion of open market housing on a development site is developed as affordable housing instead. Previously this has only applied to larger sites because of national policy. However, the National Planning Policy Framework no longer includes reference to limiting this to large sites and work undertaken in 2008 as part of the 'Housing Need and Demand Survey' found that there was no evidence to suggest that affordable housing cannot be delivered to some degree on all sizes of development, from one unit upwards. Indeed having a 'threshold' under which a contribution need not be made can distort the number of units that would otherwise come forward on a site.
- 3.33 On-site provision will always be sought, unless this would not deliver a whole unit, or there is compelling evidence why off-site provision or a financial contribution of equivalent value would be of greater all-round benefit. This approach is pursued because there is more certainty of delivering a suitable mix on site.
- 3.34 Setting the level of affordable housing to be delivered on open market housing sites is very much dependent on site viability. Setting the level too high will mean that some sites, particularly brownfield sites (that are likely to have a higher existing use value and may also have clean-up costs), are unlikely to come forward. And setting the level too low will mean that we fail to deliver as much affordable housing as we could. The wider infrastructure needs that are expected to be met by the development, either through planning obligations or the community infrastructure levy, will also have an impact on viability, and need to be considered at the same time.
- 3.35 In order to set an appropriate policy base for affordable housing, work was undertaken to assess the viability of different levels of affordable housing also considering the emerging Community Infrastructure Levy. It is important to set this at a level which is both pragmatic and will provide an appropriate amount of affordable housing. BNP Paribas Real Estate undertook a number of assessments and modelled hundreds of different scenario combinations. These compared the residual land values of generic developments to a range of benchmark land values. If a development incorporating a given level of CIL and affordable housing provision generated a value in excess of 20% of the benchmark land value, then it could be judged that the proposed levels would be viable.
- 3.36 Initial work undertaken as part of the Affordable Housing Viability Study in 2010 suggested that in many cases it will be possible to provide at least 40% of housing as affordable on future sites and in some cases (particularly on most greenfield sites and in more affluent areas) up to 50%. However there were a number of areas including Portland which would not be able to bring forward this proportion of affordable housing.
- 3.37 The assessments were recalculated to reflect the affordable rent model for delivering affordable homes and updated market circumstances. As a result of these new assessments it was concluded that a minimum of 35% affordable housing would be sought from developments in West Dorset and Weymouth and a minimum of 25% in Portland. The fact that policies for a minimum of 35% affordable housing provision in West Dorset, and 30% in Weymouth & Portland, have been successfully operated in recent years, also provides a level of comfort that this approach is achievable.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING OUTSIDE DEVELOPMENT LIMITS

- 3.38 Another way of providing affordable homes is through 'Exception Sites' which are just for affordable housing on sites that would not be granted planning consent for open market housing. This allows small sites adjoining settlements with Defined Development

Boundaries, with relatively low land value, to provide for 100% affordable housing, without a fundamental policy objection. This approach has been used in the plan area for village locations only and has not included the towns due to previous national planning policy. However it is clear from past trends of growing affordable housing needs in the towns and the limited provision coming forward from within their Defined Development Boundaries that exception sites on the edge of towns need to be considered.

MARKET HOUSING MIX

- 3.39 The analysis in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, based on housing need across the whole of the plan area, indicates that 79% of affordable housing demand is likely to be for social or affordable rents. These findings point towards a high level of social or affordable rented housing provision. However intermediate affordable housing enhances mixed communities and assists economic viability.
- 3.40 The greatest demand for affordable housing at the beginning of the plan period was for two-bedroom homes, with a significant demand for one- and three-bedroom homes. However larger homes with three or more bedrooms can provide more flexible housing to cater for different needs and the scope for newly forming and growing small families and also those with a support need. The size of housing needed will vary locally, and both current needs and flexibility to meet likely future needs will be taken into account in determining the right mix.
- 3.41 Higher accessibility standards sought through building control along with the benefits of pursuing higher Code for Sustainable Homes Levels means that homes generally will see an improvement in accessibility provision. However, disabled people often have particular design requirements over and above those currently required under building regulations.
- 3.42 The Dorset Survey of Housing Need and Demand undertaken in 2008 by Fordham Research considered special housing needs.
- 3.43 Overall there are an estimated 8,345 households in the **West Dorset** area with one or more members in an identified special needs group. This represents 19.2% of all households, which is higher than the average Fordham Research has found nationally (13-14%). The table below shows the numbers of households with different types of special needs. The numbers of households in each category exceed the total number of special needs households because people can have more than one category of special need.

Special needs categories			
Category	Number of households	% of all households	% of special needs households
Frail elderly	3,608	8.3%	43.2%
Physical disability	3,667	8.4%	43.9%
Learning difficulty	698	1.6%	8.4%
Mental health problem	1,383	3.2%	16.6%
Severe sensory disability	770	1.8%	9.2%
Medical Condition	4,491	10.3%	53.8%
Other	360	0.8%	4.3%

Figure 9: Special Needs Categories West Dorset (Source Housing Need & Demand Survey 2008)

- 3.44 Households with a ‘medical condition’ are the predominant group. There are 4,491 households containing a person with a medical condition. The next largest group is ‘physically disabled’, with 3,667 households having a member in this category. These two categories represent 53.8% and 43.9% of all special needs households respectively.
- 3.45 Overall there are an estimated 6,049 households in the **Weymouth & Portland** area with one or more members in an identified special needs group. This represents 22.3% of all households, which is higher than the average Fordham Research has found nationally (13-14%). The table below shows the numbers of households with different types of special needs. The numbers of households in each category exceed the total number of special needs households because people can have more than one category of special need.
- 3.46 Households with a ‘medical condition’ are the predominant group. There are 3,575 households containing a person with a medical condition. The next largest group is ‘physically disabled’, with 2,979 households having a member in this category. These two categories represent 55.8% and 46.5% of all special needs households respectively.

Special needs categories			
Category	Number of households	% of all households	% of special needs households
Frail elderly	2,519	8.8%	39.3%
Physical disability	2,979	10.4%	46.5%
Learning difficulty	634	2.2%	9.9%
Mental health problem	1,209	4.2%	18.9%
Severe sensory disability	597	2.1%	9.3%
Medical Condition	3,575	12.5%	55.8%
Other	275	1.0%	4.3%

Figure10: Special Needs Categories Weymouth & Portland (Housing Need & Demand Survey 2008)

SITES FOR GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

- 3.47 The document ‘Planning Policy for Travellers Sites’ (published 2012) sets out the Government’s planning policy for traveller sites in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework. The document defines gypsies and travellers as:

Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.

and travelling showpeople as:

Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above.

- 3.48 The Local Authorities in Dorset have made a commitment to carry out a joint Development Plan Document on gypsy, traveller and travelling showpeople site allocations. This DPD is being carried out by Peter Brett Consultants on behalf of the Dorset Councils. The Issues and

Options Consultation Document (November 2011) provides some useful information regarding Gypsies and Travellers. It acknowledges that Gypsies and Travellers have been resident within England for hundreds of years and states that earlier work undertaken by Anglia Ruskin University in 2006 estimated that within Dorset the total residing population is between 2,400 and 3,000 people, although this is likely to underestimate the number of the travelling community living in housing. There are seasonal differences, with more travellers arriving in the summer months. Many gypsies and travellers move around the country and need temporary transit sites in the areas they travel to. The document does say however that travelling communities are becoming increasingly settled and need permanent residential sites which also act as a base from which to travel. It also recognises that travelling showpeople play an important role in the leisure economy, travelling the country to hold fairs and circuses. They need secure, permanent bases in which to live and store their equipment.

- 3.49 Gypsies and Travellers are a group of communities which share some features but have their own histories and traditions. The document identifies that the main cultural groups include:
- Romany Gypsies
 - Irish Travellers
 - New Travellers
- 3.50 Even within each of these groups there is fragmentation between different families which emphasises the lack of a cohesive community and the need to avoid over-generalisations.
- 3.51 The Issues and Options document identifies three types of sites required to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers:
- Permanent sites – these provide residents with a permanent home;
 - Transit sites – these are permanent sites that provide temporary accommodation for their residents, normally between 28 days and 3 months; and
 - Emergency stopping places – these are pieces of land in temporary use as authorised short term (less than 28 days) stopping places for all travelling communities.
- 3.52 The document states that Travelling Showpeople have different site requirements from Gypsies and Travellers. They normally require sites which have both residential and business uses on site, to enable the storage and repair of fairground equipment.
- 3.53 In Spring 2013 the consultants ORS conducted a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and the results of this will feed into the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document which is due to be adopted in 2016. More details are available on www.dorsetforyou.com/gypsyandtravellersites.
- 3.54 The Planning Policy Statement for Traveller Sites (2012) requires Councils to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and to provide accommodation based on the findings of that assessment. Local authorities in Dorset are working together to produce a joint Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document, which will identify sites throughout Dorset to meet the needs of these groups.
- 3.55 The Councils are committed to working in partnership with Gypsies and Travellers and with their representative groups, and with local residents, to seek solutions to issues concerning Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

CARE ACCOMMODATION

- 3.56 The evidence above makes it clear that there will be an increasing number of older people within the plan area. This will be a key issue and accordingly, care accommodation will be vitally important during the plan period.
- 3.57 Within the SHMA, data is presented from POPPI (Projecting Older people Population Information System), run by Oxford Brookes University. This analyses future demographic and health changes, highlighting the following:
- Population aged 85+ is set to increase the most by 2030 (from 2011) with numbers increasing by 83% nationally;
 - Limiting long term illness – West Dorset will see the largest growth in numbers of people over 65 and recording a limiting long term illness (2011-2031) increasing by around 6,700;
 - Provision of unpaid care – across the county it is projected that the number of adults aged 65 and over providing unpaid care to a partner, family member or other person will increase by approximately 7,600. This is lower than the projected number of those with limiting long term illness; and
 - Prevalence of dementia – West Dorset is projected to have the largest increase in numbers of people aged 65 and over with dementia in the County, increasing by approaching 1,800 by 2030. Across the County the number of people with dementia aged 65+ is projected to increase by 66% by 2030 from 2011.
- 3.58 Care accommodation can take a number of different forms. The County Council is moving away from the development of traditional and sometimes institutional models of accommodation and care (e.g. traditional residential care homes), towards the development of more flexible models of accommodation and support that offer vulnerable adults increased opportunities for maintaining independence, choice and control over their lives. Increasingly, support and care is being delivered at home or through ‘extra care’ supported accommodation services. ‘Extra Care’ facilities can provide self-contained accommodation grouped on a site providing an extensive range of facilities, over and above those found in ordinary sheltered housing, including provision of meals if required and individual packages of care and support available 24 hours a day. ‘Extra Care’ facilities have dedicated care and support teams, which in most schemes are likely to be based on-site.
- 3.59 The strategic vision of the County Council and NHS Dorset is set out in its joint strategy ‘The Health & Community Strategy’ – December 2011.
- 3.60 It is their intention to deliver this through locality-based services with access to a range of resources that meet the needs of the locality. They aim to provide support and care to people as close to home as possible, meeting the needs of the growing elderly population. This increase will come mainly from re-shaping existing resources from building based provision to community based integrated health and social care services.
- 3.61 In short the priorities for health and social care provision during the plan period are to reduce the need for premature or unnecessary admission to long term residential care and increase the number of people supported to remain at home.
- 3.62 This has a number of implications for the local plan. It will have an impact on the number of elderly people remaining in their own homes which will have an effect on housing demand and supply, as set out in the Sustainable Pattern of Development background paper. Also it will have implications with respect to the building of Extra Care Housing developments together with more intense community based services that can be delivered to people in

their own homes. Where new care accommodation is necessary it is important to locate this type of accommodation in areas that are easily accessible for visitors and staff and also so that residents, where possible, can access community facilities.

4.0 CONSULTATION: WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US

- 4.1 Effective consultation is essential in the development of a robust plan. The joint local plan has had the benefit of drawing on results gained from the Issues and Options consultation, which both authorities undertook as part of their Local Development Framework Core Strategy work, along with more recent findings gained from joint authority stakeholder consultations designed specifically for the new plan.
- 4.2 Through the Local Development Framework process; the production of the Community Plan and more recently the joint Local Plan, both councils have already carried out several consultation events gauging local views on the future of the plan area.
- 4.3 In 2007, both councils undertook ‘Issues and Options’ consultation which established the vision and objectives for the plan area. In 2009, Weymouth & Portland Borough Council undertook further consultation on a series of policy options, and West Dorset consulted on growth options around Weymouth. These policy options were developed from the findings of the previous consultation stage and the emerging evidence base.
- 4.4 Intensive consultation took place with a range of businesses, organisations and members of the public during the autumn and winter of 2011. Consultation covered West Dorset District and Weymouth & Portland. A series of events were held, discussing a range of topics. The headline issues relating to housing are given below:
- Explore ideas to increase affordable housing e.g. community land trusts, urban exception sites, cross-subsidizing market and affordable housing outside development boundaries.
 - Maximise affordable housing by lowering thresholds and increasing percentages
 - Need to consider the impact that asking for more affordable housing will have on development – risk that sites will not come forward
 - Incentivise moving older people into smaller properties
 - Concerns about the impact of affordable rent
 - Release more land outside the development boundaries.
- 4.5 After these events, people got together to put forward their ideas. They formed smaller ‘working groups’ and met on one or two occasions. Comments were invited on the suggestions put forward by the working groups. Other key agencies involved in planning such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and the Highways Agency were also asked to comment on these ideas. A summary of the working group findings in relation to this background paper are given in the table below. For more information on the consultation so far, please see the Issues and Options consultation summary report.
- 4.6 The pre-submission consultation of the local plan for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland took place in June-July 2012. A range of consultation methods were used including drop in sessions across the District and Borough. Representations were received from about 120 organisations and 800 individuals / households. Full details of this consultation can be found online at www.dorsetforyou.com/newlocalplan/west/weymouth

Weymouth & Portland Core Strategy Issues & Options 2007, Preferred Options 2009	West Dorset Core Strategy Issues & Options 2007	Joint Local Plan Consultation Autumn 2011	Joint Local Plan Pre-Submission Consultation June-July 2012
<p>Objection to the proposed requirement for Code for Sustainable Homes level 4 requirements on less than 10 units. Particularly alongside affordable housing.</p> <p>Objection to affordable housing being sought on all developments.</p> <p>Support from Natural England on policies which supports highly sustainable homes.</p> <p>Code for Sustainable Homes will be seen as an additional cost to development and would impede viability.</p> <p>Mixture of support and objection for the then proposed policy regarding flats, hostels, housing in multiple occupation, sheltered housing and residential homes.</p> <p>Preference expressed for quality open space as opposed to a particular quantity.</p>	<p>60% of respondents considered that the percentage of affordable housing sought on general housing development sites should be higher than the current 35%; 40% of respondents however considered that it should not be increased. Suggestions for what the percentage should be ranged from 25% to 100%, with the majority favouring percentages between 35% and 50%. 22 of the individuals responding supported a 50% target. Some expressed concern that a percentage over 40% could deter house building and so cause greater problems. Some suggested a progressive increase, or a variation in percentages across the district depending on extent of need.</p> <p>76% of respondents supported the lowering of site thresholds on which affordable housing percentages were sought at the main towns, below the current threshold of 15. Some commented that this was a more important issue than the target sought. Asked if this was</p>	<p>Allow Affordable Housing to be built on exception sites including larger settlements with populations up to 5,000.</p> <p>Seek to negotiate an increase the maximum proportion of affordable housing to be provided on sites to 50% of all dwellings.</p> <p>Strive for the highest level of affordable housing provision possible having regard to development viability and the need to ensure other infrastructure requirements are delivered.</p> <p>Ensure that development on greenfield sites makes a greater on-site contribution towards affordable housing provision.</p> <p>In cases where it is not possible to develop affordable housing sites because the necessary finance is either unavailable or insufficient then a proportion of open market housing should be permitted to cross-subsidise construction.</p> <p>Greater incentives should be provided to encourage landowners to release land.</p>	<p>The affordable housing requirement should be a 'target' / reduced rather than a 'minimum requirement', given that some factors eg CIL and site specific abnormal costs are not known</p> <p>The requirement to provide a minimum of 70% for social and/or affordable rent and a maximum of 30% for intermediate affordable housing is too inflexible.</p> <p>Homes restricted for holiday use should make the highest contribution towards affordable housing, and not be absolved.</p> <p>It is unreasonable to require an affordable housing contribution on small development sites, as this will prevent development.</p> <p>Market housing should be allowed to cross subsidise affordable housing in exception site locations</p> <p>The mix of housing should</p>

	<p>particularly important in any specific towns, respondents mentioned Lyme Regis, Bridport, Sherborne, Dorchester and Beaminster.</p> <p>The majority of respondents (74%) considered that most of the percentage of affordable housing sought should be for rent to those most in need. Respondents were split on whether the core strategy should set a percentage for provision of special needs housing, with 50% supporting and 50% against.</p>	<p>Ensure that affordable housing developments are designed to meet the needs of all sectors of the local community including older residents, disabled persons, key workers and households who are in unsuitable or unsatisfactory accommodation.</p> <p>Requirements for rural workers dwellings should be simpler.</p> <p>Consider limiting the size of new houses as smaller units would be relatively more affordable and less attractive to wealthy in-comers.</p> <p>Provide a Lifetime Homes policy for a proportion of residential units</p>	<p>provide for the needs of elderly or disabled occupants, in line with predicted demographics.</p> <p>As retirement villages and continuing care retirement communities provide a suite of on-site facilities which reduce the need for site residents to access local services and facilities, restricting such developments to within defined development boundaries is unreasonable.</p>
--	--	---	--

CONCLUSIONS – KEY ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

- Based on this review of background information and consultation findings; the key aims for housing within the plan area are:
- 4.7 To help deliver a continuous supply of housing land to help meet the changing demographic and social needs of the area, and to help reduce the need to travel and promote economic growth and social inclusion.
- 4.8 To ensure that the type, size and mix of housing will reflect local needs as far as possible and result in balanced communities.
- 4.9 To strive towards meeting the need for affordable housing. Although the total projected need for affordable housing is not expected to be met in the plan period, opportunities will be taken to secure affordable homes to meet local needs. This will include ensuring all new open market housing sites make a contribution (through providing new affordable homes or, where this is not possible, making a financial contribution), and through a range of flexible policies that encourage affordable housing to come forward where there are suitable opportunities.

5.0 CONTINUED POLICIES

- 5.1 A number of policies have been carried forward from the adopted local plans. Opportunities have been taken to simplify the policies where possible, taking into account the changes to the generic policies and the stage of planning or development reached.

New Policy	Old	Notes
HOUS 3 Open Market Housing Mix	HS2 (WD)	This policy in essence retains the existing reference in policy HS2 of the Adopted West Dorset Local Plan to housing mix but includes reference to local circumstance.
HOUS 6 Other Residential Development Outside Defined Development Boundaries	HS6 HS7 (WD)	This policy simplifies previous policies. Also clarification has been added with respect to extensions and subdivisions of dwellings in the countryside. It also includes clarification with respect to low impact dwellings.
HOUS 7 Development of Flats, Hostels and Houses in Multiple Occupation	H5 (W&P)	Simplified version of policy included in the Adopted Weymouth & Portland Local Plan.

6.0 POLICY OPTIONS AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES CONSIDERED

6.1 There were a number of important areas where a new policy direction was considered. This section includes some of the policy areas considered and the range of options which were assessed. These options are also included in the Sustainability Appraisal.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING			
<u>Option A</u>	<u>Option B</u>	<u>Option C</u>	<u>Option D</u>
Seek a minimum of 20% affordable housing on new development sites	Seek a minimum of 35% affordable housing on new development sites	Seek a minimum of 30% affordable housing on brownfield land and 40% on greenfield land on new development sites	Seek a minimum of 50% affordable housing on new development sites

- 6.2 Option A would provide a relatively small amount of affordable housing. Whilst most housing projects would be able to meet this requirement, it is considered that the provision of housing using this approach would not go far enough in striving towards meeting the need.
- 6.3 It is believed that option B, to require a minimum of 35% affordable housing, would deliver a balance of requiring affordable housing and not discouraging housing development.
- 6.4 Option C, to provide a differential approach to brownfield and greenfield development of affordable housing, acknowledges the additional costs associated with developing brownfield land. There are also benefits associated with developing brownfield rather than greenfield sites.
- 6.5 The high percentage of affordable housing suggested by option D would be likely to discourage development in much of the plan area. Therefore, whilst a large amount of affordable housing will be provided at each site, the overall affordable housing provision could decrease due to a smaller number of housing projects being completed.

A POLICY OPTION SIMILAR TO THAT IN OPTION 'B' IS THE PREFERRED OPTION TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN. OPTION B HAS BEEN REFINED IN ORDER THAT A 25% MINIMUM IN PORTLAND IS INCLUDED TO REFLECT LOCAL MARKET CONDITIONS

EXCEPTION SITES	
<u>Option A</u>	<u>Option B</u>
Affordable housing can be permitted as an exception to general policy on sites around towns and villages	Affordable housing can be permitted as an exception to general policy on sites around villages only

- 6.6 Option A is likely to provide a greater degree of affordable housing in areas closer to larger settlements. The consequence is that services and amenities are more accessible by sustainable means, reducing fuel usage and reliance on less sustainable transport methods.
- 6.7 Option B will restrict the development of affordable housing to villages only, reducing the land available for affordable housing to meet the needs of the towns. This approach will make services and facilities less accessible by sustainable means.

POLICY OPTION 'A' IS THE PREFERRED OPTION AND TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN.

OTHER RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE	
<p><u>Option A</u></p> <p>Restrict residential development in the countryside. Replacements or extensions will be permitted, providing there are no adverse landscape impacts. Housing is permitted for workers which require 24hr supervision of their business in a rural location, if it can be proven that it is essential, and landscaping impacts are mitigated.</p>	<p><u>Option B</u></p> <p>Residential development will be permitted in countryside locations.</p>

- 6.8 Option A, to apply a restrictive approach to countryside development and strongly protect landscape assets, will ensure that the majority of housing is located in settlement areas rather than countryside locations. This will reduce the need to access services and facilities by less sustainable modes of transport. This approach will restrict the provision of housing in countryside locations.
- 6.9 Option B, to permit residential development in countryside locations, will have strongly adverse landscape impacts. Furthermore, the potential loss of productive agricultural land, and the need to use less sustainable modes of transport to access services and facilities, means that this option performs poorly under the climate change, soil and water quality and quality of life sustainability objectives. This approach is likely to support the development of housing.

A POLICY SOLUTION SIMILAR TO POLICY OPTION 'A' IS THE PREFERRED OPTION AND HAS BEEN TAKEN FORWARD IN THE LOCAL PLAN. HOWEVER THE PLAN ALSO MAKES ALLOWANCE FOR SMALL SCALE DEVELOPMENT TO COME FORWARD FROM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS AND FROM THE REUSE OF BUILDINGS.