

# Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy

*The Natural Place to do Business*

**An Economic Growth Strategy for:  
North Dorset, West Dorset and  
Weymouth & Portland 2017 to 2033**





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# 1. Introduction

Welcome to the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy – the joint Economic Growth Strategy of North Dorset District, West Dorset District, Weymouth and Portland Borough and Dorset County Councils – the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership.

Economic Growth is a key part of the National agenda, with Local Enterprise Partnerships contributing to the national plan through their local visions. Our strategy sets out how we will contribute to Dorset’s Economic Ambition described in the Dorset LEPs Strategic Economic Plan, and how it will address the economic needs of our area while respecting our natural environment.

Our strategy describes both our aspiration for the area and also that of other stakeholders so that it is truly an economic growth plan for Western Dorset.

It is apparent in times of change – political and fiscal - that the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership cannot achieve our economic vision without the support and participation of key partners and businesses.

We look to our Schools, Colleges, and Universities to support our identified skills needs not just for our young people but also those in employment looking to or needing to upskill.

We look to our business growth partners and agencies to work with us and support our business growth and productivity expectations.

We look to national and local developers to deliver new homes to accommodate our growing population, and employment sites and premises to support business growth.”

***We pledge to keep economic growth at the forefront in our policy development and implementation.***



Gordon Page  
**Chairman of the LEP**

Rebecca Knox  
**Leader of Dorset County Council**

Cllr Graham Carr-Jones  
**Leader of North Dorset District Council**

Cllr Tony Alford  
**Leader of West Dorset District Council**

Cllr Jeff Cant  
**Leader of Weymouth & Portland Borough Council**

## 2. Our Vision and Economic Growth Strategy

*Western Dorset  
“the natural place  
to do business”*

### **By 2033 the Economic Growth Strategy will have supported and delivered:**

- 20,000 new homes
- 13,200 new full-time equivalent jobs
- a minimum of 70 hectares of new employment land;
- an increase from 25% to 35% in the proportion of workforce with Level 4 qualifications or higher and;
- an additional £564 million of GVA to the Western Dorset Area

### **Our Economic Growth Zones:**

Our principal towns are set within two functional economic areas; Weymouth, Dorchester and Portland in the West; Blandford, Gillingham and Shaftesbury in the North. The economic growth aspiration for these two distinct economic growth areas is to achieve a better balance and more sustainable future for the towns whilst releasing the major housing, employment and investment potential of these two economic areas.

### **Our Rural Growth Area:**

Most of our rural areas lie in designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and include the growth towns of Bridport and Sherborne, the related settlements such as Beaminster and Sturminster Newton and many thriving villages with their challenges of rurality. These towns and villages will be supported to achieve local economic growth and contribute to rural Dorset's future prosperity.

### **Our Coastal Communities:**

These lie along our World Heritage designated Jurassic coastline and shape our marine economy. Local maritime assets will be supported at Weymouth, Bridport and Lyme Regis, and at the strategically important port and harbour of Portland

### **Our Growth Strategy**

Has the flexibility to deliver increases in numbers of higher quality jobs, and improvements in business productivity, raising skills and wages to levels comparable to those across the rest of Dorset and England - whilst respecting localised housing and population growth plans.

The following schematic highlights the most significant economic infrastructure, assets, and connections across the Western Dorset area along with a snapshot of some key planned and potential development projects

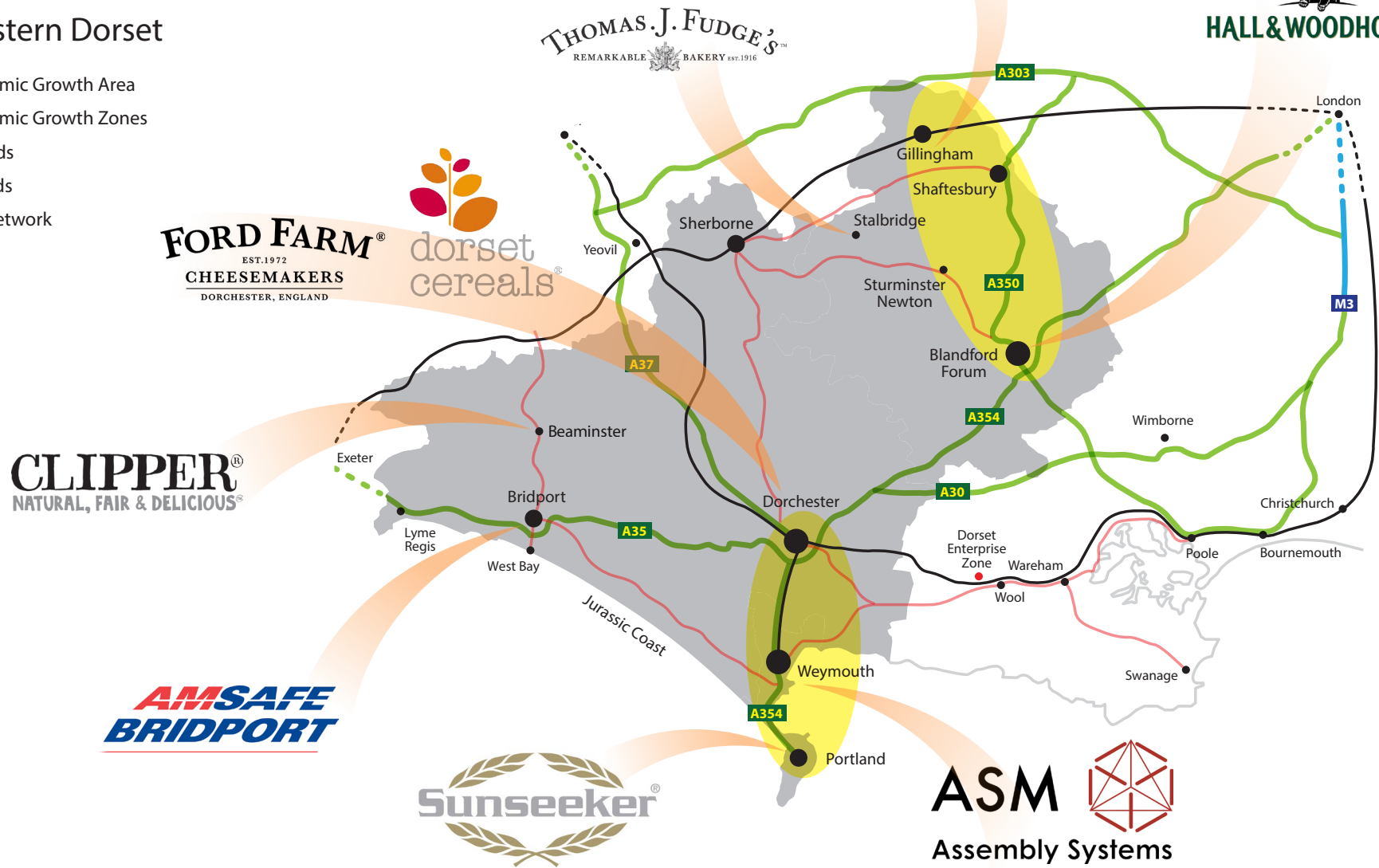
**The focus areas for economic development are illustrated on the map below, as well as locations of a number of successful national and international companies based in Western Dorset.**

# Area covered by Economic Growth Strategy



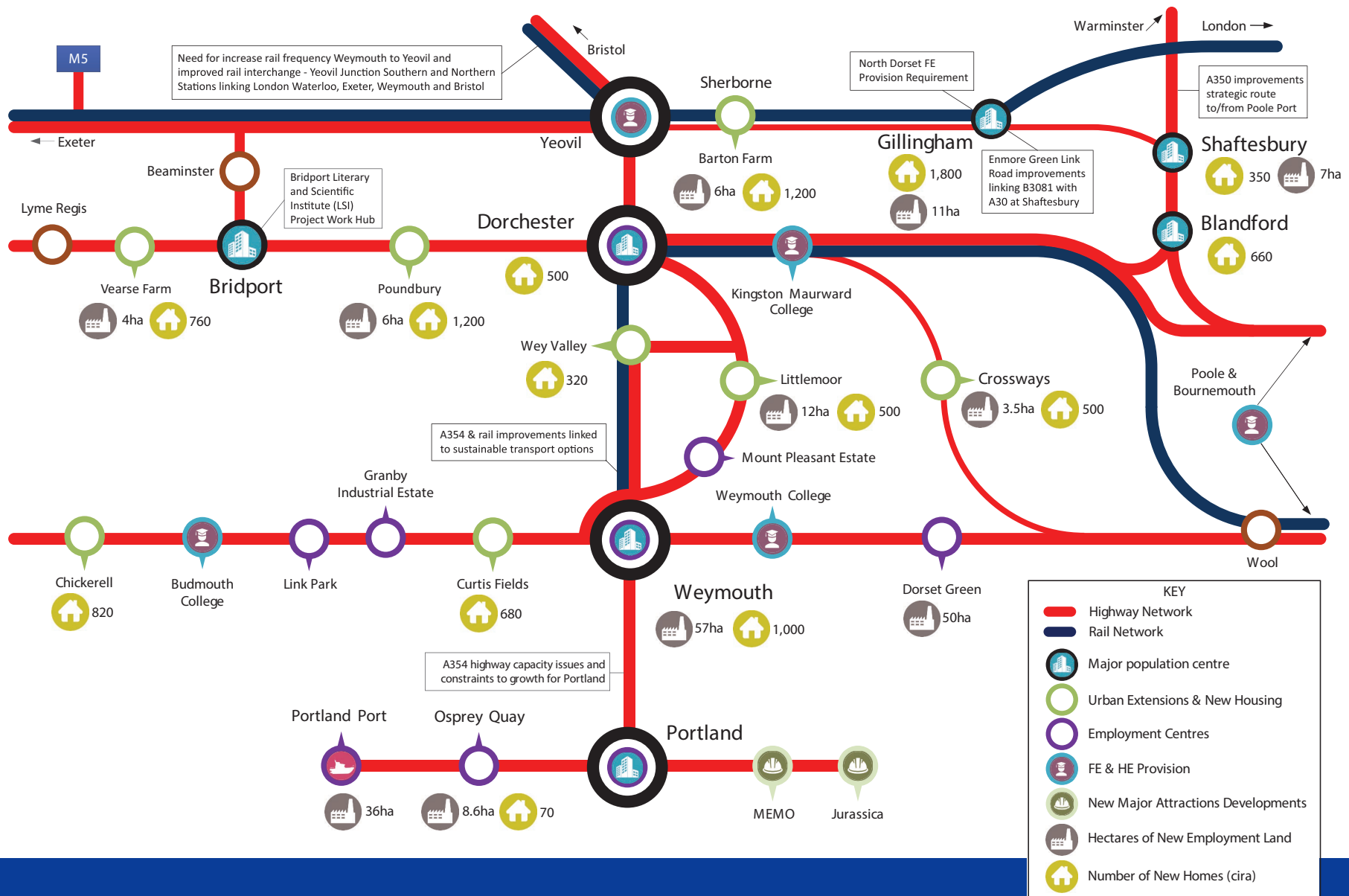
## Western Dorset

- Economic Growth Area
- Economic Growth Zones
- A Roads
- B Roads
- Rail Network





# Economic Infrastructure, Assets and Connections



### 3. A Distinctive Part of Dorset

Western Dorset covers 1,733 square kilometres and is home to 235,509 residents within extensive Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and along the only natural UNESCO designated World Heritage site in England – The Jurassic Coast. These features help to attract people to live, inspire creativity, and drive tourism.

Our towns and settlements are historic in nature with a high proportion of listed buildings. This high quality natural and built environment shapes a distinctive character with sense of place, lifestyle and quality of life that will be enhanced by the Strategy.

The area already hosts some 12,405 businesses in a diverse economy, but additional businesses and job opportunities will come from the development of key employment and housing sites focused around our urban locations and growth towns. Further benefits will arise from supporting growth and productivity of land-based and coastal businesses.

Source: Combined areas from adopted local plans

Source: GeoWessex : 2014 Mid Year Estimates ONS

Source: GeoWessex: UK Business Activity Size Location 2014 (ONS)







## 4. Economic Assessment and Sector Priorities

*Our area is a beautiful place in which to live and work with a perceived affluence but which masks some significant underpinning challenges that must be addressed to achieve growth:*

- The “productivity challenge”: low average skills level amongst the workforce and a high proportion of businesses in lower added-value activity
- High economic dependence on sectors in decline
- Poor housing affordability
- New homes completion rates below target
- The “demographic crunch” –an increasing proportion of elderly people in the population, with a declining proportion of young and working age
- Constrained infrastructure



### An Evidence-based Approach

This strategy is underpinned by an evidence based assessment, informed by a range of commissioned research and feasibility studies - supported by the Dorset LEP through Growth Deal 2 - that identify issues, needs challenges and opportunities.

The assessment analysed and assessed key ‘layers’ of our local economy including population and skills, infrastructure, housing, business and sectors. This has helped to identify potential gaps and barriers to economic growth, the possible interventions needed to help support growth and investment, and potential integration and collaborative work with partners across the area.

A number of studies provided data to the assessment. Some – such as the Transport and Movement study, were commissioned specifically to provide economic growth information. The core studies looked at:



## Transport and Movement

- Assessment of transport and movement to test the physical infrastructure requirements of redevelopment sites and how they relate to the existing infrastructure and car parking including Park & Ride;
- Assessment of possible improvements to the traffic system to encourage use of public transport;
- Assess improvements and creation of more pedestrianisation and;
- Improvement to bus and rail interchanges.

## Employment and Skills Study

- Need and opportunity to generate highly skilled employment in the area, as well as fostering and increasing the potential of existing sectors;
- Ensuring all our young people are able to reach their potential and;
- Encouragement and support all residents to enter into meaningful employment.

## Weymouth Town Centre Key Sites

- Economic viability of the redevelopment sites;
- Assessment of under-utilised sites
- Assessment of a greater range of food and entertainment based family-friendly uses and;
- Improvement to the image of Weymouth town centre to reflect the character and heritage of the town with a focus on leisure, heritage, public realm, food & drink outlets and retail.

## Culture and Tourism

- Feasibility to develop the tourism brand to benefit Western Dorset;
- Assessment of improvements to service and quality standards across tourism and heritage;
- Diversification and improvements to the product and the potential to widen the market appeal and extend the length of season);
- Festivals and Events assessment;
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- Festivals and Events assessment;

**Evidence from other supporting studies were also included in developing the evidence base.**

**The evidence based economic assessment has helped to identify both common need and individual opportunity across the area rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This method has enabled the Strategy to identify and establish strategic interventions aimed at maximising economic growth across key areas, alongside more focused interventions recognising the distinctive character of local economies where appropriate and sustainable economic growth can take place.**

## Challenges

**A number of common challenges have been identified.**

### New and affordable homes

The delivery of housing has failed over a number of years to achieve target rates in the Local Plan. A shortage of supply and growing demand from net in-migration makes it difficult to attract or retain key employees. Low wages and high house prices continue to make it difficult for particularly our young people to afford to live and work locally.

### The 'productivity challenge'

Growth depends in part on the skill levels of residents as higher skilled workers help to drive productivity. Western Dorset shows stagnation in numbers and levels of skills amongst the workforce. The challenge therefore is to both retain existing talent locally to capture the benefits of their skills investment, but also of growing new talent locally in Western Dorset by appropriately training young people, and by upskilling and reskilling the workforce to meet the changing shape of skills demand.

A second aspect of under-performing productivity is the relatively slow levels of adoption of new working practices and technologies amongst many smaller and traditional businesses.

## The 'demographic crunch'

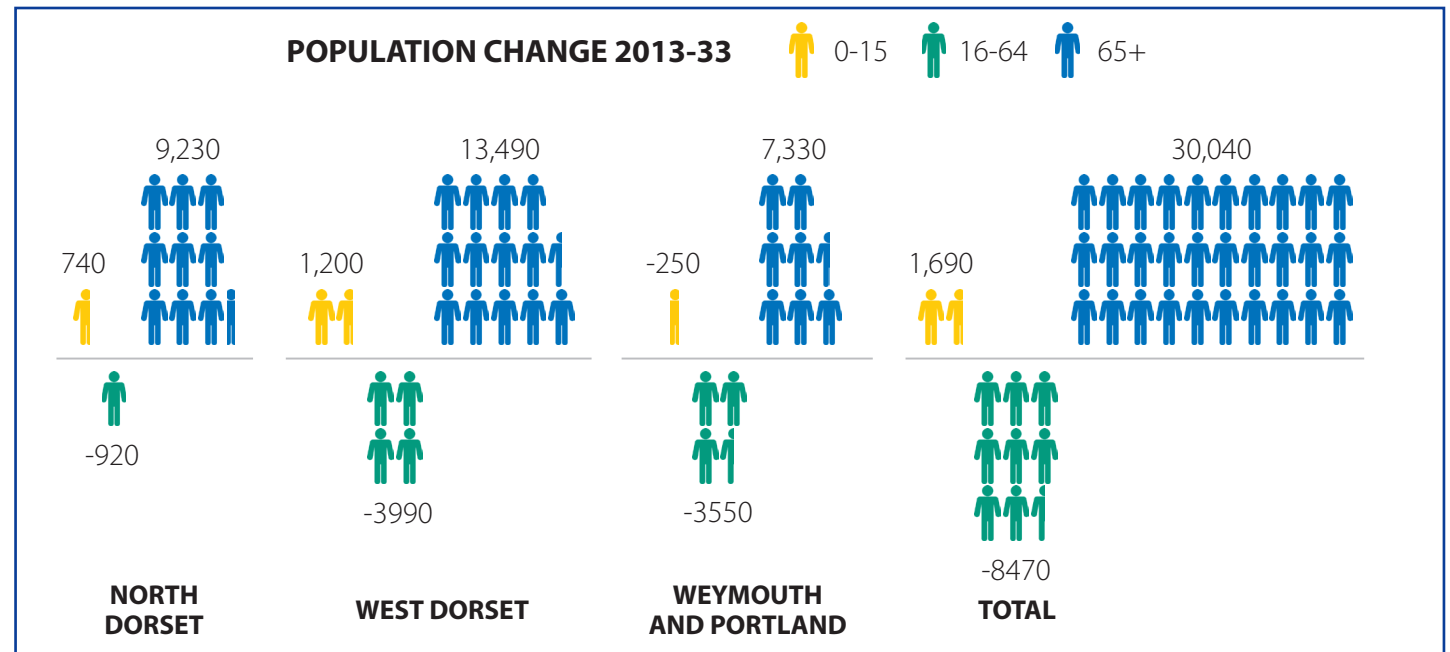
In recognition of the importance of people and skills in contributing to the productivity of the Western Dorset economy, one of the key challenges is the increasingly limited supply of labour. This is caused by a combination of factors including decreasing numbers of working age residents who are economically active and a significant proportion of the workforce due to retire within 10 years. Dorset is also characterised by a population with a high and growing proportion of elderly people; and falling numbers of young and working age population. Projections for Dorset as a whole suggest further decline in the working age population, creating the potential for a severely constrained labour market when considered against the scale of future labour requirements. In parallel, but less tangible, is the challenge of overcoming the perception of the area as a destination for 'returning to retire'.

## Infrastructure

The digital infrastructure is seen as vital to local economic growth, but in the predominantly rural Western Dorset area is behind the curve compared to competing economic areas. To address this, the 2015 Dorset Digital Infrastructure Strategy which informs this strategy, aims to stimulate significant economic growth by providing Dorset businesses and learners with access to high speed digital connectivity whilst supporting sustainable rural growth.

At present there is a projected balance between employment land supply and demand, but this risks becoming a shortfall without ongoing efforts to identify potential sites.

In parallel, limited available investment in development of the rural transport infrastructure continues to be a constraint to economic growth. Partnership working to deliver infrastructure programmes for roads, rail, public transport network, ports, and cycle networks continues to be critical.







## Challenges (continued)

### Sectors and Businesses

The Western Dorset economy comprises a wide range of sectors typical of the UK economy. Compared to the UK however, the proportions in the mix show that there is relatively high dependence on the public sector and on sectors with some form of challenge or opportunity:

- Advanced Engineering: Acute skills shortage.
- Construction: Cyclical, need to raise skills & technology
- Finance & professional Services: Job decline forecast
- Health & Social care: Biggest low wage sector but with low wages
- ICT services: High growth needed to underpin wider economy
- Land based industries: Low contribution to prosperity
- Public Sector: Largest employer but continuing decline in employment and spending
- Retail: Low skill, low wage, declining job numbers
- Tourism: Widespread but low wage, low skill, seasonal work

Our economy is typical of the UK in being predominantly made up of small businesses. The challenge will be to foster widespread change and growth across this large, highly fragmented and diverse group, and in doing so achieve a significant aggregated economic growth contribution.



## Growth Scenarios

In developing a response to the challenges, the Partnership devised three growth scenarios each of which were based on extrapolation from recent data on two main indicators of economic growth:- Gross Value Added (GVA) – the measure of the value of goods and services produced in an economy; and the associated Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs.

The economic projections were derived from the Cambridge Econometrics Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM 2015) for Dorset. Three economic growth scenarios were produced in terms of growth in full-time equivalent jobs and GVA across Western Dorset. Each scenario starts from a baseline of 2011 Census of Population workplace based employment data, then applies varying assumptions:-

- Scenario 1 (blue) – standard employment growth rates built into the LEFM have been applied for the period 2013-2033, with some adjustments for local knowledge of expected changes in employment in particular locations or sectors. This represents a continuation of current trend.
- Scenario 2 (red) – employment growth rates were adjusted to reflect aspirations for growth, or anticipated decline, in identified challenge sectors
- Scenario 3 (yellow) – as scenario 2, and adding anticipated impact of growth at the exemplar technology park at the Dorset Enterprise Zone from 2017. The higher levels of jobs and business growth are associated with the development of this and additional employment sites and the additional FTEs that could be potentially accommodated.

### The forecasts for each uplifted scenario include a number of assumptions:

- An anticipated uplift in the performance of key sectors in the local economy will result from specific sector interventions
- Economic growth in some locations will not come from the delivery of local employment sites as there are constraints on the amount of future employment land available, arising from the need to protect our local environment.



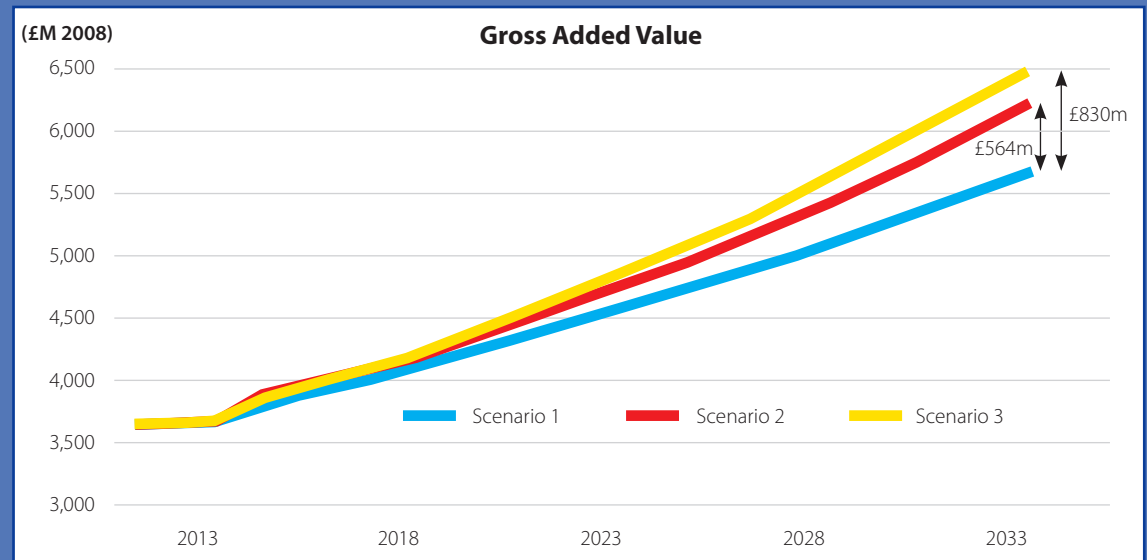
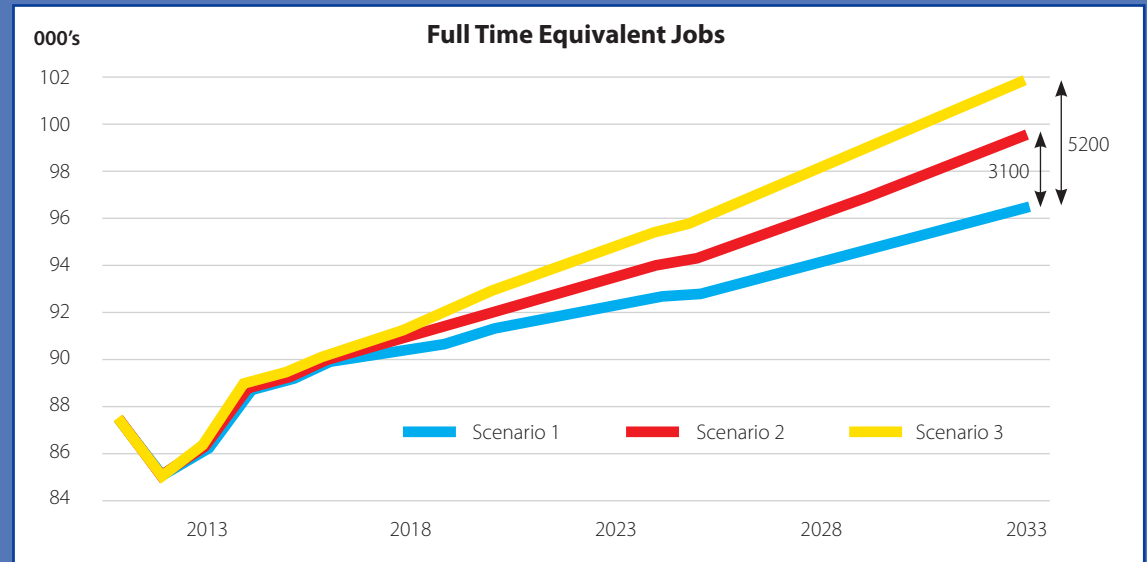


## Comparison of Scenario Forecasts

### Scenario Outputs

Comparison of forecast FTE outputs: The higher level growth proposed in scenario 2 which reflects aspirations for certain challenge sectors could result in an additional 3,000 FTE jobs above trend in scenario 1. Scenario 3 which includes the Enterprise Zone could deliver a further 2000 FTE jobs directly and indirectly.

Comparison of forecast GVA outputs: Scenario 2, the ambitious growth scenario could result in an additional £564 million of GVA to the Western Dorset area, whilst scenario 3 could deliver a further £266m if the impact of the Enterprise Zone is achieved.



## Growth Ambition

In light of both the economic assessment and the forecast scenarios, the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy, and the subsequent action plan, is based on achieving scenarios 2 and 3. The chosen strategy is ambitious and seeks to deliver a level and quality of economic growth greater than would have been achieved without the proposed interventions.

The ambitious level of growth proposed by this scenario will require collaboration, concerted effort and investment of resources from a broad range of local and national partners. Such ambition and determination is especially required at times of economic uncertainty, such as those currently experienced in the UK.

However, the strategy recognises that balanced and sustainable growth is essential, so the levels of growth projected are consistent with the provision of a balance of residential and employment land in current local plans.

*The economic assessment and recent studies has produced a clear direction for the Strategy but also gives a strong indication that unless there is intervention the local economy it will start to fall behind the region between the next 5 and 10 years bringing significant pressure to our economic sustainability and growth and the quality of life.*

Evidence from other supporting studies were also included in developing the evidence base.

The evidence based economic assessment has helped to identify both common need and individual opportunity across the area rather than a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. This method has enabled the Strategy to identify and establish strategic interventions aimed at maximising economic growth across key areas, alongside more focused interventions recognising the distinctive character of local economies where appropriate and sustainable economic growth can take place.





## 5. Strategic Economic Programme

Whilst the Economic Growth Strategy sets a vision and direction towards 2033, it is a living document that will be reviewed periodically to generate a series of 5-year Strategic Economic Growth delivery programmes. This will allow regular measurement and review of the programme performance and the cumulative impact of the strategy. Before each new 5-year cycle, the programme will be adjusted to meet evolving economic need and/or opportunity, and allow for the changing role of the public sector and other players.

The studies that have been undertaken as part of the economic assessment, have involved a wide range of engagement with businesses and private sector organisations, education sector and students, and public sector partners. The studies themselves have generated a large number of proposed actions for many of those players and those have been used to inform a wider Economic Growth Action Plan.

The need and opportunity to drive the programmes will largely fall within the remit of Local Councils and public sector organisations, although recognising that some programme delivery will require collaboration or be dependent on timetables of businesses and other private partner organisations.

### 5-year Strategic Economic Programmes

Each 5 year programme will set out the principal areas for intervention across five strategic economic themes:

#### A. Infrastructure

There is a vital need to improve electronic and physical connectivity of the area and underpin delivery of the economic potential of the area by delivering more connectivity for business, learning, access to services, and visiting. Working in collaboration and co-ordinating with all partners this theme of the programme will focus on high-speed broadband, and on establishment of an efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure.

#### Key delivery aims:

- An infrastructure that supports economic growth
- Competitive digital Infrastructure through Ultrafast and broadband rollout and improved mobile (broadband G3, G4) coverage
- Improved physical connectivity
- Integrated spatial and infrastructure planning

#### Strategic Outcomes expected:

improved access to employment and learning; improved productivity; improved access to markets; increase in GVA; reduced need to travel; better public transport travel options; reduced congestion; reduced carbon footprint and improved quality of life.

#### Key Projects:

1. Superfast and Ultrafast Broadband
2. Enmore Green Link Road, Shaftesbury
3. North South road rail routes and connectivity
4. Dorchester Transport network improvements
5. Weymouth Inner Harbour Flood Defence



## B. Homes and employment sites

Housing affordability is a significant issue with house price to earnings ratios higher than nationally. The lack of affordable housing is a major barrier to economic growth and in particular to retaining and/or attracting young people to the local labour market. There is a history over the past twenty years of employment land not being brought to the market without public sector intervention. High housing values and good returns on investment for residential development, coupled with low rents and poor returns on investment for employment site development deter developers and investors from delivering the employment land allocations.



### Key delivery aims:

- Increase rate of new homes delivery to levels nearer those in the Local Plan allocation and projections;
- Promote Government's new starter homes initiative as a way to attract and retain younger people;
- Deliver employment land and workspace at rate above historic trend;
- Promote the supply of additional land through provision of incentives;
- Establish Challenges of bringing sites forward with infrastructure issues

### Strategic Outcomes expected:

An affordable housing programme aimed at the economically active population; major housing sites unlocked and generating new homes; slowing of negative growth in the working age population; improvements in availability of labour supply to the local market; strengthened local construction sector with increased employment opportunities and higher skilled workforce supported by local education and training providers.

### Key Projects:

1. Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan with employment sites
2. North Dorset Employment Sites
3. Accelerated housing delivery programme
4. Dorchester Town Centre Retail development



## C. Employment and skills

In the area currently, the workforce is less skilled than the national average, a relatively high proportion of the workforce is in lower skilled occupations and wages are consequently below regional average. Investment in skills and training is a major factor in creating a highly employable, higher skilled local population that can be retained locally, and which can generate economic growth, improved productivity and a sustainable local economy.

### Key delivery aims:

- More equitable access to quality education, training and employment opportunities, recognising that there are physical gaps which exist (particularly in the North and West)
- Improved Careers Advice aimed at better preparing school and college leavers for work and careers in the local economy.
- Enhanced connections between people, jobs and skills infrastructure.
- A 'productivity challenge' skills programme – recognising the importance of people and skills in local businesses in contributing to their productivity.

### Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:

Improved uptake of learning in colleges and workplace; More local people entering into and retained in employment; improved workforce productivity; sustained low unemployment levels (sector change); increase in general wage levels to bring closer to regional and national levels;

### Key Projects:

1. Productivity through skills improvement
2. Careers IAG (information, advice and guidance) programme
3. Targeted education and training provision in gap areas.



## C. Business and Sectors

A range of factors need to be addressed if our local economy is to develop sustainable economic growth: low business start-ups and survival rates; low productivity; high proportion of low GVA sectors; declining high GVA sectors.

### Key delivery aims:

- Increase local Business start-up and survival rates to levels closer to the UK
- encouraging local business and employment growth
- Foster transition of the economy to higher GVA and growth sectors
- Delivery of increased targeted support to locally important Sectors: Advanced Engineering (marine and maritime); Advanced Manufacturing; Agricultural Technologies; Care Sector; Construction; Environmental; ITC, Retail, Tourism and Leisure.

### Strategic Outcomes to be achieved:

Increased proportion of new & surviving businesses; more local people in local employment with reduced daily workforce commute out of area; improved business sector productivity overall to give an attractive competitive economy; increase in total GVA of the economy; sustained low unemployment levels (sector change)

### Key Projects:

1. Business start-up and survival support programme
2. Business support for productivity and growth
3. One on one business support through Account Management, in collaboration with public and private partners
4. Advanced Engineering cluster development
5. Destination Management and the Dorset DMO
6. Sector programmes with interventions specific to sector type and issues

There are a number of important industrial sectors which have the potential to drive growth in Western Dorset. Opportunities to increase the value of these sectors in their own right will be identified and developed. The economic assessment has identified sectors that, through appropriate local intervention and support, have the potential to:

- provide significant growth, either above trend or in contrast to the regional and national predictions (table 5.1)
- contribute to local growth if local challenges are addressed (table 5.2)

Some sectors are predicted to change which may require intervention to mitigate negative effects on our economy (table 5.3)

Other sectors can be considered as 'enabling sectors' which additionally service the needs of the population (e.g. health and social care) and the strategy recognises the need to continue to develop quality and excellence in these sectors.



## 5.1 Sectors with potential to provide significant growth

Sector and 2016 Position	Description	2033 Growth Scenario	Interventions
<p><b>ADVANCED ENGINEERING &amp; MANUFACTURING</b></p> <p>2,600 jobs 4% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant, well established, knowledge intensive sector, including businesses with strong international reputation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope to deliver strong local growth, and develop supply chains, in high and medium-high technology manufacturing</li> <li>Focus on aerospace marine and defence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Account Management with DIT (former UKTI)</li> <li>Cluster development</li> <li>Skills</li> <li>Enterprise Zone</li> </ul>
<p><b>CONSTRUCTION</b></p> <p>9,000 jobs 10% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key role to play in supporting economic growth and housing provision</li> <li>New skills/technologies required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in jobs and productivity anticipated</li> <li>Need to ensure availability of skilled and adaptable workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing development</li> <li>Employment site development</li> </ul>
<p><b>ICT SERVICES</b></p> <p>1,000 jobs 1% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crucial sector to underpin economic growth</li> <li>Superfast and ultrafast broadband being rolled out across the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Productivity anticipated to grow above national average</li> <li>Support and infrastructure for other sectors growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Superfast and Ultrafast broadband</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Sectors with potential to increase contribution to local growth

Sector and 2016 Position	Description	2033 Growth Scenario	Interventions
<p><b>HEALTH &amp; SOCIAL CARE</b></p> <p>11,300 jobs 9% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crucial sector for Dorset given the demographic crunch</li> <li>• Issues around training and retention of workforce to address</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant job growth anticipated</li> <li>• Link to e-health and e-care solutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Care Academy at Weymouth College</li> </ul>
<p><b>LAND BASED INDUSTRIES</b></p> <p>2,900 jobs 2% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant impact on stewardship of the environment</li> <li>• Traditional sectors due to geology and historical development</li> <li>• Scope to improve productivity through application of technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agri-tech a priority sector for investment and development of workforce skills</li> <li>• Collaborative approach with neighbouring areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in facilities and training at Kingston Maurward College</li> <li>• Joint South West promotion of inward investment opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>TOURISM &amp; LEISURE</b></p> <p>7,000 jobs 5% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditionally a major part of the Dorset economy</li> <li>• Need to address issues of seasonality low pay, low skills and limited career opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job numbers to remain steady, but invest to improve the Dorset 'offer' and address issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with DTA to support delivery of Destination management plan</li> <li>• Skills development</li> </ul>



### 5.3 Sectors predicted to change and requiring mitigation

Sector and 2016 Position	Description	2033 Growth Scenario	Interventions
<p><b>FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</b></p> <p>7,600 jobs 12% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average representation in Dorset economy</li> <li>Financial services focused on Bournemouth/Poole</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marginal falls in jobs and GVA anticipated, reflecting national trends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DLEP focus on financial services offer of south/central England to attract inward investment</li> </ul>
<p><b>PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION DEFENCE</b></p> <p>7,900 jobs 12% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently the largest employment sector across area</li> <li>Highly skilled workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to experience continuing reduction in jobs and investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entrepreneurship programme to encourage skills &amp; knowledge retention</li> <li>Public sector apprenticeship programme</li> </ul>
<p><b>RETAIL</b></p> <p>8,900 jobs 9% of GVA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail sector has experienced job losses and closures in line with national trends</li> <li>Impact upon vitality and viability of town centres</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs fall anticipated in line with national trends and changes in retail patterns</li> <li>Changing nature of retail towards online</li> <li>Reduced requirement for multiples to have presence in smaller locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weymouth Town Centre masterplan</li> <li>Dorchester retail led development</li> <li>Entrepreneurship programme</li> </ul>

## E. Assets and Policy

With the changing Government policy, which is focused on economic growth, a review of existing Council policy is required to maximise the potential of Strategic Economic Growth Strategy and the local economy. Commercialisation and income generation has to be at the heart of the Strategy and changes in policy should lead by example especially around employment, apprenticeships and learning and land and property assets. Use of local authority assets and/or the use of capital receipts need to be utilised to generate real incentives for investors and developers to enable rapid economic growth, support community development and capacity and increase the sustainability of the local economy. This is against the background of Public funding cuts reducing its ability to support and enable economic growth.

As a key enabler, public sector landowners mainly Local Authorities, will have a particular role to play in developing the physical economic infrastructure comprising land, premises, and connectivity.

During the development and delivery of the Economic Growth Strategy other key public sector players will be considering ways to leverage their assets for general economic benefit. This will however be alongside current imperatives to generating income to address their own continuing funding reductions through:

- seeking opportunities to generate capital receipts through the sale of assets;
- to generate revenue income streams;
- and/or rationalise investments.

This has been recognised and will be integral to their role in implementation of the Strategy whilst maintaining functional and effective Council services.

## Key delivery aims:

- Local authority apprenticeship programmes
- Local Authority Procurement refocus to maximise economic and employment opportunities
- Local Authority assessment, reuse and realisation of assets to deliver economic growth
- Local Authority Planning systems with increased key role in enabling economic growth
- Local Authority moved towards a cross-service approach in planning/development and decision making of major economic developments and regeneration projects.

## Strategic Outcomes expected:

Increased apprenticeships, work placements and skills training through improved local authority procurement and processes; new income streams for the local authorities from new developments and regeneration projects/schemes; increased capital receipts that are subsequently reinvested in economic growth,

## Key Projects:

1. Procurement
2. One public estate
3. Business rates retention
4. Assets to deliver affordable housing





## Intervention Planning

The rationale for intervention at detail level within each of the themes is derived from consideration of:

- Evidence of need or opportunity, and priority within the economy
- Strategic fit of a chosen intervention with the strategy and other partner strategies
- Availability of power and capability between delivery partners to affect the change desired
- Likelihood of achieving successful project delivery
- Scale of intervention and availability of associated resources required for delivery
- Scale of outputs, outcomes and benefits compared to value of resource investment
- Likely length of delivery and outputs timetable

This has been recognised and will be integral to their role in implementation of the Strategy whilst maintaining functional and effective Council services.

## Interrelated Interventions

In seeking to raise economic growth, jobs and productivity, interventions will be directed simultaneously to a number of complementary fronts across the range of challenge issues typified by: Encouraging constructions of new and affordable homes to house the required workforce; supporting businesses and workforces to gain higher skills - linking with schemes such as the new Apprenticeship Levy; helping business to adopt new technology, working practices and knowledge; encouraging innovation and enterprise; investing in spatial and digital infrastructure; delivering a public sector role. Although large single gains may come from larger infrastructure, business and skills projects, support for the small projects and schemes will form an important part of the Strategy.

## Dorset Economic Growth

With a coordinated approach to our economic growth, this Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy is intended to make a significant contribution to the objectives of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan and will meet the five strategic objectives of:

- Sustainability and Competitiveness;
- Workforce retention and higher skills;
- Accessible and affordable homes;
- High class environment; and
- Quality of life and growth across Dorset; for businesses and communities.

The programs, projects and actions to deliver Dorset's economic growth are shown in the 2017 to 2022 Western Dorset Economic Growth Action Plan, presented in a separate document.

## 6. Partnerships and Governance

Delivery of Our growth strategy will be achieved through strong focussed partnership working, by the Western Dorset Economic Growth Partnership (which forms the key strategic lead for delivery of this strategy), with Dorset LEP, Dorset Growth Hub, DTA, DIT, HE and FE providers, BIDs, local chambers and coastal community teams (and any successor organisations) and the private and third sectors. Each partner will have a clear and complementary role to play in delivering the Western Dorset Economic Growth Strategy ambition alongside its own aims.

It will not be constrained by boundaries; as well as working with the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership, we will seek to create stronger economic partnerships with other Local Enterprise Partnerships, HE and FE bodies, and neighbouring local authorities, especially those immediately adjacent to Dorset that contribute to and support the local economies of our own communities such as Lyme Regis, Sherborne and Gillingham.

Our local economy is urban, coastal and rural. Our challenge is to deliver real growth that helps our principle growth zones to flourish whilst delivering sustainable growth for our growth towns and coastal economies. Therefore,

Delivery will require resourcing at a number of stages and levels including:

- Partnership building and maintenance
- Strategy overview, impact monitoring, and steering
- Programme building and project identification
- Project design, planning and implementation
- Project delivery and output monitoring

It will be achieved by:

- Targeted project teams drawn from across relevant partners and stakeholders in the public, private and third sector.
- Local authorities teams drawn from many of the Service Units within Dorset County Council and the Dorset Councils Partnership
- Partner organisations delivering their own projects
- Maximising external resources to achieve local ambitions
- Partner organisations delivering improved access to services across Western Dorset





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