



Christchurch and East Dorset
Core Strategy
Issues and Options March 2008
Discussion Paper



Prepared by Christchurch
Borough Council and East Dorset
District Council as part of the Local
Development Framework





Welcome to the Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation

We are fortunate we live and work in an attractive, prosperous, thriving and safe area like Christchurch and East Dorset.

We can enjoy our beautiful countryside, coast and historic market towns, we have low levels of unemployment and crime, good quality housing, education and employment opportunities. We have strong local communities.

However we also face major challenges. How can we protect and improve our beautiful environment? Unemployment is low, but so are wages. The local economy is strong, but how do we maintain this? Most people are well housed, but a large number cannot afford to buy so how can we give everyone the opportunity of living in a comfortable home? Economic, housing and social pressures mean that the area is facing high levels of development for the coming years. The very qualities which our local area offers also create pressure for more development. We need to ensure that as our area grows it develops in a sustainable way, and that we protect and improve our environment and quality of life.

The Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy will set out a vision for the future development of our area, and a series of key spatial policies to help achieve this vision. It is vital that this Strategy is built on a base of sound evidence and wide ranging public involvement.

As leaders of the area's two Councils, we are delighted to introduce the first stage "Issues & Options" consultation on the Core Strategy. We want to know what you think about the major planning issues which will need to be addressed in the future, and to tell us what the options might be for addressing these issues.

Please take time to look through the document and to let us know what you think.

Alan Griffiths - Leader Christchurch Borough Council

Derek Burt - Leader East Dorset District Council

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This document has been prepared to trigger discussion about the future planning of the area covered by Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council.

Future local planning will take the form of a number of Local Development Documents which together will form the Local Development Framework. The most important of these is the Core Strategy. Further information on the Local Development Framework can be found on our website:

www.dorsetforyou.com



This document and the Response Paper

This document discusses the issues and the options for the Core Strategy. There is a separate 'Response Paper' where we would like you to set out your views and which is the part we would like you to send back to us. We expect many people will only want to comment on some of the issues and options. Some of you may want to give views on all the themes, or to add further written comments. Either approach is fine.

What is the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy will set out the broad development strategy of the Councils for the next 20 years, and will contain the main spatial vision, objectives and planning policies to make the strategy happen.

What is Spatial Planning?

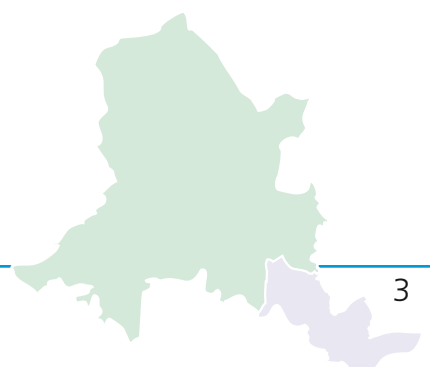
Local Development Frameworks should be spatial rather than purely land use plans. Traditionally, the land use planning system has focused on the regulation and control of the use of land. The aim is to go beyond this, to take account of the strategies and plans of other agencies not traditionally involved in the land use planning system but who also have an impact on spatial development.

(Companion Guide to Planning Policy Statement 12)

The Core Strategy should:

- Be guided by sustainable development principles;
- Be linked to the sustainable communities agenda;
- Be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy;
- Avoid repeating national or regional planning policies;
- Include a monitoring and implementation framework;
- Represent the spatial expression of the Community Plans, prepared by the Local Community Partnerships.

INTRODUCTION



Core Strategy Process

The Core Strategy will be prepared through a process of identifying key issues and then refining options for addressing these issues into draft policies. The preparation of the Core Strategy can be broken into the following stages.

- **Evidence gathering** work on baseline data and studies which will inform the issues to be addressed in the Core Strategy.
- **Issues and Options** where consultation takes place to identify issues and a range of possible options for addressing them.
- **Preferred Options** where the Councils identify one or more preferred options for dealing with key issues and publishes them for consultation.
- **Submission** where a draft Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State and there is a period when stakeholders and the public can make comments and representations.
- **Examination** - where an Inspector examines the "soundness" of the Core Strategy, considers the comments and representations, and provides a report.
- **Adoption** - where the final Core Strategy is adopted as the Councils' policy.

Evidence gathering studies to support the Core Strategy have been ongoing for some time, and are referred to in this Issues and Options paper. Work on Issues and Options will continue through early

2008. The remaining stages of Core Strategy production are programmed as follows:

- Preferred Options - Summer 2008
- Submission - March/April 2009
- Examination - November / December 2009
- Adoption - June 2010

A Joint Core Strategy

Christchurch Borough Council and East Dorset District Council are working in partnership to prepare their Local Development Frameworks. This includes a number of documents which will be jointly prepared, of which the Core Strategy is one.



Although a joint document addressing many common issues, the Core Strategy will be approved separately by both Councils, and each Council will have to meet the housing and other targets which are set for its area by the Regional Spatial Strategy.

The Issues and Options Document

The Issues and Options consultation documents are broken into themed sections each of which sets out the issues and proposes options. To make it easier to deal with the range of issues, the document has been structured in a specific way.

The Core Strategy will cover a wide range of different issues. The Councils have set out a series of themes in this document which cover the major issues identified in the Community Plans for Christchurch and East Dorset, as well as more traditional planning issues including those from the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Within each theme we have identified some key issues which we would particularly welcome comments.

How we have identified the Themes.

The Issues and Options paper has been constructed on a series of themes, with issues identified from different sources grouped under each theme.

These themes have been worked up from a number of different sources.

Political Input

Elected Councillors are uniquely in touch with community issues, through their election campaigning, and through their day-to-day work responding to matters raised by constituents, and in dealing with Council business. Both Councils have drawn up Corporate Plans for the next four years and these plans both affect and are affected by the Core Strategy.

Community Plans

One role of the Local Development Framework is to be the spatial expression of the Community Plan. Community Plans are in place in both Christchurch and East Dorset.

Sustainability Appraisal

The Councils have prepared a draft Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which aims to test developing LDF policies against a range of objectives measured against baseline data across a range of sustainability objectives measured against baseline data across a range of topics for Christchurch and East Dorset.

National and Regional policy

The Core Strategy does not exist in isolation. It will be prepared with significant involvement of the local community and stakeholders, but it must also comply with relevant legislation and should conform to national policy advice, and with the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

National policies which will be particularly relevant are:

- Promoting sustainable patterns of development and tackling the effects of climate change.
- Protecting biodiversity
- Protecting important landscapes
- Limiting flood risk
- Promoting strong and cohesive communities
- Protecting the Green Belt.
- Providing more housing, and more affordable housing.
- Meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.
- Providing for sustainable economic growth.
- Promoting vital and viable town centres.
- Seeking appropriate contributions from development.

The Regional Spatial Strategy reflects many of these national policies. It also contains specific policies for South East Dorset. The Panel Report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy has recently been published. The panel recommends the following broad strategy for future development of South East Dorset:

- Continue an urban renaissance within the existing urban

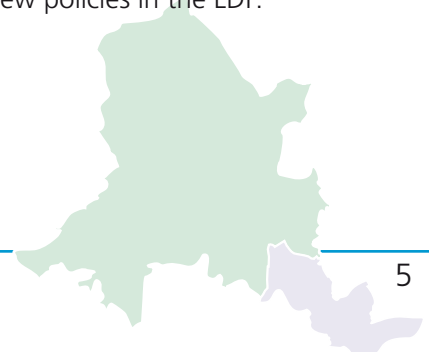
areas of Bournemouth, Poole & Christchurch by increasing density of development in conjunction with high quality design at locations offering a wide range of services and facilities.

- Focus retail and commercial development on the centres of Bournemouth and Poole.
- Prioritise investment to release potential of the Twin Sails Regeneration Area in Poole.
- Other commercial and retail development should complement plans for the town centres and regeneration area rather than competing with them.
- Development in the remainder of the area to be based on meeting locally generated growth.

In addition the Regional Spatial Strategy Panel report sets targets for the provision of housing including urban extensions, proposes redrawing the green belt, infrastructure proposals and impacts on heathland habitats. It provides a basis for a local transport strategy to serve the area, including dualling the A31 through the conurbation.

Evidence studies

The two Councils have identified key areas where detailed evidence gathering is required to support new policies in the LDF.



The details of this evidence work will be explained in the “evidence” sections under each theme in the document. Work which is ongoing or complete is as follows:

- Housing Needs Study
- Housing Market Assessment.
- Five Year Housing Land Supply assessment.
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Study.
- Employment Land Review.
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.
- Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study.
- Joint Retail Study.
- Joint Review of Parking Standards.
- Joint Review of Planning Obligations.
- Joint Study of Recreation Impacts on Heathlands.
- Ecological and Economic studies of Bournemouth Airport.
- Ecological Study for the Urban Extension area of search in Christchurch.

Where possible, issues arising from this evidence gathering have been used to develop the questions in this consultation document.

A common structure has been developed for each section as follows:

Where are we now?

This section sets out what each theme covers, the issues raised, and provides a summary of relevant information.

Rules and regulations

This section recognises that the Core Strategy does not exist in isolation, and that its policies must conform to national and regional policy guidance. In some cases this means that the range of options must be limited to those which will not conflict with these rules and regulations.

The evidence

This section sets out, where relevant, any evidence which the Councils are collecting to inform their new policies. Reference is also made here to other plans and strategies which the Councils are aware of which are relevant to the theme.

Benefits and costs

This section highlights potential costs and benefits of different policy options. We think it is important that you are aware of these potential trade offs when considering options.

The Issues and the Options

The document then sets out a series of issues questions under each theme and provides a series of possible options in the response document which might form a policy to address each question.

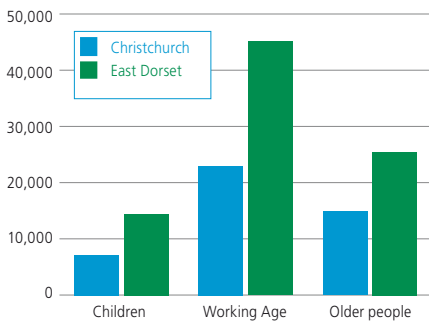
You can say to what extent you agree or disagree with each option, and you can suggest further options not on the list.

The Core Strategy cannot deal with every issue on a locationally specific basis. However, it is helpful if we know which areas you think are important to consider when formulating policy. For that reason we have provided an opportunity under certain questions for you to identify areas to which issues relate.

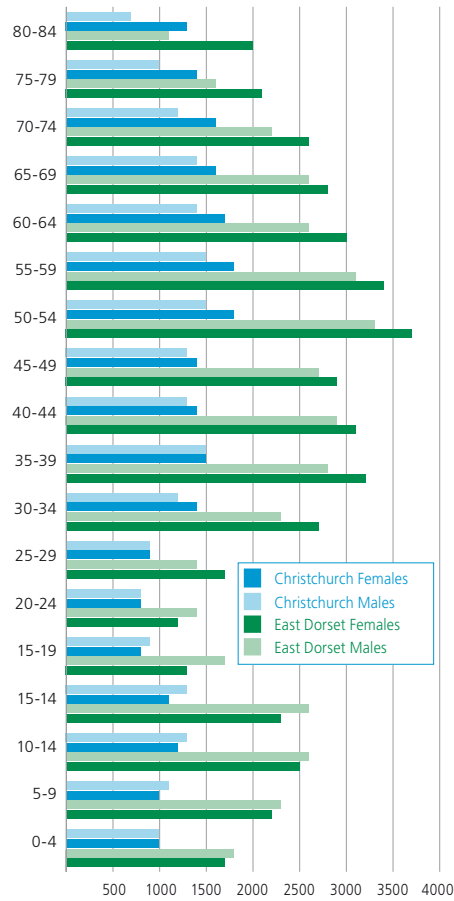
Population

Age Profile

Both areas have large retired age groups and a low proportion of young adults. In Christchurch 33.5% and in East Dorset 30% are in retired age groups compared to an average of 19% across England and Wales.



Basic age structure
(Source: ONS, mid-2006 estimates)



Detailed Age Profile
(Source: ONS, Mid-2006 estimates)



An Overview of Christchurch and East Dorset

Ethnic Groups

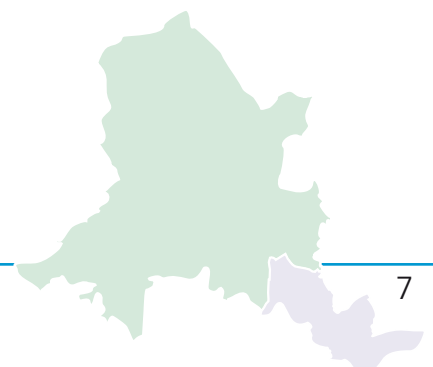
The area has a largely white population - 98.92% for Christchurch and East Dorset has 98.99%. This compares with a county figure of 98.75% and a national figure of 90.92%.

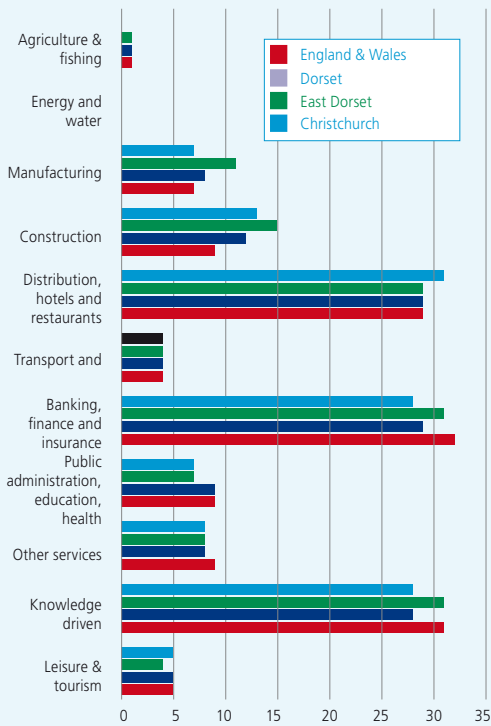
Economy

The proportion of knowledge based industries in Christchurch and East Dorset is comparable to the national average. There is a high proportion of manufacturing, particularly in East Dorset, despite the national decline of this sector. Christchurch has a higher proportion of businesses engaged in tourism and in the hotel/distribution and restaurant sector than East Dorset and the national average. In both areas, particularly East Dorset, the number of businesses engaged in construction is higher than the national average.

Unemployment is low in Christchurch and East Dorset compared with regional and national averages. In December 2007, East Dorset was ranked at the top of the table of lowest unemployment rates by district/unitary authority in the south west region (45 areas). Christchurch was ranked at 13th.

The proportion of the local population in employment is above national and regional average for Christchurch, but below average for East Dorset.





Indices of Deprivation

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004		
Indicator (comparing 354 local authority areas across England & Wales)	Christchurch Rank out of 354	East Dorset Rank out of 354
1 = Most Deprived: 354 = least deprived	247	325

Deprivation can be seen to be low in the national context, particularly for East Dorset District. However, the picture across each district/borough is not consistent, with some areas facing particular problems. At the more local "Super Output Area" (SOA) level, the Index of Deprivation identifies the places with the highest multiple deprivation scores.

Index of Multiple Deprivation by Super Output Area (ODPM 2004)
(Indicator: 1 = most deprived; 32,482 = least Index of Multiple Deprivation)

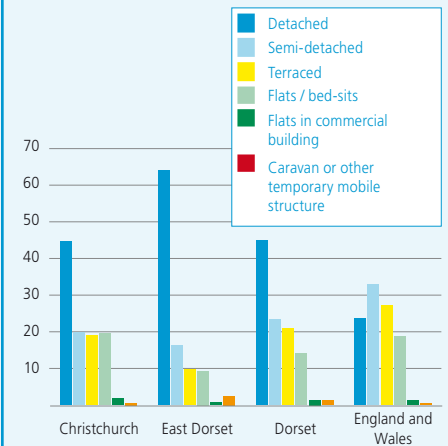
Super Output Area	National Rank Out of 32,482	Dorset Rank Out of 247
Somerford East, Christchurch	7369	10
Somerford West, Christchurch	7496	11
Heatherlands, Ferndown	10,372	14
Somerford South, Christchurch	13,182	24
Leigh Park, Wimborne	13,783	26
Mudeford Quay	29,316	215
Furzehill, East Dorset	32,482	247

Housing

There is a very high proportion of detached dwellings in both areas - 44.7% in Christchurch (almost twice the national average) and 64% in East Dorset (almost three times the national average). The percentage of flats in Christchurch is above national and county average whereas in East Dorset the proportion is lower in comparison. East Dorset also has a low proportion of terraced dwellings compared with Christchurch, County and national averages.

Tenure of housing

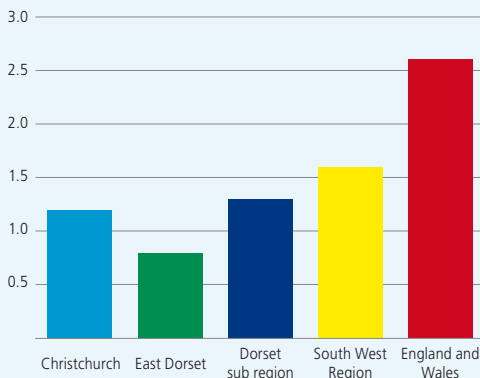
Both Christchurch and East Dorset have a high proportion of those who own their own home outright, - at around 46% compared to the national average



Types of Housing - Percentages
(Source: 2001 Census)

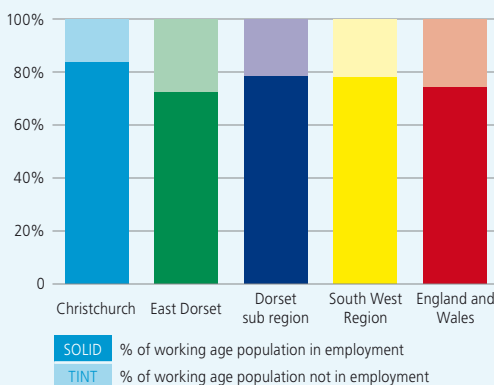
Sectors of employment

(Source: ONS, Annual Business Inquiry 2005)



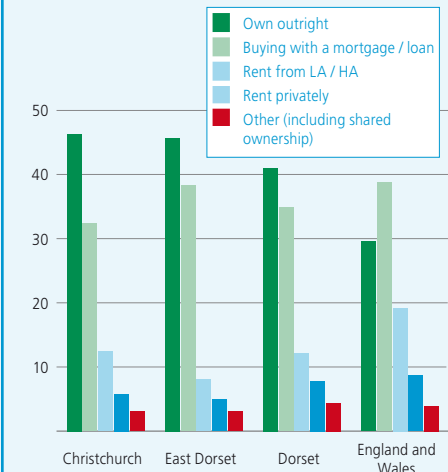
Unemployment Rate %

April 2006 - March 2007 (Source: DCC)



Working age population in employment

(Source: DCC)



Tenure of Housing

(Source: 2001 Census)

of 29.5%. The low proportion of Housing Association (particularly in East Dorset) and privately rented dwellings contributes to affordable housing problems.

House prices

Information from the Land Registry shows that between 2001 and 2006 property prices rose in Christchurch by 61%. In East Dorset, between 2003 and 2006 that rose by 26%.

Entry level market costs in Bournemouth and Poole HMA (to buy)

Bedrooms	Bournemouth	Christchurch	East Dorset	North Dorset	Poole	Purbeck
1	£110,000	£124,000	£142,000	£81,500	£110,000	£132,000
2	£159,000	£180,000	£190,000	£135,000	£176,000	£178,000
3	£218,000	£251,000	£243,000	£170,000	£220,000	£229,000
4	£290,000	£323,000	£318,000	£247,000	£285,000	£309,000

Survey of Estate and Letting Agents - 2006

Entry level market costs in Bournemouth and Poole HMA (to rent, weekly cost)

Bedrooms	Bournemouth	Christchurch	East Dorset	North Dorset	Poole	Purbeck
1	£114	£125	£133	£104	£114	£104
2	£150	£160	£153	£115	£156	£132
3	£190	£180	£196	£138	£183	£162
4	£242	£230	£254	£173	£230	£196

Survey of Estate and Letting Agents - 2006

A survey of local estate and letting agents in 2006 identified that:

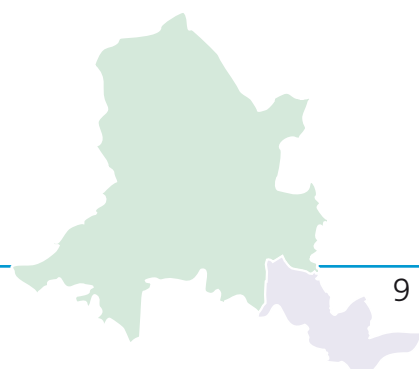
- In Christchurch entry level prices for one bedroom properties were £124,000 and up to £323,000 for a 4 bedroom property.
- In Christchurch weekly rents varied from £125 for a one bedroom property to £230 for a 4 bedroom property.
- In East Dorset entry level prices for one bedroom properties were £142,000 and £318,000 for a 4 bedroom property.
- In East Dorset weekly rents varied from £133 for a one bedroom property to £254 for a 4 bedroom property.

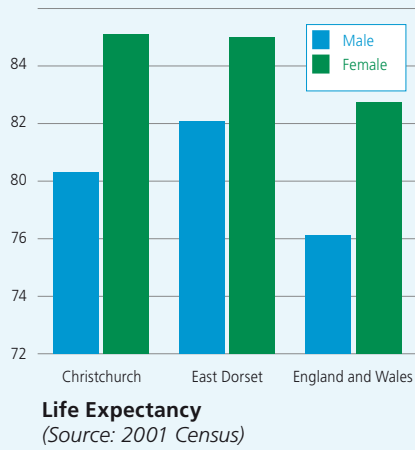
House price to income ratio data 2006¹

¹ Source: Hometrack report Can't Buy: Can Rent. The affordability of private housing in Great Britain, published November 2007

Area	House price to Income ratio
Christchurch	6.96 : 1
East Dorset	6.57 : 1
South West	4.84 : 1
Great Britain	4.28 : 1

Nationally, Christchurch is ranked as the 6th and East Dorset the 10th least affordable area in Great Britain.





Health

Percentage of people with long term limited illness (Source 2001 Census)

Category	Christchurch	East Dorset	Dorset	England & Wales
Percentage of people with a long-term limiting illness	22.1	18.4	19.2	18.2
Percentage of people with a long-term limiting illness who are of working-age	31.1	32.6	36.8	45.7

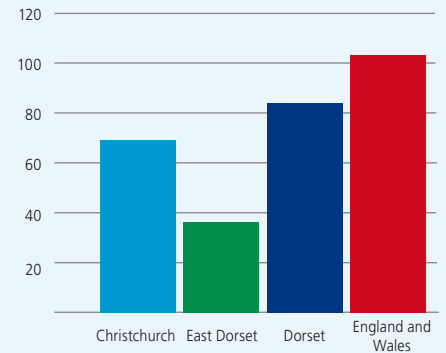
Life expectancy in Christchurch and East Dorset is above the national average. Christchurch has a higher than national average percentage of people with a long-term limiting illness. The proportion of those of working age with a limiting life-long illness is 31/32 %, considerably less than the national average at 45%.

Crime

Crime Rates 2006/7 (Source Home Office: Crime in England & Wales 2006/7: Local Authority areas - Recorded crime for key offences 2005/6 to 2006/7)

	2006/7 Offences per 1,000 population	Change 2005/6 - 2006/7 (%)
Burglary		
Christchurch	2	-27
East Dorset	1	23
Dorset	2	-24
England & Wales	5	-3
Violent offences		
Christchurch	10	-19
East Dorset	6	12
Dorset	17	-1
England & Wales	19	-1
Theft of vehicle		
Christchurch	1	-19
East Dorset	1	32
Dorset	2	-1
England & Wales	4	-1
Robbery		
Christchurch	0	0
East Dorset	0	0
Dorset	0	-25
England & Wales	2	4

The crime rates for Christchurch and East Dorset are low compared with Dorset and in particular nationally. Additionally, rates for most crimes have fallen since 2005/6.



Crime per 1000 population

(Source: Home Office)

Education

Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C or equivalent in 2006 (Source DCC)

Christchurch	East Dorset	Dorset	England & Wales
61%	59%	62%	59%

The level of educational achievement is similar in both areas to national averages.

Evidence suggests that if we do not change the way we plan for the future, we are likely to face threats from climate change to the natural environment and food production, as well as greater extremes of weather.



Sustainable methods of development and construction can reduce the negative impact development has on the planet through such means as:

- locating development in ways that reduces people's need to travel, and make it easier to travel by walking, cycling or public transport
- avoiding development in high flood risk areas
- building new homes which are energy efficient
- promoting the use of renewable materials and sources of energy
- minimising waste and promoting recycling and composting

Where are we now?

We do not have policies to require sustainable standards for development.

We do focus new homes in locations near to facilities, services, public transport and job opportunities.

We prevent the development of homes in high flood risk areas.

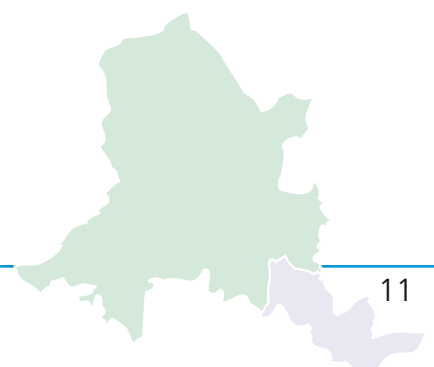
Rules regulations and advice

Government policy requires local authorities to adopt policies which reduce greenhouse gas emissions (primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂) by 30% by 2026 and 60% by 2050 . New homes should be 'zero carbon' by 2016, meaning that the net carbon emissions from all energy used by a new home should be zero .

The Government's 'Code for Sustainable Homes' recommends minimum standards for factors such as energy and water efficiency, responsibly sourced building materials, waste and pollution. At present, house builders' adherence to the code is voluntary.

Both the Christchurch and East Dorset Community Strategies support initiatives which encourage energy efficiency and protect the natural environment.

THEME 1 **Our Sustainable Future: Addressing Climate Change**



The evidence

Evidence shows that ongoing costs to the homeowner for heating, lighting and water consumption are greatly reduced in homes built using sustainable techniques.

Benefits and costs

There are a number of potential trade-offs to consider in the options:

- Sustainable construction and design requirements help reduce the carbon footprint of new development, but could put up development costs.
- Renewable energy development will help reduce fossil fuel use and support energy efficiency, but some types, such as wind turbines, may have significant visual impacts.
- Resisting development in flood risk areas reduces the risks from climate change, but could place greater pressure for development on areas which are not at risk of flooding.

Sustainable development

How should we protect the environment and meet national targets for sustainability with the need to build new houses for a growing population and to develop a vibrant economy.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How should our sustainable development and energy efficiency policies apply to new development?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue CC1



Renewable Energy

Where we are now?

Neither Christchurch nor East Dorset currently require new developments to provide a proportion of their energy needs from renewable on-site sources such as wind turbines or solar panels. The South West region currently only generates 3% of its power from renewable sources, significantly below the national target of 20% by 2020. Many councils across the UK have adopted policies which require between 10% and 30% of energy needs to be generated from renewable sources on-site. Policies usually only apply to developments above a certain size threshold and are generally different for residential and non-residential developments.

Rules, regulations and advice

National planning policy requires councils to promote and encourage the use of renewable and low carbon energy production through their Local Development Frameworks . The Government expects a proportion of the energy supply of new development to be provided by renewable or low carbon energy sources and has indicated that it may soon make this a mandatory requirement.

The draft Regional Spatial strategy policy RE5 requires larger scale developments to provide as a minimum, sufficient on-site generation to reduce CO2 permissions from use of the buildings by 10%.

The evidence

Both the Christchurch and East Dorset Community Strategies support initiatives which encourage energy efficiency and protect the natural environment. The Dorset, Bournemouth & Poole Renewable Energy Strategy & Action Plan (December 2005) sets out Dorset's current position regarding energy use and the potential for renewable energy use across the County.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What proportion of energy should developments be required to provide as a proportion of their energy requirements from on-site renewable energy sources and if so how?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue CC2



For residential developments, over what threshold should policies require a proportion of energy to be provided through on-site renewables?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC3



For non-residential developments, over what threshold should policies require a proportion of energy to be provided through on-site renewables?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC4



Are there types of renewable energy development which would be inappropriate in parts of Christchurch and East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC5



Reducing Flood Risk

Christchurch Borough and East Dorset District are significantly influenced by the water environment.

A network of rivers flow through the District to Christchurch and the Harbour. Along these corridors and in valleys in the chalk uplands settlements are subject to flood risk.

Ideally we would not need to consider building new homes in the defended flood plain. However, because available developable land in Christchurch and East Dorset is so scarce, we must consider whether it is appropriate to build on land currently at risk of flooding. If parts of existing built-up areas are ruled out due to flood risk, it will place greater pressure for development on the rest of the urban area, and on greenfield sites out of existing towns and villages.

Where we are now?

Parts of Christchurch and East Dorset are categorised by the Environment Agency as medium or high risk flood plain. The extent of these flood plains will become larger over time due to the effects of climate change, with increased seasonal rainfall and rising sea levels. Many fields and other undeveloped areas within the flood plain are left to flood when water levels rise but most built-on areas of flood plain are currently protected by defences. These defences will need to be improved in the future in order to maintain a sufficient level of protection.

Rules, regulations and advice

National planning policies (PPS25) require all Councils to consider existing and future risks of flooding in their development policies. In particular we must avoid placing inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding and should direct development away from areas at highest risk. Development within the areas of flood risk is currently permitted, but only if a detailed Flood Risk Assessment proves that flood risk will not increase as a result.

The evidence

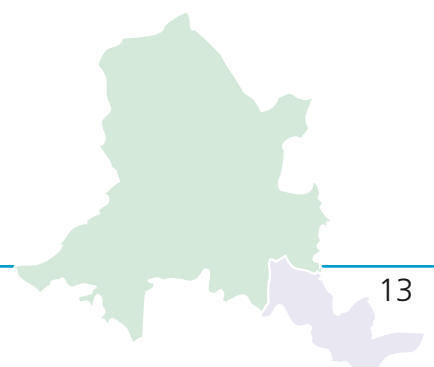
Both Councils are working on Strategic Flood Risk Assessments which will show the extent of the flood plain in years to come. Planning policies will need to reflect the outcomes of the flood assessments and decisions need to be made about the appropriateness of building new homes on flood plains currently protected by defences.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Should we continue to permit new development in areas of flood risk?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue CC6



As a means of reducing damage to buildings and risk to life, local planning polices could require developers to incorporate flood resistance (keeping water out) and flood resilience (reducing damage if water does enter a building) measures into the design of all new developments built in the flood plain. These measures might also include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water drainage.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

To reduce damage to buildings and risk to life, should we require new developments in the flood plain to incorporate flood resistant and/or resilient measures into their design, on the basis that flood prevention measures will provide protection?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC7



Coastal areas

In partnership with the Environment Agency, Christchurch Council will need to decide how best to manage the increasing risk to coastal locations of flooding from the sea.

Where are we now?

Large parts of Christchurch lie on low ground around the harbour. The harbour, as well as the Highcliffe area, is protected by soft weak cliffs. Not all of the Christchurch coast is currently protected by flood defences. These factors make the area vulnerable to coastal erosion and sea level rise.

Rules, regulations and advice

The South West Regional Spatial Strategy requires the councils to adopt policies which either defend existing properties against flood risk or relocate existing development from areas of the coast at risk, which cannot be realistically defended .

The evidence

Sea level rise due to climate change is anticipated to affect the Christchurch coastline. By 2070 tide levels for the 1 in 200 year flood event are expected to increase by 2.5m, with further risk from increased wind speeds and wave heights.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How should we consider development in areas at risk from coastal flooding?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC8



SUGGESTED ISSUES

Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue CC9



The area is renowned for its special and often rare natural environment. Large areas are already protected through law and planning policy. It is important to protect this natural asset for its own sake. However, the protected environment heavily influences where future development in Christchurch and East Dorset can be located. This will put greater pressure on areas outside these designations - therefore we need to recognise and manage this pressure.



Where are we now?

The area benefits from the presence of many international nature conservation sites. These areas are already protected by European and National legislation or conventions, which prohibits them being adversely affected. This has a fundamental impact on the development and management of land. Of particular relevance to this point are the Dorset Heaths, an internationally protected and fragmented habitat found across SE Dorset, large parts of which exist in Christchurch and East Dorset.

To help mitigate the impact residential development has on these heathlands, a SE Dorset Interim Planning Framework has been put in place until 2009 and is to be replaced by a joint Heathland Development Plan Document which will form part of this (and other authorities') Local Development Frameworks. Advice from Natural England is that no conventional residential development should normally be allowed within 400 metres of these sites and those beyond 400 metres but within 5 kilometres should provide adequate mitigation for their impacts. It is likely that a significant part of this mitigation will be through the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs) to attract people away from the heaths.

Another internationally important site is the River Avon which is protected as a wetland of importance for birds under the Ramsar Convention.

As well as internationally protected land, there are also large areas of national and local nature conservation importance that are protected either through law, or existing planning policy.

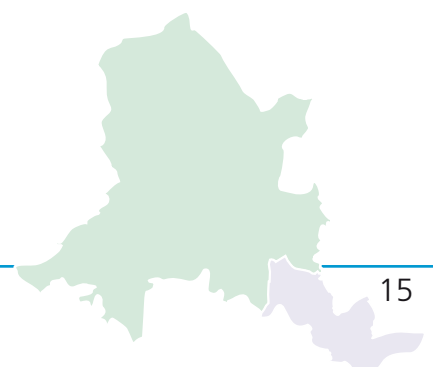
The area provides habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna, including some species which are protected in their own right through legislation.

Rules, regulations and advice

Several regulations and acts exist that protect both natural habitats and individual species. These include The Hedgerow Regulations 1997, Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

THEME 2

Protecting the Natural Environment



Among the most important are the Habitats Regulations 1994 and the Ramsar Convention.

Government guidance in the form of Planning Policy Statement 9 (Biological and Geological Conservation) states, 'Planning Policies and planning decisions should aim to maintain, and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests'.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy reflects this guidance, with a policy requiring development to promote enhancement to designated sites.

The evidence

An objective of the Christchurch and East Dorset Community Strategies is to protect and enhance the environment.

The Community Strategy for Dorset looks to promote recognition and response to climate change in respect of the environment, as well as its general protection, conservation and enhancement.

Key principles of the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy

- **Managing our best habitats**
 - To enable appropriate management to protect and enhance existing, restored and newly created habitats of importance to wildlife, and to make connections between habitats within the surrounding landscape; to support landowners to achieve these aims.
- **Protecting natural assets** - To highlight new actions which are required to achieve biodiversity

conservation in Dorset; to ensure wise use of ecological information at all levels of land-use planning in the county, from Regional Plan to individual site development; to use our local experience to inform those making changes at regional or national levels.

- **Partnership** - To foster the biodiversity partnership to share workload, skills and experience; to embrace all sectors of the community including business, health and education to help them take action for biodiversity.
- **Involving everyone** - To enable communities to work together to conserve their local biodiversity and formulate their own plans for future action.
- **Raising awareness** - To search for imaginative ways to encourage a wider range of people to find out about Dorset's wildlife, and to provide support and encouragement for those involved in education at all levels.
- **Funding conservation action** - To seek new and innovative means to meet the costs of this work, whilst continuing to make best use of existing funds.
- **Monitoring Dorset's biodiversity** - To monitor our progress on conserving the species and habitats special to this county, and to co-ordinate our many actions so that we can review and adjust future plans.

The Dorset Local Geodiversity Action Plan's aims are to promote the conservation and enhancement of the geological resource, provide guidance and increase the appreciation and understanding of the geological heritage of the area.

Benefits and Costs

It is often said that we cannot put a value on protecting our natural environment, and clearly the high quality of our local environment in Christchurch and East Dorset is what makes the area distinct. The natural environment sustains human life, as well as enhances its quality.

The presence of significant areas of protected natural habitats can also have potentially negative implications. Land available for new development is very limited, and potential impacts on habitats and species may mean increased mitigation costs from development, as has been the case with the Heathland Interim Planning Framework.

Further protection of land for nature conservation reduces that available to meet the needs of the community and the economy through new development.

Whilst strong protection exists for national and internationally designated sites, more locally important habitats and landscapes often enjoy much less protection from development. Protecting these areas as well however further reduces land available to meet development needs.

Nature Conservation

We need to provide informal recreation ground to attract people away from using the protected heathlands. Such areas are known as Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).

SUGGESTED ISSUES



How can we offer further protection for the protected heathlands?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue NE1



Where should Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces be located?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue NE2



Should we provide any additional protection to sites under significant pressure?

Go to Response Paper
Issue NE3



Landscape

Where are we now?

The north western part of East Dorset lies within the Cranborne Chase and Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Elsewhere, within the rural parts of East Dorset, Areas of Great Landscape Value have been identified and their character protected through planning policy in the Local Plan, although this does not prevent new development which is sympathetic to the character and quality of the landscape.

To the east of the area lies the New Forest National Park, designated in March 2005.

Rules, regulations and advice

The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a national designation and its character therefore protected. The New Forest National Park lies just a few kilometres from the eastern boundary of Christchurch and East Dorset districts. There is a statutory duty under Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 to have regard to the purposes of designation of National Parks when considering proposals for development which might affect them, even where this development is outside the boundary of the Park.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy has policies to Protect and Enhance the Region's Natural and Historic Environment, Landscape Character Areas and Protected Landscapes.

The evidence

Christchurch Borough Council has undertaken a comprehensive character assessment across the whole Borough which considers the landscape and townscape quality of both the rural and urban areas of the Borough.

An objective of the East Dorset Community Strategy is to protect and enhance the environment, which includes designated landscapes.

The Community Strategy for Dorset looks to promote protection, conservation and enhancement of Dorset's countryside, coast and marine environments.

A County wide Landscape characterisation is being undertaken by Dorset County Council. This work is almost complete and will

be used to inform our work in the Local Development Framework.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



How far should landscape quality and character be protected throughout the rural area?

Go to Response Paper
Issue NE4



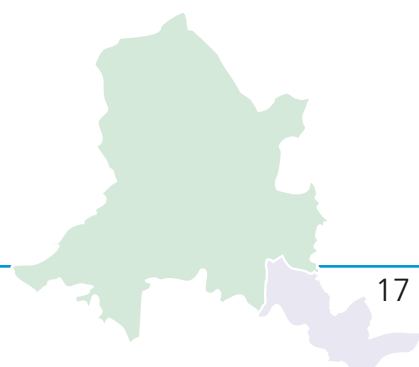
How can we offer protection for the adjoining New Forest National Park through our development strategy and policies?

Go to Response Paper
Issue NE5



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue NE6





Both Christchurch and East Dorset enjoy a diverse range of buildings and sites of archaeological or historic value which make up the area's distinctive character. The Core Strategy will need to ensure these sites are adequately protected from harmful development and preserved for future generations.



Where are we now?

The ever-changing nature of our environment means that areas of historic value or distinct character often come under threat from inappropriate development. Christchurch and East Dorset currently identify a total of 979 listed buildings, 31 Conservation Areas and 17 Special Character Areas. These have been protected by local plan policies.

Both local plans contain a series of general policies requiring good design. In East Dorset this has been supported by a Countryside Design Summary. Christchurch has prepared a Borough wide character assessment and other informal design advice.

Rules, regulations and advice

Government policy in PPG15 requires Councils to continue to protect and appraise buildings and areas of historic or architectural significance and recommends identifying further examples of local merit where they exist. Councils must seek to balance conservation with the need to promote economic development. Policies should promote the re-use and renovation of historic buildings where appropriate.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy seeks to preserve and enhance the region's historic environment, and requires local authorities to assess its significance and vulnerability to change.

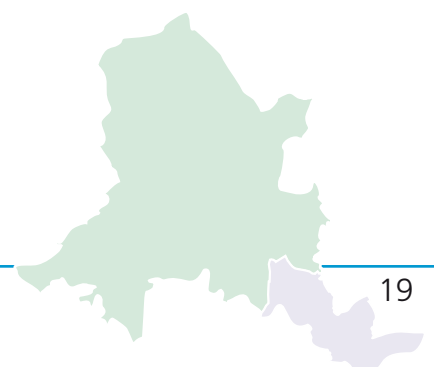
National advice is to improve the design quality of new development, although it is not prescriptive as to how to do this.

The evidence

Ongoing appraisals of Conservation Areas have indicated a loss of valuable historic features as well as structures in danger of continuing decline. Both the Christchurch and East Dorset Community Strategies identify the need to preserve the historic built environment.

Christchurch Borough Council has undertaken a Character Appraisal to identify the important design features of the different parts of its area.

THEME 3 The Historic Built Environment



Benefits and Costs

Local heritage plays a vital role in the character of urban and rural settlements in Christchurch and East Dorset. Local authorities have significant powers to protect this heritage, including listing of important buildings and designation of conservation areas. High levels of protection may have hidden costs however:

- Listing of buildings, and creation of conservation areas preserves the historic environment, but may also impose additional costs and

restrictions on property owners and businesses wishing to develop their premises.

- Historic town centres can increase visitors and trade, however development of new, larger more modern retail and leisure facilities may be more difficult given the constraints of the historic urban character.
- Creation of design guidance and codes helps to establish high quality development in sensitive areas, however it may also be seen as imposing rigid rules and stifling creativity.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



How should we ensure that valuable buildings and sites are appropriately protected?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BE1



Should we identify special character areas where the form and design of new development is controlled through design guidance?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BE2



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BE3



Knowledge of the scale, location, accessibility, service and employment roles of settlements are important factors for planning how to best provide for the needs of existing and future communities. These factors will help to determine the settlement strategy for Christchurch and East Dorset which will establish the future distribution of development throughout the Districts.



The creation of a settlement hierarchy can help direct the type and scale of development throughout the area. The settlements further up the hierarchy will be the focus of development. The hierarchy should not just relate to the scale of a settlement, but should also consider the services and employment opportunities that are present that can support growth, or provide a basis for growth.

The consideration of settlement functions should help in identifying the roles of settlements in delivering future growth.

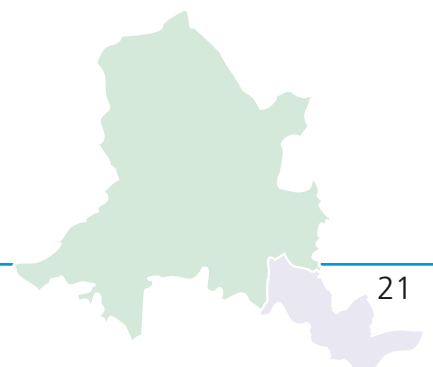
It is important to consider where within each settlement development should be focused. A key consideration will be the scope for provision of access to employment, services and facilities without relying extensively on the use of cars.

Where are we now?

The plan area is made up of a series of settlements with a variety of established functions.

- Wimborne Minster and Christchurch have deep historical roots with well established service and employment roles.
- Other settlements, such as Highcliffe, Verwood, Ferndown, Corfe Mullen and West Moors have only recently developed, but provide local services with varying degrees of employment.
- Burton, Colehill, Three Legged Cross and St Leonard's and St Ives, have few facilities and employment opportunities, but provide large numbers of homes.
- Elsewhere, there is a range of villages. The larger ones, such as Cranborne, Alderholt, Sixpenny Handley and Sturminster Marshall have a limited range of services and employment opportunities, while the smaller villages have even fewer, or none at all.
- The East Dorset Local Plan identifies the local urban centres of Ferndown, Wimborne Minster, Verwood, West Moors, Corfe Mullen, West Parley and St Leonards and St Ives. Within these, new

THEME 4 Settlement Strategy



development is considered acceptable in principle.

- Outside these settlements smaller scale development is acceptable in principle within village infill envelopes.
- The Christchurch Local Plan does not have any ranking of settlement hierarchy.

Recent years have seen an increased intensification of the urban areas through infill residential development. This has occurred on the basis of development opportunities and has not been related to the proximity of facilities, employment or public transport opportunities. It has therefore taken place unevenly throughout the urban areas where land has been available.

- Within East Dorset the pattern of such development has been influenced by Special Character Areas and Conservation Areas.
- In Christchurch the pattern of infill development has been influenced by the Borough Character Appraisal.

Rules regulations and advice

Government guidance advises that development should be focused in existing centres to promote their viability, vitality, social cohesion and a sustainable pattern of development.

The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy follows this line and advises that we should avoid creating a hierarchy simply based on population size, but should instead look at the role and functions of the settlements in order to focus development.

The Panel report for the Regional Spatial Strategy recommends that there should be 4 settlement policies, to be known as Development Policies A, B, C and C2 http://www.southwest-ra.gov.uk/nqcontent.cfm?a_id=3627

- **Policy A** requires that the primary focus of development should be at the Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs). Within our Districts the following settlements are proposed to be included within the SE Dorset SSCT:
 - Christchurch, Highcliffe, Corfe Mullen, Colehill, Wimborne Minster, Ferndown, West Parley, West Moors, St Leonards, Ashley and St Ives.
- **Policy B** relates to settlements considered suitable for locally significant development. These should have an existing or realistic potential for a concentration of business and employment; a wide range of shopping, cultural, religious and faith, educational, health and public services that can meet the needs of the settlement and the surrounding area while minimising car dependence; and sustainable transport modes that can be maintained.
- **Policy C** concerns development in small towns and villages. Development here must be able to support small scale economic

activity; extend the range of services available; not significantly increase traffic on local roads or where traffic can be shown to be acceptable; promote self containment, strengthen local communities and help to support key services

- **Policy C2** is a restrictive policy for development in the open countryside.

New development in the form of intensification of existing settlements will still be required in order to meet needs expressed in the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Government advice is to locate people close to facilities and employment opportunities.

The evidence

The South West Regional Assembly commissioned a report by Roger Tym and Partners entitled 'Functional Analysis of Settlements' (2005). This identified the functions of some of the main settlements in the area.

- Christchurch and Corfe Mullen were considered as part of the main conurbation with access to a full range of services and employment opportunities.
- Wimborne Minster, Ferndown, Verwood and Three Legged Cross were considered to act as dormitory towns, with limited service and employment roles in the context of the Region.

PPS1 requests that '*planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of*



public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major transport interchanges.'

Monitoring of the pattern of new development over the last decade has shown that the provision of facilities has taken place primarily in existing town and local centres. Employment development has been almost exclusively related to town centres and the established employment estates.

Residential development has occurred throughout the urban areas with no clear pattern in relation to location and density.

Benefits and Costs

The structured hierarchy of towns and villages is often something we take for granted, having evolved over many tens, if not hundreds of years. However with significant pressure for growth, there is a possibility that some settlements could significantly increase their population, and thus their potential role within the area.

The level of shops, services, housing and transport will always vary, but some costs and benefits of encouraging or discouraging change to settlement hierarchy to consider are:

- Increasing population in villages is often resisted as it might change the character of the village, but there is also a desire to sustain local services by increasing village populations. However, the population increase needed to maintain facilities can often be quite large and is likely to bring in a new population from outside.
- Focussing new development in centres which already have good services and transport links creates sustainable patterns of development, but may require higher density development in these areas.
- Changing patterns of development can mean that aspirations for new facilities may not be met. For example, evidence suggests that many modern leisure facilities providers such as cinemas require populations in excess of 300,000 within a 15 minute drive time. Expectations for certain services at certain centres may be unrealistic.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What overall settlement strategy should we adopt to shape development across Christchurch and East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue SS1



Do you believe that the existing settlement service and employment functions should stay as the focus for their future, or be widened?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SS2



In the light of the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy policies which if any policy should apply?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SS3



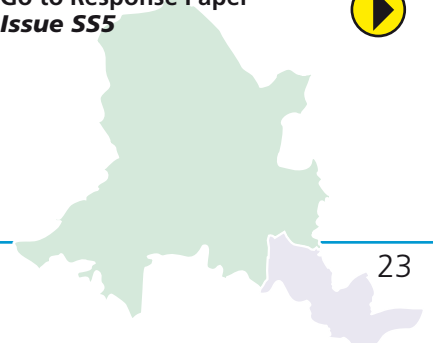
How do we ensure that development is focused towards sustainable locations within settlements?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue SS4



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SS5





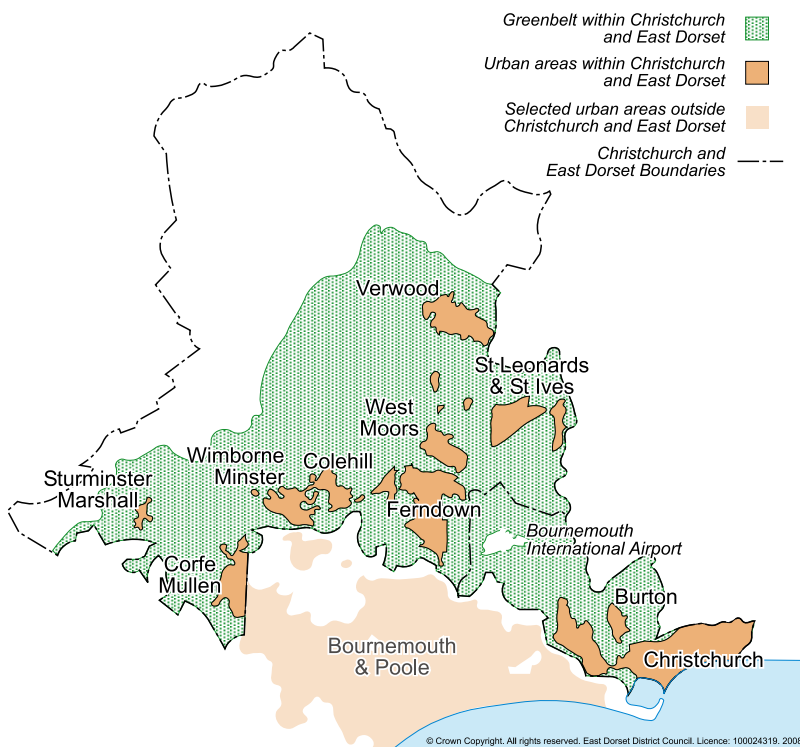
The green belt is one of the best known planning designations and has proved effective over many decades in preventing the encroachment of urban development into the countryside.



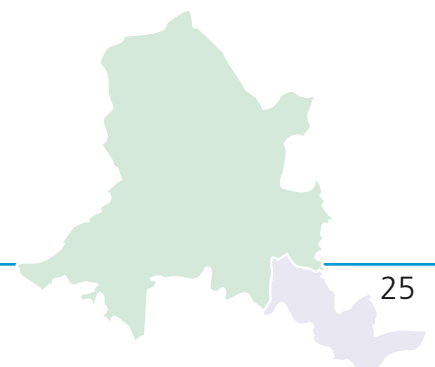
Green belt designation is a constraint in policy terms only, with its main purposes being to protect the open countryside and prevent the joining of settlements. The land within the green belt is not chosen for its landscape or nature conservation value. It is therefore a tool to control the spread of urban development. This means that, where growth of urban areas is required it is sometimes appropriate to review green belt boundaries to allow for development.

Where are we now?

The green belt around South East Dorset was established in the early 1980s and runs from Wareham in the west to Walkford and Chewton Bunny in the east. The green belt links to the South West Hampshire green belt and abuts the New Forest National Park.



THEME 5 Development in the Green Belt



All of the countryside in Christchurch Borough and the majority within East Dorset District is protected as green belt, with the boundary tightly drawn around Christchurch and the larger towns within East Dorset such as Wimborne, Ferndown and Verwood.

Rules, Regulations and advice

National planning policy on green belts is contained in PPG2, and in general terms has changed little over many years. Green belt policy seeks to protect land from “inappropriate development” such as housing, employment and other commercial developments, unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

The aim of green belts is to protect the character of settlements, control urban sprawl, and to prevent settlements from merging together.

The Panel report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy has made several recommendations which have important consequences for the Green Belt in this area:

- It has supported provision of urban extension areas of search in both Christchurch and East Dorset.
- It has recommended removal of the green belt at Bournemouth Airport.
- It has recommended that an additional 1,000 dwellings are provided as smaller urban extensions in East Dorset District, in addition to those required in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.
- It has however generally supported the role and extent of the green belt in South East Dorset.

The boundaries of these development areas and the green belt that will surround them will be defined through the Local Development Framework and the Core Strategy will need to set out key policies for development of these urban extensions. These proposed developments are specifically considered under the next theme.

The evidence

The green belt is considered important by residents and the Councils in maintaining the open countryside. There has been significant public opposition to urban extension proposals in East Dorset District, and indeed the Council objected to these proposals at the Regional Spatial Strategy Examination.

Benefits and Costs

The green belt affords significant protection to the open countryside around our main towns from development. Green belt designation has, over many years been widely supported and stoutly defended by the two Councils. However there can be important consequences of maintaining a tightly drawn green belt around our towns:

- The green belt maintains built up areas at their current limits, but

this means that additional development has to be fitted into the existing settlements through infilling. This may affect the character of existing urban areas.

- New greenfield sites can often be developed more readily and planned on a more comprehensive basis than brownfield sites in the urban area. Lower initial values on greenfield sites may make possible larger developer contributions to community needs and infrastructure.
- For some development, for example employment or leisure uses, suitable sites may simply be unavailable within urban areas, however green belt policy may prohibit their location adjoining the urban area.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Are there particular types of development which should be considered for provision in the green belt as an exception to normal green belt policy because they are urgently needed?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue GB1



Should land be released from the green belt and safeguarded for future development required beyond that needed in this plan?

Go to Response Paper
Issue GB2



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue GB3



The draft Regional Spatial Strategy proposes limited urban extensions, rolling back the inner green belt boundary. The Panel report and recommendations support these urban extensions and recommends additional, smaller ones in East Dorset.



Where are we now?

On the assumption that the Panel's recommendations will be supported by the Secretary of State when she publishes her proposed modifications to the draft Regional Spatial Strategy later this year, the Core Strategy must make decisions about where all these extensions should be and what form they should take.

Rules, regulations and advice

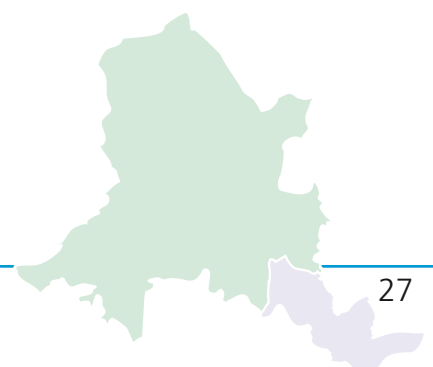
Regional Context

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy has specific proposals for urban extensions for housing in the following broad locations:

- 'north of Christchurch urban area' - north of the railway and east of Stony Lane to the county boundary (*about 600 dwellings*);
- 'north west of the main urban area at Corfe Mullen' (*about 700 dwellings*);
- 'north and west of Wimborne Minster' and
- 'east and south east of Ferndown' (*about 1700 dwellings between the two*).
- In addition there is a proposal for an urban extension 'west of Ferndown' for 20 hectares of employment development.

The draft Inset Key Diagram shows 'areas of search' for these urban extensions. Although this is not a map but a diagram, it seems to show that the area 'north of Christchurch' is both north and south of the railway line near Roeshot Hill and Burton; that 'at Corfe Mullen' stretches along the northern as well as the western edge of the settlement; that the area 'north and west of Wimborne Minster' includes land north of Colehill; and that the area 'east and south east of Ferndown' includes West Parley. The areas of search are just that. They are bigger than needed for the housing and industry that is proposed, and include areas where no development could take place as well as areas which are possible. There is therefore a choice about which areas of land within these should be used.

THEME 6 Urban Extensions



The Panel Report recommends these urban extensions should be included in the Regional Spatial Strategy when it is adopted by the Secretary of State.

In addition, the Panel proposes 1,000 further dwellings in smaller developments around existing settlements in East Dorset. The proposed Policy makes it clear these are related to the urban areas rather than rural settlements, but otherwise gives no 'steer' about where they should be.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the Panel Report also strongly support the need for affordable housing and higher housing densities in major new housing areas.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the Panel Report both support the principle and the purpose of the South East Dorset Green Belt, one of whose aims is to maintain the key gaps separating the settlements. The development must not fill in any of these gaps or make them so narrow that they cannot continue to survive as open country.

The Government emphasises the need for good design, so that new housing areas are attractive places to live.

It also requires new housing areas to be designed 'sustainably', minimising land take while maintaining good living standards, and limiting the impact on the world's resources both in building and in operation. This means good planning has a particular role to play in making sure that people living in these areas do not NEED to travel far to reach work, shops, doctors, open space and other facilities (even though they may still choose to travel further for these), and can get to a range of places without having to use private cars (and though it is often forgotten, many people do not have cars).

The new housing areas will not be big enough to support local centres of their own, particularly the developments providing the 1,000 dwellings on smaller sites, so they must be close to existing shops and schools.

A special problem in south east Dorset is that new housing must not have any significant impact on internationally important nature conservation sites, especially the heathlands. This is both a national and an international policy. One of the main impacts of housing is to create demand for countryside recreation for such things as dog-walking, so new large housing areas need to have large open areas which the new residents (and their dogs!) can enjoy instead of the heathlands. However, even with big open areas nearby, new housing will still need to be at least 400 metres from any heathland, and smaller sites may find it difficult to provide recreation spaces large enough to be attractive.

Other important constraints on where the development could go are the flood plains, larger Ancient Monuments and the safeguarding areas around the Airport.

The evidence

The major, absolute constraints on where development could go (such as the floodplains and the nature conservation sites) have been mapped.

The existing shopping and service centres, and other facilities which new housing must rely upon have been surveyed.

However, each new urban extension will need more work on such things as how the drainage (both foul drainage and surface water run-off) can be provided, how the traffic can be accommodated, and whether there are any local features such as badgers' setts which need to be taken into account.

There will also have to be work to see whether existing facilities (such as schools and doctors' surgeries) can expand to meet the additional demand.

Benefits and costs

Urban extensions are a contentious local issue, particularly those proposed adjoining the settlements in East Dorset District. It is important to consider the potential costs and benefits of developing these extensions:

- Urban extensions will clearly result in significant loss of open countryside around certain towns, but without them, all new housing development will need to be met through redevelopment and infilling of existing urban areas and it is less likely that we will be able to deliver much affordable

housing.

- Development of urban extensions does allow master planning of development, allowing consideration of landscaping, open space and associated facilities. It will be important however that these new developments do not take investment and activity away from existing centres.

North of Christchurch

If there were to be development north of the railway line there would have to be expensive works to carry the traffic under it. This would cost a great deal, and might mean less for other benefits such as affordable housing or other infrastructure. Parts of the land north of the railway are also subject to the risk of flooding, although not a high risk. The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy has identified land north of the railway line for minerals extraction. If this proceeds there is a potential increase in floodrisk for this area.

If it were north of the railway line the new development would form part of Burton. This would change the character of the village, but could help to support more local facilities.

The land south of the railway lies between the railway and the A35 at Roeshot Hill has potential access to the frequent bus service which terminate at Sainsbury's although it would be separated from the main urban area by a busy main road. It also has a line of pylons running through it which might have to

be moved. Again, this would be expensive, reducing the money available for other things.

Immediately north east of the railway line and north west of Lyndhurst Road are the allotments which are also located within the urban extension area of search. If development comes forward in this area it will need to be considered whether the allotments can remain in their current location or if they need to be relocated to a suitable alternative site.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



In refining the area of search for the urban extension north of Christchurch, what strategy should be adopted?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE1



What criteria should we consider in developing policy for this urban extension?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE2



North-West of the main urban area at Corfe Mullen

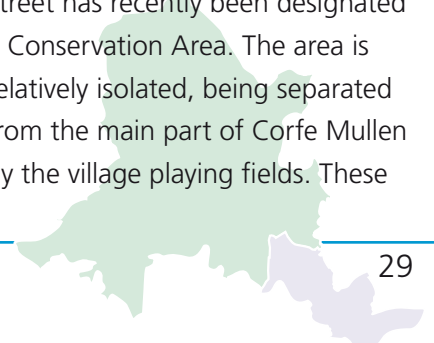
Corfe Mullen is a hilltop settlement. Any new development will be on the slopes and in the valleys below.

The land to the west is the Waterloo Valley. This is very attractive landscape and has important nature conservation sites in the southern and middle parts between Naked Cross and Brook Lane. It is a relatively long way, and uphill, from here to the main village facilities which are mainly scattered along the Wareham Road and where the now much-reduced bus service runs.

The northern part of the Waterloo Valley has no major nature conservation sites, although it is still rich in wildlife. It is closer to the cluster of facilities at the northern end of the village and to Henbury View and Lockyers schools. However there is still a steep hill between the valley and the hilltop.

The very bottom of the Waterloo Valley is subject to flooding.

The land north of Corfe Mullen lies along the north-facing slope of the Stour Valley between Brog Street and Wimborne Road above the A31. Again, this is attractive landscape with some wildlife interest. The area around Brog Street has recently been designated a Conservation Area. The area is relatively isolated, being separated from the main part of Corfe Mullen by the village playing fields. These



would have to stay, because there is no other flat land, not subject to flooding, where they could be moved. North-facing slopes are not good places for sustainable housing.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Where should the development be?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE3 

Lockyers School

As part of the new development it would be possible to build housing on the existing site of Lockyers School and use the profits to build a new school on part of the playing fields north of Wimborne Road. Lockyers School is an historic part of the village, but its buildings are outworn.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Do you think that Lockyers School should be considered as part of the urban extension?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE4 

What additional facilities and transport improvements does Corfe Mullen need to support the development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE5 

North and West of Wimborne Minster

There is only a small area west of Wimborne Minster before a limit is set by the River Stour and its flood plain. This is where the Cuthbury allotments are. The land is a short, level walk to the town centre and all its facilities. However, this area could only hold about 200 houses. A good new site would have to be found for the allotments, which are an important facility.

North of Cuthbury the land rises sharply to Queen Elizabeth's School, and the edge of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

North of Wimborne and north east of the River Allen there is an area quite close to the town centre, north of Walford Bridge. Further east there is a newly defined Conservation Area at Burts Hill - Merrifield. Beyond this there is open country along the north side of the Colehill ridge, but it is far from the town centre and bus routes, although close to some other facilities such as St. Michael's Middle School.

Problems with development to the north of Wimborne and Colehill are likely to be how drainage - particularly surface water drainage - is dealt with, and how traffic from the development is carried through Wimborne or across Colehill.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Where should the development be?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE6 

About 1,700 dwellings need to be shared between the two areas of search north and west of Wimborne Minster, and east and south of Ferndown. Please say how much you think should be found at the area of search north and west of Wimborne Minster:

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How much housing should there be?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE7 

What additional facilities and transport improvements would be most needed to support this development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE8 

If the allotments at Cuthbury need to be replaced, where might this be?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE9 

East and South of Ferndown

Most of the land east of Ferndown is ruled out by being within 400 metres of the important Parley Common area of heathland.

At West Parley there are only limited areas between the existing built up areas and the River Stour and its flood plain to the south and the area seriously affected by aircraft noise from the airport.

There is a local shopping centre at Parley Cross, but schools are a long way away. There are transport proposals for a 'gyratory' road system at Parley Cross to cope with the growing volume of traffic, including that from the growth of air transport and business at the Airport to the east. It would be uncomfortable to have this major traffic feature at the centre of the new development area. There is still a relatively good bus service down New Road into Bournemouth.

Further west is the major Ancient Monument at Dudsbury camp, on a bluff above the river. This could not be built on. Further west again are the Dudsbury golf course, and land around the northern parts of Longham. Longham has very few local facilities, either in the way of shops or schools, and it has only a limited bus service.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Where should the development be?

**Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE10**



About 1,700 dwellings need to be shared between the two areas of search north and west of Wimborne Minster, and east and south of Ferndown. Please say how much you think should be found at the area of search east and south of Ferndown:

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How much housing should there be?

**Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE11**



What additional facilities and transport improvements would be most needed to support this development?

**Go to Response Paper
Issue UE12**



West of Ferndown

This is an area of search where it is proposed there should be 20 hectares of industrial development. This could be on land north of the existing Ferndown and Uddens Industrial Estates at Blunt's Farm. This could connect to the roads in the existing industrial estates, and its further spreading would be contained south of the A31 Ferndown Bypass. Direct access onto the bypass would not be allowed by the Highways Agency.

Further south, but still 'west of Ferndown, is the land around Stapehill Abbey, Knoll Gardens and Award Road. There is no industry in these areas at present and the road network could pose problems unless there were extensive improvements. There are some areas with features of nature conservation importance, although these are not nationally or internationally listed.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Where should the development be?

**Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE13**



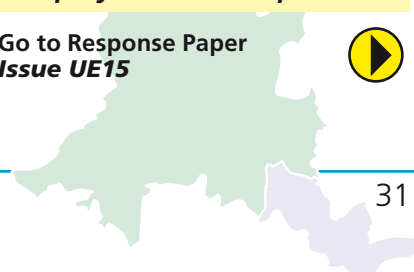
What transport improvements should be made as part of this development?

**Go to Response Paper
Issue UE14**



Should there be additional facilities to support the employment development?

**Go to Response Paper
Issue UE15**



1,000 houses on other sites around the main towns and built up areas of East Dorset

Where are we now?

The green belt boundaries were originally drawn to allow scope for development, so that they would not have to be changed for a long time. The boundaries have therefore not changed in about 25 years. However, the green belt boundaries are now tight to the edge of development.

Rules, regulations and advice

The Regional Spatial Strategy provides the exceptional circumstances necessary to change green belt boundaries. The Regional Spatial Strategy Panel report recommends that 1,000 dwellings will be required in the green belt associated with the urban areas of East Dorset. Green Belt boundaries will need to be re-set to accommodate this.

Nevertheless, national guidance provides clear advice as to where green belt boundaries should be drawn, so that they fulfil the purposes of the green belt and can be maintained for a long period. Strong boundaries should be used, such as roads and rivers. Narrow gaps between settlements should be protected and the smallest area necessary removed from the green belt to prevent urban sprawl and make efficient use of land.

The evidence

Consideration of the issues in Theme 5 highlights the differences between the urban areas in relation to their function. It is important to take this into account when thinking about the best location to allow new development and move back the Green Belt boundaries. We need to think of how we ensure a sustainable future Green Belt, but also the location of housing in relation to facilities and employment opportunities.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How should the proposed 1,000 homes be distributed?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue UE16



Do you have any suggestions for sites where this development could go?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE17



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue UE18



Travel is a fundamental human requirement. When matters about transport are discussed it is clear that there are very serious challenges facing Christchurch and East Dorset. Major road congestion is regularly experienced and those without cars in the outlying parts of the Districts are badly served by public transport. The Core Strategy must find ways of enabling people to travel safely and conveniently to meet their needs.



Where are we now?

Christchurch is close to Bournemouth with access to the A338 to the north and the A35 to the east. The Borough has two railway stations at Christchurch and Hinton Admiral, relatively high frequency bus services and a regionally significant airport.

East Dorset has sparse rural villages in the north of the district and suburban settlements to the south. There is no railway and bus services are far less frequent than Christchurch. Wimborne Verwood and Ferndown are important towns for the district and provide many services and facilities to the surrounding areas. Access to town centres and facilities both locally and in the main centres of the conurbation is a key issue.

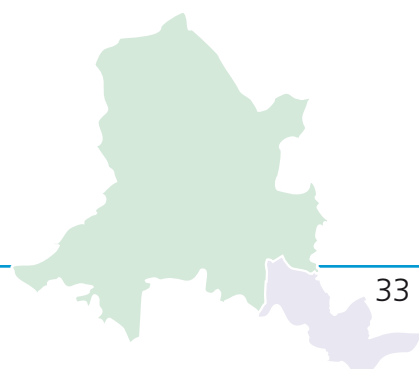
Many people drive to work, and to access shops and services from outlying areas in Christchurch and East Dorset. Over the last 20 years traffic on Dorset's roads has doubled. Increasing traffic raises problems of congestion, road safety and environmental impact, especially in the main urban areas and along major routes. Reliance on the car is greatest in rural areas of East Dorset and Christchurch where public transport services are infrequent. Reducing traffic levels in these areas is particularly difficult because of the lack of viable alternatives.

Access to work, and particularly outlying industrial areas, can be difficult. This is a problem for people wanting to take up jobs and for employers looking for workers. This issue cross-relates to Theme 9 on Employment, and may hamper economic growth.

Rules, regulations and advice

The Government advises that new development should reduce the need to travel. Planning proposals and policies should make it easier for people to get to work and to key facilities by sustainable transport modes, especially walking, cycling and public transport. Where required, traffic management measures should improve local neighbourhoods, enhance streetscape and the natural environment and improve road safety.

THEME 7 Transport



The Government's main objectives linked to transport are to:

- Promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and freight.
- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking cycling and public transport.
- Reduce the need to travel, especially by single-occupancy cars.
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Reduce the impact of traffic on the built and natural environment.

The Government advises us to achieve these objectives by:

- Increasing the use of previously developed land.
- Increasing housing densities;
- Focusing more development in urban areas, towns and key service centres.
- Supporting new development by sustainable transport choices with the provision of essential infrastructure.

Achieving government objectives for transport requires effective integration of transport planning and spatial planning. This is particularly to enable new development to be accompanied by the necessary transport services and infrastructure to promote accessibility to everyday facilities for all.

The evidence

Regional Context

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy advises that we must ensure investment in infrastructure and identify clearly the links with development.

The Strategy promotes changes in travel patterns and the use of sustainable modes of transport that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Panel report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy recommends the following priorities:

- Investment in public transport, walking and cycling provision with better buses and trains;
- Increased demand management by transferring more road space to priority vehicles and managing the supply and use of parking (with the possibility of congestion charging);
- Prime transport corridor improvements and the A31 improved to dual carriageway standard through the conurbation.
- Improvements on the A31 to Poole corridor;
- Provision of new local rail services and stations and use of rail for local Park and Ride;
- Improvements to rail links to other major centres;
- Improved accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking to significant areas of countryside recreation, including Cranborne Chase and the New Forest.
- Route management along the A350 corridor (links from South East Dorset to the M4).
- A new passenger terminal at Bournemouth Airport;
- A package of measures to improve access to the airport, including a link road to the A338;

The Panel report recommends strengthening the requirement for local authorities in South East Dorset to work together to deliver transport improvements. This will require the pooling of resources and developer contributions to deliver the transport strategy for the conurbation.

Christchurch Borough Council's Corporate Plan

The Borough's Corporate Plan says "Locally, many people think that road congestion is one of the biggest problems in Christchurch" and the Corporate Plan has among its objectives

TR1 Encourage the use of a variety of sustainable and fuel-efficient modes of transport to help reduce congestion

TR3 Develop speed management and pedestrian improvements in areas of greatest need

The Community Strategy for Dorset 2007 - 2016

The Community Strategy supports delivery of the SE Dorset integrated transport package, improved surface access to Bournemouth Airport and improvements to the A31 to Poole corridor.

Christchurch Community Strategy 2007-2010 East Dorset Community Strategy 2007

The Community Strategies for Christchurch and East Dorset raise similar issues of accessibility. The strategies want more sustainable modes of transport, reducing dependency on the car where practicable with improvements to public and community transport services and the promotion of cycling

The Christchurch Community Strategy also identifies the need to review and update signage to facilities, parking, shops and other places of interest in the Borough. A project to enhance facilities at Christchurch Railway Station is also part of the Community Strategy. In East Dorset there is concern in many areas over the speed and volume of traffic. Meetings with the business community have shown serious worries about poor roads, congestion and unreliable travel times.

Local Transport Plans

Planning for accessibility is a central part of this Core Strategy and is also a key theme for Dorset's Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and community strategies. The Core Strategy provides the spatial expression for the transport strategies contained in Local Transport Plans and for the Community Strategies.

The promotion of travel plans is an important measure to promote alternatives to single-occupancy car journeys e.g. car sharing, public transport, walking and cycling. Travel plans are also an essential tool in reducing congestion, CO₂ emissions and travelling costs. The requirements for preparation of travel plans to serve new development in Christchurch and East Dorset is set out in adopted supplementary planning guidance, 'Travel Plans in Dorset'.

Other evidence

A major new traffic model is being prepared by the local transport authorities for South East Dorset. This study will not be completed in time to inform this Core Strategy but will be available for future revisions of the strategy.

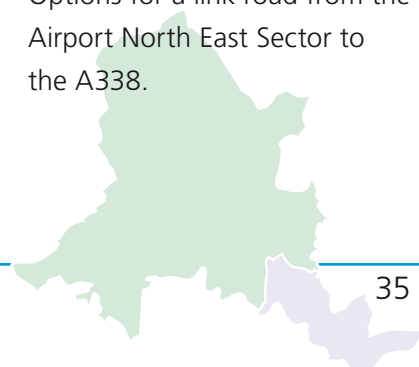
A **Transportation Study** has been commissioned by Dorset County Council to develop an integrated transport strategy for North Dorset and the northern part of East Dorset. This will try to reduce the need to travel, optimise the choices between travel modes and reduce the impact of travel on the environment.

The **Dorset Residential Parking Study** is also underway. This will provide parking standards appropriate to the location of new development. This study is due for completion in March 2008.

A **Parking, Access and Signage Strategy** has been completed by Colin Buchanan for Christchurch Council. This study has made detailed recommendations about car parking capacity, parking hierarchy, tariffs, signing and routing and opportunities for park and ride schemes.

A number of transport studies are currently being prepared for Bournemouth International Airport which include.

- Options for a link road from the Airport North East Sector to the A338.



- Road and junction improvements required in step with growth at the airport.
- Transport contributions required in step with the scale of new development.

The Regional Spatial Strategy panel recommend a total of 3,450 homes in Christchurch and 6,400 in East Dorset to be provided during the period 2006 - 2026. If this is agreed by the Secretary of State, a proportion of this development will need to be accommodated in urban extensions.

Transport modelling work is currently being undertaken to assess impacts of proposed development upon the road network and to identify specific transport improvements required to serve potential urban extensions. These studies will be available to inform the preferred options stage of the Core Strategy.

Benefits and Costs

This issue raises a number of trade offs which need to be carefully considered:

- Focusing development on town centres and along existing transport corridors ensures that people can choose alternatives to the car, but may also concentrate development in areas already suffering congestion and lead to higher housing densities.
- Continuous and worsening traffic congestion has serious implications for the economy, general travel time and air quality.
- Taking contributions from development for transport improvements ensures that each development compensates for its potential impacts on the transport network. However, the pot of money from many small developments takes time to fill up, thus delaying the delivery of the new transport infrastructure and services.
- Constraints on private car use, for example charging for cars carrying only one person, or higher parking charges, may help to reduce congestion and encourage public transport use, but are unpopular because many people want the convenience of using their cars.
- Relief roads can reduce the impacts of through traffic. However these are costly major projects for which resources likely to be very limited, and could have significant environmental impacts.
- Better public transport can also be costly and often requires ongoing subsidies from taxpayers.

Dependency on the private car

Within Christchurch and East Dorset there is a reliance upon the private car. This adds to congestion and CO₂ emissions. Car ownership is predicted to rise over the plan period with more two-car households.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How can we reduce dependency on the private car and encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue TR1



Extent of Prime Transport Corridors

Prime transport corridors form the network of key routes within the conurbation where high quality transport services can be provided - at a cost. Regional and Local Transport Plan policy is that new development should be concentrated along these. Since substantial new development is proposed in the outer parts of the conurbation, should these Prime Transport Corridors be extended into these outer areas?

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Should a prime transport corridor be extended to the following settlements?

Go to Response Paper
Issue TR2



What can we do to increase the potential of rail as a means of transport in the area?

Go to Response Paper
Issue TR3





Major Trip Generating Development

In accordance with national policy new development should not contribute to generating unsustainable commuting / travel patterns. Therefore, the location of major new trip generating development and its proximity to appropriate transport infrastructure is very important.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Should approval of major new trip generating development be conditional on any of the following?

Go to Response Paper Issue TR4



Major Transport Improvements

In order to improve accessibility and support the local economy a number of major transport improvements are likely to be required. A package of transport improvements have been identified in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the Local Transport Plan. The Core Strategy must also consider Issues for transport improvements in addition to those considered in these strategies.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Which major highway improvements are required?

Go to Response Paper Issue TR5



Car parking hierarchy / Car parking capacity

A car parking hierarchy can direct the use of public car parks for shoppers, employees and retailers. The need for car parking must be balanced against the need to reduce levels of congestion and promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What approach should we adopt for car parking provision?

Go to Response Paper Issue TR6



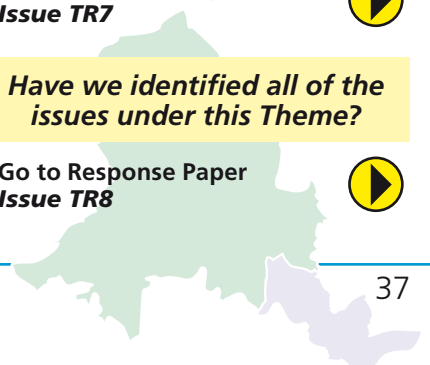
What type of proposals can be developed to improve safety on our roads and our local environment?

Go to Response Paper Issue TR7



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper Issue TR8





Our town centres are the main focus of our communities. They provide places to shop, work, socialise, learn and live. The Future Vitality of our town centres is therefore very important and the Core Strategy needs to provide the support needed to meet the challenges of the future



Where are we now?

There are six town centres within Christchurch and East Dorset which are of differing size, significance and function, as defined in the current Local Plans. These are:

Christchurch Borough

Christchurch
Highcliffe



East Dorset District

Ferndown
Verwood
West Moors
Wimborne



These are complemented by a variety of local and neighbourhood centres both in the villages and suburban areas.

Rules, regulations and advice

Government guidance in PPS6 advises we should plan for the growth and development of existing town centres to ensure vitality. This should:

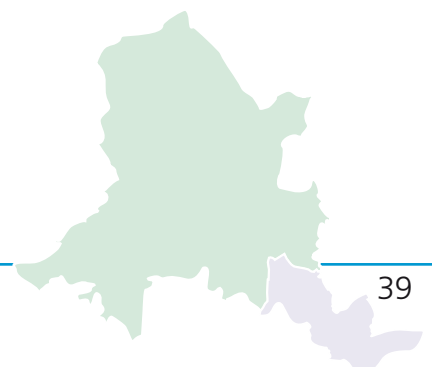
- Support competitive retail and tourism activity
- Promote social inclusion and accessibility
- Encourage greater investment, mixed uses and employment opportunities
- Deliver sustainable growth
- Encourage sustainable transport Issues by reducing the need to travel
- Promote high quality design and a safe environment for all

Government advocates that market towns and villages should be the main service centres in rural areas, providing a range of facilities at a scale appropriate to the needs and size of the catchment areas.

The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy also promotes the importance of enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centres to facilitate sustainable growth and the importance of mixed uses in the heart of

THEME 8 Town Centre Vitality

The Future Vitality of our Town Centres



towns. It advocates the improved access to towns by sustainable modes of transport, such as bicycles and buses.

The evidence

The Councils have recently commissioned a report (February 2008) by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) into the health and vitality of the town centres in Christchurch and East Dorset. This demonstrates the unique functions of the towns and highlights the high levels of shopping migration both between the towns and into the conurbation. The study assesses the future need for additional retail, commercial and leisure development and the capacity to accommodate future growth.

Benefits and Costs

It is important that our towns and villages are able to provide an adequate range of shops, services and facilities to meet the needs of the populations they serve. Ensuring that this is achieved may have some costs as well as benefits:

- Policies which seek to protect retail frontages or centres can ensure that the retail function of a centre remains strong, but may also reduce the ability of centres to change and develop their functions, for example increasing restaurant and leisure uses.
- Retaining village shops attempts to ensure the retention of a valuable local facility, however this may impose constraints on owners whose business has closed and cannot be sold for alternative use.
- Encouraging new retail floorspace is important in maintaining market share for our centres. However the demand for new larger units may conflict with the historic character of many town centres.

Outflow of shoppers

The flow of shoppers for convenience and comparison goods away from the town centres will have an adverse effect on the vitality of our town centres. This will also increase traffic congestion and CO₂ emissions. As the population continues to grow, these issues will worsen.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

What range of uses should be promoted in the town centres to enhance their vitality?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue TC1



How can we improve the vitality and viability of our towns and villages?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue TC2



What issues or improvements do you consider need to be addressed to ensure continued investment in the town centres?

Go to Response Paper
Issue TC3



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue TC4



The economy of the area faces important challenges over the next 20 years. It currently performs below the National average in relation to productivity, but employment rates are high. Changes in the structure of the population indicate that the supply of workers will reduce, however, demand for new premises is high.



Where are we now?

Unemployment is low in Christchurch (1.2% 2006) and East Dorset (0.7%) and wage levels are slightly below the national average.

Christchurch performs relatively well in the knowledge economy with advanced engineering and aerospace companies located at Bournemouth International Airport. However, the majority of employment in Christchurch and East Dorset is in low value sectors such as distribution, hotels and restaurants.

The area is strong in manufacturing / engineering, distribution, transport & communications, and construction. The area is less strong in research and development and information technology companies which are associated with high levels of productivity and high quality employment opportunities.

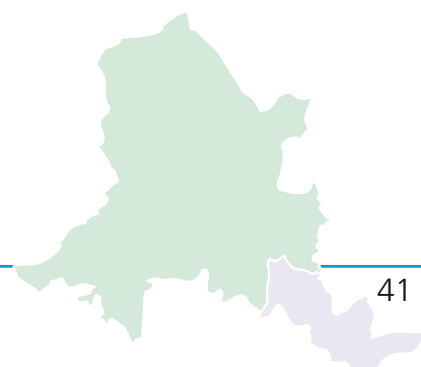
The supply of new employment land is mainly within the Airport business parks with some 60 - 70ha available for development. Christchurch's remaining supply of employment land is concentrated on sites close to the town centre with the most significant sites located off the Somerford Road. In East Dorset employment land supply is concentrated around Ferndown, Ebblake and Woolsbridge.

Rules, regulations and advice

Government guidance advises that we should:

- Promote a strong stable, productive, innovative and competitive economy.
- Promote economic development that is compatible with environmental objectives and reduces the need to travel.
- Meet the requirements of commerce and industry by providing a variety of sites well served by appropriate infrastructure to meet diverse business requirements.

THEME 9 Sustainable Economic Growth



Regional context

The Panel Report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy advises that Christchurch, and the main towns of East Dorset should be considered as being functionally part of the south east Dorset conurbation – one of the Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCTs) of the region. Regional policy is that these SSCTs should be the main focus for economic growth. However, the Regional Spatial Strategy also acknowledges the contribution of small communities and rural areas toward the economic performance of the area.

The Panel recommend that a target of 110ha of land should be provided for employment in the Bournemouth and Poole area as a whole. The Airport could provide 70 ha. However, the Panel also recommend that the necessary links to the Airport are a low priority for public spending, implying that they should be funded by the developers of the Airport. These costs may be more than the Airport development can bear.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy proposes an urban extension for employment in an Area of Search 'west of Ferndown' which would be around 20 ha.

The Panel also recommend that the types of development in our area should not compete with the town centre regeneration proposals of Poole and Bournemouth, which rely heavily on office development.

Christchurch and East Dorset Community Strategies:

The community strategies for Christchurch and East Dorset identify a number of priorities to promote sustainable economic growth. Common objectives of the strategies include:

- Supporting the objectives of the sub regional economic strategy 'Raising the Game'.
- Improving the local skills base and the availability of high quality employment opportunities.
- Supporting local business - through specific events to increase footfall and by supporting business forums.
- Promoting the town centre evening economy
- Providing support to social enterprise
- Providing sufficient affordable housing.

The evidence

Employment land reviews are currently being prepared for Christchurch and East Dorset. Their main task is to assess the amount and location of employment land and the types of premises needed to meet the requirements of local business and inward investment over the next 20 years. The main findings of the reviews so far are:

- There is a shortage of employment land available in the short to medium term
- Employment land supply is concentrated at Bournemouth International Airport and the ability to bring this land forward is constrained by significant infrastructure and environmental issues.
- The majority of supply is within the general industrial / business area market segment which constrains the range of business activity which can be attracted.
- The majority of employment in Christchurch and East Dorset is low wage and low skill.

Forecasts made for the Regional Spatial Strategy provide a reminder that about 40% of new employment will be in such businesses as health, social, education, hotel and catering. These and many other businesses do not go on 'industrial estates'.

Benefits and Costs

Ensuring a thriving economy goes to the heart of development planning for the future. In an area of significant environmental constraints and pressure for development, this often represents a challenge:

- Protecting existing employment sites helps to maintain existing supply of land and premises. Many of these sites are also in highly sustainable locations for new housing development. We need to consider carefully how these competing demands can be met and whether there are employment sites that could be released for housing.

- Allowing more flexibility for employment development in rural areas may help diversify the rural economy and reduce commuting, but may also have impacts on the character of rural villages and the landscape and lead to lengthy journeys and more traffic on rural roads.
- It is difficult to control the market for employment land. Increased controls over what type of enterprise can locate on a site reduces business flexibility.
- Restricting the uses allowed on certain employment estates reduces flexibility to meet changing market demand, but could be used to address specific needs such as for key business sectors or types of premises.

Meeting the employment land requirements of the local economy

In meeting the employment land requirements of local business and inward investment it is important that the right types of site and premises are provided in the right places. Throughout these questions, references to “B Class uses” refer to the following definitions of the Use Classes Order:

Class B1 Light industry and offices.

Class B2 General industry.

Class B8 Warehousing and distribution.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How can we ensure that there is a sufficient amount and range of employment land and premises to meet the needs of local business and inward investment?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue EG1 

How important is it to protect employment sites, given competing uses for the land?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue EG2 

Apart from the area ‘west of Ferndown’, are there any places where you think more employment land should be provided in East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
Issue EG3 

What sort of new employment premises do you think are required in Christchurch and where? (excluding employment land located at Bournemouth Airport)

Go to Response Paper
Issue EG4 

What range of uses should be promoted on established and allocated employment sites?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue EG5 

Which non-B class uses should be permitted on established and allocated employment sites in order to promote sustainable economic development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue EG6 

How can we influence the availability of skilled labour to meet the needs of local business and inward investment?

Go to Response Paper
Issue EG7 

How can we promote employment development which offers high quality employment opportunities?

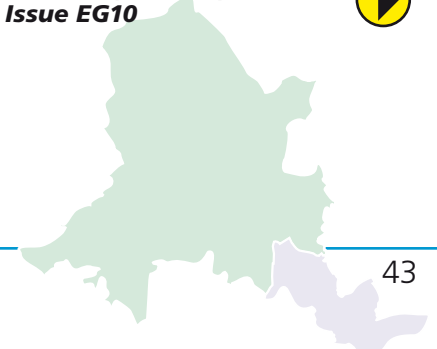
Go to Response Paper
Issue EG8 

Which measures should be adopted to support the rural economy?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue EG9 

Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue EG10 





Bournemouth International Airport fulfils a major sub regional role both as a regional airport and as an employment site. In terms of passenger growth it is the UK's fastest growing airport.



Where are we now?

Bournemouth International Airport lies within Christchurch Borough, and the parish of Hurn. It is approximately 5km (3 miles) from Christchurch town centre and 7km (4.5 miles) from Bournemouth town centre. The site is reasonably close to the trunk road network, approximately 2km (1 mile) from the A338 Bournemouth Spur Road, which connects to the A31 trunk road at Ashley Heath. The airport has no rail connection, the nearest station being Christchurch, approximately 4km away. An hourly airport bus service connects the airport with Bournemouth travel interchange and the town centre and main hotels.

The airport is sited on low lying land between the Moors River and River Stour. The site extends to 366 hectares (900 acres). It is a major employer in the area and fulfils two distinct functional roles, providing:

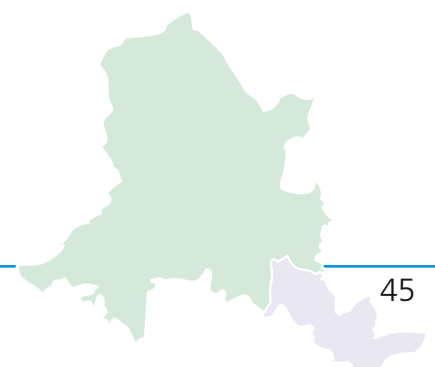
- The primary airport for the local and wider area; and
- An existing Business Park and future employment opportunity of strategic importance to South East Dorset.

The site is often described as different sectors:

- The southeast sector comprising the main passenger terminal buildings, the NATS Air Traffic Control College, Museum of Aviation, flying club and other associated airport buildings and uses, including car parks.
- The southwest sector, essentially comprising runway and taxiways.
- The northeast sector comprising a mixture of significant aviation related businesses, and other low key employment uses.
- The northwest sector comprising a varied range of business uses, including high quality office development at Aviation Park. The two northern sectors are known as the airport business park.

The airport is almost unique in the UK in containing significant nature conservation designations within the airport site (some 67 hectares of such designations). These comprise internationally protected SPA and SSSI heathland, and local Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs).

Theme 10 Bournemouth International Airport



The past 5 years have seen significant growth in air passenger numbers, particularly with the growth of low cost airlines. In 2000 passenger throughput at the airport was 271,000 passengers per annum, by 2006 it had risen to 917,000 and last year it broke through the 1 million passengers per annum figure. The business park has continued to fulfil an important role as an employment centre, estimated to employ around 2,500 people.

The status of the business park and the airport itself has also been recognised in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan and the emerging South West Regional Spatial Strategy.

Development of the airport as a whole has however been constrained both by sensitive nature conservation designations which lie within and adjoining the site, and by inadequate local transport infrastructure. Fulfilling the potential of the site will depend upon overcoming these constraints, and ensuring a sustainable pattern of development.

Rules, regulations and advice

National Policy

Airport Growth - Government policy on airports is set out in the Civil Aviation Act 2006 which implements a number of commitments of the Future of Air Transport White Paper. Government policy supports the principle of providing additional terminal capacity at the airport in the context of minimising impacts on environmentally sensitive sites and providing improvements to transport access.

In response to the Future of Air Transport White Paper, Bournemouth Airport prepared a Master Plan to set out how the airport can accommodate the projected levels of growth up to 2030 identified in the White Paper.

Employment at the Airport Business Park - The government promotes economic development compatible with environmental objectives. In promoting sustainable economic growth we are required to provide sufficient land for employment development well served by infrastructure. In this context the infrastructure constraints at the airport must be addressed to ensure a sufficient supply of land and premises is brought forward in an appropriate timescale to meet business requirements. This is important not only because of the contribution the business park already makes to the local economy but also due to the significant reliance placed on the site in providing land to meet future employment needs in the local and wider area.

Climate Change - Future development of the Airport must adhere to policies which provide a framework for achieving zero carbon development, reducing emissions, stabilising climate change and taking into account unavoidable consequences.

Green Belt - The southern operational sector of the airport is set within

the green belt while the business park is excluded. National guidance presumes against development in the green belt except in very special circumstances.

Biodiversity and Geological

Conservation - The Airport site as a whole includes and abuts several international, national and locally designated sites of nature conservation importance. The New Forest National Park lies approximately 5.4 km (3.5 miles) to the east of the Airport.

As part of the process of preparing the Core Strategy and Airport Area Action Plan we are required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA). This assesses the impacts of a land use plan against the conservation objectives of a European nature conservation site. Where significant effects are identified, alternatives should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.

Transport - Future development at the Airport should offer a realistic choice of access by a range of transport modes with particular emphasis on the provision of public transport services. It is anticipated that the Airport and Business Park Travel Plans will play a pivotal role in reducing single occupancy car based travel. The Core Strategy should promote sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on the car for work and other journeys.

Noise - Future development of the Airport should consider current levels of noise exposure and any

increase that can be reasonably expected in the future. We should ensure that development does not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance.

Regional Context

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy promotes the continued economic development of Bournemouth International Airport and airport related development. As part of the region's Air Strategy the draft Regional Spatial Strategy supports the growth of Bournemouth as a strategic regional airport to meet the region's demand for air services and to reduce journeys to airports outside the region.

The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the importance of promoting aerospace and advanced engineering related development at the airport business park. The Regional Spatial Strategy also sets out a requirement to provide a ready supply of high quality sites at the right time in suitable locations to support the economic growth of the region. Employment land at Bournemouth Airport plays a significant role in achieving this objective as it constitutes the bulk of existing supply for the sub region.

The Regional Spatial Strategy Panel Report implies that employment development at Bournemouth Airport should complement development in the town centres of Bournemouth and Poole. The report suggests that we should be clear on the type of employment to be promoted at the airport so as not to conflict with employment

development in Bournemouth and Poole. The report also states that the Poole Regeneration Area should be the priority for publicly funded infrastructure.

The Panel Report identifies the importance of a link road from the airport to the A338, as part of a package of transport measures, to make the business park more marketable, ease traffic problems and allow a higher level of development. The report identifies the provision of a link road as a longer term project and emphasises that implementation of the link road is dependent on the commercial judgement of the airport owners..

The report also states that land at Bournemouth Airport should be removed from the green belt with the detailed boundary to be established through the LDF process.

The evidence

Christchurch Borough Council's Corporate Plan Priority BT4 is to *"Support expansion at the Airport which promotes economic growth and mitigates environmental impacts"*.

The Christchurch Community Strategy supports development at the airport which promotes economic prosperity and meets environmental objectives.

The East Dorset Community Strategy states that the development of the Airport will enhance transport connections and open up possibilities for international trade. However the

strategy also raises concerns that airport growth may contribute to increased noise levels, pollution and traffic congestion.

Manchester Airport Group, the owners of the Airport, produced a Master Plan for the operational Airport in 2007. This sets out a range of proposals to meet passenger growth up to 2030. The Group is currently preparing a Planning Framework for the Northern Sectors and this will feed into the Core strategy when completed.

The Airport Master Plan, which covers the southeast and southwest sectors, was prepared by Bournemouth Airport and was formally adopted by the Airport in May 2007. Although the Master Plan does not form a statutory part of the Council's Local Development Framework, it was subject to wide consultation and in accordance with the Air Transport White Paper, such Master Plans should be used to inform the preparation of the Local Development Framework.

A Planning and Spatial Framework for the Business Park is being prepared by the Airport, who are responsible for developing and managing the Business Park. Publication of the draft Framework is pending completion of an associated transport study being prepared by the Airport's transportation consultants in consultation with Dorset County Council. The Framework will focus mainly on the northwest sector and is to update a previous Master Plan study for the Business Park led

by consultants EDAW completed on behalf of the owners and the South West Regional Development Agency. The EDAW study concluded that the development proposals identified were not commercially viable, due largely to the costs of the link road and also abnormal external costs, including conditions in the lease applying to new development.

An economic study is currently being prepared for Bournemouth International Airport which assesses the future role of employment land at the airport in the context of the sub regional economy. The study will assess the level of employment development that can be delivered at the Airport in the short, medium and long term and the range of employment uses that can be promoted.

Manchester Airports in consultation with Dorset County Council have commissioned transport modelling work to examine a range of proposals for transport improvements to enable phased growth of the northern business parks.

An ecological study has been commissioned which will assess the impact of development Issues for the airport on areas of environmental sensitivity within and abutting the airport site. This includes an ecological assessment of the route for a link road from the north east sector to the A338. This study will be complete in time to assess the preferred options stage of the Core Strategy.

The Dorset Workspace Strategy will assess the role of employment land at the airport in the context of provision across Dorset County. This study is scheduled for completion in May 2008 and will inform the preferred options stage of the Core Strategy.

The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment shows that large areas of the Airport are at risk of flooding.

Benefits and Costs

Bournemouth Airport is the largest single development site within Christchurch and East Dorset. Aviation development is an increasingly contentious issue nationally and globally due to its environmental impacts. Benefits and costs to consider under this theme are:

- There are major benefits to residents and to the local economy from having a growing and thriving international airport within our area. We need to ensure however that aviation growth and demand can be managed sustainably, both in terms of impacts on climate change and on the local environment.
- The airport's employment land offers a significant resource to serve the needs of Christchurch, East Dorset and the whole of South East Dorset. It will be important to ensure that its development does not result in development and economic activity being "sucked out" of the existing town centres across the conurbation.

- Provision of significant new transport infrastructure and services will be a key component of delivering sustainable development at the airport. Some of this infrastructure comes at a high cost, and identifying funding will be a major consideration.

Operational Airport Growth

SUGGESTED ISSUES

What are the priority issues which should determine the limits to which growth at the airport should be controlled?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue BA1



Employment Growth and Transport Capacity

Future growth of the airport northern business parks is constrained by the transport improvements required in step with new development. In particular this concerns the need for a package of transport measures including junction improvements and the provision of a link road to the A338. Dorset County Council and Manchester Airports are undertaking work to assess detailed options for road improvements.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Which transport improvements should the Core Strategy consider as part of the transport requirements for the Airport?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue BA2



Employment Development Issues

In planning for the growth of the airport northern business parks it is important to consider that it

may not be possible to implement all of the transport improvements currently being considered. In particular Issues must consider the constraints and time scales involved in providing a link road to the A338. The recently permitted proposals for the upgrading of the airport terminal will provide junction improvements to the airport access with the B3073 and to Hurn Roundabout. Work is also being undertaken by the Airport's transportation consultants in consultation with Dorset County Council to seek to identify the level of additional development above that already permitted that can be accommodated at the airport and business park in highways terms, in advance of the link road and subject to phased improvements to local junctions.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Which development options should be pursued in consideration of current infrastructure constraints?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue BA3



Airport Green Belt Boundaries

The Business Park already lies outside of the Green Belt. The RSS Panel Report recommends that land at the operational airport should also be removed from the green belt. The Regional Spatial Strategy suggests that the detailed boundary should be established through the Local Development Framework process. The green belt boundary should be amended with regard to the development needs of the airport and to prevent

encroachment into the open countryside, unrestricted sprawl and the setting and character of surrounding settlements. The Airport Master Plan identifies existing buildings and operational areas at the airport together with the Airport's vision in terms of future development necessary to accommodate the predicted aviation growth.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Which part of the airport do you think should be released from the green belt?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue BA4



Promoting the Sustainable Economic Growth of the Airport

Employment land at Bournemouth Airport constitutes the vast majority of supply for the South East Dorset sub region. Given the strategic status of the site the type of future development permitted will have a significant impact upon the South East Dorset economy.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What policy approaches should be pursued at the airport to effectively promote sustainable economic growth?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BA5



Employment uses to be promoted at the airport business park.

The business park already contains a wide range of occupiers. The occupancy rate is consistently high, currently averaging in excess of 95%. There is also a very broad variety in the type, size and quality of premises, ranging

from workshops, hangars (either in storage, industrial or aviation use), light industrial units and high quality office and research and development buildings. Many buildings are also coming to the end of their economic life.

The approach to guiding future development at the airport business park therefore needs to be aspirational and market facing in respect of the types of business activity and other uses which can be attracted to the site. There is a balance to be struck between promoting the airport for higher order businesses and those that can realistically be attracted to locate at the airport.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What type of business activity should we be promoting at the airport?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BA6



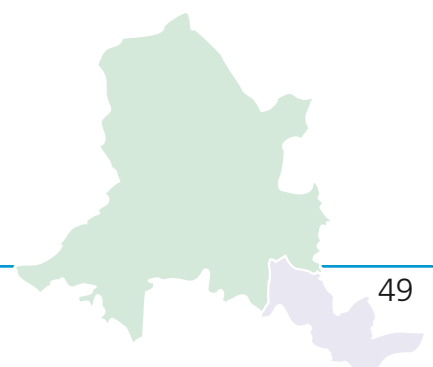
What type of premises should be provided in the north west and north east areas?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BA7



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue BA8





Housing is a national priority. The launch of the Housing Green Paper in 2007 - Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable set out the Government's plans to ensure that 3 million new homes are built by 2020. These plans include more ambitious building targets, more social housing, building homes more quickly and greener homes. This is set within the context of the principal objective of creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.



Where are we now?

Although the drive for delivery of more homes for the area is set within the wider context of national and regional policy, there are some issues that can be decided locally such as where housing should be built, the type of housing, design and density of development.

Both Christchurch and East Dorset have areas which are characterised by low density housing development such as Jumpers and Highcliffe in Christchurch and Ashley Heath, West Parley and St Ives in East Dorset. There is also a concern that increasing levels of flats redevelopment is eroding the stock of suitable family housing.

Issues relating to affordable housing are contained in a separate Affordable Housing Issues and Options paper.

Rules, regulations and advice

PPS 3 Housing (2006) sets out the Government's key housing policy of ensuring that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live. The planning system should deliver a mix of housing, both market and affordable, to support a wide variety of households in all areas. Housing should be located in suitable locations, which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure. There should be sufficient space for living, sleeping and normal family or household life.

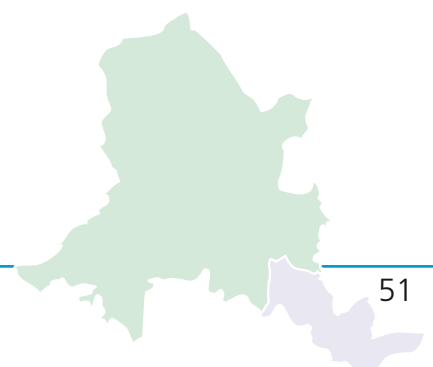
Circular 01/2006 requires local authorities to assess the needs of gypsies and travellers and to provide permanent and transit sites within their areas.

Circular 04/2007 makes a similar requirement for travelling show people.

The Regional Spatial Strategy policy for the SE Dorset conurbation is to maximise the use of previously developed land and buildings with urban extensions within a revised green belt.

THEME 11

Delivering Suitable and Sufficient Housing



The Panel Report recommends a total of 3,450 dwellings in Christchurch and 6,400 dwellings in East Dorset to be built between 2006 - 2026.

Included in these totals are 600 dwellings in Christchurch and 3,400 dwellings in East Dorset on greenfield land, or urban extensions. These are considered under Theme 6 of this document.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the number of pitches that will be required in each authority area for gypsies and travellers. The 2006 consultation identified 33 residential and 27 transit pitches for Christchurch and 50 residential and 38 transit sites in East Dorset. These figures are being challenged by the local authorities. An Examination in Public on this issue is to be held in March 2008. The Government requires that the Core Strategy will need to contain a criteria based policy to assess proposals for new gypsy & traveller and travelling showpeople sites.

The evidence

The Christchurch Community Plan 2007 – 2010 emphasises the importance of economic affordable housing and relevant parts of the Community Plan are referred to in the Affordable Housing DPD.

The East Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy 2007 identifies a key issue of balancing development pressures with the need to protect sites of environmental importance. A general action point is to encourage the development of a sufficient number and types of housing within the partnership area which allows the area to flourish (SO5).

Local planning authorities are required to undertake a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to provide the evidence base to support the delivery of sufficient land to meet the community's need for more homes. This exercise in Dorset is being undertaken jointly by the Councils, supported by the County Council.

Christchurch Borough Council's Corporate Plan includes 4 objectives for housing:

HO1 - Develop new planning and housing policies to increase supply of high quality sustainable housing development;

HO2 - Improve the utilization of the housing stock in Christchurch;

HO4 - Improve the condition of private sector stock;

HO5 - Work with partners to improve levels of housing investment.

Five Year Housing Land supply assessments have already been completed for both authorities.

A Housing Market Assessment is being undertaken across Dorset. This includes a Survey of Housing Need and Demand. The research findings on

affordable housing requirements are reported in the Affordable Housing DPD.

A "Balancing Housing Market" assessment gives an indication of the likely demand for housing of particular sizes and tenures across the whole housing market. Looking at the market housing element only (the affordable housing element is reported on in the Affordable Housing DPD) the following results can be summarised:-

- In Christchurch and East Dorset the most significant shortfall is for 2 bed properties in the owner-occupied sector.
- In East Dorset the results suggest a small surplus of 1 bed roomed properties in the owner-occupied sector, whereas in Christchurch there is still a shortfall for this size of property.
- In Christchurch and East Dorset the results suggest a small surplus for 2, 3 and 4 bed roomed properties in the private rented sector. However there is a shortfall for 1 bed properties in both authority areas, particularly in East Dorset.

Benefits and Costs

- Focusing housing development in existing urban areas helps protect the countryside and green belt around our towns, but it also increases pressure for higher density infilling and redevelopment within existing suburban areas which might change their character e.g. by the loss of private gardens for housing development.
- Building more flats meets identified demand from key sectors of the housing market and meets housing numbers in an efficient way. Redevelopment of family homes for flats however, reduces the available stock of family housing available in the local market.
- Higher density housing makes better use of available land, but may raise issues of car parking provision, gardens and amenity space for occupiers, and height and massing in relation to adjoining properties.



SUGGESTED ISSUES



Should we have a policy which specifies which mix of dwelling sizes and types should be built even if this might restrict market choice?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue HO1



If we are to have policies seeking to control the size of housing, what issues are important?

Go to Response Paper
Issue HO2



On the basis that we are required by Government to provide for Gypsy and traveller accommodation what criteria should be included in a policy to assess proposals for gypsy & traveller sites and travelling showpeople sites?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue HO3



What factors should be taken into account when setting targets for the density of housing development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue HO4



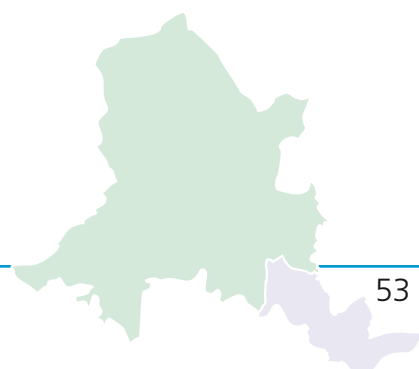
Should we protect certain areas from increased redevelopment and infilling for any reason?

Go to Response Paper
Issue HO5



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue HO6





The Core Strategy has an important role to play in supporting community development, although it is often not easy to assess community needs, given the broad range of issues involved and competing priorities. Community and social issues are wide ranging however and we can only influence those which have a spatial dimension.



Our growing population is increasingly becoming older, as we all live for longer. Both Christchurch and East Dorset have one of the highest percentages of retired residents in the country, and this is likely to continue as the area remains an attractive location in which to live in retirement. An elderly population has different needs to a younger population. We need to take account of these demographic changes in order to prepare and plan for the future needs of our residents and communities.

Where are we now?

Christchurch is a relatively small Borough and thus benefits from good links between the Borough Council and the Parish Councils, and between the Councils community groups, such as highly active residents associations and the various Theme Action Groups of the Community Partnership. East Dorset also benefits from a network of Community Partnership Theme Action Groups, Local Action Groups and Parish Plan Groups.

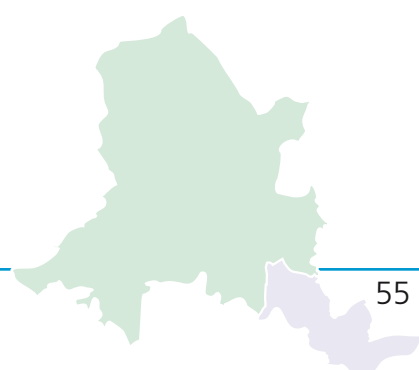
There are a number of community challenges including;

- health care;
- access to services for the young and the elderly;
- social deprivation;
- exclusion; and
- crime.

While many residents are comfortably off, there are pockets of deprivation in both urban and rural local authority areas. While the levels and frequency of crime in Christchurch and East Dorset are very low compared to national standards, the fear of crime, particularly amongst elderly residents is high (as identified in the fear of crime survey) and anti-social behaviour is also seen as an issue of concern.

THEME 12

Community Issues



Rules, regulations and advice

Local authorities have a statutory duty to promote the economic, social or environmental well being of their area under the Local Government Act 2000. This also requires them to develop Community Strategies and form Community Partnerships to act as leaders in the local community. Government policy in recent years has focussed on developing sustainable communities, a definition which includes:

Good quality local public services, including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities, especially for leisure.

A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it.

Effective engagement and participation by local people, groups and businesses, especially in the planning, design and long term stewardship of their community, and an active voluntary and community sector.

The Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (2006) sought to give local communities more power over the services they receive, and to promote increased community ownership and management of local facilities and assets. Government planning policy on sustainable development (PPS1) also reinforces the role of the spatial planning system in promoting community development.

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established statutory duties of local authorities, the Police and other agencies to work together to develop and implement plans for reducing crime and disorder. The Act also established Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships to bring these partners together and set targets.

Following high profile cases of mistreatment of children, the Government issued the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', which became embodied in the Children Act 2004.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy does not contain any policies specifically relating to the needs of children and young people. The Regional Spatial Strategy does however set out policy to take account of the needs of different groups:

Policy S12

Taking account of the Needs of All Groups in Society

The needs of all groups in society will be taken account of when planning the development of communities in the South West to ensure that all members of society are able to benefit from the growing prosperity and improving quality of the region.

The Sustainable Community Strategies have recently been published by both authorities. Evidence on health issues is contained in 'Choosing Health in Dorset - The Dorset Public Health Report' (2005) and Dorset local

authorities have worked together on the 'Dorset Crime and Drugs Reduction Strategy 2005-2008'.

Christchurch Borough Council's Corporate Plan identifies relevant objectives:

- **SHC1** Reduce anti-social behaviour and criminal damage
- **SHC3** Improve public awareness of Christchurch being a safe and healthy place to live.

The Christchurch Community Strategy has identified the need for a new community centre for the town; the organisation of community litter picks; and the organisation of a Community Action event to showcase community activities.

In East Dorset, the Sustainable Community Strategy (2007) identifies two key themes relating to the provision of services for young people and for the socially deprived or excluded. The report highlights the evidence gained from the Parish Plans which identified issues of access to local services, such as dentistry, healthcare and education; the need to retain young people in the community by providing them with suitable training, employment and affordable housing; issues of crime, anti-social behaviour and speeding; and the provision of and access to services for children and young people.

The evidence

The East Dorset Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is the body with strategic control of community safety and crime policy for the authority areas of East Dorset and Christchurch. The partnership aims to reduce crime, tackle anti-social behaviour, discrimination, burglary and violent and drug related crime.

At a more local level the Christchurch Community Safety Action Group is involved in a range of practical projects to improve community safety. The Multi Agency Youth Outreach Service (MAYO) allows volunteers and agencies to work together to engage with young people. The Neighbourhood Management initiative is being taken forward in both authority areas with a network of Partners and Community Together (PACT) meetings.

The Dorset Primary Care Trust published their draft Health Strategy for consultation in July 2007. The results of consultation on this include; support for carers as they are key to ensuring that patients can remain in the community, community health services should be increased and easily accessible, increased day care rehabilitation for older people, emphasis on keeping people healthy – better accessibility for activities to keep fit, more priority for alcohol and drug misuse services and promote a one-stop approach to medical services to reduce transport need.

Benefits and Costs

Funding of community facilities is increasingly complex, and the use of land or buildings for community use often has to compete with other development issues such as housing. Trade offs to consider under this theme include:

- Securing contributions from development for community facilities is a way of ensuring that development supports its own impacts on local communities. Community facilities would however need to “compete” for such contributions alongside affordable housing, transport, open space and other priorities.
- Protecting existing facilities ensures that they are not lost to alternative uses, however this may also restrict community groups, churches etc from realising development potential of their land to provide income or funds.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



How can we best support community development?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue C11



How can we develop culture in Christchurch and East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C12



Which community facilities and services most need to be improved, or provided in Christchurch and East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue C13



How can the Core Strategy develop policies to improve access to services for the young, the elderly and for vulnerable groups?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C14



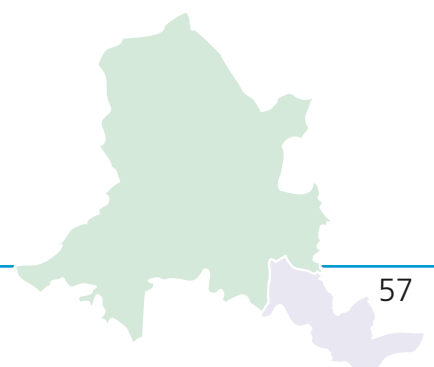
How can we support deprived communities?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C15



How can we help meet the specific needs of older people?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C16



Children and Young People

Where are we now?

It is recognised that young people face difficult choices now and will continue to do so in the future over employment opportunities or from moving on into their own home. Some children suffer at home from abuse, act as young carers or have a disability. Grange Ward, in Christchurch, has the 3rd highest percentage of lone parent households in Dorset.

Rules, regulations and advice

Following some high profile cases of mistreatment and abuse of children (e.g. death of Victoria Climbié) the Government launched a major policy initiative to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The primary elements of this initiative are the “Every Child Matters”, and the provisions of the Children Act 2004. Subsequent to this, the Government published a further consultation on how services for teenagers should be delivered.

The Children Act provisions relate primarily to child welfare and protection from harm, however the wider policy aspirations of Every Child Matters do provide relevant background for the Core Strategy.

Every Child Matters

Five outcomes which mattered most to children and young people:

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Economic wellbeing.

Children’s health is promoted through the Department of Health’s National Service Framework for Children. This framework notes that, whilst today’s children enjoy better health than previous generations, inequalities still exist and access to facilities and services is a key factor in this. Whilst many historic illnesses affecting children are now easily preventable, new concerns pose significant challenges.

The evidence

The Christchurch Corporate Plan places great emphasis on this topic, through the following objectives:

CYP1 Provide a greater range of services, activities and facilities for young people of all ages.

CYP2 Ensure that “Every Child Matters” legislation is fully implemented in Christchurch.

CYP3 Encourage young people to make a positive contribution to live in Christchurch.

There are a number of local strategies which relate to Children and young people. Both the Christchurch and the East Dorset community strategies contain a number of actions and objectives relating to young people.

In East Dorset, Children & Young People is a priority focus area for the Community Partnership. Actions relating specifically to young people include:

- Support the work of agencies which seek to address childhood obesity levels, inactivity by the young and poor lifestyle choices.
- Encourage agencies to organise activities for Children and Young People both in term time and school holidays.
- Encourage agencies to meet shortfalls in play provision, skate parks, youth shelters etc.
- Provide local opportunities for school children to gain good quality work experience.
- Support schemes to make public transport more

affordable for young people.

- Promote and support formal educational goals for children and young people, especially related to basic skills development.
- Recognise that young people are fearful of crime and support initiatives which allow them to feel safe.
- Ensure the needs of children and young people are well documented within the LDF review process.

In Christchurch, the Community Plan contains a number of actions relating to young people:

- Provision of a Youth Council.
- Proposal for an Entry to Employment training base.
- Providing play and leisure facilities in the community.
- Promoting cycling.
- Young peoples bike project.
- Multi Agency Youth Outreach.

Christchurch has also adopted a Youth Strategy (2005) which aims, amongst other things, to raise awareness of the needs of young people and their families for Council services, and to ensure that children and young people have a voice in any decisions which affect them.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



What are the key issues affecting children and young people in Christchurch and East Dorset?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C17



Crime and anti-social behaviour

Both Christchurch and East Dorset are some of the safest places to live in the Country. Levels of crime and anti-social behaviour are well below the national and regional averages. However, the local communities identify anti-social behaviour and traffic speeds as the main areas of concern amongst residents.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



How can we develop policies to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C18



Health and care

The high proportion of older people in Christchurch and East Dorset has implications for the demands on health services and provision of health and social care. However there is more to the issue than access to medical services. It is also about encouraging individual responsibility for health by promoting healthier lifestyles, giving sufficient support to carers and ensuring access to leisure and recreational facilities.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



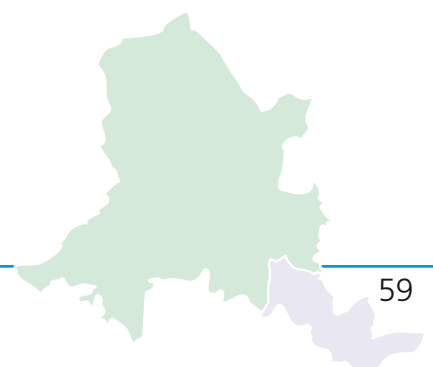
How can the Core Strategy help to maximise opportunities for people to improve their health and well-being?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C19



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue C110





We are very fortunate to have access to a variety of open space, sport and leisure facilities for the community. These are generally situated in or around the main settlements of East Dorset and Christchurch and are accessible to the majority of the population.



Where are we now?

Many sporting sites are privately owned and managed by clubs. The maintenance of existing public sites and the provision of new land for sports facilities is very expensive. As the population in the area continues to grow, additional land will be required to provide open space and sports facilities.

Neither Council has a general policy for developer contributions to recreation facilities for smaller developments although larger housing schemes are required to provide on-site open spaces and money for their maintenance.

Policies in both Council areas protect existing open spaces, unless they can be shown to be no longer needed.

Rules, regulations and advice

Government guidance in PPG17 recommends there should be sufficient open space, sport and recreation facilities to promote an active and healthy lifestyle. The Regional Spatial Strategy requires the Councils to provide 'Green Infrastructure' – a chain of linked green routes, to provide for informal recreational needs close to urban areas. The Panel's Report on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy proposes that the opportunity of the Stour Valley for Green Infrastructure should be realised.

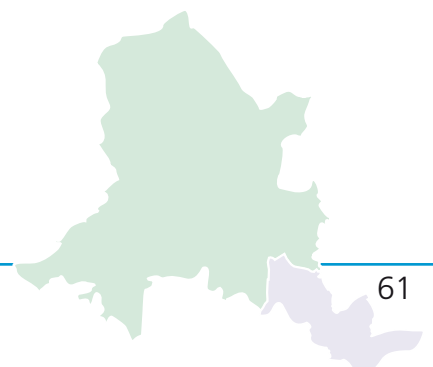
The evidence

A report by Inspace Planning (May 2007) considers the open space requirements of the area in terms of need, quantity and quality and recommends standards for provision. Some areas were shown to be deficient in the quantity or quality of some types of leisure facilities.

Benefits and Costs

Open spaces, sports and recreation facilities help people of all ages to relax and keep healthy. Open space is also important in breaking up the built form of urban areas. There can however be costs to bear in mind when

THEME 13 Improving Sport and Leisure Facilities



discussing provision of recreation facilities:

- New open space is important, but we should ensure that we make best use of existing facilities. It may be preferable for developer contributions to improve existing facilities rather than provide further land.
- Locating open spaces close to houses ensures that children can play close to their homes, but this may increase noise and disturbance to local residents.
- New open spaces must be maintained: this can be costly for local communities.

SUGGESTED ISSUES



Do you consider there are enough of the following types of open space in your settlement?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue SL1



To meet the future needs of the community, should we focus on providing brand new recreation and leisure facilities or on upgrading existing provision?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SL2



How should we require the provision of open space for residents of new housing development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SL3



What policies should we adopt for water based recreation facilities such as marinas, moorings and associated club and training facilities?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SL4



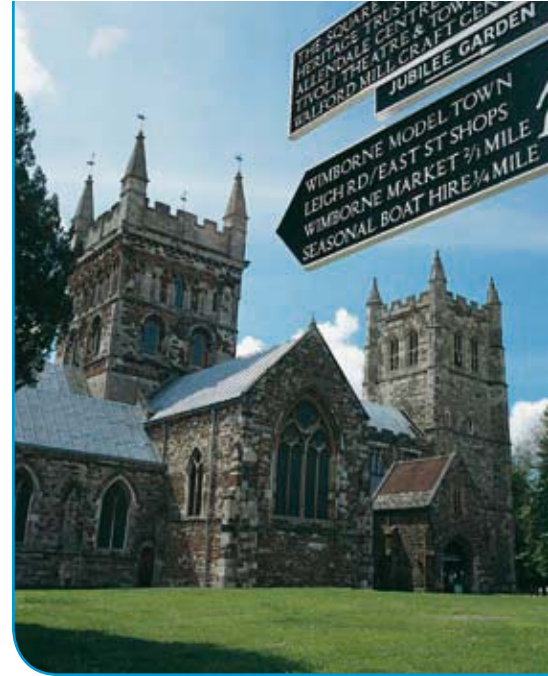
Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue SL5



Tourism plays an important part in our local economy, providing employment helping to sustain investment in an attractive built and natural environment.

Policies in the Core Strategy to protect this environment will also protect the tourism industry which benefits from it, but equally we have to consider to what extent the Core Strategy can promote or protect tourism, especially since the industry is heavily driven by market demand.



Where are we now?

Christchurch is a popular destination for annual holiday makers and those seeking a short break, offering a range of tourist accommodation, attractions, restaurants and cafes, including the harbour, beaches and rivers the C11th Priory and other important attractions such as Highcliffe Castle, and local museums. This can place pressure on local services and road networks particularly during the summer months. In addition, other regular events are held to encourage day visitors such as the French Market, Food Festival, and Christmas Fair.

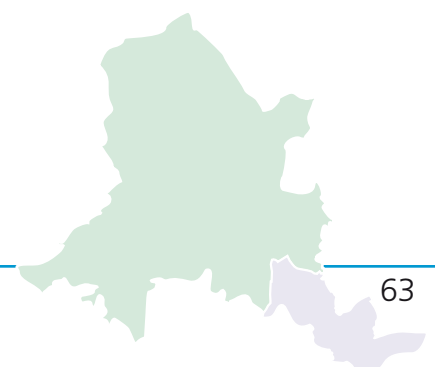
East Dorset equally attracts large numbers of visitors annually to visit for example the medieval town of Wimborne, Kingston Lacy House, Moors Valley Country Park, as well as annual events such as the Wimborne Folk Festival in June and the Christmas Parade.

2005 Key Tourism Facts	Christchurch	East Dorset
Trips by Staying Visitors	192,000	280,000
Spend by Staying Visitors	£38,968,000	£47,384,000
Day Visits	792,137	1,451,000
Spend by Day Visitors	£32,246,191	£55,995,000
Other Tourism related spending (dining/maintenance of second homes/boating)	£4,087,000	£6,703,000
Numbers employed in Tourism	1824 (1338 full-time)	2469 (1770 full-time)
% of employment in Tourism	8%	7%

(Data supplied from The Value of Tourism 2005 – Dorset – South West England)

Setting the towns in context, adjoining the New Forest National Park and the Dorset and West Wiltshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the attraction to the area is understandable and likely to continue to grow.

THEME 14 Tourism



Rules, regulations and advice

Government guidance in PPG21 encourages the development of tourism.

- to support the local economy;
- to promote investment in tourist centres;
- to allow diversification of farms and rural communities;
- to encourage regeneration of land;
- whilst respecting the local community and environment.

In 2006, the Government published good practise guidance on planning for tourism. This guidance recognises the link between tourism and the built and natural environment.

The guidance indicates that it will be appropriate for Core Strategies to contain policies for tourism in areas where it is a key issue. Tourism policies should:

- Aim to maximise the benefits of tourism.
- Identify optimal locations.
- Integrate tourism development with its surroundings.
- Avoid adverse impacts.

The Regional Spatial Strategy also recognises the importance of tourism to the South West Region, and specifically the importance of Dorset and Bournemouth/Poole as tourist destinations. The Regional Spatial Strategy contains three policies for tourism:

TO1 - Which aims to improve the quality and diversity of facilities, reducing seasonality, maintaining the role of the main resorts, realising the potential of the region's heritage and culture, and identifying new opportunities.

TO2 - Developing the role of tourism in coastal towns.

TO3 - Defining policy for location of major new attractions.

The evidence

The Community Plan for Christchurch contains a number of initiatives which aim to enhance tourist and visitor activity, as well as providing opportunities for residents.

- Promoting an evening café culture to attract and retain visitors and residents in the town centre in the evening. The partnership organised an evening festival in 2007.
- Utilising heritage, for example by producing a heritage walks network, and expanding knowledge of the role heritage plays in the town.
- Producing health walks leaflets.

The Council also produces detailed management plans for key sites such as Mudeford Quay, the Beaches nature conservation sites and Highcliffe Castle which deal with detailed visitor management issues.

East Dorset has management plans in place for Moors Valley Country Park and has adopted the management plan for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Benefits and Costs

The attractiveness of the area for tourists and visitors largely depends upon the attractiveness of the local environment. This leads to a number of potential conflicts in this theme:

- New visitor attractions and accommodation help to diversify the range of facilities on offer in the area. These new attractions and facilities may however be located in areas where their environmental impact would be significant.
- Protecting hotels and tourism accommodation from change of use may help preserve the potential availability of these premises, but may also restrict the potential for owners of failing businesses to sell on their properties.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

How can the Core Strategy ensure that Christchurch and East Dorset remain vibrant and attractive destinations for visitors?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue TM1



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue TM2



If we are to successfully enable the new development we are required to provide we need to fund the infrastructure and community needs. We need to identify all ways of doing this as resources are always scarce. We therefore need to consider how the new development can contribute. However, if we are to seek funds and resources from development we need to consider the viability of development. Development will only take place if profitable.



Where are we now?

The Local Plans do not have comprehensive policies relating to planning contributions to help fund infrastructure and community needs. The East Dorset Local Plan does have a policy for the Verwood area that collects funds primarily for new roads. However, this is limited compared to what is provided elsewhere in the Country.

Rules, regulations and advice

The Government is reviewing legislation and guidance relating to planning obligations. This will dictate the limits of policy on this topic. However, it seems that an approach that allows the collection of a local Community Infrastructure Levy from development will be allowed to provide for both general needs of the area and also specific ones relating directly to a development.

Circular 05/05 requires that a planning contribution must be:

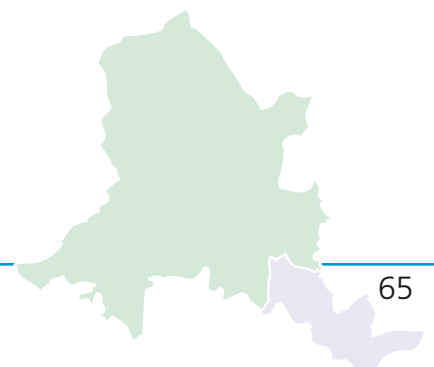
- Relevant to planning
- Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms
- Directly related to the proposed development
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development
- Reasonable in all other respects

The evidence

Tariff approaches have been adopted in various areas in the Country. These collect funds to provide for a very wide, but clearly justified range of infrastructure and community needs.

Feedback through the Community Strategies is that there is a need to seek planning contributions from development.

THEME 15 Funding & Delivering the Local Development Framework



Benefits and Costs

Taking contributions from development is a key way of ensuring that development proposals address their own impacts. However, this will impact on development viability, and whether costs are passed on to property buyers and tenants.

SUGGESTED ISSUES

Should development provide for a system of general contributions paid into a central fund to support wider community needs?

Go to Response Paper
Issue FD1



If there are to be general contributions what should be the priorities?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue FD2



What forms of development should contribute towards community needs?

Go to Response Paper
KEY Issue FD3



Should development on brownfield land be required to provide for the same amount of community needs as greenfield development?

Go to Response Paper
Issue FD4



Have we identified all of the issues under this Theme?

Go to Response Paper
Issue FD5



In this document we have set out what the Councils consider are the key issues facing Christchurch and East Dorset. We now need to look at the future as a whole. We need to try to establish a “guiding light” for the Strategy.



Put another way, we need to look at the aims and objectives. The Councils already have aims – Christchurch as stated in the Corporate Plan is ‘Defending and Improving Your Quality of Life’, and East Dorset a place which has “So Much to Offer”. The context for this strategy may therefore be to defend and preserve the environment and quality of life that we already enjoy.

We need to know your views on how we can succeed in our aims. What do you think should be the principles that underlie the strategy and make up the route map for reaching where we want to be in 20 years?

We have responsibility to ensure that the vision is soundly based on a consensus view of the community. We are not therefore putting forward any predetermined vision: it is for you to tell us how we can best defend and improve the quality of life in Christchurch and East Dorset.

Where are we now?

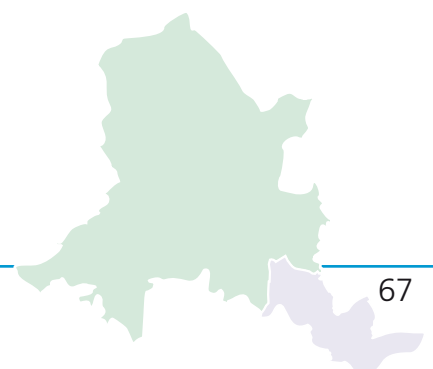
Christchurch and East Dorset are popular places to live, with a high quality environment, attractive historic towns, a strong economy and safe prosperous communities. In contrast we have high house prices, traffic congestion and a vulnerable natural environment. We also face economic uncertainties and climate change.

This Issues & Options paper has also identified a number of issues which might need addressed in a vision for the future – high house prices, maintaining a sustainable economy, tackling traffic congestion, protecting the environment and character of our towns, and meeting the managing the effects of climate change.

Rules, regulations and advice

There are no set rules for what can be included in the Core Strategy vision, but it will be important to have regard to national and regional aspirations for development and for the planning system.

Developing the Vision



The Government has recently consulted on further reform of the planning system. The Planning White Paper set out a vision for the planning system as follows:

Planning is of fundamental importance to the quality of people's lives. When planning is well done it enables us to build thriving, healthy, sustainable communities where people want to work, shop or live. It supports the economic development which is vital to create jobs and ensure our continuing prosperity as a nation. It helps us to protect our natural and historic environment and ensure everyone has access to green space and unspoiled countryside. It enables the delivery of essential infrastructure which allows us to travel and enjoy access to clean, affordable energy, water and waste facilities. And it supports us as individual citizens in improving our homes and property while protecting us from over-intrusive development. Planning does all of this by helping us to ensure development meet economic, social and environmental objectives in an integrated and sustainable way.

In its Companion guide to PPS12 (Creating Local Development Frameworks) the Government advises that the spatial planning process should be visionary, and that:

"Local Development Frameworks provide the opportunity to develop a clear spatial vision for an area, together with a realistic implementation strategy. This vision should emphasise local distinctiveness with a focus on delivery."

The vision for the region is set out in the Integrated Regional Strategy "Just Connect!". This vision is also endorsed in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy.

"The South West must remain a region with a beautiful and diverse environment. By working together and applying the principles of sustainability we can achieve lasting economic prosperity and social justice whilst protecting the environment. This approach will secure a higher quality of life now and for future generations."

The Regional Spatial Strategy goes on to set out its aspirations for the region, including:

- All communities enjoy the benefits of further development and where housing needs are satisfied.
- The economy continues to prosper.
- Growth is supported by necessary infrastructure in step with development.

The evidence

As part of developing the vision, the Core Strategy will need to examine visions and aspirations of key partners and the local community. This work is still ongoing, and will include:

- The Christchurch & East Dorset community strategies.
- Parish Plans
- Corporate Plans for both Councils.
- Visions contained in plans of neighbouring authorities.
- Partners plans such as the Primary Care Trust, Education Authority, Police, Local Transport Plan, Housing Associations etc.

The Corporate Plan for Christchurch Borough Council includes among its key themes a number which are directly relevant to the emerging LDF. These are

Safe and Healthy Communities, Business and Tourism, Transport, Improving Prospects for Housing, Children and Young People, and Protecting the Environment, which will help it achieve the vision of a Christchurch "Where time is pleasant."




The Christchurch Community Plan 2007 contains a vision for each of its Action Groups which together make up an overall vision for the document. The vision is for a Christchurch where:

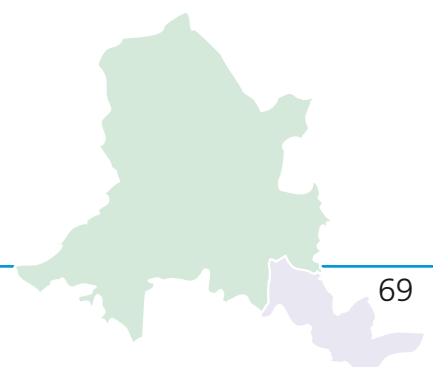
- Good health is promoted, ill health treated and vulnerable groups supported.
- Crime levels are low and where people feel safe.

- The high quality natural and built environment is protected and enhanced.
- The Borough is economically vibrant and where people want to live, work, bring up children, be supported through unemployment and retire.
- Travel is efficient, affordable and sustainable.
- Relationships between people of different generations are strong and where all sections of the community are valued.
- The quality of life is high and there is a range of cultural and educational opportunities.

The draft East Dorset Sustainable Community Strategy sets out a vision that, by 2015, East Dorset will be:

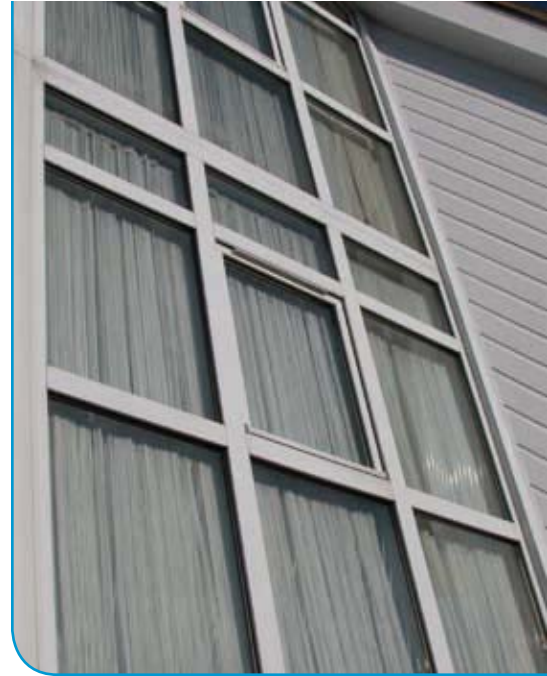
- A healthy place to live and work.
- A wealthy district which creates and shares prosperity and values learning.
- A safe community where residents do not fear crime.
- A strong community with a thriving well supported voluntary sector.
- An enjoyable place to live and visit where culture and leisure is valued.
- A well planned community balancing protection of environment with sustainable development.
- A low carbon producing community.

SUGGESTED ISSUES	
<i>What major themes should the Core Strategy vision have?</i>	
Go to Response Paper KEY Issue VN1	
<i>If you could only select 3 of the above Issues (or including any additional issues you have identified), to be included in the vision, which would they be?</i>	
Go to Response Paper KEY Issue VN2	





The Core Strategy will contain major new policies to guide development over the next two decades across Christchurch and East Dorset. It is important that we receive your comments on the issues and how to address them.



Response Period

This Issues and Issues document is produced for a period of 6 weeks consultation from 25th March 2008 until 6th May 2008.

Viewing and obtaining the documents

The document can be viewed and downloaded from the Councils' website www.dorsetforyou.com

The document can also be viewed or obtained from the two Councils, and viewed at libraries throughout Christchurch and East Dorset. You can obtain a copy of the Issues and Issues document by contacting the Councils' planning policy teams.

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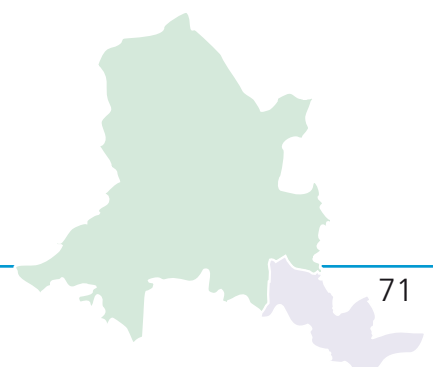
Completing your Response

It will help us if you send your comments back to us using the Response form provided.

You do not have to complete a response to every question, only those which interest you. If you do not agree with the issues and Issues put forward by the Councils, or wish to propose further issues and options, then there is space provided for you to do so. **We would particularly like your responses on the Key Issues highlighted.**

You can respond on each of the options given for each issue, and you can suggest further Issues. An opportunity is also provided for you to identify locations where the issue or options for addressing it are relevant.

How to respond





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