

State of Dorset

Population

March
2018



Dorset County Council

Change in Dorset's demographic make-up can have an impact on service demands and provision for local authorities but can also affect housing demand and business needs.

Changes in our population are shaped by both natural change (births and deaths) and by migration into and out of Dorset.

By projecting future population change, we can plan to target services and resources to the places where they will be needed most.

Big Numbers Box

0.4%pa

projected total population change
2016-2041

422,900

total
population
in 2016

1.4%pa

+65s projected
population change
2016-2041

24,200

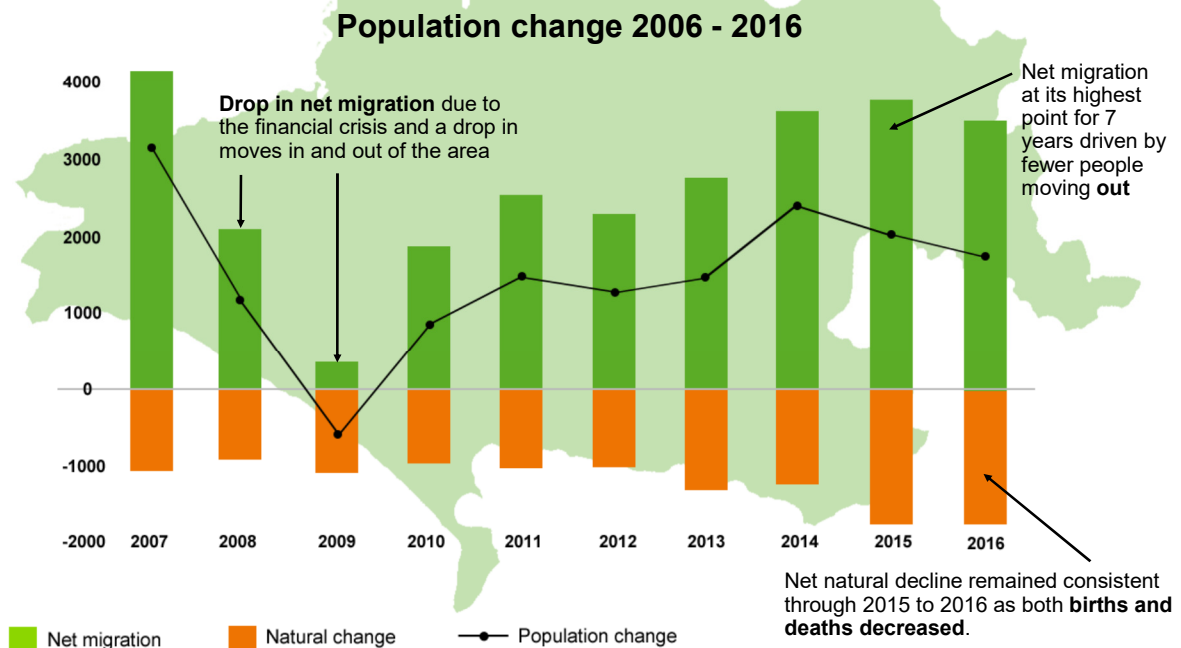
increase in +65s
2006-2016, an
increase of 2.3%pa

1,700

decrease in
0-15yrs
2006-2016

Box 1: Population change in Dorset

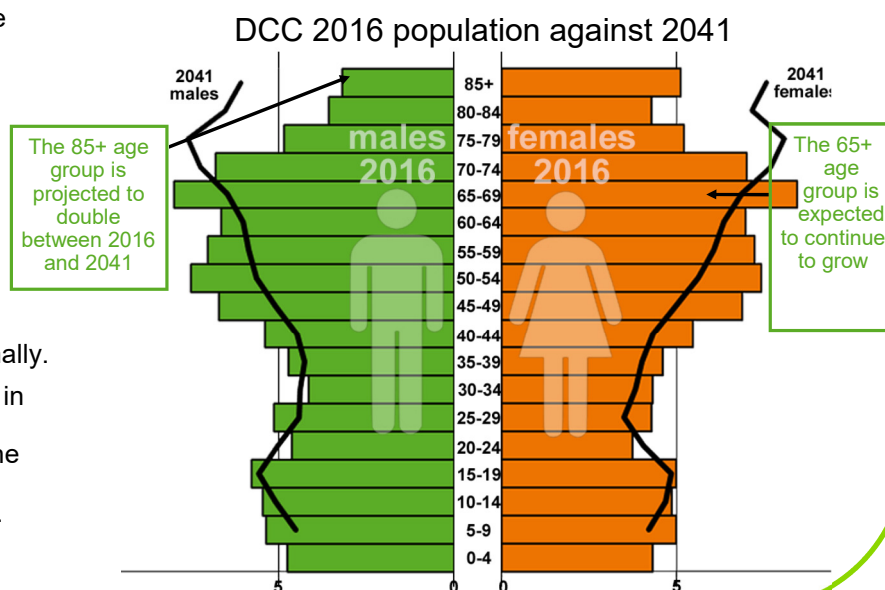
- In Dorset, deaths outnumber births giving net decline in the natural population.
- Growth in Dorset's population therefore arises from positive net migration, with in migration normally greater than out migration each year.



- Over the period 2006-2016, Dorset's population grew by 17,000, growth of about four per cent compared with eight per cent nationally.

Box 2: Age breakdown of population change

- Over the period 2006-2016, the number aged 65+ grew by 24,200 – up by 25%.
- However, the population of working age dropped by 6,400 in Dorset – and the number of children fell by 1,700.
- There was also a net loss of 15-19 year olds from Dorset to other parts of the UK, with net gains mostly among those aged 30+.
- Over the next 25 years, Dorset's population is projected to grow at a slightly slower rate to the national average at about 0.4% per annum compared to 0.6%.
- Corresponding with the national trend, the greatest part of this growth is among those aged 65+, increasing at 1.6% pa.
- Dorset's working age population is expected to see a marginal decline over this period compared with marginal growth nationally.
- No growth is expected in the next 25 years for 0-15yr olds following the fall between 2006 and 2016 in this age group.



What are we doing about it?

The county council produces population projections which look forward 25 years and are revised on an annual basis. These projections can be used to anticipate local housing need and inform local plans which identify land for housing. The projections also help with school place planning - a growing population of children creates a demand for school places and support services. The ageing population can affect housing supply as some older people live in under-occupied homes.

An ageing population has an impact on the economy as more employees move into retirement with a potential loss of skills from the workforce, unless employers plan for this by up-skilling other workers and training apprentices for a long term solution. The county council provides adult learning courses¹ to help people get back into work after a gap or to improve existing skills. The council also promotes the benefits to employers of retaining and training older staff². Ultimately this will benefit both individuals and the local economy and will ease pressure on council budgets.

To support the growing number of older people, Dorset is helping people plan for their future care needs with a campaign: Prepare to Live Better. The council also provides advice and support to carers. Keeping fit and healthy into old age improves people's physical and mental wellbeing and reduces the demand for public services. Investing in green spaces and providing information through services like 'Live Well Dorset'³ can be much more cost effective than clinical interventions and other support.

Sources

- 2016 Mid-year estimates, ONS, Revised 22/03/18. For more info visit <https://apps.geowessex.com/stats/>
 2016-based trend population projections, Dorset County Council
 1 <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/adultlearning>
 2 Lifelong learning for an ageing workforce available at <https://apps.geowessex.com/stats/>
 3 <https://www.livewelldorset.co.uk/>