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# State of Dorset Population



Change in Dorset's demographic make-up can have an impact on service demands and provision 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

**0.3%pa**

projected total population  
change 2017-2042

**375,100** total  
population  
in 2017

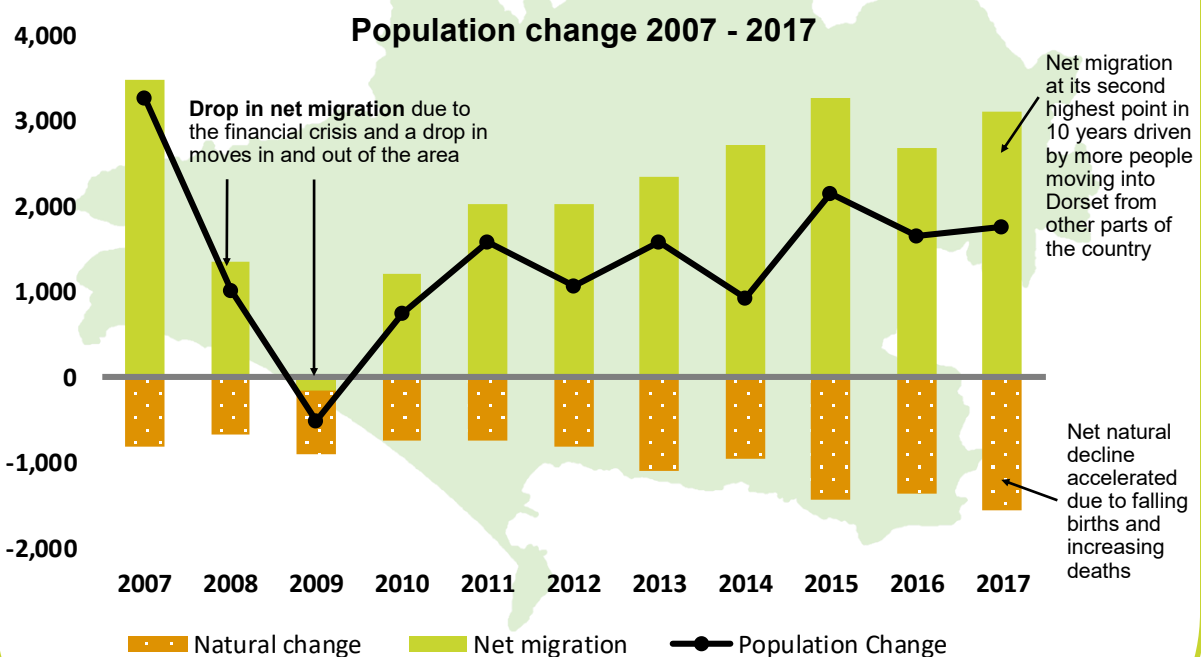
**1.5%pa** +65s projected  
population change  
2017-2042

**22,500** increase in +65s  
2007-2017, an  
increase of 2.5%pa

**1,400** decrease in  
0-15yrs  
2007-2017

## Box 1: Population change in the Dorset Council area

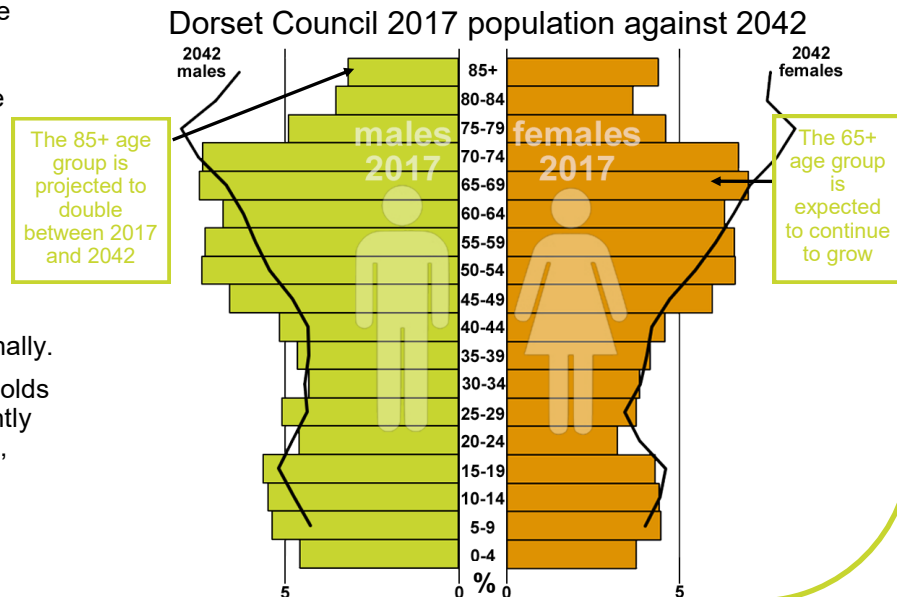
- In the Dorset Council area, deaths outnumber births giving net decline in the natural population.
- Growth in Dorset's population therefore arises from positive net migration, with in migration normally greater than out migration each year.



- Over the period 2007-2017, Dorset's population grew by 12,000, growth of about four per cent compared with eight per cent nationally.

## Box 2: Age breakdown of population change

- Over the period 2007-2017, the number aged 65+ grew by 22,500 – up by 27%.
- However, the population of working age dropped by 9,100 in Dorset – and the number of children fell by 1,400.
- 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 slower rate to the national average at about 0.3% per annum compared to 0.6%.
- Corresponding with the national trend<sup>5</sup>, the greatest part of this growth is among those aged 65+, increasing at 1.5% pa.
- Dorset's working age population is expected to see a marginal decline over this period compared with marginal growth nationally.
- The number of 0-15yr olds is expected to fall slightly over the next 25 years, continuing the trend in place since 2007.



## What are we doing about it?

The 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 and demand by continuing to live in under-occupied homes, either from preference or because they require or requiring specially designed dwellings.

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 up-skill other workers and train apprentices. The council works with partners to secure and deliver European Social Funds for initiatives<sup>1</sup> to upskill the workforce and help people into employment. It also provides adult learning courses<sup>2</sup> and promotes the benefits of retaining and training older staff.<sup>2</sup> The Dorset Mentoring Scheme enables experienced business people to help fledgling companies by sharing their experience and mentoring through the early years.<sup>3</sup>

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' can be much more cost effective than clinical interventions and other support.<sup>4</sup>

### Sources

- 1 <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/adultlearning>
  - 2 Lifelong learning for an ageing workforce available at <https://apps.geowessex.com/stats/>
  - 3 <http://www.dormen.org.uk/>
  - 4 <https://www.livewelldorset.co.uk/>
  - 5 2016-based 25-year national population projections, ONS
- Throughout: 2017 Mid-year estimates, ONS; 2017-based trend projections, 2017-2042, Dorset Council