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State of Dorset Diversity



There are many definitions available for the term 'diversity' but they all cover the same fundamental issues. These include the recognition of differences, respecting those differences and appreciating the fact that different perspectives are valuable and can bring real benefits to society in general. There are nine protected characteristics within our strands of diversity.

- Age
- Disability
- Sex
- Religion & Belief
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Ethnicity

Big Numbers Box

29% of Dorset's population is aged 65+

Almost

1 in 3 of the former East Dorset area's population is aged 65+

1 in 5

of all residents have a health condition that limits their day to day activities

1,900

living in a same sex relationship

4.4%

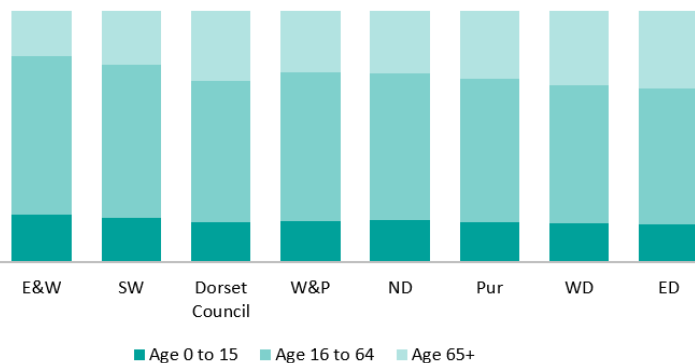
of Dorset's residents are from an ethnic minority

5,300

follow a non-Christian religion

Box 1: Age & religion

Age structure in the former district council areas, 2020



- Dorset has a much greater proportion (**29%**) of the population aged 65 and over than England and Wales (**19%**)¹.
- Some of the former districts have almost one in three residents aged 65 and over¹.
- The five major non-Christian world religions Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism constitute **1%** of Dorset's residents' religious beliefs².
- Dorset's main non-Christian religious groups are concentrated in Dorset's towns. Weymouth has just over **300** residents of Muslim faith. There are also concentrations around military establishments such as Blandford Camp where the Gurkhas and their families live who are predominantly Hindu in their religious belief².

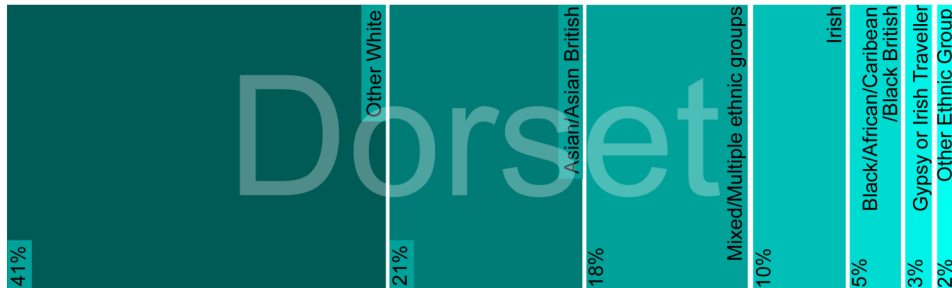
Please note: Robust statistical data at a Local Authority level on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity does not currently exist apart from data on couples living in a same sex relationship from the Census 2011 (see Big Numbers Box).

Sources

- 1 Mid-year population estimates (2020), ONS
- 2 Census 2011, ONS

Box 2: Ethnic Minorities

Residents of Dorset who are not 'White British'



- (4.4%) of Dorset residents are from an ethnic minority, much lower than the country as a whole (19.5%)².
- The highest proportion (41%) of Dorset's ethnic minority population are classified as 'White Other'². This classification includes people who identify as white but who do not have UK national identity (English, Welsh Scottish, Northern Irish and British). An example would be Polish or Irish.

Box 3: Disability

- One in five of Dorset's population consider themselves to have a long term health problem or disability².
- Another method for looking at the number of residents with a disability is to consider those claiming either Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance³.

% of Dorset residents with long-term health problem or disability in the former



% of Dorset residents claiming a disability benefit



Box 4: Gender, sexual and relationship diversity

- The Census 2021 asked new questions about sexual orientation and whether an individual's gender identity differed from how they were assigned at birth⁴.
- The new Census questions reflects how our understanding of different experiences and the language that goes with these changes over time. In recent years there has been an increase in the terminology surrounding gender identity and expression.
- Annual Population Survey statistics on sexual orientation began in 2014. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of people identifying as something other than heterosexual nationally almost doubled from 865,000 to 1,526,000⁵.
- In the South West, 2.5% of people shared that they identify with a sexual orientation other than heterosexual in 2019. Whilst this figure is broadly in line with the Census 2011, data on sexual orientation is very difficult to obtain, however, when the Census 2021 data is released it is expected that this shall give a robust dataset⁵.

Sources

3 Stat-Xplore, Department of Work and Pensions, February 2021 & 2020 Mid-year estimates, ONS

4 Preparing for the 2021 census (England and Wales), UK Parliament

5 Sexual Orientation 2014-2019, Annual Population Survey, 2019