

The English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025

Welcome to this bulletin on the Indices of Deprivation 2025. This report will include the latest release of the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas in England. It will focus on the data within the Dorset Council area. The report considers the aggregate data set - The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and looks at how this data can be used. The index is measured at a small area level (called Lower-layer Super Output Areas – LSOAs) in England with an average of 1,500 residents in each.

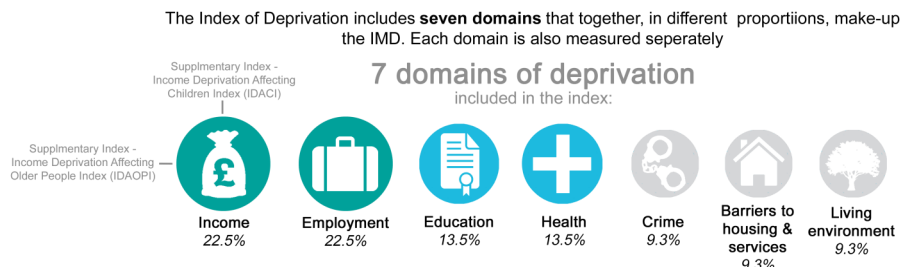
In a national context, Dorset as a whole does not score highly in relation to multiple deprivation.

However there are pockets of significant deprivation

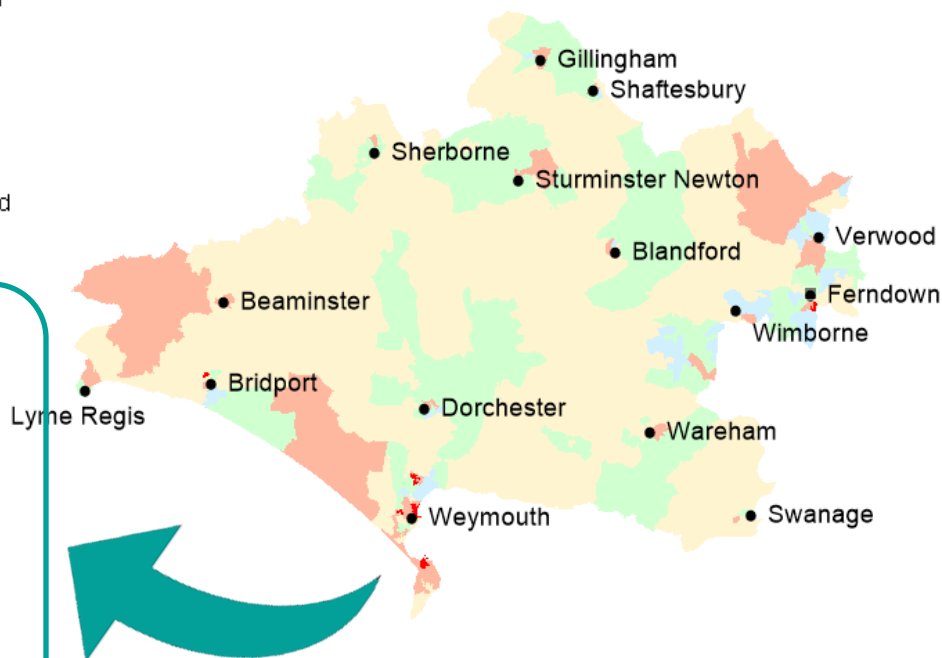
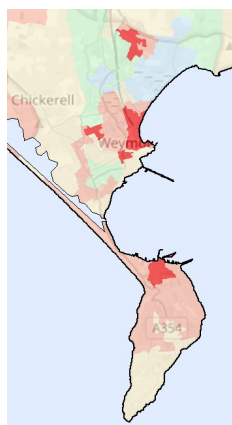
- Nine areas in Dorset are in the top 20% most deprived nationally
- Seven of those are within the former borough of Weymouth & Portland
- The other two are in West Dorset (Bridport Court Orchard) and East Dorset (Ferndown Trickett's Cross East)
- Five of the Weymouth & Portland areas are in the top 10% most deprived nationally: Littlemoor West, Fortuneswell North, Melcombe Regis Park District, Melcombe Regis Town Centre and Westham North Westhaven
- The two other areas in Weymouth and Portland within the top 20% are: Rodwell and Chapelhay and Melcombe Regis Carlton Road

Dorset remains a county of contrasts

- The former borough of Weymouth & Portland has some significantly deprived areas
- 80% of Dorset's least deprived LSOAs are in the east of the council area
- None of the areas in the former districts of Purbeck or North Dorset are in the top 30% most deprived nationally when multiple deprivation is considered
- The data, however, looks not just at multiple deprivation but also considers different facets of deprivation that are aggregated to comprise the Multiple deprivation index but are also looked at individually to give a more holistic view of deprivation.
- The graphic below illustrates the different domains that are incorporated and the weighting given to each domain in the overall Index.



IMD 2025 - Focus on Dorset Council Deprivation



Why does it matter?

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) are a nationally recognised measure that helps Dorset Council understand where need is greatest and how deprivation affects different parts of the county. Deprivation has a profound impact on health, wellbeing, education, and life chances, and understanding its distribution is essential for targeting resources effectively.

Dorset's most deprived areas are concentrated primarily in urban locations such as Weymouth and Portland, where communities experience higher levels of health inequality, lower incomes, and greater social need. The impact of deprivation often includes higher levels of social care need, poorer health outcomes, increased absenteeism, and more children requiring additional support or entering care.

At the same time, a significant proportion of Dorset's rural communities experience deprivation linked to barriers to housing, transport, and essential services. Understanding the IMD therefore matters because it enables Dorset Council and partners to target interventions, plan services more effectively, and address both urban and rural inequalities, ensuring that support reaches the communities that need it most.

Sources

This bulletin was created by: Policy Intelligence and Performance, using the 2025 Indices of Deprivation released October 2025 by the MHCLG.