

Appendix 3: Issues and Problems in North Dorset

| Key Issue | Description | Source |
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| Social | | |
| Planning for inclusive, mixed and sustainable communities | Balancing the needs of social, environmental and economic considerations will need to be undertaken, to meet the sustainability objectives. | National Plans and Policies, Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan 2011, Local Plan, Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, Community Plans |
| Shortage of housing that is affordable | Average house prices and the house price to income ratio in the District, are far higher than the national average. Affordability is exacerbated by market forces, in-migration, the selling off of social homes though the 'right to buy' and low average wages. | Dorset Data Book 2005, Land Registry, Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, Housing Needs Assessment 2002 |
| Shortfall of affordable housing (Low Cost Market, Rented or Shared Equity) | Although the percentage of all housing completed in the District that was affordable increased by 2.2% to 15%, this was from a low base. Nationally 33.6% of completions were affordable. | Area Profiles - Audit Commission, Housing Needs Assessment 2002, Local Plan, Annual Monitoring Report |
| No. of second/holiday homes within the District | 1.4% of the housing stock are second/holiday homes. This is below the average for Dorset, but is double the national figure (2001). This has implications for the supply of housing and has implications for sustainable communities. | Dorset Data Book 2005 |
| Large net migration of people into the District | North Dorset has had the greatest population change (between 1994 and 2004) in the entire South West, increasing the population by over 14%. This has had both positive and negative impacts within the authority. | South West Observatory (2005) |

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| Ageing Population | The percentage of people of working age has remained steady at around 54% for the past three years, this is far lower than the national average of 60%. This fact will have implications for health provision, housing and accessibility. | Area Profiles - Audit Commission, |
| Access to local facilities and services | Much of the District is very rural in nature. With high car ownership, bus services have become less viable, reducing access to services in the market towns for those relying on public transport. | National Plans and Policies, Local Plan, Community Strategy |
| Protecting and enhancing local cultural facilities | 73% of residents think that over the past 3 years, cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums) have got better or stayed the same. This is far below the County response (92%) and the National response (84%) Cultural facilities are key to mixed, vibrant and viable communities. | Area Profiles - Audit Commission, National Plans and Policies |
| Education standards | 25% of 16-74 year olds have no qualifications and roughly 23% of people have poor numeracy or literary skills. Increasing educational standards through improved working with the local colleges and schools could improve people's opportunities. | 2001 census Data Book, Area Profiles - Audit Commission |
| Commuting and the potential for dormitory settlements | Blandford Forum, Gillingham and Sturminster Newton had marginal differences between in-commuting and out-commuting, while Shaftesbury had over 1,000 more out-commuters per day than in-commuters (2001) | 2001 ONS |
| Balancing the need to accommodate more housing within the District, with the protection of the local environment and character of the District. | The emerging Regional Spatial Strategy will set housing rates for the District for the next 20 years to 2026. There will be a need to balance the protection of green spaces with the need to provide for unmet demand of housing. | |

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| Lack of facilities for young people, especially in the rural areas | Open Space Assessment | |
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| Key Issue | Description | Source |
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| Economic | | |
| Labour Supply | The percentage of the working age population in employment is high at 82.6% compared to a national average of 76.5%. 75% of people in employment work full time. This has a serious impact for both employers and employees in the District, due to labour supply shortages for employers as well as people moving out of the District for particular employment opportunities. | Area Profiles - Audit Commission, Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy |
| Maintaining the viability and vitality of the four market towns | The town centres act as the focal points for community life. Their economic viability has changed in the past due to changes in shopping habits and the closure of livestock markets. Certain development will be controlled and others facilitated to ensure the centres remain viable. | Draft Regional Economic Strategy, National Plans and Programmes, Local Plan |
| Rural economy | Changes in the rural economy due to market forces, legislation etc. have impacted on the vitality and viability of rural villages | Draft Regional Economic Strategy, National Plans and Programmes, Local Plan |
| Travelling to work | Less than 2% of commuters in the District travel to work by public transport, and over 63% travel to work in a private car. Initiatives that support sustainable forms of transport and reducing the need to travel could reduce congestion and its associated impacts. | The 2001 Census Data Book, Area Profiles Audit Commission |
| Employment opportunities in the rural settlements | Roughly 60% of the population live outside of the four main market towns in the District. Small-scale employment in the rural settlements could reduce the need to travel for inhabitants | North Dorset Profile 2004 |

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| Low wages and low unemployment | Wages are considerably lower than the Dorset or England&Wales average, while unemployment is slightly lower than the Dorset average and 3 times lower than the National average (2005). Low unemployment levels create both positive and negative impacts within the District. | Dorset Data Book 2005 |
| Loss of rural services and facilities | North Dorset's villages have witnessed a serious decline in the provision of most of their rural services and facilities. Approximately 75% of rural parishes now have no shop selling general produce | North Dorset Profile 2004 |
| Impact of tourism on the wider economy | Tourism is typically low wage and seasonal and can also burden both the built and natural environment of the District. However, sustainable growth of tourism could have a major positive impact on the District's economy. | PPG21: Tourism, Draft RSS |
| Costs of developing on brownfield land (contamination etc.) | Land prices have risen dramatically since the start of this century. Development will still be required to be sited in the most sustainable locations, typically within the market towns, rather than on greenfield sites | PPG3: Housing |
| Low skills base | 25% of the population of the District have no formal qualifications (2001) and over 23% in 1997 had poor literacy skills. There are no HE Colleges or University Satellite campuses within the District. | 2001 Census Data Book |
| Balancing the needs of the economy with the protection of the countryside | While rural diversification that is sustainable will be supported, the protection of the countryside as an environmental, economic and social asset will continue. | PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas |
| Implications of potential large economic shifts - e.g. Blandford Camp and Blandford Brewery | There are only a small proportion of large employers within the District, however changes to the number of people employed would have implications within the District | |

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| Pressure for changing the use of business/industrial land to other uses | Loss of employment land has not been monitored in previous years, although in 2004/05 a net loss of business/industrial uses to other uses, predominantly residential, was identified | Annual Monitoring Report 2005 |
| Promoting good design in terms of both architecture and sustainability | Sustainable development is one of the Government's key objectives, as stated in PPS1. Good design through design codes can improve the quality of new developments | PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development |

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| Environment | | |
| To protect and enhance all biodiversity | Within the District there are a number of nationally designated areas, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) and protected species, which will continue to be protected. Non-designated sites such as rivers, ponds and other habitats will also be protected and enhanced where appropriate. The delivery of the Biodiversity targets as identified in the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy is an important Council objective. | Local Plan, DERC, Dorset Biodiversity Strategy |
| Pressure on the natural and built environment | Planning guidance requires that previously developed land should be considered for development before greenfield land. | Planning Policy Guidance note 3, Local Plan, Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy |
| The need to travel by private car | The percentage of households without access to a private car is 14.1%, far lower than the national and county averages. Less than 2% of the population travel to work by public transport in the daytime. The high use of the car has significant implications on the viability of local facilities, congestion and air/noise pollution. | Dorset Data Book 2005, Local Plan, National Planning Policy Strategies |
| Lack of supply of alternative fuels for transport and space-heating in the District | At present there are only a very small number of filling stations that sell LPG in the District. Biomass and Biofuels could provide more sustainable forms of energy for domestic and business use. | www.go-autogas.com |

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| Energy efficiency | There is a need to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels. Both the retrospective adaption of building and the requirement of new buildings to be energy efficient would achieve reduction in energy use. | National Plans and Policies, Local Plan, emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, Dorset Renewable Energy Strategy |
| Flood prevention | The River Stour and other more minor rivers pass through the District. There are a number of buildings that are susceptible to flooding. Flooding does not just occur adjacent to rivers, with certain areas susceptible to groundwater flooding and/or surface water flooding. | Local Plan, National Plans and Programmes, National Planning Policy Statements |
| Sustainable Waste Management | Only 383kg of waste is recycled per head of population (2003/04), compared to 514kg in the County and 439kg Nationally. Reduction in consumption and the increased ability to recycle, especially at the kerbside, will increase the rate of recycling. Waste should be managed in accordance with the waste hierarchy: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. | ODPM BVPI 84, Dorset Waste Strategy |
| Implication of agricultural reforms on the countryside | Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy is likely to lead to diversification away from agricultural activity. Growth of small businesses will need to be sustainable and accessible. Remaining agricultural practices can have a major impact on the environment, and where the Planning Regulations permit, development should be managed to enhance rural Dorset. | |
| Protecting and enhancing open spaces within the built environment | There are 158 formal open spaces (recreation grounds, amenity space, formal gardens) and 78 outdoor sports pitches (on 39 sites) in the District. Green spaces are fundamental to the provision of healthy and thriving communities. | National Plans and Policies, Local Plan, Community Strategy |

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| Climate Change | Climate change is perhaps the greatest environmental challenge facing the world today and tackling the causes of it is one of the Government's key priorities. This issue can be tackled at the local level, through policies and objectives which lead to more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable communities. | |
| Sustainable Water Management | This is an issue not just in terms of drinking water provision but also is important concerning soil erosion, habitat loss and landscape change. Water consumption can be managed through planning through the delivery of less water intensive buildings and developments. Water quality can be protected and enhanced through greater management and the promotion of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). | Audit Commission |
| Contaminated land and pollution prevention | Contaminated land remediation and the prevention of pollution release, especially during the construction phase of development, are key issues in the protection of the environment. | |
| Loss of species rich/ancient hedgerow | Main losses are due to farm intensification and improvement, and also development controlled through planning – housing and employment. | |
| Loss of (veteran) trees | Due to poor education/knowledge/information losses of veteran trees are continuing at a significant rate. Pressure to infill, reduces tree cover from District's settlements. | |