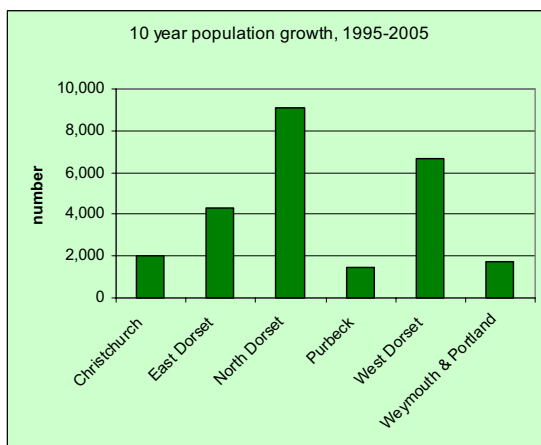


Dorset's Changing Age Structure

1

Past and Future Growth

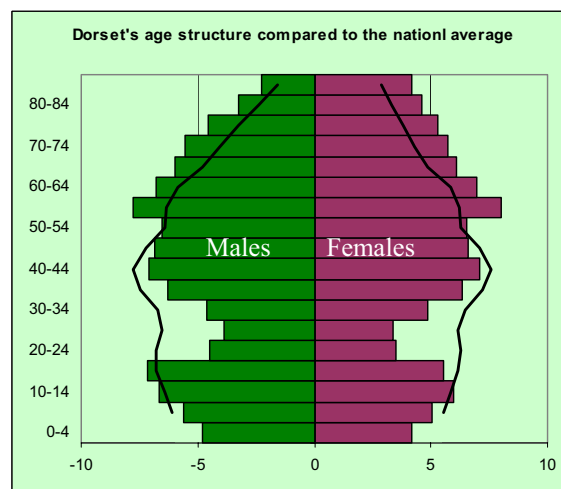
- The current population of Dorset is 401,145 (mid-2005 estimate), making it one of the lowest populated shire counties in England.
- Between 1995 and 2005 the total population of Dorset increased by 6.7%. This is approximately 50% higher than the national rate of growth (4.3%).



- The greatest growth in population was recorded in North Dorset District which increased by 16% (9,091 people) over the last 10 years. The lowest rate of growth in the County in the same period was in Weymouth & Portland Borough where growth was just under 3% (1,715 people). The adjacent chart illustrates these and other demographic changes.
- Growth in population is expected to continue in the coming years. The projected increase in population from 2005 to 2015 is 6.7%.
- If this predicted increase occurs then the population of Dorset will rise to 431,400 by 2015 (Office for National Statistics 2003-based sub-national population projections).

Age Structure

- Dorset's age structure differs from the national average. The County has the highest proportion of people over retirement age (60 female / 65 male) in the Country.
- According to estimates of population for 2005, over 27% of Dorset's population were over retirement age. This is significantly higher than the national average of 18.7%.
- The proportion of the population who are over retirement age is highest in the east of the county. In East Dorset District over 30% of the population are over retirement age whilst in Christchurch the figure is higher still at over 33%.
- Dorset is home to a relatively small proportion of younger people, particularly those in their twenties. Just 7.6% of Dorset's population are aged 20-29 years, significantly lower than the national average of 12.7%. The above chart shows the difference between Dorset's age structure and the national average.

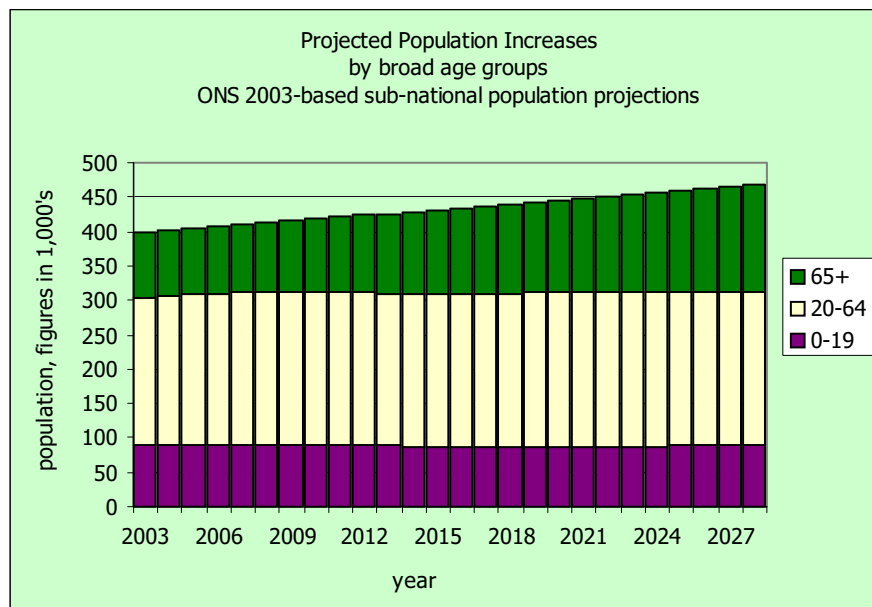
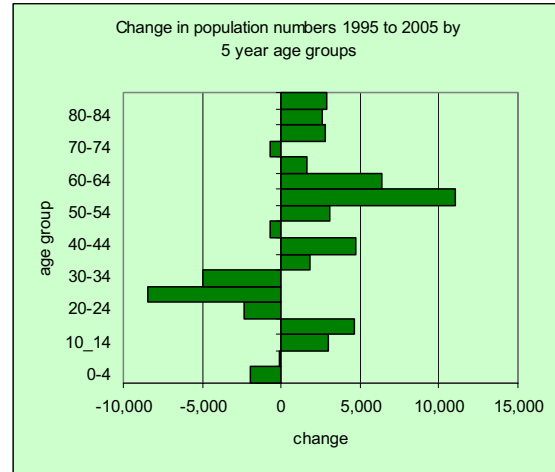


Bars represent Dorset - Lines represent England & Wales



Change in Age Structure

- As mentioned, over the last 10 years Dorset's total population has increased by 6.7%. However, during this period there has been a decline in the number of people of certain age groups.
- Between 1995 and 2005 the number of people in Dorset aged 50-59 years has increased by over 14,000. This represents a growth rate of 32.5%.
- Over the same period a decrease in the number of people aged 20-34 years was recorded. The number of people in this age group fell from over 65,000 to less than 50,000. This is a decline of over 24%. Changes in the numbers recorded in each age group over this period are shown in the above chart.
- Over the next 20 years Dorset's population is expected to increase by over 50,000. The chart below illustrates that most of this growth is anticipated to be in the 65+ age group. The population numbers found in the other age groups are expected to remain fairly constant during this period.



- Between 2003 and 2028 the number of people aged 65+ in Dorset is projected to increase by over 66%.

Sources: Registrar General's Mid-Year Population Estimates 1995—2005, Office for National Statistics
 2003 based sub-national population projections, Office for National Statistics

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