



Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd

Date: Monday, 28 September 2026
Time: 2.00 pm
Venue: Meeting Room 1, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum: 3)

Cllrs Nick Ireland (Chair), Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Steve Robinson, Gill Taylor and Ben Wilson

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic & Governance Services
Meeting Contact lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. MINUTES	5 - 8
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2026.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interest as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.	

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Representatives of town or parish councils and members of the public who live, work, or represent an organisation within the Dorset Council area are welcome to submit either 1 question or 1 statement for each meeting. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person or via MS Teams to read out your question and to receive the response. If you submit a statement for the committee this will be circulated to all members of the committee in advance of the meeting as a supplement to the agenda and appended to the minutes for the formal record but will not be read out at the meeting. **The first 8 questions and the first 8 statements received from members of the public or organisations for each meeting will be accepted on a first come first served basis in accordance with the deadline set out below.**

Further information read [Public Participation - Dorset Council](#)

All submissions must be emailed in full to lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on 23 September 2026.

When submitting your question or statement please note that:

- You can submit 1 question or 1 statement.
- a question may include a short pre-amble to set the context.
- It must be a single question and any sub-divided questions will not be permitted.
- Each question will consist of no more than 450 words, and you will be given up to 3 minutes to present your question.
- when submitting a question please indicate who the question is for (e.g., the name of the committee or Portfolio Holder)
- Include your name, address, and contact details. Only your name will be published but we may need your other details to contact you about your question or statement in advance of the meeting.
- questions and statements received in line with the council's rules for public participation will be published as a supplement to the agenda.
- all questions, statements and responses will be published in full within the minutes of the meeting.

5. COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS

To receive questions submitted by councillors.

Councillors can submit up to two valid questions at each meeting and sub divided questions count towards this total. Questions and statements received will be published as a supplement to the agenda and all questions, statements and responses will be published in full

within the minutes of the meeting.

The submissions must be emailed in full to lindsey.watson@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk by 8.30am on 23 September 2026.

[Dorset Council Constitution](#) – Procedure Rule 13

6. FORWARD PLAN 9 - 16

To consider the Forward Plan.

7. CARE DORSET UPDATE 17 - 24

To consider a report of the Chief Executive Officer, Care Dorset.

8. CARE DORSET ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 25 - 44

To consider a report of the Chief Executive Officer, Care Dorset.

9. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chair has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

10. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing the following recommendation:

Recommendation

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in item(s) No 11 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered. (Any live streaming will end at this juncture).

Reason for taking the item in private

Paragraph 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

11. Trading Company proposal 45 - 62
Para 3

To consider an exempt report of the Chief Executive Officer, Care
Dorset.



SHAREHOLDER COMMITTEE FOR CARE DORSET HOLDINGS LTD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 29 JUNE 2026

Present: Cllrs Richard Biggs (Vice-Chair), Steve Robinson and Gill Taylor

Apologies: Cllrs Nick Ireland and Ben Wilson

Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):

Chris Best (Chief Executive Officer), Jen Cook (Lawyer - Contracts and Commercial), Sean Cremer (Director - Resources (Section 151 Officer)), Julia Ingram (Director - Adult Social Care), Sarah Sewell (Head of Service - Commissioning for Older People and Home First), Caroline Tapster (Chair of the Board, Care Dorset) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic and Governance Officer)

VICE-CHAIR IN THE CHAIR

Due to the Chair of the shareholder committee having given apologies for the meeting, the Vice-chair, R Biggs, chaired the meeting.

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations.

4. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

5. **Review of Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the shareholder committee were noted.

6. **Forward Plan**

The shareholder committee forward plan was noted.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health reported that it was planned to hold a further summit between Dorset Council as shareholder and Care Dorset later in the year, which would provide an opportunity to meet informally to look at future development opportunities.

7. Dorset Council Organisational Update

The shareholder committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Commissioning and Improvement, which presented the developments led by the council, relevant to Care Dorset, and summarised key progress since the last meeting of the shareholder committee.

In presenting the report, the Head of Older Peoples' Commissioning and Homes First noted that full implementation of the new model for day opportunities was progressing which included a transition to a more flexible and sustainable model of delivery and focus on promoting independence. In addition, reference was made to supported living, with work to progress a second transitions property in Weymouth, strong performance in community reablement, the progression of redevelopment of Sidney Gale and work to explore opportunities for service development being undertaken by commissioners and Care Dorset.

In response to a question on progression to redevelop Sidney Gale, it was noted that further work was required to look at costs and other factors. A discussion paper would be brought to Cabinet at the appropriate time, later in 2026.

In respect of reablement centres, work was continuing with Care Dorset to develop the operational model for the future service. This would include consideration of issues around leasing properties and how the business model needed to be set up. Options would be discussed with the shareholder.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness reported that work would be starting soon on a review of supported living, which would include consideration of the need for move-on accommodation. Input into this review was welcomed.

The report was NOTED.

8. Care Dorset Update

The shareholder committee considered a report, which provided an update on matters relating to Care Dorset since the previous meeting.

The Chair of the Board reported that recruitment for a Non-Executive Director with commercial and business development expertise, would commence at the end of June 2026. This would ensure a range of expertise on the board and would support the board's aspirations for growth of Care Dorset. In addition, it was noted that Dorset Council's Chief Executive had joined a meeting of the board last week for a helpful discussion on how Care Dorset could support the council in its wider transformation programme, with further discussions to be held, and it was noted that a governance review was to be undertaken by Care Dorset to ensure the company was working in line with good corporate governance.

The Chief Executive Officer (Care Dorset) thanked all Care Dorset colleagues for their efforts in supporting people within the service during the recent hot weather. In addition, he provided an overview of the areas covered by the report including occupancy levels, day opportunities, community reablement and staff turnover and sickness levels. In respect of revenue, it was hoped that this would increase in the coming months and would be supported by a comprehensive marketing programme.

In response to a question regarding the council's transition to a new model for day opportunities, it was reported that the service was performing well, with attendance above commissioned levels, including use on a private basis. The service was supporting people to be able to continue living in their own homes.

The Chief Executive Officer (Care Dorset) provided an overview of action taken in response to the recent period of hot weather. Lessons were being learnt and plans to be put in place to respond to hot weather situations in the future. A report would be provided to the shareholder.

The report was noted.

9. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

10. **Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 2.05 - 2.24 pm

Chairman

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Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd
Forward Plan - September to December 2026
(Publication date – 20 AUGUST 2026)

Explanatory Note:

This Forward Plan contains future items to be considered by the Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd. It is published 28 days before the next meeting of the Committee. The plan includes items for the meeting including key decisions. Each item shows if it is 'open' to the public or to be considered in a private part of the meeting.

Definition of Key Decisions

Key decisions are defined in Dorset Council's Constitution as decisions which are likely to -

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates (**Thresholds - £500k**); or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority."

In determining the meaning of "*significant*" for these purposes the Council will have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 Act. Officers will consult with lead members to determine significance and sensitivity.

Committee Membership 2026/27

Cllr Nick Ireland – Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Climate, Communications, Performance and Safeguarding

Cllr Richard Biggs – Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economic Growth and Strategic Assets

Cllr Steve Robinson – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Cllr Gill Taylor – Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness

Cllr Ben Wilson – Cabinet Member for Transformation, Customer and Workforce

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
September 2026				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions (as required) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To note any decisions taken under delegation.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Dorset Council Organisational Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To present the developments on the part of the council relevant to Care Dorset.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Sarah Sewell, Head of Service - Commissioning for Older People and Home First sarah.sewell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Care Dorset Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To provide an update for shareholder members on matters relating to Care Dorset.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Care Dorset Annual Performance Report Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To consider the Care Dorset Annual Performance Report.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Annual report and Year end accounts Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To receive the annual financial report.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Trading Company proposal Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt Proposal to establish a new trading company.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 28 Sep 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
November 2026				
Dorset Council Delegated Decisions (as required) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To note any decisions taken under delegation.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 23 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Dorset Council Organisational Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To present the developments on the part of the Council relevant to Care Dorset.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 23 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Sarah Sewell, Head of Service - Commissioning for Older People and Home First</i> <i>sarah.sewell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i> <i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Care Dorset Update Key Decision - No Public Access - Part exempt To provide an update for shareholder members on matters relating to Care Dorset.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date 23 Nov 2026	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset</i> <i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Annual Reports				
Care Dorset Annual Business Plan (March) Key Decision - Yes Public Access - Fully exempt For the Shareholder Committee to consider progress in delivering the 5 year business plan, and any review of the plan as necessary.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date March	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>
Review of Terms of Reference (June) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To note the shareholder committee terms of reference.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date June	Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate, Communications, Performance & Safeguarding	<i>Grace Evans, Head of Legal Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer grace.evans@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</i>
Care Dorset Annual Performance Report (June) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To consider the Care Dorset Annual Performance Report.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date June	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Subject / Decision	Decision Maker	Date the Decision is Due	Cabinet Member	Officer Contact
Annual report and Year end accounts (June) Key Decision - No Public Access - Open To receive the annual financial report.	Decision Maker Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holdings Ltd	Decision Date June	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Health	<i>Chief Executive Officer – Care Dorset</i> <i>Director - Adult Social Care (Julia Ingram)</i>

Private/Exempt Items for Decision

Each item in the plan above marked as 'private' will refer to one of the following paragraphs.

1. Information relating to any individual.
2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6. Information which reveals that the shadow council proposes:-
 - (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or
 - (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

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Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holding Ltd

28 September 2026

CARE DORSET UPDATE

For information and assurance

Report author: Chris Best
Title: Chief Executive Officer
Email: chris.best@caredorset.co.uk
Date: 14 September 2026

Report status: PUBLIC

Executive summary:

Care Dorset continues to perform strongly across its services, with residential occupancy above target, improving workforce stability, and positive outcomes for people supported.

Progress against the Business Plan remains positive, including service growth, quality improvement, workforce development and organisational transformation. Governance arrangements continue to strengthen, and The Lawns has achieved a Good CQC rating.

Financial performance remains below plan, with a year-to-date deficit driven by lower-than-forecasted income and workforce cost pressures. Recovery actions are in place and performance is being closely monitored.

Overall, the organisation remains on a positive trajectory, making good progress against its strategic objectives while maintaining a focus on financial recovery and long-term sustainability.

Recommendation(s):

The Shareholder Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to continue its support for the Company.

Reason for recommendation(s):

As an owned company of Dorset Council and a critical partner in the delivery of adult social care services, this report provides the Shareholder Committee with assurance regarding

Care Dorset's operational performance, strategic progress, governance arrangements and financial position.

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

1. Occupancy levels (block-funded)

- 1.1. Occupancy across block-funded residential care homes was 96.1% for the three months ending August 2026, exceeding the target of 95.0% and improving by 5 percentage points from the previously reported position. This performance demonstrates sustained demand and effective utilisation of available capacity.

2. Occupancy levels (self-funded)

- 2.1. Self-funded occupancy averaged 53.0% for the three-month period ending August 2026, which is broadly in line with the forecast position. Performance remains consistent with expectations and reflects the continued development of the self-funded market across Care Dorset's residential services.
- 2.2. Care Dorset continues to invest in activities that support occupancy growth, utilising a range of marketing channels including digital, social media and print advertising. These efforts are intended to strengthen market awareness, promote available services and support future growth in self-funded placements.

3. Day opportunities

- 3.1. Care Dorset continues to deliver services in line with its contractual commitments. During the three-month period ending August 2026, the organisation delivered 2,186 hours of support to 357 people through its day opportunities provision. This reflects sustained demand for the service and the organisation's ongoing commitment to supporting people to maintain independence, develop skills and remain connected to their local communities.
- 3.2. A joint transformation programme Board has been established between Care Dorset and Dorset Council as well as an advisory panel. A joint strategic asset review is also underway, supported by site visits involving Care Dorset and Dorset Council property colleagues. Dedicated workstreams for property, catering, and transport are being established, alongside engagement plans for people we support, families, and carers. Together, these activities will ensure that future service options are informed by robust evidence, stakeholder insight, and strong partnership working across the wider system.

4. Community reablement

- 4.1. During the three-month period ending August 2026, Care Dorset delivered an average of 3,592 hours of reablement support per month, helping people to regain skills, maximise independence and achieve positive outcomes following periods of illness, injury or changes in circumstance.

- 4.2. Over the same period, 97.5% of individuals concluded their reablement support with no increase in their ongoing package of care requirements. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the service in supporting people to maintain or improve their independence, reducing the need for longer-term care and support where appropriate.
5. Supported living
 - 5.1. Care Dorset's supported living services continued to deliver contractual support hours across its three supported living settings during the period, ensuring people received high-quality, person-centred support that promotes independence, choice and wellbeing.
 - 5.2. Care Dorset's newest supported living service at Littlemoor Road is now operational and is currently supporting two young adults. The successful mobilisation of the service builds on the positive outcomes achieved at the Dorchester Road scheme and further strengthens the organisation's ability to provide high-quality support.
6. Extra Care (St Martin's)
 - 6.1. St Martin's is now approaching full occupancy and has established a vibrant and supportive community for the people who live there. The service continues to demonstrate strong demand and is providing a stable, high-quality environment that promotes wellbeing, independence and social connection.

WORKFORCE PERFORMANCE

7. Voluntary turnover for the 12-month period ending August 2026 was 14.45%, representing an improvement of 2 percentage points compared with the previously reported position. This reflects continued progress in workforce stability and the organisation's efforts to support colleague engagement, wellbeing and retention.
8. Total colleague turnover for the 12-month period ending August 2026 was 17.0%, a reduction of 3 percentage points from the previously reported position. This remains significantly below the Southwest adult social care sector average of 25.1%, demonstrating Care Dorset's comparatively strong workforce retention performance within a challenging labour market.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

9. The financial position at the end of July 2026 shows a year-to-date operating deficit of £228k, against a planned surplus of £50k, representing an adverse variance of £278k.
10. The variance is principally attributable to income being below plan, with revenue shortfalls of £421k arising primarily from lower-than-anticipated private bed occupancy levels and contract income growth being below forecast assumptions. In addition, operating performance has been affected by higher workforce costs, including increased agency utilisation and elevated levels of sickness absence,

together with the timing of planned expenditure on property maintenance and equipment replacement.

11. Management continues to maintain close oversight of financial performance and is implementing actions to address the factors contributing to the current variance. While performance remains below the approved plan, the latest reforecast indicates a trajectory towards a breakeven position by year end. The Board recognises the importance of sustained delivery of improvement measures and will continue to monitor progress closely.

ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE

12. As the second quarter of the plan's lifecycle draws to a close, an interim update on delivery is provided.
13. Care Dorset continues to make progress against its strategic objectives, with developments underway across service growth, quality improvement, workforce development and organisational sustainability.
14. Under *Aim One: Expanding market share*, the organisation has successfully opened its newest service at Littlemoor Road, which is already supporting individuals and demonstrating demand for specialist local provision. Efforts to expand capacity at Anglebury Court remain a priority, with broad stakeholder support for the proposal, although agreement to progress the scheme has yet to be secured.
15. Under *Aim Two: Improving and sustaining good quality care and support*, significant progress has been made in embedding the Thrive model across the organisation. Partnership work with BILD will support the next phase of implementation through workforce development in Positive Behaviour Support, Active Support and Practice Leadership. A network of PBS coaches has been established to promote consistency, shared learning and sustainable cultural change across services.
16. Under *Aim Three: Being known as a trusted provider and a great place to work*, the Community Reablement Service has continued to strengthen, supported by workforce growth and the appointment of a dedicated Occupational Therapist. Service performance has improved significantly, with unfulfilled hours reduced to minimal levels and recruitment remaining positive. The CarePath Academy has expanded its leadership, clinical and professional development offer, reducing reliance on external training providers and strengthening internal capability. Annual stakeholder surveys have been completed and are informing the development of a new Customer Voice Framework, with new engagement forums being established to strengthen involvement from people who use services, families, professionals and colleagues.
17. Progress has also been made against *Aim Four: Enabling value for money and future sustainability*. The organisation's technology-enabled operating model continues to advance, with a clear systems roadmap now in place to support digital transformation, improved management information and more effective decision-making. Work is also underway to standardise operating procedures, strengthen business processes and build organisational capacity through additional specialist roles. Alongside this, Care Dorset is continuing to develop its Environmental, Social

and Governance (ESG) agenda, with initial activity focused on environmental sustainability, waste management and community impact.

18. Overall, the organisation continues to make good progress across its strategic priorities, with a strong focus on growth, quality, workforce capability, service transformation and long-term sustainability. While some significant programmes remain in development, the direction of travel remains positive, supported by effective partnership working, strengthened governance and continued investment in people, services and infrastructure.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

19. Board recruitment

- 19.1. Recruitment for an additional Non-Executive Director with commercial and business development expertise is ongoing. The role has attracted strong interest from a diverse range of candidates, reflecting the growing profile of Care Dorset.
- 19.2. While a number of high-quality applications have been received, the Board is seeking to ensure that any appointment provides the right combination of skills, experience and cultural alignment to support the organisation's strategic ambitions. As a result, the recruitment process remains open while suitable candidates continue to be assessed.

20. Governance review

- 20.1. The Boards of Care Dorset Holding and Care Dorset Ltd have commenced a governance effectiveness review to ensure that governance arrangements remain aligned with recognised good practice and continue to support the organisation's strategic objectives. The review has begun with a survey of Board members and regular attendees at Board meetings, providing an opportunity to assess current arrangements and identify areas for further development.
- 20.2. Early findings demonstrate a strong level of confidence in the organisation's governance framework, leadership, organisational culture, quality oversight and financial stewardship. The review has also highlighted opportunities to further strengthen strategic oversight, enhance engagement with shareholders, develop risk assurance arrangements, improve performance reporting, broaden stakeholder engagement and support ongoing Board development.
- 20.3. The next phase of the review will include a detailed analysis of governance documentation and benchmarking against relevant governance standards and best practice. A final report, including recommendations for further enhancement, is expected in early 2027 and will support the Board's commitment to continuous improvement and effective governance.

OTHER MATTERS TO NOTE

21. Since the last report, The Lawns residential care home in Weymouth has achieved a Good rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This represents a significant milestone for the service, particularly in the context of previous inspection findings. The achievement reflects the commitment and hard work of colleagues across the home, supported by the ongoing partnership and improvement activity undertaken with Dorset Council's quality and commissioning teams. The improved rating provides assurance regarding the quality of care being delivered and demonstrates the positive impact of sustained focus on service improvement.
22. Care Dorset's profile and influence within the wider social care sector continue to grow. In November, the Chief Executive has been invited to deliver a keynote presentation at a national Care Strategy Forum, focusing on the organisation's THRIVE support model. This provides an opportunity to showcase Care Dorset's approach to delivering person-centred support and share learning with sector leaders and partners.
23. Further recognition of Care Dorset's leadership has been demonstrated through the appointment of the Chief Executive as Co-Chair of the National Care Forum (NCF) LATCo Senior Managers' Forum. The role will provide opportunities to contribute to national discussions on the development of local authority trading companies, strengthen sector partnerships, and ensure Care Dorset remains engaged with emerging policy, innovation and best practice across adult social care.
24. A colleague from Care Dorset's supported living service has been shortlisted in the "Specialist Carer of the Year" category at the forthcoming National Care Awards, reflecting the outstanding commitment, professionalism and quality of support provided to the people we support.
25. Positive media coverage
 - 25.1. The organisation has received some positive media attention over the period including:
 - 25.2. **Littlemoor Road:** [New supported living accommodation for young adults in Weymouth | Hello Rayo](#)
 - 25.3. **The Hayes care home resident pulls pint at Sherborne pub:** [The Hayes care home resident pulls pint at Sherborne pub | Dorset Echo](#)
 - 25.4. **Mayor joins in the fun at Blandford care home's summer fair!:** [Mayor joins in the fun at Blandford care home's summer fair! | The New Blackmore Vale Magazine | In Print & Online](#)
 - 25.5. **Staff praised in heatwave:** [Care Dorset staff have been praised during the heatwave | Dorset Echo](#)
 - 25.6. **Sherborne care home resident taken on motorbike ride out:** [Sherborne care home resident taken on motorbike ride out | Dorset Echo](#)
 - 25.7. **Thought-leadership piece:** [What problem is the National Care Service trying to solve? – SocialCareToday](#)

APPENDICES

26. There are no appendices to this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

27. None.

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Shareholder Committee for Care Dorset Holding Ltd

28 September 2026

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

For information and assurance

Report author: Chris Best
Title: Chief Executive Officer
Email: chris.best@caredorset.co.uk
Date: 14 September 2026

Report status: PUBLIC

Executive summary:

Care Dorset has continued to strengthen its performance and organisational maturity during its fourth year of operation, delivering over £4.1 million in savings since inception while maintaining strong occupancy, positive reablement outcomes and consistently good regulatory performance across inspected services. Workforce retention, training compliance and leadership capability have improved, supported by investment in organisational development and quality improvement. Despite ongoing financial, workforce and estate-related pressures, the organisation has maintained a strong partnership with Dorset Council and continued to develop new service provision, including specialist supported living. Governance, assurance and digital transformation arrangements have also been strengthened to support long-term sustainability and strategic delivery.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is asked to note the annual performance report.

Reason for recommendation(s):

As an owned company of Dorset Council and a strategic partner in the delivery of adult social care services, this report provides the Shareholder Committee with an overview of Care Dorset's performance, achievements and key developments during the reporting period.

DELIVERY AGAINST INITIAL EXPECTATIONS

1. The Cabinet report of November 2021 established a number of key expectations for the Local Authority Trading Company. As these expectations have not subsequently been refreshed, they continue to provide the basis for assessing Care Dorset's performance nearly four years after commencing operations in October 2022.
2. Financially, Care Dorset has exceeded the original savings target. Against an expectation to deliver £3 million of gross savings by April 2025, the organisation has generated almost £4.1 million of savings since inception. This includes £896k arising from the closure of Sidney Gale House in August 2024, demonstrating the organisation's contribution to delivering value for money.
3. In relation to residential capacity, Care Dorset currently operates 175 block-contracted beds, lower than the original ambition of 220 beds. This reflects changes to the operating model following the closure of Sidney Gale House and an increase in the proportion of self-funded provision. Despite the reduced bed base, occupancy across block-funded residential services has averaged 90.4%, representing a significant improvement on the position at transfer. Services are also supporting people with increasingly complex needs, demonstrating Care Dorset's ability to provide care for individuals with higher levels of acuity.
4. Recovery and reablement services continue to make a significant contribution to system flow. While reablement bed capacity has reduced from 30 beds across three services to 12 beds at Castleman Plus, occupancy has remained strong and has increased further during 2026. Community Reablement has continued to perform well, supporting an average of almost 150 people each week, with short intervention periods and positive outcomes. Notably, 97% of people completing reablement do so without requiring an increased package of ongoing care.
5. Care Dorset has also continued to strengthen its presence within local communities through a range of engagement activities, including fundraising initiatives, intergenerational projects with local schools, and sponsorship of community sports teams. These activities support the objective of creating strong local connections and promoting community-based opportunities.
6. The relationship between Care Dorset and Dorset Council remains positive and constructive. Regular engagement and reporting arrangements are in place across both organisations, supported by quarterly service-level agreement meetings. While some property-related matters remain unresolved, there is a shared commitment from both organisations to address these challenges and maintain progress against strategic objectives. Overall, partnership working remains a significant enabler of Care Dorset's success.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND DIRECTION

7. Care Dorset's five-year strategy, Your Life, Your Way, continues to provide the overarching framework for organisational decision-making and development. The strategy is underpinned by the vision of creating "a world where people can thrive" and is delivered through four strategic pillars: Quality, Reputation, Effectiveness and Growth.
8. During the reporting period, the organisation has focused on strengthening the foundations required to deliver its long-term ambitions. This has included enhancing governance and

accountability arrangements, improving the quality and accessibility of performance information, developing more consistent operational standards, and investing in leadership capability across the organisation.

9. Alongside this, significant emphasis has been placed on ensuring resources are deployed effectively and sustainably, supporting both service quality and financial resilience. Collectively, these activities are establishing a stronger platform from which Care Dorset can continue to improve outcomes for people who use services, respond to future demand, and deliver against its strategic objectives.

QUALITY AND THE EXPERIENCE OF PEOPLE WE SUPPORT

10. Maintaining and improving the quality of care and support remained the organisation's primary focus throughout the reporting period. This was achieved against a challenging operating environment characterised by increasing complexity of need, workforce pressures, ageing estate infrastructure and the need to maintain consistent service delivery across a geographically dispersed portfolio of services.
11. Priority attention was given to strengthening key areas of quality assurance, including care planning and record keeping, medicines management, workforce deployment, safeguarding, leadership oversight and engagement with families and professionals. Alongside this, continued emphasis was placed on ensuring improvement actions were completed in a timely manner and that learning was embedded across services.
12. Progress has been made in strengthening oversight, standardising operational practice and improving assurance arrangements. This work will continue as the organisation seeks to embed sustainable improvements, demonstrate consistency across services and provide ongoing assurance regarding the quality, safety and effectiveness of care and support delivered to the people it serves.

PEOPLE, LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

13. Our colleagues remain central to delivering high-quality services, maintaining our reputation and supporting the long-term sustainability of the organisation. During the reporting period, Care Dorset has continued to embed its servant leadership approach through the introduction of the CARE Leadership Model, which is being rolled out across the organisation to promote consistent leadership behaviours, accountability and culture.
14. While leadership within residential services experienced some instability earlier in the reporting period, this has now largely stabilised. Managers in post are making positive progress in developing their teams, strengthening performance and modelling the values and behaviours that underpin a positive organisational culture.
15. Investment in leadership development has also been a key priority. In April 2026, Care Dorset held its first Leaders' Summit, bringing together local and senior leaders from across the organisation to strengthen collaboration, align strategic priorities, share learning and reinforce a collective commitment to delivering high-quality care and support.
16. The organisation has continued to invest in workforce capability through its partnership with the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD). This programme has supported the rollout of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and the introduction of PBS coaches across

services, strengthening professional practice and improving outcomes for the people we support.

17. This work has also enabled the development of THRIVE, Care Dorset's organisational model of support. THRIVE brings together Positive Behaviour Support, Active Support, Capable Environments and Practice Leadership into a single framework designed to promote independence, choice, inclusion and quality of life. The model provides a clear and consistent approach to delivering person-centred care and will continue to underpin leadership development, workforce practice and service improvement across the organisation.
18. Table 1 sets out the key workforce metrics position from October 2025 to July 2026.

TABLE 1:

Key metric	October 25	July 26
Colleague voluntary turnover	15%	15.04%
Colleague retention	71.2%	79%
Sickness (average number of sick days per FTE in a 12-month period)	10.3 days	10 days
Colleague engagement score	80%	79%
Training compliance	82%	91%

OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

19. Care Dorset continues to deliver a diverse portfolio of services across residential care, bedded and community reablement, day opportunities, extra care and supported living. Demand for services remains strong, with increasing complexity of need across many service areas, requiring continued focus on quality, workforce capability and operational resilience.
20. Regulatory performance remains a significant strength for the organisation. During the reporting period, Anglebury Court and The Lawns were inspected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), with both services achieving an overall rating of Good. Notably, The Lawns improved from a previous rating of Requires Improvement in August 2024 to Good following its July 2026 inspection, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted quality improvement activity and the commitment of colleagues across the service.
21. All currently inspected Care Dorset services hold an overall Good CQC rating. Several newer services, including Castleman Plus and St Martin's, have not yet received their first inspection since opening or registration changes.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

22. Financial sustainability remained a key area of focus throughout the reporting period. Like many organisations operating within the care sector, Care Dorset faced increasing cost pressures, including the impact of national policy changes such as increases to employer National Insurance contributions. In addition, changes to arrangements with Dorset Council resulted in Care Dorset assuming greater responsibility for leased properties, alongside the

delivery of unplanned savings totalling £500k to support the Council's wider financial position. Despite these challenges, the organisation has continued to take action to strengthen financial resilience and improve operational efficiency.

23. A significant development during the year was the introduction of Neuvon as Care Dorset's neutral vendor for agency staffing. Implemented in May 2025, the arrangement has improved oversight and control of agency staffing requirements, increased transparency in agency utilisation, and reduced premium agency costs. This has contributed to a more effective approach to workforce management and has saved the organisation £280,000.
24. The organisation has also continued to invest in digital transformation as a key enabler of future efficiency and growth. The appointment of a Head of Digital Services and Systems has provided dedicated leadership for the development of a comprehensive digital roadmap, designed to simplify the technology landscape, improve system integration, and strengthen the quality of management information available to support decision-making. The benefits of this programme will be realised progressively over the coming years as new systems and processes are embedded across the organisation.
25. Further progress has been made through the implementation of a new electronic rostering system, which went live in April 2026. The system has improved the experience of colleagues by providing greater flexibility and visibility over working patterns and leave arrangements, while also enhancing organisational oversight of workforce deployment, productivity and resource utilisation. Collectively, these initiatives are strengthening organisational effectiveness and establishing a more robust platform to support the delivery of Care Dorset's strategic ambitions.

GROWTH AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

26. Sustainable growth remains an important strategic objective for Care Dorset, enabling the organisation to support more people, diversify its income streams and increase its contribution to the wider health and care system. Consistent with the organisation's strategic approach, growth opportunities continue to be assessed against clear criteria, including strategic alignment, quality impact, workforce capacity, financial viability, capital requirements and overall deliverability.
27. The organisation has also expanded its service portfolio through the successful mobilisation of Littlemoor Road, a specialist transition service for younger adults with learning disabilities and/or autism. This builds on the success of the Dorchester Road service and demonstrates Care Dorset's ability to develop innovative services that respond to identified local demand.
28. Alongside service development, increasing self-funded occupancy has remained a key commercial priority. Care Dorset now has 46 residential care home beds funded outside of the block contract arrangement. While occupancy across these beds has averaged 66.4% during the reporting period, increasing utilisation remains an important opportunity to strengthen income generation and improve financial performance.
29. The organisation's commercial development capacity was impacted during the period by the removal of the Chief Commercial Officer role from the structure as part of wider cost-saving measures. While the direct effect on growth outcomes is difficult to quantify, the reduction in dedicated commercial resource presents a challenge in progressing business development opportunities at pace. Notwithstanding this, Care Dorset continues to pursue

growth opportunities that align with its strategic objectives and deliver sustainable benefits for the organisation, the Council and the people it supports.

PARTNERSHIPS AND REPUTATION

- 30. Care Dorset's ability to deliver its strategic objectives is underpinned by strong partnerships across the health and care system. Productive relationships with Dorset Council, NHS partners, commissioners, regulators, community organisations, and the people we support and their families continue to support service quality, organisational development and positive outcomes for local communities.
- 31. The relationship with Dorset Council remains particularly important given its role as shareholder, commissioner, landlord and strategic partner. Throughout the reporting period, constructive engagement has been maintained through established governance, reporting and operational forums, supporting collaborative working and alignment of shared priorities.
- 32. These strong partnership arrangements have enabled continued progress across service delivery, transformation programmes and strategic development initiatives. They have also supported Care Dorset's growing reputation as a trusted provider, evidenced through improved regulatory outcomes, sector engagement and increasing recognition of the organisation's innovative approaches to care and support.

GOVERNANCE, ASSURANCE AND STRATEGIC RISKS

- 32.1. The governance framework continued to evolve during the reporting period, reflecting both changes in Board membership and the organisation's ongoing commitment to maintaining effective oversight and assurance. The Board saw the departure of Andrew Billany following his move from Dorset Council. As Care Dorset's first Company Director and a longstanding advocate for the organisation, Andrew made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of the business.
- 32.2. To strengthen Board capability and provide additional assurance in relation to the organisation's growing clinical responsibilities, Dr Felix Davies joined the Board as a Non-Executive Director in August 2025. His clinical expertise and experience have enhanced Board discussions and strengthened oversight of quality, safety and clinical governance.
- 32.3. The organisation's strategic risk profile remains stable overall, although work continues to reduce a number of risks to their target levels. Oversight arrangements remain in place through the Board and its committees, with regular monitoring of controls, mitigations and risk trends.
- 32.4. The principal strategic risks facing Care Dorset relate to changes in policy and commissioning arrangements, financial pressures arising from the wider economic environment, the condition and suitability of the estate, digital resilience and information security, the ongoing delivery of high-quality care, and the organisation's ability to deliver its strategic priorities and growth ambitions. These risks are regularly reviewed to ensure that emerging issues are identified early and that mitigating actions remain effective.
- 32.5. While the operating environment continues to present challenges, the Board is satisfied that appropriate governance, risk management and assurance arrangements are in place

to support informed decision-making and maintain oversight of the organisation's most significant strategic risks.

- 32.6. Care Dorset operates a well-established governance structure designed to provide effective oversight, assurance and accountability across the organisation. Supporting the work of the Board are four Chief Officer-led committees, each responsible for overseeing defined areas of organisational performance, risk and strategic delivery.
- 32.7. The committees play a key role in providing assurance to the Board through the monitoring of key performance indicators, oversight of strategic and operational risks, and scrutiny of progress against agreed business plan objectives. This approach enables the Board to maintain visibility of performance and emerging issues while ensuring appropriate challenge and accountability throughout the organisation.
- 32.8. The four committees are:
- Clinical Governance and Best Practice Committee
 - People and Resources Committee
 - Property and Assets Committee
 - Business Development Committee
- 32.9. Collectively, these committees provide a structured framework for oversight and decision-making, supporting the effective delivery of Care Dorset's strategic priorities and ensuring that risks, performance and opportunities are subject to regular review and scrutiny.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S CLOSING REFLECTIONS

33. As Care Dorset approaches its fourth year of operation, it is in a stronger and more mature position than when it was established in October 2022. The period has been marked by significant external pressures, including financial constraints, workforce challenges, increasing complexity of need, and ongoing change across the health and social care sector. Despite this, the organisation has remained focused on its core purpose of supporting people to live fulfilling lives while delivering value for Dorset Council and local taxpayers.
34. The report highlights a number of noteworthy achievements. Care Dorset has delivered savings in excess of those originally anticipated, maintained strong occupancy across contracted services, secured positive regulatory outcomes, strengthened workforce capability and retention, and continued to develop services that promote independence and community inclusion. Progress has also been made in strengthening governance arrangements, leadership capability and organisational effectiveness. Underpinning these achievements is a continued commitment to a culture centred on compassion, accountability, respect and empowerment.
35. The organisation remains realistic about the challenges that lie ahead. Sustained focus will be required to continue improving quality, manage ongoing financial pressures, address estate-related risks and ensure sufficient organisational capacity to deliver both operational priorities and long-term strategic ambitions. Growth opportunities will continue to be pursued where they align with Care Dorset's purpose, values and commitment to delivering high-quality care and support.

36. Looking ahead, the priorities set out within Your Life, Your Way remain unchanged. The organisation will continue to focus on strengthening quality, developing leadership, improving organisational effectiveness, advancing digital capability and maintaining long-term financial sustainability. Achieving these ambitions will depend on the commitment of colleagues and the continued support and collaboration of Dorset Council, health and care partners, families, carers and the people who use our services.
37. On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our colleagues, volunteers, directors, shareholder representatives, stakeholder partners and families for their continued commitment and support. Most importantly, I would like to thank the people we support, whose experiences, aspirations and feedback continue to shape our services and provide the clearest reminder of why our work matters. Care Dorset enters the next stage of its journey with a strong foundation, a clear sense of purpose and a continued determination to deliver outstanding care and support for the people and communities of Dorset.

APPENDICES

38. Appendix A: Impact Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

39. None



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way

Impact Report 2025/26



I and my family are truly happy with the care given to Rob. The staff also care for the welfare of Rob's family.

Family member

I could not fault the care. They go above and beyond.

Family member

It feels like being at home. There's nothing I would change.

Family member

I feel like I've known the staff here for years. The atmosphere is friendly and there's a lot of laughter.

Ruth

Contents

3. Chief Executive's welcome
4. Financial narrative
5. Case study: bringing down agency costs
6. Operational update
7. Quality as culture
9. Bringing wishes to life
10. Opinion: Vic Rayner OBE, National Care Forum CEO



Year in Review

It's extraordinary to think it's been a whole year since we last shared stories of the impact Care Dorset has made to the lives and families of the people we support, to Dorset Council and to the communities of Dorset.

We're now in the second year of a five-year strategic period.

This is a time of sleeves-up renewal – modernising our business and bringing the 23 services, plus outreach, together into one efficient organisation delivering our vision: 'A world where people can thrive.'

We need this because exceptional service starts with enabling our colleagues to succeed.

By making sure the right people are in the right place at the right

time and giving them the tools, support, and environment they need to thrive, we empower them to deliver the best possible experience for the people we support.

So perhaps you can imagine how much harder that was without the ability to see in one place what shifts are booked, how much absence we're dealing with and who's on annual leave.

Our Chief Finance Officer, Lisa Evans, has been leading a major project to bring in a system which can do just that (page 4).



Good' across the board

Talking of unity, I'm hugely pleased to report all of our regulated and inspected services are now rated 'Good' in all domains by the Care Quality Commission.

Anyone who has undergone a CQC inspection will know what a moment that is for colleagues, and – prepare as you might – there's no way to make it anything other than stressful.

Chief Operating Officer Ally Prince describes what was done to ensure one service went from 'Requires Improvement' back to 'Good' at the first opportunity (Page 6).

And this has all been done while we welcome our newest service, Littlemoor Road in Weymouth. A product of the success of our first Transition service, and an opportunity for growth, new experiences and (I hope) fun for three



young people

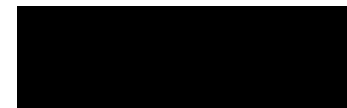
Insight

Adult social care (ASC) has been headline news recently in a way it hasn't been for years. While we're all focussed on the day job, it's important to look up and see how our experience tracks against national trends.

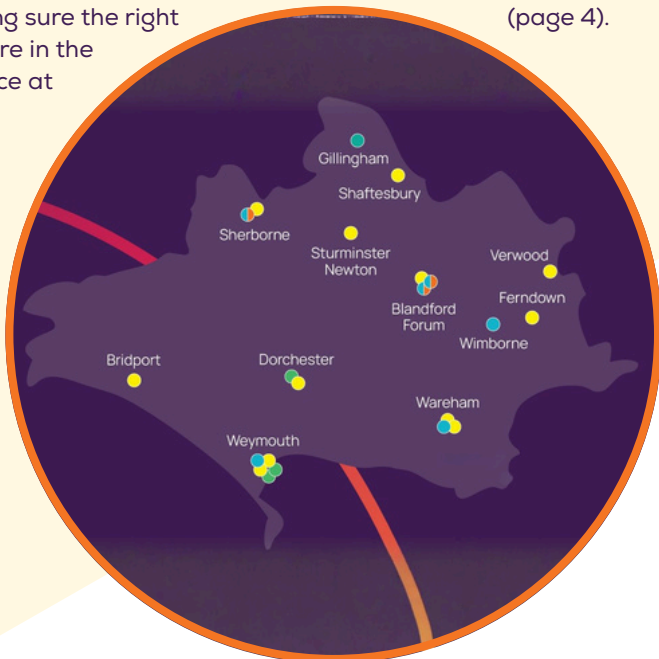
We're proud members of the National Care Forum which represents not-for-profits and LATCos in the ASC industry and I am grateful to its CEO, Vic Rayner OBE, for sharing insights into this sector, its drivers and many challenges.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Impact Report. If you would like to discuss any part of it do please simply contact me.

Sincerely,



Chris Best
Chief Executive Officer





Financial narrative

By Lisa Evans, Chief Financial Officer

Towards stable growth

Care Dorset has returned £500,000 in savings to Dorset Council over 12 months, whilst driving for growth. But high-quality care for the people we support must always be put first.

"Net profits have continued to grow year-on-year, from a loss in 2023 to £10k the following year and £40k in this.

This small surplus is very welcome as we, like all publicly owned adult social care bodies, must operate within a tight financial envelope.

Messaging the importance of value-for-money and discipline is ongoing, and is bearing fruit.

But I'm proud that rather than passively managing each efficiency issue piecemeal, Care Dorset has instead done the hard thing and faced the structural causes.

Programmes to unify staff rota, holiday and absence management (see right) and agency costs (page 5) are both steps towards the 'Care Dorset Way' which will generate economies for years to come."

Sales up 2%

Gross profit 15%

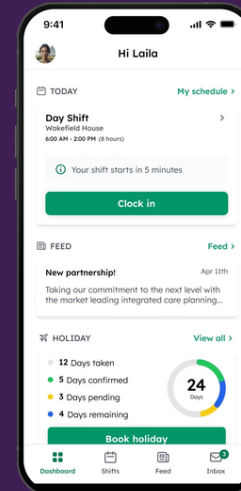
£500k returned to Dorset Council

Financial KPIs	Unit	2025/26*	2024	2023
Revenue	£'000	48,600	31,919	29,583
Operating profit/loss	£'000	40	10	(394)

*The financial results cover an 18-month reporting period. Equivalent 12 months sales are 2% higher than the previous final year, with growth from private funders and growth in Extra Care.

Making sense of rotas

Until 2026 there was no single way to see your shifts, book leave or record sickness. Each service did it their way.



In April, Care Dorset implemented a new digital rostering system, Sona.

For most colleagues Sona is a mobile app where they can book holiday, see their rota and access additional shifts.

For the organisation, it has strengthened oversight of workforce deployment, enabled deeper insight into working patterns and productivity, and enhanced monitoring of delivery and resource use.

As a result, the system is supporting more effective workforce planning while helping to ensure resources are aligned to demand.



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way

Zoning in on agency costs

When you need a care and support colleague and there's no one to call, you call agency. But that comes at a cost. It can become a habit. And it quickly adds up to a sizeable bill. How to address it?

Care agencies exist to fill gaps. Without them it would be very difficult to keep services at safe staffing levels. The industry needs agency.

But for Care Dorset what was meant to be an 'in need' additional service had become a 'baked in' financial burden. Agency use was consistently over expectations and some suppliers were charging premiums it was hard to justify.

Service colleagues who booked agency were working with systems, habits and relationships which had built up over years – and each did it differently.

Simply saying it was a problem wasn't going to solve the problem.

In late 2024 Care Dorset approached Neuen, seeking a refresh of our relationship with agency. We said we believed we were using it too much, we appeared to be using the most expensive agencies most often and there wasn't enough visibility.

The programme to tackle that ran throughout spring of 2025.

Neuen renegotiated agency fees. Most agencies engaged, but those who chose not to join the roster at the new rates were released.

There were communications, face-to-face meetings and a little training to update managers and senior staff. It wasn't about taking operational decisions away, just standardising the process to be more visible.

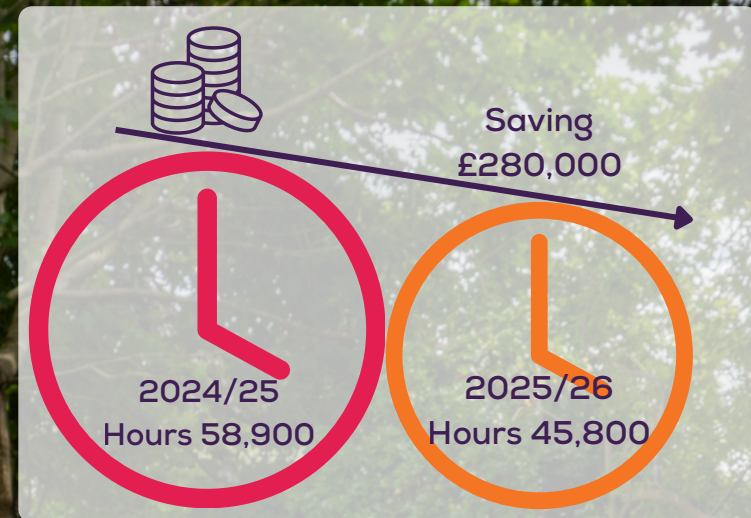
System goes live

Under the new system there would only be one way to book agency – through an online portal. That went live in May 2025.

Care Dorset has made a saving of £280,000 compared to hourly coverage in the previous year.

Chief Operating Officer Ally Prince said: "We like and need our agency colleagues. This is about management.

"It's reminded anyone booking agency to think twice – is this really necessary? Are there other options? I believe that's made a big difference."



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way



Operational update

By Allyson Prince, Chief Operating Officer

You're in a Good place

In March 2025, The Lawns in Weymouth was rated 'Requires Improvement' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Skip forward a year and it's back to 'Good' again. What was the difference?

"It's such a pleasure to say all of Care Dorset's CQC-inspected services have achieved a 'Good' rating.

We've had two inspections in 2026. Anglebury Court, our Residential service in Wareham, was inspected in February and rated 'Good' in May.

And in August another Residential service, The Lawns in Weymouth, regained its 'Good' title.

Both were wonderful achievements by service colleagues and great for the people we support and their families.

But I must admit getting back

our 'Good' at The Lawns was very special.

Safe	Good	✓
Effective	Good	✓
Caring	Good	✓
Responsive	Good	✓
Well led	Good	✓

The new Manager, Michelle Harwood, has created a great 'can do' culture, and her enthusiasm was noticed.

One relative told the CQC: 'The new management have turned the place around.'

There were lots of reasons The Lawns earned its rating – all of them hard won – but having that leadership in place is a huge benefit."

Second service

In May 2024 Care Dorset opened its first 'Transition service,' essentially a Supported Living home for people aged 18-25 as they develop independence skills.

That was Dorchester Road in Weymouth, and its leadership have since been nominated in two separate national awards.

So it was fantastic to see that success turn into a second Transition service, Littlemoor Road, again in Weymouth, which opened in July.



Here to THRIVE

Many care services have their own model of care provision. Care Dorset has developed its own – called THRIVE – and it will become a cornerstone of our service.

THRIVE is a combination of three care disciplines:

1. Active Support

Helps people with disabilities take part by shifting support from "doing for" to "doing with" – promoting independence, skills, and meaningful engagement.

2. Positive Behaviour Support

Improves quality of life and reduces challenging behaviour by understanding why behaviours occur.

3. Person-centred care

Centring an individual's values, preferences, and circumstances. Treating the person rather than the diagnosis.

We're at an early stage in the rollout, but excited to develop a branded THRIVE model serving all the people we support.



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way

Quality as a culture (part 1)

Quality in care requires a culture which is open to development, and programmes which provide it. Care Dorset has both - but neither happen by themselves.

In September last year, all Care Dorset learning & development activity was brought together under the CarePath Academy brand.

Its two tiers of Leadership training - partly based on the NHS 'QI' model - is developing the next generation of Care Dorset leaders.

CarePath Academy is a keystone in the 'Care Dorset Way' across the 23 services and outreach. That includes compliance level training and career development.

The CarePath Academy remains a Care Dorset programme, but with a medium-term ambition to become an awarding body, offering recognised care qualifications.



Positive Behaviour Support

Last year, Care Dorset began a three-year partnership with the disability charity network Bild to strengthen our Positive

Behavioural Support (PBS) practice.

PBS is one pillar of THRIVE (page 6), Care Dorset's new care model.



Quality as a culture (part 2)



Dorset's Reablement rates beat all the averages

DAILY ECHO

Care Dorset reablement service amongst best in England

DorsetECHO

Dorset care company 'among most successful in England'

With 23 services plus outreach "What's it like to be at Care Dorset?" was not always a question with an answer. The Customer Experience Team was created to provide one.

Care Dorset needed a 'golden thread,' bringing Quality and safeguarding, its Values and its ambitions to life for all stakeholders.

In November last year the Customer Experience Team was launched. The 'experience' is that of the people we support, but also of families, colleagues and others.

The team's Customer Voice programme now drives almost all stakeholder engagement, including surveys - bringing them together in one place for analysis.

It also leads integration with third-party agencies whose role it is to assess Care Dorset's provision, ensuring it meets the standards expected by regulators and others.

The goal is always safer, higher-quality and more meaningful outcomes for everyone.



Reablement success

In April, Care Dorset announced its Reablement care could be listed amongst the best in England.

Some 92% of those who used it, ended needing no increase in care.

That's 15% better than the national average and outranks the South West - itself the top-performing region at 86%.

In the three months to February, the Care Dorset team delivered over 12,000 hours of support.

During the same period, 92% of users ended their Reablement with no increase to their package of care.



Making dreams come true

No one stops enjoying the things they've always enjoyed just because they've moved into a care setting. Creating a perfect day can mean extra effort – but it's what Care Dorset does.

When Gerald White turned 100, he could not have known he was about to have an 80-year-old wish fulfilled.

Gerald lives in The Hayes, a Care Dorset Residential home in Sherborne.

The father of two said: "In my 20s my friend Eddie had a motorbike and sidecar, but he would never let me ride in it."

Activities Officers decided they wanted to do something about that.

The problem was they didn't know anyone who owned a sidecar.

So an appeal went up on Facebook groups: "Do you have a sidecar? We'd like to make someone's day."

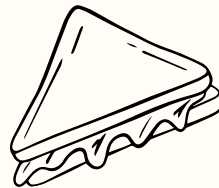
That caught the attention of local bikers.

Then it was spotted by someone with an award-winning, homemade sidecar.

Fast forward to June this year.

Gerald is being helped into the sidecar, along with 20 bikers who will be his guard of honour (in return for bacon sandwiches from the kitchen team).

Watch the video...



Adventures so far...

Football-mad Ron gets star treatment at Weymouth FC

Brief Encounter star Margaret turns 100, gets message from the King delivered by the mayor

Gerald's sidecar ride out

Former landlord Shirley pulls pints again



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way



The future is LATCo shaped

As a publicly owned Local Authority Trading Company, Care Dorset occupies a unique place in the adult social care market, says National Care Forum CEO Vic Rayner OBE.

There is a growing group of NCF's not-for-profit members who operate as Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCos), meaning they grew out from local authorities and so possess strong local knowledge and established trust amongst the people and communities they support.

LATCos are delivering measurable improvements in adult social care and support across the UK.

By their nature align with the current Labour government's priorities of ethical public service delivery, fair employment and community wealth-building while also offering appeal through their efficiency, innovation and financial sustainability.

LATCos, charities, community interest companies, housing providers, local authority direct provision and social enterprises operate services throughout England.

Between them they provide 20% of the social care provision delivered every day.

We believe this needs to increase.

Other services that are provided to older and disabled adults is done so on a 'for profit' basis.

In many cases those profits are redirected away, or 'extracted', from social care provision each year, whereas not-for-profit care and support organisations reinvest their surplus, offering more transparency and clearer accountability for the use of taxpayers' and self-payers' money.

Adult social care reform

This idea of 'extractive profit' or 'profiteering' has been highlighted recently by both Prime Minister Andy Burnham and Baroness Louise Casey.

The Casey Commission's 'Big Conversation on Care' has asked the public to submit proposals to tackle the question: 'When we are old or disabled, or have a serious illness, who should support us and how?' and at the time of writing 55 of the suggestions posted feature not-for-profit care in some way.



We are hopeful that by the time this public consultation has concluded these proposals will have received sufficient support to ensure the future role of not-for-profit care and support is included in the Commission's recommendations for the reform of adult social care.

We want to both support our members to grow and see the proportion of not-for-profit provision in adult social care increase and we would welcome working with the government to achieve this.

In collaboration with our members we have made a series of recommendations to government in order to transform the adult social care sector. [You can read these here.](#)

At a time when the social care system continues to experience challenges around funding, commissioning and workforce, we are keen to see how the new government may respond to hearing more about the purpose of our not-for-profit members and the innovation taking place within their organisations.

We hope to see the recognition, strengthening and growth of not-for-profit care and support provision become central to the development of a National Care Service.

Furthermore, we will continue to support Care Dorset and all our members by ensuring their voices are heard at the highest level of government.



Care Dorset
Your Life, Your Way

Contact

For further information please
contact our team on hello@caredorset.co.uk

www.caredorset.co.uk

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