Dorset

Health & Wellbeing Strategy

Supporting the people of Dorset to start well, live well and age well in healthy places



Dorset Council

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Foreword

Cllr. Steve Robinson, Chair, Dorset Health and Wellbeing Board

Health and wellbeing are shaped by far more than the services we receive when we become unwell. They are influenced by our relationships, our communities, our opportunities, our sense of belonging and purpose, and the strengths we build throughout our lives. This strategy is founded on the belief that every person in Dorset should have the opportunity not only to be healthy, but to thrive.

In developing this strategy, we have been inspired by a simple but powerful idea: people achieve better outcomes when they are surrounded by supportive relationships, meaningful opportunities, clear expectations and environments that help them develop confidence, resilience and a positive sense of identity. These principles apply not only to children and young people, but to people of all ages and stages of life.

Communities are strongest when individuals feel connected, valued, and empowered. Whether it is a child benefiting from a positive start in life, an adult maintaining their health and independence, or an older person remaining active and involved in their community, the conditions that support wellbeing are remarkably consistent. Strong families, supportive neighbourhoods, trusted services, opportunities to contribute, and a sense of belonging all help people live healthier, happier and more fulfilling lives.

This Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out our shared ambition for Dorset. It is a commitment from partners across local government, the NHS, the voluntary and community sector, emergency services and our residents to work together to create those conditions for success. Through prevention, early intervention, integrated neighbourhood working and community-led approaches, we will focus on building the strengths and assets that already exist within Dorset's people and places.

Together, we can create a Dorset where everyone has the opportunity to start well, live well, age well and enjoy healthy, thriving communities. This strategy is our shared roadmap towards that vision.

Introduction

Purpose Statement

This Health and Wellbeing strategy aims to establish the conditions for everyone in Dorset to live well by improving prevention-focused integrated care, strengthening communities, and supporting people to thrive at every stage of life. It focuses on the wider population to support healthier lifestyles, prevent future ill health, and remain independent. This strategy will complement the emerging NHS Neighbourhood Health Plan, which will focus on residents already dependent on health services and will support our shared commitment to working together to lead improvements in health and wellbeing in Dorset.

The national direction of travel, through devolution and the health bill, points towards local places working together with communities, making decisions on how best to commission services for local populations. This decision making is anticipated to be devolved to local health leaders, i.e. the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Ambition

The ambition set out in this strategy is to:

- ensure that every child has the best start in life through strong family support and high-quality early education,
- support people to live healthier and longer lives while reducing health inequalities,
- deliver integrated health and social care at a neighbourhood level.
- allow people to feel safe and included in their local community, and to take pride in their local area as a place where they can live well and thrive,
- enable everyone to achieve their full potential.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The board is a statutory partnership bringing together councillors and leaders from health and care agencies and the voluntary and community sector to address health priorities in a coordinated and integrated way.

It has statutory responsibilities to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, enable integrated health and care working, and produce a Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The partners on the board are: Dorset Council, NHS Dorset, Dorset Healthcare and Dorset County Hospital (NHS), Dorset Voluntary and Community Assembly, Dorset Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, Dorset Healthwatch, GP representatives.

Health and Wellbeing in Dorset

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) brings together evidence on the health, wellbeing and wider needs of Dorset's population. It provides the evidence base for this strategy, ensuring that priorities, ambitions and actions are guided by evidence and responsive to the needs of local people.

The following diagram shows a snapshot of the picture in Dorset using data from the JSNA.

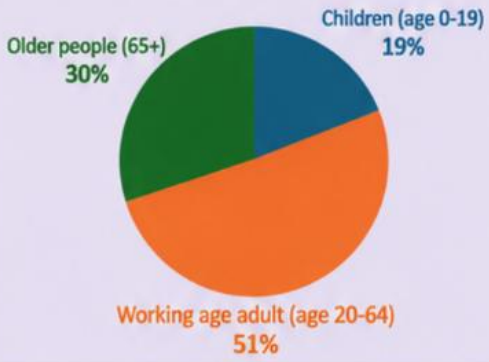
Dorset Data (from the published 2026 JSNA)

Dorset Council

GENERAL DATA

Population:
389,947 (2024)
increasing by **4%**
over the past decade.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION



Dorset is less diverse than urban areas but is becoming more ethnically diverse. **6%** of residents are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Over **1 in 25** residents in Dorset (around **14,300** people) live in areas ranked among the 20% most deprived in England. In contrast, **1 in 6** residents (approximately **62,500** people) live in areas among the 20% least deprived nationally.

START WELL

Childhood obesity is a persistent concern. In 2023/24,
24.7%
of Reception age children and **31.8%** of Year 6 pupils were overweight or obese.

Breastfeeding rates are above the national average:
75.8%
of babies in Dorset receive a first breast milk feed compared to **71.9%** nationally.

School readiness. In 2023/24,
71%
of children aged 2-2.5 years achieved a good level of development which is below the England average. Areas of lower achievement include fine motor skills and personal social skills.

LIVE WELL

In Dorset the percentage of patients with a depression diagnosis has been increasing since 2012 to
12.9%
in 2022/23 (similar to England) however new diagnoses appear to be declining.

The percentage of adults who are overweight or obese in Dorset is similar to the England average. However, at **62.4%** this is still high and has changed little over time.

Smoking is one of the main causes of health inequalities, with the harm concentrated in disadvantaged communities and groups. Smoking prevalence has been reducing in Dorset – currently **9.9%**. However, prevalence is higher among adults in routine and manual occupations (19.5%), adults with long-term mental health conditions (20.9%) and adults in substance use treatment.

Economically inactivity is **18%** of the working age population, and among them **32%** are classified as long term sick (highlighting major barriers to workforce participation). Financial stress is linked to poor mental health and lower engagement with preventative healthcare services.

Around **1 in 6 (67,000)** residents live with a disability that limits daily activity (5% aged 35-49 and 16% aged 75-84, over a third aged over 85).

AGE WELL

In Dorset people are generally healthier and live longer than the England average. Latest life expectancy data shows women live to approximately **84.5 years** and men **81.1**. The difference of life expectancy of **4.9 years** for men and **3.2 years** for women between the most and least deprived areas (2021-23).

Healthy life expectancy is an important measure of health and inequality. Men in Dorset will experience poor health for around **17 years** and women **20 years**. We know from national data that people in more deprived areas experience ill health at an earlier age.

Of Dorset's 60+ population, **10%** are frail. Of these **59%** are classed as having high frailty. Hip fracture numbers are similar to the national average, however the rate of hip fracture in ages 65+ are significantly higher in the most deprived area.

HEALTHY PLACES

Access to green space and nature is known to benefit physical, mental, and social health. Local analysis estimates that **51%** of people live within walking distance of space that is likely to provide access to nature.

The Local Environment score **(4.95)** in the Thriving Places Index for the Dorset area is close to the England average. Data used in the score include air and noise pollution, outdoor space access and flood risk. The Transport score **(3.74)** for Dorset is below average, reflecting rural challenges in active travel and car relance, collisions and travel time to services.

Fuel poverty affects an estimated **10%** of households **(around 18,000)** particularly those living in older properties with poor energy efficiency. Cold, inefficient homes common in rural Dorset contribute to respiratory and cardiovascular illness, frailty, and falls, particularly among older adults and those with long-term conditions.

Building the strategy with stakeholder engagement

To ensure this strategy reflects the priorities of Dorset's communities and partners, a series of stakeholder engagement workshops were held with representatives from Dorset Council, health services, the voluntary and community sector and wider system partners. The engagement process was designed to shape the strategy from the outset, helping to develop a collective vision for health and wellbeing.

There was a clear and consistent message from stakeholders that improving health and wellbeing in Dorset requires a greater focus on prevention, early intervention and the wider determinants of health (such as housing, employment and access to green space). Stakeholders highlighted the importance of designing services around what matters most to residents, strengthening communities and the voluntary sector, and creating simpler, more integrated systems with shared outcomes and accountability. Collectively, the engagement has reinforced the need for a person-centred, community-enabled approach that supports people to live well, age well and feel valued, while tackling inequalities and improving the quality of life for all Dorset residents.

This strategy and outcomes framework incorporate council objectives, NHS goals and the aims of the community and voluntary sector, reinforcing the shared commitment to integrated support in the partnership.

National Context - Changes in Health Policy and Legislation

The strategy is influenced by the changing national policy relating to health and wellbeing. An important part of this is the Health Bill currently going through Parliament. At the time of writing (October 2026);

- The Health Bill proposes to abolish NHS England (NHSE), transferring its functions to the Department of Health and Social Care and the Secretary of State. This represents a significant restructuring of NHS governance, intended to simplify accountability, strengthen national oversight and support the Government's neighbourhood-based model of care.
- A major policy theme is place-based care, with Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) and their integrated care strategies being abolished and replaced by a new Neighbourhood Health Plan framework.
- The Bill also aims to strengthen collaboration between health and care partners, improve data sharing, and support efforts to reduce health inequalities.
- It intends to devolve decision making to local health leaders, i.e. the Health and Wellbeing Board

The bill's provisions align with the NHS 10 Year Health Plan (2025), which sets out a vision for a more preventative, community-based and person-centred health system. It

emphasises a shift from hospital-based, reactive care to local, neighbourhood health models and the importance of co-production, partnership working, and valuing community insight.

The national plan provides a clear framework to support Dorset in delivering a more integrated, sustainable, and person-centred Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The emphasis on partnership working, shared accountability, and the role of the voluntary and community sector (VCSE) as equal partners also reflects Dorset's approach to moving resources upstream into prevention and building stronger, more resilient communities.

Local context – system partners' priorities

Dorset Council's priorities include making prevention a defining principle of how Dorset Council operates, reducing future demand and achieving better outcomes, as well as recognising the need to work differently with partners and communities.

NHS Dorset's priorities include targeting prevention, proactive care and earlier intervention in neighbourhoods to deliver radically different models of care and support, and ensuring delivery is through neighbourhood care, with high-functioning Integrated Neighbourhood Teams.

Vision, Mission and Aims

Vision

Strong communities, healthy lives

Dorset will be a county where people can live well - for longer: independent, connected, healthy and active within their communities; where support is available before crisis occurs; where care is delivered locally and personally when needed; and where more people are enabled to remain in their own homes and communities throughout later life.

Mission

Dorset will take a whole-system, long term approach to supporting health and wellbeing, rooted in homes, places, relationships, health, care, income, transport, technology, information and community life. This will help people live well, maintain independence, prevent future ill health, and delay or reduce the need for formal care.

Overarching aims

To achieve our vision, partners across Dorset will work together to:

- **Improve the health of the population:** Support people to stay physically, mentally and socially well through prevention, early intervention and community-based support. Including addressing the wider determinants of health such as housing, education and social support.
- **Reduce health inequalities:** Address the unequal factors that affect health and wellbeing, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to live a healthy and fulfilling life.
- **Integrate health and care services:** Create joined-up, person-centred services that are easier to access and closer to home, improve experiences of care and support people to remain independent. Prioritise community-led approaches central to the design of services.

This vision, mission and aims are supported by the following principles of working together as an integrated system:

1. **People First-** Focus on what matters to people, not just what is the matter. Meet basic needs first and recognise lived experience.
2. **Communities as Equal Partners-** Communities lead, shape, and co-design solutions. Build on local strengths, relationships, and assets.
3. **Local by Default-** Decisions and priorities shaped at neighbourhood level. Solutions tailored to Dorset's diverse places
4. **Simple & Joined-Up-** No wrong door. People are guided, not passed around. Clear, accessible information and seamless support
5. **Prevention & Wellbeing-** Act early to keep people well. Prioritise connection, belonging, and independence.
6. **Inclusion & Equity-** Actively reduce inequalities and remove barriers. Ensure everyone can access and benefit from support.
7. **Collaboration & Shared Responsibility-** One system, one purpose, shared accountability. Organisations, communities, and individuals working together
8. **Sustainable & Long-Term-** Invest in what works over time. Value both large-scale change and small, meaningful impact.

Strategic Outcomes Framework

The strategy is framed around four strategic outcomes based on life stages. This provides a structured approach to cover outcomes and priorities across multiple partners and allows for a common language and structure for measuring progress. It is better to focus on a few strategic priority outcomes well, than tracking lots of outcomes ineffectively.

1



Start Well

Children, young people and their families are healthy, thriving and resilient. They feel safe and connected to their community.

We support the development, wellbeing and physical and mental health of young people, from early childhood to adulthood, supported by strong, confident families.

2



Live Well

People can live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives, with support in the community to improve wellbeing.

We work to reduce health inequalities across Dorset, making it easier for adults to stay physically and mentally well, prevent long-term illness and get help early when they need it

3



Age Well

Older people live independently, with dignity and choice, supported to stay well in their own homes and communities.

We help older adults to maintain their independence for as long as possible, preventing unnecessary hospital stays and ensuring care is centred around what matters to them.

4



Healthy Places

Our neighbourhoods are safe, inclusive and connected, with access to nature, making healthy living easier for everyone.

We create and look after local environments that support health, ensuring safe streets, accessible green and blue spaces and strong community connections.

Start Well

Outcome:

Children, young people and their families are healthy, thriving and resilient. They feel safe and connected to their community.

We support the development, wellbeing and physical and mental health of young people, from early childhood to adulthood, supported by strong, confident families.

Ambition:

Strengthen early child development and health through improved family support, supportive friendships, role models and achievement at school to give children in every part of the county the best start in life.

Strategic Focus:

- Early years development
- Youth mental health
- Family resilience
- Making healthier choices

Measures:

- School readiness
- Rates of childhood obesity
- Children's mental health wait times and outcomes

Delivery group programmes:

- Best start in life
- Neighbourhood Health

Relevant policies and strategies:

- Dorset's Best Start Local Plan 2026 to 2029 - Dorset Council
- Dorset SEND strategy 2024 to 2027 - Dorset Council
- Placement Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Leavers 2024 to 2027 - Dorset Council
- Birth to Settled Adulthood (B2SA) - Dorset Council

JSNA Evidence

- **Childhood Health:** Dorset's children generally have good health outcomes, but significant inequalities emerge early in life. The JSNA highlights that in 2023/24, only 71% of children aged 2 to 2.5 years achieved a good level of development, which is below the England average, while 67.4% of children achieve a good level of development by the end of Reception, matching the national average. Childhood health challenges include 24.7% of Reception-aged children being overweight or obese, 14.4% of 5-year-olds experiencing visible dental decay, and declining childhood vaccination rates, with only 67.4% of children in care up to date with immunisations.
- **Education, Skills & Learning:** While overall school readiness in Dorset is 67.4%, achievement falls to just 46% for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), demonstrating a substantial disadvantage gap. School attendance also remains a concern, with 7.9% of half-day school sessions missed in 2023/24, significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels and above national trends.
- **Childhood Vaccinations:** Vaccination uptake in Dorset has been declining, with coverage for school-age children at or below the England average, and immunisation rates for children in care notably low, with only 67.4% up to date in 2023/24.
- **Oral health and obesity:** 24.7% of Reception children are overweight or obese, with the prevalence remaining persistently higher in more deprived areas. Furthermore, 14.4% of 5-year-olds had visually obvious dental decay in 2023/24, and hospital admissions for dental decay and gum disease have been increasing.
- **Maternal and infant health:** On a positive note, infant mortality is similar to the national average, and Dorset performs well in early nutrition, with 75.8% of babies receiving a first breast milk feed compared to the national average of 71.9%.

Live Well

Outcome:

People can live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives, with support in the community to improve wellbeing.

We work to reduce health inequalities across Dorset, making it easier for adults to stay physically and mentally well, prevent long-term illness and get help early when they need it

Ambition:

People live healthier lives for longer, and health inequalities are reduced.

Strategic Focus:

- Adults' prevention
- Reducing health inequality gaps
- Healthy lifestyles
- Learning disabilities

Measures:

- Making healthy life choices (smoking, physical activity, alcohol harm rates)
- Rates of preventable long-term conditions
- Adult mental health wellbeing scores
- Improved community cohesion

Delivery group programmes:

- LiveWell Dorset
- Neighbourhood Health
- Physical Activity

Relevant policies and strategies:

- Public health vaping position statement
- Physical Activity Strategy

JSNA Evidence:

- **Life expectancy gaps:** Although Dorset generally has high life expectancy, there is a clear social gradient. There is a life expectancy gap of 4.9 years for men and 3.2 years for women between the most and least deprived areas, driven heavily by heart disease, cancer, and circulatory diseases. Furthermore, men in Dorset experience poor health for around 17 years of their lives, and women for 20 years.
- **Preventable lifestyle factors:** Across Dorset, 62.4% of adults are overweight or obese, and 22% are physically inactive. While smoking prevalence is 9.9% overall, it is disproportionately higher among adults in routine and manual occupations (19.5%) and those with long-term mental health conditions (20.9%). Social isolation and loneliness also remain significant factors affecting wellbeing, particularly in rural communities.
- **Rising multiple long-term conditions (LTCs):** Over 150,000 residents live with two or more long-term conditions. For example, 19% of patients have hypertension (with many more undiagnosed), which often presents alongside comorbidities like depression and diabetes.

Age Well

Outcome:

Older people live independently, with dignity and choice, supported to stay well in their own homes and communities.

We help older adults to maintain their independence for as long as possible, preventing unnecessary hospital stays and ensuring care is centred around what matters to them.

Ambition:

Residents experience joined-up health and social care services at a neighbourhood level.

Strategic Focus:

- Ageing at home
- Dignity
- Frailty prevention

Measures:

- Healthy life expectancy
- People remaining independent in their community for longer, reducing engagement with NHS and social care
- Social isolation and loneliness metrics for older adults
- Dementia diagnosis rates and support quality
- Trips and falls avoidance

Delivery group programmes:

- Neighbourhood Health
- LiveWell Dorset
- Age Friendly Dorset
- Future Care
- Better Care Fund
- Thriving Communities

Relevant policies and strategies:

- A Better Life for Adults in Dorset 2023 to 2028
- A Better Life for Carers in Dorset 2023 to 2028
- Nutritional Care Strategy
- Dorset's Extra Care Housing Strategic Statement 2024 to 2039

JSNA Evidence:

- **Our Population:** Dorset has one of the oldest populations in the country and is ageing further. By 2028, around 33% of residents will be aged 65 and over. Currently, approximately 10% of people aged over 60 are frail, meaning they are less able to cope with illness or everyday challenges due to declining physical, mental or social resilience. Over a third of those aged 85+ experience significant ill health or disability that restricts daily living.
- **Reliance on unpaid carers:** Nearly 10% of the population (35,505 people) provide unpaid care. Current pressures on public services mean reliance on these carers is growing, yet people providing high levels of unpaid care are more likely to report poor health themselves.

Healthy Places

Outcome:

Our neighbourhoods are safe, inclusive and connected, with access to nature, making healthy living easier for everyone.

We create and look after local environments that support health,

ensuring safe streets, accessible green and blue spaces and strong

community connections.

Ambition:

People feel safe and included in their local community and are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Strategic Focus:

- Environment and setting
- Air quality
- Access to green/blue spaces
- Active travel
- Physical activity
- Community safety

Measures:

- Residents with easy access to quality outdoor, community, recreation and leisure spaces, within a 15-minute walk
- Perceptions of safety and local community strength
- Physical activity groups
- Fuel poverty rate

Delivery group programmes:

- Thriving Communities

- Active 4 Health
- Movement for Movement
- Live Well Dorset

Relevant policies and strategies:

- Community Safety Plan (CSIP) 2020 to 2026 (2024 refresh)
- Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 3
- Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy 2023 to 25 Refresh
- Housing Strategy January 2024 to January 2029 - Dorset Council

JSNA Evidence:

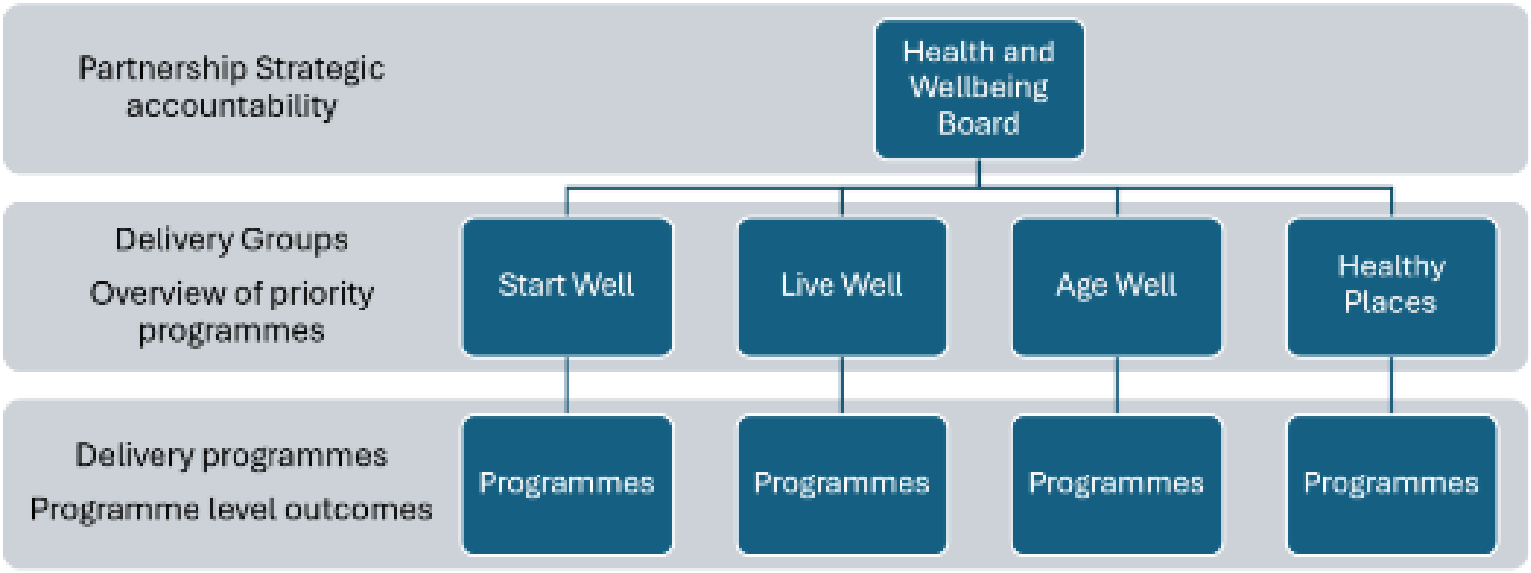
- **Environment:** Rurality presents a significant challenge for Dorset residents. The county has 51 Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that fall within the 20% most deprived areas nationally for access to housing and essential services. Dorset's transport score in the Thriving Places Index is below average due to this car reliance and long travel times to services. Long travel distances, limited public transport and reliance on private vehicles can restrict access to healthcare, employment and community support.
- **Deprivation:** Around 10% of Dorset households (approximately 17,800 households) experience fuel poverty, while the cost-of-living crisis is increasing financial hardship, reliance on foodbanks and health inequalities. Deprivation is strongly associated with poorer physical health, lower educational attainment and reduced life expectancy. For instance, cold, inefficient homes contribute to respiratory illness, frailty, and falls, particularly among older adults.
- **Social isolation:** The JSNA highlights that social isolation and loneliness have detrimental effects on physical and mental wellbeing. Due to rural barriers, residents have expressed a strong need for localised access to services through community hubs and outreach clinics, as long travel distances negatively impact those without transport.

Leadership and Accountability

The Health and Wellbeing Board is responsible for providing strategic oversight and accountability for the outcomes and overarching aims. It will do this by strengthening the partnership, committing to working more closely with our communities, and using data and insights in planning and decision making. The board will ensure that its business supports the achievement of the outcomes.

The board will hold itself to account through an annual review and refresh process, assessing and measuring progress towards the strategic outcomes and updating the direction for the following year. There will be ongoing engagement sessions at least annually to ensure the outcomes reflect the needs of residents and partners.

While the Health and Wellbeing Board will provide strategic leadership and oversight, delivery of the strategy will be overseen by delivery groups aligned with the four outcomes. The delivery groups will be responsible for coordinating priority programmes and will report progress to the Health and Wellbeing Board to prompt discussion and development, allowing reflection and learning so the strategic outcomes can be refined over time.



Implementation

The four delivery groups aligned to the outcomes Start Well, Live Well, Age Well and Healthy Places will be the main mechanism for coordinating implementation of the major delivery programmes. They will report progress and risks back to the Board at each meeting. These groups are effectively the place-based partnership where the work will get done.

The groups will provide a structure for joining up activity, identifying opportunities for collaboration and ensuring delivery contributes to shared outcomes. Working together, Dorset Council, NHS partners, VCSE organisations and communities will support integrated care and neighbourhood-based models of delivery, creating a collaborative system focused on prevention and improved outcomes for residents.

The delivery groups will be led by senior officers in the partnership. Membership will be dependent on the scope of the programmes within them and will evolve as the work progresses. The groups are expected to be partnership based, representing the health and care system.

The delivery groups will be responsible for overseeing the main programmes and developing detailed performance measures, avoiding duplication of work.

These groups do not necessarily own the work of the delivery programmes but provide a clear reference point to join up related work, understand the added value of aligning partnership work and focus on the most important programmes that contribute to achieving strategic outcomes. Where there is a strong connection with work managed elsewhere, it helps to have awareness and understanding so that the Health and Wellbeing Board can support, advocate and champion relevant programmes.

Delivery model

The delivery groups will incorporate these key features in how the delivery will be managed (developed in the engagement sessions):

- Data-Informed but Community-Shaped
- Community-led and co-produced
- Services closer to home
- Local decision-making
- Neighbourhood health models
- Community hubs and local access points
- Integrated Neighbourhood Teams as a key delivery mechanism
- Coordinated, not duplicated, efforts
- Align and join up, so everyone works towards shared outcomes

A living strategy (Test, Learn, and Grow)

The strategy is intended to be a living document, providing a framework for the board to use a test, learn and adapt approach to assess impact, success, and identify areas for improvement. This includes building evidence as work develops, improving measures, and learning from good practice in other places. The board will promote discussion and development, allowing reflection and learning from good practice elsewhere so the strategic outcomes can be refined over time.

The strategy is not intended to cover everything we do across the partnership but will focus on key strategic priorities that deliver the agreed outcomes, with an awareness and connection to related work overseen elsewhere in the system.

The strategic outcomes reflect broad long-term measures while the delivery groups will develop more specific and short-term measures. These will reflect both health outcomes and wider community outcomes.

The Health and Wellbeing board will hold an annual review of the strategy and the outcomes, which will allow assessment of progress, celebrate success and identify where further attention is needed for the following year. The annual review process will also enable the strategic outcomes to be adapted to meet changes in context and goals.

The conditions for success are to maintain engagement, keep partners on track, and include all relevant programmes from constituent organisations in the delivery groups' scope of work.

Opportunities for system work

The strategy provides an opportunity to align activity and join up efforts, recognising that organisations in the system are already working in the same themes. The health and wellbeing board, with its coordinated delivery groups, will help prevent duplication and ensure everyone is working towards shared outcomes, coming together through the board to discuss and debate progress.

Some key opportunities for joined-up system working can be achieved through this strategy, these have been identified by system leaders and are as follows:

- **Community Data and Intelligence:** Consolidate community data and insights from various sources, including JSNA, DiiS, and community conversations, to inform commissioning and support local decision-making. Include new needs assessments from housing and supported housing in our system planning to help prioritise housing for those who will benefit most.
- **Align outcomes to key system programmes** through an updated

Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Stand up delivery groups for starting well, living well, ageing well and healthy places.

- **Develop an integrated commissioning strategy** that aligns Dorset Council changes with joint commissioning opportunities with health (children's, Better Care Fund, person-centred frameworks). This will include how we maximise return on spend to build community wealth and increase social value as anchors.
- **Physical Assets and Estates:** Strategic importance of reviewing and repurposing physical assets, including releasing underused buildings for housing or other community uses, and coordinating asset management between Dorset Council and NHS partners. Develop high-quality third spaces for work with our communities.
- **Develop a clear prevention offer** that can wrap around the Neighbourhood Health developments. This includes provision of effective voluntary sector support, through Thriving Communities, and council services to build health improvement capacity, like LiveWell Dorset.
- **Join up the learning from Future Care, Better Care Fund schemes, and Neighbourhood Health** into a place operational model that embeds prevention approaches, keeps people away from high-cost services, and living well in communities for longer. Address the future workforce needs of this model through change programmes like the Weymouth Multiversity proposal.

Appendix

Stakeholder Engagement and Insights

We took a deliberative approach to developing the strategy with input from partners and stakeholders. We held four sessions to discuss the key elements and gain insights that formed the basis for this strategy. We also looked at previous insights from residents and stakeholders in relation to health and care services, to avoid duplication of engagement.

Across the stakeholder workshops, there was consistent support for a strategy that:

- **Focuses on what matters to residents:** quality of life, independence and wellbeing.
- **Prioritises prevention and early intervention,** helping people stay well for longer and building resilience.
- **Strengthens communities,** investing in local capacity and VCSE partners.
- **Addresses the wider determinants of health,** including housing, employment, transport, environment and social inclusion.
- **Creates simpler, more joined-up services,** with shared outcomes, clear accountability and a "No Wrong Door" approach.

Overall, there was a clear message that delivery should build on existing programmes that share common characteristics: prevention, community-based support, holistic approaches and trusted local relationships. Participants also highlighted the need for stronger governance, better data sharing, improved collaboration across organisations, and success measures that focus on outcomes such as quality of life, belonging, purpose and community connection.

NHS Dorset Insight review

NHS Dorset carried out a review in 2025 of recent engagement reports to consolidate findings of what people are telling us in the health and care system. It is important not to duplicate engagement already done, provided it is still relevant, and it is important to reflect the views and priorities of our communities in the strategy. The overall themes were identified as follows:

- Integration and joined-up working
- Voluntary and community sector and social connection
- Prevention and early help
- Inequalities and inclusion

- Digital inclusion and choice
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Access and barriers to services
- Communication and information
- Workforce and relationships
- Wider determinants of health

JSNA forward plan (agreed at HWB March 26)

- **26/27:**

1. Work and Health
2. Healthy Life Expectancy
3. Annual Narrative update

- **27/28:**

4. Prevention across the life course
5. Community voices and local insight
6. Annual Narrative update Notes

- **Longer term:**

7. Integration and service transformation
8. Community wellbeing