

Overall Participation in Dorset Survey

Figures have now been published giving a breakdown of responses received from residents to the questionnaire on Reorganising Dorset Councils.

Looking first at the specially selected, statistically weighted selected households - figures are as follows:

Area	Population	% of pop	Replies	% of Replies	Weighting
Christchurch	48,370	6	459	11	0.6
East Dorset	87,900	12	554	13	0.9
Bournemouth	188,730	25	670	16	1.6
Poole	149,010	20	781	18	1.1
North Dorset	69,880	9	439	10	0.9
Purbeck	45,410	6	453	11	0.6
Wey & Port	65,130	9	391	9	0.9
West Dorset	100,030	13	508	12	1.1
Total	754,460	100	4,255	100	

From this we see that Christchurch has contributed 11% of the replies although its population represents only 6% of Dorset. The WCRA newsletter may have something to do with that. Only Purbeck amongst the other council areas has produced a result so out of kilter in terms of over-representation. This means that results from these two areas will be scaled down before inclusion in the overall analysis using a weighting of 0.6

On the other side of the coin Bournemouth contributed only 16% of the replies despite representing 25% of Dorset's population. Their results will be scaled up by a factor of 1.6

NB The specially selected household survey responses will be statistically weighted to take account not just the size of the population in each local authority area as shown above but also to allow for the different response rates from different types of households. This process will ensure that the household survey results are statistically reliable and representative of the whole population both in each area and overall.

Turning now to the unsolicited questionnaires that were returned:

Area	Population	% of pop	Replies	% of Replies	Weighting
Christchurch	48,370	6	1,409	13	0.5
East Dorset	87,900	12	1,433	13	0.9
Bournemouth	188,730	25	2,048	19	1.3
Poole	149,010	20	2,625	24	0.8
North Dorset	69,880	9	632	6	1.5
Purbeck	45,410	6	656	6	1.5
Wey & Port	65,130	9	694	6	0.9
West Dorset	100,030	13	1,414	13	1.0
Total	754,460	100	10,911	100	

NB For the purpose of this commentary, I have excluded 61 questionnaires received from outside Dorset and 1,564 received from undeclared geographic locations

From this we see that Christchurch has contributed 13% of the replies although its population represents only 6% of Dorset. Again, the WCRA newsletter may well have something to do with that. This means that results from Christchurch will be scaled down before inclusion in the overall analysis using a weighting of 0.5

On the other side of the coin once again Bournemouth is under-represented and contributed only 19% of the replies despite representing 25% of Dorset's population. It is joined by North Dorset and Purbeck, both of which are under-represented. Their figures will be scaled up.

Sixteen facilitated workshops were also undertaken throughout the consultation period, with residents, town and parish councils, businesses and the voluntary sector. In addition, further separate responses and written representations were received from hundreds of stakeholders including businesses, voluntary sector groups, public sector partners, MPs, service user groups, town and parish councils, residents' groups and other organisations.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) will now analyse the data, present the findings and produce a full and detailed report, which will be available online at:

www.reshapingyourcouncils.uk

on 5th December 2016, along with the detailed Case for Change that is being prepared by Price Waterhouse Coopers.

The ORS report will: include overall results for the whole of Dorset; compare findings from the household survey and open consultation questionnaire; feature breakdowns of results from each council area; and present the feedback received from stakeholders via all the different consultation activities.

The Price Waterhouse Coopers' case for change will assess each option for its ability to meet the government's 'statutory tests' of:

1. Improve value for money and efficiency
2. Deliver significant cost savings,
3. Show that the cost of change can be recovered over a fixed period
4. Improve services for local residents
5. Provide stronger and more accountable leadership
6. Be sustainable in the medium-long term.

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