South West Observatory Local Profiles
Somerset

Key Facts

- **Life expectancy** in Somerset for both men (79.4 years) and women (83.5 years) was higher than both the South West and England averages.
- The rate of **teenage conception** in Somerset (33.2 per 1,000 women aged 15-17) was lower than the rate for the South West (34.5 per 1,000) and England (40.2).
- The **crime rate** in Somerset (28.9 per 1,000 population) was lower than the rate for the South West (33.8 per 1,000) and England and Wales (41.3 per 1,000).
- Median gross **annual pay** in Somerset was £24,202 (South West £24,922, England £26,165)
- The latest **unemployment rate** for Somerset is 7.5% (South West 6.0%, England 7.6%)
- 56.7% of Somerset pupils achieved **5+ GCSEs** grades A*-C or equivalent, including Maths and English (South West 57.5%, England 58.3%).
- Somerset's lowest quartile **affordability ratio** (house price to earnings ratio: a higher ratio means less affordable housing) was 7.8 (South West 8.2, England 6.7).
- There were 341 **road casualties** per 100,000 population in Somerset (South West 310, England 355).

Demographics

Population by Local Authority

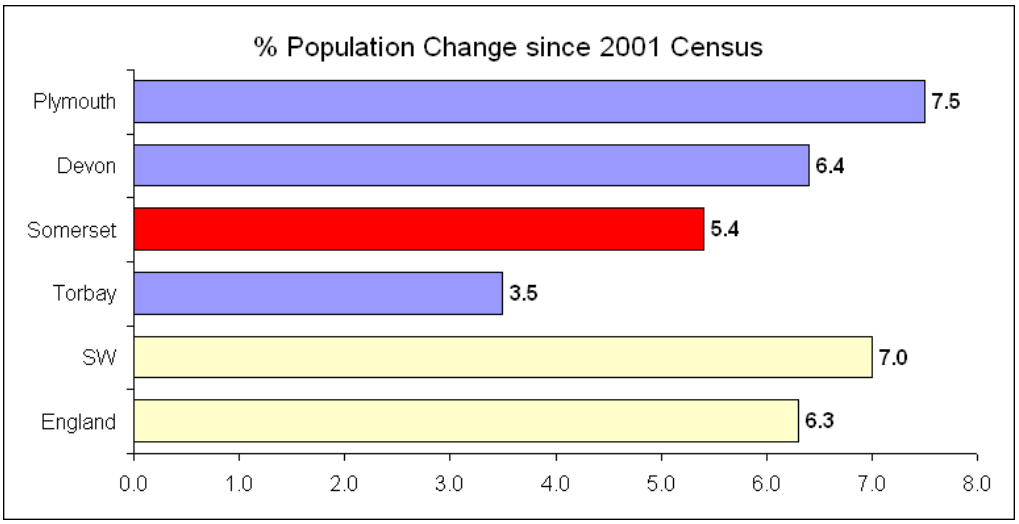
- Somerset has the 4th highest population of the 16 county and unitary authorities in the South West. It makes up over 10% of the South West population.
- Somerset has the 3rd largest land area of the 16 South West county and unitary authorities, but the 5th lowest population density.
- The five Somerset districts vary greatly in size and population, with South Somerset being the biggest and most populous.

	Pop. 1000s	Area Sq Km	Persons per sq km
Somerset	**525.2**	**3,451**	**152**
Mendip	109.0	739	147
Sedgemoor	112.8	564	200
South Somerset	158.6	959	165
Taunton Deane	109.4	462	237
West Somerset	35.4	725	49
South West	**5,273.7**	**23,837**	**221**
England	**52,234.0**	**130,281**	**401**

ONS - Mid Year Estimates 2010 / ONS Census 2001 Area data

Population Change

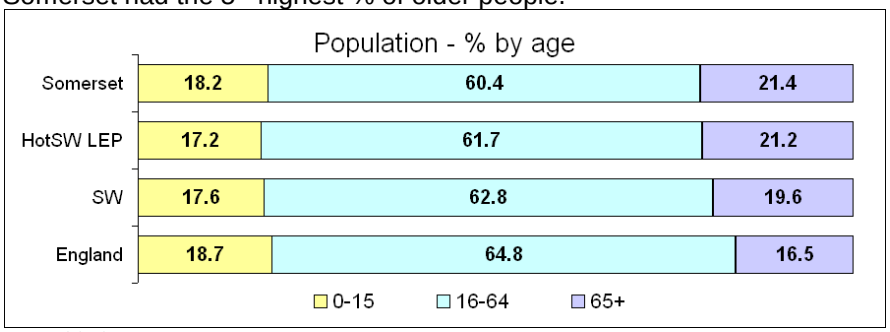
- Since the 2001 census, Somerset's population has increased by 5.4%, a lower rate of growth than the South West (7.0%) and England (6.3%).
- Within the districts, population increases over the same period ranged from 0.9% in West Somerset to 6.5% in Taunton Deane.



Census 2001 and ONS Mid-Year Estimate 2010

Population by Age

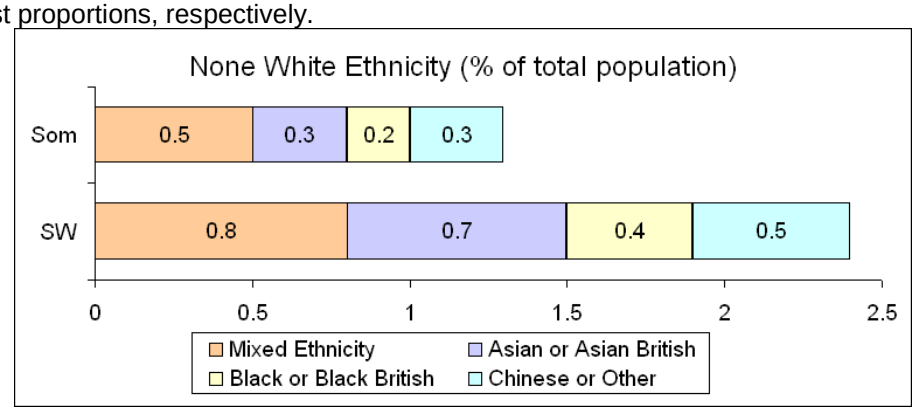
- Somerset has the 4th lowest % of working age people among the 16 South West county and unitary authorities. Somerset had the 5th highest % of older people.



ONS Mid Year Estimates 2010

Ethnicity

- Of the 16 South West county and unitary authorities, Somerset had the third lowest percentage (1.2%) of non-white ethnic population in 2001.
- Within the Somerset districts, Taunton Deane (1.56%) and West Somerset (0.82%) had the highest and lowest proportions, respectively.



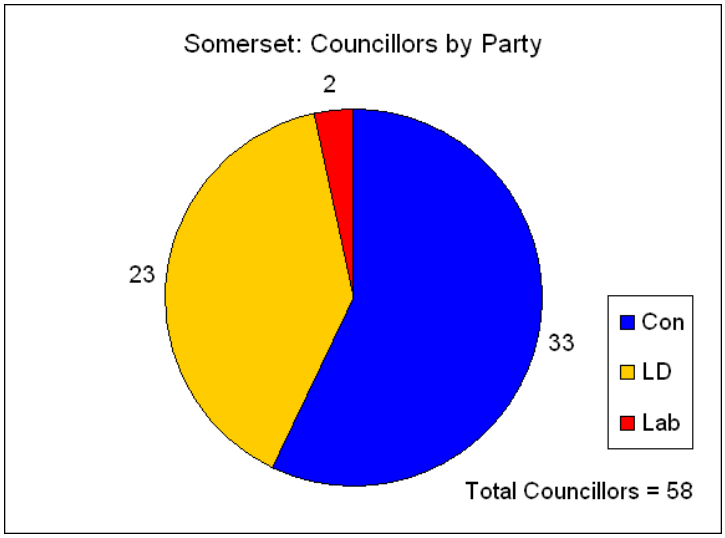
ONS 2001 Census

Local Authority

Political Representation

- Somerset includes all or part of 5 Parliamentary Constituencies: 1 Conservative (Bridgwater & Somerset West) and 4 Liberal Democrat (Somerton & Frome, Taunton Deane, Wells and Yeovil).
- The Conservatives have a majority of seats on Somerset County Council.

- Three of Somerset's district councils, Mendip and Sedgemoor and West Somerset have Conservative majorities South Somerset has a Liberal Democrat majority, while West Somerset has no party in majority.



Council Tax 2010/11

- Across Somerset, the average council tax per dwelling is ranged from £1,175 in Sedgemoor to £1,484 in West Somerset (South West £1,272, England £1,196).
- Average Band D council tax ranged from £1,415 in Taunton Deane to £1481 in South Somerset (South West £1,500, England £1,439).
- Due to the Government freeze on Council Tax these figures are almost identical to those for 2010/11.

CLG Local Government Finance Council Taxes 2011/12

Health

Life Expectancy

- Male life expectancy in Somerset is 79.4 years (South West 79.2, England 78.3). This ranged from 78.5 in Sedgemoor to 80.0 in South Somerset.
- Female life expectancy is 83.5 years (South West 83.3, England 82.3). This ranged from 82.5 in Taunton Deane to 84.0 in South Somerset and West Somerset.
- These were the 13th (for men) and 7th (for women) longest life expectancies out of 34 county level authorities in England.

ONS Life Expectancy at Birth 3-year rolling average 2007-09

Infant Mortality

- Somerset has a higher infant mortality rate than the rate for either the South West or England.
- In recent years there has been little change in the rates of infant mortality in Somerset. The South West and England rates have consistently fallen over recent years.

Mortality all causes – Infants < 1 year				
Deaths/1000 live births	**2004-06**	**2005-07**	**2006-08**	**2007-09**
Somerset	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.2
South West	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.0
England	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.7

National Centre for Health Outcomes Development 3-yr rolling average 2007-09.

Teenage Conceptions

- Somerset's teenage conception rate is lower than the rates for both the South West and England.
- The rate is higher than 3 years previously, as opposed to the England figure which has steadily reduced.
- At the district level, the rate of teenage pregnancy varies from 27.0 in West Somerset to 35.6 in Sedgemoor.

Conception rates per 1000 women aged 15-17			
3-year rolling averages	**2001-03**	**2004-06**	**2007-09**
Somerset	32.4	31.6	33.2
South West	35.5	34.3	34.5
England	42.4	41.1	40.2

ONS 3-year rolling average 2007-09

NHS Trust Performance Indicators

- The Care Quality Commission's new Annual Health Check gives all NHS organisations a two-part annual performance rating.

Healthcare organisation	Overall quality of services*	Financial Managem't score*
Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust	Good	Excellent
Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Good	Excellent
Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (mental health)	Good	Excellent
Somerset PCT	Good	Good
South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust	Good	Good

*excellent, good, fair, or weak

- Of the 12 Ambulance Services in England in 2010/11, South Western had the 3rd highest 8 minute response rate and the 6th lowest 19 minute response rate. Both rates have improved from the previous year.

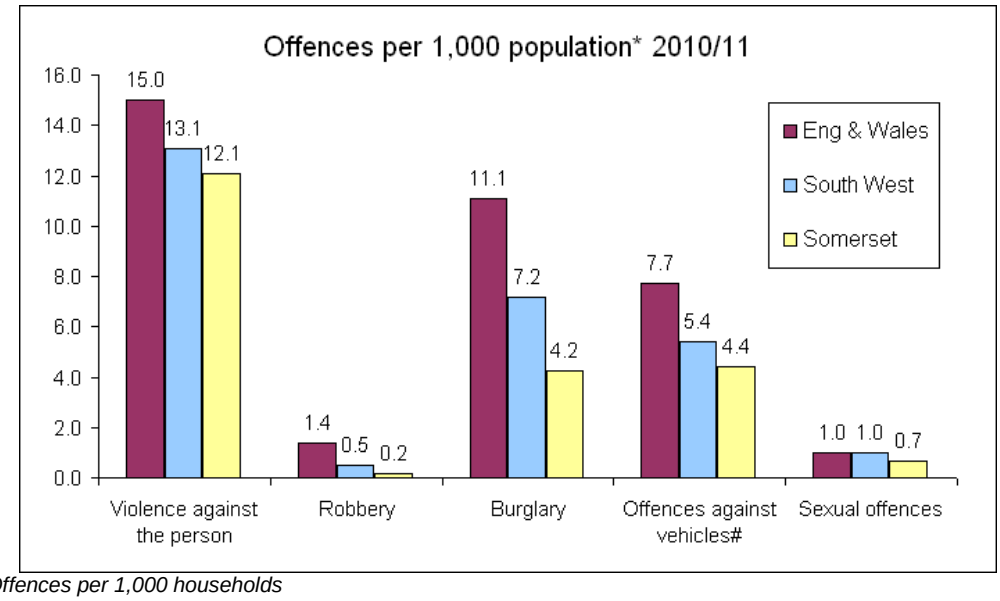
Ambulance response *time target – Category A*	South Western	England target
Arrive within 8 minutes	76.9%	>75%
Arrive within 19 minutes	96.1%	>95%

Care Quality Commission Annual Health Check 2008/09 / DH Ambulance Services, England 2010-11

Crime

Key Offences

- In 2010/11, Somerset had the 6th lowest overall crime rate of the 16 unitary and county authorities in the South West at 28.9 offences per 1,000 population.
- The overall crime rate was lower than the South West average (33.8) and the average for England and Wales (41.3).
- Overall crime in Somerset fell from a rate of 31.8 in 2009/10. This included decreases in the rates of all key offenses shown in the graph.
- At a district level Taunton Deane had the highest overall crime rate (33.3 per 1,000 population), while West Somerset had the lowest at 23.6.
- In 2010/11 Avon & Somerset Police ranked lowest of all South West force areas for people having confidence in the police and local councils dealing with issues (52.6% strongly agree/tend to agree, England and Wales average was 52.7%).



** Burglary: Offences per 1,000 households*
 # Aggregates theft of a vehicle and theft from a vehicle
Home Office Crime in England & Wales 20010/11/British Crime Survey 2010/11

Earnings and Economy

Gross Annual Pay

- Median gross full-time annual pay among Somerset residents is £24,202, a fall of 0.9% from 2010. This is below the median for both England (£26,615) and the South West (£24,922).
- The equivalent pay for those working in Somerset is £23,352, illustrating a tendency for residents to commute to other areas for higher paid work.
- Median gross full-time annual pay for Somerset resident men is 40% times higher than women. In the South West men's pay is 29% higher and in England 25% higher.
- At district level, median earning range from £22,126 in Sedgemoor to £26,135 in Mendip (no information is available for West Somerset).

ONS Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (ASHE) 2011

Local Enterprise Zones (LEPs)

- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) are locally-owned partnerships between local authorities and businesses and play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.
- Somerset is in the Heart of the South West LEP with Devon County and Torbay and Plymouth Unitary Authorities. The table below summaries some key facts across local authorities within this LEP:

	Median Pay	Enterprise 3-year Survival Rate (from 2007)	School Qualifications*	Median House Price	Affordability**	Crime Rate (per 1,000 pop)
Devon	£22,570	66.7%	58.0%	£195,000	9.2	23.5
Somerset	**£24,202**	**67.4%**	**56.7%**	**£170,000**	**7.8**	**28.9**
Plymouth	£23,879	61.3%	56.5%	£140,000	6.3	45.0
Torbay	£22,053	59.2%	56.8%	£158,000	8.0	39.2
South West	£24,922	65.9%	57.5%	£181,500	8.2	33.8
England	£26,615	62.9%	58.3%	£175,000	6.7	41.3

** % scoring 5+ GCSEs at grade A*-C, including Maths and English*
*** ratio of lowest quartile earnings to lowest quartile house prices*

Productivity (GVA)

- In 2009 Somerset's Gross Value Added (GVA) per head was £15,988, the 4th lowest of the 12 SW NUTS3 areas. The value for the South West was £18,184 and England £20,498).
- Between 2008 and 2009 there was a decrease in Somerset's GVA per head, of -2.3% (South West -2.3%, England -2.2%).
- Over the last 10 years GVA per head in Somerset has increased by 42.3% (South West 43.2%, England 44.3%).

ONS Gross Value Added 1997-2009 (ONS Dec 11)

Enterprise Survival Rate

- At the end of 2010, there were 61,460 VAT/PAYE registered businesses in the Heart of the South West LEP area, of which 21,050 were in Somerset.
- During 2010, there was a fall in the number of VAT registered businesses in Somerset, of –3.3% (South West -2.1, England -1.9%).
- The 3-year survival rate of enterprises that started in 2007 in Somerset is 67.4% (South West: 65.9%, England: 62.9%). The survival rate has decreased from 68.6% in 2006.
- Somerset had 1635 new businesses in 2010, a fall of -7.1% from 2009 (South West -0.6%, England -0.7%).

ONS Business Demography 2010
Data Limitations: Business Demography statistics exclude Agriculture

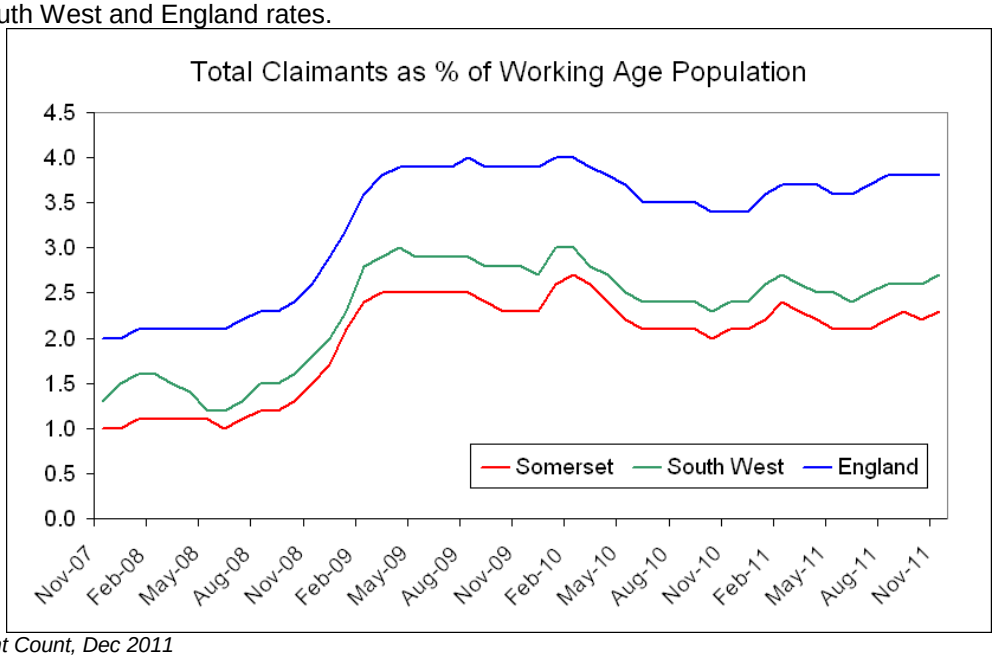
Employment

Unemployment and Claimant Rate

- Somerset's working age **employment** rate is lower than the South West rate but higher than the rate for England.

% of working age population	Jan 09 – Dec 09	Jan 10 – Dec 10	% point change
Somerset	73.7	73.3	-0.4
South West	74.2	73.6	-0.6
England	70.9	70.4	-0.5

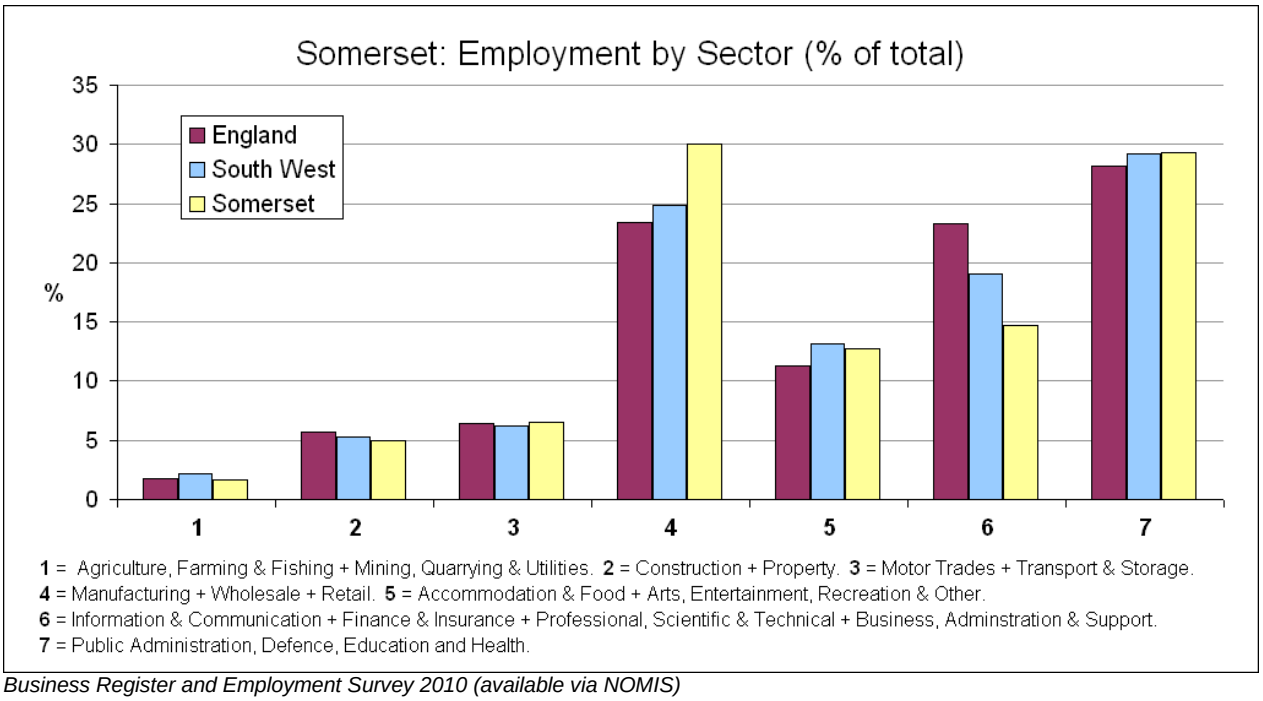
- The latest **unemployment** rate for Somerset is 7.5% of the economically active 16+ population (South West 6.0%, England: 7.6%).
- The Somerset **claimant count** rate is marginally higher than a year ago, though it remains lower than the South West and England rates.



ONS Claimant Count, Dec 2011

Employment by Sector

- The largest proportion of jobs in Somerset is in manufacturing, wholesale and retail (30.0%), followed by public administration (including defence), education and health (29.3%).



Business Register and Employment Survey 2010 (available via NOMIS)

Indices of Multiple Deprivation

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010

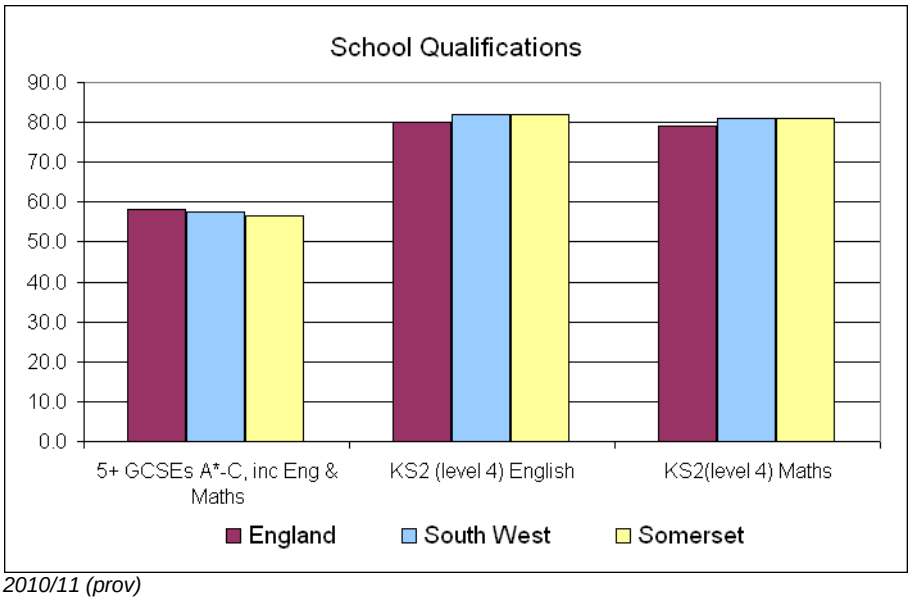
- In the IMD 2010, 14 out of 327 (4%) of Somerset's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are among the most deprived 20% in England.
- Six such areas are in Sedgemoor (5 in Bridgwater, 1 in Burnham/Highbridge). Three are in Taunton Deane (all in Taunton), three in South Somerset (all in Yeovil) and one each in Mendip (Shepton East ward) and South Somerset (Williton).
- Five Somerset LSOAs are among the most deprived 10% in England, three in Taunton and one each Bridgwater and Highbridge.

For more maps and analysis see the full SWO IMD Profile for Somerset, see the PDF available at: http://www.swo.org.uk/local-profiles/indices-of-multiple-deprivation/

Education and Skills

School Qualifications

- Results for 2010/11 show 56.7% of pupils in the Somerset Local Education Authority (LEA) achieved 5+ GCSEs or equivalent at Grade A*-C including English & Maths by the end of Key Stage 4. This was lower than the rate for both the South West (57.5%) and England (58.3%).
- Somerset LEA's latest Key Stage 2 pass rates for English and Maths were very close to those for the South West and England.



DfE GCSE & KS2 2010/11 (prov)
NB: provisional figures are based on data provided by Awarding Bodies, subject to checking by schools, and so should be treated with caution. Figures may be different in future revised releases

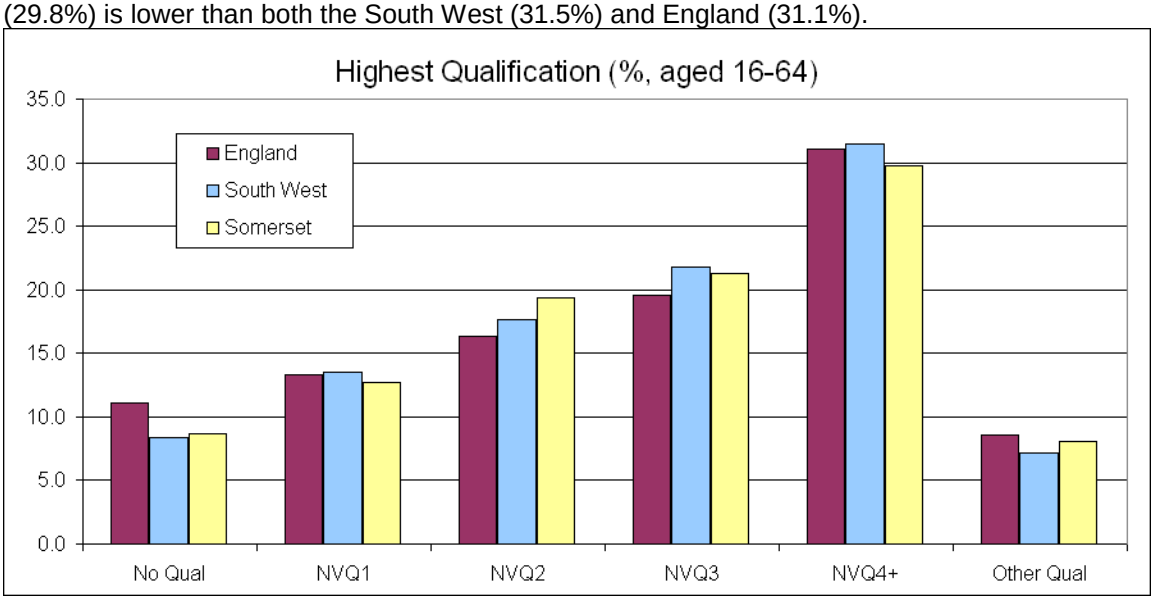
School Absenteeism

- The percentage of half days missed due to unauthorised absence by pupils in Somerset district's primary schools ranges from 0.44% in Taunton Deane (lower than the rates for the South West and England) to 0.73% in Mendip (this is higher than the rates for both the South West and England).
- At secondary school level, the lowest district rate was again in Taunton Deane (0.85%), while the highest rate was in South Somerset (1.30%).

% half days missed, Unauthorised absence	Maintained primary schools	Maintained secondary schools
Mendip	0.73	1.06
Sedgemoor	0.68	1.28
South Somerset	0.67	1.30
Taunton Deane	0.44	0.85
West Somerset	0.52	1.21
South West	0.49	1.10
England	0.67	1.38

DfE Pupil Absence in Schools in England 2009/10

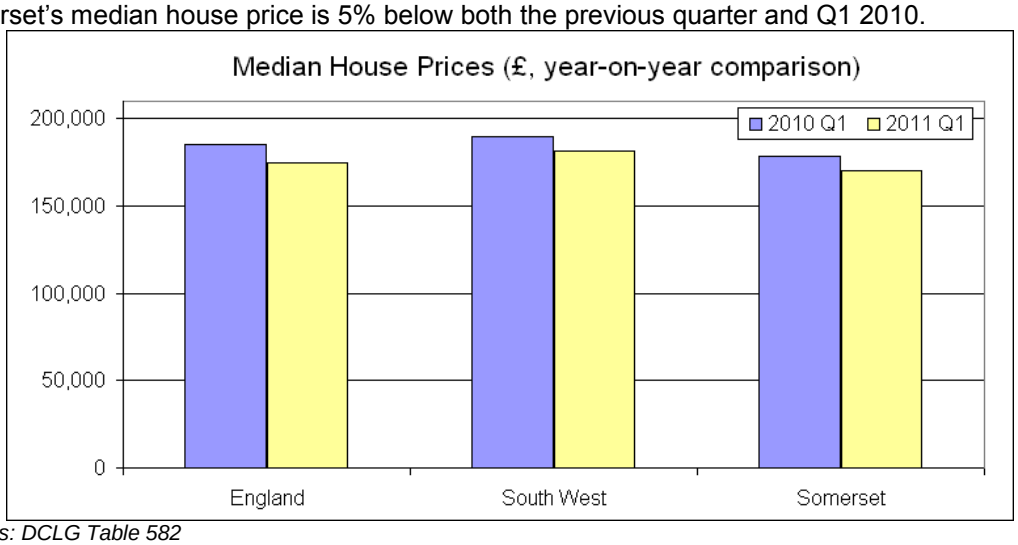
Workforce Qualifications

- The proportion of the Somerset workforce with no qualifications (8.7%) is higher than the South West (8.4%) but lower than England (11.1%).
- The proportion of Somerset's workforce with NVQ 4 (degree & equiv.) qualifications and above (29.8%) is lower than both the South West (31.5%) and England (31.1%).
- 

Housing

House Prices

- In Q1 2010 Somerset's median house price was £170,000, 6% below the South West median (£181,500), and 3% below England's (£175,000).
- Median prices in the districts ranged from just under £160,000 in Sedgemoor to just over £184,000 in West Somerset.
- Somerset's median house price is 5% below both the previous quarter and Q1 2010.



House Prices: DCLG Table 582

Affordability

- Affordability ratios are calculated as house price divided by annual workplace-based earnings.
- Using median house prices and earnings gives a median affordability ratio in Somerset of 7.7 (South West 7.9, England 7.0).
- The lower quartile (LQ) ratio based on lower quartile house prices and earnings better reflects the first time buyers' market. Somerset's LQ ratio in 2010 was 7.8 (South West 8.2, England 6.7).
- Within Somerset, the LQ ratio ranges from 7.4 in Sedgemoor to 8.9 in West Somerset

DCLG Tables 576 and 577

Homelessness and Temporary Accommodation

- In the financial year of 2010/11, Somerset accepted 622 households (2.8 per 1,000) as being homeless and in priority need (South West 1.5, England 2.0). Somerset had 192 households in temporary accommodation, 58 of which were in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Among Somerset districts, the rates of accepted homelessness ranged from 1.0 per 1,000 households in Sedgemoor to 4.1 in South Somerset.
- In the same year in Somerset there were a total of 1,752 households where positive action was successful in preventing or relieving homelessness (7.0 per 1,000 households, South West 7.2, England 8.7).

DCLG Tables 784 and 792. For more information on homelessness prevention and relief data see: http://bit.ly/pRGark

Planning and Land Use

Planning Decisions

- In the year ending March 2011, the district planning authorities within Somerset (excluding Exmoor National Park) made decisions on 6,257 planning applications, 190 of which were for major developments.
- The largest number of major decisions and total of all decisions was made in South Somerset (62 and 1,988 respectively).
- Time taken to decide applications by different development type are shown in the table below.

Speed of decision by development type			
	% major within 13 weeks	% minor within 8 weeks	% other within 8 weeks
Mendip	55	48	69
Sedgemoor	46	71	84
South Somerset	61	72	89
Taunton Deane	52	75	82
West Somerset*	73	76	89
Exmoor NP	25	68	84
South West	64	72	84
England	66	75	86

*planning authority for areas outside Exmoor NP only

CLG Statistics of Planning Applications Q1 to year ending Mar 11

Land Use

- In 2007-10, the percentage of new dwellings built on previously developed land ranged from 45% in Sedgemoor to 72% in Taunton Deane (South West 66%, England 77%). All districts in Somerset have higher percentages than in 2003-06 except West Somerset.
- In 2007-10, the density of new dwellings built per hectare ranged from 19 in West Somerset to 38 in Sedgemoor (South West 38, England 43).

CLG Land Use Change in England to 2010

Environment

The South West Observatory and the Environment Agency have produced a series of Environment Profiles for local authorities in the South West. These can be found here:
http://www.swenvo.org.uk/south-west-local-profiles/
Profiles for each district within Somerset can be found at this site.

The Somerset County Profile is here:
http://www.swenvo.org.uk/south-west-local-profiles/somerset-profiles/

Environmental Designations

- Somerset contains more than half the area of Exmoor National Park.
- It also includes the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and significant parts of the Mendip Hills and Blackdown Hills AONBs. Two further AONBs encroach slightly into the county: Dorset & Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs.
- The county also contains part of the Exmoor Heritage coast.
- There are 12 National Nature Reserves in Somerset, covering 5,707Ha.

Green Belt

- A small area (850 hectares) of the Bath and Bristol designated Green Belt area is within the bounds of Mendip district.

CLG Local Planning Authority Green Belt Statistics 2009/10

Transport

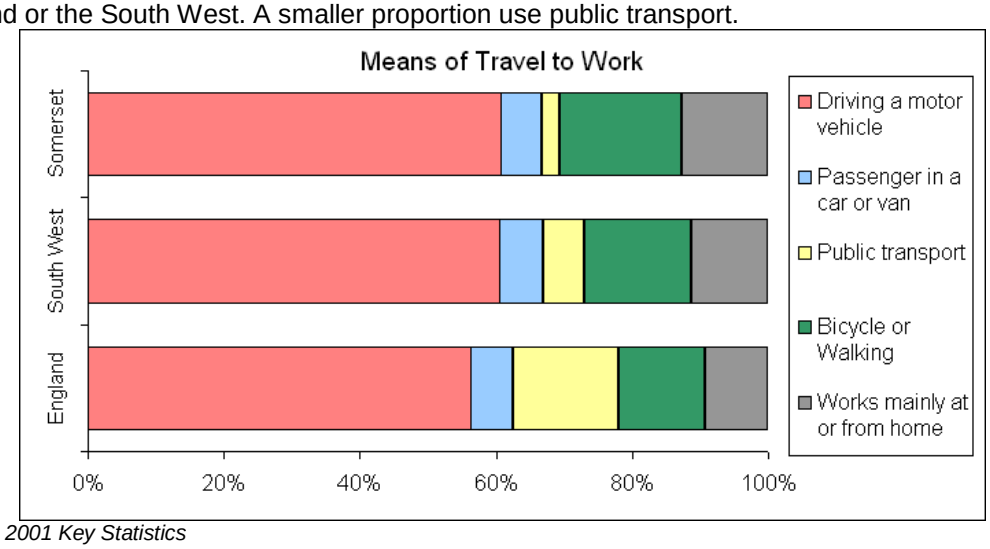
Road Casualties

- In 2010, there were 341 road casualties per 100,000 people in Somerset, higher than the rate for the South West (310) but lower than the rate for England (355).
- 13.3% of these casualties resulted in death or serious injury, higher than the South West and England rates (both 11.5%).

DfT Road Casualties Great Britain 2010

Travel to Work

- A higher proportion of people in Somerset work at home, walk to work or cycle to work than in either England or the South West. A smaller proportion use public transport.



ONS Census 2001 Key Statistics