

Vision for Dorchester

10 April 2025

The following vision is a product of Town Council and wider public input, to provide a more appropriate vision for Dorchester than the vision that was included in the January 2021 draft Local Plan. It sets out general aims for the town as a whole, and whilst many of these may apply to other towns and villages across Dorset, reflects the priorities of our residents and distinctive elements of Dorchester.

In 2038 Dorchester will:

- Have risen to the challenge of climate change, with designs based on zero carbon solutions, and wildlife friendly green spaces and tree-lined corridors that encourage walking and cycling.
- Have a balanced but diverse mix of housing and workplaces, in particular helping young people to afford to live and work locally, and flexible, adaptable premises to help businesses respond to changing economic circumstances.
- Have a vibrant and accessible town centre that people want to visit and walk around, to access local services, explore its rich history, culture and arts and enjoy its shops, museums, its historic market and its hospitality.
- Have a strong sense of community with a wide range of social and sports opportunities for all ages, accessible local centres and recreation spaces, supporting a range of inclusive and community-run enterprises.
- Have outstanding health and social care, education and training, with its schools, colleges and hospital providing choice and opportunities for a better way of life.
- Be easy to get to and around, with an extensive network of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes, linking to a network of transport hubs for trains and buses, with car and bike sharing facilities, all using low emission technology.
- Still recognise and celebrate its rich literary associations, including Thomas Hardy's Casterbridge, and the town's medieval, Roman and neolithic heritage.
- Link to the surrounding countryside, both visually and physically, valuing the tranquillity, biodiversity, productivity and timelessness of the landscapes that surround the town, including north of the watermeadows.