



DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL  
DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE

**SWOT ANALYSIS**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Breadth of Heritage Offer with some unique and special assets (M Castle, Roman Town House, Hardy...)	Low number of accommodation providers and bed spaces in the town, lack of group accommodation
Diverse offer – Brewery Square/Poundbury alongside heritage/culture/arts	General lack of awareness of the town’s visitor offer
Accessible town centre area	Heritage offer is often “hidden” or not known about locally
E-W and N-S rail connections	Not a destination of choice
National Express Destination	The town generally, and its heritage offer for visitors, not well represented if at all on sub regional, regional and national websites
At junction of NCN 2 (E-W) and NCN 26 (N-S)	No active maintained promotional website exclusively for the town
Proximity to London and SE concentrations of population	No town structure, formal or informal to guide and sustain the promotion and development of tourism
Proximity to Exeter, Bristol, Bournemouth, Southampton, LHR and LGW airports	Limited or no town related visitor experience content on local tourism businesses websites
Events in general and THVF, & HoD in particular,	Slow, infrequent and expensive rail connections - especially to London
Volunteer Centre Dorset resource for volunteers working in visitor economy	Chain hotels not engaging
Proximity of main concentrations of bed spaces along Jurassic Coast particularly at Weymouth and Bridport	Limited electric car charge points
Nearness of BCP resident population and also visitors staying in BCP	Demand for volunteers greater than supply
Location on the Dorset AONB and proximity to the UNESCO world heritage designated “Jurassic” coast	Visitor economy not joined up in the town.
	Absence of regular local social media content and activity from many local tourism related businesses
	Traffic flow along HE and HW streets
	State and condition of some heritage properties in the town centre

	<p>The wide and diverse range of heritage people places and events complicates the potential heritage offer</p> <p>Town centre retail offer lacks the distinctiveness to be a must visit destination</p> <p>Lack of real (as opposed to derived) data about tourism locally</p> <p>Unknown and unmeasured quality of customer service as part of visitor experience</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <p>The new Dorset County Museum</p> <p>The new Kings Arms Hotel</p> <p>Development at the Roman Town House</p> <p>Development of this Heritage Tourism Strategy</p> <p>Volunteer Centre Dorset resource for volunteers working in visitor economy</p> <p>Development of new heritage “products” to increase reasons for visiting the town, providing new experiences and also new product to feature in regional and national channels</p> <p>Bringing together of the visitor economy in Dorchester</p> <p>Dorchester BID – both remit (business plan) and resource</p> <p>Closer working with Visit Dorset, including opportunity to offer (VD) to piggy back on bigger audiences/contacts</p> <p>Making Dorchester a ‘must stop’ destination rather than a ‘drive through’ to other SW destinations building on new on product/experiences/packages</p> <p>Heritage – growing in value in the tourism economy</p> <p>End of Covid 19 and potential appetite for staycationing</p> <p><b>Potential for rural areas / smaller towns to be more appealing than large city breaks in immediate future post COVID19</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <p>Jurassic coast and coast in general</p> <p>Current and future competition from local Dorset and other destinations in the South West and in particular from Salisbury, Winchester, Stonehenge, Exeter, Bristol &amp;, Bath as established Heritage Tourist destinations</p> <p>COVID19 specifically</p> <p>COVID19 economic fall out longer term</p> <p>Hot summers, wet cold winters</p> <p>Lack of engagement by Dorchester businesses engaged in the wider visitor economy</p> <p>Dorset Council intentions not known with regards TIC and or Visit-Dorset activity</p> <p>Lack of funds or support to develop new marketing and product and experience development for the visitor economy development activity</p> <p>Dorchester BID do not engage</p> <p>Dorchester BID not successful at rebalot</p>

**Covid 19 situation gives opportunity for fresh look at tourism economy/importance /renewed enthusiasm to work together as community for good of town's economy to get back on track**

Cruise ship visits to and cruise ship visitors from Portland Harbour and Port of Poole

Improved volume and common threads in social media feeds from across the sector in the town

Collaborative working with other Dorset Destinations and Visit Dorset to strengthen Dorchester's appeal as part of the Dorset offer

A wide and diverse range of heritage people places and events in which to develop the offer

Productivity improvements through increased occupancy out of peak season

Creation of an appropriate formal or informal group to guide and sustain the promotion and development of tourism in the town

Sustainable transport location (Rail and NCN)