

Childcare in Somerset

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2017

Somerset County Council

Early Years Commissioning Team

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Introduction

This Childcare Sufficiency Assessment provides an overview of the childcare market in Somerset to be used by both Somerset County Council and existing and prospective childcare providers. It includes an overview of the demographic and economic situation of Somerset, legislation pertinent to the provision of childcare and a snapshot of the sufficiency of childcare places across the county. Also included this year is information on the Extended Entitlement (30 hours) to be offered to working families with three and four year olds from September 2017. The data on the demand and supply of places included in this report is intended as the basis for deciding where in the county additional early years places may need to be commissioned.

Legislation

The Childcare Act (2006) requires Local Authorities in England to ensure a sufficiency of childcare for working parents, parents study or training, and for disabled children. Childcare sufficiency relates to the provision of registered childcare for children aged 0-14 years old, and up to 18 years old for disabled children and children with additional needs.

Local Authorities have a 'market management' function, shaping the development of childcare to make it flexible, sustainable and responsive to the needs of the community and supporting the sector to meet the needs of parents, children and young people.

The Childcare Act (2006) also requires Local Authorities to:

- Ensure early years provision of a prescribed description is available free of charge to each young child that is eligible (Section 7) (amended by section 1 of the Education Act 2011 and section 87 of the Children & Families Act 2014)
- Make information, advice and guidance on childcare and any other useful services, facilities or publications available to parents and prospective parents in their area (Section 12)
- Provide information, advice and training to any persons who intend to provide care and to existing childcare providers in their area (Section 13) (amended under section 74 of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015)

Changes in legislation

The Childcare Act (2016) became law in March 2016. This Act extends the current universal entitlement (15 hours a week for 38 weeks or 570 hours a year for eligible 2 year olds and all 3 and 4 year olds) to an additional 570 hours for 3 and 4 year olds in eligible families, from September 2017. To be eligible, both parents (or the lone parent in a single parent family) must be working and earning from around £120 per week up to a maximum of £100,000 per year. Local Authorities have a duty to secure funded childcare places for qualifying children.

More detailed information about the legislation regarding the provision of childcare can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk.

Other help with the cost of childcare includes:

- Tax-free childcare: for eligible working parents earning up to a maximum of £100,000 per year, the government will top up every £8 paid into an account by £2, up to a maximum of £2,000 per child.

- Universal Credit for childcare: for families claiming Universal Credit, up to 85% of eligible childcare costs can be claimed back, up to £646 a month for one child and £1,108 for two or more.

Commissioning of early years places

The commissioning of additional early years places will be based on the supply and demand data included in this report and this will be updated annually. The policies and principles governing early years and school place planning were approved by Cabinet on 18th March 2015 and take into account the Somerset Children's Trust Board top three priorities. These are to:

- Raise achievement
- Keep children safe and healthy
- Tackle inequalities and narrow the gaps

The following principles ensure that the Local Authority (LA) is commissioning good quality places:

- Young people have a right to a good or outstanding quality of education to enable them to achieve their potential and maximise their life chances through a rich and rounded curriculum.
- Education and childcare provision should be of such a size that they are financially viable and able to attract and retain good leadership.
- All education and childcare provision rated 'requires improvement' by Ofsted will be subject to intensive scrutiny and review by the LA to ensure the quality of education and childcare improves.

Additional early years places will only be considered based on sufficiency assessments. Private, voluntary and independent providers will be the first choice as the LA should only be the provider of last resort (Childcare Act 2006). The LA may assist with the cost of additional space / buildings when capital funds are available.

Contributions from new developments towards EY provision

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure eligible children can access funded Early Education, and a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare for parents to be able to access work and / or training for work (Childcare Act 2006).

When new housing developments are approved, contributions are sought by the LA towards the provision of additional early years places, for eligible children, as required.

As at July 2017, it is expected that there will be approximately seven early years aged children for every 100 new dwellings. On the assumption that each child will attend part time only, the number of places currently required to be funded is 3.5 per 100 dwellings. The amount requested per place is £14,175 (DfE Basic Need Cost Multiplier, 2016). With the introduction of the extended entitlement in September 2017, it is expected that five early years places per 100 dwellings will need to be funded.

The Infrastructure Growth Plan for Somerset 2017 – for education provision – can be found at:

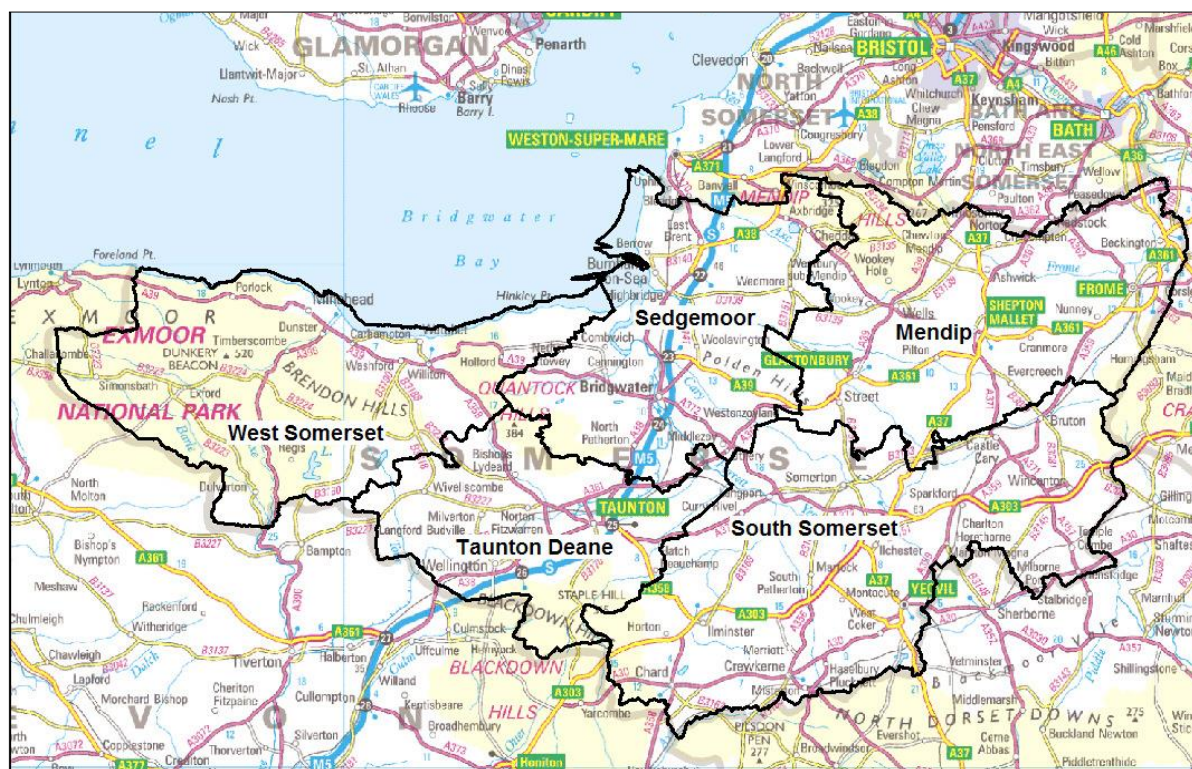
<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/early-years-and-school-place-planning-infrastructure-growth-plan/>

Part 1: Somerset – area context

Population

Somerset is a largely rural county, divided into five districts: Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

Map of Somerset showing districts



The latest estimate of the population of Somerset is 545,390. This is an increase of 3781 from the 2011 census population estimate and has resulted primarily from inward migration from other parts of the country, particularly from the county's neighbouring authorities. However, there is a net flow out of Somerset of young people aged 16 – 24.

The number of young people under 16 and from 0 to 4 years old is shown below, by district, along with the proportion of each compared with the total population. West Somerset has the lowest proportion of young people in the five districts.

Population information for Somerset (source: see below)

District	Total Population ¹	Population Under 16 ¹	% Pop'n Under 16	Population 0 – 4 YO ²	% Pop'n 0 – 4 YO
Mendip	111,724	20,115	18.0%	5740	5.1%
Sedgemoor	120,260	21,577	17.9%	6570	5.5%
South Somerset	164,982	28,932	17.5%	8667	5.3%
Taunton Deane	114,021	20,502	18.0%	6002	5.3%
West Somerset	34,403	4,671	13.6%	1343	3.9%
Totals/averages:	545,390	95,797	17.6%	28,651	5.3%

¹Mid-year estimate 2016 (based on Census 2011)

²GP Registration figures January 2017

Ethnicity

Almost 95% of Somerset's population identifies as White British. This is typical of the county's neighbouring authorities in the south-west but much higher than in England and Wales as a whole, where the figure is around 81%. However, the proportion of non-White British residents has increased slightly since 2001. The majority of these live in the county's major urban areas.

Somerset population by ethnic origin / background (source: www.ons.gov.uk)

Ethnic Group or Background	Number	Proportion of Somerset population ¹	Proportion in England & Wales
White British	501,558	94.6%	80.5%
White Irish / gypsy / Irish traveller / other	17,697	3.3%	5.5%
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups	4,241	0.8%	2.2%
Asian / Asian British	4,873	0.9%	7.5%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	1,013	0.2%	3.3%
Other ethnic group	590	0.1%	1.0%

¹Compared with 2011 Census population

Deprivation

Overall, Somerset is less deprived than the country as a whole; however, the county is slightly more deprived than it was in 2010, particularly in relation to housing quality. The number of 'highly deprived' neighbourhoods (the 20% most deprived in the country) increased from 14 in 2010 to 25 in 2015, with the most deprived in the larger urban areas. Some 38,000 Somerset residents live in these deprived areas.

There are 52 LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas; geographical areas with about the same size population) in Somerset that fall within the 30% most disadvantaged in England. Two are within the 5% most disadvantaged in England, both in Taunton.

Deprivation information for Somerset (source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2015)

District	Number of LSOAs	Number of most deprived LSOAs ¹	Percentage most deprived LSOAs
Mendip	66	9	13.6%
Sedgemoor	70	17	24.3%
South Somerset	103	12	11.7%
Taunton Deane	55	10	18.2%
West Somerset	33	4	12.1%
Totals / average:	327	52	15.9%

¹The 30% most disadvantaged LSOAs in the country

Sedgemoor has the highest proportion of disadvantaged LSOAs in Somerset. These are concentrated in Bridgwater, where there are 14 disadvantaged LSOAs. South Somerset has the lowest proportion of disadvantaged areas.

Economy

Somerset has a mixed economy of agriculture, tourism and manufacturing. Employment in the county has increased in the past few years and has been boosted by the recent decision to go ahead with the construction of the new reactor at Hinkley Point (see employment section below). Although average earnings in Somerset are lower than in the UK as a whole, gross disposable household income is approximately 2% higher.

Economic inactivity (the proportion of people without a job who haven't actively sought work in the previous four weeks and are not available to start work in the following two weeks) follows a similar pattern to unemployment, with the highest rate in Mendip (23.5%) and the lowest in South Somerset (17.5%; closely followed by Taunton Deane at 17.7%). The overall rate for Somerset is 19.5%, lower than the national rate of 22.3%. There is a higher proportion of economically inactive women aged 16-64 than men, both in Somerset (22.9% vs. 16.7%) and nationally (27.4% vs. 16.9%). Looking after family or the home accounts for the largest group of economically inactive people and will include women taking career breaks to raise children.

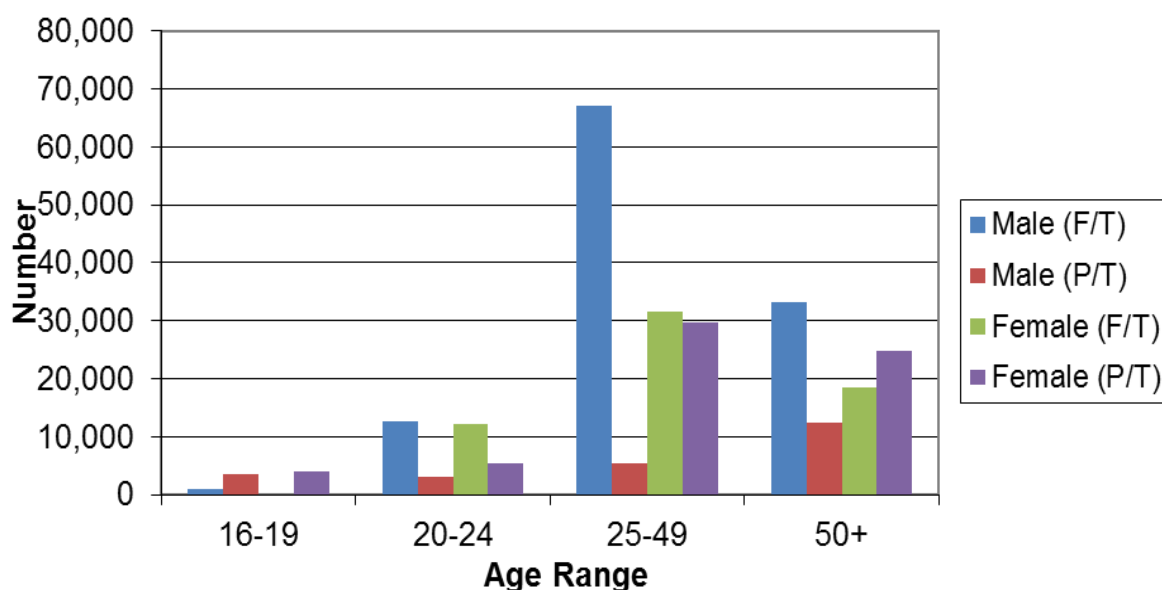
Employment

Total employment in Somerset increased by 1.3% to 225,600 (excluding the self-employed) between 2014 and 2015. Although this is positive, it is below the national increase of 2.2%. However, Somerset's current employment rate (77.3%) is still above the national average employment rate (73%).

The majority of the county's jobs (30%) are located in South Somerset with only 5.5% in West Somerset. The largest employment sector is health, followed by manufacturing and retail. In 2014, a greater proportion of the employed people in Somerset worked part-time (36%) compared with the national average (31%). Across the county, Mendip has the lowest employment rate and Taunton Deane has the highest. Although women have a lower rate of economic activity than men, both are above their respective national averages.

Employment patterns by age category and gender

(Source: www.nomisweb.co.uk annual population survey – workplace analysis 2016)



In the 20-24 age range the number of men and women working full time is roughly equal and the number of each is higher than their part time equivalents. However, in the 25-49 age range, the vast majority of men work full time whereas the women are split almost equally between full time and part time working. This suggests that in the majority of families it is women who reduce their working hours to care for children (or possibly older relatives). In the over-50s, more women work part time than full time. This suggests a pattern of continued part time employment for women once caring responsibilities have reduced or ended.

Overall unemployment in Somerset stands at 3.9%, lower than the national rate of 5.2%, and down by 0.7% from 2015. There are differences between the districts with Mendip having the highest unemployment rate (5.7%) and Taunton Deane having the lowest (2.7%). There is no current data for West Somerset. Unemployment rates are higher for women (4.5%) than men (3.1%) in Somerset (2016); this could be because more women have time out of work to look after children.

Construction of the new reactor at Hinkley Point

It is expected that there will be 25,000 employment roles over the lifetime of the Hinkley project, currently expected to be 11 years. This doesn't mean the employment of 25,000 individuals, though, as people will be moved from role to role, with training if necessary. Some of the opportunities will be taken up by people already in the trades, but new jobs will be created and there is a target of 1000 apprenticeships during the life of the build. The project will provide a welcome opportunity for increased employment in the West Somerset district.

It is anticipated that 34% of the workforce will be home-based (within the commute zone) with the other 66% being non-home-based (outside the commute zone, from other parts of the UK and from mainland Europe). A proportion of the non-home-based workers are expected to bring their families, and some of these families will include children. Estimates suggest that there will be between 500 and 765 family type workers. A financial contribution towards school and early years places has been secured from EDF, which is being put towards the construction of a new primary school with a 26 place nursery at Northgate in Bridgwater. Bridgwater is likely to accommodate the highest number of Hinkley workers, but towns including Burnham, Taunton, Weston-super-Mare and Cannington are also expected to be areas where incoming workers will settle.

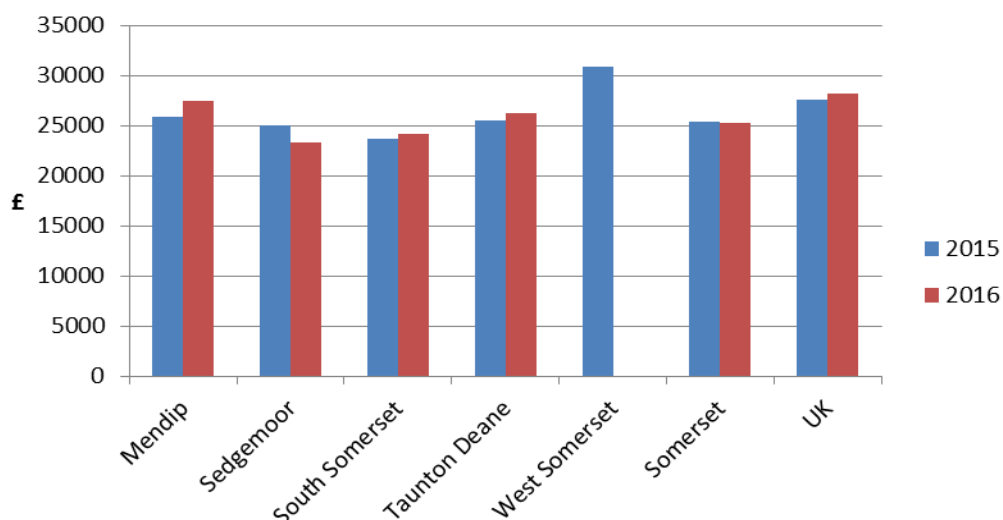
There is likely to be an increase in the demand for childcare places in all of the areas where incoming families with early years aged children settle.

Earnings

The median annual earnings of full time workers in Somerset in 2016 was £25,299. This is down slightly from 2015, when it was £25,333 and is below the national average for 2016 which is £28,213. There are differences between the districts in Somerset; Sedgemoor had the lowest median earnings last year – and was the only district that showed a fall between 2015 and 2016 – with West Somerset having the highest (in 2015; data for 2016 is not available).

Median earnings in Somerset by district

(Source: www.nomisweb.co.uk Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2016)



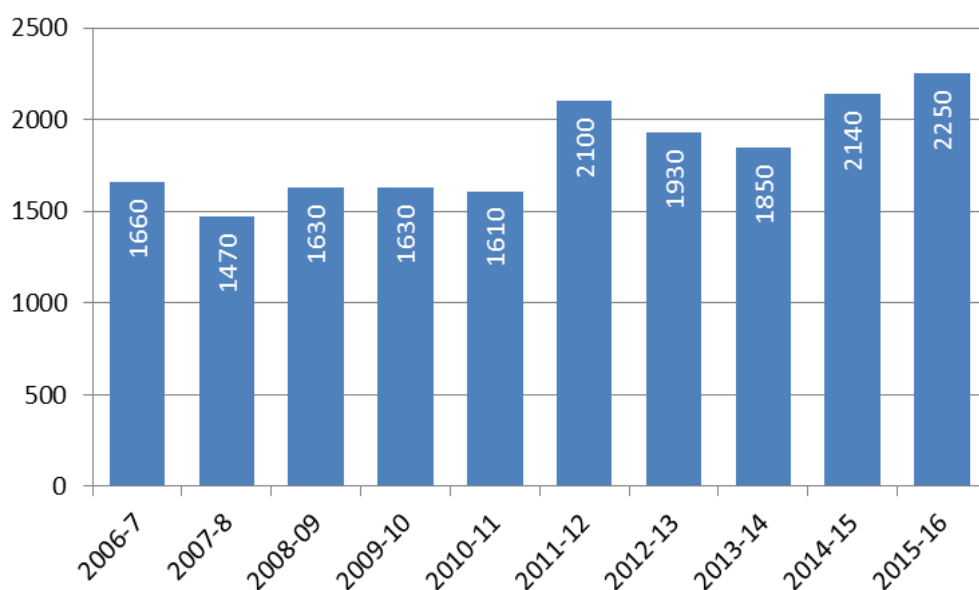
New housing

There has been a considerable amount of new housing across Somerset over the last five years. The growth in the urban areas of Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil has been particularly high with housing developments in progress at Stockmoor (Bridgwater), Monkton Heathfield and Comeytrowe (Taunton) and Wyndham Park (Yeovil), amongst others. Around 20,000 new homes are expected in these areas in the next 10-15 years.

All districts in Somerset have had or are expected to have at least some new housing, although this will be concentrated in the urban areas. Rural West Somerset has the lowest number of new dwellings planned. The Council will have to plan to accommodate the Early Years aged children coming from these developments, in particular those eligible for funded childcare places.

Number of new dwellings in Somerset

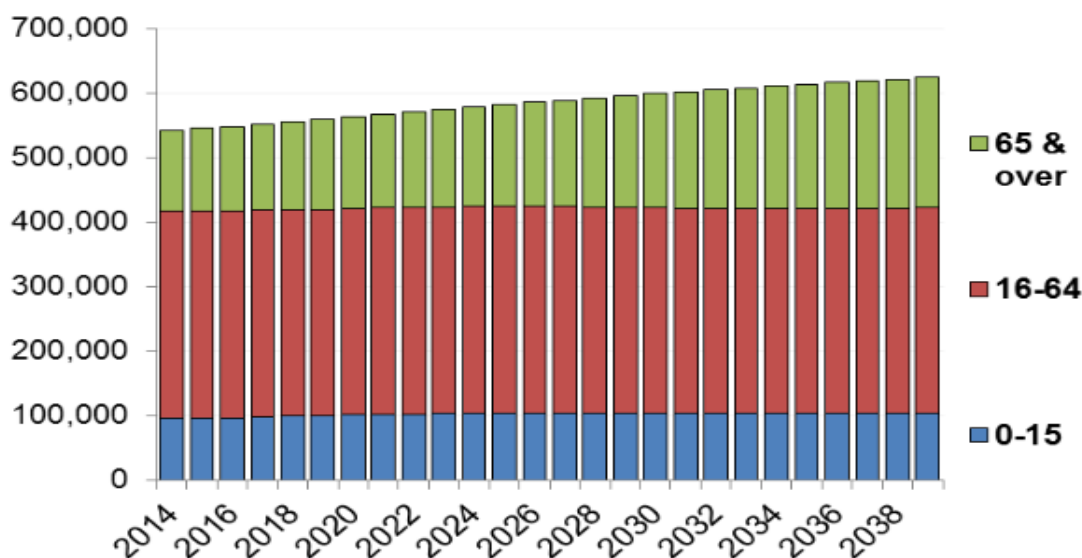
(Source: Somerset Intelligence (Dept. for Communities & Local Government) 2016)



Population forecasts

The population of Somerset is expected to increase by 15% (around 82,000 people) over the next 25 years, to around 623,600. The district experiencing the greatest growth is expected to be Sedgemoor (22%), with the lowest in West Somerset (5%). The 65+ age group will experience the greatest growth but the under-16 population is expected to increase by 9% by 2039, with the majority of this increase in the next 10 years.

Somerset population projections by age (source: Somerset Intelligence 2016)



The majority of the population growth (87%) will be due to internal migration, i.e. more people moving into Somerset than moving out. The people moving into Somerset tend to be of retirement age; amongst younger age groups there is a net flow out of the county. Some international migration is also contributing to population growth.

In 2015 there were more deaths than births in Somerset, although the number of births was higher than in 2014. Mendip experienced the greatest increase in the number of births with the number in Taunton Deane declining slightly.

Impact on childcare provision

Somerset's population grew last year and is expected to grow rapidly over the next ten year. The main drivers for this growth are migration into the county from other parts of the country and the large amount of new housing, particularly in the urban areas of Bridgwater, Taunton and Yeovil. Around 20% of new houses are predicted to have families with early years and school aged children, which means an increasing demand for childcare places across the county.

Although Somerset is better off in terms of deprivation than the country as a whole, deprivation has increased recently, with more areas classed as deprived now. In fact, Somerset has 33 of the most deprived wards in the country. These are predominantly in the urban areas of Bridgwater and Taunton but also cover some of the rural areas.

In these areas, in general, a greater proportion of children are in families where the lone parent or both parents rely on out-of-work benefits. These children are likely to be eligible for free school meals and funded childcare for two year olds.

Part 2: Early Years and childcare providers

Number of providers

In Somerset, as at 04 July 2017, there are 332 childminders (including six 'childcare on domestic premises' settings) and 316 group childcare settings, a total of 648 settings offering 11023 places.*

Number of childcare providers by type (2016 & 2017) (source: Somerset County Council)

Type of childcare	2016 (as 11.04.16)		2017 (as 04.07.17)	
	No. of providers	No. of places	No. of providers	No. of places
Childminder	359	1052	326	1106
Childcare on domestic premises	6	102	6	114
<i>Sub-total:</i>	<i>365</i>	<i>1154</i>	<i>332</i>	<i>1220</i>
Nursery / pre-school: private or voluntary run	242	7518	224	7191
Nursery / pre-school: maintained school run	37	999	51	1379
Nursery / pre-school: academy run	21	606	28	829
Nursery / pre-school: independent school run	14	432	13	404
<i>Sub-total:</i>	<i>314</i>	<i>9555</i>	<i>316</i>	<i>9803</i>
All provision	679	10709	648	11023

*FTE places for under-5 year olds

Note: The number of places data is not available for all childminders

Points of interest

- The number of childminders has decreased since 2016, continuing a trend seen since June 2011. This also reflects the national trend which has seen the number of childminders in England drop by 23% since 2012 (source: Pre-School Learning Alliance, from Ofsted, March 2017).
- Although the number of childminders has decreased, it appears that the number of childminder places has increased. This is most likely due to missing data on the number of childminder places in 2016. This could also be due to an increase in the number of childminders using assistants which would allow them to care for more children at one time.
- The number of group childcare settings has remained stable but the number of places available has increased by almost 250. It is likely that the settings that have closed are the smaller ones (who are more likely to have sustainability issues) and that settings offering a larger number of places have opened.
- A significant number of schools and academies have either opened nurseries or taken over the management of a previously private or voluntary group.

Funded providers

All types of providers are able to register to offer funded childcare places for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. The current offer is 15 hours per week over 38 weeks or this can be stretched over more weeks to the equivalent of 570 hours per year. From 1st September 2017 the offer is being extended for 3 and 4 year olds in working families. The offer is for an additional 15 hours per week over 38 weeks (or a total of 1140 hours over a year).

Funded vs. non-funded providers by type (source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)

Type of childcare	All providers		Funded providers		Non-funded providers	
	No. of providers	No. of places	No. of providers	No. of places	No. of providers	No. of places
Childminder	326	1106	178 (55%)	746 (67%)	148 (45%)	360 (33%)
Childcare on domestic premises	6	114	6 (100%)	114 (100%)	0	0
Sub-total:	332	1220	184 (55%)	860 (70%)	148 (45%)	360 (30%)
Nursery / pre-school: private voluntary run	224	7191	224 (100%)	7191 (100%)	0	0
Nursery / pre-school: maintained sch. run	51	1379	51 (100%)	1379 (100%)	0	0
Nursery / pre-school: academy run	28	829	28 (100%)	829 (100%)	0	0
Nursery / pre-school: independent sch. run	13	404	13 (100%)	404 (100%)	0	0
Sub-total:	316	9803	316 (100%)	9803 (100%)	0	0
All provision	648	11023	500 (77%)	10663 (97%)	148 (23%)	360 (3%)

Points of interest

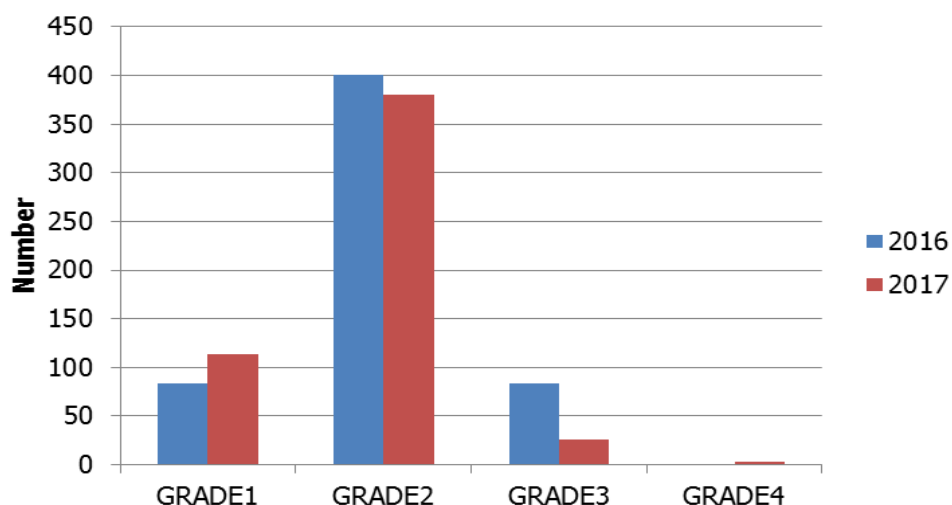
- Around half of childminders offer funded places (including all CDPs), a higher proportion than in April 2016.
- All group childcare settings offer funded places.
- Early indications suggest that many providers will be offering the extended entitlement. See page 18 for the number of providers registered to offer the extended entitlement.
- The percentage of private, voluntary or independent providers (PVIs) was 82% in April 2016 and 75% in July 2017. This decrease is likely to be due to the number of schools and academies taking over the management of previously private or voluntary settings.

Quality of childcare

In Somerset, as at 04 July 2017, 494 of the 523 providers that have an Ofsted grade (94.5%) are rated Outstanding (G1) or Good (G2). This is up from 85.4% of providers in April 2016.

Number of providers by Ofsted grade (2016 & 2017)

(Source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)

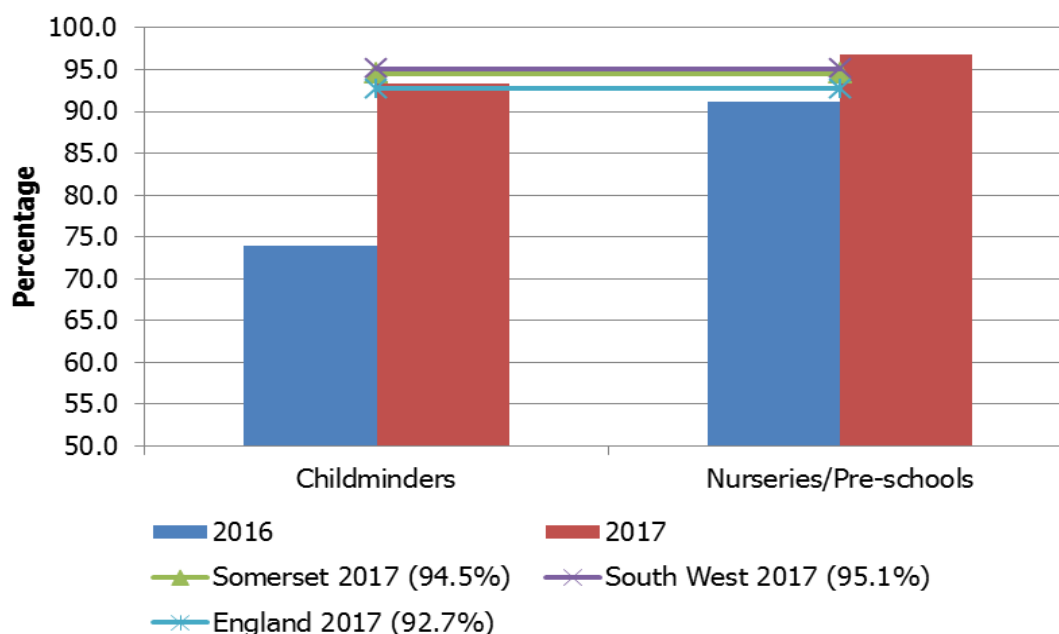


Points of interest

- Since 2016, there has been an increase in the number of Outstanding providers, a decrease in the number providers rated Good or Requires Improvement and an increase in the number rated Inadequate.
- Although there are fewer settings this year, a larger number do not have a grade (60 compared with 28 in 2016). This is because many of the settings that are new or are now managed by schools or academies have not yet been inspected.
- There are currently three settings graded Inadequate; one childminder and two group settings.

Percentage of providers graded Good or Outstanding by type of provider (2016 & 2017)

(Source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)



Points of interest

- The proportion of Good and Outstanding settings in Somerset is just slightly below that of the south-west as a whole (95.1%) and above that of England (92.7%).

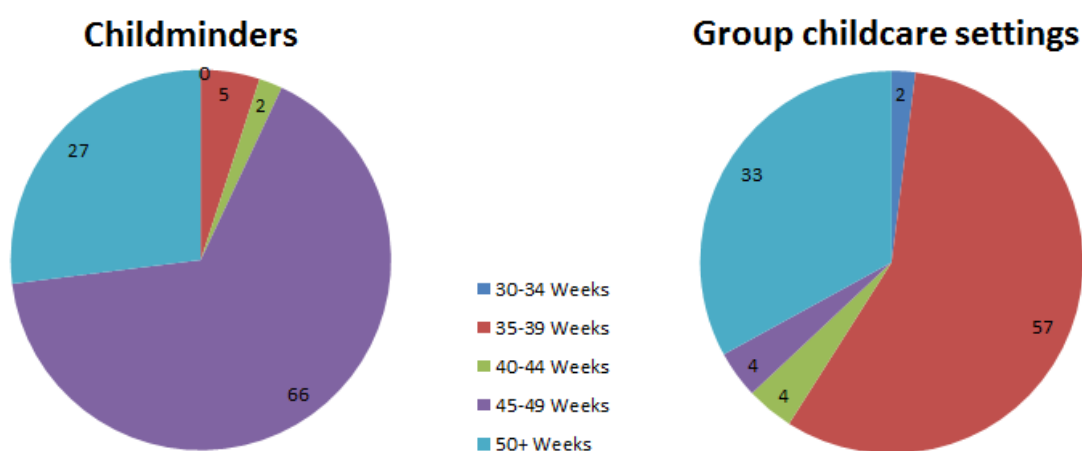
- It is the improvement in the inspection grades of childminders that has driven the overall increase in quality of providers in Somerset over the last year.
- Only settings that are graded Good or Outstanding are able to offer the funded entitlement to eligible two year olds, unless there is a demonstrable shortage of high quality places in the area. With the excellent quality overall in Somerset this has not been a significant problem.

Availability of childcare

The availability and flexibility of childcare includes the number of weeks a year and the number of hours per week the settings are open. Also important is the hours of opening; there is a small but significant demand for childcare outside 'normal' working hours as a result of shift work and an increasing demand for flexible working patterns.

Weeks open per year: percentage of providers by type (2017)

(Source: Somerset County Council)

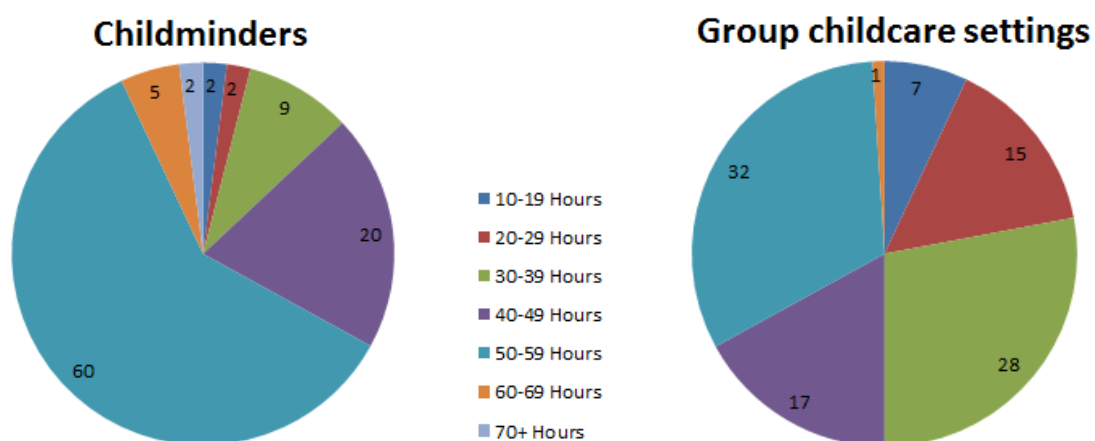


Points of interest

- Of the childminders in Somerset for which there is data, the vast majority are open for at least 45 weeks a year, with over a quarter open for 50 weeks or more a year. Around 5% are open term time only.
- Of the group childcare settings for which there is data, the majority are open for 35-39 weeks a year, i.e. term time opening. Around a third of the settings are open almost all year round (50+ weeks per year).

Hours open per week: percentage of providers by type (2017)

(Source: Somerset County Council)



Points of interest

- The vast majority of childminders are open between 40 and 59 hours a week with around 7% open over 60 hours a week. These easily cover a 'normal' 37 hour working week.
- The opening hours of group childcare settings are much more variable with most of them open either 30-39 hours or 50-59 hours a week. This is likely to reflect those settings which are run by schools and those which are not. Those which are not run by schools will have more flexibility regarding opening times.
- Just five of the childminders provide care at weekends; these include one in Mendip, two in Sedgemoor and two in Taunton Deane. No group childcare providers open at weekends.
- In a recent survey of childcare providers just 5% of those who responded indicated that they would consider offering childcare at weekends in the future.
- In the year Mar 16 – Feb 17 the EY Commissioning Team received 11 brokerage requests for childcare outside the typical working hours of childcare providers, typically to cover shift work. This represented 9% of the total number of requests.

With the increase in shift work and flexible working patterns, there may be an increase in demand from parents for childcare that suits their working hours.

Childcare costs

The average cost of a childminder in Somerset is £3.95 per hour. The majority of childminders charge the same amount regardless of the age of the child; a few charge less for 3 and 4 year olds. The cost ranges from a minimum of £2.30 to a maximum of £5 per hour, with the most common charge being £4 per hour.

Group childcare settings tend to charge different rates for different aged children, usually the younger the child the higher the cost. In Somerset, the average cost at a group setting is £4.11 per hour for 0 – 2 year olds and £4.01 for 3 and 4 year olds. The cost ranges from about £2 per hour to a maximum of £6.89 per hour, with the most common charge also being £4 per hour.

The independent school nurseries have a higher average charge than the private, voluntary and maintained nurseries. The average cost of an independent school nursery place is £5.29 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds; for the others it is £3.96 per hour.

Average hourly rates of childminders and group settings by district

(Source: Somerset County Council, 2017)

District	Child-minders	Group settings			
		0-2 YOs excl. indep	0-2 YOs <i>incl. indep</i>	3&4 YOs excl. indep	3&4 YOs <i>incl. indep</i>
Mendip	£4.06	£4.25	<i>£4.28</i>	£4.12	<i>£4.22</i>
Sedgemoor	£3.90	£4.23		£4.04	
South Somerset	£3.90	£3.91	<i>£3.95</i>	£3.83	<i>£3.91</i>
Taunton Deane	£3.99	£4.16	<i>£4.18</i>	£4.01	<i>£4.04</i>
West Somerset	£3.70	£3.73		£3.57	
SOMERSET	£3.95	£4.09	<i>£4.11</i>	£3.96	<i>£4.01</i>

The least expensive settings to attend tend to be small settings in the rural villages, run either voluntarily or by the local school. Mendip has the highest average cost (excluding independent schools) for both 0-2YOs and 3-4YOs, and West Somerset has the lowest. The pattern is the same for childminder costs. This is despite West Somerset having the highest median earnings of the five districts and may reflect a wide range in earnings between different age groups here.

In 2016, the average cost for a childminder was £3.79 per hour. For group settings it was £4.28 for babies, £3.95 for 2 year olds and £3.88 for 3-4 year olds.

Occupancy and vacancy rates

Data on occupancy and 'live' vacancy rates are not yet collected in Somerset. For sufficiency purposes, full occupancy is assumed when calculating the supply of places. Therefore the following data (in Part 3) may be influenced by factors such as parental preference between providers in each community, the number of staff employed at providers to fulfil ratios, the occupancy policies of individual providers and when parents are able to access funded entitlement places.

Part 3: Sufficiency of childcare places

Early Years population

In January 2017, the population of Early Years aged children in Somerset was estimated to be 28,651. This figure comes from GP registrations. The number of 0 year old children is likely to be an underestimate due to delays in some children being registered. The actual number of 0 year olds is likely to be approximately 10% higher at around 5908. This means that the calculated demand for childcare places will be an underestimate and should be treated as the minimum number required.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	5371	5690	5795	5754	6041	28,651

Source: NHS Somerset GP registrations (January 2017)

The Early Years aged population in Somerset in January 2017 was slightly lower than that in January 2016, by around 300 children.

Whole county demand and supply

Based on national usage rates, the current demand and supply of places for the whole county is shown in the table below (January 2017).

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders ¹	1770	1201	Insufficient
Group 0-2YO	2957	3308	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO PAID	3397	5893	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO EYE	7493 / 9504 / 11522*	11460	Sufficient / sufficient / insufficient*
Migration	211 into county		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

¹Childminders have different usage rates to group childcare providers

Across the county, there are an insufficient number of childminder places, by around 32%. There are a sufficient number of group childcare places for all 0-2 year olds and those 3-4 year olds who pay for their places. There were a sufficient number of places for funded 3 and 4 year olds in the autumn and spring terms, but not the summer term.

More children came into the county from neighbouring authorities to access childcare provision than left.

The picture across the county will mask differences between regions and between urban and rural areas. There may be pockets of insufficiency even though a wider area may be sufficient. The county is divided into its five districts for the purposes of more detailed supply and demand calculations, which are detailed on the following pages.

The extended entitlement offer (30 hours)

From 1st September 2017, the government is extending the universal entitlement of 15 hours of funded childcare (or 570 hours) to a maximum of 30 funded hours per week

over 38 weeks for eligible 3 and 4 year olds (or 1140 hours per year). Eligible children are those from families where a single parent or both parents are working, earning at least the equivalent of 16 hours a week at the National Minimum or Living Wage up to a maximum of £100,000 a year. Parents must apply for the extended entitlement via the government's childcare service at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

The offer is designed to 'help families by reducing the cost of childcare and will support parents to work more hours, should they wish to do so' (DfE (2015) Childcare Bill: policy statement). This extended entitlement is expected to increase the demand for places. It is not compulsory for providers to offer extended entitlement places.

The Early Years Commissioning Team surveyed both parents and providers about the extended entitlement in 2016. The parent survey aimed to determine the level of interest amongst parents in taking up the extended offer, and the provider survey explored the interest in - and capacity for - offering the entitlement. To access the report click on '30 hours Consultations Report' under Information and resources on the site:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/childrens-services/early-years-providers/30-hours-funded-childcare-provider-information/>

A total of 574 eligible families responded to the survey. The majority of parents (around 85%) said they would take up at least part of the extended entitlement to allow them to return to work or increase their hours. In addition, many families already use childcare for more than 15 hours a week; these will see their additional hours (up to 30) being funded from September 2017.

A total of 160 providers responded to their survey. Although many providers intended to offer 30 hours places, concerns included the funding rate and staffing. Some providers indicated they would require larger premises in order to offer places. A number of models for offering the extended entitlement were given. To date (04 July 2017), 374 early years providers in Somerset (74.9% of providers) have registered to offer the extended entitlement.

DfE estimates from 2016 indicated that 4120 families in Somerset will be eligible for the extended entitlement. The demand for – and supply of – extended entitlement places has been estimated for the whole county and for each for the five districts. The demand was estimated by taking the eligible population and multiplying by the estimated take-up rate from the parent survey. The places available are those indicated by providers on registering as 30 hours providers.

Estimated demand for 3-4YO EYE places in Somerset from September 2017

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for EYE places 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
11460	9282	Sufficient	11594	Insufficient	13914	Insufficient

The demand is lowest in the autumn term for any year as most of the four year olds will have started school. Demand is highest in the summer term.

Sufficiency: Mendip

Introduction and population

The Mendip district is in the north-east of Somerset and borders the local authorities of North Somerset, Bath & North East Somerset (BaNES) and Wiltshire. There are five main towns here – Frome, Wells, Shepton Mallet, Street and Glastonbury – surrounded by a rural area typified by scattered villages and small settlements. The Mendip Hills are found in the north-west corner of the district.

Mendip comprises 66 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which nine are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. These deprived areas are concentrated in Frome but are also found in the other urban centres of Shepton Mallet, Street, Glastonbury and Wells. Mendip has an Early Years aged population of 5740.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	1038	1202	1167	1096	1237	5740

Supply and demand of childcare places

Based on national usage rates, the current situation is:

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders	355	285	Insufficient
Group 0-2YO	581	799	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO PAID	672	1246	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO EYE	1446 / 1858 / 2271*	2429	Sufficient in all terms
Migration	106 into district		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

Across Mendip there are an insufficient number of childminder places but a sufficient number of group childcare places for all ages and for both paid-for and funded children. Both childminders and group childcare providers are concentrated in the urban areas; in the rural areas, group providers are often part of the village primary schools. In rural areas parents may have to travel some distance to access childcare. Overall, a large number of children came into the district to access childcare, reflecting cross-border movement.

Sufficiency in selected towns

Frome is the largest town in Mendip and has the highest proportion of deprived areas in the district. This means there will be a higher proportion of 0-2 year old children eligible for funded childcare places than elsewhere.

Childminder places:	Sufficient (Frome has a large number of childminders)
0-2YO places (all):	Insufficient (10 additional places required to make 171)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Supply equals demand
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn; insufficient in spring & summer terms (max 200 additional places required)

Wells

Childminder places:	Sufficient
0-2YO places (all):	Sufficient (around twice the number required)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (around twice the number required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in all terms

Street

Childminder places:	Insufficient (11 additional places required to make 39)
0-2YO places (all):	Sufficient (around twice the number required)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (over twice the number required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in all terms

Glastonbury

Childminder places:	Insufficient (there are no childminders in Glastonbury)
0-2YO places (all):	Sufficient
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (around twice the number required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in all terms

Shepton Mallet

Childminder places:	Insufficient (11 additional places required to make 45)
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn; insufficient in spring (just) & summer (max 50 additional places required)

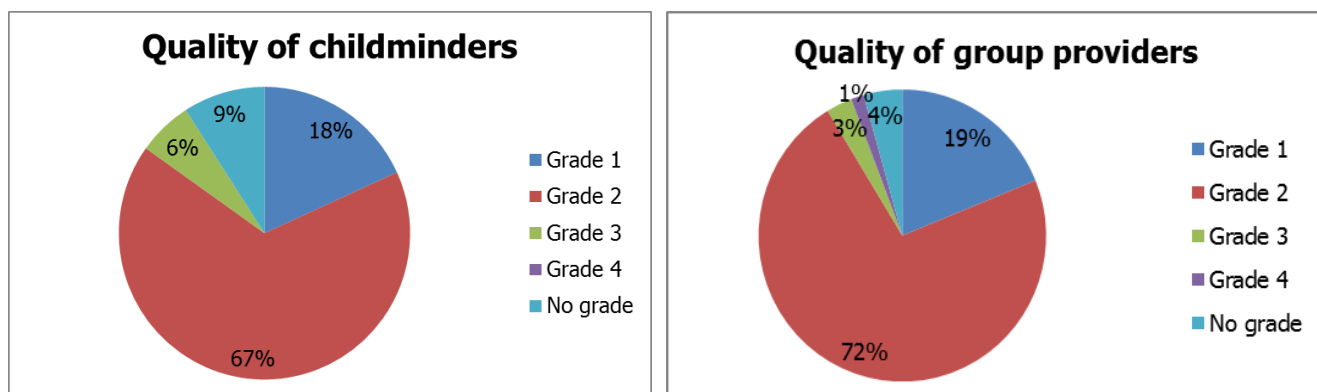
Two year old take-up rates

In the summer term 2016 (the most recent term there is data for), 93% of the two year olds identified by the DWP as eligible for a funded place took up a place at a registered setting. This compares with the Somerset average of 83%. The target figure is 80%.

More eligible children took up a place in Mendip than the number living in the district, reflecting the overall movement of children from the neighbouring local authorities into the area.

Quality of childcare provision

The average proportion of providers across the county (which have been graded) that are rated Good or Outstanding is 95%. Mendip has 94% of its providers rated Good or Outstanding (July 2017). There is a slightly higher proportion of Good or Outstanding group providers than childminders.



New housing

There are a number of new housing developments either approved or pending approval across Mendip, plus further developments in the pipeline.

Housing Developments	No. of dwellings		Number of EY places required (approved + pipeline)	Total number of EY places required
	Approved / pending	Pipeline		
Frome	965	1193	34 + 42	76
Glastonbury	360	150	13 + 5	18
Street	107	785	4 + 27	31
Shepton Mallet	206	1419	7 + 50	57
Wells	817	640	29 + 22	51
Rural Mendip	945	1478	33 + 52	85
Totals:	3400	5665	120 + 198	318

Around 120 Early Years places are required from housing that has been approved or is pending approval. A further 198 places will be required from developments in the pipeline, a total of 318 additional Early Years places. These will be required across the sector, i.e. from childminders and group settings, and across the age range.

The number of houses planned for Frome and Shepton Mallet in particular will put pressure on the settings here, where there are already insufficiencies.

Impact of the extended entitlement (30 hours)

The estimated demand for 30 hours places in Mendip is:

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for EYE places 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
2429	1892	Sufficient	2332	Sufficient	2774	Insufficient

As of 04 July 2017, 82 providers in Mendip (77% of funded providers) have registered as 30 hours providers, offering a total of 1121 places. These places could be places that are already offered, or new places, or a mixture of both. With provider registrations still being received, the number of providers and the number of places offered should increase.

Summary

Overall, Mendip currently has an insufficient number of childminder places but a sufficient number of group childcare places for all ages. Frome and Shepton Mallet are the towns where the number of 3&4 year old EYE places is insufficient to meet the current estimated demand. This situation could be exacerbated by the extended entitlement, although the final number of 30 hours places is not yet known.

There is a significant amount of cross-border movement of children to access childcare between Somerset and its neighbouring authorities of North Somerset and BaNES, making demand predictions more difficult here.

Sufficiency: Sedgemoor

Introduction and population

The Sedgemoor district is in the north-west of Somerset and borders the North Somerset local authority. The main urban area is Bridgwater, with Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge the next most significant settlement. The A38 and the M5 motorway bisect the district, providing good transport links. Parts of the Somerset levels are in the east of the district, with part of the Quantock Hills in the south-west.

Sedgemoor comprises 70 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which 17 are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Fourteen of these deprived areas are concentrated in Bridgwater (including the most deprived LSOA in the county), with the remaining three in Burnham and Highbridge. Sedgemoor has an Early Years aged population of 6570.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	1256	1303	1328	1312	1371	6570

Supply and demand of childcare places

Based on national usage rates, the current situation is:

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders	406	226	Insufficient
Group 0-2YO	700	678	Insufficient
Group 3-4YO PAID	773	1276	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO EYE	1710 / 2167 / 2625*	2521	Sufficient / sufficient / insufficient*
Migration	47 into district		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

Across Sedgemoor there are an insufficient number of childminder places and an insufficient number of places for 0-2 year olds, although only just. There are a sufficient number of paid-for places for 3&4 year olds, and funded places in the autumn and spring terms, but a shortfall in funded places in the summer term.

Both childminders and group childcare providers are concentrated in the urban areas (childminders in particular); in the rural areas, group providers are often part of the village primary schools. In rural areas parents may have to travel some distance to access childcare.

Sufficiency in selected towns

Bridgwater is the largest town in Sedgemoor and has the highest proportion of deprived areas in the district. This means there will be a higher proportion of 2 year old children eligible for funded childcare places than elsewhere.

Childminder places: Insufficient (half the number required (=170))
0-2YO places (all): Insufficient (55 additional places required to make 319)
3&4YO paid-for places: Sufficient

3&4YO funded places: Sufficient in autumn; insufficient in spring & summer terms (max 250 additional places required)

The pattern of sufficiency in Bridgwater reflects that across the district, although there are proportionally fewer funded 3-4 year old places available here compared with the demand.

Burnham & Highbridge

Childminder places: Insufficient (15 additional places required to make 60)
0-2YO places (all): Insufficient (21 additional places required to make 109)
3&4YO paid-for places: Sufficient
3&4YO funded places: Sufficient in autumn & spring; insufficient in summer term (max 50 additional places required)

Cheddar

Childminder places: Insufficient (fewer than half the number required)
0-2YO places (all): Insufficient (fewer than half the number required)
3&4YO paid-for places: Supply equals demand
3&4YO funded places: Insufficient in all terms (max 50 additional places required)

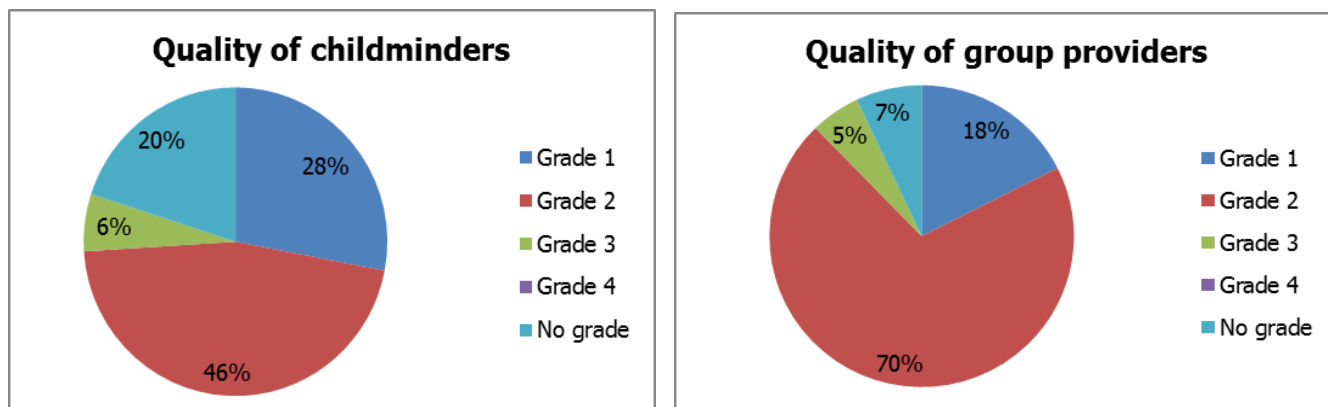
Two year old take-up rates

In the summer term 2016 (the most recent term there is data for), 88% of the two year olds identified by the DWP as eligible for a funded place took up a place at a registered setting. This compares with the Somerset average of 83%. The target figure is 80%.

A high proportion of the potentially eligible two year olds identified by the DWP (97%) applied for a funded place and was eligible. A high proportion of these (91%) actually took up a place in a setting.

Quality of childcare provision

The average proportion of providers across the county (which have been graded) that are rated Good or Outstanding is 95%. In Sedgemoor the figure is 94% (July 2017). There is a much higher proportion of Good or Outstanding group providers than childminders, although a significant proportion of childminders do not currently have a grade.



New housing

There are a number of new housing developments either approved or pending approval across Sedgemoor, plus further developments in the pipeline. Bridgwater in particular is a key site for meeting the Government's target for building new homes.

Housing Developments	No. of dwellings		Number of EY places required (approved + pipeline)	Total number of EY places required
	Approved / pending	Pipeline		
Bridgwater	2466	3483	86 + 122	208
Burnham & Highbridge	877	670	31 + 23	54
Cheddar	277	150	10 + 5	15
Rural Sedgemoor	550	3460*	19 + 121	140
Totals:	4170	7763*	146 + 271	417

*Including urban extensions

Around 146 Early Years places are required from housing that has been approved or is pending approval. A further 271 places will be required from developments in the pipeline, a total of 417 additional Early Years places. These will be required across the sector, i.e. from childminders and group settings, and across the age range.

The number of houses planned for Bridgwater in particular will put pressure on the settings here, where there are already insufficiencies. Both Burnham and Cheddar also currently have an insufficient number of places.

Impact of the extended entitlement (30 hours)

The estimated demand and supply of 30 hours places in Sedgemoor is:

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for EYE places 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
2521	2127	Sufficient	2654	Insufficient	3183	Insufficient

As 04 July 2017, 73 providers in Sedgemoor (78% of funded providers) have registered as 30 hours providers, offering a total of 917 places. These places could be places that are already offered, or new places, or a mixture of both. With provider registrations still being received, the number of providers and the number of places offered will increase.

Capital funding has been received to open a new setting in Bridgwater, which will create 26 additional places. Extended entitlement places will be offered here, helping to meet the demand in an area with much new housing and a rapidly expanding population, including incoming workers for the Hinkley Point project.

Summary

Overall, Sedgemoor currently has an insufficient number of childminder places and group childcare places for 0-2 year olds. There are a sufficient number of 3-4 year old places, except for EYE places in the summer term. This situation could be exacerbated by the extended entitlement, although the final number of 30 hours places is not yet known. All the main urban areas – Bridgwater, Burnham and Cheddar – have an insufficient number of 3-4 year old EYE places, at least in the summer term, and a new provision is opening in Bridgwater to address this. The large amount of new housing in certain areas will also put pressure on places.

Sedgemoor has a higher concentration of economic disadvantage than any other district in Somerset. Where there are higher levels of disadvantage there is often a lower

demand for childcare as families have less need and a reduced ability to pay for childcare. The universal offer and extended entitlement will enable more families in these areas to access childcare and potentially take up employment.

It is expected that there will be a number of families moving into the area, particularly to Bridgwater, Burnham / Highbridge and Cannington, as part of the workforce for the Hinkley point project. A proportion of these families will have early years aged children requiring childcare, increasing the pressure on childcare places.

Sufficiency: South Somerset

Introduction and population

The South Somerset district is the largest district in area and is in the south-east of Somerset. It has borders with Dorset, Devon and a small part of Wiltshire. The main urban area is Yeovil, with other larger towns including Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Somerton, Langport and Wincanton. The A303 bisects the district, providing good transport links. Parts of the Somerset levels are in the north-west of the district.

Sedgemoor comprises 103 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which 12 are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Eight of these deprived areas are concentrated in Yeovil, with the remaining four in Chard and Martock. South Somerset has an Early Years aged population of 8667.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	1636	1670	1758	1789	1814	8667

Supply and demand of childcare places

Based on national usage rates, the current situation is:

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders	534	447	Insufficient
Group 0-2YO	883	899	Sufficient (just)
Group 3-4YO PAID	1038	1795	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO EYE	2316 / 2920 / 3526*	3560	Sufficient in all terms
Migration	14 into district		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

Across South Somerset there are an insufficient number of childminder places. There are a sufficient number of places for 0-2 year olds, although only just. There are a sufficient number of paid-for places for 3&4 year olds, and funded places in all terms, but only just in the summer term.

Both childminders and group childcare providers are concentrated in the Yeovil, with smaller concentrations in the other towns listed above. In the rural areas, group providers are often part of the village primary schools. In rural areas parents may have to travel some distance to access childcare.

Sufficiency in selected towns

Yeovil is the largest town and has the highest proportion of deprived areas in the district. This means there will be a higher proportion of 0-2 year old children eligible for funded childcare places than elsewhere.

Childminder places:	Insufficient
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (nearly twice as many places as required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient

There was considerable migration into Yeovil – of 169 children – to access 3-4 year old funded places. This may reflect parents travelling into Yeovil for employment and accessing childcare near their work places. The pattern of sufficiency in Yeovil reflects that across the district.

Chard

Childminder places:	Insufficient (only a third of number required (=51))
0-2YO places (all):	Sufficient (just)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (twice the number required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in all terms

Crewkerne

Childminder places:	Insufficient (13 places required to make 22)
0-2YO places (all):	Insufficient (eight places required to make 41)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn; insufficient in spring & summer terms (max 30 additional places required)

Iminster

Childminder places:	Sufficient (just: number of places available equals demand)
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient (around twice the number required)
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient

Wincanton

Childminder places:	Insufficient (eight places required to make 27)
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn; insufficient in spring & summer terms (max 40 additional places required)

Two year old take-up rates

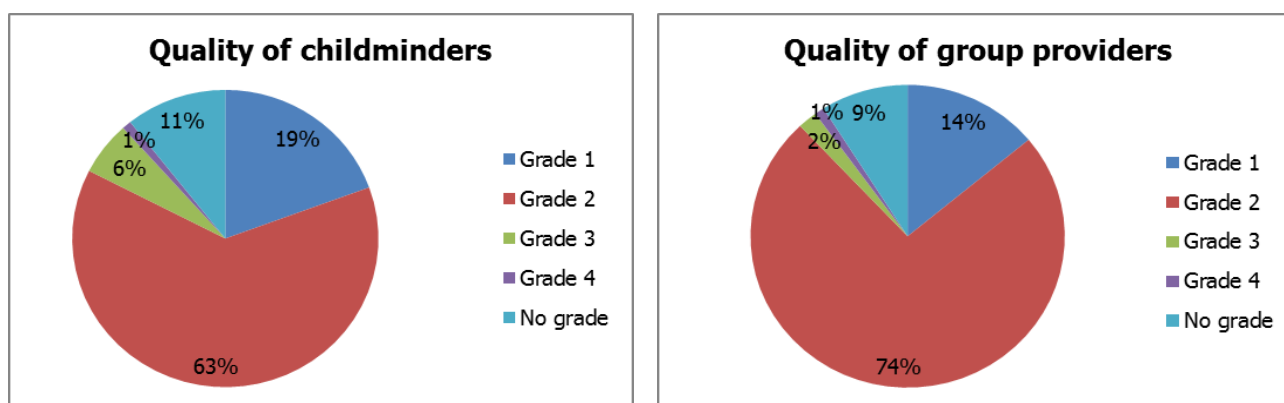
In the summer term 2016 (the most recent term there is data for), 81% of the two year olds identified by the DWP as eligible for a funded place took up a place at a registered setting. This compares with the Somerset average of 83%. The target figure is 80%.

Although the number of applications for a funded place is relatively low compared with the number expected by the DWP (85%), a high proportion of the ones who did apply took up a place (94%).

Quality of childcare provision

The average proportion of providers across the county (which have been graded) that are rated Good or Outstanding is 95%. South Somerset also has 95% of its providers

rated Good or Outstanding (July 2017). There is a slightly higher proportion of Good or Outstanding group providers than childminders.



New housing

There are a number of new housing developments either approved or pending approval across South Somerset, plus further developments in the pipeline.

Housing Developments	No. of dwellings		Number of EY places required (approved + pipeline)	Total number of EY places required
	Approved / pending	Pipeline		
Yeovil	2803	586	98 + 21	119
Yeovil urban extension	880	745	31 + 26	57
Chard	738	730	26 + 26	52
Crewkerne	738	201	26 + 7	33
Ilminster	890	105	31 + 4	35
Wincanton	367	724	13 + 25	38
Rural South Somerset*	2792	3224	98 + 113	211
Totals:	9208	6315	323 + 222	545

*Including Castle Cary, Huish Episcopi, Somerton, Martock, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, South Petherton and Ilchester

Around 323 Early Years places are required from housing that has been approved or is pending approval. A further 222 places will be required from developments in the pipeline, a total of 545 additional Early Years places. These will be required across the sector, i.e. from childminders and group settings, and across the age range.

The number of houses planned for across South Somerset will put pressure on the settings here, where there are already insufficiencies, particularly for 0-2 year olds.

Impact of the extended entitlement (30 hours)

The estimated demand and supply of 30 hours places in South Somerset is:

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for EYE places 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
3560	2793	Sufficient	3512	Sufficient	4233	Insufficient

As 04 July 2017, 129 providers in South Somerset (72% of funded providers) have registered as 30 hours providers, offering a total of 1495 places. These places could be places that are already offered, or new places, or a mixture of both. With provider registrations still being received, the number of providers and the number of places offered will increase.

Capital funding has been received to expand a setting in Broadway (near Ilminster) which will create 14 additional 3&4 year old places. Extended entitlement places will be offered here, helping to meet a demand in the area.

Summary

Overall, South Somerset currently has an insufficient number of childminder places but a sufficient number of group childcare places for all ages (only just though for 0-2 year olds). The extended entitlement offer is calculated to cause a shortfall in 3-4 year old EYE places in the summer term. However, the final number of 30 hours places is not yet known. The large amount of new housing, particularly in Yeovil, will put additional pressure on places.

Many rural settings are sessional (e.g. mornings only) and based in shared use premises such as village or church halls. These issues may limit their opening hours and they may not meet the needs of working parents, particularly for the extended entitlement. A setting near Ilminster is being expanded to help meet the 30 hours need in a rural area.

Sufficiency: Taunton Deane

Introduction and population

Taunton Deane occupies the south-west corner of Somerset and has a border with Devon. The main urban area is Taunton, with Wellington the next most significant settlement. Both towns lie close to the M5, allowing good transport links. The majority of the district is rural typified by small towns and villages. To the south of the district lie the Blackdown Hills.

Taunton Deane comprises 67 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which ten are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Nine of these deprived areas are in Taunton, including the second, third and eighth most deprived LSOAs in the county. The other deprived area is in Wellington. Taunton Deane has an Early Years population of 6002.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	1209	1167	1215	1176	1235	6002

Supply and demand of childcare places

Based on national usage rates, the current situation is:

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders	372	155	Insufficient
Group 0-2YO	630	747	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO PAID	694	1242	Sufficient

Group 3-4YO EYE	1647 / 2091 / 2536*	2523	Sufficient / sufficient / insufficient*
Migration	72 into district		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

Across Taunton Deane there are an insufficient number of childminder places, with fewer than half the estimated required number of places. There are a sufficient number of places for 0-2 year olds. There are a sufficient number of paid-for places for 3&4 year olds, and funded places in the autumn and spring terms, but a shortfall in funded places in the summer term.

Both childminders and group childcare providers are concentrated in the urban areas (childminders in particular); in the rural areas, group providers are often part of the village primary schools. In rural areas parents may have to travel some distance to access childcare.

Sufficiency in selected towns

Taunton is the largest town and has the highest proportion of deprived areas in the district. This means there will be a higher proportion of 0-2 year old children eligible for funded childcare places than elsewhere.

Childminder places:	Insufficient (fewer than half the number required (=178))
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn & spring; insufficient in summer (max 160 additional places required)

The pattern of sufficiency in Taunton reflects that across the district, although there are only just enough 0-2 year old places and proportionally fewer places for (paid-for) 3&4 year olds.

Wellington

Childminder places:	Insufficient (19 places required to make 52)
0-2YO places (all):	Insufficient (seven places required to make 82)
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in all terms (just in summer term)

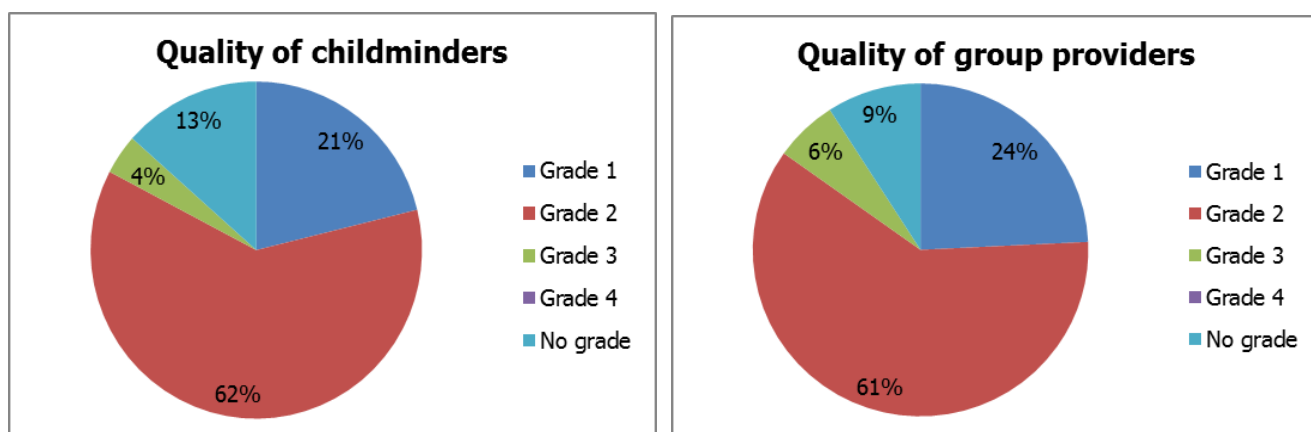
Two year old take-up rates

In the summer term 2016 (the most recent term there is data for), 88% of the two year olds identified by the DWP as eligible for a funded place took up a place at a registered setting. This compares with the Somerset average of 83%. The target figure is 80%.

A high proportion of the potentially eligible two year olds identified by the DWP (93%) applied for a funded place and were eligible. A high proportion of these (95%) actually took up a place in a setting.

Quality of childcare provision

The average proportion of providers across the county (which have been graded) that are rated Good or Outstanding is 95%. The figure in Taunton Deane is 94% (July 2017). The proportion of Good or Outstanding group providers and childminders is about the same.



New housing

There are a number of new housing developments either approved or pending approval across Taunton Deane, plus further developments in the pipeline. Taunton in particular is a key site for meeting the Government's target for building new homes.

Housing Developments	No. of dwellings		Number of EY places required (approved + pipeline)	Total number of EY places required
	Approved / pending	Pipeline		
Taunton	6721	4276	235 + 150	385
Wellington	1696	347	59 + 12	71
Rural Taunton Deane*	588	330	21 + 12	33
Totals:	9005	4953	315 + 174	489

*Including Wiveliscombe

Around 315 Early Years places are required from housing that has been approved or is pending approval. A further 174 places will be required from developments in the pipeline, a total of 489 additional Early Years places. These will be required across the sector, i.e. from childminders and group settings, and across the age range.

The number of houses planned for Taunton in particular will put pressure on the settings here, where there are already insufficiencies. Wellington also currently has an insufficient number of places.

Impact of the extended entitlement (30 hours)

The estimated demand and supply of 30 hours places in Taunton Deane is:

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for EYE places 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
2523	2049	Sufficient	2556	Insufficient (just)	3065	Insufficient

As 04 July 2017, 77 providers in Taunton Deane (74% of funded providers) have registered as 30 hours providers, offering a total of 1183 places. These places could be places that are already offered, or new places, or a mixture of both. With provider registrations still being received, the number of providers and the number of places offered will increase.

EFSA Capital funding has been received to open a new setting and expand three others in the district. The new setting is opening in Norton Fitzwarren and will create 50 additional places. Extended entitlement places will be offered here, helping to meet the demand in an area of new housing and rapidly expanding population.

Settings are being expanded with EFSA capital funding in Taunton, Wiveliscombe and Rockwell Green (Wellington), to provide additional 3&4 year old extended entitlement places in areas of need.

Summary

Overall, Taunton Deane currently has an insufficient number of childminder places but a sufficient number of group childcare places for all ages (apart from 3-4 year old EYE places in the summer term). This pattern is repeated in Taunton, where there is a large amount of new housing planned. A setting in Taunton is being expanded to meet the anticipated demand for 30 hours places, with the opening of a new setting on the outskirts of Taunton where there are also new housing developments. Two further settings are being expanded in the district to meet the rural need.

It is expected that there will be a number of families moving into the area, particularly to Taunton, as part of the workforce for the Hinkley point project. A proportion of these families will have early years aged children requiring childcare, increasing the pressure on childcare places.

Sufficiency: West Somerset

Introduction and population

West Somerset covers a very rural area in the west of the county bordering Devon and a long stretch of coastline in the north. Much of the district covers Exmoor National Park in the west with the Brendon hills in the east. The majority of the population lives along the coast with sparsely scattered villages across the vast majority of the area. West Somerset has the highest average aged population in the country.

West Somerset is also the worst performing area for social mobility in the whole of England and ranks second-lowest against Early Years social mobility indicators (Social Mobility Commission, November 2016). The district has been chosen as one of six 'Opportunity Areas' and will receive a share of £60million of government funding to help improve social mobility in the area.

West Somerset comprises 21 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) of which four are in the 30% most deprived areas in the country. Three of these deprived areas cover Watchet with the fourth in Minehead. West Somerset has an Early Years aged population of 1343.

Age	0	1	2	3	4	Total
Population	232	271	259	295	286	1343

Supply and demand of childcare places

Based on national usage rates, the current situation is:

	Places required	Places available	Sufficiency
Childminders	82	17	Insufficient

Group 0-2YO	145	159	Sufficient (just)
Group 3-4YO PAID	167	259	Sufficient
Group 3-4YO EYE	373 / 468 / 563*	427	Sufficient / insufficient / insufficient*
Migration	28 out of district		

*Autumn / spring / summer terms

Across West Somerset there are an insufficient number of childminder places, with just one fifth of the estimated required number of places. There are a sufficient number of places for 0-2 year olds, but only just. There are a sufficient number of paid-for places for 3&4 year olds, and funded places in the autumn term, but a shortfall in funded places in the spring and summer terms. West Somerset is the only district that has a net outward migration of children to access 3&4 year old funded places. This could be because settings in Devon will be nearer for some parents than those in the district.

There are 15 group childcare providers and just six childminders in West Somerset. The groups are concentrated in Minehead, as are the childminders, with all but one of the childminders here. In the rural areas, group providers are often part of the village primary schools and parents may have to travel some distance to access childcare.

Sufficiency in selected towns

Minehead is the largest town and has pockets of deprivation. Here and in Watchet there will be a higher proportion of 0-2 year old children eligible for funded childcare places than elsewhere.

Childminder places:	Insufficient (less than half the number required (=32))
0-2YO places (all):	Sufficient
3&4YO paid-for places:	Sufficient
3&4YO funded places:	Sufficient in autumn & spring; insufficient in summer (max 26 additional places required)

Watchet

Childminder places:	Insufficient
0-2YO places (all):	Supply equals demand
3&4YO paid-for places:	Insufficient (eight places required to make 34)
3&4YO funded places:	Insufficient in all terms (max 57 additional places required)

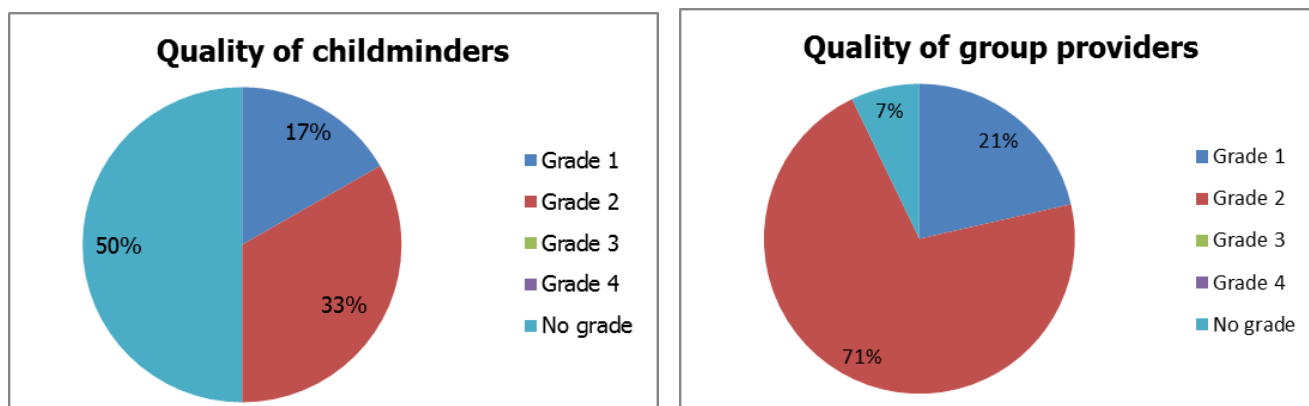
Two year old take-up rates

In the summer term 2016 (the most recent term there is data for), 78% of the two year olds identified by the DWP as eligible for a funded place took up a place at a registered setting. This is the lowest proportion of the five districts and below the target figure of 80%. The Somerset average is 83%.

A relatively low proportion of the children identified as eligible by the DWP applied for a funded place (around 80%). However, the majority of those who applied did take up a place. More eligible children took up a place in West Somerset than the number living in the district, reversing the trend seen in 3&4 year old movement across borders.

Quality of childcare provision

The average proportion of providers across the county (which have been graded) that are rated Good or Outstanding is 95%. In West Somerset the figure is 100% (July 2017), although a large proportion of childminders in particular are not currently graded.



New housing

There are a number of new housing developments either approved or pending approval across West Somerset, plus further developments in the pipeline.

Housing Developments	No. of dwellings		Number of EY places required (approved + pipeline)	Total number of EY places required
	Approved / pending	Pipeline		
Minehead	270	885	9 + 31	40
Watchet	88	490	3 + 17	20
Rural West Somerset*	203	556	7 + 19	26
Totals:	561	1931	19 + 67	86

*Including Williton

Around 19 Early Years places are required from housing that has been approved or is pending approval. A further 67 places will be required from developments in the pipeline, a total of 86 additional Early Years places. These will be required across the sector, i.e. from childminders and group settings, and across the age range.

The number of houses planned for both Minehead and Watchet will put pressure on the settings here, where there are already insufficiencies.

Impact of the extended entitlement (30 hours)

The estimated demand and supply of 30 hours places in West Somerset is:

Current no. of EYE places available	Demand for places EYE 2017-18					
	Autumn term		Spring term		Summer term	
427	422	Sufficient (just)	540	Insufficient	659	Insufficient

As 04 July 2017, 13 providers in West Somerset (76% of funded providers) have registered as 30 hours providers, offering a total of 154 places. These places could be

places that are already offered, or new places, or a mixture of both. With provider registrations still being received, the number of providers and the number of places offered will increase.

Summary

Overall, West Somerset currently has an insufficient number of childminder places but a sufficient number of group childcare places for 0-2 year olds, but only just. There are a sufficient number of paid-for 3-4 year old places and EYE places in the autumn term, but not in the spring and summer terms. Watchet – which is the most deprived settlement in West Somerset – particularly suffers from a shortfall in places. The extended entitlement offer is likely to exacerbate this situation.

The main challenge in West Somerset is the age and sparsity of its population; the district has the highest average age of any area in England. This means that settings are sparsely distributed and some parents will have to travel a considerable distance to access childcare. Many rural settings will be sessional and unable to meet the needs of working parents.

It is expected that there will be a number of families moving into the area, particularly to Minehead, Watchet and Williton, as part of the workforce for the Hinkley point project. A proportion of these families will have early years aged children requiring childcare, increasing the pressure on childcare places.

Part 4: Childcare provision for specific groups

Children entitled to Early Years Entitlement (EYE) funding

The Childcare Act (2006) established that Local Authorities must secure sufficient funded early years provision for all eligible children. The current entitlement is for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks a year (or 570 hours stretched over the year) from the start of term following the child's third birthday until the child starts statutory schooling. In September 2014 the offer was extended to the 40% most disadvantaged two-year olds as well.

EYE for two year olds

The 40% most deprived 2 year olds are currently eligible for 15 hours a week of funded childcare per week (or 570 hours stretched across a year). Cohorts of 2 year olds, by district, have been tracked from the initial DWP estimate of the number eligible to the number taking up a place in a setting.

In Somerset, outreach work for funded two year old places is carried out by getset area teams and is supported by health visitors.

Take-up of the 2 year old offer (spring term 2017)

District	Estimated no. of eligible children*	Number of eligible applications received	Percentage of eligible applications received	Number of eligible children in settings	% of children taking up a place compared with DWP estimate	% of children taking up a place compared with apps received
Mendip	322	291	90%	262	81%	90%
Sedgemoor	428	439	103%	381	89%	87%
South Somerset	508	496	98%	451	89%	91%
Taunton Deane	367	369	101%	330	90%	89%
West Somerset	100	78	78%	83	83%	106%
Somerset			96		87	91

*Please note that due to parents being transferred to Universal Credit, the estimated number of eligible children will be lower than expected.

In the spring term 2017, Somerset had a 2 year old take-up rate of 87%; i.e. 87% of those children identified as eligible by the DWP took up a place in a setting (see highlighted column). The rate varies around the county with the highest take-up rate in Taunton Deane and the lowest in Mendip. The target rate set by early years commissioning is 80%; and all districts exceed this.

Reported reasons why parents do not take up a funded early years place for their child include parents considering that their child is too young and parents waiting until a place is available at their first choice provider rather than using an alternative. Some hard to reach groups of parents can be unaware of their entitlement.

Number of providers registered to offer EYE for eligible 2 year olds
(Source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)

Type of childcare setting	Registered 2YO EYE providers 2016		Registered 2YO EYE providers 2017	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Childminder	136	38%	167	50%
Maintained school nursery	8	62%	10	63%
Independent school nursery	2	14%	2	15%
Private / voluntary nursery	273	93%	271	94%
Totals	419	62%	450	69%

The number of providers registered to offer funded places to 2 year olds has increased since last year. The greatest increase over the year has been amongst childminders with a 12% increase in the number of childminders offering 2YO funded places.

EYE for three and four year olds

The vast majority of three and four year olds (99.4%) take up a funded place in a setting or with a childminder for at least some of their 15 hour entitlement.

Number of providers registered to offer EYE for 3 and 4 year olds
(Source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)

Type of childcare setting	Registered 3&4YO EYE providers 2016		Registered 3&4YO EYE providers 2017	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Childminder	161	45%	186	56%
Maintained school nursery	13	100%	16	100%
Independent school nursery	14	100%	13	100%
Private / voluntary nursery	293	100%	287	100%
Totals	480	71%	502	77%

Again, the number and percentage of childminders offering funded places for 3 and 4 year olds has increased since last year. All the group settings offer funded places for 3&4 year olds.

Supply and demand of 3&4YO EYE places in Somerset
(source: Somerset County Council, July 2017)

Number of 3&4YO EYE places available	Demand for 3&4YO EYE places		
	Autumn term 2016	Spring term 2017	Summer term 2017
11460	7684	9695	11713

There were a sufficient number of 3&4YO EYE places in the autumn and spring terms of the current academic year, but a small shortfall of places in the summer term.

Children with SEND

The Local Offer

The Children and Families Act (2014) requires local authorities to publish and keep under review information about services they expect to be available for children and young people with special educational needs from birth to age 25. This is called the local offer.

In Somerset, the local offer information is available on the Somerset Choices website. All EY providers are encouraged to publish as much information as possible about their SEND offer to enable parents to find the appropriate care for their child.

All settings are expected "to adopt an inclusive approach, promote equality of opportunity and ensure there is no discrimination" (Somerset Code of Practice for the provision of the Early Years Entitlement). All settings who deliver the Early Years Entitlement must have a named SENCO and ENCO who have attended training courses on these roles.

In Somerset, the Multi-Agency Assessment, Intervention and Support in Early Years (MAISEY) programme identifies and coordinates the support needed by children with significant and complex needs and may allocate additional funding to support children to access their entitlement to the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about Somerset's local offer can be found on the Somerset Choices website: www.somersetchoices.org.uk/family/information-and-advice/somersets-local-offer/

and from the Somerset Special Educational needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) website: www.somersetsend.org.uk/.

Sufficiency of places for children with SEND

Somerset County Council considers there to be sufficient childcare places for children with additional needs. Somerset does not collect data specifically on the demand and supply of EY places for children with SEND as most children with SEND are included in mainstream provision. However, there have been a few brokerage requests from parents of children with SEND who couldn't find the childcare they require. Out of around 130 brokerage enquiries over the last year, five were for children with SEND of various types (4%). SCC was unable to find the childcare requested for three of these children.

Children requiring holiday and wrap-around care

Holiday and wrap-around care is an important part of the childcare offer in Somerset. Health, retail and agriculture provide a significant proportion of the employment opportunities here and, with increasingly flexible working patterns, it is important that parents can access childcare at the hours that suit their shifts and working patterns.

There are 104 known out-of-school and holiday clubs in Somerset. It is likely that there are some that are not registered with the council. Many of the clubs are based at schools.

Sufficiency of places for children requiring holiday and wrap-around care

District	Early Years population	Number of out-of-school and holiday clubs	Ratio of holiday clubs to Early Years population
Mendip	5740	14	1: 410
Sedgemoor	6570	26	1: 253

South Somerset	8667	21	1: 413
Taunton Deane	6002	37	1: 162
West Somerset	1343	8	1: 168
Total /average	28,651	106	1:270

Taunton Deane has the highest proportion of holiday clubs for its EY population and South Somerset has the fewest. However, this information does not take into account the number of places offered by each provision.

In addition to these holiday clubs, there are 263 childminders and 192 group childcare settings who are open for more than 38 weeks a year (i.e. for more than the standard school term time weeks).

Not all parents will require childcare during the school holidays. Many will work term-time only or will use annual leave to cover some or all of the school holidays and others will use informal childcare such as relatives. However, four brokerage requests were received by the council for holiday care in the last year.

Providers operating outside standard hours

For the purposes of this report, outside standard hours means opening before 8am in the morning or after 6pm in the evening, and providing care at weekends or overnight.

Out-of-hours care	Childminders	Group childcare
Providers open before 8am	145 (60%)	58 (18%)
Providers open after 6pm	41 (17%)	5 (2%)
Providers open at weekends	5 (2%)	0 (0%)
Providers offering overnight care	25 (10%)	0 (0%)

There are fewer providers offering care in the evening than in the early morning. Although there are a number of providers offering care before 8am and after 6pm, in the majority of cases this is for just an extra half an hour i.e. starting at 7.30 am and / or finishing at 6.30pm. There are very few providers open at weekends but more offering overnight care.

There appears to be a greater problem accessing childcare outside of standard hours in Somerset. In the last year, 14 brokerage requests have been received for care outside of standard hours; most were for care before and after school to cover shift work, but also included two families requiring care on Saturdays and one requiring overnight care. Not all requests were able to be fulfilled, suggesting there are an insufficient number of providers offering care outside of standard hours.

Children from low income families

Working tax credits are available to people with an income below a certain level. The childcare element is intended to support low income working families by paying for up to 70% of childcare costs, up to a maximum limit. The Local Authority must ensure that all eligible families can access their entitlement. Working tax credits cannot be claimed by people in receipt of Universal Credit.

Percentage of families benefitting from the childcare element of working tax credit

District	Percentage of families benefitting from the childcare element of working tax credit		
	2013-14	2014-15	Difference
Mendip	14.9%	15.6%	0.7%
Sedgemoor	13.5%	13.5%	0%
South Somerset	13.4%	16.4%	3.0%
Taunton Deane	17.0%	17.4%	0.4%
West Somerset	13.3%	13.3%	0%
Somerset	14.1%	14.8%	0.7%
South West	14.6%	14.8%	0.2%
England	14.9%	15.1%	0.2%

(Source: Child and Working Tax Credits statistics finalised annual awards (geographical analysis) Table 2: 2013-14 & 2014-15)

Somerset showed a greater improvement in the take-up of working tax credits than the average in the South West, and in England.

Brokerage

SCC publishes information about providers (who have given permission for their information to be shared) via the Somerset Choices website, and parents can search for childcare using their postcode to identify their nearest providers. For those parents unable to find childcare that suits their needs, Somerset provides a brokerage service. This service is currently administered by the SSE Early Years Improvement Team.

Since March 2016, an average of 11 brokerage requests have been received each month, with a minimum of four and a maximum of 22 in any one month. In addition to the type of brokerage requests noted above, parents have contacted the service for:

- Children requiring drop-off at or pick-up from particular schools
- Childcare for fewer hours than the full sessions offered
- Childcare within a short distance of home (because parents don't drive)

The service has also been used by parents whose first language is other than English.

There appears to be a need for more childcare for certain very specific requirements and outside, for example, normal working hours.

Part 5: Strategic priorities

The strategic priorities for early years are now captured within its pillar of Somerset's Education Vision 'Achieving Excellence for All' 2015-2020. This can be viewed via: <http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/meetings/reports.asp?item=1305>

Somerset's Early Years Vision 2015-2020

Priority 1: To further develop collaborative partnerships and provide the highest quality support and opportunities for all children and families.

Priority 2: Ensure communication and information is relevant, clear and accessible to parents, carers and providers.

Priority 3: Identify and recognise the number of transition points a child has in their first 5 years and develop timely, multi-agency strategies to support positive transitions and continuity across the 0-5 age range.

Priority 4: Value and empower the family around the child and in particular respect parents / carers as central to children's development.

Priority 5: Improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, including preparing children for school that are school ready.

Priority 6: Secure high quality and resilient leadership and governance in every school and setting and strengthen workforce development through ongoing self-improvement.

Priority 7: The development of self-improving communities. Community engagement is increasingly seen as a source of resources in terms of sector led improvement and the development of networks/partnerships. In order to drive quality improvement all schools and settings need to be autonomous and responsible for their outcomes.

The vision also links to Somerset's Children and Young People's Plan, which can be viewed via: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/organisation/trusts/somerset-childrens-trust/>

The seven strategic priorities above are coordinated by the Local Authority Vision Strategy Group, and through the Early Years Partnership Board. These both report to the Somerset Education Partnership Board.

As well as these priorities, the county sufficiency report both reinforces and highlights further commissioning priorities and actions for 2017-2020. These are presented in the table on page 41. They should be viewed as linking to all seven priorities, and not separate from the early years' vision strategy.

Commissioning priorities and actions for 2017-2020

Statutory duty / strategic priority	Action	Lead responsibility
Ensure all eligible 3-4 year olds can access a funded childcare place	<p>Capital investment programme bids should be based on this county sufficiency report, and are targeted at areas of insufficiency.</p> <p>Ensure that providers are signposted to correct resources to keep them sustainable and offer support with any remodelling of their service to enable them to remain sustainable or undertake a managed closure.</p> <p>Ensure that committees are aware of their roles and responsibilities in running a childcare and education business.</p> <p>Research reasons why some childminders and groups do not offer EYE funding / 30 hours places. Respond to these and commission workshops e.g. induction to funding, business planning, partnership models.</p> <p>Research reasons why childminders and group providers leave childcare. Analyse results to determine whether there are patterns and whether there are actions that can be taken by the LA to retain providers.</p> <p>Support leaders in moving to the increase to 30 hours of entitlement so that they have the skills and knowledge to implement quality practice.</p> <p>Convert non-funded childminders to those that offer funded spaces.</p> <p>Raise awareness and promote findings of brokerage information to providers through bulletins and Early Years News and Views.</p> <p>Consult with the Parent Carer forum about barriers to accessing entitlement for children with SEND.</p> <p>Collect regular vacancy and occupancy data from providers during termly funding claims processes.</p>	Early Years Commissioning Team

Ensure all eligible 3-4 year olds can access an extended entitlement place	<p>Provide business support workshops through SSE Improvement Team for 30 hours.</p> <p>Implement communications strategy for 30 hours, including website updating.</p> <p>Implement ICT strategy for 30 hours including code checker and 30 hours search function on Somerset Choices.</p> <p>Implement six approved capital projects from the EFSA to secure 30 hours spaces.</p> <p>Capital investment programme bids should be based on this county sufficiency report, and are targeted at areas of insufficiency for 30 hours places.</p>	Early Years Commissioning Team
Ensure all eligible 2-year olds can access a funded childcare place & ensure their families can be followed up through getset services	<p>Ensure capital investment programme bids are based on this county sufficiency report, and are targeted at areas of insufficiency, where practicable.</p> <p>Monitor sufficiency of childcare places for 2 year olds and identify areas of need, both in terms of places and quality.</p> <p>Analyse reasons for non-access of 2-year old funding for trends / issues, both geographic and perceived difficulties. Adjust marketing and recruitment strategies accordingly so that the benefits are clear.</p> <p>Follow up families who are eligible for two year old funding and offer appropriate support and/or signposting to appropriate services. Persuade eligible families to take up their entitlement.</p> <p>Contact all families identified by DWP as eligible for 2-year old funding, providing lists of settings in their area and instructions on how to apply for a funded place.</p> <p>Provide list of families eligible for 2-year old funding to getset services.</p>	<p>Early Years Commissioning Team</p> <p>Getset services / outreach services</p> <p>SSE Entitlements Team</p>
Provide information about childcare to all families in Somerset	<p>Provide online information via Somerset Choices and SCC website.</p> <p>Childcare Choices leaflet published and distributed.</p> <p>Somerset Direct teams updated about childcare offers and changes.</p> <p>Ensure brokerage is in place for parents wishing to access childcare.</p> <p>Ensure materials and information is available in other languages.</p>	Early Years Commissioning Team

	Ensure Partnership Group shares information about the childcare offer in Somerset.	
Secure high quality and resilient leadership and governance in every school and setting and strengthen workforce development through ongoing self-improvement	<p>Implement workforce review strategy across the county to address recruitment and supply of qualified staff to meet need for sufficiency.</p> <p>Review leadership framework for the county to ensure it meets the needs of the sector.</p> <p>Provide business and committee support across the county via commissioned services from SSE Improvement Team.</p>	<p>Early Years Commissioning Team</p> <p>Early Years Vision Strategy Group</p>
Families in Somerset are supported to find childcare to meet their needs	<p>Improve sufficiency of holiday and wrap around care available in Somerset.</p> <p>Play Forum contract to continue and develop to support providers of play based holiday care and wrap around provision.</p> <p>Provide information, advice and guidance to providers and those wishing to set up wrap around and holiday care provision in areas of shortage.</p> <p>Targeted recruitment of childminders in areas of need.</p> <p>Targeting grants for providers to support sufficiency, flexibility and catering for children with SEND.</p> <p>Proactively collect holiday and wraparound care information from providers in the county to assess sufficiency in more detail.</p>	Early Years Commissioning Team