

South Somerset District Council

Settlement Profile: Bruton

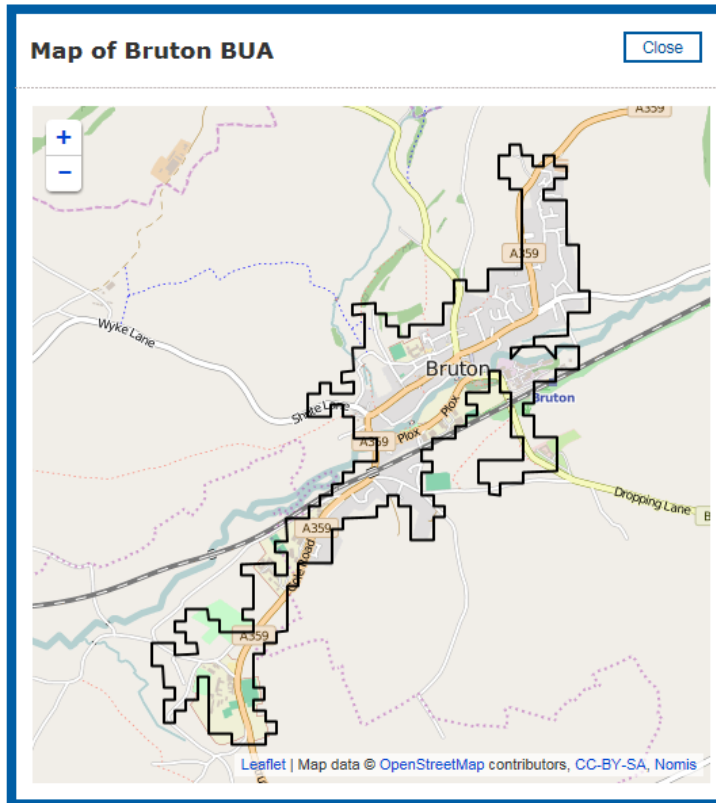


October 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Settlement Profile has been produced using 2011 Census data for the 'Built-up Area' (BUA) of Bruton (Figure 1.1) unless stated otherwise.

Figure 1.1: Map of Bruton BUA



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council

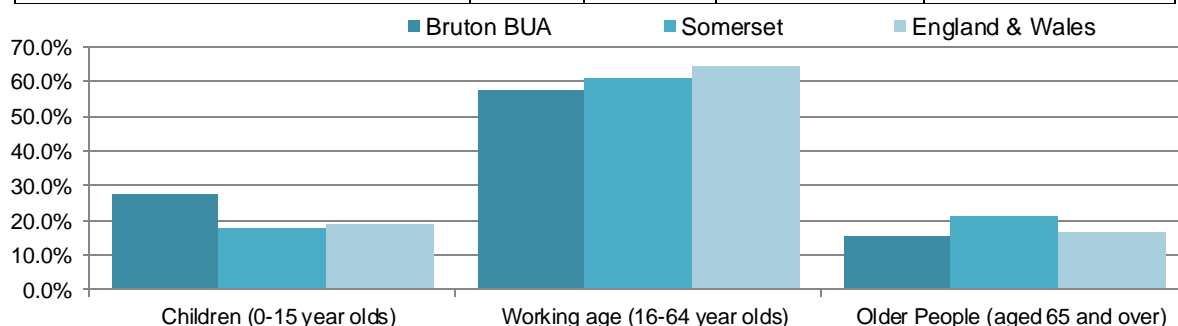
- 1.2 Bruton is situated in the east of the District, in the Brue Valley a few miles north of the A303, about 4 miles from Castle Cary and 7 miles from Shepton Mallet. The A351 Frome-Yeovil road passes through the settlement and the B3081 crosses the river at Church Bridge. The topography and hence settlement has been heavily influenced by the River Brue. The majority of the settlement is built on the higher ground on the north side of the river and in recent years residential development has occurred to the north east of the town.
- 1.3 Bruton is a Rural Centre with Saxon origins. Once a royal estate of the West Saxon kings in the 7th century, in addition to its agricultural trade, the town had a flourishing cloth industry from the middle ages, succeeded from the late 18th century by silk production. Today the two main industries are farming and education. There are four schools in Bruton: King's School, founded in 1519, Bruton School for Girls, Sexey's School and Bruton Primary School.
- 1.4 Although 'Bruton – the Way Forward' is no longer in existence, a Town Plan Resident Survey was undertaken by the Town Council in the Autumn of 2016 and a 'Town Plan' was published in July 2017.

2. POPULATION

- 2.1 Figure 2.1 shows the age profile of Bruton's resident population, with the number and percentage of residents in each of the following groups: children; working age; and older people. It then compares the percentages against those for Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 2.1 Bruton's Age Profile Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Bruton BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total usually resident population	2,984	100.0	100.0%	100.0%
Children (0-15 year olds)	816	27.3	17.8%	18.9%
Working age (16-64 year olds)	1,709	57.3	61.1%	64.7%
Older People (aged 65 and over)	459	15.4	21.1%	16.4%



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

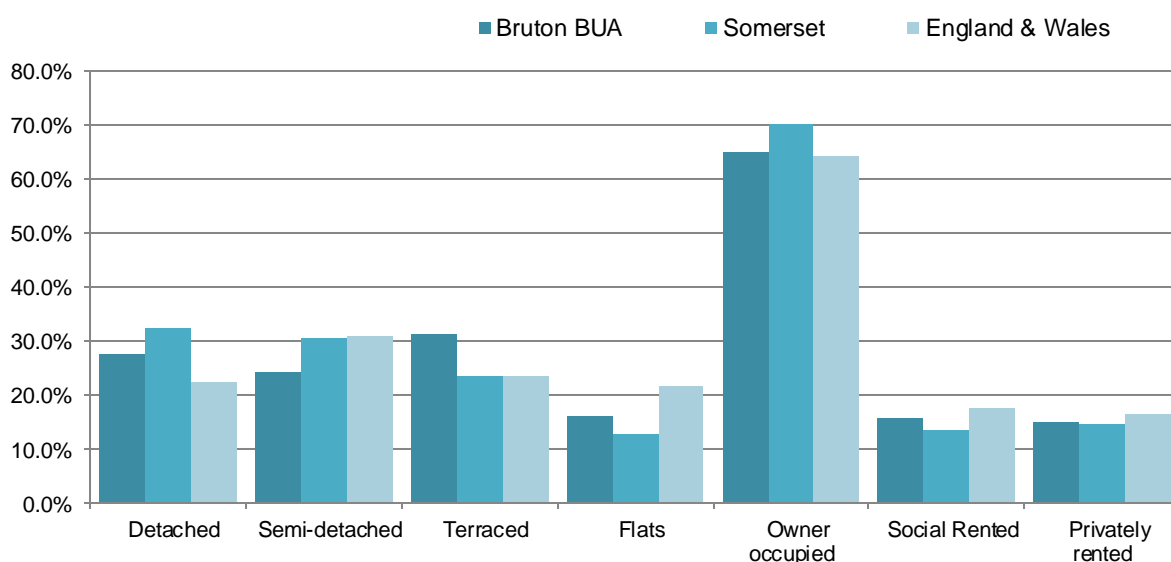
- 2.2 Bruton has a resident population of 2,984. It has a lower ratio of 'Working age' residents than Somerset and England & Wales. There are relatively many more children (probably accounted for by school boarders), and significantly fewer 'older people' than across Somerset, although the proportion of 'older people' is comparable to the national figure.

3. HOUSING

- 3.1 Figure 3.1 shows the number and percentage of dwellings by dwelling type and households by tenure. It also presents a comparison of dwelling types and tenure profiles for Bruton, Somerset, and England & Wales.

Figure 3.1: Bruton's Accommodation and Household Profiles

	Bruton BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of dwellings	1,141	100.0	100.0	100.0
Detached	316	27.7	32.3	22.6
Semi-detached	279	24.5	30.4	31.1
Terraced	358	31.4	23.7	23.6
Flats	186	16.3	13.0	21.6
Tenure		%	%	%
Total number of households	1,071	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner occupied	695	64.9	70.2	64.3
Social Rented	170	15.9	13.5	17.6
Privately rented	161	15.0	14.7	16.7



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

- 3.2 Figure 3.1 suggests that Bruton offers a reasonable range of accommodation types, with the proportion of terraced housing higher than in Somerset, but comparable nationally. Owner-occupation is lower than across the County but corresponds to the country as a whole.
- 3.4 The Local Plan¹ states that 203 dwellings should be provided in Bruton over the Plan period; with 108 completions to March 2017; and a further 76 potentially forthcoming. Housing delivery in Bruton would therefore appear to more or less on course.

¹ Policy SS5

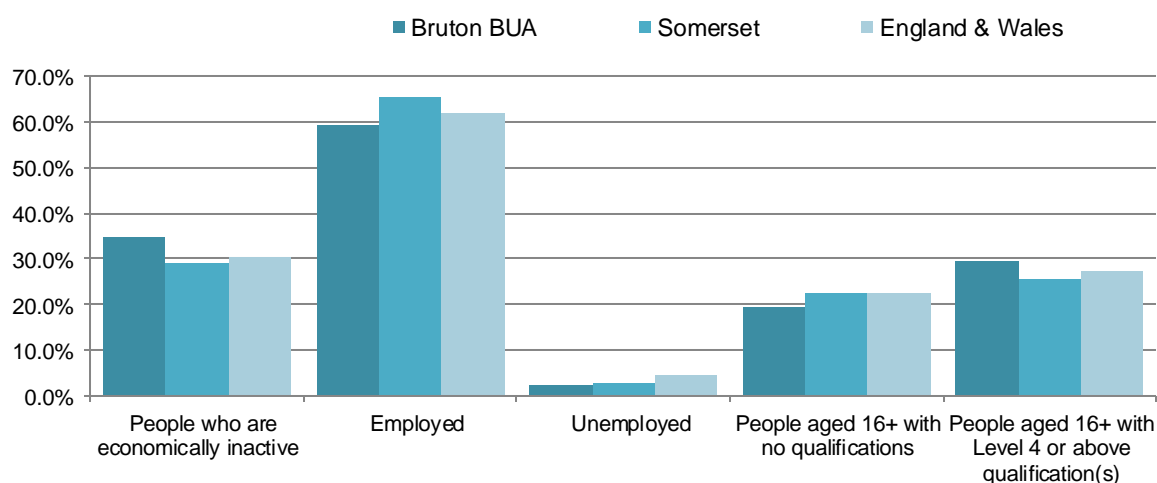
4. ECONOMY

The Economy in General

- 4.1 The proportion of people in Bruton who are economically inactive is significantly higher than across Somerset or nationally; unemployment levels are very low; but employment levels within the population of working age are actually lower than elsewhere. Educational qualification attainment is comparatively high with a lower percentage of the population with no qualifications than either within Somerset as a whole or in England and Wales.
- 4.2 The presence of the four local schools is reflected by the large portion (nearly a third) of jobs being within the education sector, this being the greatest by a sizeable margin, although a further (Steiner) school has closed since the Census took place, so this figure may now be reduced (See Figure 4.2). This academic emphasis in the town may explain the relatively high levels of educational achievement referred to above. There are still high numbers of people working in manufacturing, but levels are lower than in the rest of the District; and numbers of people working in retail and accommodation and food services are also relatively high, signifying the Town's role as a Rural Centre.

Figure 4.1: Bruton's Economic Activity Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Bruton BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of people aged 16 to 74	1,929	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
People who are economically inactive	671	34.8%	29.2%	30.3%
Employed	1,142	59.2%	65.2%	61.9%
Unemployed	48	2.5%	3.0%	4.4%
People aged 16+ with no qualifications	418	19.3%	22.4%	22.7%
People aged 16+ with Level 4 or above qualification(s)	641	29.6%	25.6%	27.2%



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council, using 2011 Census statistics from ONS

Figure 4.2: Employment Provision in Bruton 2015

Sector	Bruton		South Somerset
	No of Jobs	%	%
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	0	n/a	n/a
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	0	0	0.9
3 : Manufacturing (C)	225	17.9	20.3
4 : Construction (F)	20	1.6	5.5
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	75	6.0	(All G) 18.8
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	50	4.0	
7 : Retail (Part G)	100	8.0	
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	50	4.0	3.5
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	150	11.9	6.2
10 : Information & communication (J)	5	0.4	2
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	0	0	0.9
12 : Property (L)	15	1.2	1.4
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	50	4.0	7
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	20	1.6	5.5
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	0	0	2.3
16 : Education (P)	400	31.8	7.8
17 : Health (Q)	75	6.0	14.1
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	10	0.8	3.9
Total	1250	100	

Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, NOMIS, 2015

The BRES data does not include farmagriculture (SIC subclass 01000).data at settlement level; it is only available at region and country level. This is Open Access data that has been rounded to make it publishable; as such, the figures do not tally to an exact 100%. Bruton is comprised of Super Output Area E36005232.

4.3 Significant recent new commercial developments in Bruton include new buildings at Kings School and Sexey's School; development at Durslade Farm; the change of use of the piggery units for light industrial purposes; and an additional hotel, café/restaurant space at the 'At the Chapel' restaurant. The Council's monitoring² shows that, although very little net additional employment land has been secured, these developments have contributed to a net additional 2,933m² of completed employment floorspace.

4.4 The redevelopment of Durslade Farm to a Hauser & Wirth site has had significant positive social and economic impacts for Bruton.

The Town Centre

4.5 Bruton is designated as a Local Centre in the adopted Local Plan (Policy EP9). The range of Class A uses present in the centre, compared with the national average, is set out in Figure 4.3.

² SSDC Monitoring Database

Figure 4.3: Bruton Use Class Mix by Unit

Type of Unit	No of Units	Total Number of Units (%)	
		Bruton	UK Average
A1 Comparison	12	36.4	33.4
A1 Convenience	4	12.1	10.4
A1 Service	4	12.1	13.0
A2 Service	1	3.0	11.8
A3 (Restaurants and Cafes)	3	9.1	9.5
A5 (Hot Food Takeaways)	1	3.0	6.0
A4 (Pubs/Bars)	4	12.1	4.6
Vacant	4	12.1	11.2
Total	33	100	100

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study; Lichfields, July 2017

- 4.5 The centre has a good range of comparison units, 3% above the national average, made up of independent and specialist stores, with no national multiples. In terms of convenience units, there is a small Spar Shop and a Premier, supplemented by an organic food shop and a wine shop. The provision of service uses in the centre is below the national average and includes a number of hairdressers, an estate agent and a post office. There is one takeaway; various restaurants and a greater proportion of public houses than nationally.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.1 The existing Doctor's Surgery is understood to require improvement, but a new surgery building has now been granted planning permission on a site on Frome Road. NHS England and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recognise the requirement for improved GP facilities and have committed funding for a business case and feasibility study to be commissioned.

6. TRAVEL

- 6.1 Bruton has its own railway station ten minutes' walk from the town centre, with services to Weymouth, Bath and Bristol. There is a regular bus service to Castle Cary, Wincanton, and Street. A national cycle route runs through the settlement.

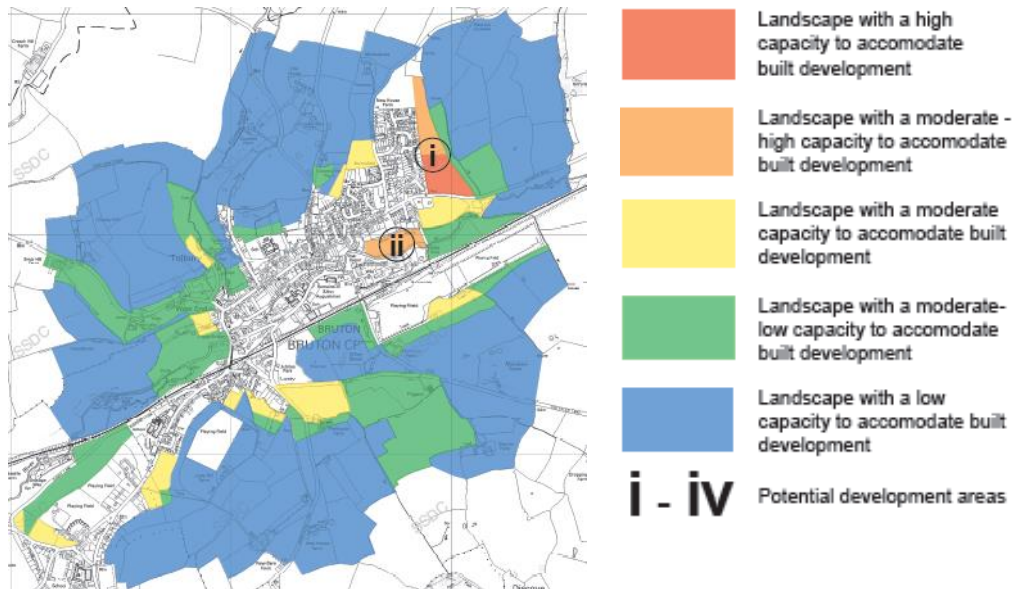
Figure 6.1: Public Transport Provision in Bruton

Buses		
Operator	Principal Destinations	Frequency (Approx.)
Nippy Bus	667 – Castle Cary – Wincanton – Keinton Mandeville - Street	90 mins
South West Coaches	1B: Yeovil – Shepton Mallet 19: Bruton – Yeovil	1x daily Fridays only
Train Services		
Operator	Principal Destinations	Frequency (Approx.)
Great Western Railway	Weymouth (Dorchester) – (Yeovil) (Bath) Bristol	2 hourly

7. ENVIRONMENT

7.1 The Peripheral Landscape Study³ shows that there is land to accommodate growth, taking into account landscape character and sensitivity; and historic, wildlife or environmental constraints, with the four most suitable sites identified (Figure 7.1).

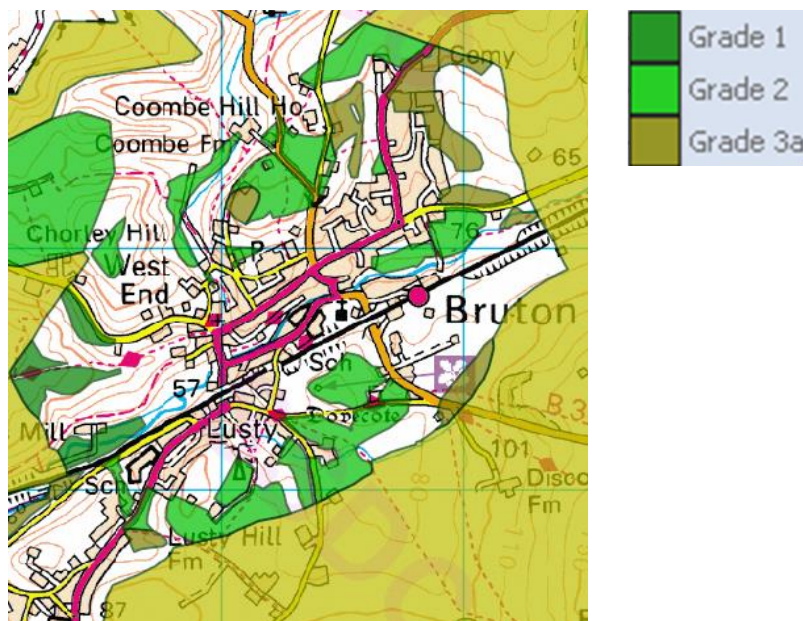
Figure 7.1: Bruton Landscape Capacity



Source: Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)

7.2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 & 3a)⁴ is a key environmental constraint according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF⁵). As Figure 7.2 shows, large areas of Grade 2 and 3a land surround Bruton.

Figure 7.2: BMV Land around Bruton



Source: WebMap, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

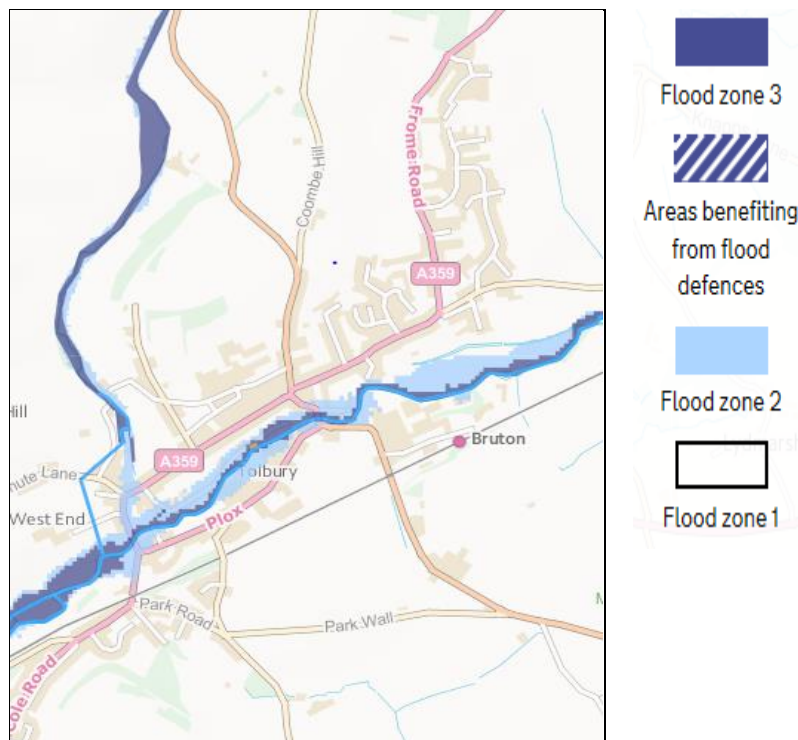
³ Peripheral Landscape Assessment, March 2008

⁴ Defined in the NPPF, (DCLG) 2012 – Annex 2

⁵ DCLG, 2012

7.3 Another environmental constraint to be taken into account in Bruton's growth is flood risk, shown below in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7.3: Bruton Flood Map



Source: Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning

7.4 One of the key environmental issues in Bruton is the risk of flooding along the course of the River Brue and its tributary Combe Brook. As a result of a severe flood in 1982 a retention dam was built about one and half miles east of the town, the dam acts as a flow regulator to control the total amount of water in the river at Church Bridge and now provides a 1 in a 100 year standard of protection to properties in the settlement.

7.5 The Combe Brook bypass culvert also reduces flood risk to a number of properties in the West End area and funding is already committed to improve surface water drainage at Cuckoo Hill. The EA suggests further studies to assess the Bruton flood alleviation scheme and to develop a surface water management scheme; as well as the preparation of a flood emergency plan for the settlement. Flood defences at Bruton may need to be raised in the future to provide an increased standard of protection, funded through development.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The HELAA⁶ identifies one site that would deliver further growth within five years, to the west of Frome Road. The results of the Resident Survey undertaken in 2016 suggest that other alternatives might be at Brewham Road or Coles Road. There was strong local support in the Survey to protect the Historic Centre, Jubilee Park and the Tolbury/ Duckpond area from development.

Key Issues

- 8.2 The key issues that will need to be taken into account in planning the future of Bruton include:
- Bruton's community is relatively young compared with the County as a whole, with high numbers of school children and proportionately fewer older people than the County as a whole.
 - Unemployment is low, with almost a third of the resident working population engaged in the education sector, there being four schools located within the town. Qualification levels are high compared with the County or England and Wales. The Manufacturing, Retail and Food and Accommodation Services sectors also employ large numbers of people in the town.
 - The town centre appears quite buoyant with a large numbers of specialist and independent retailers; and with vacancy rates not dissimilar to nationally.
 - The town is relatively small to have its own train station, with services to larger centres such as Yeovil, Bath and Bristol. There are also good links by bus to other centres in the District and Mendip.
 - There are opportunities for the town to expand, but these are limited by the risk of flooding.

⁶ Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2017