

South Somerset District Council

Settlement Profile: Crewkerne



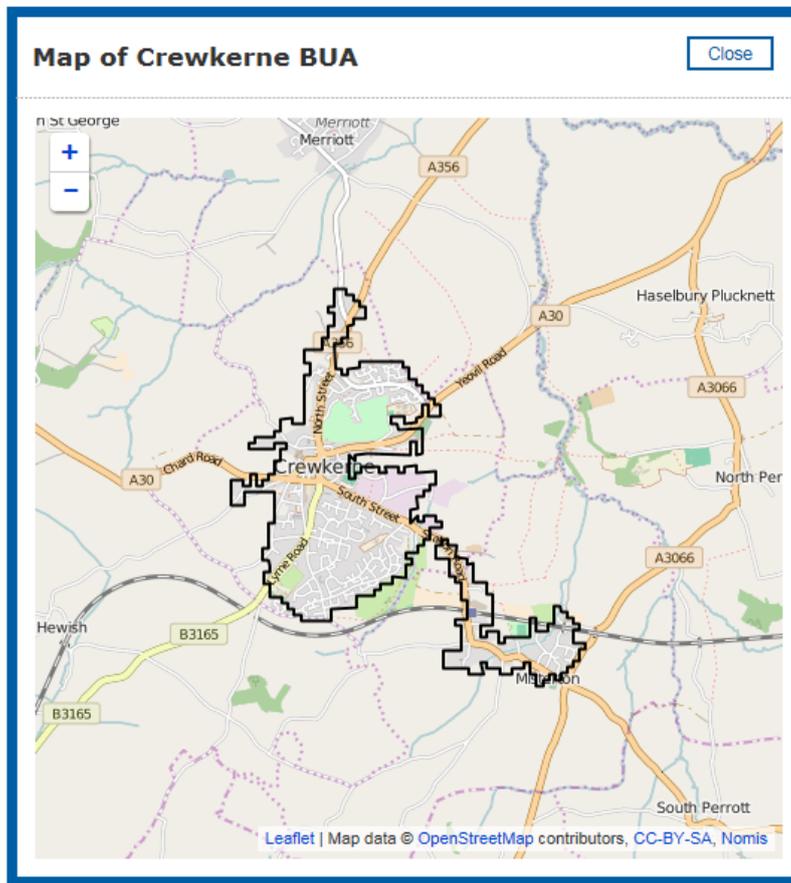
October 2017



1. INTRODUCTION

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

Figure 1.1: Map of Crewkerne BUA



Source: Partnership Intelligence Unit, Somerset County Council

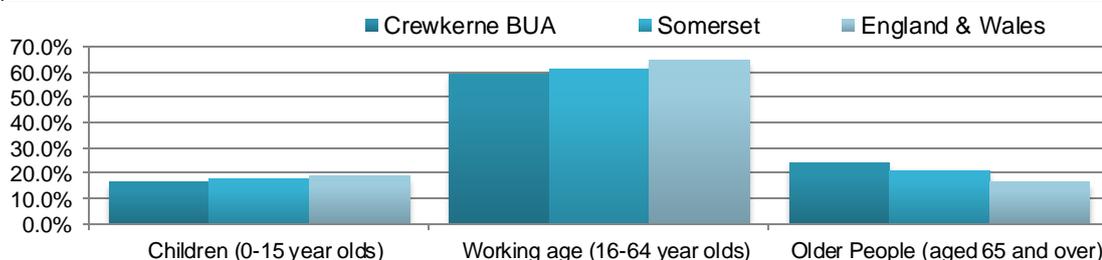
- 1.2. Crewkerne is a town located in the south-west of the district, close to the county boundary with Dorset. The A30 (London to Exeter) and the A356 (Martock to Dorchester) intersect in the historic and dense town centre. It is positioned 9 miles to the south-west of Yeovil and 7 miles to the east of Chard.
- 1.3. The Waterloo – Exeter railway line defines the southern edge of the settlement. The railway station on the edge of the settlement provides the residents with increased opportunity to commute sustainably to other settlements.
- 1.4. Crewkerne's primary functional relationship is with Chard, although it also relates to Yeovil, and supports a number of smaller satellite settlements such as Misterton, to the south-east.
- 1.5. At the time of writing, Crewkerne has not been designated as a neighbourhood area. It is not understood that any formal neighbourhood planning process has begun.

2. POPULATION

- 2.1 Figure 2.1 shows the age profile of Crewkerne’s resident population, assessing 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 Crewkerne’s Age Profile Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Crewkerne BUA	Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%
Total usually resident population	7,826	100.0	100.0
Children (0-15 year olds)	1,293	16.5	17.8
Working age (16-64 year olds)	4,639	59.3	61.1
Older People (aged 65 and over)	1,894	24.2	21.1



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

- 2.2 Crewkerne has a resident population of 7,826 people, with proportionately, fewer ‘Children’ and residents of ‘Working age’, and more ‘Older People’ than Somerset, and England & Wales.
- 2.3 It is likely that pressure is being placed on services for the elderly in Crewkerne due to its high proportion of ‘older people’.

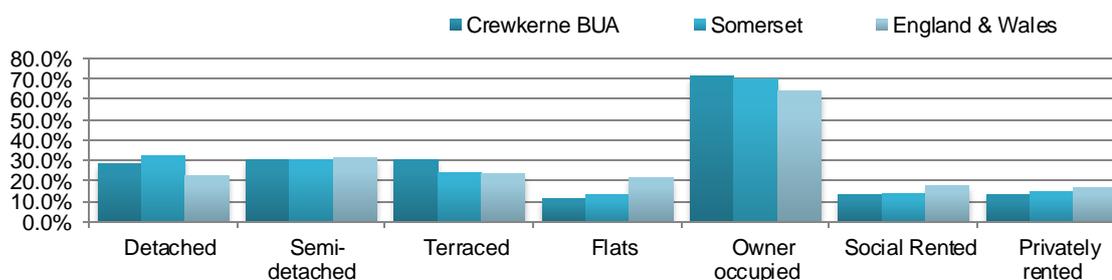
3. HOUSING

- 3.1 Policy SS5 sets Crewkerne a target of delivering 961 new dwellings by 31st March 2028. Between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2017, Crewkerne has delivered 355 dwellings and had 610 commitments¹, suggesting that it could exceed this target; this is subject to the deliverability of the Crewkerne Key Site.
- 3.2 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 Crewkerne, Somerset, and England & Wales.

¹ South Somerset District Council Monitoring Database

Figure 3.1: Crewkerne's Accommodation and Household Profiles Compared to Somerset, and England & Wales

	Crewkerne BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of dwellings	3,802	100.0	100.0	100.0
Detached	1,079	28.4	32.3	22.6
Semi-detached	1,143	30.1	30.4	31.1
Terraced	1,147	30.2	23.7	23.6
Flats	433	11.4	13.0	21.6
Tenure		%	%	%
Total number of households	3,585	100.0	100.0	100.0
Owner occupied	2,555	71.3	70.2	64.3
Social Rented	474	13.2	13.5	17.6
Privately rented	478	13.3	14.7	16.7
Average household size	2.2			



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

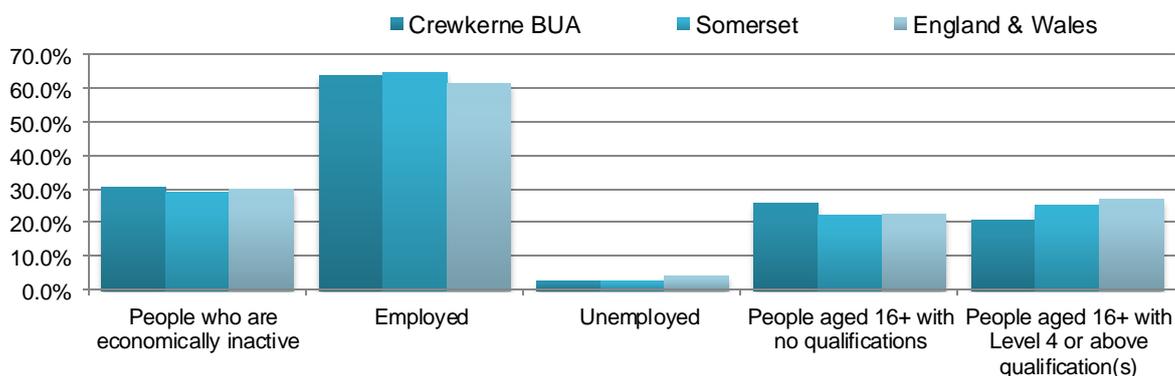
- 3.3 Figure 3.1 shows that Crewkerne has a relatively low provision of flats but a high proportion of terrace properties, balancing out the provision of properties in the more affordable end of the market. Overall, the range of accommodation is fairly balanced.
- 3.4 Crewkerne's proportion of private and social rented accommodation is lower than the county and national averages, with a higher proportion of dwellings being owner-occupied. Whilst the settlement maintains a fairly good variety of housing types, but would benefit from a greater proportion of privately and socially rented dwellings.
- 3.5 In terms of the delivery of housing, the success of the settlement against its housing target depends on the delivery of the Crewkerne Key Site, which has planning permission but has not yet commenced due to viability concerns.

4. ECONOMY

- 4.1 As Figure 4.1 shows, the proportion of economically inactive people in Crewkerne is above the county, and English & Welsh averages. On the other hand, the proportion of people employed is above, and proportion of unemployed is below, the national English & Welsh average. The settlement should then be considered to be in a moderately good position, economically, despite lower than average qualification levels.

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

	Crewkerne BUA		Somerset	England & Wales
		%	%	%
Total number of people aged 16 to 74	5,623	100.0	100.0	100.0
People who are economically inactive	1,734	30.8	29.2	30.3
Employed	3,608	64.2	65.2	61.9
Unemployed	166	3.0	3.0	4.4
People aged 16+ with no qualifications	1,703	26.1	22.4	22.7
People aged 16+ with Level 4 or above qualification(s)	1,381	21.1	25.6	27.2



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

- 4.2 The main employment area in Crewkerne is the Blacknell Lane Industrial Estate.
- 4.3 The SSDC Monitoring Data base shows that Crewkerne has delivered 3,513 sq. metres net floorspace and a net gain of 1.3 hectares since 2006/7. This is a modest amount of net additional land, and less than six times the amount of floorspace that Chard has delivered, illustrating that there is a very weak link between land and floorspace delivery.
- 4.4 Figure 4.2 shows the employment within the Crewkerne Ward (E36005243), specific to 18 industry groups.

Figure 4.2: Employment Provision in Crewkerne, 2015

Sector	Crewkerne		South Somerset
	No of Jobs	%	%
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	10	0.3	n/a
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	50	1.5	0.9
3 : Manufacturing (C)	800	24.3	20.3
4 : Construction (F)	125	3.8	5.5
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	75	2.3	(All G) 18.8
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	50	1.5	
7 : Retail (Part G)	400	12.2	
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	175	5.3	3.5
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	175	5.3	6.2
10 : Information & communication (J)	40	1.2	2
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	35	1.1	0.9
12 : Property (L)	40	1.2	1.4
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	225	6.8	7
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	125	3.8	5.5
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	30	0.9	2.3
16 : Education (P)	300	7.6	7.8
17 : Health (Q)	500	15.2	14.1
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	100	3.0	3.9
Total	3,500		

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%.

- 4.5 Of the industries, the primary employer within the settlement is manufacturing (24.3%); the second and third largest employers are Health (15.2%).and Retail (12.2%) respectively.
- 4.6 The settlement provides around 3,500 jobs, meaning that for every resident aged 16 to 74, the settlement provides around 60% of a job. In fact, the settlement provides a similar number of jobs than there are people employed in the settlement.

Town Centre

- 4.7 The attractive, historic centre meets the retail and service needs of the centre and its wider catchment. The centre has a mix of convenience and lower order comparison shopping and services. It provides a higher than average level of comparison units, though there are a relatively high number of charity shops and very few national multiples. The proportion of vacant units is below the national average, suggesting reasonable demand for units. There are a number of convenient and public car parks located in close proximity to the Town Centre.

- 4.8 On the other hand, the centre has a relatively poor higher order comparison offer, a low proportion of national multiple retailers, and a below average proportion of restaurants, public houses and bars. A conflict has also been identified in the Market Square area between vehicles and pedestrians which can detract from the overall shopping environment.
- 4.9 The settlement has a good range of services and facilities, though there are opportunities to improve the offer and the shopping experience.
- 4.10 As shown in Figure 4.3, the Study predicts that the town's retail capacity will grow, meaning that future provision of additional units may be likely to be necessary.

Figure 4.3: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Crewkerne

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034
Convenience	504	584	661
Comparison	94	223	354
Food and Beverage	15	44	73
Total	613	851	1,088

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

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.1 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan² (IDP) explains that Crewkerne's future is focused on the delivery of one large-scale mixed-use site, which is threatened by viability issues associated to the delivery of a new road. Short-term pressures on transport also require intervention. In the long term, consideration of education provision will be needed.
- 5.2 New housing does generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development. Particular priorities are new play areas and youth facilities.
- 5.3 Subject to growth and water quality objectives, Wessex Water may carry out a treatment works scheme at Crewkerne in the medium term. Development proposed in the Local Plan at Crewkerne is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to the other utilities, flood risk and drainage, telecommunications, waste and recycling, health care, or emergency services.
- 5.4 Crewkerne currently has two first schools: a middle school named Maiden Beech Academy; and Wadham School, which is a secondary school and sixth form. Depending on the delivery of the Key Site, a new first school will be required in the medium to longer term.
- 5.5 The settlement's facilities are commensurate with its role as a Market Town. It has a town hall, library, and churches, as well as a community hospital, health centre, and other health-related services. Its leisure facilities include a sports centre, swimming pool, and gym facilities.

² Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Update 2015/16) Part One – Spatial Summary (January 2016)

- 5.6 There are infrastructural issues which are resolvable and mostly relate to the Key Site. Funding for the necessary infrastructural improvements have been ring-fenced as part of the Key Site scheme, so these issues should be addressed before they pose a significant issue.

6. TRAVEL

- 6.1 How the residents of a settlement travel is an indication of its sustainability.
- 6.2 The settlement's public transport provision is shown in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1: Public Transport Provision

Buses		
Operator	Principal Destinations	Frequency (approx.)
South West Coaches	96/96A: Chard – Crewkerne Railway Station - Yeovil	Multiple Daily
First Wessex	40: Bridport – Beaminster – Crewkerne Railway Station – Yeovil	3 x daily
Somerset County Council	9 Merriott – Ilminster	2 x daily weekday mornings
Train Services		
Operator	Service	Frequency (approx.)
South Western Railway	London Waterloo to Exeter via Basingstoke, Andover, Salisbury, Gillingham, Templecombe, Sherborne, Crewkerne, Axminster & Honiton	Hourly

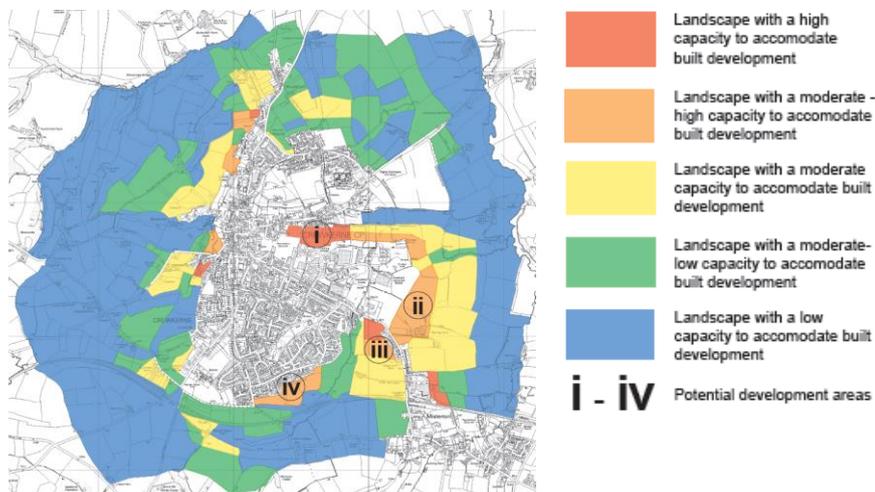
- 6.3 Despite its adjacent railway station, Crewkerne is under-served by its public transport provision. Though usage of the station has increased 50% over the last 10 years³, it has retained poor accessibility and limited parking which make it difficult to use. In addition, given its status as a Primary Market Town, Crewkerne's bus services are quite limited.
- 6.4 Overall, Crewkerne would benefit from improved bus services as well as improved accessibility and parking at the railway station.

³ Infrastructure Delivery Plan

7. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The Peripheral Landscape Study⁴ shows that, from a landscape standpoint, there is land capable of accommodating growth (Figure 7.1)

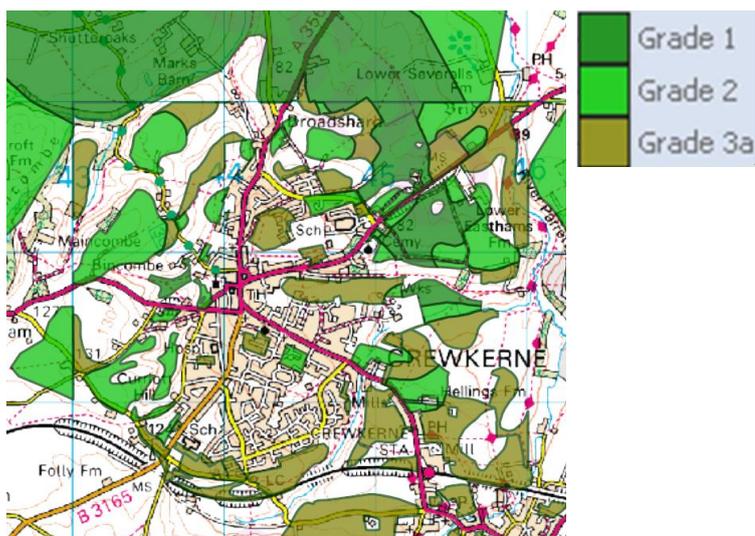
Figure 7.1: Crewkerne Landscape Capacity



Source: Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)

- 7.2 Whilst landscape potential is important, other factors and constraints are also necessary to understanding the growth potential of the settlement.
- 7.3 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land (Grades 1, 2 & 3a)⁵, is a key environmental constraint, according to the NPPF⁶. Loss of BMV will have to be considered as part of the planning balance for future growth. As Figure 7.2 shows, there are varying sized pockets of BMV located in 360 degrees around the settlement.

Figure 7.2: BMV Land around Crewkerne



Source: WebMap, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Data

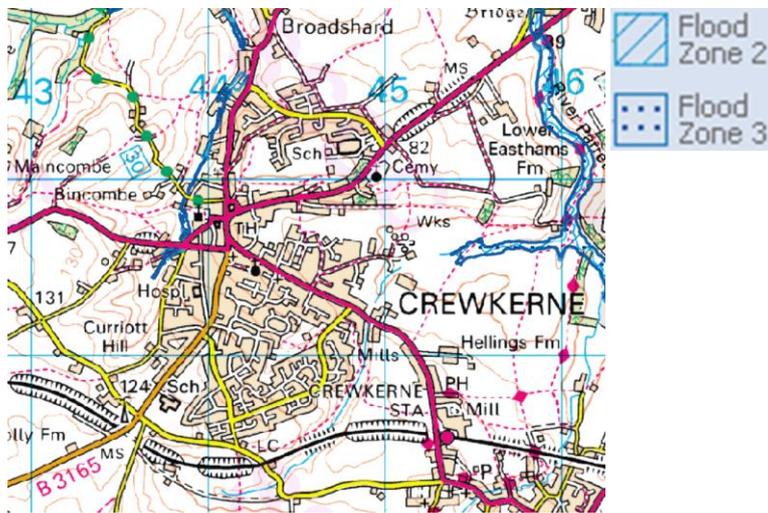
⁴ Peripheral Landscape Assessment, March 2008: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base/district-wide-documents/peripheral-landscape-studies/>

⁵ Defined in the NPPF, (DCLG) 2012 – Annex 2

⁶ DCLG, 2012

7.4 Another environmental constraint for Crewkerne's growth is flood risk, shown below in Figure 7.3

Figure 7.3: Crewkerne Flood Map (Flood Zones 2 and 3)



Source: Environment Agency data on WebMap

7.5 The map shows a thin silver of Flood Zone 2 and 3 land on the north-west edge of the settlement and some Flood Zone 3 land detached to the east. The flood risk does not pose a significant constraint to the growth of the settlement.

7.6 There are a few county wildlife sites one of which is a nature reserve. They are primarily located to the south and south-east of the settlement, but also scattered elsewhere. There is also a county geological site on Lyewater, to the west of the town. These sites do not present a significant constraint to the expansion of the town.

7.7 There are five archaeological sites either in or on the periphery of the town. The archaeological sites are unlikely to significantly constrain the growth of the town.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 Crewkerne's ability to accommodate future growth is considered to be fairly strong, and may offer opportunities to improve public transport provision.

Key Issues

8.2 The key issues that will need to be taken into account in planning the future of Crewkerne are:

- The delivery of the Crewkerne Key Site and associated infrastructure
- Limited public transport provision and accessibility