



Dorset 2011 Census Story

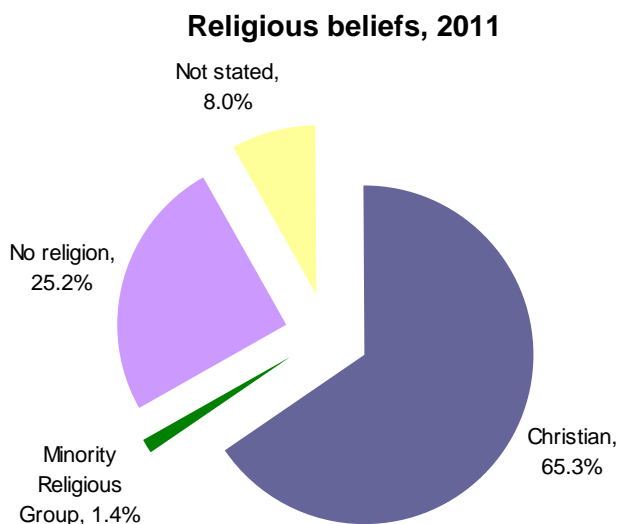
Religion in Dorset: a picture of the county's religious beliefs

Despite falling numbers Christianity remains the largest religion in Dorset in 2011. Meanwhile a quarter of the population now say they have no religion.

In the 2011 Census, Christianity was the largest religion in Dorset, with 269,737 people (65.3 % of the population). The second largest religious group were Muslims with 1,318 people (0.3 % of the population). The proportions of Christians are higher in Dorset, when compared to the national figure for England and Wales where 59% are classified as Christian.



104,221 people, around a quarter of the population in Dorset, reported they have no religion in 2011. This is a very similar proportion to that recorded nationally.



The religion question was the only voluntary question on the 2011 census and 8.0 % of people chose not to answer.

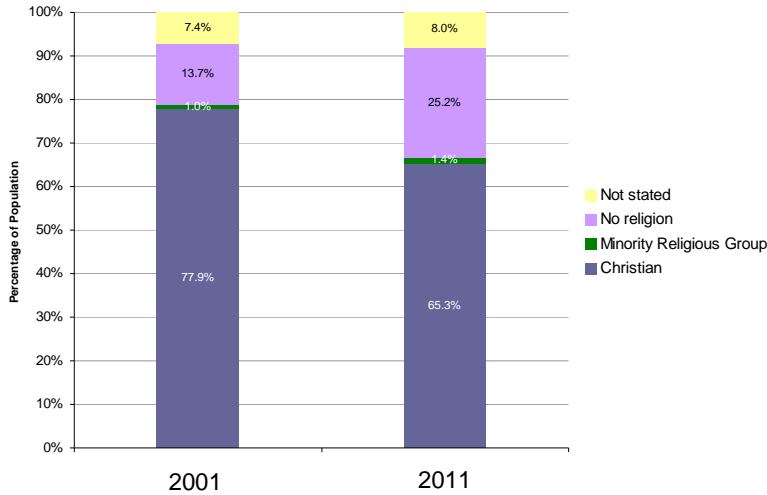
Between the Censuses of 2001 and 2011 there has been a decrease in people who identify as Christian (from 77.8 % to 65.3 %) and an increase in those reporting no religion (from 13.7% to 25.2 %). There has also been a small increase in the proportion of other religions from 1% in 2001 to 1.4% in 2011.

Interestingly, those who put 'no religion' (Jedi) outnumbered all of the other main religious groups bar Christian in Dorset with 0.4% of the population classifying themselves as such, although the power of the force has fallen somewhat since its height in 2001.



In 2011, Weymouth & Portland was the most 'diverse' area with the highest proportion of people identifying themselves as Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Jewish (1.2%) though this is small compared to the national figure for England and Wales which is recorded as 8.0%. Christchurch and East Dorset had the highest proportion of Christians and Weymouth & Portland had the highest proportion of people reporting no religion (28.7%).

Change in religious affiliation, 2001—2011

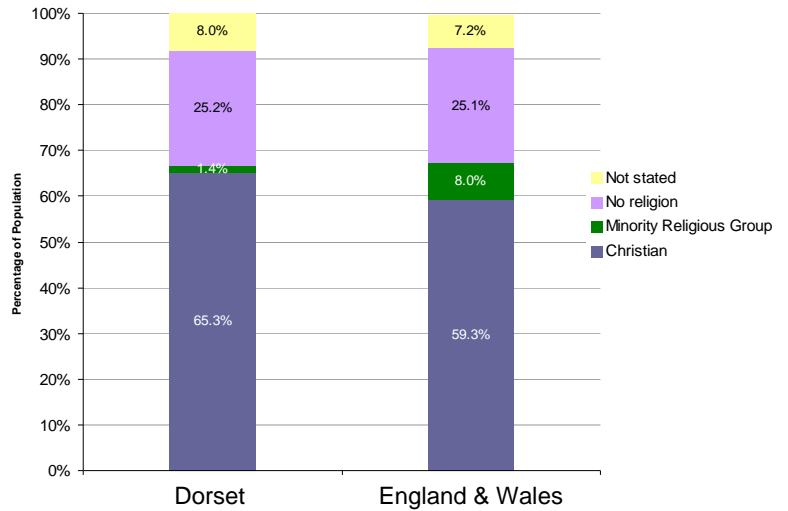


There are small areas of the county with relatively high proportions of people from minority religions. Tarrant Launceston and Tarrant Monkton for example have 7% and 4% of the population who are Hindu and 3% and 2% who are Buddhist. This reflects the significant Ghurkha community based in and around Blandford Camp. In general though the proportions of people identifying themselves as Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Jewish remains very low in Dorset.

Rampisham in West Dorset with 38% and Melcombe Regis in Weymouth with 35% have the highest proportions of people who have no religion in the county. Burstock in West Dorset with 82% and Ryme Intrensica in West Dorset with 81% have the highest proportions of people who have a religious belief.



Census 2011 religion



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 Source: 2001 & 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics