

WATAG

Western Area Transport Action Group

Improving Public Transport in West Dorset

Presented by: Nick Hurrell - WATAG



Our Objectives

- **Make Public Transport more attractive**
- **Reduce reliance on private cars**

- **Where do we start?**
 - Understand travel needs – ask the public !

- **Our current thinking...**
 - Agree minimum frequencies on Key Routes
 - Longer operating hours - early morning to mid /late evening
 - Councils/Bus Operators to develop Transport “hubs” to provide better local connectivity (local buses, cycle paths, etc)
 - Better integration with Rail timetables (Axminster, Crewkerne, Dorchester stations)



Where are we now?

Bus

- Councils/Bus Operators – very little promotion of services
- Timetables are difficult to access (unlike Devon)
- Usage - Very little data available

Train

- Services well publicised – timekeeping unreliable and perceived as expensive
- Bus connectivity patchy

Active Travel (Cycling, Walking)

- Needs a Strategy

Local Transport Plan (LTP 4) – good but needs more definition

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Hot News..... Dorset Council discussing Public Transport and Active Travel tonight !



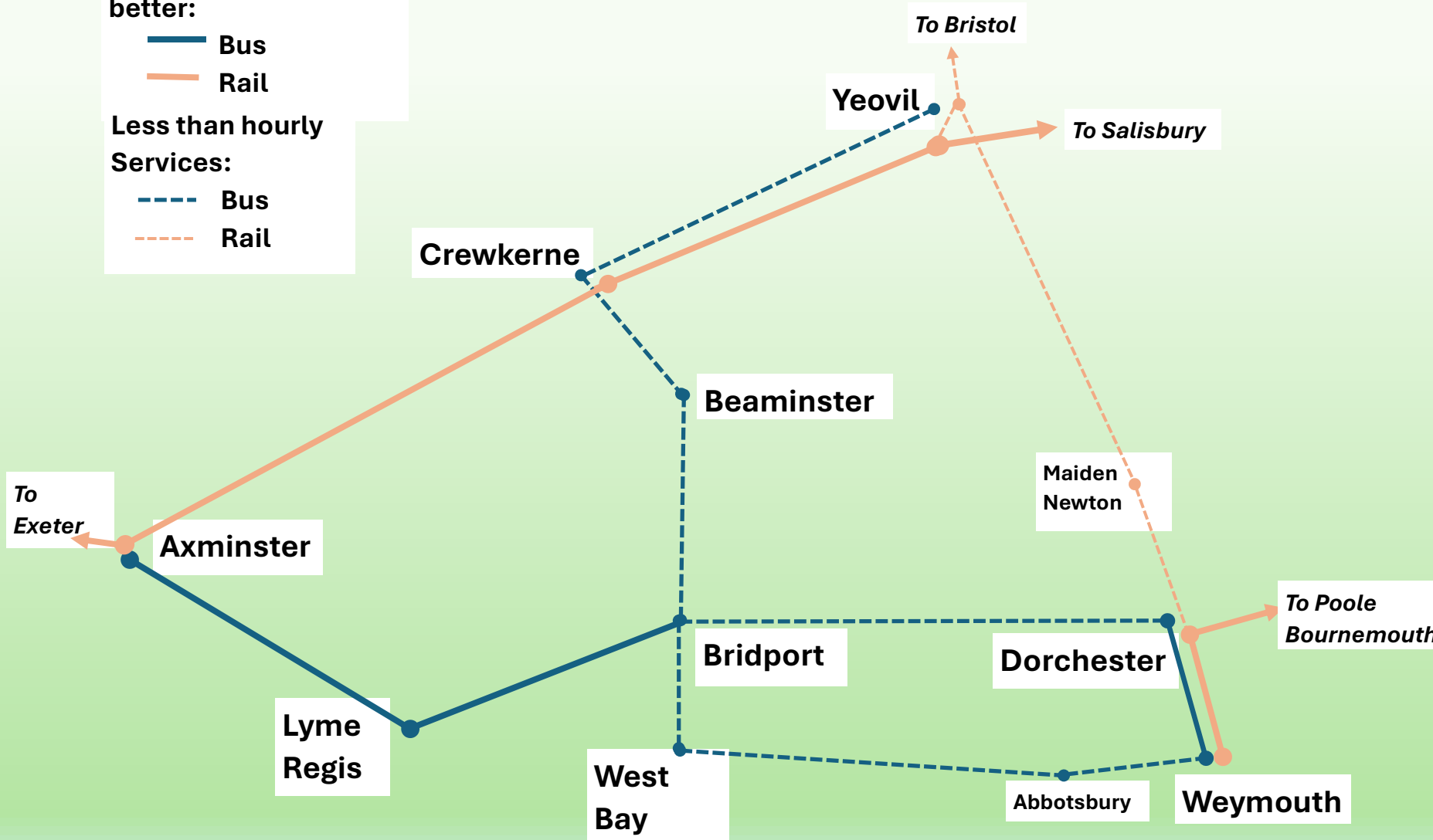
Key Routes identified

Hourly Services or better:

- Bus
- Rail

Less than hourly Services:

- - - Bus
- - - Rail



How do Dorset's buses compare?

Dorset	
Route	Services per day (weekdays)
Bridport – Dorchester (13 Miles)	8
Bridport – Lyme Regis / Axminster	13
Bridport – Crewkerne/ Yeovil	4

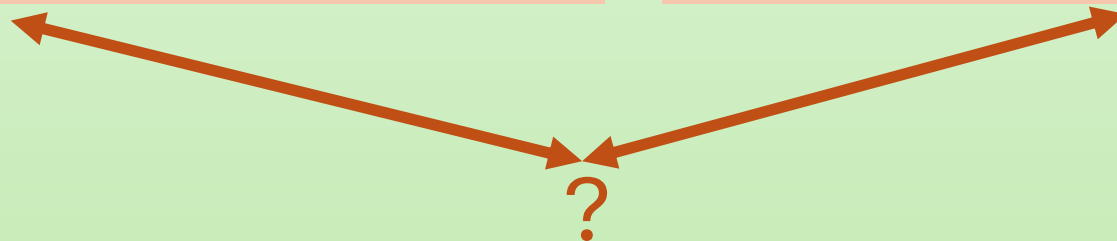
Devon	
Route	Services per day (weekdays)
Sidmouth – Exeter (13 Miles)	29

Population - Bridport 21,000

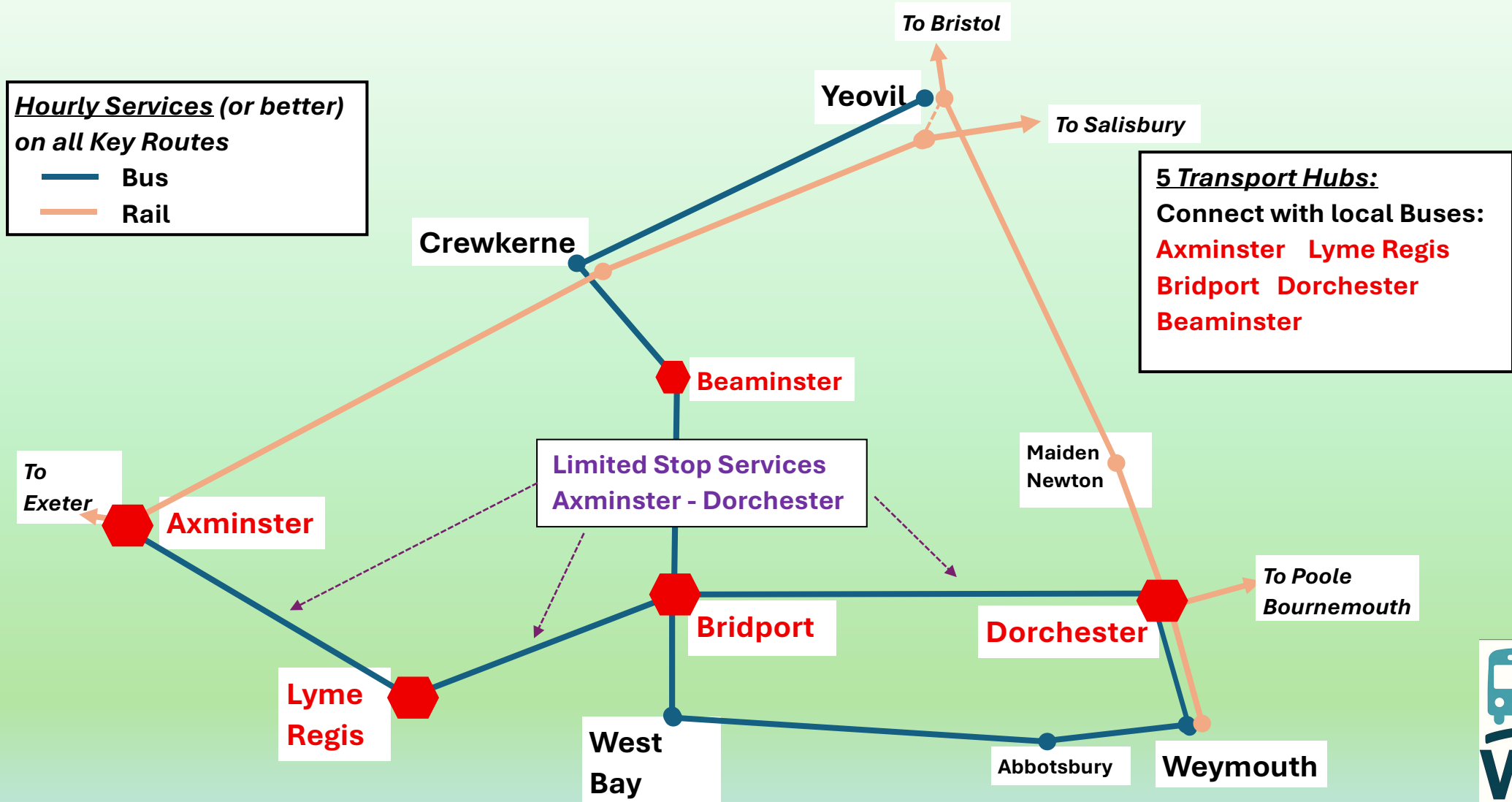
Population: Sidmouth 13,000

Govt Revenue Funding: 2026-29: £6.7m

Govt Revenue Funding: 2026-29 £25.6m



Potential Service Improvements



What we will do

- Develop an “Aspirational” Transport Plan – Public Consultation
 - Does it meet people’s needs?
 - Will it encourage a move towards public transport?
- Agree strategy with local Transport Action Groups
- Consult with local Councils – demonstrate value
- Lobby Councils/Government to increase bus funding and rail capacity

.....Be Realistic !



Next Steps... We need your help

Resource

- Survey local people – gather evidence
- Social Media campaign
- Lobby MP's for support

Improve communication – new WATAG website: www.watag.org.uk

Email: watag@Hotmail.co.uk

*.... Provide evidence for better funding
Dorset: £6.7m vs Devon: £25.6m*





WATAG

**Promoting Public Transport and
Active Travel in West Dorset**