

SWEDBAG FINAL REPORT

“Who would think that any county in mainland England could be so poorly served?”

Oliver Letwin MP



SWEDBAG Summary of survey findings

- Some 4,000 forms distributed to households - 3,912 completed
- 97% of those who returned questionnaires were unhappy

Local News / Events Coverage

- 95% want local news/events coverage on both Radio & TV!

Television

- Amazingly 21.5% are having problems with analogue TV
- 70% can't get, or are having problems getting, some or all Freeview digital TV channels
- Only 16% actually have Freeview while 21% have Sky = 37% (Ofcom says UK average for digital television coverage is 65.9%)
- Of the 16% who have Freeview, half of those live in the Sherborne area!
- 43% have reported that TV reception has worsened in the last two years
- 77% have external TV aerials of which 80% are under 10 years old

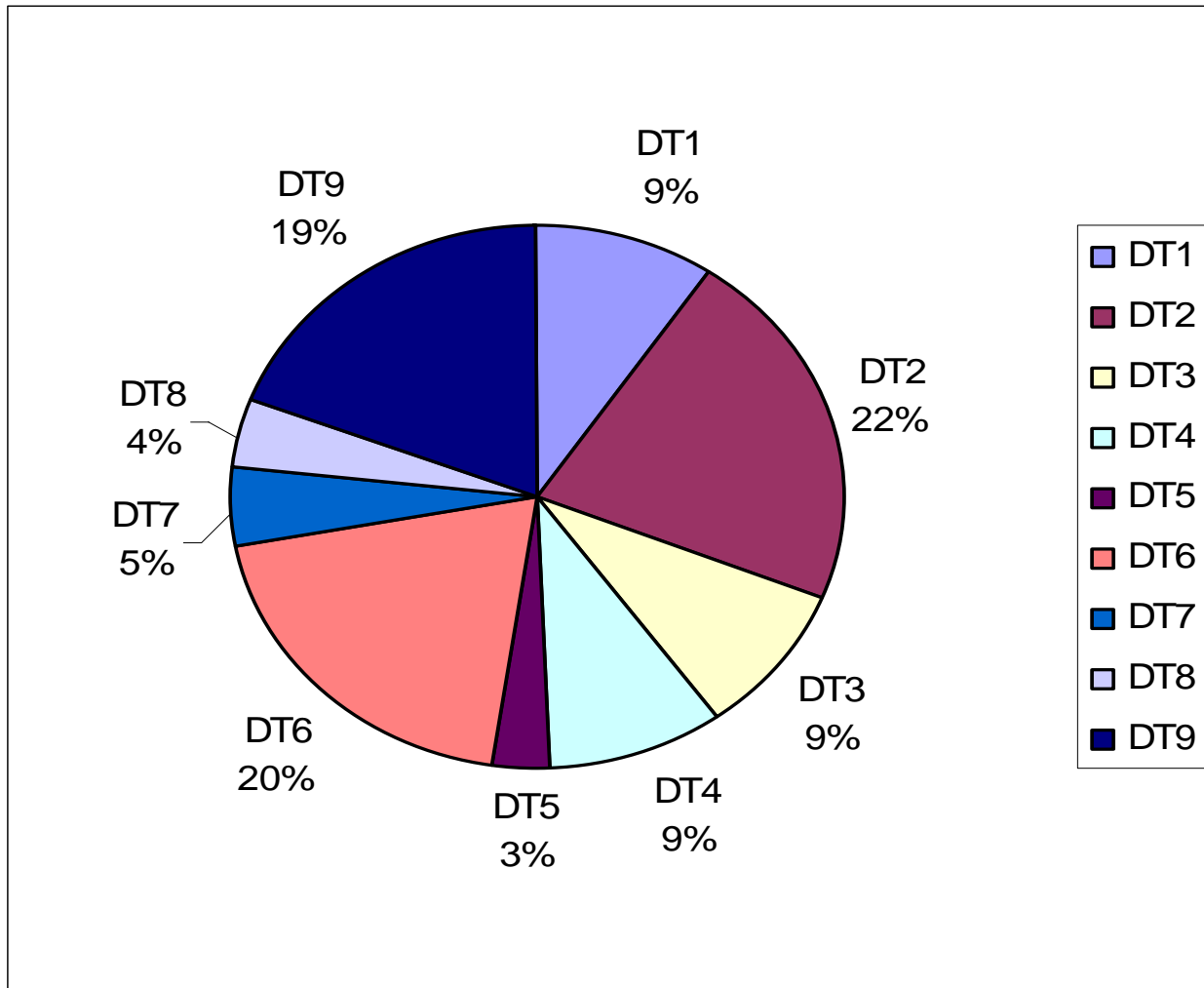
Radio

- 21.5% have problems getting FM radio including BBC Radio 4
- 30% can't get (what is supposed to be) our local BBC radio station - Radio Solent (103.8Mhz)
- 46% can't get, or are having problems receiving, digital radio (DAB)
- Only 13% have DAB, and of these 39% are having problems!
- Just 18% have external Radio aerials

Survey Response By Postcode

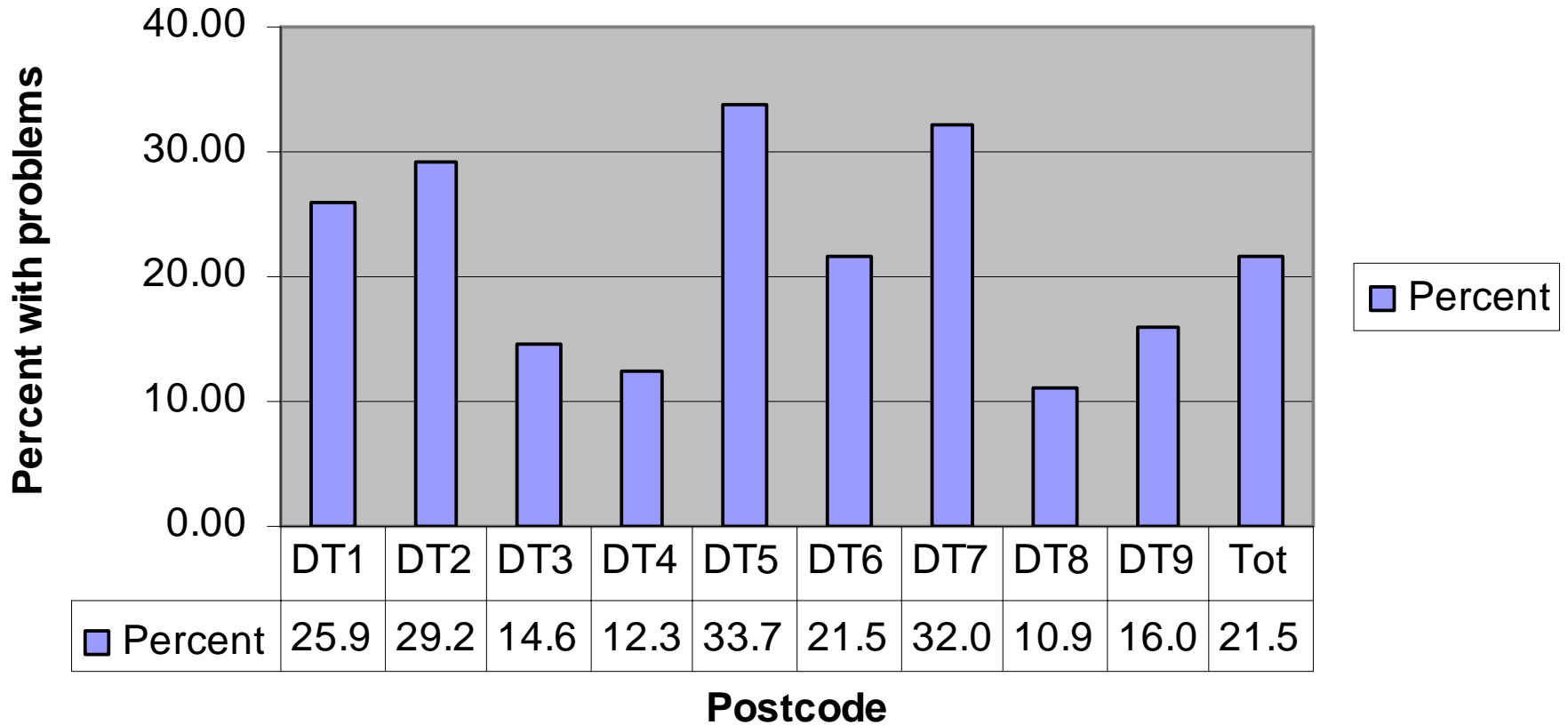
DT1	Dorchester	365
DT2	Dorchester Villages N	841
DT3	Rural Weymouth	353
DT4	Weymouth	354
DT5	Portland	113
DT6	Bridport	769
DT7	Lyme Regis	185
DT8	Beaminster	166
DT9	Sherborne	743
Other	Edges of S&W Dorset	15
Total		3904

Response By Postcode



Problems BBC1 BBC2 ITV1 Ch

BBC1-CH4

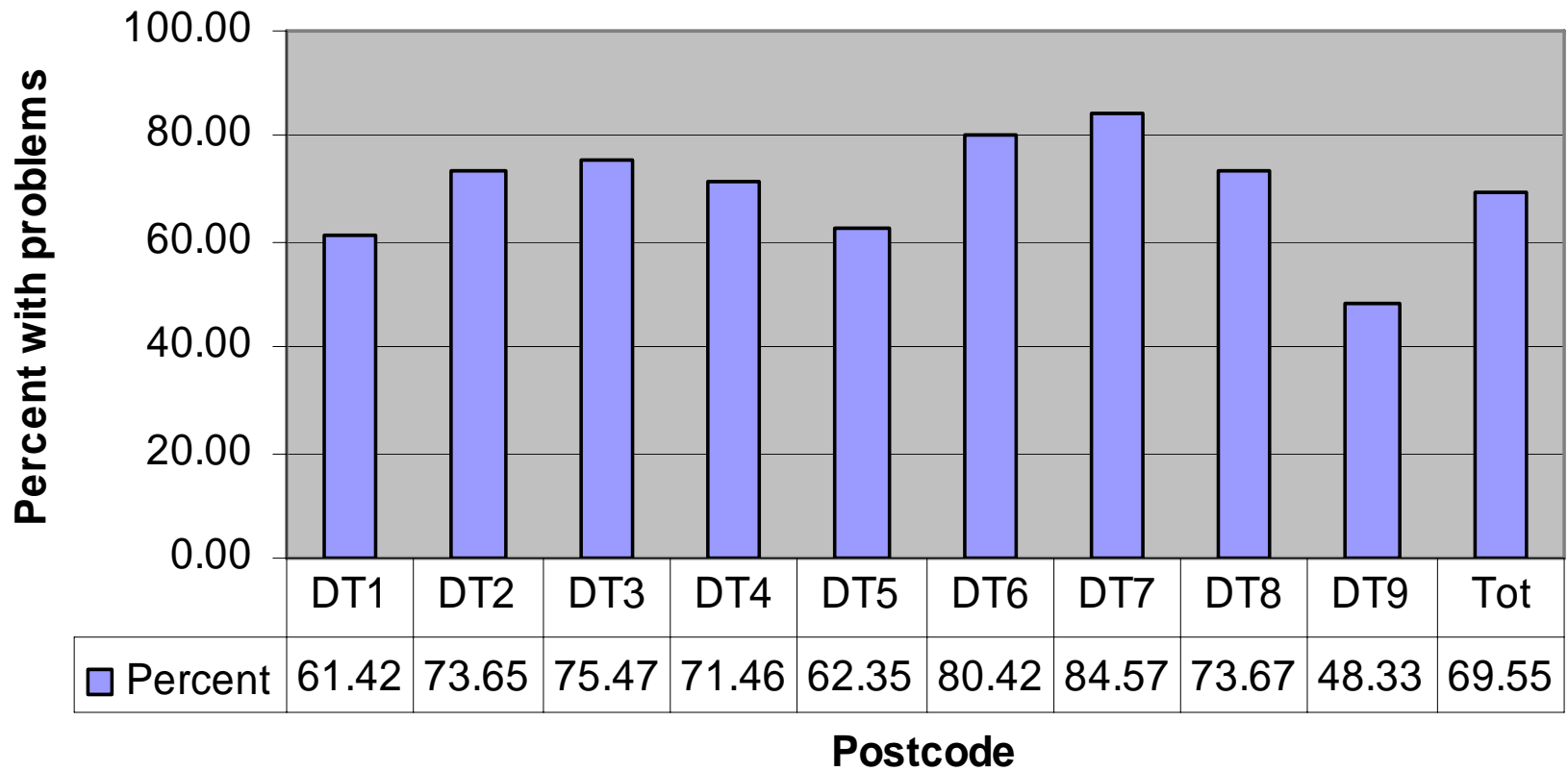


Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Analogue TV

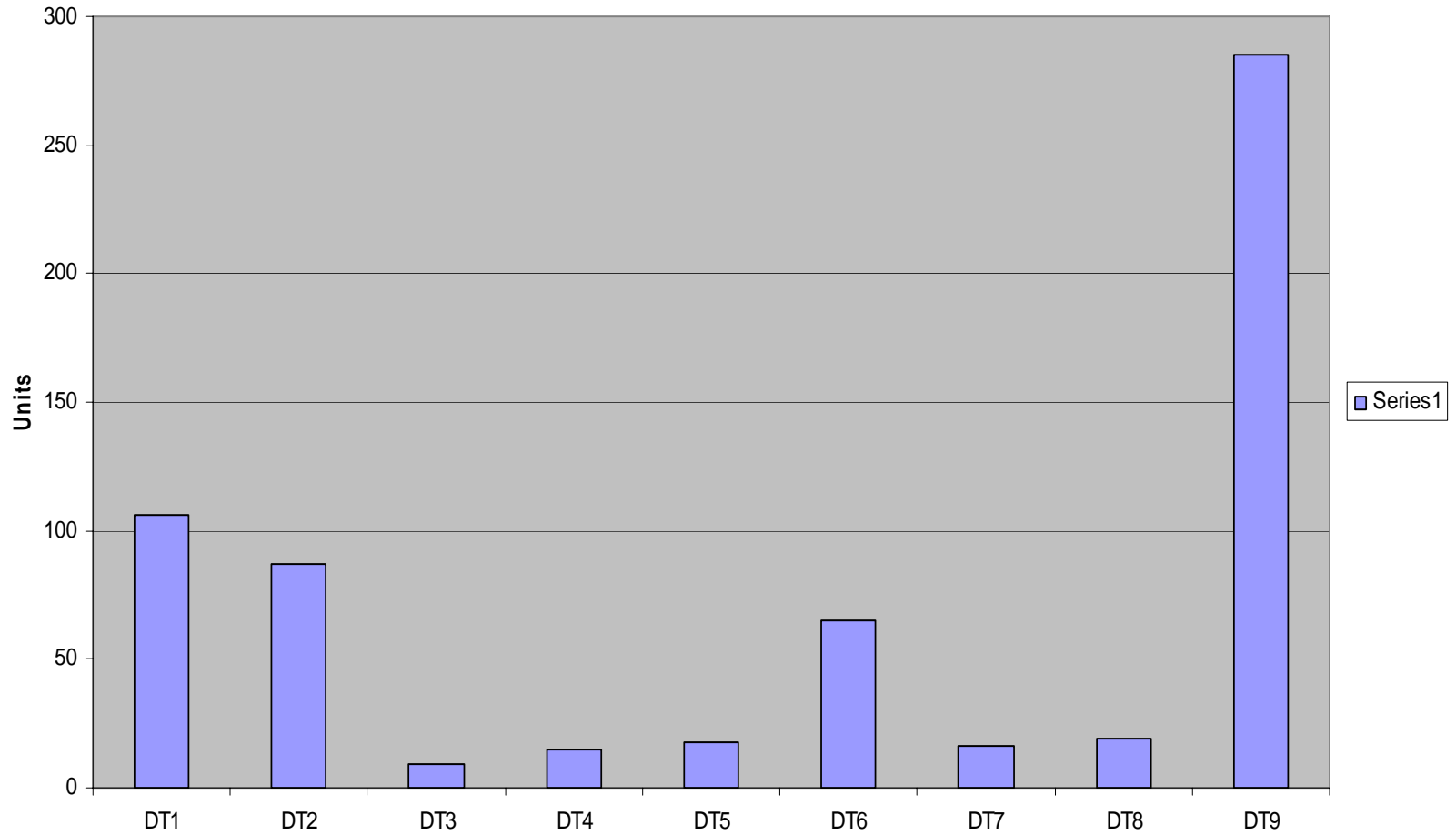
- Considering this is 2005, the reception is abysmal
- BBC letter from Bristol said 'tough luck - go digital!'
- Interference from France whenever weather conditions are "good" during evenings.
Worst reception we have ever experienced having resided in Yorkshire, Essex & Lancashire!
- Even with booster TV poor and on clear days unwatchable. No digital in area.
- Analogue reception varies enormously depending on atmospheric conditions.
Reception on BBC1 has been unacceptable for the 12 years that we have lived in Cerne Abbas despite new equipment.
- I have a booster but still foreign TV interference. Lot of the time channels fuzzy and unwatchable
- TV reception better in Loders than Bradpole. Disgraceful that Dorset cannot get full analogue service.

Problems with Freeview

CH5,BBC3,BBC4,ITV2



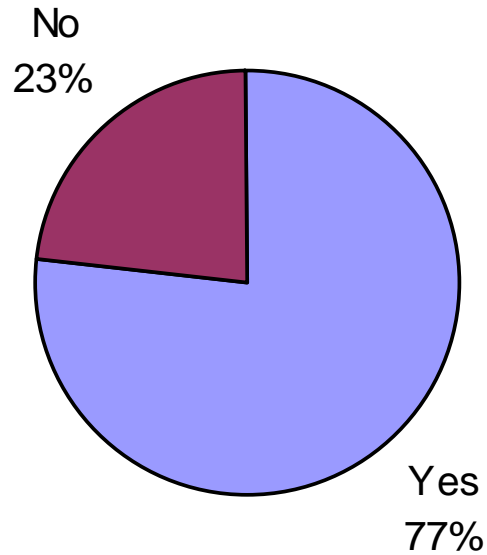
Those with Freeview



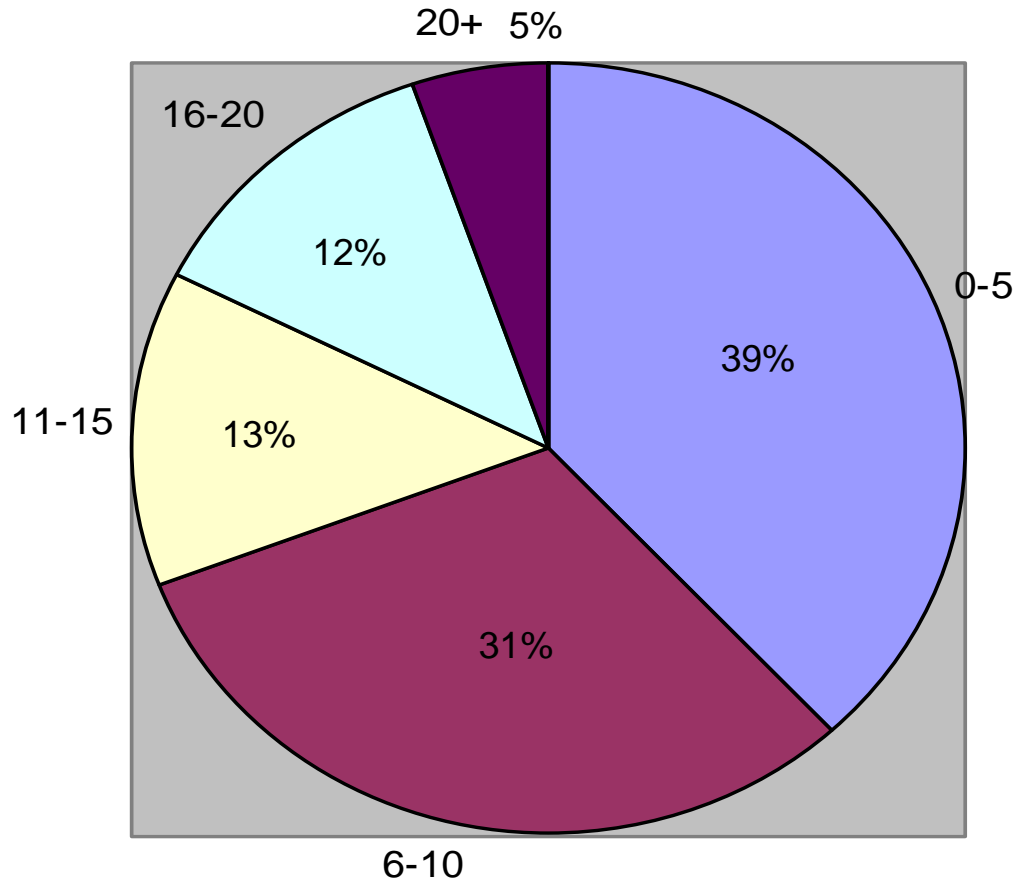
Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Digital TV

- As an ex-BBC engineer, I am appalled by awful terrestrial analogue TV reception. Freeview didn't work! So had Sky.
- I fully support WEDBAG in campaigning for full reception of ALL digital TV & Radio programmes. It is a disgrace that West Dorset is so badly served. We DEMAND full digital reception
- In the technological age we now live in, it is farcical that West Dorset isn't served as well as most other areas in the UK.
- TV reception here is terrible. We often have to switch off Freeview & suffer appalling pictures from terrestrial.
- Lyme Regis. Terrestrial Channel 5 is non existent. DAB is 'fringe' and so is Freeview.
- We live in a Grade 2 listed building so cannot have a dish aerial under present planning law.
- Analogue TV should not be switched off unless and until digital cover is available to all
- I am increasingly irritated by BBC advert for services & facilities not available in this area!!
- I have been a TV service engineer in West Dorset/East Devon for 43 years and the coverage of TV in Lyme Regis has always been very poor.

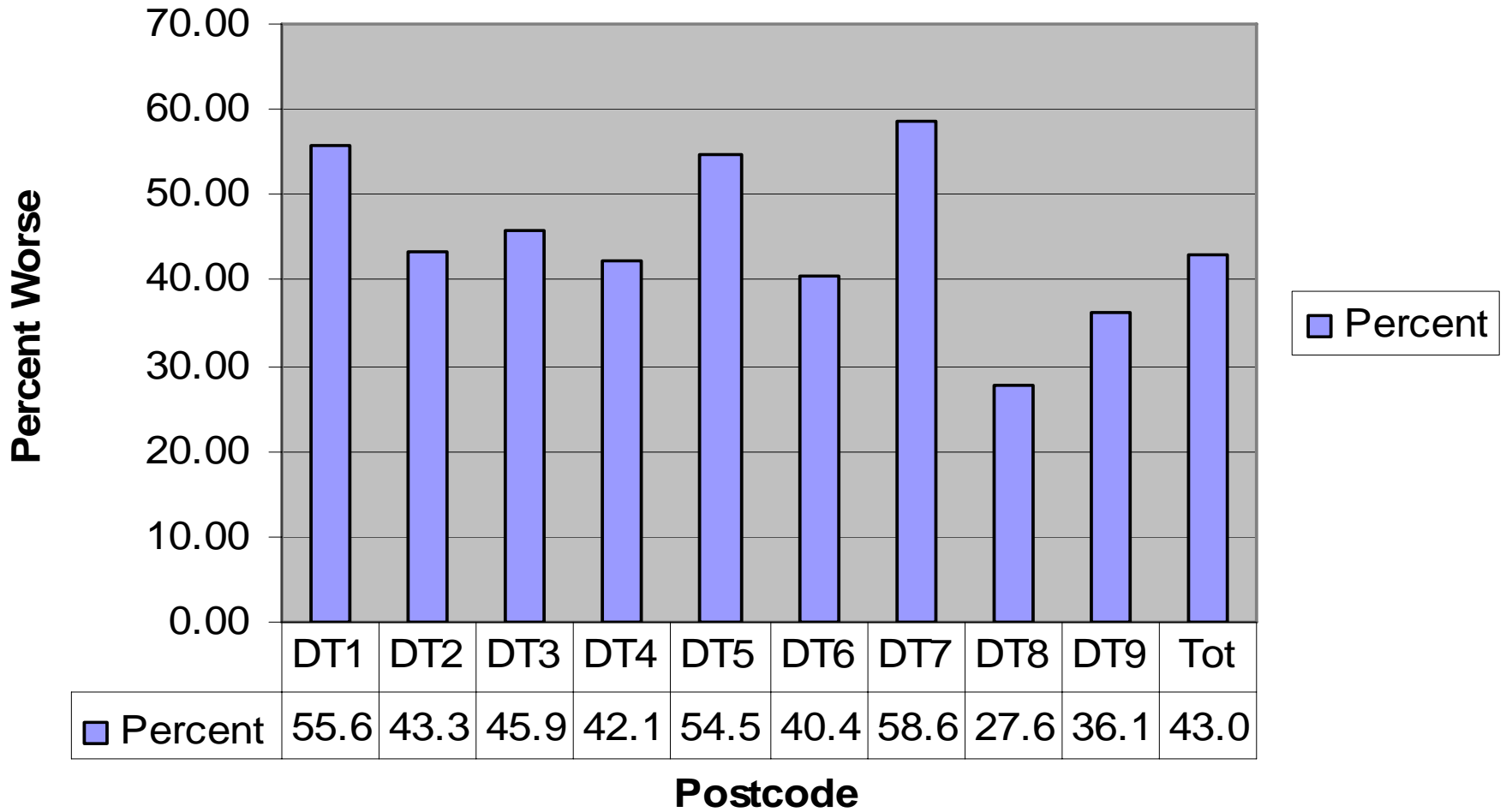
External TV Aerial



Aerial Age in Years

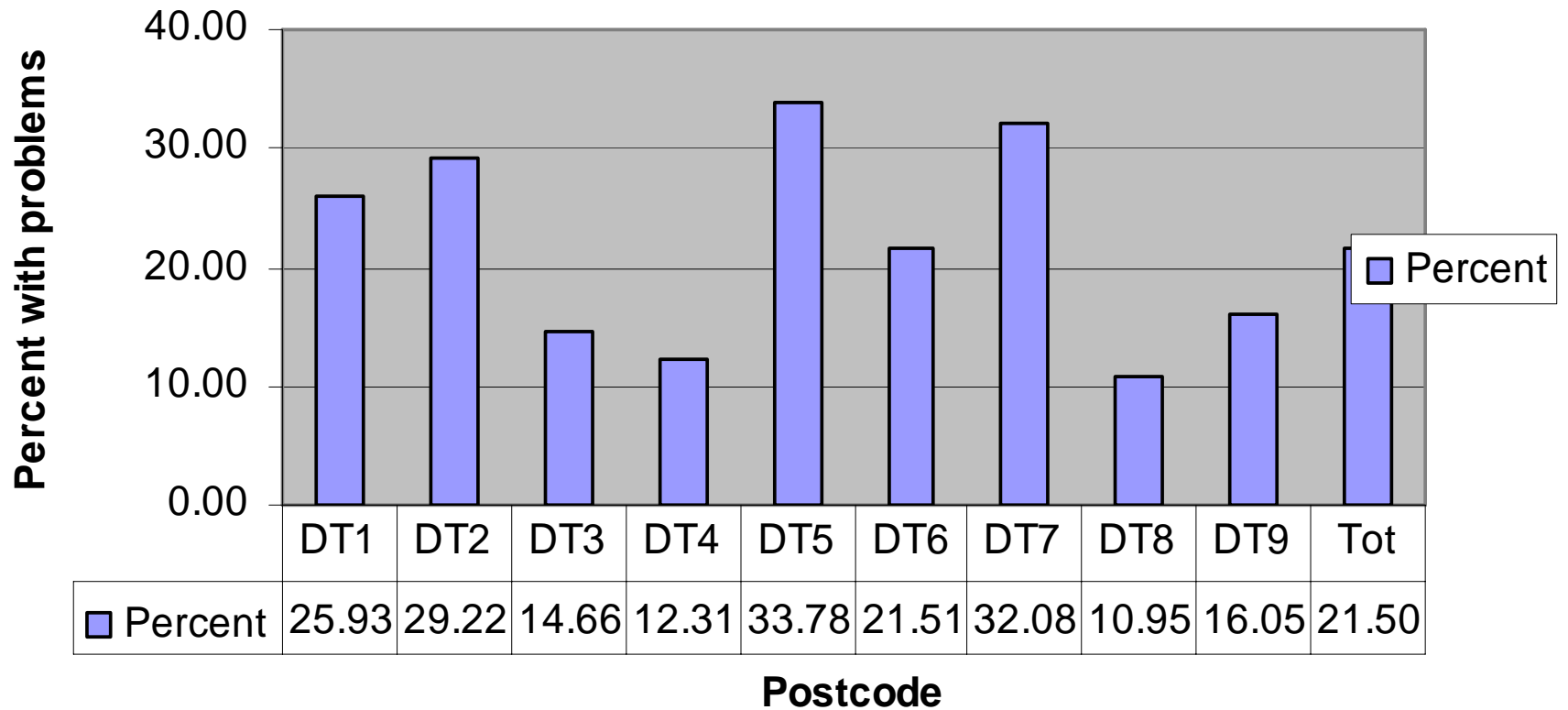


TV Reception worse over last 2 years



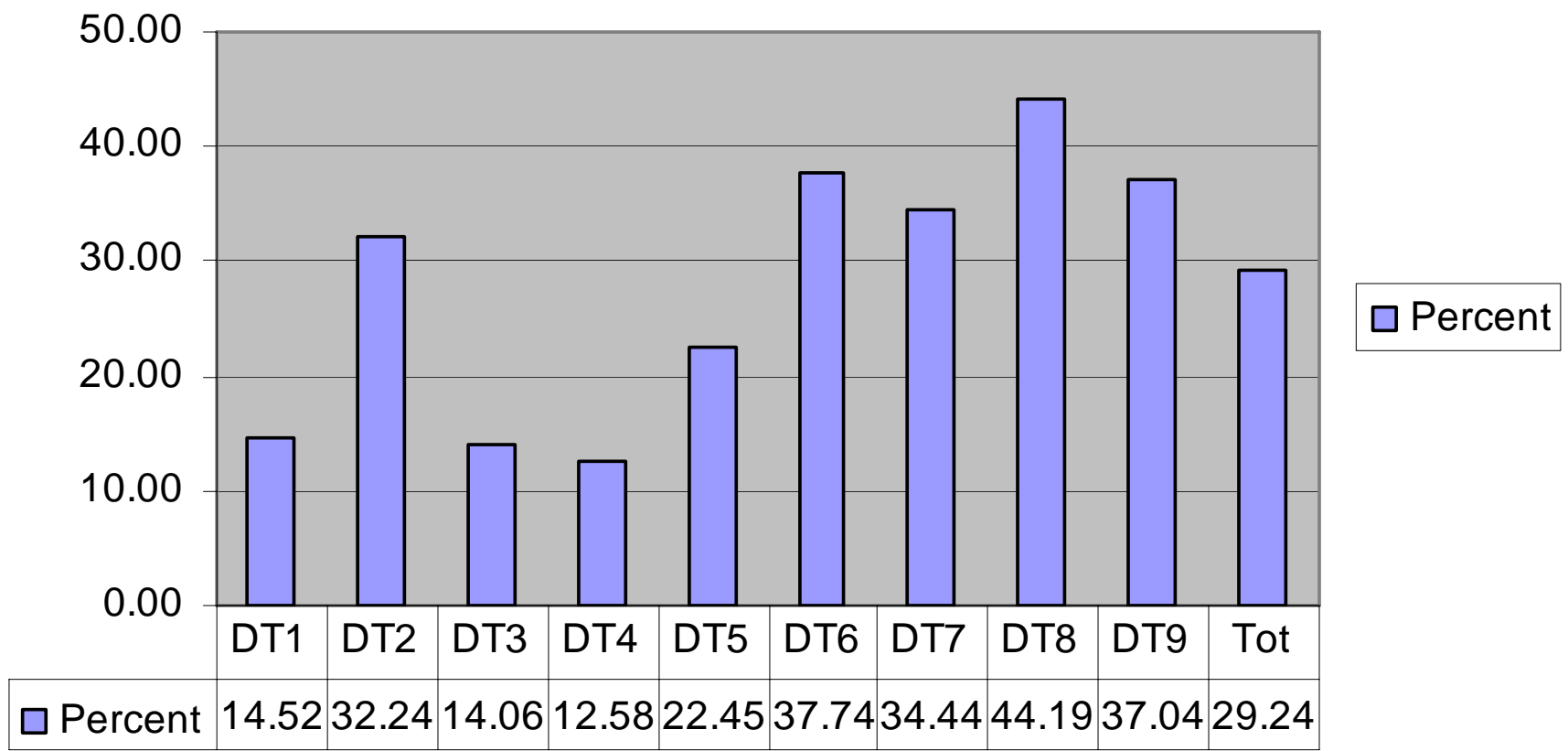
Problems with FM Radio

FM Radio



Problems with Radio Solent

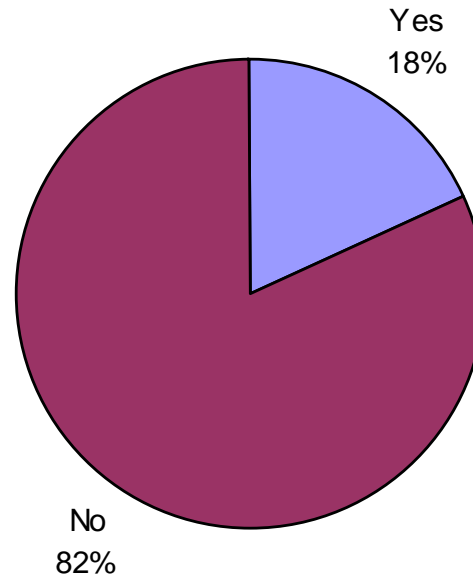
BBC Radio Solent



Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - FM Radio

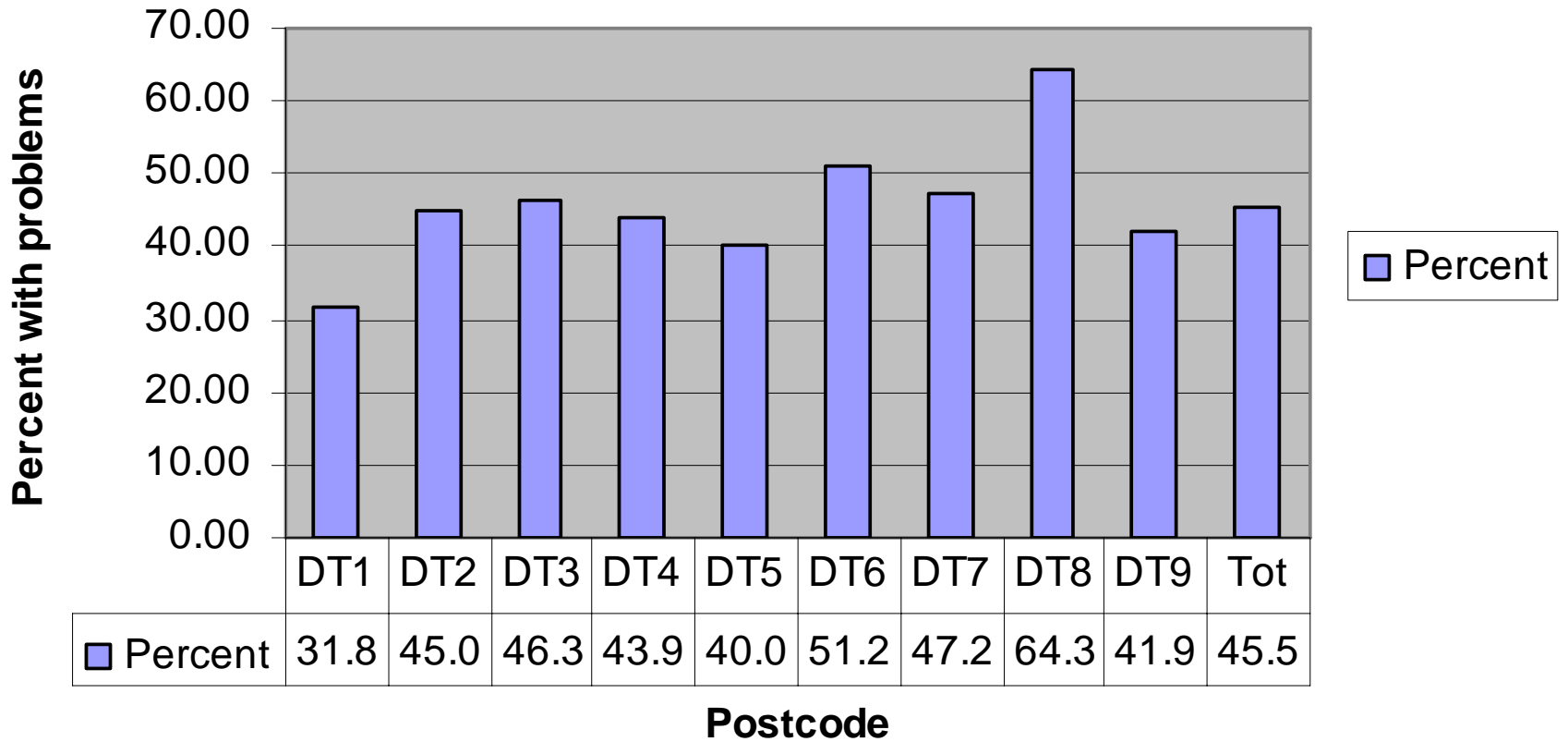
- At weekends Radio 4 is blanked out by French stations
- Car radio reception is very poor from Bridport & further west
- Radio 4 reception erratic & subject to interference.
- FM radio is the dodgiest, most subject to fluctuation etc. even though I have a special external FM aerial.
- Interference on R4 is sometimes unbearable, and occasionally we get breakthrough in what appears to be Spanish.

External FM Aerial



Problems with Digital Radio

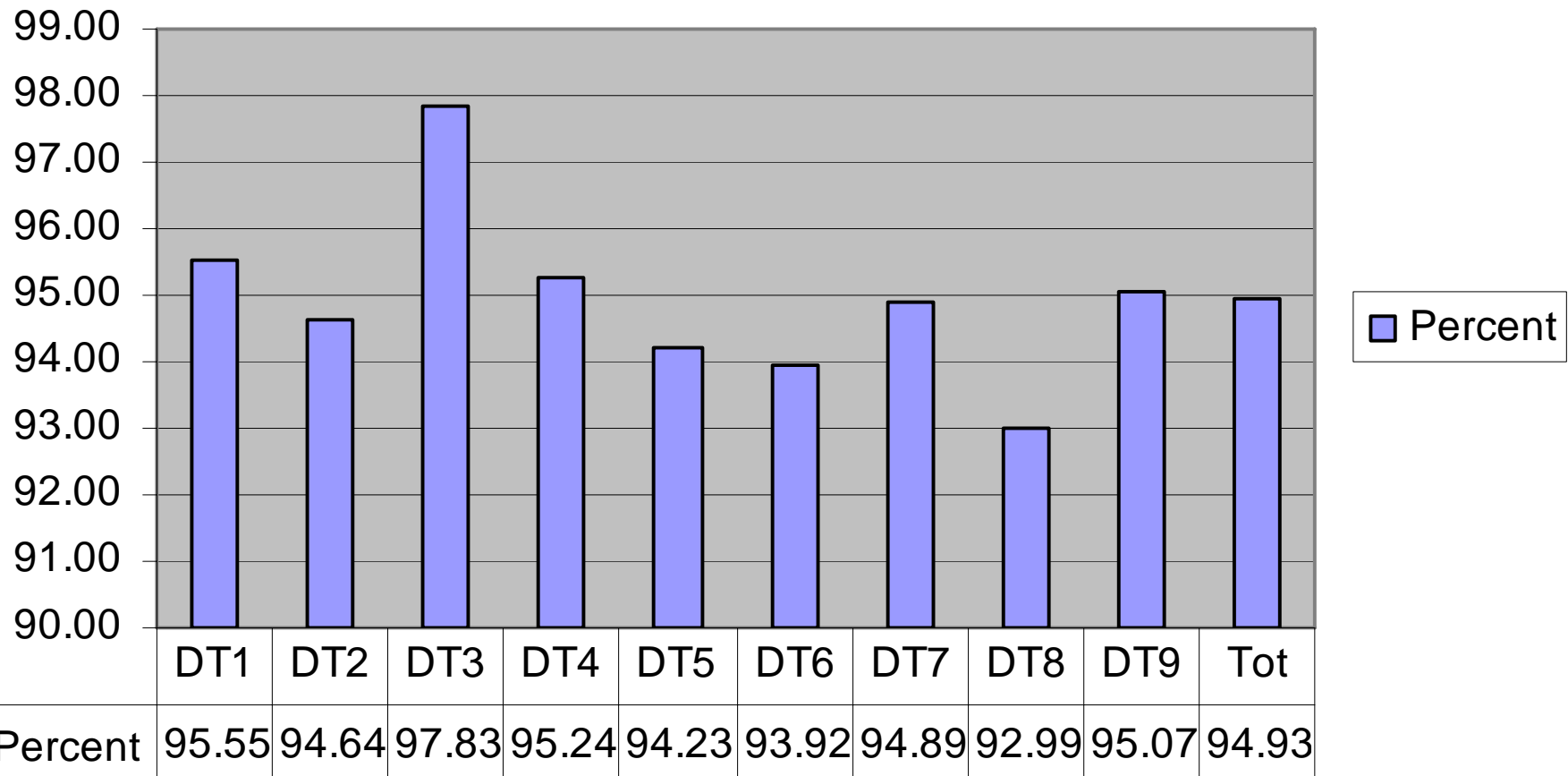
Digital Radio



Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - DAB

- DAB reception is unacceptable. Classic FM is poor and not available on DAB
- DAB 'no service available' is all you get. I receive a better signal from Radio Wales than Radio Devon!
- Visitors amazed at inability to receive digital radio
- DAB reception is fine upstairs if I hold the radio half way up the window.
- We have a digital radio but cannot receive DAB.

Want dedicated coverage of news and events in Dorset



Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Local TV & news / events coverage

- Coverage of news or local documentary in West Dorset is pathetic!
- In the eyes of ITV and BBC, West Dorset does not exist.
- Big events in Dorset not worthy of mention e.g. Sherborne Country Fair, Dorset County Museum etc.
- Local news rarely mentions West Dorset area (between Dorchester and Devon border).
- It is ridiculous & unacceptable that we hear news of Bristol & Forest of Dean but no local news. We want local news ASAP!
- I live on the Dorset/Devon border but, when I type in our postcode for "Where I live", the BBC gives me news for Hampshire!
- When we moved here from North Yorkshire in 2002, we could not believe that there was NO LOCAL radio or television coverage - what happens in an emergency????
- It's a disgrace that we don't receive the same local news coverage as Devon & Cornwall.
- It defies description that Dorchester and Weymouth areas get different news coverage on the ITV channels

Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Licence Fee

- BBC should spend money on completing coverage before new programmes are promoted. Give areas a licence reduction until coverage is provided.
- Disgraceful that most BBC & ITV channels cannot be received, that no proper news or weather forecast is available for this area. Why do I have to pay a licence fee?
- Moved here Oct 2004. Appalling not receiving Ch5 or terrestrial digital TV/radio. TV/radio signal quality worst known anywhere. Must assert our rights vigorously to receive all modern services forthwith.
- We pay a vast amount to the BBC for the TV licence. Perhaps we should withhold a % of it as we are not getting what we are paying for. Sale of goods act – ‘Fit for purpose’, for example.
- It is completely unacceptable that we (the Dorset Licence payer) should be expected to pay a full fee for a poor and partial service, especially as there is no choice in the matter. Sort it out!
- Programmes, service and reception are like a third world country, we should have a discount on our licence fee.