

# Welcome to the West Country

Become a GP where life is sweet



THIS PDF IS  
INTERACTIVE



# Introduction

If you are looking to build your career as a GP, work within local communities and have an opportunity to design your own role – the West Country offers it all. An area with stunning landscapes, remote rural landscapes, working in the West Country offers doctors a variety of stimulating challenges. Later in this brochure you can read about how you can **design your own job** to suit your career and lifestyle ambitions, and four GPs who have recently settled here share their personal stories.

The South West has rail and motorway links, as well as two international airports serving many destinations within the UK, Europe and further afield, celebrated state and private schools in every county and Universities and HE colleges throughout the region.

We would like to welcome you to join our committed team and we will support you in every way to make your move here a smooth one. GPs are the bedrock of healthcare in England and the foundation of the NHS. We hope this brochure encourages you to join us.



**Dr Liz Thomas**  
Deputy Medical Director  
NHS England South West

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# Introducing the South West

The West Country is an area of great contrasts from hills to coasts. There is a lot of space : across the three counties we have a population of just 2.3 million people, and a lot of people live in rural areas. However for those who enjoy a busier pace of life, we have the culturally vibrant cities of Exeter, Plymouth, Truro and Taunton, along with coastal and market towns and a lively food and arts scene.

Devon, Cornwall and Somerset are three of the most beautiful and unspoilt counties in England, boasting two of the country's nine National Parks and 21 additional Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We also enjoy one of the warmest climates in the UK.

Imagine being able to fill your weekends with a visit to a wonderful beach, a moorland walk, sailing, surfing or enjoying the arts. Or you may prefer to visit one of the incredible stately homes and gardens including the Lost Gardens of Heligan, the Eden Project, Dunster Castle and Montacute House.

The West Country has so much to offer -  
see how we can help you make the move

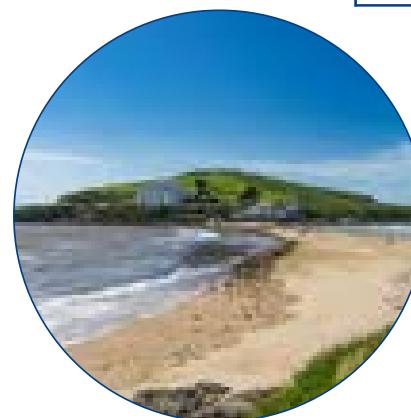


## Living in Devon

Devon covers almost 7000km<sup>2</sup>, has two National Parks and a third of the county is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We think that gives you an idea of what to expect. It also has 450 miles of stunning coastline and family-friendly beaches as well as beautiful coastal towns.

The capital city of Exeter, with its cobbled streets and squares, is dotted with art galleries, restaurants and boutique shops. There's also the magnificent cathedral and a flourishing arts scene, typified by the Phoenix Arts Centre.

One of the largest cities on the south coast, Plymouth has a rich maritime heritage, stunning waterfront, and a vibrant cultural life.





## Schools, Housing & Transport



State education is free for ages 5-18. Universities in Exeter and Plymouth house two vibrant medical schools. In 2016, average house prices in Exeter were £268,000, compared to £188,000 in Plymouth. Transport is excellent: just over two hours to London by train from Exeter, and Exeter Airport flies to 40 destinations worldwide. Plymouth offers ferry routes to France, Spain and Portugal.

## Food & Drink



Devon is famous for its dairy produce, vegetables, meat and seafood. Farm shops are becoming increasingly popular and many have on-site restaurants and you'll find a diverse selection of dining experiences in the cities.

## Sport & Leisure



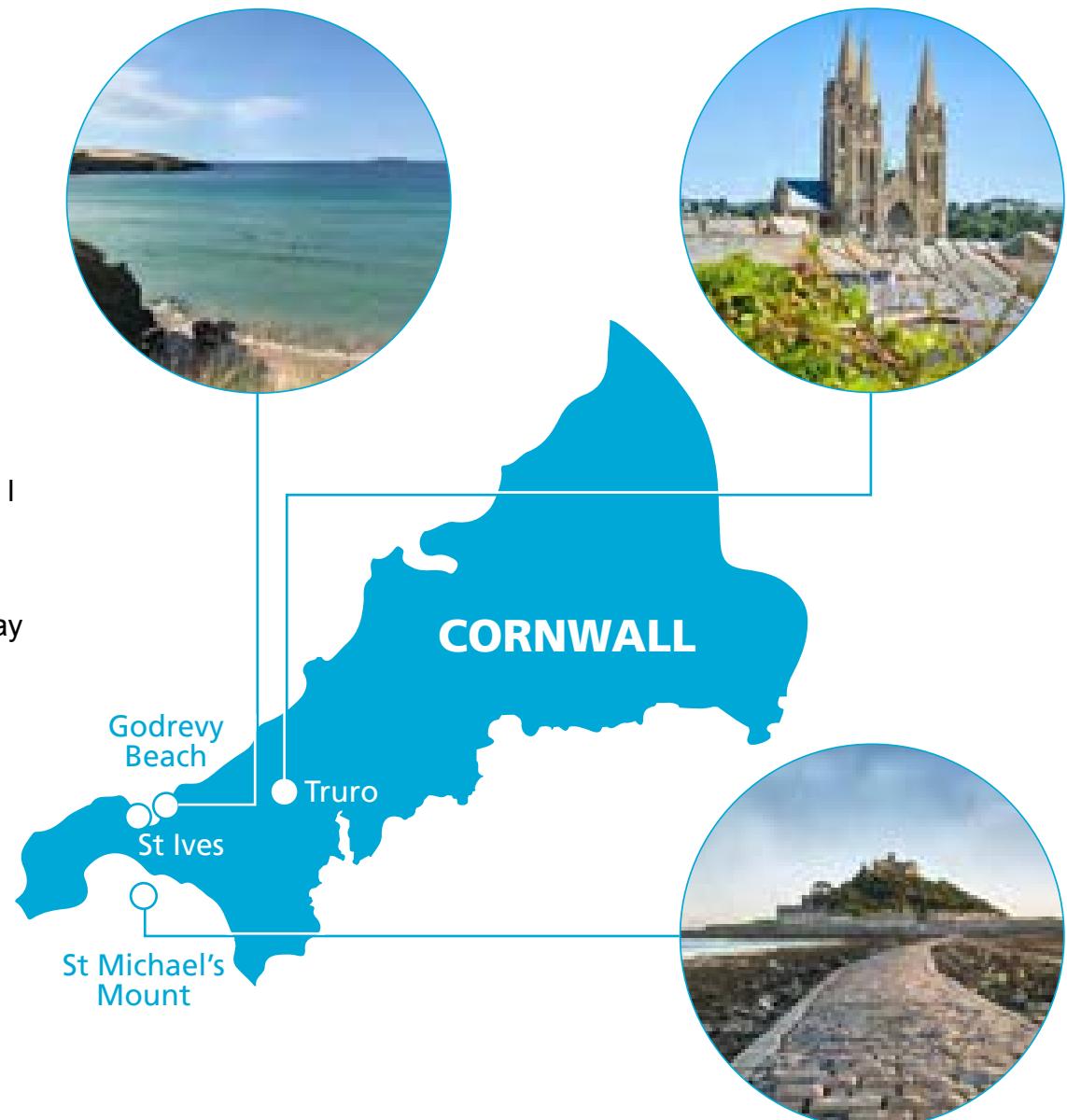
Exeter is the home of the Chiefs, who won England's rugby Premiership in 2017. Both cities have football teams with impressive stadiums. Music and the arts are ingrained into Devon history, and folk music, jazz and acoustic gigs can be found all over the county. Spend your leisure time exploring Devon's famous Dartmoor National Park.

## Living in Cornwall

The UK's southernmost city, Truro, is the capital of Cornwall and home to Truro Cathedral, charming pedestrianised shopping areas, the Royal Cornwall Museum and the Hall for Cornwall - a thriving venue for the arts.

Of course Cornwall is perhaps most famous for its picturesque villages and beaches, a huge draw for families and surfers alike. As is the Boardmasters Festival each summer celebrating music, surfing and the sea, whilst those who love gardens are drawn to the biomes of the Eden Project. Or you can walk across the causeway from Marazion to the stunning island of St Michael's Mount with its cobbled streets, sub-tropical gardens and stunning architecture.

Cornwall may be the Land's End, but life is very definitely buzzing!





## Schools, Housing & Transport



Local schools abound in Cornwall, and the University of Falmouth specialises in the creative arts. Housing can be modern or traditional cottages; and whilst property prices can be high in the most celebrated areas, there are many parts with affordable homes. Cornwall can be remote - a big attraction for those seeking a different way of life, but Newquay Airport offers flights overseas and to London and Manchester.

## Food & Drink



Seafood restaurants and traditional fish and chips are the famous delicacies of Cornwall's coastal towns, and we mustn't forget the Cornish Pasty! There is a huge variety of gastropubs and restaurants, many run by top chefs. After a hearty walk, a Cornish cream tea could be just what the doctor ordered.

## Sport & Leisure



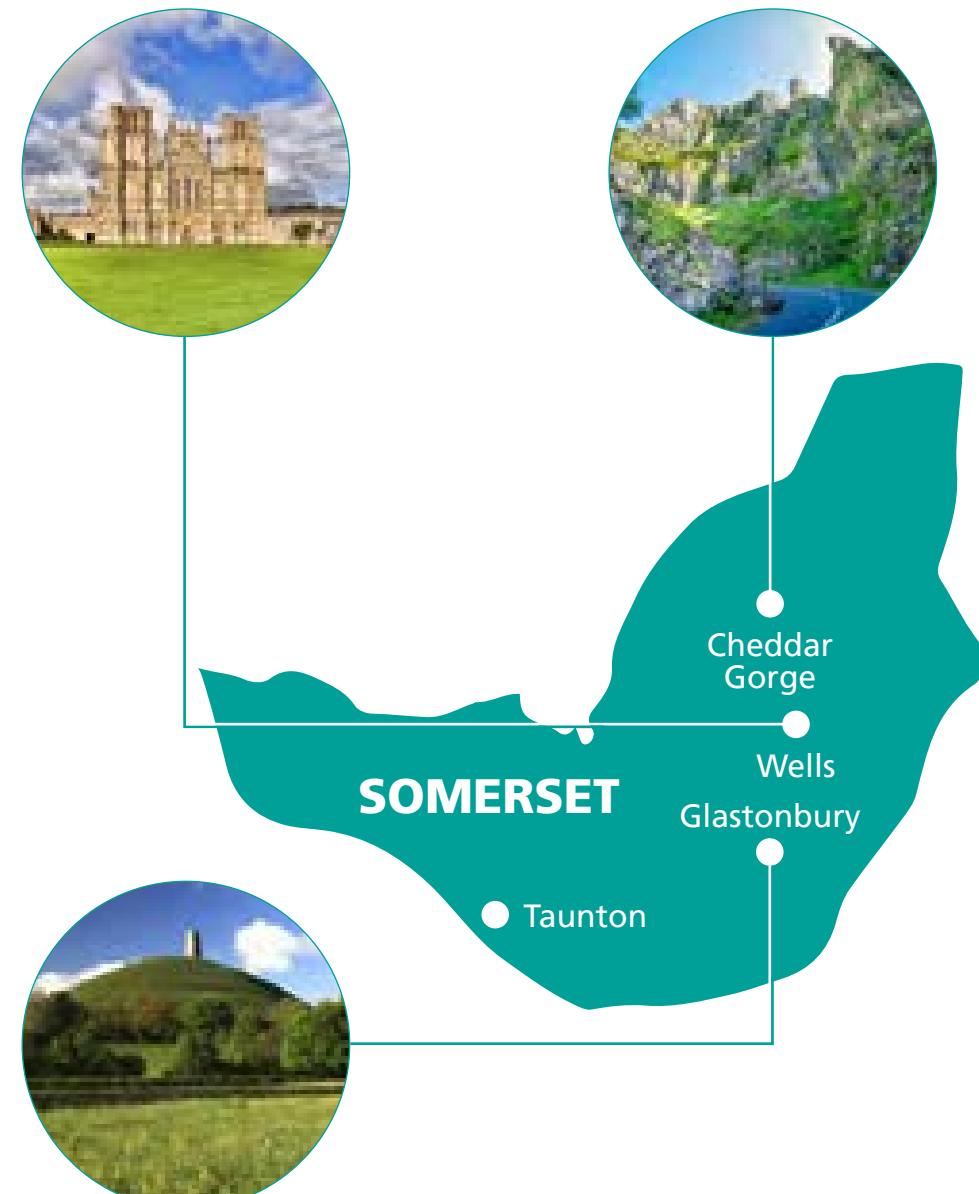
If you like surfing, or want to learn, the north coast has some of the best surf in the world. The southern coast is dotted with beautiful coves ideal for family swimming and the South West Coast Path takes in over 630 miles of superb walking. The County boasts the Tate St Ives and the Minack Theatre.

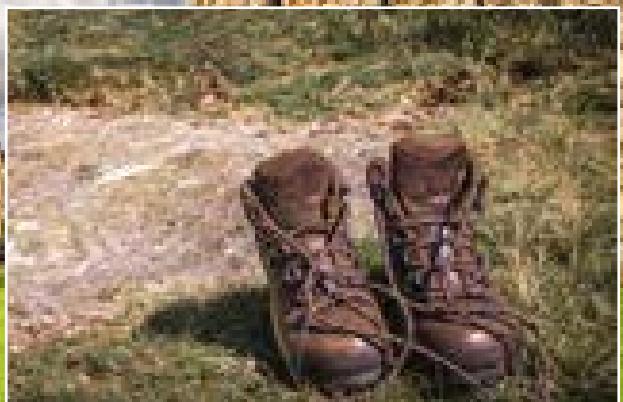
## Living in Somerset

Somerset is the UK's ~~se~~ nth biggest county and is home to the magnificent City of Bath in the east and the National Park of Exmoor in the west. Somerset is also packed with historic towns and charming villages which lead out to beautiful countryside for you to explore.

All of Somerset's highlights are easy to find on our excellent road network including the cultural hotspots of Frome and Bruton, the legendary Glastonbury Tor, the stunning white beaches of Weston Super Mare and the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty that are the Quantocks, Mendip and Blackdown Hills.

It is a wonderful county for cycling, walking and horse riding, and our warm and welcoming pubs will be happy to serve you a pint of real Somerset Cider when you are done.





## Schools, Housing & Transport



Somerset's state schools create great opportunities and results for our young people. House prices average £250,000 and there are fast rail services to London and the north, and the M5 motorway provides easy access to the rest of the UK.

## Food & Drink



Somerset is famous of course for Cheddar Cheese and Cider, but there is so much more to discover. Artisan kitchens and breweries exist all over the county, as do food festivals, fine dining in our major cities and local village fetes.

## Sport & Leisure



Somerset has two racecourses in Wincanton and Taunton, and Somerset County Cricket club hosts international matches. Plenty of opportunity to explore the great outdoors. There are designer shopping villages and each June Somerset comes alive with the world-renowned Glastonbury festival.

# General Practice in the South West

General practice in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset is of a high standard, making it a great place to work and to live.

There are 256 GP practices in the West Country, with 85% rated as good and 15% as outstanding by the Care Quality Commission.

General Practice is supported by a Local Media Committee in **Devon, Cornwall and Somerset**.

## There is a great variety of general practice

- Practices with a predominantly older patient population where patients have complex health needs
- Large multi-site practices with 20,000-plus patients and multi-disciplinary team working
- Small practices with an emphasis on personal care and traditional family doctors.

There are vibrant medical schools in Plymouth and Exeter, and comprehensive continuing education and development



programmes. All three authorities are developing integrated care systems that will offer the opportunity for combinations in hospital and community medicine, and for portfolio working.

## Supporting You in your Journey

We recognise that moving is a huge step. That is why we offer you a placement with a host employer so that you have the opportunity to spend some time living and working in the area before you choose where you want to be. Get in touch [here](#) to discuss how we can support you.

# People's Health

## Devon

The health of people in Devon is a mixed compared with the England average. About 12% of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.

### Health inequalities

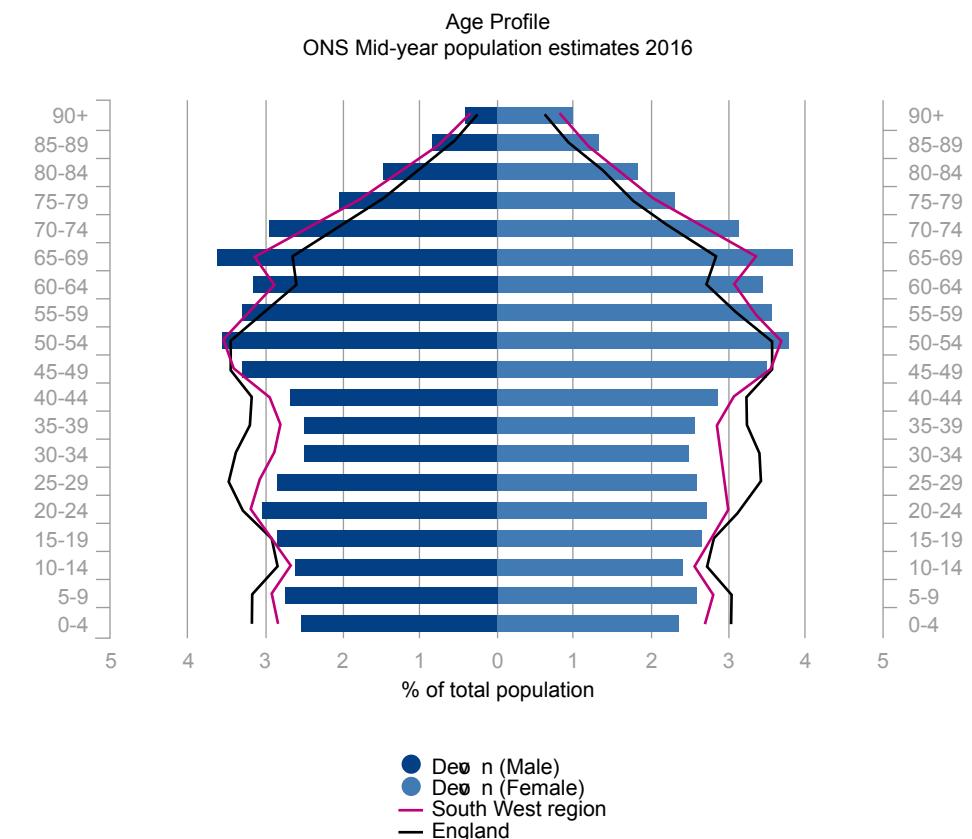
Life expectancy is 5.8 years lower for men and 4.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Devon than in the least deprived areas.

### Child health

In Year 6, 15.2% of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England. Levels of GCSE attainment are better than the England average.

### Adult health

The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital stays is 601, better than the average for England. Estimated levels of adult excess weight and physical activity are better than the England average. Rates of early deaths from cardiovascular diseases and cancer are better than average.



For more information on priorities in this area, see:  
[www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk](http://www.devonhealthandwellbeing.org.uk)

Report information provided by Public Health England, July 2018

# People's Health Cornwall

The health of people in Cornwall is varied compared with the England average. About 16% of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average.

## Health inequalities

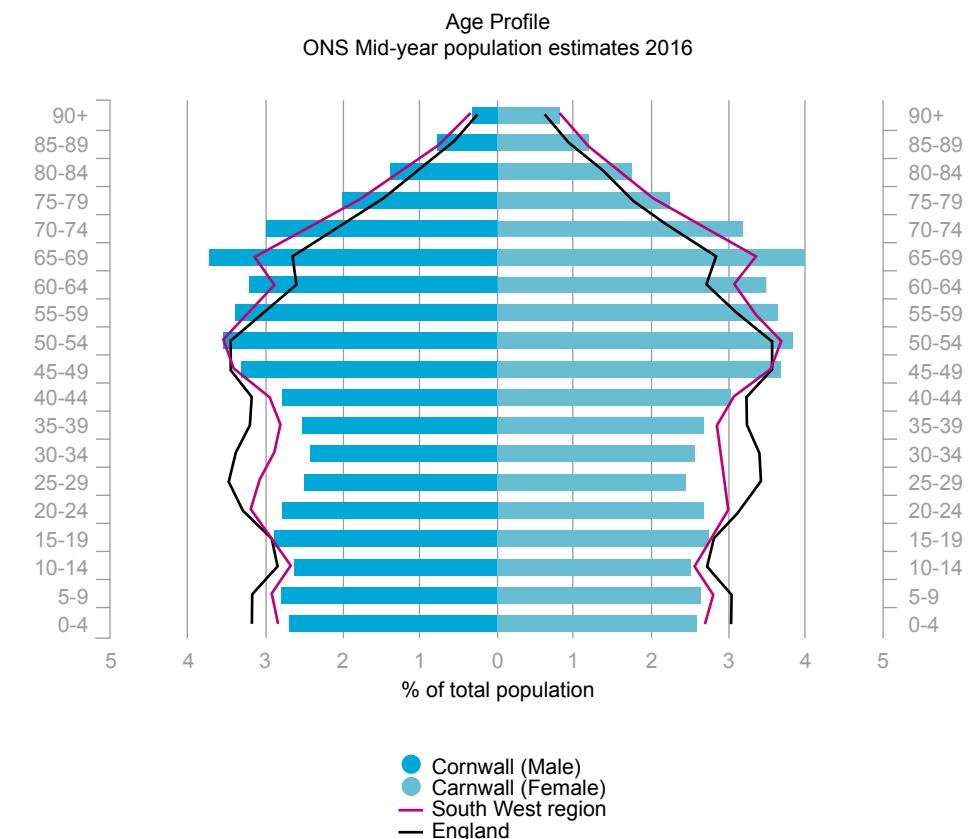
Life expectancy is 6.4 years lower for men and 5.3 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Cornwall than in the least deprived areas.

## Child health

In Year 6, 15.1% of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England. Levels of GCSE attainment and breastfeeding initiation are better than the England average.

## Adult health

The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital stays is 738, worse than the average for England. The rate of self-harm hospital stays is 242, worse than the average for England. Rates of early deaths from avoidable diseases and cancer are better than average.



For more information on priorities in this area, see:

- [www.cornwall.gov.uk/jspa](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/jspa)
- [www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health-cornwall/directories-of-public-healths-annual-report/](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health-cornwall/directories-of-public-healths-annual-report/)

Report information provided by Public Health England, July 2018

# People's Health

## Somerset

The health of people in Somerset is varied compared with the England average. About 13% of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.

### Health inequalities

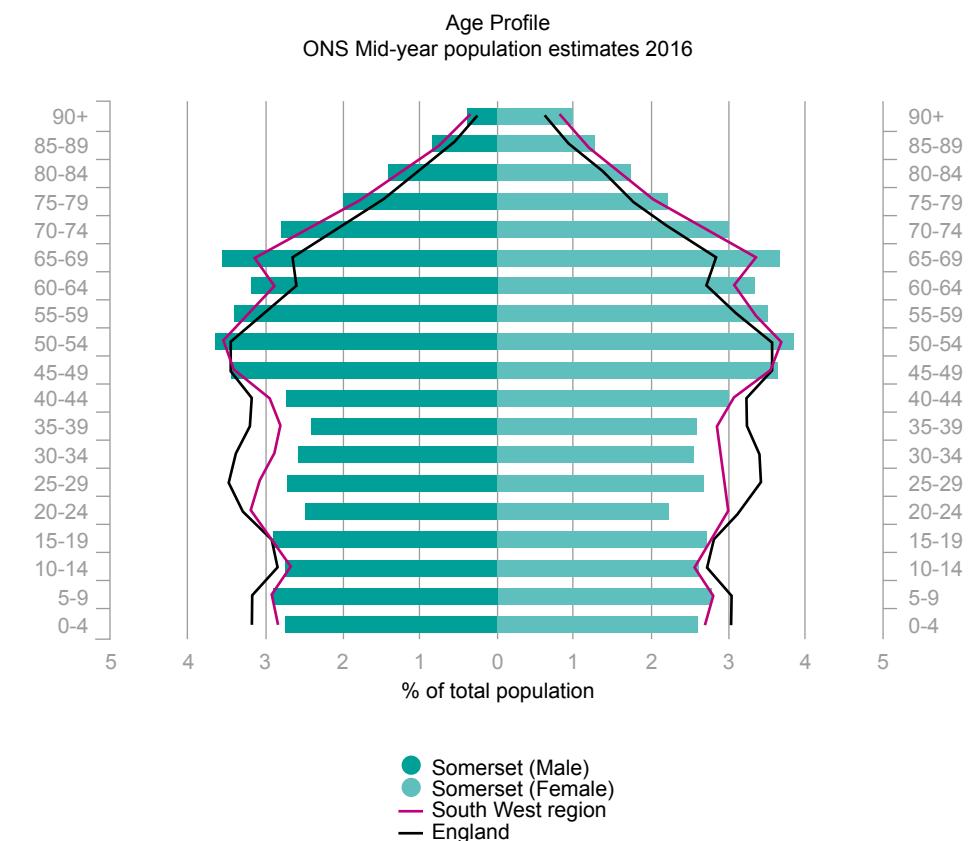
Life expectancy is 5.5 years lower for men and 4.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Somerset than in the least deprived areas.

### Child health

In Year 6, 16.4% of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England. Levels of GCSE attainment are worse than the England average. Levels of breastfeeding initiation are better than the England average.

### Adult health

The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital stays is 650. Estimated levels of adult physical activity are better than the England average. Rates of early deaths from cardiovascular diseases and cancer are better than the average.



For more information on priorities in this area, see:

- [www.somerset.gov.uk/public-health](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/public-health)
- [www.somersetintelligence.org.uk](http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk)

Report information provided by Public Health England, July 2018

# Meet the GPs

## Dr Rachel Ali

Rachel completed her training in the UK after moving over from Canada and is a GP at Penrell Park Surgery, Plymouth.

### Why did you want to be a GP in the South West?

I moved down to the South West when I first qualified, after five years training in Nottingham I wanted to be close to the coast. When I came down I fell in love with Devon, and haven't really wanted to be anywhere else. I've done a little bit in Cornwall, Dorset and Australia but I keep coming back.

### Why did you come here and why did you stay?

I came to the UK after growing up in Canada, and living in the States, Nigeria, Switzerland and I finished my education here. Coming down to the South West was a gift. I didn't realise there was anywhere in the UK that had this beautiful mix of coast, countryside and the moors.

### What career opportunities are there in the South West?

You've got the ability to get involved in any aspect, whether the goal is to run your own practice, looking at chronic disease, acute trusts, developing a special interest – there are GPs locally running ENT clinics, cardiology clinics, dermatology clinics. There's also



media politics like I'm involved in and developing Federations; where GPs practise work together. There are so many opportunities it's hard to wrap your head around all of them.

### What are the benefits of living and working in the South West?

It's beautiful here for starters. There is something really special about being able to leave work, pick up a coffee and drive for five minutes and find yourself sitting on the Hoe watching the waves roll in, and the boats go by and the sunset over the water. My kids are in great schools – there is a range of options and my commute is six minutes, door-to-door!

# Meet the GPs

## Dr Max Dutson

as featured by NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group

Max Dutson is originally from Dorset and graduated from the University of Nottingham. He moved to Cornwall in 1996 and is a GP partner at the Wadebridge and Camel Estuary practice.

### Why did you want to be a GP in the South West?

I had a link to Cornwall and my second job straight after graduating from university was as junior house officer at Treliske hospital. I've worked as locums in Bristol and north Wales, with Médecins Sans Frontières in Africa and a hospital in New Zealand. I also had a stint with Ginger Productions on some of their extreme health programmes featuring quasi-celebrities but Cornwall would always call me back.

**What career opportunities are there in the South West?** There's lots of things that make being a GP in Cornwall great but the most exciting thing is that you get to know your patients, working in a small community in a beautiful part of the country. Along with the traditional 'at the office' GP roles there is also the chance to pursue portfolio careers, where you can train to become a GP with a special interest like dermatology - and there's funding for new recruits to train in their specialist area.



Photo Credit  
NHS Kernow/Tom Last Photography

### What are the benefits of living and working in the South West?

There's no better place to live and work - the people, the team at the practice, the community feel, we work pretty closely with the neighbouring practices which is good – I love it. The scenery is stunning; we have beaches, we have the great outdoors and dare I say it a bit of rock climbing. Our family's favourite place to visit is Perranporth beach, just a stone's throw from our house!

But personally, for me, the best benefits of living and working in Cornwall are the feel to it, the pride that the Cornish people have, the festivals that are going on and the wonderful outdoor - Cornwall has so much offer.

# Meet the GPs

## Dr Jenny Capps

*as featured and interviewed for the GP in Somerset campaign, launched by Somerset LMC.*

Jenny is a GP registrar in her final year at Dunster and Porlock Surgeries on Exmoor

### What influenced your decision to work in General Practice?

My background is actually in emergency medicine and I chose to switch to general practice, mainly because of continuity – I like the fact that you get to see your patients and follow them up and actually get the results back from the investigations that you order. You follow people on a journey and you can pick up on the small things if they're unwell. You never know what's coming through the door and that keeps me interested.

### If you could give GPs of the future one piece of advice, what would it be?

Make sure you have a good work life balance. I think that's what's appealing about general practice – you can make it work around your life. Choose GP because it gives you the work life balance.



Photo Credit  
GP in Somerset

### If someone was considering a move to Somerset, what would you say to convince them to move?

If they came to Somerset they would convince themselves, so I would say take the plunge and come and visit this beautiful area. I am biased towards West Somerset because it's got the moors, Quantocks, Blackdown Hills and there's an abundance of outdoor activities. If you're active, there is absolutely everything that you could possibly ever want to do around here, we've got the sea, we've got mountain biking, horse riding, shooting, fishing, you name it you'll find it in Somerset. So, come and visit and you won't want to leave.

# Meet the GPs

## Dr Ed Parry-Jones

Dr Ed Parry-Jones is a GP at Ernsettle Media I Centre, and moved to Devon after working in Africa and the Caribbean for nine years.

### Why did you want to be a GP in the South West?

I did my GP training before going away to work in Africa and the Caribbean, and with a family of two small boys I wanted to find somewhere to come back to in the UK to be a GP. Initially we looked at Devon as I was brought up in North Wales, and had done my training in Scotland so I really enjoy the outdoors.

I always wanted to live and work by the sea. Plymouth is a smallish city – with lots of things going on, it's a vibrant place.

### Why did you come here and why did you stay?

When we were looking to come back to the UK we looked around and Plymouth ticked a lot of our boxes. As a city it had lots to offer; with lots going on and from a work point of view I was interested in the relatively new Media I School. There were lots of things going on, opportunities for teaching and really good GP practices. Also as a city it's a safe place for kids, and lots of activities outdoors. We've stayed as we've built a good life here.



Play video 

### What's the best thing about living and working in Devon?

For me the best thing about living in Devon is the sea. Clinically, the best thing about working here in Plymouth is the opportunity for portfolio careers; there is a media school, a great hospital with lots of specialities. There is lots of scope to do teaching and training, working with disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups.

As a city, Plymouth has some quite deprived areas so there is a lot of need for support here, so there is a lot of satisfaction – working where good quality General Practice is needed.

## Design your job

We want to invest in you – come to the Westcountry and find a GP job you enjoy, and the lifestyle you've always wanted.

Practices across the South West are working with NHS England and other organisations to offer real choice to GPs looking to work or return to the profession in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset.

If you long to live and work just a few miles from the coast or in the countryside, have decided to drop your hours, have recently qualified or want to work just a couple of days a week, [talk to us](#) or [visit our next job fair](#).

We have a large choice of vacancies including portfolio options, which are already underway in Devon, for those who want more flexibility – and a new lifestyle.

So whether you choose to work for an individual practice or a host employer we can offer you sessional opportunities so you can co-design your new job. [For more details visit our website](#).

If you've thought about living and working in the Westcountry before, or already live here but want something different get in touch to arrange a consultation by emailing [england.swpcrecruitment@nhs.net](mailto:england.swpcrecruitment@nhs.net)



### Portfolio sessional options include:

- Family friendly hours for planned clinics / work
- Evening and weekend sessions to suit you, including urgent care and acute GP work
- Short or long-term sessional work covering vacancies or maternity leave
- Secondary care experience
- Clinical fellow sessions to develop skills in appraisal or education
- Remote working, providing telephone or online triage



## Latest Vacancies

NHS England South West keeps a full, up-to-date list of GP vacancies in the South West on the website. It can be accessed by anyone, and is constantly refreshed, so keep checking back for new opportunities.

Click the buttons to see the latest vacancies across the West Country in Devon, Cornwall and Somerset

**Latest Devon Vacancies**



**Latest Cornwall Vacancies**



**Latest Somerset Vacancies**



We're ready to  
invest in you.



For further information please email:  
[england.swpc.ec.uitment@nhs.net](mailto:england.swpc.ec.uitment@nhs.net)

or visit the [website](#)

