

# 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

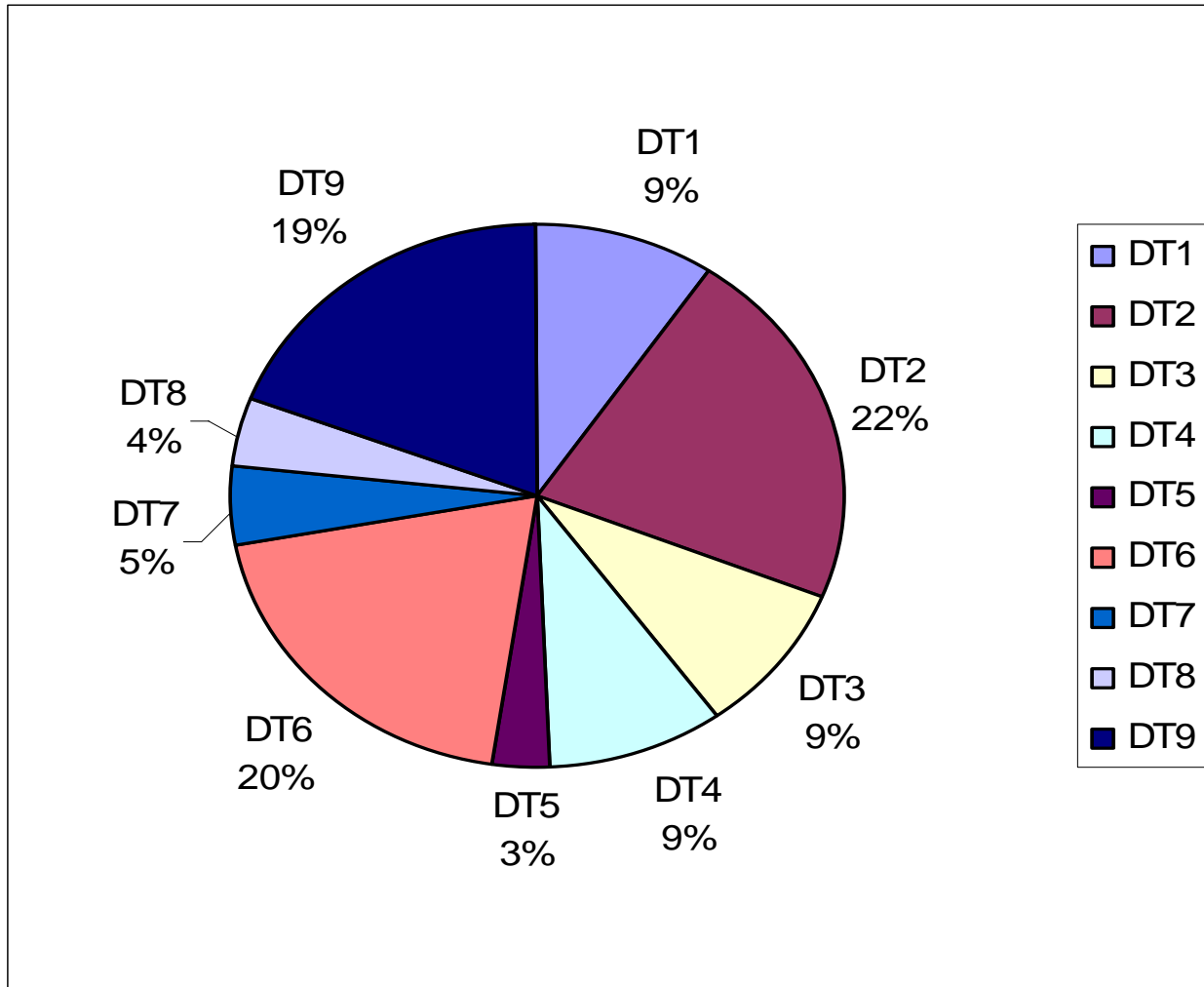
### Radio

- 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

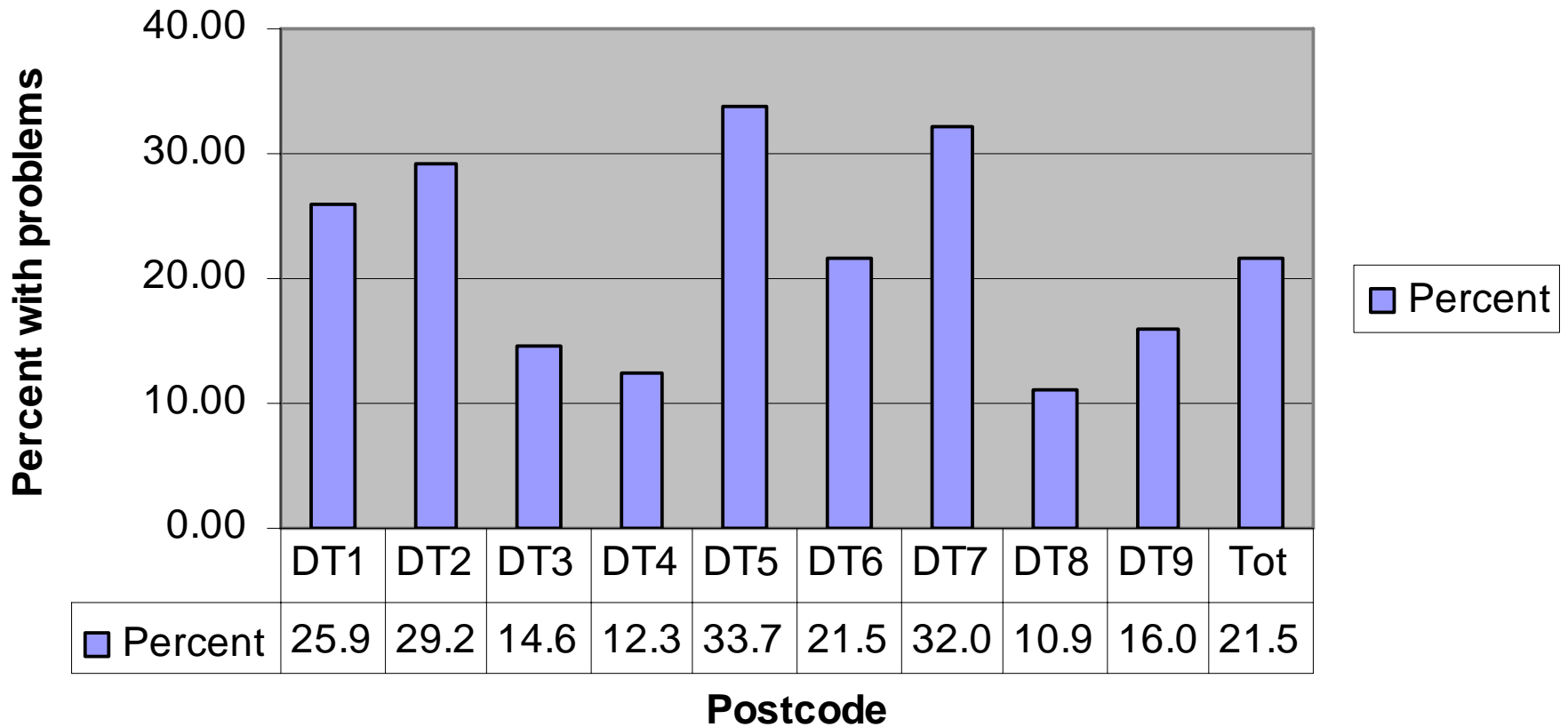
<b>DT1</b>	<b>Dorchester</b>	<b>365</b>
<b>DT2</b>	<b>Dorchester Villages N</b>	<b>841</b>
<b>DT3</b>	<b>Rural Weymouth</b>	<b>353</b>
<b>DT4</b>	<b>Weymouth</b>	<b>354</b>
<b>DT5</b>	<b>Portland</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>DT6</b>	<b>Bridport</b>	<b>769</b>
<b>DT7</b>	<b>Lyme Regis</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>DT8</b>	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

# Response By Postcode



# Problems BBC1 BBC2 ITV1 Ch

## BBC1-CH4

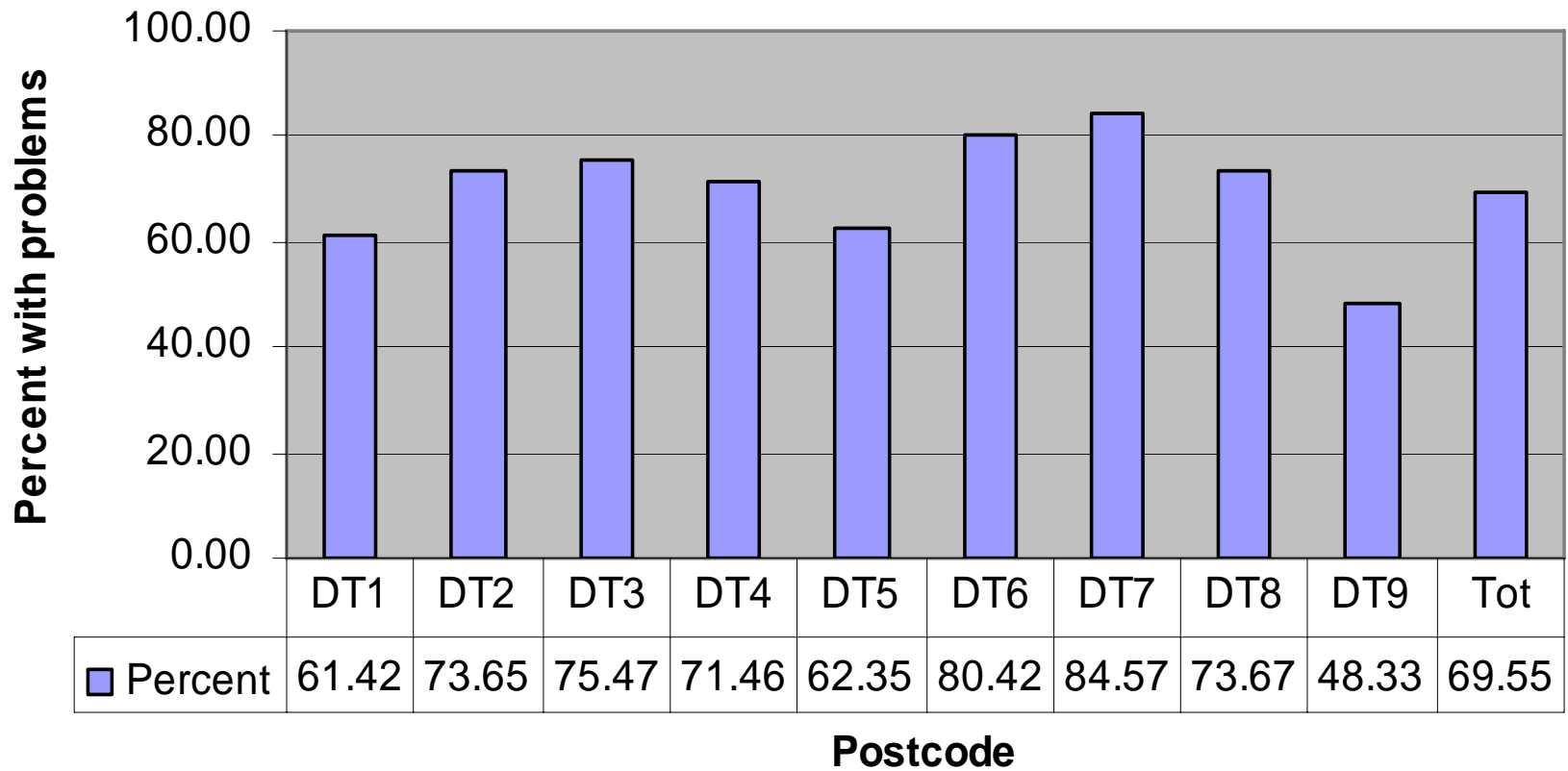


## Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Analogue TV

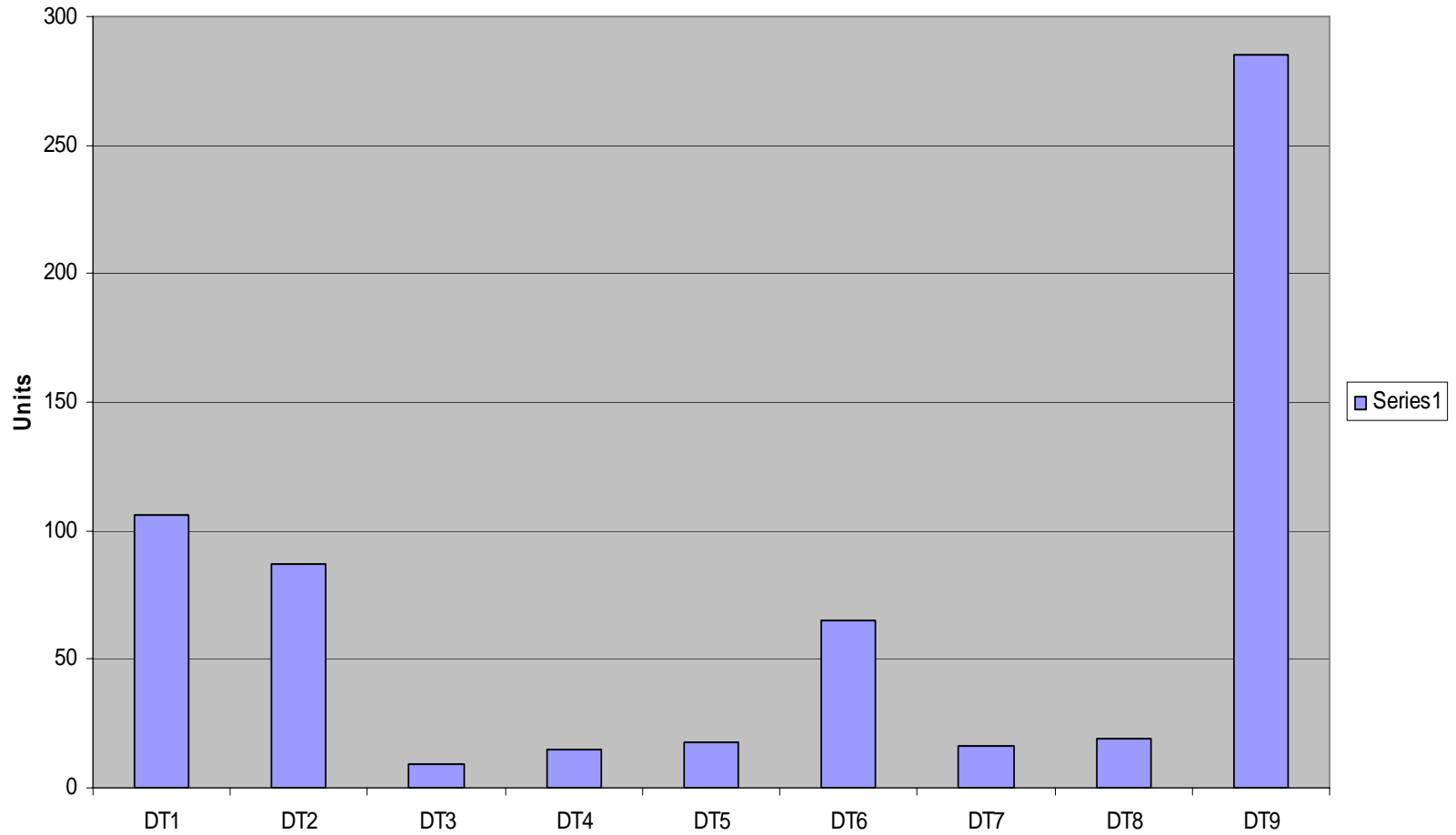
- Considering this is 2005, the reception is abysmal
- BBC letter from Bristol said 'tough luck - go digital!'
- Interference from France whenever weather conditions are "good" during evenings. Worst reception we have ever experienced having resided in Yorkshire, Essex & Lancashire!
- Even with booster 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

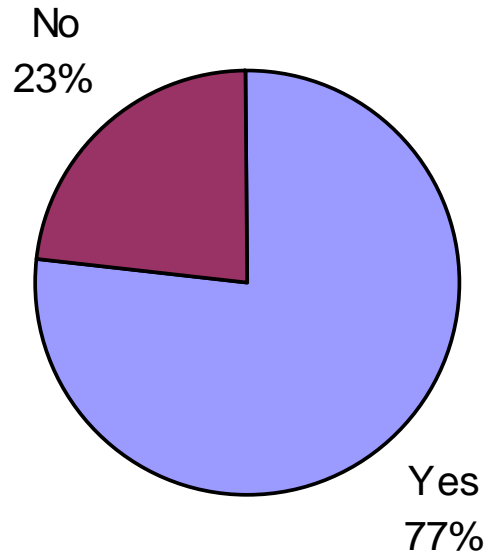




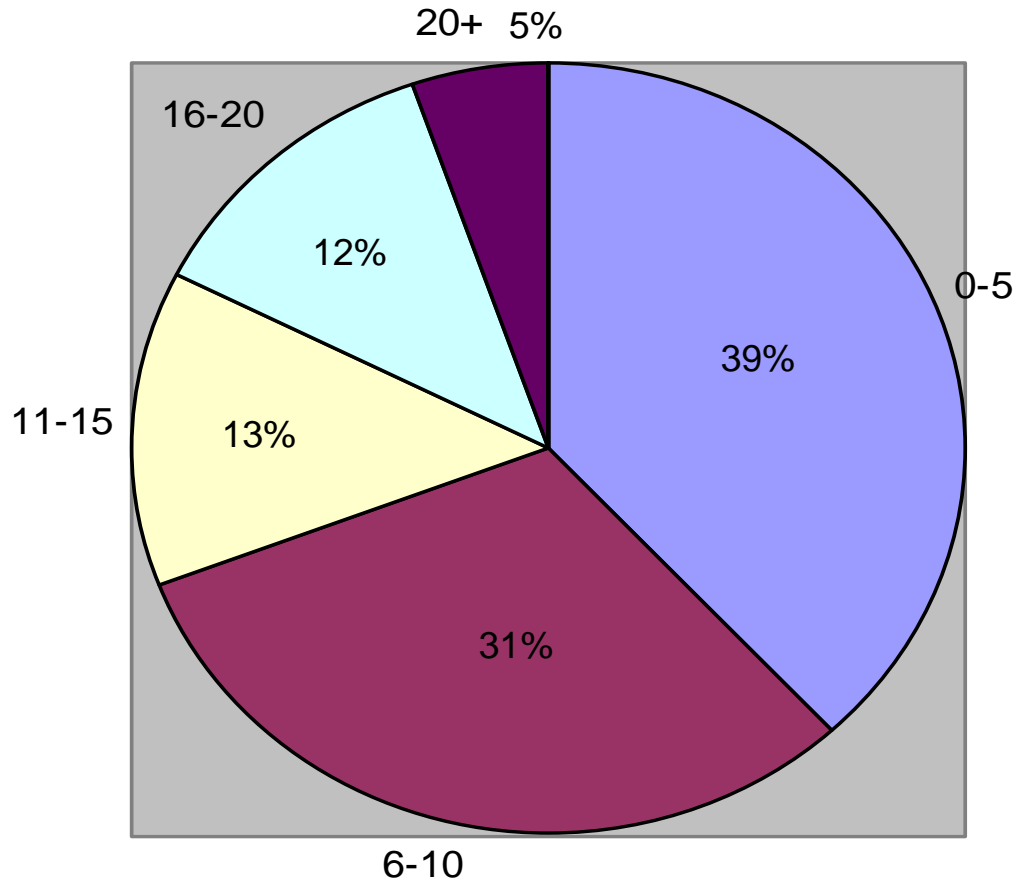
## Sample Comments from the Questionnaire - Digital TV

- 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.

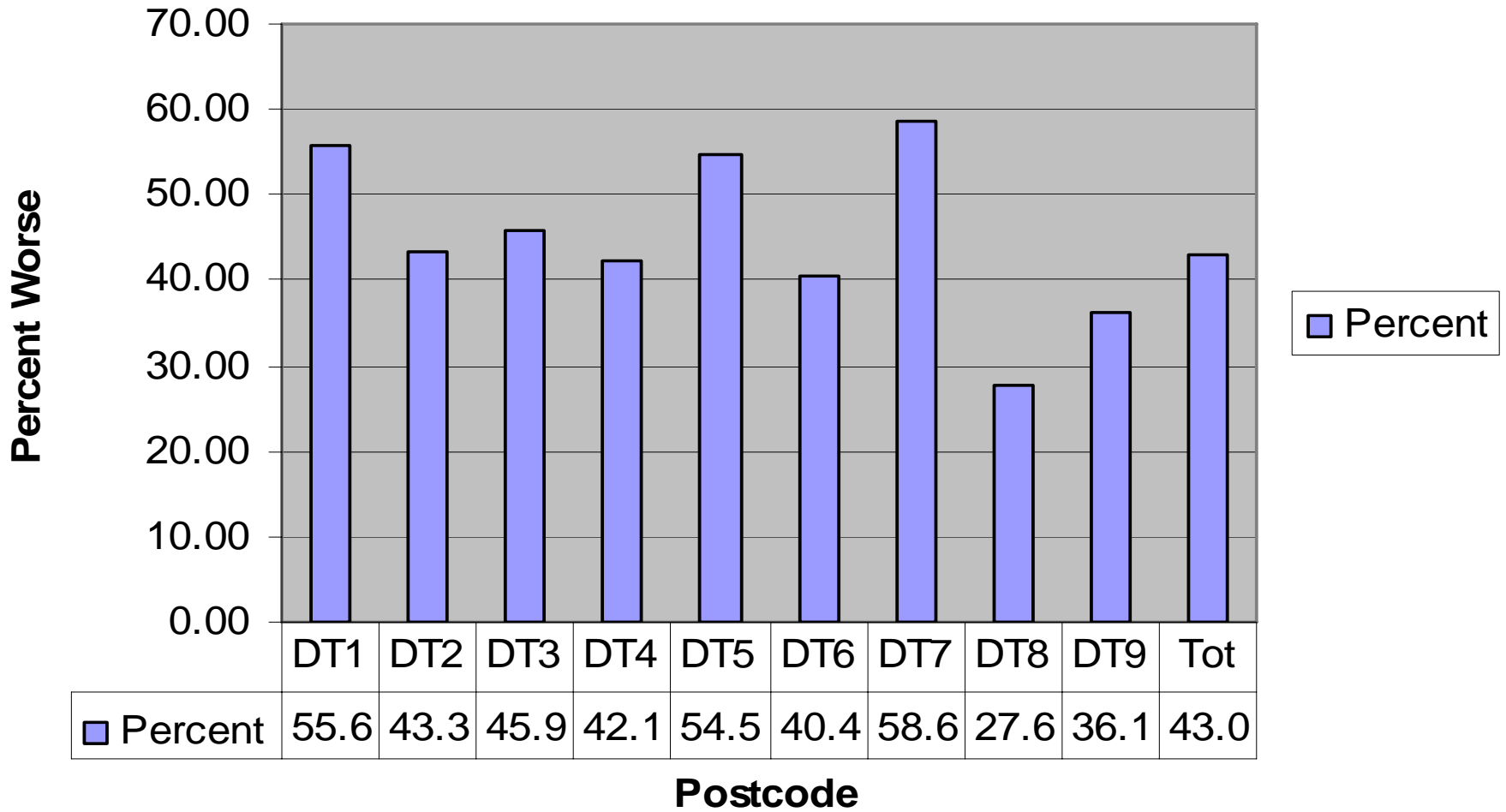
# External TV Aerial



# Aerial Age in Years

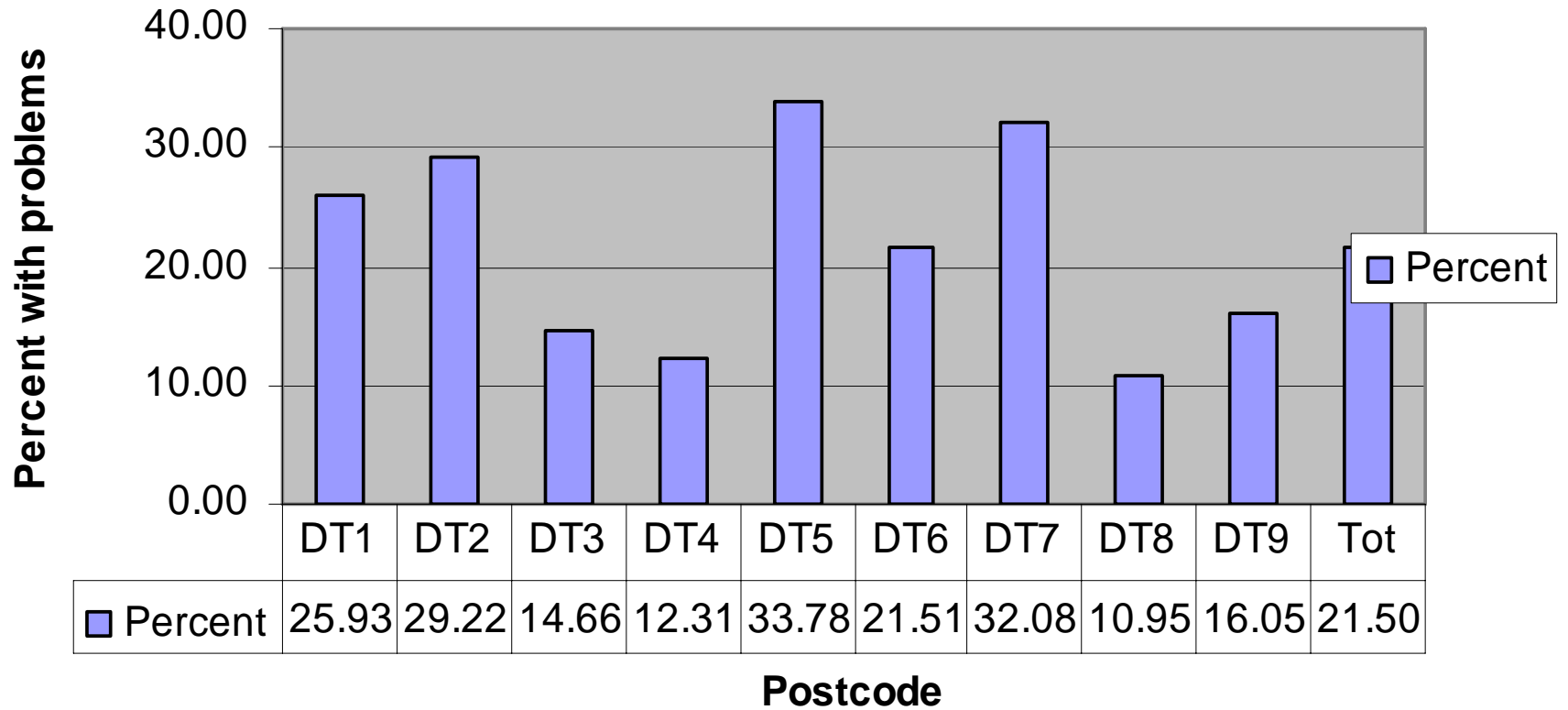


# TV Reception worse over last 2 years



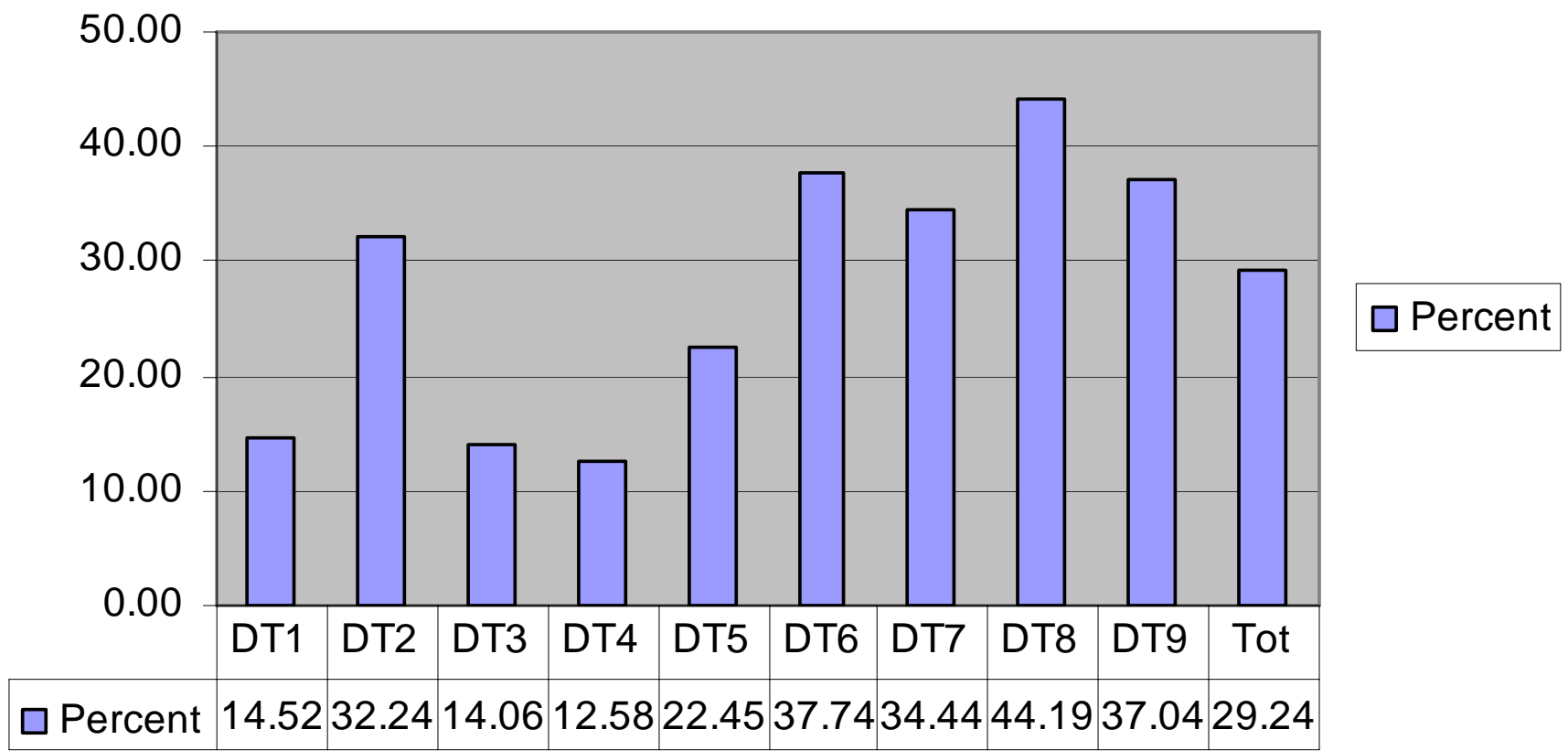
# Problems with FM Radio

## FM Radio



# Problems with Radio Solent

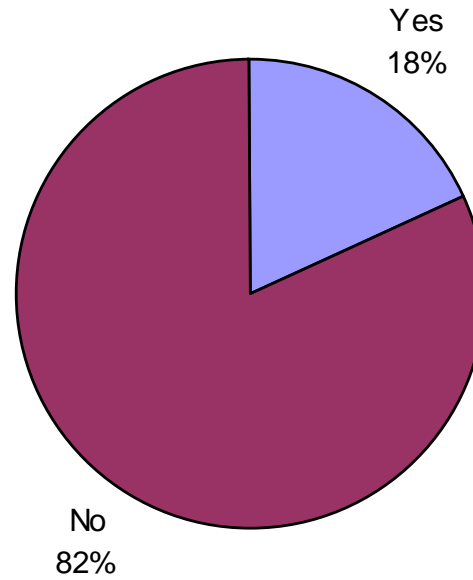
## BBC Radio Solent



## 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.

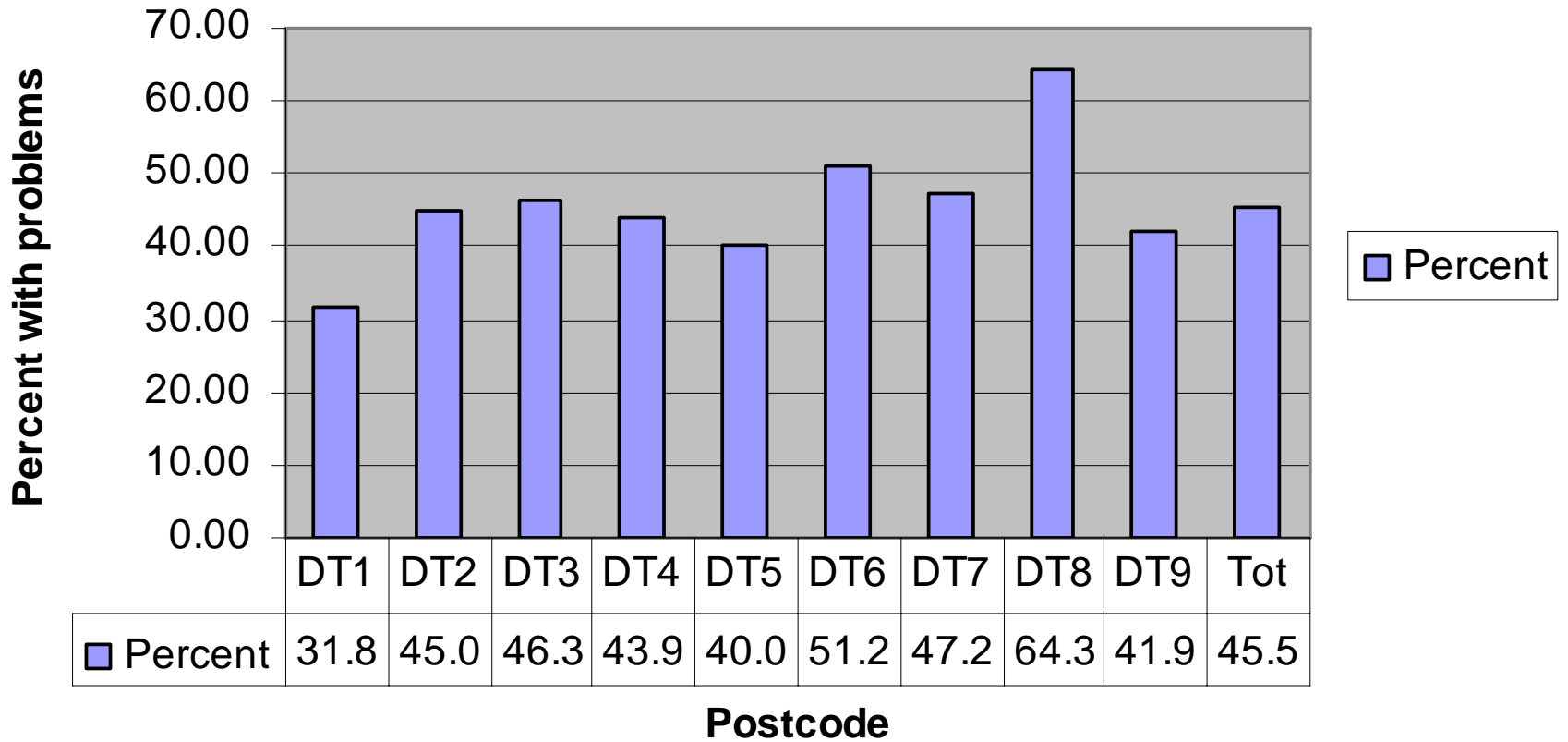
# External FM Aerial





# Problems with Digital Radio

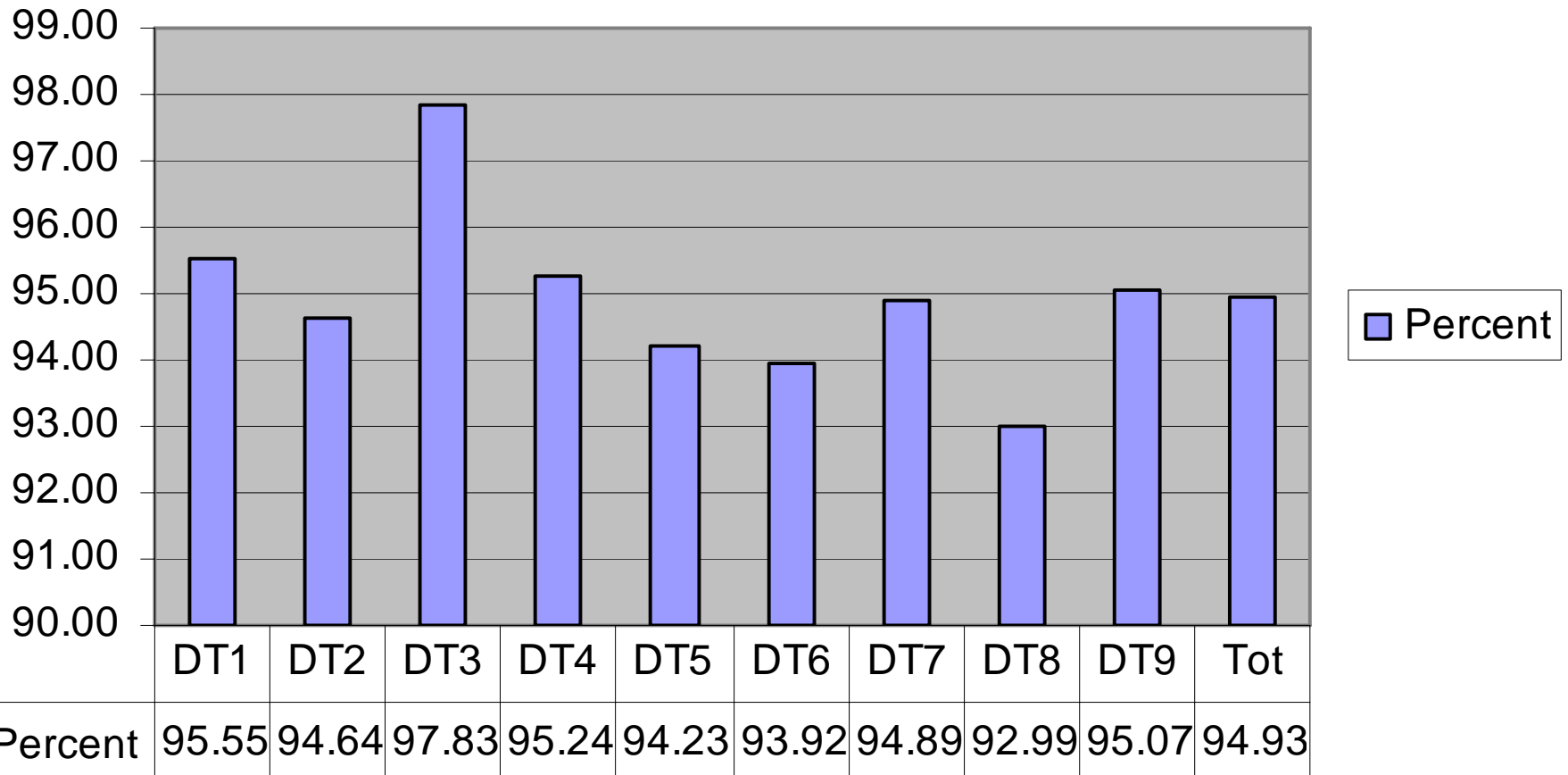
## Digital Radio



## 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.