

## DARIEN, CT

### Housing Data Profile Analysis Worksheet (Worksheet 2)

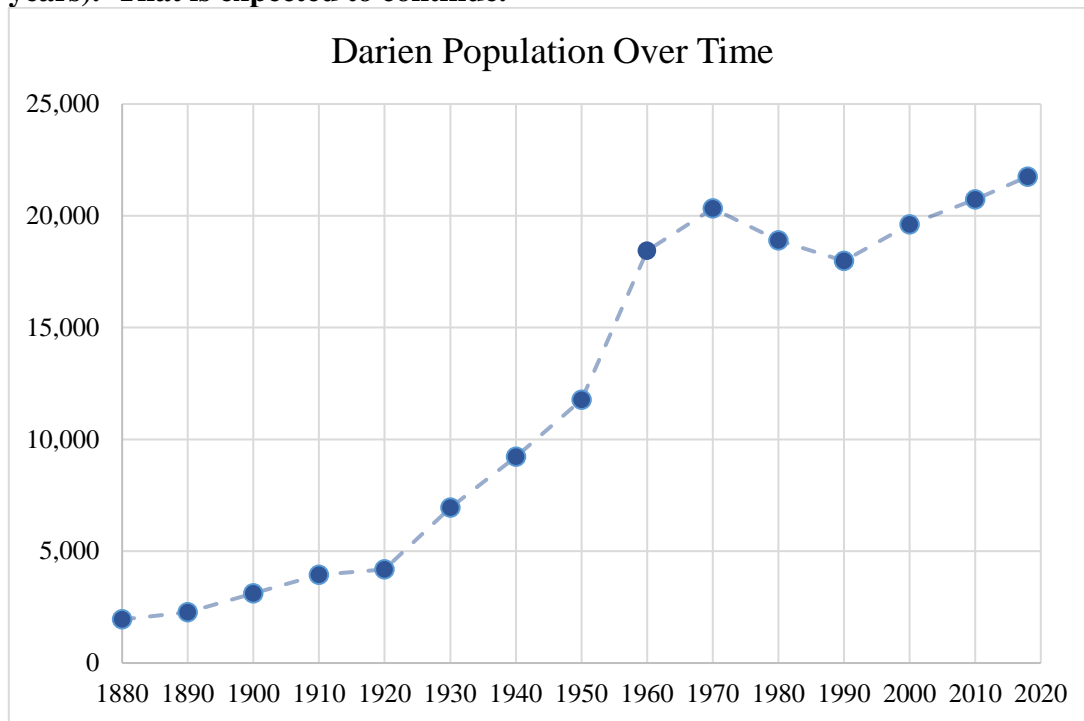
Analyzing the data in your Housing Data Profile, please answer each of the following questions:

1. *Overall, how do you view the age, income, racial, ethnic and other demographic indicators of your municipality? Please compare your assessment of your municipality with surrounding municipalities, your region and the state overall*

**The 2018 Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Data Profile for Darien is a good demographic snapshot of the Town.**

**Unlike most of the communities in Connecticut, Darien as a whole is a growing community. One other unusual fact, is that, as noted within the Darien School Facility Utilization Plan, prepared by Milone and MacBroom, while household sizes in Fairfield County and the State of CT as a whole are decreasing, Darien's average household size has grown in recent years, as did average family household size.**

**The graph below shows slow, steady population growth in Darien since 1990 (the past 29 years). That is expected to continue.**



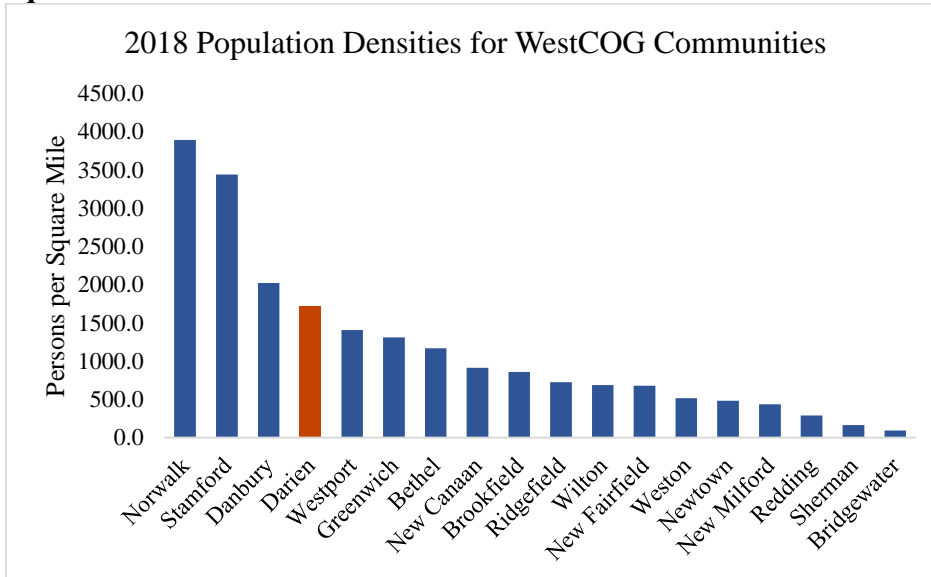
#### Age & Income

**Darien's excellent school system continues to attract families with children, which is noted by a median age for those living in Darien being younger than the CT median age.**

**According to the Data Profile, "Darien's median household income ranks 2 among CT's 169 municipalities."**

**Other than the three cities of Norwalk, Stamford and Danbury, Darien has the highest population density of the eighteen communities within the WestCOG region. In fact,**

**Darien's population density is more than twice that of the State of CT's 738 persons per square mile.**



## Race & Ethnicity

The PSC Housing Data Profile notes that Connecticut is becoming more diverse, as the nonwhite population increased from 28% to 31% from 2010 and 2015. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, Darien's population is 90% white.

2. Assess whether your municipality is projected to get older, younger or stay about the same, and whether your current housing stock will be affordable and appropriate for your anticipated age groups, or whether you foresee the need to provide new housing choices.

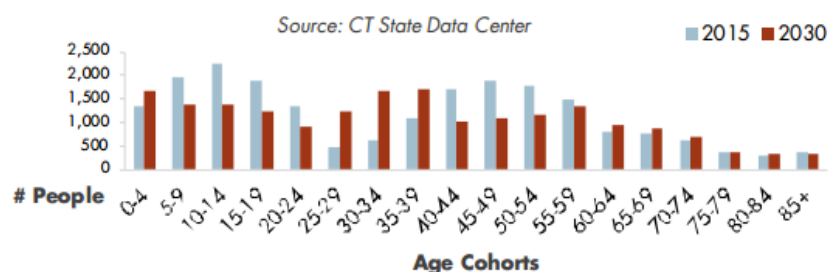
As noted in the graphic below from the PSC Housing Profile, it is estimated that the trend for longer life spans is expected to continue into the future. The graph shows that by 2030, Darien's number of residents in each age cohort from age 60 to age 85 are expected to increase. The recent construction of the Residences at Selleck's Woods, a combination assisted living/memory care facility containing a total of 105 units will likely have some effect on the CT State Data Center projections which were done prior to the completion of that project. Thus, the projected population in each of those 60+ categories is likely to increase even more.



## Aging of the Population

Darien is one of the 116 Connecticut municipalities projected to see a drop in their school-age population between 2020 and 2030. Many municipalities will see declines over 15%. In Darien, the projected decrease is 26%. Meanwhile the 65+ population for Darien is projected to increase by 11%.

## Age Cohorts - 2015, 2030 Population Projections: Darien



Darien's school-aged population is generally holding steady. Enrollment and school projections show that this trend will continue for the next few years. A 2018 Patch article notes that from 2012-2017, Darien's school population had a very slight (almost insignificant) decrease in students. Thus, based on local knowledge, and more recent, current data, the Town does not share the belief that Darien's school age population will drop by 26% between now and 2030. A detailed report done by Milone & MacBroom done in 2015 took a very detailed look at the Darien enrollment projections, and arrived at a range of three future enrollment projections, none of which showed a decrease of the extent projected by the PSC Housing Data Profile. These projections were all done prior to the recent approvals of the Noroton Heights Shopping Center redevelopment, The Commons at Noroton Heights, and "The Corbin District", which altogether will be constructing over 250 new units in Darien over the next few years—projects that were not envisioned when the previous population projections were done.

In recent years, Darien has made great strides in providing many different housing choices. A number of new projects have been approved and constructed bringing new options that never before existed. A sample of such projects includes the following:

- Garden Homes, 397 Boston Post Road—a total of 35 units—24 market rate units and 11 deed-restricted affordable units. The project consists of very small studio and one-bedroom apartments for rent. Because of the small size of the "market-rate" units, they rent for almost the same as the "deed-restricted affordable units". This redevelopment filled a gap, in that very few studio and small one-bedroom apartments now exist in Darien.
- The Cottage, 30A Edgerton Street—a group home for 6 developmentally disabled young adults. This development on Town property filled a gap, in that there is an unmet demand for "special needs" housing.
- The Heights at Darien, Allen O'Neill Drive—a total of 106 units—all deed-restricted affordable units. This replaced the former Allen O'Neill housing, which consisted of 53 single-family residences.
- The Residences at Selleck's Woods, Parklands Drive—a total of 105 units. Seventy-eight (78) units are for assisted living and twenty-seven (27) units are for Memory Care. This will provide a certain type of housing for elderly residents.
- Apartments at 1950 and 1958 Boston Post Road—8 market rate apartments above stores in the Noroton section of Town.
- Kensett, a total of 76 market-rate condominium units (some which have become rental units). These condominium units (most of which contain three bedrooms) were larger than those which previously existed in Darien. As part of Phase II of this project, three deed-restricted affordable units were created within a building located at 289 Hoyt Street.

Now under construction (expected completion in 2020 or 2021):

Old Town Hall Homes at 719 Boston Post Road—deed-restricted affordable housing, a total of 55 units.

Three other projects which have been approved, and will likely be underway within the next few months include the following. All three of these projects should be completed in 2021-2023.

**Noroton Heights Shopping Center redevelopment**—a mixed use development in Noroton Heights that will include 59 new residential units (19 one-bedroom and 40 two-bedroom).

**“The Commons at Noroton Heights”**—a mixed use development also in Noroton Heights that will include 122 new residential units (67 one-bedroom and 55 two-bedroom)

**“The Corbin District”**—a mixed use development including the construction of 116 one and two-bedroom (67 one-bedroom and 55 two-bedroom) market-rate condominiums in downtown Darien, with two deed-restricted affordable units on-site, and the construction of special needs housing for 14 residents at 26 East Lane in Darien. These will substantially increase the amount of one and two-bedroom rental units in Darien, all of these new units will have elevators and be ADA compliant.

Thus, the above four projects which are now under construction or which will be completed by 2022 or 2023 are expected to bring a total of over 300 new one and two bedroom apartments or condominiums to Darien. This will provide housing for both young people just starting out their careers, and/or the aging population which may not be interested in single-family home ownership.

3. *Assess your residential grand list, whether it has grown in value, fallen in value or stayed about the same and what factors in the housing market (supply, demand, mix, those factors in surrounding municipalities) have had an impact on that grand list.*

The PSC report notes that Darien is one of only 17 communities in the State of Connecticut to show an increase in the Grand List since 2008. In the period from 2008 to 2016, Darien’s grand list increased 29%.

The Town Assessor has provided the following additional information.

**Residential properties** located in the northern half of Darien (2 acre zone) were on the open market for a longer period of time during 2017 and 2018 with some actively listed for as much as 2-3 years. This neighborhood had an overall reduction in their assessments of 7-11%. Those Darien residential properties close to the town center or walking distance to the train maintained their values, and some neighborhoods increased by 2-3% since the last 2013 revaluation.

4. *Assess your municipality’s residential zoning and determine whether it allows for a variety of housing choice creation, should the municipality want to add to the spectrum of choices, or whether lot size, floor area ratio and other factors limit your municipality’s housing creation ability.*

Darien has been largely “built out”, and the Planning & Zoning Commission sees very, very few new subdivisions of vacant property. Most new development is “infill” development. From a single-family residential standpoint, that would be the replacement of an existing single-family residence with a new single-family residence on the same property.

As noted above, recent years have had a huge increase in different types of housing being created, and a significant amount of new deed-restricted affordable housing also being created. In fact, since 2010, Darien has qualified for two (2) four-year moratoria under

**CGS 8-30g. A third moratoria could be in sight sometime after 2021-2022, as a number of approved projects which will get started in late 2019 include affordable housing units, which will likely come on-line over the next 3+ years.**

**Darien has a number of different residential zoning districts with differing minimum lot sizes, ranging from 1/5<sup>th</sup> of an acre (a minimum lot size of 8,712 square feet) to 2 acre (87,120 square feet). Darien's recent growth in number of housing units is NOT attributable to more single-family housing, but rather an increase in multi-family housing.**

**The Town's Zoning Regulations do not limit the minimum size of housing units in single family zones, but rather, a maximum size is established based upon limits on building setbacks and building coverage. Most developers usually opt to construct larger single-family homes rather than smaller, since those usually sell for more money.**

**In recent years, a number of new overlay zoning districts have been established which encourage multi-family housing in certain zones. These are as follows: Designed Business and Residential (DBR); Designed Community Residential (DCR); Leroy West Affordable Housing (LW); Noroton Heights Redevelopment (NHR); and Special Needs (SN) Overlay Zones. Each of these five overlay zones has seen multi-family housing approved in them.**

5. *Assess your current housing choices: how wide a spectrum of unit types (single-family detached, duplex, multifamily, mixed-use, etc.) your municipality currently has, where they are generally located, and whether a diversity of housing types could be expanded in areas of municipality.*

**As noted herein, Darien has a number of different housing types—condominium units; apartments; very small studio and one-bedroom units; housing for the developmentally disabled, etc. The largest apartment complex in Darien is Avalon on Hollow Tree Ridge Road, which contains 189 units, 47 of which are deed-restricted affordable units. As noted, Darien has ensured that all higher density housing is located on municipal water and sewer.**

**The Darien Housing Authority owns and manages two properties containing affordable housing for the elderly, people with disabilities and low- and moderate-income households. These units are generally subject to long waiting lists.**

**Opportunities for expansion of additional density are in areas which are on municipal water and sewer, and on main roadways, near public transportation.**

6. *From your housing data profile, determine the number and percentage of income-restricted housing units (affordable housing), their type (single-family, multifamily), their location (confined to an area of municipality, with/without access to transit, jobs, healthcare, shopping, recreation) and whether there are locations where such housing could be created. How do your municipality's numbers/percentage compare to surrounding municipalities, the region/county, and the state as a whole?*

**According to the Housing Data Profile, the State Affordable Housing Appeals List notes that Darien has 241 total assisted units. At the time of that writing, Darien had 3.4% assisted units. Almost all of those units were multi-family units.**

The chart below shows that in the WestCOG region, the Town of Darien has made the third largest increase from 2002 to 2018 (behind Stamford and Brookfield). The 3.56% number from 2018 will be dropping in the upcoming year, as the redevelopment of Old Town Hall Homes occurs (turning 30 apartment units into 55 new apartment units).

**2018 DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING  
WESTCOG COMMUNITIES  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPEALS (CGS 8-30g)  
LIST**

<u><i>Cities (above the 10% threshold)</i></u>	<u>2002</u> <u>PERCENTAGE</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Stamford	11.86%	15.12%
Norwalk	12.23%	12.75%
Danbury	12.24%	10.83%

<u><i>Other Communities</i></u>	<u>2002</u> <u>PERCENTAGE</u>	<u>2018</u> <u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Bethel	6.48%	5.85%
Brookfield	2.30%	5.36%
Greenwich	4.39%	5.06%
New Milford	4.19%	4.34%
Wilton	2.58%	4.00%
<b>Darien</b>	<b>1.28%</b>	<b>3.56%</b>
New Canaan	1.82%	3.44%
Westport	2.50%	3.37%
Ridgefield	2.17%	2.96%
Newtown	3.34%	2.46%
New Fairfield	1.55%	1.43%
Sherman	0.19%	0.38%
Redding	0.00%	0.37%
Weston	0.06%	0.19%
Bridgewater	0.13%	0.11%

*Source: State of CT Department of Housing*  
Last revised: August 1, 2019

As of 2018, Darien's deed-restricted units number 252, or 3.56% of housing units. Darien is one of the few communities to qualify for a moratorium under CGS 8-30g, and in fact, is one of only two communities to qualify for two moratoria (the other is Berlin). As of 2017, Trumbull, Ridgefield, Wilton and Farmington have all achieved moratoria.

Darien's affordable units are largely multifamily units, which are on municipal water and

sewage.

**Location of existing affordable housing.**

- Avalon, containing 47 affordable units, is located one block from the Noroton Heights Train Station, two blocks from a bus stop, and within two blocks of shopping, including access to a grocery store and bank. Avalon has on-site recreational facilities, including a pool, and basketball court, for use by residents.
- Garden Homes, containing 11 affordable units, is located on Boston Post Road, on a main bus route through Darien. It is across the street from a grocery store and restaurants. It is on the eastern end of Boston Post Road.
- The Heights at Darien, containing over 100 units of affordable housing, is three blocks from the Noroton Heights Train Station and the grocery store, doctor's office, pharmacy and banks, which are across the street from that train station. It is also across the street from McGuane field, a Town park.
- Pemberton 16—this building contains 5 units of affordable housing. It is one block from the Darien Train Station (and associated bus line which stops there), as well as one block from downtown Darien, which contains jobs and shopping.
- Tokeneke Center—there are 2 units of affordable housing within the second floor of this building in downtown Darien. Similar to Pemberton 16, it is one block from the Darien Train Station (and associated bus line), as well as one block from downtown Darien, which contains jobs and shopping.

There are many zoning districts in Darien which allow multi-family and/or affordable housing, and those districts are throughout the Town and close to Boston Post Road, on areas served by public water and sewer. The Noroton Heights Redevelopment Zone, across the street from the Noroton Heights Train Station, also allows for the development of multi-family and affordable housing.

7. *From your housing data profile, determine the median household income overall, for homeowners, and for renters, the median sales price and median gross rent, and how many households (renters and owners) are burdened by their housing costs (spending more than 30% of their income on housing).*

Based upon the 2018 Partnership for Strong Communities Housing Data Profile, the median household income in Darien in 2015 was \$208,906. For homeowners that is \$233,523.

The Housing Data Profile notes that the median gross rent for the 875 rental units is \$2,717, but of course, it is not clear what size units those are and/or what amenities come with those units.

The Data Profile notes that 30% of owners and 46% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

2018 Affordable Housing Appeals List - Exempt Municipalities							
Town	Total Housing Units 2010 Census	Governmentally Assisted	Tenant Rental Assistance	Single Family CHFA /USDA Mortgages	Deed Restricted Units	Totally Assisted Units	Percent Affordable
Ansonia	8,148	347	747	134	9	1,237	15.18%
Bloomfield	9,019	558	95	328	0	981	10.88%
Bridgeport	57,012	6,434	4,240	900	19	11,593	20.33%
Bristol	27,011	1,766	815	1025	0	3,606	13.35%
Danbury	31,154	1,590	943	544	296	3,373	10.83%
Derby	5,849	275	302	96	0	673	11.51%
East Hartford	21,328	1,574	776	989	0	3,339	15.66%
East Windsor	5,045	559	40	102	14	715	14.17%
Enfield	17,558	1,340	219	613	7	2,179	12.41%
Groton	17,978	3,587	94	358	10	4,049	22.52%
Hartford	51,822	10,293	8,267	1479	0	20,039	38.67%
Killingly	7,592	520	112	202	0	834	10.99%
Manchester	25,996	1,831	932	896	32	3,691	14.20%
Meriden	25,892	1,887	1,168	1011	11	4,077	15.75%
Middletown	21,223	3,019	1,163	484	25	4,691	22.10%
New Britain	31,226	2,911	1,477	1107	177	5,672	18.16%
New Haven	54,967	9,434	6,600	1008	481	17,523	31.88%
New London	11,840	1,592	483	486	99	2,660	22.47%
Norwalk	35,415	2,215	1,331	363	607	4,516	12.75%
Norwich	18,659	2,221	745	528	0	3,494	18.73%
Plainfield	6,229	377	186	221	0	784	12.59%
Putnam	4,299	383	62	84	0	529	12.31%
Stamford	50,573	4,112	1,879	385	1272	7,648	15.12%
Torrington	16,761	928	329	512	17	1,786	10.66%
Vernon	13,896	1,508	401	372	12	2,293	16.50%
Waterbury	47,991	5,344	2,916	1758	28	10,046	20.93%
West Haven	22,446	1,024	1,499	442	0	2,965	13.21%
Winchester	5,613	349	183	86	0	618	11.01%
Windham	9,570	1,763	610	360	0	2,733	28.56%

2018 Affordable Housing Appeals List - Non-Exempt Municipalities							
Town	Total Housing Units 2010 Census	Governmentally Assisted	Tenant Rental Assistance	Single Family CHFA /USDA Mortgages	Deed Restricted Units	Totally Assisted Units	Percent Affordable
Andover	1,317	18	2	25	0	45	3.42%
Ashford	1,903	32	0	32	0	64	3.36%
Avon	7,389	244	13	34	0	291	3.94%
Barkhamsted	1,589	0	6	16	0	22	1.38%
Beacon Falls	2,509	0	3	40	0	43	1.71%
Berlin	8,140	556	59	126	10	751	9.23%
Bethany	2,044	0	2	9	1	12	0.59%
Bethel	7,310	192	28	134	74	428	5.85%
Bethlehem	1,575	24	0	8	0	32	2.03%
Bolton	2,015	0	1	25	0	26	1.29%
Bozrah	1,059	0	4	28	0	32	3.02%
Branford	13,972	233	63	152	0	448	3.21%



<b>Bridgewater</b>	881	0	0	1	0	1	0.11%
<b>Brookfield</b>	6,562	155	24	96	77	352	5.36%
<b>Brooklyn</b>	3,235	231	8	72	0	311	9.61%
<b>Burlington</b>	3,389	27	0	37	0	64	1.89%
<b>Canaan</b>	779	35	4	5	1	45	5.78%
<b>Canterbury</b>	2,043	76	1	56	0	133	6.51%
<b>Canton</b>	4,339	211	14	47	32	304	7.01%
<b>Chaplin</b>	988	0	0	32	0	32	3.24%
<b>Cheshire</b>	10,424	258	22	87	17	384	3.68%
<b>Chester</b>	1,923	23	3	13	0	39	2.03%
<b>Clinton</b>	6,065	105	12	52	0	169	2.79%
<b>Colchester</b>	6,182	364	30	129	4	527	8.52%
<b>Colebrook</b>	722	0	1	5	1	7	0.97%
<b>Columbia</b>	2,308	24	2	58	0	84	3.64%
<b>Cornwall</b>	1,007	28	2	3	0	33	3.28%
<b>Coventry</b>	5,099	103	4	120	20	247	4.84%
<b>Cromwell</b>	6,001	212	9	185	0	406	6.77%
<b>Darien</b>	7,074	136	10	2	104	252	3.56%
<b>Deep River</b>	2,096	26	5	29	0	60	2.86%
<b>Durham</b>	2,694	36	1	17	0	54	2.00%
<b>Eastford</b>	793	0	0	15	0	15	1.89%
<b>East Granby</b>	2,152	72	3	40	0	115	5.34%
<b>East Haddam</b>	4,508	73	5	48	0	126	2.80%
<b>East Hampton</b>	5,485	70	7	75	25	177	3.23%
<b>East Haven</b>	12,533	542	154	302	0	998	7.96%
<b>East Lyme</b>	8,458	396	0	82	19	497	5.88%
<b>Easton</b>	2,715	0	0	1	15	16	0.59%
<b>Ellington</b>	6,665	260	7	96	0	363	5.45%
<b>Essex</b>	3,261	58	5	16	16	95	2.91%
<b>Fairfield</b>	21,648	230	105	52	140	527	2.43%
<b>Farmington</b>	11,106	470	118	132	155	875	7.88%
<b>Franklin</b>	771	27	1	15	0	43	5.58%
<b>Glastonbury</b>	13,656	582	38	117	2	739	5.41%
<b>Goshen</b>	1,664	1	0	3	0	4	0.24%
<b>Granby</b>	4,360	85	1	44	5	135	3.10%
<b>Greenwich</b>	25,631	865	392	13	27	1,297	5.06%
<b>Griswold</b>	5,118	137	49	156	0	342	6.68%
<b>Guilford</b>	9,596	186	11	32	0	229	2.39%
<b>Haddam</b>	3,504	22	0	27	0	49	1.40%
<b>Hamden</b>	25,114	937	699	486	4	2,126	8.47%
<b>Hampton</b>	793	0	1	13	0	14	1.77%
<b>Hartland</b>	856	2	0	4	0	6	0.70%
<b>Harwinton</b>	2,282	22	4	25	0	51	2.23%
<b>Hebron</b>	3,567	58	3	39	0	100	2.80%
<b>Kent</b>	1,665	34	4	4	0	42	2.52%
<b>Killingworth</b>	2,598	0	0	20	5	25	0.96%
<b>Lebanon</b>	3,125	26	4	75	0	105	3.36%
<b>Ledyard</b>	5,987	32	9	206	0	247	4.13%
<b>Lisbon</b>	1,730	2	0	48	0	50	2.89%
<b>Litchfield</b>	3,975	140	4	24	19	187	4.70%
<b>Lyme</b>	1,223	0	19	4	8	31	2.53%
<b>Madison</b>	8,049	90	2	7	33	132	1.64%
<b>Mansfield</b>	6,017	175	128	99	2	404	6.71%
<b>Marlborough</b>	2,389	24	1	26	0	51	2.13%
<b>Middlebury</b>	2,892	76	5	22	20	123	4.25%
<b>Middlefield</b>	1,863	30	3	17	1	51	2.74%
<b>Milford</b>	23,074	726	225	192	76	1,219	5.28%
<b>Monroe</b>	6,918	32	4	49	8	93	1.34%