

Cape & Islands -- Trends & Implications

Report prepared for the Cape Cod Collaborative February 8, 2019

Cape Cod & the Islands are unique places in topography and demography
But the forces of both demographic and climate change will impact their future

Consider these housing and demographic details and trends:

- The Cape* & Islands have about 265,000 year-round residents, same as in 2010
-- By contrast the Bay State has 6.9 million residents up about 5% since 2010
- They live in 112,000 year-round homes (*households*), 4% fewer than in 2010
--The State has 2.6 million year-round homes, about 2% more than in 2010
- But Cape & Islands have about 194,000 dwelling units, 2% more than in 2010
-- The State has about 2.9 million dwellings, also about 2% more than in 2010

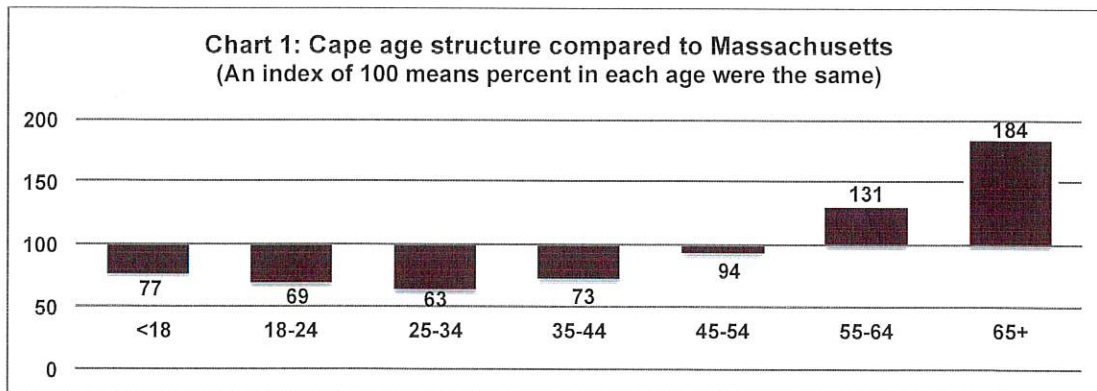
Implications: The Bay State is growing in both in population and households. But almost all Cape & Island towns either have no growth or are declining both in terms of population and households, even though the number of all dwelling units is rising.

The trend of dwellings being either converted to seasonal or part-time rental units, or being built as such, on Cape & Islands strongly implies that, unless there is some major change, the number of families with school-age children will keep shrinking.

* Cape definition for this report includes Barnstable County plus the Town of Wareham

Other relevant demographic trends:

- The Cape (Barnstable County) has a median age of 53 years, highest in the State
-- as a result fewer than 1 in 3 adult women here are in their 18-44 child-bearing years
- Since 2010 Cape & Islands births were under 1,900/year, offset by 3,000+ deaths
-- Each year since 2010 statewide there were about 72,000 births, but only 55,000 deaths
- So few Cape births occur because its age structure differs greatly from the state:

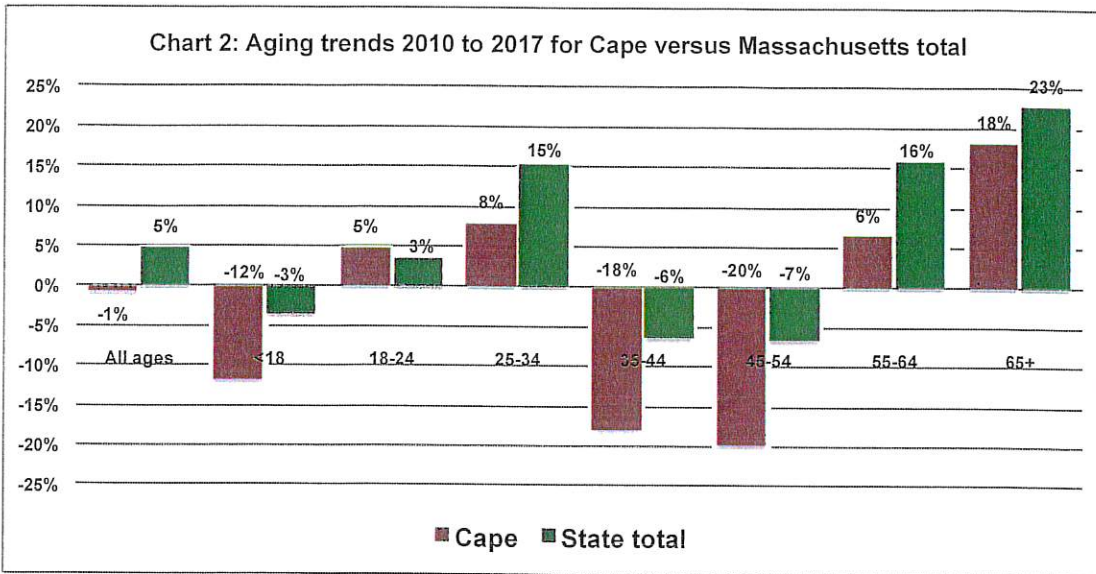


Source: Census Bureau 2017 population estimates

Implications: Partly because the Cape is a desirable place to retire, a greater percentage of homes are occupied by older people than elsewhere in the state. Retiree advantages: built up home equity & don't need to commute to work.

Age structure & child trends:

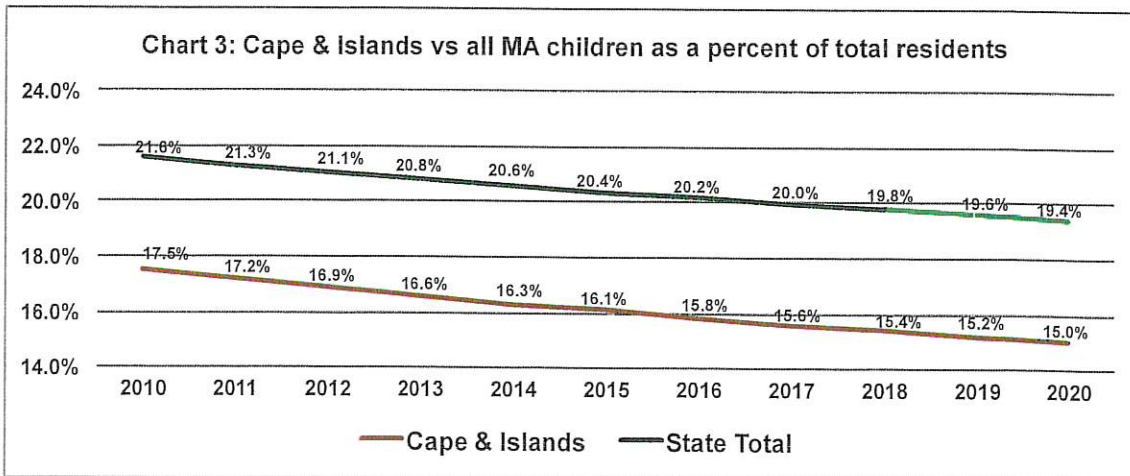
- Cape residents are not increasing, and are *aging* more rapidly than the State.
- But Cape *aging* has been due far more to loss of working age families & children
- Rapid increase in people ages 55 + are mostly the result of aging Baby Boomers



US% = +5% -1% 0% +10% 0% -6% +15% +26%

Source: Census Bureau population estimates

- Children as a percent of year-round residents are declining in both Cape & State
- But on Cape & Islands children are a smaller fraction of residents & decreasing
- Only 53% of Cape & Islands dwellings are households with year-round residents (Down from 57% seven years ago)



Source: Census Bureau annual population estimates. Data for 2018 thru 2020 are authors projections

Housing, households and year-round residents for Cape & Island towns

- Year round residents are decreasing in most places, except for the Islands
- Dwelling units are increasing everywhere except for Brewster & Chatham
- Only one-third of dwellings are year-round households in the Outer cape

Table1: Cape & Island households and housing units trends by town

	# residents in 2017	Number of Dwellings	Number of Households	Households/ Residents % dwellings	%C 2010-'17	Dwellings %C 2010-'17	Households %C 2010-'17	Child/K Dwellg
Provincetown	2,959	4,580	1,719	38%	0.6%	1.9%	-2.6%	42
Truro	2,004	3,350	800	24%	0.0%	8.9%	-18.7%	49
Wellfleet	2,736	4,552	1,502	33%	-0.5%	5.7%	10.0%	88
Eastham	4,882	6,116	2,260	37%	-1.5%	2.6%	-5.4%	83
Orleans	5,820	5,471	2,814	51%	-1.2%	2.4%	-4.6%	126
Brewster	9,836	7,851	4,205	54%	0.2%	-1.2%	-4.1%	211
Outer Cape	28,237	31,920	13,300	42%	-0.4%	2.5%	-3.9%	113
Chatham	6,169	7,195	2,717	38%	0.7%	-2.0%	-11.9%	118
Dennis	13,917	16,356	6,815	42%	-2.0%	4.9%	-1.6%	92
Harwich	12,145	10,308	5,416	53%	-0.8%	0.2%	-3.7%	184
Yarmouth	23,339	17,490	10,482	60%	-1.9%	0.1%	-6.7%	200
Barnstable	44,163	26,621	18,629	70%	-2.3%	1.1%	-3.1%	283
Mid Cape	115,389	77,970	44,059	57%	-1.6%	1.2%	-4.4%	196
Bourne	19,879	11,667	8,200	70%	0.6%	8.0%	4.2%	304
Sandwich	20,303	9,550	7,402	78%	-1.8%	0.8%	-4.8%	463
Falmouth	31,101	22,215	13,164	59%	-1.4%	1.1%	-6.4%	234
Mashpee	14,191	10,198	6,023	59%	1.3%	3.2%	-1.6%	215
Wareham	22,640	13,181	9,529	72%	3.5%	1.1%	4.4%	330
Upper Cape	108,114	66,811	44,318	66%	0.3%	3.7%	-1.4%	295
Cape total*	251,740	176,701	101,677	58%	-0.7%	2.0%	-3.8%	218
Nantucket	11,229	12,030	6,257	52%	10.4%	3.5%	3.8%	185
Martha's Vin	17,325	17,677	3,761	35%	4.8%	4.1%	13.1%	173
Cape&Islands	280,294	206,408	111,695	54%	0.1%	2.3%	-2.6%	213

Source: Census Bureau estimates (Due to small size of some towns, data may have large sample variability)

Note: Child/K Dwellig column is number of children per thousand dwelling units. Top standard = 500

- The Donahue Institute projects a decline in # of children on Cape & statewide
--- Children on the Cape are projected to decrease at about one percent per year
- Nationwide trends all point to fewer children as birth rates are at all-time lows
--- Also White, non-Hispanic birth rates are the lowest of any race/ethnic category
- The wider trend to fewer children is unlikely to be different on Cape & Islands
--- Standard for children per 1,000 dwellings is 500, which Cape towns are far below

Implications & conclusion: Managing this slow decline in the number of children would be a hard task in a normal setting. But it is vastly harder when the structure of small towns with many education options is as complicated as it is on the Cape.