



# **Authority Monitoring Report**



**2022**



## **Foreword**

The North Somerset Council Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is published each year. This AMR monitors the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

The primary purpose of the AMR is to report on the performance of the planning policies and the progress of emerging policy documents and North Somerset Council remains committed to preparing and publishing a monitoring report in this format each year.

Further copies of this document and those from previous years are available on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/planningpolicy)

**We welcome any comments on this document that would help us to improve both the information and format of future reports.**

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## **Introduction**

The production of an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is a statutory requirement.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Show how North Somerset's emerging development plan documents are progressing;
- Show how well the policies in the adopted development plan documents are performing; and
- Where policies are not being implemented, explain why and set out what steps are being taken to ensure that the policy is implemented, or whether the policy should be amended or replaced.

Annual monitoring will also form the basis for review of any development plan documents that are adopted.

## **Local Development Plan**

The development plan for North Somerset currently comprises the following adopted documents and associated policies maps:

- North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)
- Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016)
- Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)
- West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011)
- Backwell Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)
- Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2015)
- Claverham Neighbourhood Development Plan (2018)
- Yatton Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019)
- Congresbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019)
- Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan (2021).

### **Core Strategy**

Following an examination conducted by an independent Inspector, the North Somerset Core Strategy was found sound and was formally adopted in April 2012. The adoption of the Core Strategy was subsequently challenged. The High Court Judgment found that Policy CS13: Scale of new housing was unlawful by reason of the Core Strategy Inspector's failure to give 'adequate or intelligible reasons for his conclusions on the housing requirement figure.

As a result Policy CS13, along with other policies that could require consequential changes if the housing requirement increased, were remitted back to the Planning Inspectorate for re-examination. The re-examination took place in two stages. Policy CS13 was re-adopted in 18 September 2015.

The second stage of the re-examination assessed whether any consequential changes were needed to the other remitted policies as a result of the increase to the housing requirement.

The Core Strategy remitted policies were adopted by the council on 10 January 2017. Further details are available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/corestrategy).

### **Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies**

This development plan document contains the detailed development management planning policies to deliver the adopted Core Strategy. It covers a range of development issues including development in the Green Belt, major transport schemes, conservation areas, extensions to dwellings, development in the countryside, retailing, accommodation for older people, minerals planning and design.

The plan was adopted by full council on 19 July 2016. For further details please visit [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies).

### *Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan*

The Site Allocations Plan allocates housing and employment sites to deliver the Core Strategy requirements and defines the settlement boundaries for towns and villages identified in the Core Strategy in order to direct development to the most sustainable locations within North Somerset. The plan also contains allocations and policies that will protect the environment and provide additional facilities for leisure and social and community uses.

The plan was adopted on 10 April 2018. Further details are available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sitesandpolicies).

### *West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy*

The four unitary authorities in the West of England area worked together to produce this joint development plan document which was adopted in March 2011. The plan period runs until 2026. The strategy sets out the policies for the provision of waste management infrastructure across the sub region.

The document is available at <http://www.westofengland.org/waste-planning/adopted-joint-waste-core-strategy>.

### *Neighbourhood Development Plans*

Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) have now been made for six areas within North Somerset;

- Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano
- Backwell
- Claverham
- Congresbury
- Long Ashton
- Yatton.

As they are adopted, these form part of the local development plan.

Plans are being prepared for a number of other neighbourhood areas within the district.

The adopted plans and further information on those that are being prepared can be viewed at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans).

## Emerging plans

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the programme for the preparation of the Council's suite of planning policy documents. It sets out details of which documents are being produced, in what order, and when. The LDS is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it reflects the anticipated programme accurately. The last published version is dated December 2022 and can be viewed on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/localplan).

### Local Plan 2038

A new Local Plan is being prepared by the Council.

The Local Plan will allocate sufficient housing and employment and identify any associated necessary infrastructure. The Local Plan will also reassess, and update where appropriate, policies and designations for the protection of the natural and built environment and allocations for other land uses.

It will also contain a full suite of development management policies relating to the use of land and buildings on topics such as retail, employment, residential uses, design, flooding and drainage, waste and minerals, community facilities, transport and other infrastructure.

We published an initial pre-commencement document in March 2020 setting out the proposed scope, methodology and programme for the new Local Plan and consulted upon it from 10 March – 22 April 2020.

Following consideration of the responses to the pre-commencement document we moved on to the Challenges for the Future consultation. We published a document in July 2020 which set out what we thought were the challenges facing North Somerset over the next 15 years, and we consulted on a number of questions relating to these challenges between 22 July and 2 September 2020, seeking feedback on the issues that the Local Plan will need to address.

We received over 3,000 comments to the Challenges consultation from a wide range of people and organisations, including residents, businesses, house builders, service providers, local interest groups and town and parish council. These responses helped us shape the next part of the process – Choices for the Future.

In November 2020 we published the Choices for the Future document and opened a consultation on various approaches for where new housing and employment should be delivered over the next 15 years. We consulted upon this document between 2 November to 14 December 2020. The responses to these choices guided us towards a new spatial strategy which was endorsed by the Council's Executive committee in April 2021.

A draft Preferred Options Local Plan was agreed by the Executive committee in February 2022. The was published for consultation which closed on 29 April 2022. We received over 4,000 comments from over 700 respondents.

Work then progressed towards a Publication Version of the plan, however on 6 December 2022 there was an announcement of the Government's intention to make further changes to the planning system, which could include a revised method for calculating local housing requirements and protecting constrained areas such as Green Belts. North Somerset Council has made the decision to await clarity on these critical issues before finalising a revised version of the Local Plan.

On 22 December 2022 the Government published a consultation on planning reforms, along with proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. This is ongoing.

Consultation on a revised Local Plan is now not expected to take place before Summer 2023 with submission for examination in Autumn 2023. A revised Local Development Scheme will be published in due course, setting out a detailed revised timetable.

Full details are available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/newlocalplan](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/newlocalplan).

### Emerging Neighbourhood Development Plans

In addition to the six made plans there are other Neighbourhood groups at various stages of plan production and other parishes within North Somerset have also expressed an interest in developing a Neighbourhood Plan. Full details are kept up to date at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning).

### **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Whilst not formally part of the development plan, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can provide more detail on certain aspects of the development plan and clarify the interpretation of a policy or approach. Once adopted, SPDs are material considerations in the planning process.

Current adopted SPDs:

- Accessible Housing Needs (2018)
- Affordable Housing (2013)
- Biodiversity and Trees (2005)
- Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places (2021)
- Development Contributions (2014)
- Employment Led Delivery in Weston-super-Mare (2014)
- Landscape Character Assessment (2018)
- North Somerset and Mendip Bats Special Area of Conservation (2018)
- Parking Standards (2021)
- Residential Design Guide part 1 (2013)



- Residential Design Guide part 2 (2014)
- Shopfront Design Guide (2019)
- Solar Photovoltaic Arrays (2013)
- Travel Plans (2010)
- Weston Villages (2012)
- Weston-super-Mare Town Centre Regeneration (2017)
- Wind turbines (2014)

All adopted and emerging supplementary planning documents are available to download from [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/spds](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/spds).

## **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge which developers have to pay per square metre of development towards the cost of infrastructure to support development. The charge which is payable varies according to the size, type and location of the development. Our CIL charging schedule took effect on 18 January 2018. We are required to produce a separate monitoring report on CIL income and expenditure, along with details of any monies secured or spent in relation to S106 legal agreements. This is called an Infrastructure Funding Statement.

Full details of our CIL, including the Infrastructure Funding Statement and previous monitoring reports, are available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/CIL](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/CIL).

## **Authority Monitoring Report Topic areas**

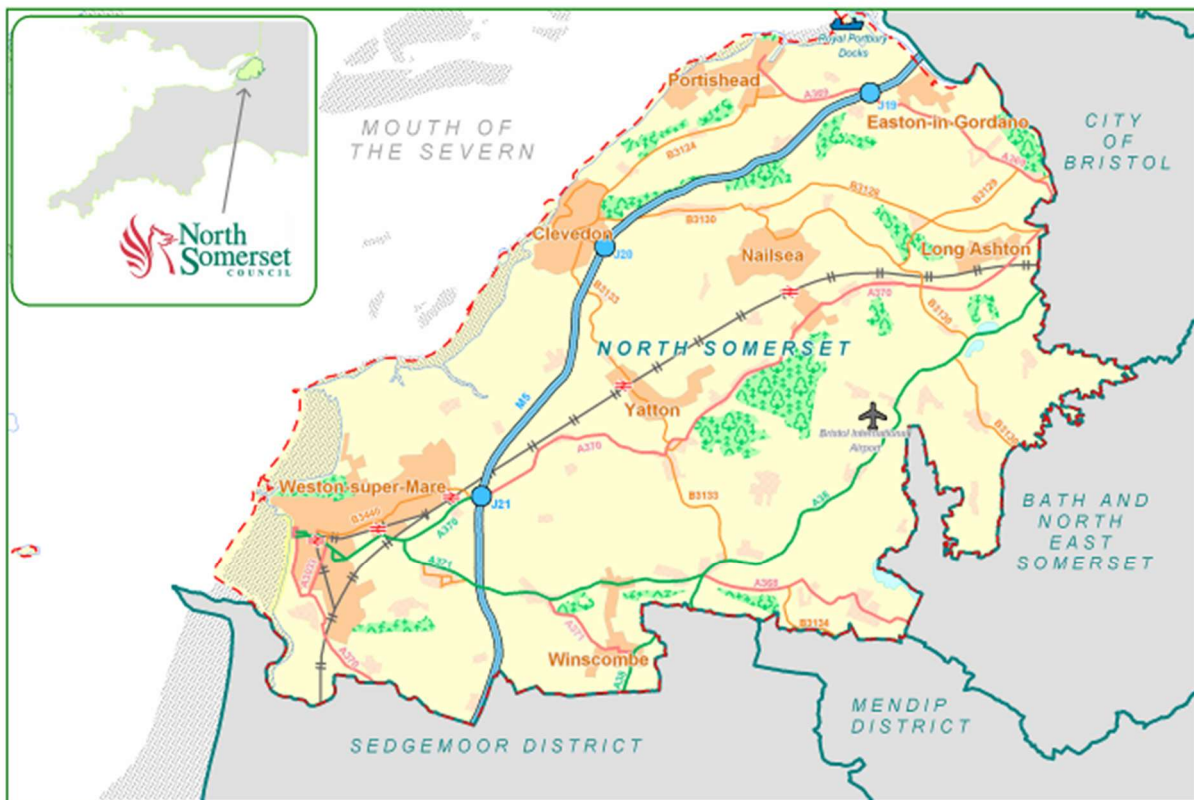
The Authority Monitoring Report is presented on a topic basis, for ease of reference. The topics have been set out to mirror the themes in the Core Strategy, which are:

- Living within environmental limits
- Delivering strong and inclusive communities
- Delivering a prosperous economy
- Ensuring safe and healthy communities.

Since the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the withdrawal of Government guidance on monitoring it is now a matter for local authorities to decide what to include in their monitoring reports while ensuring that they are prepared in accordance with relevant legislation.

## Setting the scene in North Somerset

### Location map



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North Somerset covers an area of 39,080 hectares (151 square miles) and (according to the 2021 Census) has a population of 216,727 people. The district contains an international airport, a deep-sea west coast port, part of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a large area of Green Belt stretching south-west from the edge of Bristol, as well as areas of low-lying levels and moors. The main settlements include the strategically significant town of Weston-super-Mare and the three smaller towns of Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea. The M5 runs from north to south through the district and the mainline railway from Bristol to the South-West also crosses North Somerset stopping at five stations along its route.

## Demographic structure

### Population size

- The population of North Somerset is 216,728 as recorded by the 2021 Census, an increase of 1,154 on the 2020 mid-year population estimate.
- The age breakdown for North Somerset is:
  - Aged 0-15 years – 17.6%
  - Aged 16-64 years – 58.5%
  - Aged 65 years and over – 23.9%
- Currently the proportion of people in North Somerset aged 65 and over is 23.9%, compared to 22.4% in the South West and 18.5% in England and Wales.

Source: 2021 Census ONS

### Ethnicity

	White	Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	Other ethnic group
North Somerset	95.7%	1.7%	1.5%	0.5%	0.6%
South West	93.1%	2.0%	2.8%	1.2%	0.9%
England and Wales	81.7%	2.9%	9.3%	4.0%	2.1%

Source: 2021 Census, ONS

### Dwellings, household types and tenure

At the 2021 Census there were 94,648 households in North Somerset. The household composition is:

- 30.7% one-person household
- 64.5% single family household
- 4.8% other household type

Source: 2021 Census

## **Socio-cultural issues**

### **Crime rates and perception of safety**

- Over the past year 13,262 crimes (excluding fraud) were recorded in North Somerset. This accounted for 11% of crimes committed in the Avon and Somerset police force area.

Source: Home Office – Police recorded crime, March 2021

### **Unemployment rates**

- The unemployment rate of people aged 16-64 in North Somerset is 2.4% for the period of April 2021 to March 2022. This is a decrease on the previous year's figure of 4.8%. The unemployment rate across the South West 2.9%.

Source: Annual Population Survey April 2021 to March 2022

### **Deprivation**

- Within the Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 the local authority district with a rank of 1 is the most deprived, and the area ranked 317 is the least deprived. North Somerset is ranked at 221.
- North Somerset has 5 LSOAs within the most deprived 5% in England, all within South and Central wards of Weston-super-Mare.
- There are 12 LSOAs within the least deprived 5% in England, these are spread across the district.

Source: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

## **LIVING WITHIN ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITS**

### **Climate Change**

#### **Climate Emergency**

North Somerset Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions and tackling climate change. The Core Strategy outlines principles that will guide development to be more sustainable.

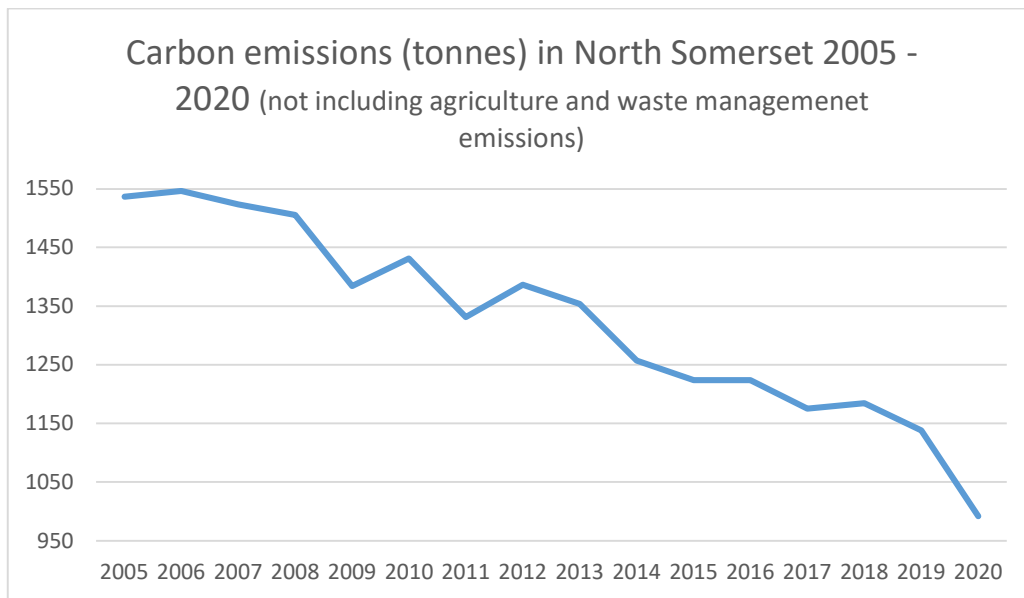
In February 2019 the council declared a Climate Emergency. A target to be carbon neutral by 2030 has been set for both the organisation and the authority area. A Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan has been produced to assist in achieving these targets. A refreshed action plan was adopted in November 2022 following the successful completion of several projects outlined in the original plan. The report is available on our website at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/climatechange>.

#### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy provide data at local authority level estimating industrial, public sector, commercial, domestic, transport, LULUCF, agricultural and waste management greenhouse gas emissions in kilotons. Figures are available from 2005 to 2020 and show there has been a significant reduction in North Somerset.

Year	Industry Total	Commercial Total	Public Sector Total	Domestic Total	Transport Total	LULUCF Net Emissions	Agriculture Total	Waste Management Total	Grand Total	Per Capita Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Emissions per km <sup>2</sup> (kt CO <sub>2</sub> e)
2005	224.2	161.7	53.6	485.6	585.1	26.5	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2006	225.4	173.4	55.9	489.8	576.0	26.1	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2007	215.1	166.3	52.9	471.8	592.3	25.2	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2008	208.8	163.2	52.4	471.2	585.4	24.4	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2009	184.0	137.4	44.6	429.4	565.3	23.6	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2010	200.3	145.8	47.6	458.4	555.6	23.4	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2011	180.9	137.2	44.9	402.1	543.8	22.6	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2012	193.1	147.6	47.7	436.2	539.0	22.7	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2013	190.3	136.4	44.9	424.3	536.0	21.8	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2014	173.7	117.2	39.0	357.5	547.5	22.0	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
2015	169.1	102.3	32.7	346.9	551.9	21.0	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]

<b>2016</b>	171.2	88.2	30.2	332.2	579.9	22.2	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
<b>2017</b>	163.5	83.4	27.9	307.5	571.4	21.5	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]	[x]
<b>2018</b>	172.9	80.3	27.9	300.0	581.3	22.1	107.0	35.2	1,326.8	6.2	3.4
<b>2019</b>	158.5	67.0	23.9	292.3	574.4	22.0	107.0	38.8	1,284.0	6.0	3.3
<b>2020</b>	151.2	55.7	23.3	286.3	453.2	22.3	103.9	36.3	1,132.3	5.3	2.9



The most significant reduction in carbon emissions has come from the commercial and public sectors with reductions of 66% in the commercial sector since 2005 and a reduction of 56% in the public sector.

### **Sustainable design and construction**

#### **Renewable energy**

Large renewable energy and microgeneration schemes are supported by the council. Renewable electricity produced in North Somerset, as at the end of 2021, is detailed in the table below.

	Number of sites	Capacity (MW)	Generation (MWh)
Photovoltaic	8,311	85.254	75,218
Onshore Wind	5	0.034	70
Hydro	2	0.023	X
Anaerobic Digestion	2	1.099	X
Landfill Gas	1	1.561	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,321</b>	<b>87.971</b>	<b>75,289*</b>

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industry 2021

X – there was some generation but it has been suppressed to prevent the output of individual plants being revealed.

\* total does not include hydro, anaerobic digestion and landfill gas generation.

## Carbon Reduction

Throughout the North Somerset district carbon emissions have been reduced to 5.3 tonnes per capita in 2020 with the Transport sector being one of the major sources of carbon dioxide emissions. The council has taken the decision to implement the following changes to reduce carbon emissions:

- **Rewilding and green programme** - allowing our green spaces to grow wild and planting more trees
- **Transport** - improve paths and roads to encourage more walking and cycling, switch to green energy sources for buses and public transport
- **Reduce, reuse, recycle** - improve our waste management strategies and services to send less to landfill
- **Planning and building** - update policies to guide sustainable development, and provide incentives for homeowners to make green improvements

The council have also taken the following action to reduce the risks associated with a changing climate:

- **Flood risk management schemes:** tackling the increase in flood risk from extreme weather events and a changing climate.
- **Biodiversity and green infrastructure planning policy:** reducing the threats posed to biodiversity by climate change. GI leads to cooling, carbon storage and provides shading, increasingly required through increased temperatures.
- **Community resilience** – providing support for communities to cope in extreme weather events.

## Supplementary Planning Documents

The Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places SPD was adopted in April 2021. This document joins the Wind Turbines SPD and the Solar Photovoltaic Array SPD in providing additional guidance for sustainable development, the SPDs can be viewed at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/spds](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/spds)

## Environmental protection

### Flood Risk

Policy CS3 of the adopted North Somerset Core Strategy relates to Environmental Impacts and Flood Risk Assessment. Since July 2016 it has been supplemented by adopted Policy DM1 on Flooding and Drainage in the adopted Sites and Policies Plan: Part 1. One monitoring indicator identified is to review the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) at regular intervals. The SFRA was produced as a series of studies between 2008 and 2010. An

update to the SFRA Level 1 was published in June 2020 and is available on our website: [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sfra](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sfra).

As a Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), North Somerset has prepared a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) which outlines how we intend to manage local flood risk within our area. Local flood risk means flooding from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.

The LFRMS identifies objectives for managing local flood risk, proposes measures to achieve these objectives and sets an action plan giving approximate timescales for implementing these actions. The LFRMS can be viewed at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-02/local%20flood%20risk%20management%20strategy.pdf>.

## **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

### **Screening opinions**

The council has a specific role within the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 to provide screening opinions on development proposals. This is to determine whether a proposed development falls within the remit of the Regulations, by whether it is likely to have any significant effects on the environment. Screening should take place at an early stage in the decision of a development but can occur after a planning application has been made.

The EIA Regulations list the types of development that may be subject to EIA within 2 separate Schedules. All projects listed in Schedule One will be subject to EIA and an Environmental Statement will be required with a planning application. The council is required to determine whether a proposal listed in Schedule Two of the Regulations should be subject to EIA. An assessment is undertaken to determine whether these projects are likely or unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. Where significant effects are judged to be likely, a positive screening opinion is provided and when significant effects are judged to be unlikely- a negative screening opinion is provided.

### **Scoping opinions**

If it is determined that a proposal is subject to EIA and an Environmental Statement (ES) is required, the developer can apply to the council in writing for a Scoping Opinion. This is guidance on the issues that will need to be addressed within the submitted ES.

## **Environmental policies**

The adopted Core Strategy policy CS5: Landscape and the historic environment seeks to protect and enhance North Somerset's landscape and townscape as well as the Mendip Hills AONB. The adopted Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies DM11 seeks to protect the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These policies provide guidance on development proposals within these areas.



## **Nature conservation**

### **Key assets**

North Somerset has:

- **2** National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- **13** Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- **204** Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)
- **56** Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- **1** Ramsar
- **4** Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- **1** Special Protection Area (SPA)
- **75** Local Geological Sites (LGS)
- **1,053** Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)
- **1** Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Source: North Somerset Council and Natural England

### **Local sites**

Local sites include Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites. The 204 Local Wildlife Sites in North Somerset cover an area of 8509.39 hectares. The condition of Local Sites is largely unknown as the majority are privately owned. Local Sites are non-statutory sites so there is no obligation on owners to protect or report on the features for which the site was designated; or for them to allow their landholdings to be surveyed (unless the designation happens to overlap with that of a SSSI). Therefore, designated Local Wildlife Sites may include habitats that have been damaged or destroyed through inappropriate management or neglect.

### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)**

SSSI condition is assessed by Natural England. 65% of North Somerset SSSIs are in favourable condition. This falls below the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan sets a new target to restore 75% of SSSIs by area to favourable condition by 2042. It is important to note that a large proportion of our SSSI sites have not been fully monitored by Natural England for many years however and a large percentage are expected to have declined in condition, reducing those in favourable condition to an even lower level. Natural England have identified many long term threats to our SSSI sites including nutrient enrichment in water, sea level rise, coastal squeeze, poor water quality and recreational disturbance. We hope that our Green Infrastructure Strategy will help to reduce this trend.

	Hectares
Favourable	2,295.24
Unfavourable Recovering	574.35
Unfavourable No Change	574.98
Unfavourable Declining	79.74
Assessed area	3,524.31

Source: Natural England

## **Development Management**

The natural environment policies in the Core Strategy seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity through:

- meeting Biodiversity Action Plan targets,
- implementation of new Green Infrastructure,
- safeguarding and enhancing through new development,
- protecting designated sites and important habitats, and
- promoting native tree planting.

Ecological consultation responses provided to Development Management ensure that the above aims are implemented within submitted ecological reports and landscaping plans. Policies CS4 and DM8 support the negotiation of reasonable avoidance and mitigation of harm to site biodiversity (prioritising protected sites and species; and Section 41 habitats and species) and the pursuit of opportunities to enhance site biodiversity.

Within the ecological assessment, it is considered essential to secure locally appropriate ecological landscaping and management of retained open spaces (subject to other required designated use constraints, e.g. play areas), particularly for major application sites; and to negotiate sufficient habitat on the boundaries of sites (proportionate to size of site) to retain sufficient wildlife corridor network.

A sufficient boundary buffer habitat is essential for bats and other wildlife that needs to migrate and interbreed with other populations for genetic exchange. A significant proportion of native planting is required within landscaping plans to increase the likelihood of provision of essential specific larval food plants for insects; and other ornamental planting required to have some recognised wildlife benefit (nectar, seeds, berries). External lighting conditions are also secured to avoid harm to light sensitive species of bats and other nocturnal wildlife.

## **Green Infrastructure Strategy**

The councils new Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy was adopted in September 2021. The strategy sets out the GI network within the district and provides a framework to maximise the environmental, economic and social benefits as well as the management, improvement and connectivity of GI assets. The strategy will also be used to inform the new Local Plan.

## **Projects**

### Rewilding in North Somerset

In February 2020 an ambitious rewilding programme commenced. Suitable sites for rewilding were picked throughout the district including parks, verges and other open spaces. Initially 5,000 trees were planted and areas of previously cut amenity grass were allowed to grow longer. The last of the tree planting was completed in winter 2021/22 and the final tall grass areas were introduced in summer 2022.

These actions have created new habitats for wildlife to flourish supporting our biodiversity action plan aims. Other benefits include helping to reduce our carbon footprint and providing more green infrastructure. A project delivered by Avon Wildlife Trust with the help of funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund has assessed the rewilding project as a success. A total of 30,000 trees were planted and approximately 400,000 square metres of tall grass has been created.

### Ash Dieback Action Plan

Ash dieback is a disease which will lead to the decline and death of most Ash trees. The disease was confirmed to be in North Somerset in 2019 but it is likely it has been in the local areas for longer. There are approximately 200,000 Ash trees in the district and around 80,000 of those are the responsibility of the council. The Action Plan, published in July 2022, sets out ways to manage the disease and associated risks in conjunction with the costs and resources needed. Our Green Infrastructure Strategy enables the council to prepare for the impact on the landscape and will help us develop resilience for the future. Tree felling has started taking place throughout the district to remove Ash trees which have been identified as rapidly declining and pose a safety risk.

### Landscape and the historic environment

It is the council's aim for the historic environment to be maintained and protected. Any development affecting conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and archaeological sites should be appropriate and seek to enhance and reflect the character of the protected area.

### **Heritage assets**

North Somerset has:

- **32** Conservation Areas
- **1,076** Listed Buildings
- **68** Scheduled Monuments
- **8** Registered parks and gardens
- **58** Unregistered parks and gardens
- **14** Local Heritage List assets

Source: Historic England 2022 / North Somerset Council

### **Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' Register**

Seven sites within the district are on the Heritage at Risk Register 2022. Four of these sites are Listed Buildings and three are Scheduled Monuments.

The four Listed Buildings at risk are:

- Ashton Court, Long Ashton (Grade I listed)
- St Mary's Church, Portbury (Grade I listed – place of worship)
- Birnbeck Pier, Weston-super-Mare (Grade II\* listed)
- St George's Church, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano (Grade II listed – place of worship)

The three Scheduled Monuments at risk are:

- Elms Colliery, Nailsea (the buildings are also Grade II listed)
- Worlebury Camp: a large multivallate hillfort on Worlebury Hill, Weston-super-Mare
- Long barrow 350m south-west of Cornerpool Farm, Wrington

### **Conservation Areas**

There are currently no Conservation Areas on the Heritage at Risk Register. Banwell Conservation Area's Appraisal and Management Plan was adopted in September 2021. Work has commenced on the three Backwell Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and will continue in 2023.

### **Development Management, Enforcement and Planning Appeals**

The Principal Conservation & Heritage Officer and Principal Archaeologist review and provide comments on planning applications and enforcement cases. Large applications which have required input over the past year include Gatcombe Farm (Long Ashton), Youngwood Lane (Nailsea), multiple applications at West Wick, the Former Royal Pier Hotel Site 55 - 57 Birnbeck Road (Weston-super-Mare), large residential sites such as Rectory Farm (Congresbury) and Box Bush Farm (Yatton) as well as Felton House, The Odeon and the Fork 'n' Ale Pub, for the Principal Conservation & Heritage Officer. Several major applications including the Banwell Bypass have also required input from heritage officers.

There were two large public inquiries in the first half of 2022 which required the input of NSC heritage officers:

#### Butts Batch, Wrington

An application for 61 houses was refused by the Council on landscape and heritage grounds. The applicant appealed the decision, and this was subject to a 6-day Public Inquiry. The appeal was dismissed on the grounds that the harm to the setting of the Grade I listed Church would not be outweighed by the public benefit of new houses in this location.

#### Front Street, Churchill

An application for up to 62 houses was refused by the Council on heritage and landscape matters. The applicant appealed our decision, and this was subject to a 6-day Public Inquiry. The appeal was dismissed on the grounds that the harm to the setting of the Grade I Listed St John's Church would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposed development, and on harm to the landscape of the area.

### **Great Weston & High Street Heritage Action Zones (HAZ)**

#### ***Great Weston Heritage Action Zone 2017- 2022***

The Great Weston Heritage Action Zone ended in September 2022. It has met its aims, and the programme in the Delivery Plan despite the challenge of Covid. It has been demonstrated how the town's heritage can play a role in the town centre's renaissance. This report provides a snapshot of achievements.

1. **Understanding.** Technical research and evidence gathering including Historic Landscape Characterisation, a Conservation Area appraisal and a

buildings listing review to better understand Weston's significance and inform a targeted building repairs scheme and other initiatives.

2. **Protecting.** Two new designated listed buildings- The Railway Station and WH Smiths. The amalgamation of 4 separate Conservation Areas into one 'Great Weston Conservation Area'; their extension to include the town centre, and the adoption of a management plan to help inform positive change and future conservation initiatives in 2018.

3. **Celebrating.** A book, Weston-super-Mare: The town and its seaside heritage, written by Allan Brodie, Johanna Roethe, and Kate Hudson-McAulay, to spread Weston's appeal and celebrate the town's colourful history and heritage. The associated 'sold out' launch event held in The Blakehay March 2019.

4. **Championing.** A series of heritage digital guides and walks including 'In the Footsteps of Hans Price' walk.

5. **Safeguarding.** Planning and heritage management tools including the adoption as policy of: a local authority Heritage Strategy, a Local Heritage List to acknowledge and help safeguard Weston's important local heritage assets; a shopfront guide (assisted by local university students), and an Article 4 Direction preventing the loss of boundary walls.

6. **Connecting communities.** Development of Know Your Place, a free digital mapping resource that enables local people to share information, knowledge and stories and to explore online maps, archive images and linked information.

7. **Conservation.** Physical improvements to the Public Realm and several historic buildings ( Walker & Ling, 132 and 134 High Street and 59 High Street) helping provide a more positive perception of the town and a better environment for investment.

8. **Participation.** A programme of heritage and cultural events for a variety of groups and audiences including: four years of Heritage Open Days Festival each September from 2017 to 2021 engaging over 30 organisations in celebration of our heritage, Civic Society led heritage lecture series, 2 major exhibitions on the Grand Pier and 3 exhibitions in The Museum , and a major Place Making exhibition in Sovereign centre featuring the Heritage Action Zone work.

9. **Capacity building.** A programme of training for council members, officers and local retailers.

10. **Local Authority commitment and investment.** The development of A SuperWeston Placemaking Strategy (2020) for the town, demonstrating a commitment to further positive design, planning, heritage and cultural initiatives. It joins individual schemes together in an overarching vision which the council is now delivering.

## ***High Street Heritage Action Zone 2019-2024***

**Engagement:** The High Street Heritage Action Zone delivered a strong programme of engagement work in the past 12 months including: Heritage Open Days Festival, Know Your Place online digital mapping resource, Volunteer recruitment training and management, Reminiscence work in care homes run by Library team, a heritage engagement programme working with local schools run by Weston Museum, two exhibitions in The Museum, training for retailers in marketing skills and training volunteers as walks guides.

**Conservation:** Shopfront enhancement work carried out on Fork n Ale public House 18 Walliscote Road and on the 'Kendall's building' in the High Street/Regent Street

### **North Somerset Local Heritage List**

The Local Heritage List criteria and management procedures have been successfully adopted by the Council, as has the first tranche of nominated assets.

The first buildings nominated for the Local Heritage List have also now been officially adopted by the Council. A new handbook has been produced with funding from the HAZ.

The heritage officers have held several training workshops to aid local residents in better understanding the nomination criteria and also how to nominate assets themselves. It is proposed to create a short information/instructional video to add to the Council's website/YouTube channel for residents.

### **Historic Environment Record**

The North Somerset Historic Environment Record (NSHER) is published on the council's website at <http://map.n-somerset.gov.uk/her.html>.

Layers available to view on the HER interactive map are:

- Conservation Areas
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
- Unregistered Parks and Gardens
- Monuments (non-designated heritage assets)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Events (e.g. excavation & survey reports)
- Listed Buildings

Over the last year work has progressed on enhancing the HER database, including the Principal Archaeologist having commenced the NRHE to HER data accession project which will result in almost 2500 records being updated or completely new information being added.

The 5-year rolling audit cycle ended in October 2021, and a new audit was undertaken (completed in March 2022).

The audit highlighted numerous areas in which the HER has undergone significant improvement and enhancement in the last 5 years including the creation and implementation of key policies and procedures, the introduction of a priority services for HER information for commercial customers, creation of a catalogue of sources/grey literature reports and digitisation of the paper records, reduction of the HER backlog by 30%, joining Heritage Gateway and accession of large datasets such as the North Mendip Hills National Mapping Programme and Great Weston Heritage Action Zone Aerial and Investigation Mapping Project.

An action plan has now been agreed with Historic England for the next five years and includes several tasks relating to data quality and enhancement, identifying appropriate storage conditions for the HER reference collection, a review of the staffing provision (addressed by the appointment of a new Historic Environment Assistant in November 2022), further reduce the backlog of reports created through the planning process, production of outstanding policies including a Forward Plan, and seeking formal adoption of the HER by the Council.

### **Local Plan policies**

Heritage and Planning Policy officers are reviewing and revising the heritage policies for the new Local Plan, to ensure they are in line with national legislation and frameworks. Heritage officers have also assisted Planning Policy officers in highlighting any heritage concerns or opportunities in the proposed site allocations for the emerging Local Plan.

### **Know Your Place**

The Sharing Heritage/Know Your Place North Somerset project has continued to be extremely successful, with volunteers having added over 1100 new records onto the website showcasing the rich history and heritage across North Somerset.

The first national lockdown meant no public engagement would be able to take place, so heritage officers set up Facebook and Twitter accounts to disseminate information in a digital format in March 2020. They worked in collaboration with staff at Weston Museum to produce educational activities, content and videos which were very well received. The social media channels have allowed for engagement with over 1.4 million people since March 2020, and the Facebook group alone has over 2,100 members.

Heritage officers continue to collaborate with Weston Town Council and Weston Museum as the project was extended thanks to funding made available through the Great Weston Heritage Action Zone. Volunteers have also created two exhibitions to showcase their research including one entitled 'Then and Now'. There is also regular collaboration with the NSC Libraries team.

## **Green Belt**

### **Size of the Green Belt**

The size of the Green Belt within North Somerset is 154.9 square kilometres, which covers 40% of the district. There has been no change to the Green Belt during the monitoring period.



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## **Waste**

### **New waste management facilities**

No planning applications for waste management facilities were approved in North Somerset during the monitoring period 2021/22.

### **Joint Waste Core Strategy**

North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol and South Gloucestershire have an adopted West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (JWCS).

In accordance with the waste hierarchy, the JWCS focuses on waste prevention, re-use, recycling and recovery of value from waste, with the ultimate aim to divert waste away from landfill. The West of England authorities are committed to meeting the sub-region's needs and the timely provision of sufficient waste infrastructure.

Delivering the JWCS relies upon a robust monitoring system. This is set out in section 7 of the JWCS. The tables below show monitoring results for the JWCS for North Somerset, against key indicators, for 2021/22. A copy of the adopted JWCS document is available to view at [www.westofengland.org](http://www.westofengland.org)



## Recycling/Composting

Unitary Authority	Capacity of applications approved during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Capacity lost during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Capacity operational at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)	Capacity permitted but not operational at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)
North Somerset	0	0	268,200	0

## Recovery

Zone & indicative requirement for residual waste treatment capacity as set out in the JWCS	Capacity of applications approved during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Capacity lost during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Capacity operational at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)	Capacity permitted but not operational at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)	Electricity and/or heat output from operational recovery facility (MW)
A~390,000tpa	0	0	5,000	0	0
E~100,000tpa	0	0	15,000	0	1.1
Total for North Somerset	0	0	20,000	0	1.1

## Hazardous/Non-Hazardous Landfill

Not applicable

## Inert Landfill

Unitary Authority	Site Name	Capacity of applications approved during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Landfill capacity which became unavailable during 2021/22 (tonnes)	Landfill operational at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)	Landfill permitted but not started at 31/03/2022 (tonnes)
North Somerset	Durnford Quarry	0	0	Approx 382,500 tonnes per annum for 20 years (2012-2032)	0
North Somerset	Lulsgate Quarry, Felton	0	0	Unspecified quantity of restoration material and finishing top soils to be imported to allow for restoration of quarry to Nov 2021	0

## Commentary

There has been no change from the 2020/21 situation regarding extant planning permissions for waste facilities in North Somerset, taking account of

all the above waste categories: recycling and composting, recovery, hazardous/non- hazardous landfill and inert landfill.

## **Minerals**

Production of primary land won aggregates and secondary and recycled aggregates

We are unable to publish details of the amount of primary land won aggregates in North Somerset for 2021, the latest year for which figures have been obtained, due to confidentiality issues. Data on production of crushed rock across the West of England sub region in recent years is available in the published annual reports of the South West Aggregates Working Party.

## **Landbank of crushed rock**

The adopted Core Strategy Policy CS8 relates to minerals and states that the council will seek to maintain a landbank for crushed rock of at least 10 years. Currently the calculated landbank is in excess of 10 years. This indicator will be monitored and reported annually.

## **Transport and movement**

### **Travel to work**

The working population of North Somerset use the following types of transport to travel to work:

<b>Method of travel to workplace</b>	<b>North Somerset (%)</b>	<b>England and Wales (%)</b>
Driving a car or van	50.6	45.1
Passenger in a car or van	3.7	3.9
Underground, metro, light rail, tram	0.0	1.8
Train	0.8	1.9
Bus, minibus or coach	1.7	4.2
Taxi	0.4	0.7
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.5	0.5
Bicycle	1.9	2.0
On foot	7.0	7.6
Other method of travel to work	0.8	1.0
Work mainly at or from home	32.6	31.2

Source: 2021 Census Travel to work statistics

## Car or van availability

Number of cars or vans	North Somerset (%)	England and Wales (%)
No cars or vans in household	15.0	23.3
1 car or van in household	41.1	41.3
2 cars or vans in household	32.1	26.2
3 or more cars or vans in household	11.9	9.2

Source: 2021 Census

## Traffic

In 2021 motor vehicle traffic in North Somerset was **1,458** million miles, an increase from **1,291** million miles in 2020. This significant increase is likely due to more vehicle journeys undertaken once Covid-19 restrictions were reduced.

Source: Department for Transport Road Traffic Statistics

In 2020 there were 27 reported killed and seriously injured casualties on North Somerset roads. This is a decrease on the 2019 figure of 32.

Source: Department for Transport Reported Road Casualties Great Britain: 2020 Annual Report

## Joint Local Transport Plan

The West of England Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP4), adopted in March 2020 by the West of England authorities, including the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), its three constituent authorities (Bath & North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council) and North Somerset Council. JLTP4 sets out the vision for transport up to 2036. It shows how we aim to achieve a well-connected sustainable transport network that works for residents across the region; a network that offers greater, realistic travel choices and makes walking, cycling and public transport the natural way to travel.

Work is underway on the JLTP5 with ambitions to make it a carbon neutral plan in line with the councils ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030, and to incorporate the post covid-19 pandemic behaviour change in travel and transport.

## Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

The West of England LCWIP is a detailed plan that identifies that over £400m of investment is needed and will be sought to provide high quality infrastructure to ensure the West of England is a region where cycling and walking are the preferred choice for shorter trips. Working with Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucestershire councils and WECA, the plan

went to public consultation during February and March 2020 and was then adopted in June 2020.

### **Active Travel Strategy (ATS)**

To harness the significant increase in walking and cycling (or active travel) trips seen during 2020, the council has set out how we want to make walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.

The ATS sets out how we will reshape places to become healthy, vibrant and clean. Using new and improved walking and cycling infrastructure, we strive for residents and businesses to choose walking and cycling as the natural choice for short and medium length journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys. We aim for them to take these journeys via a safe, connected network, making active travel the most attractive option wherever possible. This will be important in working towards making our transport network carbon neutral.

The provision of a high-quality, segregated cycle network will also attract visitors to North Somerset to cycle, walk and spend more within the district. This will be to the benefit of the local economy, as we work towards a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The strategy is wide ranging in scope, covering new infrastructure, promotion, cycle training, and opportunities which may be gained by the council changing how it carries out existing duties. The ATS went out to public & stakeholder consultation between November 2020 and January and was adopted by the council in July 2021.

### **Active Travel Fund**

Funding from the Department for Transport was secured and will contribute to active travel schemes throughout the district. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted how we view transport and presents opportunities to improve public health if more people cycle or walk places instead of driving. An increase in active travel can also help reduce carbon emissions and aid economic recovery.

The funding was made available in two phases. Phase one funding was used to implement emergency measures to aid active travel, daily exercise and social distancing during the peak of the first national lockdown. These measures were put in place at the busiest town centres, high streets, seafront and leisure areas and around the schools with the worst identified pinch points for pedestrian movements.

The council was allocated £473,750 to develop phase two. The phase two bid included the following schemes:

- Improvements to Hill Road and The Beach in Clevedon with a one-way system to allow better pedestrian access and cycling. Work is underway and expected to be finished in Spring 2023.

- Creating a cycling corridor on Baker Street and Milton Road in Weston-super-Mare, introducing a 20mph limit, preventing rat-running of cars and offering better links from residential areas to the town centre and seafront. Work has now been completed on this scheme.
- Several school schemes that offer safe cycling and walking routes to school for children and parents.

## Rail

The council aims to increase transport connectivity, promote accessibility for all and reduce carbon emissions from transport by maximising and developing the transport network. The West of England Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4) sets out to improve rail services including train frequencies, rolling stock, passenger waiting and information enhancements and greater interchange facilities for all stations including pedestrian, cycling, bus and electric vehicle access improvements to railway stations. It should be noted that improvements to the platforms and the railway itself are more difficult for local authorities as they play more of a lobbyist role to regional and national rail operators who own and operate the platforms, trains and tracks. No major improvements have been completed during the monitoring period, although progress is being made on the Metrowest Phase 1 scheme to reopen the Portishead to Bristol passenger line.

With regards to development around railway stations, policies in the North Somerset Core Strategy and the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 set out that only acceptable railway related development on safeguarded land will be supported.

## Rail Station Usage

The need to provide improved transport connectivity whilst ensuring carbon-efficient choices can be indirectly monitored through the number of passengers using the rail service in North Somerset.

Using [ticket sales data](#) published by the Office of Rail and Road, estimates of station usage, entries and exits, for each station in North Somerset are detailed in the table below. For the 2021/22 financial year, all stations saw a massive increase in patronage from 2020/21 levels due to easing of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions.

Station Name	2021/22 Entries & Exits	2020/21 Entries & Exits	Change between 2020/21 to 2021/22 (%)
Nailsea & Backwell	298,332	85,382	249%
Weston Milton	66,964	26,354	154%
Weston-super-Mare	777,910	306,684	154%
Worle	232,340	81,414	185%
Yatton	332,736	100,442	228%

Estimates of Station Usage 2021/22, Office of Road and Rail

With more passengers using the train for journeys this will help the council towards its target of carbon neutrality by 2030 and a green, active and inclusive economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **Parking**

The council adopted Civil Parking Enforcement powers (CPE) in April 2017. This includes taking responsibility for on-street parking enforcement from the police who were previously responsible. CPE enables improved enforcement of parking regulations which leads to better parking in areas where there are restrictions, as well as improved turnover of parking spaces – supporting town centres and shopping streets by making it easier for visitors and shoppers to park. Further details are available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/parking](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/parking).

A new parking scheme was adopted in February 2022 in Leigh Woods. The scheme helps residents, commuters and other vehicle users share the available parking fairly. Parking in the area is separated into resident and visitor bays, with pay and display visitor charges between the hours of 9am and 9pm and new parking permits available for residents. The scheme also includes the first roadside electric vehicle charging point in North Somerset which will be implemented at a later date.

## **Walking, cycling and Rights of Way network**

The council aims to increase transport choice and promote accessibility by maximising and developing the transport network and reducing congestion. This can also have other benefits such as improving the health and wellbeing of the population. We are working towards expanding and improving strategic cycle routes, pedestrian links and multiuser routes.

The England Coast Path follows the North Somerset Coast and is known locally as the North Somerset Tidal Trail. The trail is divided into six sections and out of the six sections improvement works have been completed on five of them. Three sections were officially opened by Natural England in June 2022 between the River Axe and Sand Bay. It is hoped that two more section will officially open in 2023 between Clevedon and the River Avon. Section 6 between Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon is currently awaiting determination by the Secretary of State.

As well as the England Coast Path project the rights of way team have produced an updated North Somerset Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan which covers the next ten years. Work continues on dealing with a number of Public Path and Definitive Map Modification Orders. The maintenance team arranged the installation of 26 Bristol gates, 142 pedestrian gates, 108 Kissing gates, 27 bridges, 11 surface improvements, three horse gates and one mobility gate. These works were part of general maintenance or as part of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan in which Parish Councils requested local path improvements.

## Cycling

The council is fully committed to improving its active travel routes. Following on from the adoption of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and the Active Travel Strategy, work is underway on a suite of Active Travel Strategy Action Plans. Public consultation is underway on seven action plans which are:

- 20mph
- Active Travel Network
- First & Last Mile
- Liveable Neighbourhoods
- Rural Lanes
- Safer Active Routes to School
- Transport Behaviour Change

Over the 2021/22 financial year, we have delivered or part-delivered cycling infrastructure at Hill Road and The Beach, Clevedon, Milton Road and Baker Street, Weston-super-Mare and on the Pier to Pier Way connecting Weston-super-Mare to Clevedon.

We have continued to offer free Bikeability training, using DfT Bikeability grant-funding with some match-funding provided by North Somerset Council. The following places were delivered in 2021/22:

	Number delivered	Course contents
Bikeability Balance (children in Reception)	0	Learning to ride – did not request any places because previously we have failed to find a contractor to deliver; will try again when we are given the option to apply for longer than one year of funding
Bikeability Level 1 (children in Year 4)	765	Cycle control - off road
Bikeability Level 1/2 (children in Year 5/6)	1374	On road cycle training
Bikeability Level 3 (Years 7-9)	198	On road cycle training including a journey
Bikeability Fix	0	Cycle maintenance - no funding available

## School Travel Plans

On a termly basis we send a newsletter containing guidance and information about national and regional campaigns related to active and sustainable travel to school and road safety initiatives.

We encourage the use of Modeshift STARS to create school travel plans and support planning applications. Modeshift STARS is a national awards scheme that recognises schools that have shown excellence in supporting walking, wheeling, cycling and other forms of sustainable travel. The application

process provides an online template that will generate a national standard school travel plan. Schools progress their plan through levels green to platinum and nominate a travel champion responsible for delivering initiatives in school.

Our biannual monitoring and reporting of mode of travel to school is held in a dashboard format. Schools are provided with summary documents showing analysis of their pupils' travel and comparison to similar schools as well as mapping information. School Mode of Travel Data is also accessible to council officers via a mapping system which shows recommended walking and cycling zones, likely routes and the frequency they are used. Modeshift STARS also includes survey and reporting functions which can be used annually or more frequently if required.

## **Workplace and Residential Travel plans**

Travel Plans are a planning requirement for all new large or expanding developments as well as some smaller ones where there is expected to be a significant transport impact. Our Travel Plans Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the detail of what is expected from a developer to mitigate the transport impacts of the development and encourage more sustainable travel. Comments are provided by the Sustainable Travel and Road Safety team for all Travel Plans submitted as part of a planning application. This engagement ensures a strong commitment to sustainable and active travel within new developments, with the aim of facilitating movements around neighbourhoods, as well as further afield, whilst reducing traffic generated by developments.

Our new fully revised Travel Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has now been consulted on and is in its final stage to adoption. The new Travel Plan SPD includes the option of a paid for Travel Plan service for developers as an alternative to developing their own Travel Plan (for appropriate, mainly residential developments), as well as a taking a more rigorous approach in general.

Over 2021/22 the council continued to promote, help and support organisations and businesses with a planning requirement for a Travel Plan and also those who are voluntarily developing a Travel Plan, under the brand Travelwest ([www.travelwest.info/businesses](http://www.travelwest.info/businesses)). This included the promotion of sustainable travel initiatives and awareness campaigns. This service has been very limited since early Spring 2022 due to the lack of resources.

## **Transport improvement schemes**

The Council aims to improve transport connectivity and reduce carbon emissions from transport by pursuing a programme of Integrated Transport improvements. This will help enable low-carbon and more active transport choices wherever possible, helping to promote accessibility, inclusivity and local economic growth by developing the transport network for all travel modes.



Despite the enormous effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on, work has progressed on the following major transport schemes:

- MetroWest Phase 1: Portishead to Bristol Railway Line – the reopening of the disused Portishead branch line to Bristol, with new stations at Portishead and Pill, and upgrading the frequency of trains on the Severn Beach to Westbury Line, is being led by North Somerset Council jointly with the West of England Combined Authority. The project will deliver benefits for residents and businesses of all five local authorities in the West of England. This major transport enhancement forms part of the MetroWest programme of investment in the local rail network over the coming years. The wide ranging benefits of the project include supporting economic growth, improving transport resilience, increasing accessibility to the rail network, and improving quality of life. The project's Development Consent Order examination commenced in October 2020 and lasted six months. A decision was made in November 2022 to grant planning consent including permission to start the compulsory purchase of the required land.
- Banwell Bypass – in October 2019 the Council secured funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to build a bypass to the north of the village of Banwell. A long-standing aspiration for both the Council and the residents of Banwell, the bypass will provide numerous benefits, including providing improvements to air quality and the public realm in the centre of the village, supporting future housing delivery; and improving local and regional connectivity for longer trips. The bypass will also allow the reallocation of road space in the centre of the village to more sustainable modes of transport wherever possible, improving accessibility and quality of life for Banwell residents. In August 2020 the grant funding agreement was signed that has enabled extensive advanced survey works to be undertaken including ecology, watercourses, ground investigation, topographical and archaeological investigation. Public consultations have been undertaken in July 2021 and March 2022 focussing on the route of the bypass, any local issue which should be considered and the scheme design. The planning application was submitted in July 2022 with a decision expected in early 2023.
- Weston Town Centre Transport Enhancements Scheme – the town centre public realm and sustainable transport improvements scheme includes the creation of a centralised bus interchange at the east end of Regent Street, wider pavements, road layout improvements and the resurfacing of some roads. Works have been completed and the bus hub opened in February 2022.
- North/South Link Road, Locking Parklands – The North South Link Road at Locking Parklands will provide a link from the A371 at Locking to the A370 West Wick roundabout as a key part of the access strategy for the Weston Villages and developments

alongside the link road. Construction work on the southern part of the road commenced in November 2018 and was completed in Spring 2021 providing access to the Flowerdown estate and the Parklands Educate Together Primary School. The northern part of the road will be built by developers and is expected to be completed between 2023 and 2024.

- Tutshill Sluice – the delivery of the Pier to Pier cycle route between Weston and Clevedon is part of the North Somerset Coastal Towns Cycle Route and has been a long-held council ambition. The route will also be used by pedestrians and horse riders. Funding was secured and work is underway on the scheme which includes a new bridge over the Congresbury Yeo, developing 1.4km of shared use path, junction improvements and route signing. The route is due to open in 2023 and will offer benefits to the local community including encouraging leisure cycling and providing a safe route for commuters as well as generating tourism.
- Bus Service Improvement Scheme (BSIP) – by working towards an improved bus service throughout North Somerset and the wider West of England area there are opportunities to not only provide customers with a convenient, coordinated and affordable network but we can also decarbonise public transport and increase air quality as well as improving the health and wellbeing of our communities. Progress has been made on a number of key areas including various bus priority schemes to improve journey times, reduced fares to make bus travel more attractive and economical and an on demand transport scheme (known as demand responsive transport) to allow a greater number of people to gain access to the public transport network by enabling them a transport link between their homes and public transport routes.

## **Air Travel**

Bristol Airport is the largest airport serving the South West, providing an important facility for both leisure and business needs as well as providing employment opportunities in the local area.

The Bristol Airport Annual Monitoring Report 2021 provides information on the activity at the airport over the year. Some key highlights are:

- 2021 continued to be dominated by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic
- Passenger numbers decreased by a further 5% to 2,061,491, following the 75% reduction last year (in 2019 the number of passengers was 8,903,718)
- Aircraft movements rose by 9% from the 2020 figures to 32,303
- The A1 Bristol Flyer and A3 Weston Flyer bus services were suspended during the pandemic. The A1 was reinstated in May 2021, with a route change to serve more areas at a higher frequency 24 hours a day. The A3 remained suspended throughout the monitoring year.

## **DELIVERING STRONG AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**

### **High quality design**

#### **Housing quality and design**

The council is committed to supporting high quality design in new housing development. The Core Strategy identifies the importance of this in policy CS12: Achieving high quality design and place making. The policy suggests that in designing new developments of 10 or more dwellings, applicants should demonstrate how they meet the Building for Life criteria.

Policy DM32: High quality design and place making of the adopted Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 sets out criteria against which planning applications will be determined. The Weston Villages SPD sets out further specific detailed guidance for this major mixed-use development area.

Two Residential Design Guide SPDs have been adopted. Section 1 covers protecting the living conditions of neighbours (adopted January 2013) and Section 2 details appearance and character of house extensions and alterations (adopted April 2014). These documents are available to download from our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/SPDs](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/SPDs). Other guidance has been produced to aid high quality design including a Development Management Advice Note on recycling and waste (September 2013) and a Highways Development Design Guide (October 2020).

#### **Sustainable Buildings and Places**

Policy CS2 of the Core Strategy relates to delivering sustainable design and construction. The policy states that when considering proposals for development the council will require energy efficient designs and the use of on-site renewable energy.

The policy also refers to the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Lifetime Homes scheme. The Government released a Written Ministerial Statement in March 2014 stating that the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Lifetime Homes schemes would be wound down and replaced with a simplified system incorporated into Building Regulations. The policy also references BREEAM standards which ensures buildings are of sustainable design and construction.

The Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places in North Somerset Supplementary Planning Document was first adopted in March 2015. The document was produced to support policy CS1: Addressing climate change and carbon reduction and CS2: Delivering sustainable design and construction of the Core Strategy. The document also updated policy CS2 following the change in national policy. Following a review, and updated Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places in North Somerset SPD was adopted in 2021.

## **Scale of new housing**

### **Housing provision**

Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy sets out the scale of new housing proposed for the district over the plan period and CS14 sets out how this is proposed to be delivered in line with the spatial strategy of the plan.

The Core Strategy housing requirement is 20,985 dwellings for the period 2006-2026, equivalent to 1,049 dwellings per annum.

### **Housing completions and plan period capacity**

During the 2021/22 monitoring year 1,017 net dwelling completions were recorded. During the plan period so far (2006 – 2022) a total of 13,290 homes have been delivered.

Total supply currently available (comprising sites with permission, allocated sites and a modest windfall allowance) equates to 10,307 dwellings. When added to the 13,290 units already completed the total provision could reach 23,597 by 2026, which is 2,612 units in excess of the housing requirement for the period.

Full details are in our Residential Land Survey headline findings paper April 2022 which is available at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/residentialland](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/residentialland)

### **Five year housing land supply**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements. The council publishes regular land supply position statements, the most recent of which has a base date of April 2021 and concluded that we could demonstrate 4.8 years supply at that time. Following publication of that position, the Government published updated Housing Delivery Test measurement results. North Somerset achieved delivery of 89% of the housing required over the preceding three years. That meant that only a 5% buffer needed be factored into the land supply requirement, rather than the previously required 20%. As a direct result of this change the Council's land supply position from the 14 January 2022 was that it could demonstrate 5.6 years supply.

This position was challenged through a series of public inquiries early in 2022. The conclusion of the most recent decision that forensically examined the matter (dated 22 June 2022) was that the Council's deliverable supply stood at 3.5 years. This remains the Council's position until the next residential land survey is undertaken in April 2023.

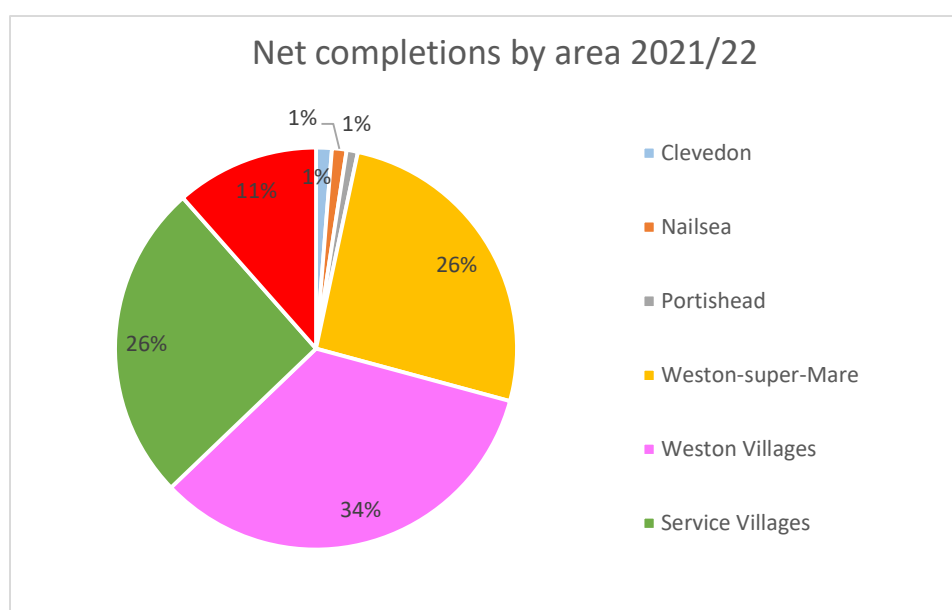
## **Distribution of new housing**

### **Net completions by area 2021/22**

Area	Completions
Clevedon	13
Nailsea	12
Portishead	9
Weston-super-Mare	263
Weston Villages	342
Service Villages	261
Infill Villages, smaller settlements and countryside	117
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,017</b>

### **Location of housing completions**

This year 63% of dwelling completions were recorded within the four towns or on the major Weston Villages strategic site. A further 26% were at Service Villages, the next tier of the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy and just 12% were at the infill villages or within smaller settlements and countryside locations.



## **Mixed and balanced communities**

### **Local Housing Needs Assessment**

Along with the other councils in the West of England, North Somerset jointly commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to produce a Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) to look at the different types of need that exist within the total amount of housing required over the next plan period.

The new Local Plan will take account of this evidence. The LHNA and a summary paper can be viewed at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/newlocalplan](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/newlocalplan)

## **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

Core Strategy Policy CS15 relates to ensuring mixed and balanced communities across the district. One of the indicators is to monitor the change in the number of licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) as ongoing monitoring will assess the effectiveness of the policy approach.

HMOs must be licenced if they are rented to five or more people and tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities.

Details of licenced HMOs can be viewed on our website at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/housing/help-landlords-letting-out-homes/houses-multiple-occupation-hmo-licensing>

## **Self-build opportunities**

The self-build market is growing and the council recognises the importance of allowing opportunities for this sector. We are committed to supporting self-build development for local people wishing to access market or affordable housing. The National Custom and Self Build Association website and the Self Build Portal website bring together a range of information and support for those wanting to get involved in a self build project. Our adopted development management policies plan offers general support for custom and self build projects and our new Local Plan policies will consider how best we can ensure the delivery of self and custom build housing in future.

The council has a self build register where people can register their interest in plots which may become available. This also enables the council to assess the level of demand within the area. As at October 2022 there were 544 records on the register in total.

Legislation requires us to try and ensure that there are enough plots available to meet demand within the area. To do this, we must look at the amount of people registered within the area each year and three years later must have permissioned enough plots to satisfy that level of demand. The register is in effect a proxy for the level demand – we cannot guarantee that those people on the register will be offered a plot. Back in October 2019 we had 196 records on our register. Therefore by October 2022 we ought to have consented 196 plots to meet that level of demand. As at October 2022 we have consented 147 housing plots that have successfully been granted CIL exemption relief on the basis that they meet the self build criteria and a further 6 plots on a large scheme in Backwell – a total of 153 plots.

As and when opportunities may become available within the area these will be promoted to those on the register. During 2023 the council will contact all of those registered to find out more about their circumstances and aspirations, to help shape the future policy position.

Further information on self build and custom build housing is available on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/selfbuild](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/selfbuild).

## **Affordable housing**

### **Affordable Housing Targets**

Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy states that affordable housing completions should be monitored on an annual basis, including the type and tenure of the housing delivered. Overall delivery will be assessed in 5 year tranches, and the policy approach reviewed as appropriate.

The adopted target is for 150 affordable homes to be provided per annum.

During the period 2021/22, 193 new affordable housing units were provided, a significant increase on last year which was much lower due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Plan period total delivery now stands at 2,290 units over 16 years, an average of 143 dwellings per annum.

Annual affordable housing delivery over Core Strategy plan period to date															
2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
126	192	266	149	110	42	211	166	154	126	138	155	96	75	91	193

## **DELIVERING A PROSPEROUS ECONOMY**

### **Supporting a successful economy**

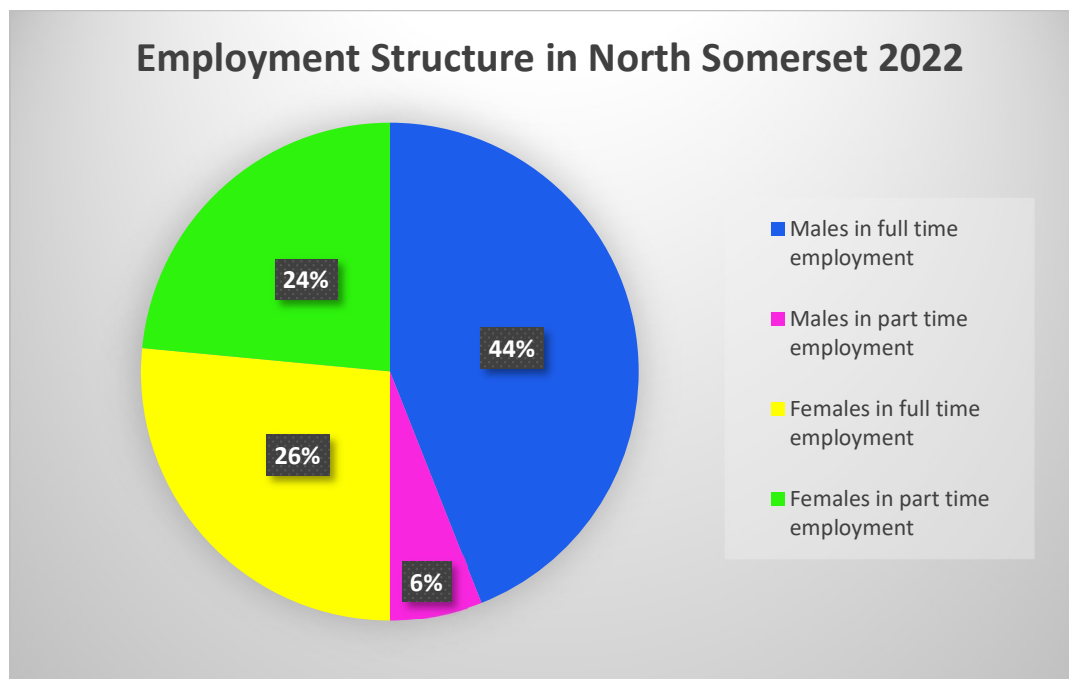
#### **Economic activity**

**83.2%** of North Somerset residents aged 16 to 64 are economically active, this is a decrease of 3.1% on the previous year. This compares to 80.2% in the Southwest and 78.7% in England and Wales.

Source: Annual Population Survey April 2021 - March 2022

#### **Employment structure**

- **70.2%** of 16-64 year olds in North Somerset work full time and **29.8%** work part time. In England and Wales, 76.8% work full time and 23.1% work part time.
- **88%** of the economically active males work full time and **12%** work part time. In England and Wales, 88.9% of the economically active males work full time and 11% work part time.
- **53%** of the economically active females work full time and **47%** work part time. Nationally, 63.5% of the economically active females work full time and 36.3% work part time.



Source: Annual Population Survey April 2021 - March 2022

#### **Income**

- In 2022 the average gross annual pay for full time employees **working** in North Somerset was **£29,890**, an increase on the previous year. Current average earnings for employees across the Southwest are £31,339 per annum.



- The average full time gross pay for the **residents** of North Somerset in 2022 was **£33,971**. This is higher than the average figure for England and Wales which was £33,101.

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2022

## Productivity

Region	Enterprise Births	Enterprise Deaths	Active Enterprises
England and Wales	338,430	302,480	2,698,655
South West	25,930	23,300	236,860
North Somerset	1,100	965	9,445

Business Demography 2021, Office for National Statistics

## Employment floorspace

Employment floorspace gains and losses are monitored through the Planning system. It is anticipated that a full Employment Land Survey will be conducted in 2023 to review how much employment floorspace has been gained and lost in recent times. An update will be given in future AMRs.

## Employment land

The adopted Core Strategy focuses on supporting a successful economy and seeks to provide an additional 10,100 jobs by 2026 by allocating around 114 hectares of land for B class uses. This will help address the issue of out-commuting and will increase self-containment, particularly in Weston-super-Mare. The adopted Sites and Policies Plan Part 2 allocates new employment sites to be developed.

## Supporting the local economy

Employment led development within North Somerset is key in ensuring that there is a balance between new homes and local job opportunities. The North Somerset Economic Plan 2020 – 2025 sets out aims and objectives to enhance the local economy. We are working closely with key landowners, developers and agents to make sure that there is a focus on creating a range of new jobs as part of the developments coming forward within the Junction 21 Enterprise Area. We offer services to assist with the delivery of business proposals which have significant economic benefits. These include:

- **Simplified Planning**  
We offer various forms of support to assist with the planning phase, including free pre-application advice for proposals for employment generating developments within the business use classes in the Junction 21 Enterprise Area. We also try to shorten the time it takes to make decisions on key applications and can use planning performance agreements to assist with project management and resources.
- **Local Development Order**  
The Food Enterprise Zone Local Development Order was adopted in May 2018 for a period of five years and covers 7.5 hectares of land within Weston Business Quarter. The LDO grants outline planning

permission for new units of B1, B2 or B8 use class for use by food businesses. This will hopefully encourage food and drink businesses to the area and provide opportunities for existing businesses to expand. Work on Zone 1 began on the development in December 2018 and is now completed. The centre is known as FoodWorksSW and includes 12 food grade business units to lease, four product development areas, workshop space and meeting rooms.

## Transport and infrastructure

Progress has been made on a number of highway and transport schemes this year, as detailed within the transport and movement section of the environment chapter.

Work is continuing with other local authorities as part of the Connecting Devon and Somerset project, which encompasses the six areas of Devon, Torbay, Plymouth, Somerset, North Somerset and Bath and North East Somerset. The project aims to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of premises in rural areas. Phase One of the roll-out of broadband infrastructure is complete in North Somerset and a substantial number of cabinets and exchanges have been upgraded as part of the programme in rural areas. A voucher top-up scheme is being piloted in the area enabling more residents and businesses to connect to gigabit-capable broadband. This means that eligible homes can receive up to £2500 and eligible businesses can receive up to £4500 towards connection.

## Retail

### Retail Centres

North Somerset is served by four towns, four district centres, 18 local centres and various out of centre retail areas. There are also significant retail offerings in close proximity to North Somerset at Cribbs Causeway, Bristol City Centre and Taunton. Retail areas throughout the district are monitored annually to record any changes in occupancy and vacancy rates.

<b>Towns</b>	<b>Weston-super-Mare</b>	<b>Portishead</b>	<b>Clevedon</b>	<b>Nailsea</b>
Total units	629	135	151	165
Vacant units	125	9	12	22
<b>% of vacant units</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Total PRF units	157	76	61	46
Vacant PRF units	36	7	6	9
<b>% of vacant PRF units</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>20%</b>
% of total units in Ea use	33%	48%	39%	41%
% of total PRF units in Ea use	53%	53%	59%	70%

April 2022

*PRF – Primary Retail Frontage*

In defined town centres, policy indicators and targets state that the proportion of primary retail frontage (PRF) units in a non-retail use should not exceed 30% and vacant units should not exceed 10%.

At present, Portishead and Clevedon PRF do not exceed 10%, an improvement on the previous year. Nailsea PRF does have an Ea use of 70% meeting the target of retail uses in the PRF. Town centres are slowly recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting national lockdowns negatively impacting retail businesses.

### **Weston Town Centre**

An exciting and ambitious programme of placemaking and regeneration for Weston-super-Mare is well underway. This focuses on developing quality living, learning and lifestyle opportunities in the town centre. Economic growth will be underpinned by attracting more people to live in the town centre and creating a residential environment that will help to inject new life into the centre, boosting the demand for shops and services.

Projects completed include an improved public realm and transport scheme to enhance Station Road, Walliscote Road and Alexandra Parade, building improvements including a refresh of one of the prominent Art Deco buildings and shopfront enhancements to some retail units.

### **Tourism**

#### **Tourism Activity**

- The total value of tourism in North Somerset in 2021 was £283,904,000, this includes both day and staying visiting as well as other tourism related spend.
- The total number of actual jobs created by tourism is 5,202 (both full and part time) with the full-time equivalent jobs being 3,716.
- The total jobs created accounts for 5% of employment in the area.
- 6,206,000 day visits to North Somerset was estimated in 2021 with 64% of those visiting the coast.
- It is estimated that the average spend for day visitors was £34.27.

Source: Economic Development, North Somerset Council 2021

### **Tourist Accommodation**

Core Strategy Policy CS22 has a clear intention to monitor the number of tourist accommodation bed spaces in Weston-super-Mare, and across the rest of the district. The following table shows the number of tourist bed spaces, pitches, berths and units in North Somerset.

<b>Accommodation supply</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Hotels	3,950	bedspaces
Guesthouses	461	bedspaces
Inns	145	bedspaces
B&B	332	bedspaces
Farms	19	bedspaces

<b>Accommodation supply</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Self-catering	410	units
Touring caravans/tents	697	itches
Static vans	296	itches
Holiday centres	543	units
Group accommodation	86	bedspaces
Campus	0	bedspaces
Second homes	374	units
Marinas	250	berths

Source: SWRTB, RYA and North Somerset Council 2021, Census 2011

## **Bristol Airport**

### **Expansion**

Long term plans for the airport have been developed with the first masterplan being published in 2006 guiding expansion up until 2030 to increase the airport capacity to 12 million passengers per annum. Further work has been undertaken and in 2018 consultation documents were published. Details of this can be viewed at <https://www.bristolairport.co.uk/corporate/about-us/our-future/>.

An outline planning application was submitted to the council in December 2018 for the development of the airport to expand the capacity to 12 million terminal passengers a year. The proposal included terminal extensions, an expansion of the parking provision and improvements to the local road network to improve transport links and traffic. In March 2020 councillors voted to refuse the application and Bristol Airport Limited subsequently lodged an appeal. A public inquiry was held between July and October 2021 and in February 2022 a panel of three inspectors allowed the appeal and granted planning permission.

### **Employment**

In 2018 it was reported that 3,654 full time equivalents were employed at Bristol Airport by 54 companies. No update in these figures has been available since the Covid-19 pandemic.

## **Royal Portbury Dock**

Within the Core Strategy, Policy CS24 provides that the role of Royal Portbury Dock will be maintained and enhanced, and that land will continue to be safeguarded for port uses within the Sites and Policies Plan. Any significant development which is permitted will be reported on in future AMRs.

## **ENSURING SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

### **Children, young people and education**

#### **Education**

Assessments including all primary tests, GCSEs and A levels were disrupted in 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions. The cancellation of these tests was instructed by the Department of Education. Ofqual developed a process to award GCSE and A level students grades which fairly reflected their performance and ability and summer exams resumed in 2022.

#### **Key Stage 2**

To raise standards in primary education the Government implemented a new set of tests for key stage 2 children in 2016. The tests assess maths, reading and spelling, grammar and punctuation with writing being assessed separately by teacher evaluation. The new method of assessment replaces the previous 'level' system with pupils either reaching the expected standard or being below the expected standard. No assessments were undertaken in 2020 and 2021.

	<b>North Somerset</b>	<b>South West</b>	<b>England</b>
<b>% achieving Key Stage 2 Reading Expected Standard</b>			
<b>2022</b>	77%	74%	75%
<b>2019</b>	74%	73%	73%
<b>2018</b>	76%	75%	75%
<b>2017</b>	71%	73%	72%
<b>% achieving Key Stage 2 Writing Expected Standard</b>			
<b>2022</b>	69%	69%	70%
<b>2019</b>	80%	78%	78%
<b>2018</b>	79%	77%	78%
<b>2017</b>	76%	76%	76%
<b>% achieving Key Stage 2 Maths Expected Standard</b>			
<b>2022</b>	74%	70%	72%
<b>2019</b>	78%	77%	79%
<b>2018</b>	74%	74%	76%
<b>2017</b>	73%	73%	75%
<b>% achieving Key Stage 2 Reading, Writing and Maths Expected Standard</b>			
<b>2022</b>	59%	57%	59%
<b>2019</b>	64%	63%	65%
<b>2018</b>	64%	63%	64%
<b>2017</b>	59%	60%	61%

**Source:** Department for Education – National curriculum assessments: key stage 2

## GCSE results

The GCSE summer exams resumed in 2022 after two years of cancellation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The percentage of pupils in North Somerset achieving level 9 – 5 (equivalent to a strong C or above) in English and Maths in 2022 was 48.2%. Throughout England 49.8% students achieved this.

Source: Department for Education

## A Levels (Level 3 qualifications)

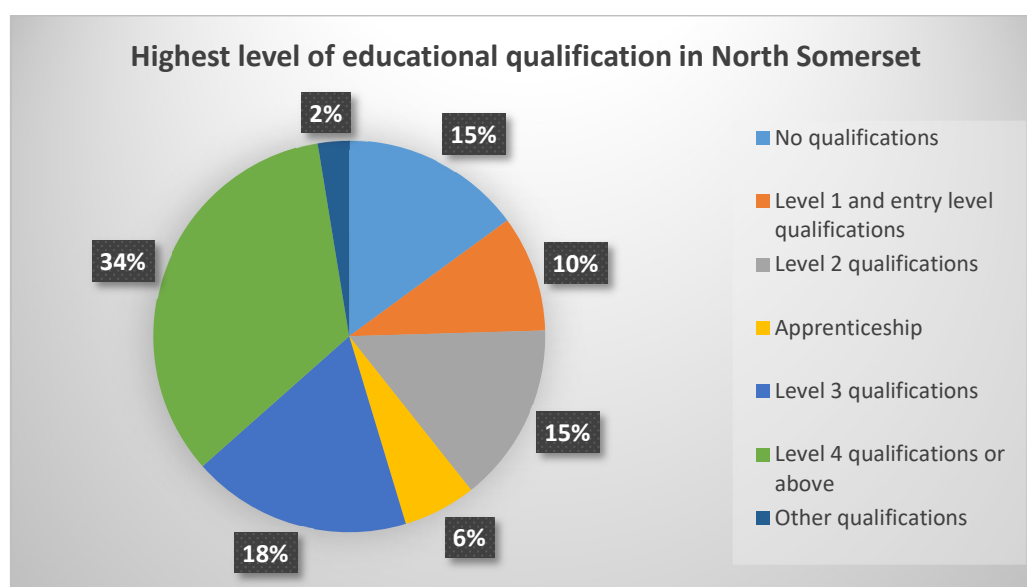
Results in North Somerset show the average point score per entry in 2022 was 35.79, the equivalent of a B-. This is an improvement on the 2019 figure of 31.89. North Somerset is below the national average with the average point score per entry for England being 38.77, the equivalent of a B.

Source: Department for Education

## Educational Qualifications

The population aged 16years and over have the following qualifications:

Highest level of qualification	North Somerset (%)	South West (%)	England and Wales (%)
No qualifications	14.9	15.7	18.2
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	9.6	9.8	9.6
Level 2 qualifications	14.8	14.3	13.4
Apprenticeship	6.0	6.0	5.3
Level 3 qualifications	18.1	18.5	16.9
Level 4 qualifications or above	33.9	33.1	33.8
Other qualifications	2.6	2.6	2.8



Source: Census 2021 Qualifications

## **Schools**

North Somerset has:

- 65 primary schools
- 11 secondary schools
- 3 special schools
- 3 independent schools
- 1 pupil referral unit and tuition

The North Somerset Enterprise and Technical College on Weston Airfield opened in 2014 and is part of the Inspirational Futures Trust. From September 2020 the college started to operate as a secondary school as well as offering post 16 course. The school is now known as the Winterstoke Hundred Academy. Planning permission was granted in September 2021 to expand the school on a site at Locking Parklands. This will accommodate 900 school places to support the increase in demand from the residential development at Weston Villages. Facilities are expected to open to pupils in 2023.

Chestnut Park Primary School at the Arnolds Way development in Yatton opened in September 2021. The school currently has a reception and year 1 class. The school has a current capacity of 210 pupils but can increase to accommodate any future demand from the nearby residential development. A preschool was also opened at the site in January 2022.

## **Weston College**

The College offers hundreds of courses at various levels and has approximately 30,000 enrolments. Weston College offers a range of course including A levels, Diplomas, BTEC, City and Guilds, apprenticeships and foundation degrees. Courses are provided for school leavers and adults and individuals can study at the college or by distance learning.

There are four main campuses at present; Loxton Campus, the town centre Knightstone Campus, South West Skills Campus and the modern university building at the Winter Gardens in the town centre and a number of satellite centres.

Knightstone Campus is the college's main site for vocational training and is where business, hospitality, hair and beauty, early years, public services, and performing arts courses are based. The Loxton Campus is the dedicated sixth form centre providing the teaching facilities for A level students and also those who are studying creative arts. The South West Skills Campus is home to technology, construction and engineering.

Other facilities include the Winter Gardens which is home to University Centre Weston houses the Law and Professional Services Academy. A wide variety of university courses are now offered in partnership with Bath Spa University, Hartpury University and the University of the West of England.

Weston College also has the contract to deliver the education services in 19 prisons providing learning opportunities to thousands of offenders.

## School places

Core Strategy Policy CS25 has an indicator in place to monitor the number of extra school places and those funded through development. The table shows the number of school places throughout the district and the additional spaces created. Spaces funded through Section 106 contributions are located at locations in Weston Villages and at Chestnut Park in Yatton providing new educational facilities to families moving to the development. There have also been extra places funded at Priory and Gordano secondary schools. Some schools in other parts of the district have reduced pupil numbers due to a declining demand.

	Number of school places Sep 2021	Number of school places Sep 2022	Difference in places	s106 funded places	Location of funded places	Notes
Primary	18,340	18,042	-298	92	Haywood Village (30) Parklands Educate Together (32) Chestnut Park (30)	For September 2022, 60 additional places were created at Parklands Educate Together Primary, funded by a combination of S106 and Basic Need. 30 additional places were added at Haywood Village Primary. Chestnut Park Primary added 30 Reception places.  To help with the management of school places and the decline in places needed in some areas, the following schools have reduced their PAN and/or capped the number of pupils which has had the net effect of reducing the total number of Primary School Places: All Saints (-4), Locking (-120), Mead Vale (-129) Milton Park (-15), Portishead (-30), St Martin's (-60), Trinity (-30) and Yatton Infants (-30).
Secondary	12,850	12,940	90	10	Priory Community School Academy (6) Gordano School (4)	For September 2022 a total of 44 additional places were created at Priory and 28 at Gordano, funded by a combination of S106 and Basic Need. An additional 28 places were created at Gordano by way of a breach class to allow for in area admissions, these places were funded by basic need.  An additional 150 places were added at Winterstoke Hundred following the South West Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) re-brokerage.



					The following schools have capped the number of pupils in some years: Nailsea (-90), Worle Community (-70)
TOTAL	31,190	30,982	-208	102	

## Children's Centres

Children's centres provide services for families with children under five. They host drop-in advice clinics, parenting workshops, parent and toddler groups and even speech and language services. Many also host regular activities for children under five. There are currently 13 centres throughout North Somerset:

- Ashcombe Children's Centre
- Banwell, Winscombe and Sandford Children's Centre (satellite unit)
- Castle Batch Children's Centre
- Clevedon Children's Centre
- Locking Castle and Locking Children's Centre
- Nailsea and Backwell Children's Centre
- Oldmixon Family Centre
- Pill Library and Children's Centre (satellite unit)
- Portishead Children's Centre
- South Weston Children's Centre @ The For All Living Centre
- Worle Library and Children's Centre
- Yatton Library and Children's Centre
- Yeo Valley and Rural Outreach Children's Centre

## Health

### Life expectancy

The average female life expectancy in North Somerset is 84.1 years and the average male life expectancy is 80.2 years. In England the average life expectancies are currently 82.6 years for females and 78.7 years for males.

Source: Public Health Outcomes Framework - North Somerset 2020, Public Health England

### Disability

40,533 people in North Somerset describe themselves as being disabled as defined under the Equality Act, 18.7% of the population. The national average across England and Wales is 17.5%.

Source: 2021 Census

### General health

As of 2021 81.4% of people consider themselves to be in good or very good health, and a further 13.3% describe their general health as fair. This accounts for 94.7% of the total population, slightly lower than the 91.8% that described their health as fair or better ten years ago. 4.1% of our residents

consider themselves to be in bad health, and a further 1.2% think they are in very bad health. Our current proportions are similar to the national averages.

Source: 2021 Census

## **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment**

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Health and Social Care is subject to a continuous rolling update process. The JSNA aims to identify the current and future needs for health and social care services for all people in North Somerset. It contains a wealth of information and will be a useful tool in ensuring that development plan policies are effectively contributing to overall health and well-being across North Somerset. The JSNA is available to view on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/statistics-data/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna-health-social-care](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/statistics-data/joint-strategic-needs-assessment-jsna-health-social-care).

## **Sport, recreation and community facilities**

### **Sport and recreation**

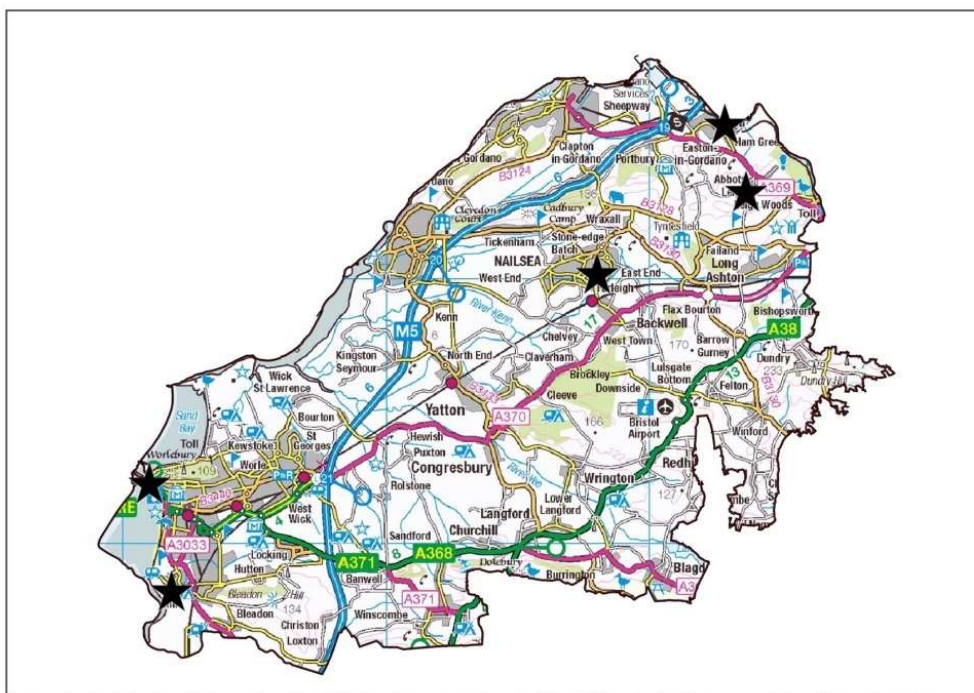
Policy CS27 of the Core Strategy aims to ensure that for all residents of North Somerset there is safe and convenient access to sport, recreation and community facilities. Policies DM68 (Protection of sporting, cultural and community facilities) and DM69 (Location of sporting, cultural and community facilities) of the Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 Development Management Policies seek to protect and enhance facilities.

The council also has a Sport and Leisure Facilities Strategy which details the councils aims to provide high quality facilities and identifies the future demand of facilities due to a growing population. The document can be viewed on the councils website: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-03/Sport%20and%20Leisure%20Facilities%20Strategy%202020-36.pdf>. The council also promotes healthy lifestyles and encourages local people to become more physically active through the bespoke Better Health North Somerset website <https://www.betterhealthns.co.uk/>.

### **Open spaces**

There are over 40 parks, public open spaces and nature reserves in the authority. During the monitoring period, there were five areas of open space in North Somerset that were managed to Green Flag Award standard. The sites are shown on the map below and are:

- Uphill Hill Local Nature Reserve in Uphill
- Watchhouse Hill Public Open Space in Pill
- Abbots Pool in Leigh Woods
- Trendlewood Community Park, Nailsea
- Prince Consort Gardens, Weston-super-Mare



Further information on the Green Flag Award criteria can be found at <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/>

## Community facilities

Our sport and leisure centres offer a range of facilities. There are eight leisure centres in North Somerset:

- Backwell Leisure Centre
- The Campus
- Churchill Sports Centre
- Hutton Moor Leisure Centre
- Parish Wharf Leisure Centre
- Portishead Open Air Pool
- Scotch Horn Leisure Centre
- Strode Leisure Centre

The council also maintain sports pitches which are hired out. This includes refurbished tennis courts at Ashcombe Park in Weston-super-Mare which received funding from the Sport England Community Asset Fund as well as the council. The three refurbished courts opened in April 2021.

Throughout the district there are a large range of community meeting places. An interactive map is available on the councils website detailing these venues: <https://map.n-somerset.gov.uk/map/Aurora.svc/run?embedded=true&noCache=0.05748824817550324&script=%5CAurora%5CCommunityMeetingPlaces.AuroraScript%24#>.

There are currently 12 libraries and a mobile library service which serve the district. Further details of the libraries are available on our website at [www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/](http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/). In October 2022 the council signed a lease on a premises at Colliers Walk, Nailsea to move the library out of its current building in order to secure it's long term future for the community. The relocation of Nailsea library should take place by Summer 2023.

## **Duty to co-operate**

The requirement for local planning authorities (LPAs) to work under the Duty to Cooperate (DTC) on strategic planning issues is set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as inserted by section 110 of the Localism Act (2011). This requires authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in relation to a number of activities including the preparation of development plan documents, other local development documents and marine plans. Local planning authorities must publish details of what action they have taken in relation to the duty to co-operate through their Authority's Monitoring Reports (AMRs).

## **Statement of Common Ground**

As part of the supporting documentation published alongside the emerging Local Plan the council has published a Duty to Co-operate Statement of Common Ground. This document captures the actions taken to address strategic cross-boundary matters through the duty to co-operate. The document can be viewed at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/planning-building-control/planning-policy/our-local-plan/local-plan-2038/how-we-work-strategically-neighbouring-councils-other-bodies>.

## **Minerals Planning**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires minerals planning authorities (MPAs), such as the West of England authorities, to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by participating in the operation of an Aggregate Working Party (AWP) and taking its advice into account when preparing their Local Aggregates Assessment. The South West AWP meets quarterly and membership includes representatives from central Government, mineral planning authorities, the Mineral Products Association, the British Aggregates Association, and such other representatives as appropriate.

## **Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA)**

A Local Aggregate Assessment is an annual assessment of the demand for and supply of aggregates in a mineral planning authority's area. Within the West of England, Local Aggregates Assessments are prepared jointly by the four unitary authorities (UAs) within the West of England sub-region (Bristol City, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire). The LAA forms an important part of the evidence base that will be used to inform preparation of the UAs' individual Local Plans. The most recent published LAA covers the period 2009-2018.

## **Joint Planning Data Group**

The West of England authorities take a joined-up approach to land-use research and monitoring across the sub-region and there is a well-established joint working arrangement through the Joint Planning Data Group. The group meets quarterly to ensure consistency, best practice, share expertise and reduce duplication of effort across the sub-region.