

North Somerset Council  
**Local Development Framework**

# Core Strategy

**Topic paper**  
Settlement Function and  
Hierarchy

## Settlement Function and Hierarchy

This is part of a series of topic papers summarising the evidence base for the North Somerset Core Strategy document.

Other topic papers available in this series:

- Demography, health, social inclusion and deprivation
- Housing
- Economy
- Retail
- Leisure, Tourism and Culture
- Resources (including minerals, waste, recycling, energy consumption)
- Natural environment (including climate change, biodiversity, green infrastructure, countryside, natural environment and flooding)
- Transport and communications
- Sustainable construction / design quality including heritage
- Summing up / spatial portrait

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The functional relationship particularly between where people choose to live and work is no longer as closely related as in the past. The relationship can be quite complex. It is determined by numerous factors which need to be taken into account in planning for growth.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Topic Paper is to set out the evidence in terms of the settlements in North Somerset in order to identify their current function and functional relationships with other settlements. The evidence will form the basis on which a hierarchy of settlements will be established. In particular the identification of Development Policy B and C settlements set out in the draft RSS. The Paper will also consider how policies have influenced the form and function of settlements and inform any discussion of whether the current list of inset and washed over Green Belt settlements is still appropriate and whether settlement boundaries are still the appropriate planning tool for many green belt and rural settlements.
- 1.3 The evidence includes details in terms of population size and characteristics, employment, travel to work data, facilities as well as recent growth trends.
- 1.4 As part of the work for the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) Tym and Partners<sup>1</sup> considered the Functional analysis of Settlements in the South West. This work focussed on an initial list of 90 settlements in the South West which were below the Principal Urban Areas (PUA's) named in RPG10. For North Somerset this included Portishead, Clevedon, and Nailsea/Backwell. Weston-super-Mare is a Principal Urban Area (PUA).
- 1.5 The study looked at settlements in terms of four main characteristics these were;
1. **Significance** - size in terms of population/employment, functions and activities.
  2. **Functionality** - the attempt to set out why the settlement is like it is and its importance rather than its simple characteristics. It looks at data which connects actions and flows of people spending goods and services, and interdependency between settlements.
  3. **Current and future growth** - the purpose is to identify where future growth might be located but also to identify specialist roles (tourism), special needs, constraints.
  4. **Role and future Potential** - policy and investment decisions, private market mechanisms.
- 1.6 This paper attempts to incorporate aspects of this work and to identify what evidence is available for the other smaller settlements in North Somerset.

## 2.0 Current Policy Background

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<sup>1</sup> South West Regional Assembly Functional Analysis of Settlements Roger Tym and Partners April 2005

2.1 PPS12 sets out that the Core Strategy should ‘set out broad locations for delivering the housing and other strategic development needs such as employment, retail, leisure, community, essential public services and transport development.’ (para. 2.10) The development of this clear locational/distributional strategy of where major spatial change is to happen will apply the Regional Spatial Strategy but also ensure the local characteristics and issues of North Somerset are incorporated. Regional Planning Guidance for the South West is currently RPG10. However this is under review with the Draft RSS at the Examination in Public stage. The weight attached to this strategy therefore will increase during the preparation of the Core Strategy as the Panel report and then proposed changes are published.

## 2.2 National

2.3 PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> is the Government's key planning policy statement setting sustainable development as the core principle underpinning planning. The emphasis is on the need to; concentrate development in highly accessible locations; reduce the need to travel, especially by car; promote regeneration; ensure good inclusive design; higher densities; mixed use developments; support sustainable economic growth; tackle social exclusion; ensure healthy safe environments and protect and enhance natural cultural and historic assets.

2.4 PPS 3 Housing<sup>3</sup> seeks to ensure housing is developed in sustainable locations which offer a range of community facilities with good access to jobs services and infrastructure. Priority is given to previously developed land (PDL) and making effective use of land.

2.5 PPG 2 Green Belts<sup>4</sup> sets out the objectives of the green belt. Green Belt Policy shapes the pattern of urban development, helps to ensure that development occurs in allocated locations, assists in ensuring sustainable patterns of development and protects the countryside.

## 2.6 Regional

### 2.7 RPG10

This provides the current strategic planning guidance for the South West Region. It sets a clear urban focus reflecting the higher level guidance of the PPS's/PPG's. RPG10 contains a number of policies that guide the locational strategy for North Somerset: VIS 1, VIS2, SS2, SS3, SS6, SS7 and SS10. A recurrent theme is the need to reduce the reliance on dormitory settlements within easy commuting distance of the Principle Urban Areas (PUA's – Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare) that has characterised development in recent decades. Policy SS2 considers that the PUA's offer the best opportunity for accommodating the majority of development in the most sustainable way. Therefore the aim is to concentrate development at the PUA's. Settlements near PUA's, large towns or in groups of similar settlements and especially settlements along major road corridors, often have high car borne out-

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<sup>2</sup> Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development' ODPM 2005

<sup>3</sup> Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 3 'Housing' Nov 2006

<sup>4</sup> Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 2 DoE 1995

commuting, less self contained growth and are less likely to be sustainable locations for development.

## 2.8 Draft Regional Spatial Strategy

The thrust of the policies development in RPG10 has been rolled forward in the Draft RSS to 2026 to take into account demand for development and to build in greater sensitivity to the diversity of the region and aims to be more positive, explicit and prescriptive on those matters requiring a strategic approach. The primary focus for development is at the Strategically Significant Cities and Towns (SSCT's). Locally these are Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare and Taunton. For North Somerset this involves significant urban extensions at SW Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare. Outside the SSCT's the scope for development is recognised as being much more limited. The Draft RSS sets out policies for development at Markets Towns (Development B settlements) and Small Towns and Villages (Development C settlements). It is for local authorities to assess the functions and hierarchy of relationships between villages, market towns and the SSCT's to determine whether settlements meet the criteria of these policies. It is recognised that some local authorities may have few or no settlements which meet all the criteria of Development policy B settlements.

## 2.9 **Local**

2.10 The North Somerset Replacement Local Plan, adopted in March 2007, sets the preferred location for major development (set out in Policy GDP/1) as Weston-super-Mare in recognition of its role as a PUA. The three smaller towns of Clevedon, Nailsea and Portishead fall within the scope of RPG10 Policy SS2 which seeks to resist the continuing substantial planned expansion of residential development of small dormitory towns within easy commuting distance of the PUA's which has occurred historically. The aim is to achieve more balanced development including the development of employment and community facilities to meet local need and resist additional out-commuting. The smaller settlements are even less likely to achieve self containment in economic and social terms therefore less able to contribute to the aim of reducing the need to travel therefore only development appropriate to the scale of the settlement is permitted. Policy H/7 states that residential development within settlement boundaries must not lead to urban housing needs being met in locations outside the four main towns where employment needs are more limited and which would add to or contribute to creating a dormitory settlement with high levels of out commuting.

2.11 Several villages in North Somerset straddle main radial roads to Bristol. Backwell and Yatton also have railway stations. However facilities are limited and the Local Plan Inspector held that just because a village had a railway station that does not make it an appropriate location for new development.<sup>5</sup>

2.12 Winscombe and Yatton perform a local service centre role and are therefore recognised as minor centres in JRSP Policy 38.

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<sup>5</sup> IR Chapter 8, 23.2

2.13 In the northern part of the District villages with settlement boundaries are either washed over with green belt or inset within it.<sup>6</sup> In the former case infill development is acceptable in Green Belt terms but other issues relating to the scale of the development still apply. These issues are likely to be more significant where the village is inset as the degree of development is potentially larger.

2.14 Table 1 sets out the current Policy Status of the settlements in North Somerset.

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<sup>6</sup> Technically, the town of Portishead and the village of Easton-in-Gordano/Pill are excluded from the Green Belt, not inset, because the Green Belt does not enclose them on the shore side. For simplicity, they are referred to here as inset.

**Table 1** Policy Context

Settlement	RPG10/ RSS Classifi cation	NSRLP	Settlement boundary	Green belt Inset	On Edge of ex. Green belt	Washed over green belt	Beyond ex. Green Belt	JSPTU Policy 38
Weston-super-Mare	PUA SSCT	Preferred location for development	Yes				Yes	Town Centre - Sub regional centre. Worle High St - Minor town District local centre
Uphill			yes				yes	
Clevedon		Location for Major Developments	yes		yes			Clevedon-Triangle MajorTown/ District centre  Clevedon Hill Rd - Minor town District local centre
Portishead			yes	yes				Portishead MajorTown/District centre
Nailsea			yes		yes			Nailsea MajorTown/District centre
Yatton Claverham			Yes (joint)		yes		yes	Minor town District local centre
Long Ashton Leigh Woods			Yes yes	yes		yes		
Easton-in-Gordano Pill			Yes (joint)	yes				
Winscombe Sandford			Yes yes				Yes yes	Minor town District local centre
Backwell			Yes		Yes			
Congresbury			Yes 2 Sections		Yes minor		Mostly	

Settlement	RPG10 Classification	NSRLP	Settlement boundary	Green belt Inset	Green belt edge	Washed over green belt	Beyond ex. Green Belt	JSPTU Policy 38 Major Town/District centre
Banwell			yes				yes	
Hutton			yes				yes	
Wrington Redhill			yes yes		yes	yes		
Wraxall Failand			no yes			yes yes		
Churchill			yes 3 sections				yes	
Lower Langford			yes				yes	
Locking			yes				yes	
Winford Felton			yes yes			yes yes		
Kewstoke			Yes 6 sections				yes	
Wick St. Lawrence			no				yes	
St George			Part WSM				yes	
Blagdon			yes 2 sections				yes	
Bleadon			yes				yes	
Cleeve			yes			yes		
Tickenham			yes			yes		
Dundry			yes 2 sections			yes		
Portbury			yes			yes		



<b>Settlement</b>	<b>RPG10 Classification</b>	<b>NSRLP</b>	<b>Settlement boundary</b>	<b>Green belt Inset</b>	<b>Green belt edge</b>	<b>Washed over green belt</b>	<b>Beyond ex. Green Belt</b>	<b>JSPTU Policy 38 Major Town/District centre</b>
Abbots Leigh			yes			yes		
Flax Bourton			yes			yes		
Burrington			no				yes	
Barrow Gurney			no			yes		
Clapton in Gordano			yes			yes		
Kingston Seymour			yes				yes	
Kenn			yes				yes	
Puxton			no				yes	
Weston-in-Gordano			yes			yes		
Brockley			no				yes	
Chelvey			no				yes	
Butcombe			no			yes		
Loxton			no				yes	
Walton-in-Gordano			no			yes		

### **3.0 Significance – size and basic facilities**

- 3.1 The size of the settlement clearly plays a part in its significance. The larger the population the more likely it is to have a range of employment provision and services. The Rural White Paper 2000<sup>7</sup> uses a population range of 2,000 – 20,000 to delimit market towns. The Defra classification of Larger Market towns<sup>8</sup> however, took into consideration a measure of the ‘function’ of settlement with populations between 10,000 and 30,000. In order to be included in this definition the settlement had to have at least 3 shops, at least 1 bank or 1 solicitor, at least 1 General Practitioner, at least 3.5 percent of its addresses were ‘non residential’ (i.e. commercial), in nature, and a least 1.3 shops per 1000 population. The study did however recognise that a different set of services and travel to work could have been used.
- 3.2 Table 2 (below) ranks the parishes in North Somerset according to the 2001 Census population. It also provides details of whether certain facilities are available and whether a certain level of public transport to the nearby SSCT’s is available. These observations provide a basic understanding of the function of the settlements. The Roger Tym Study (para.3.15) set out further characteristics which were taken into account to imply notions of significance for the larger settlements in the SW. In a more local context table 2 also shows the presence of Secondary Schools, Leisure centres, Libraries etc. Fig 10 shows the Geographical areas for the Secondary schools in North Somerset. However other attributes may also be used to distinguish significance in the more local context. Visitor attractions, large scale sports or cultural facilities, for example, may have a bearing (Clevedon pier, Churchill ski slope, Portishead marina). Similarly further education establishments may be important eg. Weston College and Bristol University School of Veterinary Science near Churchill.

### **4.0 Functionality**

- 4.1 The modern role of settlements is likely to be fairly complex influenced not only by its geography i.e. setting, distance to other settlements and transport links, but also its history including the amount of recent development and changes in employment structure.
- 4.2 Table 3, below, shows the population of each parish over time and compares changes over the past 50 years<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Rural White Paper

<sup>8</sup> Defra Classification of Local Authority Districts and Unitary Authorities in England July 2005

<sup>9</sup> N.B. Some parishes do not have a figure recorded for every Census. Clevee was formerly a part of Yatton parish. Puxton was formerly a part of Congresbury parish. St Georges was formerly part of Banwell parish. North Weston was formerly a parish but has now been merged with Portishead to form Portishead and North Weston.

Table 2

Parish	Pop 2001	Pub	Community Hall	Village Shop	Primary school (No)	PO	GP Surgery	Youth Centres	Library	Dentist	Pharmacy	Opticians	Bank	Atm	Sec School	Leisure Centre	Railway	Recycling centre	Bus Weekday Hourly or more to WSM	Bus Weekday Hourly or more to Bristol
Weston-super-Mare	71758	y	y	y	Y (20)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	Y(4)	y	y	y	Y	Y
Clevedon	21957	y	y	y	Y(5)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y			Y	Y
Portishead & North Weston	17130	y	y	y	Y(5)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y		y	Y	Y
Nailsea	16546	y	y	y	Y(4)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y			Y
Yatton	7565	y	y	y	Y(2)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y				y		Y	Y
Long Ashton	4981	y	y	y	Y(2)	y	y	y	y	y	y								Y	Y
Easton-in-Gordano	4719	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y	y	y	y	y				y					Y
Winscombe/Sanford	4332	y	y	y	Y(2)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y					Y	Y
Backwell	4151	y	y	y	Y (2)	y	y	y	y	y	y		y	y	y	y	y	y	Y	Y
Congresbury	3447	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y	y	y		y								Y	Y
Banwell	2923	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y	y	y		y								Y	Y
Wrington	2896	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y			y	y	y	y	y					Y	Y
Hutton	2627	y	y	y	Y(1)	y													Y	
Wraxall & Failand	2360	y	y	y	Y(1)	y														Y
Churchill	2241	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y	y							y	y			Y	Y
Locking	2144	y	y	y	Y(1)	y	y												Y	Y
Winford	1955	y	y	y	Y(2)	y													Y	Y
Kewstoke	1624	y	y	y	Y(1)														Y	
Wick st. Lawrence	1296	y	y	y																
St George	1214	y	y	y	Y(1)														Y	Y
Blagdon	1172	y	y	y	Y(1)	y														
Bleadon	1068	y	y	y		y		y											Y	
Cleeve	941	y	y	y		y				y									Y	Y
Tickenham	909	y	y		Y(1)															Y
Dundry	871	y	y		Y(1)															
Portbury	830	y		y	Y(1)															(Y)
Abbots Leigh	810	y	y																	Y
Flax Bourton	659	y	y		Y(1)														Y	Y
Burrington	477	y	y		Y(1)															
Barrow Gurney	374	y	y	y		y													(Y)	(Y)
Clapton in Gordano	347	y																		
Kingston Seymour	338		y																	
Kenn	332	y	y																	
Puxton	328	y	y		Y(1)														(Y)	(Y)
Weston-in-Gordano	300	y																	Y	
Brockley	271																		Y	Y
Butcombe	232		y																	
Loxton	222		y	y		y														
Walton-in-Gordano	217		y	y															Y	

(Y) = Not through the main settlement

- 4.3 It is interesting to note that some settlements without settlement boundaries e.g. Loxton have experienced significant growth over the period. Whilst only three parishes across the district have decreased in terms of population size over the past 50 year period;
- Abbots Leigh
  - Barrow Gurney
  - Brockley
- 4.4 Portishead has grown significantly in terms of population size because of the merge with North Weston and the new development that has taken place within the parish, particularly around the marina and the redevelopment of the former Portishead power station site. The population size of Wick St Lawrence has increased significantly due to the Ebdon Grounds development that took place between 1991 and 2001. Weston-super-Mare has had the lowest increase in population of the four towns in the district at 78%%, though as noted some of the urban growth has spilled over into adjoining parishes. The population of Clevedon has increased by 131%, Portishead's resident population has grown by 283% and Nailsea has seen the largest population increase of 620% over the past 50 years.
- 4.5 Housing growth 2002-2006
- 4.6 Table 4 shows the amount of new housing development which has taken place in each Parish between 2002 and 2006. Numbers are given for both small sites (less than 10 units) and large sites. Weston-super-Mare plus St George has seen the greatest amount of new housing during this period followed by Portishead. Clevedon has seen the fourth biggest rise (246) although this is fairly evenly split between small and large sites. This is closely followed by Long Ashton (242). Easton-in-Gordano and Backwell have both seen over 100 new completions whilst Winford, Winscombe/Sandford, Nailsea, Yatton, Kewstoke and Hutton have seen between 50 and 100 dwellings.
- 4.7 House Prices and affordability
- 4.8 House prices and affordability are key attributes in determining where people choose to live. The Housing topic Paper considers these issues in greater detail.
- 4.9 Retail
- 4.10 The retail topic paper considers the level of retailing available at some of the smaller centres.

**Table 3 Population of North Somerset by Parish 1951-2001**

Parish	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	Increase from 1951-2001	Annual change 1951-2001
Abbots Leigh	817	819	950	851	747	810	-1%	-0.02%
Backwell	2,003	3,185	3,872	4,196	4,216	4,151	107%	2.14%
Banwell	2,228	2,824	2,987	3,260	4,107	2,923	31%	0.62%
Barrow Gurney	676	769	689	690	496	374	-45%	-0.89%
Blagdon	1,053	1,025	1,238	1,186	1,214	1,172	11%	0.23%
Bleadon	730	707	823	900	977	1,068	46%	0.93%
Brockley	401	225	286	310	279	271	-32%	-0.65%
Burrington	407	439	406	441	431	477	17%	0.34%
Butcombe	187	187	201	232	255	232	24%	0.48%
Churchill	1,241	1,435	1,598	1,619	2,085	2,241	81%	1.61%
Clapton-in-Gordano	261	257	300	307	326	347	33%	0.66%
Cleeve	n/a	812	934	876	859	941	n/a	n/a
Clevedon	9,524	10,658	14,330	18,115	21,670	21,957	131%	2.61%
Congresbury	1,446	1,572	3,397	3,554	3,435	3,447	138%	2.77%
Dundry	743	790	854	875	869	871	17%	0.34%
Easton-in-Gordano	3,206	4,130	5,551	5,420	4,870	4,719	47%	0.94%
Flax Bourton	179	334	367	454	636	659	268%	5.36%
Hutton	552	821	1,494	2,479	2,541	2,627	376%	7.52%
Kenn	219	218	225	282	328	332	52%	1.03%
Kewstoke	898	1,050	999	1,488	1,656	1,624	81%	1.62%
Kingston Seymour	251	212	236	338	359	338	35%	0.69%
Locking	1,427	3,291	4,243	3,976	3,498	2,144	50%	1.00%
Long Ashton	3,079	4,504	5,179	4,948	4,822	4,981	62%	1.24%
Loxton	186	187	172	166	168	222	19%	0.39%
Nailsea	2,298	4,173	8,626	14,252	17,230	16,546	620%	12.40%
North Weston	1,055	1,567	2,469	2,958	3,060	n/a	n/a	n/a
Portbury	407	375	843	833	782	830	104%	2.08%
Portishead	4,471	6,538	9,030	11,363	11,661	17,130	283%	5.66%
Puxton	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	289	328	n/a	n/a
St Georges	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,214	n/a	n/a
Tickenham	596	838	934	910	938	909	53%	1.05%
Walton-in-Gordano	174	178	210	213	228	217	25%	0.49%
Weston-in-Gordano	234	165	198	236	309	300	28%	0.56%
Weston-super-Mare	40,396	43,938	50,894	58,194	64,935	71,758	78%	1.55%
Wick St Lawrence	190	182	163	168	186	1,296	582%	11.64%
Winford	1,332	1,309	1,972	2,069	1,999	1,955	47%	0.94%
Winscombe	2,243	2,553	4,329	4,096	4,192	4,332	93%	1.86%
Wraxall	1,910	1,402	1,456	1,626	1,453	2,360	24%	0.47%
Wrington	1,573	1,811	2,214	2,193	2,540	2,896	84%	1.68%
Yatton	2,689	3,107	5,960	6,774	6,826	7,565	181%	3.63%
<b>North Somerset</b>	<b>91,282</b>	<b>108,587</b>	<b>140,629</b>	<b>162,848</b>	<b>177,472</b>	<b>188,564</b>	<b>107%</b>	<b>2.13%</b>

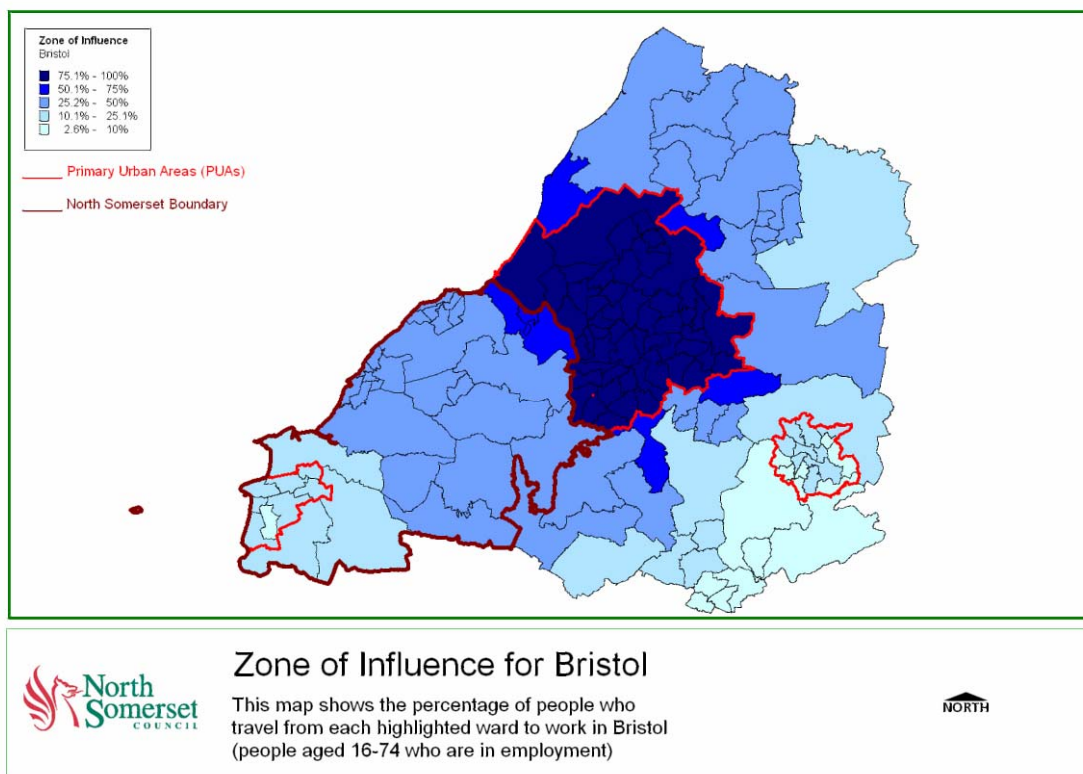
**Table 4 Housing Completions 2002-2006**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Parish Pop</b>	Pop Rank	Completions on Small sites 2002-2006	Completions on Large Sites 2002-2006	Total 2002-2006	Rank Dev
Weston-super-Mare	71758	1	398	1875	2273	1
Clevedon	21957	2	127	119	246	4
Portishead & North Weston	17130	3	77	1456	1536	2
Nailsea	16546	4	32	52	84	10
Yatton	7565	5	38	36	74	11
Long Ashton	4981	6	25	217	242	5
Easton-in-Gordano	4719	7	18	120	138	6
Winscombe/Sanford	4332	8	45	41	86	9
Backwell	4151	9	21	89	110	7
Congresbury	3447	10	19	11	30	16
Banwell	2923	11	23	0	23	18
Wrington	2896	12	12	0	12	20
Hutton	2627	13	11	39	50	13
Wraxall & Failand	2360	14	14	23	37	15
Churchill	2241	15	29	0	29	17
Locking	2144	16	10	0	10	21
Winford	1955	17	13	79	92	8
Kewstoke	1624	18	21	41	62	12
Wick st. Lawrence	1296	19	3	0	3	30
St George	1214	20	9	794	803	3
Blagdon	1172	21	2	0	2	32
Bleadon	1068	22	10	0	10	21
Cleeve	941	23	2	0	2	32
Tickenham	909	24	5	0	5	28
Dundry	871	25	8	0	8	25
Portbury	830	26	6	32	38	14
Abbots Leigh	810	27	13	0	13	19
Flax Bourton	659	28	1	8	9	24
Burrington	477	29	2	0	2	32
Barrow Gurney	374	30	1	0	1	36
Clapton in Gordano	347	31	4	0	4	29
Kingston Seymour	338	32	8	0	8	25
Kenn	332	33	10	0	10	21
Puxton	328	34	3	0	3	30
Weston-in-Gordano	300	35	8	0	8	25
Brockley	271	36	2	0	2	32
Butcombe	232	37	0	0	0	37
Loxton	222	38	0	0	0	37
Walton-in-Gordano	217	39	0	0	0	37

## Travel to work Data

- 4.11 The dormitory nature of settlements in North Somerset is in part a result of both the close proximity and available transport routes to the SSCT's. The South West Observatory carried out an analysis of the travel to work data from the 2001 Census<sup>10</sup> to map the spheres of influence of the major urban areas. The Bristol sphere of influence covers the entirety of North Somerset although its influence is much greater in the northern section of the District (see Fig 1). Fig. 2 shows that the influence of Bath does not impact greatly on the district indeed Fig 5 shows that it is the only really the eastern wards (Winford, Blagdon and Churchill, and Wrington) where working in Bath is slightly more pronounced. The South West Observatory study showed that the influence of Taunton was also marginal. The zone of influence of the Weston PUA is much smaller in scale, does not impact greatly on the North Eastern wards in the District but does extend southwards into Sedgemoor and Mendip districts.

Fig 1



<sup>10</sup> Travel to work and Urban areas of the South West Region. SW Observatory 2005

Fig 2

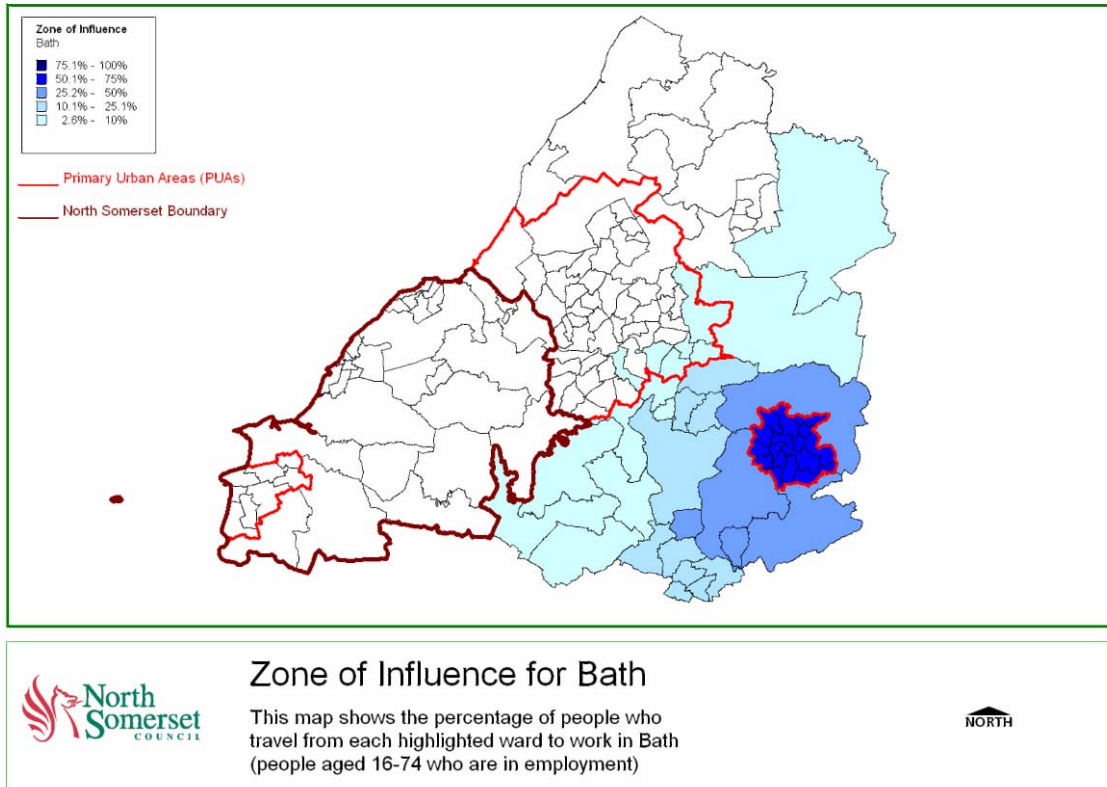
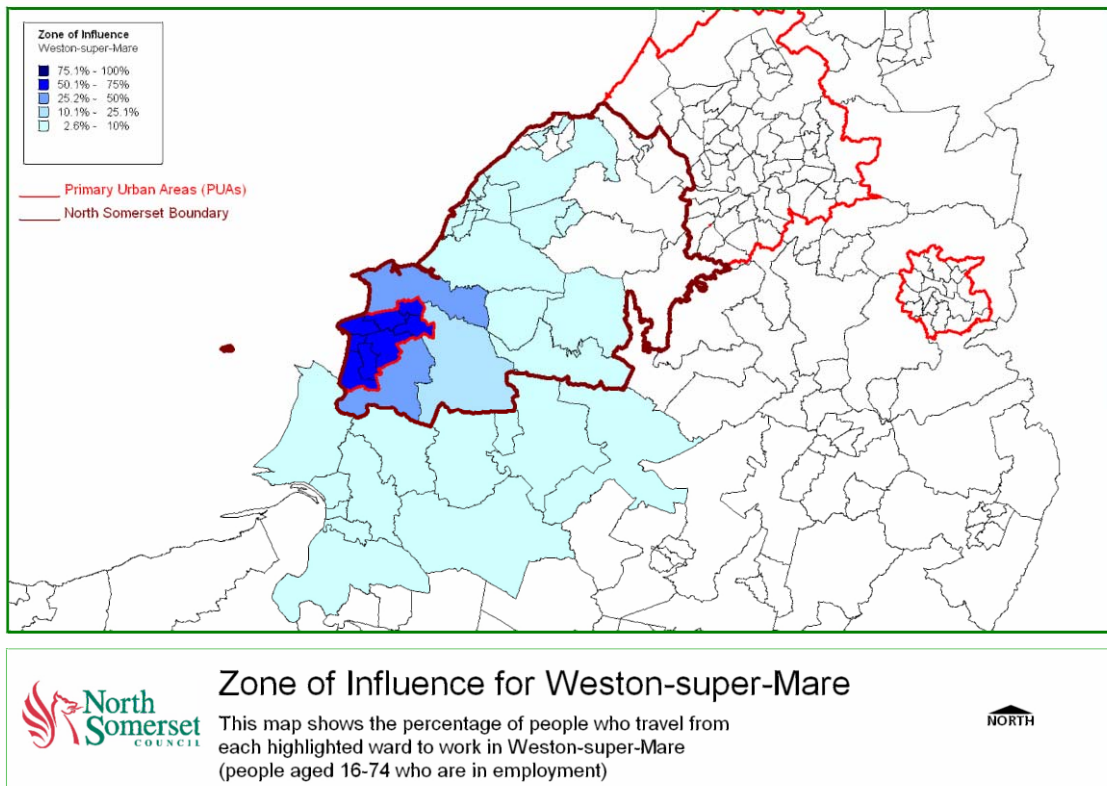


Fig 3

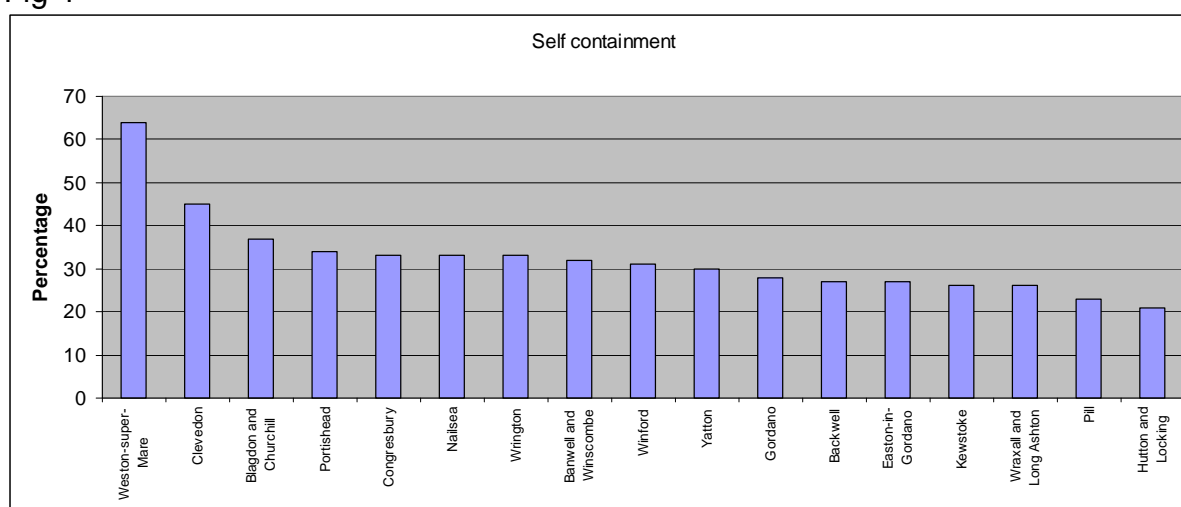




#### 4.12 Self containment

Self-containment is the ratio of residents living and working in a settlement to the total number of employed residents living in a settlement. Thus the maximum self containment is 100% and the ratio is the indicator of the ability of a town to provide work in its local economy from its resident workforce. Fig 4 shows the level of self-containment of the towns and wards in North Somerset.<sup>11</sup> The self-containment of Weston-super-mare, the only SSCT in North Somerset, is 64%. This is the lowest figure for self-containment of the 11 former PUA's in the South-West. The others range from Bristol at 85% to Bath, Gloucester and Cheltenham all at 71%.<sup>12</sup> Of the 89 Other Designated Centres for Growth (ODCG's) in the South West identified in the study Clevedon, Nailsea/Backwell, and Portishead ranked 63<sup>rd</sup> 79<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> respectively.

Fig 4



4.13 Whilst self-containment provides a useful tool it needs to be supplemented with information about the settlement as a centre of employment and information regarding in- and out-commuting. The Roger Tym study identified Clevedon, Portishead, Nailsea/Backwell and Yatton as being among the 30 settlements with the highest level of net 'out-commuting' in the region and Nailsea/Backwell and Yatton performing a 'classic dormitory role'.

4.14 Fig. 5<sup>13</sup> compares information on where residents from the towns and wards in North Somerset travel to work. The graph ranks the wards according to the percentage of residents who live and work in North Somerset. It is interesting to note that areas closest to Weston-super-Mare have the highest percentage of residents working in the area whilst not surprisingly those closest to Bristol (Long Ashton, Easton-in-Gordano, Winford, Pill) show the highest percentage working in Bristol.

<sup>11</sup> 2001Census. Travel to work statistics

<sup>12</sup> Travel to work and the Urban Areas of the South West Region SWRA 2005

<sup>13</sup> 2001Census. Travel to work statistics

Fig 5

## Travel to work comparisons

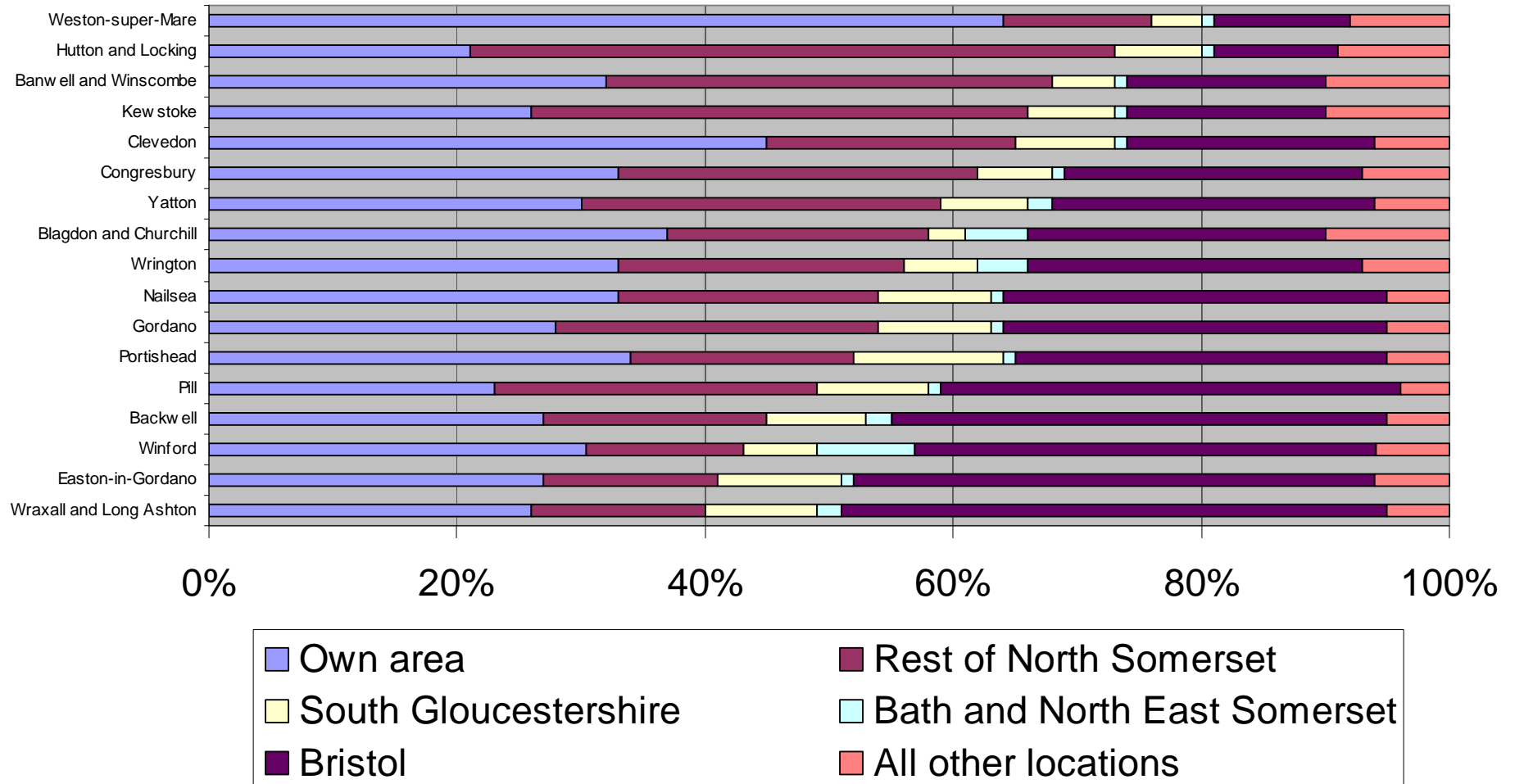
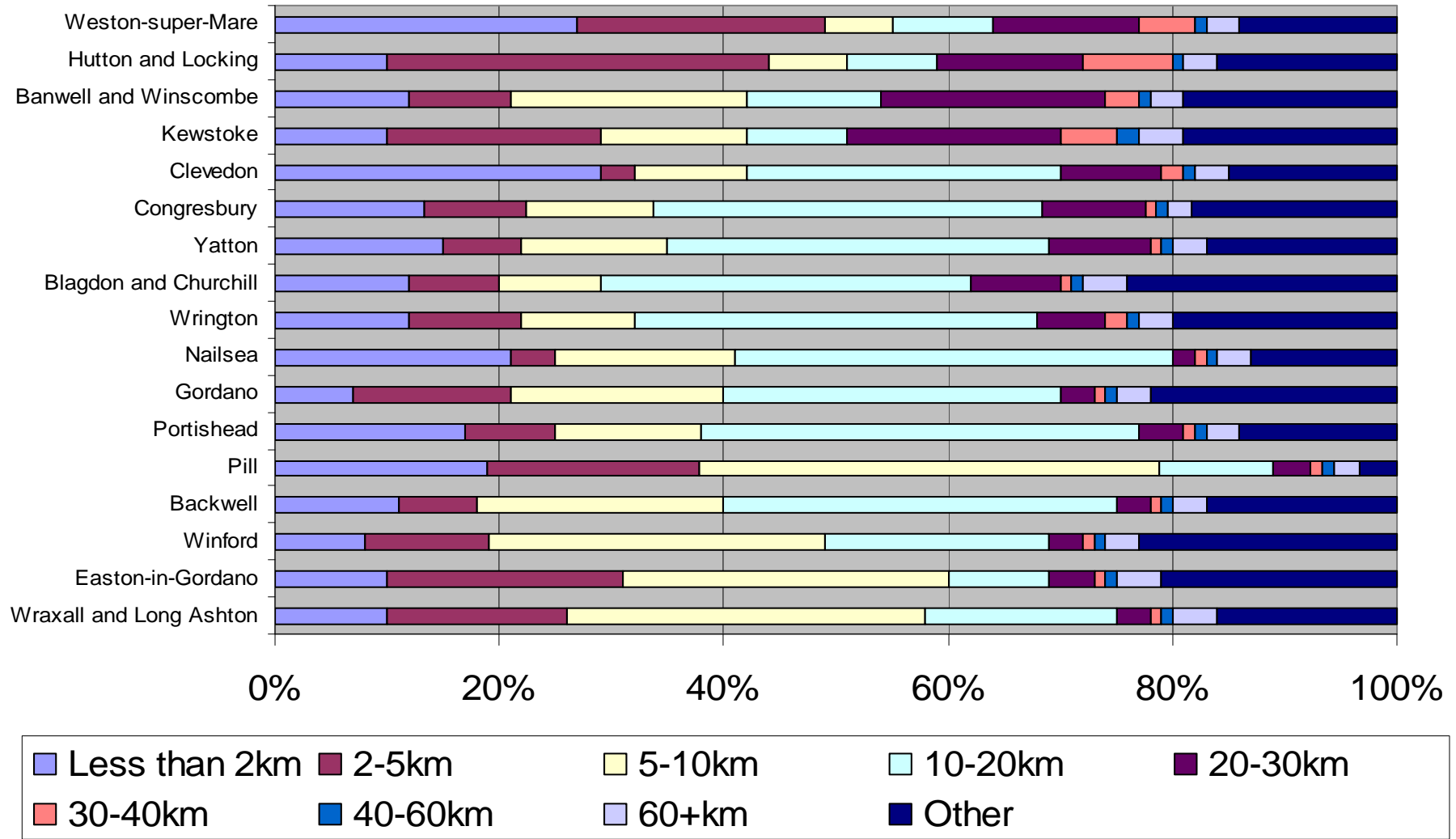


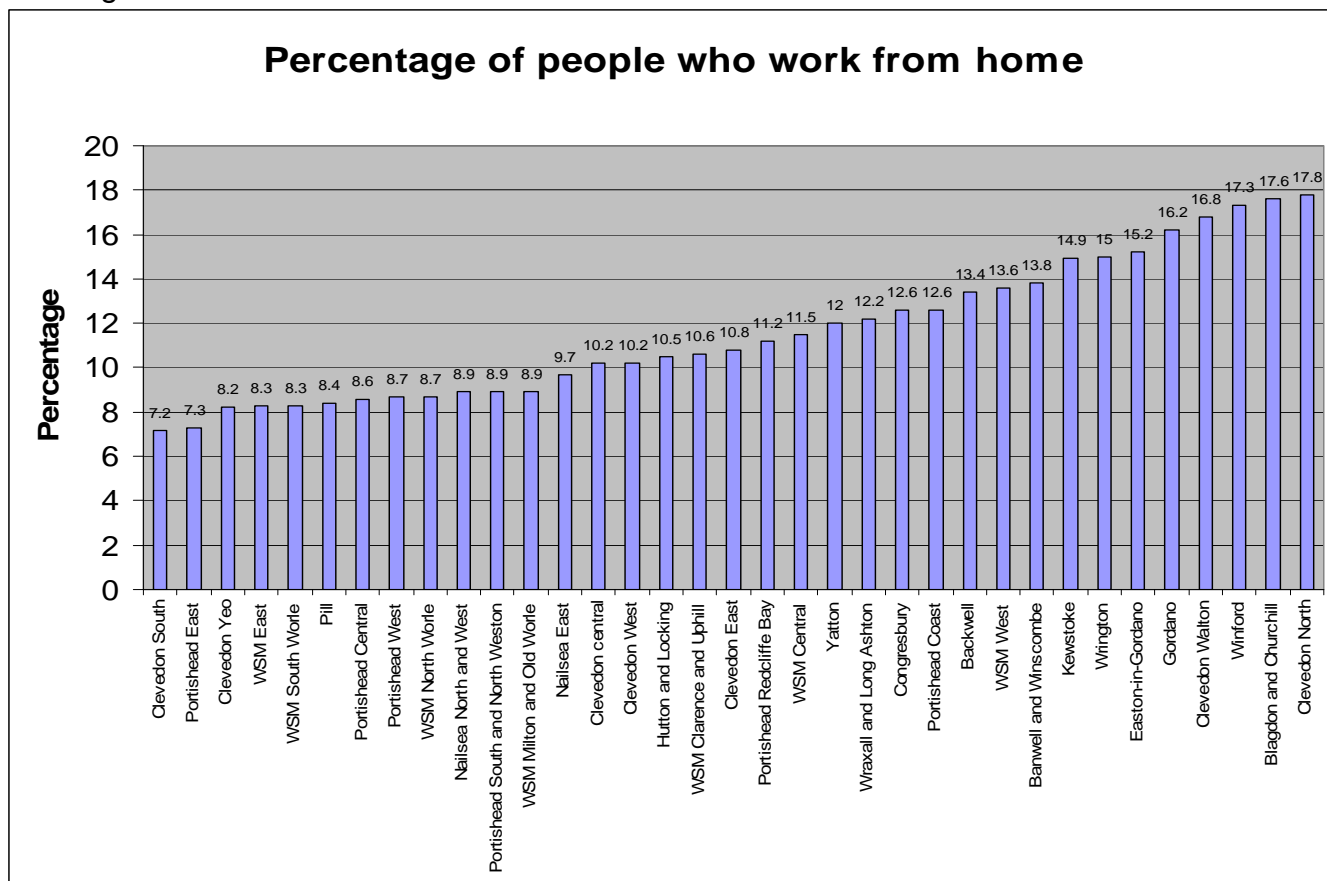
Fig 6

## Distance travelled to work



4.15 Fig 6 compares the distance travelled to work from the towns and wards. Notable are the higher percentage of residents from the Weston and associated wards that travel between 20 and 40 kms. The 'other' category is difficult to analyse although may be made up partly of people that work from home. Fig 7 therefore looks at those economically active residents that work from home. Notable is the variation between wards ranging between 7.2 and 17.8% but also that it is generally the more prosperous wards that have the highest concentrations.

Fig 7



Source 2001 Census

4.16 Maps 1-7 Appendix A show the levels of out commuting from the four towns as well as Yatton, Wrington and Blagdon/Churchill. These maps show both the level of self-containment and identify the number of commuters who are leaving each settlement and where they travel to. In all cases Bristol city centre attracts the highest amount of commuters. The north Bristol fringe area is the next most popular destination from the four urban areas.

4.17 Map 1 considers Weston-super-Mare. After Bristol City centre (attracting over 1700 commuters) the Bristol north fringe attracts over 1000 followed by Sedgemoor (over 900), Clevedon (over 700), then by Bristol south Bristol north (approximately 600 each), Avonmouth (500), Banwell and Winscombe then Wrington (approximately 350 each). It would appear that there are high levels of commuting in terms of numbers and the range and

distance travelled. Over 300 people travel to London and the SE, 150 to the West Midlands, nearly 200 to Taunton Deane, over 100 to Mendip and over 100 to Dorset/Devon/Cornwall.

- 4.18 The overall number of commuters from Clevedon (Map 2) is significantly less than Weston however there are still over 1000 people travelling to Bristol City Centre and approximately 650 to the North Bristol fringe. Weston-super-Mare attracts over 450 followed closely by Bristol North. Avonmouth and Bristol South attract over 400 then Portishead, Nailsea and Yatton. Overall the spread and distance travelled is less than for the Weston with the area to the south (other than Weston and Yatton) having very limited attraction.
- 4.19 The overall commuters from Portishead (Map 3) to Bristol city centre and the north Bristol fringe are similar to Clevedon (approximately 1200 and 800 respectively). This is followed by Bristol north and south, Avonmouth and Clevedon.
- 4.20 Nailsea (Map 4) has the second highest number of commuters that travel into Bristol City Centre after Weston-super-Mare (over 1400). The Bristol north fringe attracts almost 570 followed by Bristol south (500), Bristol North (approximately 450) and Clevedon (almost 400).
- 4.21 Maps 5 to 7 detailing the pattern of out commuting from Yatton, Wrington, and Blagdon and Churchill. Yatton still has significant numbers commuting into Bristol City Centre (680) probably influenced by the availability of rail travel although interestingly the second most popular destination is Clevedon (340) which has no rail connection. This is followed by Weston-super-Mare, Bristol North Fringe, Bristol south and Bristol North. Overall numbers commuting from the other two wards are much less although Bristol City centre still attracts the greatest numbers (220 from Wrington and 250 from Blagdon and Churchill). The north Bristol fringe and north Bristol is much less important from these areas although south Bristol and Weston-super-mare are significant.
- 4.22 Employment and in-commuting
- 4.23 Fig 8 compares the working age residents and economically active populations in each town/ward with the number of employees in that area. There are four wards in the District where the number of jobs exceeds the economically active population. These are Gordano, Easton-in Gordano, (location of Royal Portbury Dock) Wrington (Bristol International Airport) and Blagdon and Churchill. Elsewhere the ratio of jobs to economically active varies from 91% (Backwell) to 26% (Hutton and Locking).

Fig 8

Ward	Residents of working age Age 16-74*	Economically active Age 16-74*	Number of employees**	Ratio of jobs to economically active%
Backwell	3,947	2,637	2,400	91
Banwell and Winscombe	6,203	4,150	2,000	48
Blagdon and Churchill	2,857	1,995	2,300	115
Clevedon	15,408	11,154	8,000	72
Congresbury	2,485	1,688	1,400	83
Easton-in-Gordano	2,132	1,327	4,700	354
Gordano	1,982	1,309	1,400	107
Hutton and Locking	4,175	2,681	700	26
Kewstoke	2,431	1,830	700	38
Nailsea	11,996	8,576	4,200	49
Pill	2,508	1,784	1,100	62
Portishead	12,304	8,618	6,000	70
Weston-super-Mare	50,061	33,081	28,700	86
Winford	2,105	1,455	700	48
Wraxall and Long Ashton	4,767	3,250	2,200	68
Wrington	2,222	1,494	2,900	194
Yatton	6,549	4,738	2,500	53
Total	134,132	91,767	<b>72,000</b>	78

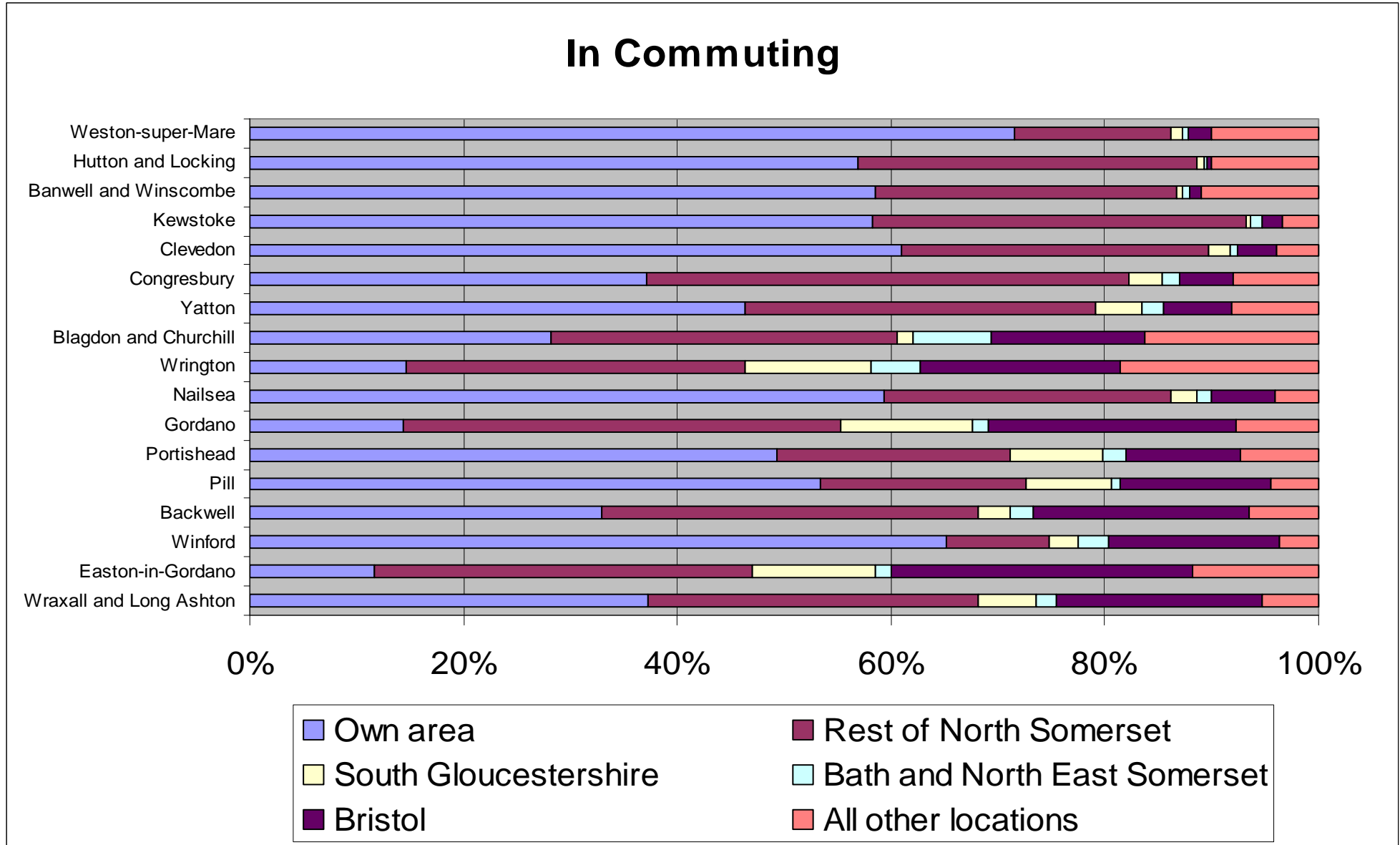
\* Source 2001 Census Key Statistics

\*\* Source Annual Business inquiry workplace analysis 2005: Nomis. .

(Figures are rounded to the nearest 100. These figures are aggregates from which agriculture class 0100 (1992 SIC) and self-employed have been excluded)

4.24 Fig 9 looks at the pattern of in-commuting to each ward. Of particular note from this analysis is that in the Weston area (Weston-super-mare, Hutton and Locking, Banwell and Winscombe and Kewstoke) a high percentage of the people working in these areas are from North Somerset. This is also the case for Clevedon, Congresbury, Yatton and Nailsea. In the case of Congresbury and Yatton whilst the percentage coming from within their own area is less, the ward plays a role in attracting commuters from the rest of North Somerset. The wards with the highest percentage of in-commuters from beyond North Somerset are Wrington, Easton-in-Gordano, and Gordano – again probably due to the Dock and Airport. Blagdon and Churchill is an interesting ward. It has one of the higher levels of self-containment (in North Somerset terms), a high number of jobs compared to economically active population, a high proportion of people who work from home and attracts commuters from BANES, Bristol and elsewhere.

Fig 9



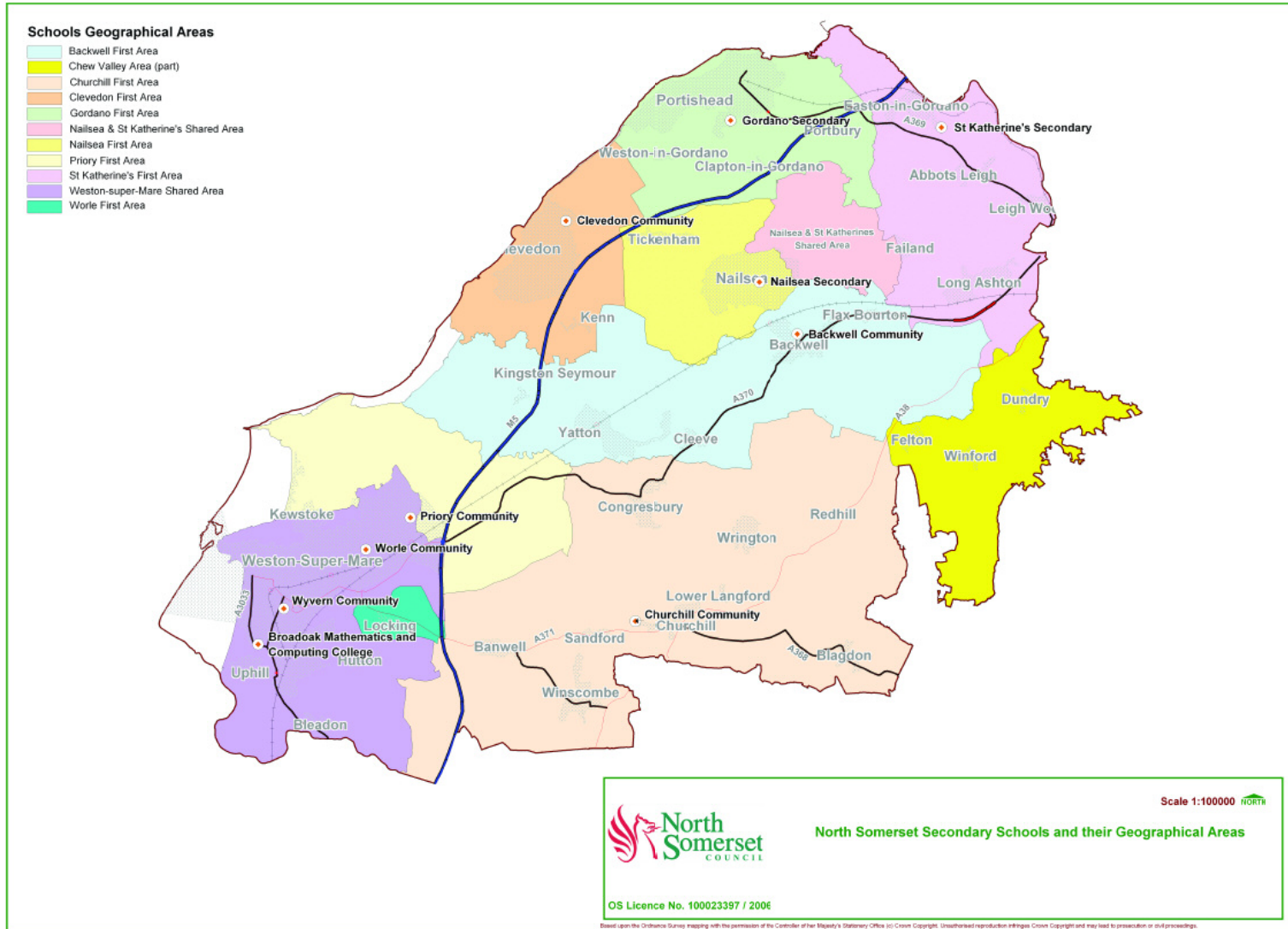


Fig 10



#### 4.25 Schools geographical area

4.26 Fig 10 shows the Geographical areas for the Secondary schools in North Somerset. This aids an understanding of the possible grouping of settlements in the district and relationships between settlements. Both Backwell and Churchill Community Schools cover very large geographical areas drawing children from numerous smaller settlements. The area to the east (including Dundry, Winford, Felton) is part of the Chew Valley School area which is outside the North Somerset area.

#### 5.0 Current, Future and Potential Growth

5.1 The current role and function of settlements in North Somerset is determined by spatial policies in the adopted North Somerset Replacement Local Plan, JRSP and RPG10 together with the policies, investment decisions and strategies of other organisations particularly covering housing, transport and infrastructure. These have long-lasting impacts on the future of particular settlements and allocations made in the NSRLP will continue to be built-out during the early years of the LDF. The importance of utilising previously developed land remains. Thus the regeneration of sites in Weston-super-Mare together with a commitment to improve the balance between jobs and homes is a priority. The draft RSS identifies urban extensions at SW Bristol and Weston-super-Mare but it is for the LDF to determine the type and level of development at other settlements determined by local conditions which may encourage or constrain potential. The draft RSS is committed to maintaining the general extent of the green belt subject to a change to allow the SW Bristol urban extension and to include land south west of Nailsea and south-east of Clevedon. Defining the detailed boundaries in these areas will be determined by criteria in PPG2 but also in relation to the future role and function of the settlements in these areas.

#### 6.0 Groups of settlements

From the above analysis it is clear that groups of settlements are emerging which have similar characteristics, geographical connections and/or are liable for potential for change. These can be divided into the following groups;

1. *Weston-super-Mare* The largest settlement, identified as an SSCT with a major urban extension proposed in the draft RSS.
2. *The Weston Settlements - Uphill, St George, Wick St Lawrence, Hutton, Kewstoke, Locking, Bleadon and possibly Banwell.* All of these settlements have very few services. The 3 wards surrounding Weston-super-Mare, Hutton and Locking, Kewstoke, and Banwell and Winscombe have few employment opportunities indeed have the lowest ratio of jobs to economically active population of the wards in the District. Kewstoke and Hutton and Locking have very low levels of self-containment. 73% and 78% of commuters from these wards respectively who travel to 'the rest of North Somerset' actually travel into Weston-super-Mare. This percentage is lower for Banwell and Winscombe ward (57%) reflecting both its greater distance from Weston and the pull of jobs particularly in Blagdon and Churchill and Wrington wards.
3. *The Coastal Towns - Clevedon and Portishead.* After Weston-super-mare Clevedon is the largest centre of population in the district. Whilst the town is

still very much a dormitory settlement for Bristol it has the second highest level of self-containment (45%) in the district and has the second largest number of employees. Employment does generate a significant amount of in-commuting, over 3100 people commute into Clevedon with 74% of these attracted from the rest of North Somerset. Recent employment growth adjacent to the town (albeit in Yatton ward) at Clevedon 5/20 has also taken place. The population of the town grew significantly in the 60's and 70's and to a lesser extent in the 80's although more recently has stabilised. 246 housing completions took place between 2002 and 2006 (just over half were on small sites). A further 111 units are allocated on large sites in the Replacement Local Plan. Future growth of the town is constrained by the existing green belt and landscape to the north east, the motorway and proposed new green belt to the south east and by the flood plain to the south. Potential for development is therefore likely to be limited to redevelopment opportunities and possible regeneration proposals for the town centre.

Portishead by contrast has experienced considerable population growth since the 1990's. The redevelopment of east Portishead including the Dock, Power Station and Ashlands is yet to be completed with a further 2200 units allocated on these sites in the NSRLP still to be developed. The NSRLP confirmed a long awaited Green Belt extension to the east of the town between the Ashlands development and the Dock. As a consequence the town has become surrounded by Green Belt. Potential growth is therefore limited to that already allocated and redevelopment opportunities.

4. *The Middle District Larger Dormitories – Nailsea, Yatton, Congresbury, Wrington, Backwell.* These settlements all have very poor levels of self-containment. All contain basic levels of services but employment opportunities vary with Nailsea and Yatton in particular having few employees compared to their economically active populations.
5. *Edge of Bristol- Pill, Easton-in Gordano.* The percentage of people working in Bristol from these wards is the highest in the District. Basic services are available but are influenced by the proximity to Bristol. Recent development of the former Ham Green Hospital has led to further housing and employment provision.
6. *SW Bristol Settlements – Long Ashton, Flax Bourton, Barrow Gurney, Failand.* Whilst these settlements have much in common with either the larger dormitories or smaller green belt settlements they have been classified as a separate group due to their proximity to southwest Bristol as their future development may be influenced by the urban extension.
7. *Smaller Green Belt villages- Abbots Leigh, Clapton-in-Gordano, Cleeve, Dundry, Felton, Leigh Woods, Portbury, Redhill, Tickenham, Weston-in-Gordano, Winford.* These smaller settlements are all 'washed- over' green belt settlements, they have few services, little employment and high out-commuting. As villages with defined settlement boundaries any development has been limited to infilling within the settlement boundary. With the increasing importance of ensuring sustainable development allowing any residential development in these settlements should be questioned. The purpose of having settlement boundaries at such settlements could therefore be reviewed.

8. *Eastern Mendips- Burrington, Blagdon.* These are small villages in the AONB which although they have similarities with villages in the rural south the relationships are with the Mendips AONB and to some extent towards Bath.
9. *Mid Moors - Kingston Seymour and Kenn.* These are small settlements with few services having many similarities to the green belt settlements although they are currently beyond the existing Green Belt. Any change to the extent of the green belt could result in these villages being within the green belt.
10. *The More Rural South – Winscombe, Sandford, and Churchill.* Whilst self-containment levels remain low, the wards to the south of the District are less influenced by Bristol. Self -containment for Banwell and Winscombe is 32% although a further 36% of the employed residents commute within the rest of North Somerset. For Blagdon and Churchill self-containment is slightly higher at 37% with 21% commuting within the rest of North Somerset. Winscombe provides various local shops and rural services with high profile traditional employment at Thatcher’s Cider, Sandford. Churchill contains the main secondary school, leisure centre and outdoor pursuit activities at the Avon ski centre.

## 7.0 Issues

- 7.1 Given the imperative to minimise the loss of green field land and reduce the need to travel, especially by car, coupled with the dormitory status, poor levels of self-containment, limited employment opportunities and development potential in the larger North Somerset towns should any be classified as development B towns to act as the local point for locally significant development? If so, what local objectives for the settlement could be pursued which would not exacerbate its dormitory status?
- 7.2 Which settlements should be classified as level C settlements? Where the aim would be to achieve more balanced development, including the development of employment and community facilities to meet local needs and outreach services to the smaller settlements. Housing would only be permitted for identified affordable or specific local needs including affordable rural housing.
- 7.4 In the smaller villages what approach should be taken to ensure that only genuinely sustainable development takes place?  
Even in washed- over green belt villages with settlement boundaries the presumption in favour of infill can be over-ridden by sustainability concerns. Therefore is the concept of settlement boundaries for these smaller settlement still an appropriate planning tool?

## 8.0 Gaps in Knowledge

- Much relevant 2001 Census data is either parish or ward based rather than settlement based – and limitations within the Census data make analysis below parish level difficult and unreliable
- Local Accessibility assessments for potential ‘B’ settlements

## 9.0 Evidence Base

1951 -2001 census data  
2001 Census data (ward/parish/town) and travel to work data  
Parish Plans  
North Somerset AMR's and residential land surveys  
SWRA Functional Analysis of Settlements (Tym and Partners)  
Travel to work areas South West Observatory

## 10.0 Stakeholders

10.1 Listed below are the key stakeholders with an interest in this topic paper.

Local Town/ Parish Councils  
Major Land owners  
Indigenous and Rural employers  
Civic societies and local interest groups  
Rural community Council  
Affordable housing providers

## 11.0 Appendix A

Out-commuting Maps (available as jpgs)

Map 1 Weston-super-Mare  
Map 2 Clevedon  
Map 3 Portishead  
Map 4 Nailsea  
Map 5 Yatton  
Map 6 Wrington  
Map 7 Blagdon and Churchill

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