

West Somerset Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05



Local Development Framework

WEST
SOMERSET
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

December 2005

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West Somerset Annual Monitoring Report 2004/05: Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory requirement under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to submit an AMR to the Secretary of State by 31 December of each year. This therefore is the first AMR for the period 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2005 and is produced for West Somerset District Council. The purpose of the document is to assess the:
- Implementation of the local development scheme; and,
 - Extent to which policies in the local development documents are being achieved.
- 1.2 A total of four indicators are required to monitor the effectiveness of planning policies:
- **Contextual Indicators.** These describe the wider social, environmental and economic background against which LDF policies operate;
 - **Core Output indicators.** These assess the performance of policies in relation to national targets, for example housing completions per annum are measured;
 - **Local Output Indicators.** These are set at the local level and are specific to measuring the performance of policies in relation to local targets; and,
 - **Significant Effects Indicators.** These assess significant social, environmental and economic effects of policies and are linked to the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 1.3 This year's AMR is not comprehensive, and the national guidance indicates that it is acceptable for AMRs to develop gradually to take account of ongoing discussions, tools to assist in monitoring being developed by statutory bodies, and emerging best practice.
- 1.4 Despite the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDD) not beginning in the AMR period, progress has since been made and meets the timescales set in the Local Development Scheme (LDS). The Core Strategy and Williton Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents (DPD) have entered the first preparation stage. At the time of submission, the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) had undergone an informal consultation meeting the requirement of Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. However, the LDS is to be resubmitted to the Secretary of State to clarify a clerical error in the document.
- 1.5 Joint working between West Somerset District Council, Somerset County Council and the South West Regional Assembly through the County Strategic Information Providers (CSIP) group has benefited the preparation of the AMR. The group shares best practice and information on monitoring.

Contextual Indicators

- 1.6 The Contextual Indicators paint a picture of West Somerset's environment, economy and social standing. The data however in some cases is up to four years old and represents the whole of West Somerset district as opposed to the West Somerset local planning area.
- 1.7 The population of West Somerset is very small with approximately 35,600 people residing in the District. One third of these live in the only town, Minehead. 50% of the population are aged 50 years or over with a significant lack of people between the ages of 20 to 35. This suggests that a lack of higher education facilities and well-paid jobs, and higher than average house prices are causing out-migration.
- 1.8 The average household size in West Somerset is 2.16, which is less than the averages for South West England and England and Wales. The District contains a higher than regional and national averages of 1 person households. This correlates with the high number of elderly people in the District, who are likely to make up a large proportion of these households.

- 1.9 The percentage of second homes in the district (4.3%) far exceeds the regional and national figures. This is thought to be a factor in the high ratio (6.80) of house price to income in West Somerset, which is the highest in England. This statistic correlates with the fall in persons between the ages of 20 and 35, who have found it difficult to step onto the housing ladder. The tenure of dwellings perhaps disguises this problem, given that a higher percentage of dwellings are in private ownership in West Somerset than the rest of the United Kingdom. To help counter the affordability problem, the high percentage of dwellings owned by Registered Social Landlords does provide a partial solution.
- 1.10 The district's economic performance is rather mixed when compared to the national average. Although an unemployment rate of 2.9% in West Somerset sits below the national 4.8%, the average earnings per week by residence (£359.7) are nearly £70 below the national average of £422.9. This reflects the large presence of low-paid and seasonal industries such as farming and tourism in the District.
- 1.11 Despite West Somerset's rurality and associated accessibility problems, the Census 2001 shows private vehicle use for travelling to work to be at 57.5%, which is well below the national figure of 65.27%. This correlates with the percentage of people walking or cycling to work (21%), which is above the national average by 8%. Both of these statistics also correlate with the 31.9% of people travelling less than 2km to work, which is some 10% more than the national figure of 21.14%. This suggests that much of the district's settlements consist of a strong sustainable element, as it appears that many workplaces are close to places of residence.

Core Output Indicators

- 1.12 Core Output Indicators have been monitored subject to the availability of data.
- 1.13 Business development within the district for the period 2004/05 advanced at just 0.2ha, which came in the form of one completion. At the end of this period, there was 6.5ha of land allocated for employment covering Use Classes B1, B2 and B8.
- 1.14 Since 1991 a total number of 1,561 net dwellings have been completed in the West Somerset local planning area. This figure exceeds the Annual Strategic Requirement (1,444 dwellings), as set in the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (adopted in 2000), by 117 dwellings. This, on average, puts the District's building rate one year ahead of itself. Most of these completions have come through the form of windfalls. Only two allocated sites from the District Local Plan have been developed, which accounts for 80 dwellings of the overall 1,561 completed.
- 1.15 The housing trajectory for the remaining six years covered by the Structure Plan to 2011 has been calculated. A total of approximately 773 dwellings are expected to be built within the West Somerset local planning area. The trajectory forecasts that the total number of net additional dwellings at 2011 will exceed the Structure Plan allocation of 2100 by some 200 dwellings.
- 1.16 Of the dwellings completed in 2004/05, 92% were completed on previously developed land, which surpasses the national target of 60%. Meanwhile, 86.5% of new dwellings were completed at 30 dwellings or more per hectare. This comes close to matching the national target of 100% of new dwellings to be built at density of 30 dwellings or more.
- 1.17 The number of affordable houses built in the AMR period was a disappointing zero. However, Local Plan policy emerging through the Proposed Modifications and the Planning Obligations Codes of Practice mechanism will assist to deliver this type of development in the future via planning gain. In addition to this the delivery of 114 affordable units is forecast for the next two years.
- 1.18 Data for transport, local services and biodiversity was not available for monitoring.

Local Output Indicators

- 1.19 Owing to neither the Local Plan being adopted as yet, nor the DPDs reaching the relevant stages for indicators to be formed, Local Output Indicators will be established and reported on over the next AMR period. Nevertheless, baseline data has been collected for the locally strategic policies, which have been identified in the LDS to evolve through the LDF process presenting key targets to monitor. Other policies such as Transport and Biodiversity have been omitted from this exercise due to the difficulty of extracting sufficient data. This will be rectified over the next AMR period.
- 1.20 The Community Plan is currently under revision. Upon adoption in the 2005/06 period, the Plan will play an important part in forming the Local Output Indicators.
- 1.21 Dwelling completion data between 1991 and 2005 indicates that overall housing development is spread proportionately amongst Minehead, Watchet and Williton, and the rest of the District. This is in line with the Settlement Policies objectives stated in the Local Plan Deposit Draft 1998. In particular the pattern of development consists of a sustainable element.
- 1.22 The Employment data reveals the average earnings by residence per week are £359.7, some £60 below the national average. 60% of West Somerset employees are in full time jobs. Both of these statistics act as a baseline to be improved in meeting the Employment Policies Objective, set out in the Local Plan Proposed Modifications 2005.
- 1.23 Retail data shows that some shopping for comparison and convenience goods is lost mainly to Taunton, which is outside of the District. The recent West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study concludes there is capacity for more retail premises in the District, particularly at Minehead. This should help claw back some of the leakage to other places like Taunton. This will assist the Local Plan Retail objectives in sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of the District's shopping centres. Ultimately, it will help to provide a more sustainable economy as well as reducing the need to travel longer distances.
- 1.24 Data for housing is exclusively confined to Policy H/4: Affordable Housing. Data illustrates that whilst there is a demand from applicants on the housing register for mostly 1-bedroom dwellings the majority of dwellings being built in the District are either 2 or 3 bedrooms in size. In using this type of data negotiations with developers should lead to a greater number of this dwelling type, which can be built at higher densities and thus a more sustainable rate.

Significant Effects Indicators

- 1.25 Significant Effects Indicators are yet to be developed due to the Sustainability Appraisal Framework not beginning preparation. This will evolve with the preparation of the DPDs and consultants have been commissioned to undertake much of this work. It is forecasted that the necessary work will have been completed for the Significant Effects Indicators to be in place for the next AMR.

Remedies and Next Steps

- 1.26 The Remedies and Next Steps section identifies a number of limitations that have arisen in the preparation of the AMR. Whilst the Contextual Indicators were monitored it was felt that the quality of data could be better. This will be discussed with members of the CSIP. Data availability has limited the monitoring of the National Core Output Indicators. This is to be investigated both internally and externally, with monitoring by the authority likely to be expanded to achieve the inclusion of the necessary data. Some limitations concern the Local Plan and LDF not being at the correct preparation stages to allow the development of Local Output Indicators. This will be overcome as both of these processes evolve.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 heralded the beginning of the new planning system in West Somerset. The new system comes in the form of the Local Development Framework (LDF), which encompasses a whole new approach to local planning. The Local Development Framework is the umbrella title for the portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs). LDDs hold planning policy and associated information such as proposal maps and specific allocations, and have other purposes such as managing the preparation of planning documents and public consultation.
- 1.2 One of the LDDs, or project management document as referred to by West Somerset District Council, is the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The Council has a statutory requirement under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to submit an AMR to the Secretary of State by 31 December of each year. This therefore is the first AMR produced for West Somerset District Council and covers the period 2004/05. The purpose of the document is to assess:
- The implementation of the local development scheme;
 - If objectives and targets set in the Development Plan Documents are being achieved;
 - If planning policies have had unintended consequences; and,
 - If assumptions and objectives behind planning policies are still relevant.
- 1.3 The AMR is regarded as a key component in the functioning of the LDF. Without it the LDF could become ineffective, under performing and dated, which will, in turn, affect the control of development and future planning of the District.
- 1.4 The monitoring of policies will follow a process whereby objectives will be set in each Development Plan Document (DPD). Targets will be established to provide an aim for the DPDs' policies with indicators formed from these targets to measure the policies performance. A total of four indicators are required to be monitored in the AMR:
- **Contextual Indicators.** These describe the wider social, environmental and economic background against which LDF policies operate;
 - **Core Output indicators.** These assess the performance of policies in relation to national targets, for example housing completions per annum are measured;
 - **Local Output Indicators.** These are set at the local level and are specific to measuring the performance of DPD policies; and,
 - **Significant Effects Indicators.** These assess significant social, environmental and economical effects of policies and are linked to the Sustainability Appraisal.
- 1.5 This year's AMR is not comprehensive, and the national guidance indicates that it is acceptable for AMRs to develop gradually to take account of ongoing discussions, tools to assist in monitoring being developed by statutory bodies, and emerging best practice. Work to develop the AMR for next year will start once this report is submitted, to ensure that relevant information is collected and interpreted, and to take into account comments received and emerging national best practice. Sub Regional workshops are planned in January 2006 to allow discussion and comparison of output, and to provide Local Authorities with the chance to analyse the LDF process as a whole and the positioning of the AMR within this. This sub regional work will assist in the development of future AMR's in the region.
- 1.6 Owing to the ongoing work to adopt the West Somerset District Local Plan, very little progress was made with the LDF in this period. Therefore, unlike future AMRs, this Report may contain areas where actual progress cannot be reported on. Where this applies, the remedial steps planned to correct any omissions for the next AMR will be explained.

2.0 Local Development Scheme Implementation

- 2.1 The West Somerset Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved in March 2005. The LDS can be treated as a planning policy information guide and is the first point of contact for finding out how and when LDDs will be prepared and produced. It provides information such as:
- The role and content of each Local Development Document within the Local Development Framework;
 - The geographical area and places that each Local Development Document affects;
 - The timetable illustrating the preparation stages for each Local Development Document.
- 2.2 The LDS was not adopted until the end of the 2004/05 period. Therefore the implementation of the LDS will be covered in much greater detail in the next AMR period, 2005/06. However, at the time of submitting this report three LDDs had begun preparation.

Development Plan Documents

- 2.3 The Core Strategy and Williton Area Action Plan Development Plan Documents (DPDs) entered the pre-production stage (evidence collection) of preparation in November 2005 as identified in the LDS. This stage of preparation corresponds with Section 5 – Evidence Base of the LDS. Within Section 5 a list is provided of background documents that are required to support emerging policies in DPDs. As at the 31 December 2005 a number of the documents were either adopted, underway or due to be undertaken by April 2006. The West Somerset Housing Strategy and West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study were documents of notable adoption and concern both DPDs, with the Central Regeneration Study for Williton being another important document adding to the preparation of the Williton Area Action Plan.
- 2.4 Other documents are underway too. The revision of the Community Plan will assist the focus of establishing a Spatial Vision in the Core Strategy DPD, whilst the West Somerset Employment Land Review will be useful to both DPDs. The Urban Capacity Study, which was due for revision in the summer of 2005, has been postponed until early 2006. Negotiations have been pursued with consultants on undertaking this.

Project Management Documents

- 2.5 Project Management Documents are the title that West Somerset District Council uses in the public domain for LDDs that are not DPDs. This is to avoid confusion over the similar names of 'Local Development Document' and 'Development Plan Document'. In addition to this, we feel that 'Project Management Document' is a better reflection of the purpose of LDDs i.e. the Statement of Community Involvement, Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Report, which do not carry Development Plan status.
- 2.6 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) began preparation in July of 2005. At the time of submission, the consult and prepare the Draft SCI stage as set by Regulation 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 had just come to an end. The consultation was extended beyond the statutory consultees listed in Regulation 25, to include parish councils, non-statutory organisations and the general public. It's purpose was to gather information on if and how they would like to be consulted on the LDF and planning applications, and what policy themes they would like to be involved in. The consultation ended within the timescale planned for in the LDS (end of December 2005).
- 2.7 Owing to a clerical error, the LDS is to be re-submitted to clarify the timescale for the SCI preparation period. The pre-submission consultation stage (as required by Regulation 26) is to be extended by one month to incorporate the month of March 2006. This will not affect the preparation of the SCI, but will provide greater clarity as to the timescale it is prepared to.

3.0 Joint Working

- 3.1 The SWRA coordinate and share best practice on monitoring and information, coordinated through the Strategic Information Providers (SIP) group. Reference is made in recent ODPM advice to this work as an example of good practice. A copy of this document can be found on the South West Observatory planning module website. <http://www.swrpm.org.uk/LDF/index.asp>
- 3.2 West Somerset District Council has developed its monitoring responsibilities through the County Strategic Information Providers (CSIP) group. The CSIP has a membership of all the district councils in Somerset, the County Council and the South West Regional Assembly. It meets on a regular basis with the intention of coordinating and streamlining the collection and analysis of information of common relevance, particularly in relation to the Core Output Indicators and other contextual indicators. A draft set of contextual indicators has been produced, which enables consistency of reporting across the county. The information on contextual indicators in this report draws on this work, and a summary of the suggested contextual indicators can be found on the South West Observatory planning module website. <http://www.swrpm.org.uk/LDF/index.asp>
- 3.3 The South West Local Government Association (SWLGA) and South West E-Government Group (SWEGG) have recently received funding from ODPM to develop an SA tool for monitoring purposes. The work to develop the contextual indicators has greatly informed the development of this tool namely the 'One Stop Sustainability Appraisal Shop' (OSSAS). More details are available on the planning module web site via the ODPM Document: '[AMR - FAQs & Seminar Feedback on Emerging Best Practice 2004/05. ODPM. Sept 05](#)' at <http://www.swrpm.org.uk/LDF/index.asp>.
- 3.4 The project will deliver a web-based tool kit to aid West Somerset District Council to undertake Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) / Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) of the LDF. The tool kit will be an online 'One Stop Shop' for quick, easy, and free access to standardised and reliable core baseline data for Sustainability Appraisals for all local authorities. These tools will comprise a GIS¹ capability, guidance and a report facility. The datasets will have standardised definitions and draw from reliable data sources. It will also provide links to guidance and good practice in undertaking SEA or SAs. A date of March 2006 has been set as a deadline for the 'live' running of the SA Tool, and it is envisaged that the tool will enable West Somerset District Council to enhance the AMR dataset collection.

¹ GIS is a technology that is used to view and analyse data from a geographic perspective. It manages, analyses, and disseminates geographic knowledge.

4.0 Context

- 4.1 The planning system can be used as a mechanism to help the community address economic, social and environmental issues. With the use of the AMR, the current picture of West Somerset's economy, environment and social situation can be set. As the LDF period rolls forward, the annual examination of contextual indicators will allow the picture to evolve and trends to emerge.
- 4.2 This section will take a brief look at the key issues, challenges and opportunities that West Somerset District Council faces corporately as well as in its role as the local planning authority. Greater attention will be given to the Contextual Indicators, with commentary provided on what the data is representing.

Painting the West Somerset Picture - Key Issues

- 4.3 West Somerset is the smallest district in Somerset, with a population of approximately 35,000 residents (Census 2001) covering an area of 727 sq km. The District is extremely rural. With a population of approximately 12,000 persons, the main town, Minehead, contains around one third of the total District population. Geographically, the District incorporates the western side of the Quantock Hills, stretching further west covering the Brendon Hills and Exmoor. The Bristol Channel lies directly to the north. The district's economy is mainly driven by agriculture and tourism.
- 4.4 Despite the towns of Bridgwater lying to the East and Taunton, a named Principal Urban Area in the Regional Spatial Strategy, to the South, the District suffers from accessibility problems due to its sparsely spread population and geographical constraints. This affects the economy by limiting the type of jobs available to those in tourism and agriculture, which have traditionally been low paid and seasonal. Limited accessibility and the restricted economy is also detrimental to the area's social standing, with affordable housing being a major issue facing the authority. It is these issues that encouraged West Somerset District Council to establish a number of community priorities in December 2004.

West Somerset District Council Community Priorities (December 2004)

- To increase the number of permanent jobs offering above average pay for the area;
- To increase the number of economically active residents in the district;
- To increase the number of houses for sale that local people can afford to buy;
- To maintain and where possible increase the opportunities for residents to access facilities and services – particularly in the deeply rural areas and for young people;
- To reduce the levels of deprivation of individuals, particularly those living in the rural areas.

Challenges and Opportunities

- 4.5 The community priorities illustrate the challenges faced by West Somerset District Council, particularly in its role as the local planning authority. These priorities are likely starting points to base our spatial objectives around, which will act as hooks to hang various policies, in the preparation of Development Plan Documents. The policies will be tailored to help achieve the priorities.
- 4.6 Whilst the current Local Plan policies are sufficient to at least control the challenges that lie before the authority, the new planning system encourages the authority to explore their core root. This will provide an opportunity to develop new policies to counteract the problems that underlie the challenges.
- 4.7 The Planning Policy team has already provided assistance in tackling the challenges. It has supported the adoption of the Affordable Home Ownership Model, which was established to ease the spiralling difficulty for certain demographic groups to mount a foot on the housing ladder. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has since praised this model. In the period 2004/05 the team was involved in a number of development projects to help boost the West Somerset economy, job prospects and accessibility to better services.

Such projects have involved the Watchet East Wharf mixed-use scheme, the Minehead Key Sites retail project and the Williton regeneration package. The Williton Area Action Plan DPD will support Williton’s future role as a focus for development within the district.

Contextual Indicators

- 4.8 Contextual Indicators essentially paint a picture of where the district stands in terms of the economy, the environment and its social well-being. They will be used to provide a backdrop against which to consider the effects of policies and inform the interpretation of output and significant effects indicators.
- 4.9 The Indicators have been collected for three geographical areas; West Somerset, Somerset or the South West, and either England or the United Kingdom. Due to the need to assess as much up to date information as possible various data sources have been used in the collection of data, hence the use of different geographical areas outside of West Somerset. This also explains why, in some cases, data might not be recorded for 2004/05 but a few years earlier.
- 4.10 The area covered by the West Somerset Local Development Framework is the part of West Somerset that falls outside of the Exmoor National Park boundary. This is unlike other local authority services such as Housing, which cover the whole of the West Somerset district. Many data sources do not recognise the difference between the Local Planning Authority boundary and the District Council boundary. Therefore, the data presented in the following section covers the whole of West Somerset. This issue will be discussed further in Section 6.
- 4.11 The following section will discuss the contextual indicators outcomes and what they mean to West Somerset. The commentary will compare the data for West Somerset with that of the wider geographical area i.e. regionally or nationally, thus putting West Somerset’s position into context.

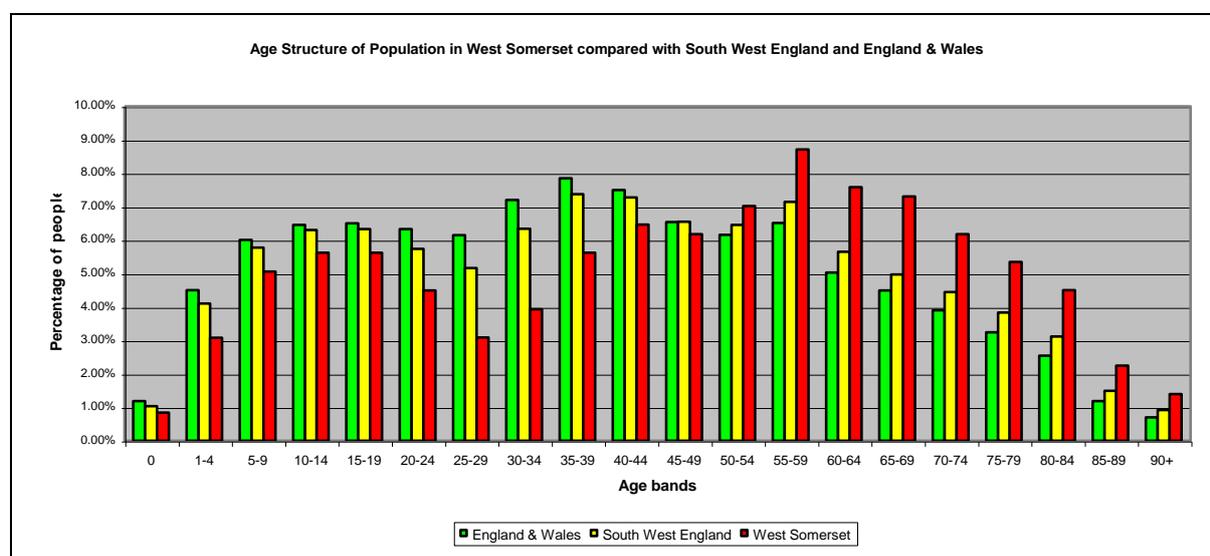
Population

Indicator	West Somerset	South West England	England & Wales
Population Size	35,600	5,038,200	53,046, 200
Age Structure	See Graph 1		

Table 1 Contextual Indicators: Population

Source: ONS Mid Year Population Estimate 2004

- 4.12 The population of West Somerset contributes very little to the total population of the South West of England. The very rural nature of the district provides the reason for this. The only settlement defined as a town in West Somerset is Minehead, which accommodates approximately 12,000 (one third) of the district’s residents. All other settlements in the district have a population of less than 4,000.



Graph 1

Source: ONS Mid Year Population Estimate 2004

4.13 The age structure of West Somerset’s population shows a complete reverse trend to that of England and Wales, but is similar to that of the South West region. This is unsurprising given rural areas such as West Somerset are attractive to older generations who look to retire to places with a pleasant environment. The notable dip in persons within the age range of 19 – 34 years suggests significant out-migrating, which hints that there is a lack of higher education facilities and higher paid jobs to anchor this cohort to the District. Higher than average house prices are also thought to contribute towards this. Although the South West region and England and Wales experience a similar dip, the percentage drop is not as significant as West Somerset’s.

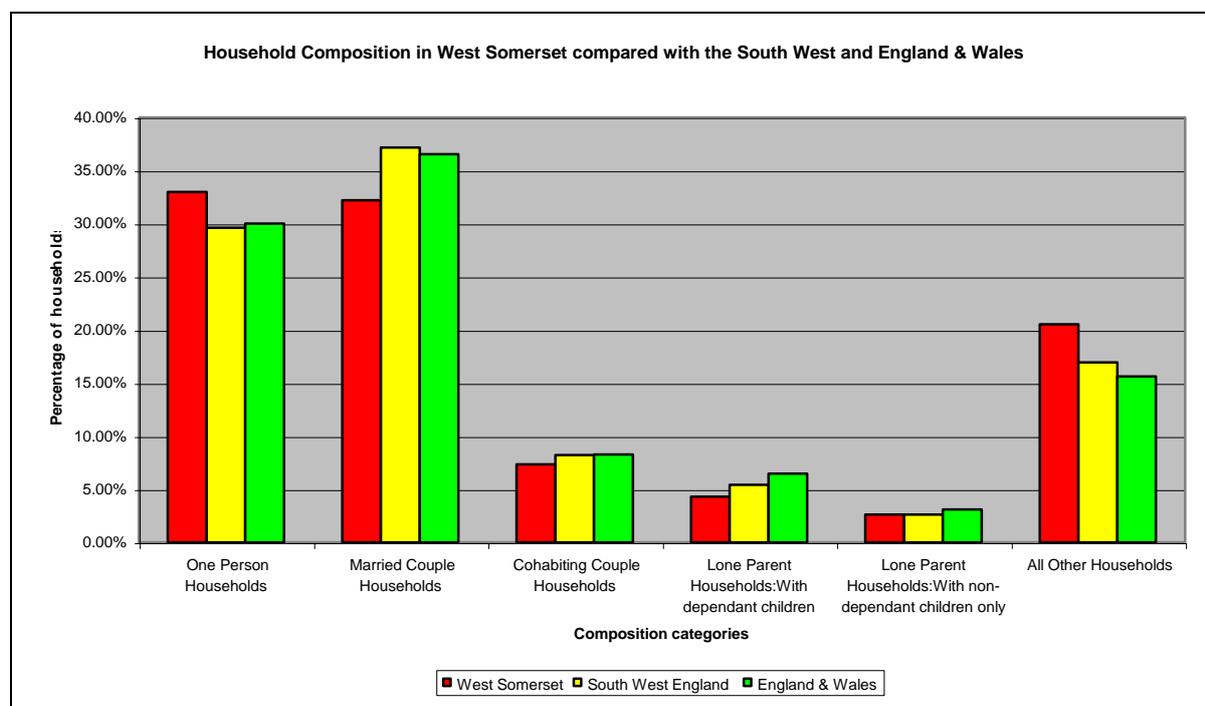
Households

Indicator	West Somerset	South West	England & Wales
Total number of households	15,627	2,085,984	21,660,475
Average household size	2.16	2.31	2.36
Household composition:			
One Person Households	5158	617810	6,502,612
Married Couple Households	5033	775468	7,915,315
Cohabiting Couple Households	1149	171537	1,794,451
Lone Parent Households			
With dependant children	670	113037	1,399,939
With non-dependant children only	409	54357	663,547
All Other Households	3208	353775	3,384,611
See Graph 2			

Table 2 Contextual Indicators: Households

Source: Census 2001

4.14 The Contextual Indicators representing Households reveal the average household size in West Somerset to be less than the averages for South West England and England and Wales. This is presumably related to the age structure, as shown in Graph 1, whereby a high percentage of West Somerset residents consist of elderly persons, which implies fewer people living together.



Graph 2

Source: Census 2001

4.15 The composition of households in West Somerset supports the previous point. Graph 2 illustrates that the percentage of households consisting of one person is higher than that for both South West England and England and Wales, conversely there is a lesser percentage of married and cohabiting couple households in West Somerset compared to the greater geographical areas. Therefore this suggests that one-person households might consist of a high number of elderly persons (given the district's age structure), which raises potential issues for the housing, health, and social services in supporting this type of household.

Dwellings

Indicator	West Somerset	South West	England & Wales
Total number of dwellings	16,000	2,185,966	22,538,641
% Second homes	4.3 % (693)	1.8% (38,381)	0.6% (150,718)
% Vacant properties	1.1% (194) (at 2005)	2.8% (61,601)	3.2% (727,448)

Table 3 Contextual Indicators: Dwellings – Total number; Vacant and Second Homes Source: WSDC Council Tax Records; Census 2001

4.16 The percentage of second homes in West Somerset far exceeds that for the region and England and Wales. This is expected considering the environment acts as a pull factor to urban dwellers and given that past house prices were lower than average, making such properties affordable. The high level of second home ownership has increased house prices in the District. This has been detrimental to the local population who now find it difficult to step on to the housing ladder, hence the affordability problem the authority faces.

4.17 Vacant dwellings in West Somerset at 2005 are nearly a third of those vacant nationally at 2001, a figure that is unlikely to have changed too much since then. This is a positive comparative for the authority but does reveal that some properties are under-utilised and could be developed for residential use. Cost might be a factor that is currently preventing this but mechanisms do exist in the form of grants to help overcome this.

Indicator	West Somerset	South West	United Kingdom
Private Owned	86.71%	N/A	82.95%
Local Authority Owned	0%	N/A	8.77%
Owned by RSL	13.29%	N/A	7.74%
Owned by other public sector bodies	0%	N/A	0.47%

Table 4 Contextual Indicators: Dwellings – Tenure at 2004

Source: Audit Commission 2004

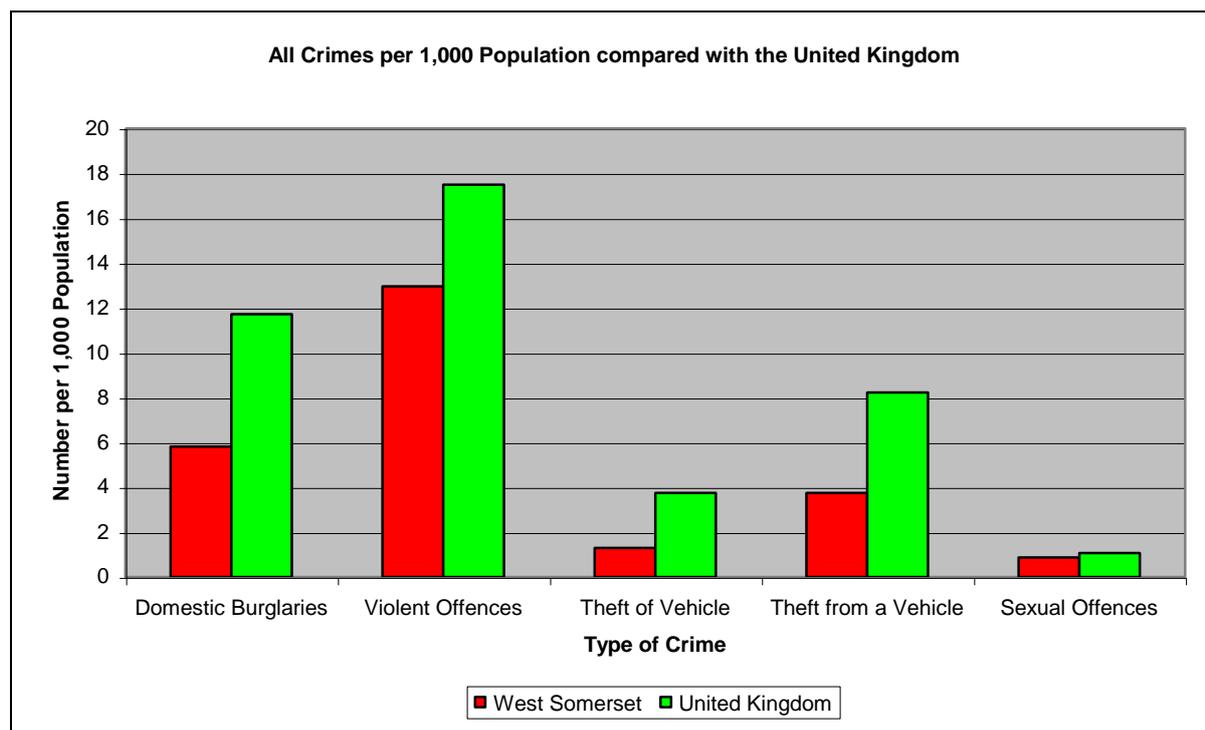
4.18 The tenure of dwellings in West Somerset is confined to two broad owners of dwellings. Unlike some parts of the UK where dwellings are in local authority ownership, West Somerset District Council has no ownership over the District's housing stock. The last of the Council's stock was sold in the late 1990s to meet corporate objectives. Instead, social housing in the District is provided through housing associations, namely Magna, which explains the above average ownership of dwellings by Registered Social Landlords. This percentage share of the housing stock is encouraged to continue to assist with providing a solution to the district's affordable housing issue. The higher than national average privately owned dwellings correlates with the very high ownership of second homes, and perhaps paints a false picture of the situation in West Somerset. This disguises the fact that there is an affordability issue, and should not be overlooked in factors that are causing high house prices.

Crime

Indicator	West Somerset	United Kingdom
All Crimes per 1,000 population	Domestic Burglaries	11.72
	Violent Offences	17.49
	Theft of Vehicle	3.75
	Theft from a Vehicle	8.22
	Sexual Offences	1.07

Table 5 Contextual Indicators: Crime – All Crimes per 1,000 population

Source: Audit Commission 2004/05



Graph 3

Source: Audit Commission 2004/05

4.19 The crime statistics for West Somerset reveal the district to be significantly below the national average for all crimes, with the exception of sexual offences. This might be unsurprising given the very low population of the district, but it should not be overlooked that rural areas can be more vulnerable to crime due to police surveillance having to cover a much sparsely populated area. Taking this into consideration, the data gives a positive outlook for community safety in West Somerset. The outlook should not be taken for granted however; crime is an issue that must be given thought in developing planning policies, particularly those that concern design of the built environment.

Indicator		West Somerset	United Kingdom
Percentage of residents surveyed who say that they feel fairly safe or very safe outside:	After dark	73.6%	72.31%
	During the day	98%	97.58%

Table 6 Contextual Indicators: Crime

Source: Audit Commission 2004/05

4.20 As emphasised with the data for All Crimes, the data presented in Table 6 is important to developing planning policies concerning design of the built environment.

Social

Indicator	West Somerset	South West England	England
House Price / H/hold Income ratio (residence based)	6.80 (2003) <i>Small sample - >50</i>	4.66	4.11
Indices of Multiple Deprivation (No. of Wards within upper 25% most deprived nationally)	2 (Minehead South; Williton East)	278 (top 20%)	8,121

Table 7 Contextual Indicators: Social

Source: Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2003; ODPM 2004

4.21 The house price to income ratio in West Somerset far exceeds that of the South West region and England in general. There are two probable reasons for this large difference. First, employment in West Somerset is traditionally based around low paid and seasonal industries such as agriculture and tourism thus implicating a low-income scale. Second, people from outside the area have influenced the housing market by purchasing second homes, thus causing a false demand for housing and consequently increasing the average house price. This is supported by the data in the 'Dwellings' section. This ratio data is an important indicator

in helping to provide housing at an affordable cost; something that the planning system can have an impact on.

- 4.22 Only two of the top 25% of the most deprived wards in England can be found in West Somerset. Despite being put in this category they are ranked low at 7047 (Minehead South) and 7094 (Williton East). Both wards are focused within or adjacent to the larger settlements in the district, which provides an opportunity to concentrate efforts on improving these two areas. The local development framework will prove to be pivotal in addressing these disparities.

Health

Indicator	West Somerset		United Kingdom	
Life Expectancy	M – 78.7	F – 82.2	M – 76.25	F – 80.69
Percentage of households with one or more person with a limiting long term illness	38.3%		32.98%	

Table 8 Contextual Indicators: Health

Source: Audit Commission 2001 and 2002

- 4.23 The life expectancy for West Somerset is above the average for the United Kingdom. The percentage of households with one or more person with a limiting long-term illness is also above the average for the United Kingdom. Although the life expectancy statistics suggests health care in the district might be of a good level, the latter statistic hints that more health care facilities might be required to cope with persons with a limiting long-term illness.

Economy

Indicator	West Somerset	South West England	United Kingdom
Unemployment Rate	2.9%	3.6%	4.8%
VAT Registered Businesses	Registrations	105 (6.9%)	10.1%
	De-registrations	130 (8.5%)	9.9%
	Total Stock	1525	-

Table 9 Contextual Indicators: Economy

Source: Nomis 2004/05

- 4.24 The unemployment rate for West Somerset is below that of both the region and the United Kingdom. Although this is a positive indication for West Somerset's economy, the average earnings per week is also below those regionally and nationally. As commented elsewhere in this report, this may be due to a combination of factors. High levels of employers in the district are those who operate in low-paid and seasonal industries such as tourism, thus limiting wages. Better-paid industries are unlikely to locate in West Somerset due to accessibility limitations caused by geographical constraints and because of the small pool of persons of a workable age. The combination of these factors present a real challenge to the local authority in attracting better-paid jobs.
- 4.25 There appears to have been a greater number of de-registrations than registrations in West Somerset, which equates to a reduction in VAT Registered Businesses. Although de-registrations are a little lower than those in the South West and United Kingdom, thus implying a better maintenance of total stock, there has also been relatively fewer registrations in the district too. This suggests less businesses starting in West Somerset than there is in the rest of the country.

Environment

Indicator	West Somerset	United Kingdom
Percentage of river length assessed as good a) biological quality and b) chemical quality	a) 96.7% b) 96.93%	a)53.61% b)51.32%
Air Quality (AQMA's)	0	113

Table 10 Contextual Indicators: Environment

Source: Audit Commission 2003 & DEFRA 2003

- 4.26 The whole length of rivers in West Somerset is classed as good biological quality and good chemical quality, with only 4% not being so. This is almost double the score for rivers in the United Kingdom and suggests that farming techniques and other potential sources of pollution are using greater environmentally friendly methods.

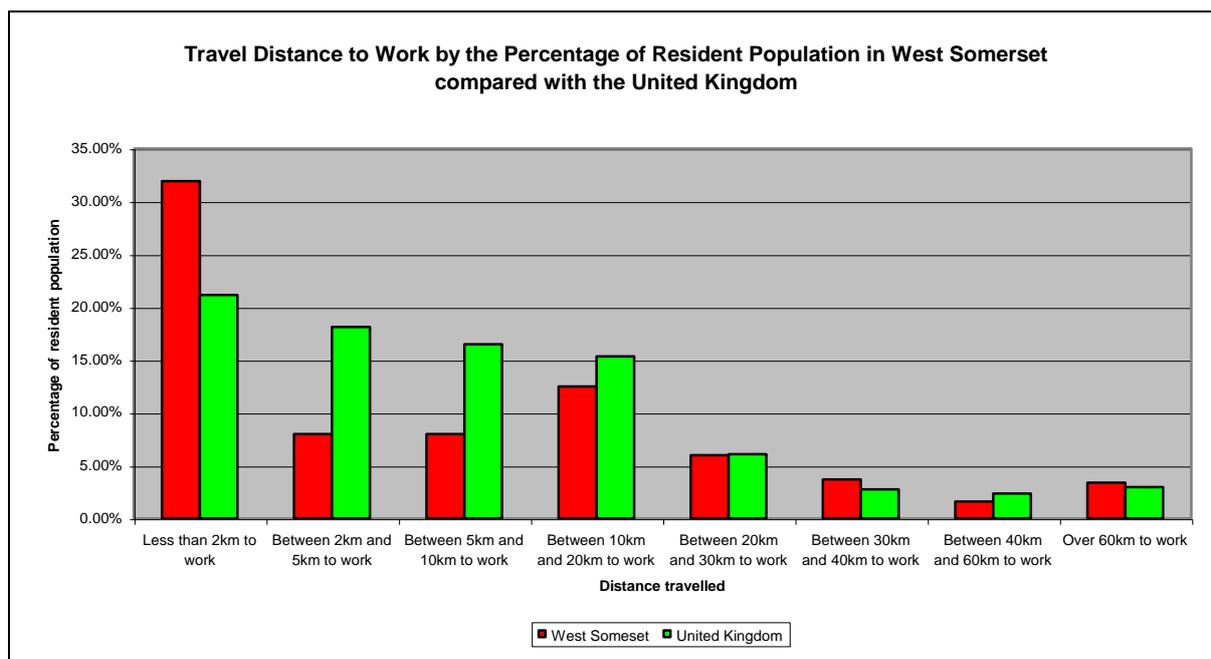
Transport

Indicator		West Somerset	United Kingdom
Percentage of the resident population who travel to work by:	Private Motor Vehicle (Car, Taxi, or Motorcycle)	57.5%	65.27%
	Public Transport	2.6%	11%
	Foot or Cycle	21%	13.3%
Percentage of the resident population travelling:	Less than 2km to work	31.9%	21.14%
	Between 2km and 5km to work	8%	18.11%
	Between 5km and 10km to work	8%	16.48%
	Between 10km and 20km to work	12.5%	15.34%
	Between 20km and 30km to work	6%	6.09%
	Between 30km and 40km to work	3.7%	2.74%
	Between 40km and 60km to work	1.6%	2.36%
Over 60km to work	3.4%	2.97%	

Table 11 Contextual Indicators: Transport

Source: Audit Commission 2001

- 4.27 Given West Somerset's rural context and thus inaccessibility by public transport, the assumption could be made that travel to work by private motor vehicle would be greater than that nationally. However, interpreting the data in Table 11, the reverse has occurred. Although this data does not correlate with travel by public transport, which is some 9% below the national figure and supports the inaccessibility point made elsewhere in this report, it does correlate with the data for travel by foot or bicycle. This figure for West Somerset is some 8% greater than that for the United Kingdom. This suggests that for a relatively large amount of the working population, their workplace can be found near to their place of residence. This would be supported by the large proportion of West Somerset's employment sector being made up of farming, whose workers tend to live on site. Likewise, it also suggests that settlements are perhaps more sustainable than those found elsewhere in the country.
- 4.28 The data for the mode taken to travel to work is perhaps supported by the data for the distance travelled to work. As reported in the previous paragraph, fewer people travel to work by private motor vehicle in proportion to those in the United Kingdom as a whole. This correlates with the number of people who travel 2km or less to work in West Somerset. The percentage for this is much higher in the district (31.9%) than it is for the United Kingdom (21.14%). This supports the previous point made that for a large amount of the working population their work place is close enough to their place of residence for them to take an alternative mode of transport to the private motor vehicle.
- 4.29 From the cohort 10km to 20km (see Graph 4), a trend emerges whereby the West Somerset statistic begins to match and then exceed that for the United Kingdom (with the exception of 40km to 60km). If the district were to be scrutinised closer, it could be assumed that areas lying close to the district's fringes, such as Stogursey, the Dulverton vicinity and those south of Williton, would see high levels of out-commuting to places such as Taunton, Bridgwater, Tiverton and even beyond like Exeter and Bristol. Although the planning system can attempt to make places within West Somerset more sustainable, it is inevitable that places closer to the district border will continue to accommodate commuters who want to live in a more pleasant environment but work where the job market is more diverse and affluent.



Graph 4

Source: Audit Commission 2001

Education

Indicator	West Somerset	Somerset	United Kingdom
Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C or equivalent	54.9%	56.4%	50.17%

Table 12 Contextual Indicator: Education

Source: Audit Commission and Somerset County Council (LEA) 2003/04

4.30 The percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C or equivalent in West Somerset is greater than those at the national level by nearly 5%. However the figure falls below that for Somerset. Although the planning system cannot have a direct influence on improving grades, it can act as a mechanism to help the education system to achieve this. This will come through the use of the Planning Obligations Codes of Practice.

5.0 Implementing Local Development Framework Policies

- 5.1 The West Somerset Local Development Framework is progressing to the timescales set in the LDS. However, in the period 2004/05 no DPDs had begun preparation resulting in no policies being adopted. During the same period the West Somerset District Local Plan had yet to be adopted and still remains to be so. This means that the policies identified in the LDS to be saved will not be until the adoption of the Local Plan.
- 5.2 Despite the progress in both the LDF and Local Plan processes not reaching a stage whereby definitive Local Output Indicators can be established, the LDS has identified the likely type of policies to be monitored. Baseline data has been gathered for some of these policies in this AMR period. This is explained in paragraphs 5.19 to 5.23.
- 5.3 The Council has met monitoring requirements for some of the Core Output Indicators and Housing Trajectories. Commentary is provided for the monitored indicators, whilst remedial action for those not monitored is explained in Section 6.

Core Output Indicators

- 5.4 The Core Output Indicators are those indicators that are used to measure the implementation of local planning policies in relation to national targets. The data presented in relation to the indicators will be used by the South West Regional Assembly to build up a regional picture of spatial planning performance to inform the preparation of their annual monitoring reports. The data presented is that recorded by West Somerset District Council.

Business Development

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Business Development	Data
1a	Amount of land developed for employment by type: B1 (b+c) + B2 + B8.	0.2 ha
1b	Amount of land developed for employment, by type, which is in development and/or regeneration areas defined in the local plan.	0sqm
1c	Percentage of COI 1a, by type, which is on previously developed land	100%
1d	Employment land supply by type (Class B1, B2 and B8)	6.5ha
1e	Losses of employment land in (i) development/regeneration areas and (ii) local authority area.	0ha
1f	Amount of employment land lost to residential development.	0ha

Table 13

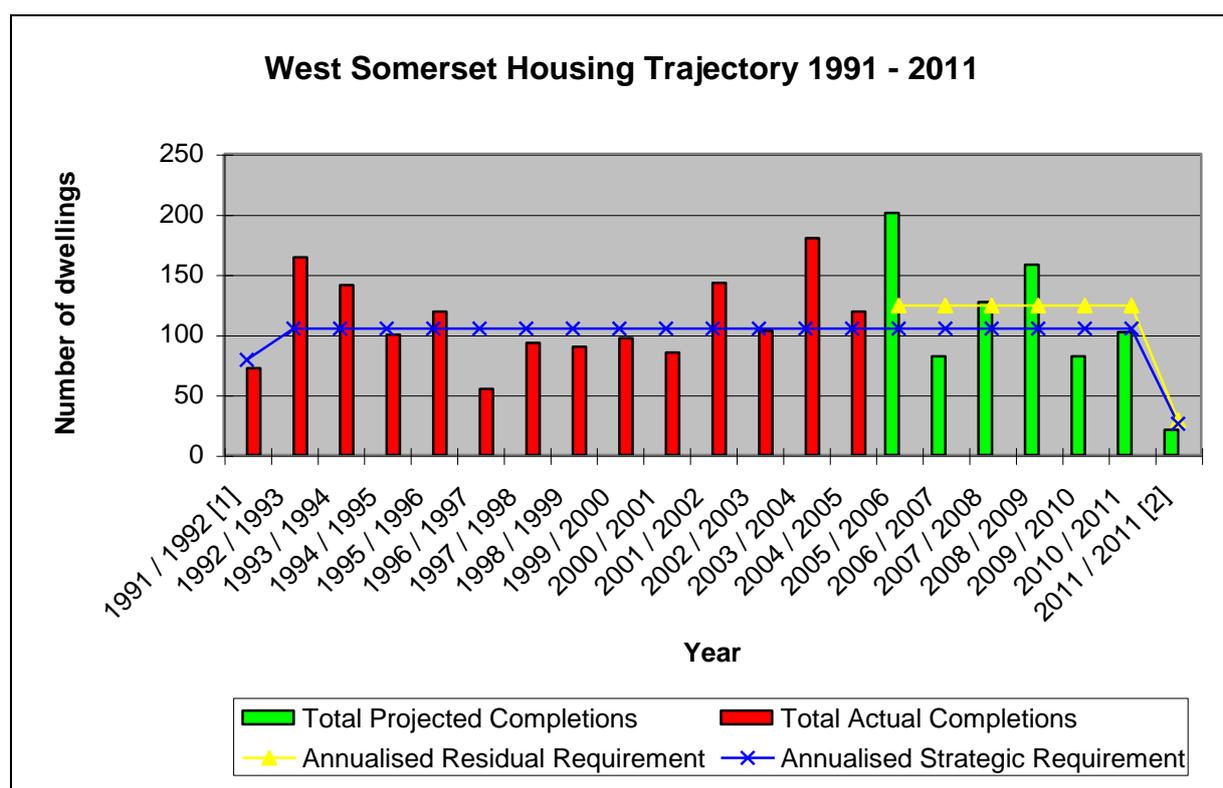
- 5.4 Very little employment land was developed in the 2004/05 period, with only one completion recorded. The completion was a redevelopment in Minehead hence the 100% development of previously developed land.
- 5.5 A total of 6.5ha remains allocated in Policy E/1 of the West Somerset District Local Plan Proposed Modifications for employment development covering Classes B1, B2 and B8. These Classes cover uses such as research and development of products laboratories, light industry, storage and distribution centres. Over the 2004/05 period no applications had come forward regarding the sites in Policy E/1.

Housing

- 5.6 Under the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (1991 – 2011) adopted in 2000, a total of 2,400 dwellings were identified for West Somerset with 300 of these to be developed in the Exmoor National Park. Recent work has progressed to revise housing requirements for the districts of Somerset in preparation for the South West Regional Spatial Strategy to cover the period 2006 to 2026. Much of the data presented below has emerged from this work.

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Housing Trajectory	Data
2a(i)	Net additional dwellings since the start of the development plan period (1991).	1,561
2a(ii)	Net dwellings for the current year.	119
2a(iii)	Projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan period (1991-2011).	1,051
2a (iv)	The annual net dwelling requirement (to 2011).	105
2a (v)	Annual average number of net additional dwellings needed to meet overall housing requirements, having regard to previous years' performances (to 2011).	124

Table 14



Graph 5

- 5.7 The number of net dwellings completed since 1991 in the West Somerset local planning authority area is 1,561. This figure exceeds the Annualised Strategic Requirement (1,444 dwellings or 105/annum), as set by the Structure Plan, by 117 dwellings at the end of 2004/05. This implies the average dwelling build rate in the area is one-year ahead of itself. As illustrated in Graph 5 the build rate has not been consistent but has fluctuated over the years. There appears to have been a dip in completions between the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- 5.8 Most of the completions have come through the form of windfalls, with only two allocated sites (Seaward Way, Minehead and Bridge Street East, Williton) developed in the Structure Plan period. A very large windfall site whose size is unusual to the area perhaps distorts the build rate. The Lido site, Minehead accounted for 162 dwelling completions between 2002 and 2005. If this were deducted from the net additional dwellings at the end of 2004/05 the resulting figure would be close to the Annualised Strategic Requirement.
- 5.9 Despite the Structure Plan setting a figure of 2100 dwellings to be met by 2011, the authority has been in a position to calculate and project the likely number of completions for the remainder of the period. By taking account of past windfall completions, housing allocations to be developed (see Table 15) and existing commitments, a total of approximately 773 dwellings are expected to be built. This will exceed the Structure Plan allocation by some 200 dwellings.

The Annualised Residual Rate, as illustrated in Graph 5, is calculated at 124 dwellings per annum.

Policy H/1: Housing Sites	No. of Units	Expected Completion Date
Rear of North Street, Williton	25	Commenced – completion due 2005/06
Rear of North Street, Williton	20	2010/11
St Audires Close East, Stogursey	45	2007/08
Seaward Way, Minehead	36	2008/09
Higher Marsh Farm, Dunster Marsh	40	2008/09
Total	166	

Table 15 Policy H/1 Housing Allocations

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Housing	Data
2b	Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land.	92%
2c (i)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at less than 30 dwellings per hectare.	13.5%
2c (ii)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare.	31%
2c (iii)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at above 50 dwellings per hectare.	55.5%
2d	Affordable housing completions	0

Table 16

- 5.10 West Somerset enjoys a high rate of housing completions on previously developed land. The national target of 60% of completions to be built on Brownfield land is far exceeded, which is a positive outcome given the need to protect the area's high environmental value. This outcome correlates with the Settlement Policy found in the West Somerset District Local Plan Proposed Modifications 2005, which restricts development outside of settlement boundaries. Added to this is the tightly drawn development limits around a number of settlements, which reduces the opportunity for Greenfield land to be developed.
- 5.11 The percentage of new dwellings completed at above 30 dwellings per hectare is also very high at 86.5%. This figure surpasses the national target of residential sites to be developed at a density of 30+ dwellings, as required in Planning Policy Guidance 3.
- 5.12 The number of affordable houses developed in the period 2004/05 was a disappointing zero. This is a concern given that the affordability of housing is a major issue for the authority. The West Somerset District Plan Proposed Modifications has introduced Policy H/4 to assist in the delivery of affordable housing. This is supported by the Planning Obligations Codes of Practice, which seeks to draw contributions from developers through planning gain and is due to be adopted in line with the local plan.

Site/Scheme	No. of Affordable Units	Expected Completion Date	Planning Permission
Shutgate Meadow, Williton	4	Completed 2005	
Severn Terrace, Watchet	17	May 2006	Yes
Townsend Farm, Carhampton	24	June 2007	
Land adjacent Sure Start, Minehead	23	May 2007	
Clanville, Minehead	12	March 2007	
The Butts, Stogumber	3	February 2007	
The Holms, Watchet	12	February 2007	
Burgage Road, Stogursey	2	N/A	
Higher Marsh Farm, Dunster Marsh	12	May 2007	
Downfield Hotel, Watchet	2	December 2006	
Watchet Glazing, Churchill Way, Watchet	3	N/A	
Total	114		

Table 17 Affordable Housing Schemes

- 5.13 Through discussions with developers a number of potential schemes have been identified which are expected to deliver affordable housing (see Table 17). A total of 114 units over the next two years have been calculated from the likely proposals to be submitted for approval.

Transport

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Transport	Data
3a	Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car-parking standards set out in the local plan.	N/A See Section 6
3b	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre.	N/A See Section 6

Table 18

- 5.14 At present West Somerset District Council does not hold data for the indicators found in Table 18. The steps to remedy this are explained in Section 6.

Local Services

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Local Services	Data
4a	Amount of retail, office and leisure development.	N/A See Section 6
4b	Percentage of completed retail, office and leisure development in town centres.	N/A See Section 6
4c	Percentage of eligible open spaces managed to green flag award standard.	N/A See Section 6

Table 19

- 5.15 At present West Somerset District Council does not hold data for the indicators found in Table 19. The steps to remedy this are explained in Section 6.

Flood Protection and Water Quality

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Flood Protection and Water Quality	Data
7	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality.	0

Table 20

- 5.16 The data in Table 20 reveals that there was no planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on either flood defence grounds or water quality. Every effort was made in the Proposed Modifications stage of the Local Plan to update the flood maps to assist the determination of planning applications that infringe flood plain land or the water quality of watercourses. This should help joint working between the Environment Agency and the local planning authority of what should and should not be granted.

Biodiversity

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Biodiversity	Data
8 (i)	Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including change in priority habitats and species (by type).	N/A See Section 6
8 (ii)	Change in areas and populations of biodiversity importance, including change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional or sub-regional significance.	N/A See Section 6

Table 21

5.17 At present West Somerset District Council does not hold data for the indicators found in Table 21. The steps to remedy this are explained in Section 6.

Renewable Energy

Core Output Indicator No.	Core Output Indicator: Renewable Energy	Data
9	Renewable energy capacity installed by type.	0

Table 22

5.18 This indicator is not monitored but through talks with planning officers it has been gathered that there were no planning applications for the installation of renewable energy. The steps to remedy the omission of monitoring this indicator will be discussed in Section 6.

Local Output Indicators

5.19 At the 31 March 2005, the West Somerset LDF preparation process had begun with the adoption of the LDS. At the time of submitting this report, further progress has been made with the Statement of Community Involvement preparation meeting the Regulation 25 stage and two Development Plan Documents currently in the pre-production stage. This progress is in line with the timescales set out in the Local Development Scheme. However, the DPDs have not advanced to the stage whereby Local Output Indicators can be developed. Indicators have not been developed around local plan policies either due to it not reaching adoption.

5.20 Owing to the local plan not reaching adoption the policies identified in the LDS have yet to be saved. To form a set of definitive indicators around these current un-adopted policies could prove ineffective as there is still a round of debate to be had between member councillors that could change the content and thus direction of what the policy is trying to achieve.

5.21 Unlike the monitoring approach that is required by local planning authorities in the LDF, which is structured as Objective-Target-Indicator, the indicators that will be formed in the next AMR period to measure the Local Plan policies might only consist of say an objective and an indicator. This is because local plan policies have not been developed with the new approach in mind. Where it is possible the new approach will be established, otherwise a slightly different approach will need to be employed.

5.22 Despite not being in a position to establish a set of definitive Local Output Indicators for the Local Plan policies for this AMR, baseline data has been collected to represent the locally strategic policies. These locally strategic policies will evolve through the LDF process presenting key targets to monitor, as proposed in the LDS. Other policies that should be monitored such as Transport and Biodiversity have been omitted from this report due to difficulty in extracting sufficient data. Nevertheless these policy themes will be given consideration over the next AMR period.

5.23 Depending on the amount of baseline data available per policy theme, trends will be analysed to provide a foundation for the future monitoring of policies to be based on. The policies chosen for analysis are key to the development of sustainable communities, a key Government objective. Their role in sustainable development will be elaborated on within the analysis of the data below.

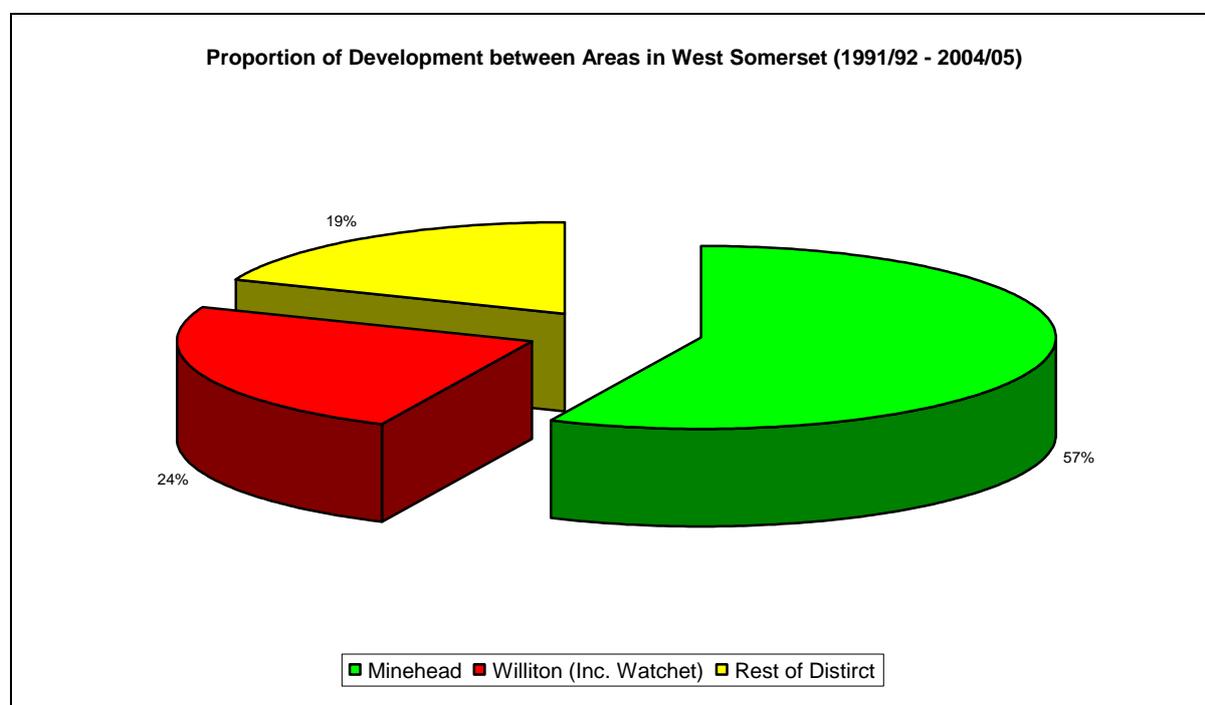
Settlement Policies: SP/1 to SP/5

Settlement	Year														Total
	91 /92	92 /93	93 /94	94 /95	95 /96	96 /97	97 /98	98 /99	99 /00	00 /01	01 /02	02 /03	03 /04	04 /05	
Minehead	53	86	103	70	59	19	25	42	29	25	48	101	162	69	891
	74%	52%	73%	70%	50%	35%	27%	47%	30%	29%	33%	98%	90%	58%	57%
Williton (+Watchet)	3	46	18	16	36	28	43	31	36	1	64	0	13	39	374
	4%	28%	13%	16%	30%	50%	46%	34%	37%	2%	45%	0%	7%	33%	24%
Rest of District	16	32	20	14	24	8	25	17	32	59	31	2	5	11	296
	22%	20%	14%	14%	20%	15%	27%	19%	33%	69%	22%	2%	3%	9%	19%
District Total	72	164	141	100	119	55	93	90	97	85	143	103	180	119	1561
	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	100%

Table 23

5.24 The Structure Plan determines the overall scale of development in the local plan area. The settlement hierarchy establishes the distribution of proposed development in general terms. Therefore, the Settlement Policy provides a basis for controlling the general scale and pattern of new development in the District and a framework to guide the future investment of scarce resources. The policy, above all, provides the key means of working towards the aim of achieving sustainable development. Three Objectives have been established to guide the Policy:

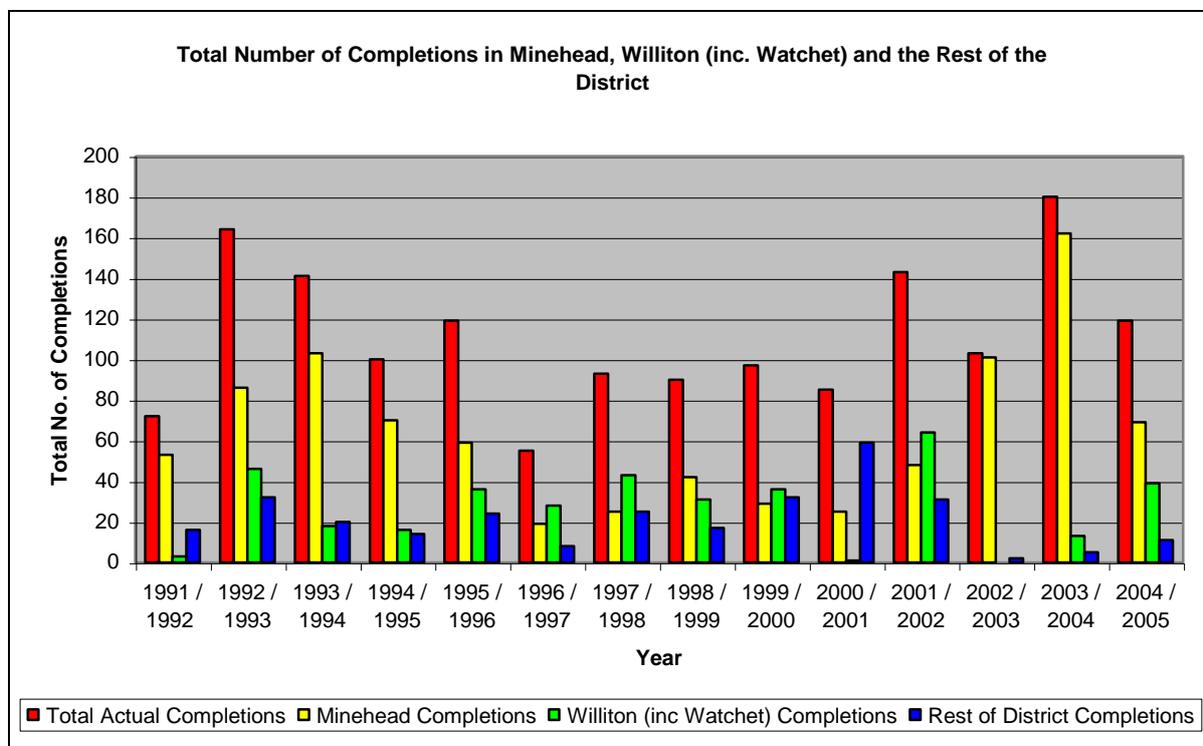
- To maintain the role of Minehead as the main growth area in keeping with its role as a town;
- To maintain the roles of Watchet and Williton as Rural Centres; and,
- To designate villages and apportion limited growth selectively.



Graph 6

5.25 In simple terms the Objectives are being achieved, as illustrated in Graph 6, with Minehead receiving nearly a 60% share of housing development in the District between 1991/92 and 2004/05. The remaining share is split between Williton and Watchet, and the rest of the district (which roughly translates as the main villages). With nearly one quarter of all housing

developments being located in the two rural centres of Williton and Watchet it can be interpreted that this proportion is enough to support their 'Rural Centres' role as designated in the Structure Plan. Furthermore with over 80% of housing development located in the three main West Somerset settlements, the cluster of development is kept close to those centres that provide services, jobs and provide better transport links. This supports the Policy's strive towards sustainable development.



Graph 7

5.26 Although the overall development has kept to the objectives set for the Settlement Policy, the data in Graph 7 shows that the trend has not been consistent. Despite the early to mid 1990s keeping to the objectives, between 1996 and 2002 five out of the six years saw more housing development either in Williton and Watchet or rural areas as opposed to in Minehead. This trend reversed greatly between 2002 and 2004 with nearly all development sited in Minehead. Over the past year the rate of housing development was much more proportionate.

5.27 The LDS identifies the Williton Area Action Plan as the only Area Action Plan in the West Somerset LDF. This will represent a future shift in the focus of development from Minehead to Williton. It is therefore predicted that over the next twenty years Graph 6 will show a greater proportion of housing development in Williton than in Minehead, with the rest of the district remaining proportionately low.

Employment Policies: E/1 to E/8

5.28 The Local Plan Proposed Modifications present a single objective for the employment policies to:

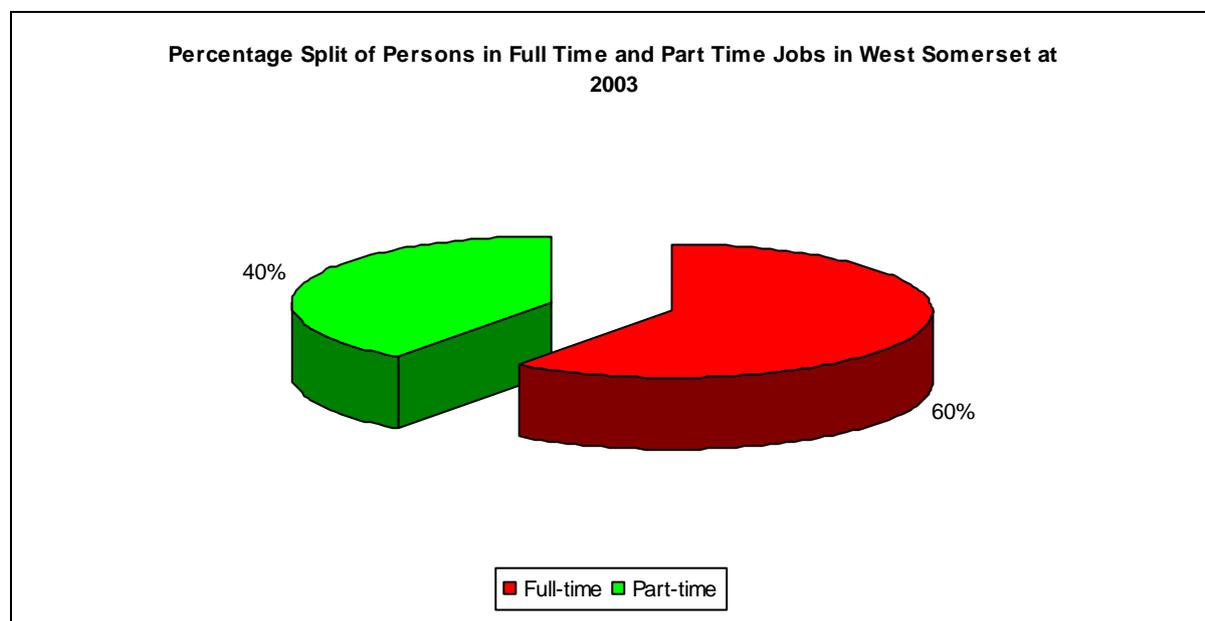
- Increase the number of permanent jobs offering above average pay for the area.

5.29 Owing to the lack of data available the data extracted can act only as baseline for the indicator that might be developed to monitor this objective, or one similar. Although the number of 'permanent jobs' should be monitored such data is difficult to extract, thus the number of full time jobs have been looked at to substitute this omission. It is considered that the majority of full time jobs are likely to be permanent.

	West Somerset (employee jobs)	West Somerset (%)
Total employee jobs	10,407	-
Full-time	6,252	60.1
Part-time	4,155	39.9

Table 24

Source Nomis 2003



Graph 8

	West Somerset	UK
Average Earnings by Residence per Week (full time workers)	£359.7	£422.9

Table25

Source: Nomis 2004/05

5.30 Of the 10,407 total employee jobs in 2003 60% of those were full time (see Graph 8). Of these full time jobs the average earnings by residence per week in the District was £359.7, as shown in Table 25, which is nearly over £60 under the national average. In fulfilling the objective of the Plan, this figure will have to increase year on year. This will require a greater number of better-paid jobs in the area to increase the average earnings. In addition to this the number of full time jobs will have to increase too. The Plan provides a framework for this through the allocation of 6.5ha of employment land in Policy E/1 to be utilised. Employment policies are also shaped to encourage employment development throughout the district including the development of the sustainable concept of live/work units.

Retail Policies: SH/1 to SH/6

5.31 The West Somerset District Local Plan Deposit Draft 1998 states two objectives for Shopping in the District:

- To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of Minehead Town Centre, Watchet and Williton shopping areas; and,
- To support the retention of shops in the villages.

These objectives have not been modified by the Proposed Modifications.

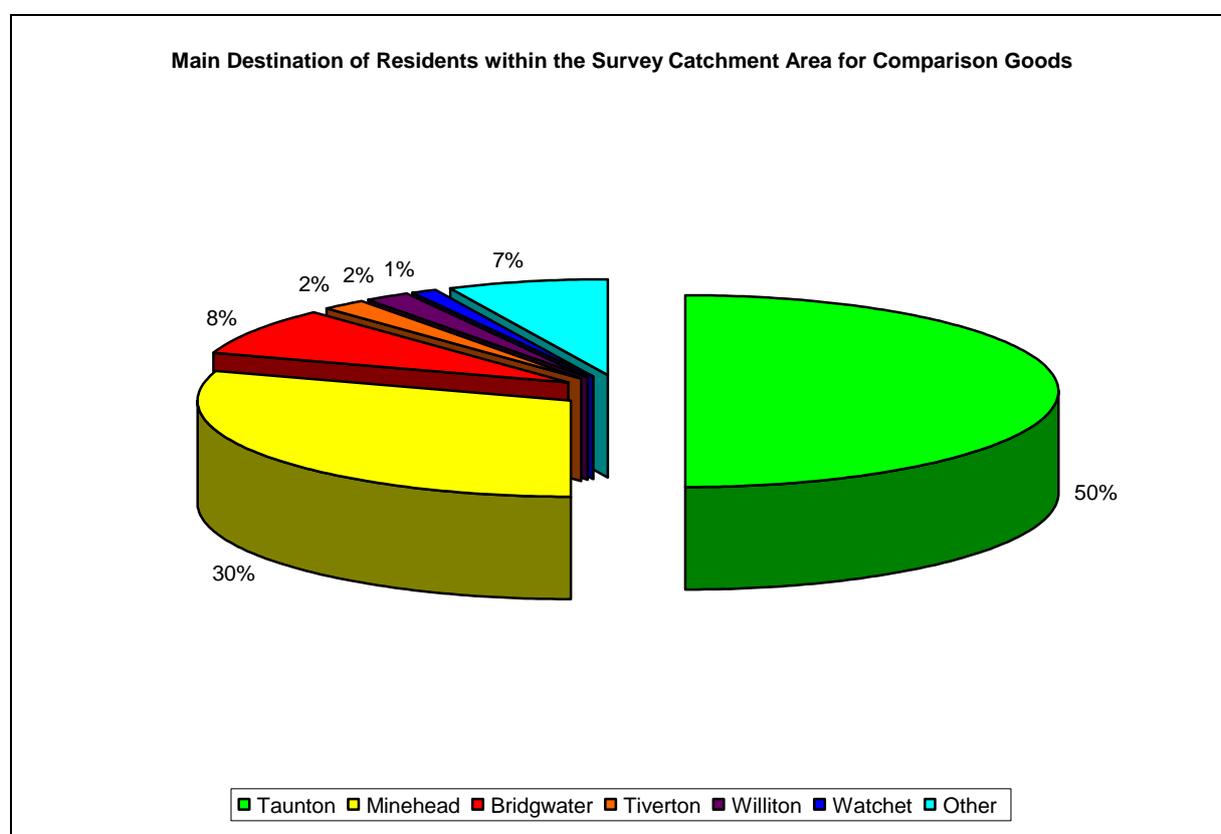
5.32 Data to assist the monitoring of these objectives and associated policies has been taken from the West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study, adopted in November 2005. Although this data will act as a good baseline for future monitoring, difficulties associated with extracting it restricts its revision to once every 5 years in line with the revision of the Retail Study. Owing to the infrequent nature of retail development in West Somerset, this is not deemed an inadequate time period to monitor however.

5.33 The data presented covers a spatial dimension regardless of the area confined to the boundaries of the local planning authority. By this it is meant that the data includes areas that fall outside of the district such as parts of Taunton Deane and Exmoor National Park, but use West Somerset to shop. This therefore does not distort the monitoring of the objective and policies.

Centre	Main Comparison Shopping Destination of Survey Catchment	Centre	Main Food Shopping Destination
Taunton	50.7%	Minehead	54.6%
Minehead	29.8%	Taunton	20.8%
Bridgwater	7.7%	Bridgwater	8.7%
Tiverton	1.9%	Tiverton	2.8%
Williton	1.7%	Williton	2.1%
Watchet	1.1%	Wiveliscombe	1.9%
Wiveliscombe	-	Watchet	1.2%

Table 26

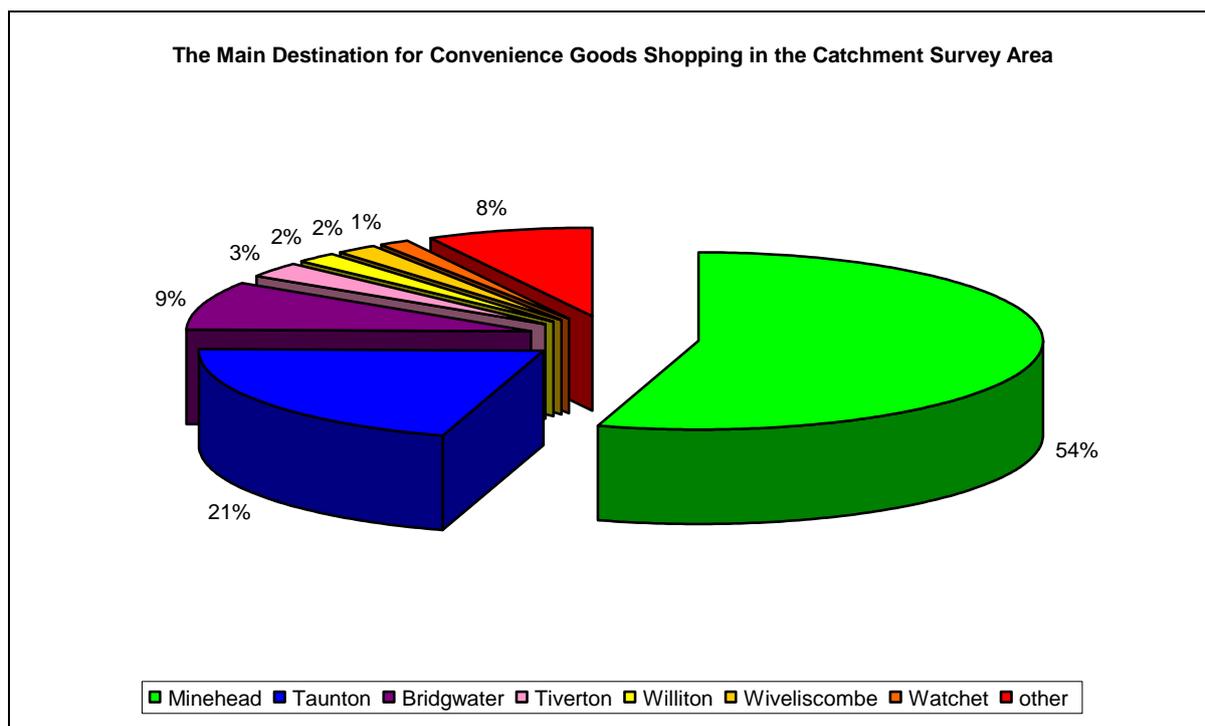
Source: West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study



Graph 9

Source: West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study

5.34 Graph 9 shows 50% of residents in the catchment area prefer Taunton rather than the other shopping centres as their favoured shopping destination for comparison goods. Whilst it should be borne in mind that some of these residents already live outside West Somerset and thus closer to other shopping destinations, some of the majority controlled by Taunton could be clawed back into the district. It was concluded in the West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study that there will be a capacity of 5,400sqm net by 2011, and 8,550sqm net by 2016, for comparison goods floor space in Minehead. This indicates the future opportunities available in the District to bring shoppers to West Somerset, which will help to provide a more sustainable economy as well as reducing the need to travel. Ultimately it will push the Council towards achieving the employment objective.



Graph 10

Source: West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study

5.35 Unlike comparison goods, the majority of residents in the catchment area surveyed use Minehead as their main convenience goods shopping destination. Although the main supermarket of Tesco is situated on an out of centre site, it does act as a good anchor to encourage people to venture a little further into the town centre of Minehead. Therefore the outcome is positive in attracting custom to Minehead town centre. The other centres of Watchet and Williton are not prominent retail centres compared to Minehead, but given their size they are not expected to compete with it. Instead existing policy (Policy SH/3) looks to support the status of these shopping centres. Therefore future analysis of this type of data will look to the share remaining buoyant or better still increasing.

Housing Policies: H/4

5.36 The Local Plan Deposit Draft 1998 lists a number of objectives relating to Housing, which have not been modified by the Proposed Modifications. The stand out objective amongst this list concerns the problematic issue of affordable housing, which reads as:

- To enable the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the local community in both the short and long term.

Size	Number (2004)	Percentage (2004)	Number 2005	Percentage (2005)
1 Bed	697	52	703	55
2 Bed	395	29	349	27
3 Bed	190	14	186	15
4 Bed	26	2	38	3
Not Recorded	36	3	0	0
Total	1344	100	1276	100

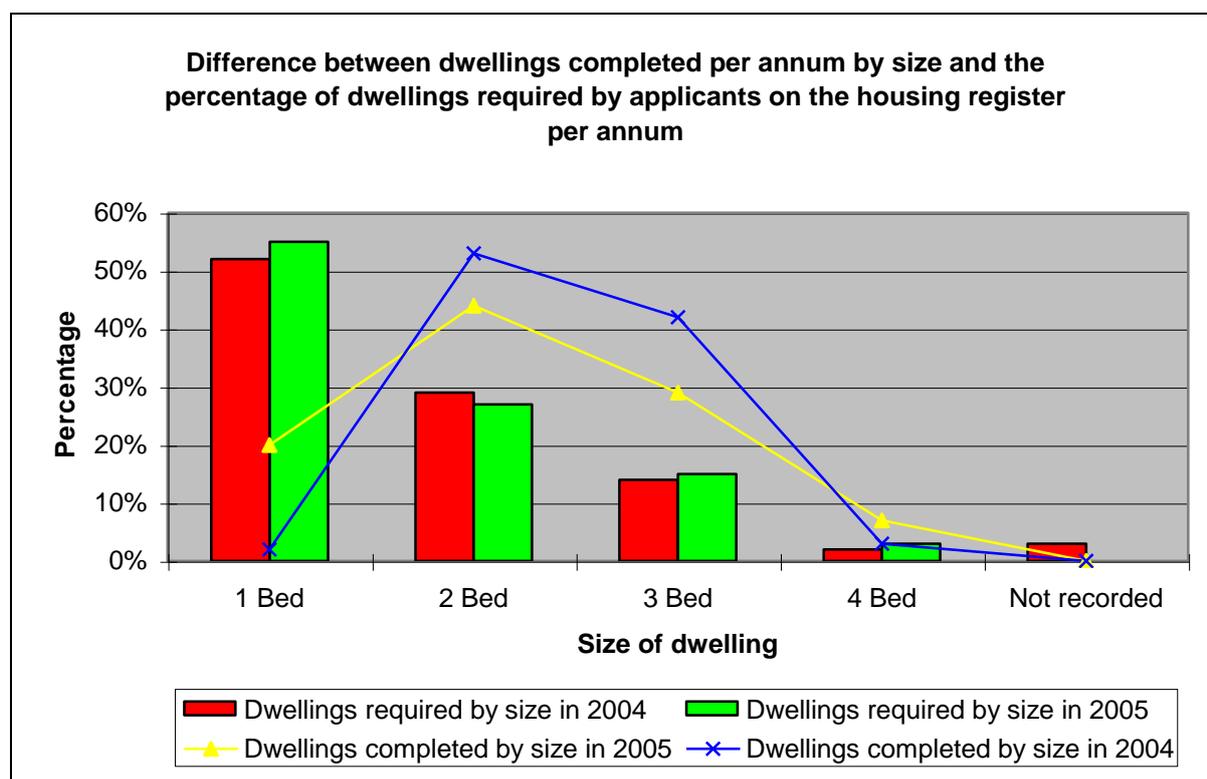
Table27: Number and Percentage of applicants on the housing register requiring specific sized dwellings
Source: West Somerset Housing strategy 2005-2008

Size	2004	2005
1 Bed	2%	20%
2 Bed	53%	44%
3 Bed	42%	29%
4 Bed	3%	7%

Table 28: Percentage of Total Dwellings Completed per Annum by Size

Source: West Somerset Housing Data

5.37 Whilst dwelling completions, including affordable units, per annum are monitored through the Core Output Indicators, the size of the dwellings in relation to the number of specific dwelling sizes required are not. The data in Tables 27 and 28 do not provide a direct correlation between the number of dwellings required by applicants on the housing register by size and the percentage of open market and affordable dwellings completed by size. The data required to achieve this will be developed over the next AMR period. However, by analysing the two datasets together trends can be gathered as to the likely specific size requirements and the actual build rate of dwellings and their sizes. This will assist the delivery of Policy H/4: Affordable Housing by guiding negotiations between the local planning authority and developers on the sort of dwelling type needed.



Graph 11

5.38 The percentage of dwellings by size required by applicants on the housing register over the periods 2003/04 and 2004/05 has remained fairly constant. The percentage of dwellings by size completed over the same periods have followed a similar pattern to each other but have been built in differing quantities. Despite over a 50% requirement for 1-bedroom dwellings, only 2% of dwellings built in 2003/04 were of this size, rising to 20% the following year. There is a prominent need for this type of dwelling in the District, not just proven by the housing register but by the Contextual Indicators revealing a high number of 1 person households too.

5.39 By recording future sizes, particularly of affordable dwellings, the onus can be put on developers to construct a greater number of 1 bedroom dwellings. Of the other sizes, the percentage of completed dwellings far exceeds those required (with the exception of 4 bedroom dwellings). Although the open market will produce a different demand for housing than that of the affordable market, the large difference between completions and requirements of 2 and 3 bedroom dwellings over both years does suggest there is less of a need for this size and more of a need for 1 bedroom dwellings.

5.40 The requirement for more 1 bedroom dwellings points towards the opportunity of providing more apartment type dwellings, which require less land and can be built at higher densities. This offers the chance to develop at a much sustainable rate.

Community Plan

5.41 In addition to the points raised in paragraphs 5.19 to 5.20, the West Somerset Community Plan is currently undergoing revision. To fulfil the ODPM’s recommendation that the LDF is integrated with local initiatives, such as community strategies, it is thought the Local Output Indicator should be developed in close liaison with the objectives and targets set in the Community Plan. The LDS Local Development Documents Profiles state that monitoring of key indicators will be developed in partnership with the Exmoor, Coast and Countryside Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership). The objectives and targets established in the Plan will be assessed to find commonalities with what the Local Plan policies are attempting to achieve, thus meeting the Objectives – Targets – Indicators structure. As the DPDs preparation progresses the Community Plan will be used to assist in the forming of spatial objectives and targets.

Objective	Target	Indicator
To increase the number of houses for sale that local people can afford to buy.	X number of Affordable units built per annum.	Covered by Core Output Indicator 2d.
	To ensure the size of dwellings built match the requirements of applicants on the Housing Register.	Percentage of dwelling types built in West Somerset per annum compared with percentage of dwelling types required by applicants on the housing register.

West Somerset Local Output Indicator 1: Affordable Housing

The example here is related to Policy H/4 in the West Somerset District Local Plan Proposed Modifications. If this policy is adopted a Local Output Indicator could be formed as presented above.

The example shows a likely objective that will be found in the revised Community Plan. Two targets have been set, of which one is covered by the required Core Output Indicator 2d(See page 18). The Indicator is set to measure the effectiveness of the policy in meeting the set target and is formed around the availability of existing data.

Figure 1: Example of the future DPD policy Objective – Target – Indicator structure

5.42 Figure 1 provides an example of what a future Local Output Indicator might look like after the integration of the Community Plan with the West Somerset LDF.

5.43 To achieve this, it is also felt that the preparation of the Local Output Indicators should start once the Community Plan is adopted, which will fall in the 2005/06 period. This is explained in greater detail in Section 6.

Significant Effects Indicators

5.44 Significant Effect Indicators are indicators that test the sustainability of LDF policies. The onus is on how effective policies are on the social, economical and environmental aspects of the areas that they affect. Government guidance requires Significant Effect Indicators to be closely developed with the objectives and targets that are established in the Sustainability Appraisal Framework that is prepared in tangent with Development Plan Documents.

5.45 At the time of submitting this report, due to the progress of DPDs not exceeding the pre-production stages, a Sustainability Appraisal Framework has not yet been established. This will evolve with the preparations of DPDs. However, steps have been taken to prepare a Sustainability Scoping Report, with issues and options emerging from this, which will build the basis for the framework to be developed upon. These steps are explained in more detail in Section 6.

6.0 Remedies and Next Steps

- 6.1 Throughout this AMR a number of gaps have emerged whereby indicators have yet to be established, data has been difficult to extract and limitations have appeared.
- 6.2 The following section will identify discrepancies and limitations, discuss the remedial action and explain the next steps to be taken over the coming year to ensure the discrepancy or limitation is overcome in the next AMR.

Local Development Scheme Implementation

Section	Local Development Scheme Implementation
Discrepancy / Limitation	Clerical error regarding the SCI preparation timescales.
Remedy	Revise the timescales in the LDS by one month to accommodate the predicted slippage for SCI.
Next Steps	Revise the timescales in the LDS and submit to the SoS for approval before 31 March 2006 and subsequently re-adopt the document.

Contextual Indicators

Section	Contextual Indicators
Discrepancy/ Limitation	Data collected represents the West Somerset District area as opposed to the West Somerset Local Planning Authority area. Therefore a proportion of the Exmoor National Park, which is monitored by the Exmoor National Park Authority, is represented in the data presented.
Remedy	Very few data sources provided by national programmes contain data that is specific to the West Somerset Local Planning Authority area. Therefore it is difficult to extract data that is purely representative of this area. Although not a direct remedial suggestion, it may prove beneficial to invite the Exmoor National Park Authority to the Somerset County Strategic Information Providers group and to adopt the common set of contextual indicators that have been used for this AMR. Through this method, both authorities can use the same indicators and thus report on these in unison, which will provide more clarity on the area that the data represents.
Next Steps	Contact Exmoor National Park Authority with the above suggestion and put any resulting outcome to the CSIP group for consideration.

Section	Contextual Indicators
Discrepancy/ Limitation	Some data is three or four years old and is released at intervals beyond one or two years. Data that is dated does not give an idea of the current situation. Therefore it is difficult to paint a picture of the area's context at the present time. Data that is released beyond one or two years, such as Census data, limits the ability of the AMR to observe trends in West Somerset's context over a short to medium time period. This also defeats the purpose of the AMR, as the same data will be used year on year with the same commentary provided.
Remedy	Search for sources of data that are updated on a short-term basis, such as one or two years. Consequently re-establish contextual indicators that can be built around the data that is available, but which is also relevant and of use to building a picture of West Somerset's context.
Next Steps	Discuss and identify with the CSIP data sources that are updated on a short-term basis. This will enable West Somerset District Council to provide a more recent analysis of the area's context.

National Core Output Indicators

Section	National Core Output Indicators
Discrepancy / Limitation	Some data has not been able to be provided by West Somerset District Council.
Remedy	Revise the authority's monitoring system in order for the correct data to be collected for the Indicators.
Next Steps	<p>Liaise with other services, such as Environmental Services, to establish a more effective monitoring system that collects data, which has previously not been a planning policy responsibility.</p> <p>Contact external organisations such as Somerset Environmental Records Centre and the Somerset County Council Local Transport Plan unit, through CSIP, who could also provide data.</p>

Local Output Indicators

Section	Local Output Indicators
Discrepancy / Limitation	Owing to the procedural stage that the West Somerset District Local Plan is at, the Proposed Modifications, and the current preparation stages of the DPDs, it has been decided to wait to establish Local Output Indicators until local planning policies have been adopted.
Remedy	<p>For this AMR baseline data has been provided for the locally strategic policies, which will evolve to present key targets in the LDF process. This has been identified in the LDS profiles. Upon adoption of the Local Plan develop indicators around the Plan's objectives concerning the saved policies, adding targets if data availability permits.</p> <p>Establish objectives, targets and indicators around emerging DPD policies. This might evolve from those set for the saved policies. Data availability will need to be considered during this process.</p>
Next Steps	Develop indicators for the Local Plan policies reported on in this AMR. Further consider other saved policies that are likely to evolve as DPD policies and begin to establish objectives, targets and indicators around these. As part of the DPD preparation process consider new policies and how these will be monitored.

Section	Local Output Indicators
Discrepancy / Limitation	The West Somerset Community Plan is currently undergoing revision to include a framework that will allow the Plan to be monitored. Government guidance recommends integrating the LDF AMR with local community initiatives, such as community strategies. Thus, as with the Local Plan, it has been decided to wait for the Community Plan to be adopted, or for stage where its monitoring framework has been approved.
Remedy	Upon the adoption of the Community Plan, or if possible the approval of a Community Plan monitoring framework, consider its objectives and targets in forming the DPDs' objectives, targets and indicators.
Next Steps	<p>Have already liaised with the Local Strategic Partnership Officer and have been invited to join the Community Plan Task and Finishing Group. This will allow the group to consider how the LDF and Community Plan could be integrated, whilst also generating discussion on how the two could be monitored under a possible corporate monitoring system.</p> <p>Set up an LDF AMR Working Group to consider linkages between the Community Plan and LDF, and any other monitoring functions the authority undertakes. This will reduce duplication of monitoring, thus saving on resources.</p>

Significant Effect Indicators

Section	Significant Effect Indicators
Discrepancy / Limitation	Owing to the preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal Framework due to start in early 2006, it has been decided to wait for this work in order to develop the Significant Effects Indicators around.
Remedy	Begin preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal to identify issues and options to allow for the development of Significant Effect Indicators.
Next Steps	The authority does not have the in-house capability to develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework alone. Therefore we are currently in discussions with consultants to assist us on this piece of work. This work will start in early 2006 with a Scoping Report produced by early Autumn of the same year. At this point objectives, targets and indicators will begin to emerge ready for the next AMR.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The first AMR for West Somerset has revealed a number issues that need to be addressed to ensure a much more comprehensive Report for the 2005/06 period. Nevertheless some useful data has been extracted in setting a baseline for future comparisons.
- 7.2 The LDS is running to timescales set, although a clerical error means that the document will need to be re-submitted to the Secretary of State for the correction to be approved. This does not affect the established milestones, such as the Submission date, however.
- 7.3 The joint working with the other Somerset district authorities, Somerset County Council and South West Regional Assembly has proved very beneficial in the production of this AMR and these links will be maintained over the next AMR period.
- 7.4 The indicators that have been monitored have revealed a number of limitations in the sources of data collected, the frequency at which this data is released, and the type of data that West Somerset District Council itself collects. In cases these limitations are unavoidable, but it has been highlighted that this will be assessed over the next AMR period to ensure greater consistency in future AMRs.
- 7.5 Local Output Indicators will be established over the next AMR period. However, baseline data has been provided for this report on the locally strategic policies that will evolve as DPD policies through the LDF process. Further consideration will be given as to how other saved policies such as Transport and Biodiversity can be monitored.
- 7.6 Although Significant Effects Indicators were not monitored, steps are in place to ensure that these are addressed in the next AMR.