

West Somerset
Annual Monitoring Report
2005/6

Local Development
Framework



December 2006

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	2
1.0 Introduction	5
2.0 Local Development Scheme Implementation	7
3.0 Joint Working	9
4.0 Context	10
- Contextual Indicators	11
5.0 Implementing Local Development Framework Policies	18
- Core Output Indicators	18
- Local Output Indicators	23
- Significant Effects Indicators	31
6.0 Remedial Action and Next Steps	32
7.0 Conclusion	35

West Somerset Annual Monitoring Report 2005/06: Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory requirement under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Secretary of State by 31 December of each year. This is one of the portfolio of documents that comprise the Local Development Framework (LDF) in the new development plan regime introduced as part of the 2004 legislation. This document is the second AMR and covers the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. The purpose of the document is to assess the:
- Implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS); and,
 - Extent to which policies in the Local Development Documents (LDD's) 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 Local Development Framework (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 Due to the need to complete and adopt the West Somerset Local Plan, progress on the preparation of LDD's under the new development plan regime was delayed and a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS) was being negotiated with representatives of Government Office for the South West (GOSW) and drafted at the end of the AMR reporting period. The Statement of Community involvement (SCI) had progressed to the Pre-Submission Consultation (Reg. 26) stage at the end of the AMR reporting period.
- 1.5 Joint working between West Somerset 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 whole of the District area with one third of these living in the largest settlement, Minehead. 50% of the district's population are aged 50 years or over and the age profile identifies a significant absence of people between the ages of 19 to 34. This suggests that a lack of higher education facilities and well-paid jobs. Also, 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 19 and 34, 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 1.8% in West Somerset sits below the national 2.7%, the average earnings per week, £476.10, are nearly £70 below the national average of £542.50. 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 proportion of people walking or cycling to work (21%) in the District is above the national average by 8% whilst 31.9% of the District's residents working population travel less than 2km to work, 10% higher 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 2005/6 was static with no applications or development occurring on sites of significant size (>0.2 Ha. or 500 sq.m. floorspace). At the end of this period, there remained 6.5 Hectares of land allocated for employment covering the Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 at the end of the monitoring period.
- 1.14 Since 1991 a total number of 1,751 net dwellings have been completed in the West Somerset local planning area. This figure exceeds the Annual Strategic Requirement (1,550 dwellings), as set in the Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (adopted in 2000), by 201 dwellings. This, on average, puts the District's residential build rate almost two years ahead of itself. Most of these completions have come through the form of windfalls. Only one allocated sites from the District Local Plan has been developed and completed during the AMR reporting period.
- 1.15 The housing trajectory for the remaining five years covered by the Structure Plan to 2011 has been calculated. A total of approximately 1009 dwellings could 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 300 dwellings.
- 1.16 Of the dwellings completed in 2005/6, 73.7% were completed on previously developed land, which surpasses the national target of 60%. Of the 190 completions these were distributed over 77 different locations and a significant increase occurred in the number of windfall developments outside of the three main settlements when compared with 2004/5.
- 1.17 The number of affordable houses completed in the AMR period was only four with a further four for the 'intermediate market'. However, work has commenced on two significant affordable housing developments including 17 units at Severn Terrace, Watchet. However, with the Local Plan being adopted in April 2006 it is expected that the Planning Obligations Codes of Practice mechanism will be adopted in 2007. It will assist in the delivery this type of development in the future via planning gain.
- 1.18 Data for transport, local services and biodiversity was not available for monitoring.

Local Output Indicators

- 1.19 Due to the need to progress the West Somerset Local Plan to adoption and the impact this had on commencing the Development Plan Documents (DPD's), work in identifying the relevant output indicators had still not been finalised at the end of the AMR accounting period. 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 particularly the former in relation to area to which the AMR applies.
- 1.20 The Community Plan is currently being revised and updated as the Sustainable Community Strategy. It is likely to be adopted in early 2007 and will then have an important influence on the formulation of the Local Output Indicators.
- 1.21 Dwelling completion data between 1991/2 and 2005/6 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 West Somerset Local Plan, which was Adopted in April 2006, just outside the reporting period of the AMR.
- 1.22 The Employment data reveals that in 2005, the average earnings by residence per week was £476.10, over £60 lower than the national average. 56.7% 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 West Somerset Local Plan.
- 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 as the Sustainability Appraisal Framework is still in the early stages of preparation. Due to the need to revise the LDS and the need to appoint consultants to undertake this aspect of work this did not commence until after the AMR reporting period had finished.

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 the Local Plan has now been adopted.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has a statutory requirement under the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to submit an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to the Secretary of State by 31 December of each year. This is one of the portfolio of documents that comprise the Local Development Framework (LDF) in the new development plan regime introduced as part of the 2004 legislation. It will supplement and eventually replace the policies and guidance contained in the area-wide local plan, the West Somerset Local Plan. 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 This document is the second Annual Monitoring Report and covers the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. It is produced for West Somerset Council and relates only to that area for which the Council is the Local Planning Authority. It therefore excludes that part of the district that is within the Exmoor National Park. 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. The purpose of the document is to assess:
- The implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS);
 - If objectives and targets set in the Development Plan Documents (DPD's) 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 commenced 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 needed to adopt the West Somerset Local Plan, very little progress was made with the LDF during the monitoring period. The Local Plan passed through the Proposed Modifications and associated consultation stage during the monitoring period under review and had been approved for adoption by Full Council in February 2006, although the document was not formally adopted until April, just outside of the monitoring period to which this report relates. 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 (LDD) within the Local Development Framework (LDF);
 - The geographical area and places that each Local Development Document affects;
 - The timetable illustrating the preparation stages for each Local Development Document.
- 2.2 Although the LDS was approved before the commencement of this AMR reporting period, it was quickly recognised that due to the resource implications associated with progressing the West Somerset Local Plan through Proposed Modifications to Adoption, revision to the original LDS was necessary. Negotiations were undertaken with Government Office to find a practical and acceptable solution. These were still ongoing at the end of the reporting period and a revised LDS was approved in July 2006.

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 2006 a number of the documents were either adopted or subject to a process of review. As the content of some of these documents would have a significant influence on the thinking that would underpin the contents of the emerging DPD's, particularly the Council's Corporate Strategy, The West Somerset Housing Strategy and, the West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study, it was considered prudent to delay progression of the them until the relevant information was available. This was in order to prevent a perception of unclear thinking and reasoning as the documents were advanced to preliminary consultation stage with key stakeholders and the public. The latter two were also important documents that would influence the eventual development of ideas and policy. They were adopted by the Council in August and November 2005 respectively. Also the Central Regeneration Study for Williton was another important document that would contribute towards the preparation of the Williton Area Action Plan.
- 2.4 Other influential studies and documents are also being progressed that will feed into the DPD's. The updating of the Community Plan (which become the Sustainable Community Strategy), and two studies involving identification of residential and employment land capacity within the District, 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. Progress on the Urban Capacity Study, which was due for revision in the summer of 2005, commenced in 2006 although the completion has been delayed in order to integrate with and take advantage of the information that would come out of the Employment Land Review. Work on the latter had commenced by the end of 2006.

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 end of the AMR reporting period in March 2006 it had just been put into the public domain for Pre-Submission Public Participation as required under Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. This commenced on 31st March for six weeks through to 11th May 2006. At the time of submission of this AMR, the process had advanced to the Independent Examination stage (Regulation 34), which had taken place through written representations only, and the Council had received the Inspector's Draft Report for consideration in terms of factual errors and clarification. Details on the outcome of this process and subsequent progress will be reported in the 3rd AMR covering the period 1st April 2006 – 31st March 2007.
- 2.7 Owing to changing circumstances and a clerical error, the LDS needed to be revised. The clerical error was to clarify the timescale for the SCI preparation period and include identification of the six week consultation period required as part of the Regulation 26 stage. This did not affect the preparation of the SCI and the successive stages in the remainder of the timetable for it as set out in the original LDS.

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 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 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 (SWEWG) 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 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. It is envisaged that the tool will enable West Somerset Council to enhance the AMR dataset collection as the monitoring process evolves.

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 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 35,600 residents (ONS Mid-Year Estimate 2004) covering an area of 727 sq km. The District is extremely rural with a population of approximately 12,000 persons, living in the main settlement, Minehead. This accounts for approximately 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 to the south, Both identified as Strategically Significant Towns in the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, the District suffers from accessibility problems due to its sparsely spread population, geographical constraints and limited transport links with these and other large urban areas such as Barnstaple, Exeter, Ilfracombe and, Tiverton. 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 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 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 2005/6 the team continued to be 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, New Horizons learning and leisure complex in Minehead and, the Central 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 2005/6 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

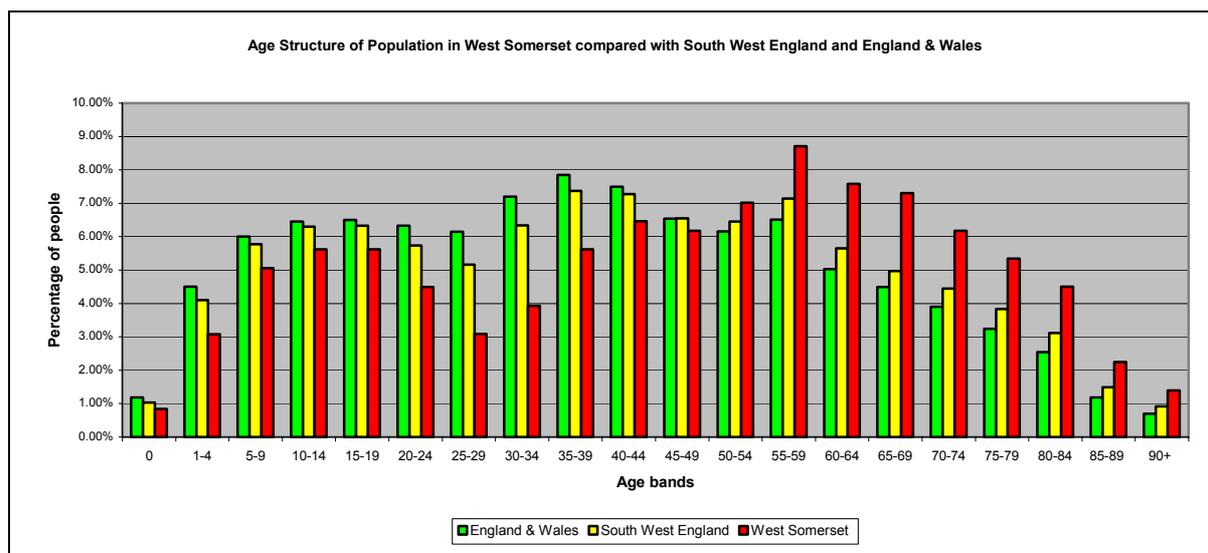
- 4.12 The population of West Somerset contributes very little to the total population of the South West of England. The very rural nature of the district provides the reason for this. The only settlement defined as a town (for planning policy purposes) in West Somerset is Minehead, which accommodates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

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

- 4.13 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. Also, higher than average house prices are causing out-migration of younger adults who are unable to secure employment and/or purchase accommodation in the area.



Graph 1

Source: ONS Mid Year Population Estimate 2004

Households

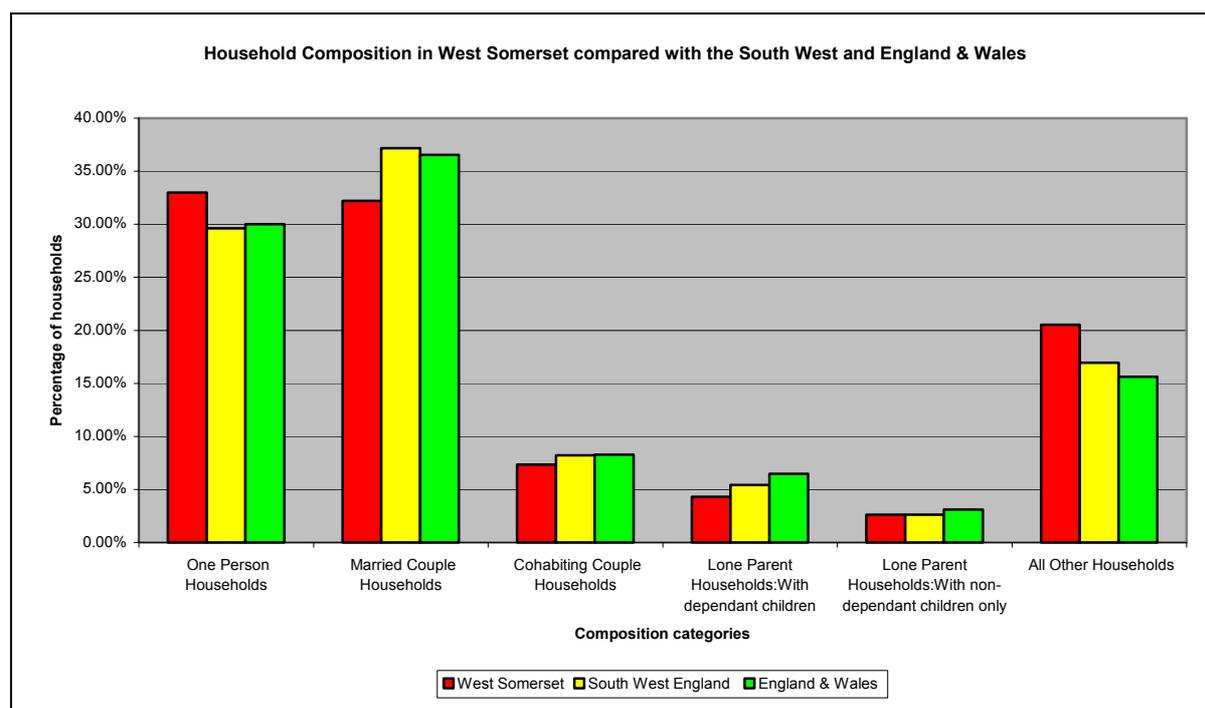
4.14 The Contextual Indicators representing Households reveal the average household size in West Somerset to be less than the averages for South West England and England and Wales. This is presumably related to the age structure, as shown in Graph 1, whereby a high percentage of West Somerset residents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

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

4.15 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.



Graph 2

Source: Census 2001

Dwellings

- 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	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

- 4.18 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 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.

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

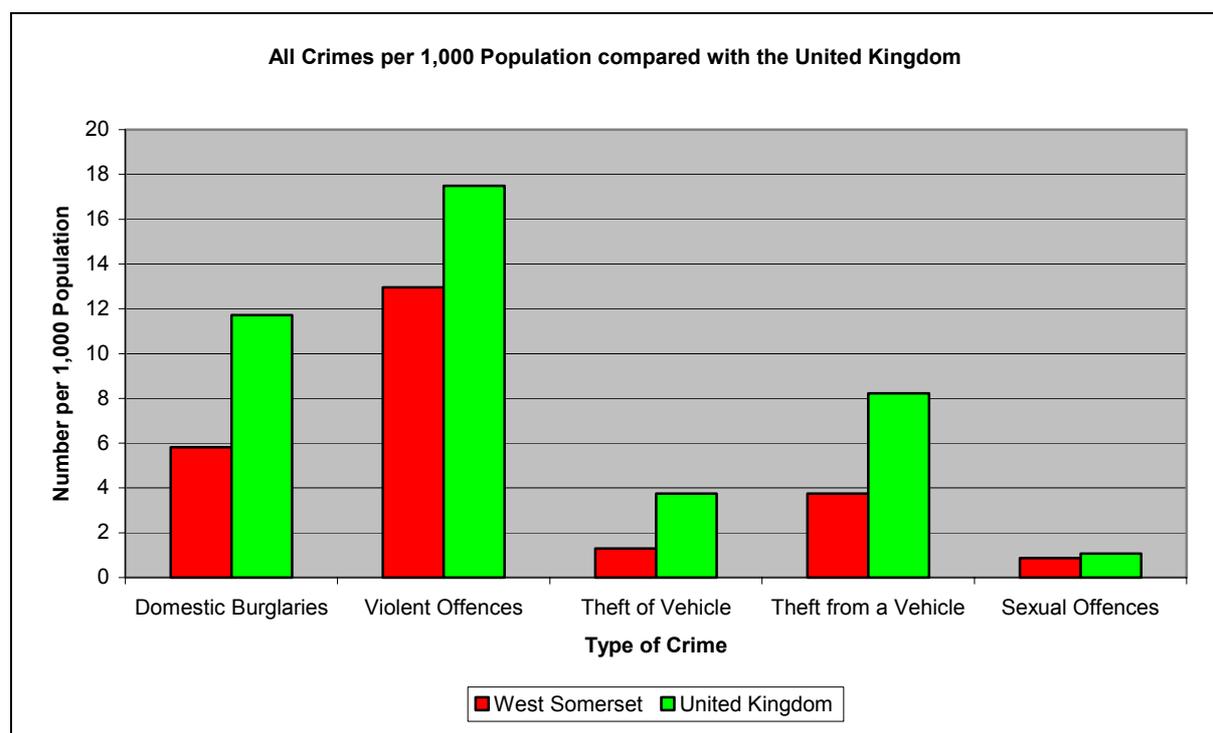
Crime

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
All Crimes per 1,000 population	Domestic Burglaries	5.81
	Violent Offences	12.96
	Theft of Vehicle	1.30
	Theft from a Vehicle	3.75
	Sexual Offences	0.87

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

Source: Audit Commission 2004/05



Graph 3

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.

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

Social

- 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. Provisional analysis of data from the Land Registry for 2005 linked with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2005 suggests that the ratio of average house price to average individual earnings in West Somerset could be as high as 8.5:1. This indicates that the opportunity for young single people in West Somerset to enter the housing market on their own and remain in the area is more difficult to achieve.
- 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) out of a total of c.32,000. 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.

Indicator	West Somerset	South West England	England
House Price / H/hold Income ratio (residence based)	6.80 (2003) Small sample - >50	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

Health

- 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.

Indicator	West Somerset		United Kingdom	
Life Expectancy	M – 78.7	F – 82.2	M – 76.45	F – 80.83
Percentage of households with one or more person with a limiting long term illness	38.3%		32.98%	

Table 8 Contextual Indicators: Health

Sources: Dept. of Health 2004 and ONS 2001

Economy

- 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. The district has a higher proportion of employers who operate in traditionally low-paid and seasonal industries such as agriculture

and tourism, than regionally and nationally and this has an impact on the level of average earnings. 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. These issues were recognised by the public regeneration agencies active in the area in the West Somerset Strategic Access Strategy published in 2002. The combination of these factors present a real challenge to the local authority in attracting better-paid jobs.

- 4.25 Compared with the previous annual monitoring period there has been a small increase of 2.3% in the total number of businesses registered for VAT in the district. The number of business registrations over the year exceeded the corresponding number who, for various reasons (not always associated with the closure of a business), left the register. This suggests that the local economy still provides opportunities for businesses to establish themselves and develop. Although the level of increase in registrations is lower than the regional and national rates, the rate of de-registrations is also lower.

Indicator		West Somerset	South West England	United Kingdom
Unemployment Rate		1.8%	1.7%	2.7%
VAT Registered Businesses	Registrations	105 (6.7%)	8.7%	9.7%
	De-registrations	90 (5.8%)	6.9%	8.4%
	Total Stock	1560	-	-

Table 9 Contextual Indicators: Economy

Source: Nomis 2005/06

Environment

- 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.

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 (AQMAs)	0	113

Table 10 Contextual Indicators: Environment

Source: Audit Commission 2003 & DEFRA 2003

Transport

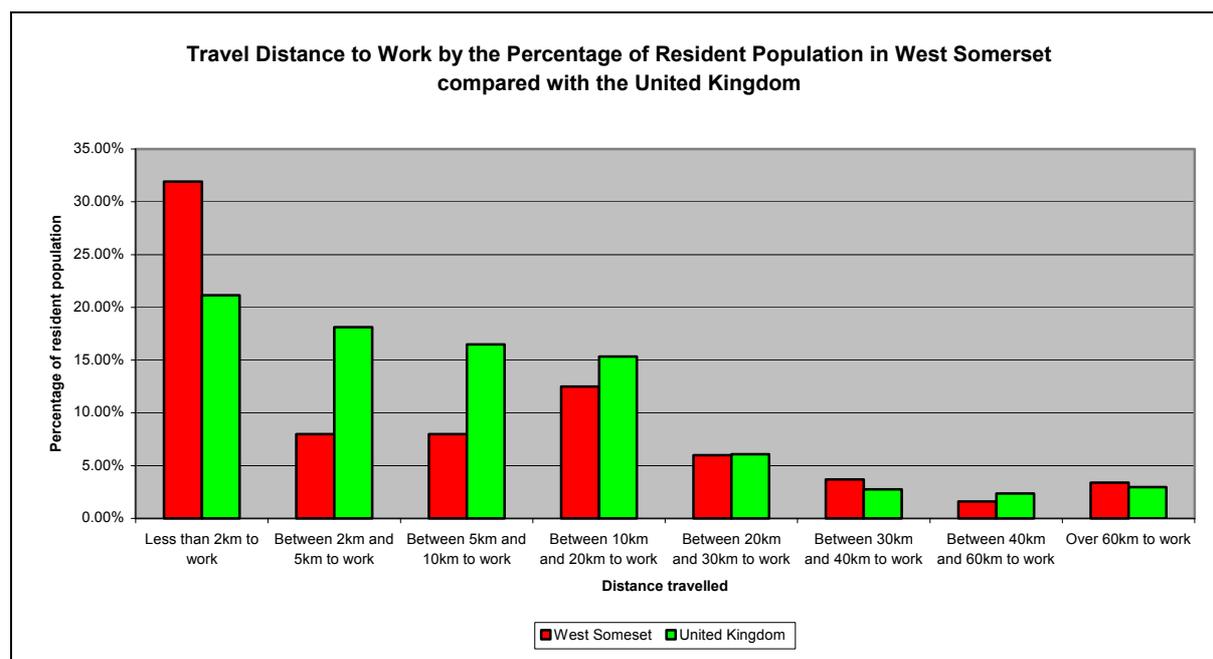
- 4.27 Given West Somerset's rural context and thus inaccessibility by public transport, the assumption could be made that travel to work by private motor vehicle would be greater than that nationally. However, interpreting the data in Table 11, the reverse has occurred. Although this data does not correlate 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.

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

4.29 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

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 only slightly lower than the corresponding proportions for the county and England. 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 emerging Planning Obligations Codes of Practice SPG.

Indicator	West Somerset	Somerset	England
Percentage of 15 year old pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE's at grades A* to C or equivalent	55.9%	56.5%	56.3%

Table 12 Contextual Indicator: Education

Source: DfES 2005

5.0 Implementing Local Development Framework Policies

- 5.1 The West Somerset Local Development Framework was not progressing to the timescales set in the original LDS due to the diversion of resources to enable the West Somerset Local Plan to be progressed through to adoption and thus provide the district outside of the Exmoor National Park with an up to date development plan and relevant policies this was achieved with the Local Plan being approved for adoption by Full Council in February 2006 and formal Adoption occurring in April, just outside of the AMR reporting period. Negotiation with Government Office for the South West for a revised LDS were taking place at the end of the monitoring period and a revised LDS was approved in July 2006. Although the Local Plan was not formally adopted until after March 2006, the policies that were identified to be saved beyond the automatic three year saving provided for under the 'transitional arrangements', had been identified in the original LDS and these were not subject to change in the revised LDS when that was subsequently approved in July 2006.
- 5.2 Despite the progress in both the LDF and Local Plan processes, the uncertainty surrounding the revisions to the LDS and personnel changes within the Planning Policy Team of the Council meant that it was not possible to identify the definitive set of Local Output Indicators. The LDS and its subsequent revised version have 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.	0.0 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	0.0%
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.	0.0ha
1f	Amount of employment land lost to residential development.	0.0ha

Table 13

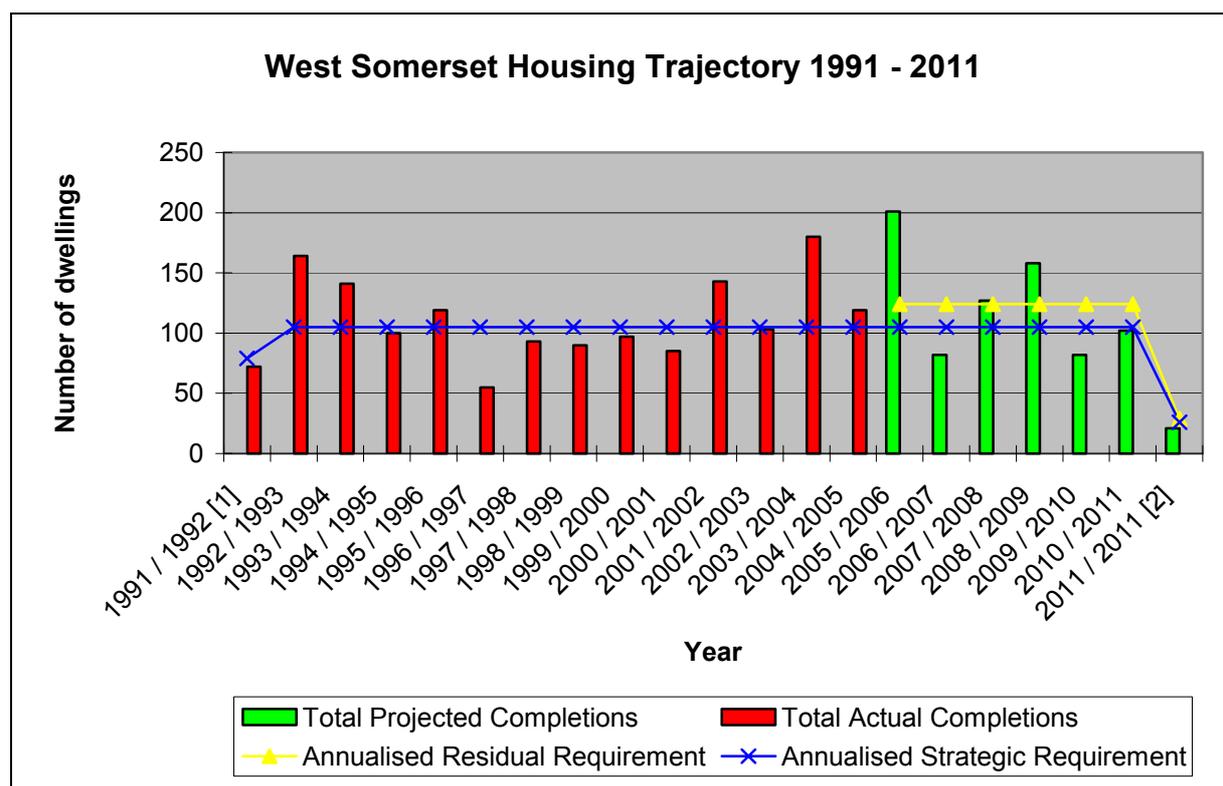
- 5.4 Very little employment land was developed in the 2005/6 period. What development that did take place was of small scale and below the thresholds established for monitoring of 0.2 Hectares of land for site area and/or greater than 500sq.m. of gross floorspace created for activities within the B Class of uses (B1, B2 and B8) identified in the Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.
- 5.5 A total of 6.5ha remains allocated in Policy E/1 of the West Somerset District Local Plan for employment development covering Classes B1, B2 and B8. These Classes cover uses such as research and development of products laboratories, light industry, general industrial and storage & distribution centres. Over the 2005/6 period no applications had come forward regarding development on the sites identified 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).	1,751
2a(ii)	Net dwellings for the current year.	190
2a(iii)	Projected net additional dwellings up to the end of the relevant development plan period (1991-2011).	1,045
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).	125

Table 14



Graph 5

5.7 The number of net dwellings completed since 1991 in the West Somerset local planning authority area is 1,751. This figure exceeds the Annualised Strategic Requirement (1,550 dwellings or 105 per annum), as set by the Structure Plan, by 201 dwellings at the end of 2005/06. This implies the average dwelling build rate in the area is almost two years 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 but the overall rate of housing completions since 2001/02 has been upward indicating a continuing demand for housing within the West Somerset local planning authority area and reflecting the prevailing economic conditions both locally and nationally.

- 5.8 Most of the completions have come through the form of windfalls, with only one allocated site (rear of North Street, Williton) developed in the AMR reporting period. The former Lido site in Minehead has accounted for 181 dwelling completions between 2002 and 2006 and the site is now built out. This is a very large windfall site, the size of which is unusual for settlement the size of Minehead in a predominantly rural location has probably contributed to a distortion in the build rate in recent years. If this were deducted from the net additional dwellings at the end of 2005/6, the resulting figure, at 112 dwellings per annum, 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 1,009 dwellings are expected to be built. This will exceed the Structure Plan allocation by some 300 dwellings. The Annualised Residual Rate, as illustrated in Graph 5, is calculated at 124 dwellings per annum.

Policy H/1: Housing Allocation Sites	No. of Units	Expected Completion Date
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	141	

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.	73.7%
2c (i)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at less than 30 dwellings per hectare.	N/A
2c (ii)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare.	N/A
2c (iii)	Percentage of new dwellings completed at above 50 dwellings per hectare.	N/A
2d	Affordable housing completions	4

Table 16

- 5.10 West Somerset enjoys a high rate of housing completions on previously developed land. During the AMR reporting period 73.7% of completions were on previously developed land. The national target of 60% of completions to be built on Brownfield land has regularly been 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 adopted West Somerset District Local Plan, 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 Due to changes in the methods of monitoring housing development which took place during the AMR reporting period, it has not been possible to provide a definitive figures on development density. Of the 190 dwellings completed during the year these were located on 77 separate sites. With a more rigorous monitoring regime now established it will be possible to produce a more comprehensive and accurate picture of residential development in future Annual Monitoring Reports.
- 5.12 The number of affordable houses developed in the period 2005/6 was only four although a further four houses for the 'intermediate' housing market were also completed during this time. The low level of provision is a cause of continuing concern for the Council given that the affordability of housing is a major issue for the Authority and the need to provide opportunities for younger people and families to remain in the area where they may have spent a significant

amount of their early years. The West Somerset District Plan has introduced Policy H/4 to assist in the delivery of affordable housing. This is supported by the Planning Obligations Codes of Practice that is being developed as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This seeks to draw contributions from developers through planning gain and is due to be adopted in the Spring of 2007 now that the Local Plan and Policy PO/1 have been adopted.

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. Development on two of the sites at Severn Terrace, Watchet and Clanville, Minehead were under construction at the end of the AMR reporting period and both should be substantially complete by the end of the next AMR.

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 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 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 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 extant planning permissions for the installation of renewable energy. One application for a development of 12 turbines adjoining the Hinkley Point nuclear power station had been submitted to the Authority for consideration but had been refused and the applicants had started Appeal procedures at the end of the AMR reporting period. At the time of submission of this document, the Appeal had been withdrawn and a revised application had been submitted for nine turbines to the Council, but had not been determined. The progress on this renewable energy development proposal will be reported in the third AMR. The steps to remedy the omission of monitoring on this indicator will be discussed in Section 6.

Local Output Indicators

- 5.19 At the end of the last AMR reporting period the West Somerset LDF preparation process had begun with the adoption of the LDS. However, due to the additional time and resources required to take the West Somerset Local Plan through the proposed Modifications stage and onto adoption (it was formally adopted in April 2006, just outside of the reporting period of this AMR). At the end of March 2006, the Council's SCI had reached the Pre-Submission Consultation stage (Regulation 26) and had been placed on informal deposit for six weeks commencing 31st March. By the time of submitting this report, further progress had taken it to the Independent Examination stage (Regulation 34) and the draft version of the Inspector's Report had been received. 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 as it was only adopted in the Spring and the LDs was in the process of being revised at that time.
- 5.20 Although the Local Plan was not formally adopted until after March 2006, the policies that were identified to be saved beyond the automatic three year saving provided for under the 'transitional arrangements', had been identified in the original LDS and these were not subject to change in the revised LDS when that was subsequently approved in July 2006. Following these changes and amendments to other influential documents such as the emerging West Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (to replace the Community Plan) and the revised Housing Strategy, it is now possible to commence work on the Local Output Indicators that will be able to be applied to the Local Plan policies.
- 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 many of the Local Plan policies were not originally drafted with the monitoring of their performance as an integral element. 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 during future AMR periods as the monitoring process becomes more effective and relevant indicators identified.
- 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.

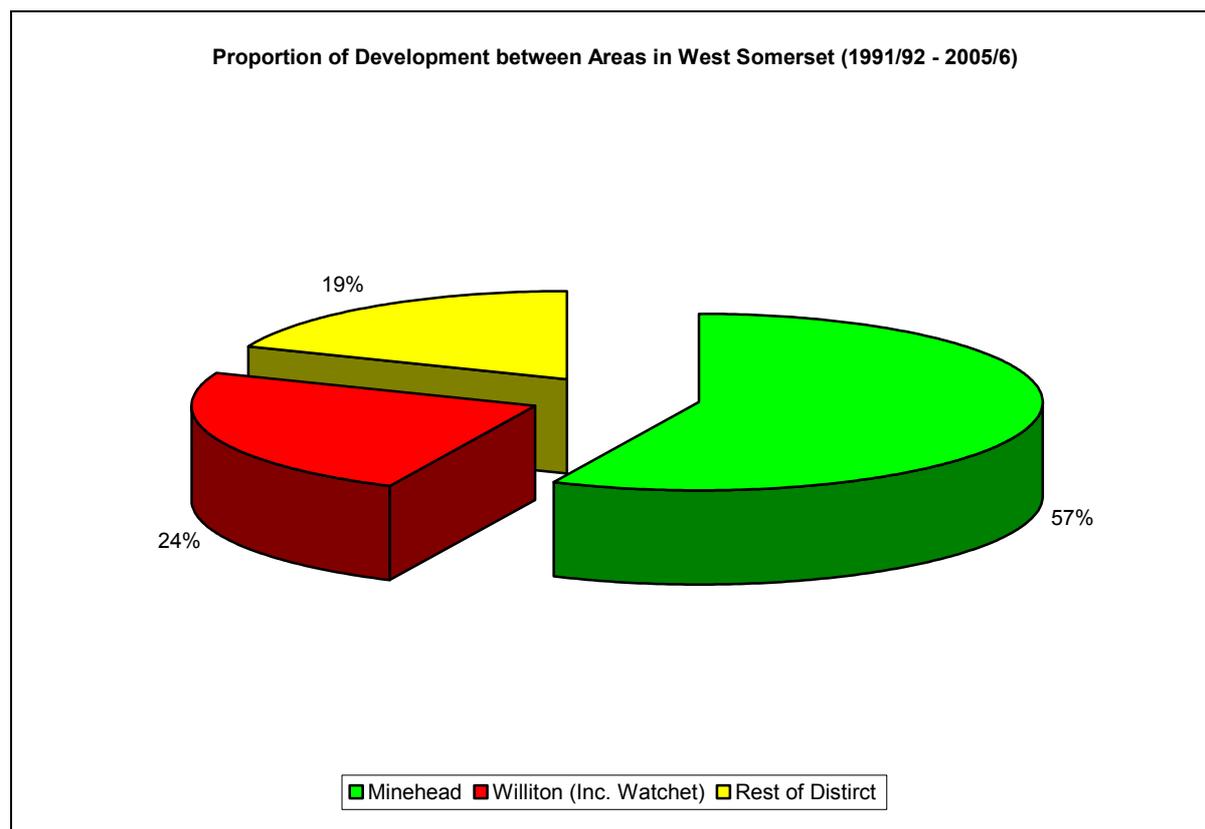
Settlement Policies: SP/1 to SP/5

- 5.24 The Somerset and Exmoor National Park Joint Structure Plan Review (adopted 2000) determines the overall scale of development in the local plan area for the period 1991 – 2011, and identifies the settlements that are of strategic significance to the delivery of its strategy and policies. As such, Policy STR2: Towns, of the Structure Plan identifies Minehead as the only strategically significant settlement in West Somerset and the strategy emphasises that it should be the main focus for development during the plan period. The Structure Plan leaves the designation of settlements beneath the strategically identified 'towns' and their position in the settlement hierarchy for the area to the relevant Local Planning Authorities through their respective local plans. It does however make a general distinction between Rural Centres and Villages, the designation of relevant settlements being determined by the role and function, services and facilities they offer at a more local level and their impact and influence on the surrounding area (Policy STR3: Rural Centres and Villages). Structure Plan Policies STR4, STR5 and, STR6 emphasise that the scale of development within the settlement hierarchy and

the rural remainder should reflect the role and function of those individual locations. Within the West Somerset Local Plan the order of the settlement hierarchy within the Local Planning Authority area and the scale of development that is expected in each is expressed through Policies SP/1 - 5. Therefore, these Settlement Policies provides a basis for controlling the general scale and pattern of new development within the LPA administered area 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.

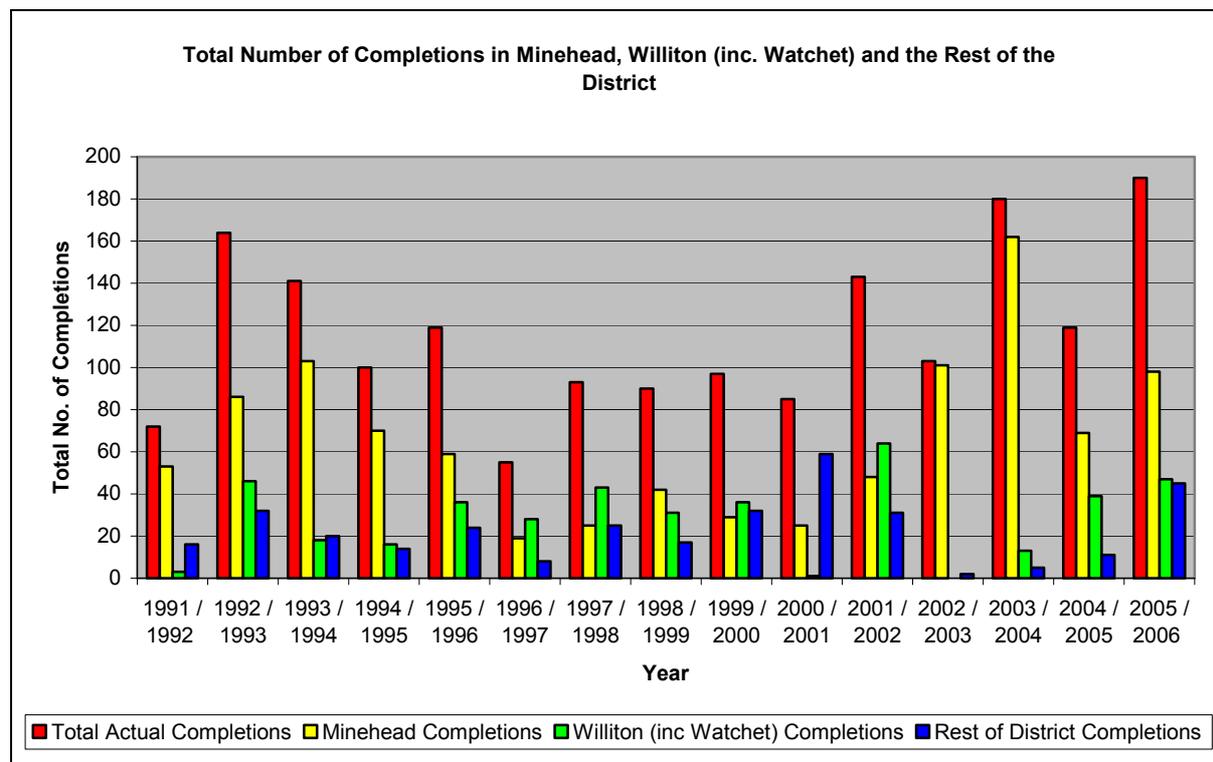
5.25 In simple terms the Objectives are being achieved, as illustrated in Graph 6, with Minehead achieving over 56% of the share of housing development in the District between 1991/92 and 2005/06. The remaining share is split between Williton and Watchet, and the rest of the district (which roughly translates 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 6

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 between 2002/3 and 2004/5 with nearly all development sited in Minehead. This is revealed through the distribution of the housing completions data in Table 23. However, it should be noted that over the past year there has been a significant increase in the

amount of completions outside of the three main settlements due to the implementation of historic extant planning approvals in this type of location.



Graph 7

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	05 / 06	
Minehead	No	53	86	103	70	59	19	25	42	29	25	48	101	162	69	98	989
	%	74	52	73	70	50	35	27	47	30	29	34	98	90	58	52	57
Williton and Watchet	No	3	46	18	16	36	28	43	31	36	1	64	0	13	39	47	421
	%	4	28	13	16	30	51	46	34	37	1	45	0	7	33	25	24
Rest of LPA Area	No	16	32	20	14	24	8	25	17	32	59	31	2	5	11	45	341
	%	22	20	14	14	20	15	27	19	33	69	22	2	3	9	24	20
LPA Total	No	72	164	141	100	119	55	93	90	97	85	143	103	180	119	190	1751
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

NB % may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table 23

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, particularly as in recent years residential completions in Minehead have been dominated by the redevelopment of the former Lido site. This has now been completed and it is therefore predicted that, in the medium term, changes to Graph 6 in successive AMR's will show an increasing proportion of housing development occurring in Williton, rather than in Minehead. Beyond this point it will be difficult to predict accurately until the quantum of development for the West Somerset area up to 2026 has been determined through the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, and the impact this will have on the main settlements along with their capacity to absorb it. It is expected that the proportion of development in the rest of the district, for the remainder of the plan period to 2011 will remain relatively low, although it is acknowledged that spikes in the data may occur for this area due to the nature of the development being based on primarily windfall development which can be notoriously unpredictable.

Employment Policies: E/1 to E/8

5.28 The adopted West Somerset Local Plan has a single objective for the employment policies to:

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

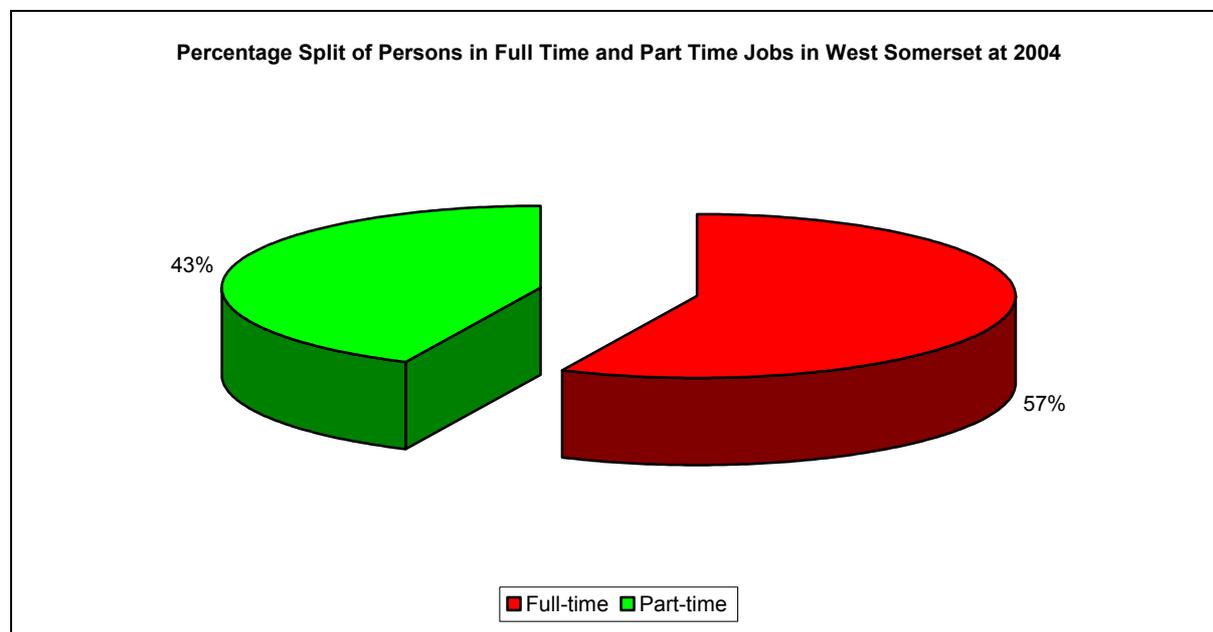
5.29 Owing to the lack of data available the data extracted can act only as baseline for the indicator that might be developed to monitor this objective, or one similar. Although the number of 'permanent jobs' should be monitored such data is difficult to extract, thus the number of full time jobs have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

5.30 Of the 10,900 total employee jobs in 2004 almost 57% of those were full time (see Graph 8). This does not, however reflect the full picture of employment within West Somerset as the Census 2001 revealed that over 27% of the residents of the District were self-employed, double the rate for England. Of the employee jobs the average individual earnings per week for full-time employees in the District was £476.10, as shown in Table 25, which is over £60 below the national equivalent. 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.

	West Somerset (employee jobs)	West Somerset (%)
Total employee jobs	10,900	-
Full-time	6,200	56.9
Part-time	4,700	43.1

Table 24

Source Nomis 2004



Graph 8

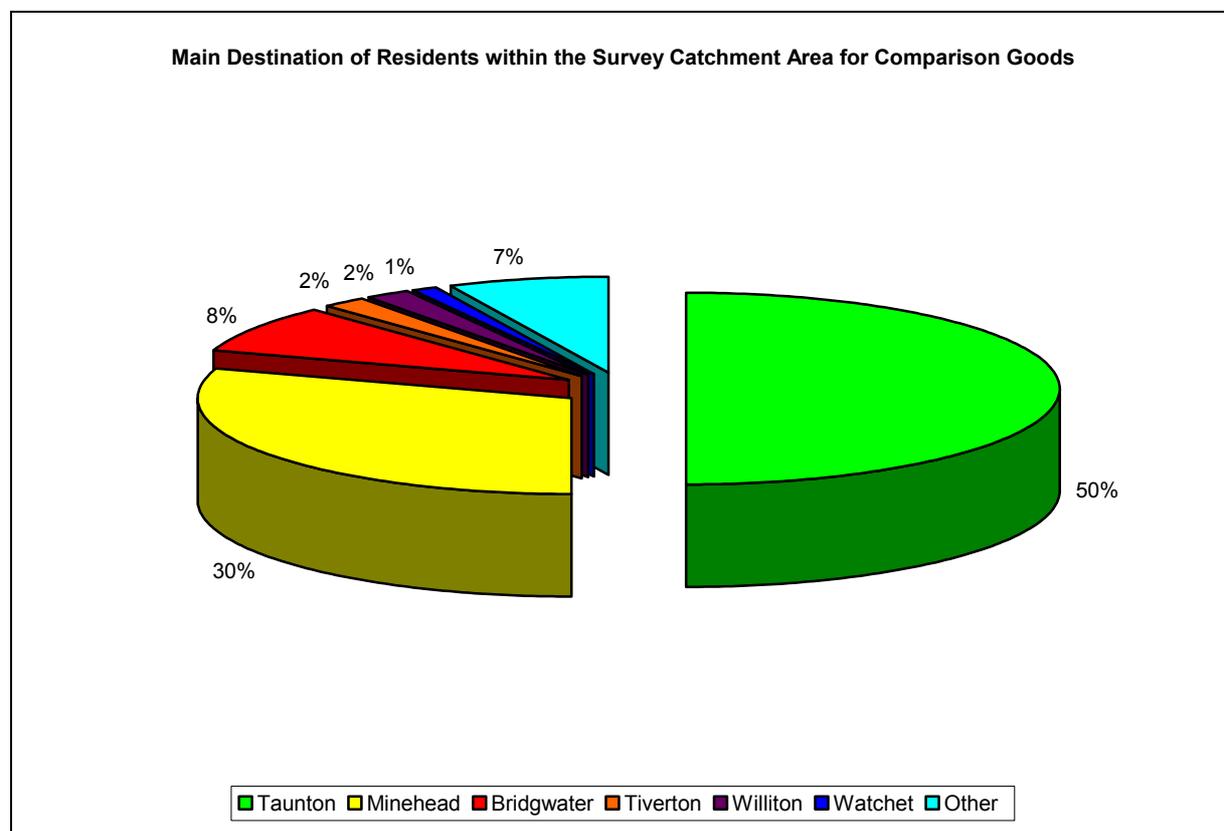
	West Somerset	UK
Average Earnings per Week (full time workers)	£476.10	£542.50

Table 25

Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2005

Retail Policies: SH/1 to SH/6

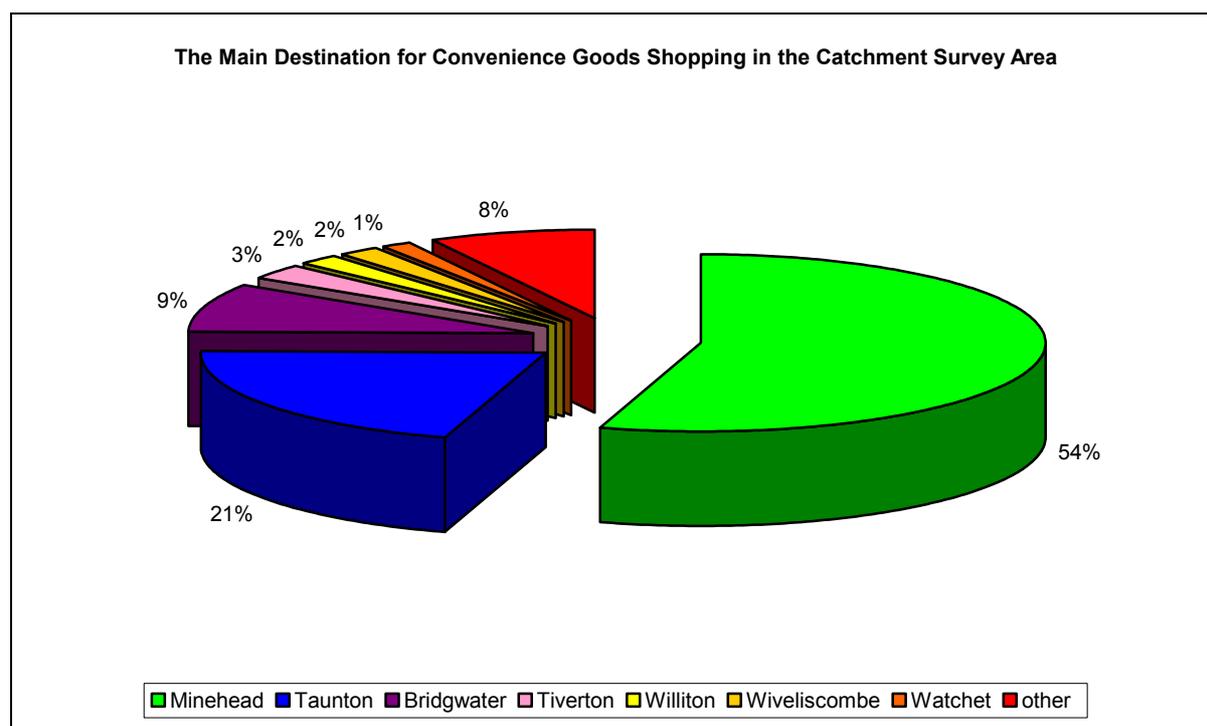
- 5.31 The adopted West Somerset District Local Plan states two objectives for Shopping in the District:
- To sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of Minehead Town Centre, Watchet and Williton shopping areas; and,
 - To support the retention of shops in the villages.
- 5.32 Data to assist the 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 adequate 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.
- 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 9

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.



Graph 10

Source: West Somerset Retail and Town Centre Study

Centre	Main Comparison Destination of 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

Housing Policies: H/4

5.36 The adopted version of the West Somerset Local Plan lists a number of objectives relating to Housing. 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.

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 future AMR reporting periods. 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.

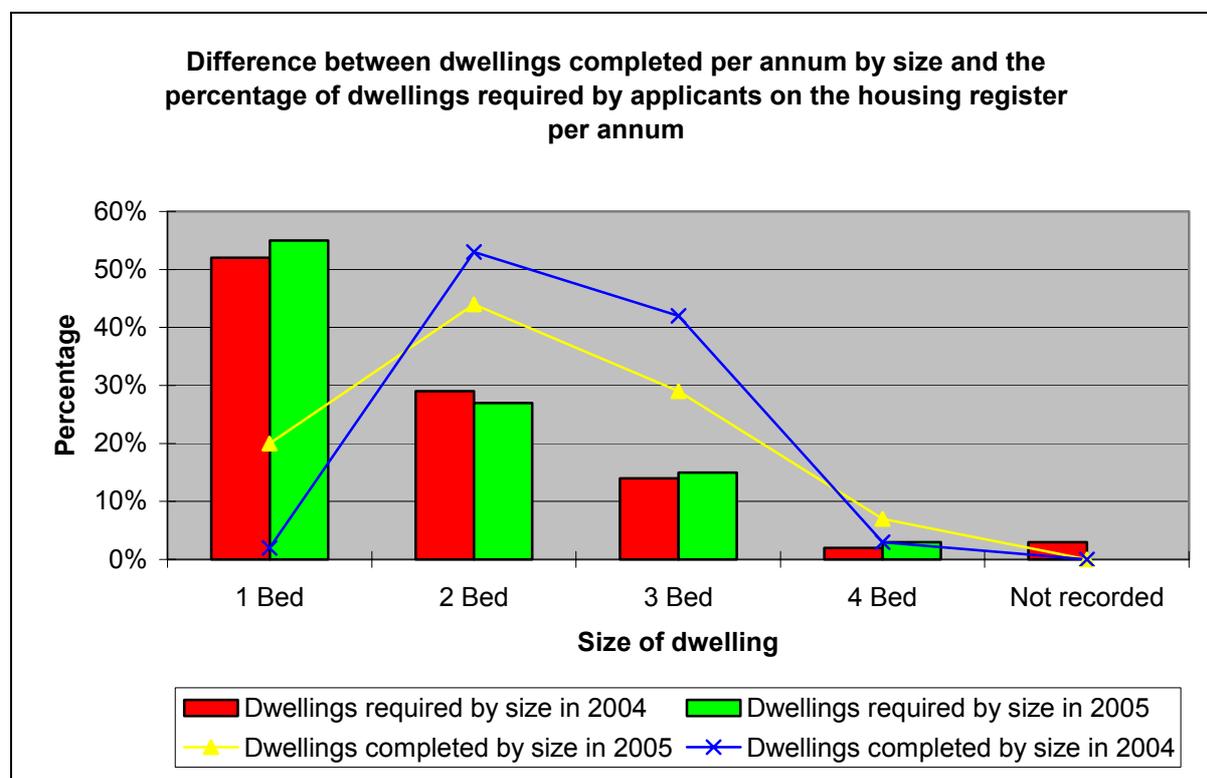
Size	Number (2004)	Percentage (2004)	Number 2005	Percentage (2005)
1 Bed	697	52	703	55
2 Bed	395	29	349	27
3 Bed	190	14	186	15
4 Bed	26	2	38	3
Not Recorded	36	3	0	0
Total	1344	100	1276	100

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

5.38 The percentage of dwellings by size required by applicants on the housing register over the periods 2003/4 and 2004/5 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 2003/4 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.



Graph 11

- 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 has been subject to revision during the AMR reporting period and will be replaced by the West Somerset Sustainable Communities Strategy early in 2007. This will set out the Council's vision and priorities for the period 2007 - 2010 and the means by which it will seek to address and meet these. 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 relevant DPDs preparation progresses the Sustainable Community Strategy 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 Sustainable Community Strategy 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 Sustainable Community Strategy is adopted, which is due in early 2007. 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 limited progress of DPD's and revisions to the LDS (approved in July 2006), a Sustainability Appraisal Framework has only just been established and work commenced. The scoping report for the Core Strategy and Williton Area Action Plan DPD's were published in July 2006 and work has been progressing alongside the evidence gathering process for these Local Development Documents at the time of submission of this report.

6.0 Remedies and Next Steps

- 6.1 Throughout this AMR a number of gaps have been identified whereby indicators have yet to be established, data has been difficult to extract and, other constraints on their identification and inclusion have become apparent
- 6.2 The following section will identify discrepancies and limitations at the time of submission, and 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	Concern regarding the progression of both Core Strategy and Williton Area Action Plan DPD's following advice to produce the former ahead of the latter in the light of the Lich field and Stafford decisions. Personnel changes have impacted on the implementation of works necessary.
Remedy	Revise the timescales in the LDS following negotiation with Government Office.
Next Steps	Revise the timescales in the LDS and submit to the SoS for approval before 31 March 2007 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	<p>Some data is three or four years old and is released at intervals beyond one or two years.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Data that is released beyond one or two years, such as Census data, limits the ability of the AMR to observe trends as well as change, in the West Somerset 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. However, it is recognised that data compiled from more regularly published data-sets have their own limitations. These are often derived from sample surveys and care needs to be taken when disaggregating national and regional data of this type down to areas of the statistical base and geographic size of West Somerset. Using data from such sources as the basis for rigorous and robust statistical analysis needs to be undertaken with care.</p>
Remedy	Search for sources of data that are updated on a short-term basis, such as one or

	two years. Endeavour to 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 whilst recognising the limitations of the data and information used.
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	The West Somerset District Local Plan was finally adopted in April 2006. Work has now commenced on identifying Local Output Indicators but these have been partly delayed due to the revision of the Community Plan into the Sustainable Community Strategy. Progression of the preparation stages of the DPDs has also been delayed and this has hampered the determination of indicators that will be consistent with both type of development plan policies and strategies for monitoring purposes.
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 revised LDS profiles approved in July 2006. Following adoption of the Local Plan and the imminent arrival of a new Sustainable Community Strategy should enable the LPA to develop indicators around the Plan's objectives concerning the saved policies and those that are anticipated to emerge from the DPD's as they progress through the various stages to eventual adoption.</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 has been subject to review and is expected to include a framework that will assist in the effective monitoring of both the adopted local plan and the emerging DPD's. Government guidance recommends integrating the Local Development Framework AMR with local community initiatives, such as community strategies. Thus, it has been decided to wait for the Community Plan to be adopted in order to ensure that consistent and meaningful indicators can be developed that will assist in the monitoring of both.

Remedy	Upon the adoption of the Sustainable Community Strategy (due in early 2007), 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 amendments to the LDS and DPD timescales contained within it, the Sustainability Appraisal Framework due to start in early 2006, was delayed. Work has now commenced with the first stage of the work, the scoping reports on the Core Strategy and Williton Area Action Plan DPD's being published in July 2006 and the relevant evidence gathering work associated with these documents. It has been decided to wait for this work in order to develop the Significant Effects Indicators around.
Remedy	Continue background evidence gathering associated with the DPD's but await the outcomes of the Employment Land Assessment, Residential Urban Capacity Study and an early indication as to the future level and scale of development arising from the emerging RSS Examination in Public as this will influence the development of Significant Effect Indicators.
Next Steps	The authority does not have the in-house capability to develop the Sustainability Appraisal Framework alone. This has been passed on to consultants to undertake as a piece of work. This work has started in 2006 and a Scoping Report produced. Further work awaits the results of the Employment Land Assessment and Residential Urban Capacity Study which are due to be completed by Spring 2007. At this point objectives, targets and indicators will begin to emerge ready for future AMR's.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 This AMR for West Somerset has revealed a number of issues that need to be addressed to ensure a much more comprehensive Report for the 2006/7 period. Nevertheless some useful data has been extracted in setting a baseline for future comparisons.
- 7.2 The LDS is currently running to timescales set in its revised version. However, there are concerns that there may be issues surrounding the quantum of additional work that may arise from other sources (e.g. the scale of development likely to be expected to be accommodated within the LPA through the emerging RSS), the impact of advice regarding the phasing of progression of DPD's following the decisions on the Lichfield and Stafford DPD's and, the availability of resources to address these and the development of more relevant data-sets to serve the AMR (see para 7.4 below). This may mean that further review of the LDS will be required during 2007.
- 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 it is anticipated that these links will be maintained over future AMR reporting periods.
- 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, the type of data that West Somerset Council itself collects, and the availability of relevant data that reflects both the geographic area of the District and that for which it is the Local Planning Authority. In cases where 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.