

PRESS RELEASE JULY 2009

A Call for Residents to Shape West Somerset's Future

How to plan future residential housing, economic, social, health and environmental developments are the questions being posed to local people by West Somerset Council.

Formerly governed by the Local Plan, future development and investment in the district outside of Exmoor National Park, which has its own planning policies, will be driven by a new Local Development Framework (LDF).

The LDF's Core Strategy is now being created and residents, business and community groups are being urged to get involved by letting the council know:

- What are the most important social, economic and environmental issues currently facing West Somerset? People are invited, where possible, to give examples and/or refer to any supporting evidence.
- What should the Core Strategy contain to address the issues identified in the first question?

Cllr Kate Kravis, Lead Member for Housing, said, "This new development framework will shape the future of West Somerset and it is vital that our communities take a leading role by making their thoughts and wishes known to us.

"It is a golden opportunity for people to tell us what is important to them, and how we can help put right or improve opportunities. From health to housing, the economy to the environment – it affects all of us so I urge people to get involved now."

The council will then look at [ways of](#) tackling the issues raised [with the help of the community and other interested parties](#). Ideas put forward will be subject to sustainability appraisal testing before being refined into a single set of draft policies in 2010.

It is hoped that the new policies will be adopted at the end of 2011 after they have been submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, and been examined by a government planning inspector. The Core Strategy will then replace many of the policies in the West Somerset District Local Plan.

With the help and input of local people, businesses and communities, the LDF's Core Strategy aims to ensure that the area has the range of jobs, housing and community facilities that it needs to make it a prosperous and healthy place to live.

The consultation ends on September 1. People can complete the consultation online at www.westsomersetsays.com website, via e-mail to LDF@westsomerset.gov.uk or by post to: The Local Development Framework Team, West Somerset Council, West Somerset House, Killick Way, Williton, Somerset. TA4 4QA. Paper copies of the consultation are available from the Council receptions at West Somerset House in Williton or the Customer Centre in Summerland Road, Minehead.

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Editors' Notes:

- Further details about the West Somerset Local Development Framework – of which the Core Strategy is the main document – can be obtained from the Council's website at www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk
- The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West requires West Somerset Council to provide 2500 dwellings during the period 2006 to 2026, that is an average of 125 per year (about the same rate of development as experienced over the last few years).
- The Core Strategy must be prepared in accordance with central government guidance in Planning Policy Statement 12 – *“Creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning”* available to download from www.communities.gov.uk
- The Core Strategy will help to implement the vision and aims of the West Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy available to download from www.westsomersetstrategicpartnership.co.uk

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