

**Report on Public Engagement,  
Local Development Framework Draft Core Strategy,  
October to December 2010**



## **1. Introduction**

Public engagement on the draft Core Strategy for the Local Development Framework has been designed and co-ordinated by the four Area Development Teams working closely with the Spatial Planning Team. A brief (see Appendix 1) and budget were agreed in July 2010 to set a framework for this consultation. Simplified materials were drawn up over the late summer period as soon as the draft Core Strategy was made available. In designing the public engagement, the main focus has been on:

- Fulfilling the requirements of the adopted and approved Statement of Community Involvement - <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-framework>
- Complying with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 12 and Statutory Instrument 2008/1371 Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
- A cost effective programme that maximised broad public engagement and that would augment the formal consultation process.
- Actively seeking online responses through the iNovem system, whilst clearly accommodating other response methods, so as not to exclude key groups of people who otherwise may not participate.

The strategy was finally approved for public consultation, at Full Council on 16 September 2010, with a launch on 8 October for an 8-week period, closing on 3 December 2010.

This followed an extensive period of testing of the emerging growth proposals.

- Firstly with Parish Councils and other key stakeholders through cluster group meetings based around towns and their catchment areas across the district. This was conducted in the late Autumn and early Spring of 2009/10 and led by Spatial Policy Team in liaison with the Area Development Teams.
- This was followed up by discussion of both the overall growth proposals and also the draft key policies, under the five themes contained in the Core Strategy, by the Council's corporate officer group and by the Council's Area Committees in open meetings. The second period of testing ran from June to August 2010.
- The consultation materials were scoped in June and July 2010 and then developed over the August to September period. A special event was held in Chard, 9 September, to engage residents in proposals developed through the Chard Regeneration Framework. This attracted 400 people and was used to link these detailed plans with the emerging Core Strategy.

## **2. Main Elements of Consultation Programme**

### **1. Household leaflet**

The main element of the engagement plan was a simple, easy to read summary, in a colour A4 format, distributed via the Royal Mail to all domestic addresses across the whole district. This document (see Appendix 2) was designed to say: what the strategy was; the stage it had reached; a central spread with the main highlights from the strategy; all dates of the main public exhibitions plus other locations where it was available for inspection; how to make online and written responses to the document and finally the timetable for completion and adoption.

This leaflet was circulated at the end of September (the consultation started on 8 October) and circulation was staggered across the district to try to achieve about two weeks notice in advance of local exhibitions.

Generally speaking the leaflet was well received. Some people missed it, and in certain instances we received reports that some homes did not receive delivery, despite all of the reported problems being from homes that were within postcode sectors that we had booked for delivery by Royal Mail. (Some reports were contested by neighbours who said they did indeed get the leaflet). An ample overrun was done, however to enable copies to be available in all our public offices and at exhibitions and as “lead in” materials to a wide range of discussion groups held with specific sub sets of the population. In this way, the broadest possible awareness raising was given to the public about the importance of the draft Core Strategy.

The leaflet was supplementary to many other forms of communication and was seen as ‘above and beyond’ what was required, particularly as many other authorities simply advertised the consultation on their websites only.

## **2. Website**

A web area was developed on the South Somerset District Council’s website enabling interested parties to see the full document online and make their comments on any section that interested them via the web tool iNovem. In addition, the website pages were constructed in such a way that all the consultation summaries and materials were available via the website, including the summary leaflet and all the summary panels explaining the different elements within the strategy. This was linked back to the home page of the website via an easy access route, so that the profile of the strategy consultation has been maintained throughout the consultation period.

The substantial evidence base underlying the draft Core Strategy’s preparation was also readily available for inspection on the web site and had previously been publicised to Town and Parish Councils and made available for inspection at a number of “data room exhibitions”.

In addition to the above, the strategy was featured on YouTube with links provided via Twitter and Facebook to encourage broader access, by young people in particular.

### **3. Public Relations Campaign**

An extensive and sustained PR campaign was maintained in the run up to the consultation period and throughout the consultation period. The Communications Officer was a key person in developing the summary leaflet, exhibition materials and web areas. Media releases were targeted at different geographical areas timed to coincide with the run up to the public exhibitions. Specialist releases were done to interest the business community. The press articles run during the consultation, including those aimed to boost attendance are set out in Appendix 3.

The Portfolio Holder for Spatial Planning participated in numerous interviews for radio and press purposes and also attended many of the public meetings, exhibitions and discussion groups to enable a clear and sustained message from politicians about the role and purpose of the Core Strategy and the importance of public engagement to improve the final document. All District Councillors were briefed and asked to talk to their constituents about the importance of the consultation and encourage them to get involved and make a response if they so wished.

As the campaign advanced, further releases were issued to showcase the success of earlier exhibitions and encourage people to make their comments in the remaining time available. The final tally of responses is around 2770 from 927 respondents. However, a further consultation is taking place with those respondents whom have commented about transport issues around Yeovil, which will increase the number of responses received.

### **4. Formal Consultees**

The Spatial Policy Team maintain a database consisting of 1292 consultees, this includes all relevant Specific and General Consultation Bodies and Other Consultees, as well as those individuals/agents/bodies who have asked to be added and those who had made responses to the earlier consultations on the Issues and Options document (March 2008). Letters/emails detailing where the document could be viewed, commented upon and copies of and/or links to the Draft Core Strategy were sent to all those on that database in the week commencing 4 October 2010.

Formal notices were placed in the following publications:

- Blackmore Vale Magazine
- Chard and Ilminster News
- Western Gazette
- Yeovil Express
- Fosse Way Magazine

Copies of the consultation document, including the Draft Core Strategy and Sustainability Appraisal were placed in all local libraries and the District Council Offices.

## **5. Public Exhibitions**

A total of 18 exhibitions were pre-planned, in all of the main centres across the district, focusing on Yeovil and the market towns. In addition, special events were held in the villages of Barwick and East Coker, the areas most likely to be affected by green field growth proposals for Yeovil. As noted earlier, the Chard Regeneration Framework event was held prior to the consultation period, giving residents an important opportunity to give in-depth consideration to the major growth proposals for the town.

These consultation events were supplemented by further events arranged in response to feedback as needed. This led to an additional event held in Somerton and a special, rurally focused event held in North Cadbury. Most events were held in the late afternoon through into the evening, although some were also held on Saturday mornings in the bigger towns and attendances were mainly in the fifty to one hundred people range with 200 and upwards attending exhibitions at East Coker and Somerton.

Each took the form of a drop-in exhibition with around twenty specially developed exhibition panels. Most of these were generic boards that explained what the exhibition was about, gave a simple summary of the main elements of the Core Strategy, the growth proposals, sustainability appraisal method, the main features of the policy areas and growth strategy. In addition, each exhibition carried specific panels covering the settlements in that area giving a summary of the main characteristics of market towns and rural centres, the headline growth proposal for those places and, where appropriate, maps showing the preferred areas for growth.

People attending exhibitions were greeted by Area Development staff and, encouraged to take an exhibition feedback form to complete and leave this in the box provided before they left the exhibition. At least two members of the Spatial Planning team attended each event to enable visitors to talk in-depth about any particular aspect that interested them. After each event feedback forms were analysed by Area Development staff. This gave an instant snapshot of numbers attending, where people came from, how they found the exhibition, whether they agreed broadly with the proposals and canvassed, whether they planned to submit a formal response to the strategy. This quick overview enabled us to plan and refine future events. A summary of feedback from each event is contained in Appendix 4, along with a copy of the feedback form. In total 1581 people were recorded attending these exhibitions, which is a conservative figure as accurate recording was difficult at the most popular exhibitions and at the most popular times. Of those who completed feedback forms we can note that:

- Apart from the Yeovil Town Centre events, the majority of people lived in the town, where the exhibition was being held.
- Overall 64% found the summary information at the exhibition useful and informative, 19% found it a bit helpful and 17% found it unhelpful.
- Overall 55 % indicated that they intended to submit detailed comments, with 27% saying they might do and 18% not to submit comments.

Area Development staff were in charge of choosing venues, timings and hosting these events, based on their experience of successful consultations on other topics. They also used contacts with local groups and organisations to encourage attendance at the exhibitions e.g. local business associations, local schools and youth groups, representatives from black and ethnic minority communities resident in the area etc.

The exhibition material was used to hold a further event for South Somerset District Council's staff, which was attended by 43 people. This served the dual purpose of raising awareness amongst staff that live in the district, whilst also encouraging service teams to think about the implications of the LDF policies for their professional areas and formulate a response if appropriate.

## **6. Reaching Minority Groups**

In addition to the broad programme of public events some special discussion groups were held with a range of groups who we felt were unlikely to attend the exhibition.

### **1) Young People**

A series of events were held in November 2010 at schools and colleges. The method chosen was to meet with groups of young people and hold a structured discussion around the overall growth proposal, a more in-depth look at key policies and seek some specific feedback on local growth proposals in the catchment area of the school.

Four such events were held in schools at Yeovil, Castle Cary/Ansford and Huish Episcopi chosen to enable coverage of urban, market town and more rurally based students.

- Ansford School, Castle Cary, 80 pupils across Years 7, 8 and 9
- Bucklers Mead School, 30 pupils from Year 8
- Yeovil College, 15 students studying A-level geography
- Huish Episcopi Academy, Langport, 30 pupils from Year 11

Each of these sessions has been written up and submitted as separate evidence as part of the consultation process. These are presented as Appendix 5.

### **2) Black and Minority Ethnic Groups**

This was arranged through the Somerset Racial Equality Council and consisted of a discussion group held with 16 representatives from black and ethnic communities across South Somerset. Good representation was achieved from different ethnic groups from across a wide geographical area. This followed a focus group format using a topic guide where participants had been sent a copy of the summary leaflet and paper copies of the exhibition boards (which summarised the contents of the strategy) in advance. There was then a facilitated discussion going through the main aspects of the strategy and pausing to record views on any particular aspect that interested the participants. These again were written up as a separate piece of evidence and have been submitted as part of the consultation. These are presented at Appendix 6.

3) **Gypsy and Traveller**

A focus group was held with a group of Gypsy and Traveller representatives from across the district. Participants had received a copy of the summary leaflet in advance of the meeting and on the day there was a discussion about the housing needs of gypsy and traveller people and views were sought on the draft policy for Gypsy and Traveller pitch development. The feedback has been written up and submitted as a separate piece of evidence as part of the consultation. This is presented at Appendix 6.

4) **South Somerset Equalities Steering Group**

A discussion group was held with representatives groups from the Equalities Steering Group, which includes disability groups, groups representing young people, faith groups, black and minority ethnic representation etc This discussion group was held in the same format as that with black and minority ethnic groups, detailed above and the feedback from the groups has been submitted as separate evidence as part of the consultation and this is presented at Appendix 6.

### **3. Resources**

A summary of the main elements of additional costs incurred in running this consultation exercise, are shown in Appendix 7. These were well within the budget set.

### **4. Conclusions and Lesson Learned**

Some of the main ones from this exercise are:

- Despite going to considerable efforts to simplify and summarise the material contained in the draft Core Strategy, many members of the public found the language and complexity of the document difficult to follow. The presence of expert planning officers to advise and discuss the content with the public was a positive response to this natural difficulty.



- There was a general appreciation of the effort made to discuss the Core Strategy with the wider community at this stage in the process; however, there was also a degree of scepticism about the likelihood of local views and evidence having any effect on the proposals in the final document. For this reason, it will be important to follow statutory regulations in considering and responding to every specific point made by representees and making these responses available for inspection as a part of the report on the Core Strategy representations and further evidence that is scheduled for October 2011 that will seek to finalise the Core Strategy for publication and submission for examination.
- Representees will be informed, in advance, of when the Area Committees, District Executive and Full Council are to consider the report on representations that will be presenting the revised Core Strategy for publication and subsequent submission for examination.
- The summary document was well worth producing and distributing broadly across the district, however the narrative of the simple summary, the more in-depth exhibition summary and the actual document itself would benefited from further refinement to draw people into increasing levels of detail and helping their understanding of how final recommendations had been arrived at.
- The range of discussion groups held with harder to reach groups was a requirement of the Planning regulations and has certainly led to some different perspectives being feed into the overall body of consultation responses.

Helen Rutter  
**Assistant Director (Communities)**

Updated March 2011

## Appendix 1

### South Somerset Local Development Framework- Draft Core Strategy

#### Brief for community consultation.

<b>Title</b>	South Somerset draft Core Strategy – community consultation programme	<b>Sponsor:</b>	Andy Foyne (for Martin Woods)
<p>Link with corporate agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required by LDF – community involvement as part of preparation of South Somerset core strategy.</li> <li>• to test and further refine the draft policies &amp; proposals of the core strategy through a public dialogue bringing local knowledge of place and at the same time forge a broader public understanding of and respect for the planning function.</li> <li>• Links to ‘continuous improvement in local quality of life’ and helping to build a sustainable South Somerset in conformity with SCS.</li> <li>• Ensure proposals are broadly what community is seeking and help to deliver aspirations both local and wider visions for South Somerset</li> </ul> <p>Test practicality of proposals/ policies</p>			
<b>Background</b>	<p>Developed in parallel to the Sustainable Community Strategy, the spatial form is the draft core strategy. It is formulated from an evidence base, results of Issues &amp; Options (2008) consultation and following town &amp; parish cluster workshops (2009)</p> <p>The next step is to test the reaction to the preferred Strategy set out in the document due to be approved for consultation at DX in September. The final version of the Core Strategy will be put on deposit for formal inspection Spring 2011 leading to formal examination in public. On adoption it will replace the current adopted local plan</p>		
<b>Benefits / Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows LDF project team to test document in a wider public as well as stakeholder arena. From this able to assess local views and further evidence submitted in order to refine the Strategy</li> <li>• Will enable the public to better understand the role of spatial planning and development management to shape better more sustainable places to live through the documents making up the LDF</li> <li>• Increase likelihood that what is being proposed is what communities want and so more deliverable</li> <li>• Essential contribution to ‘tests of soundness’ for Core Strategy,</li> <li>• Increased levels of involvement with and understanding of planning process – building linkages with Yeovil UDF and Chard vision.</li> </ul>		

## Appendix 1

<b>Objectives</b>	<p>To deliver a programme of public and local stakeholder consultation and involvement, in accordance with the South Somerset Statement of Community Involvement, and SSDC Equalities scheme, and PPS12.</p> <p>Test preferred options for the settlement hierarchy, locations for growth and major policies.</p> <p>Build the Council's reputation for high quality engagement programmes and continuous community involvement in shaping sound policies over spatial matters that affect peoples' lives.</p> <p>To raise broad public awareness and interest in planning in the future – through the LDF, and development management.</p> <p>To bring to statutory status work undertaken through Chard Vision, local community planning and the South Somerset Community Strategy.</p>
<b>Deliverables</b>	<p>A series of events and activities to achieve objectives and benefits.</p> <p>Individual and group responses – feedback / reports / photographs.</p> <p>Communications materials to support the above.</p> <p>A summary report to the LDF project board and core strategy inspector on the process, outputs and outcomes.</p>
<b>Approach</b>	<p>Programme commissioned by the LDF project board through the Area Development Service – lead officer – Helen Rutter – Area East Development Manager in dialogue with Andy Foyne, Spatial Policy Manager.</p> <p>Staffing from in-house service teams - partners if appropriate.</p> <p>Communications materials may be commissioned internally and externally.</p> <p>Delivery of programme will be varied to achieve the objectives and benefits, including use of a range of media channels and methods as part of press strategy.</p> <p>Close demonstrable linkages to the Chard regeneration programme, Yeovil Vision and town/ parish plans.</p>
<b>Inclusions</b>	<p>Target groups for public engagement using draft Core Strategy and materials drawn from it as basis for feedback and involvement.</p>
<b>Exclusions</b>	<p>Statutory consultees and existing stakeholder list will be contacted by direct (e) mail by the Spatial Policy Team ( SPT) in October</p>

## Appendix 1

	<p>Area committee workshops (SPT July 2010)</p> <p>Other current spatial or community planning activities eg minerals &amp; waste, transport, RSS, LSP.</p> <p>Non-spatial issues (although feedback may still be required to contributors)</p>
<b>Success criteria</b>	<p>Project board accepts final report.</p> <p>Test of soundness – inspector’s report.</p> <p>Feedback from events / stakeholders (including conformity with SCI)</p>
<b>Constraints</b>	<p>Budget – up to £30,000</p> <p>Time – eight weeks from publication of draft core strategy. Currently aiming for 1 October after DX</p> <p>Officer resources (planning, area development – for local delivery, support for admin, IS / comms for materials)</p> <p>Procurement rules for commissioned work (publications etc)</p>
<b>Key dependencies</b>	<p>Programme cannot start until draft core strategy published (on website).</p>
<b>Key assumptions</b>	<p>Officer time available in kind from appropriate teams for technical input / support, from now until end of consultation period.</p> <p>Draft core strategy will be made available in July to enable preparation of communications in advance of publication of draft</p>
<b>Risks</b>	<p>Insufficient clarity on scope of community/ public involvement and correct mix of place and issue based consultation – confusion / missed stakeholders ACTION – check against SCI / get agreement!</p> <p>New evidence requires further consultation</p> <p>Insufficient capacity from appropriate officers– slippage to time and / or quality - ACTION – establish time &amp; skill requirements</p> <p>Raised expectations from stakeholders not realised – loss of support into future activities – ACTION – use of communications to manage expectations</p> <p>Stipulations of consultation method using the I-novem system to record views, personal details and evidence will be off putting and so limit wide public involvement especially from harder to reach groups – ACTION ensure multiple routes to allow input</p>

## Appendix 1

	<p>including hand written submissions and reports from focus groups or other events</p> <p>Delay to project (eg from lack of material for communications, changes in Government frameworks etc. ) ACTION – check on resources and input for communications – advise project board on requirements. Continuous monitoring of national messages and evaluate impact on process</p> <p>Wish for far-reaching programme beyond scope of objectives creates slippage or raised expectations – ACTION – discuss / agree programme brief with sponsor and project board.</p> <p>Duplication / confusion with existing spatial programmes eg Chard regeneration programme – ACTION – checks with relevant ADM / boards to agree scope / detail of consultation programme.</p>
<b>Next steps (outline plan)</b>	<p>Agreement of brief</p> <p>Definition of scope / breadth of consultation – responsibilities of respective area teams in conjunction with planning</p> <p>Confirm consultation programme and clarify needs for communication material in advance of publication</p> <p>Draft programme of events and related communications plan for the public engagement element.</p>

Project name	South Somerset draft Core Strategy – community consultation programme
Document name	Draft brief community consultation
Status	draft
Security	
Date	25 07 10
Version	1.2
Author	Charlotte Jones ( original )
Owner	Helen Rutter

Version	date	Summary of Changes
1.0	06-04-10	Sent to Martin Woods for comment
1.1	09-04-10	Added linkage to Chard regeneration programme
1.2	09-04-10	Amendments agreed by Jean / Andy
1.3	25 05-10	Refined after project meeting
1.4	26 07 10	Refined after board meeting
1.5	10.08.10	Refine after PFH advice and legal advice



# Plan for South Somerset to 2026

## Have your say

A consultation event is being held in your area - see the back page for details.



Do these subjects matter to you, your children and where you live?

- » Jobs
- » Homes
- » Shops
- » Health services
- » Recreation
- » Tourism

### We need your feedback on the plan that will identify:

- How much housing will be built and where,
- Where industry providing jobs will be located,
- What roads, schools, shops, health centres and green spaces you feel are required until 2026.

### What is its purpose?

The draft plan (known as the Core Strategy) will form part of a series of documents called the Local Development Framework, used to guide and manage new development and change across South Somerset up to 2026.

### The story so far...

The draft plan (Core Strategy) is not yet council policy. It has been shaped by evidence about the local area and by engagement with the community. It includes some 'preferred options' on which we are seeking your views before final publication. We need your help to make sure the details are correct and to make sure we haven't missed important facts.

↓	March 2008: Core Strategy Issues and Options document consultation
↓	8 October to 3 December 2010: Public consultation on draft Core Strategy (incorporating 'preferred options')
↓	December 2010 to July 2011: Evaluate all responses and finalise Core Strategy for approval by South Somerset District Council
↓	September 2011: Publication of Core Strategy. Further public consultation
↓	December 2011 to January 2012: Examination by Planning Inspector
↓	Spring to early summer 2012: Adoption

### Why do we need growth?

"Our population is growing. We are all living longer and people move here from elsewhere, often to retire. At the same time we need employment growth so there are jobs for local people and those leaving education. A vibrant economy means low unemployment and enough homes, health services, leisure facilities and good shops set in an area where people want to live. We need to plan carefully to meet the future needs of those who live in our towns and villages, especially to get homes and jobs, in the right places and with the right balance."

*Cllr. Ric Pallister, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Spatial Planning*

Printed on recycled paper at a cost of 4p per copy.

# Plan for South Somerset 2026: Our Vision

“South Somerset is a thriving, attractive and affordable place to live and work. Its settlements are more self-contained with the opportunity for using less energy in businesses and everyday living.”

# Have your say on these proposals

These are the current ‘preferred options’ being put forward from 2006 to 2026. You are invited to view and comment on all of the options that have been identified, either online or at your local consultation event. (See back page for more details).

## Objectives

- Safe, inclusive, sustainable communities
- Health enhancing environment
- Low carbon quality services and facilities
- Integrated sustainable transport system
- High performing, low carbon economy
- Balanced housing market
- Eco town (well-designed homes connected to open spaces, facilities and local employment) for Yeovil
- Protected and enhanced natural environment, maintaining a wide range of species.

### Langport/Huish Episcopi

- 1.5 hectares of new employment land
- 182 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 118
- Safeguard local shopping

### Somerton

- 1 hectare of new employment land
- 219 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 281
- Improvements to town centre services
- Safeguard local shopping

### Castle Cary/ Ansford

- 3 hectares of new employment land
- 238 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 262
- Improvements to transport, parking and roads
- Safeguard local services and shopping

### Bruton

- 1 hectare of new employment land
- 97 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 120
- Improve parking and local services
- Safeguard local shopping

### Martock

- 1 hectare of new employment land
- 96 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 150

### South Petherton

- 1 hectare of new employment land
- 145 homes already allocated\*, none further proposed

### Wincanton

- 1.5 hectares of new employment land
- 703 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 350
- Improve local services
- Increase town centre shopping

### Milborne Port

- 2 hectares of new employment land
- 199 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 100
- Improve local shopping

### Ilminster

- 19.4 hectares of employment land already committed
- 191 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 340
- Increase local shopping

### Chard

- 13 hectares of new employment land
- 1,863 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 328
- 1 new primary school
- 2 neighbourhood centres (Millfields and Holbear)
- Improve town centre facilities
- Town centre road improvements
- Improve local services, including leisure
- Increase town centre shopping

### Crewkerne

- 10.53 hectares of employment land already committed
- 928 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 100
- Better road links for industrial estate
- Increase town centre shopping

### Stoke Sub Hamdon

- 0.5 hectares of new employment land
- 5 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 50
- Safeguard local services

### Yeovil

- 39 hectares of employment already committed
- 23 hectares of new employment land in Eco extension
- 3,725 homes already allocated\*, propose a further 4,475, to include an Eco extension of 3,700 homes. This would include new schools and better walking, cycling and public transport
- Improve local services, including leisure
- Increase town centre shopping

### Ilchester

- 1 hectare of new employment land
- 1 home already allocated\*, propose a further 150
- Propose new noise contours for Yeovilton Airbase
- Safeguard local services

### Rural communities

- Improve access to key services
- Support employment and services for local communities
- Meet local housing needs
- Increase self-containment
- Protect rural character and distinctiveness



\*The allocated figure is at autumn 2009 and includes: Sites already built since 2006; those under construction; those with planning permission and ‘saved’ Local Plan allocations.



## Find out more and give us your views

We are holding a number of exhibitions and events throughout October and November 2010. Here you can meet council representatives and discuss the proposals and policies that interest you and ensure you have your say.

### 1 Consultation events

Tuesday, 12 October	<b>Somerton</b> , Edgar Hall	4pm to 7 pm
Wednesday 13 October	<b>Milborne Port</b> , Town Hall	3pm to 7pm
Friday 15 October	<b>Chard</b> , Guild Hall	3pm to 7pm
Monday 18 October	<b>Martock</b> , Market House	4pm to 7pm
Wednesday, 20 October	<b>Bruton</b> , Bruton Museum	3pm to 7pm
Thursday, 21 October	<b>Ilchester</b> , Ilchester Town Hall	3pm to 7pm
Saturday, 23 October	<b>Castle Cary</b> , Market House	9am to 1pm
Tuesday, 26 October	<b>Barwick</b> , Village Hall	4pm to 7.30pm
Wednesday, 27 October	<b>East Coker</b> , Village Hall	4pm to 8.30pm
Saturday, 30 October	<b>Yeovil</b> , Yeovil Town Centre, Vicarage Walk (SSDC resource bus)	9am to 2pm
Wednesday, 3 November	<b>Stoke sub Hamdon</b> , Memorial Hall	4pm to 7pm
Thursday, 4 November	<b>Yeovil</b> , the Octagon Theatre	5pm to 8pm
Thursday, 4 November	<b>South Petherton</b> , Blake Hall	4pm to 7pm
Saturday, 6 November	<b>Ilminster</b> , Tesco's car park (SSDC resource bus)	9am to 1pm
Monday, 8 November	<b>Langport</b> , Huish Episcopi Science College, Wincanton Road, Huish Episcopi	4.30pm to 8pm
Tuesday, 9 November	<b>Wincanton</b> , Town Hall	4pm to 7pm
Wednesday, 10 November	<b>West Coker</b> , West Coker Club	4pm to 7.30pm
Saturday, 20 November	<b>Crewkerne</b> , Henhayes Centre (South Street car park)	9am to 1pm

Further events are being planned or will be undertaken where needed. Please check our website and local press for further information.

The full document is available on our website: [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy)

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## Do it online



You can send any feedback to us online, by visiting:

[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy)

More details will be added to our website from 8 October to 3 December 2010.

Email us: [planning.policy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@southsomerset.gov.uk)

Call us: 01935 462462

### 3 Visit us

You can also visit any of our council offices (from 8 October until 3 December) to see the draft Core Strategy and give feedback:

- Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT
- Churchfield, Wincanton, BA9 9AG
- Holyrood House, Chard, TA20 2YA
- Kelways, Langport, TA10 9YE
- Petters House, Yeovil, BA20 1AS

**If you would like this document translated into other languages or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please call 01935 462462.**

Dokument ten jest na życzenie udostępniany w językowych polskim.

Este documento encontra-se disponível em Português, a pedido.



## **Appendix 3 – examples of press releases run through the consultation period**

Date: **20 September 2010**

### **Public invited to have their say on homes, jobs and infrastructure plan**

Residents will soon be invited to give feedback on a crucial planning document that will shape the future of the district at a series of events being held from October.

South Somerset District Council wants people to have their say on the latest draft of a plan that will identify how much housing will be built and where, what roads, schools, shops, health centres and green spaces residents feel they require until 2026, and where new land for employment will be located.

District councillors approved the draft 'Core Strategy' document at a meeting on Thursday, meaning it can now be taken to 18 locations in local towns and villages for people to make comments, ask questions and help the council further progress the plan.

People can also take part in the consultation online from Friday 8 October at [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy) or visit any of the district council's main offices from 8 October until 3 December.

Amongst other means of contact, a leaflet will be delivered to all homes within the district between 27 September and 24 October encouraging people to get involved, including consultation event dates and a map showing a summary of the proposals made so far for each area.

The plan was originally forced to include a total of 19,700 new homes when the previous Government insisted on the figure as part of targets within the Regional Spatial Strategy – a document that was recently scrapped by the new coalition Government.

The figure was always strongly opposed by South Somerset District Council, which has immediately reduced the proposed total to 16,600. This is the figure the district council originally proposed from its own initial research as being in line with the district's growth needs.

Nearly 10,000 of this 16,600 have already been allocated, built or been given planning permission (as at Autumn 2009)

The council has aspirations that around 3,700 of the remaining 6,600 are built to eco-towns standard on the edge of Yeovil, with the rest of the growth appropriately scaled across the district.

Cllr Ric Pallister, Portfolio Holder for Spatial Planning and South Somerset's Deputy Leader explained, "This is the plan that will be used to assess and guide all future proposed changes and development to the district until 2026 so we really want people to get involved.

"Our population is growing. We are all living longer and people move here from elsewhere, often to retire. At the same time we need employment growth so there are jobs for local people and those leaving education. Most families no longer live in one large family home but in several smaller homes, especially after marriage breakups. A vibrant economy means low unemployment and enough homes, health services, leisure facilities and good shops set in an area where people want to live. We need to plan carefully to meet the future needs of those who live in our towns and villages, especially to get homes and jobs, in the right places and with the right balance.

“I’d urge all residents to have a look at the leaflet when it is delivered, learn more about it and come along to your local event. Help us to make sure the details are correct and give us your views.”

Views gathered in the six-week consultation period will then be incorporated into the evidence base used to develop the plan, and the next version will be compiled. A further consultation is planned for late 2011.

The council hopes to adopt the final plan in Spring 2012 following an independent examination from the Planning Inspectorate likely in late 2011 or early 2012.

#### Consultation Dates:

Tuesday, 12 October **Somerton**, Edgar Community Hall 4pm to 7 pm

Wednesday 13 October **Milborne Port**, Town Hall 3pm to 7pm

Friday 15 October **Chard**, Guild Hall 3pm to 7pm

Monday 18 October **Martock**, Market House 4pm to 7pm

Wednesday, 20 October **Bruton**, Bruton Museum 3pm to 7pm

Thursday, 21 October **Ilchester**, Ilchester Town Hall 3pm to 7pm

Saturday, 23 October **Castle Cary**, Market House 9am to 1pm

Tuesday, 26 October **Barwick**, Village Hall 4pm to 7.30pm

Wednesday, 27 October **East Coker**, Village Hall 4pm to 8.30pm

Saturday, 30 October **Yeovil**, Yeovil Town Centre, Vicarage Walk (SSDC resource bus) 9am to 2pm

Wednesday, 3 November **Stoke sub Hamdon**, Memorial Hall 4pm to 7pm

Thursday, 4 November **Yeovil**, the Octagon Theatre 5pm to 8pm

Thursday, 4 November **South Petherton**, Blake Hall 4pm to 7pm

Saturday, 6 November **Ilminster**, Tesco’s car park (SSDC resource bus) 9am to 1pm

Monday, 8 November **Langport**, Huish Episcopi Science College, Wincanton Road, Huish Episcopi 4.30pm to 8pm

Tuesday, 9 November **Wincanton**, Town Hall 4pm to 7pm

Wednesday, 10 November **West Coker**, West Coker Club 4pm to 7.30pm

Saturday, 20 November **Crewkerne**, Henhayes Centre (South Street car park) 9am to 1pm

Further events are being planned or will be undertaken where needed. Please check our website and local press for further information. You can also visit any of our council offices (from 8 October until 3 December) to see the draft CoreStrategy and give feedback:

Date: **4 October 2010**

## **Consultation begins on homes, jobs and services plan for district's future**

People in South Somerset are being invited to have their say on the crucial planning document that will shape the future of the district up to 2026.

South Somerset District Council wants people to give their views on a draft plan which proposes how much housing and employment space will be built and where, and what roads, schools, shops, health centres and green spaces are needed in support.

The first of 18 public drop-in consultation events will be held in Somerton, Milborne Port and Chard next week, and people can also express their ideas, support or concerns online from Friday 8 October at [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy) . Consultation will run until 3 December.

Cllr Ric Pallister, Deputy Leader and Spatial Planning Portfolio Holder for South Somerset District Council said, "This is everyone's chance to influence the policies that will be used to shape South Somerset in the future so we want to ensure that the final published plan is about the needs of the people and agreed by the people.

"If as the community of South Somerset we fail to produce a clear vision with the right amount of employment and housing land to meet local need, then future decisions will be made by Planning Inspectors and we may not like what is decided for us.

"As well as planning what can go in each town, it's also about shaping the district as a *whole* up until 2026, including things like protecting shopping centres, making sure there are enough jobs and homes for the population, sports provision and even how carbon friendly new homes should be, so it really does affect all residents.

"The proposals within the draft so far have been shaped by considerable research and discussions with local representatives, but before the final version is produced we now need the people to tell us what they think."

"As our population grows naturally, local housing demand at all levels from first-time buyers, older persons specialist provision, family homes, affordable housing and private rented properties is set to become a major issue for many families and their grown up children across the district. It is vital that we ensure that land is allocated to meet that need in both our towns and villages where it is appropriate. In some cases it may be about accepting and planning for what we need and not always about what we want or do not want."

Consultation events will be held on:

- Tuesday, 12 October **Somerton**, Edgar Hall 4pm to 7pm
- Wednesday 13 October **Milborne Port**, Town Hall 3pm to 7pm
- Friday 15 October **Chard**, Guild Hall 3pm to 7pm
- Monday 18 October **Martock**, Market House 4pm to 7pm
- Wednesday, 20 October **Bruton**, Bruton Museum 3pm to 7pm
- Thursday, 21 October **Ilchester**, Ilchester Town Hall 3pm to 7pm
- Saturday, 23 October **Castle Cary**, Market House 9am to 1pm
- Tuesday, 26 October **Barwick**, Village Hall 4pm to 7.30pm
- Wednesday, 27 October **East Coker**, Village Hall 4pm to 8.30pm
- Saturday, 30 October **Yeovil**, Yeovil Town Centre, Vicarage Walk (SSDC resource bus) 9am to 2pm
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- Thursday, 4 November **Yeovil**, the Octagon Theatre 5pm to 8pm
- Thursday, 4 November **South Petherton**, Blake Hall 4pm to 7pm

- Saturday, 6 November **Ilminster**, Tesco's car park (SSDC resource bus) 9am to 1pm
- Monday, 8 November **Langport**, Huish Episcopi Science College, Huish Episcopi 4.30pm to 8pm
- Tuesday, 9 November **Wincanton**, Town Hall 4pm to 7pm
- Wednesday, 10 November **West Coker**, West Coker Club 4pm to 7.30pm
- Saturday, 20 November **Crewkerne**, Henhayes Centre 9am to 1pm

Further events are being planned and will be organised where needed.

The plan, called the draft 'Core Strategy', includes proposals for 16,600 new homes across the district until 2026 to meet local need.

Nearly 10,000 of these 16,600 homes have already been built, allocated or given planning permission.

For the 6,600 homes yet to be planned, the evidence based on previous consultation and research has led to a proposal that around 3,700 are built to eco-towns standard on the edge of Yeovil, with the rest of the growth appropriately scaled across the district.

The total represents a reduction on the 19,700 homes originally being planned for – a figure imposed by the previous Government and opposed by the council. When the new Government scrapped the Regional Spatial Strategy the council reduced the figure to 16,600 – a figure reflecting evidence of what local people want, and what can be provided.

A leaflet is being delivered to all homes in the district which includes a map and summary of proposals for each town, and information on how to get involved.

Cllr Pallister added, "Our population is growing. We are all living longer and people move here from elsewhere, often to retire. At the same time we need employment growth so there are jobs for local people and those leaving education. Most families no longer live in one large family home but in several smaller homes, especially after marriage breakups. A vibrant economy means low unemployment and enough homes, health services, leisure facilities and good shops set in an area where people want to live. We need to plan carefully to meet the future needs of those who live in our towns and villages, especially to get homes and jobs, in the right places and with the right balance.

"Help us to make sure the details are correct and give us your views."

Views gathered in the eight-week consultation period will then be considered and the plan improved to reflect what people need and what can be achieved. The next version will then be compiled and a further consultation is planned for late 2011.

The council hopes to adopt the final plan in Spring 2012 following an independent examination from the Planning Inspectorate likely in late 2011 or early 2012.

Date: 14 October 2010

## **Businesses urged to give their views on plan for district's future**

Business owners across South Somerset are being urged to give their views on a crucial planning document that will set out policies affecting business and employment for the next 20 years.

South Somerset District Council has launched its latest round of consultation on the draft plan that, when complete, will set out how much housing and employment land should be developed and where, and what roads, schools, shops, health centres and green spaces are required in support.

But the draft plan, called the Core Strategy, also includes 16 draft policies directly relating to business and commercial development and the district council is keen to ask businesses for their opinion.

The overall aim of the plan is to support economic development in the district, and makes proposals that are aimed towards making the district more sustainable with self-contained settlements where people can both live and work in the same place.

“The draft policies cover everything from where offices should be developed, how much land in each settlement should be developed, how we support rural businesses and tourism, to how we go about protecting and developing viable town centres and supporting and retaining local shops and facilities,” said Cllr Jo Roundell Greene, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development at South Somerset District Council.

“So it is so important that business owners and anyone with an interest in our local economy to look at the documents and tell us what they think.

“We want to know whether businesses think our policies are the right ones. Will our proposed criteria ensure that we are supporting and growing our economy? Are we protecting employment land in the right way and preventing it being lost to uses such as housing? Do they think our policies will improve town centres?

“We need to protect the countryside but equally we need to provide enough opportunities for countryside businesses to grow. These are things that will affect us all and future generations so I would encourage everyone to take the opportunity to help shape the policies and therefore our future.”

People can take part online at [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/corestrategy) until 3 December or contact South Somerset District Council's Spatial Policy team on 01935 462462 for guidance.

A series of public events are also being held across the district for all residents, including business owners, to get involved.

ENDS

### **Notes to Editor:**

The Core Strategy includes many policies but particularly of interest to businesses will be the following policies which focus development on Yeovil, the market towns and rural centres, but aim to create a viable rural economy:

Policy SS5: Delivering New Employment Land which looks at a minimum level of land for each settlement

Policy EP2: Office Development which seeks offices to be developed firstly in Town Centres to aid their vitality and viability by increasing the number of people using services and facilities.

Policy EP6: Expansion of Businesses in the Countryside recognises the effort put into developing viable businesses and supports the growth of existing businesses in more countryside locations.

Policy EP7-8: Supporting Tourism.

The Core Strategy is the main document within a set of documents called the Local Development Framework which will replace the Local Plan when adopted.

It runs from 2006 to 2026, which is the reason why a proportion of homes included in the proposed targets have already been allocated or built.

The process consists of many stages – we are still fairly early in the process and there are several other versions and consultation periods to go before getting close to publication and adoption of the final Local Development Framework.

The first public consultation took place in early 2008 to give an indication. Research that shaped the evidence base has been extensive and ongoing.

Views gathered in the six-week consultation period will then be incorporated into the evidence base used to develop the plan, and the next version will be compiled. A further consultation is planned for late 2011.

The council hopes to adopt the final plan in Spring 2012 following an independent examination from the Planning Inspectorate likely in late 2011 or early 2012.

Next consultation Dates:

Friday 15 October **Chard**, Guild Hall 3pm to 7pm

Monday 18 October **Martock**, Market House 4pm to 7pm

Wednesday, 20 October **Bruton**, Bruton Museum 3pm to 7pm

Thursday, 21 October **Ilchester**, Ilchester Town Hall 3pm to 7pm

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Wednesday, 10 November **West Coker**, West Coker Club 4pm to 7.30pm

Saturday, 20 November **Crewkerne**, Henhayes Centre (South Street car park) 9am to 1pm

Further events are being planned or will be undertaken where needed. Please check our website and local press for further information.

You can also visit any of our council offices (from 8 October until 3 December) to see the draft Core Strategy and give feedback:

- Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT
- Churchfield, Wincanton, BA9 9AG
- Holyrood House, Chard, TA20 2YA
- Kelways, Langport, TA10 9YE
- Petters House, Yeovil, BA20 1AS

Date: 1 December 2010

## **Thousands give their views on draft plan for South Somerset's future**

Thousands of local people have taken part in a consultation to help develop a plan that will shape the district over the next twenty years.

South Somerset District Council has been gathering views on a set of draft policies that suggest everything from how much housing and employment space is built and where, to what schools, roads, shops, parks and other services are needed in support.

Over 1,800 residents attended the twenty special consultation events held in towns and villages across the district to have their say since this stage of consultation began in October.

School and college pupils, gypsy and traveller residents and black and minority ethnic groups took part in further events.

Hundreds of emails and comments made to the spatial planning team by telephone and at council offices have also been received.

Cllr Ric Pallister, South Somerset District Council's Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Spatial Planning explained, "Local people have shown incredible interest in this consultation and we are extremely pleased that our efforts to encourage as many people as possible to get involved have been heeded.

"We want to ensure that the final published plan reflects the needs of the people and takes account of what people know about where they live. We are glad people came to the events we organised, took part online, or just got in touch in any way they could."

Views gathered will play a vital role to inform and improve the next draft of the plan so that it reflects what people need and what can be achieved. The responses will be used along with updated assessments on transport needs, population data and economic information due back early next year.

Cllr Pallister added, "It's not just about how much development will go in each town or about protecting villages from housing growth.

"It's also about shaping the district as a *whole* up until 2026, including things like protecting shopping centres, making sure there are enough jobs for the population, requiring enough sports provision for future generations, and even how carbon friendly new homes should be.

"So often, when the public are consulted, they feel it makes little difference as decisions are already made and they won't be changed. This is different. We are listening. We know we can't please everybody all of the time, but our intention is to meet emerging need with the minimum of impact."

The latest two-month stage of public consultation ended on Friday 3 December.

The next and final draft version is expected to be ready for the final round of public consultation in Autumn 2011, before it is then examined and finally determined by the Planning Inspector in early 2012.

The council expects to adopt the final Core Strategy and the policies within it in autumn 2012.



## **Notes that might help with enquires on the LDF/Core Strategy/ Proposed Growth for towns and villages in the district**

### **Information for the press or public – Local Development Framework for South Somerset**

South Somerset District Council has a duty to produce a plan that, when complete following several years of development and consultation, will identify:

- How much housing will be built and where
- Where industry providing jobs will be located
- What infrastructure, services and facilities are needed
- Which roads, schools, shops, health centres and green spaces are required, for the next 15 years.

These plans, called the 'Local Development Framework', will consist of a whole series of documents built around a 'Core Strategy'. When it is fully agreed it will be used to inform decisions on new development and change across South Somerset until 2026.

The next stage of extensive public consultation is going ahead from October, with South Somerset District Council holding consultation events in all of the district's major towns.

Every household in the district will be sent a leaflet explaining what the Core Strategy is, what the process is, why it is important, and encouraging residents to have their say.

Displays are being held in all of the area community offices, evening and weekend roadshow displays will be taken around the district, and an online consultation will be available for anyone to send in their feedback.

#### **So what stage are we at now?**

The draft document so far has already been shaped by evidence about the local area and by the views of local people, and we have got to the stage of having a draft Core Strategy, that includes draft growth proposals, figures, and other recommendations and aims for each settlement, - referred to as 'preferred options' for each town/village.

In short, a 'Draft Core Strategy Incorporating Preferred Options' was considered by our District Executive on Thursday. District Executive was asked simply to make recommendations to Full Council, which will meet in September, so no further actual decisions have been made.

Full Council, which meets on Thursday 16 September, will then either approve the latest draft as it is at the moment, or make changes to the draft. The draft (which may stay the same or include Full Council's changes) will then go out for October's extensive public consultation.

We are asking members to view the progress on shaping the draft core strategy and preferred options, take note of comments made at recent consultations, and then either approve the draft as it is so that it can go forth to consultation, or make amendments so that an amended draft can go forth to consultation.

There is still a long way to go after this winter's consultation and a timetable is below. You will see that there are further windows of consultation too. The idea is to get a document/plan that most people (if not, everyone) agrees with, and to ask people for their comments now so that further improvements can be made.

- March 2008: Core Strategy Issues and Options document consultation
- 8 October to 3 December 2010: Public consultation on "draft Core Strategy (incorporating 'preferred options')"
- December to July 2011: Evaluate all responses and finalise Core Strategy for approval by South Somerset District Council
- September 2011: Publication of Core Strategy. Further consultation
- December to January: Examination by Planning Inspector

Spring to early summer 2012: Adoption

Years of research and previous consultation have gone in to these proposals so there should be no 'surprise proposals'.

All of the proposals are based on evidence including many, up to date studies, that show economic, population and household information and projections which help to calculate how much growth is needed and where.

Now that the Government has scrapped the Regional Spatial Strategy, we are no longer having to work to a target of ensuring 19,700 new homes are built between 2006 and 2026; a target which South Somerset District Council always objected to as being too high.

Instead South Somerset District Council is recommending that growth is reduced to 16,600 homes – a figure which all evidence points towards as more reasonable.

**So what are the current figures that are being proposed?**

These figures have been informed by years of research on the local area, and shaped by public consultation.

These figures, if agreed at Full Council, are the figures that local people are being invited to comment on and find more out at the upcoming consultation events.

**Why do we need growth?**

“Our population is growing. We are all living longer and people move here from elsewhere, often to retire. At the same time, we need employment growth so there are jobs for local people and those leaving education.

A vibrant economy means low unemployment and enough homes, health services, leisure facilities and good shops set in an area where people want to live. We need to plan carefully to meet the future needs of those who live in our towns and villages. We need to get homes and jobs in the right places and in the right balance.”

Cllr. Ric Pallister, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Spatial Planning

APPENDIX 4

Summary of LDF Exhibitions - Autumn 2010

VENUE DATE <b>EAST</b>	NO OF ATTENDEES	TOTAL OF FEEDBACK FORMS REC'D  %age living in town	DID YOU FIND IT USEFUL/ INFORMATIVE?			ARE PROPOSALS RIGHT/BROADLY RIGHT?			ARE YOU SUBMITTING MORE DETAILED COMMENTS?		
			YES	NO	BIT	YES	NO	D/K	YES	NO	MAYBE
<b>M PORT</b>  13 October	55	30  70% from M Port	14	4	12	21	6	2	7	10	13
<b>BRUTON</b>  20 October	52	33  67% from Bruton	20	1	10	22	1	8	12	5	15
<b>ILCHESTER</b>  21 October	54	39  67% from Ilchester	21	3	15	15	9	14	15	10	14
<b>CASTLE CARY</b>  23 October	55	11  82% from Castle Cary	6	1	4	5	5	1	6	2	3
<b>WINCANTON</b>  9 November	101	64  80% from Wincanton	32	22	10	17	36	11	46	8	10

VENUE DATE <b>NORTH</b>	NO OF ATTENDEES	NO OF FEEDBACK FORMS REC'D  %age living in town	DID YOU FIND IT USEFUL/ INFORMATIVE?			ARE PROPOSALS RIGHT/BROADLY RIGHT?			ARE YOU SUBMITTING MORE DETAILED COMMENTS?		
			YES	NO	BIT	YES	NO	D/K	YES	NO	MAYBE
<b>SOMERTON</b> 12 October	105	18 94%	11	7	0	7*	3	7	10	0	7
<b>MARTOCK</b> 18 October	65	35 69%	19	12	3	16	7	11	22	6	7
<b>STOKE SUB HAMDON</b> 3 November	73	30 87%	19	9	2	14	6	10	19	7	4
<b>S PETHERTON</b> 4 November	69	43 74%	22	20	1	25*	6	12	17	9	16
<b>LANGPORT</b> 8 November	33	13 69%	11	1	1	9	3	1	6	1	6
<b>SOMERTON</b> 22 November	191	106 95%	71	30	5	8	54	8	51	6	14

VENUE DATE <b>SOUTH</b>	NO OF ATTENDEES	NO OF FEEDBACK FORMS REC'D  %age living in town	DID YOU FIND IT USEFUL/ INFORMATIVE?			ARE PROPOSALS RIGHT/BROADLY RIGHT?			ARE YOU SUBMITTING MORE DETAILED COMMENTS?		
			YES	NO	BIT	YES	NO	D/K	YES	NO	MAYBE
<b>BARWICK</b>  26 October	60	25  60%	20	0	5	7	10	8	18	2	5
<b>EAST COKER</b>  27 October	208	41  76%	14	9	18	0	37	4	34	2	5
<b>YEOVIL</b>  30 October	Approx 45	5  20%	4	0	1	3	1	1	3		2
<b>YEOVIL</b>  4 November	52	22  31%	14	6	2	7	11	4	6	6	10
<b>WEST COKER</b>  10 November	71	40  85%	25	14	1	9	21	10	22	9	9

VENUE DATE	NO OF ATTENDEES	NO OF FEEDBACK FORMS REC'D  %age living in town	DID YOU FIND IT USEFUL/ INFORMATIVE?			ARE PROPOSALS RIGHT/BROADLY RIGHT?			ARE YOU SUBMITTING MORE DETAILED COMMENTS?		
			YES	NO	BIT	YES	NO	D/K	YES	NO	MAYBE
<b>WEST</b>											
<b>CHARD</b> 15 October	111	11/12 = 92%	6	6	0	7	4	1	6	1	5
<b>ILMINSTER</b> 6 November	92	39/67 = 58%	41	2	23	32	13	20	40	12	15
<b>CREWKERNE</b> 20 November	89	35/48 = 72%	32	3	13	22	13	13	13	21	14



**LDF CORE STRATEGY CONSULTATION  
Autumn**

**EXHIBITION FEEDBACK FORM**

Thank you for attending!

Tell us which town/village you live in: .....

Please complete this card before you leave and place in the box provided. Your feedback will give us a sense of what people think and help us to plan and improve future events.

1. Did you find the exhibition useful/informative?

Yes - very

A bit

No - not very

2. Do you feel the proposals for South Somerset are right/broadly right?

Yes

No

Don't know

Do you intend to submit more detailed comments on any aspect of the Strategy during the consultation period, which runs until 3 December?

Yes

No

Maybe

Full response forms can be obtained at this exhibition or you can make your responses online on the SSDC website.

**PLEASE LEAVE THIS IN THE BOX PROVIDED – THANK YOU!**

(This was printed on A5 card)



## Appendix 5

### Notes of Discussion with Young People at Ansford School on Growth Proposals for South Somerset

24 November 2010

The session involved 80 young people from years 7,8 and 9 working in 10 groups. Below is a summary of the main points recorded from flip chat notes made by the young people.

#### **Working in groups the young people considered the following 3 questions:**

- 1) Do you agree with the overall settlement hierarchy for the District?
- 2) Do you agree with the scale of growth for the District?
- 3) Do you think that most growth should go towards Yeovil?

#### **A variety of responses were given from the groups, the main points made were:**

##### About overall level and settlement hierarchy

- We agree with the principle of growth, but these should be held at about 15% rather than 25%
- We agree with the scale of growth because South Somerset is not densely populated enough
- Would like growth to maintain facilities
- We agree with the settlement distribution because we don't want more homeless people than we have now
- We agree with the scale of growth for the District, with a direct route to London, Bristol, etc. it is a perfect place for housing so feels right

##### Yeovil

- Yeovil is the centre of South Somerset so there is more of a demand for houses than in small villages
- Most growth should happen in Yeovil as it has better facilities so more demand for houses, etc
- Yeovil should grow so that more people can settle there and will be able to earn money
- In Yeovil we would like to see more re-development and less greenfield development
- Yeovil grows there will be more traffic and less growth in the market towns won't be able to grow as much because of everything going to Yeovil
- Yeovil is in good proportion to the number of houses because it has lots of facilities



## About market towns

- Having less people living in the smaller towns will keep a feeling of community spirit and there aren't as many education facilities so not as many people will want to live there
- Most of the houses and investment needs to be put into smaller towns
- We agree that Castle Cary is not a small town like Bruton, but it's not a large town like Yeovil, so this town fits into its class

## About villages

- Don't agree with less growth in villages; would like to see them grow and stop congestion in the towns
- We are concerned that some of the small villages will expand too much.
- Villages don't need lots more houses because it gets rid of the village life and sense of community
- I live in West Camel and think it could use a village shop and some more buses, because buses only go to Yeovil and back when some people need to go to other places

## Policies Governing Aspects of Growth

The young people worked in groups, with 2 groups considering each of the 5 policy areas:

### Housing:

1. *Density*
  - We think there should be bigger houses and gardens, more space, so that kids don't get into trouble
  - It should be raised to a maximum of 35 homes per hectare but not above that or the homes will be smaller and more cramped together
2. *Affordable Housing – should the threshold be lowered from 15 dwellings to 6 dwellings to provide more affordable homes?*
  - It should be lowered slightly but not to 6, people can take advantage of affordable houses and don't get a job, as they don't need to. It is important for first homes to be affordable
  - I think it should be lowered but not drastically. If it was lowered it could increase the quality of houses
3. *Replacement Dwellings – should the Council restrict the size of replacement homes or house extensions in rural areas to keep smaller homes in the area?*
  - We think they should restrict the size of replacement homes or extensions in rural areas to keep small houses
  - It should have a rule that unless the people living in the house can't fit in. It will stop people moving away because they can't extend their house

#### 4. *Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Show People*

- I think there are quite a lot of homeless people in the world and no-one is doing anything, so I reckon that if we had to put up some kind of shelter, it doesn't have to be big, just warm & safe, I would put it in Yeovil or a big town because more of them would pass through if travelling

#### **Economic Prosperity:**

##### 1. *Rural Employment – should old buildings in the countryside, like barns, be used for employment rather than residential? Should the Council allow new buildings in the countryside for jobs?*

- Barns should be turned into business buildings because if it's a farm building that's not in use then it's a waste. Also it would provide more businesses for local villages and more jobs

##### 2. *Tourism – should new tourist facilities (museums or hotels) be restricted to the towns, what about tourist accommodation like B&Bs, where should they go?*

- We think that museums should be restricted to towns as nobody knows that it is there if in a village. But you should have small B&Bs in villages as well as towns
- We don't need tourism in the countryside nor more hotels

##### 3. *Retailing – do you think the Council should protect town centre shops from changes to other uses?*

- Yes, the Council should continue to protect the town centre shops from changes to other uses
- There is a great need to re-open shops in the town centres
- For large towns like Yeovil, out-of-town retail parks are good and convenient and they offer competitive prices
- More shops in villages are needed, like newsagents and bakeries

#### **Transport & Accessibility:**

##### 1. *Modal Shift – what should new homes and businesses have to provide to encourage alternatives to the car?*

- No electric charging points. What we need are bus & train timetables around the area
- We are producing CO<sub>2</sub> already using electric cars – we are concerned about how electricity is generated. Does it come from solar panels?
- Not all businesses and homes should have to do this as they will cost more, surely they can buy these if they want?

##### 2. *Transport implications of new development – should new development fund road improvements or should we be encouraging people not to drive and how?*

- Yes, fund road improvements as people need roads
- Also need more disabled-friendly buses and trains with maybe special tokens for these for people who can't afford them

- Need more footpaths & maps and zebra crossings
  - Roads with sharp corners are hard to see around
  - Need to create more cycle paths
3. *Parking – should the Council do more to promote other travel options and do you think higher parking charges should be used to force people out of their cars?*
- No we do not agree with higher parking charges
  - Should promote other options instead of forcing people to use their cars ie: need safer footpaths, cycle paths, etc.
  - Rather than stiles have gates
  - Parking charges shouldn't go higher because if you need to use it urgently you'll have to pay
  - Generally agree that we should promote other travel options

### **Health & Well Being:**

1. *Provision of open spaces, play areas, sports & community facilities – what type of open space and play areas should the Council seek from new development?*
- We think it's fair to ask people to contribute to one of the things listed:
    - Village hall
    - Cinema
    - Clothes shops
    - Fruit & veg shops
    - Tesco's Express
    - Swimming pool
    - A dance hall
  - We think new developments should include:
    - Park
    - Multi-use games areas
    - BMX track and skatepark
    - More car parking
  - We think money from new housing should be spent locally on things that everyone can benefit from, not just 1 or 2 age groups. People who build more houses than one will have to pay
2. *Existing open spaces and play areas – should they be built on or re-located, what types of facilities are needed?*
- We think open spaces should be protected and there should be a tax for building on the open space
  - Some things could move such as less hairdressers in C Cary and maybe less token shops for tourists

- Need little play areas for small children and easier access/clearer signs, including improved access for disabled people

### **Environmental Quality:**

1. *Addressing climate changed*
  - There should be money from the Government if you get something eco-friendly
  - If your car has a bigger engine you should pay extra tax
  - New buildings should have at least 2 pieces of eco-friendly equipment
  - Build windmills and solar panels to help break down pollution and reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the owner's atmosphere
  - We would keep the idea of zero carbon homes and also upgrade the older and less efficient homes with double glazing and solar panels
2. *Design – how important is design? Is it just buildings or areas? Should we protect historic buildings from new development?*
  - Buildings should be in keeping and historical buildings should be kept for visitors
  - In historical villages, such as Queen Camel, no new houses should be built as more houses and people will mean more cars causing the environment to be worse due to CO<sub>2</sub>
  - Each new house should look a bit different to all the others and new shops should have new designs
3. *Biodiversity and green infrastructure – should we protect areas for nature, plants, animals & trees?*
  - We think there should be more places for animals to live so that people who love animals can get a job that they like
  - We should continue to protect trees and areas for nature and we should ensure that there are corridors for animals to travel from place to place

### **Proposals for Castle Cary**

Do you agree with the level of growth for your town and the preferred location?

Views on overall growth:

- We don't think Castle Cary should grow because it's fine the way it is – introducing more houses might over populate the area
- The worse case is that the town becomes overcrowded and populated. Little shops are put out of business for larger shops coming into Castle Cary
- We think this is too much growth, half the amount of growth needed
- We don't agree with Castle Cary growing, we don't want to over populate it
- To grow by half is too many people

- We think growth should be spread over South Somerset more evenly
- There are loads of houses anyway still for sale and building new ones as well, so there are too many
- There is too much traffic that makes us late for everything
- More schools would have to open, there is no space in the school, which affects education and our everyday life
- If Castle Cary has more growth it needs more facilities eg: Tesco Express
- Castle Cary is a small town not a city, we don't want it too over developed

#### **Views on the Options:**

- Several groups felt that Option 1 was the best because it identifies more reasons for it to be a market town than the others
- Another group felt Option 1 would even Castle Cary out
- Some thought that developing Option 1 would lead to the need for a pedestrian bridge on the main road as it is very busy
- Some groups, however, felt that Option 3 was the best. This was favoured because it is at Ancastle and the back of the school, close to the town and school and not a flood zone and it was felt to be the area best able to accommodate growth
- There are shops nearby with skatepark and houses

#### **What facilities the Groups felt were missing from Castle Cary:**

There were numerous suggestions for this, the main ones are:

- A skatepark in C Cary – a lot of people would use this
- Facilities with disabled access
- Swimming pool use every week by Leisure Centre
- More bungalows than family houses
- A youth area – it's embarrassing going to the play park
- A homelessness shelter
- More zebra crossing and bus stops – hardly any in South Cary
- More bins needed to reduce litter
- Need an outdoor gym and improved parking

Finally, most young people think that Castle Cary is a market town.



## Notes of Discussion with Young People at Bucklers Mead School on Growth Proposals for South Somerset

29 November 2010

The discussions were held with a group of about 30, Year 8 pupils. They worked in 5 groups.

### Working in groups the young people considered the following 3 questions:

- 1) Do you agree with the overall settlement hierarchy for the District?
- 2) Do you agree with the scale of growth for the District?
- 3) Do you think that most growth should go towards Yeovil?

A variety of responses were given from the groups, the main points made were:

- There should be less growth in Yeovil and greater growth in the other market towns and rural settlements
- There is too much emphasis on new housing and the other sort of growth needed is more facilities, jobs and open spaces
- There was stronger support for growth in the South West of Yeovil, but most thought the level of growth was too great
- There was a need for more industry and jobs
- There should be a greater emphasis on leisure facilities
- One group thought that expansion to the South would be best, because it would be nearer to the town centre with better access to facilities and less flooding risk
- 2 of the groups felt that the growth should be phased and spread across each of the 3 growth area options

### Policies Governing Aspects of Growth

The young people worked in 5 groups considering each of the policy areas:

#### Housing

1. *Density*
  - Larger garden sizes – bigger families would want bigger gardens
  - Allotments and community gardens are important
2. *Affordable Housing – should the threshold be lowered from 15 dwellings to 6 dwellings to provide more affordable homes?*
  - Important to have a range of housing types and prices

- There should be more affordable housing for people who have just moved away from home
3. *Replacement Dwellings – should the Council restrict the size of the replacement homes or house extensions in rural areas to keep smaller homes in the area?*
    - Extending houses should be allowed, but only by a certain percentage
  4. *Gypsies, Travellers and Show People*
    - Public space should be protected
    - Respect for land owner
    - Be allowed to live in the countryside
    - Don't build on the flood plains

### **Economic Prosperity:**

1. *Rural Employment – should old buildings in the countryside, like barns, be used for employment rather than residential? Should the Council allow new buildings in the countryside for jobs?*
  - We should keep jobs in the countryside, so that people who live there can work there and walk/cycle
  - Reuse all the old buildings and maybe build extensions onto to them
2. *Tourism – should new tourist facilities (museums or hotels) be restricted to the towns, what about tourist accommodation like B&Bs, where should they go?*
  - Keep major tourism facilities such as museums in the town rather than the countryside, because facilities are closer including hotels, accommodation etc
  - Transport in and out of towns is easier
  - Risk of facilities in the countryside being harder to find
3. *Retailing – do you think the Council should protect town centre shops from changes to other uses?*
  - We think we should have more shopping centres like Clarks Village as it is nicer for finding things and there are good cafes and restaurants
  - We should have/ keep shops in the suburbs like corner shops
  - Town centre shops should be protected, as we don't want these areas to feel like a housing estate

### **Transport & Accessibility**

1. *Modal Shift – what should new homes and businesses have to provide to encourage alternatives to the car?*
  - The ability to walk to work and park & ride with bike hire and cycle lanes

- Electric bikes, bus lanes and car sharing
  - Different bus routes and more bus stops, including free school bus travel for the under 16s
  - There should be electric car charging points
2. *Transport implications of new development – should new development fund road improvements or should we be encouraging people not to drive and how?*
- We feel better roads to big cities are needed
  - There should be electric buses to keep pollution low
3. *Parking – should the Council do more to promote other travel options and do you think higher parking charges should be used to force people out of their cars?*
- No, we think higher parking charges are bad
  - There needs to be more hybrid cars and mini buses
  - All efforts should be made to encourage cycling, including rack bike sheds & security and including facilities for scooters
  - All pavements need to be safer
  - There should be more solar powered transport with dealers required to sell eco friendly cars

### **Health and Well Being:**

1. *Provision of open spaces, play areas, sports and community facilities – what type of open space and play areas should the Council seek from new development?*
- We would like to see a shopping mall with indoor facilities and leisure facilities like splashdown and ice skating
  - The group drew a diagram with an ideal shopping mall which showed integrated facilities with leisure, shopping, restaurants, cafes and a young peoples' area and many stalls and open spaces in the middle with seating all around a central waterfall feature
  - It is important that there are community spaces where old people can go to play scrabble, monopoly, jigsaws, checkers, chess and generally make new friends, so they are not cooped up inside with no friends
2. *Existing open spaces and play areas – should they be built on or re-located, what types of facilities are needed?*
- We think we should protect the existing park
  - Young people need centres so children can talk about their problems
  - A disabled area for people with disabilities, all developments should be accessible e.g. with special facilities like sensory gardens



## Environmental Quality

1. *Addressing climate change*
  - Solar power – houses should be more energy efficient with wind turbines (but not everywhere and not too close to houses) – solar panels (only if people want them, not compulsory) – biomass
  
2. *Design – how important is design? Is it just buildings or areas? Should we protect historic buildings from new development?*
  - Design is important in building buildings because they are safer, more accessible, more environmentally friendly materials are used in their making, more efficient for people's needs such as disabled people
  - We should protect our historic buildings because if they start to fall or become unsafe we need to do something about it, so that people are not hurt
  - We should try to preserve as much as possible, but if it falls apart we might need to change it to make it as safe as possible
  
3. *Biodiversity and green infrastructure – should we protect areas for nature, plants, animals and trees?*
  - Yes, because animals and plants could die from lack of food, change of environment and damage caused by people; they could die out and become extinct.
  - We think it is important that animals don't die out and that we make it safer for them to get from place to place without getting hurt or injured.

## Proposals for Yeovil

Do you agree with the level of growth for your town and the preferred location?

Main views on overall growth:

- Groups were supportive of some growth, but felt 8,000 homes were too many and favoured a lower figure
- With this level of growth some thought that the town would become overcrowded and congested, which would upset its overall balance
- Two groups suggested that if the development was conducted in stages with the next stage of growth being judged if it was needed then this would be more flexible
- It was accepted that Yeovil should have most houses because it has the most facilities and schools
- It was noted that more schools will be needed if more people come to live in the town
- There was concern about building more houses instead of building business parks and places where people could work
- The maintenance of open green spaces in the town was felt to be particularly important

### **Views on Options:**

- Two of the 5 groups felt that a smaller amount of land in each of the 3 areas (options) should be developed
- Two other groups felt that the area to the South West was the better area for development and reasons given included the lack of flood areas and the availability of green fields for expansion purposes. The remaining group felt that growth to the South was best due to the close proximity to the town centre
- The group that favoured the South location did so because it was nearby to transport interchanges, near to the town centre and shops; it put the town centre in the middle of Yeovil (balancing things up), helicopters from Westland don't fly over the houses, there is a good amount of land and the roads are not too busy and there are no flood plains
- In arguing for phasing and spreading out the development, one group felt that demand should be monitored, as there was concern that there might be empty homes and insufficient demand

### **What facilities the Groups felt were missing from Yeovil:**

There were numerous suggestions for this, the main ones are:

- Another train station, more leisure facilities, gym, swimming pool, etc
- More jobs around the outskirts of the town and within the town to enable people to reach their jobs without long car journeys
- More open green spaces (like Mudford recreation ground and Birchfield Park) and more schools
- More shops, supermarkets and markets
- More public transport and park & ride
- An indoor shopping centre with cafes and restaurants, including child friendly pubs and other leisure activities like Laserage and paint balling
- Bigger car parks
- Better emergency services
- More highly paid jobs



## Notes of Discussion with Young People in Year 11 at Huish Episcopi Academy on Growth Proposals for South Somerset

2 December 2010

**Working in groups, the young people considered the following three questions:**

- 4) Do you agree with the overall settlement hierarchy for the District?
- 5) Do you agree with the scale of growth for your settlements (particularly Somerton, Langport & Huish Episcopi and the rural villages)?
- 6) Do you think that most growth should go towards Yeovil?

**A variety of responses were given from the groups, the main points being:**

*Overall level and settlement hierarchy:*

- The strategy is good.
- Public transport and schools both need improving.
- Affordability is important.
- Better to disperse growth.
- More flats needed rather than executive houses in order to accommodate younger people who couldn't afford bigger homes. Variety would also attract different people.
- Could build upwards rather than across the countryside (i.e. flats).
- Need to consider the impact on other districts.
- Where are all these people going to work?
- Use derelict land, which would help to protect countryside.
- More homes = less countryside.
- More houses in Milbourne Port will help put it on the map.
- 328 extra houses in Chard is good news as there are plenty of jobs there and people need somewhere local to live.

*Proposals for Somerton, Langport & Huish:*

- Should build on what is already there.
- Provide more things for young people (Somerton), as current provision is overcrowded. They need safe places to go.

- Growth in market towns is important.
- Disused land should be brought back into use.
- Can the primary school at Huish Episcopi cater for more students? Are there proposals for new schools in villages rather than towns? More houses = more children.
- Public transport needs to be improved.

#### *Villages:*

- The strategy is right for the villages and will help maintain the community feel.
- Development can take up the countryside and ruin it.
- There needs to be a mixture of styles of homes.
- Land is needed for farming.

#### *Yeovil:*

- Yeovil shouldn't grow too much.
- Care is needed when looking at school provision – if new schools are built then children may go there in preference to existing schools, which would suffer as a consequence. All children need a good education.
- If all the housing were in Yeovil, business in Taunton could suffer.

### **Policies Governing Aspects of Growth - The young people worked in five groups, each considering one policy area.**

#### **Housing:**

4. *Density – Should houses be built with larger or smaller gardens?*
  - Smaller houses = smaller gardens / larger houses = larger gardens. This does not necessarily meet needs e.g. someone living alone in a small one bed roomed house may love gardening.
5. *Affordable Housing – should more affordable homes be provided?*
  - There should be more shared ownership.
  - The number of houses necessary to provide more affordable houses should be lowered.
6. *Should house extensions in rural areas be restricted?*
  - No. People who are coming in from outside the area should pay more than locals for permission to develop.
  - Local residents who have lived there for a certain amount of years should be allowed to ignore the “pay more” rule (see above).

#### 4. *Gypsies, Travellers & Travelling Show People*

- Would this have an effect on farmers? Would the sites be on farming or public land?

### **Economic Prosperity:**

#### 1. *Rural Employment – should old buildings in the countryside be reused by businesses or for housing?*

- Convert old buildings into homes, with employment going into new buildings.
- New buildings are more eco-friendly.
- The countryside is becoming “commuter Ville” which is not good.
- More rural high streets would encourage tradesmen.

#### 2. *Tourism – should new tourist facilities (museums or hotels) be located in towns or in the countryside?*

- More facilities are not needed. Fewer attractions for tourists would mean more facilities for locals e.g. cinema, laserage.
- The A303 and other main roads should be improved and tourism encouraged by those roads.

#### 3. *Retailing – should town centre shops be protected from changes to other uses?*

- Langport High Street should be one way with widened pavements.
- People do want better, more varied shopping.
- Town centre shops should be kept but subletting/conversion of upper storeys should be allowed.
- Amenities should be by the shopping centres.
- Yeovil is a bit grotty and should be cleaned up and regenerated.

### **Transport & Accessibility:**

#### 1. *Modal Shift – should all new homes and businesses have to provide measures to encourage sustainable transport (e.g. electric charging points for cars, local bus timetables and bus passes)?*

- People don't want to get rid of a car to get an electric “moon buggy”.
- Bus passes are too expensive.

#### 2. *Transport implications of new development – should new development continue to pay for road improvements or is it more important to persuade people not to use the car?*

- We need better buses.

- Resurface the roads.
  - Fix the potholes.
3. *Parking – should we introduce higher parking charges in towns to discourage the use of the car?*
- No. People who are working have to get to work at a certain time and the bus may not get there at that time.
  - May get mugged walking home.
  - Could give people who raise fees a bad reputation.
  - Could encourage lower bus fares and higher parking charges.

### **Health & Well Being:**

1. *Provision of open spaces, play areas, sports & community facilities – what type of open space and play areas should we be seeking from new development (e.g. play areas, allotments, wildlife areas and parks)?*
- Allotments that can be used by everybody.
  - Footpaths that you don't have to drive to, with access for the disabled.
  - Parks that include the natural surroundings e.g. trees that kids can climb etc. These parks should be suitable for everybody and then they won't get vandalised. Get people who will use them to help design them (local involvement).
  - Provide more bridleways and make people better aware of where they are.
2. *Existing open spaces and play areas – what types of development should contribute towards community facilities such as community halls, theatres or major sports facilities?*
- Developers and residents should contribute to community facilities.
  - Residents should help pay, but only for the stuff that the community actually wants and then they are more likely to use the facilities.
3. *Existing open spaces and play areas – should existing play areas or open spaces be protected from development or can some be put to better use?*
- Update and advertise existing facilities rather than get rid of them.
  - Once they are redeveloped they are lost to the community.

### **Environmental Quality:**

1. *Addressing climate change – what can the council do to reduce the effects of climate change (e.g. make homes as energy efficient as possible, allow renewable energy technology such as bio-mass, solar parks or wind turbines)?*

- More drainage ditches.
  - Grey water recycling, every house having two taps.
  - Reuse/burn waste.
  - Dual fuel.
  - Solar/wind is too expensive and unattractive.
  - Wind at sea.
  - Tidal power.
2. *Design – how important is design in new buildings? Should we be protecting our historic buildings?*
- Design should be fit for purpose and sustainable.
  - Design has to fit the context/location.
  - Straw bale houses should be encouraged, though not in areas where it floods.
  - Historic buildings should be protected and restored.
  - Old houses should be brought back into use.
3. *Biodiversity and green infrastructure – should we continue to protect areas of high wildlife value (e.g. nature reserves)? Should we be ensuring that new development includes “corridors” for wildlife to move from place to place?*
- Preserve the areas we have.
  - Protect endangered animals.
  - Educate the public and increase public awareness.
  - Green infrastructure needs to go where it is lacking, we do not need it everywhere.
  - Existing wildlife areas should be kept, but we do not need more.

## **Yeovil College – Youth Consultation**

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 11.15-12.30pm**

Group of approx 16 A level Geography students.

Based the session around a presentation and posed questions on the level of growth across the District and on specific topic areas.

Main points raised in relation to the Distribution of growth:

- Didn't believe that Yeovil required the level of growth suggested outside the existing urban form. Felt that more brownfield land could be developed within the existing built form and that some existing housing was substandard and this could be redeveloped, providing better and more housing provision.
- Didn't like the idea of developing the greenfields around Yeovil for housing, saw them as an asset that should be protected for biodiversity.
- Accepted that if you limit the amount of housing it will push up house prices, but felt that a more even distribution across the District was a better option.
- Felt that transportation was a major issue and that this would get worse.

Other points raised:

- Queried policy on affordable housing and who would be applicable for such housing.
- Suggested a park and ride scheme to alleviate traffic congestion, suggested Cartgate.
- Queried approach to Gypsy and Traveller sites and felt that they were being treated more favourably than others in terms of developing in the open countryside.





## **LDF Consultation Event Somerset Black Development Agency**

**Held on 21 October 2010**

Present: Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities), Jo Wilkins, Policy Planner Jo Morgan, Community Cohesion Officer, David Onamade & Jenny Lawrence (SREC), Kira McCoy, Susann Savidge, Rukia Khan, Rose Stephenson, Nilo Pinol, Aurelio Horta, Maria Lopes, Antonio Rodrigues, Miroslaw Luberda, Ruta Beadle, Maria German (Bryant), Pauline Hughes, Ken Moss, Liz Johnson-Idan, Ramona Mortol and Rafal Skarbek.

Key comments and issues were presented on each policy as follows:

### **The Role and Functions of the Main Towns and Villages (Draft Policy SS1)**

- Planning for families – the group felt that consideration should be given to:
  - space (dependant of family size)
  - garden
  - number of bathrooms
  - size of rooms (to include adequate cupboards/storage)

It was felt that consideration should be given to cultural needs of communities by the developers.

- Concerns were raised in relation to terraced houses and appropriate space for people to live comfortably
- Development – how many blocks are planned?
- Awareness of water levels need to be taken into account, when building/planning new developments and to include better drainage.
- What percentage of social housing is going to be built?
- Culturally – consideration should be given to the size of affordable housing
- Spacing between housing needs to be considered, as there are often neighbourhood disputes when space is limited. This type of conflict can lead to Anti Social Behaviour and Hate Crime.

### **Developments in Rural Settlements (Draft Policy SS2)**

- How is local need defined? Who decides what is relevant to Black Minority Ethnic Committee/Gypsy and Travellers? This point was seen as crucially important to future planning for different communities. Concerns were raised that some people would fall through the net e.g. migrant workers not identified as future residents.

## Appendix 6

- There is a need to consider development outside the main towns, but they were concerned that the village life could be lost to larger developments.
- Locations of building relevant to growth – many e.g. West Coker do not want to be part of an extension of Yeovil.
- A powerful voice is needed to keep small villages protected from outside development.
- Concerns were raised that resources/shops etc will be lost again to large town development.

### **The Balance of Growth Across the District (SS3, 4, 5, 6)**

- There is too much emphasis on Yeovil. There is a need to plan, reflect and respond to local changes in the smaller settlements and encourage growth e.g. South Petherton Hospital newly refurbished and employing at least 50 new members of staff, some of whom will be from BME communities.
- Environmental issues need to be considered.
- Infrastructure – roads need to be safe for walkers or cyclists, train services need to be improved –the stations do not link bus routes. We need better links to bus routes and cycling needs to be encouraged. The cycle paths need to be linked between geographical areas/towns.
- What type of job?
- We need to support young people in villages and enable them to stay through affordable housing and local involvement.
- Increase in the birth rate among populations and Black Minority Ethnic, so how are assessments made as to their needs e.g. Future building of primary/secondary schools.
- BME/migrant communities are now settled, but there is a need to reflect local needs e.g. premises for cultural shops/cafes, community space for people to meet.
- There was a strong feeling that many people would prefer to live outside of the main towns e.g. Yeovil, but need to go to the main towns for work. Travel from outside main towns an issue if people do not have a car.
- The group felt strongly that they would prefer dispersed growth.

## Appendix 6

### Economic Prosperity (EP1 to E16)

- There is a need to include and support BME businesses. Racist representations through planning objections (links to licensing) can prevent some groups from establishing their business e.g. mobile facilities such as burger vans.
- Local shops need to reflect local needs.
- Does the policy protect closure of village schools?
- The café culture is important for BME and this should be a consideration in the planning process for Developers
- Compton Dundon is a good example of the community using the shop/post office to keep facilities alive within a village. This type of enterprise should be encouraged.
- Community space for BME is vitally important. The group felt strongly that there was a specific planning need for this in future developments. The group did not seem to equate existing provision such as village halls as appropriate, relevant community space to suit their specific needs. The group did not seem to feel that they 'belonged' in these facilities.

### Environmental Quality (EQ1 to EQ7)

- Message for Strategic housing – houses have been designed ignoring things like an extractor fan, which is essential for good ventilation and prevention of condensation.
- Private landlords – concerns were raised regarding facilities.

### Health and Well Being Policies (HW1 to HW4)

- Car parking and rubbish can create problems. Example given of car port that led to many aspects of anti social behaviour.
- Recreation facilities seen by the group as being very important.
- Accessibility to recreation and sport is essential, particularly with regard to transport from outside the main towns. In order for people to access facilities and resources, there must be good transport links.
- Links to business support issues relating to the cultural/BME can link to health e.g. hairdressing – chemicals.
- Some areas of Ninesprings are unsafe for BME communities. Future planning must consider how to protect vulnerable groups through good design, lighting, etc
- Planning should consider where to place people e.g. young peoples residential placed next to a care home for older people in Yeovil has caused many problems, in relation to noise, drugs, groups of young people congregating etc.

## Appendix 6

- There is a need to reflect new migrant populations in terms of religion/faith/beliefs e.g. The spiritual needs of these new communities is currently not being met. Existing churches are not providing services in other languages..Provision of a community space for BME, where people could come together in a shared building that could have a space/room for reflection/meditation/prayer etc may provide the answer.
- How can youth provision be protected and sustained?
- Car parking and rubbish can create problems e.g. car port that led to many aspects of anti social behaviour.
- Safety for BME – many do not feel safe attending facilities/resources in town centres such as Yeovil. Could unused buildings be used as Community Space? Provision for 13-17 year olds in market towns is needed.

## Housing Policies (HG1 to HG9)

### HG2 Housing density

- Buildings need to be built less close together. There is a need to find a balance between green space and buildings. Shared space is important as is ensuring that there is appropriate parking, and gardens.
- Personal safety is important and needs to be included when planning and to include sufficient recreation. If not, it can result in conflicts with neighbours, causing anti social behaviour, this is not good for community cohesion.
- The group prefer a lower number of dwellings per hectare particularly in towns like Yeovil. Yeovil is already densely populated and there is no need for further development.
- Question re: link to shared occupancy? How will the cuts in funding affect the accommodation and planning policies?
- Not allowed to let rooms if in social housing, where will people go – real issues.
- HG2 links to HG5

### HG4 – Provision of Affordable Housing

- Why is there no affordable housing for small sites? Clarity is needed on the definition of 'affordable housing'. Is it restricted to people's location?

### HG6 – Gypsies and Travellers

- Question relating to management of the site planning and the impact on G & T communities

## Appendix 6

### HG7 – Replacement dwellings and extensions

- What are the special circumstances? Does it prevent extensions e.g. disabled?

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### Gypsy and Traveller LDF Consultation

16 November 2010

Sixteen people attended the session from the Gypsy and traveller community of South Somerset. The group recorded the following questions and issues:

- In the Plan for Somerset, Have Your Say leaflet, the entire focus is concentrated on 'homes'. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation was ignored and it made the group feel excluded. Information could have been included in these allocations e.g. x number of homes, x number of pitches
- When addressing the allocations for social housing why is there no planning for developing Gypsy/Traveller sites? Sizes of existing sites have not been increased
- There is a need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in smaller development areas. However, there is no reason to assume that the preference for sites is in rural locations or villages. If pitches were available in urban areas, as long as the site was fenced, that would be acceptable. There is a real need to work with and not segregate communities.
- Planning policy should allow the sites as part of the forward plans to tie in with developers requirements.
- Do Gypsy and Travellers have the same rights as house dwellers in relation to right to buy pitches?



## Notes of discussion with South Somerset Corporate Equalities Group

LDF Consultation held on 2 November 2010

### SS1

The word 'hierarchy' seems "too weighted". There are assets attached to each settlement and there is a sense in which the smaller places could grow and develop and then become beneficial to the larger towns. So the focus on the particular named towns ignores other areas.

The impact of development should focus on the town e.g. linking employment to development. How much is spill over from the larger towns e.g. Taunton/Ilminster. Will SSDC lose out by people living in Ilminster and working in Taunton?

A balance is required to include facilities, jobs, as well as houses, using growth to make a broader contribution.

There is a conflict between growth and sustainability and making the area a better place to live.

Development of any community is reliant on new people coming in for growth.

### SS2

The group felt that SS2 had benefits for Total Place.

It is important to maintain villages to retain residents. Need to adapt to change over time e.g. young people may move out, but return back some years later. Types of accommodation will therefore need to be addressed by developers to ensure all changes in future populations are considered, e.g. smaller units for single people/acknowledge increase in ageing population and provide appropriate accommodation accordingly.

It is crucial to ensure that there is an interrelating system of access between rural and town.

The group felt that clarification is needed on what the 'identified local need' is.

There are a number of social needs/issues – people may need to live in their local area for family support, e.g. if they are more vulnerable or have disabilities, mental health issues. Affordable housing allocations could prevent this by pushing away those more vulnerable groups.

The group raised the question:

- Are perceptions of place a true and accurate account on which to base future planning? For example Langport is seen as an area with a concentrated older population, however in reality, there are many young people and families.

## Appendix 6

### **SS3, SS4, SS5, SS7, SS8**

The group questioned how the decisions were made regarding housing provision and growth. The loss of development to some areas may well lead to decline e.g. Langport (Some areas have limited development potential due to being identified as being in a flood area – it was felt that there could be measures taken to change this).

Areas such as Langport and Huish have been growing and developing. New families have necessitated a Children's Centre and this has attracted vibrancy, and a sense of future for the area.

The group felt that growth and sustainability can be developed in smaller settlements. It is unfortunate that the decision has already been made not to expand these smaller and potentially new developing communities.

**SS4** The group felt that the decisions made by SSDC were in the main good in relation to delivering new housing growth.

**SS5** The group were generally impressed with the 6+ housing quota.

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

The group felt that assumptions have been made in relation to the sustainability of smaller towns/villages, which was detrimental.

There is a need to keep the heart of a place in order to ensure sustainability and that should not just be concentrated on the larger settlements.

The group raised the question:

- Does this work on a human/social level for communities?

### **SS7 and SS8**

The group raised the question:

- Is the planning obligation money ring fenced?
- Does the money go into one pot and therefore not to individual settlements or developments?

The group felt that **space** for communities to live in was really important.

The group identified issues in relation to transport for older populations/disabled as crucial in future planning.

Facilities under planning obligations need to be appropriate to local communities for the development of those communities.

The group suggested making links e.g. where you put space/play equipment and the needs of the community being served. It was felt that people see this as a real benefit.

## **Appendix 6**

### **HG2**

The group found it difficult to visualise the size of a hectare, and what that would mean in terms of housing density.

The group strongly felt that planning for the future should include the concept of 'homes for life'. This would recognise the changes in modern day society in relation to communities and their growth needs – ageing population, mobility issues, blended families, disability, military families, migrant populations.

Discussion on issues of accessibility for developers to include in future planning priorities – houses built with e.g. adapted facilities like handrails, hoists etc. This would then provide a better match to individual need – different accommodation required for changing needs of communities.

The group suggested that new developments should ensure that there was a mix of different types of accommodation to benefit the various needs of communities – e.g. houses for young families, single people, older people, disabled, etc (an equivalent Poundbury).

The group felt very strongly that the design of any new developments were crucial to the successful growth and maintenance of communities.

### **Economic Prosperity**

The group raised the following questions:

- How the LDF strategies link in to the local community plans?
- Do the town/parish councils have responsibility for the strategic policies? One example of one working well is in Martock, which have secured appropriate business land.

The point was made that the Church also has responsibility for community well being, but has not been involved in any key strategic planning in relation to drawing up these LDF strategies at an earlier stage.

### **EP4, EP16**

The group felt that it was really important to protect against community resources such as pubs or shops from being converted to houses. There needs to be a policy based response to ensure local facilities are safeguarded.

### **Transport**

The group raised some concerns, and questions:

- Are there links between districts/councils/neighbouring districts/councils for transport issues?
- There is a real concern over cuts to bus routes and increased isolation for those who are unable to drive or do not have their own transport.



## Appendix 6

### TA1

It needs to be acknowledged that many families need 3+ cars to exist, so crucial for planning obligations to provide transport links to settlements in relation to e.g. shopping, work, recreation facilities.

### Planning obligations

- The group felt that planning obligations could be put towards improving the transport situation, good examples already exist that could be replicated eg Somerset Rural Youth Project moped scheme.
- The group also felt strongly that cycling should be expanded, but that many roads were unsafe and so this restricted this mode of transport.
- Local community transport could receive a contribution towards having local buses 'owned' by a centre/village run for the local community.
- New developments must have consideration to accessibility issues e.g. topography – much of Yeovil is hilly and transport needs must reflect this, particularly for those who have mobility needs, are older, or disabled.
- If money is spent on facilities e.g. in Yeovil, it is only right that those who live in the local villages have access to them, so access from rural locations is important.

### TA2

This policy was seen by the group as particularly relevant to young people, older populations, those with disabilities, people who are rurally isolated or vulnerable. The needs of all of these groups must be taken into account when designing the travel plan.

### Health and Well Being

The group raised a number of points in relation to these policies:

- These provisions are reliant on planning obligations.
- It is important to get 'best value' out of the developers. Who makes the decisions as to what facilities/resources are provided?
- How are the local communities consulted with in relation to local priorities? Are communities being consulted at the pre-application stage? How are communities feeding into the statement of community involvement? What are the community's aspirations?
- Ensure accessibility

Planning obligations should be ring fenced to provide community input and sustainability and to highlight any identifiable needs that may be missing

## **Appendix 6**

### **HW1, HW4**

It was strongly agreed by the group that young people needed good facilities in terms of sport and leisure, but there was also the need for developers to 'think outside the provision of a play area' and other creative ideas should be considered. Not everybody living in a development have children, their needs also need to be met.

### **HW2**

Local and individual needs should also be considered e.g. social class, disability, access issues.

Smaller community group should be invited to be included in making decisions about any new community developments.

The group felt that once a 'social heart is in the community, it will flourish and grow'. So it is important to include the community in decision-making processes at an early stage.

### **Environmental Quality**

The group raised the following questions:

- Can there be retrospective environmental fittings that can go on existing buildings, even if they are listed?
- Are the planning policies supportive of self-build initiatives? These are seen as exemplary examples of excellent practice and could address local needs.

### **EQ2**

Issues raised as significant for developers:

- Landscaping and design
- Lighting that allows the sky to be seen at night.

### **EQ7**

Does this policy support hunting?

### **Langport and Huish**

The group raised some questions:

- Flood risk is managed so why are there restrictions? Flood risk could provide creative and innovative development e.g. housing working with nature – houses on stilts. Link to e.g. the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales to look at alternative ways of working and managing flood risk.

## **Appendix 6**

- Unclear as to whether this is a rural centre or market town, even though there is a large secondary school.
- Are there some alternatives that might aid development and growth eg opening up the train station would reduce traffic congestion and reduce carbon emissions.

The group raised some issues:

- There appears to be a stereotyped mindset about the communities living in Langport. These assumptions have resulted in negative growth and development. Eg Langport is made up of older population

### **General feedback**

The group would like to thank SSDC for the opportunity to contribute to these key policies. The group felt that the day was very important and very useful

**Appendix 7 - Budget agreed at July 2010 to set a framework  
for this consultation**

<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Printing of strategy document leaflets and exhibition</b>	
LDF leaflets	3500.00
250 A2 Maps for Core Strategy	420.00
98 A1 Foamex Boards Core Strategy Events	2350.00
	<b>6270.00</b>
<b>Mail and leaflets to all homes</b>	<b>4215.20</b>
<b>Hire of Venues for exhibitions</b>	
Cost of Area South	160.00
Cost of Area West	280.00
Cost of Area East	75.00
Area North - room hire costs	350.00
	<b>865.00</b>
<b>Additional staffing costs</b>	<b>161.88</b>
<b>Total (£)</b>	<b><u>11512.08</u></b>