

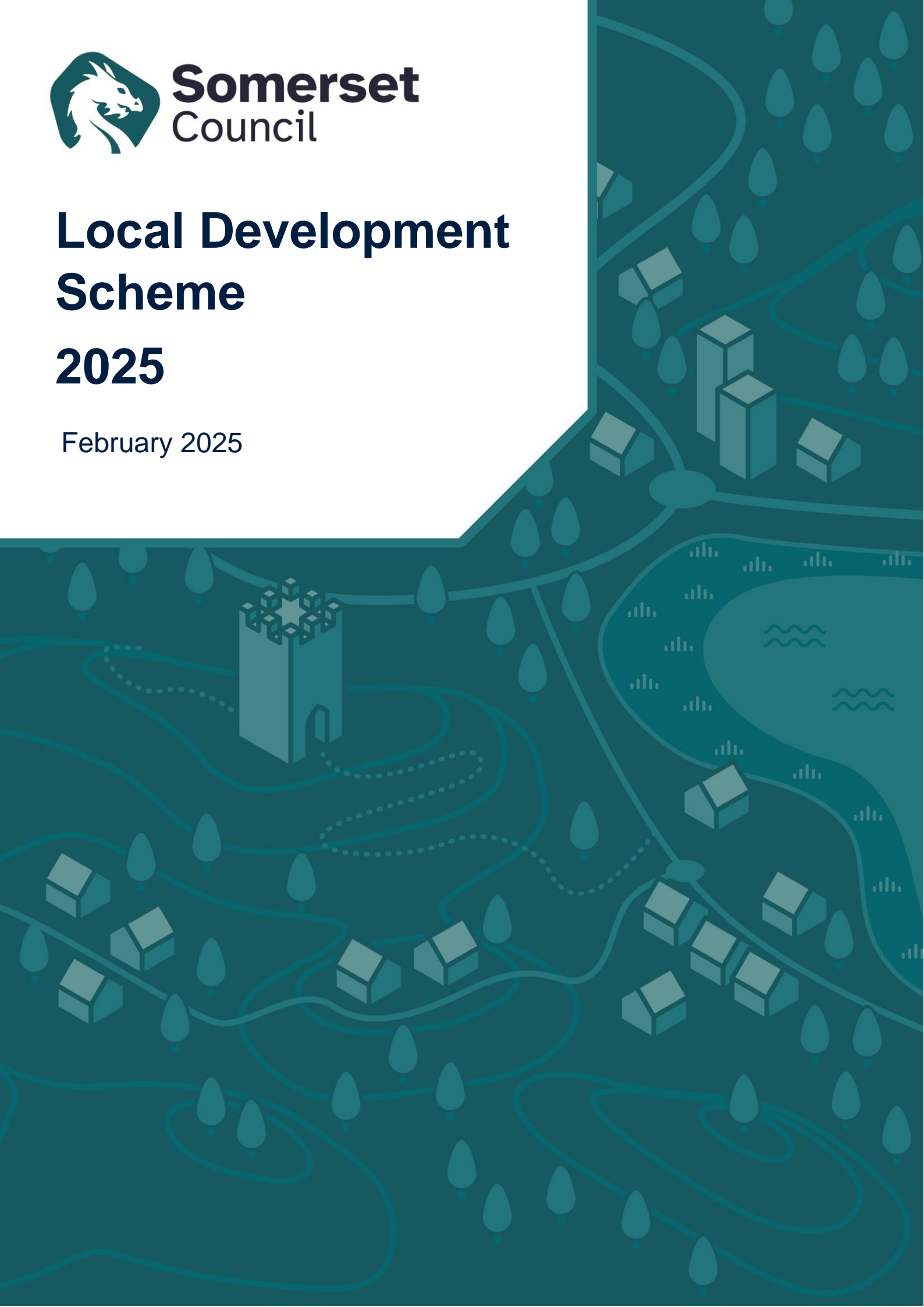


Somerset
Council

Local Development Scheme

2025

February 2025



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1. Introduction

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the documents that make up the Development Plan for Somerset and the council's work programme for updating them.

The Development Plan sets out a vision for the local area in terms of housing, the economy, community facilities, infrastructure, minerals and waste, and for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places. The Council uses the policies within the Development Plan to assess proposals for new development.

2. Background

From 1 April 2023, Somerset Council is the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the whole of the Somerset administrative area excluding the Exmoor National Park area.

As well as determining planning applications, Somerset Council is responsible for producing planning policy documents that guide new development and for their periodic review to ensure they remain up to date and effective. This includes statutory (required by law) documents and non-statutory documents.

The main legislation that sets out the requirement and processes for the preparation of the Development Plan and other documents can be found in Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended¹ (the "Act") and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended².

This LDS replaces the Somerset LDS (October 2023).

3. The Development Plan

The Development Plan is made up of:

- Development Plan documents (often called Local Plans, Minerals Plans and Waste Plans) that have been adopted; and
- Neighbourhood Development Plans (Neighbourhood Plans) which have been made in relation to that area including Neighbourhood Plans approved by referendum but not yet made by the LPA.

3.1 Adopted Development Plans

As set out in Local Government (Structural Changes) (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, if a Local Authority is going through Local Government Reorganisation, as has happened in Somerset, existing Development Plans will remain in place for the areas set out in the plans.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made>



This means that the existing Development Plans of the former council's will remain in place for their relevant geographical areas of Somerset Council until they are replaced by one or more Development Plan documents.



Table 1 lists the adopted Development Plan documents for Somerset Council. The documents can be viewed at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/>



Table 1: Development Plan documents (Local Plans) within Somerset Council LPA

Document	Date of adoption
Former Mendip District Council (known as Area East)	
Mendip Local Plan Part I: 2006-2029	2014
Mendip Local Plan Part II: Sites and Policies with post-JR revisions	2021
Mendip Policies Map	2021
Former Sedgemoor District Council (known as Area North)	
Sedgemoor Local Plan 2011-2032	2019
Sedgemoor Policies Map	2019
Former Somerset West and Taunton Council: Taunton Deane area (part of Area West)	
Taunton Deane Core Strategy 2011-2028	2012
Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan	2008
Taunton Deane Site Allocations and Development Management Plan 2028	2016
Saved policies from the Taunton Deane Local Plan to 2011	2004
Taunton Deane Policies Map	2016
Former Somerset West and Taunton Council: West Somerset area excluding Exmoor National Park (part of Area West)	
West Somerset Local Plan 2032	2016
Saved Policies from the West Somerset District Local Plan 2006	2006
West Somerset Policies Map	2016
Former South Somerset District Council (known as Area South)	
South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028	2015
Saved policies from the South Somerset Local Plan 1991 – 2011	2006
South Somerset Policies Map	2015
Former Somerset County Council (excluding Exmoor National Park)	
Somerset Minerals Plan to 2030	2015
Somerset Minerals Policies Map	2015
Somerset Waste Core Strategy to 2028	2013



3.2 Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans set out the vision for an area and the planning policies for the use and development of land within a parish or Neighbourhood Area. A Neighbourhood Plan has the same legal status as a Local Plan once it has been approved at a referendum and becomes part of the Development Plan.

Table 2 lists made Neighbourhood Plans. The website provides the latest information on made and other Neighbourhood Plans and their stage of production.

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/neighbourhood-planning/>

Table 2: Made Neighbourhood Plans within Somerset Council LPA

Neighbourhood Plan	Status
Former Mendip District Council	
Frome	Made Dec 2016
Rode	Made Aug 2017
Wells	Made Feb 2024
Former Sedgemoor District Council	
Ashcott	Made Oct 2016
Axbridge	Made Jan 2022
Burnham and Highbridge	Made Oct 2018
Cheddar	Made Oct 2018
Nether Stowey	Made Jun 2021
Wedmore	Made May 2019
Wembdon	Made Jul 2019
Former Somerset West and Taunton Council	
Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone	Made Jul 2016
Creech St Michael	Made Dec 2019
Kingston St Mary	Made May 2024
Ruishton and Thornfalcon	Made Feb 2024
Stogumber	Made Nov 2017
Trull and Staplehay	Made Jul 2017
West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine	Revised Oct 2022
Former South Somerset District Council	
Castle Cary and Ansford	Made Nov 2019
East Coker	Made Dec 2018
Martock	Made Jun 2021
North Cadbury and Yarlington	Made Oct 2022
Queen Camel	Made Jun 2021
South Petherton	Made Sep 2018
Wincanton	Made Mar 2018



4. Development Plan documents work programme

The future plan work programme will comprise of the following documents:

- Mendip District Local Plan Part II: Limited Update
- Somerset Local Plan 2045
- Somerset Minerals Plan review – assessment of effectiveness of policies
- Somerset Waste Plan review – assessment of effectiveness of policies



Mendip District Local Plan Part II: Limited Update

Mendip Local Plan Part 1, which includes a spatial strategy and development allocations, was adopted in December 2014 and covers the period 2006 to 2029. Mendip Local Plan Part 2 (“LPP2”), which identified additional housing and employment sites, was adopted in December 2021.

Mendip Local Plan Part 2 (“LPP2”), which identified additional housing and employment sites, was adopted in December 2021. Following a Judicial Review into LPP2, five site allocations were deleted from the plan on 16 December 2022. The remainder of adopted LPP2 is not affected.

Para 6 of the Court Order³ sets out specific ‘directions’ given by the judge to address the legal flaws upheld against the conduct and report of the examining Inspector. It requires reconsideration of the housing sites struck out of the Mendip Local Plan Part II. The scope of this work is limited to identifying sites for 505 dwellings needed in the former Mendip district area which are deliverable within the Mendip adopted Plan Period to 2029. Any other consideration of Policies CP1 and CP2 will be carried out as part of the wider Somerset Local Plan production.

The Court Order was updated on 19 Feb 2024 setting specific dates:

- Publication under Regulation 19 by 30 June 2024
- Submission for examination by 30 September 2024

Mendip District Local Plan Part II: Limited Update	
Scope	In accordance with Part 6 of the High Court Order of 14 July 2023 Local Plan Part 2 will be partially updated to allocate specific sites sufficient to accommodate 505 additional dwellings needed in the former Mendip District as a whole by 2029. The new allocations will be in accordance with Local Plan Part 1 policies CP1 and CP2.
Coverage	Somerset East area (the former Mendip district area)
Progress to date	Regulation 19: 28 June-12 August 2024 Submission: 30 September 2024
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework (and updates) and the Mendip Local Plan Part I policies CP1 and CP2
Delivery Risks	Recruitment and retention of staff and having the necessary resources to undertake the work
Milestones	Dates
Commencement	July 2023
Call for Sites	July-Aug 2023
Regulation 18 consultation on Preferred Sites	Feb-Apr 2024
Regulation 19 publication	Jun-Aug 2024
Submission of Plan for Independent Examination	30 Sep 2024
Inspector’s Report	May 2025
Adoption	Jul 2025

³ <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/adopted-local-plans/?district=Mendip>



Somerset Local Plan 2045

Somerset Local Plan 2045	
Scope	Strategic planning policies and site allocations
Coverage	Somerset (excluding Exmoor National Park area)
Progress to date	Evidence gathering Early engagement Call for sites
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework
Delivery risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal requirement to progress the Mendip Local Plan Part II Site Allocations Review will impact on the officer resources available and draw on the budget for bringing forward the Somerset Local Plan • Reforms to plan-making emerging from the updated National Planning Policy Framework, Planning and Infrastructure Bill, and the English Devolution Bill have the potential to impact the scope of the Local Plan, policy approaches and to the evidence base which may impact upon timescales • The Government's proposed solution to the issue of nutrient neutrality • The National Development Management Policies (consultation expected 2025) may impact the scope of the Local Plan • Increasing requests for support to advise and assist the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans • Recruitment and retention of staff to progress the local plan and necessary resources to commission the evidence base • Other competing priorities from major projects such as Gravity, Hinkley and other regeneration projects which require planning resource
Milestones	Dates
Commencement	Apr 2023
Evidence gathering and early engagement	Apr 2023 – Dec 2025
Regulation 18 consultation on Draft Plan	Apr 2026
Regulation 19 publication	Oct 2027
Submission for Independent Examination	Jan 2028
Inspector's Report	Feb 2029
Adoption	March 2029



Mineral and Waste Plans

The review of the Somerset Mineral Plan was completed in July 2024 and the outcomes reported to the Planning and Transport Policy Executive Sub Committee in August 2024. The committee endorsed the conclusion that no update of the SMP was required at that time but a number of actions were required, to:

- Continue to monitor Crushed Rock, Silurian Andesite and Sand and Gravel landbanks through the Local Aggregate Assessment (LAA) process,
- Monitor any changes in national policy, including on peat and energy minerals, which may trigger an early plan review and
- Maintain a watching brief on proposed changes to plan-making process through planning reform.

Somerset Minerals Plan

The review of the Somerset Mineral Plan was endorsed in August 2024 which concluded that no update of the SMP was required.

Somerset Council will undertake an initial assessment of the Waste Core Strategy to understand which policies may be out of date for the purposes of decision making or where circumstances may have changed and whether or not the policies in the plan continue to be effective in addressing the specific local issues that are identified the plan. This in turn will then help Somerset Council decide whether, and to what extent, an update of the policies is required. The timetable for the review of the Somerset Waste Core Strategy has been significantly affected due to ongoing resource challenges with the review pausing in May 2024 and anticipated to recommence Summer 2025 subject to successful recruitment.

Somerset Waste Plan

Scope	Assessment of the Somerset Waste Core Strategy 2028 in terms of whether the policies in the plan continue to be effective in addressing the specific local issues that are identified the plan	
Coverage	Somerset-wide (excluding Exmoor National Park area)	
Progress to date	Assessment has commenced using PAS tool kits part 1 and 2 – part complete	
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework (and updates) and the National Planning Policy for Waste	
Milestones		Dates
Commencement		Nov 2023
Complete initial assessment of Waste Core Strategy policies		Dec 2025
Somerset Council to decide whether the adopted Waste Core Strategy remains effective or whether to formally update the		Jan/Feb 2026



Plan. Subsequent timetable depends on outcome of this decision and whether a full or partial update is required.	
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5. Local Transport Plan

Somerset Local Transport Plan (LTP)

The Local Transport Plan is a statutory document required by the Department for Transport for maintaining and improving all aspects of local transport.

It is not part of the Development Plan for Somerset but it will be strongly aligned with the Local Plan, Minerals and Waste Plans.

Milestones	Dates
Commencement	Summer 2023
Key stakeholder workshops and engagement Evidence gathering Visioning and objectives	Autumn 2023
Publication of Draft Local Transport Plan and consultation	Spring/Summer 2025
Adoption	By December 2025



