we would like to invite you to find out about our plans for new villages in North Somerset.

These won't be the only public exhibitions – our plans are at a very early stage and we will be holding more events throughout 2016. We want to work with the local community to develop the proposals for the site.

The forthcoming public exhibitions will be at:

» Barrow Gurney Village Hall, 5 July, 3.30pm to 8pm
» Long Ashton Royal British Legion, 6 July, 3.30pm to 8pm
» Dundry Village Hall, 7 July, 3.30pm to 8pm

North Somerset Council, alongside the other three authorities in the West of England area, is currently preparing a new plan - the Joint Spatial Plan - to direct future growth and new development over the next 20 years. The amount of development has not yet been agreed but it is likely the authorities will have to find land for tens of thousands of new homes between now and 2036.

These new homes – and the land for employment, schools and infrastructure which will accompany them – must go somewhere.

The choices are all difficult. They could involve the dramatic expansion of existing villages; intensification of new homes around Weston-super-Mare and other towns in North Somerset; or the building of a sustainable new community in the Green Belt. Each of these options has advantages and disadvantages which will need to be carefully considered and balanced: it is likely that elements of each will be needed to deliver the scale of growth required.
THE ADVANTAGES OF BUILDING NEW VILLAGES

We consider there to be significant advantages to building a new village community on the land either side of the A38 and south of the A370. A new community can be planned from the start, with strong public transport links, and with services and facilities that all communities aspire to have on their doorsteps: a thriving and vibrant centre; outstanding new schools, doctors and dentist surgeries; purpose built sports and community facilities; and open access to public open space, even new parklands.

While Green Belt development should only be pursued after careful consideration and where there are very special circumstances, Green Belts can change and - in this case - we think should change.

While we expect to submit a planning application before the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) is finalised, we would not expect it to be determined until after the JSP is approved. But, by undertaking all the technical work required of a planning application now, we can be sure that what we are proposing is certain and deliverable.

A RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO BUILDING A NEW COMMUNITY

We want the new community at The Vale to be the very best that it can. We understand many people will have concerns about any development taking place, but we would welcome all input from the local communities now and as we develop the proposals for The Vale.

You may recall plans several years ago for about 9,500 homes in Ashton Vale. This is the same land. However, this time Taylor Wimpey is promoting the land. As a responsible developer, we are taking a very different approach and are proposing in the order of 4,500 homes across two or three separate new villages.

There are currently no fixed proposals, but our plans could include:

» High quality new housing, designed to reflect the very best of North Somerset
» New educational facilities including new primary schools and the possibility of a new secondary school and / or University Technical College
» Employment land

INVoLvING THE COMMUNITY IN SHAPING OUR PLANS

However, at this stage, nothing is set - while we have undertaken a lot of technical surveys, no designs have been proposed. So, while we understand you may have concerns, we would like to hear your views on what might be included in our proposals, to make them as good as they can be.

We would therefore like to invite you to an exhibition so you can find out about our initial ideas, explain to us your understanding of the site and let us know what is important to you about the land involved and any development that may take place there. As well as Taylor Wimpey’s development team, our technical experts (including highways, drainage and ecology specialists) will attend each of the events to hear your views and discuss with you the challenges and opportunities the development presents.

More details of The Vale will be available after the public exhibitions at www.thevale-northsomerset.co.uk where you will also be able to provide feedback and sign-up for regular email updates.

We hope you are able to make one of the exhibitions and look forward to discussing your feedback and suggestions with you.