

Planning for North Somerset's Future

Over the past few years, I've been closely involved in developing North Somerset's new Local Plan, which looks ahead from 2026 to 2041. This plan is hugely important — it sets out where new homes, jobs and infrastructure should go, and just as importantly, where development should not happen.

Balancing Growth and Green Spaces

As a Green Party councillor, I know that the idea of building on green belt or greenfield land is deeply uncomfortable for many of us — and I completely share that feeling. We all value the open countryside, the wildlife that depends on it, and the sense of space it gives our communities. But national policy and government-imposed housing targets mean that we are required to plan for over 23,000 new homes across North Somerset. If we don't, we risk losing control to speculative, developer-led proposals that deliver less infrastructure and fewer local benefits.

Why a Strong Local Plan Matters

That's why it's so important to have a robust Local Plan in place — one that manages growth responsibly, protects as much green space as possible, and ensures new development happens in the most sustainable locations.

Some of the proposed sites will affect communities in Dundry and Barrow Gurney, and I know how strongly residents feel about this. These are difficult decisions, but they are guided by evidence and by a clear goal: to protect what we can while ensuring that, where development does happen, it's supported by the right infrastructure.

Focusing Development in the Right Places

The plan focuses growth where it can be best supported — near jobs, services and public transport — helping to create vibrant, low-carbon communities. It also identifies around 73 hectares of new employment land, so more people can work locally and help reduce congestion and long commutes.

Putting Infrastructure First

One of the clearest messages I've heard from residents is that infrastructure must come first. The development planned along the South Bristol Link Road and the A38 corridor will have implications for all our communities — from Dundry and Barrow Gurney to Winford and beyond.

The supporting Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out what's needed: new schools, GP surgeries, improved roads and bus services, and better walking and cycling connections. These are improvements that affect all of us, wherever we live in North Somerset.

Environment and Climate at the Heart

Finally, this plan puts the environment and climate action at its heart — protecting habitats, improving biodiversity, promoting renewable energy, and encouraging more sustainable ways of living.

Have Your Say

The draft plan will be open for consultation from late October for a 6-week period, and I'd really encourage everyone to take a look and share your views. Your voices will help shape how North Somerset — and our local communities — grow and thrive in the years ahead. You will find the consultation documents on North Somerset Council's website. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via the email below.

Annemieke Waite, Councillor Newsletter, November 2025

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With best wishes,
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