

The Somerset area that needs 1,000 new homes a year until 2039

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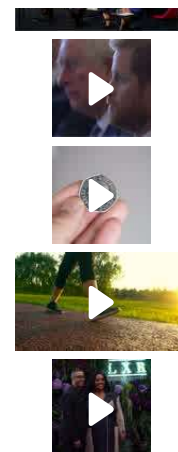
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A Somerset council will consider setting a housing requirement of a thousand homes a year for fifteen years in its new local plan.

The local plan sets out the planning policies which new developments in North Somerset will have to abide by, and also how many new houses the area will need to meet its population. Whether the area is on track to meet its housing need will swing the balance of whether borderline unacceptable housing developments should be allowed to go ahead.

A review of local housing need by Opinion Research Services recommended that North Somerset would need 999 new dwellings a year — a total of 14,985 over the fifteen year period from 2024–2039 which the local plan will cover.

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The figure is intended to cover the growth in households in the area in full, and provide 2,056 additional homes to cover an increase in net migration by 40 per cent and a return to peak rates of young people forming households.

The figure set by the review is “significantly lower” than the housing need previously calculated by the government’s standard method. However, a report to the council executive stated: “It remains a very challenging target to deliver.”



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Under the government’s standard method of calculating housing need, North Somerset had been told it needed 1,392 new homes a year — a total of 20,880 over the whole fifteen year period.

However, Opinion Research Services’ review stated: “Providing that number of homes would require population growth to be sustained at 55 per cent above the highest ever recorded trends, or see average household sizes fall at a rate that would appear implausible.

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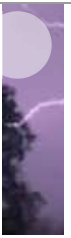
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"It seems most unlikely that the government calculation provides an accurate reflection of current and future demographic trends and market signals for the district."

North Somerset Council's executive will meet on September 6 to discuss using the new lower figure as the basis for the new local plan.

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A pre-submission version of the local plan itself is set to go before the executive on October 18. Once approved, a six week public consultation will be held over the plan.

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