

Bath & North East Somerset Placemaking Plan

Somer Valley (Part 4)

COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ID/3: Matter 22 - Infrastructure & Delivery

Issue: Whether the timely delivery of the infrastructure necessary to support the Somer Valley Spatial Strategy is realistic and feasible.

Q1. Does the Infrastructure Delivery Plan demonstrate that the key infrastructure required to achieve the proposed development can be achieved without compromising the timely delivery of development?

1. The Council is of the view that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan demonstrates that the infrastructure required to achieve the proposed development can be achieved without compromising the timely delivery of development. The overall response to the delivery of infrastructure is discussed in Matter 8 – Infrastructure.
2. The key infrastructure items identified at the time of the Core Strategy examination are shown in Table 7 / Page 65 of the Somer Valley chapter (Part 4) of the Placemaking Plan. Of these the following comments are made:
 - Public investment for site preparation and planning relate to the Radstock Railway Land (NRR) development which is now substantially complete / under construction. This was achieved partly through funding from the Homes and Communities Agency
 - The Greater Bristol Bus Network improvements have been completed
 - Site Base infrastructure requirements for Old Mills will be delivered as part of the redevelopment of that site allocation (Policy SSV9)
3. Delivery of green links and the Town Park are discussed below.
4. Additional infrastructure requirements are discussed in the Placemaking Plan and the IDP. Future items may be identified in the Somer Valley Transport Strategy which is under development. These items will be funded in a variety of ways as described in paras 2.25-2.43 of the IDP.

Q2. How will enhancements to green links between the two town centres and rest of Somer Valley be funded and implemented?

5. B&NES Green Infrastructure Strategy (CD/PMP/G27) sets out the Council's vision and the processes and delivery mechanisms including funding. Delivery will be achieved in a wide variety of ways and with different bodies taking the lead. The green links in the Somer Valley are covered by the emerging geographical project AONB Linkway. (Page 84 of the GI Strategy) A number of projects are currently in progress as part of the AONB Linkway including;
 - **Bug Life B-Line project:** West of England B- lines project is a partnership between BugLife, Avon Wildlife Trust and local authority partners including Bath & North East Somerset Council. Part of the wider B- Lines initiative to

create a network of B-Lines linking wildflower rich area across the WoE from the west to the east, and from the north to the south, linking the Cotswolds with the Mendips, cities to the countryside, and the coast to the hills.

- **Avon Wildlife Trusts Grassland Restoration Volunteers** – It provides grassland restoration advice to landowners in this area and practical assistance.
- **Avon Wildlife Trusts Avon Wildflower Grassland Project** – This is a project set up in 2008 to restore wildflower grasslands within Strategic Nature Areas across the West of England.
- **Defra Environmental Stewardship schemes** – These have been successfully used in the area including grassland restoration.
- **Limestone link** – 36 mile long distance walk route linking the two limestone AONBs (Cotswolds and Mendip Hills) promoted by Long Distance Walkers Association (LDWA)

6. There is some s.106 funding secured from the development prior to the introduction of B&NES Community Infrastructure Levy in April 2015 to implement various green infrastructure projects. The Council is allocating these funds in consultation with the Midsomer Norton and Radstock Town Councils and Westfield Parish Council to implement various green infrastructure projects in the Somer Valley.
7. One of the key projects to enhance green links within the Somer Valley is the implementation of the Midsomer Norton Town Park and details are set out below.

Q3. How will the proposed new Town Park in Midsomer Norton be funded and provided?

8. The new Town Park in Midsomer Norton is to be predominantly funded through S106 Developer Contributions supplemented by capital funding by Midsomer Norton Town Council (MNTC) which owns and will operate the new park. Importantly MNTC now own the land. It is being delivered by the Town Council itself working in partnership with B&NES Council through a Project Board. Planning permission for the change of use has been granted in June 2014 and work is in progress on the first phase of an entrance and events space.