

Watchet Town Council
Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee
Report October 2025

The Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) held its third meeting on Wednesday 1 October.

A member volunteered to take the minutes thus relieving Bernice Scott Field from having to chair and try and take minutes.

Members discussed what ideas should go into their vision for Watchet. Bernice undertook to take the ideas away and produce a synthesis for further discussion.

The redrafted TOR were discussed and the suggestions put forward by the Clerk were in the main seen as sensible and were agreed. A draft 4 would be sent across shortly.

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The day after the meeting, word came from Somerset Council that approval had been granted for Watchet parish to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area. Please see attached Designation Statement and parish map overleaf.



Designation of a Neighbourhood Area

Decision:

Watchet Parish Council has written to Somerset Council (SC) to request that the area of the entire Parish of Watchet be designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

In accordance with the statute and guidance SC has considered that application and the Head of Planning has approved the Designation of the Neighbourhood Area for Watchet Neighbourhood Plan.

Under the Somerset Council Chief Executive's Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Alison Blom-Cooper (Head of Planning) is authorised to discharge responsibilities as they relate to Somerset Council functions under Town and Country Planning and Localism legislation and policy guidance.

Reasons for the decision:

Neighbourhood Development Plans and Orders were introduced under the Localism Act 2011. The Act allows parish councils and groups of people from the community, called neighbourhood forums, to make community-led local planning policy.

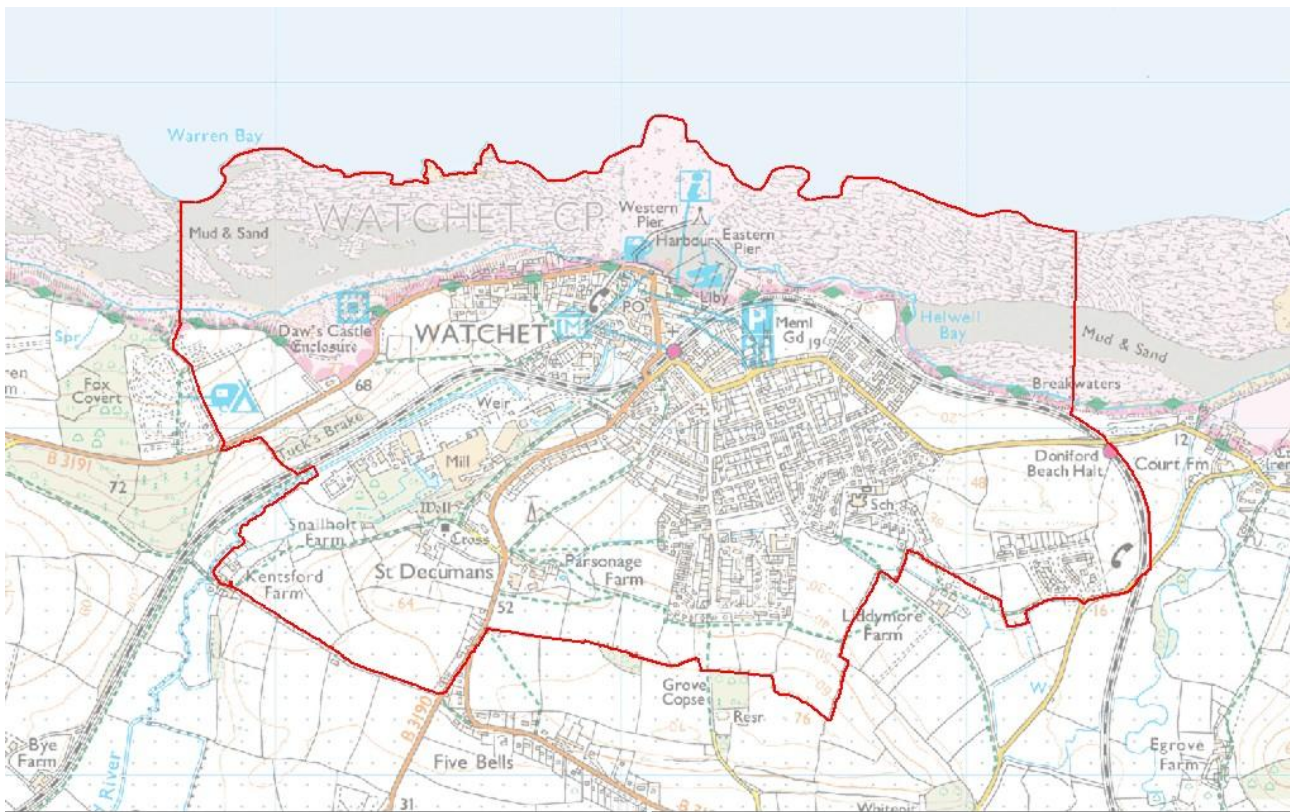
A Neighbourhood Area must be designated to define the geographical area that the Neighbourhood Development Plan or Order relates to.

It is a statutory requirement for a Local Planning Authority to designate a Neighbourhood Area under [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended). SC has the power to Designate and/or amend an existing Neighbourhood Area under [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) (as amended) Section 61G(1).

Watchet Parish Council has written to SC to request that the area of the entire Parish of Watchet be designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purpose of undertaking a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish Council is a Qualifying Body and Relevant Authority under statute and is therefore authorised to act in relation to neighbourhood areas. SC therefore has no ruling to make in that regard. [Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) (as amended) Section 61F.

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Watchet Parish Area

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A box file of documents relating to Neighbourhood Planning has been placed in the Watchet Library Reference Section for public access. Users can read the documents on a visit to the library but must not remove them. People will be able to read Neighbourhood Plans from nearby parishes and the process involved in producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Recommendations

- 1 To receive and note the report.
- 2 To consider the revised TOR (if available) and approve or defer for further consultation with the chair of NPAC and the Council representative to NPAC.

Report by Cllr Murphy, Watchet Town Council representative to the the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee.