# Gloucestershire residents oppose housing plans for Green Belt land



Furious residents in Gloucestershire are expressing their opposition to the government's proposed housing developments that could result in the construction of 22,500 new homes on Green Belt land surrounding Bristol. These plans, part of what has been labelled 'The Local Plan', are intended to address rising housing demands, with a significant portion aimed at affordable housing. However, local inhabitants argue that there is no pressing need for such extensive development.

The South Gloucestershire Council's initiative, which encompasses areas such as Bitton, Hanham, Mangotsfield, Oldland Common, Shortwood, Warmley, and Wick, is set to convert protected Green Belt land into approximately 1,800 new properties. Recent admissions from Chancellor Rachel Reeves indicate that the government is unlikely to meet its target of 1.5 million new homes before the end of the parliamentary term, raising concerns about the effectiveness and rationale behind the Local Plan.

Local resident Martin Thomas encapsulated the sentiments of many when he labelled the situation a failure of infrastructure planning. He expressed scepticism about the actual need for the proposed homes, suggesting the current estimates are "seriously flawed." He accused the government of basing housing demands on migration rather than local needs, asserting, "What is clear is that migration into the area and the availability of new houses are the two factors that have driven up the population locally."

Darren Lawrence, the chair of Save Our Green Spaces South Gloucestershire, condemned the plans as "catastrophic" and claimed they could lead to a 'dictatorial' approach to development. Lawrence's group argues that only around 5,600 homes are necessary over the next 15 years, based on local birth and death rates, and expressed concern that an influx of workers moving to the area might not address local housing needs.

Ros Pyle, another resident, echoed these worries, stating the existing infrastructure is inadequate to support the additional population. With limited local employment opportunities, Pyle believes many newcomers would be forced to endure precarious commutes along congested roads. Lawrence further indicated that the projected housing developments could add around 7,000 cars to local traffic, exacerbating current congestion and potential carbon emissions.

As residents continue to voice their discontent, they highlight various aspects of their day-to-day lives that may be impacted. Julian Jones recounted experiences of being significantly delayed due to traffic, which he fears will worsen under the new housing plan. Additionally, Pyle expressed concerns about local healthcare services already being at capacity and unable to support an increased population.

Despite this local resistance, South Gloucestershire Council has indicated that the proposed developments would bring benefits such as new schools, GP surgeries, and enhanced public transport, while also aiming for carbon neutrality through solar and wind energy initiatives.

While residents remain apprehensive about the potential consequences of these developments, the government maintains that the urgency to build 1.5 million homes is essential to combat the current housing crisis, which it claims is the worst in living memory. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has stressed that their reforms aim to balance housing needs while protecting natural landscapes.

Going forward, these controversial plans are in the final stages of public consultation before being submitted to the government's planning inspector for review. Local residents continue to champion their concerns, fearing that the proposed developments may irrevocably alter the character and environment of their communities.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.bristol247.com/news-and-features/news/development-allowed-first-time-greenbelt-surrounding-bristol/> - Corroborates the plans for 22,500 new homes in South Gloucestershire and the development on Green Belt land, highlighting the government's efforts to address housing demands.
* <https://sites.southglos.gov.uk/newsroom/housing/new-south-gloucestershire-local-plan-approved-for-public-consultation/> - Provides details about the South Gloucestershire Local Plan, including its focus on affordable housing and how it allocates sites for new homes and infrastructure.
* <https://downendvoice.co.uk/2025/02/24/last-chance-for-a-say-on-planning-blueprint/> - Highlights the opposition from residents regarding the proposed Green Belt developments, echoing concerns about infrastructure and environmental impacts.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government> - Explains the government's broader housing initiatives and reforms aimed at balancing housing needs with environmental protection.
* <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/new-homes-plans-could-mean-7000-more-cars-8192339> - Supports residents' concerns about increased traffic and carbon emissions due to potential housing developments.