



ALDERMINSTER HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

**Commissioned by Alderminster Parish Council
in partnership with
Warwickshire Rural Community Council**

**Analysis by Phil Ward
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1. Summary of Results

Approximately 300 Housing Needs Survey forms were distributed and 79 forms were returned. This equates to a response rate of 26%, which is considered to be good for a Survey of this type.

Three respondents expressed a need for alternative housing.

The specific housing needs are for ;

Rented from a Housing Association

1 x 2 bedroom house

1 x 4 bedroom house

Local Market Ownership

1 x 2 bedroom house

2. Introduction

Alderminster Parish Council commissioned a local Housing Needs Survey in October 2011.

The aim of the Survey was to collect accurate housing needs information for Alderminster Parish. This information can be used in a number of ways, but perhaps the most important is to help justify a small scheme of new homes, especially affordable homes, for people with a local connection. This type of scheme is referred to as a 'Rural Exception' scheme, because the development of new homes in rural areas is an exception to normal planning policy.

The Survey form was essentially a standard document used in Parishes across Warwickshire. A copy of the Survey form was delivered to every home in the Parish. Additional copies of the form were available for people not currently living in Alderminster Parish. A copy of the form can be seen as Appendix A to this Report.

All households were requested to fill out Part 1 of the Survey form. The first segment in Part 1 was designed to collect information on household composition and property tenure, type and size. The second segment was an opportunity for residents to comment on specific issues in order to build up a profile of positive and negative aspects to life in the Parish. The final segment asked whether any member of the household had left the Parish to find affordable or suitable accommodation and whether or not they would be in favour of a small scheme of new homes to meet locally identified housing needs.

Only households with or containing a specific housing need were asked to complete Part 2 of the Survey form. This asked for respondents' names and addresses and other sensitive information, eg financial details. Respondents were assured that any information they disclosed would be treated in the strictest confidence.

Completed Survey forms were posted via a 'Freepost' envelope to the Rural Housing Enabler. Analysis of all the information provided took place in November 2011.

3. Planning Context

Planning policy at all levels (national, regional and local) imposes considerable restraint on new housing development in rural areas. There is, however, capacity for this restraint to be relaxed in exceptional circumstances, but only where new homes are intended to meet locally identified needs.

Policy CTY.5 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan 1996-2011 provides the local planning policy mechanism for 'Rural Exception' schemes. The policy states ;

"The development, in exceptional circumstances, of affordable dwellings to meet local housing need in perpetuity may be permitted in settlements where residential development is normally resisted.

Such schemes will be supported within or adjacent to existing settlements provided that ;

- It has been demonstrated that there is a local and long-term need for affordable housing
- The content of the scheme reflects and can reasonably be expected to meet identified local need
- The scheme has been initiated from within the local community and has the support of the relevant Parish Council, or is identified in an adopted Parish Plan (or equivalent)
- Satisfactory prior arrangements for the management and occupation of the properties have been made to ensure that the homes to be provided will meet identified local housing needs, both initially and in perpetuity, and
- The need to ensure that other relevant policies of the Plan are not undermined in the location and design of the scheme"

It is anticipated that the emerging Stratford on Avon District Local Development Framework Core Strategy will extend Policy COM.1 currently in the Local Plan 1996-2011 to those areas covered by Policy CTY.5.

Housing schemes brought forward under Policy COM.1, referred to as 'Local Choice' schemes, can include both affordable housing and local market housing.

'Local need' refers to need originating or relating to a particular village. For Parishes that contain more than one village, the housing needs of each village must be considered separately.

A household is considered to have a local connection if it meets one or more of the following **'Local connection criteria'** ;

- An individual who was born in the Parish
- An individual who currently lives in the Parish and has done so for at least 12 months
- An individual who was resident in the Parish for at least 3 continuous years but has left in order to find suitable accommodation
- An individual who works full time in the Parish and has done so for at least 12 months
- An individual with a close family member, ie mother, father, brother or sister, son or daughter resident in the Parish for at least 3 continuous years.

'Affordable housing' is defined as homes available to rent through a Housing Association at a low (subsidised) rent or homes available on a shared ownership basis. Shared ownership (sometimes known as 'Homebuy') is a middle ground between renting a property and full ownership. A 'shared owner' buys a share of the property, typically 50% initially, and pays rent to a housing provider, usually a Housing Association, on the remaining share. A 'shared owner' can usually increase their share of the property up to a certain limit, but they are not able to buy the property outright (under current legislation).

'Local market housing' or 'Owner-occupier housing' is defined as homes available to buy outright.

All new homes provided as part of a 'Rural Exception' or 'Local Choice' scheme would be subject to a planning obligation, referred to as a **'Section 106 Agreement'**. This limits occupation of the homes, including any local market homes, to people with a local connection in the first instance and ensures that the affordable homes remain 'affordable' in perpetuity.

4. Results – Contextual Information

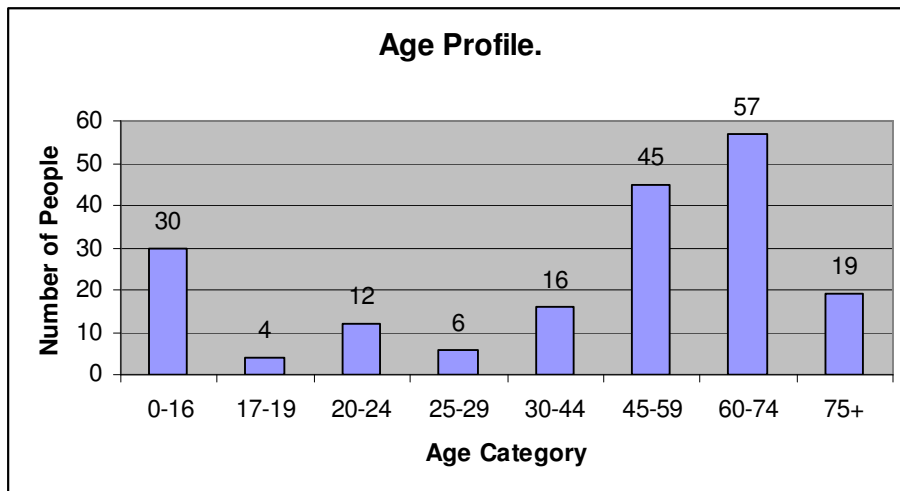
A total of 79 Survey forms were returned equating to a response rate of 26%.

This level of response is considered to be a good achievement for a Survey of this type because people generally respond for one of three reasons ;

1. To express a housing need.
2. To offer support in principle to the idea of a small housing scheme to meet local needs.
3. To state opposition to the idea of a housing scheme.

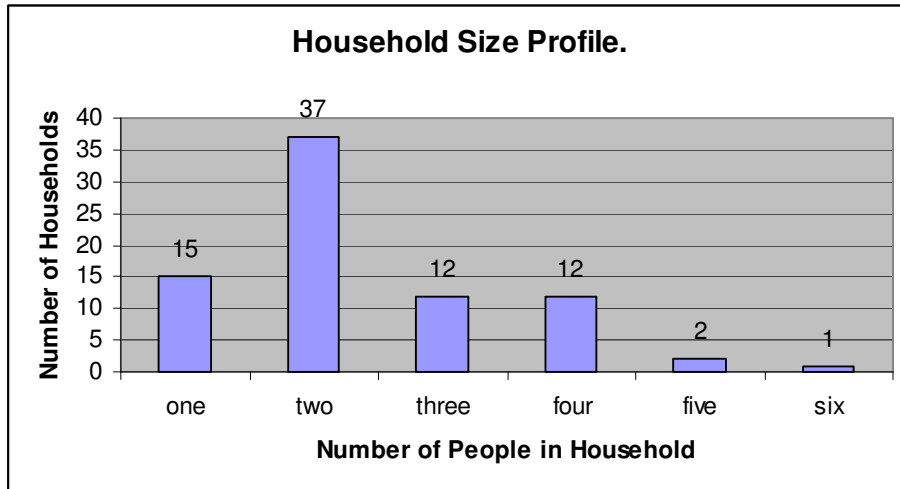
i) Age Profile (79 responses, 189 people)

The following chart shows the age profile captured by the Survey returns. The chart shows an ageing population, with 121 out of the 189 people aged 45 years and above. Encouragingly though, the number of children in the age bracket 0–16 years indicates a relatively high number of young families. In terms of the future sustainability of the Parish, this is a healthy sign.



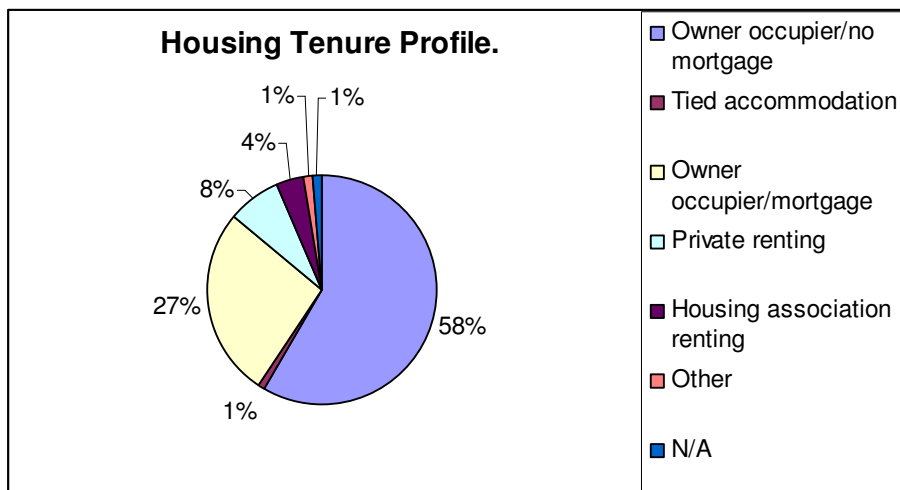
ii) Household Size Profile (79 responses)

The information collected from the age profile can also be used to create a profile of household size, as shown in the following chart. The chart shows a dominance of 2 person households as indeed do the majority of Parish Housing Needs Surveys. The mean average household size is 2.39 people, slightly higher than the 2001 Census figure of 2.26 people.



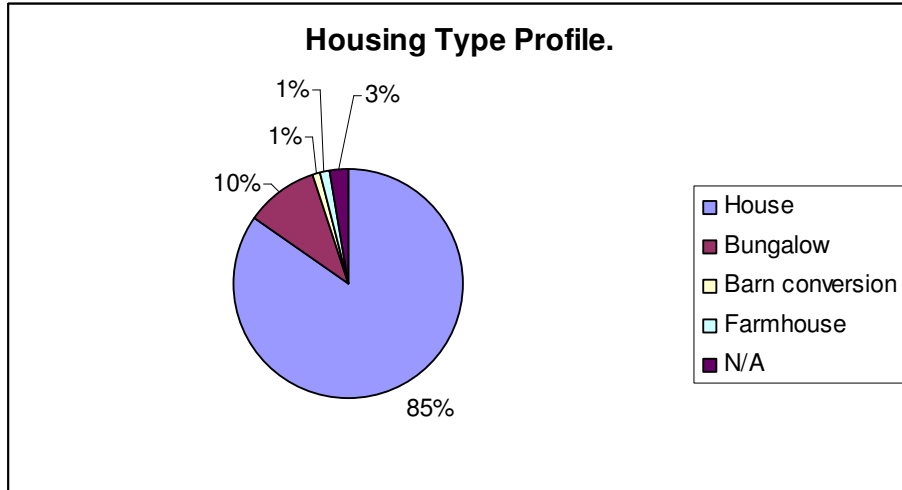
iii) Housing Tenure Profile (79 responses)

The following chart shows the housing tenure profile for the Survey respondents. In a pattern typical for villages in south Warwickshire, owner-occupiers represent 85% of the total. Tenures traditionally considered within the 'social sector' represent just 4% of the total.



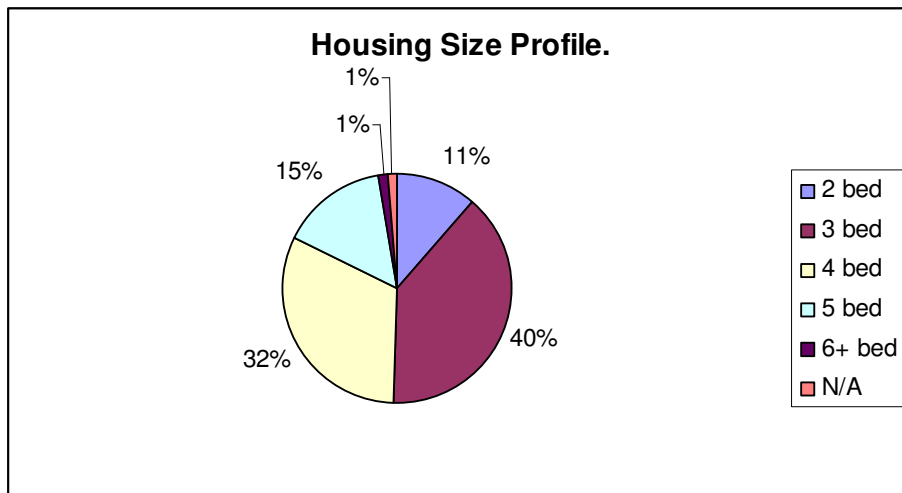
iv) Housing Type Profile (79 responses)

The chart below shows the types of homes that the Survey respondents live in. Perhaps unsurprisingly, houses represent the largest factor.



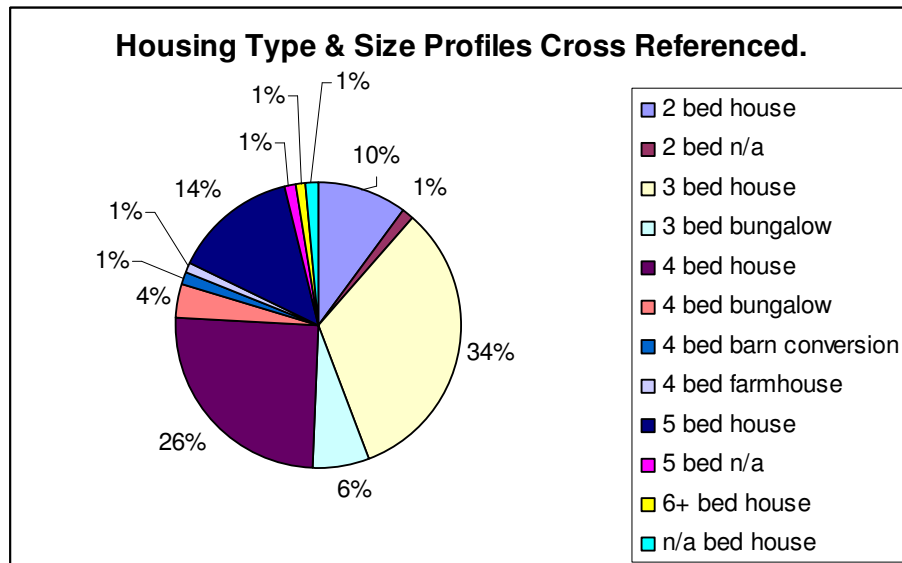
v) Housing Size Profile (79 responses)

The following chart shows the sizes of homes that the Survey respondents live in.



vi) Housing Type and Size Profiles Cross Referenced (79 responses)

Cross-referencing the data from 4.iv and 4.v provides a combined profile of type and size. 3 bedroom houses emerge as the largest factor, closely followed by 4 bedroom houses. When compared to 4.ii above, ie a dominance of 2 person households, these results may suggest an issue of dwelling under-occupation in the Parish.

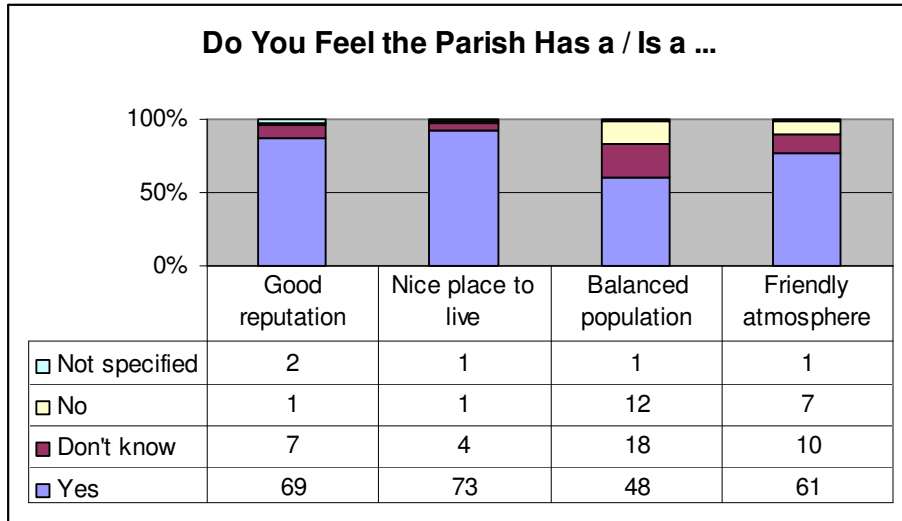


vii) Life in the Parish ; Positive and Negative Aspects (79 responses)

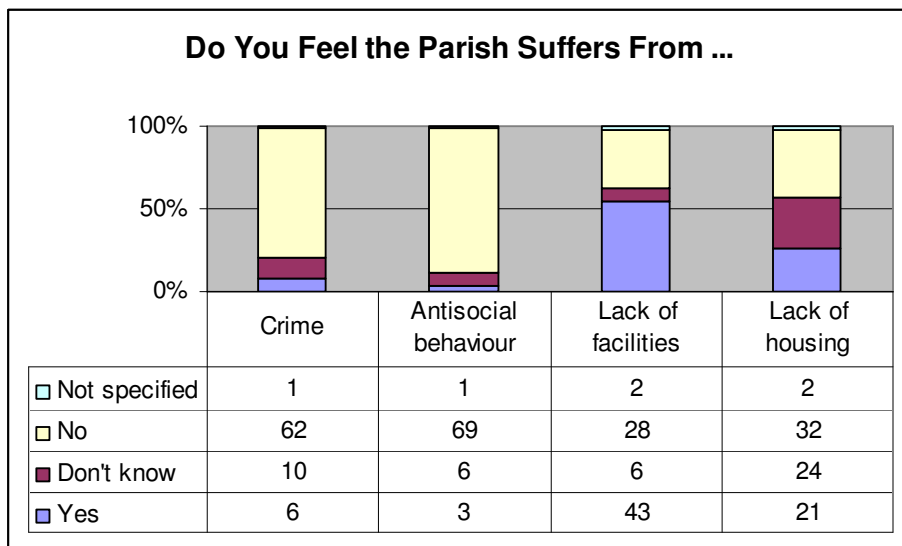
The Survey respondents were asked a series of questions in respect of the perceived positive and negative aspects to life in Alderminster Parish.

Information relating to the sustainability of a Parish is important to assess whether any homes that are subsequently provided will be 'sustainable'. Ensuring that people will occupy them is a crucial consideration when proposing new homes for local people.

The first chart shows respondents' views on the benefits to living in Alderminster Parish. The majority of respondents thought the Parish had a good reputation, was a nice place to live, had a balanced and varied population and a friendly spirit.



The second chart shows respondents' views on negative issues that exist in the Parish. The majority of respondents thought there was not an issue with crime or anti-social behaviour. The majority of respondents thought there was a lack of facilities. The largest group of respondents thought there was not a lack of housing.



The Survey respondents were asked to elaborate on their views regarding a lack of facilities and a lack of housing. Certain key issues emerged, as described in the following tables ;

Lack of Facilities Comments ;

Key issue	Number of Comments
Shop	36
Children's playground / park	12
School	7
Facilities for children & youths	5
Post Office	5
Improved public transport	5

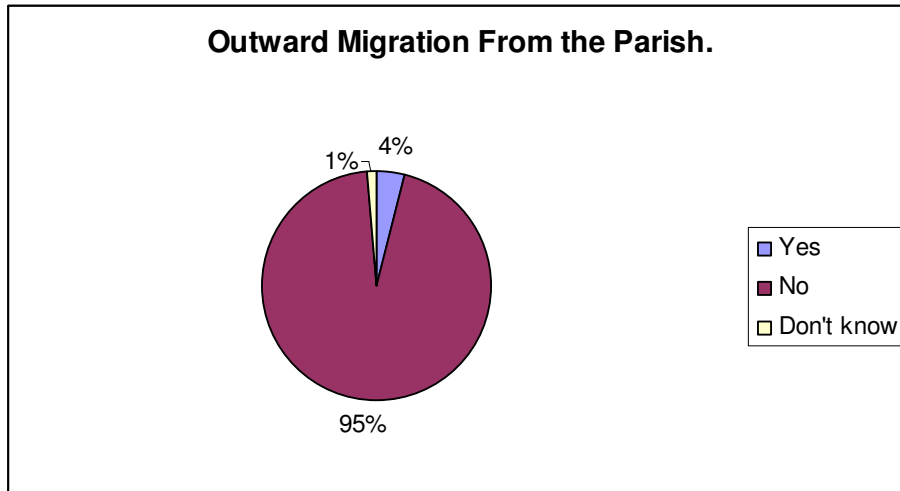
Lack of Housing Comments ;

Given the range of comments received it seems more appropriate to reproduce them below, whole and verbatim. Their order attempts to reflect emerging themes.

Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable. • Affordable. • Affordable. • Affordable. • Affordable housing. • Affordable housing. • Affordable housing for local people / workers. • Affordable housing for younger people. • Affordable housing for young persons - rural types who would fit in with village life. • Affordable or starter homes. • Low income. • Cheaper homes for younger people. • Cheaper housing. • Low cost but eco friendly house with 2 / 3 bedrooms. Too many large houses with large gardens. • Starter homes, retirement homes. • Shared ownership. • Low cost, first time buyer, rent or buy. • Family housing for 'not so well off' people either renting or purchase. • Small affordable properties to buy. • First time buyers.

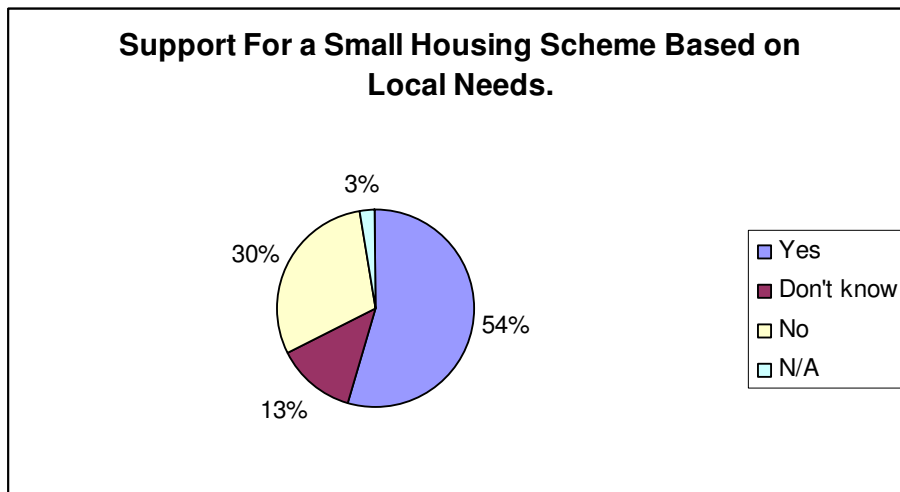
viii) Outward Migration from the Parish (79 responses)

The Survey respondents were asked whether anyone in their household had had to leave the Parish in the last 5 years because no affordable / suitable housing was available. The chart shows that this has occurred in 4% of respondents' households.



ix) Support for a Small Housing Scheme Based on Local Needs (79 responses)

The chart below shows the level of support amongst Survey respondents for a small housing scheme to meet the needs of local people being built in the Parish. The chart shows there is a level of support, 54%, amongst respondents for a small housing scheme. 30% of respondents were against such a scheme. Comments received from respondents in respect of this matter are reproduced as Appendix B to this Report.



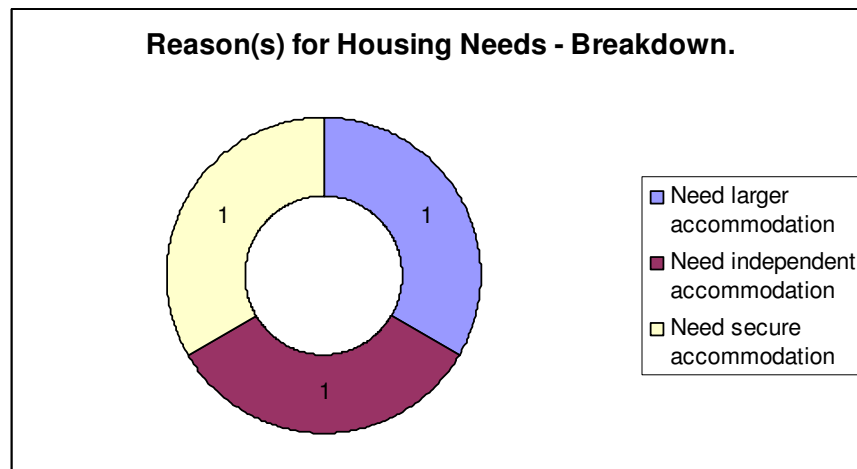
5. Results – Housing Needs Information

Out of the 79 responses to the Survey, 3 individuals or households expressed a need for alternative housing.

Section 5 provides a detailed breakdown of information from the respondents.

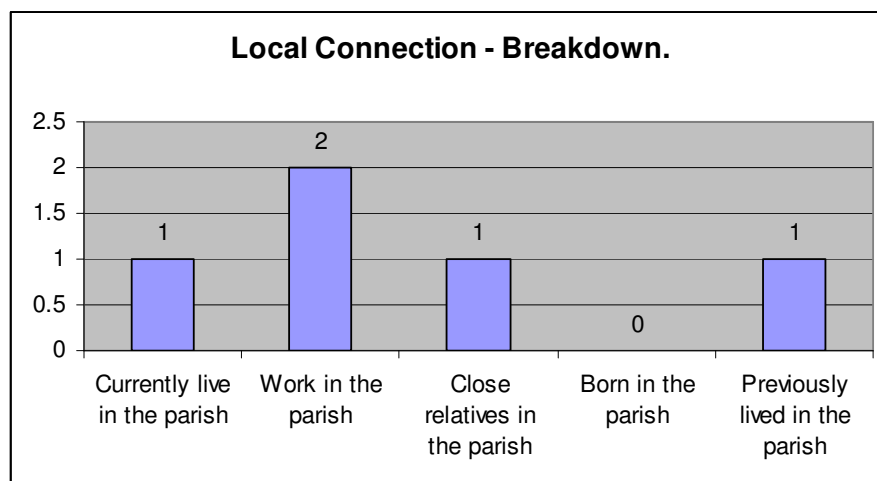
i) Reason(s) for Housing Needs – Breakdown (3 responses)

The following chart shows the reasons for the 3 respondents' housing needs. Where more than one reason was specified, the first reason shown on the Survey form was counted.



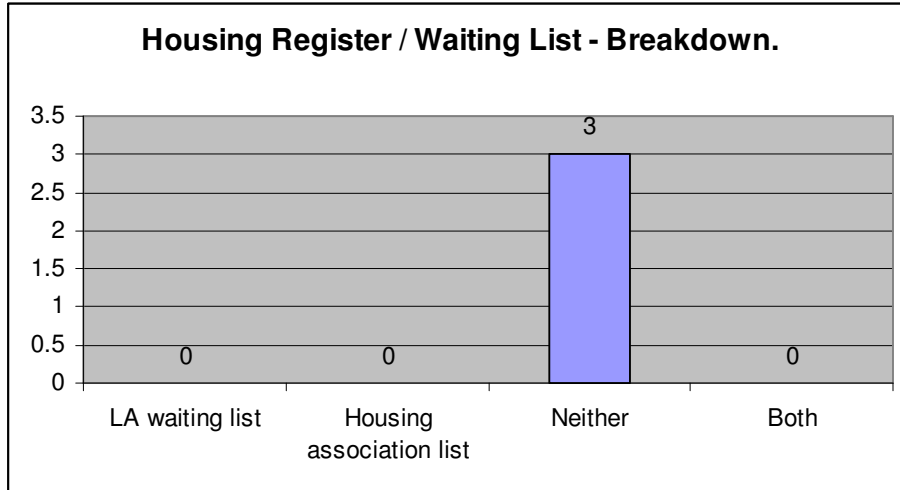
ii) Local Connection – Breakdown (3 responses)

The chart below shows the types of local connection that the respondents have. Respondents were able to indicate more than one type of local connection.



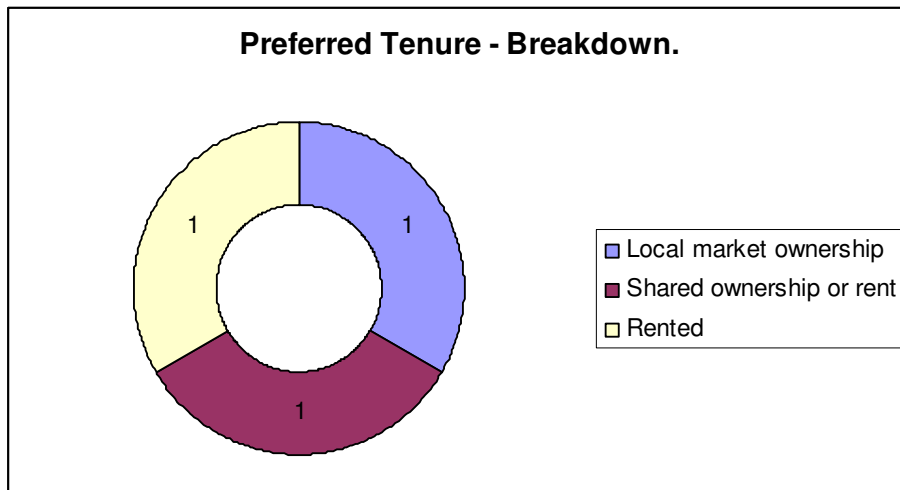
iii) Housing Register / Waiting List – Breakdown (3 responses)

The following chart shows the number of respondents registered on the Local Authority Housing Register and / or a Housing Association Waiting List.



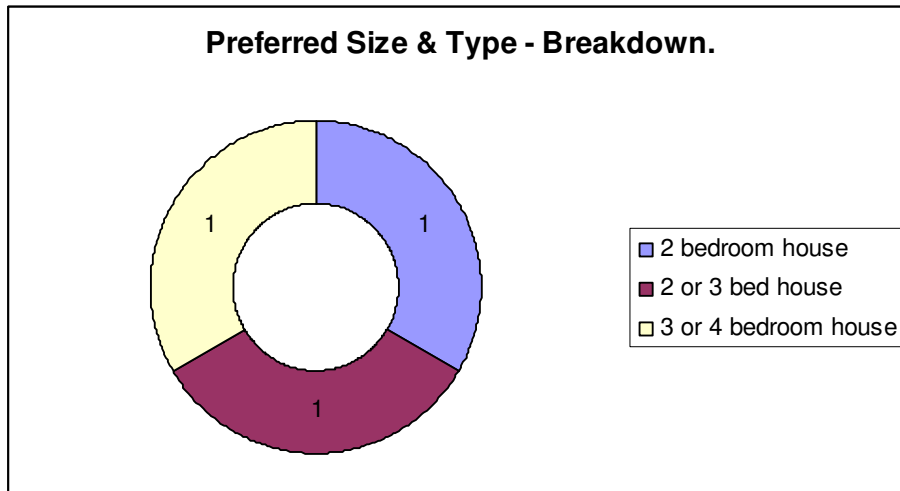
iv) Preferred Tenure – Breakdown (3 responses)

The preferred tenures of the 3 respondents are shown in the chart below.



v) Preferred Size and Type – Breakdown (3 responses)

The preferred sizes and types of accommodation expressed by the 3 respondents are shown in the following chart.



6. Determination of Specific Housing Needs

The following table shows the specific housing needs of the 3 respondents. A number of rules were used to compile this table ;

- Where a respondent indicated a preference for 1 bedroom accommodation they were reclassified as being in need of a 2 bedroom home. There are three reasons for this ; (1) The possibility of a 1 bedroom home sitting vacant for a period of time, (2) The extra flexibility that a 2 bedroom home provides and (3) The possibility that a household will grow and require additional space in the future.

Past experience of providing 1 bedroom affordable homes in rural areas has often proved to be problematic. The needs that exist in the short term may change significantly in the medium and long term. The consequence of these changes is that 1 bedroom homes, especially older homes, can be difficult to let and therefore sit vacant for periods of time.

In reality a 1 bedroom home can accommodate only a single person or a couple, whereas a 2 bedroom home can also accommodate a small family. This increased flexibility, weighed up against the relatively small extra cost and extra space associated with building a 2 bedroom home, is a strong argument for providing the larger unit.

- Where a respondent indicated a preference for shared ownership their ability to enter into a shared ownership arrangement was assessed. The mortgage the respondent could raise was compared against a 50% share (the usual starting % for shared ownership) of a comparable owner-

occupied property, as demonstrated through the research shown in Appendix C to this Report. Having assessed whether the respondent could afford to enter into a shared ownership arrangement, if they could not do so they were reclassified as being in need of rented accommodation from a Housing Association.

Local connection verified	Preferred tenure	Preferred size/type	Actual tenure	Actual size/type
Yes	Local Market Ownership	2 bed house	Local Market Ownership	2 bed house
Yes	Shared ownership or rent	3 or 4 bed house	Rent	4 bed house
Yes	Rent	2 or 3 bed house	Rent	2 bed house

A full breakdown of the needs can be seen as Appendix D to this Report.

7. Conclusions

There is a need for 3 new homes in Alderminster Parish for people with a local connection. The specific needs are for ;

Rented from a Housing Association

1 x 2 bedroom house
1 x 4 bedroom house

Local Market Ownership

1 x 2 bedroom house

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that an exercise is carried out to identify a suitable piece of land to meet the 3 housing needs identified by this Survey.

Partners in the land identification exercise should include ;

- The Parish Council
- Stratford on Avon District Council
- Warwickshire Rural Housing Association
- Local landowners
- Rural Housing Enabler for Warwickshire Rural Community Council

It should be noted that it may be difficult to make a scheme to develop just three homes financially viable.

It might be necessary, therefore, to build the homes at the same time as another, perhaps larger, housing development in a nearby Parish.

Any new homes that are intended to meet the needs described in Section 7 should be accompanied by an appropriate planning obligation to restrict occupancy of the homes to people with a local connection, as described in Section 3 of this Report.

9. Acknowledgements

Gratitude is expressed to Councillor Mark Meadows, Chairman of Alderminster Parish Council and to all those who helped distribute Survey forms.

10. Contact Information

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Appendix B.

Respondents were invited to provide any additional comments. Although intended to focus on housing issues, the comments relate to a range of subjects. The comments are reproduced below, whole and verbatim, except where a reference was made that could identify the individual concerned or in the case of defamatory remarks.

- The correct site has to be found for small developments, not the one indicated by SDC.
- Housing should not be contemplated on or near to flood plain. As the village has no street lights, any development should not include any. All new housing to be sympathetic to the village.
- A mixed development would be of great value to the village - we may also then have the advantage of a shop which would be most useful.
- Not for rental but for purchase.
- If you let one housing scheme proceed then that sets a precedent and within no time the applications are flooding in and lo and behold, housing schemes are springing up like Topsy.
- Any group of houses should be large enough in number to allow centralised heating (eg biofuel boiler / energy generator) (ie 6-10 houses). We are adding an extension to give us an extra bedroom at the moment. Too many houses extended as no new builds !!
- But only one. Any small (very) would be for young people with strong ties to the village (ie born here) with no right to buy.
- SMALL development units are OK. It's mass estates, all squashed together that's a NO.
- The village will thrive if it can grow through encouraging a cross-section of the community to live here.
- It would depend on how many units and where they were located.
- This is a small village without amenities surrounded by Green Belt. It is difficult to see where houses could be built within village itself.
- Young people need houses they can afford either rent or buy.
- Alderminster has an ageing community - there are few young families and therefore the need for a playground is not important

unless young families can be attracted. Any / most housing needs could be satisfied by moving existing tenants, whose needs have changed, to more appropriate accommodation.

- As I travel by public transport, do you think it possible to have a bus shelter at my end of the village. Thank you.
- I have disagreed with the previous restrictions upon house building in villages, BUT building and the attendant tenure must not destroy what is valued now - inclusivity of rural life with community spirit.
- We were all promised by the Council that there would be no new houses in this village.
- Don't know a lot of the residents now. The younger people don't seem to join many of the village activities.
- Depends where of course ! NIMBY !
- People with housing needs would require better 'support facilities' than we have in Alderminster. Jobs are poor and personal transport is necessary. Local towns ie Shipston & Stratford are better placed to cope.
- In our opinion the community has strong concerns that social housing could potentially be built on highly valued and cherished plots of land ie allotment plots. These areas are the hub of village community life.
- Wherever or whenever house building is to be carried out it must consider the area ie the problem of parking, play areas for children especially the hazards of busy road and river. No shop / post office - nothing really. Most of us are fortunate to have cars but what about those who don't ?
- This question poses many unknowns. Are there people that need these houses ? Where would they be built ? Would the occupants have work ? Etc etc.
- I have to travel 40 miles a day to get to work in Alderminster. I have been there 5 years.
- No additional housing has been built in the village for years. Population is ageing, no old peoples housing.

Appendix C.

Property Search on 2 November 2011 for Alderminster and within 3 miles (excluding Stratford on Avon, character properties, properties in need of repair, and properties over £300,000).

Agent	Street	Settlement	Beds	Type	Price (£)
Peter Clarke	Magdalen Close	Lower Quinton	2	Bungalow	169,950
CP Bigwood	The Green	Upper Quinton	2	Bungalow	249,950
Holmans	Bennett Place	Ilmington	2	House	194,950
Connells	Bennett Place	Ilmington	2	House	250,000
JKM Property Solutions	Banbury Road	Ettington	3	Bungalow	275,000
Sheldon Bosley	Churchill Close	Ettington	3	Bungalow	275,000
Edwards	The Close	Lower Quinton	3	House	179,950
CP Bigwood	Park Lane	Lower Quinton	3	House	189,950
Connells	The Fordway	Lower Quinton	3	House	192,500
Connells	Fosseway Crescent	Tredington	3	House	200,000
Connells	Clark Walk	Ettington	3	House	200,000
Peter Clarke	Hillman Way	Ettington	3	House	222,500
Edwards	Sutcliffe Avenue	Alderminster	3	House	229,950
Peter Clarke	Kiblers Lane	Pillerton Priors	3	House	249,950
Sheldon Bosley	Halford Road	Idlicote	3	House	289,000
Connells	Aylstone Close	Lower Quinton	4	House	269,950
Connells	Churchill Close	Ettington	4	House	274,500
Seccombes	Kiblers Lane	Pillerton Priors	4	House	280,000
Connells	The Fordway	Lower Quinton	4	House	284,950
Dixons	Manor Lane	Ettington	4	House	285,000
Victoria Jeffs	Goose Lane	Lower Quinton	4	House	285,000

Type	Average (£)	Average - 5% (£)
2 bedroom bungalows	209,950	199,453
2 bedroom houses	222,475	211,351
3 bedroom bungalows	275,000	261,250
3 bedroom houses	217,089	206,234
4 bedroom houses	279,900	265,905