



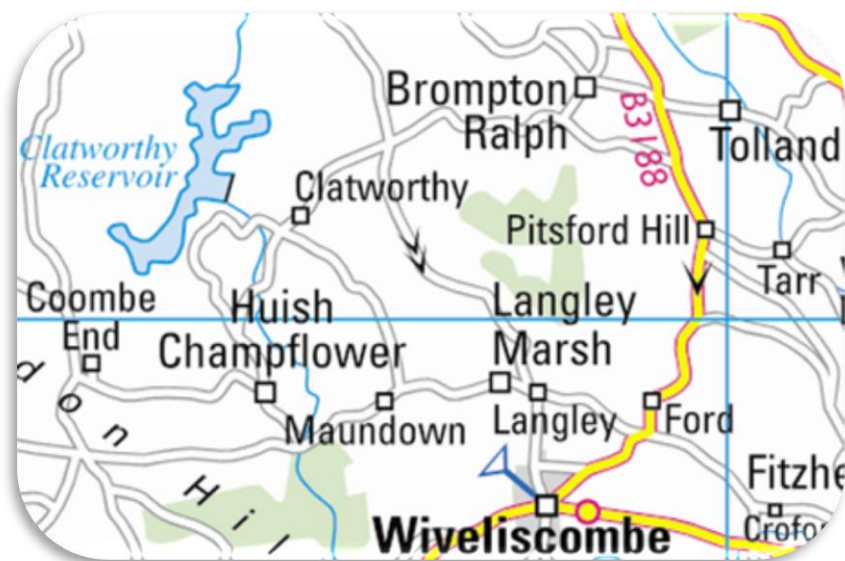
## RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

### HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

# BROMPTON RALPH and CLATWORTHY West Somerset

August 2012



<http://www.streetmap.co.uk>

## RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

### Exmoor, North Devon & West Somerset

The Rural Housing Project has been running since 2002 and is a partnership between Exmoor National Park Authority, North Devon Council, West Somerset Council, English Rural Housing Association, Falcon Rural Housing, Hastoe Housing Association, North Devon Homes, Devon and Cornwall Housing Association and Magna Housing Association. It has been working hard to address the shortage of affordable housing within a predominantly rural area. The area covered by the project displays an extreme disparity between incomes and house prices, which makes it hard for many to gain secure footing within the housing market.

The Rural Housing Project is designed to help promote and deliver affordable rural housing strategically across the project area and helps



deliver Exmoor National Park housing policies within the Park. This is being achieved by informing people about affordable rural housing, providing help and advice, carrying out research at parish level to assess the affordable housing need and bringing together the community and various partners to help deliver housing where it is needed.

One of the tasks for the project is to work with the Parish Council and the local community to assist them in carrying out a housing needs survey, in order to identify whether there is a need for affordable housing for local people in the parish.

*Colin Savage, Rural Housing Enabler*

# BROMPTON RALPH AND CLATWORTHY HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

## Introduction

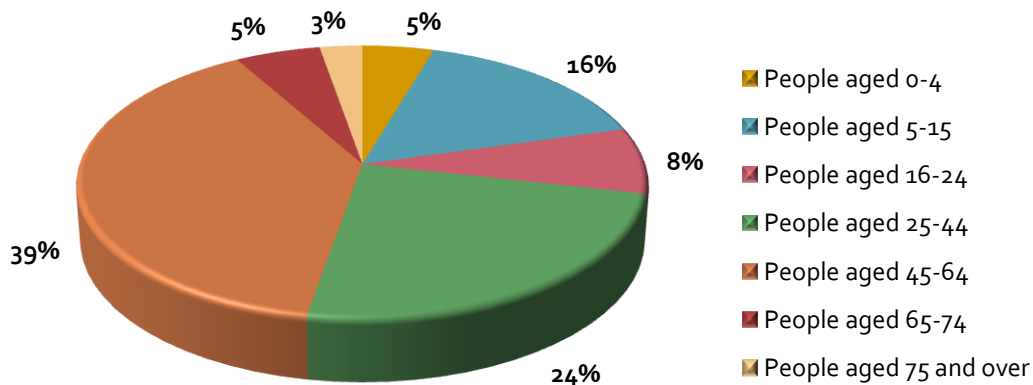
Brompton Ralph is a village and civil parish in West Somerset, about 11 miles west of Taunton, and 3 miles north of Wiveliscombe. It is in a wooded district at the eastern end of the Brendon Hills.

Clatworthy is a village and civil parish in West Somerset. It is situated ten miles from Wellington and four miles from Wiveliscombe on the southern slopes of the Brendon Hills and close to the Exmoor National Park. Clatworthy Reservoir [right] is run by Wessex Water and has a capacity of 5,364,000 cubic metres, supplying some 200,000 homes. The surrounding area is used for walking and fishing.



## Background Demographics

According to the 2002 population estimates Brompton Ralph had a population of 245<sup>1</sup> with age distribution as follows:



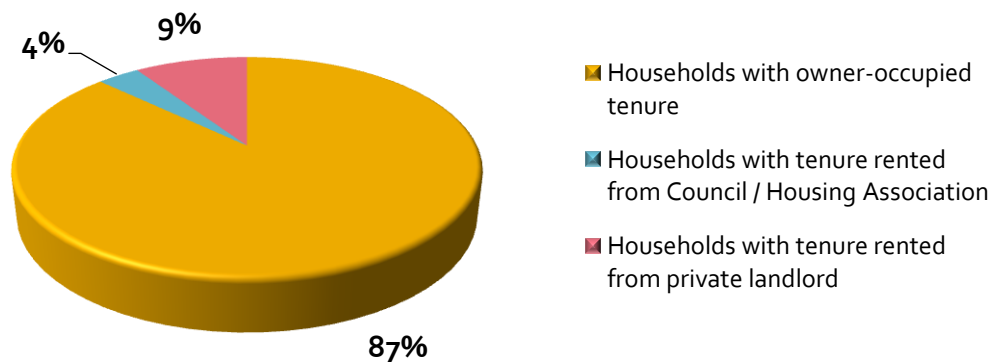
The Local Planning Authority - West Somerset Council - regards Brompton Ralph as a "Small Village" and as such it is covered by Policy SP/4:

### **POLICY SP/4 Development in Small Villages**

Development will be limited to that which supports the villages' social and economic viability, protects or enhances their environmental quality and is unlikely to lead to a significant increase in car travel and where for residential development it usually provides only for affordable housing to meet an identified local need. Residential development in a Small Village will usually be limited to conversions, infilling or the redevelopment of previously used land and small groups of dwellings.

<sup>1</sup> "Parish Population Estimates for 2002" (PDF). West Somerset.

Most homes in Brompton Ralph are owner-occupied, breakdown as follows:



Clatworthy is one of a handful of parishes that are so small they fall under the threshold for inclusion in national statistics. However, West Somerset Council produced a parish population estimate in 2002 for its Local Plan showing 101 people in 51 dwellings, with a projection for 2012 of 104 inhabitants and an extra 2 dwellings.

In West Somerset District Local Plan, Clatworthy is a small settlement, not regarded as a village, and will therefore be treated as comprising of open countryside where the control of development will be guided by Policy SP/5.

#### **POLICY SP/5 – Development Outside Defined Settlements**

In the countryside areas outside of settlement development limits, development will only be permitted where it both benefits economic or social activity without leading to a significant increase in car travel and maintains or enhances environmental quality and accords with other policies of the West Somerset District Local Plan.

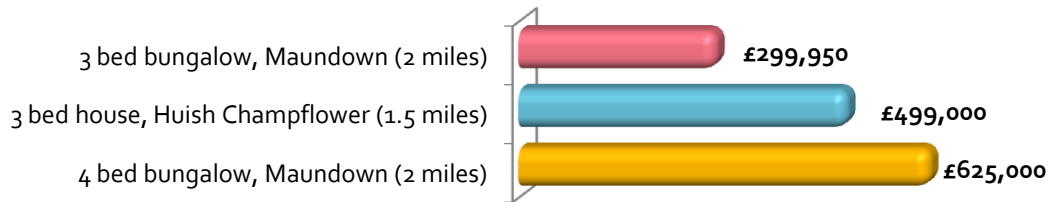
Restricted forms of residential development may be acceptable for the following specific circumstances:

- essential development for agriculture and/or forestry
- essential residential accommodation for local persons employed in agriculture and/or
- the re-use and/or adaptation of an existing rural building
- an exception site for affordable housing outside but adjacent to settlement development limits
- the extension to, or replacement of, an existing dwelling unit
- a sustainable form of countryside recreation or tourism facility
- essential infrastructure and/or public utility

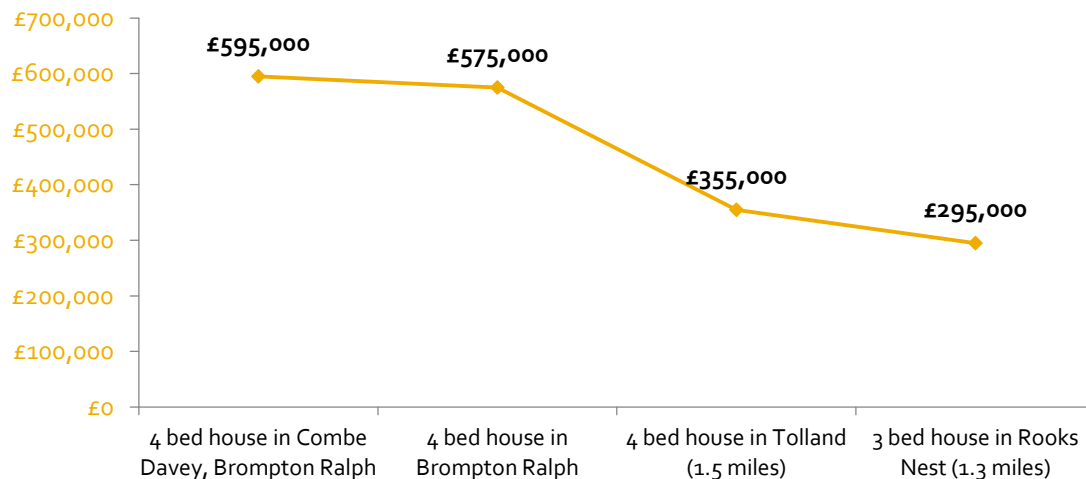
Houses in Somerset cost on average nine times more than the average wage, this is more than the rest of the UK where houses cost seven times more.<sup>2</sup> This places home ownership out of the reach of many would-be home owners. West Somerset is the most expensive place to live in Somerset with houses costing on average 18% more than the rest of Somerset.

<sup>2</sup> Somerset County Council Economic Digest March 2009

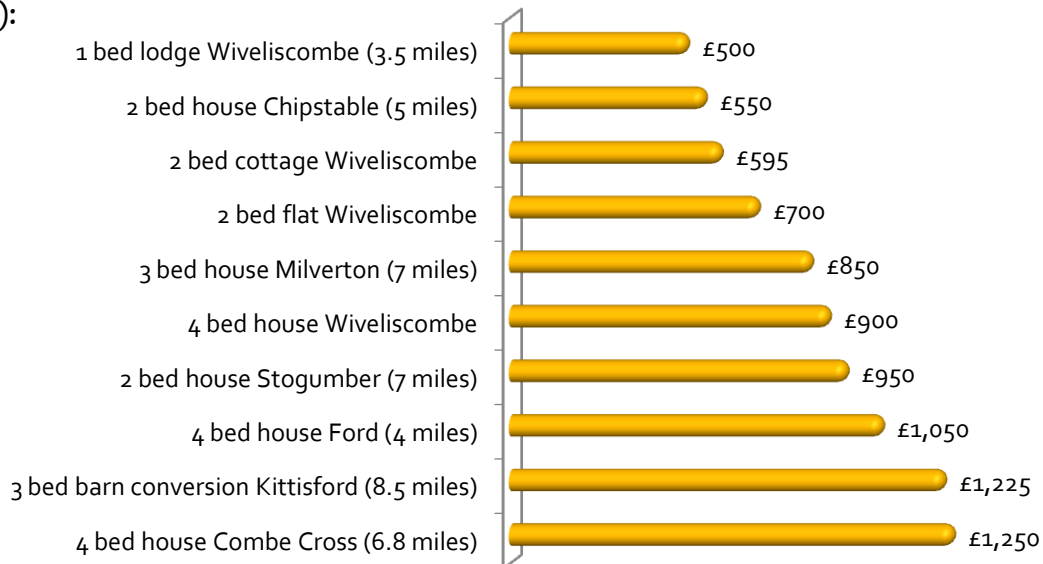
A search of available properties in Clatworthy<sup>3</sup> found no homes available to rent privately and the only house for sale was a former rectory at £950,000. In a slightly wider area, the following properties were to be found for sale:



In Brompton Ralph there were four properties for sale in the immediate area:



The following properties were available for private rent (figures given are monthly rental):



Social housing in the locality is provided by Magna West Somerset, as follows:

- Brompton Ralph – 4 x 3 beds
- Clatworthy – 3 x 2 beds and 2 x 3 beds
- Huish Champflower – 1 x 2 bed and 1 x 5 bed

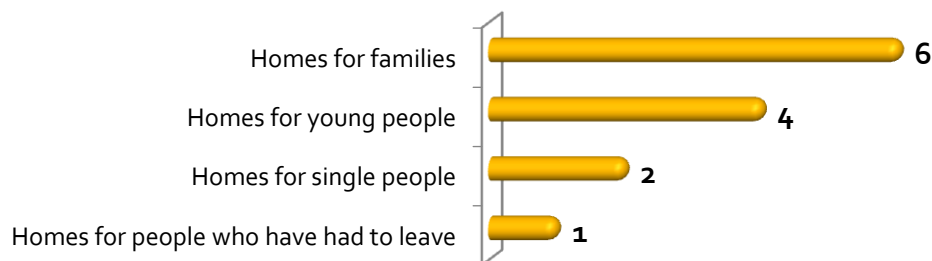
<sup>3</sup> www.rightmove.co.uk [August 2012]

## The Survey

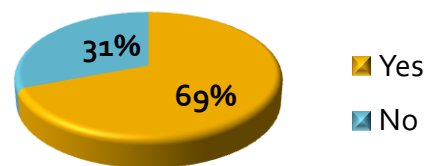
At the request of West Somerset Council, housing needs survey forms were sent to all 44 households in Clatworthy and 91 households in Brompton Ralph, along with a covering letter from the Rural Housing Enabler, Colin Savage. Copies are appended to this report.

Thirteen completed survey forms were returned from Clatworthy (a 30% response rate) and 35 from Brompton Ralph (a 38% response rate).

The first question related to perceived need for housing in the parish. The following were identified:



Respondents were then asked whether they would be in favour of a small number of new homes being provided to help meet the proven housing needs of local people. More than half of those who responded were in favour as shown in this chart. →



Comments were invited on three areas of interest:

1. The provision of a small number of new homes (as mentioned above)
2. Any other development that might be needed to benefit the community (e.g. open space, community buildings, employment opportunities)
3. Suggestions of sites where a small development could be built or buildings that could be converted to affordable housing.

## Housing Provision

- It would be better all round for villages to expand rather than have sprawling estates tacked on to already overcrowded towns. Residents could enjoy community life and help support the necessary buildings e.g. village halls, churches etc.
- Many of the existing houses in this parish are under-occupied. This space would be used if the basic need of the village – proper support for farming – were attended to.
- The average asking price for property in the Clatworthy area is around £500,000+. The cheapest would be £300,000. Local people can't afford it!
- Clatworthy is typical of small rural parishes with insufficient numbers of young people coming through and staying.

- The last thing we need is to have our village spoilt by new housing. I am totally against any more housing here.
- If you did build new houses, the occupiers would most likely find work in Taunton. Taunton is 20 miles away.
- If local people of young families cannot find local homes they will move away and villages will suffer.
- There is this need for local people to be able to stay. Economics being such that because of our beautiful surroundings buyers from more prosperous areas of the country will outbid the locals – not giving them a chance.
- Yes, but we do not know of anyone looking for a new home in the village.
- There is a great pressure on housing in UK and this results in high prices that are not accessible for many young families and people born in the parish
- Villages need to develop and grow to remain vibrant and not become retirement home villages or places full of holiday cottages.
- Young people need local homes
- You need a small number every so on to keep village balanced with young and old growing together supporting shop and post office which should always be supported by authorities as this is a community meeting point and stops people from being isolated and they get to know their neighbours
- Any new homes should be near the centre of the village, rather than extending the village outwards
- Help keep our local young people. Give them the option of staying local. Not for people moving to the area from far away.
- A very small number, sympathetic to traditional Somerset buildings.
- There is always room in smaller villages to build for local people to enable them to stay/work in the area they were brought up in.
- If local people wish to remain here, they need help in surviving the rapid increase in housing process created in the last ten years by incomers who can afford to pay far more for homes.
- Brompton Ralph has very little scope for the creation of new housing at any price.
- People of 20-40 probably do not want to live here as it is too far from any employment except farming, and few people of that age want to farm.
- If the need is proven, provide for it!
- There are three housing association homes for families. What is now needed is a small group of, say, bungalows so that the elderly do not have to move away.
- Often farmers' sons want houses to continue farming. We built a house for our son in the village. Also people who retire want a smaller place to stay in the village.
- Good mix in preference. Low cost housing, elderly able to downgrade, locally employed to rent.
- In the past there has been a need for homes for elderly people in Brompton Ralph. This village does not have homes for the elderly. People have had to leave because of no homes.
- It is a small rural community with few facilities to support growth
- Too little infrastructure and public services, poor roads, lack of parking. These issues and others would need resolving first.

- The roads around the village are inadequate for additional motorists. During the last 20 years the population of the village has almost doubled with the development of barns, chapel, houses extended etc. yet no additional infrastructure has been put in place.
- Village doesn't have the infrastructure

### **Community Development**

- If we really care about the environment it would be good for people to work near to where they live. We need to create opportunities.
- Wind turbines.
- The village hall is in need of an upgrade, and any support for this would be welcome.
- I think alternative energy projects would be a good thing to provide worthwhile jobs for people.
- Obviously, employment opportunities – but we all know it is difficult in a declining rural area.
- Something for the children – a play area (even just a couple of swings)
- Improvements to the village hall
- Playground/open space
- Levelling and maintaining the village green
- Employment opportunities
- Children's play area
- Adequate heating in places of public use. More use of what we already have, e.g. the church.



### **Site Suggestions**

#### *Clatworthy:*

- White's Farm – site and buildings.
- I would suggest a site of about four to six houses could be built at the crossways where the road comes up from Huish Champflower.

#### *Brompton Ralph:*

- Farmland next to village hall
- Near centre of village – perhaps opposite church, as this would be a good central location
- I am offering land for 3 bungalows to be built on the edge of the village.
- Land at Pitsford Hill next to cricket pitch could accommodate a small number of properties.
- Very difficult in a small upland parish with only c.170 inhabitants.
- Alleged land being bought to keep it free from development. Neighbours harassed for using land.
- Conversion of barns which are not in use.



## **Survey Part Two**

Of the 48 returns, six households completed Part Two, indicating their need to move in the next five years:

1. Retired person wishing to downsize into smaller, owner-occupied home.
2. Young person currently living with parents and looking for first independent home, rented.
3. Family in tied accommodation that is too small for their needs, 2 bed rented.
4. Couple looking to stay in village but needing adaptations for disabled living, owner-occupied.
5. Retired couple wishing to downsize but probably move to a larger settlement like Watchet or Wiveliscombe, owner-occupied, 3 bed.
6. Family in private rented accommodation, wishes to stay in the parish.

## **Rural Housing Enabler's Comments and Recommendations**

There was broad community support for a small housing development, if there is a proven need. Six households identified themselves as requiring housing in the next four years. Of these, three need affordable rented housing; the other three are owner occupiers. One of these wants to move to a larger settlement, another hopes to meet their requirement within the curtilage of their existing property, and the third would like to downsize locally.

The households needing affordable housing are all looking to rent – one has a one bedroom need and the others two bedrooms.

A survey in Huish Champflower a few years ago also identified a need for one or two affordable homes to rent.

It is unlikely that separate schemes in each village would be viable, and it is suggested that the RHE, in consultation with Parish Councils, should consider site options in Clatworthy and Brompton Ralph parishes. This might include several open market homes which would potentially meet the need of local people wanting to downsize and would help to provide funding for two or three affordable houses through cross-subsidy.

**Colin Savage**

Rural Housing Enabler

October 2012



## RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

5 July 2012

Dear Sir or Madam

### **Re. Housing in Clatworthy Parish**

Enclosed with this letter is a survey form which we are hoping you will complete and return, so that we can gauge the needs of people in Clatworthy parish regarding where they live or would like to live.

We would be grateful if every household could complete and return page one of the survey. If you are looking for somewhere to rent or to buy in the next five years, please also complete the rest of the form; it will help us to identify all those requiring different housing, and how we might best help them. Elsewhere in West Somerset and Exmoor we have supported the delivery of housing through new build schemes with housing associations, conversion of empty/redundant buildings and new, self-build schemes. We will look at all options, and welcome your suggestions as to what might be appropriate in your parish.

The Parish Council is fully supportive of our undertaking this survey and will be very interested in the outcome.

Please post your completed survey – page 1 or the whole form - back to us before the end of July. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

*Colin Savage*

**COLIN SAVAGE**

Rural Housing Enabler

Enc.



## HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY – CLATWORTHY PARISH

**The purpose of this survey is to identify local housing requirements for people in all tenures - rented and owner-occupied.**

### **SECTION 1 – EVERY HOUSEHOLD PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN**

In your opinion, who do you think is in greatest need of a new home in the parish?

Homes for young people	Homes for elderly people
Homes for families	Homes for single people
Homes for people with disabilities	No further homes are needed
Homes for people who have had to leave	Other, please specify

If need is proven, would you be in favour of a small number of new homes to help meet the housing needs of local people in your parish?

Yes       No

Please briefly explain your views:

Is there any other development you would like to see in your community?  
(e.g. open space, community buildings, employment opportunities)

Can you suggest a site where a small development could be built, or building/s that could be converted for affordable housing?

*Thank you for completing this. If you will need to move home locally in the next five years, please also complete the rest of this form.*

**SECTION 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL HOUSEHOLDS WHO ARE LIKELY TO NEED TO MOVE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**

**1. Housing Requirements**

<b>Your present home is:</b> <i>(please mark x)</i>		<b>Type of home you need:</b> <i>(please mark x all that apply)</i>
	Owner occupied	
	Low cost home ownership	
	Private rented	
	Housing association rented	
	Shared ownership	
	Conversion of existing building	
	Self-build	
	Tied to employment	
	Other <i>[specify]</i>	

<b>Size of present home:</b> <i>(please mark x)</i>		<b>Size of home you need:</b> <i>(please mark x)</i>
	1 bedroom	
	2 bedrooms	
	3 bedrooms	
	4 bedrooms	
	5+ bedrooms	

<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone Number/s:</b>	
<b>E-mail address:</b>	

**Date form completed:**

**1. WHO NEEDS HOUSING?**

Please provide the following information for everyone who will need to move with you:

<b>Living at present home:</b> <i>(please tick)</i>	<b>Relationship to you</b> <i>(e.g. wife, partner, son)</i>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Male/Female</b> <i>(M/F)</i>	<b>Will live at the home you need:</b> <i>(please tick)</i>
	Myself			

**Why do you need to move (you can give more than one reason)?**

a) First independent home		b) Couple setting up home together	
c) Present home too small		d) Present home too large	
e) Health/Disability		f) Need specially adapted home	
g) Present home in poor condition		h) Present home too expensive	
i) Renting but would like to buy		j) Moved away and wish to return	
k) Private tenancy, need more security		l) In tied housing, need more security	
m) Family break up		n) For family care/support	
o) To be near work		p) Living with parents or in someone else's home	
q) Other <i>[please explain]</i>			

**Which of the above is your main reason?**

*Please state one letter only*

**2. LOCAL CONNECTION**

**a. Where do you need to live?**

Please tell us which settlements you need to live in, in order of preference, and give the reasons for your choices (*e.g. near work, near family, born/brought up there, etc.*)

1 <sup>st</sup> Choice Parish/Village	2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice Parish/Village	3 <sup>rd</sup> Choice Parish/Village
<u>Reason</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Reason</u>

We may need evidence to support your local connection.

**b. Long Term Residence**

Housing may be provided for people with long term residence or for those needing to live close to someone who has lived locally for a long time.

**Please provide all addresses and dates of residence for the people who have lived locally during the last 20 years:**

Address (including postcode)	From (month/year)	To (month/year)

*Continue on a separate sheet if necessary*

**c. Employment**

Do you need to live locally because of work commitments?	<b>Yes / No</b>
Please describe the nature of that work and why you need to live nearby:	
Where is your place of work?	Post code:

**d. Are age, health issues, or disabilities likely to affect your housing needs?**

**Yes / No**

**If not please go to (e). If yes, please answer the questions below:**

Please describe the age, health issues or disabilities that affect your housing needs:	
Could you remain in your present home if alterations, adaptations or support were provided?	<b>Yes / No</b> If Yes, describe what changes would be needed
Do you want housing which is more adaptable to your changing needs?	<b>Yes / No</b> Please describe what you would be looking for  If so, would you want to rent or buy?
Do you need sheltered housing?	<b>Yes / No</b> If so, would you want to rent or buy?
Do you need extra care housing?	<b>Yes / No</b> If so, would you want to rent or buy?
Do you need care and support in your own home?	<b>Yes / No</b> If so, is there someone who can provide this for you?
Is the housing, care or support you have identified above available in the locality in which you want to live?	<b>Yes / No</b>
Is there someone living locally who needs you to live nearby in order for one of you to provide support or care to the other, for age or medical reasons?	<b>Yes / No</b> Please state their relationship to you  <u>and</u> provide their addresses in 3 b. above

e. **Are you a former resident of this parish who wishes to return?** **Yes / No**  
If yes, please tell us why you originally left and why you wish to return:

f. **Do you have any other relevant local connection to the area?** **Yes / No**  
If so please explain:

### 3. **INCOME AND SAVINGS**

In order to fully assess the type of housing you can afford, it is necessary to know about your current income, savings, capital and investments. This information should be combined for couples/households.

**Which of the following ranges of annual income does your household have?**  
(gross income, before deductions).

Less than £20,000 per annum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
£20,000 - £24,999 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>
£25,000 - £29,999 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>
£30,000 - £39,999 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>
£40,000 - £49,999 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over £50,000 per annum	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you are interested in purchasing a property, how much deposit could you raise?**  
(round up or down to nearest £1000):

£.....

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### 4. **HOUSING REGISTER**

If your household needs affordable housing, it is essential that you are on the Council Housing Register.

**Are you currently registered on the Local Authority housing waiting list?**

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application submitted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intend to apply soon	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have any queries about this form, affordable housing or the Rural Housing Project please contact:

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