

Lynton & Lynmouth Parish Housing Needs Report



Produced by: Devon Communities Together

On behalf of: Lyn Community Development Trust

Date: November 2023



**Devon Community
Housing Hub**



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1 Executive Summary

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for up to 16 affordable homes within the next 5 years.

Key findings

General Findings

- 850 surveys were delivered and 177 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 21% which is within the normal range for responses to Housing Needs Surveys.
- 64% (113 responses) said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people and 23% (40 respondents) were against. 24 (13%) households did not answer this question.

Affordability

- The survey found 14 households with a local connection (category 1(a) and 3(a) in figure 3 paragraph 7.2) who are in housing need and could not afford to buy or rent in the open market and were not in adequate housing.
- There were a further 3 households identified that wanted to move within social housing, but appeared to be adequately housed whose requirements have not been included.
- There is a potential need for an additional 2 two bedroom homes for households who currently live in the Parish and may therefore establish a connection if they remain through the length of their residency. These needs are shown in brackets below.
- A breakdown of the size and tenure requirements is provided below.

Type of Property	Social / Affordable Rented Housing	Low cost home ownership	Totals
1 bedroom property	10	0	10
2 bedroom property	5 (1)	1 (1)	6
3 bedroom property	0	0	0
Totals	15	1	16

For further detailed analysis please see Section 7.

Housing Needs of Older People

- The majority (89, 67%) of older households have no plans to move.
- There are a small number of older households (24) who wish to move and remain in the Parish, 8 of these have a local connection and need affordable housing.

2. Aims of the Survey

- To investigate the housing need, tenure and size of homes required for local people living or working in the parish and those wishing to return;
- To establish the general level of support for new homes in the parish with an emphasis on homes for local people with housing needs;
- To establish the views of the whole community on future housing in the parish;

3. Survey history, methodology and response

3.1 History

Lyn Community Development Trust commissioned this survey to assess future local housing need in the Parish. 850 forms were posted to every household in the parish. Parishioners were able to complete the survey online or return the survey in a reply paid envelope. Residents were encouraged to pass the online link to the survey to households who were not resident in the Parish but who were wishing to live in the Parish. The deadline for the return of the survey was 30th October 2023.

3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology. The survey form was in 3 parts. The first section asked questions about the respondents' household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second part of the survey was designed to be completed by households who intend to move home within the next 5 years and wish to remain living in the parish. Both those who have an affordable housing need and those who wish to buy on the open market were invited to complete this section of the form. The third section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents.

The methodology is based on identifying actual numbers of households in housing need and is not used to project future need.

3.3 Response

- 175 surveys were returned initially. A follow up reminder was sent to those on the Housing Register registered for the Parish with an e-mail address which resulted in a further 2 responses. These responses have been incorporated into the overall report. The final response rate was therefore 177, being a response rate of 21%.
- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. Out of the returned surveys, 64 were returned with some, or all of Part 2 completed.
- 172 respondents stated that they live in the Parish of Lynton and Lynmouth, a further 1 stated that they lived outside of the Parish but in North Devon. 4 respondents did not answer the question.

It should be noted that whilst apparent inconsistencies in responses are followed up, the information given is taken at face value.

4. Introduction and Information about Lynton and Lynmouth.

4.1 Overview of Lynton and Lynmouth.

Lynton & Lynmouth Parish is located on the North Devon coast midway between Ilfracombe and Minehead and The Parish is made up of the three villages of Lynton, Lynmouth and Barbrook and is governed at a local level by Lynton and Lynmouth Town Council.

The parish is situated in Exmoor National Park and is a popular tourist destination, being home to the Lynton & Lynmouth cliff railway (which links the two settlements) and the Valley of the Rocks. Several walking and cycling trails also go through the parish including the Tarka Trail and South West Coastal Path. The parish is fairly remote with the nearest large town being Barnstaple which is approximately 20 miles away. It has a daily bus service (not Sundays) which links it to Barnstaple.

Amenities and organisations in the parish include a range of churches, Primary school and nursery, Post Office and Tourist Information Centre, health centre, town hall, library, a range of shops, garage, and cinema. The parish also has bowls, tennis and cricket clubs and a youth centre. Lynmouth is home to the Lynmouth Pavilion which houses an Exmoor National Park centre and a café and small exhibition space. Being a tourist destination, the parish has several hotels, pubs, B & Bs and shops catering to the tourist trade.

4.2 Population Figures

In the 2021 census the population of the Parish was 1405 people living in 660 households. More information can be found at <https://lynton-and-lynmouth.parish.uk/census/>. Details from the 2021 have now been published as estimates, which means that the total number of households varies slightly depending on the data set that is being used. As the detailed results from the 2021 Census at Parish level are not yet readily available the following information is taken from the 2011 Census. It is of note that whilst the information for Lynton and Lynmouth from the 2021 Census indicates that there were 660 households in the Parish, there were actually 850 residential addresses from the Parish included in the survey.

The 2011 Census indicates that of the 871 households that were recorded 626 (72%) had at least one usual resident with the remaining 245 (28%) homes being either empty homes, second homes or holiday homes.

4.3 Type of Accommodation

In the 2011 Census the types of accommodation in the parish were broken down as in Table 1 below. There is a broadly balanced mix of house types, with an unusually high (for Devon) proportion of flats. It is likely that this profile reflects the fact that there is a high level of homes that do not have a usual resident which are likely to be holiday lets.

Table 1

Detached house/bungalow	Semi-detached house/bungalow	Terraced house/bungalow	Flat	Caravan / mobile home	Total
253(29%)	172 (20%)	217(25%)	223 (25%)	6 (0.7%)	871

4.4 Bedroom numbers

In the 2011 Census the number of bedrooms per dwelling were broken down as in Table 2 below.¹ See note below. It is of note that 9% of dwellings with a 'usual resident' are one bedroom homes, whilst there are 216 (35%) households from this total that are one person households.

Table 2

1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 or more	Total
58 (9%)	198 (32%)	208 (33%)	162 (26%)	626

When viewed together these tables indicate that there is a significant proportion of the housing stock (28%) which do not have a 'usual resident' suggesting that they are either holiday lets or second homes. The number of smaller one bedroom homes does not reflect the number of single person households, which is likely to restrict access to housing for small households on low incomes to buy or rent.

4.5 Property Prices and Rent

To assess whether a household can afford to buy or rent in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. For open market purchase information on recent house sales and current listings is analysed. For rented housing information on current rent costs provided by respondents to the housing needs survey are compared with rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical housing costs to assess affordability.

When background research was carried out on 18th November 2023² there were 28 properties for sale or sold subject to contract within 1 mile of Lynton and Lynmouth with a value of £800,000 or less on the Rightmove website (see note 2). Of those that are listed the cheapest open market property was a one bedroom flat with an asking price of £145,000. There were only two 1 bedroom properties for sale within 1 mile of Lynton and Lynmouth and it should be noted that this size of property is very scarce. 9 of the listings were for properties larger than 3 bedrooms, with 6 being 3 bed homes and 11 for 2 bed homes.

When the research was carried out (18th November 2023) there were no properties advertised for rent within 5 miles of Lynton and Lynmouth. The scarcity of rented accommodation is significant. Information on rent levels in the Parish was provided by 18 respondents who are currently in private rented housing and this has been relied on to establish entry level rent costs in the Parish. It is possible that rent levels for new lettings will be higher. It is of note that the local housing allowance is lower than the estimated entry level cost for all properties, with a shortfall of around £90 per month for 3 bedroom properties making accessibility even harder for households who are dependent on benefits to meet their housing costs.

¹ This table only gives details for 626 of the total 871 dwellings. This is because there is no data on bedroom numbers for any of the 55 empty homes, second homes or holiday lets in this dataset.

² Information on both properties for sale and rent was taken from Rightmove.co.uk on 18th November 2023. Retirement, Park Homes and properties over £800,000 in value are not included as comparators.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 3.

Table 3

Size	Property price	Weekly rent	Local Housing Allowance (TQ13)
1 bedroom	£145,000	£103.85	97.81
2 bedroom	£310,000	£150.00	126.58
3 bedroom	£335,000	£170.77	149.59

There are currently 7 housing association owned properties recorded by Devon Homechoice within Lynton and Lynmouth. There are also additional affordable homes in the Parish, with planning permission for over 20 affordable homes being granted since 2006. 16 respondents have indicated that they are in this tenure (see paragraph 5.3). There have been 2 lettings in the last 2 years, a one bed roomed bungalow and a 2 bed roomed bungalow. It is not anticipated that lettings of current affordable housing stock will have any impact on future need figures.

5. General Survey Findings

5.1 In favour of a small local development

Respondents were asked if they would be in favour of a small number of homes for local people being built if the need for affordable housing were proven. 113 (64%) of respondents said they would be in favour. 40 (23%) said they were against any development. It should be noted that 24 (13%) households did not respond to this question.

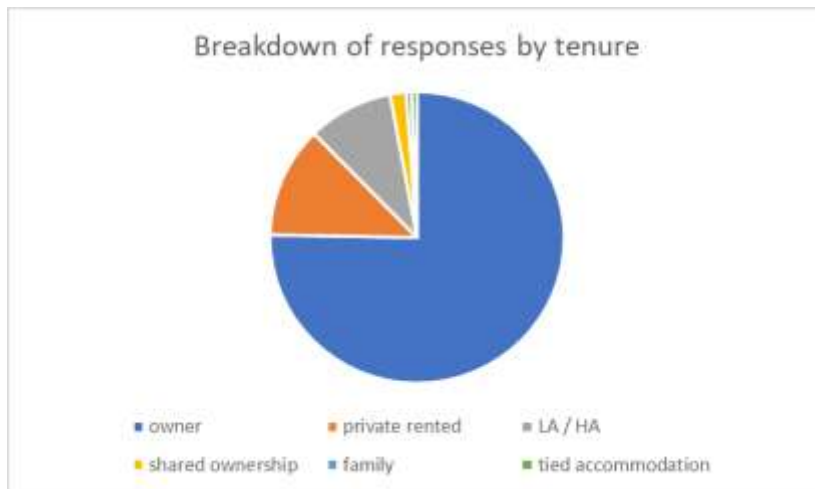
5.2 Knowledge of those who have left parish in last 5 years

Respondents were asked if they knew of anybody who had had to leave the parish in the last 5 years due to lack of suitable housing. They were also asked to indicate if they knew of anyone who was working over 16 hours per week in the Parish and were looking for housing within Lynton and Lynmouth. They were asked to pass on the link to the survey to anybody who was seeking housing in the Parish so that their needs could be incorporated.

- 59 households replied that they did know of someone who had left the Parish;
- 30 households responded that they knew of someone who was working in the Parish and wanted accommodation in Lynton and Lynmouth.

5.3 Current tenure

Of the 169 respondents who provided details, 128 own their own home and 21 rent from a private landlord. 16 households rent from a housing association or local authority, 1 lives with relatives, 3 are living in a shared ownership property and 1 has accommodation tied to their job. 7 respondents did not answer the question. Figure 1 overleaf shows the breakdown of tenure.



5.4 Main or second home

Of the 171 respondents who answered the question 163 stated that they occupied their property as their main home, 8 as their second home and none stated that the property was rented out as a holiday home.

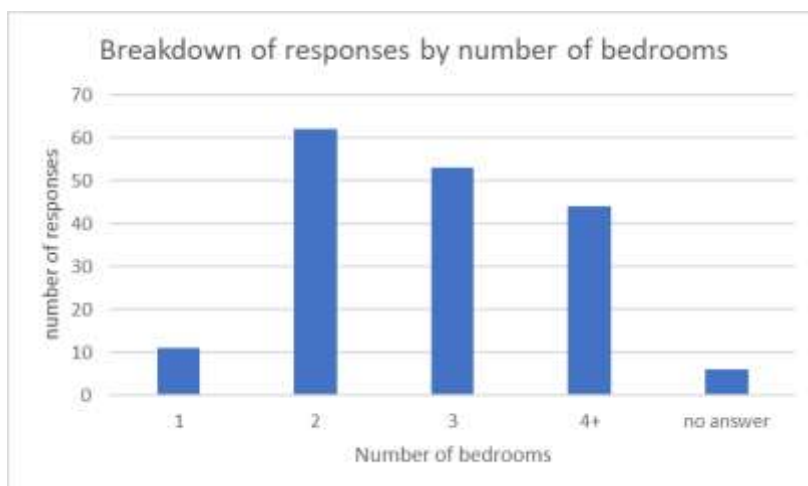
5.5 Parish of Residence

Respondents were asked which parish they lived in. 172 respondents stated that they live in the Parish of Lynton and Lynmouth and a further 1 stated that they lived outside but in Devon. 4 respondents did not answer the question.

5.6 Number of bedrooms in current home

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms their current home has. The responses are shown in Figure 2. 7 respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 2



5.7 Future plans

If respondents indicated that they were intending to move within 5 years they were asked to give a timeframe for this and asked to complete part 2 of the form which includes more detailed questions regarding their housing plans.

- 42 (28%) of those households who answered the question stated they did intend to move within the Parish within the next 5 years
- 110(72%) of those households who answered the question stated they did not intend to move within the Parish within the next 5 years
- 25 households did not answer the question.

6. Assessment of those wishing to move to a new home in Lynton and Lynmouth within the next 5 years

Part 2 of the survey was aimed at those who expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Lynton and Lynmouth Parish. It includes all households including older households. It asked questions regarding size and make-up of the new household, local connection and financial circumstances. This information helps to identify the number of households that require both open market and affordable housing in the parish and the size, tenure and type of homes required.

42 respondents indicated that they were intending to move and stay in the Parish within the next 5 years, however 64 respondents completed some or all of Part 2 of the survey. The needs of these 64 households have been included in this section of the survey.

6.1 Minimum bedroom preference

Respondents were asked the minimum number of bedrooms they would require in their new home. Table 4 below shows the breakdown. It should be noted that this reflects the preferences of the respondents rather than their eligibility. There are criteria relating to affordable housing that set the number of bedrooms that a household are eligible for based on the number of adults and children in that household. 29 respondents did not answer the question.

Table 4

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4+ bedroom
8	20	6	1

6.2 Timescales for moving

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify when they would need to move. 19 households did not answer the question.

- 7 of the households indicated a current need to move.
- 17 households indicated a need to move within the next 1-3 years.
- 21 households indicated a need to move within the next 3-5 years.

6.3 Housing tenure

Respondents were asked what type of accommodation they would consider moving to. This gives an indication of respondents' aspirations rather than confirming which type of housing they are eligible for. Respondents could select more than one option. 9 of the 13 respondents indicating that they would like open market housing were only interested in this tenure, and a further 1 respondent was only interested in self-build or open market housing. Affordable rented housing was also very popular, with 16 households only interested in affordable / social housing as an option. The results are shown in table 5.

Table 5

Shared ownership/ equity	Affordable housing for rent	Self- build	Discount market	Rent to buy	Open market
7	29	6	8	13	13

6.4 Reasons for moving

Respondents were asked why they wished to move home. They could tick more than one box.

Table 6

Reason for wishing to move	No of respondents
Need to move to a home with more bedrooms	6
Need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms	15
Need to move for health/mobility reasons	10
Will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately	7
You are struggling to afford your current home	8
Wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection	0
Home is in poor condition	6
Your private tenancy is ending	7
Sharing kitchen and / or bathroom	2
Need to move for work	0
Other - Closer to family	1
Other - want to retire	1
Other - currently no fixed abode	2

6.5 Budget for new home

Respondents were asked about their budget. Table 7 below shows the breakdown of replies. 36 respondents did not answer the question. A significant number of those who answered the question were looking to purchase for less than £150,000.

Table 7

Less than £150,000	£150,001 - £200,000	£200,001 - £250,000	£250,001 - £300,000	£300,001 - £350,000	£350,001 +
18	3	3	1	2	1

As can be seen in table 3 the average entry level (lower quartile) property prices in the Parish are £145,000 for a 1 bed, £310,000 for a 2 bed and £335,000 for a 3 bed.

7. Assessment of those in affordable housing need

This section of the survey looks at the number of households who would qualify for an affordable home in the parish, based on their household income and savings.

7.1 Exclusions

43 of the 64 households who expressed a wish to move within the next 5 years and remain in Lynton and Lynmouth have been assessed and have been excluded for the following reasons:-

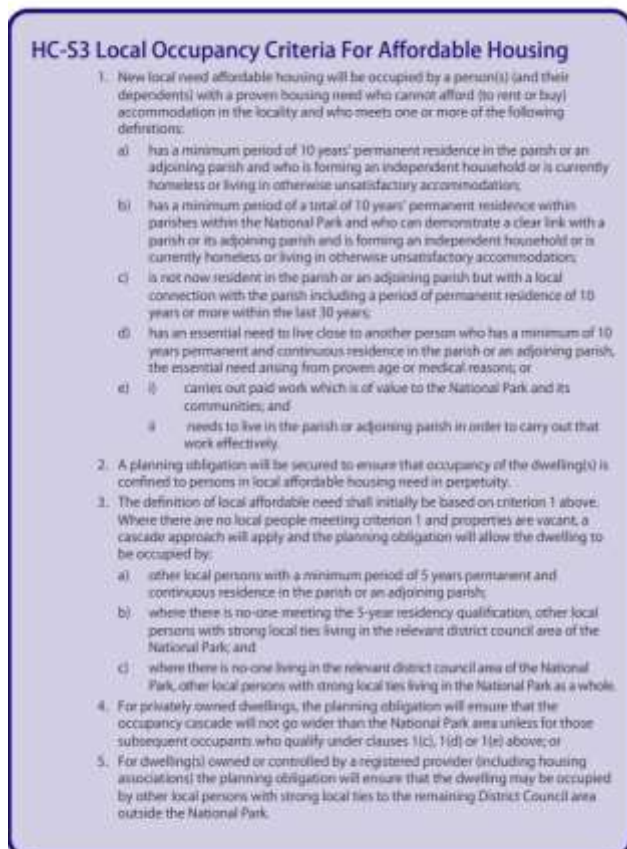
- They stated they were only interested in open market housing;
- They gave insufficient details to assess their eligibility;
- They already own their own home so do not qualify for affordable housing.

This leaves 21 households who have been assessed for affordable housing. 10 of these households are currently living in private rented housing, 6 are in housing association accommodation, 2 are living in a shared ownership property and 1 is living with relatives. 2 were living in other insecure housing.

7.2 Local Connection

To qualify for affordable housing with a local need occupancy tie (new and existing) within the Lynton and Lynmouth Parish, respondents must have a local connection. This connection is determined by Exmoor National Park and is set out below:-

Figure 3



15 of the households identified have a current local connection through residence (1a above) and 2 have a local connection through criteria 3(a) in the cascade. 3 do not have a local connection. One further household works in the Parish (1e (i)) but it has not been possible to establish whether they meet the criteria set out in 1e (ii).

Of the 3 households that do not have a local connection two have lived in the Parish two have lived in the Parish for between 3 and 5 years and may establish a local connection within the life of this report. The final household did not provide any information.

7.3 Housing Options

Of the 64 households that completed Part 2, 43 have been excluded for the reasons given in Paragraph 7.1. 15 have a local connection through criteria 1(a), 2 have a local connection through criteria 3(a) and 3 do not have a local connection or live in the Parish. 1 further household may have a local connection through employment, but there is not sufficient information available to confirm this. There are 17 respondents which have a local connection through residence (category 1(a) and category 3(a) and require an affordability assessment to establish whether there is a housing need. The housing options available to the 17 households identified as being in need of affordable housing have been reviewed.

Respondents provided information on income and savings along with household size which allows an assessment of what type of affordable housing is best suited to the household's financial circumstances.

The breakdown of housing needs of the 17 households that were identified as having a need for affordable housing are shown in Table 8. Of the 12 households that were identified as needing a one bedroom home 3 expressed a preference for a two bedroom property. Of the 7 households that were identified as needing a two bedroom home, 4 expressed a preference for a three bedroom property.

3 of the households that wanted to move were already housed in a housing association home of the same size that they would be eligible for. Their housing requirements have been shown by the numbers in (brackets), but they have been discounted from the number of affordable homes that are required in table 10.

11 of the 17 households identified are older (over 55) households. All of these have been assessed as needing social or affordable rented housing due to their financial circumstances and 2 appear to be adequately housed, leaving a total of 9 older households in need of affordable housing.

It should be noted that there is an additional household which requires a 3 bedroomed social / affordable rented home that has not been included within these figures as it has not been possible to establish their eligibility.

There are also 2 households who live in the Parish who have not yet established a local connection and may require 2 bedroom accommodation within the five years that this survey is valid. One would currently be suitable for social / affordable rent and one for low-cost home ownership. These have been included in the numbers in tables 8 and 10.

Table 8

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom
Social / Affordable rent	10 (2)	5 (1)	0
Low cost home ownership	0	1	0

7.4 Other evidence of housing need

As well as this survey other evidence of housing need should be considered. The housing waiting list or register for Devon is called Devon Home Choice (DHC). Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. A breakdown of the number of applicants on the housing register (Devon Home Choice) is provided below.

Table 9

Devon Home Choice band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	Total
Band A (Emergency need)	0	0	0	0
Band B (High)	0	2	0	2
Band C (Medium)	1	2	0	3
Band D (Low)	4	1	0	5
Band E (No need)	7	4	0	11
Total	12	9	0	21

7.5 Housing Mix

The suggested mix of housing is shown in Table 10 below. This takes account of the family makeup as declared on the survey form and the type of housing required. A definition of the tenure types is provided in the footnote below.³

Table 10

Type of Property	Social / Affordable Rented Housing	Low cost home ownership	Totals
1 bedroom property	10	0	10
2 bedroom property	5	1	6
3 bedroom property	0	0	0
Totals	15	1	16

8. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 3 of the questionnaire was directed at residents over the age of 55. The number of people over the age of 55 is set to rise significantly across the UK over the next 20 years. In 2014 the Office for National Statistics published population projections for the next 20 years. These figures show that by 2034 the percentage of people over the age of 55 will have increased by 23% across Devon.

134 (76%) of respondents had a least one member of the household that was aged 55 or over and completed Part 3 of the survey.

³ Rented Housing – the rent for the property equates to between 60% and 80% of Open Market Value (OMV)
Low Cost Home Ownership – any product which enables a household to own a portion of their home.

8.1 Age of Respondents to Part 3 of the survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. The breakdown is shown in table 11 below. There were 7 respondents who indicated that that everybody in the household was aged 86 and over all of whom are living alone.

Table 11

Age Group of individuals within household	55-65	66-75	76-85	Over 86
Number	79	72	36	9

8.2 Future Housing Plans

Households with someone over 55 were asked about their future housing plans.

- 31 households plan to move within the next five years. 24 households would like to remain in Lynton and Lynmouth, one plans to move away from the Parish but remain within North Devon, one plans to move elsewhere in Devon and four plan to move away from Devon. One respondent did not answer the question.
- Of the 24 households wanting to remain in Lynton and Lynmouth 11 already own their own home. Of the remaining 13 households 2 rent from the local authority or a housing association, 8 are in private rented accommodation and one lives with relatives. One stated that they are of no fixed abode in the Parish and 1 did not answer the question. Nine households are likely to need affordable housing in the Parish and have been included in Part 2 for the report. A further 2 households wish to move but appear to be adequately housed.
- Of the 24 households wishing to move locally, 6 expect to move within the next 12 months, 9 within 1 -3 years, 8 within 3-5 years and the remaining one did not answer the question.
- Of the remaining respondents 11 (8%) have considered moving, but do not expect to do so within the next 5 years, 89 (67%) have no plans to move and 3 did not answer the question.

8.3 Adaptability of current home

Respondents were asked if their current home was adaptable to meet changing needs.

- 68 households said their home was adaptable
- 47 households said their home was not adaptable
- 19 did not answer the question.

8.4 Type of Accommodation preferred by older persons

Older households who were expecting to move in the future were asked what type of accommodation they may need in the future. Most respondents 95 (71%) either did not expect to move or did not answer the question. Of those that did 32 (82% of responses) preferred a home better suited to their needs but not specially designed for older people, 6 (15%) preferred a specifically designed home and 1 (3%) were anticipating moving to a residential / nursing home when it was necessary for them to move. Preferences are shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons	Number
Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people	32
Home specially designed for older people	6
Residential / nursing home	1

The preference for accommodation which is suited to older person's needs, but is not specially designed for older people is of note. There is a preference for a property that is designed for accessibility, but not for designated older persons accommodation.

8.5 Considerations when choosing next home

Households were asked to list the most important considerations when choosing a new home. They could give more than one reason. The numbers in brackets are the responses from those who indicated that they were likely to move within 5 years. The reasons are listed in Table 13.

Table 13

Most important consideration	Number
Need to downsize to a smaller more manageable home	21 (12)
Cheaper running costs	18 (10)
Proximity to shops/amenities	17(8)
Proximity to public transport	12 (7)
Need to be near family / carers	20 (9)
Need one level for medical reasons	12 (5)

The most important considerations overall were that older persons wished to move to a property which is smaller and more manageable, and to be close to family and carers.

8.6 Conclusion - Older Persons Needs

The older persons' survey shows that the majority of older households 89 (68 %) have no plans to move home. However, the parish does have a small number (31) of older households who wish to move, 24 of which want to move within the Parish. The main drivers being having a more manageable home and being close to support. There is a preference for a home which is suitable for older people, but not necessarily specifically designed for this age group.

The survey indicates that 9 of the 22 older households that expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Lynton and Lynmouth will need affordable housing. These have been included within the numbers detailed in the affordability section (table 10). The remaining households have stated that they will be looking to the open market for alternative housing within 5 years, already own their own home or appear to be adequately housed.

9. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for Lynton and Lynmouth

Overall, it must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving. Any provision of affordable housing, would, by necessity, need to take account of this. The survey has identified that there is currently a need for up to 16 units of affordable housing within the next 5 years. Included in the 16 are 2 households who may establish a local connection within the 5 years of this report and become eligible for consideration.

As the needs of households are constantly changing the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide. In particular, it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years. However, if there is a significant development of affordable housing in the parish which is subject to a local connection requirement and substantially meets the need identified in the report it may be necessary to refresh the survey.