



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

HOLFORD

West Somerset

March/April 2012



BRYAN ADAMS video: Everything I do, I do it for you – filmed in Holford Glen



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND 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.



Colin Savage, Rural Housing Enabler

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.

HOLFORD PARISH HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

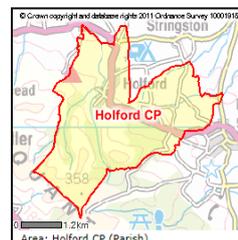
Introduction



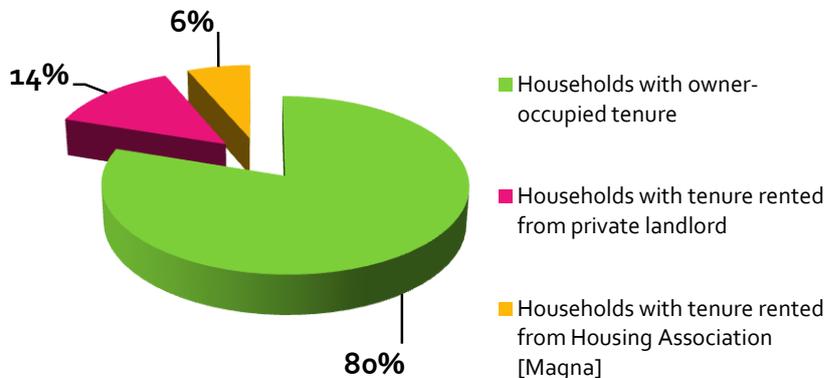
Holford is a village and civil parish in West Somerset within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, about 10 miles west of Bridgwater and 6 miles east of Williton. The village is on the Quantock Greenway and Coleridge Way footpaths. The parish includes the village of Dodington. Holford Kelting, just north of the village, is a 13 acre nature reserve of ancient woodland and streamside scrub run by the Somerset Wildlife Trust.

The West Somerset Local Plan defines Holford as a “small village”, meaning that under Policy SP/4, development is limited to that which

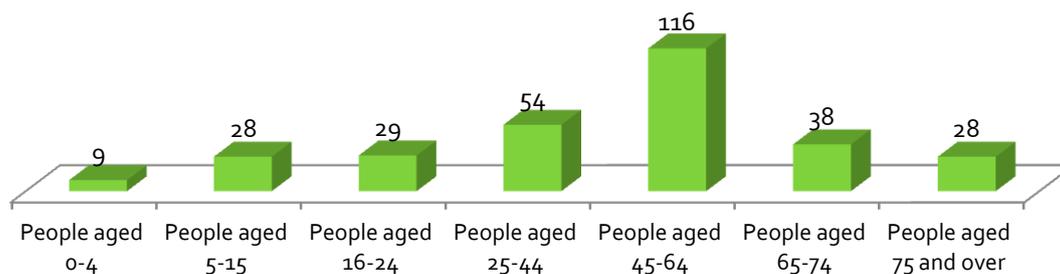
- supports its social and economic viability
 - protects or enhances its environmental quality and
 - is unlikely to lead to a significant increase in car travel
- and where for residential development it usually provides only for affordable housing to meet an identified need. Residential development in a small village is usually limited to conversions, infilling or the redevelopment of previously used land and small groups of dwellings.



Most homes in Holford are owner-occupied, see chart below for breakdown of tenure:



Holford Parish has a population of 302¹ of which 151 are male and 151 female, living in a total of 125 households. Age groups are as shown in the following table:



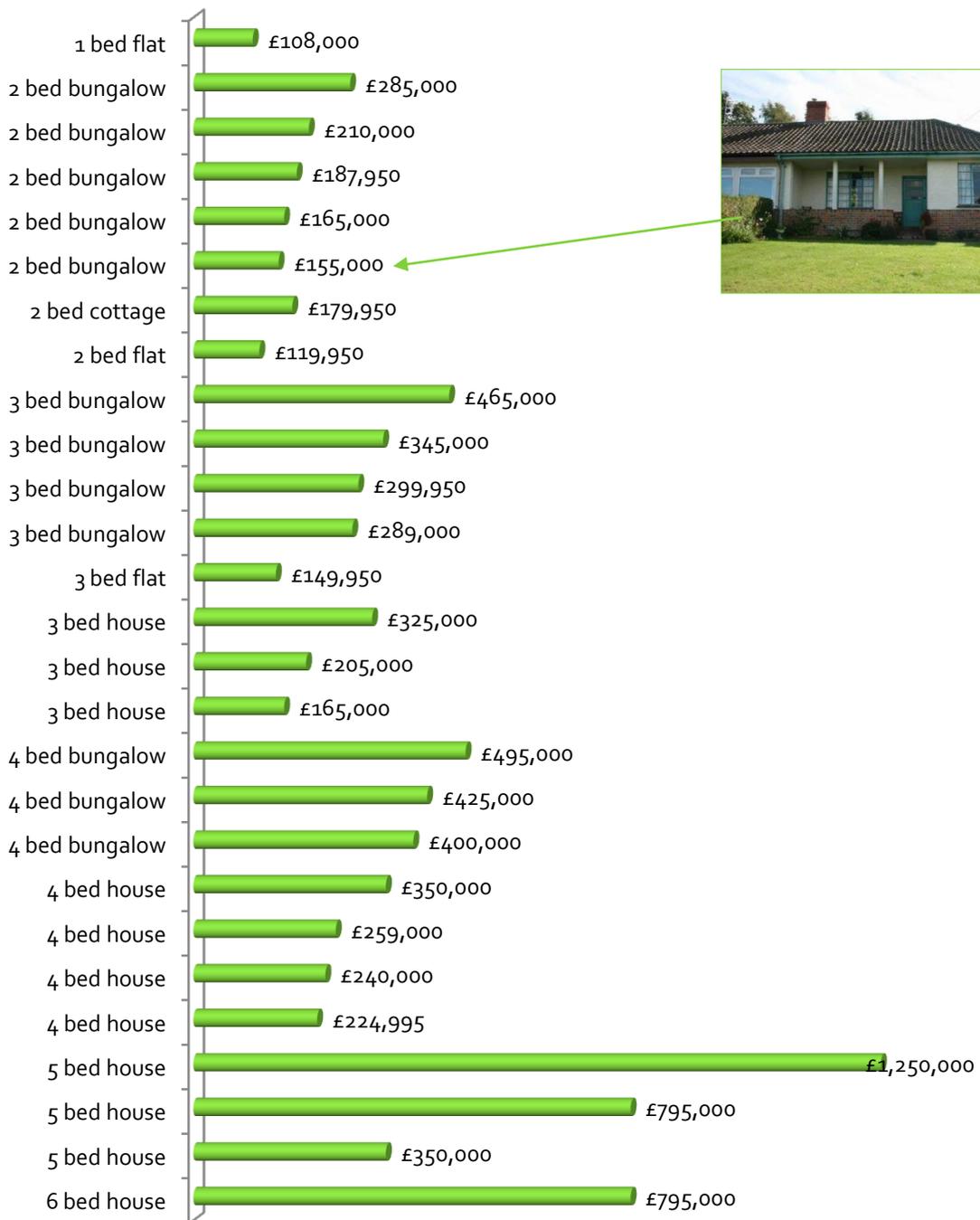
¹ Census 2001 : Office of National Statistics Last Updated: 28 April 2004

Local House Prices

As at April 2012 there were 27 residential properties for sale within 3 miles of Holford village. These ranged in price from £108,000 for a 1 bed flat to over £1million for a large house. The lowest price for a 2 bed house was a bungalow at £155,000 (in need of refurbishment). To obtain a mortgage on this property a household would need an income of £36,500 per annum with a £20,000 deposit or £40,000 with a £15,000 deposit².

Actual house prices* within 3 miles of Holford as at April 2012

*source=www.rightmove.co.uk

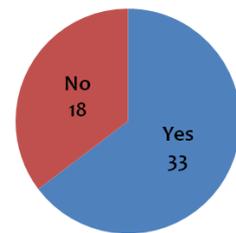


² Source = www.moneyextra.com

The Survey

Following discussions with Holford Parish Council, and with their agreement, initial housing needs survey forms were sent to all households in Holford Parish, along with a covering letter from the Rural Housing Enabler. Copies are appended to this report.

36.7% of surveys were returned. The first question asked whether people would be in favour of a small number of new homes being provided to help meet the proven housing needs of local people in the parish. The majority were in favour as shown in this chart →



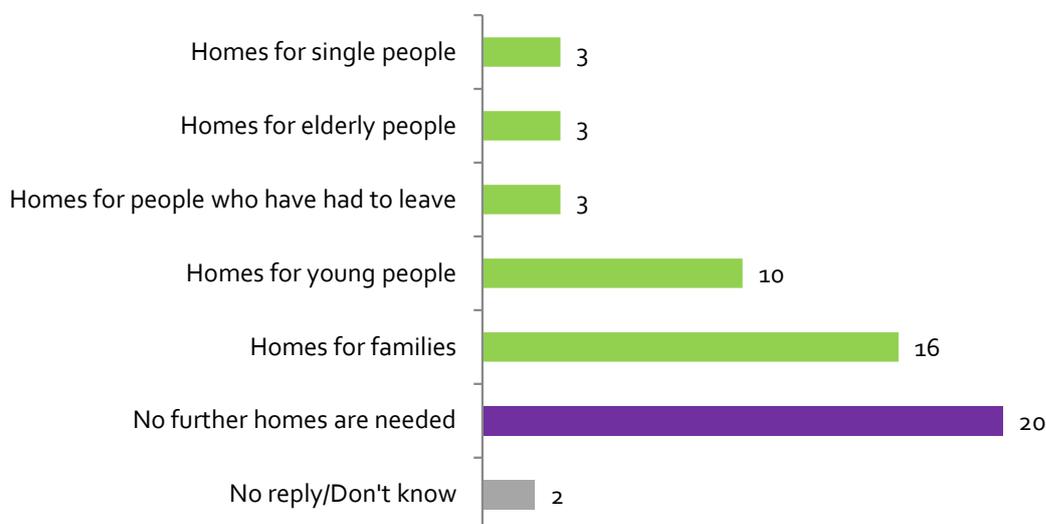
Comments were invited on three areas of interest:

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

Many comments were received and these are listed at the end of the report.

Perception of Housing Need

Respondents felt that those in greatest need for provision of housing in the parish were in the following groups:



Of the 33 returns, 9 households completed Part Two indicating that they were likely to move home locally in the next five years.

Their tenure situation was as follows:

- 3 renting privately and wishing to own their own home via self-build or conversion.
- 2 renting privately and wanting more secure tenancy
- 1 in tied accommodation wanting to own their own home via self-build or conversion, or to rent through housing association
- 3 owner occupied and looking to downsize

These nine households were subsequently sent a follow-up form requesting more detailed information on their housing needs and aspirations. One was returned completed. This was from a couple in their late twenties who had moved away to attend university but now returned to the area to be near family members. They are in rented accommodation and one of them works from home, so needs office space. They would like to buy but find local prices prohibitive. They want a home in which to raise a family. They would be interested in a self-build opportunity.

Rural Housing Enabler's Comments and Recommendations		
Summary of circumstances	Local connection	Housing required
1 Couple 60s-70s, owner occupation, will buy something suitable when ready.	None provided	Quality, open market flat.
2 In private rented (campsite), prefer self-build	None provided	3 bed self-build. Probably buying outside Holford.
3 Single young woman, possibly living with parents.		1-2 bed rented
4 Probably a family, in 3 bed rented. Would prefer owner occupied.		2-3 bed owner occupied
5 Probably a family, in 3 bed private rented, prefer HA rented		2 bed rented
6 Couple/family in 4 bed owner occupied, want 2 bed owner occupied		2 bed owner occupied
7 Probably older owner occupier, single/couple. In large 3 bed, prefer 1 bed.		1 bed owner occupied.
8 Couple/family in 3 bed tied housing, need 2 bed, consider most tenures.		2 bed ownership, self-build.
9 Couple/family, 3 bed owner occupied, interested in conversion opportunity.		2-3 bed conversion.
<p>More information on need and local connection. All phoned or emailed on 25 July 2012. Appears to be mainly a need for open market, conversion of existing buildings, self-build, with only two seeming to be affordable rented.</p> <p>Colin Savage Rural Housing Enabler</p>		



VIEWS RE. SMALL NUMBER OF NEW HOMES BEING BUILT

Comments by people who said “Yes” to the idea

Holford parish needs new development. It has stagnated over recent years. More affordable homes are needed for younger families. The village has too many older, wealthier residents.

To try and keep the local community together and younger people in the local area.

Not enough young people in Holford!

Providing they were sympathetic to the area and did not adversely affect current residents.

People who have lived in the area, who rent, cannot afford to buy their own homes.

It would be good to stay in the village. (I applied to convert a large garage but permission refused; also refused permission for small new build)

Only if they are built with the environment in mind → i.e. eco homes, solar panels and other related eco technology should be a top priority as well as designing them to have decent sized gardens – not the normal handkerchief sized gardens found on many new estates.

Any development must be sympathetic, small and not in any way to be detrimental to the beauty of the area.

This is a good area to bring up young children; many of the present residents are aged 50+ years, often caring for younger relatives and grandchildren who enjoy visiting this area. We have good schools but poor public transport.

Young people should not be forced out of their home area by lack of any suitable, affordable housing.

Most houses in the village are out of the price range of younger professional families and attract retired people. Would be good for the village to have a small number of good, attractive, 3-4 bed houses to meet this need.

I don't think there is a demand for them but if young families want to live here then a few homes would be good. But there is little work around here – Williton or Bridgwater would be better perhaps.

It is difficult to see where any houses could be built in the village of Holford.

A small number of houses whose inhabitants would easily integrate into the community, one hopes, especially those with a local connection.

The population appears to be ageing – with inevitable ability restrictions – some additional suitable housing would be welcome.



VIEWS RE. SMALL NUMBER OF NEW HOMES BEING BUILT

My son who was born and brought up here would like to live in Holford with his young family in affordable rented accommodation (anonymous ☹)

I have lived in Holford nearly 70 years and I have found that when it is said housing for local people they are usually let to complete outsiders. This is so unfair.

There is a lack of transport in this village for the use of people who need to take up employment, also lack of jobs which prevent many people from living here. Much of our County Council housing has been sold.

Many young people have to leave the area due to the high cost of housing and low paid work. Young families also need affordable housing in the area. A mixed age community is a healthy community.

“No” 

Adequate housing stock both council and housing association exist in Holford.

Holford is a small, rural village. Apart from converting existing buildings into flats/affordable homes, I feel to add new buildings would ruin the village.

Because people from way outside the area are moved into the houses and half of them are on the Dole and have no intention of working and it is not right.

More housing would spoil Holford, noise and light pollution, extra traffic. Holford is not a suitable site for more houses as too far away from shops, schools and other amenities.

Greenbelt – conservation area.

Holford has reached its capacity for a small village. There are few amenities – only a pub. Not much to attract new people. And no street lights! Also it SSI, AONB and parts are a conservation area.

There are no shops, no post office, no garage and few jobs in the village. We don't feel it needs to be developed at all.

A new housing development would be totally out of character for Holford. There is no local employment, regular bus service, schooling or shops, so extra housing would increase the traffic in the narrow country lanes.

- (1) There is no definition here of “local”.
- (2) If there ever are any children of young people there is nothing here or them – they move to Bristol or London.

We had some fairly recently and there does not need to be any more.

No facilities, i.e. shop – post office – school. All a bus or car ride away. Bus timetable – few connections. Train station 11/15 miles – M5 18 miles. We have a conservation area and we are in AONB.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS

More employment opportunities would/might enable us to stay in this area.

A shop.

If new homes are built, open spaces for children to play in should be included.

Protection for Holford silk mills.

Housing to keep the village alive and then perhaps a shop again.

Local shop

Employment opportunities.

A local shop – but doubt that would be economically viable, and Kilve and Nether Stowey are close by.

Community is already adequately catered for in respect of “community buildings”. This is not a parish in which employment is realistically expected to significantly exceed present levels.

The silk mill site becoming a nature reserve.

Community run café and shop.

Post Office/shop.

Tennis court and soccer pitch

Woodland exercises course.

A shop.

A good balance already exists.

There are no facilities in Holford.

A slightly larger, modern village hall.

The village hall is now out-dated and needs replacing.

A community shop – maybe part of the pub?

Tennis court!



SITE SUGGESTIONS

Land along Portway Lane.

National Trust buildings adjacent to Holford Church.

The Glebe Field opposite the Church would be ideal for a number of new homes – flat land, good access, in the centre of the village.

Glebe Field / National Trust land in the middle of the village

South Lane, Nether Stowey.
Field next to a small cul-de-sac of social housing.

Portway Lane (land owned, I think, by the Fairfield Estate)

To the rear of existing modern development on the north side of A39.

Expand Green Close housing.

Most of the land is protected in this area. The area N.E. of the A39 might be available.

Green Close / land area possibly (?)

Plenty of forest/woodland areas around the “village green”.

On the west side of the A39, opposite the cricket green / orchard?

If land can be purchased from land owner, alongside the village hall site may be suitable.

I suspect that near Portway (4 new houses a few years ago) has already been earmarked as the new (Portway) development is numbered from the far end leaving open fields next to no. 4 (apart from hard standing area)

In the orchard next to the village hall.

Possible site next to the village hall, access from Greenway or main road.



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset.TA22 9HL

☎ (01398) 322249 ✉ cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

1st February 2012

Dear Sir or Madam

Re. Housing in Holford

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 Holford 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 form. If you are looking for somewhere to buy or to rent 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 form back to us before the end of February. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely

COLIN SAVAGE

Rural Housing Enabler

Enc.



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY – HOLFORD

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? *(Please tick one)*

Homes for young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homes for elderly people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for families	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homes for single people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for people with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	No further homes are needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for people who have had to leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>

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 other side of this form.

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

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS		
Your present home is: <i>(please mark x)</i>		Type of home you need: <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>	

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

CONTACT DETAILS	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number/s:	
E-mail address:	
Date form completed:	

The Rural Housing Project will contact you in due course for further details.



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset.TA22 9HL

☎ (01398) 322249 ✉ cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

16 March 2012

Dear

Thank you very much for completing and returning the housing needs survey we sent out recently.

You filled in Section 2 for people likely to need to move in the next five years, and we are therefore enclosing a further form designed to give us the information we need to try and help as many local people as possible to live in a home that is the right size and location for their needs. Please complete and return this as soon as possible. We attach a photocopy of your first form, for your reference.

All information received will be stored confidentially and used to work out what can be provided in terms of development to benefit the community. We will get in touch if a housing scheme is brought forward that could meet your requirement.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Colin Savage

Colin Savage
Rural Housing Enabler

Enc.



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

FOLLOW-UP HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY FORM

1. WHO NEEDS HOUSING?

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

Living at present home: (please tick)	Relationship to you (e.g. wife, partner, son)	Age	Male/Female (M/F)	Will live at the home you need: (please tick)
	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 [please explain]			

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 st	2 nd	3 rd
<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

Can you demonstrate that you have a real need to live locally because you have permanent employment?

Yes / No

Please describe the nature of that work and why you need to live nearby:

Where is your place of work?

Post code:

If you work from home, does your new housing need to take account of this? If so, please provide more detail:

d. To provide care or support

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?

Yes / No

Please state their relationship to you: _____
and provide their addresses in 2b 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 need different housing because of age or health reasons? Please explain:

g. Do you have any other relevant local connection to the area? If so, please describe:

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):

£.....

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?

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

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

Colin Savage, Rural Housing Enabler
Exmoor House, Dulverton. TA22 9HL

01398 322249 cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk