

Rural Alliance Parishes Housing Needs Report



East Down



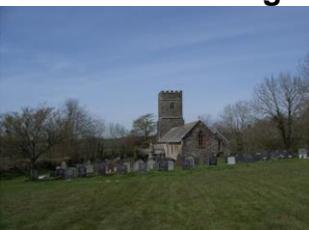
Bratton Fleming



Challacombe



Goodleigh



Loxhore



Arlington



Shirwell



Stoke Rivers



Marwood

**Produced by: Devon Communities Together
On behalf of: Rural Alliance Parishes
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1 Executive Summary

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for 25 affordable homes within the next 5 years.

Key findings

Affordability

- The survey found 19 households in housing need who could not afford to buy in the open market.
- 6 additional replies were received by households on Devon Home Choice who had not completed the survey but were eligible for affordable housing in the parish.

Tenure

- 16 of the households in need qualified for affordable housing for rent
- 9 may be able to afford a low cost home ownership property

Size of Property Required

- 15 x 1 or 2 bedroom properties for singles or couples
- 8 x 2 bedroom properties for families
- 1 x 4 bedroom property for a family
- 1 x 5 bedroom property for a family

Other Findings

- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. 1617 surveys were delivered and 418 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 26%.
- 69% of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. 71 households did not answer this question.
- The Part 2 survey of older people identified 17 households who want to move within the 9 parishes within the next five years. The preference for many of these was for smaller, more manageable homes, not specifically designed for older people. Only 5 of these required affordable homes, the others being owner-occupiers or in one case, failing the local connection for 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 Rural Alliance parishes and those wishing to return.
- To establish the general level of support for new homes in the 9 parishes with an emphasis on homes for local people with housing needs.
- To establish the views of the whole community on future housing in the area.
- To assist the Parish Councils and District Council with future planning for this group of parishes.

3. Survey history, methodology and response

3.1 History

The 9 parishes making up the Rural Alliance decided to group together to provide affordable housing in their area. All Parish Councils were in agreement and it was decided to carry out a housing need survey as the first step in the process. The Rural Housing Enabler attended a number of meetings with the group and survey forms were then finalised. 1617 forms were posted to every known household in the survey area. Parishioners were able to return the survey in a reply paid envelope. The deadline for the return of the survey was 13th May 2019.

3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology approved by local planners. Background notes on the methodology can be obtained from the Rural Housing Enabler.

The survey form was in 3 parts. The first section asked a limited number of questions about the type of household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents. The third 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 their 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. A reminder was also sent to those on the Devon Home Choice register who live in the surveyed area who did not complete a survey form.

3.3 Response

- 417 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 26% of all dwellings surveyed. This is an average response rate and includes a good cross section of the community.
- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. Out of the 417 returned surveys, 48 were returned with Part 3 completed.
- All of the respondents live in 1 of the 9 parishes with the exception of 1 who lives in Combe Martin

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 the Rural Alliance parishes

4.1 Rural Alliance parishes

The Rural Alliance consists of 11 parishes - Kentisbury, Trentishoe, Arlington, Bratton Fleming, Challacombe, East Down, Goodleigh, Loxhore, Marwood, Shirwell and Stoke Rivers. However, Kentisbury and Trentishoe are not included in this survey as they have recently been surveyed with Parracombe and Martinhoe.



All of the parishes are located in the North Devon District Council area, to the north of Barnstaple. The parishes vary in size from the largest, Bratton Fleming, which has a population of 1069 to the smallest parish of Challacombe which has a population of 141. One of the parishes, Challacombe, also lies within the Exmoor National Park.

Due to their location, the villages have limited public transport links with Arlington and Shirwell having a once daily service linking them to Lynton/Lynmouth and Barnstaple (not Sundays). Bratton Fleming, Goodleigh and Loxhore benefit from more frequent bus services also to Lynton/Lynmouth and Barnstaple (not Sundays). There are no bus services to Challacombe, East Down, Marwood or Stoke Rivers.

Arlington

Arlington is a small rural parish located in North Devon. Due to its size, there are few amenities: no schools, no post office and no village hall. There is a church and a large stately home owned by the National Trust, Arlington Court. The parish has a high proportion of leased and rented houses as a consequence of the National Trust presence.

Bratton Fleming

The parish of Bratton Fleming is located on the fringe of Exmoor and is by far the largest village in the Rural Alliance. It has a church, primary school, village hall, village shop, a mobile Post Office service which visits 4 times a week and a youth club. There is a sports ground in the village and Exmoor Zoo is located in Bratton Fleming.

Challacombe

The parish of Challacombe is located in Exmoor at the edge of North Devon, on the Somerset border. It has 2 places of worship, a public house, a Post Office and stores, Exmoor Information Centre and a petrol station.

East Down

The parish of East Down is made up a number of small hamlets: Ashelford, Bugford, Churchill, Clifton, East Down, Holwell, Indicott, Okewill, Shortacombe and Stonecombe. Amenities include a church, a village hall, and a public house.

Goodleigh

The parish of Goodleigh contains the main village and two outlying hamlets at Northleigh and Snapper. Its amenities include a church and a Methodist chapel, a post office and stores, a primary school and a public house. It has a village hall that is very well used.

Loxhore

Loxhore has few amenities other than a village hall, a church and a chapel. There are 3 main hamlets - Loxhore Cott, Lower Loxhore and Loxhore Town - as well as a number of outlying working farms.

Marwood

The parish of Marwood has a relatively large population of over 800 that is dispersed across several small settlements. The village has a primary school that doubles as a community centre and 2 places of worship.

Shirwell

The village of Shirwell has a parish church, primary school, village store. The community is well served with amenities for young people, including a playgroup, primary school and youth club.

Stoke Rivers

Stoke Rivers parish consists of a village with a number of outlying farms. The village has a Parish Church and a small Baptist Chapel. There is also a small village hall.

4.2 Population Figures

In the 2011 census the usually resident populations of the 9 parishes were recorded as in the table below. Population figures for the parish of Arlington were included in the figures for Loxhore. The reason for this is not known. There are 48 properties with no usual resident which are either empty properties, second homes or holiday lets.

Table 1

Parish	Number of dwellings	Usually resident population
Bratton Fleming	457	1069
Challacombe	69	141
East Down	98	222
Goodleigh	183	450
Loxhore & Arlington	125	304
Marwood	359	801
Shirwell	175	404
Stoke Rivers	70	153
Total	1411	3544

4.3 Type of Accommodation

In the 2011 Census the types of accommodation in the 9 parishes was broken down as in Table 2 below. The largest category is detached houses or bungalows, which makes up 61% of the total figure. There are very few flats (less than 2% of the total).

Table 2

Parish	Detached house/bungalow	Semi-detached house/bungalow	Terraced house/bungalow	Flat	Caravan / mobile home	Total
Bratton Fleming	210	112	85	6	7	420
Challacombe	37	10	4	1	0	52
East Down	60	21	3	2	0	86
Goodleigh	92	52	21	4	2	171
Loxhore & Arlington	85	22	3	2	3	115
Marwood	197	74	18	8	1	298
Shirwell	105	42	9	3	1	160
Stoke Rivers	47	10	2	0	2	61
Total	833	343	145	26	16	1363¹

4.4 Bedroom numbers

In the 2011 Census the number of bedrooms per dwelling was broken down as in Table 3 below. The vast majority of homes have between 2 and 3 bedrooms with very few smaller 1 bedroom properties.

Table 3

Parish	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5 or more	Total
Bratton Fleming	16	100	183	88	33	420
Challacombe	2	9	20	12	9	52
East Down	1	18	24	23	20	86
Goodleigh	5	36	82	27	21	171
Loxhore & Arlington	1	14	49	32	19	115
Marwood	10	33	107	88	60	298
Shirwell	5	32	60	39	24	160
Stoke Rivers	2	7	21	21	10	61
Total	42	249	546	330	196	1363

When viewed together these tables show that there is a lack of smaller, cheaper accommodation in the 9 parishes with detached dwellings and properties of 3 bedrooms plus being the most prolific.

4.5 Property Prices and Rent

In the last 2 years the Land Registry has recorded 65 property sales in the 9 parishes. The average price of properties was £383,000. Prices ranged from £116,000 for a one bedroom leasehold flat to £985,000 for a 6 bedroom house.

¹ The total number of dwellings in Table 2 is 1,363 as opposed to the number of dwellings in Table 1 which is 1,411. This is because the figures on accommodation type do not include empty properties. This is also the case in Table 3.

There are currently 39 property listings on the Rightmove website across the 9 parishes. 17 of these are in Bratton Fleming. The cheapest house on the market at the moment is a 2 bedroom property for £219,000 in Goodleigh. This is the only house for sale under £250,000.²

To assess whether a household can afford to buy in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. This is done by comparing information on recent house sales and homes currently on the open market. Average rents are identified by comparing local private rents gained from the housing need survey with rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical rents to assess affordability. There were only 5 properties advertised for rent on the open market at the time of writing this report therefore data has been estimated from surrounding rural areas.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Size	Property price	Weekly rent
1 bedroom	£150,000	£115
2 bedroom	£200,000	£125
3 bedroom	£250,000	£140

There are currently 60 council/housing association owned properties in the Rural Alliance parishes. These are broken down by bedroom size in the table below.

Table 5

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	Total
13	27	19	1	60

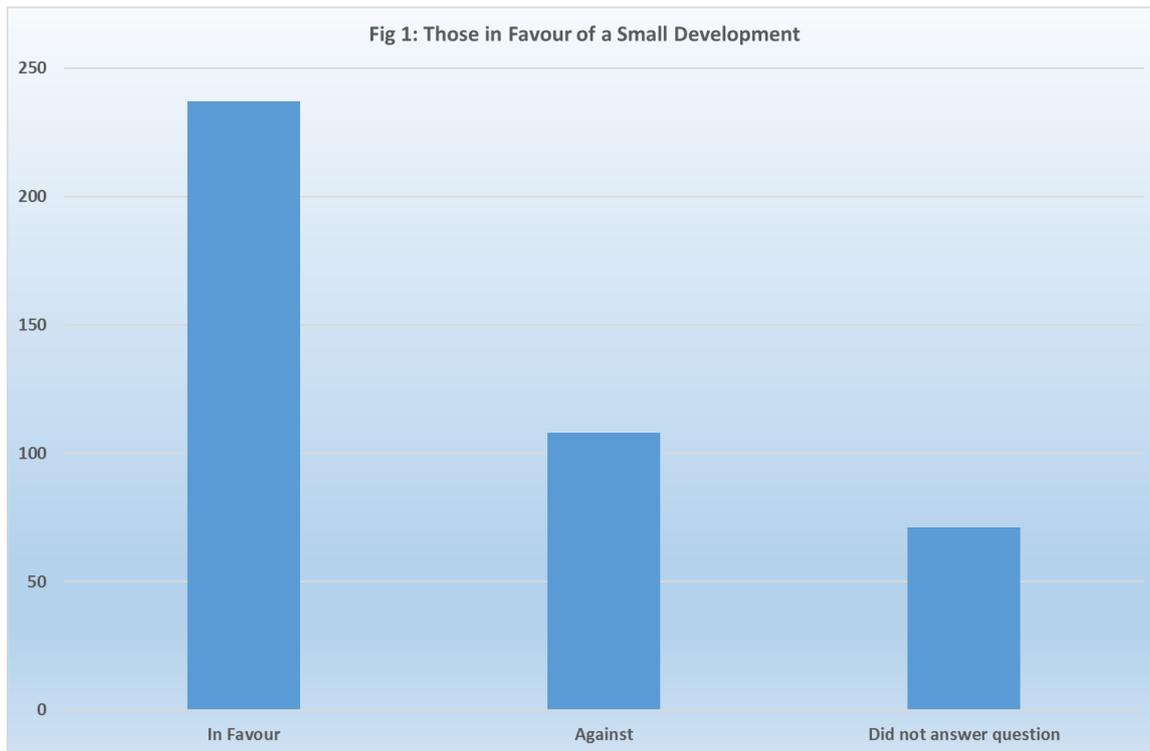
9 have been let in the last 2 years. 6 of these are in Bratton Fleming, 2 in Marwood and 1 in Goodleigh. Therefore lettings of current affordable housing stock could have a small impact on future need figures.

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. 69% of those answering the question said they would be in favour. 31% said they were against any development. It should be noted that 71 households did not respond to this question and 1 household ticked both boxes. Fig.1 below shows the breakdown.

² Information correct as of 20/5/19



5.2 Site suggestions and general comments

121 individuals made suggestions for possible housing sites within the survey area and made more general comments about housing in the area. These suggestions and comments will be made available to the Parish Councils on a separate document.

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

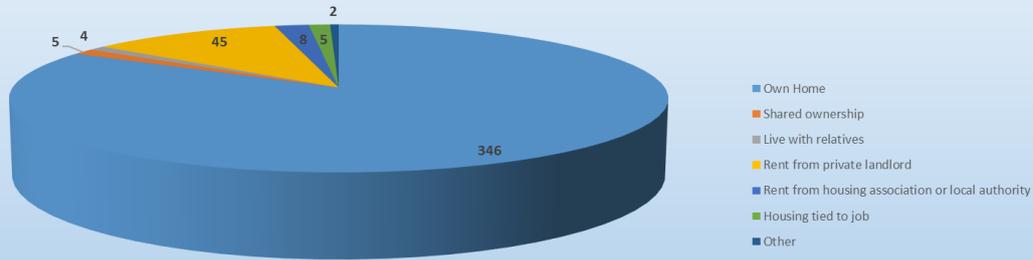
Respondents were asked if they knew of anybody who had had to leave the parish in the last 5 years due to lack of suitable housing.

- 42 households replied that they did know of someone

5.4 Current tenure

Of the 415 respondents who provided details, 346 (83%) own their own home, 45 (11%) rent from a private landlord, 8 (2%) rent from a housing association, 5 (1%) live in a shared ownership property, 5 (1%) live in housing tied to their job, 4 (1%) live with relatives and 2 (1%) ticked 'other' with no further details. Figure 2 below shows the breakdown of tenure.

Fig 2: Current Tenure



5.5 Main or second home

7 of the respondents were second home owners.

5.6 Parish of Residence

Respondents were asked which parish they lived in. All but one of the households surveyed lived in 1 of the 9 Rural alliance parishes. The breakdown is shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Parish	Number
Bratton Fleming	118
Marwood	83
Goodleigh	68
Shirwell	39
East Down	26
Loxhore	26
Stoke Rivers	24
Challacombe	16
Arlington	15
Combe Martin	1
Total	416

5.7 Number of bedrooms in current home

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms their current home has. The replies are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Number of bedrooms	1	2	3	4+
Respondents	8	69	171	161

5.8 Future plans

Respondents were asked whether they intended to move home within the next 5 years. If they answered Yes to this question they were asked to complete Part 3 of the form.

- 39 households stated they did intend to move within the next 5 years

5.9 Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

Respondents were asked whether they would consider becoming a member of a CLT.

- 24 households showed an interest and left contact details.

6. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 2 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 and by 25% in North Devon during that period.

495 people answered Part 2 of the survey from 310 households with at least one member over the age of 55. This is 75% of the total number of households who responded.

6.1 Age of Respondents to Part 2 survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. As can be seen in Table 8 below, the majority of those who replied (78%) were aged between 55 and 75.

Table 8

Age Group	55-65	66-75	76-85	Over 85
Number	195	190	90	20

6.2 Future Housing Plans

Households were asked about their future housing plans.

- 54 households plan to move within the next five years. Of these, 16 would like to remain in the Rural Alliance parishes.
- 4 of these 16 households may need affordable housing.
- 52 further households expect to move after five years.
- 201 have no plans to move at the moment.
- 3 households did not answer the question.

6.3 Adaptability of current home

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

- 201 respondents said that their home was adaptable
- 91 respondents said that their home was not adaptable

6.4 Type of Accommodation preferred by older persons

Older households were asked what type of accommodation they may need in the future. The majority preferred a home better suited to their needs but not designed for older people. Preferences are shown in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons	Number
Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people	92
Home specially designed for older people	22
Residential / nursing home	8

6.5 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 reasons are listed below in Table 10.

Table 10

Most important consideration	Number
Need to downsize to a smaller more manageable home	74
Cheaper running costs	60
Proximity to public transport	54
Proximity to shops/amenities	52
Need to be near family / carers	33
Need one level for medical reasons	31

The two most important considerations were that older persons wished to move to a smaller, more manageable property with cheaper running costs.

6.6 Conclusion – Older Persons Needs

The older persons' survey shows that the majority of households (65%) have no plans to move home. However, the parish does have a number of older households who wish to downsize to smaller accommodation that is easier to maintain, has lower running costs and is closer to amenities and support.

4 of the 16 households that expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in the Rural Alliance parishes believe they will need affordable housing. The remaining 12 households would require open market housing. Small open market bungalows, flats and houses can be built, however, developers who build open market homes do not usually attach any kind of local connection covenant as this reduces the value of the homes. This means that any open market properties cannot be guaranteed for local people.

Meeting the housing needs of this group of people should be given further consideration.

7. Assessment of those wishing to move to a new home in the Rural Alliance parishes within the next 5 years

Part 3 of the survey was aimed at those who expect to need to move home within the next 5 years and remain in The Rural Alliance parishes. 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 are eligible for both open market and affordable housing in the parish and the size, tenure and type of homes required.

39 households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in the Rural Alliance parishes, however 49 completed Part 3 of the survey. The needs of these 49 households have been included in this section of the survey.

7.1 Minimum bedroom requirement

Respondents were asked the minimum number of bedrooms they would require in their new home. Table 11 below shows the breakdown. It should be noted that 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.

Table 11

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom	5 bedroom
5	23	13	5	1

7.2 Timescales for moving

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify when they would need to move.

- 3 households indicated a current need to move
- 16 households indicated a need to move within the next 1-3 years
- 29 households indicated a need to move within the next 3 - 5 years
- 1 did not specify a timescale

7.3 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. The results are shown in table 12 below. Respondents could choose more than one option.

Table 12

Shared ownership/ equity	Affordable housing for rent	Self-build	Discount Market	Rent to Buy	Open market
7	15	16	8	14	22

7.4 Reasons for moving

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

Table 13 overleaf shows why households need to move.

Table 13

Reason for wishing to move	No of respondents
Need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms	22
Struggling to afford current home	18
Need to move for health/mobility reasons	12
Need to move to a home with more bedrooms	8
Wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection	4

Will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately	3
Home is in poor condition	3
Private tenancy ending	2
Need to move for work	2
Sharing facilities with someone who is not going to be housed with you	1
Other (want to buy own home, want to self-build, want renewable energy, retirement, nearer family)	10

7.5 Budget for new home

Respondents who wished to purchase a home were asked about their budget. Table 14 below shows the breakdown of replies.

Table 14

£150,000 - £200,000	£200,000 - £250,000	£250,000 - £300,000	£350,000 +
18	5	3	7

8. 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.

8.1 Exclusions

All 49 of the households who completed Part 3 of the form have been assessed and 27 have been excluded for the following reasons:-

- 2 could afford to buy on the open market and wanted to do so
- 1 was under 16 so does not currently qualify for affordable housing
- 24 already own their own home and have the funds to buy on the open market so do not qualify for affordable housing

This leaves 22 who would qualify for affordable housing.

8.2 Local Connection

In order to qualify for affordable housing, respondents must have a local connection to the Rural Alliance parishes. Local connection criteria are set out by the local authority.

A household has a local connection to an area if:

- at least one adult in the household was resident continuously in the Parish for a minimum of five years immediately prior to occupation;
- at least one adult of the household was resident in the Parish for five years within the previous ten years immediately prior to occupation;
- at least one parent, guardian, child or sibling of at least one adult in the household, has been resident in the parish for a minimum of 5 years immediately prior to occupation; or
- at least one adult in the household has been in continuous employment for at least 16 hours a week in the parish for at least five years immediately prior to occupation.

3 of the respondents do not have this connection. This leaves 19 households who may qualify for affordable housing.

8.3 Preferred housing tenure

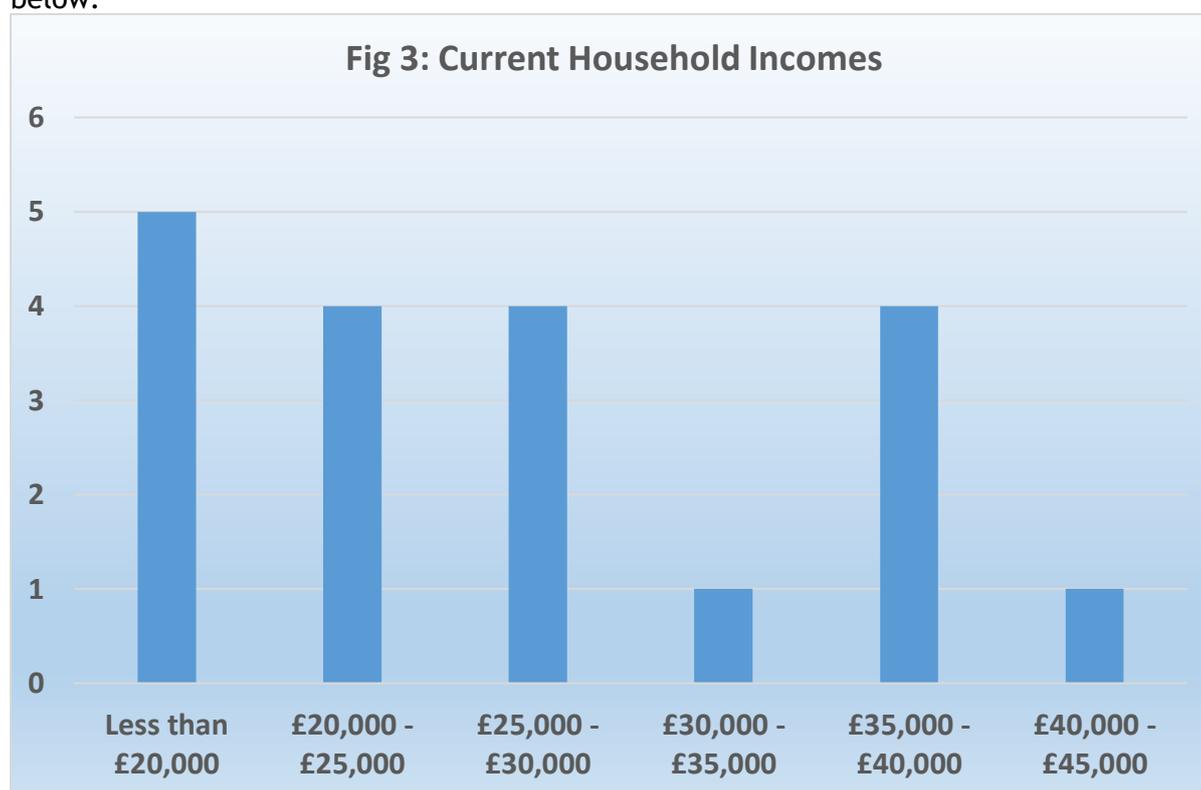
The survey also asked households who had a housing need which tenure of housing they were interested in. Respondents could give more than one option. The responses are listed in Table 15 below.

Table 15

Type of housing	Interested
Shared ownership/equity	4
Affordable housing for rent	12
Self-build	4
Discounted market sale	4
Rent to buy	9

8.4 Housing Options

The housing options available to the 19 households in need are now given consideration. Respondents provided information on income and savings which allows an assessment of what the household can afford to pay for their accommodation. These incomes are shown in Figure 3 below.



Given the financial circumstances of the households in need, 7 may be able to afford some form of low cost ownership (shared ownership, discount market or affordable self-build) but the other 12 would require affordable housing for rent.

8.5 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. Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. There are a total of 35 households resident in the 9 parishes registered on Devon Home Choice. Details are set out below. Numbers by specific parish are included on Appendix B.

Table 16

Devon Home Choice band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Band A (Emergency need)	0	0	0	0	0
Band B (High)	1	0	0	0	1
Band C (Medium)	1	1	2	1	5
Band D (Low)	12	1	1	0	14
Band E (No Housing Need)	11	2	2	0	15
Total	25	4	5	1	35

Only 2 of the households who are registered on Devon Home Choice completed the survey and indicated a wish to move away. Due to this apparent disparity, all those who are registered with Devon Home Choice and living within the parishes were contacted separately by letter and a further 10 replies were received. 6 of these did want and qualified for affordable housing in the parish. These have been added to the final numbers, giving a total need of 25.

8.6 Housing Mix

The suggested mix of housing is shown in Table 17 below. This takes account of the family makeup as declared on the survey form and the type of housing required.

Table 17

Type of Property	Affordable Housing for Rent	Low cost home ownership	Totals
1 or 2 bedroom property for single people	8	4	12
1 or 2 bedroom property for couples	1	2	3
2 bedroom property for families	6	2	8
4 bedroom property for families	0	1	1
5 bedroom property for families	1	0	1
Totals	16	9	25

2 households require level access.

9. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for the Rural Alliance parishes

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. However, given the level of response to the survey, and in spite of the potential for circumstances to change, the Parish Council can feel confident in the results of this survey. The survey has identified a need in the near future for 25 units of affordable housing.

Any further action taken towards meeting this housing need will require the support of the Parish Council and wider community consultation. Should the Parish Council wish to address the identified housing need, the Rural Housing Enablers are available to help identify potential sites, conduct site appraisals and facilitate the process of identifying potential development partners as well as any other ongoing assistance that may be required.

As the needs of households are constantly evolving 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 will

normally be necessary to re-survey the parish before any further development to address local needs is considered.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parish Council:

- **Note this report**
- **Consider the options for addressing the need for 25 affordable homes.**

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