



BUNNY

HOUSING NEEDS

SURVEY

Midlands Rural Housing
in partnership with
Rushcliffe Borough Council
and Bunny Parish Council
May 2008



Thank you to the residents of Bunny parish for their help and support with this survey.



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Executive Summary

Midlands Rural Housing completed a Housing Needs Survey in Bunny during February 2008, to assess the housing need in the parish. As well as requesting specific housing information, the survey asks some general questions relating to the quality of life in the parish.

Midlands Rural Housing works with local authorities and other partners to increase the availability of affordable homes for local people. Affordable housing may be provided through both rental and shared ownership schemes and is for people with a strong connection to the parish.

Bunny is an affluent community, with a high proportion of owner-occupied, family housing. House prices are higher than average and there is little affordable accommodation available for either rent or purchase.

The population is young and includes a high proportion of families with children under 16. The high cost of housing, combined with a lack of facilities and poor public transport connections, will adversely affect the future generation's ability to remain in Bunny and may have an effect on the future sustainability of the parish.

Seven respondents have a need for affordable housing, mainly young people seeking an independent, affordable lifestyle. Several are interested in shared ownership as a way of entering the housing market.

The resulting breakdown is:-

- 3 x 2-bed houses-----for shared ownership**
- 3 x 2-bed houses-----for rent**

- 1 x 3-bed house-----for shared ownership**

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of seven affordable dwellings should be considered.



1. Introduction

Midlands Rural Housing works with local authorities and other partners to increase the availability of affordable homes for local people in rural areas. In 2005 MRH established the Trent Valley Partnership to work closely with authorities in the East Midlands region.

Rushcliffe Borough Council has identified the Trent Valley Partnership as their preferred partner, for the purpose of undertaking Housing Needs Studies in rural villages and identifying opportunities for the development of affordable housing within the district. Trent Valley Partnership is now undertaking the fourth year of a programme of studies on behalf of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Bunny currently has a population of 613 (2001 Census), in 227 households. 267 survey forms were produced for distribution to residents throughout the parish.

During January 2008, Midlands Rural Housing and Bunny Parish Council worked together to deliver a Housing Needs Survey form to every household in the village. The return date for the survey was 28th February 2008 and returns were made via a 'Freepost' envelope directly to Midlands Rural Housing.

2. Purpose of the Survey

The aim of the survey was to assess the current and future housing needs in the parish of Bunny, in order to provide Rushcliffe Borough Council with the information it requires to formulate plans and anticipate future housing requirements.



3. Housing Costs

Property Values: Oct - Dec 2007 - Rushcliffe

	Av Detached	Av Semi	Av Terrace	Av Flat	Av Overall Price	No. Of Sales
	£	£	£	£	£	
East Midlands	252,943	147,882	124,837	122,624	171,559	21,880
Nottinghamshire	234,447	137,085	111,879	115,552	159,451	3,797
Rushcliffe	285,793	198,601	157,860	129,614	220,291	494

Source: Land Registry

The table above provides an indication of the property prices within the East Midlands Region, the county of Nottinghamshire and Rushcliffe Borough. It shows that, across the board, prices in Rushcliffe are considerably higher than elsewhere in the region. A family wanting to purchase an average terrace house would need to be earning approximately £40,000 per annum to secure a mortgage.

Data from the Land Registry shows the following average house prices in Bunny (Postcode NG11 6Q*), based on sales between July 2006 – December 2007.

Detached - £351,743 (Based on 8 sales)

Semi-Detached – £216,331 (Based on 11 sales)

Terraced - £143,000 (Based on 1 sale)

Overall - £266,829 (Based on 20 sales)

As can be seen from a comparison with the previous table, house prices in Bunny are higher than in Rushcliffe as a whole and would be prohibitively expensive for people on low incomes.



4. Availability of Affordable Housing in Rushcliffe

Rushcliffe Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2004-2007 (Nov. 2005), Sections A4 and A5, outlines the need for more affordable housing within the borough.

It shows that not only are open market values prohibitively high, but also that the levels of social rented properties available from Registered Social Landlords are well below the national averages for England and Wales.

Section A8.1 of the Housing Strategy goes on to show that in the 10 year period from 1995-2005, the number of affordable rented properties in the borough has reduced by 649 due to the Right to Buy scheme and 224 shared ownership properties have been lost through 'stair casing' up to full ownership.

5. Planning Context

Planning policy at national, regional and local levels imposes strict restraints on new housing development in rural areas. However in exceptional circumstances, consideration for affordable housing in rural areas, where the Council is satisfied that local need exists, may be permitted.

Section A8: Affordable Housing Development, in Rushcliffe Borough Council's Housing Strategy 2004-2007 (Nov. 2005), outlines the means by which local communities can engage with the planning process to bring about developments that meet their 'local' housing needs.

Section A8 encourages communities to explore their housing needs, ideally as part of a parish plan or equivalent. It is anticipated that, in due course, this Housing Needs Survey will form an integral part of a Parish Plan for Bunny that will be adopted by the Borough Council.

The provision of any housing that may be provided as a result of this survey would be subject to a planning condition (known as an S106 agreement) being placed on the development. This has the effect of limiting occupation of the properties to people with a strong local connection who have exceptional personal reasons for residing there, or are required to work in the locality and are in housing need.



6. Respondents' Details

The following sections of this report detail the responses from the questionnaires distributed and returned during February 2008, in Bunny parish.

Respondents individual details have been kept confidential and any identifiable attributes have not been included in the results. Any comments that have been made may also have been edited so as not to identify individual circumstances.

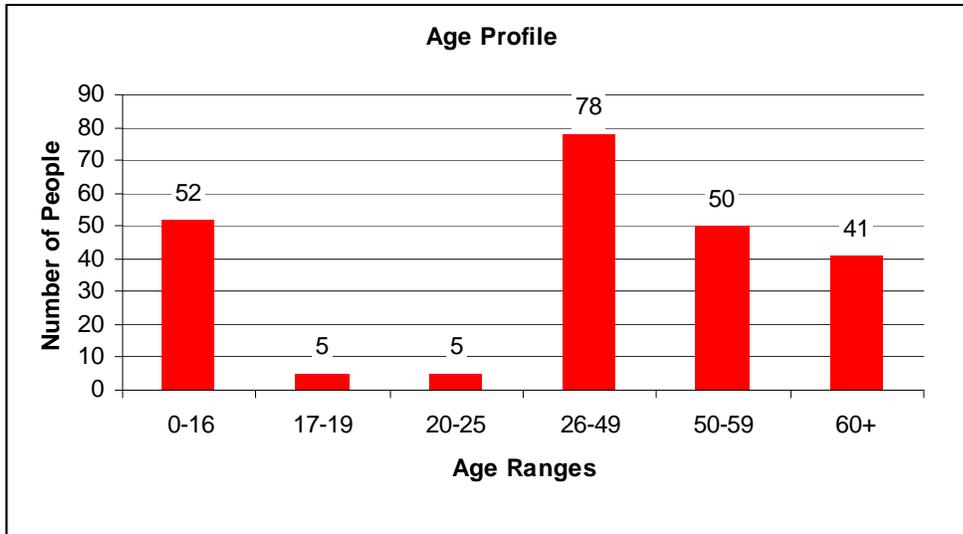
The following results are a snapshot in time and provide the village and Rushcliffe Borough Council with an insight into the parish in terms of current housing need, the desirability of the village as a place to live, and the current level of facilities serving the local community.

A total of 92 survey forms were received giving a return rate of 34%. This is considered a good response, taking into consideration that only people who have a housing need, or those who are interested in commenting on local matters, are likely to respond.

6.1 Age Profile

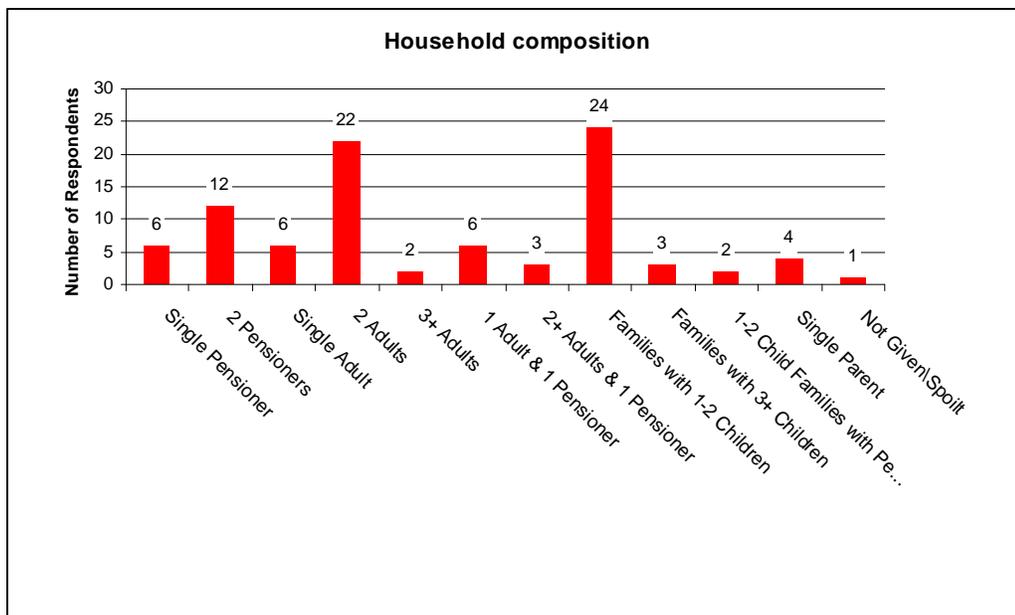
The chart overleaf shows the age profile of the 231 people captured on the 92 survey forms returned. The responses show that the largest single group of the population in Bunny, representing 34%, are people between 26-49 years of age.

There are a substantial number of families with young children. Children under 16 form 23% of the population. This shows that a young generation is up and coming and their ability to remain in Bunny in the long-term will almost certainly depend on the availability of affordable housing within the parish.



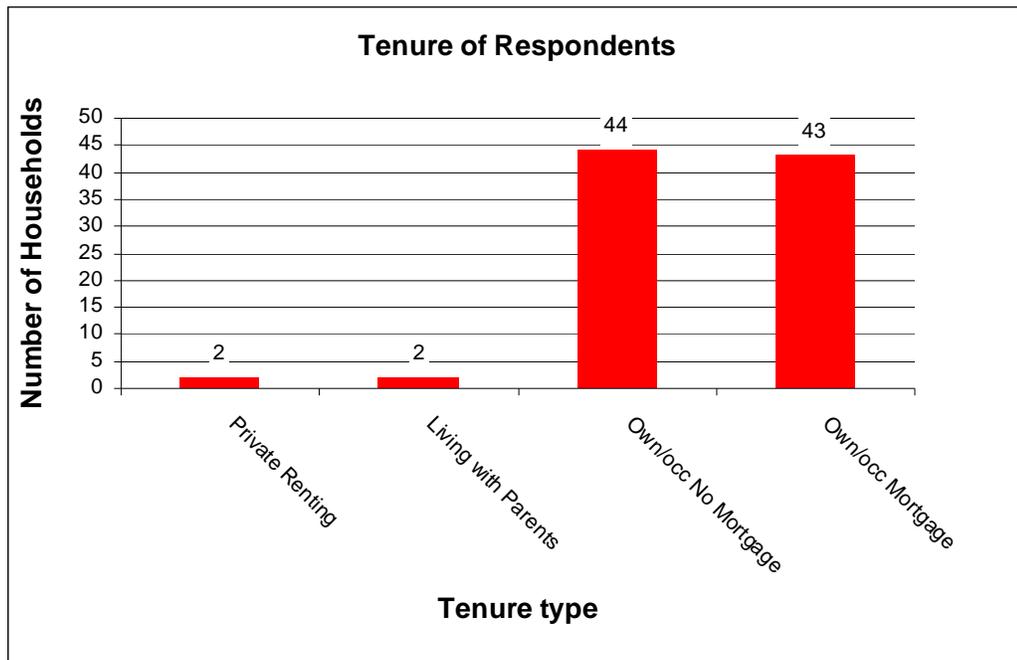
6.2. Household Size and Mix

The following chart shows the number of households in each size/mix category. Total households containing families with children accounted for 31%; followed by those households containing only adults accounting for 36% of respondents. Pensioners accounted for 33% of total households.



6.3. Tenure of all Respondents

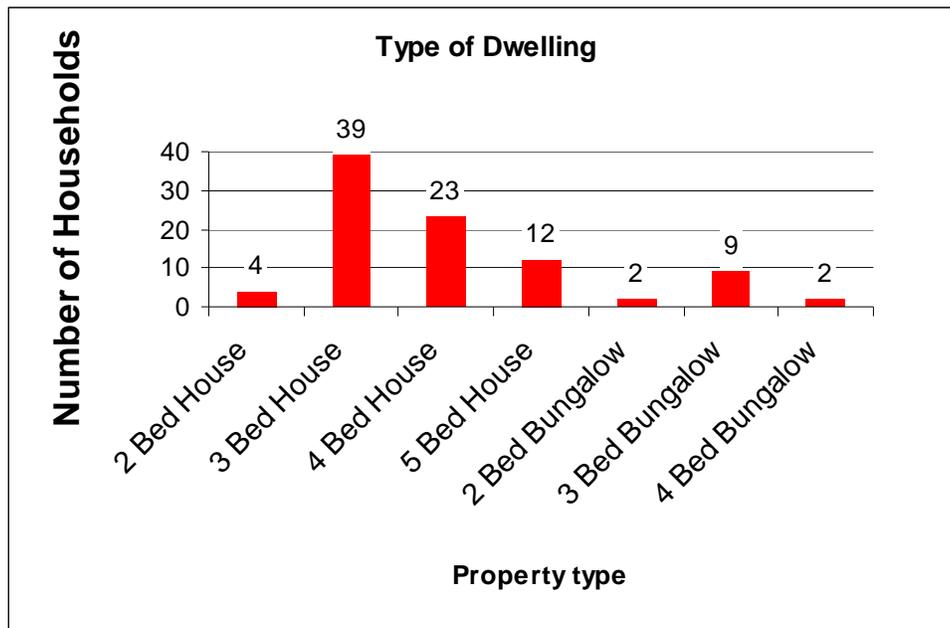
The following chart shows the current household tenure of all respondents. Owner-occupiers make up over 95% of households, with 50% having no mortgage. Privately rented accommodation makes up less than 3% of total households, with none being social rented housing. This low level of private and social rented accommodation bears out the findings in the Borough Council's Housing Strategy, outlined under section 4 of this report.



6.4. Property Types

The following chart details the types of property that respondents currently live in. The largest group were occupants of 3 bedroom houses at 43%, followed by occupants of 4 bedroom houses at 25% and occupants of 5 bedroom houses at 13%.

The number of small properties with 1 or 2 bedrooms amounted to less than 7% of total respondents.

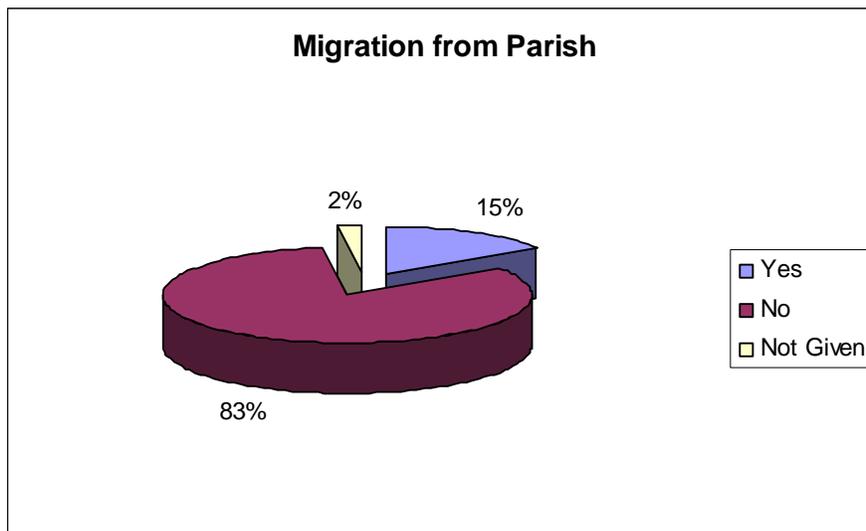


6.5. Ethnicity

Respondents' results showed that the demographic is almost entirely White British. This supports the recent Countryside Agency report which found that rural settlements had lower levels of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents than that of urban cores and that there were only 136,000 BME residents in rural areas throughout the country.

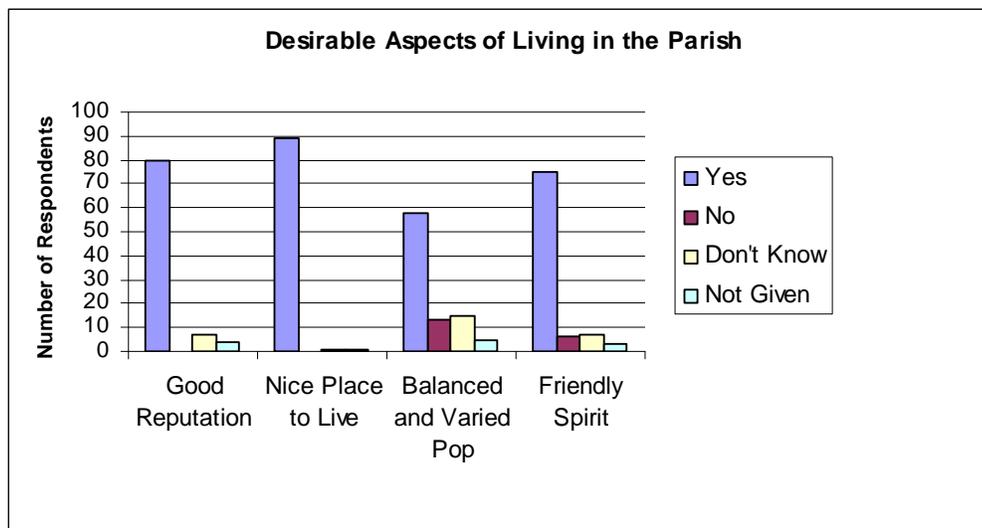
6.6. Migration

The chart below indicates that a number of local people have been forced to move out of the village in order to secure suitable housing. 15% of respondents were aware of somebody who needed to move out to find affordable or suitable accommodation.

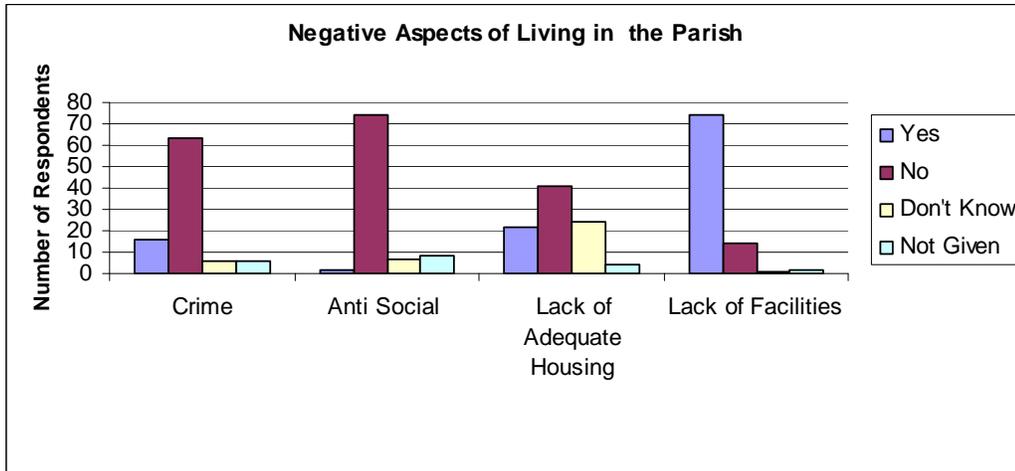


7. Sustainability Issues

Respondents were asked a series of questions relating to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of living in Bunny. The purpose of these questions is to build-up a picture of life in the parish and to identify any issues that could form a threat to the long-term sustainability of the village. The following two charts detail respondents' answers, from which we can gain an indication whether any affordable housing provided in the village will be sustainable in the future, i.e. will people want to live there in the future?



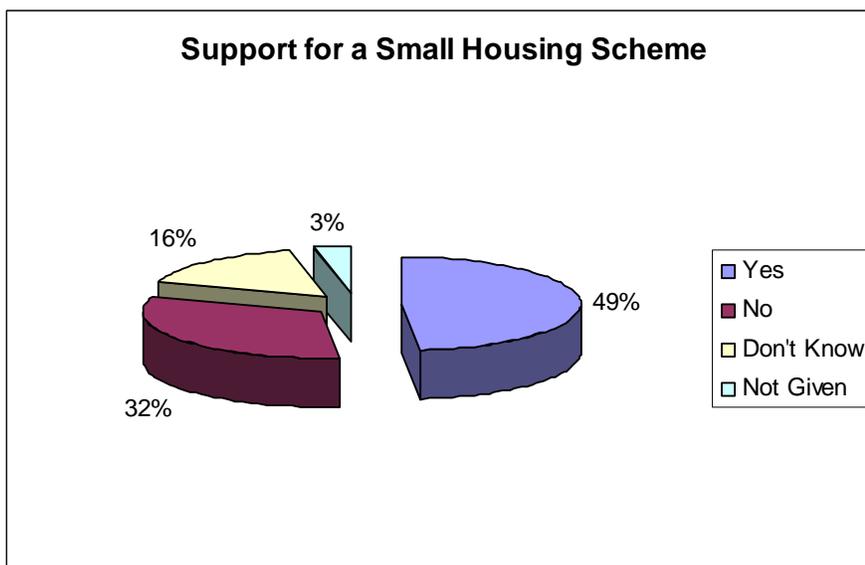
From the chart above it can be seen that the vast majority of residents consider that Bunny has a good reputation, is a nice place to live, with a balanced and varied population and friendly community spirit.



The second chart above shows that a small number of respondents consider there is some crime in the village. Some respondents also believe there is a lack of adequate housing available. However, a significant majority of respondents are concerned about the lack of facilities in the parish.

8. Support for a Small Housing Development

The chart below shows the level of support for a small development of affordable homes for local people, being built in the parish. The chart shows there is a fairly low level of support within the community, with 49% being in favour and 32% of respondents being against such a scheme. Significantly, 16% were unsure.



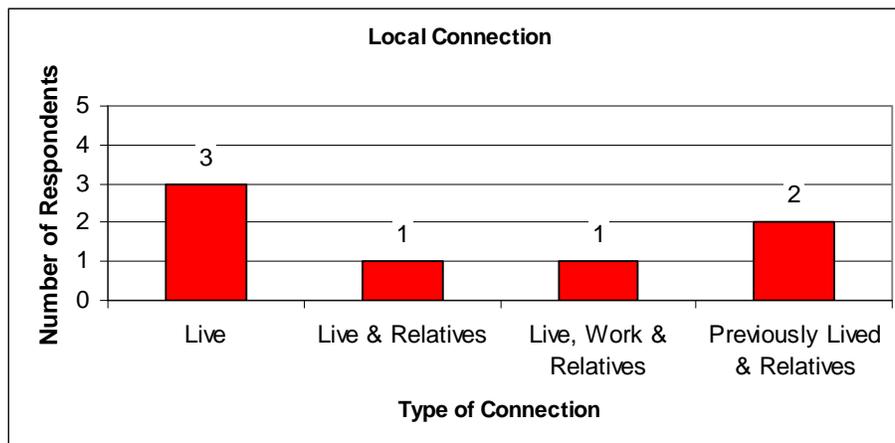
9. Housing Needs Analysis

Of the 92 returns, 85 were from people who would be considered as adequately housed and would not be looking to move to alternative accommodation within the next 5 years. These respondents completed a survey form primarily to offer their support or objection towards a 'local needs' housing development, as well as to give their comments regarding the sustainability of Bunny and comment on its facilities. These were therefore discounted from the rest of the analysis.

Accordingly, as far as the requirement for affordable housing is concerned, there are 7 returns detailing a housing need.

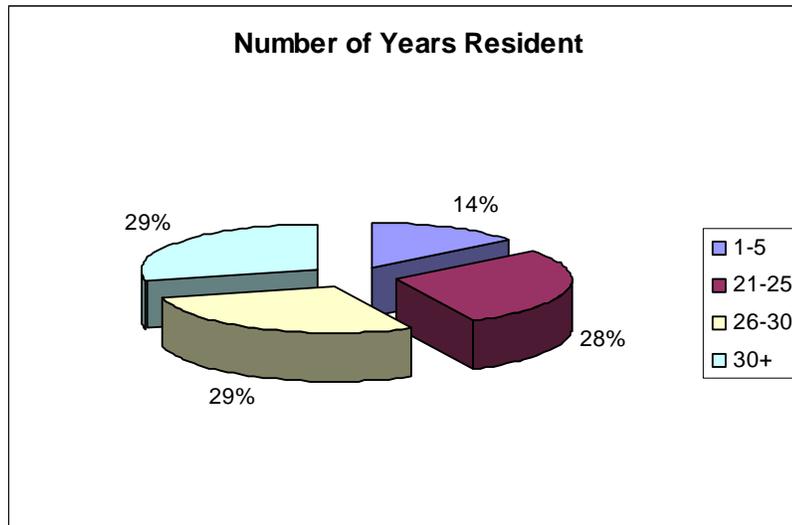
9.1. Local Connection

The graph below shows the type of local connection held by the 7 respondents with a specific housing need.



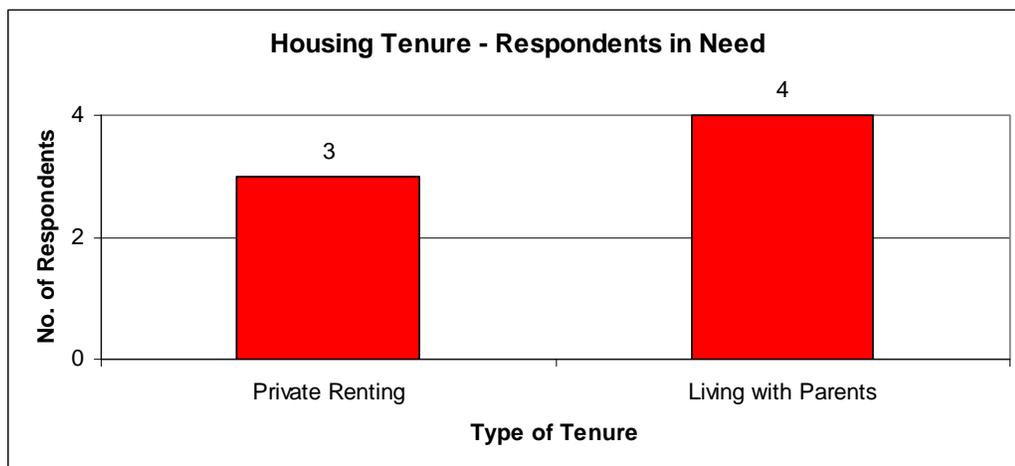
9.2. Residency

The table below gives the number of years that these respondents have lived in Bunny. Only 1 respondent has less than 5 years residency. 2 respondents with over 20 years residency have recently left the parish and would like to return.



9.3. Housing Tenure

The chart below shows the housing circumstances of respondents with a need for affordable housing.



9.4. Respondents in Need Details

The following tables list the respondents who have expressed a housing need, what type of housing they would prefer, and our assessment of their need.

Single

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Living with parent in 3 bed rented property, needs independent, smaller, cheaper accomm. within 2 years. Residency 47 years, works and family in the parish.	2 bed house or bungalow. Rented.	2 bed house. Rented.
Living with parents in 5 bed house, needs smaller, secure, independent accomm. immediately. Residency 54 years and family in the parish. On LA & HA registers.	2 bed flat. Rented.	2 bed house. Rented.
Living with parents in 3 bed property, needs independent accomm., close to employment, within 2 years. Residency 28 years and family in the parish.	2-3 bed house. Shared Ownership.	2 bed house. Shared Ownership.
Living in privately rented property out of parish, needs cheaper, secure accomm. within 2 years. Previous residency 24 years and family in parish. On LA register.	2-3 bed house. Shared Ownership.	2 bed house. Shared Ownership.
Living in privately rented property out of parish, requires cheaper home within 2 years. Previous residency 21 years and family in the parish.	2 bed house. Shared Ownership.	2 bed house. Shared Ownership.

Families

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Family of 2, living in 3 bed privately rented property, needs cheaper accomm., close to employment, immediately. Residency 1 year.	3 bed house. Shared Ownership or Rented.	2 bed house. Rented.
Family of 4 living with parents in 5 bed house, require independent, larger accomm. within 2-5 years. Residency 30 years and family in parish.	4 bed house. Shared Ownership.	3 bed house. Shared Ownership.

Therefore the housing needs derived directly from the survey are:

3 x 2-bed houses-----for shared ownership

3 x 2-bed houses----- --for rent

1 x 3-bed house----- -for shared ownership



10. Conclusions & Recommendations

Midlands Rural Housing, in partnership with Bunny Parish Council, has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of the parish. This study has not only investigated the actual housing needs, but has also ascertained residents' views with regard to living in the village, and has identified the level of local support for a development to meet local needs.

Bunny is an affluent village which is regarded as a pleasant and popular place to live. Several respondents are concerned that Bunny's rural environment should be preserved and the village should not become overdeveloped. However, there are also concerns that the parish has few amenities and that public transport connections are poor, which in the long term may have a detrimental effect on the village's sustainability. The parish does, however, benefit from a close proximity to East Leake and Keyworth where there are a number of amenities, including shops, Doctor's and Dentist Surgeries, a Post Office and comprehensive schools.

The population consists predominantly of families and young people and there are a high proportion of children under 16. Housing stock is almost entirely owner-occupied, medium to large family accommodation. House prices are higher than average and there is almost no affordable property available for purchase or rent. This may affect the sustainability of the village as the up and coming generation will be unable to remain in the parish. 15% of respondents were aware of someone who has had to leave to find suitable housing and 49% were in favour of developing an affordable housing scheme in Bunny.

Of the seven respondents claiming a need, none are elderly, several are seeking to gain independence and four are seeking to gain a first step on the housing ladder by opting for shared ownership.

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of seven affordable dwellings should be considered. This development will alleviate the current housing needs in Bunny, whilst remaining available to the parish in perpetuity, to allow for future requirements which may arise.



11. Acknowledgements

Midlands Rural Housing would like to thank Mr. P. Le Sueur, Chairman of Bunny Parish Council and Mr. M. Elliott, Clerk to Bunny Parish Council, for their time and help in carrying out this Housing Needs Survey.

12. Contact Details

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Appendix A: Comments Regarding Facilities

The following is a list of general improvements to the quality of life in the parish, requested by several respondents to the Housing Needs Survey:

- More regular buses to Keyworth; more regular buses to Ruddington; more frequent & regular buses; more frequent bus service; better bus services between Bunny, Ruddington and East Leake; an evening bus service; bus service to QMC; better bus services to Ruddington & Keyworth and an evening service;
- A bigger food shop; more shops; a community shop; village shop/post office; general store; a fresh food shop and post office;
- Post Office; re-open the post office; reinstate the post office;
- A shop, post office and more buses;
- Public transport is poor; better public transport;
- Lack of amenities is part of Bunny's attraction;
- The village is attractive due to the balance between population and amenities;
- Improved pavements and road safety; bus shelters;
- To live in Bunny, you need to be able to drive;
- The village has lost its identity, the school has isolated itself from the community;
- There are no facilities in Bunny and no connecting services to villages with amenities such as Doctor, Dentist, Supermarket, Chemist;



Appendix B: Comments Regarding a Small-Scale Development of Affordable Housing for Local People.

The following comments were received from respondents and give a general indication of their concerns for and against an affordable housing scheme. A random selection of comments has been reproduced.

- There is not enough affordable housing for young adults; Youngsters find it difficult to stay in Bunny as no affordable houses available; there is no suitable affordable housing for young or elderly;
- Insufficient housing for 1st time buyers; priority should be given to 1st time buyers homes;
- A housing scheme is not necessary, the village has already been overdeveloped in the last 10 years; the village is small and should be kept that way;
- We are in favour of affordable housing but are not convinced that it should be restricted to local people;
- The village is desirable because of its rural location which should be preserved; Bunny is nice as it is and the environment should not be changed by housing schemes;
- The village is starting to suffer from over-development and too much infill; traffic density is increasing;
- Traffic congestion on the A60 is getting worse and there are plenty of nearby villages with affordable housing; Bunny is desirable as it is, nearby villages offer cheaper housing;
- There has been too much development of larger houses;
- I am not aware of a local demand to stay in Bunny;