



EAST BRIDGFORD HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

Midlands Rural Housing
in partnership with
Rushcliffe Borough Council
and East Bridgford Parish Council
May 2010



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



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Executive Summary

Midlands Rural Housing completed a Housing Needs Survey in East Bridgford during October 2009, 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 social rental and intermediate (formerly shared ownership) schemes and is for people with a strong connection to the parish.

East Bridgford is a popular, sought after place to live, with a high proportion of owner-occupied property and very little available rented property. As a result, house prices are higher than many other places in Nottinghamshire. People on low incomes have difficulty finding suitable low cost accommodation in the parish.

A number of older people expressed an interest in homebuy bungalows. This indicates the shortage of availability of suitable properties in East Bridgford. However, their financial circumstances did not qualify them for affordable housing and they are considered to be adequately housed.

Facilities in the parish are generally good, respondents main concerns are low level crime and anti-social behaviour.

Five respondents, seeking rented accommodation are a balance of young and older people, all of whom require suitable alternative accommodation which they are unable to find on the open market in East Bridgford. One older respondent is interested in a Homebuy property.

The figures are discounted to allow for the fact that some people will resolve their own housing issues prior to the scheme's completion. Discounts are in the ratios of 25% on rental and 40% on Homebuy units.

The final result therefore becomes:-

2 x 2-bed houses for rent
2 x 2-bed bungalows for rent

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of four affordable dwellings should be considered to alleviate the current housing need in East Bridgford.



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.

To date in Rushcliffe the partnership has completed 16 affordable homes in rural villages, has a further 17 currently being built and has undertaken 11 rural housing needs assessments.

East Bridgford currently has a population of 1,813 in 759 households (2001 Census). 775 survey forms were produced for distribution to residents throughout the parish.

During October 2009, Midlands Rural Housing and Rushcliffe Borough Council worked together to deliver a Housing Needs Survey form to every household in the village. The return date for the survey was 31st October 2009 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 East Bridgford, in order to provide Rushcliffe Borough Council with the information it requires to formulate plans and anticipate future affordable housing requirements.

3. Housing Costs

Property Values: Apr - Jun 2009 - Rushcliffe

	Av Detached	Av Semi	Av Terrace	Av Flat	Av Overall Price	No. Of Sales
	£	£	£	£	£	
East Midlands	243,924	143,378	122,630	113,570	164,886	15,207
Nottinghamshire	189,122	102,913	76,751	94,551	128,817	4,394
Rushcliffe	265,985	177,098	140,754	115,249	203,949	363
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 a household income of approximately £40,000 per annum and a 10-15% deposit to secure a mortgage.

Data from the Land Registry shows the following average house prices in East Bridgford (Postcode NG13 8N*), based on sales between January 2008 – Aug 2009.

Detached - £197,687 (Based on 8 sales)

Semi-Detached - £170,625 (Based on 4 sales)

Flat (leasehold) - £147,472 (Based on 2 sales)

Overall - £182,781 (Based on 14 sales)

As can be seen from a comparison with the previous table, although the price of detached properties in East Bridgford is not comparatively high, the price of semi-detached houses and flats is higher than elsewhere in the region. There are no records of sales of terraced properties. The lack of entry level terraced properties in this area suggests that first time buyers and single income households will face additional difficulties in accessing the owner occupied sector. As a result, most properties would be unaffordable to people on low incomes.



4. Availability of Affordable Housing in Rushcliffe

Housing costs in Rushcliffe are the highest in the County, reflecting the desirability and prosperity of the Borough. This creates problems of affordability, particularly for new entrants to the housing market.

House prices rose steadily for the 10 years to 2007. They have declined slightly over the last eighteen months, but remain above the regional average (which has fallen by over 15% since early 2008). In April 2009, the average Rushcliffe house price stood at £210,805.

The 2009 SHMA update estimates that 43% of all households in Rushcliffe are unable to afford the entry level owner occupation price of £139,995 (based on 90% mortgage on a lower quartile flat/apartment). The price of a family home is of course, considerably higher.

The Borough's private rented sector is unable to offer much help in making housing costs affordable. An estimated 46% of all households would be unable to afford lowest quartile market rents.

With the primary exception of West Bridgford, Rushcliffe is a predominantly rural Borough, characterised by small towns and interspersed villages. Many historic villages have Conservation Area status due to their unique character.

Rushcliffe Borough Councils' Housing Strategy 2009- 2016 identifies that there are significant issues of rural housing need, particularly around affordability, and the inability of local families to access housing in their own communities. Lack of employment opportunities, school closures and poor access to local services are contributing to this problem.



4.1 East Bridgford Affordable Housing Supply and Turnover

Turnover Definitions:

High Turnover where a vacancy arises on average every six months or under.

Medium Turnover when a vacancy arises on average every six months to two years.

Low Turnover when a vacancy arises on average less often than every two years.

Social Rent

Location	Number & Type of Property	Landlord	Turnover
East Bridgford	12 x one bedroom flats	Spirita	High
East Bridgford	12 x two bedroom flats, 7 x two bedroom houses, 10 x 2 bedroom maisonettes	Spirita	High
East Bridgford	24 x three bedroom houses, 1 x four bedroom house	Spirita	Low
East Bridgford	4 x three bedroom houses	Accent Nene	Low
East Bridgford	2 x three bedroom houses, (local connection criteria)	De Montfort Housing	Low
East Bridgford	3 x two bedroom bungalows, (local connection criteria)	De Montfort Housing	Low
Total	75		

Homebuy

Location	Number & Type of Property	Landlord	Turnover
East Bridgford	2 x two bedroom houses, 3 x 2 bedroom bungalows, (local connection criteria)	De Montfort Housing	New Build Homebuy
Total	5		



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.

Strategic actions contained within the Rushcliffe Borough Council Housing Strategy 2009- 2016 encourage Parish Councils and local communities to explore their housing needs as part of their comprehensive Parish Plans. It is anticipated that, in due course, this Housing Needs Survey will form an integral part of an East Bridgford Parish Plan that will be adopted by the Parish 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 October 2009 in East Bridgford.

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.

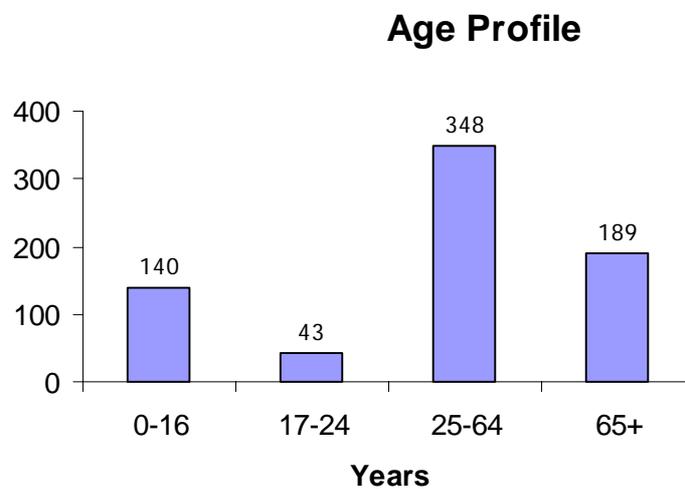
The following results are a snapshot in time and provide the village and Rushcliffe Borough Council with an insight into the parish in terms of current housing need, the desirability of the village as a place to live, and the current level of facilities serving the local community.

A total of 312 survey forms were received giving a return rate of 40%. This is considered an excellent 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 below shows the age profile of the 720 people captured on the 312 survey forms returned. The responses show that the largest single group of the population in East Bridgford, representing 48%, are those between the ages of 25 -64.

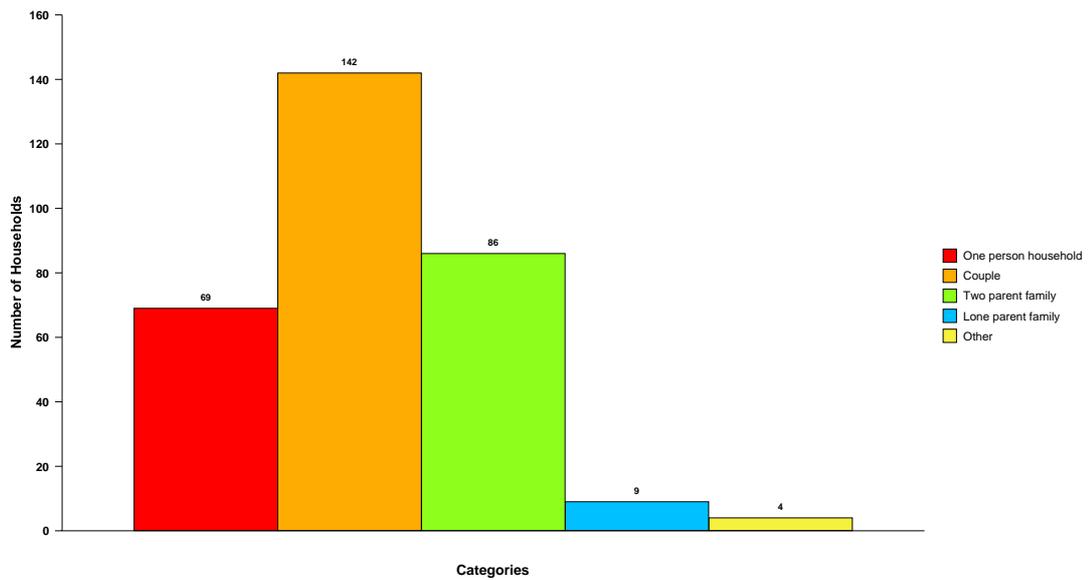
There are a substantial number of families with young children. Children under 16 form 19% of the population. This shows that a young generation is up and coming and their ability to remain in East Bridgford in the long-term will almost certainly depend on the availability of affordable housing within the parish.



6.2. Household Size and Mix

The chart overleaf shows the number of households in each size/mix category. 46% of households in East Bridgford are occupied by couples, with a further 22% occupied by single people. 30% are occupied by families.

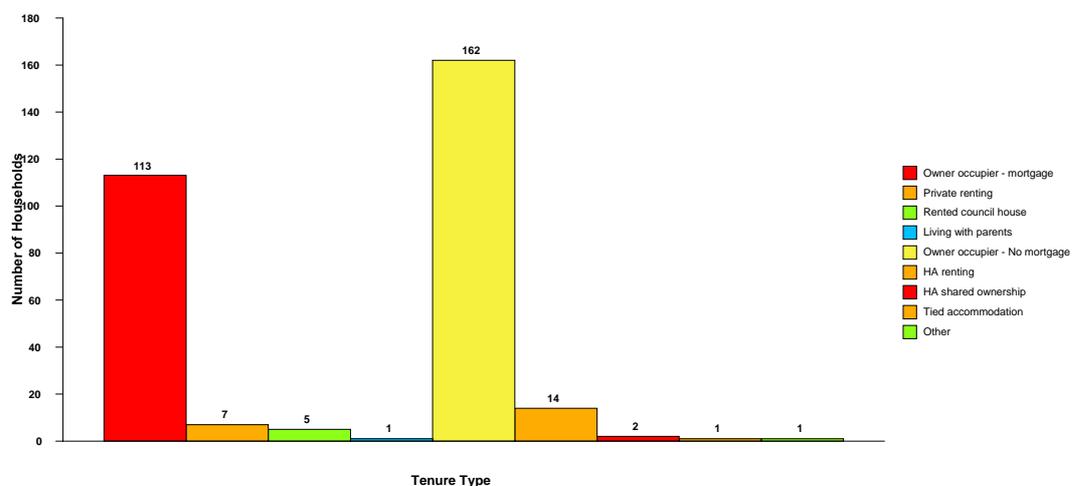
Category of Household



6.3. Tenure of all Respondents

The following chart shows the current household tenure of all respondents. Owner-occupiers make up 90% of households, with almost 60% of those having no mortgage. Rented accommodation makes up less than 9% of total households. Almost 75% is social rented housing, with the level of privately rented property being significantly low. The 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.

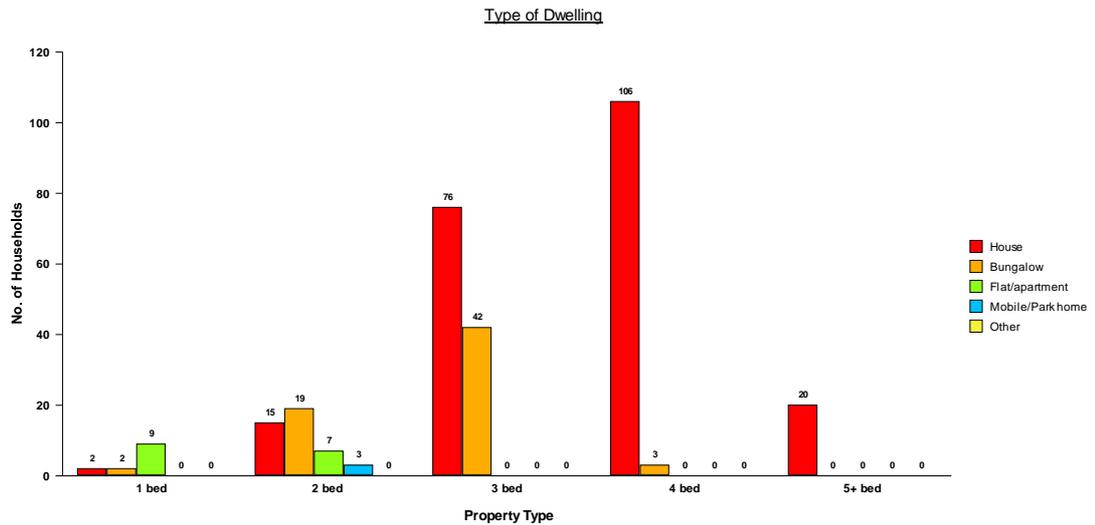
Current Housing Situation



6.4. Property Types

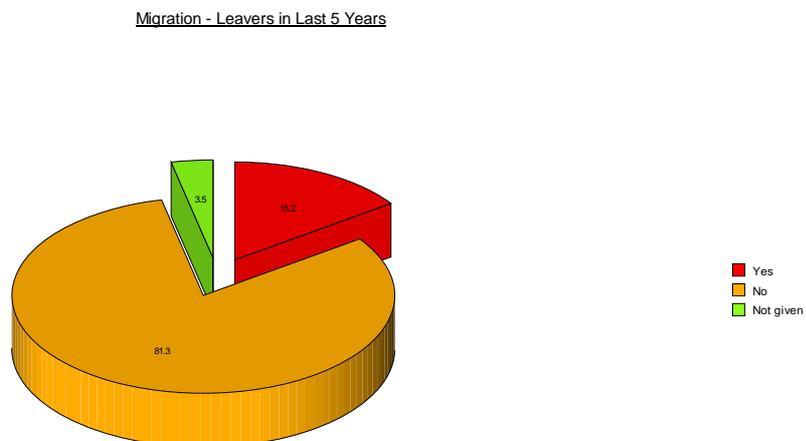
The following chart details the types of property that respondents currently live in. The largest group were occupants of 4 bedroom houses at 35%, followed by occupants of 3 bedroom houses at 25%.

Small properties with 1 or 2 bedrooms amounted to less than 19% of respondents.



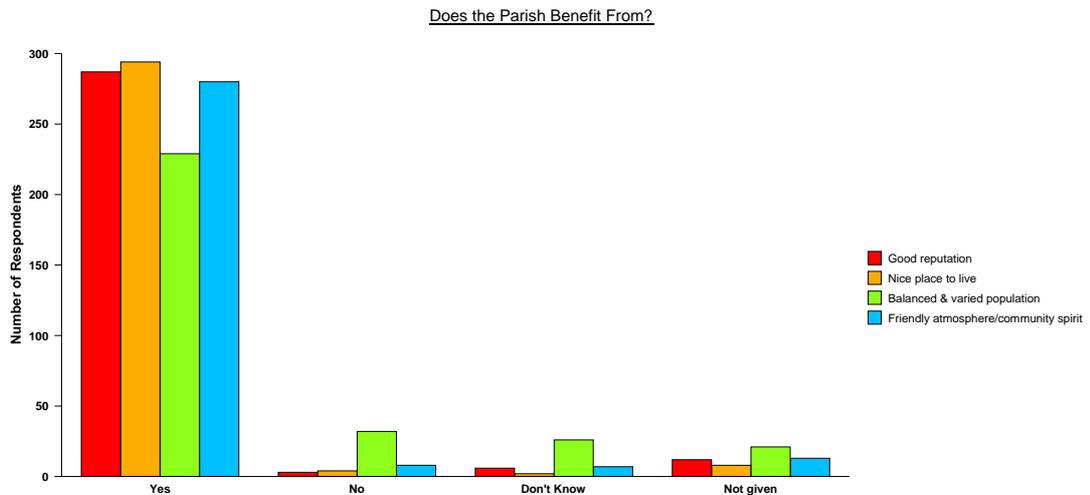
6.5. Migration

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.

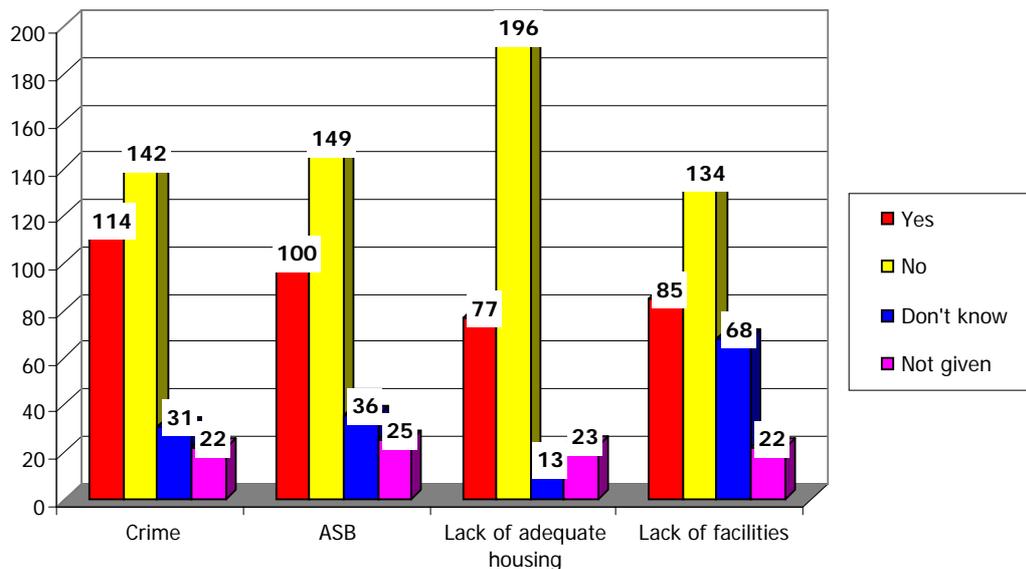


7. Sustainability Issues

Respondents were asked a series of questions relating to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of living in East Bridgford. 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 East Bridgford has a good reputation, is a nice place to live, with a balanced and varied population and friendly community spirit.

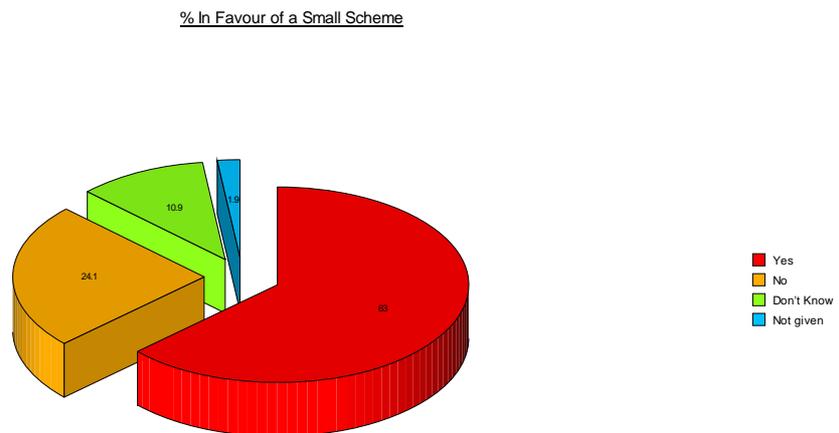




The second chart above shows that although a number of respondents consider there is a lack of adequate housing and a lack of facilities available, the majority did not feel that these were significant issues. However, a significant number of respondents are concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour.

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. 63% would be in favour of developing more affordable housing in East Bridgford.



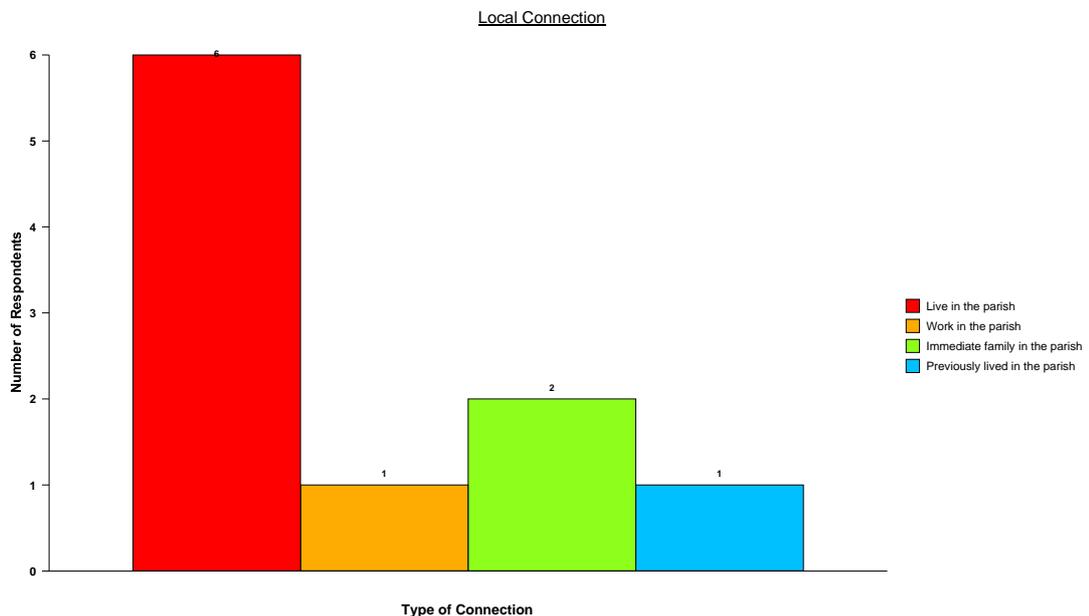
9. Housing Needs Analysis

Of the 312 returns, 306 were from people who would be considered as adequately housed or 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 East Bridgford and comment on its facilities.

Accordingly, as far as the requirement for affordable housing is concerned, there are 6 returns detailing a housing need.

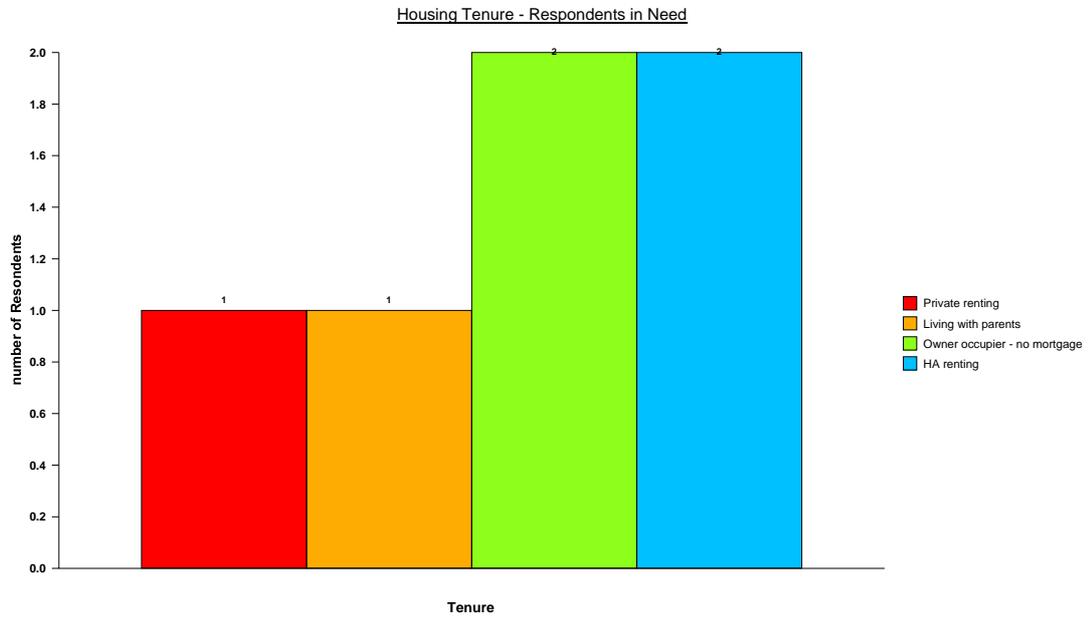
9.1. Local Connection

The graph below shows the type of local connection held by the 6 respondents with a specific housing need. All 6 respondents currently live in the parish, while one is also connected through work, two have immediate family in the parish and one has lived in the parish previously.



9.2. Housing Tenure

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



9.3. 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 parents, requires independent, first home within 2-5 years. Resident and works in the parish.	2 or 3 bed house. Rent or Homebuy.	2 bed house. Rented.

Families

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Young couple with child, living in 1 bed rented property, require larger accommodation within 2 years. Resident in parish 1 year. On Housing Register.	2 or 3 bed house. Rented.	2 bed house. Rented.
Lone parent and child living in 2 bed rented property, require cheaper home and certainty of tenure. Residency 3 years.	2 or 3 bed house. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed house. Rented.

Older People

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Single person living in own 3 bed property, requires cheaper home. Resident in parish 61 years.	2 bed bungalow or house. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow. Homebuy
Single person with mobility problems, living in rented 2 bed property, requires smaller, adapted accommodation within 2 years. Residency 75 years. On housing Register.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.	2 bed bungalow, adapted. Rented.
Single person with mobility problems, requires independent accomm. immediately. Residency 30 years. On housing register.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.	2 bed bungalow, adapted. Rented.



Therefore the housing needs derived directly from the survey are:

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

1 x 2-bed bungalow-----for Homebuy

2 x 2-bed bungalows-----for rent

It can be expected that, by the time a scheme is completed, some people will have resolved their own housing needs. A discount is therefore applied in the ratios of 25% reduction in rental units and 40% reduction in Homebuy units.

As a result of discounting, the final results are:-

2 x 2-bed houses for rent

2 x 2-bed bungalows for rent



10. Conclusions & Recommendations

Midlands Rural Housing, in partnership with East Bridgford 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.

East Bridgford is popular with residents, who consider it a pleasant place to live. The population appears to be reasonably well balanced, with a high percentage of working age adults and a substantial number of families with children under 16.

Housing stock is also fairly well balanced, with a good spread of small, medium and large properties. However, house prices are high, particularly for smaller properties. There is a high proportion of owner-occupation and a low level of rented accommodation available, particularly in the private rented sector, so people's ability to find suitable low cost housing in East Bridgford is severely restricted. 15% of respondents said they were aware of someone who had moved out of the parish to find suitable housing and 63% said they would support a development of affordable housing.

Respondents appear to be generally satisfied with amenities in the parish, although there is some concern regarding levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Several people indicated a desire to downsize into smaller properties. All were considered to be adequately housed already and their current circumstances would not qualify them to be considered for affordable housing. This response shows the level of desire to remain in East Bridgford, but at the same time, illustrates the lack of availability of suitable properties on the open market.

Five respondents have indicated a need for small, rented properties. One is a young, first-time buyer, two are young families and two are older people seeking to downsize into smaller, single storey properties due to ill health or disability. A sixth respondent has indicated a need for a Homebuy property for similar reasons.

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of four affordable dwellings should be considered to alleviate the current housing needs in East Bridgford.



11. Acknowledgements

Midlands Rural Housing would like to thank Mr. J. G. Powell, Chairman of East Bridgford Parish Council and Mrs. J. Barlow, Clerk to East Bridgford Parish Council, for their time and help in carrying out this Housing Needs Survey.

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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:

- I would welcome public transport which serves the entire village.
- Buses are limited which discourages usage. Evening & weekend services could be improved.
- The shops are fine but public transport needs a link to Lowdham.
- A more high profile police presence is required around the car park and playing fields to discourage anti-social behaviour.
- More police beat activity might help to control loutish behaviour.
- There is a lack of policing evident around the car park and sports field. There is some drug related activity and underage drinking in the village.
- More/better street lighting would be a benefit.
- This is a good village with good social and sporting facilities but it does not cater for young adults wishing to remain here.
- The children's play area has needed swings and proper play equipment for over three years.
- East Bridgford is a nice village with nice people and a nice environment.



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.

- Any development must be small and for local people.
- There are a number of rented flats/houses in East Bridgford.
- The last affordable housing development at Fosters Close took some time to gain full occupancy. The need for additional housing must be questionable.
- Housing is required for elderly people wishing to downsize and remain in the village.
- Retirement homes, possibly warden assisted, should be considered.
- Do not spoil the village by over-development. I think we have enough affordable housing.
- Previous low cost housing took a long time to sell. It is debateable whether we need more.
- Our village's first affordable housing scheme has been a success and given the high price of properties, I think it is important that we have low cost homes for purchase and rent.
- Any new build development should avoid greenbelt.
- East Bridgford has developed enough and much of the greenery and open spaces have gone.
- The village has developed enough and the traffic congestion is already bad.
- I would support development of smaller bungalows for older people. People need to downsize from larger properties and free up family houses for others.
- It is important that everyone in need has somewhere to live without depending solely on private landlords.
- If local people benefit the housing would be welcomed, but location must be carefully considered.