



**WHATTON
in the
VALE**

HOUSING NEEDS

SURVEY

Midlands Rural Housing
in partnership with
Rushcliffe Borough Council
and Whatton in the Vale Parish Council
March 2014



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



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Executive Summary

Midlands Rural Housing completed a Housing Needs Survey in Whatton during February 2014 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.

Whatton is a popular and sought after place to live. It is a historic village lying in the Vale of Belvoir with good road and rail links to major centres such as Nottingham, Grantham, Newark and Leicester.

Whatton has a reasonably well balanced population and a varied range of housing stock. Unusually, it has a significant proportion of smaller properties, particularly bungalows, which are reasonably priced and affordable to first time buyers and people seeking to downsize. In contrast, family sized properties, particularly older or detached properties, are relatively expensive and are not affordable to young families looking for larger properties. It is this group that seem to be most vulnerable.

The housing needs survey has shown that there is local support for an affordable housing scheme in Whatton. Only 27% of respondents were directly opposed to such a development.

As a result of the survey, three respondents have registered an interest in affordable housing. Two are families with young children.

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



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 eighth year of a programme of studies on behalf of Rushcliffe Borough Council.

Whatton currently has a population of 843 in 367 households (2011 census). During January 2014, 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 14th February 2014 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 Whatton in the Vale, 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: Rushcliffe April – June 2013

	Av Detached	Av Semi	Av Terrace	Av Flat	Av Overall Price	No. Of Sales
	£	£	£	£	£	
East Midlands	226,730	136,621	118,316	102,399	163,058	14,576
Nottinghamshire	221,919	127,958	110,472	97,669	161,155	2,626
Rushcliffe	304,207	190,889	167,171	119,515	235,125	470
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.

House prices in Rushcliffe increased by 3.9% during the twelve months to June 2013, compared to 1.3% for the East Midlands as a whole. A family wanting to purchase an average terrace house with a 10% deposit would need to be earning approximately £50,000 per annum to secure a mortgage.

Data available from Zoopla, giving the value of sales during the last twelve months in Whatton, shows fourteen properties sold during 2013, with an average selling price of £184,139.

There are currently 12 properties for sale on the open market as follows:-

- 1 x 4 bed barn conversion at £575,000
- 1 x 5 bed detached house at £475,000
- 1 x 5 bed detached cottage at £460,000
- 1 x 4 bed detached house at £425,000
- 1 x 4 bed barn conversion at £299,950
- 1 x 4 bed barn conversion at £299,950
- 1 x 3 bed barn conversion at £299,950
- 1 x 3 bed bungalow at £210,000
- 1 x 3 bed semi-detached house at £139,995
- 1 x 2 bed semi-detached bungalow at £129,950
- 1 x 2 bed semi-detached bungalow at £128,500
- 1 x 2 bed semi-detached bungalow at £124,950



There are currently 2 properties for rent on the open market as follows:-

- 1 x 3 bed semi-detached house at £695 pcm
- 1 x 2 bed bungalow at £595 pcm

The above figures suggest that the property market in Whatton is divided, with detached family sized properties being marketed at prices in excess of £200,000, but semi-detached houses and bungalows being marketed at prices between £125,000 to £140,000, making these properties reasonably affordable to families moving up the housing ladder and to older people seeking to downsize into smaller properties.

Properties available for rent on the open market are limited and the level of rents is unlikely to be affordable 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, declined slightly during 2008/09 but have continued to rise since, remaining above the regional average. The average Rushcliffe house price, at April 2013, stood at £237,049 compared to £210,805 in April 2009, a rise of over 12%.

The 2012 SHMA update estimates that 56% of all households in Rushcliffe are unable to afford the entry level owner occupation price of £148,500 (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 49% 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 Whatton 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
Whatton	6 x 2 bedroom houses	Metropolitan Housing	Low
Whatton	4 x 3 bedroom houses	Metropolitan Housing	Low
Total	10		

5. Planning Context

Planning policy at local level 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.

There are three categories of affordable housing as defined by national policy. These categories are traditional social rent, affordable rent, and intermediate housing. For clarity, **Social Rented Housing** has rents that are set at national level. **Affordable Rented Housing** has rents set at no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). **Intermediate Housing** includes shared ownership properties which enable first time buyers to enter the housing market.

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. In addition, changes to the planning system allow for Parish Councils to produce Neighbourhood Plans. This survey could form part of the evidence for Parish Councils to justify identifying sites for affordable housing.

6. Respondents' Details

The following sections of this report detail the responses from the questionnaires distributed and returned during February 2014 in Whatton Parish.

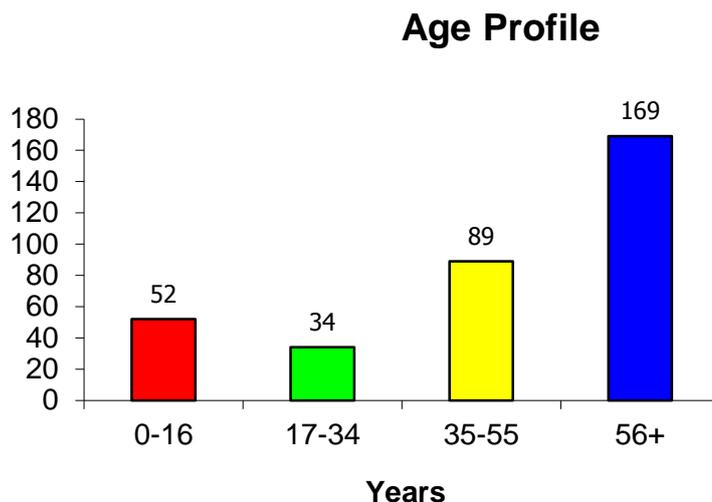
Respondents individual details have been kept confidential and any identifiable attributes have not been included in the results. Any comments that have been made may also have been edited so as not to identify individual circumstances.

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 153 survey forms were received giving a return rate of almost 42%. This is considered a high 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.

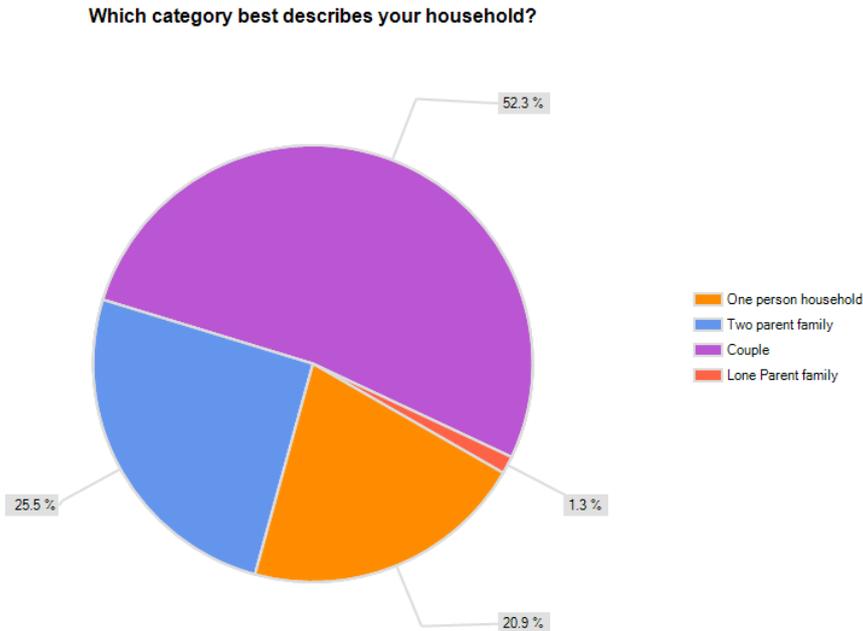
6.1 Age Profile

The chart below shows the age profile of the 344 people captured on the 153 survey forms returned. The responses show that the largest single group of the population in Orston, representing 49%, are people in the older adult age group. 15% of respondents were children under 16. Young adults represent 10% of respondents.



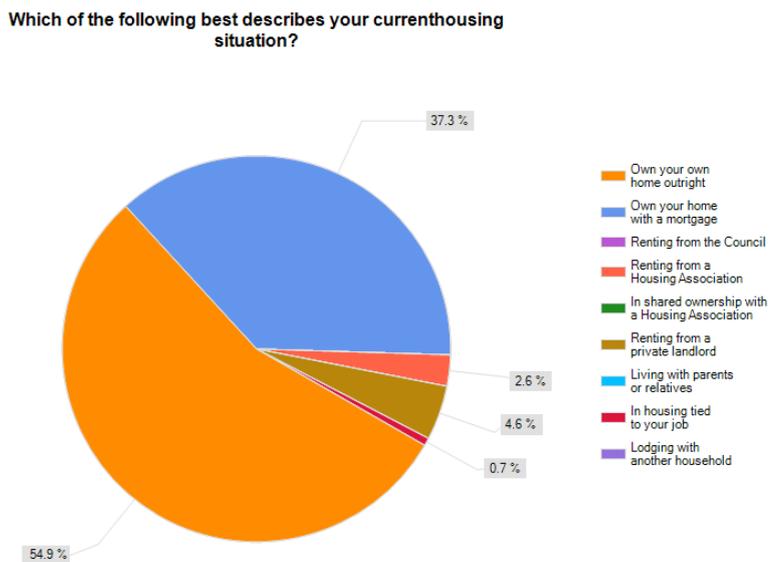
6.2 Household Size & Mix

The following chart shows the number of households in each size/mix category. Households containing families with children accounted for almost 27% of the total, with properties containing single people and couples accounting for 73%.



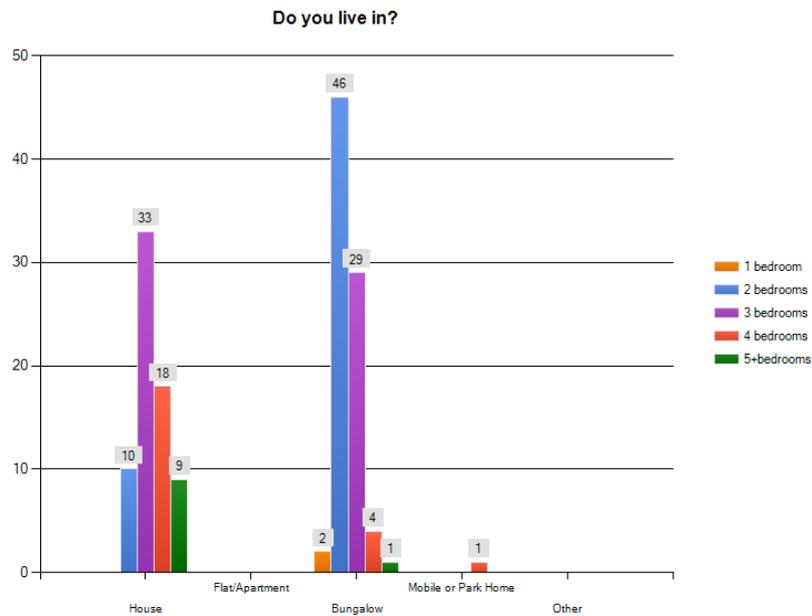
6.3 Tenure of all Respondents

The chart below shows that Owner-occupiers make up 92% of households. Social rented properties account for less than 3% of households and private rentals account for almost 5%.



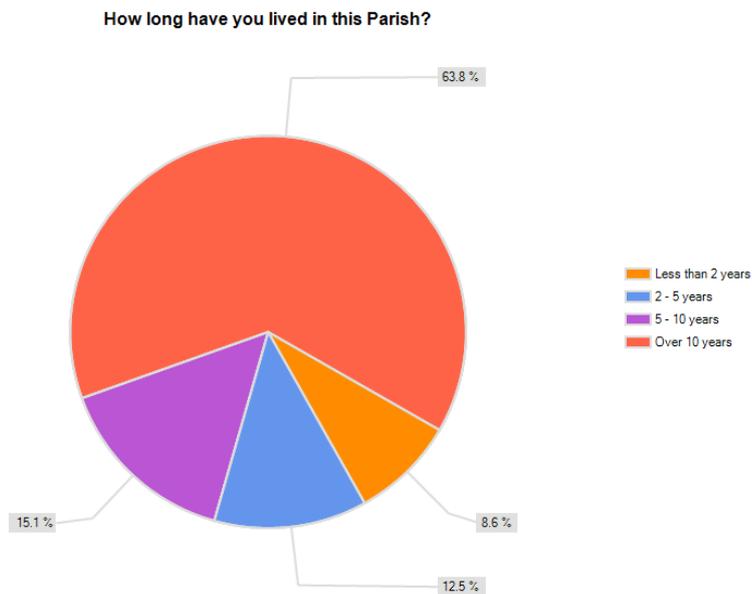
6.4 Property Types

The following chart details the types of property that respondents currently live in. Unusually, 54% of all respondents were living in bungalows. The largest occupancy group was 2 bedroom bungalows at 30%. 22% of respondents were living in 3 bedroom houses, closely followed by occupants of 3 bedroom bungalows at 19%.



6.5 Residency

The chart below shows that almost 64% of respondents have lived in the parish for more than 10 years, with 91% having lived in Whatton for over 2 years.

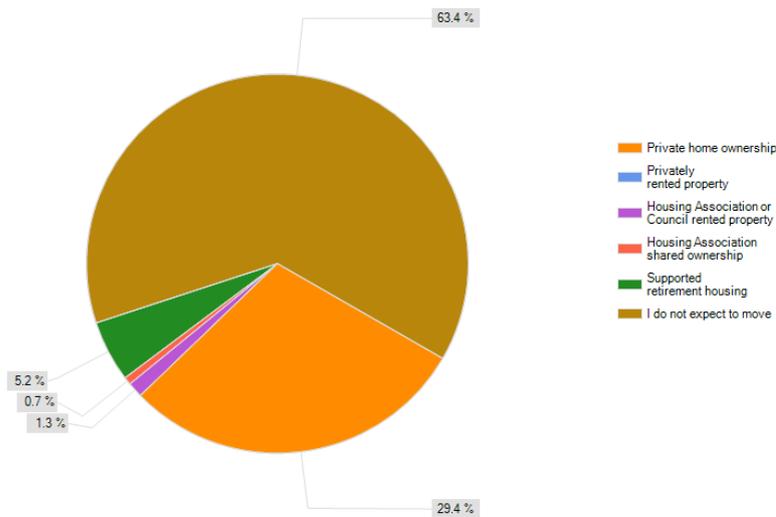


6.6 Migration

The chart below shows whether respondents are expecting to move house in the future, and if so, what they would prefer their next move to be. Over 63% of respondents do not expect to move from their present property.

Almost 30% of respondents would prefer to buy their own property on the open market. 5% of respondents expect their next move to be into retirement housing and 2% expect to move into social rented or shared ownership properties.

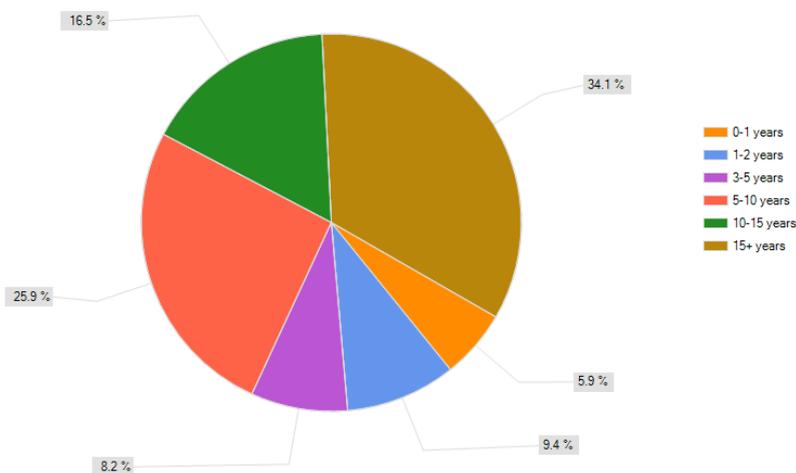
If you move house in the future, what type of housing do you anticipate moving into?



6.7 Timescales

The chart below shows that, of those people expecting to move homes in the future, almost 24% are expecting to move within the next five years.

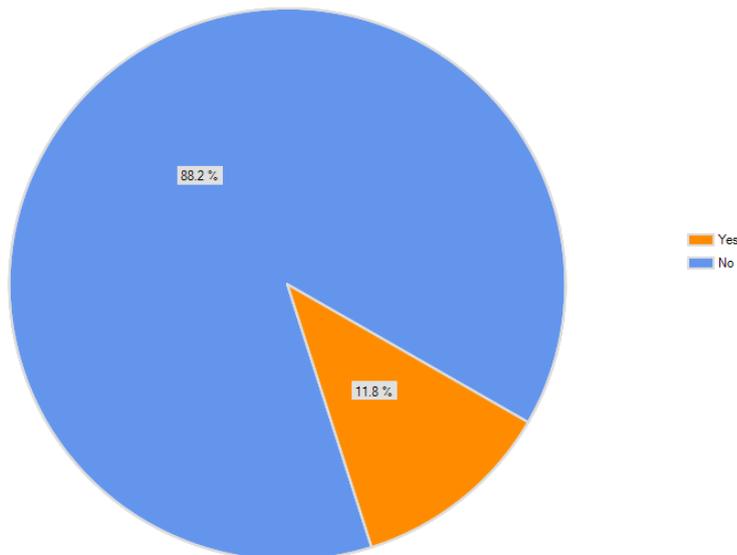
If you move house in the future, when do you anticipate your next home move will be?



7.0 Local Support for Affordable Housing

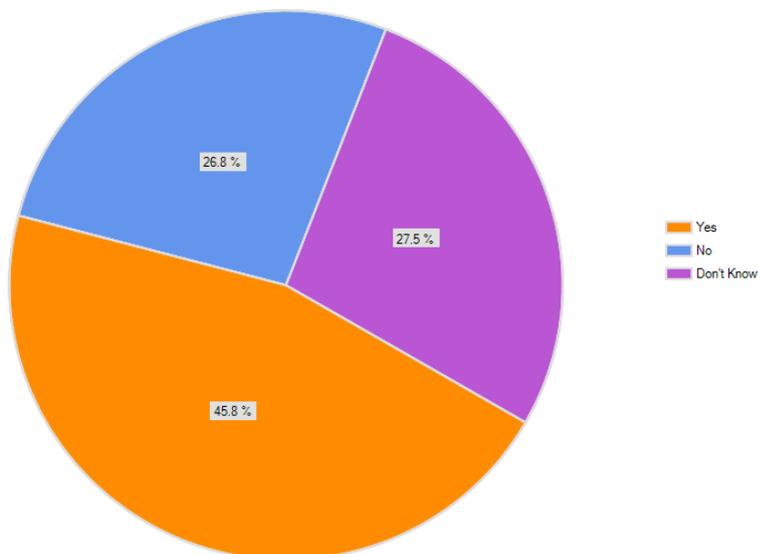
The chart below indicates that a number of local people have had to move out of the village in order to secure suitable housing. 12% of respondents were aware of somebody who needed to move out to find affordable or suitable accommodation.

Do you know of anyone who has had to leave the parish in the last five years through lack of suitable or affordable housing?



The second chart, below, shows the level of support for a small development of affordable homes for local people, being built in the parish. Almost 46% of respondents would be in favour. A further 27% were unsure, and 27% would be against such a scheme.

Would you be in favour of a small scheme of new affordable homes for rent/shared ownership for local people



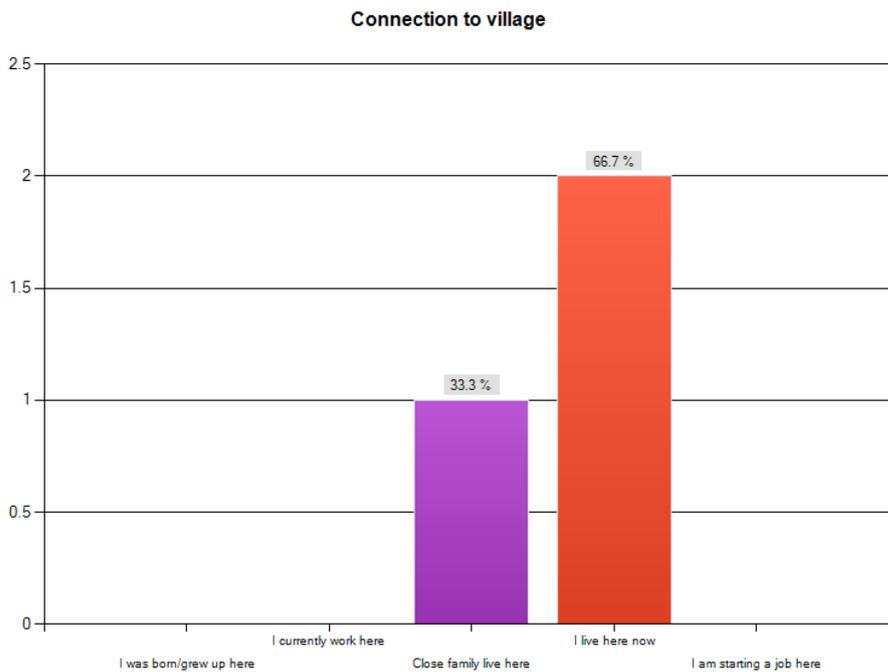
8.0 Housing Needs Analysis

Of the 153 returns, 150 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 Whatton 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 3 returns detailing a housing need.

8.1 Local Connection

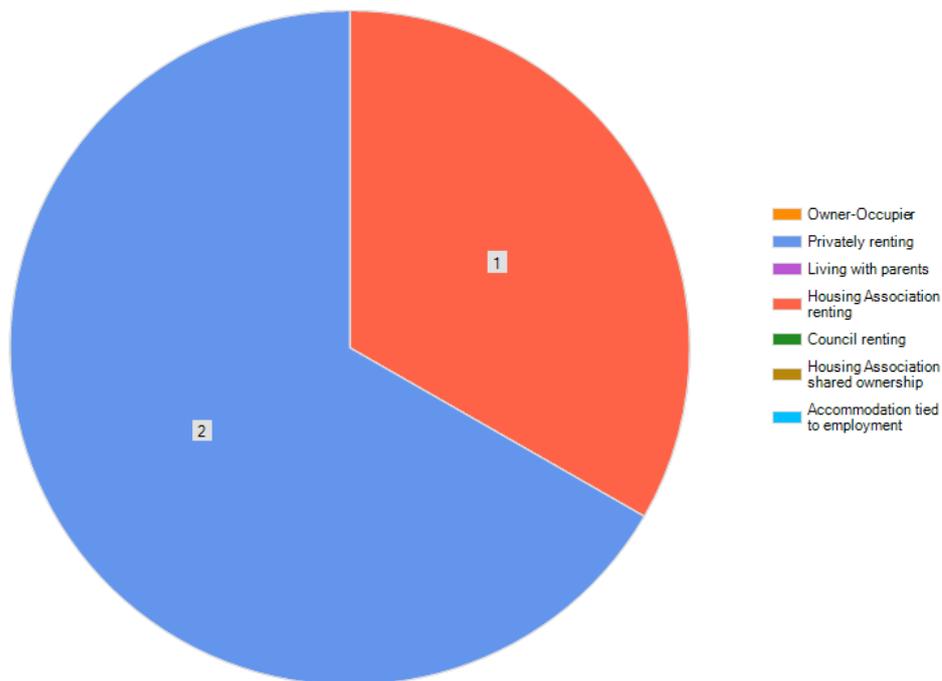
Of the three respondents with a need for affordable housing, two are currently living in the parish and one has close family ties.



8.2 Current Housing Tenure

One respondent is currently living in housing association accommodation and two respondents are privately renting, one outside the parish.

What is your current housing situation?



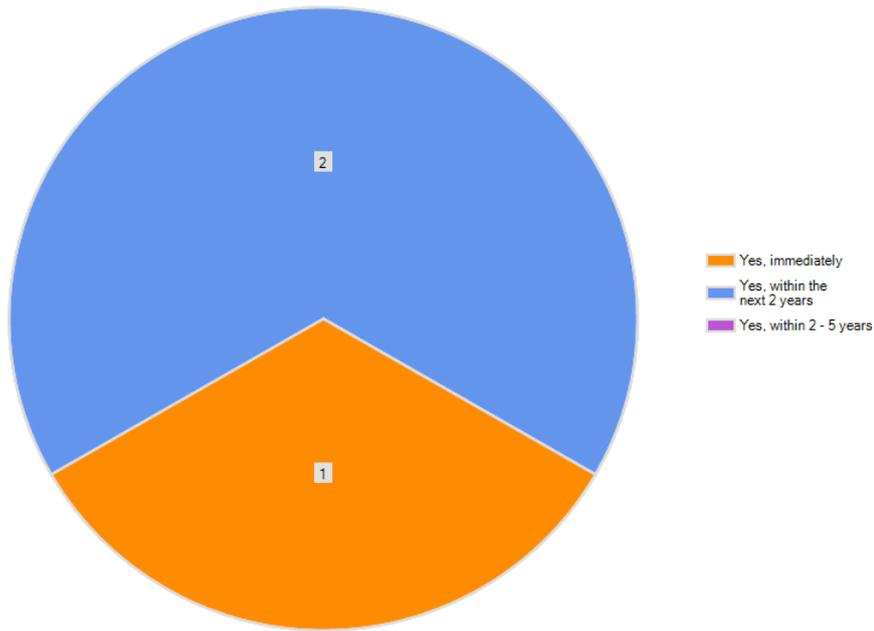
8.3 Registered for Housing?

None of the respondents are registered on the local Choice Based Letting System.

8.4 When is Housing Required?

The chart overleaf indicates that one respondent requires alternative housing immediately and two within 2 years.

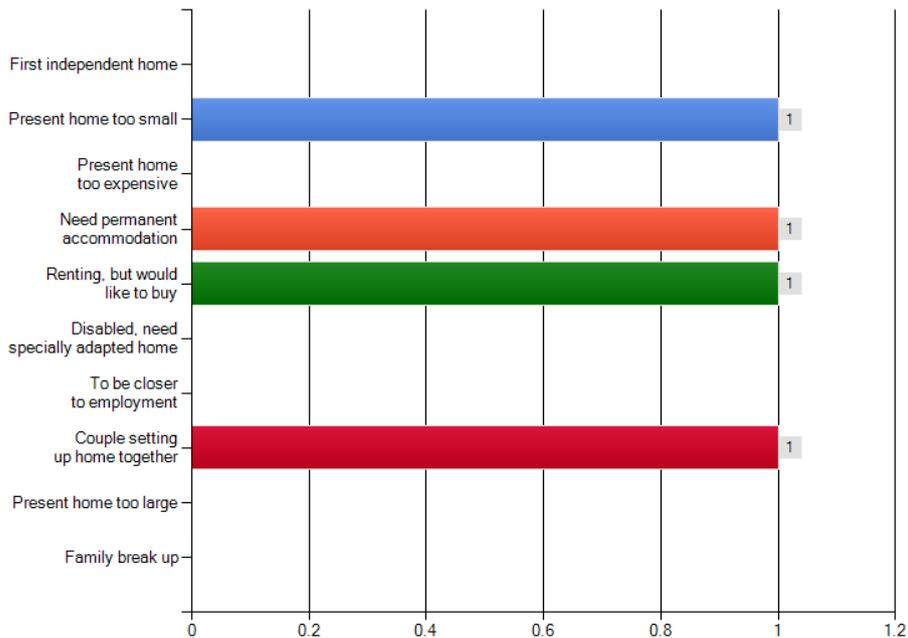
Are you in need of another home in this Parish?



8.5 Reason for Needing Alternative Housing

The chart below shows peoples' reasons for requiring alternative housing. One respondent has indicated that their present property is too small to accommodate them adequately, one respondent has indicated a need to be nearer to their child's school and to close family/carers, and the third respondent wishes to establish a permanent home with a partner and move out of the private rental market.

Reason for Housing Need (Please tick all that apply)



9.0. Respondents in Need - Details

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

Families

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Couple currently living separately, wishes to establish a permanent home in the parish. One partner currently privately renting.	1 or 2 bed house for shared ownership.	1 or 2 bed house for shared ownership.
Family of four with special needs, living in 2 bed HA property, require larger property urgently.	3 or 4 bed house for affordable rent	3 bed house for affordable rent.
Family of four with special needs, living outside the parish, need to be closer to child's school and close family/carer.	3 or 4 bed house for affordable rent or shared ownership.	3 bed house for affordable rent or shared ownership.

9.1 Results of Analysis

The housing needs derived directly from the survey are:

1 x 1 or 2 bed house for shared ownership

1 x 3 bed house for affordable rent.

1 x 3 bed house for affordable rent or shared ownership.



10. Conclusions & Recommendations

Midlands Rural Housing, in partnership with Whatton in the Vale 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.

Whatton is a small and secluded settlement in the Vale of Belvoir, in the rural east of Rushcliffe Borough. Nearby villages with local facilities are Bottesford, Aslockton and Bingham. Major shopping, leisure and employment opportunities are available at Grantham, 12 miles distant, and Nottingham, which is 13 miles away. The local railway station is at Aslockton and Whatton is close to the A52 Nottingham – Grantham and A46 Newark – Leicester routes, making it a convenient dormitory village for people commuting for work.

Whatton is a historic village and is a sought after place to live. Older and larger properties are generally limited in availability. However, there is a good supply of smaller properties and a high number of bungalows in the village. A study of the local property market indicates that detached, family properties coming to the market are generally priced upwards of £200,000. They are unlikely to be affordable to families on low incomes. Semi-detached houses and bungalows, particularly 2 bedroomed bungalows, are more reasonably priced at around £130,000. They are more likely to be affordable to older people seeking to downsize.

The housing needs survey shows that 61% of properties are family sized and 39% are in the range of smaller properties, having 1-2 bedrooms. This is unusual and reflects the number of small bungalows in the parish. 92% of properties are owner-occupied, with just 3% being social housing and 5% private rentals. The age profile of respondents shows that there are a high number of older people in the parish. However, there are also a reasonable number of children under sixteen and young adults, indicating that the population is fairly well balanced and that the supply of smaller, low cost housing is enabling the younger and older age groups to find housing in the parish.

The survey results show that people remain living in Whatton for a long time. 64% of respondents have been there for over 10 years and 63% do not expect to move in the foreseeable future. Of those who do expect to move, the majority will be looking to purchase on the open market. However, 2% believe they will require social housing.

46% of respondents are fully in favour of developing a small affordable housing scheme for local people, in the parish. Only 27% of respondents would be directly opposed to such a scheme.

Three respondents have registered a need for affordable housing. Reflecting the survey's findings, that the main group affected by high house prices in Whatton are families seeking 3-4 bedroomed properties, two of these respondents are families



with children. All three respondents have local connections and appear to be eligible for consideration.

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



11. Acknowledgements

Midlands Rural Housing would like to thank Mr Greg Redford, Chair of Whatton in the Vale Parish Council and Mr Mike Elliott, Clerk to Whatton in the Vale Parish Council, for their time and help in carrying out this Housing Needs Survey.

12. Contact Details

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

- Whatton is in need of a small development of affordable housing. There are several plots of land in and around the edge of the village. I am greatly in favour of such a scheme.
- There is already sufficient affordable housing in the parish.
- I would support a scheme but it depends where the new homes will be sited and if they fit into the surroundings.
- Whatton is not suitable for expansion. There are no facilities and a poor bus service.
- We have moved here to provide a good upbringing for our children and do not want to see the village developed. Affordable housing is available in Bingham.
- As the parent of three children who have been raised in the village, I am concerned that they will not be able to afford to live here when they eventually leave home. Affordable housing could help new buyers – we have plenty of provision for the older generation but we need to help the future generations.
- I think it's a good idea for affordable housing to be built in the village for families in need of a home and wanting to stay instead of moving away.
- No further development is needed in the village.
- Can we fix a few of our other problems before building more houses? We have abysmal public transport, no doctor or dentist, no shops or pub, and non-existent internet for anyone wanting to work from home. We also have no car parking for events in the village.
- It is very difficult for young families to live in the village.
- It's a shame young people can't afford to buy here. They are the future of the community.
- House prices in Whatton are relatively high and there are very few properties to rent. We have children and grandchildren in Whatton and are involved in local activities, but recently we were forced to consider moving away. Fortunately, we managed to find a small bungalow here. It would be hard to settle elsewhere.
- I don't see the need for affordable housing. Bungalows are quite reasonable at around £130,000.



- Affordable housing is a good idea as long as it enhances other properties in the village.
- I would welcome new housing in the village. Affordable family housing might bring new facilities, such as a park/playground, and would enable people to take the next rung up the ladder.
- Affordable housing should be for local people and not, as in Aslockton, remain unoccupied and then let to people from outside the parish. There is plenty of affordable housing available in Bottesford and Bingham.
- I feel very strongly that unless affordable housing is available for first time buyers, the younger generation will move away and this will have a negative impact on the community.