



SNITTERFIELD HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

**Survey commissioned by Snitterfield
Parish Council in partnership with
South Warwickshire Housing Association
and
Warwickshire Rural Community Council**

**Analysis by Charles Barlow
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1. Summary of results

Approximately 495 Housing Needs Survey forms were distributed and 197 forms were returned. This equates to a response rate of 40%, a rate considered to be excellent for a survey of this type.

14 respondents expressed a need for alternative housing. The specific needs, with urgencies ranging from immediate to within the next 5 years are:

Shared ownership

4 x 2 bedroom houses

Rented

1 x 2 bedroom bungalow

6 x 2 bedroom flats (or houses/bungalows)

1 x 2 bedroom house

2 x 3 bedroom houses

2. Introduction

Snitterfield Parish Council commissioned a local Housing Needs Survey in October 2006 as a response to an action point in the Snitterfield Parish Plan 2006.

The aim of the survey was to collect accurate, up-to-date housing needs information relating to the parish. This information can be used in a number of ways, but perhaps the most relevant is to help justify a small scale housing scheme to meet local needs, as specified by Policy COM.1 of Stratford on Avon District Council's Local Plan. Such schemes are known as 'Local Choice' schemes.

The survey form was essentially a standard document used in parishes across Warwickshire. A survey form was delivered to every home in the parish. A copy can be seen as Appendix A of this report.

All households were invited to fill out the first part of the survey form with the aim of producing a demographic picture of household composition, tenure, property type and size. Positive and negative aspects to life in the parish were explored and the opinions of respondents towards a small housing scheme based on the needs of local people were sought.

Only households with, or containing a specific housing need, were asked to complete the second part of the survey form. This part of the form asked for respondents' names and addresses and other sensitive information in confidence, e.g. information relating to income.

Completed survey forms were posted directly to the Rural Housing Enabler for Warwickshire Rural Community Council via a 'Freepost' envelope. Analysis of the completed forms took place in late November 2006.

3. Planning context

Planning policy at all levels {national, regional and local} imposes considerable restraint on new housing development in rural areas. There is, however, capacity for this restraint to be relaxed in exceptional circumstances where new housing would meet an identified local need.

Policy COM.1 of Stratford on Avon District Council's Local Plan 1996-2011 deals with the principle of 'Local Choice' in helping to support and build rural communities. Policy COM.1 describes the circumstances in which a housing scheme designed to meet local needs might achieve planning consent. In this context 'local' relates to a particular village. 'Housing need' refers to all forms of need, both 'affordable', i.e. homes to rent from a housing association or shared ownership, as well as owner-occupier needs.

Policy COM.1 applies to all 'Local Centre Villages' in Stratford on Avon District and Snitterfield is classified as one such settlement. The policy encourages communities to explore their housing needs, ideally as part of a parish plan or the equivalent.

Any housing that may be provided as a result of this survey would be subject to a planning obligation, known as a Section 106 agreement, being placed on the development. This would limit occupation of the homes to people with a local connection in the first instance and ensure that any 'affordable' housing, i.e. rented from a housing association and shared ownership, was retained as such in perpetuity. Local connection criteria are:

- An individual who was born in the parish
- An individual who currently lives in the parish and has done so for at least 12 months
- An individual who was resident in the parish for at least 3 continuous years but has left in order to find suitable accommodation
- An individual who works full time in the parish and has done so for at least 12 months
- An individual with a close family member, i.e. mother, father, brother or sister, resident in the parish for at least 3 continuous years

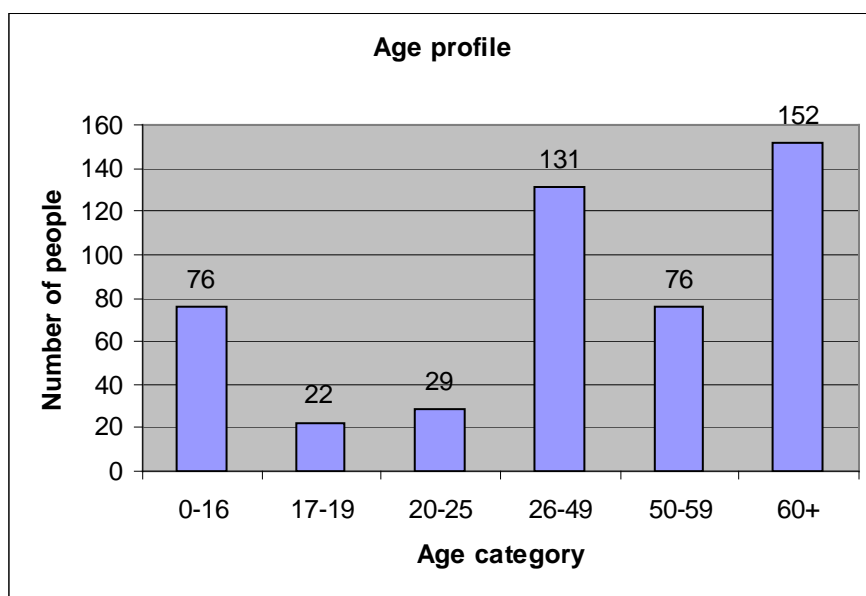
4. Results – Contextual information

A total of 197 survey forms were returned equating to a response rate of 40%. A response rate of 40 % is considered to be excellent for a survey of this type because people generally only respond for one of three reasons:

- To express a housing need.
- To offer support in principle to the idea of a small housing scheme for local needs.
- To state opposition to the idea of a housing scheme.

i) Age profile (197 responses, 486 people)

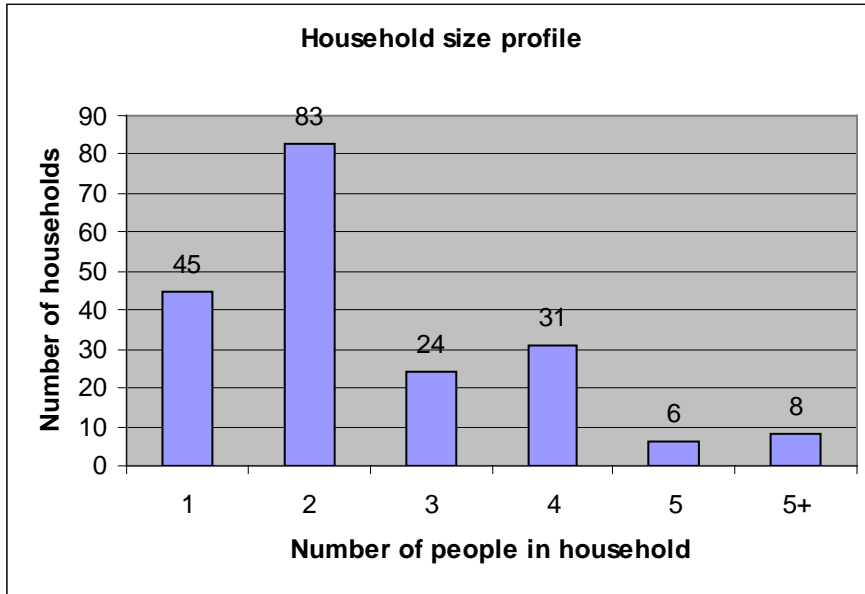
The following chart shows the age profile captured by the survey returns. The chart shows an ageing population, with 228 out of the 486 people aged over 50. It is noticeable that the age groups 17-19 years and 20-25 years are small in number, suggesting an imbalance in the age profile which may have repercussions for the long-term sustainability of the village.



ii) Household size profile (197 responses)

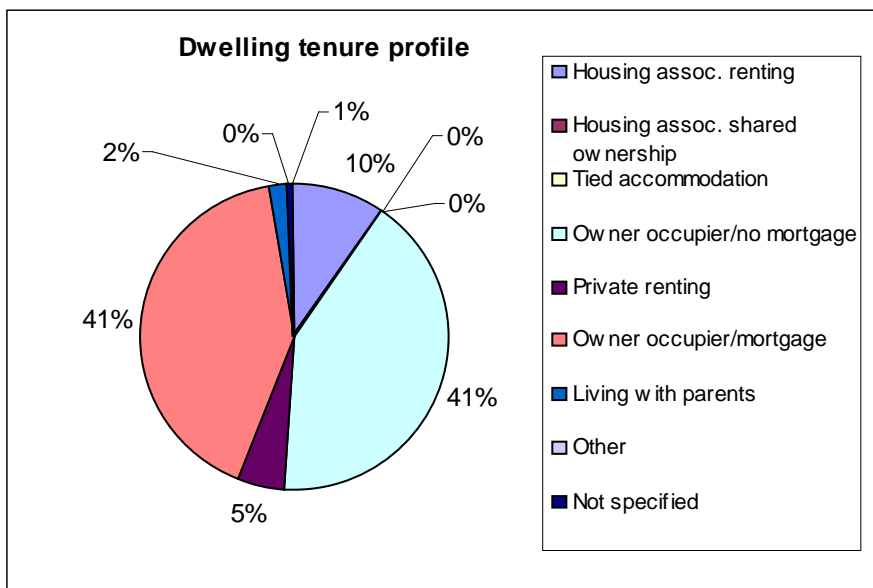
The data collected from the age question can be used to create a profile of household size as shown in the following chart. The chart shows a

dominance of 1 and 2 person households, as indeed do the majority of parish Housing Needs Surveys. The mean average household size is 2.47 people, corresponding closely to the Census 2001 figure for the parish of 2.50.



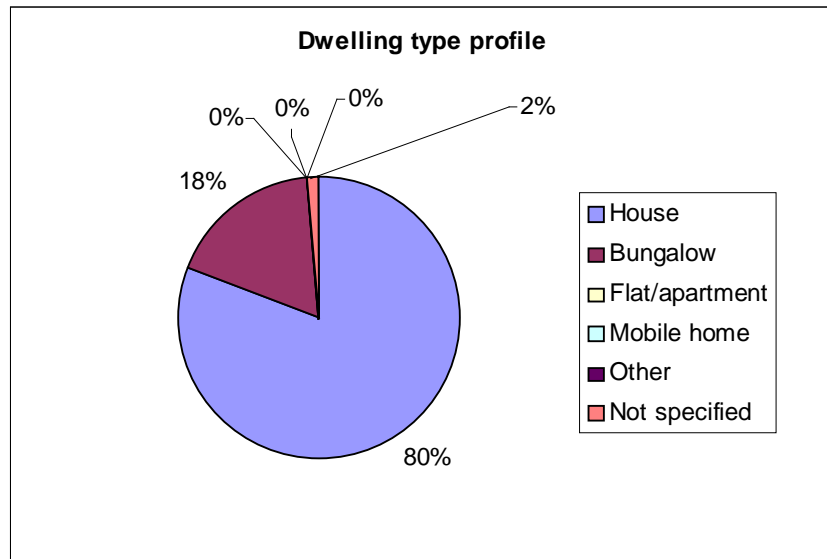
iii) Dwelling tenure profile (197 responses)

The following chart shows the dwelling tenure profile for survey respondents. In a pattern typical for villages across south Warwickshire, owner-occupiers represent 82% of the total. Tenures traditionally considered to be within the 'social sector' represent just 10% of the total.



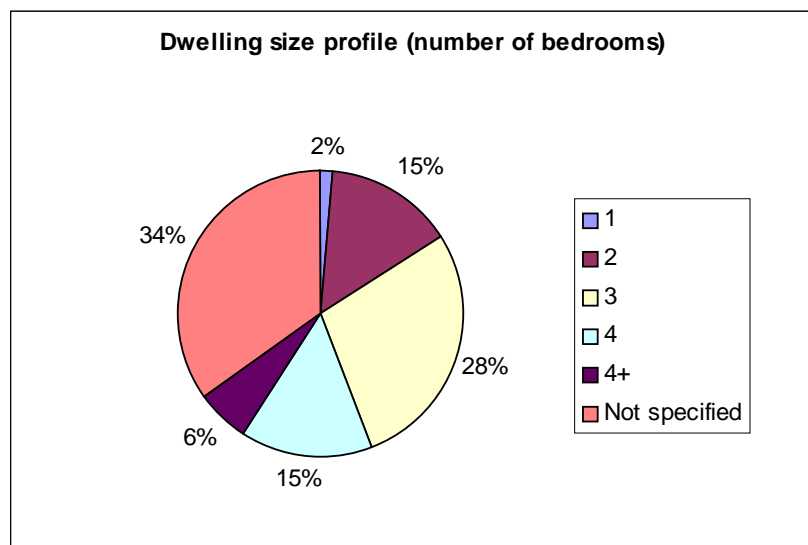
iv) Dwelling type profile (197 responses)

The following chart shows the types of dwellings that the survey respondents live in. Perhaps unsurprisingly houses represent the largest factor, although there is also a significant proportion of bungalows.



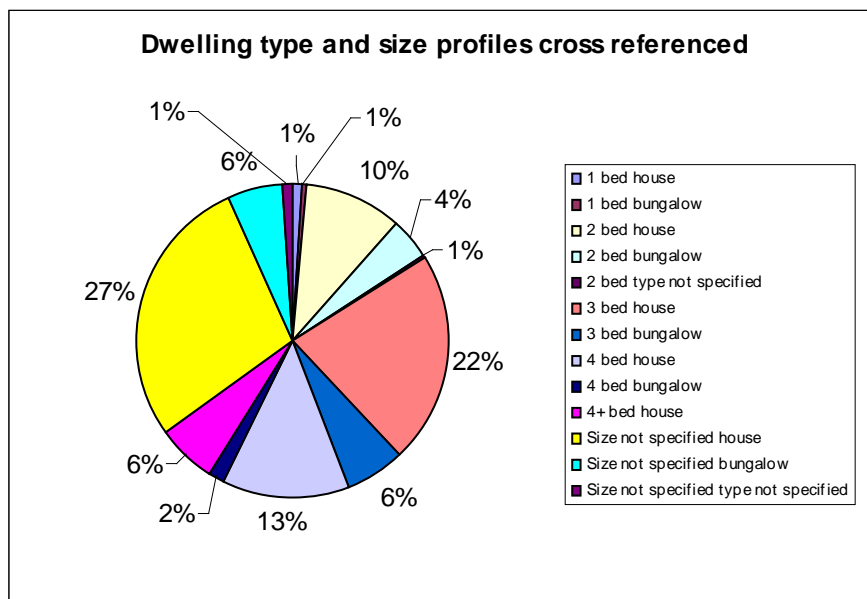
v) Dwelling size profile (197 responses)

The following chart shows the sizes of dwellings that the survey respondents live in. A large number of the respondents omitted to fill in this part of the survey form, perhaps because they thought that giving this information might identify the location of their home.



vi) Dwelling type and size profiles cross referenced (197 responses)

Cross-referencing the data from 4.iv and 4.v provides a combined profile of dwelling type and size. This can be seen in the following chart. 3 bedroom houses emerge as the largest single factor of those specified, closely followed by 4 bedroom houses. When compared to 4.ii above, i.e. a dominance of 1 and 2 person households, these results may suggest an issue of dwelling under-occupation in the parish.

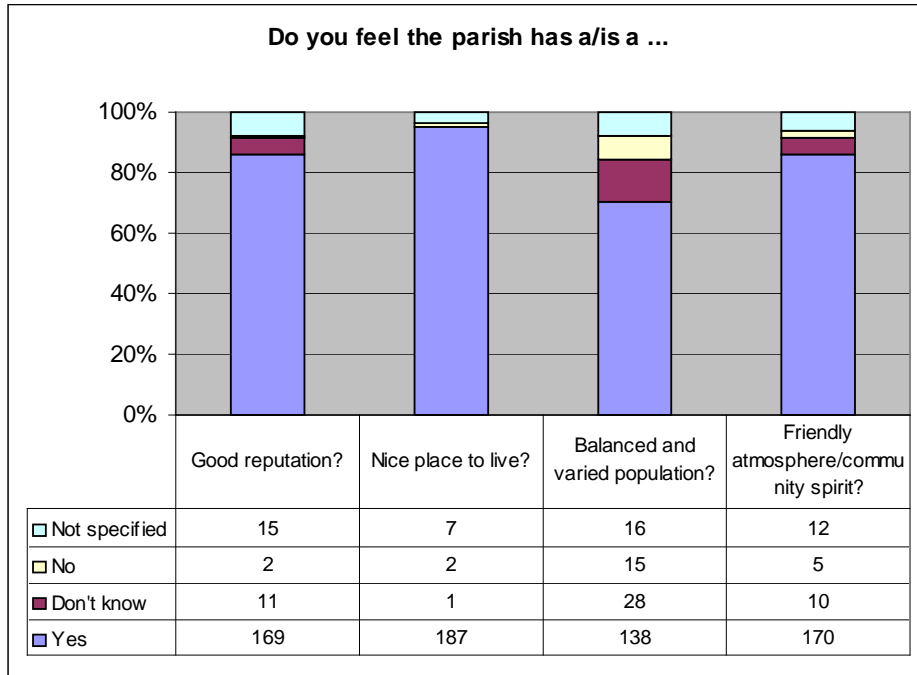


vii) Life in the parish: positive and negative aspects (197 responses)

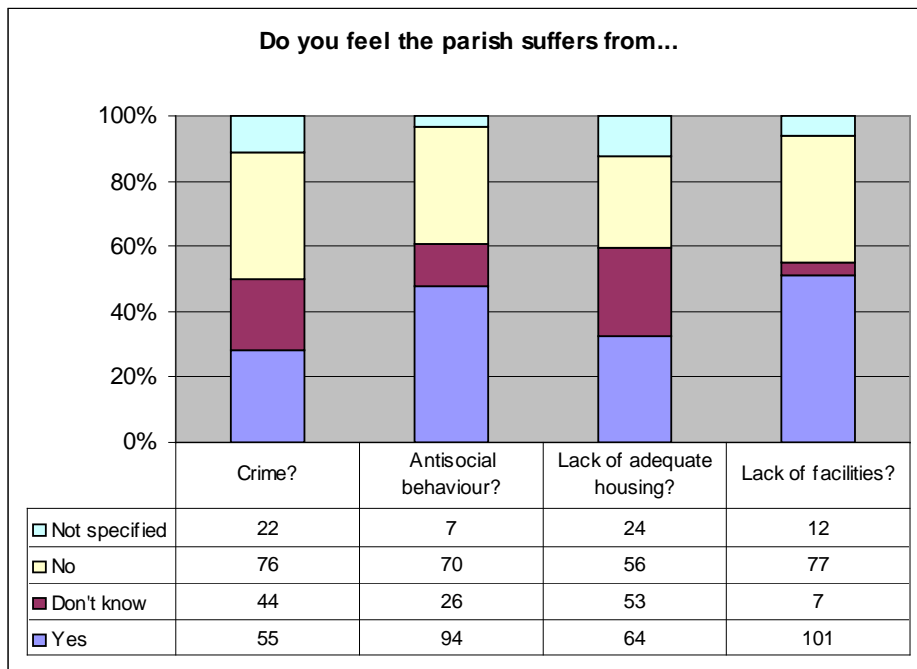
The survey respondents were asked a series of questions relating to the perceived benefits and disadvantages to living in Snitterfield Parish. This was done to build-up a picture of life in the parish and also to identify any issues/problems which could threaten the long-term sustainability of the parish.

Information relating to the sustainability of a village is important to assess whether any affordable homes that are subsequently provided will be 'sustainable'. Ensuring that people will take up tenancies and live in a settlement are crucial considerations when proposing new homes.

The first chart shows the respondents' views about the benefits to living in Snitterfield. The majority of the respondents thought the parish had a good reputation, was a nice place to live, and had a balanced and varied population and a friendly spirit.



The second chart shows the survey respondents' views about negative issues that might exist in the parish. There were a variety of opinions in respect of the issues. In respect of crime, the majority of people didn't know, didn't specify or didn't feel there was an issue. Curiously the same was true regarding a lack of adequate housing. In respect of antisocial behaviour and lack of facilities a greater percentage of respondents thought there was a problem.



As part of the survey, respondents were invited to elaborate on their views regarding a lack of adequate housing and a lack of local facilities. Certain key issues emerged, as specified in the following tables:

Lack of adequate housing – comments:

Key issue	Number of respondents' comments
Need for affordable housing for local people, general comments	20
Need for affordable housing for local people, specifically young people	28
Need for affordable housing for local people, specifically families	4
Need for housing specifically to meet the needs of older people	2

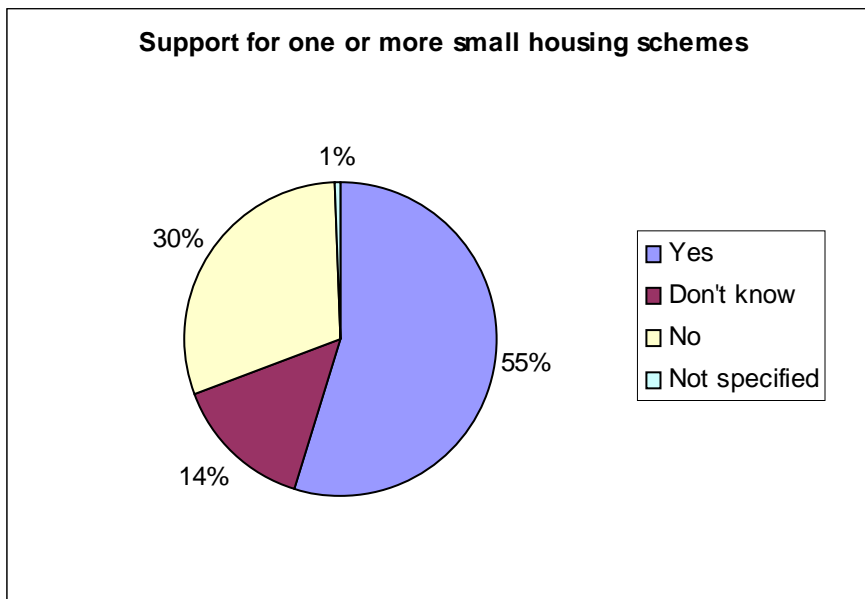
Lack of facilities – comments:

Key issue	Number of respondents' comments
Post office	89
Improved bus service	40
Doctors at the surgery	15
Better policing	4
Activities for young people	3
Car parking facilities	3

With just under half of all respondents requesting a post office in the parish, clearly this is a significant issue. The question is what can be done to provide a post office?

viii) Support for one or more small housing schemes (197 responses)

The chart below shows the level of support within the community for one or more small housing schemes to meet the needs of local people being built in the parish. The chart shows there is a high level of support, 55%, amongst the survey respondents for a small-scale affordable housing scheme. Only 30% of respondents were against such a scheme. Comments received from the respondents with regard to the development of such a scheme are shown in Appendix B of this report.

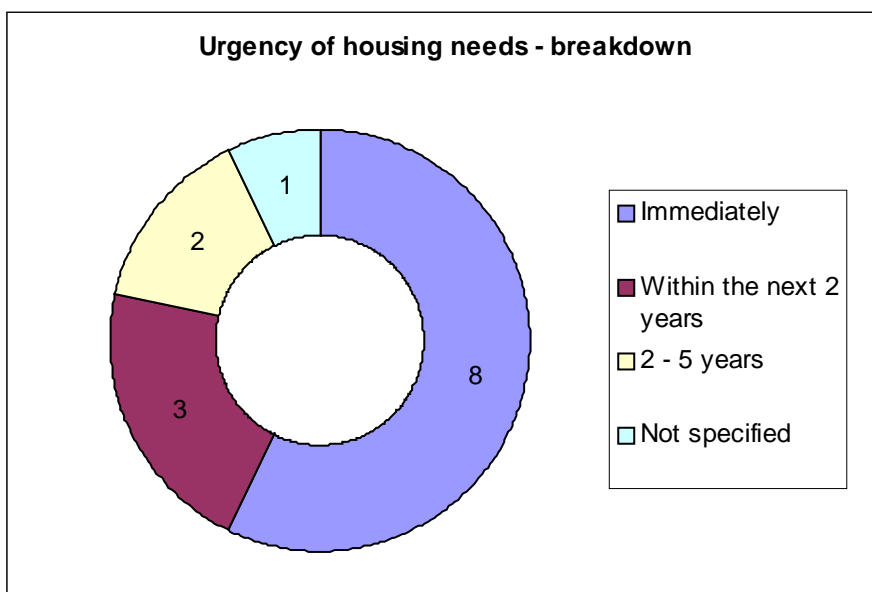


5. Results – Housing needs information

14 housing needs were identified from the 197 respondents to the survey. Section 5 provides a breakdown of information from these 14 respondents.

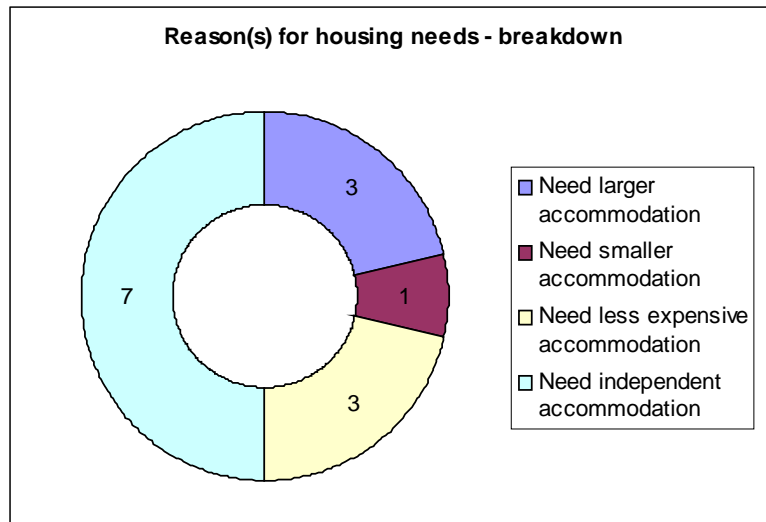
i) Urgency of housing needs - breakdown (14 responses)

The following chart shows the urgency of the 14 housing needs.



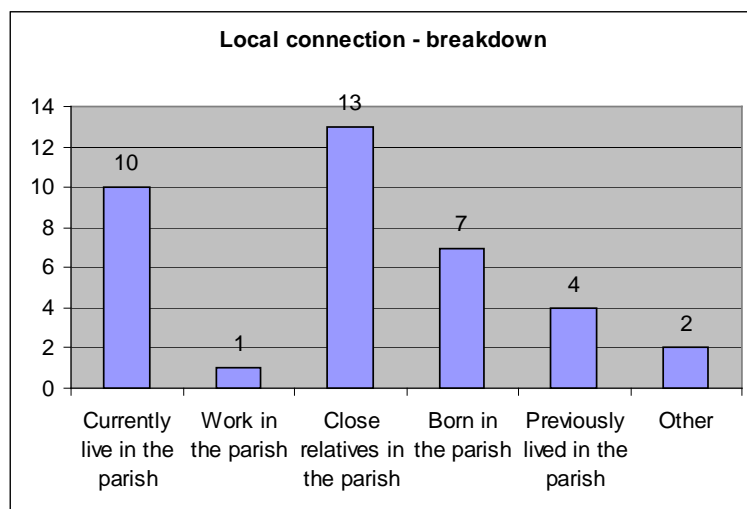
ii) Reason(s) for housing needs – breakdown (14 responses)

The following chart shows the reasons for the 14 respondents being in need of alternative housing. Where more than one reason was specified, the first reason shown on the survey form was counted.



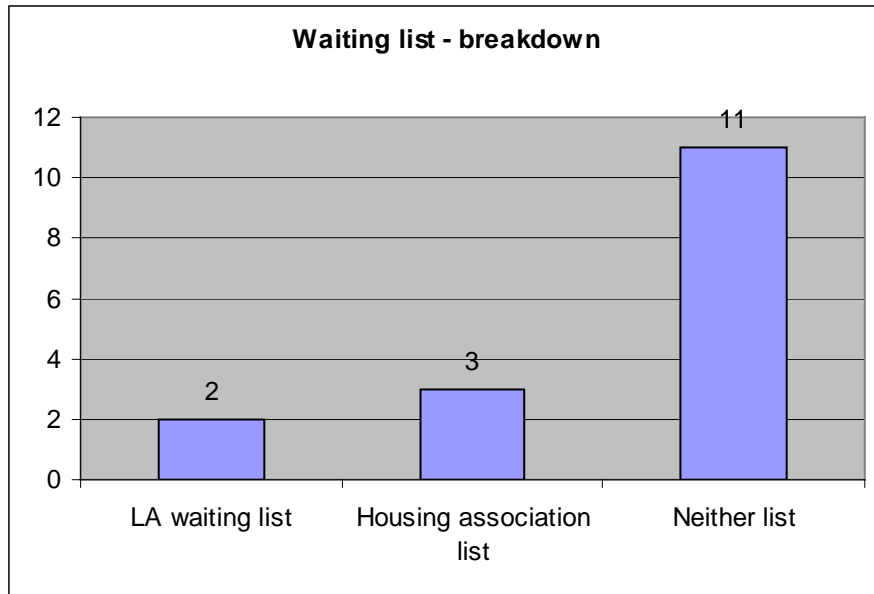
iii) Local connection – breakdown (14 responses)

The chart below shows the types of local connection that the 14 respondents have. The 4 respondents not currently living in the parish have all previously lived in the parish.



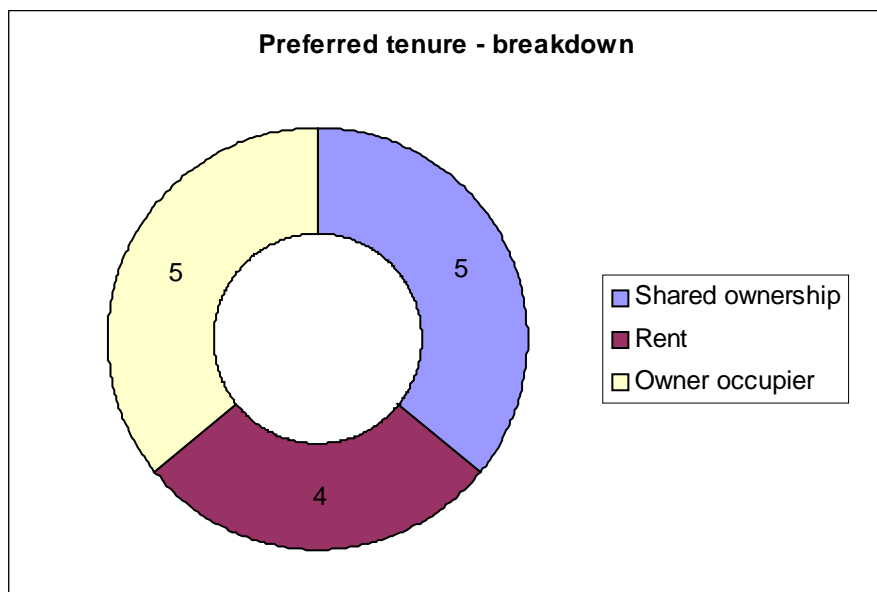
iv) Waiting list – breakdown (14 responses)

The following chart shows the number of respondents registered on the local authority waiting list and/or a housing association waiting list.



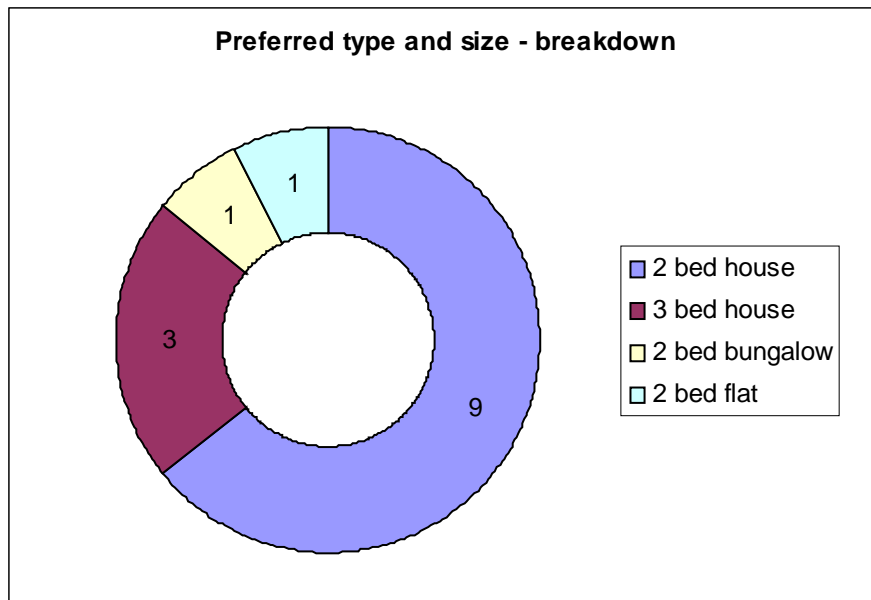
v) Preferred tenure – breakdown (14 responses)

The preferred tenures of the 14 respondents are shown in the chart below.



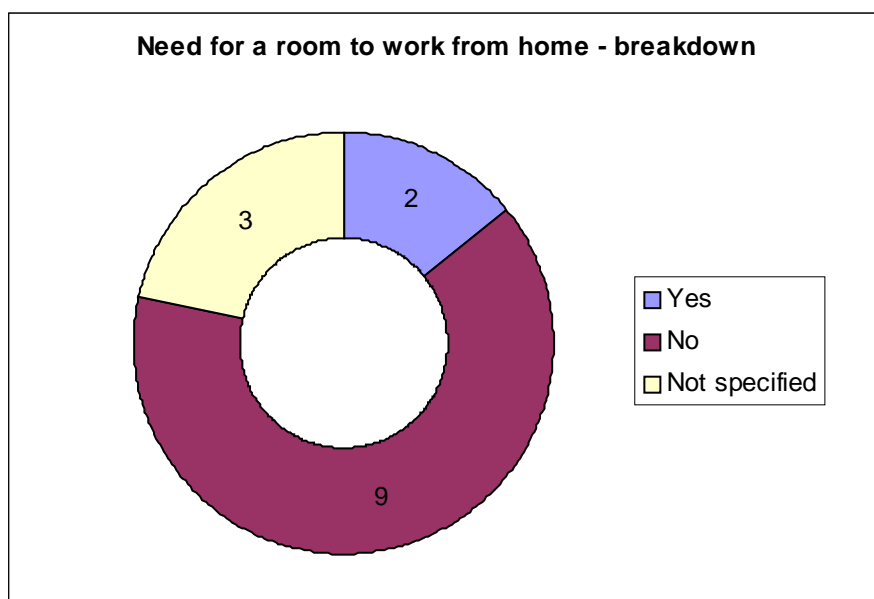
vi) Preferred type and size – breakdown (14 responses)

The preferred types and sizes of accommodation expressed by the 14 respondents are shown in the following chart.



vii) Need for a room to work from home - breakdown (14 responses)

Respondents were asked whether they had a need for a room to work from home. Only 2 of the 14 respondents answered 'Yes'.



6. Determination of specific housing needs

The following table shows the specific housing needs of the 14 respondents. A number of rules were used to compile this table:

- Respondents that indicated a preference for 1 bedroom accommodation were reclassified as being in need of a 2 bedroom home. In rural areas, the capacity for housing associations to develop 1 bedroom homes is very limited. In terms of occupancy, the flexibility of 2 bedroom homes is far greater than 1 bedroom homes.
- Where a respondent indicated a preference for shared ownership their ability to enter into a shared ownership arrangement was assessed. The mortgage the respondent could raise was compared against a 50% share (the usual starting % for shared ownership) of a comparable open market property. Research was carried out on property prices in the Snitterfield area and can be seen as Appendix C of this report. Having assessed whether the respondent could afford to enter into a shared ownership arrangement, if they could not do so they were re-classified as being in need of rented accommodation from a housing association.
- Where a respondent indicated a preference for owner occupied housing, their financial ability to afford this was clarified using income and mortgage capacity information. If a respondent could not afford owner occupied housing they were reclassified as being in need of shared ownership housing under the terms described in the paragraph above.

Urgency	Local connection verified	Preferred tenure	Preferred type/size	Actual tenure	Actual type/size
2 - 5 years	Yes	Owner occupier	2 bed house	Shared ownership	2 bed house
2 - 5 years	Yes	Shared ownership	2 bed house	Shared ownership	2 bed house
Immediately	Yes	Owner occupier	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)
Immediately	Yes	Shared ownership	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)
Immediately	Yes	Shared ownership	2 bed house	Shared ownership	2 bed house
Immediately	Yes	Shared ownership	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)
Immediately	Yes	Rent	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)

Immediately	Yes	Owner occupier	3 bed house	Rent	3 bed house
Immediately	Yes	Rent	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed house
Immediately	Yes	Rent	2 bed flat	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)
Not specified	Yes	Rent	2 bed bungalow	Rent	2 bed bungalow
Within the next 2 years	Yes	Owner occupier	2 bed house	Rent	2 bed flat (or house/bungalow)
Within the next 2 years	Yes	Shared ownership	3 bed house	Rent	3 bed house
Within the next 2 years	Yes	Owner-occupier	3 bed house	Shared ownership	2 bed house

A full breakdown of the needs can be seen as Appendix D of this report.

7. Conclusions

There is a need for 14 new homes in Snitterfield for local people. The specific needs, with urgencies ranging from immediate to within the next 5 years are:

Shared ownership

4 x 2 bedroom houses

Rented

1 x 2 bedroom bungalow
6 x 2 bedroom flats (or houses/bungalows)
1 x 2 bedroom house
2 x 3 bedroom houses

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that an exercise is carried out to identify a suitable piece of land, or pieces of land, to meet the 14 housing needs identified by this survey. Partners in this exercise should include:

- The Parish Council
- Stratford on Avon District Council
- South Warwickshire Housing Association
- Local landowners
- Rural Housing Enabler for Warwickshire Rural Community Council

Any housing that is intended to meet the needs described in Section 7 should be accompanied by an appropriate planning obligation to restrict occupancy of the homes to people with a local connection, as described in Section 3 of this report.

In arriving at the housing needs described in Section 7, the needs of 11 single people/couples have been determined as being for 2 bedroom homes. It is therefore essential that any proposal to develop these 11 new homes must be accompanied by an understanding on the part of the housing association that single people have priority of occupation over other household sizes. This understanding should be incorporated into any planning obligation relating to the 14 new homes.

9. Acknowledgements

Gratitude is expressed to Cllr Gerry Stammers, Chairman of Snitterfield Parish Council.

10. Contact information

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