



GUNTHORPE

HOUSING NEEDS

SURVEY

Midlands Rural Housing
in partnership with
Newark & Sherwood District Council,
Nottingham Community Housing Association

March 2009



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



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Executive Summary

Midlands Rural Housing completed a Housing Needs Survey in Gunthorpe during February 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 rental and shared ownership schemes and is for people with a strong connection to the parish.

Gunthorpe is a pleasant and popular place to live, although respondents have highlighted a shortage of local amenities. Most amenities are available in neighbouring Lowdham.

The age profile of the population is well balanced and the parish supports a number of families with children under 16.

The existing housing stock consists largely of three and four bedroom family accommodation. There are few small properties available and turnover of small properties on the open market is minimal. There is an absence of private rented properties. As a result, house prices are well above the average for the area. There is concern among respondents that the lack of affordable, small houses is leading to young people having to leave the parish. There is also concern at the lack of small properties available for the elderly wanting to downsize.

The housing needs survey has identified nine respondents wanting to register an interest in affordable housing. The majority are elderly people who require bungalow accommodation and 50% of the respondents are interested in Homebuy rather than rental.

The resulting breakdown is:-

1 x 2-bed house for rent

1 x 2-bed house for Homebuy

2 x 2-bed bungalows for rent

1 x 2-bed bungalow (special needs) for rent

3 x 2-bed bungalows for Homebuy

1 x 3-bed house for rent

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of 9 affordable dwellings should be considered to alleviate the future housing need in Gunthorpe.



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.

Newark & Sherwood District Council and Nottingham Community Housing Association are partners of the Trent Valley Partnership. In Newark & Sherwood, during the period 2005 to 2011, they will be working with Midlands Rural Housing and parish councils to undertake Housing Needs Studies in rural parishes and identify opportunities for the development of affordable housing within the district. Rural parishes are those with a population of fewer than 3000 people.

This needs study looks at the shortfall in housing in Gunthorpe Parish. Gunthorpe currently has a population of 704, in 302 households (2001 Census). 322 survey forms were produced for distribution to residents throughout the parish.

During January 2009, Midlands Rural Housing and Newark & Sherwood District Council worked together to deliver a Housing Needs Survey form to every household in the parish. The return date for the survey was 9th February 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 housing need in the parish of Gunthorpe, in order to provide Newark & Sherwood District Council with the information it requires to meet local housing needs.

3. Housing Costs

Property Values: Oct - Dec 2008 - Newark & Sherwood

	Av Detached	Av Semi	Av Terrace	Av Flat	Av Overall Price	No. Of Sales
	£	£	£	£	£	
East Midlands	230,826	134,634	112,688	112,688	156,665	10,194
Nottinghamshire	216,508	122,930	98,857	95,162	145,562	1,831
Newark & Sherwood	234,886	119,602	107,653	93,112	153,938	283
Source: Land Registry						

The table above provides a comparison of the property prices across the East Midlands Region, the County of Nottinghamshire and Newark & Sherwood District. It shows that the average overall price in Newark & Sherwood is higher than elsewhere in the region. A family wanting to purchase an average terrace house would need to be earning approximately £30,000 per annum to secure a mortgage.

Data from the Land Registry shows the following average house prices in Gunthorpe (PostcodeNG14 7**), based on sales between June 2007 – July 2008 (most recent available figures).

Detached - £277,000 (Based on 9 sales)

Semi-Detached – £149,150 (Based on 3 sales)

Overall - £245,037 (Based on 12 sales)

As can be seen from a comparison with the previous table, even taking into account that house prices may have fallen in recent months, house prices in Gunthorpe are substantially higher than in Newark & Sherwood as a whole and would be prohibitively expensive for people on low incomes.



4. Availability of Affordable Housing in Newark & Sherwood

The District's Housing Needs Survey 2003 shows that, not only are open market prices becoming prohibitively high, but also that levels of rented properties available from both the District Council and Housing Associations are falling due to the Right to Buy scheme.

The District's Housing Needs Survey 2003 outlines the need for an additional 614 affordable properties per year, throughout the district. It states that, locally, the proportion of houses and bungalows is over 20% higher than the national average, whilst the supply of terraced properties is almost 10% below and the supply of flats/maisonettes is 12% below the national average.

5. Planning Context

Planning policy at national, regional and local levels imposes strict restraints on new housing development in rural areas. However, it is possible to relax such constraints in exceptional circumstances, e.g.: where new housing would meet a specific, locally identified, need.

Newark & Sherwood Local Plan **Adopted** – March 1999 (Policies H17 and H19) outlines the means by which the District Council can use the planning process to bring about developments that meet 'local' housing needs in rural areas.

The provision of any housing that may be provided as a result of this survey would be subject to a legal restriction (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; e.g.

- A person or family currently living in the parish.
- A person or family who has lived in the parish but moved away to find affordable or suitable housing.
- A person or family with work commitments in the parish.
- A household containing an individual who was born in the parish.

6. Respondents' Details

The following sections of this report detail the responses from the questionnaires distributed and returned during January/February 2009, in Gunthorpe Parish.

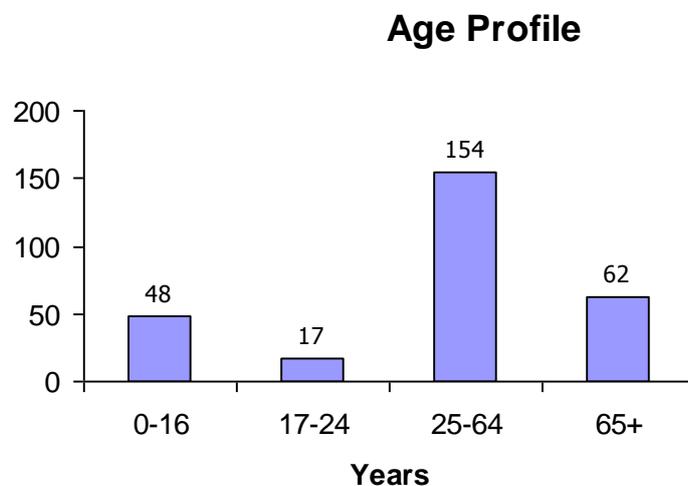
Respondents individual details have been kept confidential and any identifiable attributes have not been included in the results. Any comments that have been made may also have been edited so as not to identify individual circumstances.

The following results are a snapshot in time and provide the village and Newark & Sherwood District Council with an insight into the parish in terms of current housing need, the desirability of the village and the current level of facilities serving the local community.

A total of 122 survey forms were received giving a return rate of 38%. This is 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.

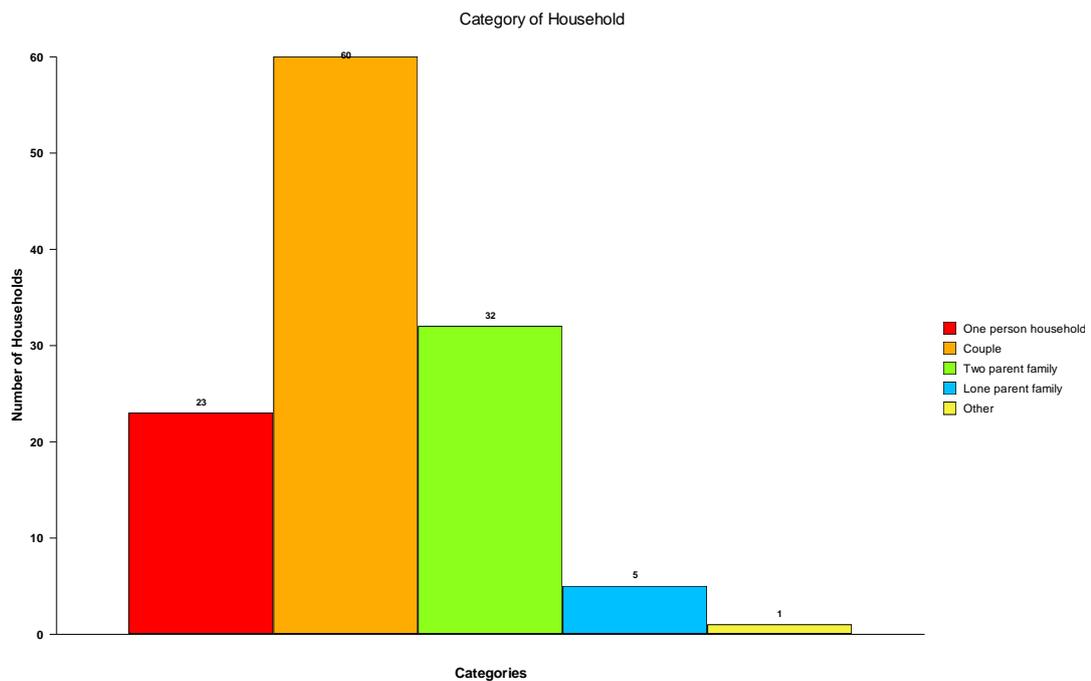
6.1. Age Profile

The chart overleaf shows the age profile of the 281 people captured on the 122 survey forms returned. The responses show that the largest single group of the population in Gunthorpe, representing 55%, are people between the ages of 25-64. However, there are also a substantial number of families with young children. Children under 16 form 17% of the population. This shows that a young generation is up and coming and their ability to remain in Gunthorpe in the long-term will almost certainly depend on the availability of affordable housing within the parish.



6.2. Household Size and Mix

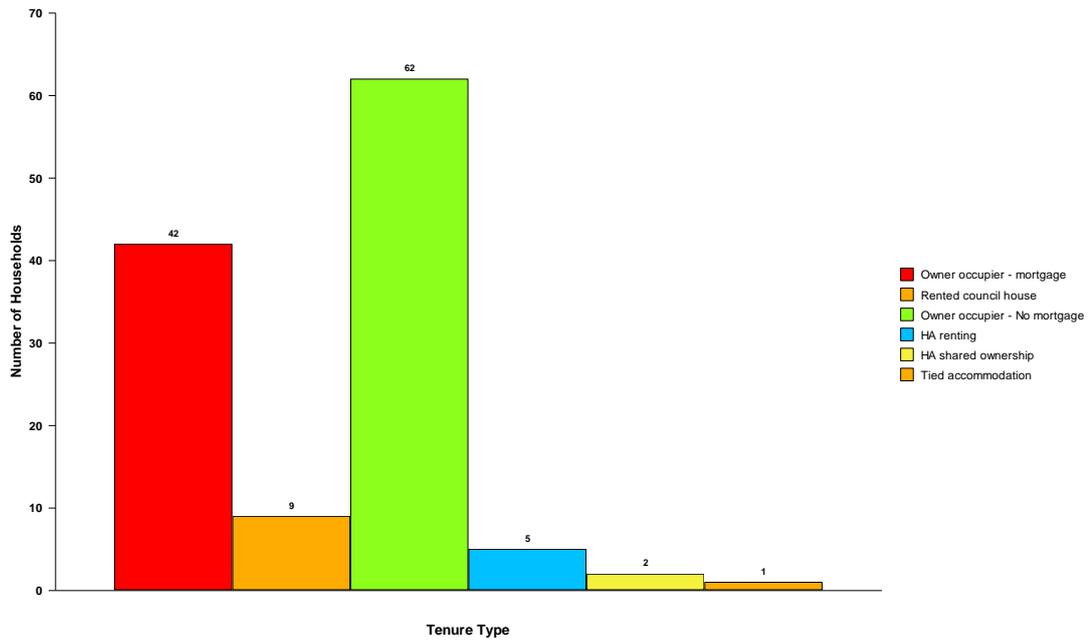
The following chart shows the number of households in each size/mix category. Total households containing couples accounted for 50%, followed by those containing families with children accounting for 31% of respondents. One person households accounted for a further 18% of the total.



6.3. Tenure of all Respondents

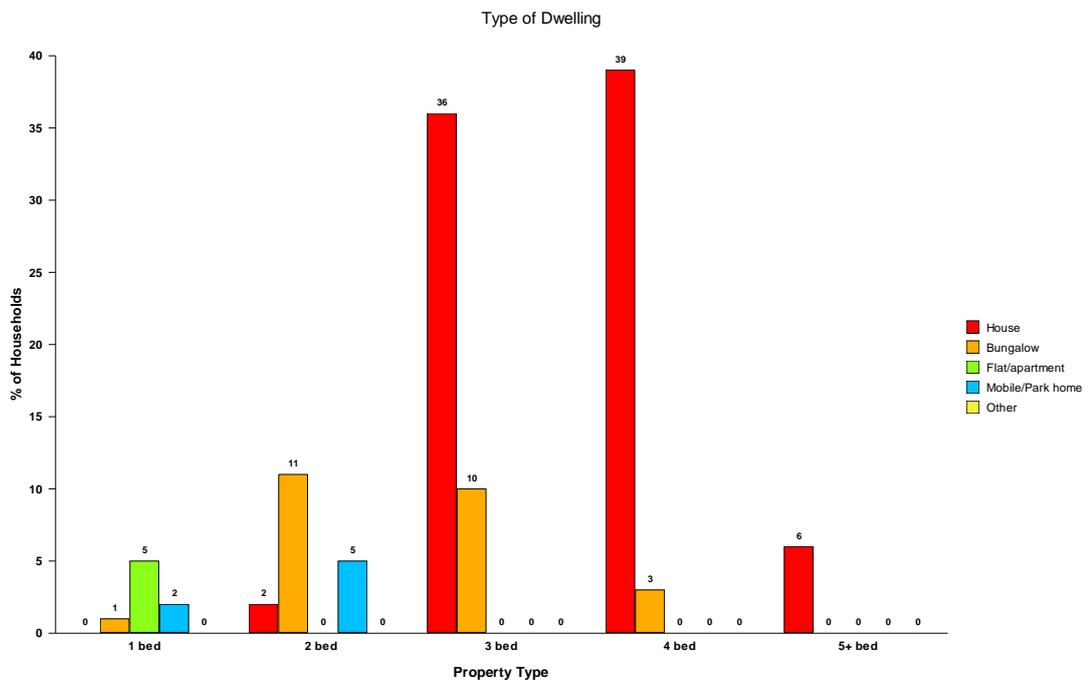
The chart overleaf shows current household tenure of all respondents. Owner-occupiers make up 86% of households, of whom 60% have no mortgage. Rented accommodation makes up 12% of total households. The rental market consists entirely of Council or Housing Association properties, with no evidence of private renting.

Current Housing Situation



6.4. Property Types

The following chart shows that the largest groups were occupants of 4 bedroom houses at 33%, followed by occupants of 3 bedroom houses at 30%. 1 and 2 bed properties make up a total of 21% of respondents.



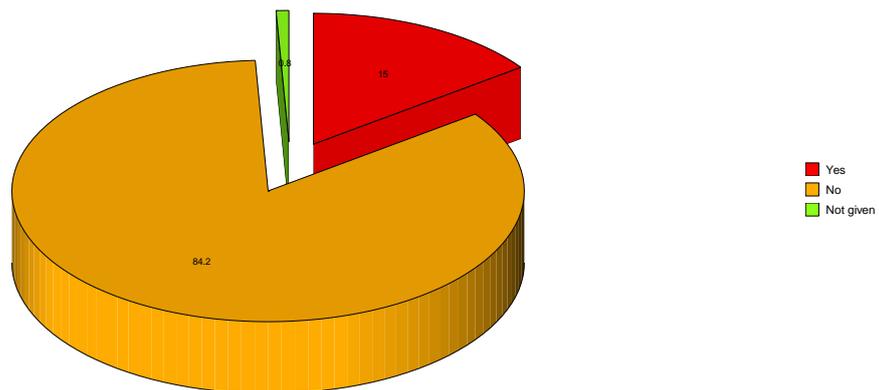
6.5. Ethnicity

Respondents' results showed that the majority of the demographic is 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

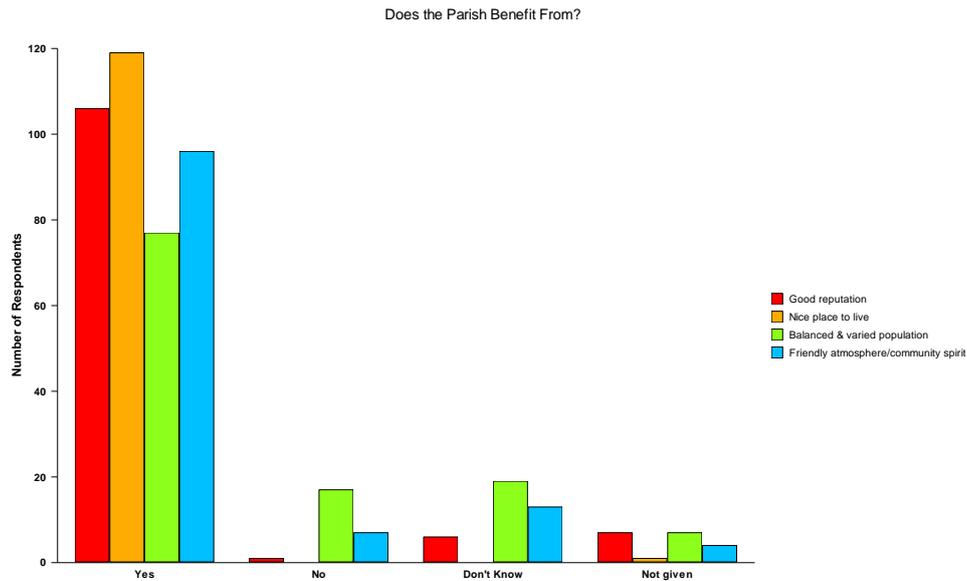
The chart below indicates that there have been a number of local people forced to move out of the village in order to secure suitable housing. 15% of respondents were aware of somebody who needed to move out to find affordable or suitable accommodation.

Migration - Leavers in Last 5 Years

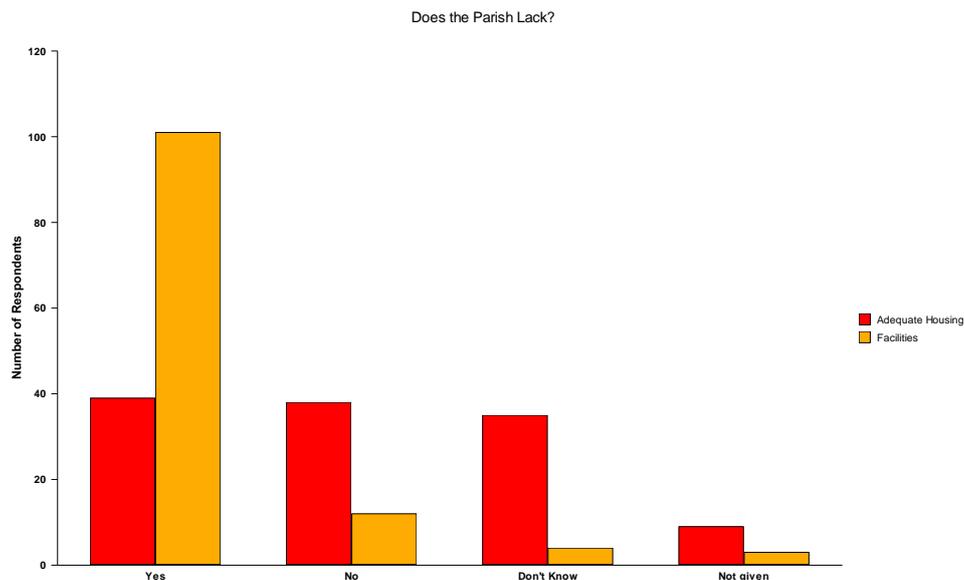


7. Sustainability Issues

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



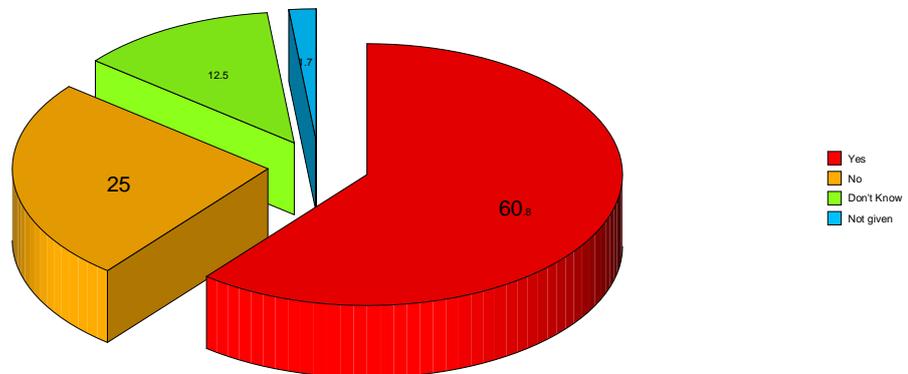
The second chart above shows that the responses to the question 'does the parish lack affordable housing?' are almost equally split into three groups – those thinking yes, those thinking no, and those who don't know.

The chart also shows that a majority of respondents believe the village is lacking in essential facilities.

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 reasonable level of support within the community at 60%, with just 25% of respondents against such a scheme.

% In Favour of a Small Scheme



9. Housing Needs Analysis

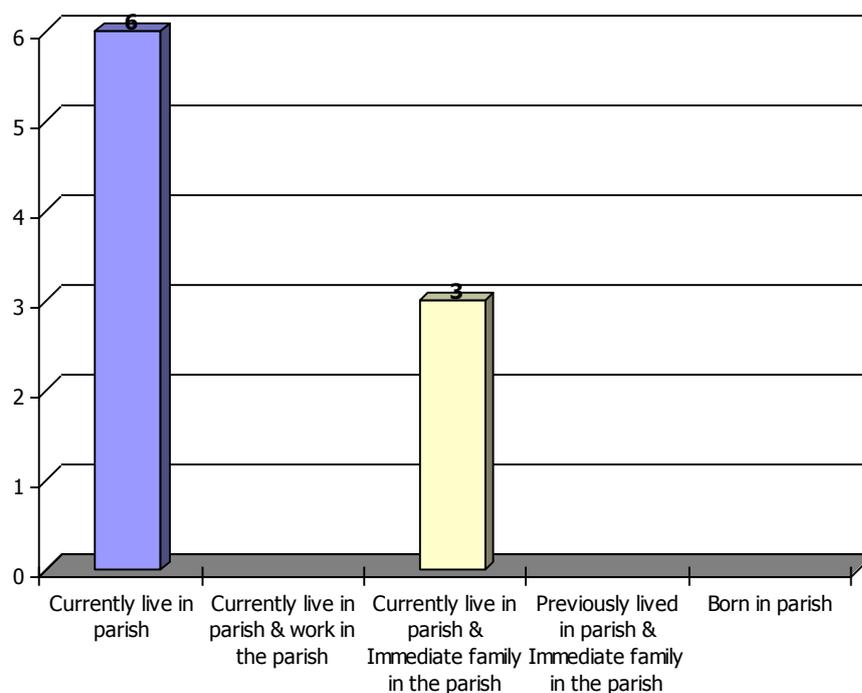
Out of the 122 returns, 113 were from people who would be considered as adequately housed and would not be looking to move to alternative accommodation within the next 5 years. These respondents completed a survey form primarily to offer their support or objection towards a 'local needs' housing development, as well as to give their comments regarding the sustainability of Gunthorpe 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 9 returns detailing a housing need.

9.1. Local Connection

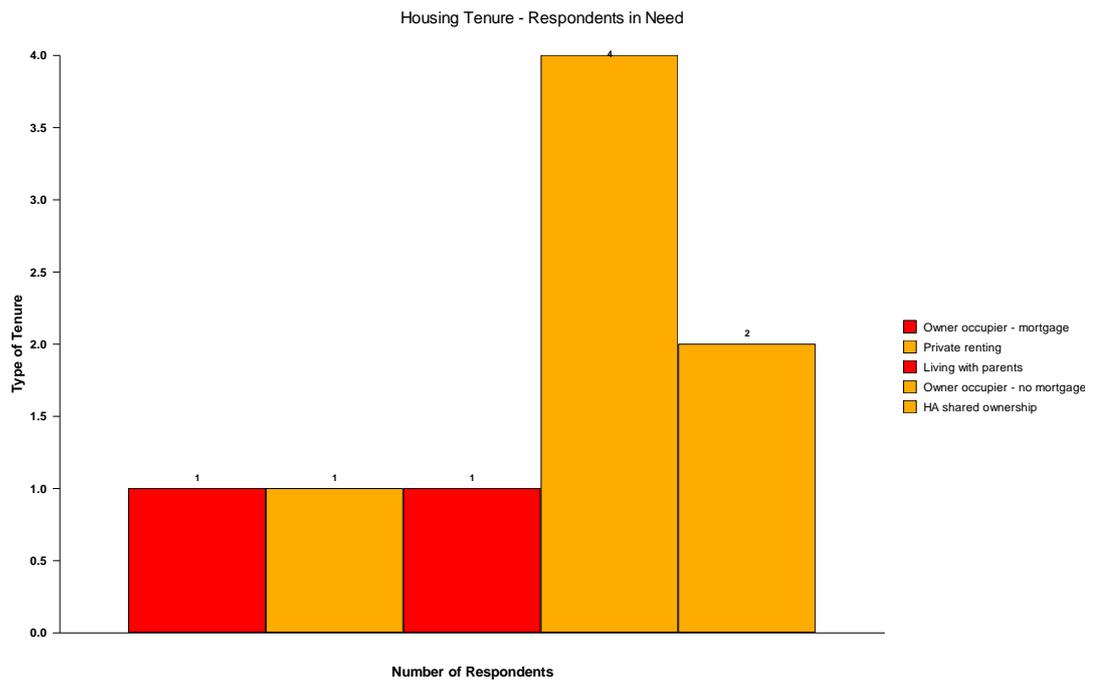
The graph below shows the type of local connection held by respondents with a specific housing need. There were 9 responses in total, all of whom are currently living in the village and fulfil the criteria for having a strong local connection with the parish.

Tenure of Respondents in Need



9.2. Housing Tenure & Length of Residency

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



9.3. Respondents in Need Details

The tables below 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 years. Residency 15 years and family in parish.	2 bed house. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed house. Rented.
Single person living in mortgaged 4 bed property, requires smaller accomm. within 2-5 years. Residency 28 years.	2 bed house or bungalow. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed house. Homebuy.

Elderly

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Single person living in mortgaged 3 bed house, requires smaller accomm. within 2-5 years. Residency 55 years.	2 bed house or bungalow. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow. Homebuy.
Couple with physical disabilities require adapted property, close to carer, within 2 years. Residency 60 years.	2 bed bungalow, adapted. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow, adapted. Rented.
Couple with ill health, living in own property, need cheaper home, in 2-5 years. Residency 30 years.	2 bed bungalow. Rented or Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow. Homebuy.
Single person living in own 3 bed property, requires cheaper home, close to family, in 2-5 years. Residency 30 years.	2 bed bungalow. Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow. Homebuy.
Single person, living in own mobile home, requires cheaper home and security of tenure, within 2-5 years. Residency 4 years.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.
Single person, living in own mobile home, requires security of tenure within 2-5 years. Residency 20 years.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.	2 bed bungalow. Rented.

Families

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Lone parent with two children, living in rented accomm., requires cheaper home and certainty of tenure, immediately. Residency 19 years.	3 bed house or bungalow. Rented or Homebuy.	3 bed house. Rented.

Therefore the housing needs derived directly from the survey are:

1 x 2-bed house for rent

1 x 2-bed house for Homebuy

2 x 2-bed bungalows for rent

1 x 2-bed bungalow (special needs) for rent

3 x 2-bed bungalows for Homebuy

1 x 3-bed house for rent

10. Conclusions & Recommendations

Midlands Rural Housing, in partnership with Newark & Sherwood District 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 local support for a development to meet local needs.

Gunthorpe is considered a pleasant and popular place to live. Although respondents felt that it is lacking in some essential facilities, most requirements are available nearby in Lowdham.

The age profile is well balanced and there are a high percentage of children under 16, showing that Gunthorpe is popular with families.

A high proportion of the existing housing stock consists of 3 and four bedroom properties. Property prices are high and turnover of smaller properties on the open market is negligible. In addition, the level of rental property available is low and there is no evidence of a private rental market. These factors indicate that there may be a shortage of affordable housing for young singles/couples in the future, although this is not evidenced by the current housing needs survey results.

15% of respondents were aware of someone who has had to move out of Gunthorpe to find suitable, affordable housing and whilst respondents were equally split on the question of need for affordable housing in Gunthorpe, 60% were in favour of developing a small scheme.

The housing needs survey identified nine respondents wishing to register an interest in affordable housing. Six of these are people who are, or shortly will be, of pensionable age and require small, bungalow accommodation. Only one is in immediate need, and almost 50% have indicated an interest in Homebuy properties in 2-5 years time.

Our recommendation is that a mixed development of 9 affordable dwellings should be considered to alleviate the future housing need in Gunthorpe.



11. Contact Details

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Appendix A: Comments Regarding Facilities

The following is a list of comments and suggestions on general improvements to the quality of life in the parish, from several respondents to the Housing Needs Survey:

- There is a lack of public transport and shop/post office.
- Lack of shops, post office, transport and a pub.
- There are no shops available for older residents with no transport.
- Need a small shop and regular buses.
- A post office could be sited in one of the pubs.
- Bus service is very poor, so a car is needed for access to shops.
- Some activities for children.
- There is a need for a corner shop.
- A local shop for milk, papers, basic provisions, etc.
- The bus service is poor and irregular compared with neighbouring villages.
- Good playpark, facilities for teenagers, sports facilities.
- Youth club and adequate facilities for children.
- The bus service is not suitable for anyone working outside the village.
- The bus connection with Lowdham is not frequent enough. We need it for doctors, shops, etc.



Appendix B: Comments regarding the development of a small-scale affordable housing development 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 a shortage of affordable starter homes and retirement homes.
- Youngsters have to leave to find housing and there are only flats for the elderly.
- We need affordable rented housing and shared ownership.
- We need affordable rented accommodation for 1st time buyers.
- Starter homes for people born here and for people wanting to downsize.
- More bungalows for the elderly.
- Housing for 1st time buyers.
- Before any more housing is built, we need the drainage system renewing. The village has outgrown the existing system.
- No more housing.
- More properties for young couples and young families. It would be nice for our children to have an opportunity to stay in Gunthorpe.
- Starter homes required – prices prohibit young people at present.
- We worry that our children will not be able to afford to live in the village.
- Affordable housing for young families.
- Building will put pressure on the flooding issues in the village.
- There is no land available outside the floodplain.
- The village already has an adequate range of housing and doesn't require more.