

Broad Town

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

July 2012

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1. Parish Summary

The parish of Broad Town is in the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

- There is a population of 580 according to the 2001 census, comprised of 220 households. ONS predictions for 2011 suggest a population of 590 in 240 households.¹
- Broad Town sits in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The village boasts a White Horse, a small primary school, a parish church and a number of local groups and organisations. Sadly there is no pub or shop but there is a social club, which provides an inexpensive bar in the village hall on Friday nights.
- In July 2011, a team of local volunteers produced a comprehensive parish plan following wide consultation with the parish.
 - This consultation included inviting residents to complete a questionnaire, which explored many parish issues.
 - The published plan detailed the results of the consultations and included an Action Plan covering areas to be addressed where possible. Housing and development was an area where results were divided and the recommendation of the Parish Plan Steering Group, captured within the Action Plan, included conducting a Housing Needs Survey to gather more pertinent data.

2. Introduction

In early 2012, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Broad Town parish council, to establish if there was a proven need for affordable housing in the parish and potentially to use the findings of the survey to inform the parish plan.

Such surveys assist officers in identifying those areas with the greatest housing problems so that scarce financial resources can be put to best use.

Experience has shown that these surveys need to be carried out at regular intervals if the results are to remain relevant in identifying trends.

- The Principal Development Officers are employed by Wiltshire Council's new housing team to assist in the delivery of new affordable housing.
- The Principal Development Officers work closely with rural communities, housing associations, local authorities and landowners to meet the affordable housing needs of rural communities.
- The survey is funded by Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership and Wiltshire Council.

¹ <http://www.intelligenetwork.org.uk/population-and-census/>

3. Aim

The aim of carrying out the survey is to investigate the affordable housing need for local people (or those who have a need to live in the parish or the locality) of Broad Town.

- 'Housing need' can be defined as the need for an individual or household to obtain housing which is suitable to their circumstances.
- It implies that there are problems or limitations with the household's current housing arrangements and that the household is unable to afford or to access suitable accommodation in the private sector.
- Such problems may be concerned with housing costs, size, location, layout, state of repair, or security of tenure either immediately or in the future.

4. Survey Distribution and Methodology

In order to carry out the housing needs survey, questionnaires were delivered to the parish council for distribution in May 2012.

To encourage a good response, households were given a pre-paid envelope in which to return the completed survey. The council applies the data protection policy to responses, ensuring that all survey responses remain anonymous.

Residents were asked to return the completed surveys in the pre-paid envelopes by 22nd June 2012. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Housing Strategy department at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 275 questionnaires were distributed to the parish.
- Everyone was asked to complete the first section of the form.
- If a household considered itself in need, or likely to be in need, of affordable housing within the next five years, it was invited to complete the rest of the survey.
- There was a good response rate of 28% with 77 replies received.
- The received data refer only to themselves (i.e. to the survey respondents) and should not be taken as indicative of the population of Broad Town.
- Six responses were made online.

5. Key Findings

This report is divided into two parts. The first section looks at existing households in the parish in order to provide a description of the current housing in Broad Town. This section also describes the levels of new affordable housing, if any, which would be supported by residents of the parish.

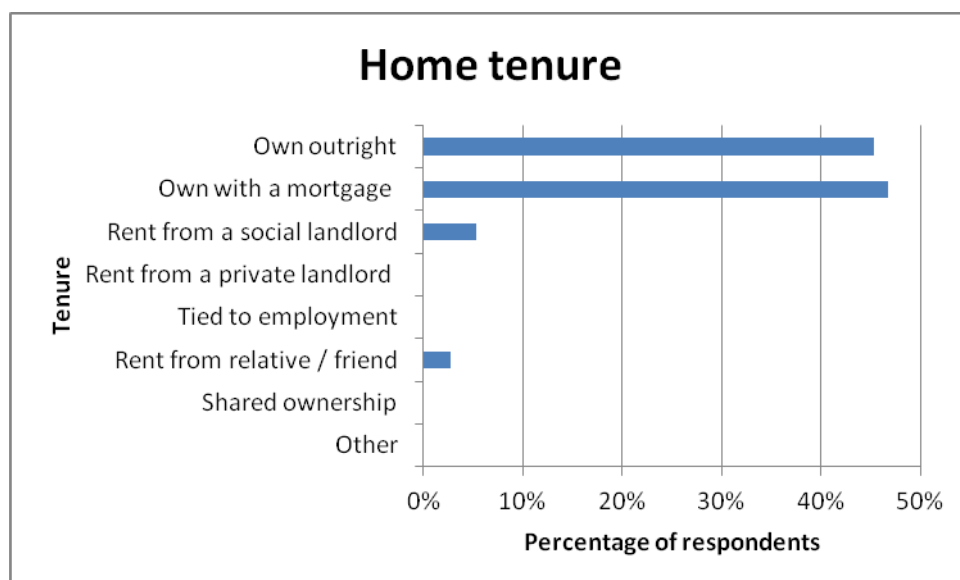
The second section examines the households who have declared a need for new housing in Broad Town. The section begins by describing the overall need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment is then made in order to determine the numbers of households who have a current need for new *affordable* housing. The results of this financial assessment are summarised in the 'Recommendations' of the report (section 8).

Part One – Households currently living in the parish

The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Broad Town was their main home. All of those who replied indicated that their home in Broad Town is their main home.

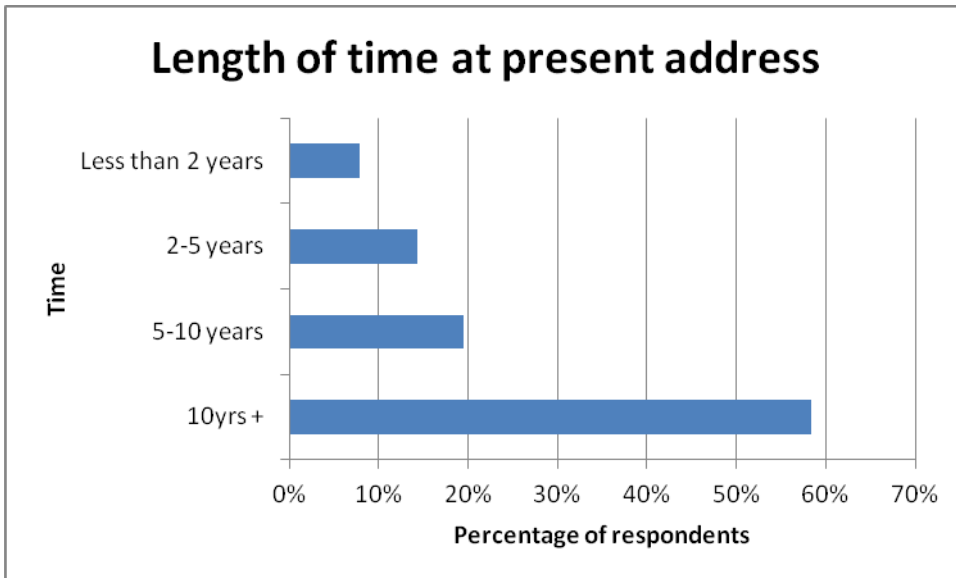
The 2001 Census data for the Broad Town & Hook output area indicates that 84.6% of households in the area were owner-occupying, 5.3% were renting from social landlords, 6.9% were privately renting, and 3.3% of households were living rent free.²

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (92%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 5.3% of respondents were living in socially rented properties and 2.7% were renting from a relative or friend. There were no responses from those living in privately rented accommodation, suggesting a bias in the survey responses toward owner-occupiers and away from private renters: the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.



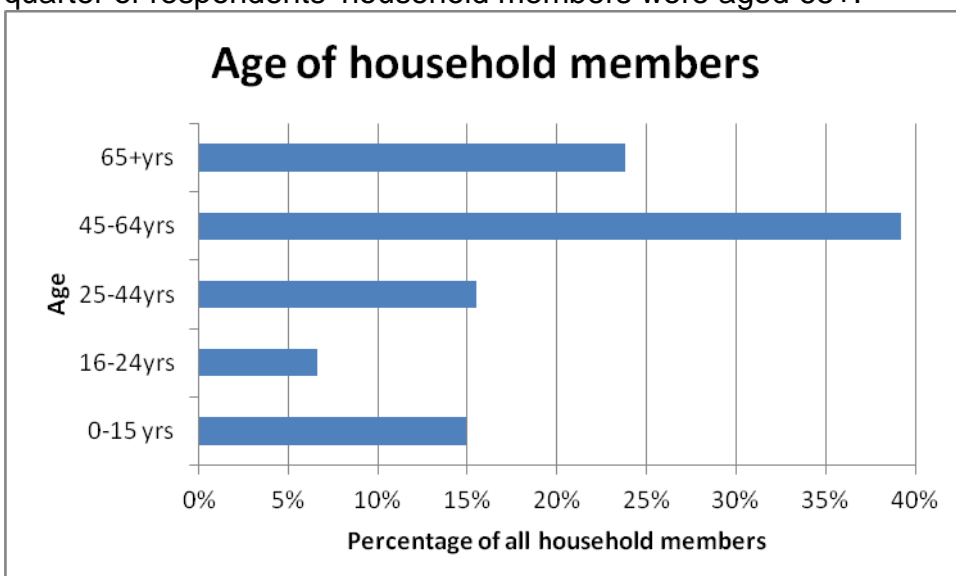
² Percentages do not sum due to independent rounding.

The chart below indicates the length of time respondents have lived in Broad Town. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than ten years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents.



The survey also shows that the majority of respondents live in larger family homes, with 87% of respondents having 3 or more bedrooms in their property, 10.4% having two bedrooms and only 2.6% of respondents living in a home with one bedroom. The majority of respondents (79.2%) live in detached properties.

These responses indicate relatively high levels of under-occupation in Broad Town. While the majority of respondents live in larger homes, the majority (70.1%) also have households composed of two or fewer persons. These levels of under-occupation are an expected corollary of larger numbers of older person households, among which under-occupation is more common, and indeed the spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that nearly a quarter of respondents' household members were aged 65+:



As shown in the chart above, however, the majority of households responding to the survey had members aged 45-64 and there were also significant proportions aged 25-44 and with children aged under 16 years old. This indicates a spread of different household types in Broad Town, from older person households with fewer members, to many younger households with children.

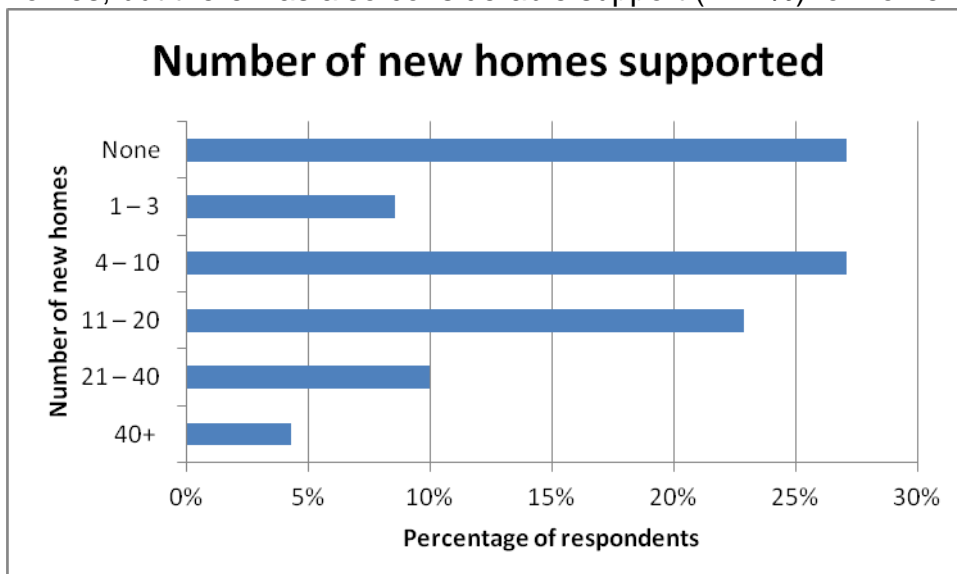
The distance travelled to work can also be a good measure of the sustainability of local development, as more people working locally can indicate an ongoing need for local housing. The table below shows how far people in the respondents' households travelled to work:

Persons in household	Distance to work				Total
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	
Person 1	11	23	10	9	53
Person 2	5	14	11	6	36
Person 3	0	3	1	0	4
Person 4	0	0	0	0	0
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	40	22	15	93

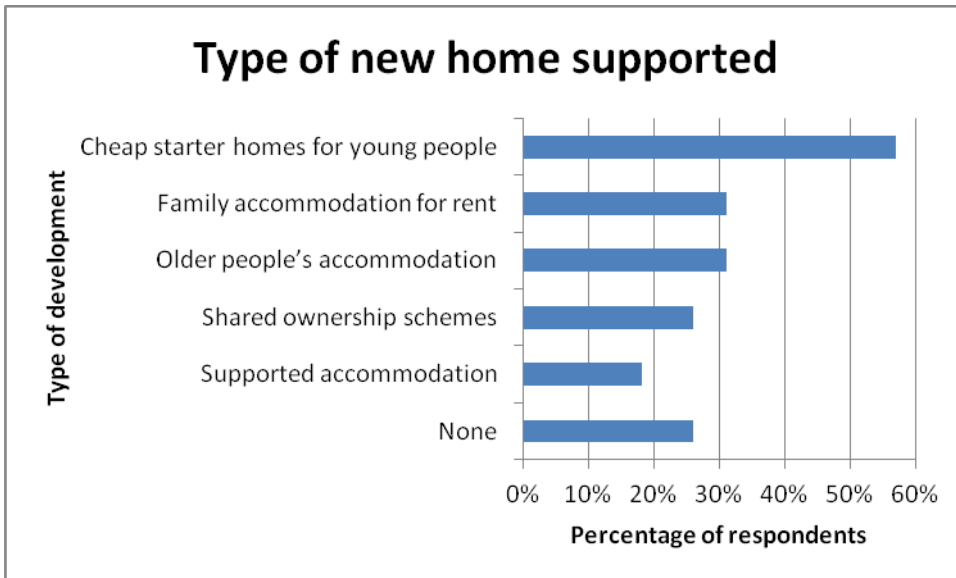
These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Broad Town, indicated by the survey respondents. While the majority of households' working members (60.2%) usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, a significant proportion also travel more than that, which suggests a potential lack of more local sources of employment.

Respondents were also asked whether anyone currently living in their household would need separate accommodation in the parish now or in the near future, to which 4.2% of respondents answered 'yes'. This result indicates a moderate sustained need for housing in the parish.

Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. Results here were mixed: half of respondents indicated that they would support new housing developments that delivered either between four and ten, or eleven and twenty, new homes, but there was also considerable support (27.1%) for no new housing in Broad Town:



Respondents were asked what types of development they would support. Over half (57.1%) of respondents supported the development of cheap starter homes for young people, with 31.2% of respondents supporting both the development of family accommodation for rent and older persons' accommodation. 26% endorsed the development of shared ownership homes. There was less support (18.2% of respondents) for supported accommodation for tenants with disabilities.

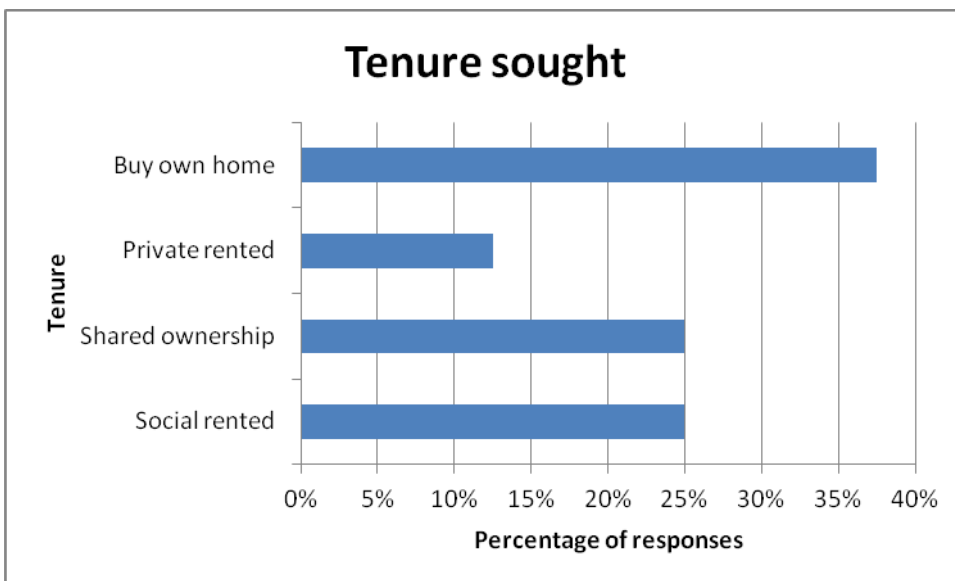


Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

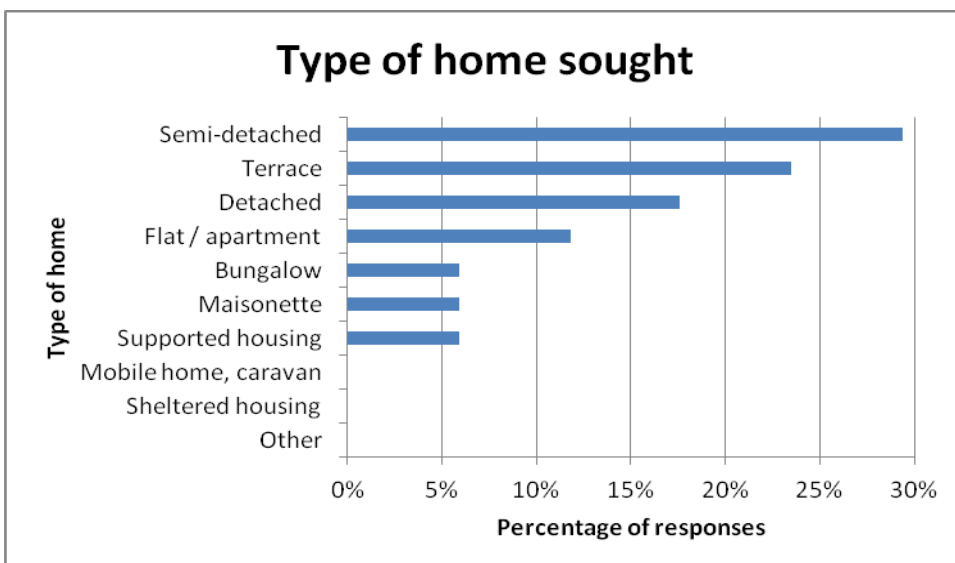
This part of the report looks initially at all the responses to section two of the survey in order to give a broad picture of the need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment is then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable housing.

Five respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Broad Town. All of these households have a local connection to Broad Town, either living or working in the parish, or having previously lived there.

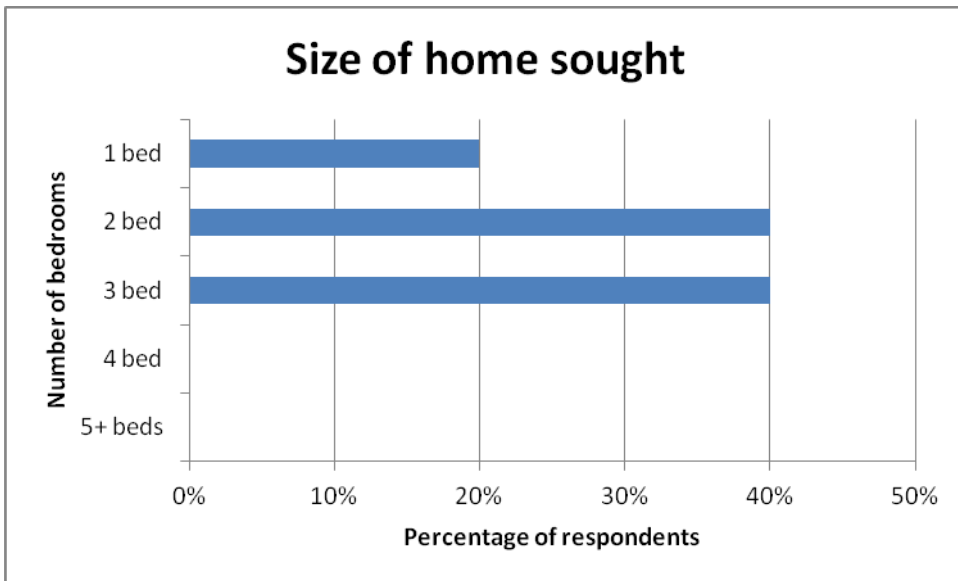
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with home ownership the most desired. Households could indicate more than one response:



Respondents to this section were also asked what type of housing they required, with the majority seeking semi-detached properties, followed by terraces and detached properties. Full responses are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):



The need for sizes of property varied from one- to three-bedroom properties. No need was expressed for properties with 4 or more bedrooms:



The respondents were then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in Broad Town to meet their needs, to which 80% answered 'yes.'

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Broad Town, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of respondents. One respondent did not complete the financial declaration section of the survey, and as such cannot be included in the financial analysis. Please note, as well, that due to the low numbers of respondents to this section of the survey, and to the need to preserve respondents' confidentiality, only a short summary of the financial assessment is presented below.

Income levels were mixed: two of the households had incomes below £17,000pa, and two had incomes above £35,000pa. Three of the households had savings. Only one household had equity in an existing property.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Broad Town suggests that **one of the households responding to the financial questions would not require public support in order to achieve its required housing**. The remainder, due to low levels of income and savings and to the cost of open market housing in Broad Town, would be considered 'in housing need' as defined in section 3 of this report. These households inform the recommendations of this survey for new affordable housing in Broad Town, presented in section 8.

Of the households meeting the criteria for affordable housing, two were headed by people aged 25-44. One household contained children aged under 16. No households headed by persons aged 65+ were found to be in need of affordable housing.

6. Affordability

In order to investigate affordability, further research has been carried out on house prices in the area.

It is possible to estimate the average property prices in the Broad Town area:³

Bedrooms	Apr 2012- Jun 2012
1	£98,500
2	£161,000
3	£205,200
4	£310,000
5+	£458,500

Example calculation for a mortgage

Typically, a household making a single application can obtain a mortgage of 3.5 times their annual income, or 3x annual income for joint applications. Households would generally expect to need a deposit of around 15% of the total price.

If an average two-bedroom property sold in Broad Town cost £161,000 then a household may require £24,150 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £39,100 for a single applicant or £45,617 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in the North Wiltshire area in 2011 was only £20,149:⁴

- It would be unlikely that a household would be able to purchase a property in this parish without a large deposit, some equity in an existing property or a substantial income.
- First time buyers would generally struggle to meet the criteria necessary for obtaining their own home.
- In some cases intermediate housing (shared ownership or low cost market housing) would be a suitable option, whilst in other instances affordable rented accommodation would be appropriate.

³ House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN4 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SN4 postcode covers a wider area than the Broad Town parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

⁴ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2011, Table 8.7a, Office of National Statistics, <http://www.ons.gov.uk> . Note that while the mortgage calculation refers to household income, i.e. to the combined income of all persons in the home, the ASHE figure refers to individual income.

7. Summary

This survey's recommendations (see section 8 below) concentrate on those households who are unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

This is just a quarter of the research needed for this assessment: the housing register of Wiltshire Council, the local Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the advice from allocation staff who manage the register must also be taken into account.

- It is generally difficult to get accurate data on the housing need of single people, especially the under 25s, and surveys of this type tend to underestimate the figures.
- Housing development in Broad Town should take account of anticipated future housing need (as described in the Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment) as well as the number of households in immediate need of more suitable accommodation.
- In the fourth quarter of 2011/12, there were ten households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Broad Town parish: one of these households is also reported on in this report as in need of affordable housing. The remaining households on the Register are seeking properties with between one and four bedrooms and any full assessment of housing need in the parish should take account of the Register.
- There are twenty-four affordable homes in the parish.⁵ These properties represent 10% of the total housing stock in the parish, which is lower than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 19.2%.
- The social housing in Broad Town had a 4.2% re-let rate in 2011/12: from April 2011 to April 2012, one social home was re-let in the parish.⁶
- The low levels and turnover of social housing in Broad Town indicate that **none of the households responding to section two of the survey and in need of affordable housing could meet their needs through access to the existing social housing of the parish.**

⁵ Housing Strategy team, live tables.

⁶ *Ibid.*

8. Recommendations

This survey's recommendations concentrate on households unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

The following indicates the minimum need over the next three years for new affordable housing development in the parish, based on the responses to the survey.

Subsidised rented housing

- 1x one bed home for single/couple, providing help with personal care.
- 1x three bed home for a family, providing help with personal care.

Shared / Low cost home ownership

- 1x two bed home for family

Sheltered housing for older people

- None