

# **Lyneham and Bradenstoke**

**Parish Housing Needs Survey**

**Survey Report**

**January 2013**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Parish summary	3
Introduction	4
Aim	4
Survey distribution and methodology	5
Key findings	5
Part 1 – People living in parish	6
Part 2 – Housing need	9
Affordability	13
Summary	14
Recommendations	15

## 1. Parish Summary

The parish of Lyneham and Bradenstoke is in the Royal Wootton Bassett & Cricklade Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

- There is a population of 5230 according to the 2001 census, comprised of 1720 households. ONS predictions for 2011 suggest a population of 5490 in 1800 households.<sup>1</sup> Unofficial estimates suggest the figures to be lower in 2013 as the parish is in the interval between closure of the RAF base and the opening of the Defence College.
- Lyneham and Bradenstoke Parish includes the two principal villages of its name plus the hamlets of Preston and Thickthorn to the east and is situated in the peaceful and scenic county of Wiltshire. The villages lie in the north western part of the county, among the undulating hills, just north of the escarpment of the Marlborough Downs. The villages sit on a slight plateau just over 500 feet above sea level, overlooking the picturesque and far reaching Avon Vale. The surrounding land is mainly arable but some dairy farming exists.
- The parish is accessible to the neighbouring towns of Chippenham, Calne, Swindon and Royal Wootton Bassett and to the surrounding countryside including the nearby Cotswolds.
- Until late 2012 the parish was home to RAF Lyneham where the RAF's C-130 Hercules fleet was based. The site is now at the first stage of an exciting Ministry of Defence development to create a Defence College of Technical Training for cross-service use.
- Bradenstoke village has mainly developed around the single lane and within its conservation area many buildings have considerable historical interest. The village is mainly private dwellings with a public house, village store, church, two chapels and a village hall.
- Lyneham too has buildings of historical interest, alongside more modern facilities, including a small shopping area of convenience stores and several food outlets (eat in and takeaway), a primary school, post office, two public houses, petrol station, small library, two churches and a village hall.
- Preston too has diversity with a goat dairy and a brewery.
- Communication features strongly with a Lyneham website, a Bradenstoke monthly magazine and a Parish Council newsletter thrice yearly.
- There are a wide range of activities for all ages organised by the residents for their enjoyment and to meet the needs of the community. The Parish Council are proactive in working with the community and in looking forward in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan following the introduction of the Localism Act.

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

## **2. Introduction**

In late 2012, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Lyneham and Bradenstoke 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.

## **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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke.

- '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 October 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 14<sup>th</sup> December 2012 and the deadline was subsequently extended to 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2013 to allow for late deliveries and returns over the Christmas period. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Housing Strategy department at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 1840 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 below average response rate of 19.4% with 357 replies received.<sup>2</sup>
- The received data refer only to themselves (i.e. to the survey respondents) and should not be taken as indicative of the population of Lyneham and Bradenstoke.
- Thirteen 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke. 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke. 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).

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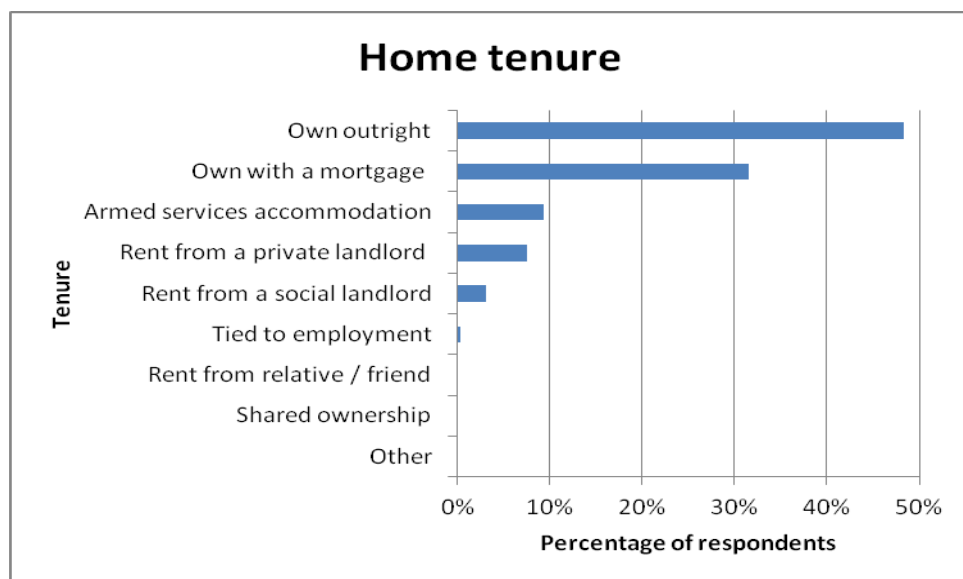
<sup>2</sup> Current average response rate, by parish, to the Wiltshire rural housing needs surveys is 34.2%.

## Part One – Households currently living in the parish

The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Lyneham and Bradenstoke was their main home. 99.1% of those who replied indicated that their home in Lyneham and Bradenstoke is their main home.

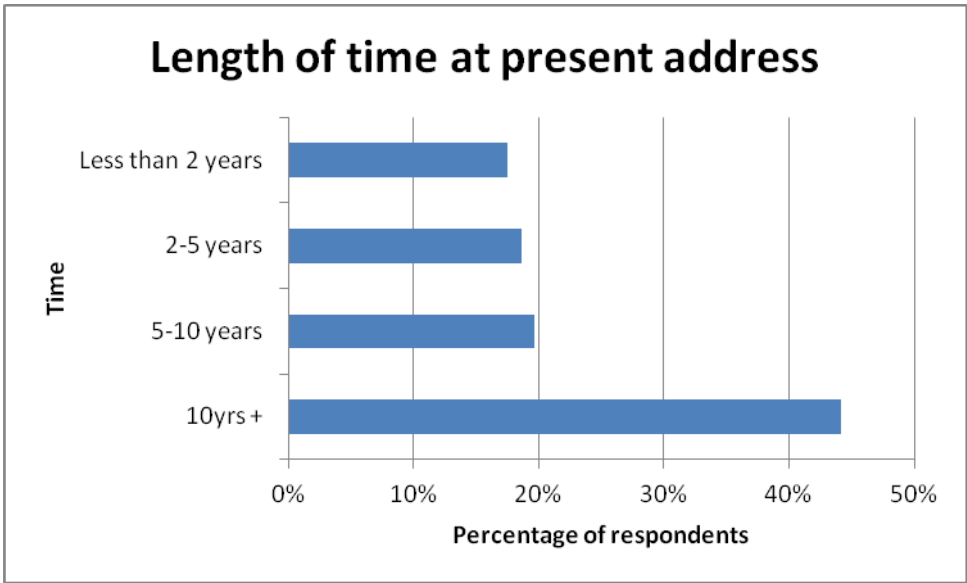
The 2001 Census data for the Lyneham and Bradenstoke output areas indicates that 53% of households in the area were owner-occupying, 11% were renting from social landlords, 34.6% were privately renting, and 1.3% of households were living rent free.<sup>3</sup>

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (79.8%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 9.3% of respondents were living in armed services accommodation, 3.1% of respondents in socially rented properties and 7.6% in privately rented accommodation. The remainder (0.3%) were living in accommodation tied to employment. These results suggest a bias in the survey responses toward owner-occupiers and away, in particular, from those living in privately rented accommodation: the remainder of this section should be read with this in mind.



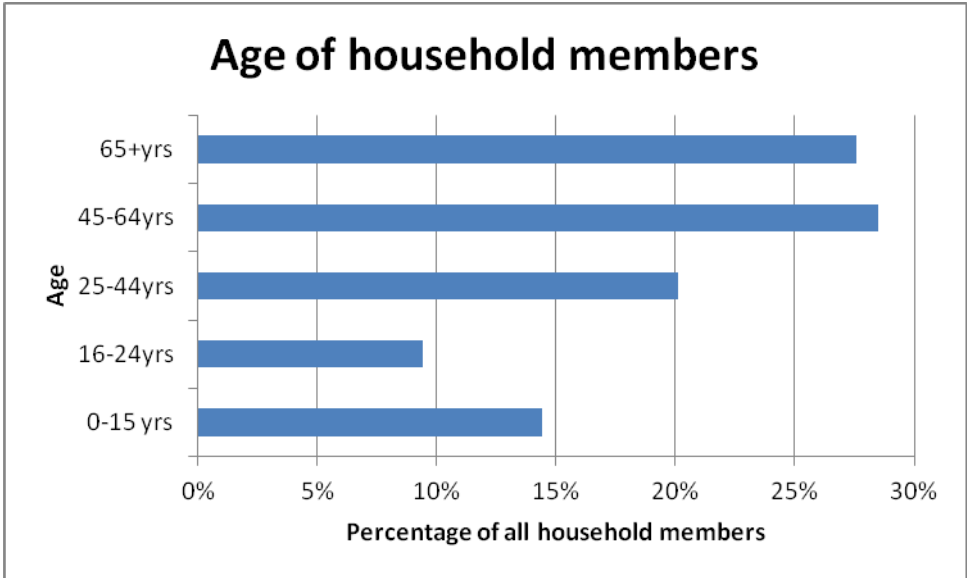
The chart below indicates the length of time respondents have lived in Lyneham and Bradenstoke. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than five years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents.

<sup>3</sup> Percentages do not sum due to independent rounding.



The survey also shows that the majority of respondents live in larger family homes, with 56.5% of respondents having 3 or more bedrooms in their property, 39.3% having two bedrooms and only 4.2% of respondents living in a home with one bedroom. The majority of respondents (40.3%) live in semi-detached properties.

These responses indicate a moderate level of under-occupation in Lyneham and Bradenstoke. While the majority of respondents live in larger homes, the majority (67.5%) 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 over a quarter of respondents' household members were aged 65+:



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

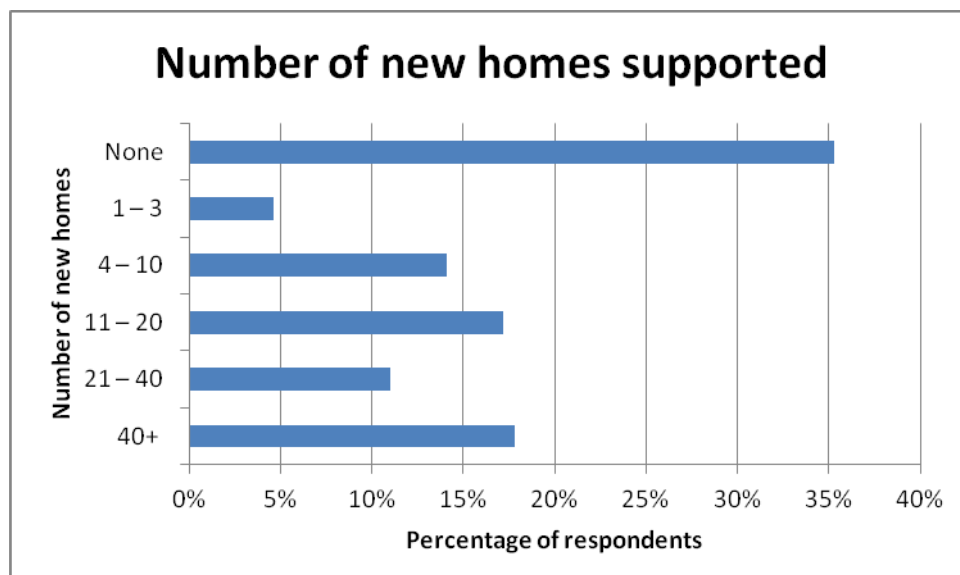
The distance travelled to work can also be a good measure of the sustainability of local development, as more people working locally can indicate an ongoing need for local housing. The table below shows how far people in the respondents' households travelled to work:

Persons in household	Distance to work				Total
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	
Person 1	26	56	115	25	222
Person 2	15	50	57	9	131
Person 3	0	6	6	2	14
Person 4	1	1	2	0	4
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>371</b>

These results suggest a potential difficulty with the sustainability of new housing development in Lyneham and Bradenstoke, indicated by the survey respondents. The majority of households' working members (58.2%) usually travel more than ten miles to their place of work, 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 4.5% of respondents answered 'yes'. This result indicates a moderate, but sustained, need for housing in the parish.

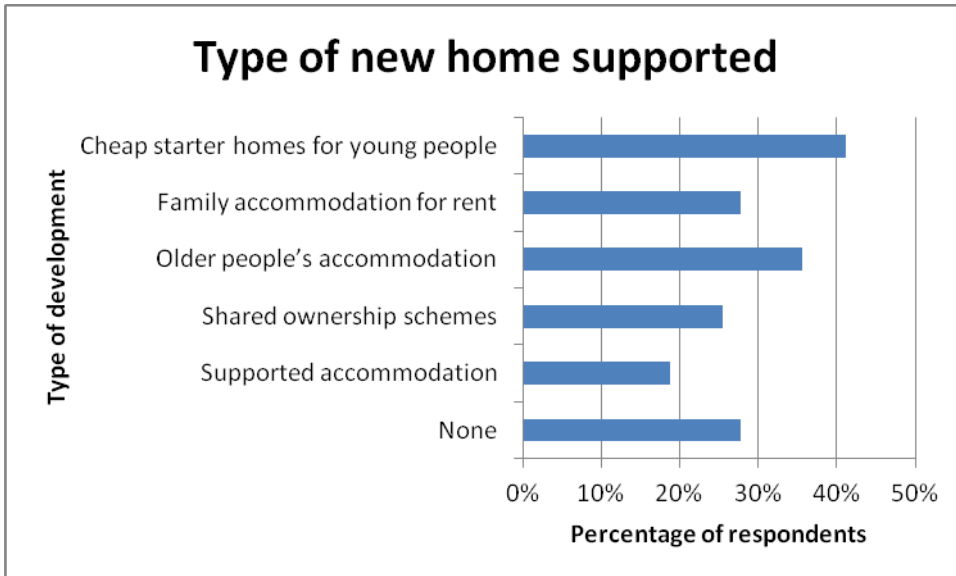
Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. These results were mixed: over a third (35.3%) of respondents were opposed to any new housing in the parish, while significant proportions supported larger developments of 21+ new homes (28.8%) and medium-sized developments of four to twenty new homes (31.3%). Support for small developments was low (4.6%):



Respondents were asked what types of development they would support. 27.7% of respondents reiterated their opposition to any new housing, while 41.2% of respondents



supported the development of cheap starter homes for young people, 35.6% the development of new older people's accommodation, 27.7% family accommodation for rent, 25.5% the development of shared ownership homes, and 18.8% endorsed the development of supported accommodation for tenants with disabilities.



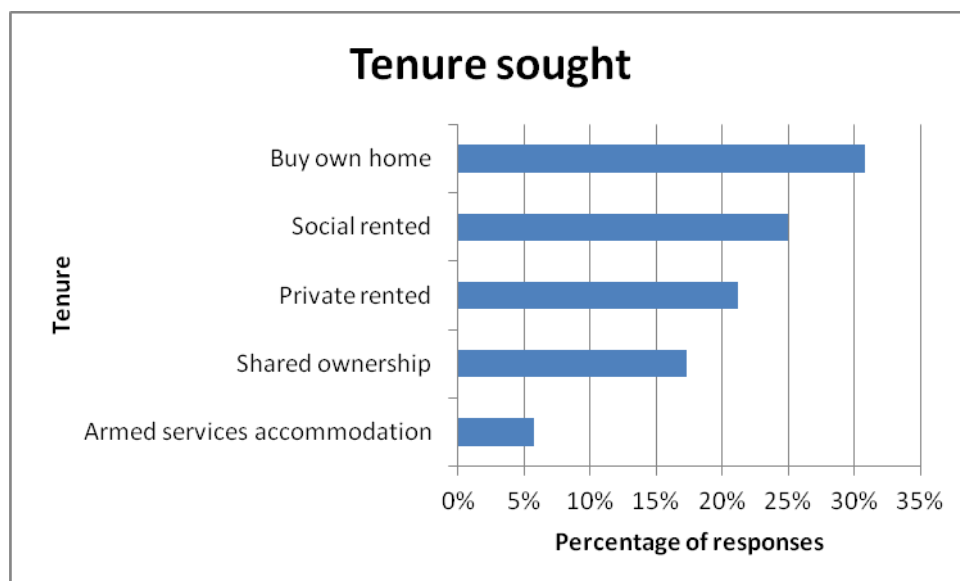
## Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

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.

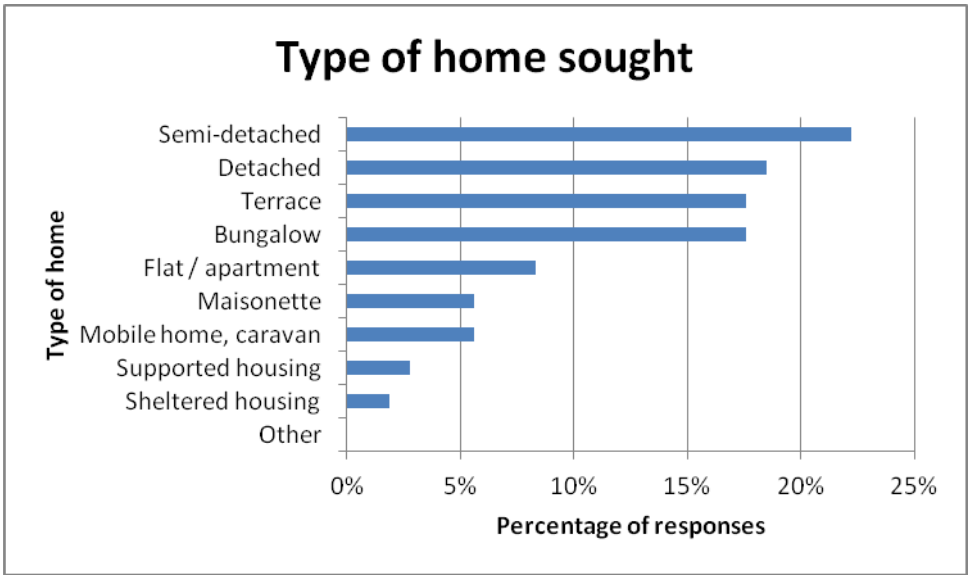
Thirty-eight respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke.

81.1% of these households have a local connection to Lyneham and Bradenstoke, either living or working in the parish, having family members in the parish, or having previously lived there.

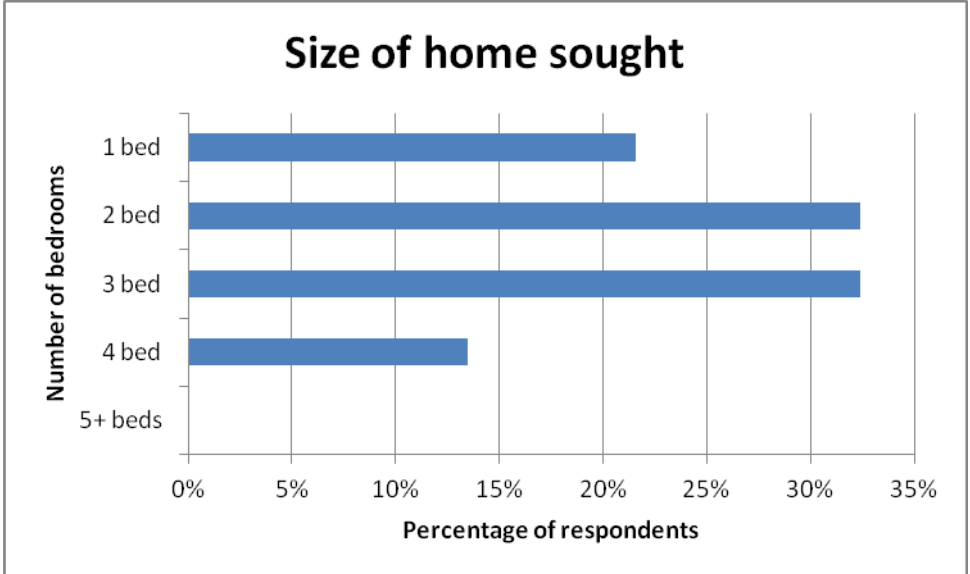
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The majority of respondents (30.8%) were looking for open market purchase, with the remainder interested in shared ownership and either socially or privately rented properties. A smaller percentage of respondents (5.8%) sought armed services accommodation. 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 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 four-bedroom properties, with the majority (32.4% each) seeking two and three bedroom properties. No need was expressed for properties with 5+ bedrooms:



The respondents were then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke to meet their needs, to which 80.6% answered 'yes.'

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of respondents. Three households that responded to this section of the survey did not complete the financial questions, and as such cannot be considered in the analysis.

Thirty-two households (91.4% of those responding to the financial questions) either did not own property or declared zero or negative equity in their homes. Twenty households (57.1%) possessed no savings, and a further ten (28.6%) estimated their savings at under £10,000.

Income levels were mixed but the majority were low: nineteen (54.3%) respondents estimated a combined gross household income of below £20,000pa, six (17.1%) of between £20,000 and £30,499 pa, six (17.1%) of between £30,500 and £50,000pa, and four (11.4%) of between £50,000 and £75,000 per year.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Lyneham and Bradenstoke suggests that **six (17.1%) of those who answered the financial questions would not require public support in order to achieve their required housing**. The remainder, due to lower levels of savings, income and equity and to the cost of open market housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke, 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke, presented in section 8.

Of the households meeting the criteria for affordable housing, fourteen (48.3%) were households headed by people aged 25-44, ten (34.5%) by people aged 45-64, and five (17.2%) were headed by people aged 65+. Fifteen households (51.7%) included children aged under 16.

## 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke area:<sup>4</sup>

Bedrooms	July 2012- Sept 2012
1	£112,400
2	£154,000
3	£207,600
4	£319,500
5+	£469,100

### 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke cost £154,000 then a household may require £23,100 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £37,400 for a single applicant or £43,633 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:<sup>5</sup>

- 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.

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<sup>4</sup> House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN15 postcode area, [www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/](http://www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/) . Please note that the SN15 postcode covers a wider area than Lyneham and Bradenstoke parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

<sup>5</sup> 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 Lyneham and Bradenstoke 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 second quarter of 2012/13, there were fifty-two households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Lyneham and Bradenstoke parish: seven of these households are also reported on here 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 one hundred and ninety-nine affordable homes in the parish.<sup>6</sup> These properties represent 10.8% of the total housing stock in the parish, which is lower than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 19.2%.
- The social housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke had a 5% re-let rate last year: from October 2011 to October 2012, ten social homes were re-let in the parish.<sup>7</sup>
- The levels and turnover of social housing in Lyneham and Bradenstoke indicate that **one 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.**

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<sup>6</sup> Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

<sup>7</sup> *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 in the parish, based on the responses to the survey.

### **Subsidised rented housing**

- 4x one bed homes for singles/couples (1x single level accommodation)
- 4x two bed homes for families (1x single level accommodation)
- 6x three bed homes for families
- 1x four bed home for a family

### **Shared / Low cost home ownership**

- 1x one bed home for a single/couple (1x single level accommodation)
- 5x two bed homes for families (1x single level accommodation)
- 1x three bed home for families
- 2x four bed homes for families

### **Sheltered housing for older people**

- 2x social rented one bed homes

### **Supported or adapted housing**

- 1x three bed wheelchair accessible shared ownership home, providing support with personal care
- 1x four bed wheelchair accessible shared ownership home, providing support with personal care