

# Upper Deverills

## Housing Needs Survey

### Survey Report

April 2013

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## 1. Summary of the Parishes

The parishes of Brixton Deverill and Kingston Deverill are in the Warminster Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

Kingston Deverill parish includes the settlements of Kingston Deverill and Monkton Deverill. Please note that when Kingston Deverill is mentioned in this report, unless specified otherwise this refers to the parish, and so includes Monkton Deverill.

- The two parishes have a combined population of approximately 410 people, living in 188 households.<sup>1</sup>
- The parishes comprise the villages of Brixton Deverill, Monkton Deverill and Kingston Deverill, and are part of the Deverill Valley.
- The name Deverill refers to the River Deverill which flows through the whole valley. It rises to the west of Kingston and flows north, passing through the villages. The name Deverill literally means 'diving rill'. There are points along its route where it peters out and flows underground, hence the disappearing rill or stream.
- King Alfred has long been associated with the Deverill valley in legend and folklore, an example being the dedication of Monkton church. The story of Alfred and the cakes is supposed to have taken place in a field south of the rectory in Brixton, and tradition says that Alfred prayed for victory in the church on the eve of the Battle of Ethandune. The earliest evidence of settlement in the valley is in Brixton. The Deverills have been continuously inhabited by farming people since at least 3500BC.
- Brixton Deverill village has ten listed buildings including the church. Manor Farm was formerly the Manor House. It was built in the 15th century, with 17th and 18th century additions and alterations. Whitecliff Farmhouse was built c. 1700. The Old Rectory was built in the 17th century with later additions. It ceased to be a Rectory in the 1970s. Attached to the front of the building is an early 19th century former schoolroom. There are also six listed cottages in Brixton, five of which date back to the 17th century. Brixton was able to support a village shop until 1915.
- There are sixteen listed buildings in Monkton and Kingston Deverill, including farmhouses dating from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. There are also 17th and 18th century houses and cottages. The Rectory at Kingston, which served both parishes, was built in the 18th century and extensively altered in 1858 by Manners of Bath, the architect responsible for Kingston Deverill church.
- The valley has been continuously inhabited by farming people since at least 3500BC, and there are numerous tumuli, earthworks and barrows. A round barrow on Middle Hill in Kingston Deverill was found to contain a rare and beautiful necklace made of a glass-like substance found in the Baltic. This provides proof of trade between Wessex and the continent. During the centuries preceding the Roman invasion the pattern of life changed. Field systems became more elaborate. The 'Celtic' types of field appeared, these being small irregular enclosures ditched and banked as a protection against damage by wild animals or possibly raiding bands. Fine examples of these may be seen on Pertwood

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<sup>1</sup> Brixton Deverill, 2011 projected population of 80 in 40 households; projections based on 2001 Census, <http://www.intelligenenetwork.org.uk/population-and-census/>. Population and household numbers for Brixton Deverill have not been released for the 2011 Census.

Kingston Deverill, 2011 population of 331 in 148 households; Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, parishes in England and Wales; Table KS101EW, 2011 Census: Usual resident population, parishes in England and Wales.

Down, the surface of which has not been ploughed since early days. Around 60 A.D strip fields appeared and some of these continued to be used until the enclosures at the end of the 18th century. The outlines of these can still be seen on the north slope of Court Hill at Kingston Deverill. It is possible to trace the names of those who farmed these strips as late as 1780. Other lynchets are well outlined at Monkton Deverill and there are many places in the valley where these strip fields can be seen.

- There is an Iron Age site to the east of Keysley Farm in Kingston Deverill, and this may well have been the settlement site associated with the field system on Pertwood Down. Two Roman roads crossed at the ford at Kingston Deverill. One was the ancient lead road from Portchester and the other from Poole. The two join at the boundary between Monkton and Kingston Deverill.
- At the time of the Domesday survey the estimated population figure for the whole valley was 680. The largest community was Monkton Deverill with approximately 285 residents, and Kingston Deverill the smallest with only 34. Monkton Deverill was twice the size of Kingston Deverill and had land for nine ploughs as opposed to Kingston's three. Like many villages, the Deverill Valley provided most of the services that people needed at the beginning of the 20th century.
- Until World War II the main source of employment in the valley was farming. The chalkland is excellent for growing corn, and large numbers of sheep were kept to fertilise the soil. By combining the growing of crops with keeping cows and sheep, making cheese and butter and selling milk, the farmers have always managed to make a living. As early as 1289 there were 1143 sheep on Brixton Downs, these sheep were traded at local sheep fairs and the thriving market at Warminster, and continued to be a good source of income through the centuries. By the early 19th century corn prices had risen; times were good in the Deverill Valley. Unfortunately this was soon to change. In the 1880s corn began arriving from abroad, soon to be followed by more foodstuffs. The Wiltshire farmers saved themselves by turning to fresh milk production instead. After the Second World War the farmed acreage of the Deverill parishes more than doubled. This was achieved by using land cleared by tanks that had used the Downs as a training area. The Valley continues to be a thriving community.

## **2. Introduction**

In late 2012, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with the Upper Deverills 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 parishes or the locality) of Brixton Deverill and Kingston Deverill.

- '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 March 2013.

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 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Housing Strategy department at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 180 questionnaires were distributed to the parishes (130 to Kingston Deverill and 50 to Brixton Deverill). This suggests a shortfall of 18 questionnaires in Kingston Deverill parish, as indicated the 2011 Census (which was unavailable at time of the questionnaires' distribution).<sup>2</sup>
- 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 27.8% with 50 replies received, 31 (23.8%) from Kingston Deverill and 19 (38%) from Brixton Deverill.
- The received data refer only to themselves (i.e. to the survey respondents) and should not be taken as indicative of the population of Upper Deverills.
- One response was made online.

## 5. Key Findings

This report is divided into two parts. The first section looks at existing households in the parishes in order to provide a description of the current housing in Upper Deverills. This section also describes the levels of new affordable housing that are supported by residents of the parishes.

The second section examines the households who have declared a need for new housing in Upper Deverills. The section begins by describing the overall need for both market and affordable housing in the parishes. 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 parishes

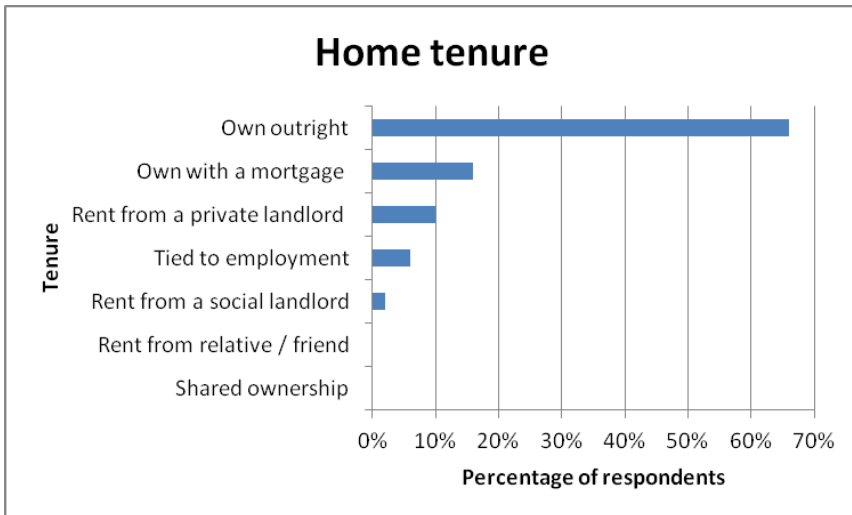
The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondent's home in Kingston Deverill or Brixton Deverill was their main home. All of those who replied from Kingston Deverill, and 94.7% of those who replied from Brixton Deverill, indicated that their home in the local parish was their main home.

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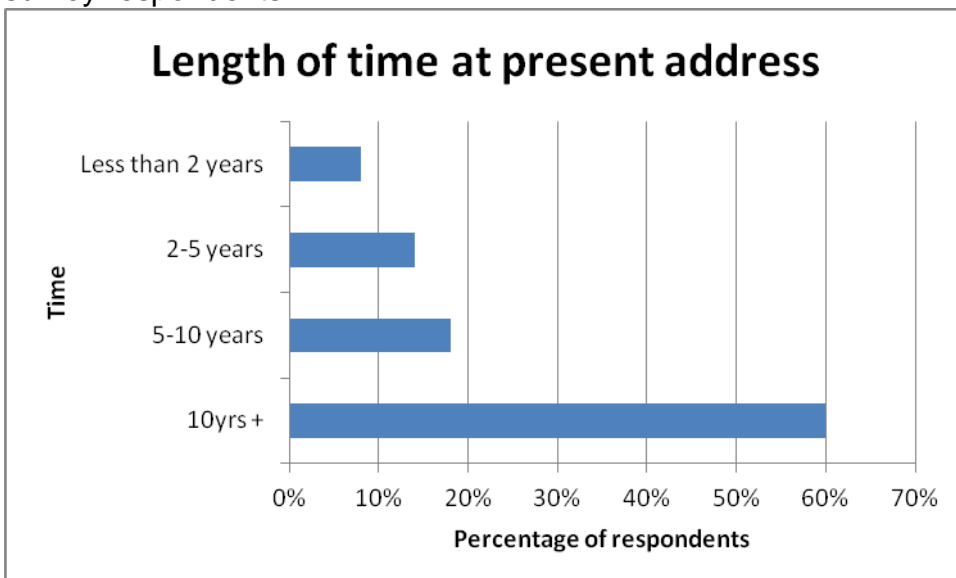
<sup>2</sup> Kingston Deverill, 148 households; Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, parishes in England and Wales. The projections for households based on the 2001 Census were 110 for Kingston Deverill and 40 for Brixton Deverill, with an additional 20 spare copies distributed to Kingston Deverill and 10 to Brixton Deverill to allow for under-estimation. The further known shortfall in Kingston Deverill (and possible shortfall in Brixton Deverill – 2011 Census figures are not available for this parish) means that eighteen plus households may not have received the survey. This should be borne in mind with regard to the findings and recommendations of this report.

The 2011 Census data for the local output area described 64.2% of households in the area as owner-occupying, 1.4% as living in shared ownership (part rent / part buy) homes, 4.1% as renting from social landlords, 21.6% as privately renting, and 8.8% of households as living rent free.<sup>3</sup>

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey, combined for both parishes. The majority (82%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 2% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 10% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency, and 6% were living in accommodation tied to their employment. These results suggest a bias in the survey responses, particularly toward owner-occupiers, and the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.



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



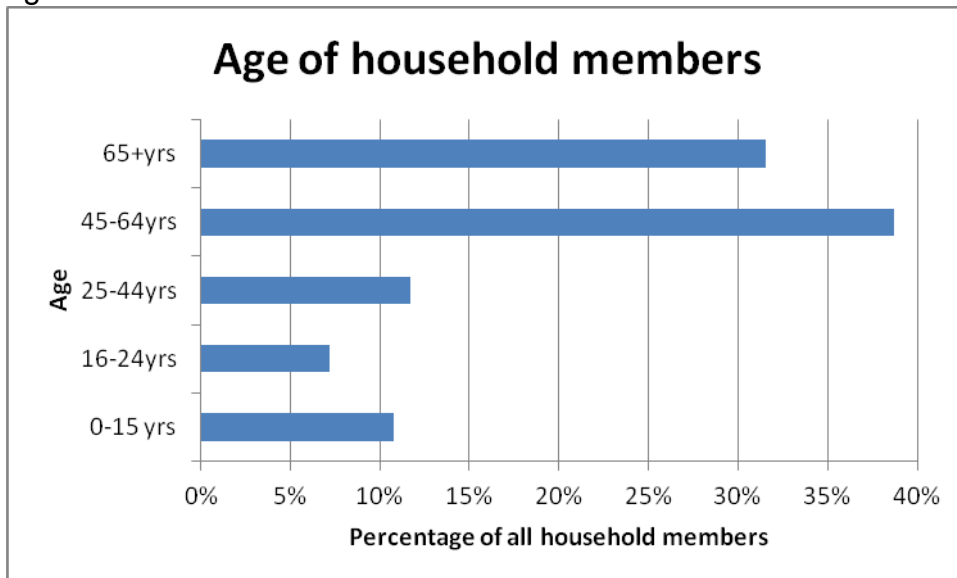
The survey also shows that the majority of respondents live in larger family homes, with 90% of respondents having 3 or more bedrooms in their property, 8% having two bedrooms and

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

only 2% of respondents living in a home with one bedroom. The majority of respondents from both parishes (71% in Kingston Deverill; 57.9% in Brixton Deverill) live in detached properties.

These responses indicate relatively high levels of under-occupation in Upper Deverills. While a majority of respondents from both parishes live in larger homes, a majority (78%) also have households composed of two or fewer persons.

High levels of under-occupation are often a corollary of higher 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 third of respondents' household members were aged 65+:



As shown in the chart above, the spread of ages indicates a predominantly older population responding to the survey, with 70.3% of respondents' household members aged 45+.

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	7	9	10	8	34
Person 2	8	3	7	1	19
Person 3	0	0	0	0	0
Person 4	0	0	0	0	0
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>53</b>

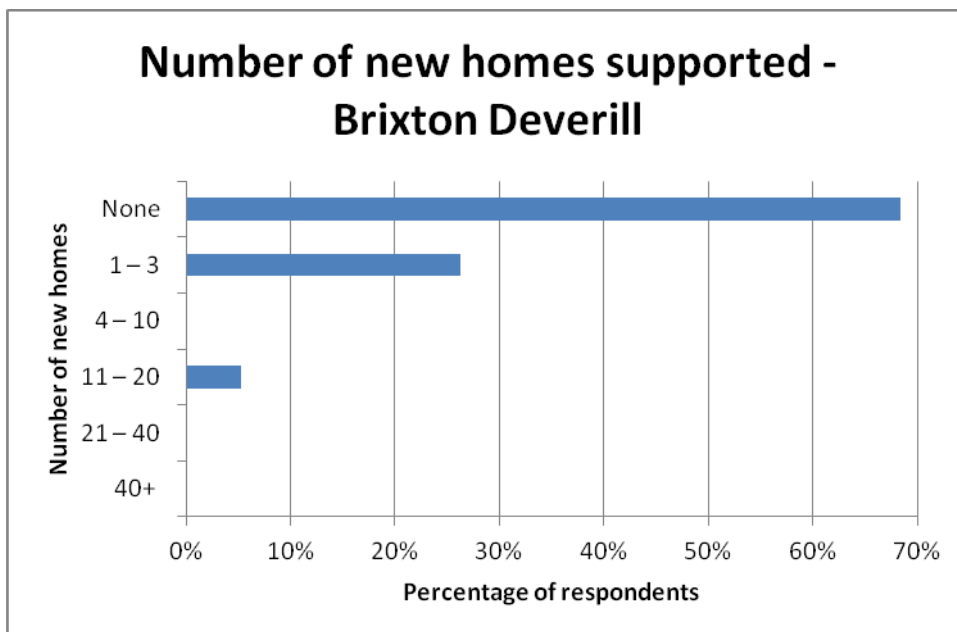
These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Upper Deverills, indicated by the survey respondents. While 50.9% of households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, 49.1% travel more than that, which suggests a potential lack of more local sources of employment.

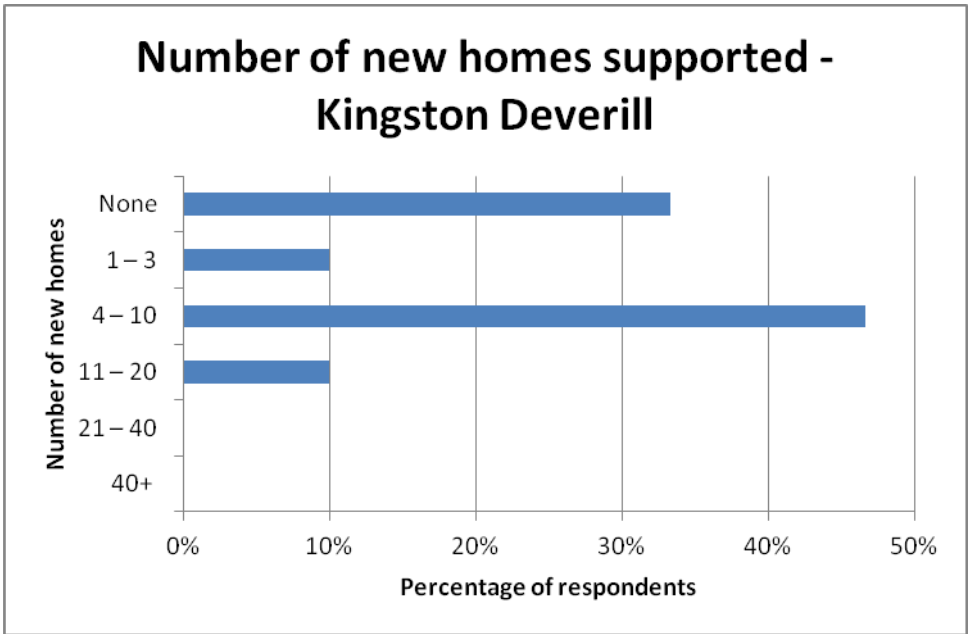


Respondents were also asked whether anyone currently living in their household would need separate accommodation in the parishes now or in the near future, to which all answered in the negative. This may reflect the older population described above, and the relatively low numbers of young people aged 16-24, as this latter composes the primary demographic that usually constitutes the demand for future housing.

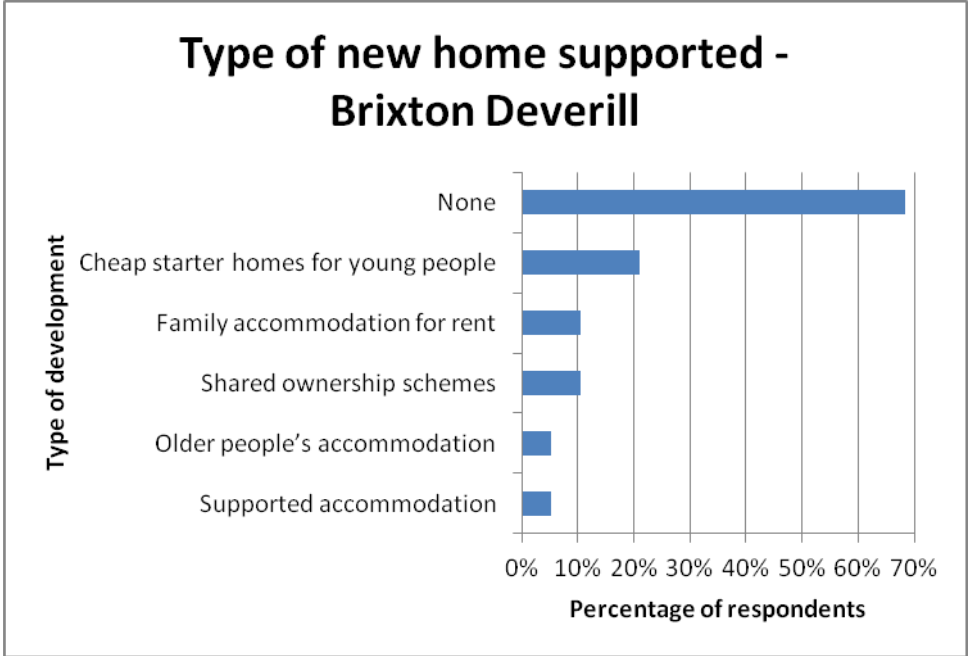
Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in their parish. These results varied substantially between the two parishes, with the majority (66.7%) of respondents from Kingston Deverill in support of new local housing, and the majority (68.4%) from Brixton Deverill opposed to any new homes.

The most popular response from Kingston Deverill (46.7%) supported the development of between four and ten new homes. There was no support in either parish for larger developments delivering more that twenty-one new homes. Full results for each parish are given in the two charts below:





Respondents were asked what types of development, if any, they would support. The most prevalent support was for affordable starter homes for young people (51.6% of respondents in Kingston Deverill; 21.1% in Brixton Deverill). 32.3% of respondents from Kingston Deverill, and 68.4% from Brixton Deverill reiterated their opposition to any new housing. Full responses for each parish are given in the charts below:



## Type of new home supported - Kingston Deverill

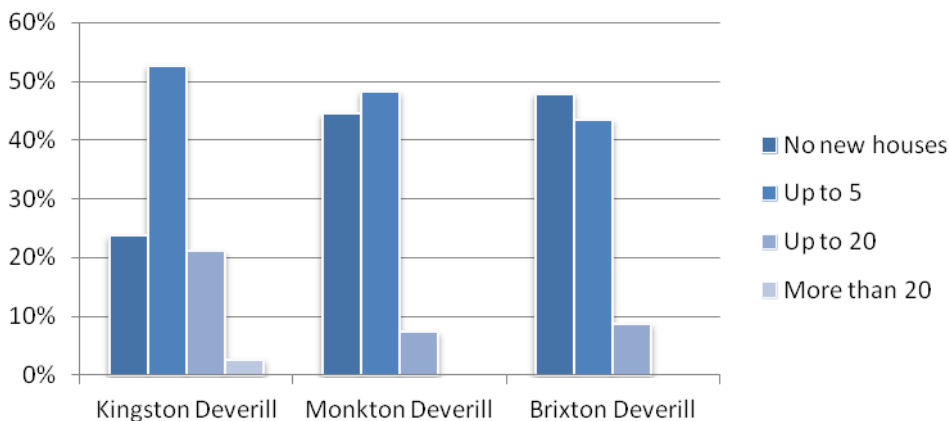


### Upper Deverills Parish Plan Survey – comparison of results

In June 2012, the Parish Council carried out a survey of Upper Deverills to inform the Parish Plan. The survey included questions about potential new housing in the parishes, and the results were held separately for the communities of Brixton Deverill, Monkton Deverill and Kingston Deverill.

The chart below shows the results, for each community, regarding levels of support for new housing in the Deverills valley:

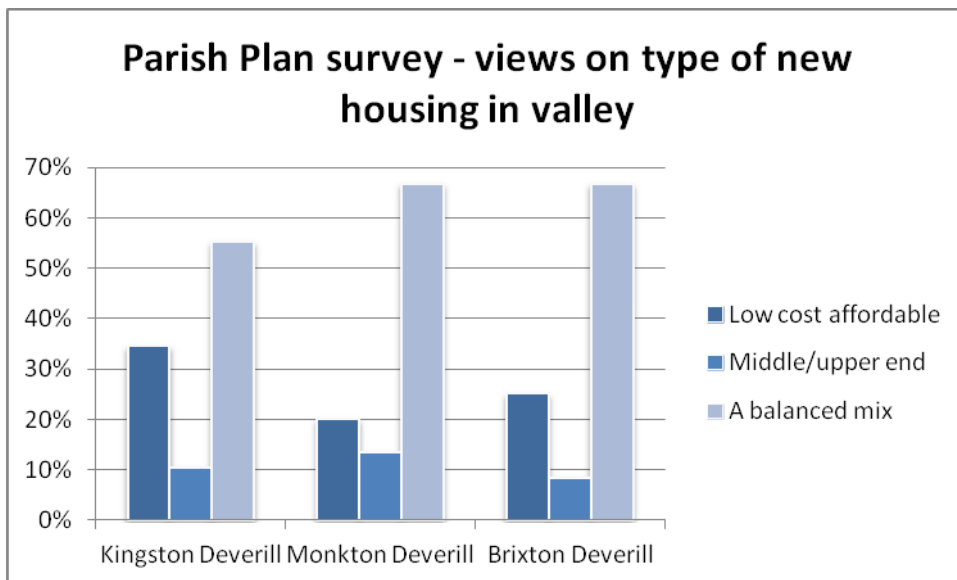
### Parish Plan survey - views on residential development in valley



The Parish Plan survey shows a slim majority (52.7%) of respondents from Brixton Deverill as supporting some new housing; in the more recent survey, a majority (68.4%) from this parish were opposed to any new residential development. While this may reflect the different phrasing of the questions (the Parish Plan survey asked about new housing in the Deverills valley, whereas the recent survey referred specifically to new housing in Brixton Deverill parish), both surveys nonetheless indicate less support for new housing in Brixton Deverill than in the communities of Monkton Deverill and Kingston Deverill.

Respondents from both Kingston Deverill and Monkton Deverill indicated 'up to five' as the most popular number of new homes in the Parish Plan survey. By contrast, Kingston Deverill parish (encompassing Monkton Deverill) expressed higher levels of support (46.7%) for 'between four and ten' new homes in the more recent survey, with only 10% of these respondents supporting the smaller option of 'between one and three' new homes.

The Parish Plan survey also asked residents about preferred types of new housing, asking specifically whether a new development should comprise only lost cost affordable housing, only housing toward the middle and upper end of the market, or a balanced combination of these. Results for each community are given in the chart below:



Support is evident here for a mixture of affordable and higher-end market housing, which mirrors the support in the more recent survey, particularly in Kingston Deverill and Monkton Deverill, for a range of different types of housing.

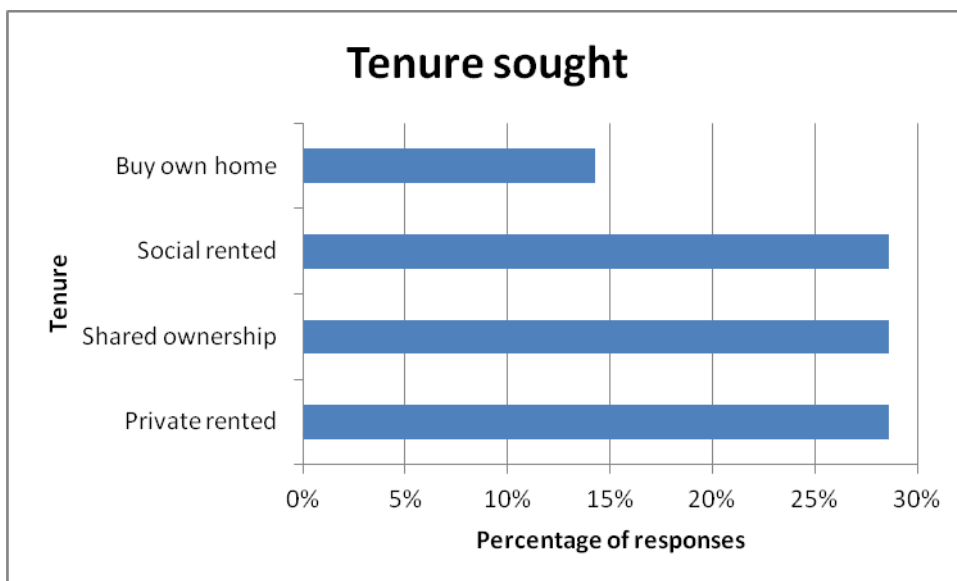
## Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parishes

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 parishes. A financial assessment is then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable housing.

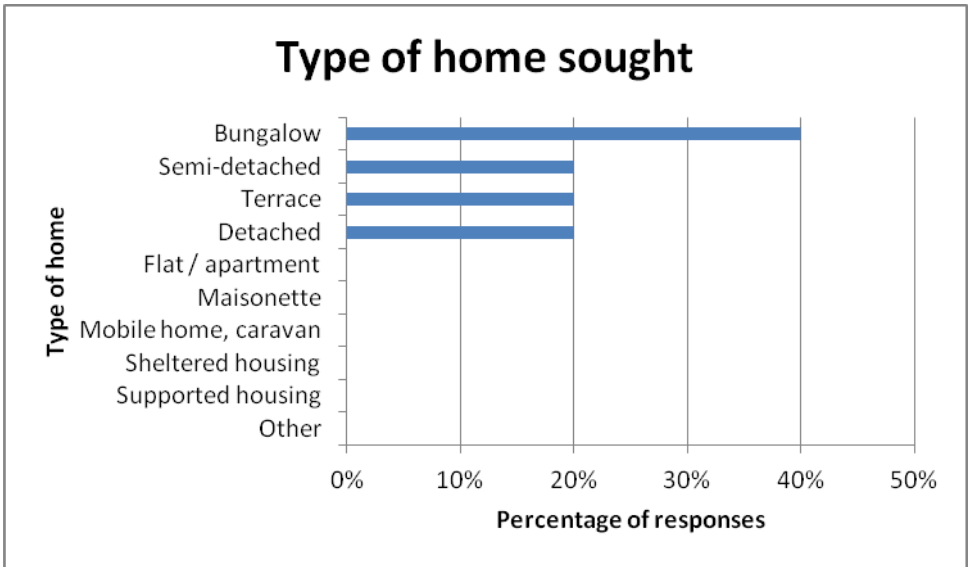
No respondents from Brixton Deverill returned section two of the survey and the results that follow are therefore specific to Kingston Deverill parish.

Three households currently living in Kingston Deverill parish responded to section two of the survey, indicating their need for alternative housing in the parish. Their primary reasons for needing to move were described as access problems (stairs etc) and an inability to manage in their current accommodation; issues of size (overcrowding or under-occupation); and the aspiration to move from rented to owned accommodation.

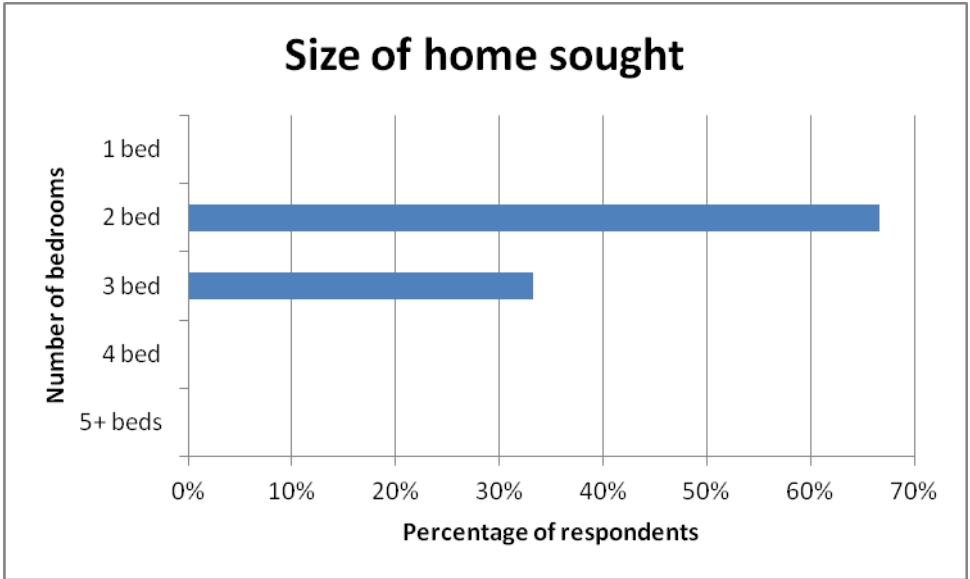
The respondents were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with open-market ownership the least desired. Households could indicate more than one response:



Respondents to this section were also asked what type of housing they required, with the majority seeking bungalows. Full responses are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):



The need was mainly for two-bedroom properties, but one respondent also expressed a need for a three-bedroom home:



The respondents were then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in the parish to meet their needs, to which all answered 'yes.'

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Kingston Deverill, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of respondents. Please note that due to the low number of responses and the need to preserve the confidentiality of respondents, only a very short summary of the financial assessment is presented below.

No households reported having equity in existing properties. Levels of savings were non-existent or very low, while incomes were more varied, with one higher than the local average.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in the Upper Deverills parishes suggests that all of these households would require public support in order to achieve their required housing.

These three households would therefore 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 Upper Deverills, presented in section 8.

## 6. Affordability

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

Land Registry records indicate low levels of market sales in Kingston Deverill and Brixton Deverill parishes, with only eight properties in Kingston Deverill and five in Brixton Deverill having been sold in the past seven years, at a mean average sale price of £424,230. Only one property in this period sold for less than £200,000.<sup>4</sup>

### 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.

With the average property sold in the Upper Deverills area costing £424,230, a household may require approximately £63,600 as a deposit. Annual household income would need to be in the region of £103,000 for a single applicant or £120,000 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in the West Wiltshire area in 2011 was only £21,593.<sup>5</sup>

- It would therefore be unlikely that a household would be able to purchase a property in Upper Deverills without a large deposit, some equity in an existing property or a very 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> <http://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/> Data on sold house prices compiled by Zoopla via monthly updates from the Land Registry for England and Wales. There may be a delay of up to three months from when a property is actually sold to when it becomes officially recorded with Land Registry. Zoopla provides data on house prices for information only, on an 'as is' basis as supplied and accepts no liability for any errors or omissions.

<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 Upper Deverills 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 third quarter of 2012/13, there was one household on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Kingston Deverill parish and none seeking housing in Brixton Deverill parish.<sup>6</sup> The household seeking accommodation in Kingston Deverill requires a one-bedroom property, and any full assessment of housing need in the parishes should also take account of the Register.<sup>7</sup>
- Wiltshire Council records indicate that there are six affordable (socially rented) homes in the Upper Deverills area. These are located in the settlement of Monkton Deverill and are owned and managed by Selwood Housing Association. These properties include three two-bedroom bungalows, two three-bedroom houses, and one four-bedroom house. With approximately 188 households in the two parishes, these properties represent a considerably lower proportion (c. 3%) of social housing in Upper Deverills than that which is present in Wiltshire as a whole (14.7%). The socially rented housing in the area had a zero re-let rate over the past year.<sup>8</sup>
- The low levels and turnover of social housing in the area indicate that none of the households responding to section two of the survey and in need of affordable housing could meet those needs through access to the existing social housing of the area.

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

<sup>7</sup> Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

<sup>8</sup> Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy parish lettings records, Brixton Deverill and Kingston Deverill parishes.

## **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, based on the responses to the survey.

### **Subsidised rented housing**

- 1x two bedroom home for a couple / family, (single level, providing support with personal care and access to an emergency response system such as Lifeline)

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

- 1x two bedroom home for a couple / family
- 1x three bedroom home for a family

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

- None