

Upavon

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

December 2014

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1. Parish Summary

The parish of Upavon is in Pewsey Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

- There is a population of 1,196 according to the analysed 2011 Census, comprised of 493 households.¹
- Upavon parish is situated in the south western part of East Wiltshire at the base of the Pewsey Vale. The two short tributaries of the River Avon merge in the north of the parish to form the main river flowing southwards.
- Upavon is an ancient settlement with a history that can be traced back to the Bronze Age. The central part of the village of Upavon is designated as a Conservation Area. Nearby Casterley Camp is of Roman antiquity.
- The upland areas of the eastern and western parts of the parish are adjacent to or part of the Salisbury Plain military training area.
- The original village itself is a fairly compact community comprising of a mix of older and eventually more modern properties. The village was extended post-WW2 to the east with additional housing, whilst the airfield camp further east again has existed since just before WW1.
- An outline planning application has been proposed regarding building c. 50 residential dwellings on a former chicken farm adjacent to the North West corner of the main village.
- Upavon St Mary's parish church, which dates back to Norman times and was originally an abbey, is located in the centre of the village.
- The village has two public houses, a shop and post office, a garage and a hairdresser.
- The village has two recreation areas, one including a playing field, with both containing contemporary play equipment.
- There are also many active groups and societies within the village.

2. Introduction

In autumn 2014, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Upavon Parish Council, to establish if there was a proven need for affordable housing in the parish for local people, 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.

¹ In the case of Upavon parish, the 2011 Census output area statistics also include part of the parish of Enford. Wiltshire Council's Corporate Research team has analysed and disaggregated these figures to provide accurate information for the parish of Upavon alone. Please see Wiltshire Council (May 2013) 'Wiltshire Census 2011, Selected Statistics Profile Tool', online at <http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/population-and-census/> .

- 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 members of the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership (WRIP).²
- 'The Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership brings together representatives from the economic development, regeneration, spatial planning, new housing and housing strategy teams of Wiltshire Council together with Registered Provider [housing association] partners and the Homes and Communities Agency to enable and promote the sustainable delivery of new build housing in the rural communities of Wiltshire.'³

3. Aim

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

- '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 Upavon Parish Council for distribution to the parishioners at the beginning of October 2014.

To encourage a good response, households were given a pre-paid envelope in which to return the completed survey.

Residents were asked to return the completed surveys in the pre-paid envelopes by 17th November 2014. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Housing Strategy department at Wiltshire Council. The council applies the data protection policy to responses, ensuring that all survey responses remain anonymous.

² The members of WRIP that contribute to the survey funding are Wiltshire Council and seven registered providers of social housing (housing associations) - Aster, GreenSquare, Guinness, Jephson Housing, Raglan Housing, Selwood Housing and Wiltshire Rural Housing Association.

³ Para 1.1, 'Purpose', *Terms of Reference for the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership*. Full WRIP membership: Wiltshire Council, Aster, Wiltshire Rural Housing Association, Raglan Housing Association, GreenSquare, Guinness, Jephson Housing Association, Selwood Housing, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the Wiltshire Community Land Trust.

- A total of 533 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 27.2% with 145 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 Upavon parish.
- Two 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 Upavon. This section also describes the levels of new housing, if any, which would be supported by respondents to the survey.

The second section examines the households who have declared a need for new housing in Upavon. 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 assessment are summarised in the recommendations of the report (Section 8).

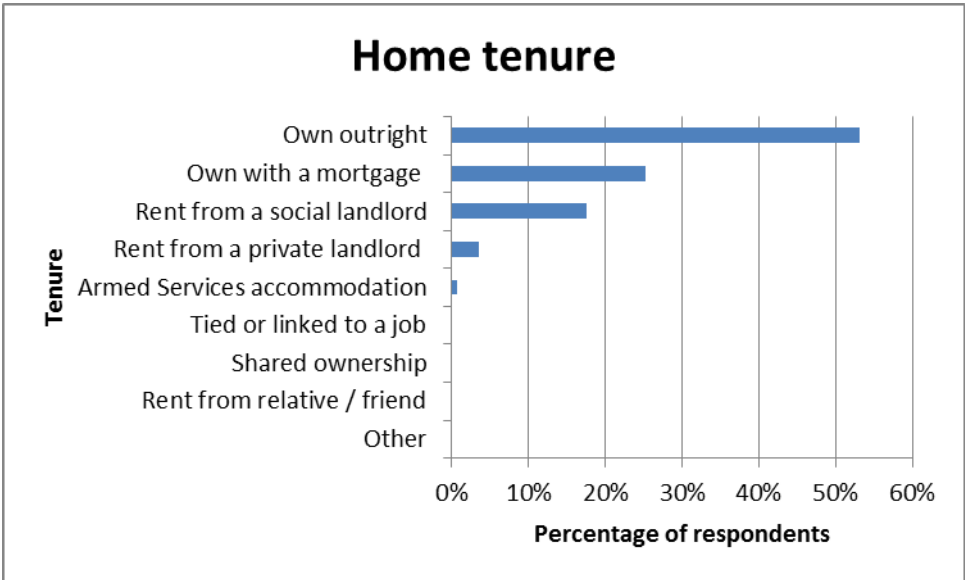
Part One – Households currently living in the parish

The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Upavon was their main home. 97.9% of those who replied said that it was.

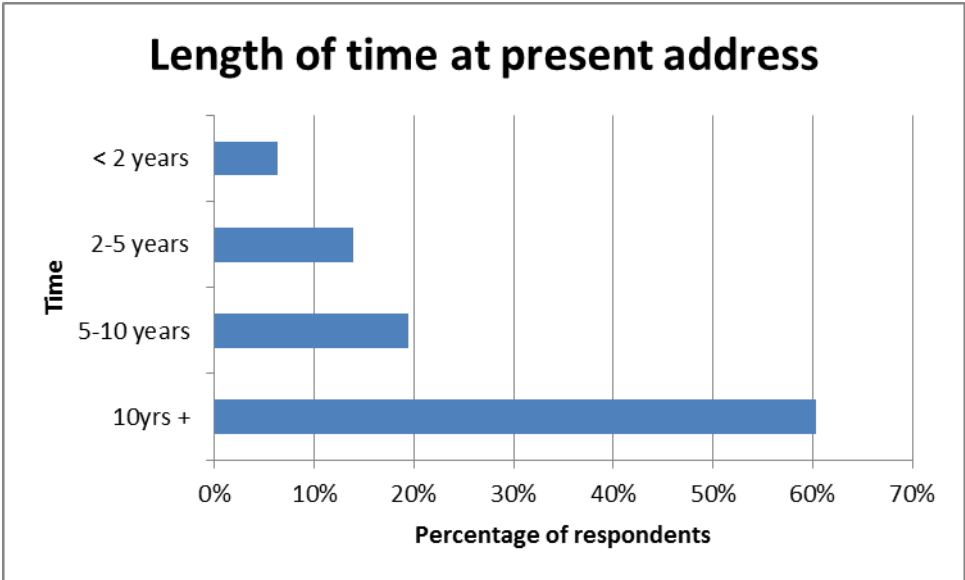
The analysed 2011 Census data for Upavon indicates that 50.7% of households in the parish were owner-occupying, 17.8% were renting from social landlords, 29.8% were privately renting (also including Armed Services accommodation), 0.2% living in shared ownership (part owned, part rented) homes and 1.2% of households were living rent free.⁴

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (78.3%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 17.5% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 3.5% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency and 0.7% living in Armed Services accommodation. These results indicate a significant bias in the survey responses toward those living in owner-occupied homes and away from those living in privately rented and Armed Service accommodation and the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.

⁴ Wiltshire Council (May 2013) 'Wiltshire Census 2011, Selected Statistics Profile Tool', online at <http://www.intelligenenetwork.org.uk/population-and-census/>. Percentages do not sum due to independent rounding.

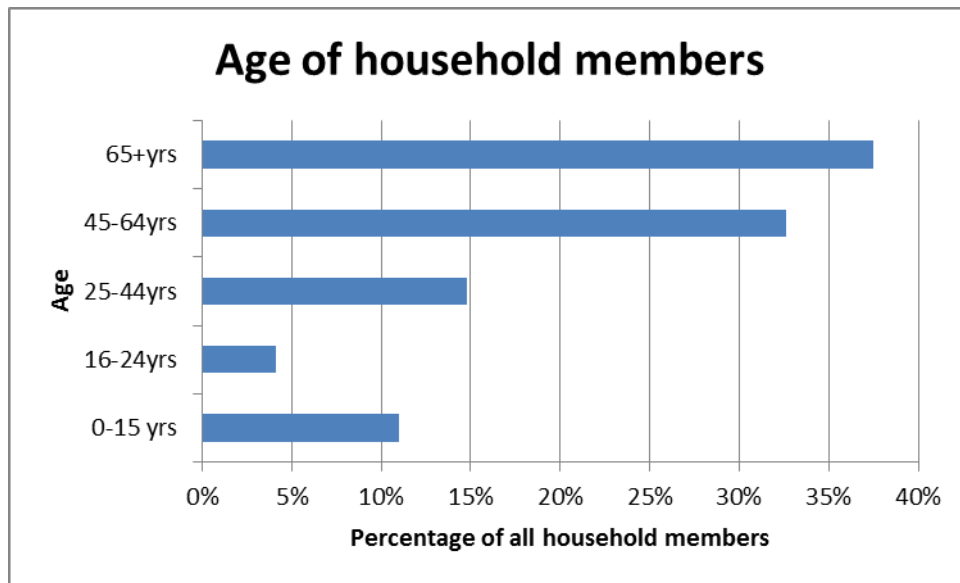


The chart below indicates the length of time that respondents have lived in their current home. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than ten years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents:



Many respondents to the survey lived in large family homes, with 10.4% of respondents having five or more bedrooms in their property. 16% lived in four bedroom homes, 43% had three bedrooms, 28.5% two bedrooms and 2% of respondents lived in homes with one bedroom.

The spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that over a third (37.5%) of respondents' household members were aged 65+:



As shown in the chart above, there were significant numbers of households responding to the survey with members aged 25-64 and with children aged under 16. This indicates a spread of different household types in Upavon, from older person households with fewer members, to younger households with children.

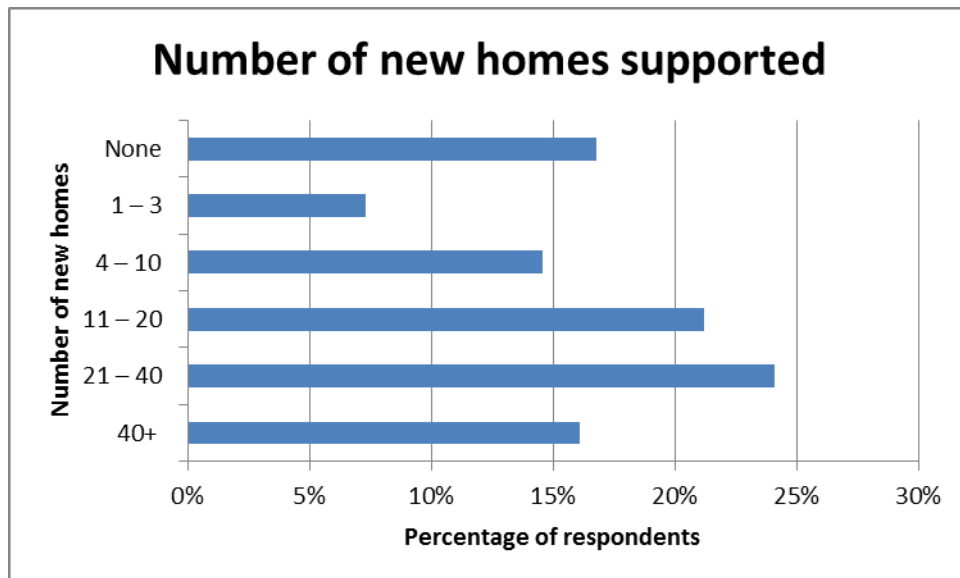
The distance travelled to work can also be a good measure of the sustainability of local housing development, as more people working locally can indicate an ongoing need for local housing. The table below shows how far people in the respondents' households travelled to work:

Persons in household	Distance to work				Total
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	
Person 1	8	22	32	8	70
Person 2	9	9	14	4	36
Person 3	0	5	2	0	7
Person 4	0	1	0	0	1
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	17	37	48	12	114

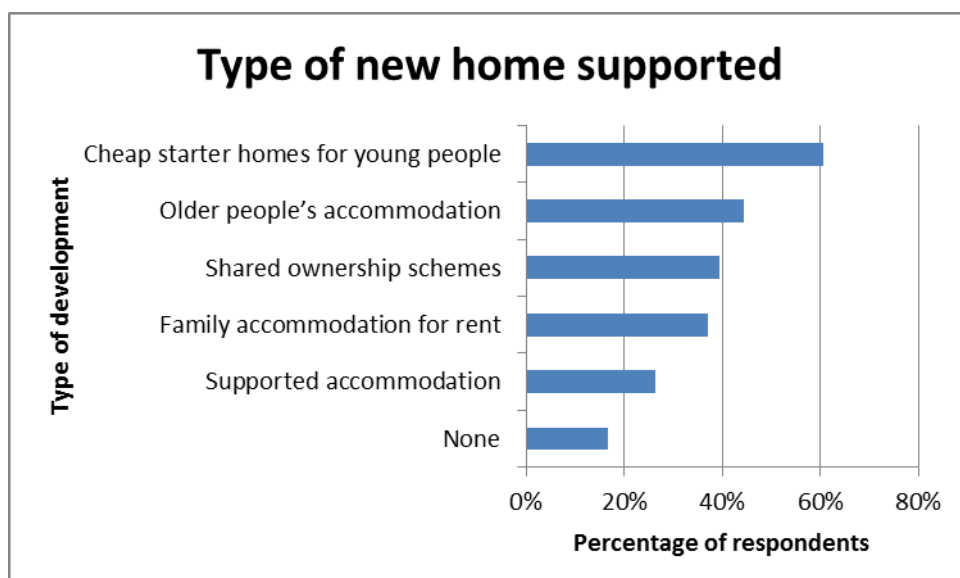
These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Upavon, indicated by the survey respondents' access to local employment. While 47.4% of households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, 52.6% travel more than that, indicating a potential lack of more local sources of appropriate 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 10.4% of respondents (14 households) answered 'yes', indicating a sustained need for housing in the parish.

Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. A large majority of respondents (83.2%) were in support of some new housing in Upavon, with the most popular option (24.1% of respondents) being for between twenty one and forty new homes, closely followed (21.2%) by between eleven and twenty new homes. 16.8% of respondents were opposed to any new housing in Upavon parish:



Respondents to this section were finally asked what types of housing development, if any, they would support. The types of housing considered most needed in Upavon by the survey respondents were affordable starter homes for young people (60.6%) and older people's accommodation (44.5%). Full results are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

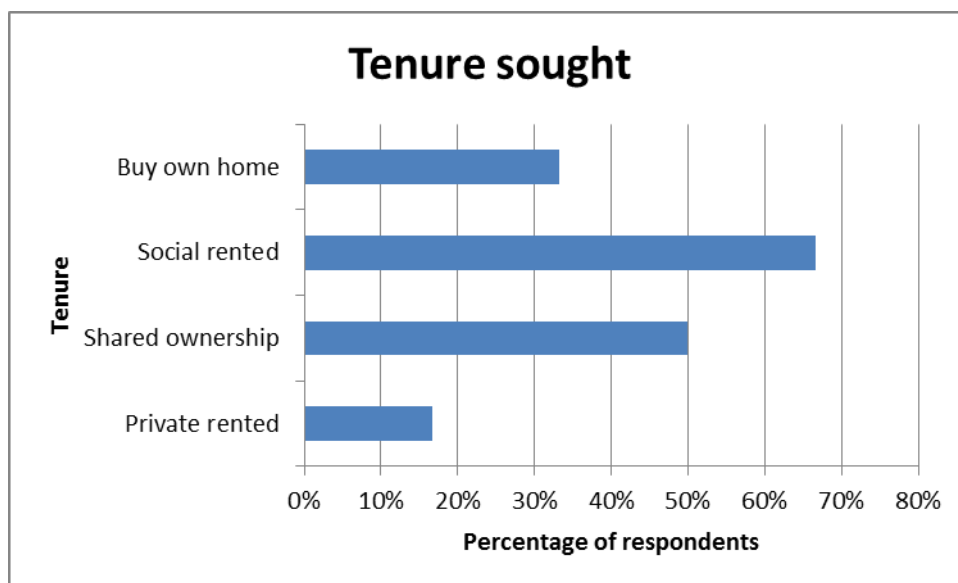


Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

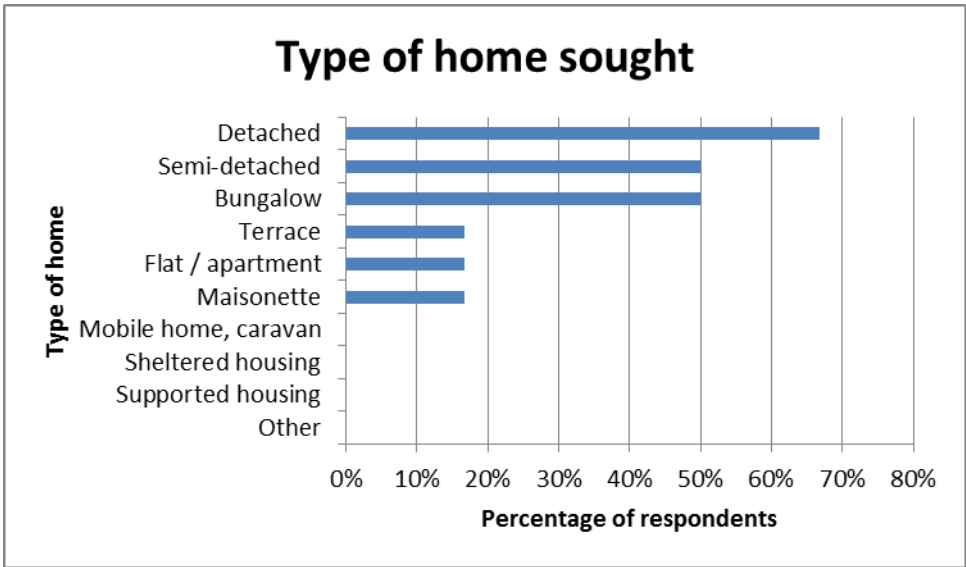
This part of the report looks initially at all the responses to section two of the survey in order to give a broad picture of the need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment and an evaluation of the current affordable housing in Upavon are then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable (i.e. non-market) housing.

Six respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their immediate need for new housing in Upavon. All of these households currently live in the parish, with one family currently living in Armed Service accommodation. The most popular reason for needing to move, expressed by half the respondents (three households), was to live in more affordable accommodation.

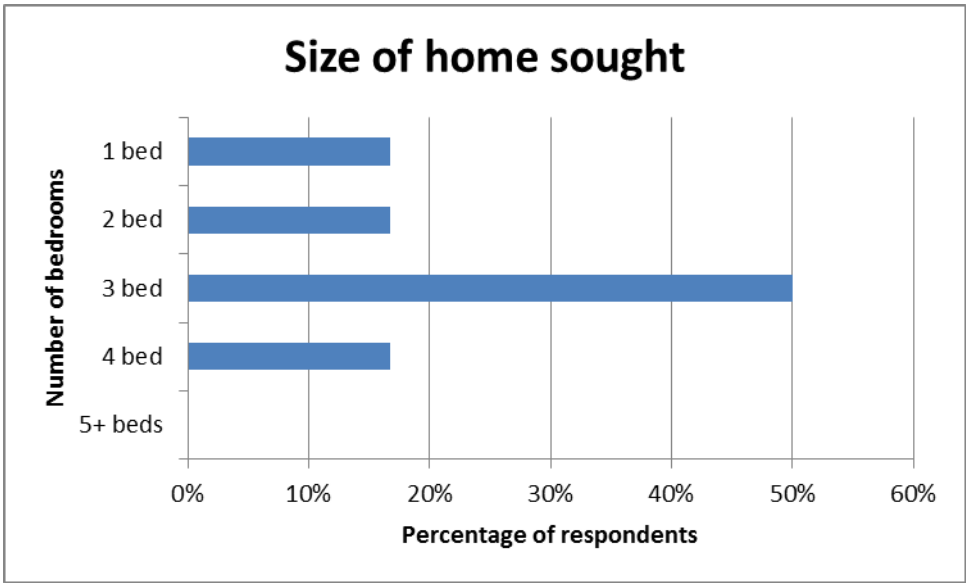
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with social rented and shared ownership (part owned, part rented) homes the most desired. Households could indicate more than one response:



Respondents to this section were also asked what type of housing they required. The most sought-after type was detached properties. Full responses are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):



In terms of size, the most popular option was for three bedroom homes and respondents also expressed a need for properties with one, two and four bedrooms. No need was declared for homes with five or more bedrooms:



The respondents were then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in Upavon to meet their needs, to which all six households answered ‘yes’.

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

Only one of the households responding to this section of the survey reported having equity in an existing property, and the estimated levels of savings among the respondents were predominantly low, with only one household declaring more than £5,000 in savings. Income

levels were also generally low. The highest gross income bracket reported was £33,500-£34,999pa, and the median gross income bracket of the respondents was £15,500-£18,999pa.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Upavon suggests that one household would not require public support in order to achieve their required housing. The remaining five households 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 Upavon, presented in Section 8.

Of the five households meeting the criteria for affordable housing, three include 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 Upavon area:⁵

Bedrooms	Aug 2014 – Oct 2014
1	£182,800
2	£230,700
3	£283,800
4	£405,800
5+	£643,200

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 Upavon cost £230,700 then a household may require £34,605 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £56,027 for a single applicant or £65,365 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in the Kennet area in 2011 was only £21,712:⁶

- 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.

⁵ House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN9 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SN9 postcode covers a wider area than Upavon parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

⁶ 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.

- In July 2014, there were twenty households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Upavon parish: two of these households are also described in Section 8 of this report as in need of affordable housing. The remaining eighteen households on the Register are seeking properties with either one or two bedrooms, and any full assessment of housing need in the parish must take account of the Register.⁷
- The analysed 2011 Census recorded 88 social homes in the parish. These properties represent 17.8% of the total housing in Upavon, which is higher than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.⁸
- The social housing in Upavon had an 11.4% re-let rate in the past year: from the first to the fourth quarter of 2013/14, ten social homes were re-let in the parish.⁹ Of these, four were three bedroomed homes, five had two bedrooms, and one was a one bed roomed home.
- The levels and turnover of social housing in the parish, relative to the need on the Register, suggest that **one** of the households responding to section two of this survey and in need of affordable accommodation, with a need specifically for a three bed roomed socially rented home, could meet this need through accessing the existing social housing of the parish.
- While this survey's recommendations describe the need for affordable housing (see Section 8 below), it should be noted that the household specifying an interest in market purchase, and able to afford this, also described a lack of suitable accommodation in Upavon. This household requires a 3 bed roomed detached, semi-detached or bungalow home, and their description of the lack of such suggests a potential need for an open-market or mixed tenure development in the area.

⁷ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

⁸ Wiltshire Council (May 2013) 'Wiltshire Census 2011, Selected Statistics Profile Tool', online at <http://www.intelligenenetwork.org.uk/population-and-census/>.

⁹ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

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. Please note that this report provides a description of the affordable housing need only of those who responded to the survey, and as such may underestimate the total affordable housing need in the parish. As described in Section 7, the survey is only a quarter of the evidence required to fully assess housing need in the parish. Wiltshire Council's Housing Register, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the advice of allocation staff who manage the Register **must** also be taken into account in properly determining local housing need.

Subsidised rented housing ¹⁰

- 1x one bedroom home
- 1x three bedroom home

Shared / Low cost home ownership

- 1x two bedroom home
- 1x four bedroom home (providing support with personal care)

Sheltered housing for older people

- None

¹⁰ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in subsidised rented properties are where possible made in line with the 'family size' criteria implemented as part of the Housing Benefit changes by the 2012 Welfare Reform Act.