

Steeple Langford

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

March 2015

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1. Parish Summary

The parish of Steeple Langford is in Amesbury Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

- There is a population of 515 according to the 2011 Census, comprised of 234 households.¹
- The parish comprises the villages of Steeple Langford, Hanging Langford, Little Langford and the settlements of East Clyffe, Ballington and Bathampton.
- The parish is in the Wylve valley almost equidistant between Warminster and Salisbury alongside the A36. There has been a recorded settlement in this location since before the Domesday Book.
- There is a wide range of housing from large estate houses to sheltered housing for the elderly. All bar three properties in Little Langford belong to Wilton Estate.
- There are churches in Steeple and Little Langford and a privately run nursery school in Steeple Langford; however, there is no shop, doctor's surgery and the bus service between Warminster and Salisbury is at best hourly during the working day. There is one pub.
- Employment is limited to agricultural work on the local farms and estates, and there are light industrial units and offices at East Clyffe in former farm buildings and at Ballington.
- The villages lie on the edge of the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and large parts of the parish have been designated as a conservation area. The River Wylve divides Steeple Langford from Hanging Langford and Little Langford and the bordering meadows form a flood plain that is liable to flood in wet winters and parts of this flood plain are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There is also a wildlife reserve owned and managed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust at the lakes that were formed from old gravel pits.
- The recreation ground provides pitches and facilities for soccer, cricket, tennis and a children's play area. There are other clubs and organisations providing local activities at the recreation ground and the small parish hall.

2. Introduction

In late 2014, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Steeple Langford 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.

¹ 2011 Census. <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

- 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 affordable housing needs of local people (and those who need to live in the parish).

- ‘Housing need’ can be defined as the need for an individual or household to obtain housing that 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 at the beginning of January 2015.

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 16th February 2015. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Housing Strategy department at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 254 questionnaires were distributed to the parish.
- Everyone was asked to complete the first section of the form.

² The members of WRIP that contribute to the survey funding are Wiltshire Council and six Registered Providers of social housing (housing associations) - Aster, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, 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, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the Wiltshire Community Land Trust.

- 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 an excellent response rate of 43.3% with 110 replies received.
- This report describes the views only of the residents who returned the questionnaires and these views may not be representative of the wider population of Steeple Langford.
- Eleven 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 Steeple Langford. 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 Steeple Langford. 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).

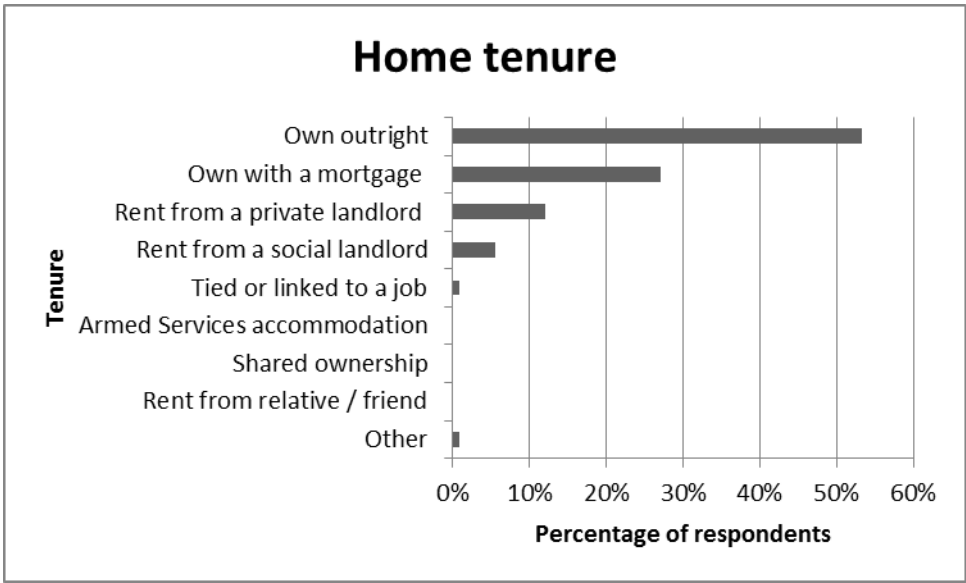
Part One – Households currently living in the parish

The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Steeple Langford was their main home. 99.1% of those who replied said that it was.

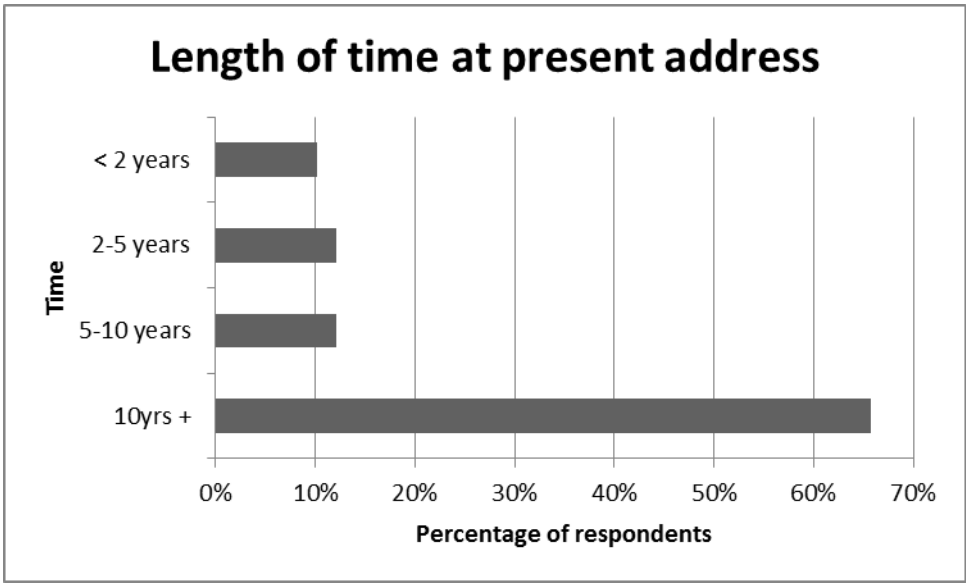
The 2011 Census data for Steeple Langford indicates that 64.5% of households in the parish were owner-occupying, 14.5% were renting from social landlords, 18.8% were privately renting and 2.1% of households were living rent free.⁴

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (80.4%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 5.6% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 12.1% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency, 0.9% were living in accommodation tied to their employment, and 0.9% were living in a tenure described as 'other'. These results indicate a bias in the survey responses toward those living in owner-occupied homes and the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.

⁴ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

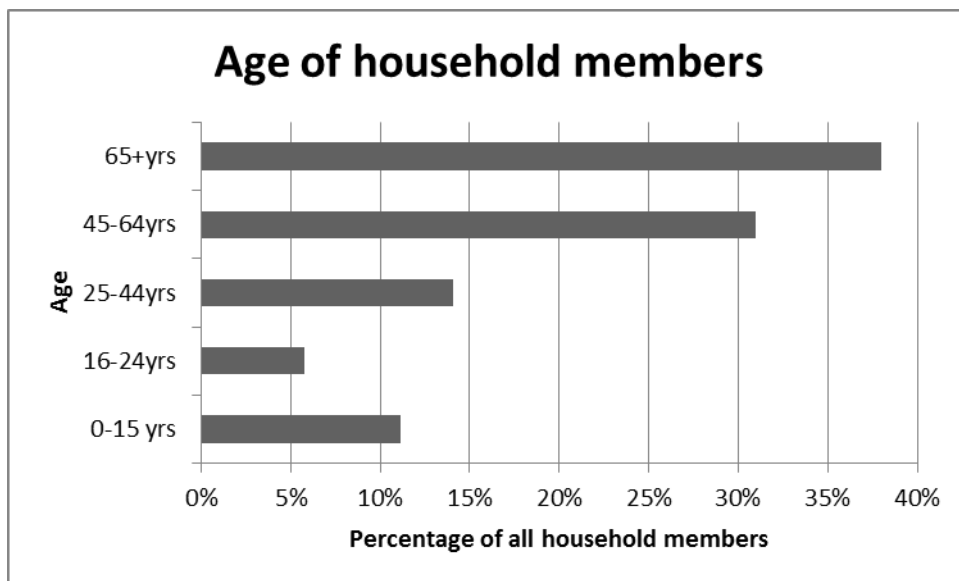


The chart below indicates the length of time that respondents have lived in their current home. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than ten years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents:



Many respondents to the survey lived in large family homes, with 12% of respondents having five or more bedrooms in their property. 38% lived in four bedroom homes, 38% had three bedrooms, 9.3% two bedrooms and 2.8% of respondents lived in homes with one bedroom.

The spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that over a third (38%) 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 Steeple Langford, 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:

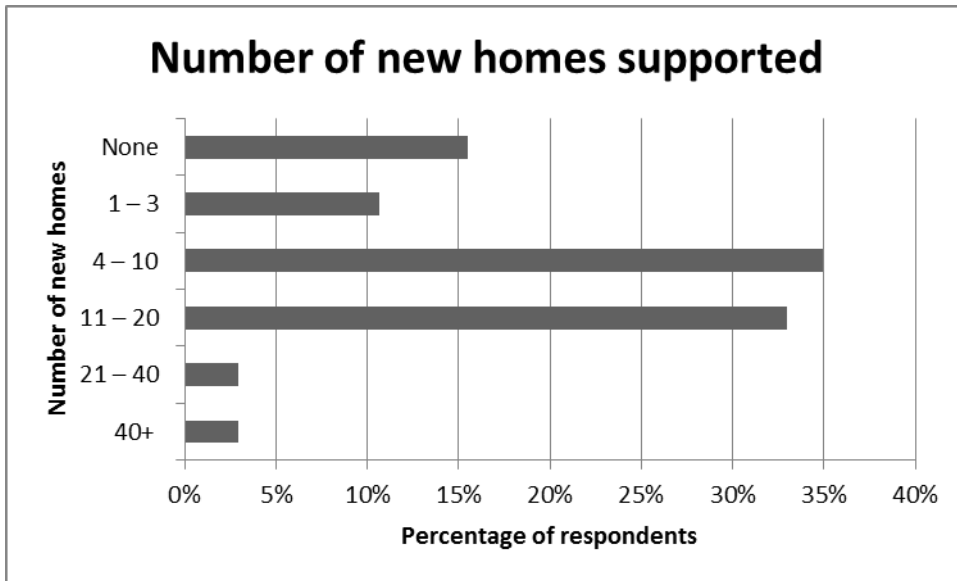
Persons in household	Distance to work				Total
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	
Person 1	12	14	23	8	57
Person 2	5	13	18	2	38
Person 3	0	3	1	1	5
Person 4	0	0	0	0	0
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	17	30	42	11	100

These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Steeple Langford, indicated by the survey respondents' access to local sources of employment. While 47% of the households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, 53% travel more than that, suggesting a potential lack of more local sources of employment.

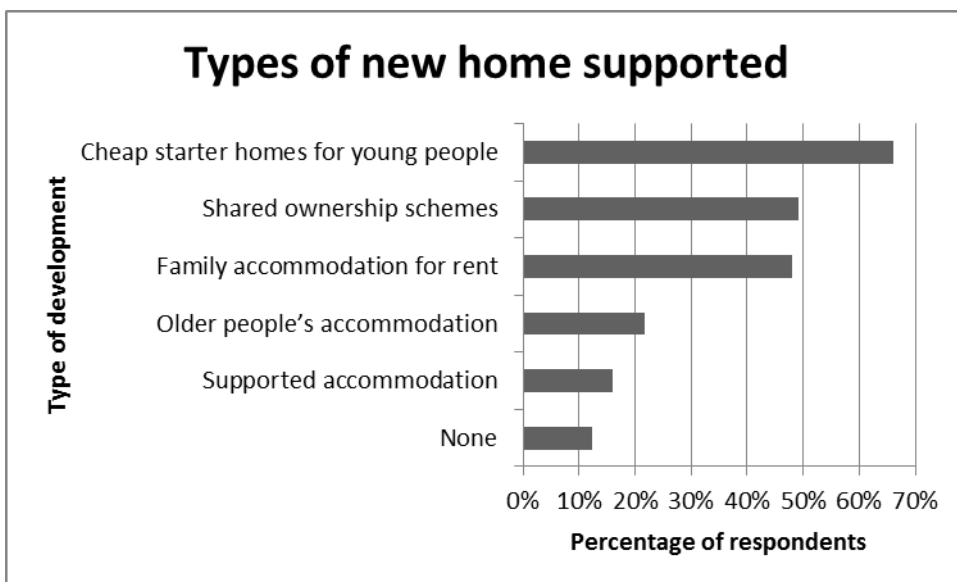
Respondents were also asked whether anyone currently living in their household would need separate accommodation in the parish now or in the near future, to which 9.8% of respondents (ten households) answered 'yes', indicating a sustained need for housing in the parish.

Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. A majority of respondents (84.5%) expressed support for some new housing in Steeple Langford, with the most popular option (35% of respondents) being for between four and ten

new homes. 15.5% of respondents were opposed to any new housing in Steeple Langford 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 Steeple Langford by the survey respondents were affordable starter homes for young people (66%) and shared ownership homes (49.1%). Full results are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

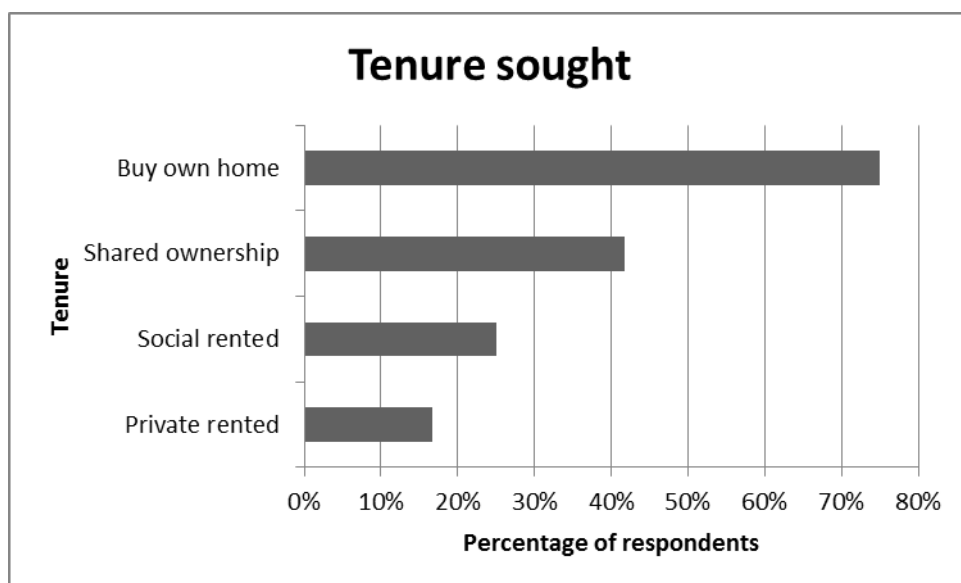


Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

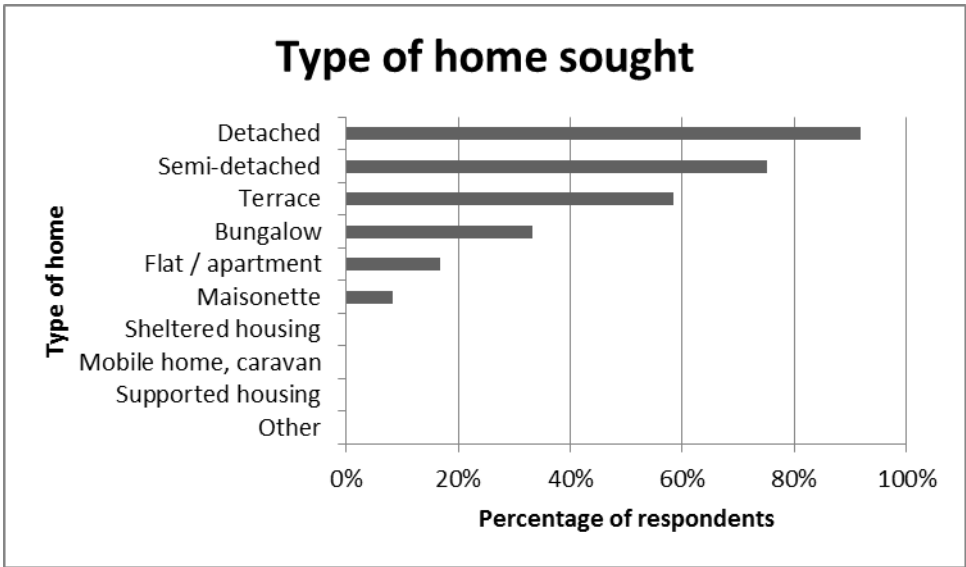
This section of the report looks initially at all the responses to section two of the survey in order to give a broad picture of the need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment and an evaluation of the current affordable housing in Steeple Langford are then made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

Twelve respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Steeple Langford. All twelve households declared a local connection to Steeple Langford, either through currently living there, currently working there, having family members in the parish, and/or having previously lived there.

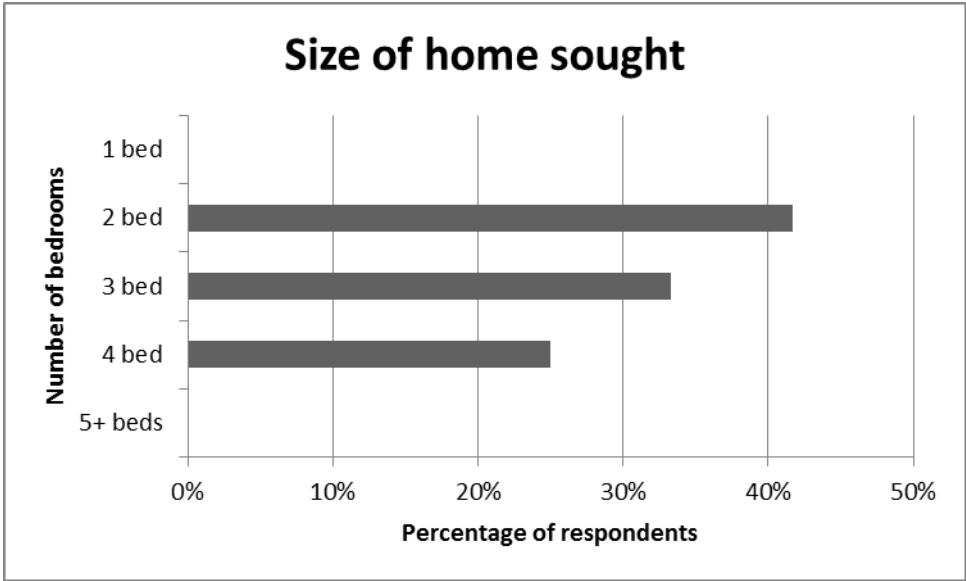
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with purchased homes the most desired. Households could indicate more than one response:



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 two bedroom homes and respondents also expressed a need for properties with three and four bedrooms. No need was declared for homes with one or with five or more bedrooms:



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

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Steeple Langford, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of respondents. One household did not complete the financial declaration section of the survey in sufficient detail to be assessed, and as such is excluded from the affordable housing assessment. 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 two of the eleven households responding to the financial section of the survey reported having equity in an existing property, and, while the estimated levels of savings among the respondents were generally low, three households declaring higher savings in excess of £40,000. Income levels were varied. Three of the eleven households reported gross incomes of more than £50,000, while three reported lower gross household incomes of less than £20,000pa. The median gross household income bracket of the eleven respondents was £29,000-£30,499pa.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Steeple Langford suggests that seven of the eleven households would require public assistance in order to achieve their required housing and so 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 Steeple Langford, presented in Section 8.

Of the remaining four households, two were seeking privately rented homes. One of these required a three bedroom home (detached, semi-detached or terraced) and the other sought a four bedroom single level home providing support with personal care. The third household was seeking a two bedroom socially rented home, but declared a financial capacity that excluded it from eligibility for socially rented accommodation. All three of these households should be able to afford to rent in the private sector in Steeple Langford: however, all three also noted a lack of suitable existing accommodation for their needs. This suggests a need in the parish for an open-market or mixed tenure development providing access for local people to privately rented homes.

The fourth household deemed ineligible for affordable housing was seeking a three bedroomed, detached, purchased home. As with those above, this household also described a lack of suitable housing in Steeple Langford. This also suggests a need for an open-market or mixed tenure development in the parish.

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 Steeple Langford area:⁵

Bedrooms	Oct 2014 – Dec 2014
1	£183,700
2	£246,900
3	£317,800
4	£474,600
5+	£677,100

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 Steeple Langford cost £246,900 then a household may require £37,035 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £59,961 for a single applicant or £69,955 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in the Salisbury area in 2011 was only £20,226:⁶

- 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 SP3 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SP3 postcode covers a wider area than Steeple Langford 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 October 2014, there were seven households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Steeple Langford parish: none of these households are described in Section 8 of this report. The households on the Register are seeking properties with one and two bedrooms, and any full assessment of housing need in the parish must take account of the Register.⁷
- The 2011 Census recorded 34 social homes in the parish.⁸ These properties represent 14.5% of the total housing in Steeple Langford, which is very close to the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.⁹
- The social housing in Steeple Langford had a 17.6% re-let rate in the past year: from the third quarter of 2013/14 to the second quarter of 2014/15 inclusive, six social homes were re-let in the parish.¹⁰ Of these six, four were one bedroomed homes, one was a two bedroomed home, and one a three bedroomed home. All were subsidised rented homes.
- Despite Steeple Langford's average level of social housing, the type of stock turnover (subsidised rented, predominantly one bedroomed homes) suggests that **none** of the households responding to section two of this survey and in need of affordable accommodation could meet their needs through accessing the existing social housing of the parish.

⁷ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

⁸ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, English parishes / Welsh communities.

⁹ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, local authorities in England and Wales.

¹⁰ 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 ¹¹

- 2x two bedroom homes

Shared / Low cost home ownership

- 2x two bedroom homes
- 1x three bedroom home
- 2x four bedroom homes

Sheltered housing for older people

- None

¹¹ 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.