

Avebury

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

March 2017

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1. Parish Summary

The Parish of Avebury is in the Marlborough Community Area of Wiltshire Council. The village of Avebury lies at the centre of the Parish, with its associated settlement of Avebury Trusloe about 1km to the west. The nearby hamlets of Beckhampton and West Kennett lie about 2kms to the south west and south east respectively.

515 people (2011 census) live in about 235 homes in the Parish. About 80 households live in Avebury, Rawlins Park and along the Swindon Road, and a further 95 households live in Avebury Trusloe and Bray Street. 45 households live in Beckhampton and 14 live in West Kennett or by Silbury Hill. About 10 more dwellings are second homes or holiday cottages. Over 60 council houses were originally built for letting at low rents and are now run by Aster Housing, but many of them have subsequently been bought under the right to buy. Nearly 30 homes at Rawlins Park provide a supply of housing for sale at lower cost.

The whole Parish is in the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site and has some of the most important surviving prehistoric archaeological monuments in the British Isles. As a result, some 250,000 – 300,000 people visit the Parish each year. The Parish is in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, lying near the edge of the Marlborough Downs, and parts of the Parish, at Avebury, Bray Street and West Kennett, are designated Conservation Areas.

The parish church of St James' stands in Avebury and dates from Saxon times. The village has a non-profit community grocery shop, an outreach post office, a nursery for one to five year olds, the Red Lion pub, three gift shops, up to three cafes depending on the time of year, a community hall (the Social Centre), a sports and social club and a recreation ground with pavilion. Several B&Bs are provided in Avebury, Avebury Trusloe and Beckhampton. The Waggon and Horses pub stands on the A4 at Beckhampton and Avebury Trusloe has a play area provided by the Parish Council. The Parish is relatively well served by bus services, which include the 49 bus that serves Avebury, Trusloe and Beckhampton.

Four farmers and a racing stables manage much of the land in the Parish. The National Trust manages several properties including the Neolithic Henge and other ancient monuments, the Alexander Keiller Museum, Avebury Manor, the Great Barn together with its 'farmyard', and two car parks.

Avebury Parish Council is aware that local employers and employees, as well as residents, need a supply of affordable housing. Beckhampton Stables, for instance, trains over 100 horses and regularly needs access to affordable accommodation for its large staff.

2. Introduction

In autumn 2016, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Avebury 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 Service Development and Enabling 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 Housing Development Partnership.¹
- 'The Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership brings together representatives from the economic development, regeneration, spatial planning, service development and enabling 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.'²

3. Aim

The aim of carrying out the survey is to investigate the affordable housing needs of local people (or those who need to live in the parish) in Avebury 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.

¹ 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.

² Para 1.1, 'Purpose', *Terms of Reference for the Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership*. Full membership: Wiltshire Council, Aster, White Horse Housing, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the Wiltshire Community Land Trust.

4. Survey Distribution and Methodology

In order to carry out the housing needs survey, questionnaires were delivered to the Parish Council for distribution 14 November 2016.

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 23 December 2016. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Service Development Officers at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 235 questionnaires were distributed to the parish.
- Everyone was asked to complete the first section of the form.
- If a household considered itself in need of, 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 34.5% with 81 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 Avebury.
- 3 of the 81 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 Avebury. 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 Avebury. 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

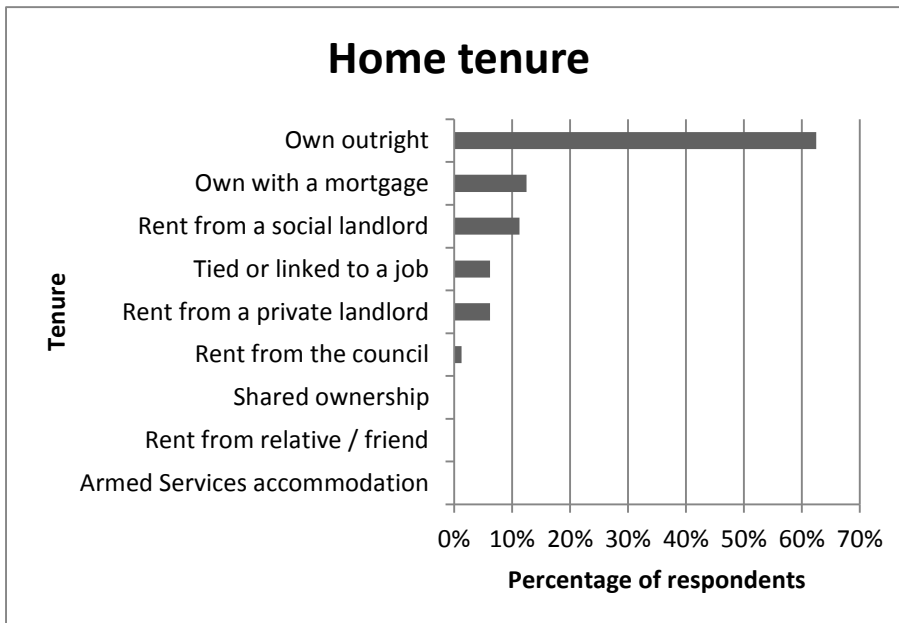
The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Avebury was their main home. 100% of those who replied said that it was.

The 2011 Census data for Avebury indicates that 62.2% of households in the parish were owner-occupying, 17.4% were renting from social landlords, 13.0% were privately renting and 7.4% of households were living rent free.³

³ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

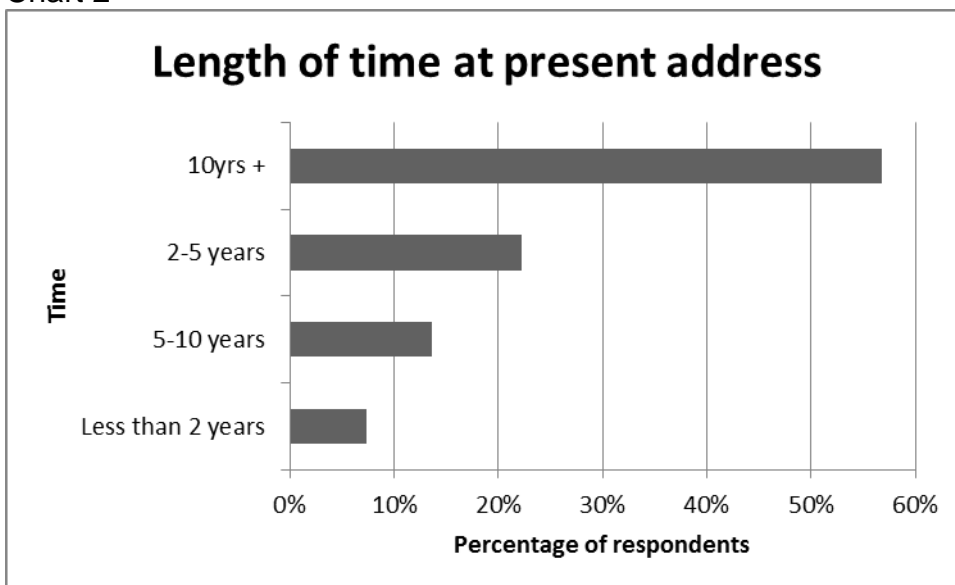
The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (75.0%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 12.6% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 6.2% were living in accommodation tied to their employment, 6.2% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency. 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.

Chart 1



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:

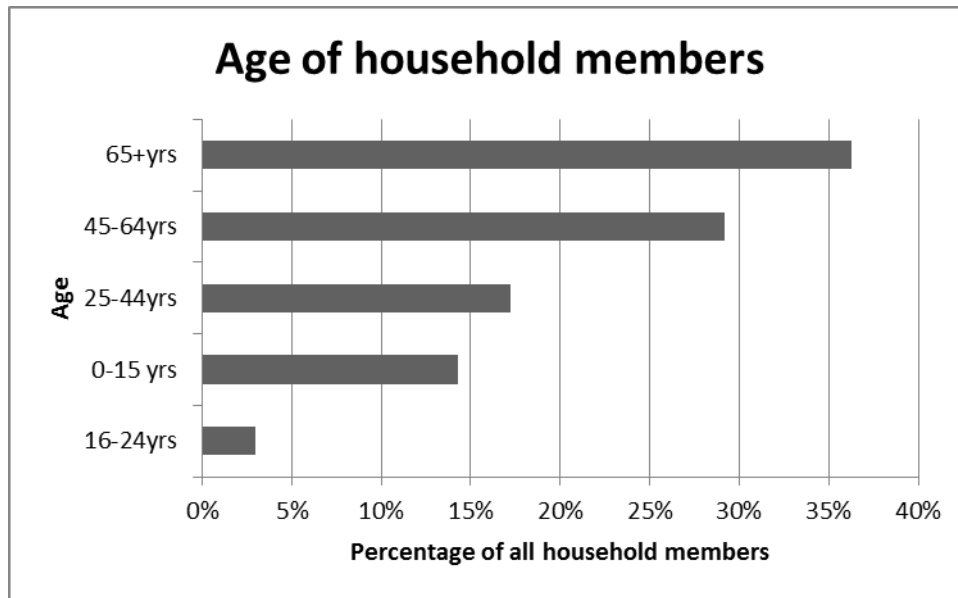
Chart 2



The number of bedrooms in each household that responded were as follows: 13.6% of respondents having five or more bedrooms in their property; 24.7% lived in four bedroom homes, 35.8% had three bedrooms, 22.2% two bedrooms and 3.7% of respondents lived in homes with one bedroom.

The spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that over a third (36.3%) of respondents' household members were aged 65+:

Chart 3



As shown in the chart above, there were significant numbers of households responding to the survey with members aged 25-64. This indicates a spread of different household types in Avebury, 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:

Table 1

	Distance to work				Total
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	
Person 1	12	9	16	6	43
Person 2	4	7	7	2	20
Person 3	0	2	0	0	2
Person 4	0	0	0	0	0
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	18	23	8	65

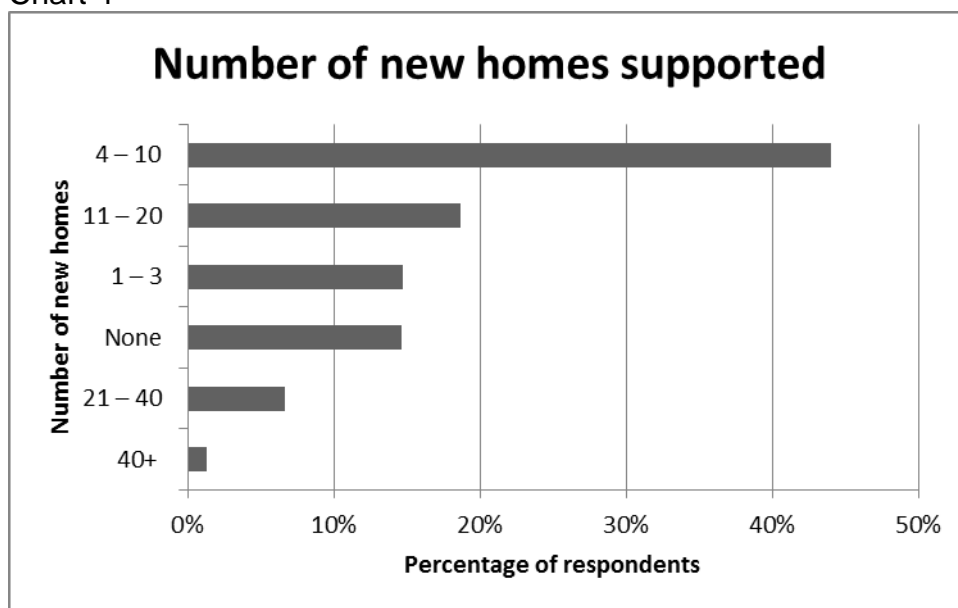
These results suggest a good level of sustainability for new housing development in Avebury, indicated by the survey respondents' access to local sources of employment. Just over half

(52.3%) of the households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, with the less than half (47.7%) travelling more than that.

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 6.7% of respondents (five households) answered 'yes', indicating a low level of sustained need for housing in the parish.

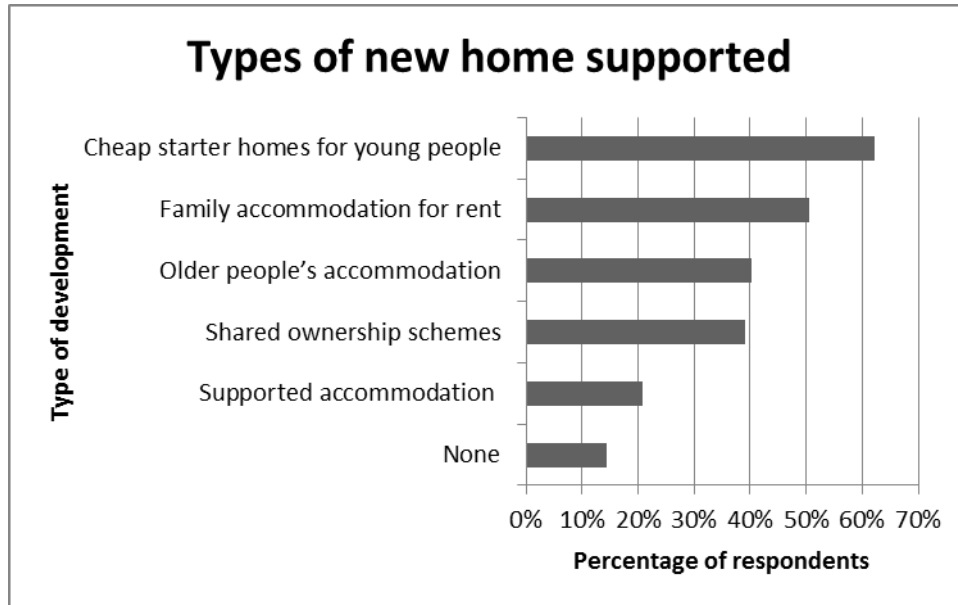
Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. A large majority of respondents (85.3%) were in support of some new housing in Avebury, with the most popular option (44.0% of respondents) being for between four and ten new homes. There was some opposition to new housing in Avebury parish (14.7% of respondents):

Chart 4



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 Avebury by the survey respondents were affordable starter homes for young people (62.3%) and family accommodation to rent (50.6%). Full results are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

Chart 5



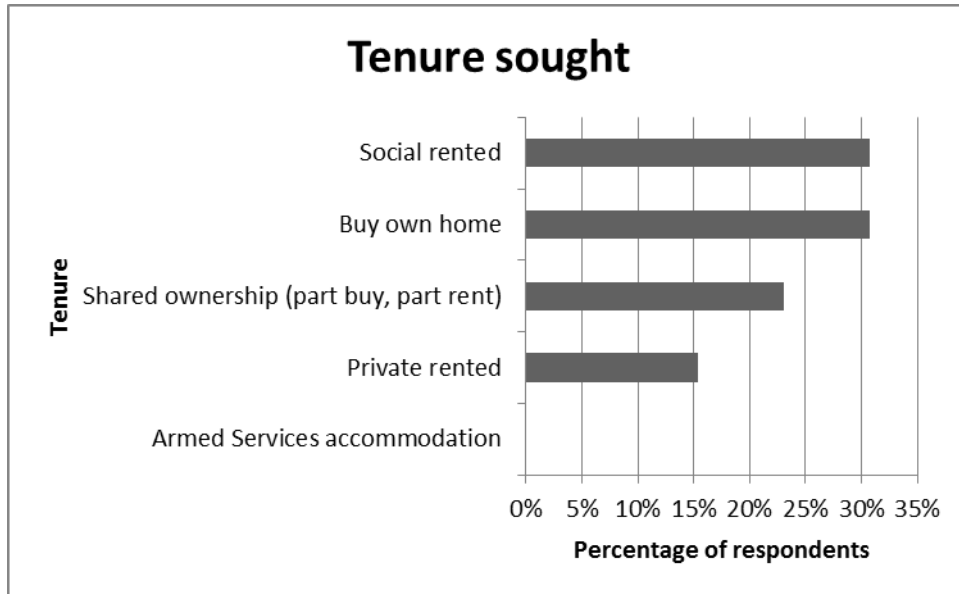
Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

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 Avebury are then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable (i.e. non-market) housing.

Eight respondents replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Avebury. The most frequent reasons given for needing to move were to provide support to family members (two households), and that respondents were currently living with their families but wanted to live independently in the parish (two households).

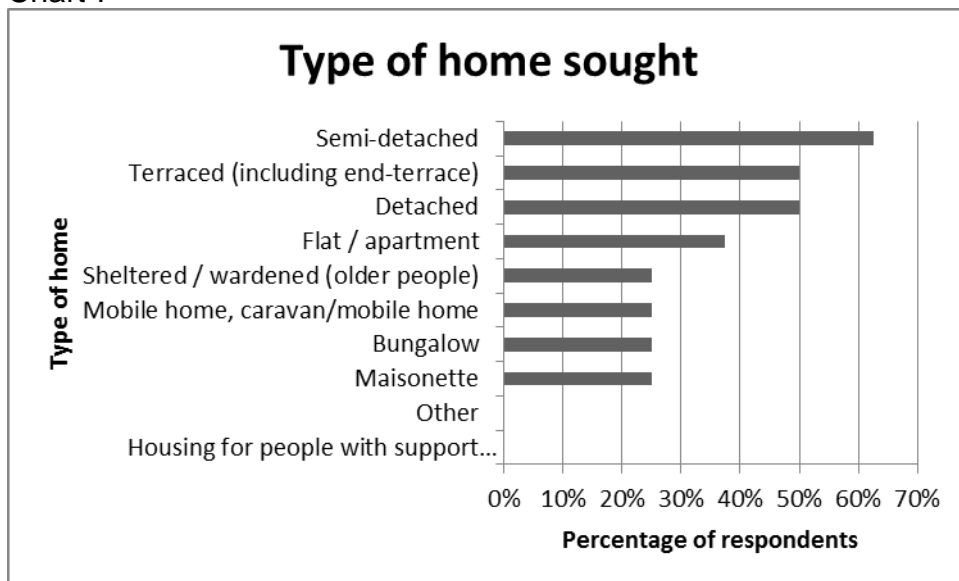
The respondents requiring accommodation in the parish were asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was for all types of tenure, with socially rented and owner occupied homes the most desired. Households could indicate more than one response:

Chart 6



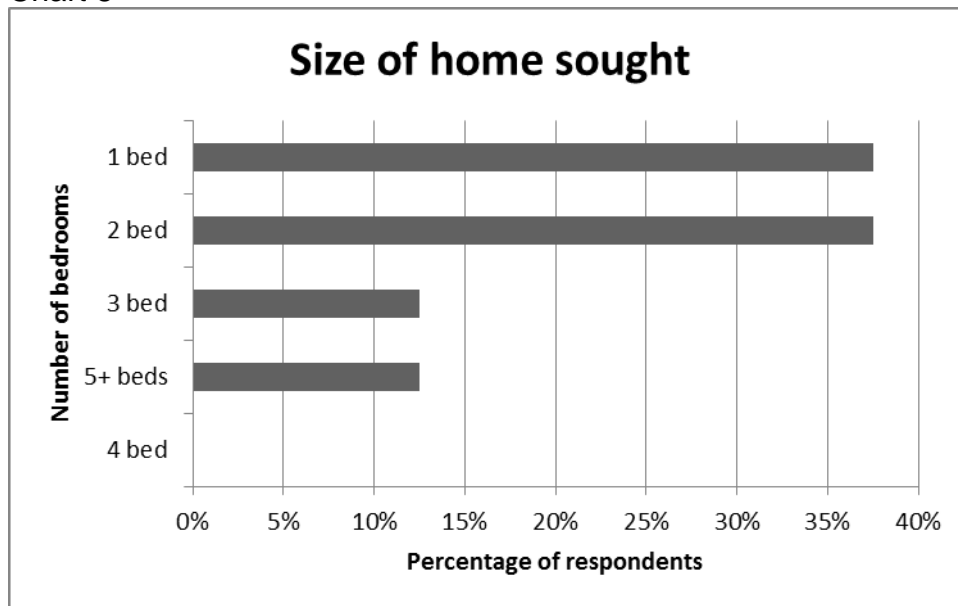
Respondents to this section were also asked what type of housing they required. The most sought-after type was semi-detached properties. Full responses are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

Chart 7



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

Chart 8



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

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Avebury, 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. It should also be noted that of the eight responses to Part Two, one did not complete their questionnaire in sufficient detail to be included in the affordable housing assessment. Therefore this household has not been included in the summary or the affordable housing assessment.

Only one of the households responding to this section of the survey reported having equity in an existing property. The estimated levels of savings among the respondents varied, with six households declaring less than £2,500 in savings and only one household declaring more than £40,000 in savings. Income levels also varied. Four of the seven residential households reported gross incomes of less than £24,500, while two reported a gross household income of over £24,500pa. The median gross household income bracket reported by the seven residential respondents was £23,000 - £24,499pa.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Avebury suggests that four of the seven residential 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 Avebury, presented in Section 8. It is noted that there was interest from a local employer around the principle of affordable housing for future employees. However the detailed needs cannot be assessed based on the information we hold on current responses.

The comparison of income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Avebury indicated that three of the seven residential households would not require public assistance in order to achieve their required housing. Of these, one household sought shared ownership; however the income declared would not be sufficient for this product and the household do not meet the

local eligibility criteria for socially rented housing as they have access to adequate funds to afford to rent a home in the private sector in Avebury parish. The final two households were seeking several of the specified tenures; however, despite their expressed preferences both of these households do not meet the local eligibility criteria for socially rented housing as they are deemed to be adequately housed and both do not have sufficient finances for a shared ownership product. Therefore these three households are not included in the recommendations of this report.

The remaining four residential 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 Avebury parish, presented in Section 8.

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 Avebury area:⁴

Bedrooms	March 2017
1	£230,800
2	£315,300
3	£389,900
4	£581,600
5+	£865,100

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 Avebury cost £315,300 then a household may require £47,295 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £76,573 for a single applicant or £89,335 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in Wiltshire in 2014 was £20,657:⁵

- 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.

⁴ House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN8 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SN8 postcode covers a wider area than Avebury parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

⁵ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014, resident analysis. Gross annual pay of employed persons resident in Wiltshire, www.nomisweb.co.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.

- 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.

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 March 2017, there were two households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Avebury parish: neither of these households is those described in Section 8 of this report as in need of affordable housing. The two households on the Register are seeking properties with one bedroom and three bedrooms, and any full assessment of housing need in the parish must take account of the Register.⁶
- The 2011 Census recorded forty seven social homes in the parish.⁷ These properties represent 20.0% of the total housing in Avebury, which is higher than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.⁸
- The social housing in Avebury had an 8.5% re-let rate in the past year: from the fourth quarter of 2015/16 to the third quarter of 2016/17, four social homes were re-let in the parish; two were two bedroom homes and two were three bedroom homes.⁹
- The provision and turnover of social housing in the parish suggest 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.
- 100% of respondents to section two of the survey described a lack of suitable accommodation for their needs in the parish, and it is notable that while Avebury has a good proportion of privately rented homes (13% of the total parish stock), the turnover of these isn't high and rents are generally higher than the LHA. The lack of availability of low cost privately rented homes in Avebury does indicate a need for an open-market or mixed tenure development in the area.

⁶ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

⁷ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, English parishes / Welsh communities.

⁸ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, local authorities in England and Wales.

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. The recommendations describe a snapshot of the need for affordable housing at the time the survey was conducted and do not take account of future changes in need, for example arising from the changing housing needs of employees of local businesses. The recommendations may not represent the parish's full housing need as responses were not received from every household, for example households which are on the Housing Register but have not completed a questionnaire are not included in these recommendations (see Section 7). In order to fully assess the housing need in the parish, the recommendations need to be considered alongside evidence provided by Wiltshire Council's Housing Register, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the advice of allocation staff who manage the Register.

It is noted that there was interest from a local employer around the principle of affordable housing for existing and future employees. However, the survey can only address the known needs of current households in the parish, and there is currently insufficient evidence from current employees to include them within the current housing needs recommendations,

Subsidised rented housing ¹⁰

- 2x one bedroom homes (1x bungalow/ground floor accommodation*);

Shared ownership / discount market homes¹¹

- 2 x two bedroom homes

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.

¹¹ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in shared ownership/discounted market properties are based on the number of bedrooms wanted by respondents, applicants can purchase the size of home they are able to afford.