

Parishes of Bridestowe & Sourton Housing Needs Report



Produced by Devon Communities Together

**On behalf of Bridestowe and Sourton Neighbourhood
Plan Committee**

Date: April 2016



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1 Executive Summary

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for 12 affordable homes within the next 5 years:

Key findings

Affordability

- The survey found 10 households in housing need who could not afford to buy in the open market.
- 1 could afford to rent in the open market.
- 3 additional replies were received by households on Devon Home Choice who had not completed the survey but were eligible for affordable housing in the village.

Tenure

- 9 of the households in need qualified for affordable rent, 3 may be able to afford a shared ownership property.

Size of Property Required

- 11 x 1 or 2 bedroom properties for singles/couples
- 1 x 3 bedroom property for a family

Other Findings

- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. 410 surveys were delivered and 137 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 33%.
- 89% of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. Twenty-two households did not answer this question.
- A total of eleven households showed an interest in self-build. Ten expressed an interest in individual self-build housing and three expressed an interest in group self-build housing.

2. Aims of the Survey

- To investigate the affordable housing need, tenure and house size for local people in the Parishes of Bridestowe and Sourton, those wishing to return, and those who work in the Parishes.
- To establish the general level of support for a small development of affordable homes for local people with housing needs.

3. Survey history, methodology and response

3.1 History

Bridestowe and Sourton Neighbourhood Plan committee decided to carry out a survey to assess the level of local housing need across both parishes. The Rural Housing Enabler attended a Parish Council meeting on 10th November 2016 and it was agreed to proceed with the survey. Survey forms were finalised and 410 forms were hand delivered to every household in the village. Parishioners were able to return the survey in a reply paid envelope. The deadline for the return of the survey was 22nd April 2016.

3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology approved by local planners. Background notes on the methodology can be obtained from the Rural Housing Enabler.

The survey form was in three parts. The first section asked a limited number of questions about the type of household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents. The third part of the survey was designed to be completed by households who believe they have a need for affordable housing and wish to remain living in the village. A reminder was also sent to those on the Devon Home Choice register who did not complete a survey form.

The two parishes are currently working together to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and have commissioned a joint housing needs survey. However, results for each parish will also be compiled separately in order to provide each Parish Council with meaningful data and information about their parish.

3.3 Response

- 137 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 33% of all dwellings surveyed.
- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. Out of the 137 returned surveys, 10 were returned with Part 3 completed.
- Seventy-three of the respondents live in Bridestowe and fifty-five live in Sourton. Nine did not specify where they live.

It should be noted that whilst apparent inconsistencies in responses are followed up, the information given is taken at face value.

4. Introduction and Information about Bridestowe & Sourton

4.1 Overview of Bridestowe

The parish of Bridestowe is located in West Devon between Okehampton (6 miles) and Tavistock (10 miles), with Launceston approximately 12 miles distant. The village has good transport links, being located about 2 miles off of the main A30 highway and just off the main A386 road, giving it good transport links to Exeter, Plymouth and other nearby larger settlements. There are regular bus services to Bude, Holsworthy, Okehampton, Plymouth and Exeter.

Bridestowe has a Parish Church, Methodist Chapel, village hall, primary and pre-schools, village stores and post office and a public house.

The village has a number of clubs and societies including a cricket club, Beavers, Cubs and Scout groups, a gardening club, WI and over 60's lunch club and a busy modern village hall which holds regular events.

4.2 Overview of Sourton

The parish of Sourton is located in West Devon, to the east of Bridestowe and just off the main A386 road, giving it good transport links to Exeter, Plymouth and other nearby larger settlements. It lies approximately 4 miles from Okehampton, 10 miles from Tavistock and 12 miles from Launceston. Part of the parish lies within Dartmoor National Park. As well as the main village, the parish also includes the hamlets of Boasley, Thorndon, Bowerland, Week, Lake, Southerley Prewley and Forda. The village has a church, village hall, 2 public houses and a Travelodge, filling station and Little Chef is situated just off the A30 at Sourton Cross.

The village has several clubs and societies including the WI and a busy church community.

There are regular bus services to Tavistock, Okehampton and Plymouth (not Sundays).

4.3 Population Figures

In the 2011 census the usually resident population of Bridestowe and Sourton was recorded as 996 in 479 households. This consists of 576 residents in 278 households in Bridestowe and 420 residents in 201 households in Sourton. The census also records that there were 59 dwellings which were empty properties, second homes or holiday lets in both parishes.

4.4 Council Tax Bandings

A breakdown of Council Tax bandings in Table 1 shows that there are 158 properties (35% of all dwellings) in the lower two bandings out of a total of 456. These represent the entry level properties that people on lower incomes would be able to afford. This is a fairly high percentage compared to a lot of villages in rural Devon and indicates that there is some availability of cheaper properties for purchase and rent within the villages.

Table 1

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H	Total
Bridestowe	29	75	54	58	31	11	8	3	269
Sourton	11	43	39	65	23	5	1	0	187
Total	40	118	93	123	54	16	9	3	456

4.5 Property Prices and Rent

In the last two years (since 1st April 2014) the Land Registry has recorded twenty-eight property sales in both parishes (twenty-three in Bridestowe and five in Sourton). The average price of properties whose value was shown was £257,000 (three properties have been excluded from this calculation as they are

retirement properties which are priced below the market value). The average price of homes in Sourton was £216,000. In Bridestowe the average price was higher at £283,000.

There are currently seven property listings on the Rightmove website in Bridestowe. The cheapest house on the market at the moment is a two bedroom property for £159,950. There are only three houses for sale under £200,000. There are four properties for sale in Sourton, the cheapest is a bungalow for £350,000.

There is only one property currently for rent in Bridestowe, a one bedroom house at £500 per month, there is one property currently for rent in Sourton, a three bedroom property at £650 per month.¹

The data relating to house prices and availability shows that there are few homes either to buy or rent in the two parishes and the majority that do become available are out of the range of first time buyers.

To assess whether a household can afford to buy in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. This is done by looking at the above information on local sale prices and coming up with an average entry level house price for one, two and three bedroom properties. In order to establish average rents we look at private rents gained from the housing needs survey and rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical rental costs to assess affordability. There were no one bedroom properties for sale or rent on the open market at the time of writing this report therefore data has been taken from surrounding rural areas.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Size	Property price	Weekly rent
1 bedroom	£120,000	£125
2 bedroom	£180,000	£150
3 bedroom	£220,000	£160

There are currently fourteen council/housing association owned properties in Bridestowe and six in Sourton.

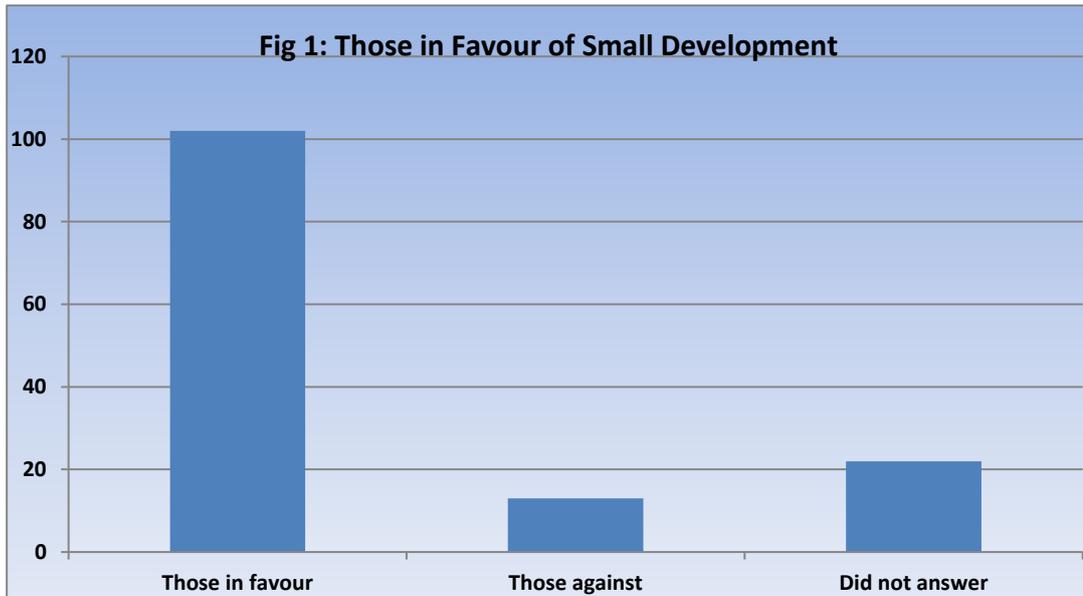
Only two have been let in the last two years. Therefore lettings of current affordable housing stock will have little impact on future need figures.

5. General Survey Findings

5.1 In favour of a small local development

Respondents were asked if they would be in favour of a small number of homes for local people being built if the need for affordable housing were proven. 89% of those answering the question said they would be in favour. 11% said they were against any development. It should be noted that twenty-two households did not respond to this question. Fig.1 below shows the breakdown.

¹ As of 18/04/16



5.2 Suggestions where a development could be sited.

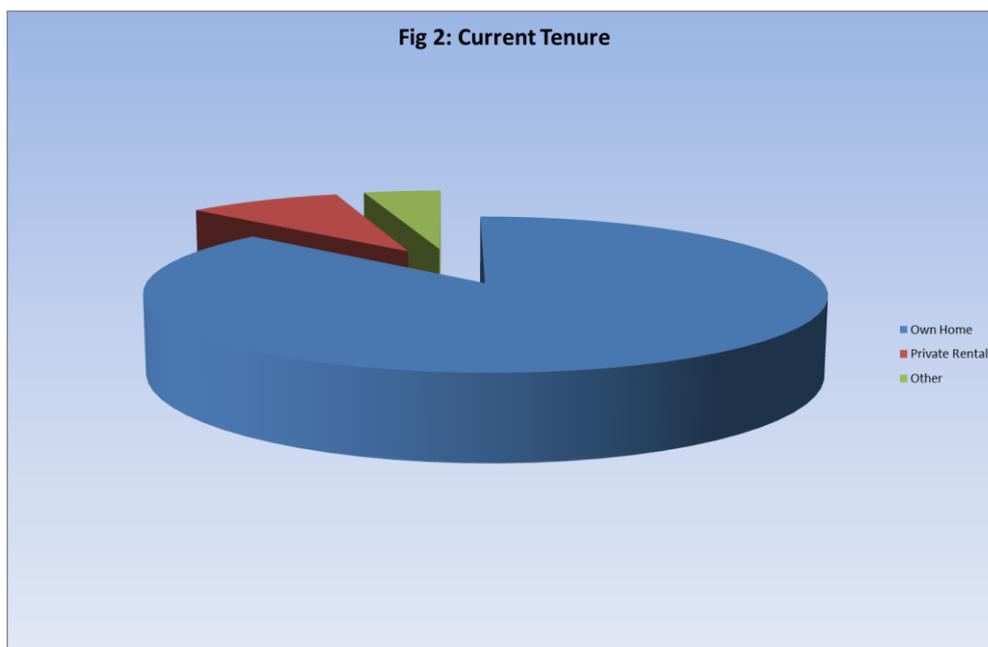
Fifty-three individuals made suggestions or comments. The full list will be made available to the Parish Council.

5.3 Main or second home

Two of the responders were second home owners.

5.4 Current tenure

Of the 135 respondents who provided details, 117 (87%) own their own home and 12 (9%) rent from a private landlord. The remaining 6 households (4%) are made up of 3 in tied housing, 2 renting from a housing association and 1 living in a shared ownership property. Figure 2 below shows the breakdown of tenure.



5.5 Current type of accommodation

Respondents were asked what type of accommodation they current live in.

- None of the respondents live in a flat
- Eighty-nine live in a house
- Thirty-eight live in a bungalow.
- Ten did not answer the question.

5.6 Interest in self-build

Respondents were asked whether they would be interested in a self-build project either individually or part of a group if a site were available. Eleven households showed an interest in at least one type of self-build project (households were able to tick both types if they wished). As self-building is a popular option and is encouraged by local and central government, this may be something for the Parish Council to consider further.

- Ten households stated they may be interested in an individual self-build project.
- Three households stated they may be interested in a group self-build project.

5.7 What type of housing would you prefer to move to?

Respondents who wished to move in the next 5 years were asked what type of housing they would prefer; they could tick more than 1 box. Results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Open Market Housing	Affordable Rent	Low Cost Housing	Open Market Self-Build	Affordable Self-Build	Starter Home
35	11	8	8	5	3

The majority would like to move to open market housing with affordable rent being the most popular of the affordable housing options.

Respondents were also asked how many bedrooms they would require in their new home.

- One would require a 1 bedroom property
- Twenty-one would require a 2 bedroom property
- Twenty-eight would require a 3 bedroom property
- Nine would require a property with 4 or more bedrooms

Respondents were asked what their budget would be if they purchased a new home. Fifty-two households replied to this question. Results are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

£150,000-£200,000	£200,000-£250,000	£250,000-£300,000	£300,000-£350,000	£350,000-£400,000	£400,000+
12	23	2	10	2	3

The range £200,000 - £250,000 was the most popular option and 67% of respondents wished to purchase homes priced under £250,000.

5.8 Community Land Trusts

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are a way of providing affordable housing, especially affordable rented homes, for local people. There is very little grant funding available for affordable rented homes but a fund has been proposed for community led housing projects. It may be that the CLT route will be the best way to provide affordable housing in small communities in the future.

Respondents were asked whether they would be interested in joining a Community Land Trust. Ten expressed an interest.

6. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 2 of the questionnaire was directed at residents over the age of 55. The number of people over the age of 55 is set to rise significantly across the UK over the next 20 years. The Office for National Statistics predicts that by 2034 the percentage of people over the age of 55 will increase by 23% across Devon and by 27% in West Devon.

168 people answered Part 2 of the survey from 105 households with at least 1 member over the age of 55. This is 77% of the total respondents.

6.1 Age of Respondents to Part 2 survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. As can be seen in Table 5 below, the majority of those who replied (82%) were aged between 55 and 75.

Table 5

Age Group	55-65	66-75	76-85	Over 85
Number	72	66	25	5

6.2 Future Housing Plans

Households were asked about their future housing plans.

- Eighteen households plan to move within the next five years. Of these, nine would like to remain in Bridestowe and Sourton.
- None of these households expect to need affordable housing.
- A further twenty households expect to move after five years.
- Sixty-six households have no plans to move at the moment.
- One household did not answer the question.

6.3 Type of accommodation required

Households were asked what type of accommodation they would prefer to move to. The results are in Table 6 below.

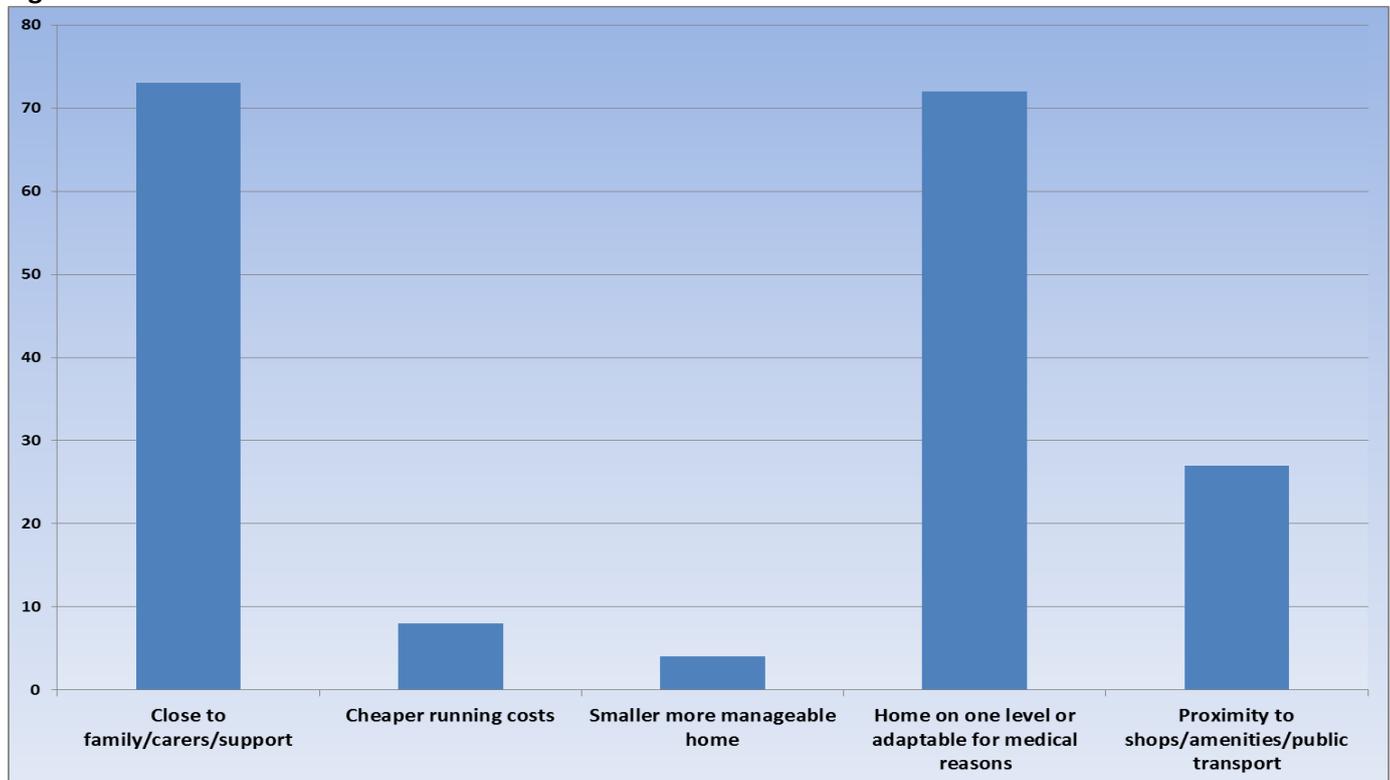
Table 6

Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons	Number
Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people	37
Home specially designed for older people	4
Residential / nursing home	2

6.4 What reasons would be most important when choosing a new home

Older households were asked to give the three most important considerations when choosing their next home. The results are shown in Figure 3 below. The most popular reason is a home on one level or adaptable for medical reasons followed closely by a home close to family/carers/support.

Fig3



6.5 Conclusion – Older Persons Needs

The older persons’ survey shows that the majority of households (63%) have no plans to move home. However, the parish does have a number of older households who wish to move to accommodation that is on one level, adaptable for medical reasons and close to family and support.

None of the households that expect to move home within the next five years and remain in Bridestowe and Sourton believe they will need affordable housing. All would require open market housing. Small open market bungalows, flats and houses can be built, however, developers who build open market homes do not usually attach any kind of local connection covenant as this reduces the value of the homes. This means that any open market properties cannot be guaranteed for local people.

Meeting the housing needs of this group of people should be given further consideration.

7. Assessment of those in need – Part 3 survey

Ten households indicated a need to move and returned part three of the survey.

7.1 Housing need

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify why they had a housing need and when they would need to move. They could give more than one reason.

- Two households indicated a current need to move.
- Two households indicated a need to move within the next 1 – 3 years.
- Five households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years.
- One did not specify a timescale.

Table 7 shows why households need to move within the next twelve months

Table 7

Reason for current need	No of respondents
Need to move to a home with more bedrooms	1
Wish to move back to parish and have local connection	1
Struggling to afford current home	1

Table 8 shows the reasons why people expect to need to move in the future.

Table 8

Reason for future need	No of respondents
Will need to downsize to home with fewer bedrooms	3
Need a home with more bedrooms	2
Health / mobility reasons	1
Home in poor condition	1
Expect to leave home and will not be able to afford to rent privately	5
Have a private tenancy ending and expect to need affordable housing	3
Wish to move back to parish and have strong local connection	1

7.2 Local Connection

The definition of local connection is set by West Devon Borough Council:

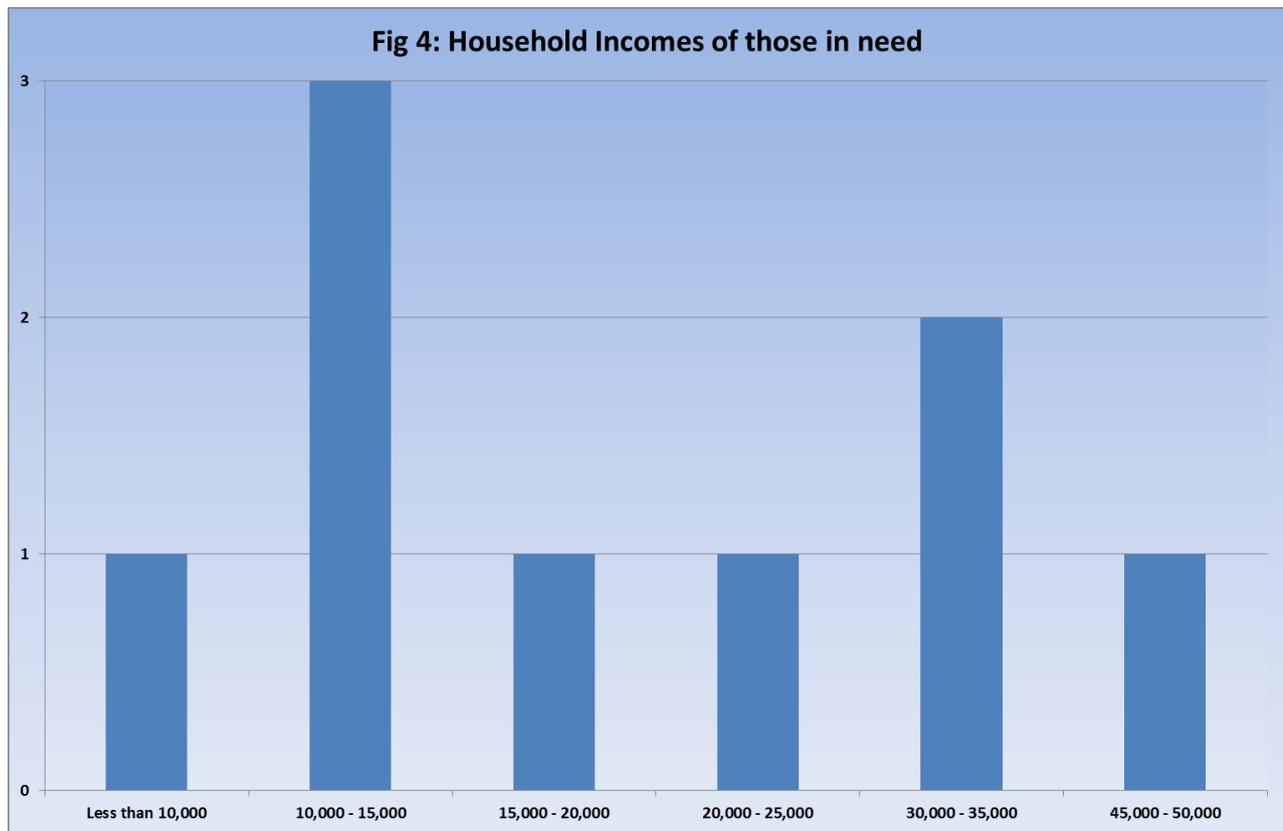
- A member of the household currently resident in the parish for 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years where this has been out of choice or:
- Those people who have permanent work in the parish or:
- A member of the household has family connections in the parish (immediate family who have themselves lived in the parish for at least 5 years) or:
- Other strong local connection with the parish for example by upbringing

On reviewing the circumstances all of the households in need were found to meet the local connection requirement as set out above.

7.3 Housing Options

The housing options available to the ten households in need with a local connection are now given consideration.

Respondents provided information on income and savings which allows an assessment of what the household can afford to pay for their accommodation. These incomes are shown in Fig 4 below.



One household did not provide income details but has been assessed as being in housing need due to other information provided.

Taking into account the income, savings and assets of the ten households in housing need, one of them can afford to rent in the open market so have been discounted from the final figures. This leaves nine households that would require affordable housing. Three may be able to afford to buy a shared ownership property but the only affordable option for the remaining six households is subsidised rented housing.

The survey also asked households who had a housing need which type of housing they were interested in. Respondents could give more than one option. The responses are listed in Table 9 below.

Table 9

Type of housing	Interested
Shared ownership/equity	0
Affordable rented	4
Self-build	3
Starter home	3
Discounted market sale	2

7.4 Other evidence of housing need

As well as this survey other evidence of housing need should be considered. The housing waiting list or register for Devon is called Devon Home Choice. Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. There are eight households resident in the two parishes registered on Devon Home Choice (six in Bridestowe and two in Sourton). Details are set out below.

Table 10

Devon Home Choice band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Band A (Emergency need)	1	0	0	0	1
Band B (High)	0	0	0	0	0
Band C (Medium)	1	0	0	0	1
Band D (Low)	2	0	0	0	2
Band E (No Housing Need)	3	0	1	0	4
Total	7	0	1	0	8

Only one of the households registered on Devon Home Choice completed the survey. Due to this apparent disparity, all those who are registered with Devon Home Choice and living within the parish were contacted separately by letter and a further 3 replies were received. These have been added to the final numbers, giving a total need of 12.

7.5 Housing Mix

The suggested mix of housing is shown in Table 11 below. This takes account of the family makeup as declared on the survey form and the type of housing required.

Table 11

Type of Property	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership	Totals
1 or 2 bedroom property for single people	7	2	9
1 or 2 bedroom property for couples	1	1	2
3 bedroom property for families	1	0	1
Totals	9	3	12

Three households require a property with level access.

8. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for Bridestowe & Sourton

Overall, it must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving. Any provision of affordable housing, would, by necessity, need to take account of this. However, given the level of response to the survey, and in spite of the potential for circumstances to change, the Parish Council can feel confident in the results of this survey. The survey has identified a need in the near future for 12 units of affordable housing.

As the needs of households are constantly evolving the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide. In particular it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years. However if there is a significant development of affordable housing in the parish which is subject a local connection requirement and substantially meets the need identified in the report it will normally be necessary to re-survey the parish before any further development to address local needs is considered.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parish Council:

- Note this report
- Consider the options for addressing the need for 12 affordable homes.

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