

Rushton Housing Needs Survey

March 2012

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Key Findings

189 survey forms were distributed and 63 were returned giving a response rate of 33% which is good.

Five households indicated they needed to move in the next five years.

The most frequent reason given for needing to move was 'other'

Only two households have someone wanting to move within the village

Of these only one household has actually been identified as having someone in genuine need of affordable housing.

The type of accommodation required to meet their needs using Keyways allocation criteria:

1 x 1 or 2 bed flat/maisonette

Overall conclusion suggests there is no need to identify any opportunities specifically for affordable housing development.

It apparent from the survey findings that there is significant concern highlighted regarding unfinished development in the village

Introduction

Rising house prices and the loss of social housing stock, as a result of the right to buy policy, has seen many first time buyers and those on more modest incomes forced out of the villages where they have lived all their lives. In some villages the knock on effects of this is the loss of key services such as schools, pubs, Post Offices, village shops etc, along with the sustainability of the village.

The North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2007) shows a strong need for affordable homes across the district highlights some interesting information on the rural areas. For example it acknowledges that when looking at broad levels of income, the average household income in the rural area is much higher than in the urban areas. The type of housing in rural areas is also more likely to comprise larger detached dwellings, with by far the highest tenure being owner-occupation.

In order to obtain a more localised perspective a parish housing need survey can be carried out. Through a housing needs survey it is possible to assess the level of need for affordable housing in a village as well as any support the village has for a small scale development. If a need is shown to exist, then there are steps that can be taken to encourage the development of affordable housing.

During September 2011 189 surveys were distributed to all households within Rushton.

Purpose of the Survey

Kettering Borough Council has a statutory duty to investigate housing needs and examine ways of meeting these needs. In rural areas it is recommended by the Audit Commission and the National Housing Federation that Housing Needs Surveys are carried out in all villages as part of a rolling program over a 3-5 year period.

It is however recognised that only a village housing needs survey will indicate the specific housing needs that may be required within a village which can be used to form the evidence base on which to base strategy and policy. A more detailed village housing needs survey can identify the nature and extent of any need within a village. Housing need surveys can help to demonstrate the need for affordable housing, and the level of community support for any new development which may be necessary. They provide vital information to help to plan to meet local needs, including through the formulation of planning policy.

Exception sites are exclusively for affordable housing and use the 'exceptions' criteria set out in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3 was published in November 2006 and sets out the national planning policy framework for delivering housing objectives). This enables small sites to be used, specifically for affordable housing in small rural communities that would not normally be used for housing. These sites are located adjacent to the village confines. In order to build on these sites there must be evidence of a local housing need and a housing needs survey is the best way of doing this.

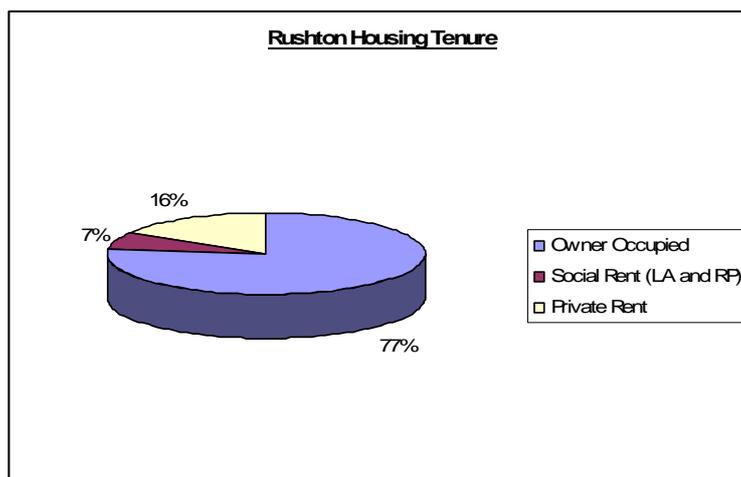
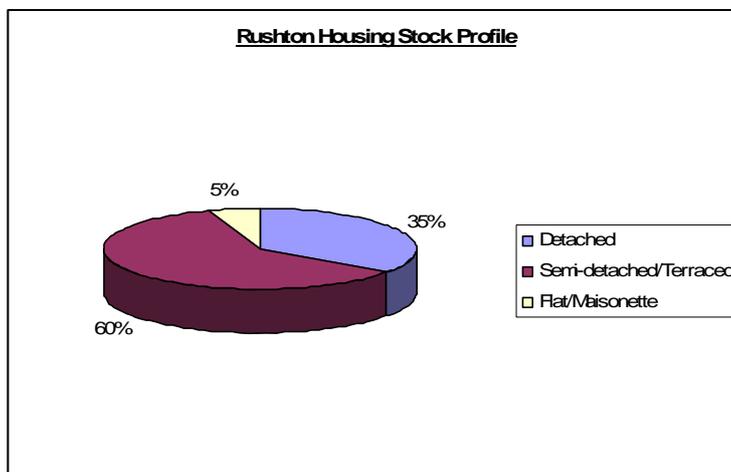
Planning gain and infill sites are primarily for market housing, however Kettering Borough Council has a policy requirement of 30% affordable housing on sites over 15 units. The North Northants Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) recommended that in rural villages this threshold be reduced from 10 dwellings to 3 dwellings. Consultation is already underway in the Borough on the Site Specific Document

Information from this survey will be used by the Planning and Housing Departments to inform future work.

The information from a housing needs survey is also useful at a local level, in particular with parish council activities. It can be used when decisions on housing issues are required.

Contextual Information on Rushton

Housing in the Parish has a high proportion of detached properties and is predominantly privately owned. The graphs below indicate the split in types (Source: Office for National Statistics).



Affordable housing within Rushton is currently made up of the following (source: Kettering Borough Council):

	Kettering Borough Council	Registered Provider (RP)
1 bed flat		
1 bed bungalow		
1 bed house		
2 bed flat		
2 bed bungalow	10	
2 bed house		
3 bed house	3	
4 bed house		
Total	13	0

House Prices and Affordability in Rushton

To establish levels of affordability, an assessment of how expensive it is for people who are trying to enter the housing market has been undertaken. For this we compare the bottom 25% of house prices (lower quartile) with the bottom 25% of salaries (lower quartile). Lower Quartile price is used for housing market analysis as it is deemed to be the appropriate entry level to access housing.

Sales prices were looked at for the period 2010/11 to present. Sales prices ranged from £100k for a terraced property to £490k for a detached property. The average sold price during this period was £223k. Current available properties to buy were then assessed. At present the cheapest property available to purchase in Rushton is £152,500, the most expensive is £325,000 (source: Rightmove.co.uk). The Lower Quartile property price is £169,462.

For a household to be able to purchase a home at this price they would need to be earning in the region of £52,296 (assuming 3.5 times salary and a 10% deposit). However, the average lower quartile of salaried household income for Rushton is only £18,700 (source: CACI Paycheck Profile 2011). This demonstrates that for households whose earnings are in the bottom 25%, a property (which is also in the bottom 25%) would cost 8 x their annual income. With mortgages being calculated on 3.5 times of their annual salary this highlights how unaffordable 'entry level' properties are to people trying to access the market, assuming no other equity. 71% of the population in the Parish earn below £43,576 (source: CACI Paycheck Profile 2011).

We have also considered affordability of intermediate products to assess whether this would make much of a difference for people trying to access the housing market. The table below illustrates this:

Entry Level (Lower Quartile) Property Price	Entry level property price (less 10% deposit)	Income required	Proportion able to purchase	Homebuy income required (70%)	Proportion able to purchase
£169,462	£152,516	£43.5k	29%	£30k	45%

(These calculations are based on a single person obtaining a mortgage at 3.5 times their income plus a 10% deposit)

Introduction of some form of intermediate housing product that equates to the cost of 70% of entry level (lower quartile) prices could help a further 16% of the Parish population. Some 55% of households have a household income of below £30k which would imply they would still rely on some other form of affordable housing i.e. social rent or affordable rent. Affordable Rent is a new product made available by the government, set at up to 80% of market rent. The majority of new schemes developed across the Country will be delivered as this tenure. There are no advertised rental properties in the Parish from which to draw sufficient analysis of the local 'affordability' of affordable rent. It is anticipated that affordable rent developed in rural areas has the potential to be expensive hence options at below 80% market rent would need considering in terms of true affordability.

NB – A significant proportion of Rushton's population is made up of pensioners thus the likelihood is that although the income levels may be low (due to non working population), households may well be asset rich.

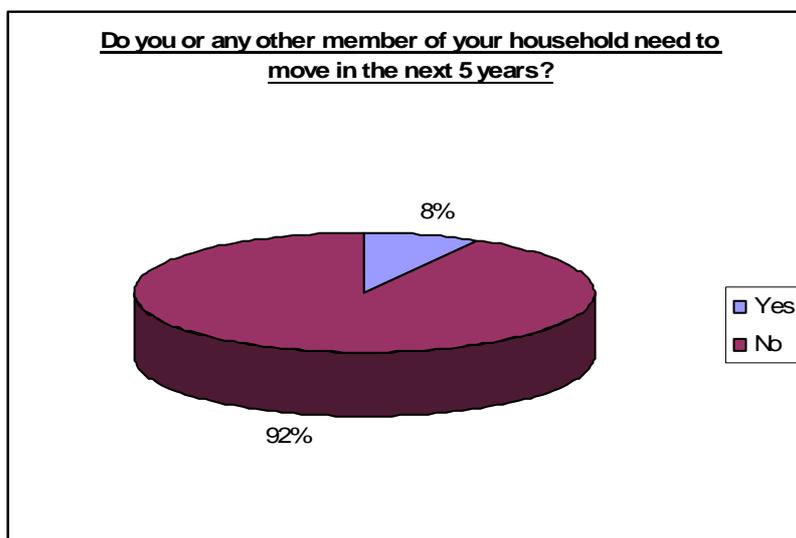
Identifying housing need

The following sections of this report detail the responses from the questionnaires distributed and returned during September/October 2011. Respondents individual details have been kept confidential and any identifiable attributes have not been included in the results. Any comments that have been made may have also been edited so as not to identify individual circumstances.

The following results are a snapshot in time and provide the Parish and Kettering Borough Council with an insight into current housing need, the desirability of the village and the current level of facilities serving the local community.

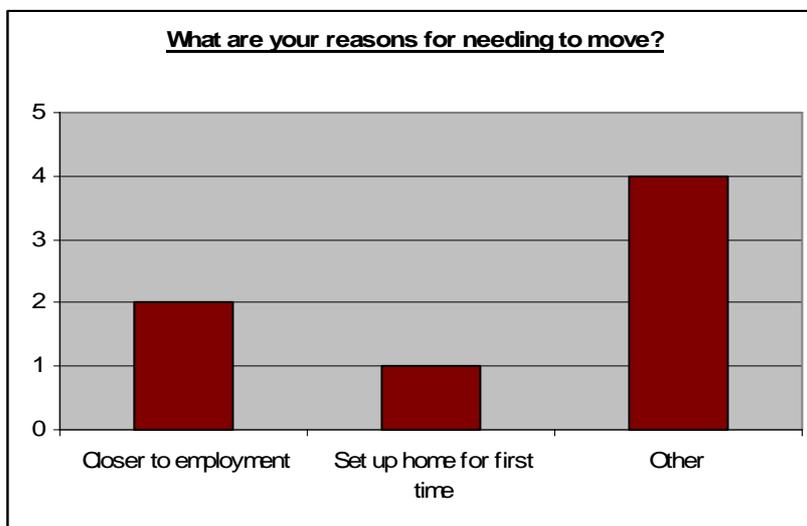
We can start to build a picture of the number of households needing an affordable home in the Parish by looking at those, including newly forming households (i.e. children moving out of the parental home) that need to move and whether they want to live within the Parish.

Those needing to move



63 households responded to this question, of which 58 (92%) said that they would not need to move from their current home in the next five years. Five respondents (8%) indicated that there was someone in their household who would require a move in the next five years.

Reasons for needing to move



Respondents were asked “What are your reasons for needing to move?” and were able to tick as many answers as applied.

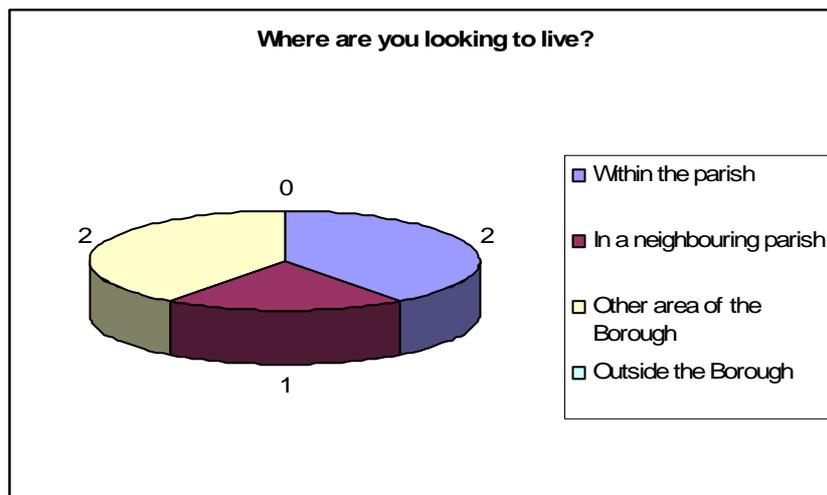
The most frequent answers given were ‘other’ and the reasons given were as follows:

- Having to commute
- Lack of facilities/transport
- Living in time limited accommodation
- Renting – cannot afford to buy in village

Households were also asked to specify their main reason for needing to move and the responses from those that answered this question are shown in the table below.

	Frequency
Other	4
First time buyer	1

Where households are looking to live



When asked, “Where are you looking to live?” two respondents said that they would like to live within the Parish. Two respondents want to move to somewhere else in Kettering Borough. One respondent wanted to live in a neighbouring Parish.

Migration

Households were asked whether they knew of anyone who had had to move away from the village within the last 10 years. Only six of the households who responded answered yes to this question.

Identifying local connection

According to the surveys, only two respondents needed to move and wanted to stay within the parish. These households will need to have a strong local connection to the parish to be included in the final total of households in housing need. Kettering's Allocation Policy is currently under review and local connection criteria generally is a priority being looked at. The recommendation for rural areas will be a strong local connection where the household has been living in the parish for at least two years; or used to live in the parish or has relatives living in the parish for a number of years and also other considerations such as working or undertaking education or training in the parish. It is important to include those respondents to the survey with a local connection of less than two years as they may be considered to have a strong local connection once a development is completed. All local connections are assessed at the time of development. The link between rural local connection, residency and certain affordable housing developed in villages would be covered in the associated legal agreement and would take priority over any over-arching allocations policy.

The following table indicates the local connection criteria to all those who indicated a need to move within the next five years, i.e. the five households, not just those with an identified housing need. Households may have met more than one of the Local Connection criteria.

Local Connection	Yes	Timescale			
		Less than 1 year	1-3 years	3-4 years	5+ years
Work in the Parish					
Live in the Parish		2		1	2
Previous residence in the Parish					1
Close relatives living in the Parish (parents, children, siblings, grandparents or grandchildren, including step-relatives)				1	1
Participating in education/training in the Parish			1		

Of the households needing to move within the next five years and who want to stay within the Parish, one is currently registered with Kettering Borough Council Keyways register.

Housing Needs Analysis Table

The following table lists details of the respondents who feel they have a housing need. This table only includes those households who have said they need to move within/into the parish and have a strong local connection as outlined in the section above as these households will be the households that are likely to be eligible for affordable housing. Three survey respondents indicated a need to move but to owner occupied accommodation and one to private rented accommodation therefore these results have been omitted. Those households looking to move away from the Parish have also had results omitted.

The reality type was determined by looking at the response to the question on the household composition, using the Council's allocations policy. Each household's priority need has also been examined and judged against the current entry-level housing available in the village and their current housing circumstances.

Respondents that would be considered for one bedroom properties under Kettering Borough Council's Allocations Policy have been reclassified as being in need of a two bedroom home. This offers more flexibility in rural areas as the capacity for housing associations to develop one bedroom homes is very limited. In terms of occupancy, the flexibility and sustainability of two bedroom homes is far greater than one bedroom homes.

Ref	Household Make-up	Reason for need	Preferred Tenure	Likely allocation
1	Single male	Living in time limited accommodation. On Keyways list	Social Rent	Social/Affordable Rent 2 bed flat/maisonette

Suggested mix based on the housing needs survey findings using the Keyways allocation Matrix (Keyways Allocations Policy v3 Sept 2010) would be the following:

1 x 2 bed maisonettes/flats for rent

Rural affordable development can be a lengthy process from site identification to a development completing and during this time households circumstances would change. Also types of units that can be provided may also be dictated by the type of scheme that may come forward. Therefore the above mix is simply indicative of the survey findings but could be used to inform future development along with other sources of information available at that time. As the need identified in this survey is so small it alone wouldn't justify looking for an appropriate development site at this time.

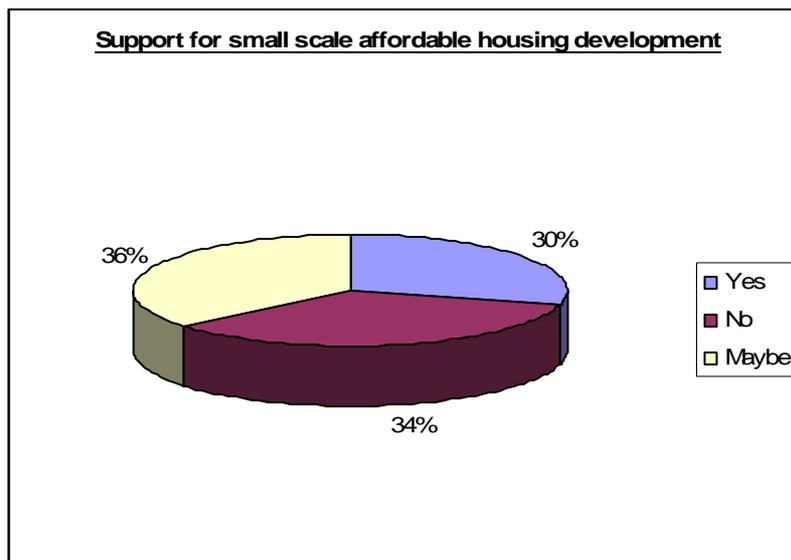
Local Authority Data

As a statutory duty, Kettering Borough Council holds a housing waiting list for the whole Borough. This register allows a household to request to be considered for housing anywhere in the borough and is therefore an additional way to measure housing need. As part of the Keyways application, applicants can request as many areas as they wish and also have the opportunity to request a 'preferred village/area'. Figures gleaned from analysing the waiting list can be used to complement the findings of the survey returns. Analysis of Keyways data showed that 389 applicants had specified Rushton as an area they are interested in. Of these, three applicants are currently already resident in Rushton or have their correspondence address as Rushton.

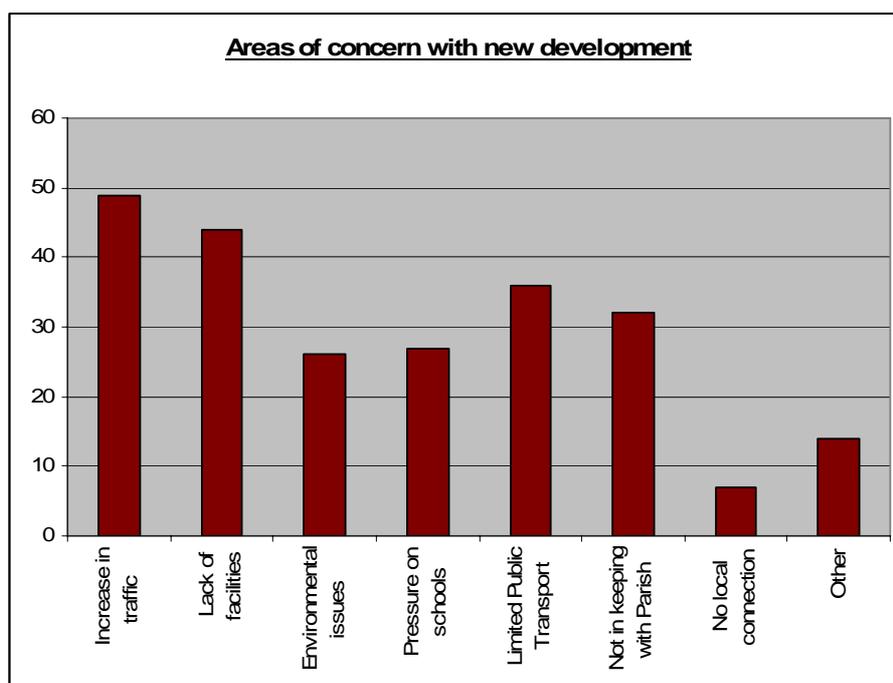
In terms of availability of social rented properties, since the launch of Keyways at the beginning of 2009 there have been no properties in Ruston become available for letting (source: Keyways.org.uk):

Support for new small scale affordable housing development

Households were asked whether they would support a new small-scale affordable housing development in the Parish if there was a proven need. All but two of the households who responded answered this question. The results are shown below. The results are roughly split between yes, no or maybe to supporting new affordable housing development.



Households were then asked to indicate what their areas of concern were with new development. Households could tick as many areas as applied or indicate their own areas of concern. The following chart indicates the areas of concern:



Other areas of concern included:

- Not wanting development at all
- Lack of available land
- Already unfinished development in the village
- Housing prices
- Parking
- Pressure on medical services

Working from Home

The question on working from home was included in this survey as Kettering Borough Council Development Services are keen to find out whether there are any particular issues related to this. 60 respondents answered this question. Of those 60, 11 households worked from home. 16 respondents felt that better broadband services were needed. One household required more space to be able to work from home more effectively.

Ethnic Monitoring

Only 24 households completed this section of the survey. 22 households were White-British. 1 household was White-other, 1 household refused the question.

Limitations of the surveys

Most surveys of this nature will have limitations. Whilst compiling the results the following issues have been noted:

The very first question on whether the households considers themselves to be in need will attract subjective answers; some people who have answered “no” may in fact have a housing need, and therefore will not be included in the final analysis of need.

Extra attention needs to be paid to the issue of how representative the sample is and special caution is needed about the extent to which generalisations can be made on the basis of the research findings. Provided that the limitations are acknowledged and taken into account, the limited size of the sample need not invalidate the findings.

These findings apply to a point in time. If development does occur at some point in the future, individuals and households interested in any affordable properties will need to have their housing need and suitability assessed at that time.