



WELLOW

HOUSING NEEDS

SURVEY

Midlands Rural Housing
in partnership with
Newark & Sherwood District Council and
Nottingham Community Housing Association

March 2009



Thank you to the
residents of Wellow
parish for their help and
support with this survey.



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Executive Summary

Midlands Rural Housing completed a Housing Needs Survey in Wellow during February 2009, to assess the housing need in the parish. As well as requesting specific housing information, the survey asks some general questions relating to the quality of life in the parish.

Midlands Rural Housing works with local authorities and other partners to increase the availability of affordable homes for local people. Affordable housing may be provided through both rental and shared ownership schemes and is for people with a strong connection to the parish.

Wellow is a popular parish in which to live. Its relatively small size inevitably results in a lack of essential facilities. However, these are available less than one mile away, in nearby Ollerton.

The population is ageing and there are few families with young children. Most households consist of adult couples, although the existing housing stock is made up mainly of family housing with three or more bedrooms. There is a limited supply of smaller housing and bungalows available and the majority of respondents to the survey felt that there is no requirement for more affordable housing.

There were three respondents to the housing needs survey who registered an interest in affordable housing. All have strong connections to Wellow, through work and residency and require suitable housing so they can remain living close to their jobs and families.

The resulting breakdown is:-

2 x 2-bed houses for rent

1 x 2-bed bungalow for Homebuy

Our recommendation is that a small development of three affordable properties be considered in order to meet the current housing need in Wellow.



1. Introduction

Midlands Rural Housing works with local authorities and other partners to increase the availability of affordable homes for local people in rural areas. In 2005 MRH established the Trent Valley Partnership to work closely with authorities in the East Midlands region.

Newark & Sherwood District Council and Nottingham Community Housing Association are partners of the Trent Valley Partnership. In Newark & Sherwood, during the period 2005 to 2011, they will be working with Midlands Rural Housing and parish councils to undertake Housing Needs Studies in rural parishes and identify opportunities for the development of affordable housing within the district. Rural parishes are those with a population of fewer than 3000 people.

This needs study looks at the shortfall in housing in Wellow Parish. According to the 2001 census, Wellow has a population of 444, living in 194 households. During January 2009, Midlands Rural Housing and Newark & Sherwood District Council worked together to deliver a Housing Needs Survey form to every household in the parish. In total, 228 survey forms were distributed to residents. The return date for the survey was 9th February 2009 and returns were made via a 'Freepost' envelope directly to Midlands Rural Housing.

2. Purpose of the Survey

The aim of the survey was to assess the housing need in the parish of Wellow, in order to provide Newark & Sherwood District Council with the information it requires to meet local housing needs.

3. Housing Costs

Property Values: Oct - Dec 2008 - Newark & Sherwood

	Av Detached	Av Semi	Av Terrace	Av Flat	Av Overall Price	No. Of Sales
	£	£	£	£	£	
East Midlands	230,826	134,634	112,688	112,688	156,665	10,194
Nottinghamshire	216,508	122,930	98,857	95,162	145,562	1,831
Newark & Sherwood	234,886	119,602	107,653	93,112	153,938	283

Source: Land Registry

The table above provides a comparison of the property prices across the East Midlands Region, the County of Nottinghamshire and Newark & Sherwood District. A family wanting to purchase an average terrace house in Newark & Sherwood would need to be earning approximately £35,000 per annum to secure a mortgage.

There are no Land Registry records of recent house sales in Wellow that can be compared to the figures above.

As can be seen from the previous table, average house prices in Newark and Sherwood are substantially higher than in Nottinghamshire as a whole and would be prohibitively expensive for people on low incomes.

4. Availability of Affordable Housing in Newark & Sherwood

The District's Housing Needs Survey 2003 shows that, not only are open market prices becoming prohibitively high, but also that levels of rented properties available from both the District Council and Housing Associations are falling due to the Right to Buy scheme.

The District's Housing Needs Survey 2003 outlines the need for an additional 614 affordable properties per year, throughout the district. It states that, locally, the proportion of houses and bungalows is over 20% higher than the national average, whilst the supply of terraced properties is almost 10% below and the supply of flats/maisonettes is 12% below the national average.

5. Planning Context

Planning policy at national, regional and local levels imposes strict restraints on new housing development in rural areas. However, it is possible to relax such constraints in exceptional circumstances, e.g.: where new housing would meet a specific, locally identified, need.

Newark & Sherwood Local Plan **Adopted** – March 1999 (Policies H17 and H19) outlines the means by which the District Council can use the planning process to bring about developments that meet 'local' housing needs in rural areas.

The provision of any housing that may be provided as a result of this survey would be subject to a legal restriction (known as an S106 agreement) being placed on the development. This has the effect of limiting occupation of the properties to people with a strong local connection; e.g.

- A person or family currently living in the parish.
- A person or family who has lived in the parish but moved away to find affordable or suitable housing.
- A person or family with work commitments in the parish.
- A household containing an individual who was born in the parish.

6. Respondents' Details

The following sections of this report detail the responses from the questionnaires distributed and returned during February 2009, in Wellow Parish.

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 also have been edited so as not to identify individual circumstances.

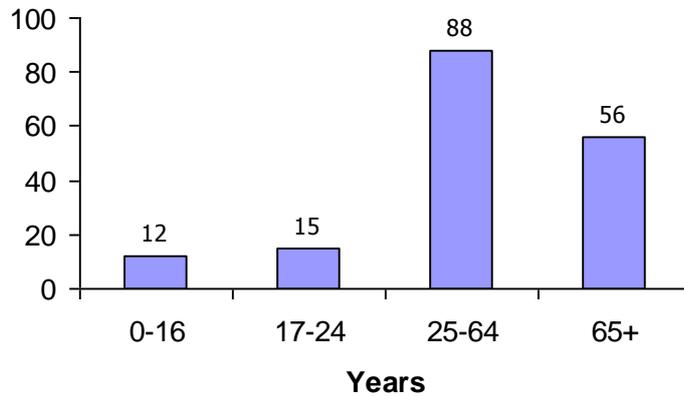
The following results are a snapshot in time and provide the village and Newark & Sherwood District Council with an insight into the parish in terms of current housing need, the desirability of the village and the current level of facilities serving the local community.

A total of 77 survey forms were received giving a return rate of 34%. This is an excellent response, taking into consideration that only people who have a housing need or those who are interested in commenting on local matters are likely to respond.

6.1. Age Profile

The chart below shows the age profile of the 171 people captured on the 77 survey forms returned. The responses show that the largest single group of the population in Wellow, representing 51%, are people between 25-64 years of age, followed by those aged over 65 at 33%. The percentage of children under 16 is lower than average at 7% of total. The ageing population may have implications for the long-term sustainability of the parish.

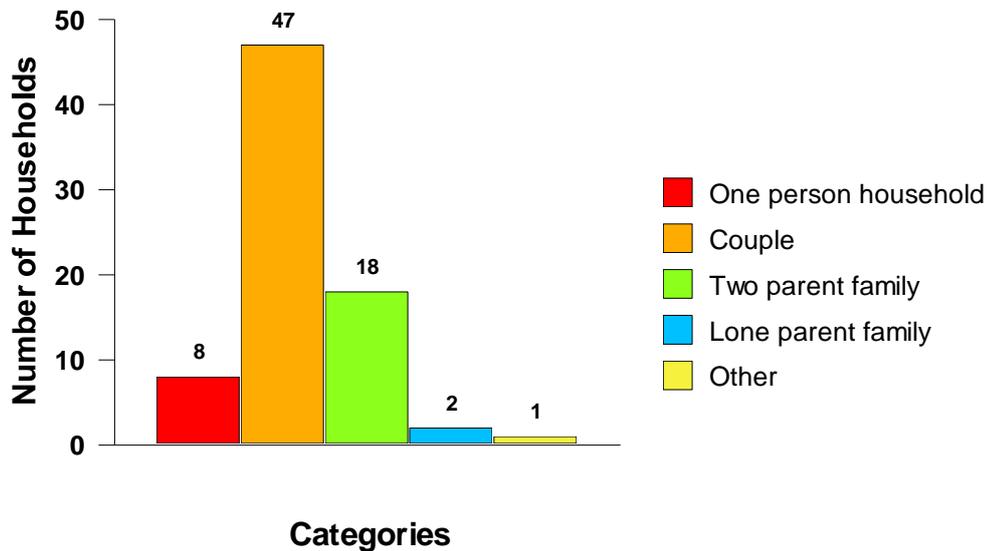
Age Profile



6.2. Household Size and Mix

The following chart shows the number of households in each size/mix category. The number of households containing families with children accounted for 26% of respondents, with those households containing only adults accounting for 74% of total households.

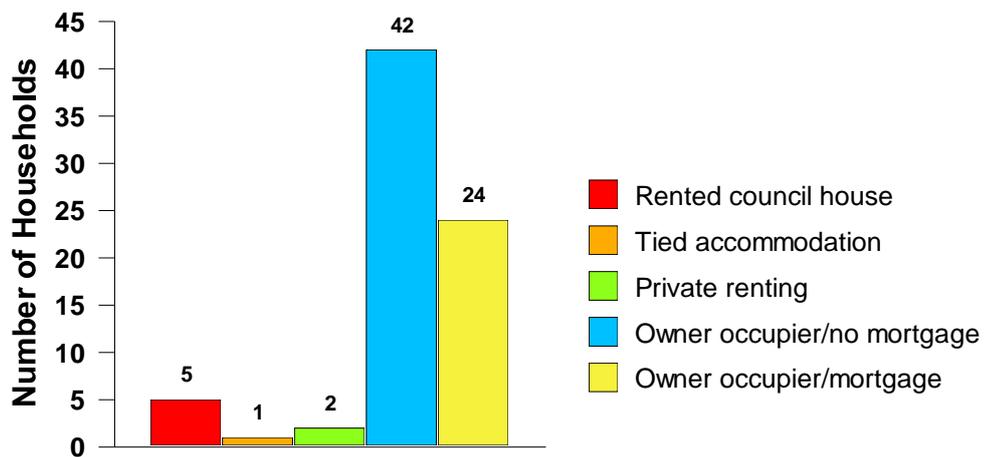
Category of Household



6.3. Tenure of all Respondents

The chart overleaf shows current household tenure of all respondents. Owner-occupiers make up over 89% of households, of whom 64% have no mortgage. Rented accommodation makes up 11% of total households, with almost 7% of rentals being council houses.

Current Housing Situation

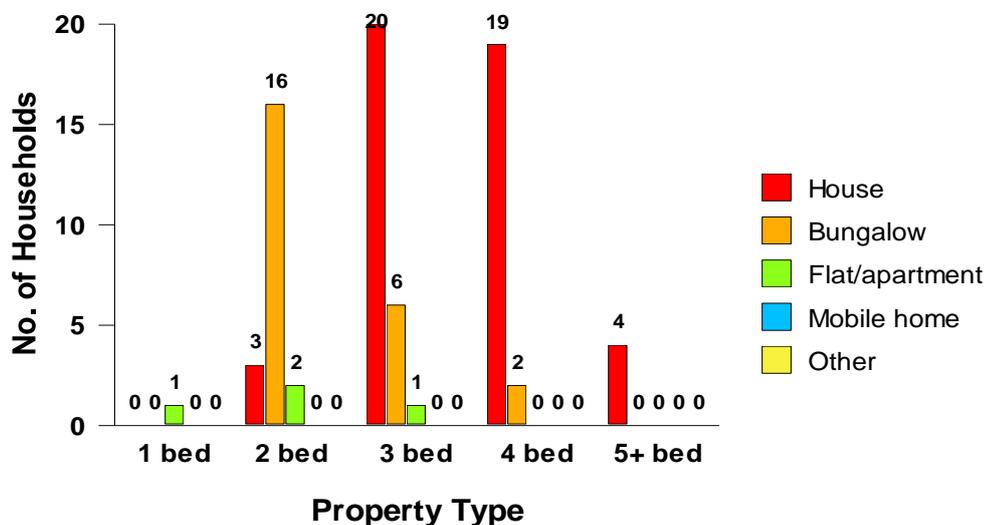


Tenure Type

6.4. Property Types

The following chart shows that 1 and 2 bed properties make up a total of 30% of respondents, whilst larger family homes make up 70%, suggesting that there is an imbalance between the household size & mix, and the type of properties available.

Type of Dwelling



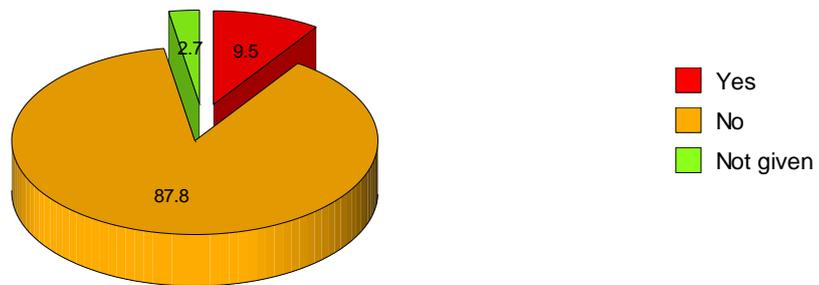
6.5. Ethnicity

Respondents' results showed that the majority of the demographic is White British. This supports the Countryside Agency report which found that rural settlements had lower levels of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents than that of urban cores and that there were only 136,000 BME residents in rural areas throughout the country.

6.6. Migration

The chart below indicates that there have been a small number of local people forced to move out of the village in order to secure suitable housing. Almost 10% of respondents were aware of somebody who needed to move out to find affordable or suitable accommodation.

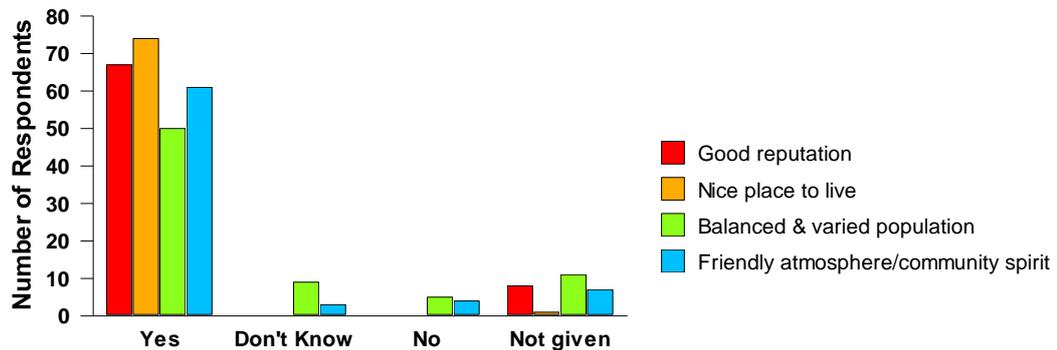
Migration - Leavers in Last 5 Years



7. Sustainability Issues

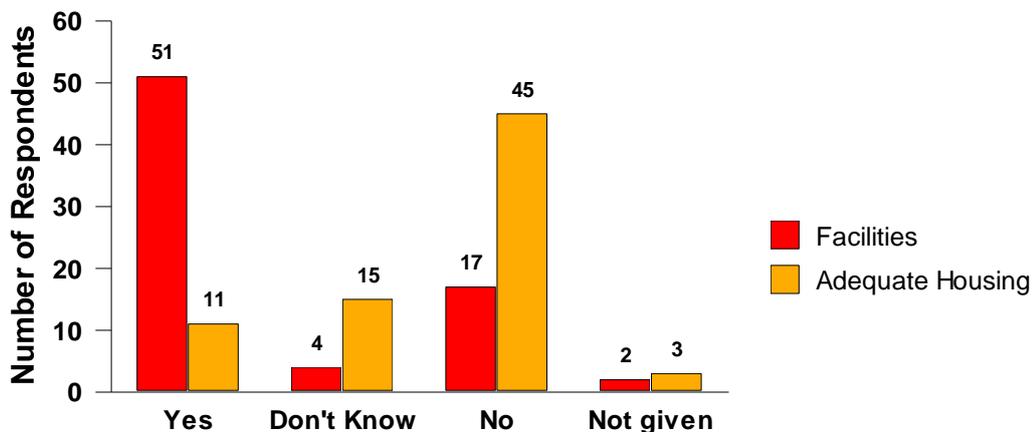
Respondents were asked a series of questions relating to the perceived advantages and disadvantages of living in Wellow. The purpose of these questions is to build-up a picture of life in the parish and to identify any issues that could form a threat to the long-term sustainability of the village. The following two charts detail respondents' answers, from which we can gain an indication whether any affordable housing provided in the village will be sustainable in the future, i.e. will people want to live there in the future?

Does the Parish Benefit From?



From the chart above it can be seen that the vast majority of residents consider that Wellow has a good reputation, is a nice place to live, with a balanced and varied population and friendly community spirit.

Does the Parish Lack?

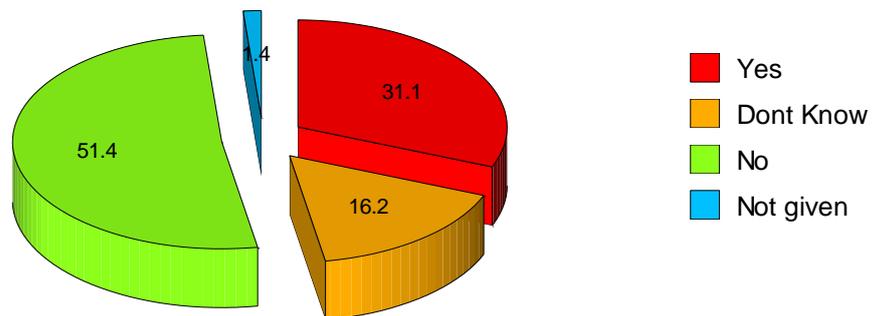


The second chart above shows that almost 70% of respondents consider that the village is lacking in essential facilities, but less than 15% consider it is lacking in adequate affordable housing.

8. Support for a Small Housing Development

The chart below shows the level of support for a small development of affordable homes for local people, being built in the parish. The chart shows there is a low level of support within the community at only 31%.

% In Favour of a Small Scheme



9. Housing Needs Analysis

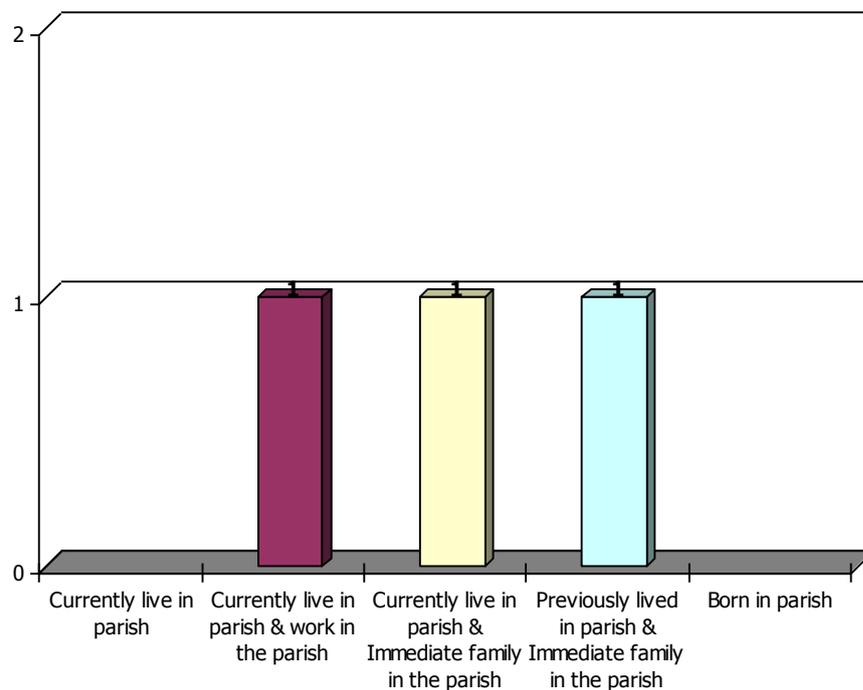
Out of the 77 returns, 74 were from people who would be considered as adequately housed and would not be looking to move to alternative accommodation within the next 5 years. These respondents completed a survey form primarily to offer their support or objection towards a 'local needs' housing development, as well as to give their comments regarding the sustainability of Wellow and comment on its facilities. These were therefore discounted from the rest of the analysis.

Accordingly, as far as the requirement for affordable housing is concerned, there are 3 returns detailing a housing need.

9.1. Local Connection

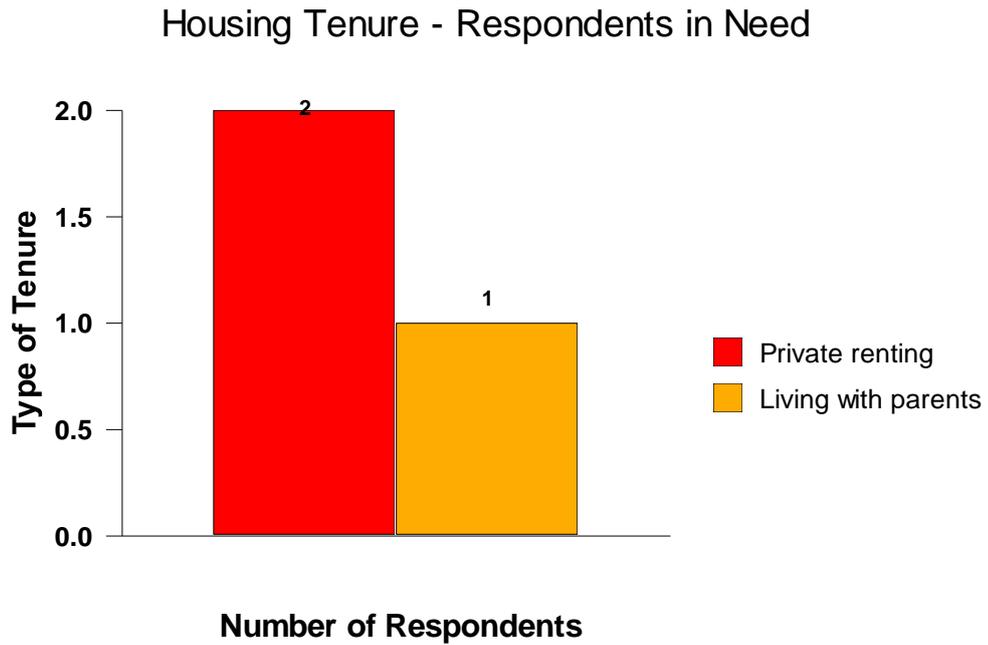
The graph below shows the type of local connection held by respondents with a specific housing need. There were 3 responses in total, all of whom fulfil the criteria for having a strong local connection with the parish.

Local Connection



9.2. Housing Tenure & Length of Residency

The chart below shows the housing circumstances of respondents with a need for affordable housing. Respondents have lived in the parish for seven, sixteen, and twenty one years, respectively.



9.3. Respondents in Need Details

The tables below list the respondents who have expressed a housing need, what type of housing they would prefer, and our assessment of their need.

Elderly

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Couple, currently renting in the parish, require smaller property and change of tenure. Residency 7 years and working in the parish. On LA register.	3 bed house or bungalow, Homebuy.	2 bed bungalow, Homebuy.

Families

RESPONDENT	ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Young family of three, previously resident in Wellow, currently renting out of parish. Need to be close to employment and require first home. Previous residency 21 years and family in the parish.	3 bed house, rented or Homebuy.	2 bed house, rented.
Siblings currently living with parents, require independent accomm., close to employment. Residency 16 years and family in the parish.	2 or 3 bed house, rented or Homebuy.	2 bed house, rented.

Therefore the housing needs derived directly from the survey are:

2 x 2-bed house for rent

1 x 2-bed bungalow for Homebuy

10. Conclusions & Recommendations

Midlands Rural Housing, in partnership with Newark & Sherwood District Council, has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of the parish. This study has not only investigated the actual housing needs, but has also ascertained residents' views with regard to living in the village, and has identified local support for a development to meet local needs.

Wellow is a small parish of around 200 households. It has few facilities, the nearest convenient centre being approximately a mile away, at Ollerton. The survey has indicated that the majority of residents consider Wellow is lacking in facilities such as shops and public transport. However, the overwhelming majority of respondents said that Wellow is a pleasant and popular place to live.

The existing housing consists largely of family properties with three or more bedrooms, although there are a number of smaller bungalows in the parish. The age profile of the population shows that most residents are of working adult or pensionable age, with a low percentage of children and young people being evident. The majority of households contain adult couples and there are few households containing families. This household profile indicates an imbalance with the size and type of properties that are available in Wellow.

There is a high percentage of owner-occupied property and a low level of rented property available in the parish. Land Registry enquiries showed there have been no recent sales of properties in Wellow, indicating that housing turnover is low, leading to prices that will be unaffordable for those on low incomes. However, the majority of respondents do not consider that Wellow is lacking in adequate affordable housing and only 31% are in favour of a small affordable housing development for local people.

Three respondents have registered an interest in obtaining affordable housing in Wellow. All of them have strong connections to the parish through work and residency. Two of the three claims are from young people who would like to remain in the village.

Our recommendation is that a development of three affordable dwellings should be considered to alleviate the current housing needs in Wellow.



11. Contact Details

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Appendix A: Comments Regarding Facilities

The following is a list of comments and suggestions on general improvements to the quality of life in the parish, from several respondents to the Housing Needs Survey:

- There are no shops and poor public transport links.
- Wellow could use a village shop and a good bus service.
- There are no shops, post office and no bus service to speak of.
- The bus services are very poor and there are no shops.
- There are no shops and no regular bus service.
- The pot holes and poor road conditions are difficult for the elderly. There have been no road or footpath repairs for at least 15 years.
- A traditional corner shop would be desirable.
- A regular bus service to Nottingham and Mansfield.
- There is no mains gas. Homes are expensive to heat.
- No gas, no shops, no police cover, no vicar, no doctor, poor public transport.
- A route 13 bus service is needed.
- A small village shop in the pub would be useful.



Appendix B: Comments regarding the development of a small-scale affordable housing development for local people.

The following comments were received from respondents and give a general indication of their concerns for and against an affordable housing scheme. A random selection of comments has been reproduced.

- Wellow is a conservation area. It should not be compromised by building this type of housing.
- There is sufficient affordable housing within one mile of Wellow.
- We do not think Wellow needs more housing.
- In my opinion, no more houses should be built in Wellow.
- We have very few services here to support new housing – no gas, shops or transport.
- There are no schools or facilities for young children.
- Wellow has old people's bungalows, but the council housing was all sold off. There are social housing developments in Ollerton, less than a mile from Wellow.
- Wellow needs some new build Homebuy properties.
- The new housing on Ollerton colliery site seems to be mostly empty and is less than a mile away.
- Previously built affordable housing has ended up being unaffordable.
- Young people living here would need to commute to have any kind of lifestyle.
- We need more old people's bungalows.
- All small villages and towns should accept their fair share of housing and help reduce the monstrous development proposed in the south east.
- Wellow has grown by 25% in the last 10 years, diluting the character of the village. No more please!
- Keep the village as a village – no more housing.