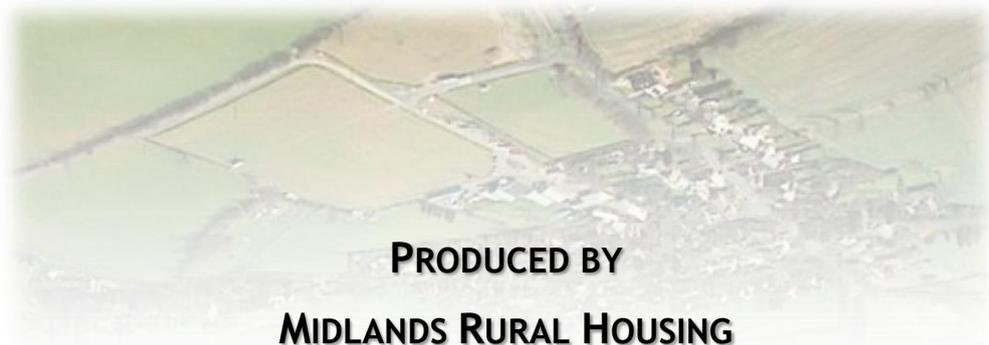


A DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE HOUSING NEEDS OF BIRDINGBURY



**PRODUCED BY
MIDLANDS RURAL HOUSING**

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CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	2
2.	PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY	2
3.	RESPONDENT DETAILS	3
	i) HOUSEHOLD TYPE	3
	ii) TENURE	5
	iii) PROPERTY TYPE	5
	iv) LENGTH OF RESIDENCY IN PARISH	6
	v) ANTICIPATED NEXT HOME MOVE - TENURE	6
	vi) ANTICIPATED NEXT HOME MOVE - TIME	7
	vii) LIFE IN THE PARISH	8
	viii) MIGRATION	10
	ix) SUPPORT FOR AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME	10
	x) COMMENTS	11
4.	HOUSING NEED ANALYSIS	12
	i) RESPONDENT ANALYSIS	12
	ii) HOUSE PRICE DATA	14
	iii) LOCAL CONTEXT	14
5.	CONCLUSION	16
6.	CONTACT INFORMATION	17

1. Introduction

Rural house prices have doubled over the last decade¹ forcing many local residents to move away from their towns and villages in order to find suitable and affordable homes. House prices in the countryside are now up to £40,000 higher than in urban areas, despite average wages being lower. The number of people on waiting lists for affordable homes in rural England has soared to around 750,000². New household formation is outstripping supply by 3 to 1 (source: CLG). Increasing house prices and the limited availability of appropriate properties has resulted in local people being unable to find a home within their community and this may be happening in Birdingbury.

Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) work with local authorities, town and parish councils, registered providers (housing associations/registered social landlords), private developers and local communities in order to investigate the need for, and provide, affordable homes in towns and villages throughout the Midlands. The first step in this research is to undertake a Housing Needs Survey which will give an overview of the current housing situation in a parish and provide details of the need for local housing.

The Birdingbury Housing Needs Survey questionnaires were delivered to every household in the Parish in late September. The return date for the survey was 25th October and returns were made via a postage paid envelope directly to MRH. Survey forms were distributed to all households as well as to those who contacted MRH to say that they had moved away from Birdingbury or had a strong connection to the Parish and wished to complete a form. In total 150 survey forms were distributed.

2. Purpose of the Survey

The survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of any local housing need for a range of housing tenures for Birdingbury residents. This evidence will be made available to Rugby Borough Council and Birdingbury Parish Council; used to inform Housing Strategy; and provide clarity on what type and tenure of housing is required to meet local needs.

In addition, the information can be used positively in the planning process. It provides a foundation on which to negotiate 'planning gain' opportunities with developers. In short, it gives the planners evidence that can be used to obtain an element of 'local needs' housing in negotiations with house builders, should such possibilities arise in the village.

The information obtained from a Housing Needs Survey is also invaluable at the local level, particularly in relation to local authority and parish council activities. Such information can be acted upon locally and taken on board in the decision making process when housing issues arise.

¹ Halifax Rural Housing Review 2010 - " the average house price in rural Great Britain rose by 96%, or £102,722, from £107,250 in 2000 to £209,972 in 2010 - equivalent to a weekly increase of £198"

² National Housing Federation, Rural housing research report 2011

3. Respondent details

A total of 150 survey forms were distributed and 57 were received in return, giving a return rate of 38% against the number distributed. In our experience this is a good level of response for a survey of this kind and it is only those who have a housing need or are interested in a local needs development and general village life that are likely to respond.

i) Household type

The questionnaire asked village residents to indicate the type of household they are. This enabled the charts below (fig 1.1), to be produced:

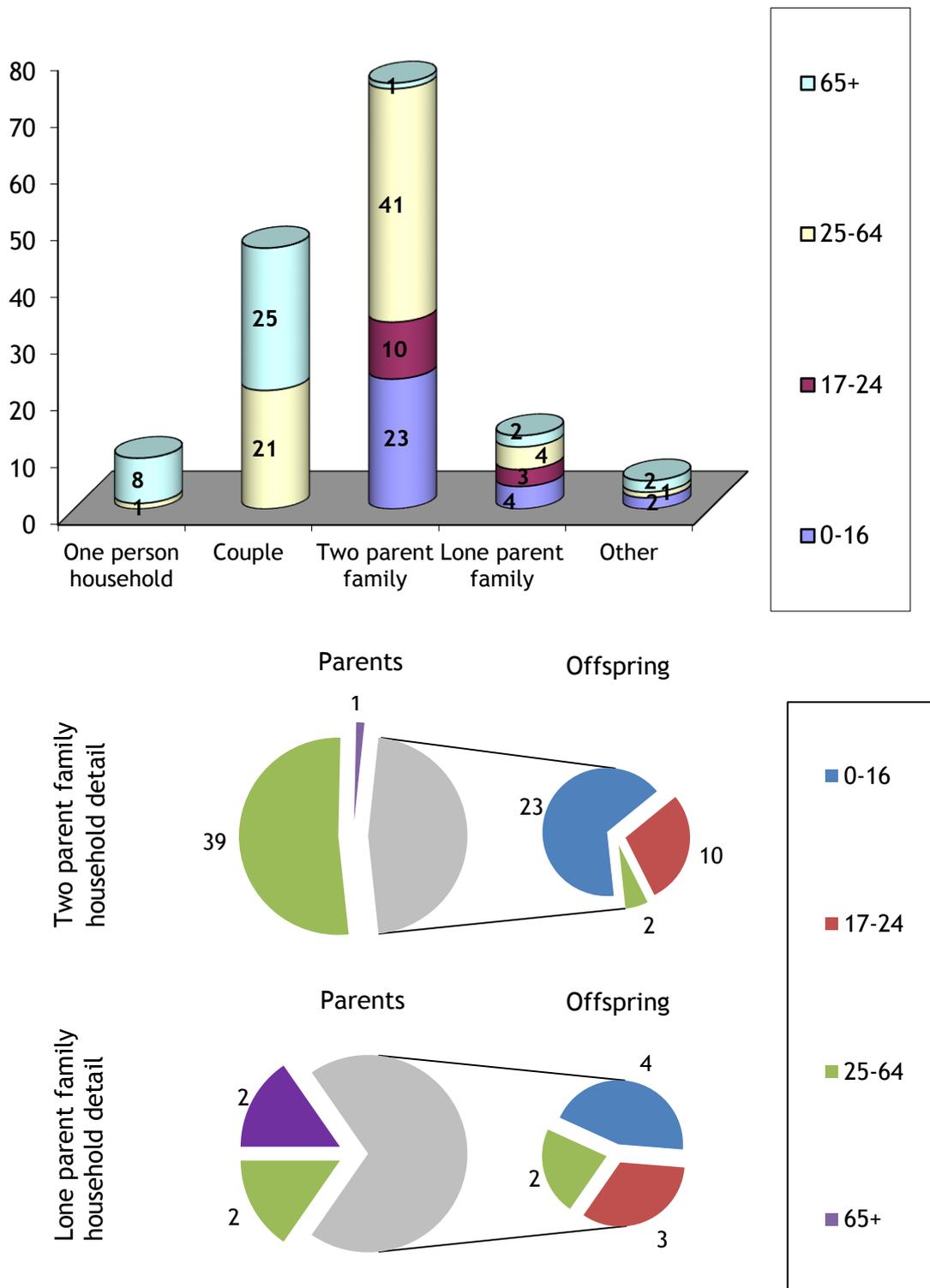


Fig 1.1 - Household type

Fig 1.1 on page 3 shows the age range breakdown of households that responded to the survey.

The largest number of responses were from those living in couple only households; a total of 23 responses were received from this type of household. 54% of people in those households were 65 years and over and 46% were 25-64 years old.

20 responses came from two parent family homes. The parents of these households were all aged over 25 years old (98% aged 25-64 years old and 2% 65 years old and over). The offspring living in the two parent family households were of varying ages. Two thirds of the offspring were under 16 years old; 29% were 17-24 years old; and 6% were aged 25-64.

There were 9 responses from one person households. 89% of them were from those 65 and over and 11% were from people aged 25-64.

4 responses were from lone parent family households. The parents were split equally in the age ranges 25-64 years old and 65 years old and over. The offspring of these households were of varying ages; 44% were under 16 years old, a third were aged between 17-24 years old, and 22% were aged between 25-64 years old.

1 response came from household that did not fall into the categories above.

ii) Tenure of all respondents

The current household tenure of respondents is given in the chart below (fig 1.2):

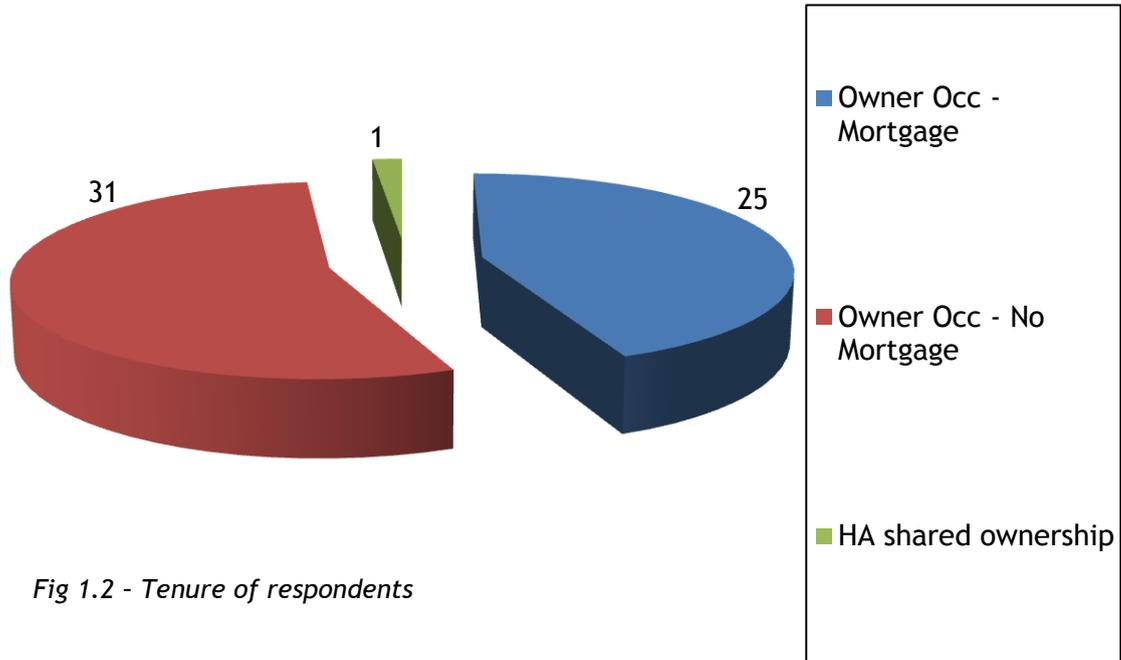


Fig 1.2 - Tenure of respondents

It shows that owner-occupiers were by far the largest tenure group accounting for 98% of replies (54% of total survey respondents have no outstanding mortgage on their property and 44% have a mortgage on their home).

The remaining 2% of respondents live in Housing Association shared ownership accommodation.

iii) Property Types

The following chart (fig 1.3) details the type of property that respondents currently reside in:

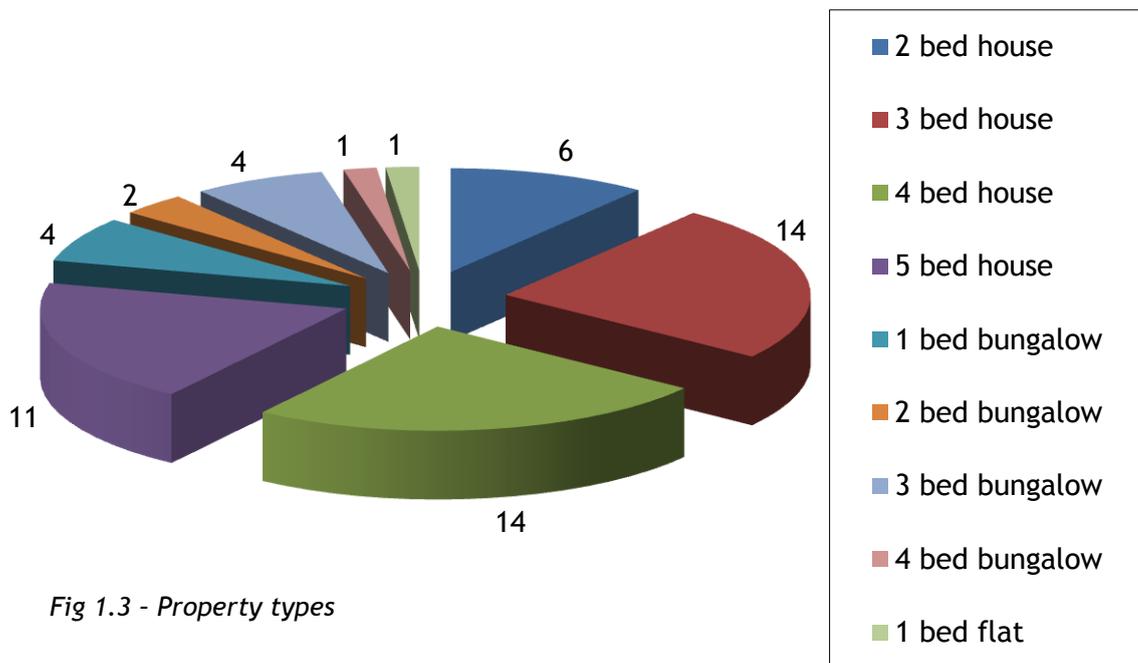


Fig 1.3 - Property types

Those living in 3 and 4 bedroom houses were the largest group (50% of responses were equally split between those house size respondents), followed by those living in 2 bedroom houses (10%). 19% of responses were from people living in a bungalow.

iv) Length of residence in Parish

The length of time that respondents have lived in Birdingbury is given in the chart below (fig 1.4):

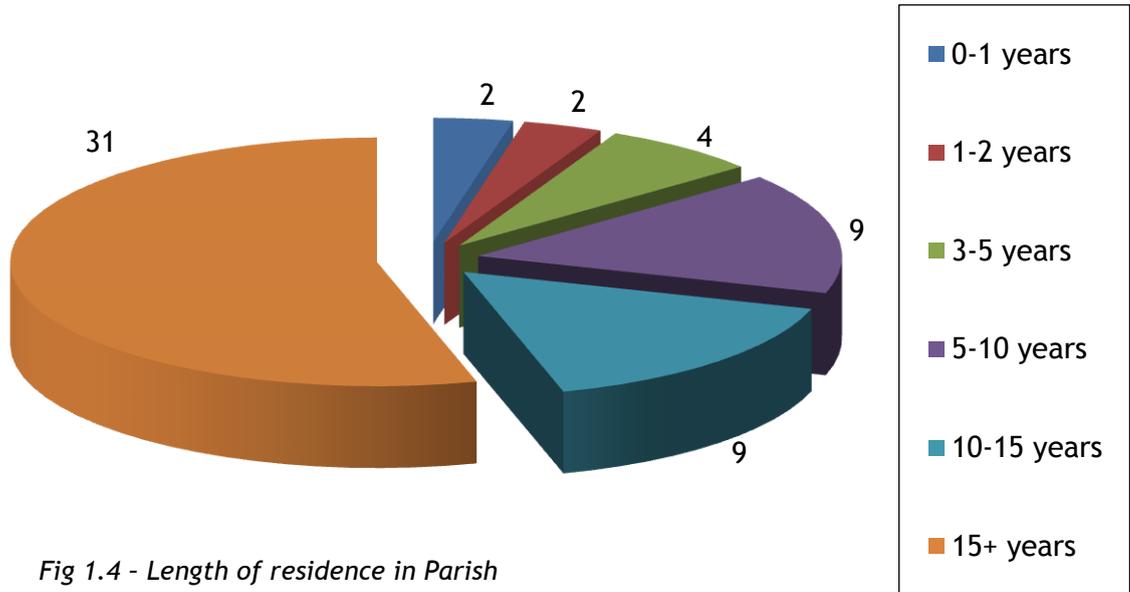


Fig 1.4 - Length of residence in Parish

It shows that 54% of respondents have lived in the Parish for in excess of 15 years.

16% of respondents have lived in Birdingbury for between 10 and 15 years, and 16% have been there for between 5 and 10 years. 14% of responses came from those who have lived in the village for less than 5 years.

v) Anticipated next home move - tenure

The following chart (fig 1.5) shows the tenure that respondents expect to move into in their next home move:

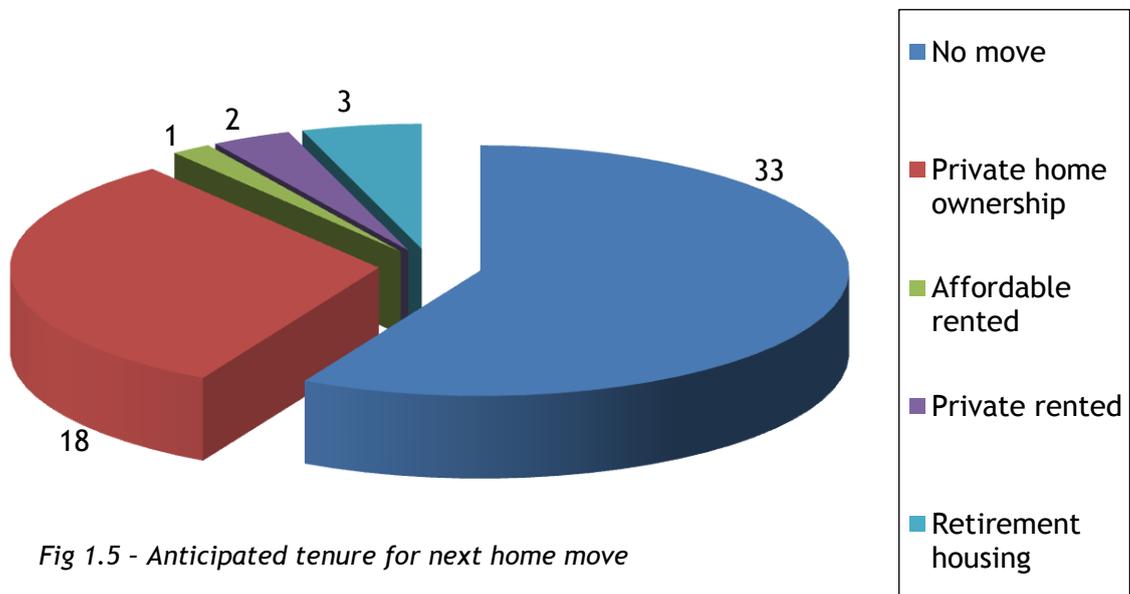


Fig 1.5 - Anticipated tenure for next home move

Over half of completed questionnaires (58%) came from villagers who do not expect to move home again. 32% of people anticipate their next property being a

privately owned home and 5% believe they will move into retirement housing. 5% of responses came from those who think they will move into rented accommodation.

vi) **Anticipated next home move - time**

The timescale for the anticipated next move for respondents is detailed below (fig 1.6):

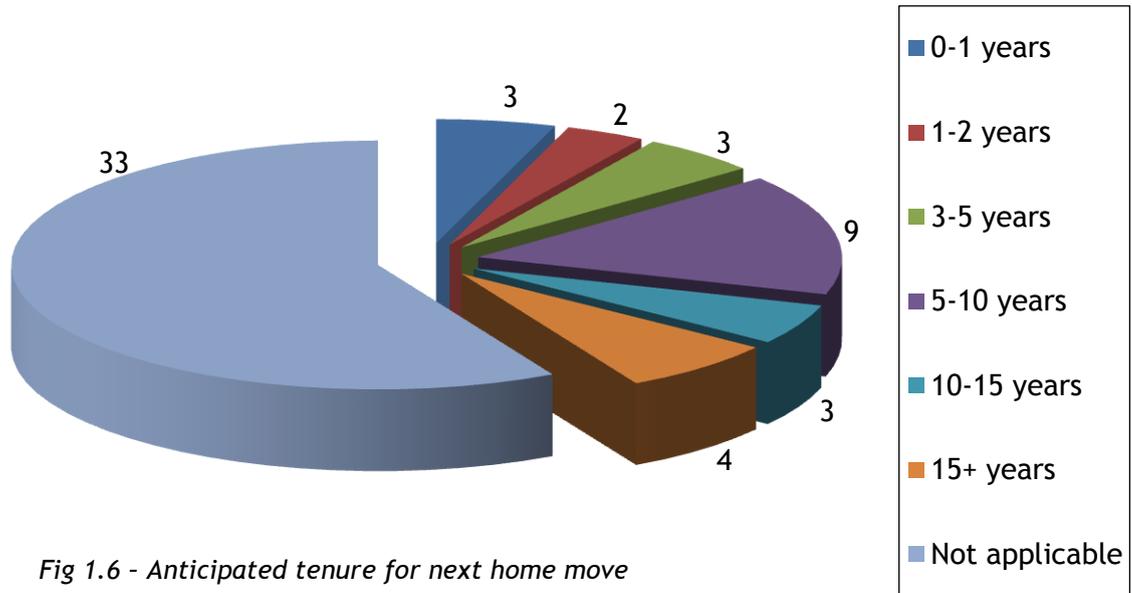


Fig 1.6 - Anticipated tenure for next home move

As with Fig 1.5, 58% of responses came from households that do not expect to move again. 12% of respondents expect their next home move to be in 10 years or more.

16% anticipate moving in 5-10 years time; 5% believe they will move in 3-5 years; whilst 9% of respondents expect to move within 2 years.

vii) Life in the Parish

The following two charts detail respondents' answers to the 'life in the Parish' questions.

The views expressed allow a picture of life within the Parish to be built up. This information can help assess whether any homes that are subsequently provided in the village will be 'sustainable.' Ensuring that people will want to take up tenancies and live in a village both now and in the future are important factors when considerations around the provision of new homes take place.

The first question asked Parish residents how they felt about the 'positive' factors of life in the Parish.

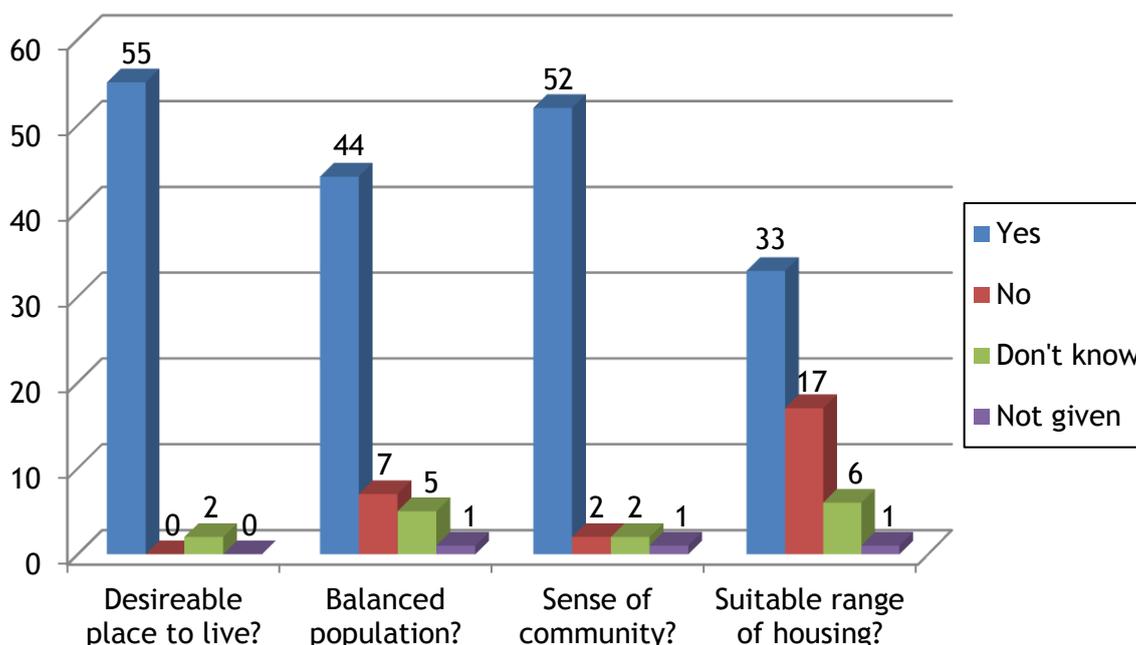


Fig 1.7 - Life in the Parish - positive factors

From fig 1.7, above, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are very positive about life in Birdingbury. 96% believed that the Parish is a desirable place to live and 91% thought that it enjoys a sense of community.

77% of completed questionnaires came from those who believed that Birdingbury has a balanced population (only 12% did not), whilst 58% said that the Parish has a suitable range of housing (30% did not).

The second question sought village residents' perceptions on the potentially negative aspects of life in the Parish.

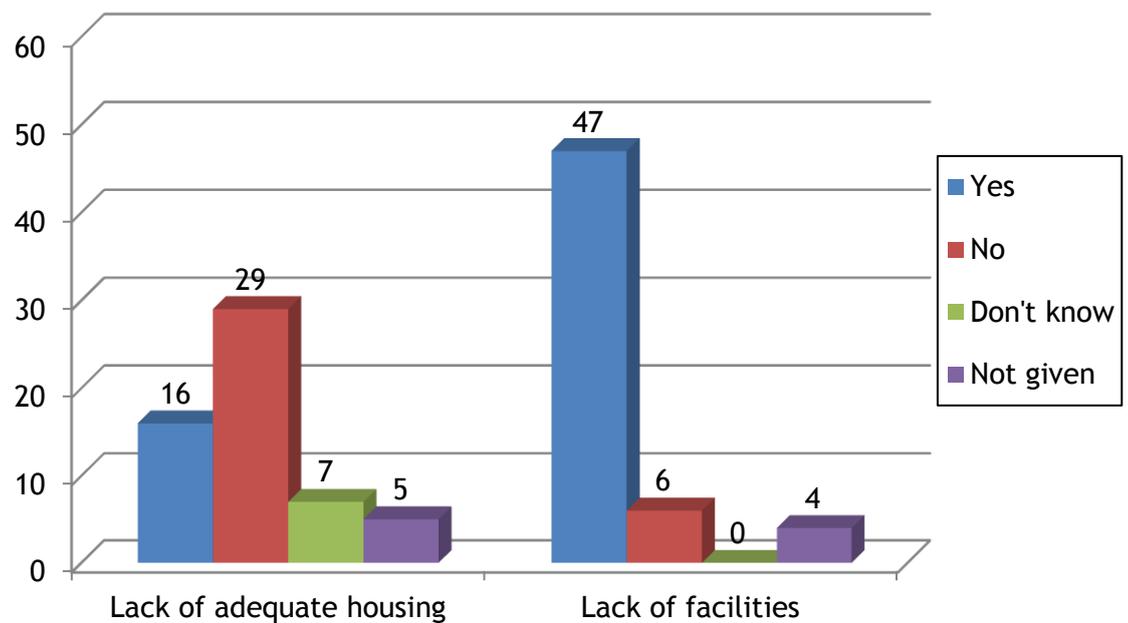


Fig 1.8 - Life in the Parish - negative factors

As can be seen from fig 1.8, above, just over half of respondents (51%) believed that there is not a lack of adequate housing in Birdingbury whilst 28% of returned surveys felt that there is.

Villagers' perception on whether Birdingbury is well served by facilities saw 82% of respondents stating that there is a lack of facilities in the Parish whilst 11% felt that there is not.

Comments detailing respondents perceived problems in the Parish (besides housing) were based around the subjects of:

- No shop (15)
- No Post Office (6)
- Poor public transport links (2)
- No pub (1)
- No café (1)

viii) Migration

The survey also asked whether respondents knew of people who had been forced to leave the Parish because of a lack of suitable or affordable accommodation.

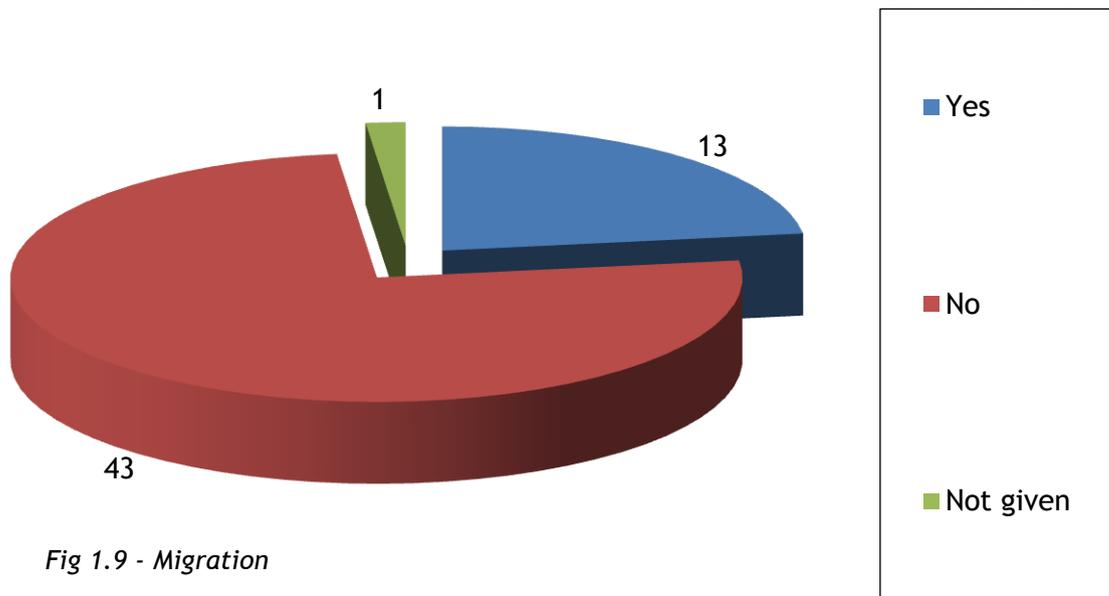


Fig 1.9 - Migration

Fig 1.9 shows that just under a quarter (23%) of Parish residents who returned questionnaires were aware of others who have had to leave the Parish in the last 5 years due to a lack of suitable or affordable accommodation.

However, between them these 13 respondents knew of some 29 people in total who have had to leave Birdingbury for this reason. Obviously many of these 'leaving' people/families will have been 'double counted' within this figure, but the number is still noteworthy considering the size of the village and the timescale involved.

ix) Support for an affordable housing scheme for local people

One of the fundamental questions in the survey is that which asks whether people are in favour of a small scheme of affordable homes in the village for local people.

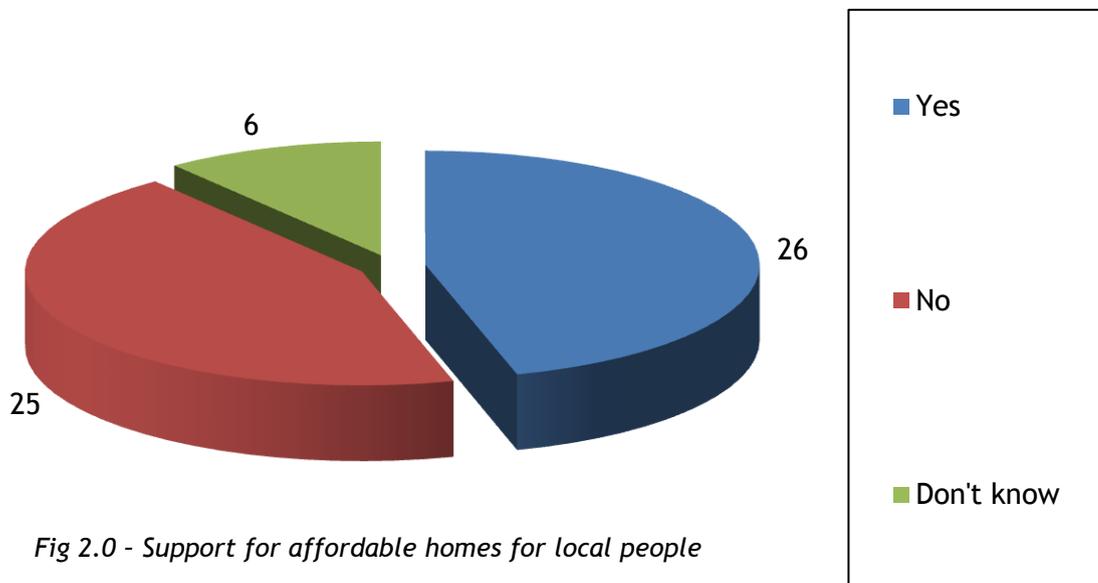


Fig 2.0 - Support for affordable homes for local people

Fig 2.0, above, shows that 46% of respondents are in favour of an affordable housing scheme for local people, while 44% said that they are not in favour.

x) **Respondents' comments**

Many respondents made additional comments on their returned form. They are summarised below:

(It is not appropriate to include certain comments which make specific reference to particular areas of the village or to identifiable elements of the community)

Supportive of affordable housing development to meet local needs

There were 26 general comments highlighting a lack of affordable / low cost / rented / shared ownership / 'council housing'; for the young / elderly / families / disabled / first-time buyers and those on low and average incomes.

"The present scheme works and could be expanded - land available adjoining"

Not supportive of affordable housing development to meet local needs

"There is currently affordable housing in the village - very slow to sell!"

"Already have social houses and houses reserved for first time buyers"

Other comments regarding housing, development and life in Birdingbury

"There are no housing options locally for people with specific needs."

4. Housing Need Analysis

Of the 57 returns, 50 were from people who felt that they were adequately housed at present. These respondents completed a form primarily to offer their support, objection or thoughts towards 'local needs' housing as well as to give their comments regarding life in the Parish. These were, therefore, discounted from the rest of the analysis.

As far as the requirement for housing, 7 returns indicated a need for housing.

i) Respondent analysis

The following table lists details of those respondents who stated that they are in housing need. Respondents were asked to identify what they felt is needed in terms of property type and size together with a preferred tenure type. In reality it may not be possible to meet the aspirations of each respondent. Incomes and likely property prices are considered in order to ensure that any proposed scheme would indeed meet the needs of those to be housed. Therefore a 'reality tenure' is suggested to outline realistic provision.

Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household details	Reasons for need	Preferred home and tenure	Likely allocation/ realistic purchase
9	Yes	No	Family	Want cheaper home and change of tenure	3 / 4 bed house / bungalow - affordable rented housing	3 bed house - affordable rented housing
12	Yes	No	One person household	Want to be closer to carer; physical changes	2 bed bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing	2 bed bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing
16	Yes	No	Couple household	Need to change for physical reasons	2 bed house / bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing	2 bed bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing
27	Yes	No	Family	Want larger home	4 bed house - affordable rented housing	3 bed house - affordable rented housing

28	Yes	No	One person household	Want independent home	1 / 2 bed house / bungalow - Shared ownership / affordable rented housing	2 bed house - affordable rented housing
29	Yes	No	One person household	Need larger home	2 bed flat - open market purchase	2 bed bungalow - open market purchase
38	Yes	No	Family	Need independent home	2 bed house - Shared ownership / affordable rented housing	2 bed house - affordable rented housing
57	Yes	No	Couple household	Want smaller home	2 / 3 bed bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing	2 bed bungalow - open market purchase / retirement housing

ii) **House price data**

The table, below (fig 2.1), details the house prices and household type breakdown for the Birdingbury area. They are taken from www.zoopla.co.uk. Further local context is given at section iii with regard to properties that are/have been for sale and rent in Birdingbury itself.

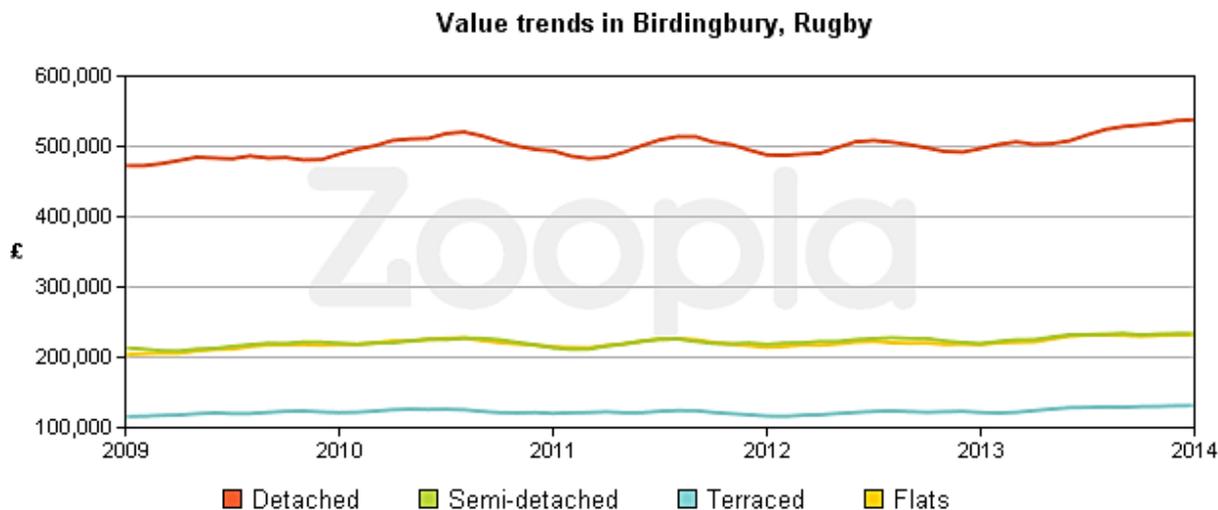


Fig 2.1 - Average property prices for Birdingbury 2009-2013

The chart above (fig 2.1) shows that property prices in Birdingbury have, overall, increased slightly over the past 5 years. During the last 2 years property values for Birdingbury have increased by an average of £42,808 (10.23%).

iii) **Local context**

By way of local context, the table, below, shows prices of properties that were for sale or rent in Birdingbury in December 2013 (source: www.zoopla.com). The table shows all properties that were offered for sale in Birdingbury and includes all properties that were available to rent under £1,000pcm.

Property	Price (£)	Property	Price (£)
4 bed bungalow	495,000		

It can be seen that only one property is on the market in the village and there are no properties available to rent.

Affordability is calculated using a mortgage multiplier of 3.5 times household income with a 25% deposit.

With regard to actual sales, the table below shows properties that have been sold in Birdingbury over the past 2 years:

Year	Property	Price (£)
2013	Detached	720,000
2013	Bungalow	160,000
2013	Detached	499,950
2013	Detached	565,000
2012	Semi detached	132,000
2012	Detached	675,000
2012	Semi detached	130,500
2012	Detached	475,000
2012	Bungalow	295,000

The lower quartile property price for actual sales since December 2011 is £302,750. Based on the affordability criteria explained earlier this would require a deposit of over £75,000 and an income in excess of £64,500 per annum.

Using the same affordability criteria the 'cheapest' homes to have sold in the last 2 years (2 semi detached houses for around £131,000) would require a deposit of over £32,500 and an income in excess of £28,000 per annum.

It should be noted that there were only three properties sold for less than £200,000 during the last two years.

5. Conclusion

MRH has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of Birdingbury. This study has not only investigated the actual affordable housing need of the Parish, but also for market rent level housing and open market housing. In addition, the survey ascertained residents' views with regard to living in the Parish and support for affordable housing to help sustain local communities.

The survey has identified an immediate need for affordable and open market properties.

- 4 were assessed as being in need of affordable housing for rent :

2 x 2 Bed house - affordable rented

2 x 3 Bed house - affordable rented

- 4 were assessed as being in need of open market housing:

4 x 2 Bed bungalow / retirement housing - open market purchase

THEREFORE, THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE IDENTIFIED
HOUSING NEED FOR 4 AFFORDABLE HOMES AND
4 OPEN MARKET HOMES IN BIRDINGBURY FOR THOSE
WITH A LOCAL CONNECTION

6. Contact information

Midlands Rural Housing

Whitwick Business Centre
Stenson Road
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 4JP



telephone: 01530 278 080

email: richard.mugglestone@midlandsrh.org.uk

web: www.midlandsruralhousing.org



@MidlandsRural