



HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

REPORT

**TICEHURST PARISH
ROTHER DISTRICT
2007**

Action in rural Sussex

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INTRODUCTION

Action in rural Sussex was asked by Ticehurst Parish Council to carry out a Housing Needs Survey in May 2007. The aim of the survey was to determine the existing and future housing needs of residents in Ticehurst, particularly those on low or modest incomes. This report identifies the affordable housing that is required by local people in Ticehurst and reports on the views of residents regarding an affordable housing development within the parish.

The role of the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) is to provide independent support, advice and information to Parish Councils and community groups concerned about the lack of affordable housing in their rural communities.

Action in rural Sussex (AirS) is a registered charity (No.1035401) whose purpose is to improve the quality of life of local communities, particularly for disadvantaged people, and to facilitate the development of thriving, diverse and sustainable communities throughout rural Sussex.

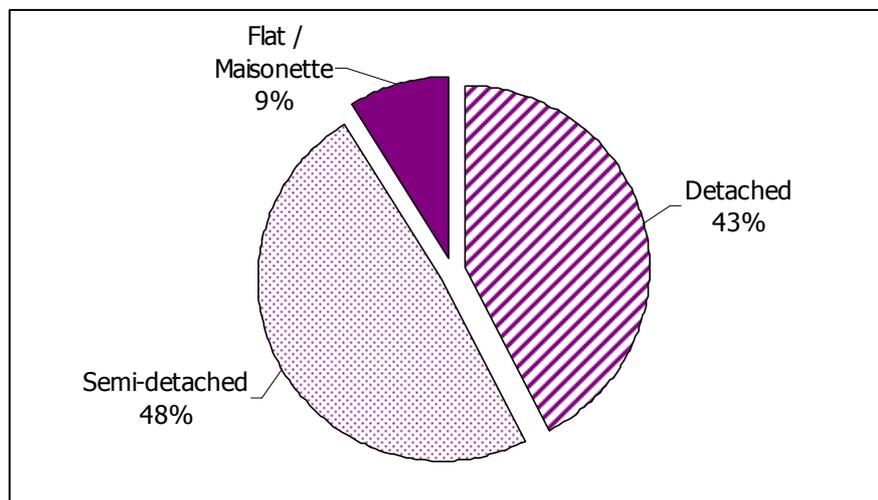
Ticehurst

The parish of Ticehurst is situated in the district of Rother within East Sussex. The parish is approximately 10 miles from Tunbridge Wells and 11 miles from Battle. According to the 2001 Census, the population of the parish was 3393 of which 1634 were male and 1759 were female. The parish is made up of 4 settlements: Ticehurst, Flimwell, Stonegate and Wallcrouch.

The parish has various amenities including 2 primary schools (one in Ticehurst and one in Stonegate), butchers, hairdressers, grocery store, estate agents, flower shop, a bank, a post office and 3 pubs. There is a doctors surgery and a pharmacy in the parish. The parish also has a village hall, a scout hut and a youth club. There is a bus route that runs from Hawkhurst through the parish on an hourly basis during the day, there is also a community bus service that operates for the elderly and there is a train station at Stonegate and Wadhurst.

Figure 1 indicates there is a high portion of semi-detached properties in the parish; this is closely followed by detached properties. The 2001 Census data demonstrated that there is only a small amount of flats / maisonettes within the village. Table 1 demonstrates that there is a large number of semi-detached properties in Ticehurst in comparison to the district wide numbers. This table also clearly shows that there are very low numbers of flats in the parish compared to the whole of Rother.

Figure 1. Property Types in Ticehurst



(Source: Census, 2001)

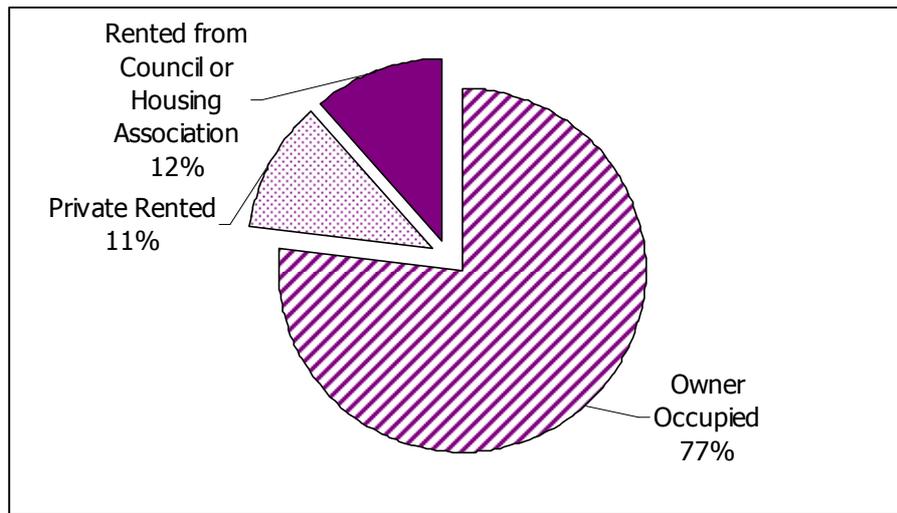
Table 1. Housing Type in the Rother District and Ticehurst Parish

Housing Type	Rother District	Ticehurst Parish
Detached	17,665 (44%)	623 (43%)
Semi-detached	14,320 (35%)	709 (48%)
Flat / Maisonette	8,739 (21%)	132 (9%)

(Source: Census 2001)

From the 2001 Census data and as seen in Figure 2, the predominant tenure in Ticehurst is owner occupied (77%), followed by renting the property from a housing association (12%) and renting the property from a private landlord (11%). Table 2 compares the tenure in Ticehurst to those in the Rother district and the UK.

Figure 2. Household Tenure in Ticehurst



(Source: Census, 2001)

Table 2. Housing Tenure for the UK, Rother District and Brede parish

Tenure	UK	Rother	Ticehurst
Owner occupied	70%	77%	77%
HA / Council rent	19%	10%	12%
Private rent	10%	7%	11%

(Source: Census 2001)

Affordability

The Rother Housing Need Survey Report 2005 calculated the cheapest entry levels needed for both purchasing and renting a property in the district. The Housing Need Survey Report calculated on the basis of having a 95% mortgage the lowest income level needed to enable someone to purchase a one bedroom flat is £31,700. This figure increases up to £56,200 for a 2 bedroom flat and £42,700 for a two bedroom terrace house as seen in Table 26. The Housing Need Survey Report also calculated the lowest incomes needed to rent a property on the open market; the figures are based on rent at 25% of the gross income. For a 1 bedroom flat, an income of £21,400 would be required, followed by £27,600 for a 2 bedroom flat. There was no data for incomes required for a 2 bedroom terrace house.

Table 2. Income thresholds required for purchasing and renting properties in Ticehurst

Size of property	Income needed	
	Purchase	Rent
One bedroom flat	£31,700	£21,400
Two bedroom flat	£56,200	£27,600
Two bedroom terrace	£42,700	No data

(Source: Rother Housing Need Survey Report, 2005)

A property search on www.rightmove.co.uk was carried out to assess the availability and price of property in Ticehurst. There were 7 shared ownership properties for sale in the parish new development by Downland Housing Association, 6 of these properties have been reserved and are no longer available to purchase. Table 3 shows the lowest prices for open market properties for sale in Ticehurst and the cost of a 25% share of a shared ownership home in the new Downland Housing Association developments. Table 4 shows the lowest prices for renting on the open market in the area.

Table 3. Lowest Current Open Market Property Purchase Prices in Ticehurst

Property Type	Location	Lowest Price	Shared Ownership in Ticehurst (25% share)
1 bed flat	Lamberhurst, Kent*	£125,000	£32,500
1 bed house	Ticehurst	£185,000	
2 bed house	Flimwell	£199,950	£46,250
3 bed house	Ticehurst	£280,000	£48,750
4 bed house	Ticehurst	£295,000	

(Source: Right Move, 2007)

* A search within 3 mile radius of Ticehurst was carried out because there were no properties in Ticehurst

From the property searches that were carried out, there was 1 x 1 bed house, 4 x 2 bed terrace houses for sale, 5 x 3 bed houses for sale and 8 x 4 bed properties for sale. There were no one bedroom flats for sale in the parish at the time the research was conducted, as demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 4. Lowest Current Open Market Property Rental Prices in Ticehurst

Property Type	Location	Lowest Price
1 bed flat	Burwash*	£475pcm
1 bed house	Durgates*	£695pcm
2 bed house	Wadhurst*	£890pcm
3 bed house	Etchingham*	£795pcm
4 bed house	Bells Yew Green*	£1700pcm

(Source: Right Move, 2007)

* A search within 3 mile radius of Ticehurst was carried out because there were no properties in Ticehurst

Table 4 highlights there were no properties to rent on the open market at the time of the property search, all of nearest rental properties were found within a 3 mile radius of the parish.

Table 3 demonstrates the cost of housing in Ticehurst. When this is compared with the average income in Rother of £22,100 (Rother District Council Housing Strategy) it is clear it is not only those on low to average incomes cannot afford to purchase on the open market.

Housing Need Survey

Methodology

Action in rural Sussex worked with both Ticehurst Parish Council and Rother District Council to agree the method and process by which the housing need survey would be conducted. The standard Defra Housing Need Survey with amendments was agreed and consisted of two parts, the first part was for all households to fill in and the second part was for those who are in housing need to complete. A copy of the covering letter and the housing need survey are included in the appendices (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively).

The survey was delivered by post to 1601 households. This included the 1595 households in the parish and an additional 6 households that were on the district housing waiting list, had a local connection and were interested in moving back to the parish. A pre-paid envelope was included for residents to return the survey by 25th June to Action in rural Sussex for analysis.

Response Rate

Overall 1601 questionnaires were sent out to the households. A total of 575 forms were returned giving a response rate of 36%, this is a reasonable response rate for a housing needs survey.

From the responses that were received, 572 households were living in their main homes, 3 households said it was their second home. Therefore the number of respondents analysed for the survey is 572, as the respondents who stated their property was their second home were not required to fill in the questionnaire.

Part 1 – You and Your Household

Second Homes

3 respondents said that the property was their second home and 489 said that the property was their main home. 83 respondents did not answer this question, giving the total of completed surveys as 572.

Description of Current Home (part 1, q1)

The majority of respondents (453) described their homes as a house, 65 respondents live in a bungalow, 19 live in a flat / maisonette and 27 respondents live in sheltered / retirement housing as can be seen in Table 5. 4 respondents described their property as other, 2 of these respondents described their home with a business attached. 4 people did not respond to this question.

Table 5. Current property description

Description of Current Home	Number of respondents
House	453 (79%)
Bungalow	65 (11%)
Flat / Maisonette	19 (3%)
Sheltered / Retirement Housing	27 (4%)
Other	4 (1.5%)
No Response	4 (1.5%)
TOTAL	572

Number of Bedrooms in Current Home (part 1, q2)

Table 6 demonstrates that 43 respondents said that they have a bed-sit or one bedroom, 117 had two bedrooms, 222 respondents had 3 bedrooms and 184 respondents have 4 or more bedrooms. 11 households did not respond to this question.

Table 6. Number of bedrooms in current property

Number of bedrooms	Number of respondents
Bed-sit / one bedroom	43 (7%)
Two bedrooms	112 (19%)
3 bedrooms	222 (38%)
4 or more bedrooms	184 (32%)
No Response	11 (1%)
TOTAL	572

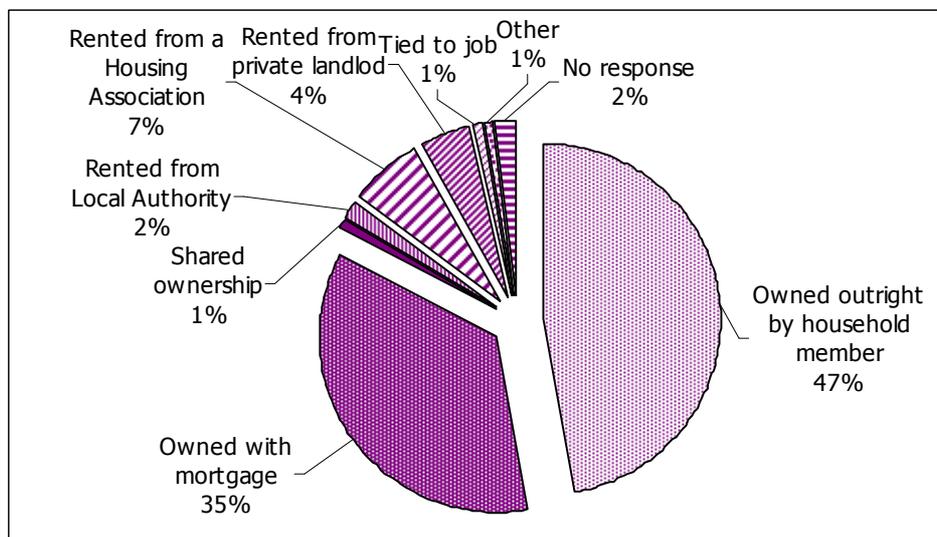
Tenure of Current Home (part 1, q3)

As seen in Figure 3, the majority of respondents owned their own homes outright, closely followed by owning the property with a mortgage. 38 respondents are renting from a Housing Association, 10 are renting from the Local Authority and 25 are renting

from a private landlord. 5 respondents have shared ownership properties and 5 have properties that are tied to their occupations. 5 respondents ticked other, 1 respondent was living in a family owned property, 1 had purchased the leasehold and the remaining 3 respondents did not specify. 11 respondents did not answer this question.

In summary from Figure 3, 82% of households are owner occupiers, 1% live in a shared ownership property, 9% rent their property from a housing association and 4% rent the property from a private landlord. In comparison with the percentages for the Rother district in Table 2, Ticehurst has a higher number of owner occupiers and a smaller number of households in private rented or housing association rented properties.

Figure 3. Current Tenure of Home



Which village do you live in within the parish? (part 1, q5)

As seen in Table 7, 379 respondents live in Ticehurst, followed by 114 respondents living in Flimwell, 65 live in Stonegate and 7 households live in Wallcrouch. 7 households did not answer this question.

Table 7. Which village do you live in

Village	Number of respondents
Ticehurst	379
Flimwell	114
Stonegate	65
Wallcrouch	7
No response	7
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	572

Adaptations (part 1, q7)

15 respondents said that their current home required adaptations to become suitable for the needs of a household member. 537 respondents said that their home did not require any adaptations and 23 households did not respond to this question.

Other Family Members (part 1, q8)

40 households reported knowing of a family member who has had to move away from the parish in the last 5 years due to the difficulties in finding a suitable home locally. Only 10 of these filled in the second part of the survey.

Does any family member need to move now or within the next 5 years? (part 1, q9)

From Table 8, it can be seen that 122 respondents said that a household member will need to move, 72 said it was needed within 5 years and 50 said they needed to move in 5 or more years. 331 respondents said that they did not need to move and 119 households did not answer this question.

Table 8. Does the household need to move

Does the household need to move	Number of households
Yes, within 5 years	72 (12%)
Yes, in 5 or more years	50 (8%)
No	331 (57%)
No Response	119 (20%)
TOTAL	572

Support for Affordable Housing (part 1, q9)

Out of all the responses to the survey 391 (68%) of households were in favour of a small affordable housing development for local people in Ticehurst if there was a proven need, as seen in figure 4. 138 (24%) of the respondents said they would not support an affordable housing development and the remaining 8% did not answer the question. Table 3 correlates this information with the length of time that the respondent has lived in the parish.

Figure 4. Support of an Affordable Housing Development in Ticehurst

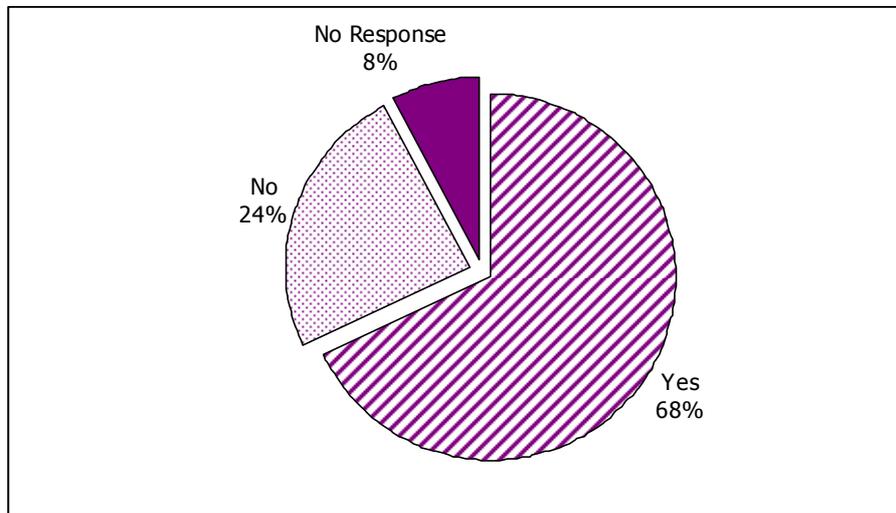


Table 9. Support for Affordable Housing in Ticehurst and length of residency

Number of years of residency	Yes	No	No Response	TOTAL
Less than 3	58	30	8	96
3 – 10	114	55	10	179
11 – 20	85	14	6	105
21 – 30	57	13	2	72
31 – 40	33	13	1	47
41 – 50	13	3	2	18
50+	26	7	9	42
Did not state length of residency	5	3	5	13
TOTAL	391	138	43	572

Length of Residency (part 1, q5)

From Table 9 it can be seen that approximately half of the households responding have lived in the parish for over 10 years. Of these 179 households have lived in the parish for over 20 years.

Appendix 3 highlights additional comments which respondents made on the survey.

Part 2 – Housing Needs

There were 47 respondents to part 2 of the questionnaire, making a total of 47 households in need.

Local Connection

47 households have a strong local connection. 32 are currently living in the parish, 14 have close family living in the parish and 1 respondent used to live in the parish and works full time in the parish.

Housing Register

Only 10 of the 47 households with a local connection who indicated a housing need are on the housing register. Of these 10, 3 households are currently renting from a housing association and would like a transfer. There is a total of 210 Housing Association properties in the parish and an annual turn over of 7 properties. However, a transfer may not always be possible as the size of the property that is required may not be available.

Current place of residence

38 of the households that are in housing need are a household who are currently living in the parish, 5 are within another household within the parish and 4 households are currently living outside the parish.

Which village would you live to move to?

Table 10. Which settlement within the parish would you like to move to?

Parish settlement	Number of households
Ticehurst	25
Flimwell	2
Any settlement	12
Outside the parish	3
No Response	5
TOTAL	47

As demonstrated in Table 10, 25 of respondents said that they would like to live in Ticehurst, 2 respondents want to live in Stonegate and 12 households said they would live in any of the villages in the parish. 3 households said they would like to move outside the parish. 5 households did not respond to this question.

When accommodation is required

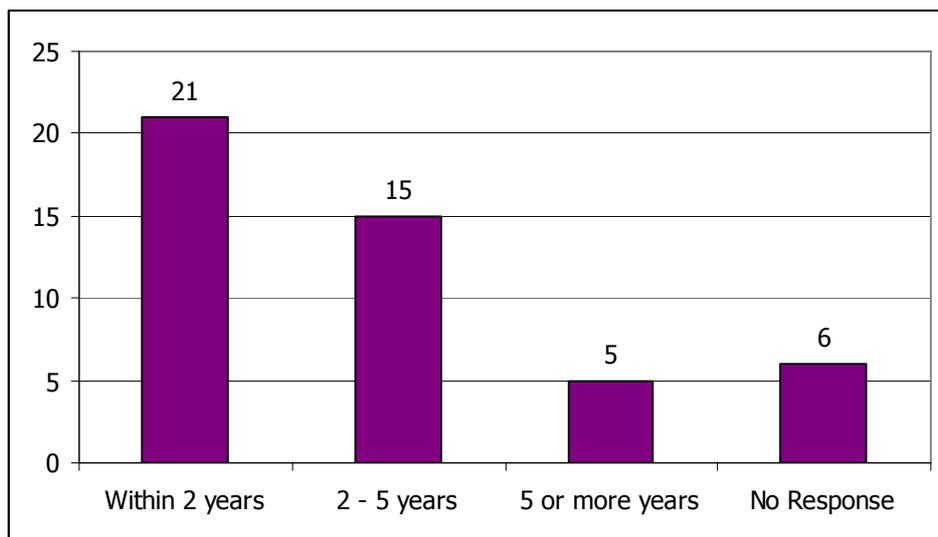
The majority of people in housing need stated that they would need to move within the next 5 years.

As shown in Table 11, when asked why the household needed to move, 12 respondents said it was to set up an independent home, 7 households wanted a larger home, 5 said they needed a cheaper home and 3 said they needed a smaller home. Other households stated that they wished to move closer to relatives and to change the tenure of their home. A number of other respondents gave multiple answers for this question.

Table 11. Reason for needing to move house

Reason for moving	Number of respondents
Need to set up an independent home	12
Need a smaller home	3
Need a larger home	7
Need a cheaper home	5
Multiple answers	14
TOTAL	47

Figure 5. When would you need to move home?



Affordability

To enable an accurate calculation of the number of people that are in housing need and cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market, respondents were asked for their gross annual income and the amount of savings they have. Figure 6 outlines the annual incomes for those in housing need and have a local connection.

Of the 20 households with a gross annual income of less than £20,000 11 have incomes below £10,000. A further 12 households have incomes between £20/30,000, still an insufficient income to purchase a home on the open market. 2 households did not answer this question.

Of the 13 households with an annual income over £30,000:

- 10 households would be unable to purchase the size of property they required on the open market
- only one household would be able to purchase the property that they required on the open market
- 2 households provided insufficient details to make a full assessment of need
- These three households have been excluded from the number of households who are in housing need.
- It is possible that 5 of the households with incomes above £30,000 might qualify for shared ownership housing if it were available

In summary of those households in need:

- 42% have incomes below £20,000
- 68% have incomes below £30,000
- 50% have incomes below the average for Rother (£22,100)

The total number of households that are in housing need with a local connection is 44.

Figure 6. Annual incomes of households in housing need with a local connection



Figure 7. Savings of households in housing need with a local connection



22 households have either no savings or savings below £10,000. This was followed by 10 respondents having over £10,000 in savings. Of these 10, 2 households have £30,000 in savings, 1 household has £68,000 and 7 did not specify the amount. 15 households did not respond to this question. There was insufficient data to make an assessment of need for the respondent who has savings of £68,000. This household has been excluded from the final figure of households in need, making the total number of households that are in housing need with a local connection is 43.

Assessment

In order to assess the eligibility of respondents for a local needs housing scheme it is necessary to ensure that each has a local connection to the parish and that they are unable to meet their needs on the open market.

47 respondents fulfilled the local connection criteria.

From a study of local house prices undertaken in 2007 an entry level home (lower quartile of prices) was £185,000 for a 1 bed house in Ticehurst this rises to £280,000 for a 3 bed house.

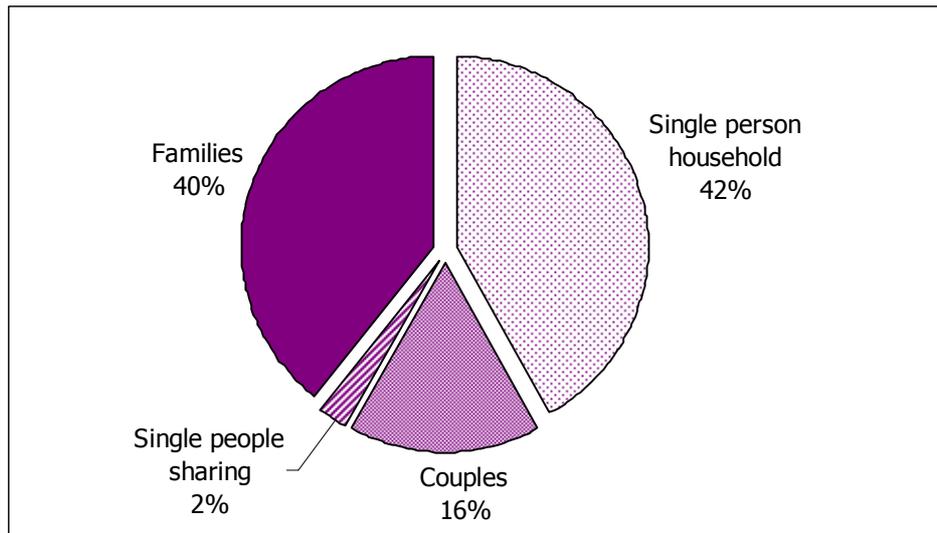
To access home ownership an income of at least £31,700 would be required to buy a 1 bed flat, £56,200 for a two bed flat and £42,700 for a two bed terrace house.

43 out of the 47 households in housing need fulfilled both the local connection and financial assessment. One household was able to meet their needs on the open market and there was insufficient data for 3 households for an assessment to be made.

Household composition

The household makeup of the 43 households in housing need with a local connection and who cannot afford to buy or rent on the open market are as follows and are also shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Household composition of those in need and with a local connection



Of the 18 single person households, 7 describe themselves as older person households.

As a percentage breakdown this equates to the following:

42% in housing need are single people, of which 16% in housing need are older person households

16% in housing need are couples

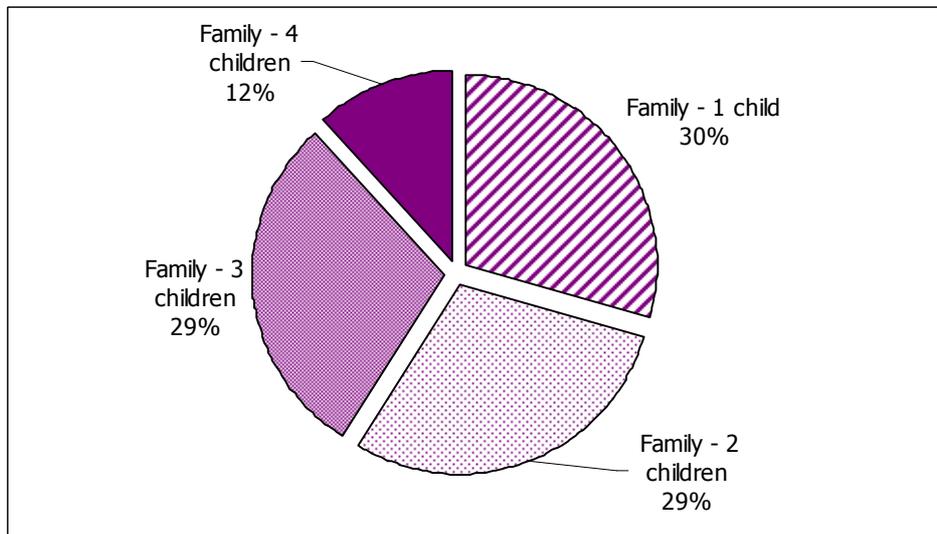
40% in housing need are families

2% in housing need are people sharing households

Household composition of families in need is as follows and is also shown in Figure 9:

Family – 1 child	5
Family – 2 children	5
Family – 3 children	5
Family – 4 children	2
Total households	17

Figure 9. Composition of Families in Housing Need



Summary of Need

There are 43 households in housing need who have a local connection and who cannot afford to either purchase or rent on the open market.

Single person households	18
Couple without children	7
Single people sharing households (2 people)	1
Families with children	17
Total households	43