

Warwickshire
Rural
Housing
Association



**A DETAILED INVESTIGATION
INTO THE
HOUSING NEED OF
EXHALL PARISH**

**Produced by
Warwickshire Rural Housing Association
in conjunction with
Exhall Parish Council**

March 2003



CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Purpose of the Survey
3. Respondent details
 - Household size of respondents
 - Tenure of all respondents
 - Property type
 - No. of years in the village
 - Desirability
 - Local support
4. Housing need analysis
5. Conclusion

1. Introduction

As part of our continuing work within the Stratford upon Avon District, we contacted Parish Councils throughout the District to introduce the work of Warwickshire Rural Housing Association and explain the process involved with identifying and addressing housing need in rural areas.

One of these Parishes was Exhall, who responded positively confirming that they were interested in looking at the housing need of the village.

We attended a Parish Council meeting, at which it was agreed that a housing needs survey should be conducted, the results of which would be passed on to the Local Authority and Parish Council.

The survey form was agreed with the Parish Council who then arranged delivery to every household in the village during February 2003 (a copy of the survey form is attached at Appendix 1 to this report). The return date for the survey was 3rd March 2003, giving respondents approximately 4 weeks to return their completed forms.

The parish of Exhall currently has a population of c.190 people, and 82 survey forms were distributed around the village (one to every property), and a “freepost” envelope was attached for respondents’ convenience.

2. Purpose of the Survey

The survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of the housing need in the parish of Exhall. This evidence can then be used to inform the District Housing Strategy and provide clarity on what type and tenure of housing is required to meet local needs.

One option for meeting a villages housing need is through the construction of a purpose built affordable housing development using the “exceptions” criteria set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing). However, to do this there must be accurate details of the village housing need, and in this respect the survey is the most accurate and accepted method.

In addition, the information can be used positively in the planning process in that it provides a foundation on which to negotiate “planning gain” opportunities with developers. In short, it gives the planners evidence which 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 such a survey is also invaluable at the local level, particularly in relation to the Parish Council’s activities. Such information can be acted upon locally and taken on board in the decision making process when housing issues arise.

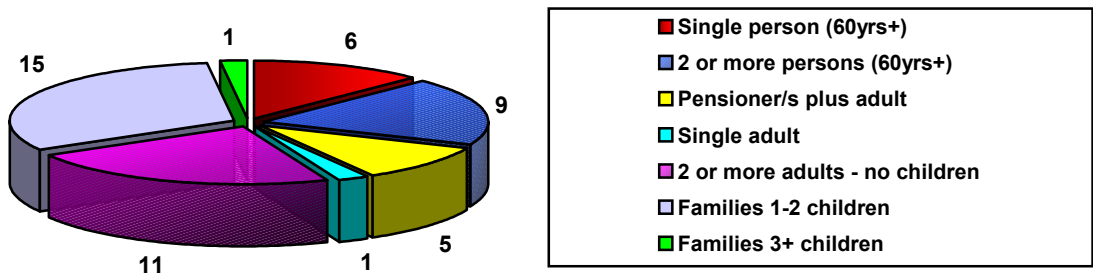
Indeed, if anything is to be done about the local needs of the village, support at the local level is vital before anything can be done to address it.

3. Respondent details

A total of 48 survey forms were received, giving a return rate of approximately 58.5%. This is a very high level of response when considering that only people who have a housing need, or who are interested in a local needs development, are requested to respond. Clearly the issue of “affordable” housing for “local” people is an important one to residents within Exhall.

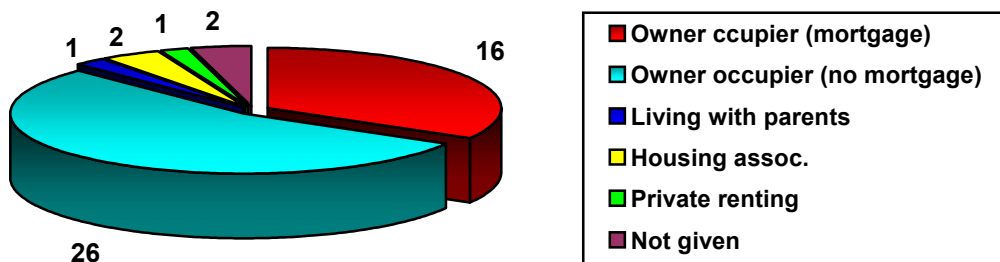
i) Household Size of Respondents

There was a real mix in terms of household sizes. As can be seen from the chart below there was a large response from families accounting for over 33%. There was also a fairly high return rate from person over 60 years accounting for 31%.



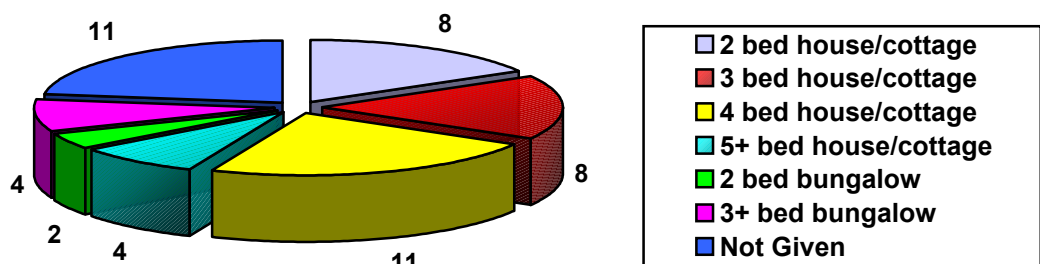
ii) Tenure of all Respondents

The current household tenure of respondents is given in the table below. It is easy to see that owner occupiers were by far the largest tenure group accounting for almost 90% with the larger percentage of these being from residents who do not have an outstanding mortgage.



iii) Property Types

The following chart details the types of property that respondents currently reside in.



From this chart we would consider that there is a reasonable variety of properties within the village although the single largest category of responses is from those living in 4 bedroom houses.

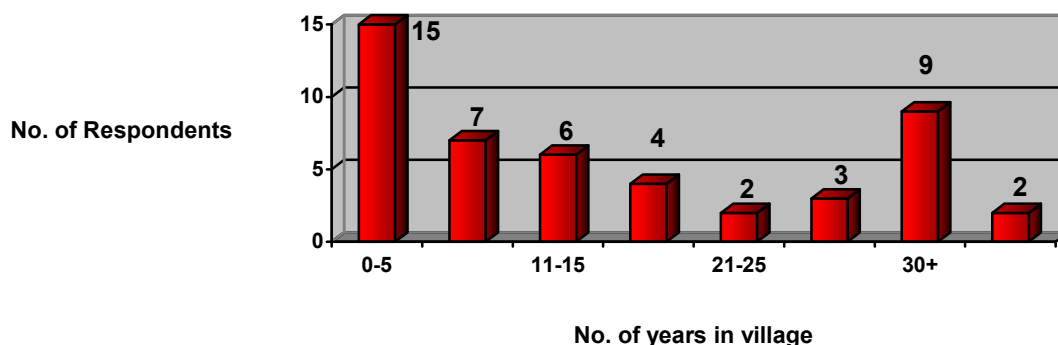
For this type of survey it is common for individuals not to give details of their current home due, presumably, to a fear of identification. Unfortunately this was the case for the survey of Exhall, which has resulted in a less accurate picture of the village make-up.

iv) Local Connection

Primarily the survey forms are delivered to properties within the village, but the questionnaire is also directed at people who may not currently be living in the village but who have a close connection to Exhall. 46 of the returns were completed by people who currently reside in the parish, and the remaining 2 by individuals who are previous residents of the village.

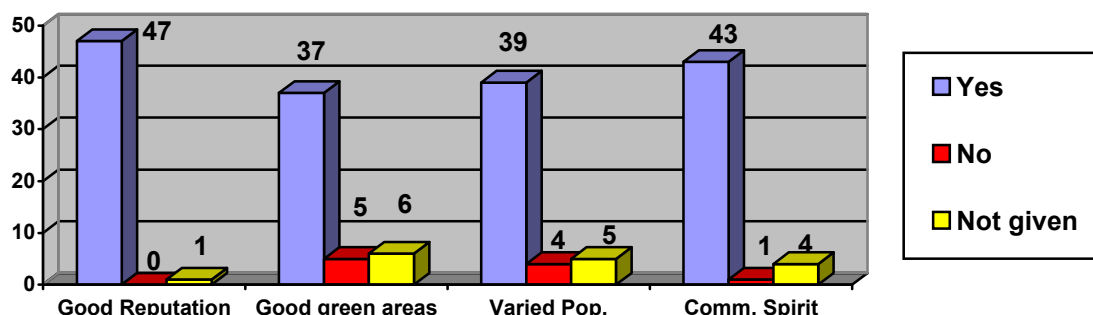
v) Period of Residence

The table below gives the number of years that respondents have lived in Exhall. From this table we see that the single largest category, accounting for 31% of responses, is residents who have lived in the village for less than 5 years.

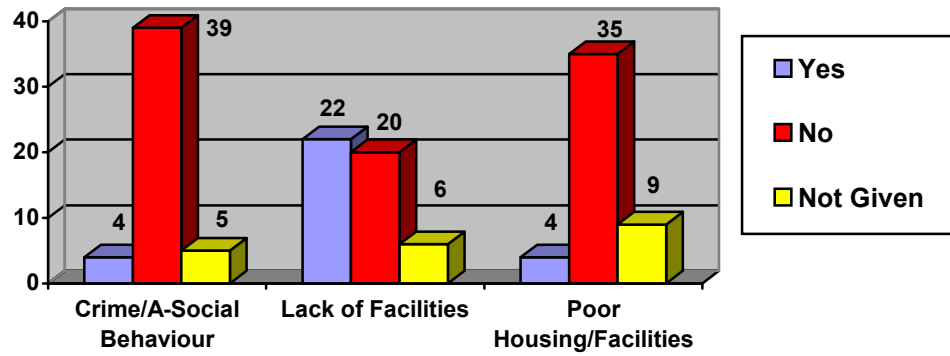


vi) Desirability (Sustainability)

The following two charts detail respondents’ answers to the “desirability” questions. The answers to these questions allow us to construct a more detailed picture of Exhall. From this we can assess whether any social housing that is subsequently provided in the village will be “sustainable”, i.e. that potential current and future applicants will in fact want to take up a tenancy or lease.



From the above chart it can be seen that the vast majority of residents consider that Exhall has a good reputation; pleasant and well maintained green areas; a varied and balanced population and a friendly atmosphere/community spirit.

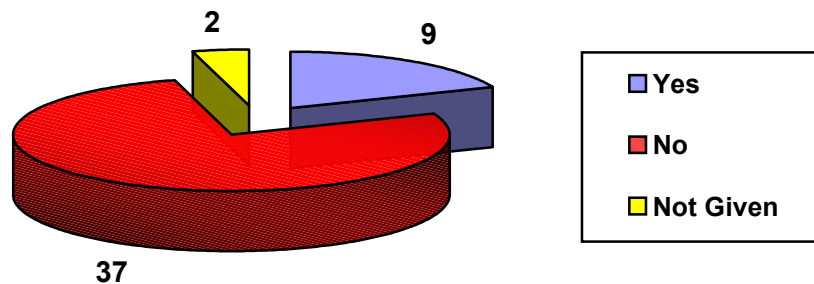


This second chart shows that the vast majority consider that there is not a problem with crime and/or anti-social behaviour and that the general condition of the built up area is good. However, a small majority consider that there is a lack of facilities, and suggestions included:

*Would like a better bus service/more regular.
 Village shop/Post Office – although comments were made regarding the viability of such.
 Mobile shop.
 Central meeting place.*

vii) Migration

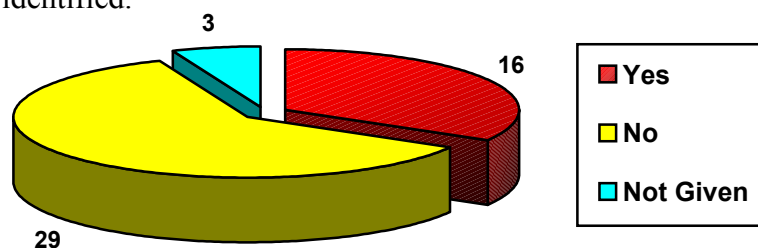
The survey also asked whether respondents knew of people who had had to leave the village because of a lack of suitable, affordable accommodation.



This chart confirms that there have been a number of local people who have been forced to move out of the parish in order to secure suitable housing at a level that they can afford. However, we must stress that this question does not identify those individuals who have been forced to leave, due to confidentiality issues, and a number of the responses to the survey may relate to the same individual/s.

viii) Local Support for a Small Housing Development

One of the fundamental questions on the survey is that which asks if there is support for a small local development. A large majority of respondents, over 60%, would not be in favour of an affordable housing development to be provided even if there were a local need identified.



4. Housing Need Analysis:

Of the 48 returns, 44 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 form primarily to offer their support/objection towards a “local” needs housing development as well as give their comments regarding the “desirability” of Exhall. These were therefore discounted from the rest of the analysis. Accordingly, as far as the requirement for affordable housing is concerned there are just 4 returns detailing a specific housing need.

The following table lists the responses identifying a housing need, what type of housing they will require, and our assessment of their need:

Within the next 2 years

RESPONDENT	WHAT REQUIRED	ASSESSMENT
Elderly couple, private renting. Current property too large to maintain and in poor condition	2 bed house or bungalow – rent	2 bed bungalow – rent
Family (1 child). Housing Assoc. renting, would like to return to the village for support from family and friends	3 bed house – rent	3 bed house – rent
Single person, living with parents. Requires independence but does not wish to leave the village	2 or 3 bed house – open market	2 bed house – rent (due to income levels provided)
Couple, owner occupiers (with mortgage). Would like to return to the village.	3 bed house or bungalow – any tenure	2-3 bed house – shared ownership

5. Conclusion

Warwickshire Rural Housing Association, with the support of Exhall Parish Council, has conducted a detailed study of the housing need of the village. This study has not only investigated the actual housing need of Exhall, but has also ascertained residents views with regard to living in the parish, as well as identifying local support for a development to meet local needs.

The exact need is as follows:

1 x 2 bed houses for rent

1 x 3 bed house for rent

1 x 2 bed bungalow for rent

1 x 2-3 bed house shared ownership purchase

This is a small requirement, but it may be possible to develop such a scheme if a suitable site could be identified. However, it should be noted that the initial reaction from residents is that they do not wish to have any form of affordable housing developed in their village. Accordingly, if the Parish and District Council would like to see such a scheme produced then further consultation should be undertaken in the first instance.