



Housing Needs Survey Report for Alcester Parish

April 2023

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1. Introduction

Alcester Parish Council commissioned a local Housing Needs Survey, which was distributed during March 2023 with a return deadline of 25th March. The aim of the survey was to collect local housing needs information within and relating to Alcester parish.

This report presents the results of the survey and is based directly on the responses to the questionnaire. It shows the current and future needs of the respondents for homes in the parish.

The survey form is a standard document used across Stratford-upon-Avon district and is based on a survey form used by Rural Housing Enablers across England. Additional forms were available upon request and respondents were given the option to complete the survey online if they preferred. Forms could be securely returned to the WRCC Rural Housing Enabler using the Freepost envelope.

A copy of the cover letter and survey form can be found at Appendix A to this report.

Individual responses have been anonymised and are not shared with the parish council or any other third party.

2. Planning Context

At a national level, current guidelines (National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012) emphasise the role of local communities in the planning process. For example, it encourages communities to “plan positively for local development, shaping and directing development in their area ...”

At a local level, Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) has adopted a local plan to guide development in the district up to 2031. Amongst other things this plan aims to build upon the success of previous plans in providing opportunities for local communities to promote housing schemes, as well as other forms of development, that meet an identified local need.

There is also scope for a local community to prepare a neighbourhood plan to steer development within their area and the Alcester Neighbourhood Development Plan was 'Made' on 12th July 2021. It is now formally part of the District Council's development plan and will be used to assist in making decisions on planning applications within the plan area.

A community can choose to promote a 'local needs scheme' in its own right, relying on policies in the local plan or via a neighbourhood plan. In either case a local needs scheme can include both affordable housing and local market housing. Such schemes will be supported within or adjacent to existing settlements provided that:

- It has been demonstrated that there is a local need for affordable housing and the scheme reflects identified local need,
- The scheme has been initiated from within the local community and has the support of the relevant parish council,

- Satisfactory arrangements for the management and occupation of the properties have been made to ensure that the homes to be provided will meet identified local housing needs both initially and in perpetuity.

Unless a neighbourhood plan expressly provides otherwise a local needs scheme would be subject to a planning obligation (Section 106 Agreement) limiting occupation of the homes, including any local market homes, to people with a defined local connection.

The term “affordable housing” has a specific meaning (as set out in the Glossary to the NPPF) and includes options both for affordable housing for rent and home ownership.

New affordable homes are generally required for two reasons:

- Many residents on low and middle incomes cannot afford to rent privately or buy open market housing, and
- The market does not provide the right type of accommodation for residents, for example homes for people who are older and wish to downsize.

3. Results

Households with a need for alternative housing, and who wish to live in the parish, were requested to complete the survey. A household may comprise a family, a single person or a couple, and a dwelling may contain more than one household in housing need.

The survey asked for details of the household, the current housing situation, preferred housing situation, the identified need and local connection, together with sensitive information such as financial details. Respondents were assured that any information they disclosed would be treated in strict confidence.

Approximately 3200 Housing Needs Survey forms were distributed. Twenty-five survey forms were returned by Freepost and eighteen surveys were completed online. One of the hard copy survey forms gave details of three households in need.

However, eight of the returns have been discounted as detailed below:

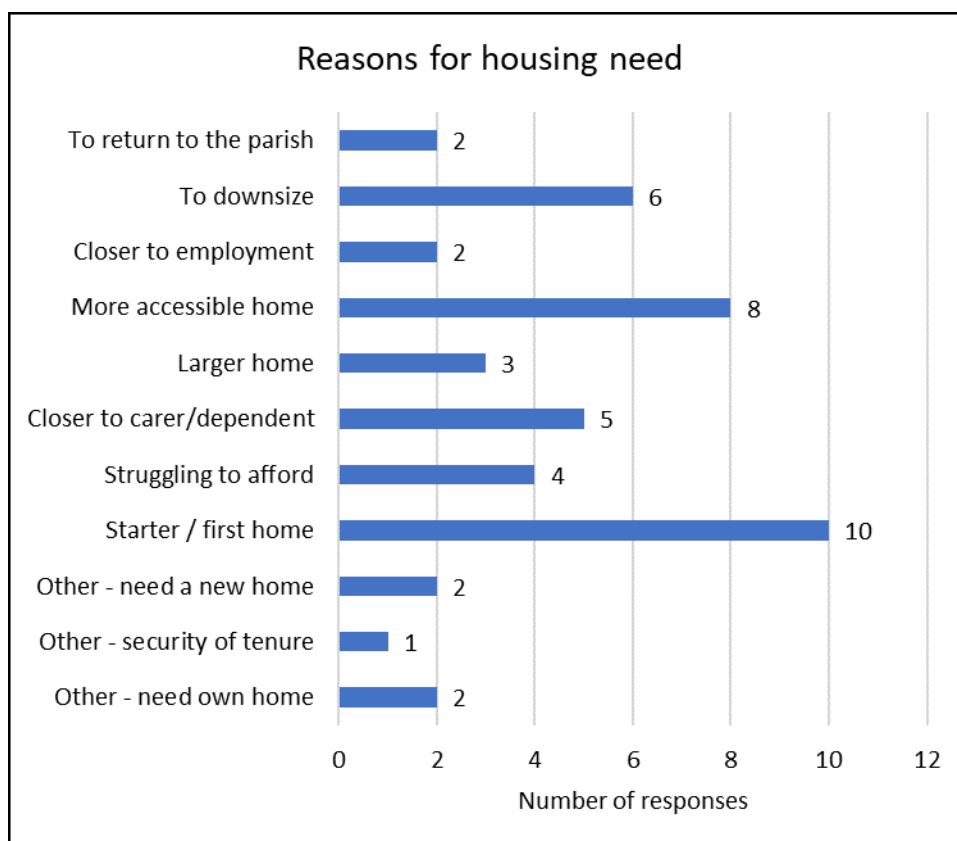
- already adequately housed x 6
- no identified housing need x 1
- insufficient information provided & no contact information x 1

This report therefore provides an analysis of thirty-seven returns, which gives a return rate of 1.16%. This is lower than the average 2% housing need seen in other rural parishes across the district.

Q1: Reasons for housing need

Respondents were asked “why do you/your household require alternative accommodation” and were able to indicate more than one reason for their housing need.

All respondents completed this section and, as can be seen below, those looking for a ‘starter / first home’ made up the largest group (ten responses) followed by those looking for a more accessible home (eight responses) and those looking to downsize (six responses).



Q2: Current dwelling

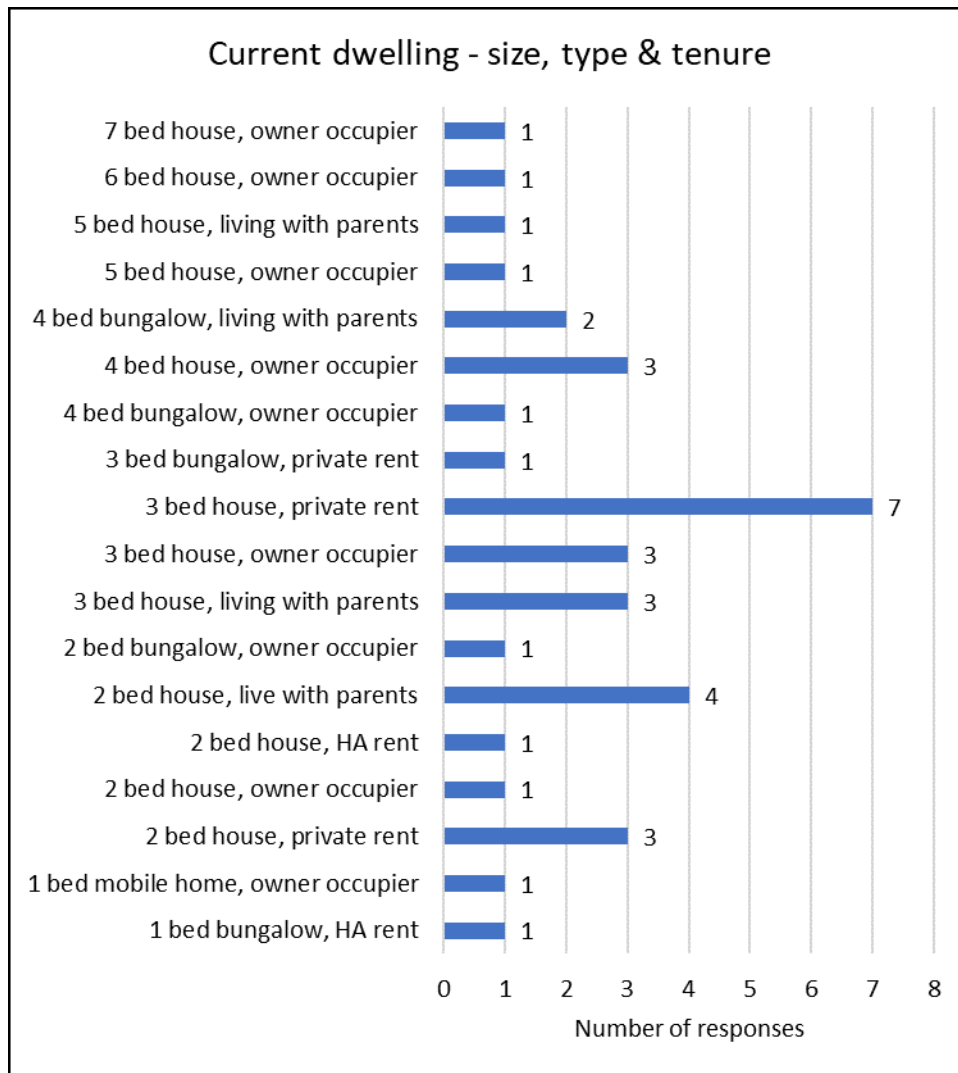
Respondents were asked to provide details of the dwelling that the household currently lives in.

Thirty-six of the respondents provided information and '3 bed house, private rent' represents the largest answer at seven responses followed by '2 bed house, live with parents' with four responses.

The largest group live in a 3 bed property (fourteen responses) and the majority currently live in a house (twenty-nine responses).

Thirteen respondents live in an owner-occupied property, ten currently live with parents and eleven live in privately rented accommodation.

The smallest property is a 1-bed mobile home, and the largest property is a 7 bed house.



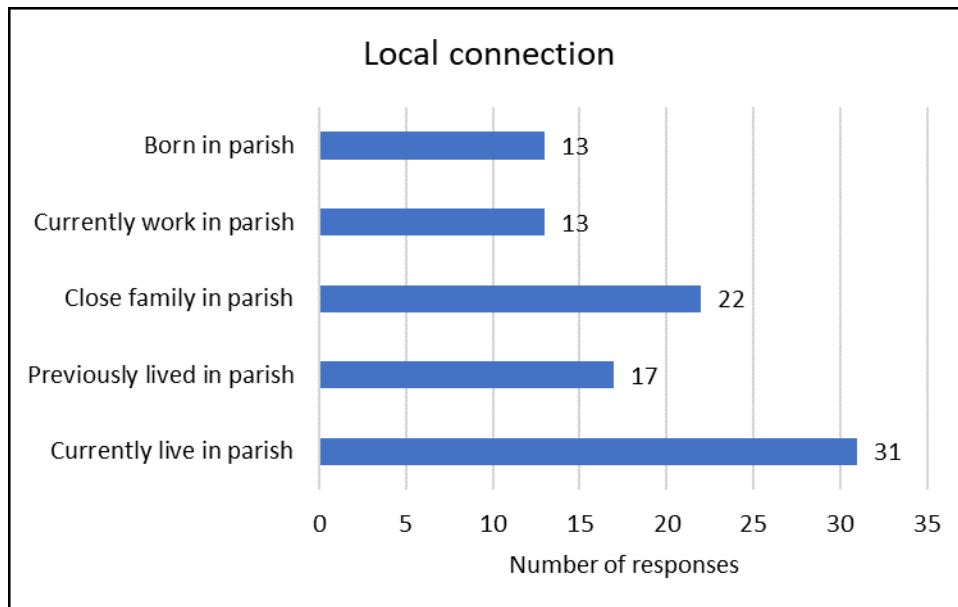
Respondents who rent were asked “approximately what percentage of your income, after tax, do you spend on rent?” Thirteen respondents who currently pay rent provided information, which indicates that the households spend an average of 51% of income on rent.

- 75%
- 60%
- 45%
- 33%
- 40%
- 27%
- 10%
- 70%
- 40%
- 60%
- 100%
- 44%
- 60%

Q3: Local connection

Respondents were asked to indicate their connection to the parish and, where appropriate, were able to indicate more than one connection.

All respondents answered this question, with ‘currently live in parish’ gaining the most responses (31), followed by ‘close family in parish’ (22 responses). ‘Close family’ refers to parents, siblings, or children.

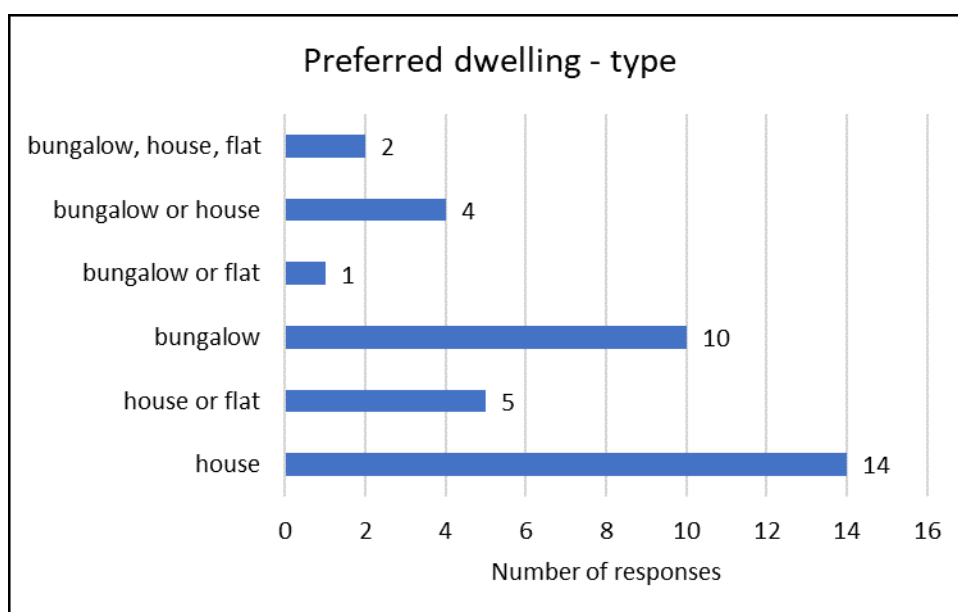


Q4: Preferred dwelling

Respondents were asked to indicate the type, size, and tenure of their preferred dwelling. It should be noted that a housing preference doesn't necessarily align to analysed need. For example, a couple with a young child, a joint income of £30,000, no savings or equity, and seeking a 3-bed owner occupier home would probably be analysed as requiring a 2-bed house to rent from a housing association. Further information is provided at Q5 Financial Information.

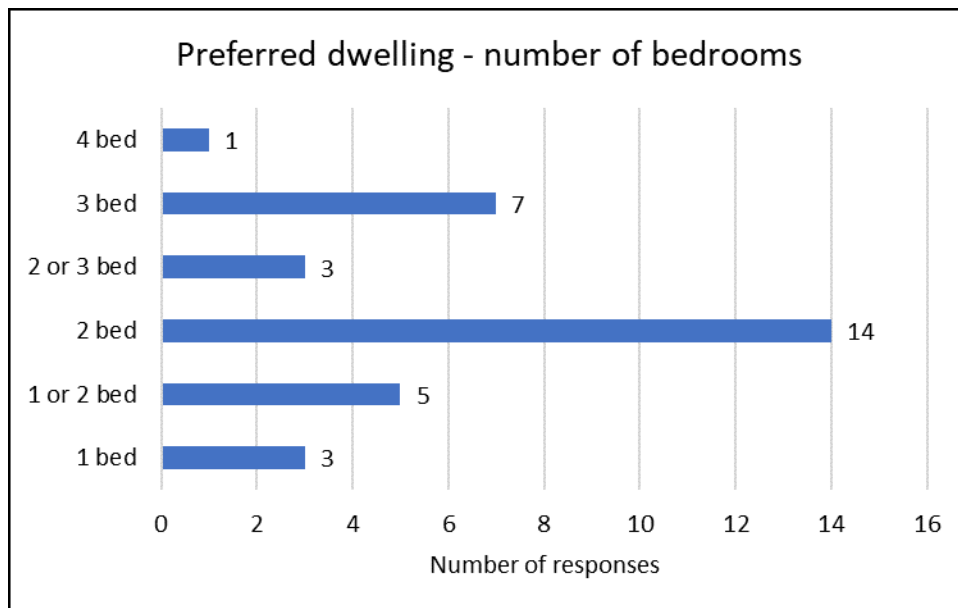
i) Dwelling type

Thirty-six respondents indicated at least one dwelling type preference and the largest group indicated they would prefer to live in a house (14 responses), followed by those preferring a bungalow (10 responses). Respondents were able to indicate more than one preference.



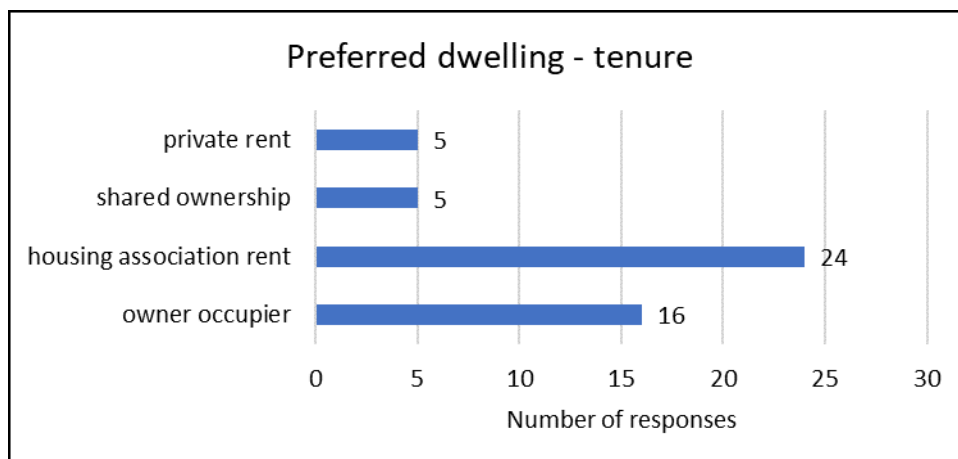
ii) Number of bedrooms

Thirty-three of the respondents indicated a preference regarding the number of bedrooms and 2 bed dwellings appear most popular which is similar to other rural parishes.



iii) Dwelling tenure

Respondents were asked to indicate their preferred tenure and were able to indicate more than one preference. All respondents answered this question and the largest group would prefer housing association rent (twenty-four responses), followed by some form of home ownership.



iv) Self build

Three of the respondents indicated that they would be interested in self-build. However, given the financial information provided, it would appear that only one respondent may be in a financial situation to achieve this if land were available.

v) Designed to cater for a disability

Three of the respondents indicated that they would prefer a property specifically designed for a disability.

Respondents were asked to 'provide details of any specific housing requirements' and whilst the information provided aids the analysis of need it is not reproduced within the report. Comments included reference to old age, medical conditions, and unsuitability of stairs and steps.

Q5: Financial information

The information provided in response to this section aids the analysis of need but is confidential and not reproduced herein.

Where a respondent indicates a preference for shared ownership their ability to enter into such an arrangement is assessed using the information provided. The mortgage and deposit that the respondent could raise is compared against a comparable owner-occupied property in the local area, as demonstrated through the research shown in Appendix B to this report. If it appears that the respondent could not enter into a shared ownership arrangement as they have a limited, or no, deposit they are re-classified as needing rented accommodation.

Similarly, where a respondent indicates a preference for a market home their ability to enter into a mortgage is assessed including the ability to raise a deposit. Having assessed whether the respondent could reasonably acquire a suitable mortgage if they could not do so they are re-classified needing either a shared ownership property (with a suitable deposit) or rented property (without a suitable deposit).

One of the respondents who indicated a preference for shared ownership gave no indication of having savings, equity or gifted funds so would appear to be unable to raise a mortgage.

Q6: Housing waiting list

Fourteen of the respondents indicated that they are currently registered on the District Council's housing waiting list, known as Home Choice Plus.

However, it should be noted that in November 2022 there were 360 households with an Alcester address registered on the local authority housing waiting list. Whilst some registered households may not wish to continue residing locally, experience from across the district shows that typically most people living in a rural parish will wish to continue residing there due to established social networks, employment etc. This particularly applies to families with children and older people. A summary of these registered households can be seen at Appendix C.

Q7: Detail of households seeking alternative housing

The information provided in response to this question aids the analysis of need, for example in relation to overcrowding, but is confidential and not reproduced herein.

4. Conclusion

This survey identifies thirty-seven households with a local connection to Alcester parish looking for alternative homes, as shown below.

Housing association rent (20)

- 5 x 1 bed flat/maisonette
- 7 x 1 bed bungalow
- 1 x 2 bed bungalow
- 5 x 2 bed house
- 1 x 3 bed house
- 1 x 5 bed house

Housing association shared ownership (6)

- 1 x 2 bed bungalow at 40% share
- 1 x 2 bed house at 40% share
- 1 x 2 bed house at 50% share
- 3 x 2 bed house at 60% share

Owner occupier (11)

- 1 x 1 bed bungalow
- 4 x 2 bed bungalow
- 3 x 3 bed bungalow
- 1 x 2 bed house (starter/first home)
- 1 x 2 bed house
- 1 x 3 bed house

Consideration should also be given to the 360 households registered on Home Choice Plus (suitably discounted by the fourteen responses to Q6).

In rural areas where analysis indicates a need for 1-bed rented accommodation this may be reclassified as 2-bed accommodation as 1-bed homes can sometimes be difficult to let and may sit vacant for a period of time. A 1-bed home can accommodate only a single person or couple, whereas a 2-bed home can also accommodate a small family and a single or couple household may grow and require additional space in the future. This increased flexibility, weighed against the relatively small extra cost and extra space associated with building a 2-bed home is a strong argument for providing the larger unit.

5. Contact Information

Town Clerk - Alcester Town Council
Globe House, Priory Road, Alcester B49 5DZ
Tel: 01789 766084
Email: clerk@alcester-tc.gov.uk
Web: www.alcester-tc.gov.uk

Sarah Brooke-Taylor – WRCC, Rural Housing Enabler
Warwick Enterprise Park, Wellesbourne CV35 9EF
Tel: 01789 842182
Email: housing@wrccrural.org.uk
Web: www.wrccrural.org.uk



Alcester Town Council housing needs survey

March 2023

Dear Householder

Do you want to downsize, are you currently living at home with parents and want your own home, do you need a bungalow in preference to a house?

A lack of suitable and affordable housing in rural communities has been a serious problem for many years, with house prices outstripping average incomes by large margins. This can often lead to local people moving away. To assess the extent of the problem in the local area we are conducting a survey to identify the homes that local people need.

The form is to be completed ONLY if you have a need for alternative housing and wish to live within the parish.

If you know anyone currently living elsewhere who would like to live in Alcester parish please ask them to contact the Rural Housing Enabler (details on back page) to receive a copy of this form. They would need to have a strong local connection, for example they work in the parish, previously lived in the parish or have a close relative currently living in the parish.

Data is being collected on behalf of the parish council by WRCC (an independent charity that supports rural communities across Warwickshire) for the purpose of identifying parish-wide housing need only. All information will be treated in strict confidence and all returns will be anonymised.

A separate form should be completed by each household (family, single, couple) in need of alternative housing and if they wish to be housed in the parish within the next five years. If necessary, please request extra forms; see contact details on the back page.

Completed survey forms should be returned by 25th March 2023 using the Freepost envelope or complete this survey online at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Alcester23.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

Councillor Kathryn Cargill
Mayor - Alcester Town Council

1. Why do you/your household require alternative accommodation (tick all that apply)?

- Need a larger home due to overcrowding
- Wish to downsize
- Want a starter home / first home
- Wish to return to the parish
- Struggling to afford current home
- Need to be closer to a carer or dependent to give or receive support
- To be closer to employment
- Need a home that is more accessible (ie all rooms on one floor)
- Need a new home for another reason - please explain below

2. Current dwelling – what type of property do you/your household currently live in?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow | <input type="checkbox"/> Flat / maisonette |
| <input type="checkbox"/> House | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Number of bedrooms

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent - housing association* | <input type="checkbox"/> Owned (with / without mortgage) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent - private* | <input type="checkbox"/> Live with parent/s |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shared ownership (part rent, part buy) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

*** If you currently rent your home approximately what percentage of your income, after tax, do you spend on rent?**

%

3. What connection do you/your household have to this parish (tick all that apply)?

- Have lived continuously in the parish for at least the past twelve months
- Previously lived in the parish for a continuous period of not less than 3 years within the past 5 years
- Have parents, siblings or children currently living in the parish and who have done so for a continuous period of not less than 3 years within the past 5 years.
- Currently work in the parish and have done so for at least the past 12 months for an average of not less than 16 hours per week
- Born in the parish and/or parents were resident in the parish at the time of birth

4. What type of property would you/your household prefer (tick all that apply)?

- Bungalow House Flat / maisonette

Number of bedrooms

- Rent - housing association Shared ownership (part rent, part buy)
 Rent - private Owned (with / without mortgage)
- Interested in self build
- Specifically designed to cater for a disability

Please provide details of any specific housing requirements (eg relating to a disability) for yourself or any member of your household who is seeking housing with you.

5. It is important to understand what people can afford.

This information will not be disclosed to any third party and remains confidential. Financial information helps to determine the tenure of property suitable for the household.

Please indicate the approximate total annual gross income (before tax) of the household in need of alternative housing. Do not include housing or other benefits.

£

Do you have savings, equity in your current home or will someone gift you money towards a new home?

- Yes savings £..... / equity £..... / gift £.....
 No

6. Are you registered on the Stratford on Avon District Council housing waiting list (known as Home Choice Plus)?

- Yes No

If you wish to apply to rent a housing association property you should be on the housing waiting list. Applications forms are available by download (www.homechoiceplus.org.uk), telephone (01789 260861) or email (housingadviceteam@stratford-dc.gov.uk).

7. Details of the household (family, couple, single) seeking alternative housing.

Please complete a separate form for each household in need of different housing.

	Age (yrs)	Sex (M / F)	Relationship to person completing survey form
Person 1			<i>Person completing form</i>
Person 2			
Person 3			
Person 4			
Person 5			
Person 6			

Please provide your name and contact details. We may need to contact you to obtain further information. Any information you give will remain confidential to WRCC and will not be shared with any third party.

Name	
Address	
Email / telephone	

Thank you for completing this survey.

If you require an additional survey form contact the Rural Housing Enabler:
01789 842182 or housing@wrccrural.org.uk.

**Please return this form in the Freepost envelope provided
no later than 25th March 2023.**

(or post to Freepost Plus RSRR-KAGE-GBUR, Warwickshire Rural Community Council,
Warwick Enterprise Park, Wellesbourne, Warwick CV35 9EF)

WRCC collects the minimum data required and for the specific purpose of providing an anonymised housing needs report. Data is processed lawfully and fairly, and it is kept in a secure manner. Returned survey forms are kept for a brief period before being shredded.

WRCC is a registered charity No.1081017 and a Company Limited by Guarantee in England and Wales No. 3930819
Find out more at www.ruralwarwickshire.org.uk

Appendix B – Property search

Results of property search within the parish (www.rightmove.co.uk, March 2023) excluding listed properties, those in need of renovation, with extra land, stables & similar.

As can be seen by the research below there appears to be a reasonable turnover of houses within Alcester but it is difficult to move within, or return to, the parish if seeking a bungalow or flat/maisonette.

Details of properties currently for sale.

Agent	Location	No of beds	Type	Price £
Earles	Cross Road	3	detached house	625,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	4	detached house - new build	575,000
Sanders & Sanders	Roman Way	4	detached house	550,000
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Abbey Close	4	detached house	550,000
Peter Clarke & Co	Kinnersley Road	4	detached house	529,950
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Gerard Road	4	detached house	485,000
Sanders & Sanders	Throckmorton Road	4	detached house	485,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	detached house - new build	395,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	detached house - new build	390,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	semi-detached house - new build	390,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	detached house - new build	387,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	semi-detached house - new build	377,000
Sanders & Sanders	Winchcombe Road	3	semi-detached house	375,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	3	semi-detached house - new build	363,000
Arden Estates	Glebe Road	3	semi-detached house	350,000
Peter Clarke & Co	Alauna Avenue	3	end of terrace house	350,000
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Eclipse Road	3	detached house	325,000
Sanders & Sanders	Riddell Close	3	semi-detached house	315,000
Purplebricks	School Road	3	semi-detached house	300,000
Sanders & Sanders	Hertford Road	3	end of terrace house	299,950
Sheldon Bosley Knight	Vallett Avenue	4	end of terrace house	290,000
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Alauna Avenue	3	semi-detached house	290,000
Sanders & Sanders	St Faiths Road	3	end of terrace house	285,000
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Castle Road	3	mid terraced house - new build	285,000
Bloor Homes	Birmingham Road	2	semi-detached house - new build	275,000
Parker Mercer & Durnian	Boehm Drive	2	end of terrace house	270,000
Jeremy McGinn & Co	Stratford Road	3	mid terraced townhouse	270,000

Jeremy McGinn & Co	Stratford Road	3	mid terraced townhouse	268,000
Sanders & Sanders	Stratford Road	2	end of terrace house	232,950
Springbok Properties	Meadow Road	2	mid terraced house	220,000
Purplebricks	Smiths Way	1	mid terraced house	160,000

Average of properties currently for sale.

Property size & type	Price £
1 bed mid terrace house	160,000
2 bed mid terraced house	220,000
2 bed end of terrace house	251,475
2 bed semi-detached house	275,000
3 bed mid terrace townhouse	269,000
3 bed mid terraced house	285,000
3 bed end of terrace house	311,650
3 bed semi-detached house	345,000
3 bed detached house	424,400
4 bed end of terrace house	290,000
4 bed detached house	529,158

Properties sold in last 12 months.

Date sold	Location	No of beds	Type	Price £
Nov-22	Hadrians Walk	3	semi-detached house	350,000
Jun-22	Mayors Drive		detached - new build	410,000
Jun-22	Kinnersley Road	4	detached house	560,000
Jun-22	Evesham Street	2	terraced house	385,000
Jun-22	Seymour Road	1	flat	141,000
Jun-22	School Road	1	flat	120,000
May-22	Horton Close	3	semi-detached house	282,000
May-22	St Faith's Road	2	terraced house	215,000
May-22	Throckmorton Road	4	semi-detached house	350,000
May-22	Corinthian Court	2	flat	155,000
Apr-22	Arrow Crescent	2	flat	143,000
Apr-22	Smiths Way	2	terraced house	185,000
Apr-22	Kinwarton Road	1	flat	72,000
Apr-22	Bleachfield Street	3	semi-detached house	290,000
Apr-22	Gas House Lane	2	flat	174,000
Apr-22	Springfield Road	2	terraced house	204,000
Apr-22	Stratford Road	2	detached house	212,000
Apr-22	Corinthian Court	2	flat	147,500
Apr-22	School Road		semi-detached house	250,000
Apr-22	Avon Crescent	3	terraced house	225,000
Apr-22	Corinthian Court	1	flat	117,500

Average of properties sold in last 12 months.

Property size & type	Price £
1 bed flat	112,625
2 bed flat	154,875
2 bed terraced house	247,250
2 bed detached house	212,000
3 bed terraced house	225,000
3 bed semi-detached house	307,333
4 bed semi-detached house	350,000
4 detached house	560,000

According to HM Land Registry (information at 15th March 2023) properties in Alcester had an overall average price of £230,364 over the last year. The majority of sales in Alcester during the last year were flats, selling for an average price of £122,000. Terraced properties sold for an average of £248,286, with semi-detached properties fetching £293,000.

Overall, sold prices in Alcester over the last year were 14% down on the previous year and 17% down on the 2019 peak of £276,886

Appendix C – Home Choice Plus

Home Choice Plus is the scheme used to allocate housing association properties across the participating local authority areas, which includes Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

In November 2022 the following households with an Alcester address were registered.

Household type	No. of children in household	No. of households	House type & size
Single / couple	0	114	1 bed maisonette or 2 bed house*
Family	1	50	2 bed house
Family	2	40	2 or 3 bed house
Family	3	6	3 bed house
Family	4	2	3 or 4 bed house
Family	5+	5	4+ bed house
Pensioner/DLA	0	127	1 or 2 bed bungalow*
Other	0	16	2 or 3 bed house

*In rural areas where analysis indicates a need for 1-bed accommodation this may be reclassified as 2-bed accommodation as this offers greater flexibility.

If local needs properties are developed for a community as a result of information obtained through a housing survey and similar evidence it would be subject to a planning obligation prioritising occupation of the homes, including any local market homes, to people with a defined local connection (as listed at Q3 on the survey form).