

# Parishes of Stoodleigh, Oakford and Washfield Housing Needs Report



**Produced by: Devon Communities Together**

**On behalf of: Stoodleigh Parish Council**

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# 1 Executive Summary

## Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for 2 affordable homes within the next 5 years.

## Key findings

### Affordability

- The survey found 1 household in housing need who could not afford to buy or rent in the open market.
- 1 additional reply was received from a household on Devon Home Choice who had not completed the survey but was eligible for affordable housing in the parish.

### Tenure

- Both of the households in need qualified for affordable rent.

### Size of Property Required

- 2 x 1 bedroom homes

## Other Findings

- 480 surveys were distributed and 170 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 35%.
- 77% of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. 28 households did not answer this question.

## 2. Aims of the Survey

- To investigate the housing need, tenure and size of homes required for local people living or working in the 3 parishes and those wishing to return.
- To establish the general level of support for new homes in the 3 parishes with an emphasis on homes for local people with housing needs.
- To establish the views of the whole community on future housing in the 3 parishes.
- To assist the Parish Councils and District Council with future planning for the 3 parishes.

## 3. Survey history, methodology and response

### 3.1 History

Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) wished to carry out a survey to assess future local housing need. The Rural Housing Enabler attended a Parish Council meeting at Stoodleigh on 31<sup>st</sup> July and the subject was also discussed at Oakford and Washfield Parish Council meetings. All 3 Parish Councils agreed to proceed with the survey. Survey forms were finalised and 481 forms were posted to every household in the 3 parishes by MDDC. Parishioners were able to return the survey in a reply paid envelope. The deadline for the return of the survey was 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017.

### 3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology approved by local planners.

The survey form was in 3 parts. The first section asked a limited number of questions about the type of household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents. The third part of the survey was designed to be completed by households who intend to move home within the next 5 years and wish to remain living in one of the 3 parishes. Both those who have an affordable housing need and those who wish to buy on the open market were invited to complete this section of the form. A reminder was also sent to those on the Devon Home Choice register who did not complete a survey form.

### 3.3 Response

- 170 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 35% of all dwellings surveyed.
- 12 surveys were returned with Part 3 completed, indicating a need for housing in the parish.
- All of the respondents who provided their details live in Stoodleigh, Washfield or Oakford.

It should be noted that whilst apparent inconsistencies in responses are followed up, the information given is taken at face value.

## **4. Introduction and Information about Stoodleigh, Oakford and Washfield**

### **4.1 Overview of Stoodleigh**

Stoodleigh is a rural parish located approximately 6 miles north of Tiverton.

Village amenities include a parish church, parish hall and a public house. The village has several clubs and organisations including a cricket club, bell-ringers, garden club, history group and SWAG (formed to provide outings and entertainment for local people). Exercise classes also take place in the parish hall. There is a mobile library that visits every 4 weeks

Stoodleigh village lies about 2 miles off of the North Devon link road and has limited public transport with a voluntary bus service to Tiverton twice weekly (Exe Valley Market Bus) and a once daily term time service to Tiverton which operates at school opening and closing times.

### **4.2 Overview of Oakford**

Oakford is a rural parish adjoining Stoodleigh to the north-west.

Village amenities include a parish church and village hall. The village has a public house/hotel which has recently closed and may not re-open. The village has a social club for women called the Moorland Club.

Oakford village lies about 3 miles off of the A361 North Devon link road and also has limited public transport. The Exe Valley Market Bus serves Oakford and as well as the Tiverton route has an additional once fortnightly service to South Molton and Barnstaple.

### **4.3 Overview of Washfield**

Washfield is a rural parish located approximately 3 miles north-west of Tiverton and south of Stoodleigh.

Village amenities include a parish church and memorial hall. There is a social club which takes place at the memorial hall on Tuesday and Saturday evenings and a local Women's Institute. A mobile library calls at the village every 4 weeks.

Washfield village lies approximately 3 miles off of the A361 North Devon link road and has limited public transport links with the Exe Valley Market Bus providing a twice weekly service to Tiverton and the school term time service also calling on school days during term times.

### **4.4 Overview of the 3 parishes**

All 3 parishes are in a very rural location to the north-west of Tiverton with limited services, amenities and public transport. The land is mainly set out to agriculture. There are a few small local businesses located in the 3 parishes but most residents either work in agriculture or commute to larger towns to work.

### **4.5 Population Figures**

In the 2011 census the usually resident populations of Stoodleigh, Oakford and Washfield were recorded as below:-

Stoodleigh	316 in 137 households
Oakford	58 in 183 households
Washfield	347 in 143 households

This gives a total of 1021 in 463 households across the 3 parishes.

#### 4.6 Type of Accommodation

In the 2011 Census the types of accommodation in the 3 parishes were broken down as in Table 1 below. The largest category of homes is detached houses or bungalows. There are very few flats.

Table 1

Parish	Detached house/bungalow	Semi-detached house/bungalow	Terraced house/bungalow	Flat	Caravan / mobile home	Total
Stoodleigh	86	34	7	3	3	133
Oakford	95	37	17	7	5	161
Washfield	97	28	9	3	1	138

#### 4.7 Bedroom numbers

In the 2011 Census the number of bedrooms per home per parish were broken down as in Table 2 below.

Table 2

	1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 bedrooms	5 or more	Total
Stoodleigh	5	16	49	37	25	133
Oakford	9	24	66	40	22	161
Washfield	5	16	50	45	22	138

When viewed together these tables show that there is a lack of smaller, cheaper accommodation in the 3 parishes with detached dwellings and properties of 3 bedrooms plus being the most prolific.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4.8 Property Prices and Rent

In the last 2 years the Land Registry has recorded 19 property sales in the 3 parishes. The average price of properties was £377,000. Prices ranged from £172,000 for a 3 bedroom house (ex-local authority) to £840,000 for a 4 bedroom house.

There are currently 9 property listings on the Rightmove website in the 3 parishes. 4 of these are in Stoodleigh with only 1 below £250,000, 5 are in Oakford, again with only 1 below £250,000. There are no homes listed for sale in Washfield.<sup>2</sup>

To assess whether a household can afford to buy in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. This is done by comparing information on recent house sales and homes currently on the open market. Average rents are identified by comparing local private rents gained from the housing need survey with rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical rents to assess affordability. There were very few properties for rent on the open market at the time of writing this report therefore data has been taken from surrounding rural areas.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 3 below.

<sup>1</sup> This data only gives details for 432 dwellings as it does not include homes with no usual residents.

<sup>2</sup> House price and rental data current as of 30/11/17

**Table 3**

Size	Property price	Weekly rent
1 bedroom	£150,000	£115
2 bedroom	£185,000	£130
3 bedroom	£240,000	£160

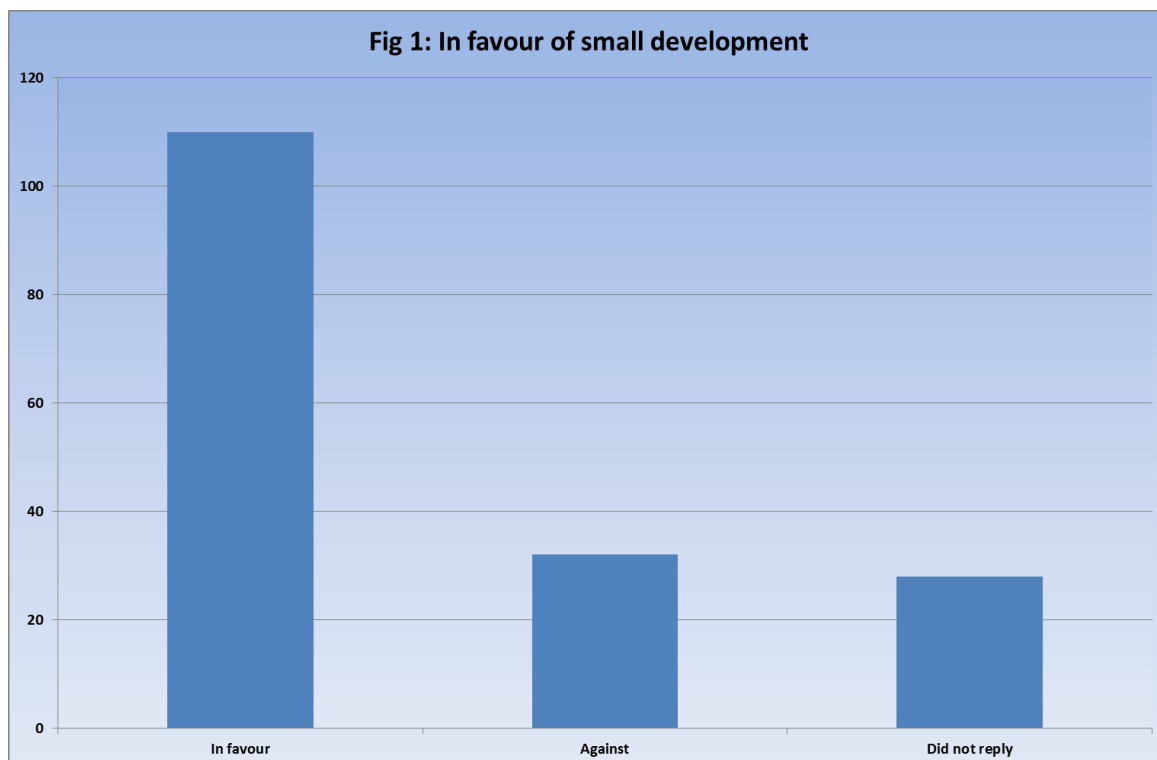
There are currently 10 affordable homes in the 3 parishes. These consist of 1 x 3 bed house and 2 x 1 bed bungalows in Stoodleigh, 1 x 3 bed house and 3 x 1 bed bungalows in Oakford and 3 x 3 bed houses in Washfield. None have been let in the last 2 years. Therefore lettings of current affordable housing stock will have little impact on future need figures.

## 5. General Survey Findings

As 3 parishes have been surveyed, the most significant data will be broken down by parish in a separate document. The figures in the main body of the report relate to all 3 parishes together.

### 5.1 In favour of a small local development

Respondents were asked if they would be in favour of a small number of homes for local people being built if the need for affordable housing were proven. 77% of those answering the question said they would be in favour. 23% said they were against any development. It should be noted that 28 households did not respond to this question. Fig.1 below shows the breakdown.



### 5.2 Site suggestions and general comments

51 individuals made suggestions for possible housing sites within the parishes and made more general comments about local housing. These suggestions and comments will be made available to the Parish Councils on a separate document.

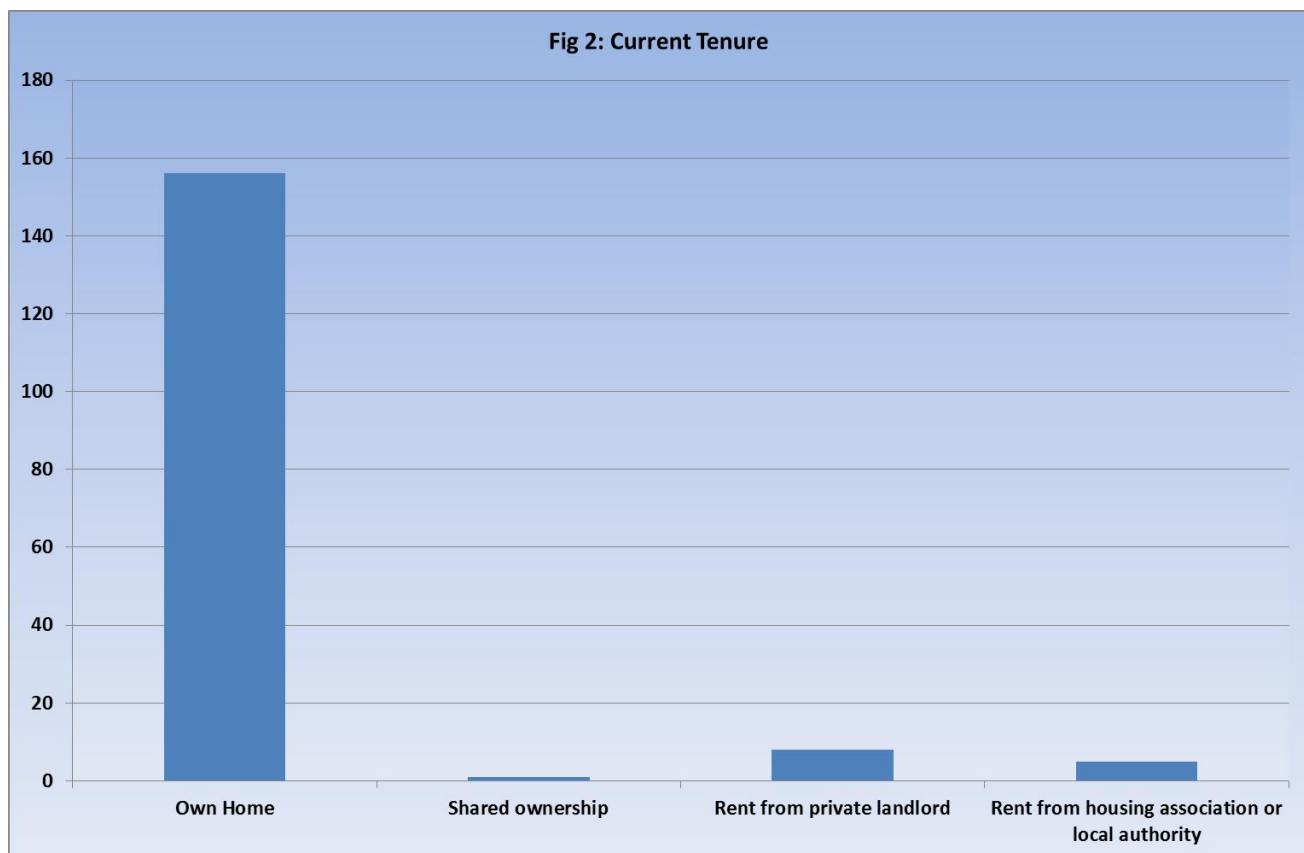
### 5.3 Knowledge of those who have left the 3 parishes in last 5 years

Respondents were asked if they knew of anybody who had had to leave their parish in the last 5 years due to lack of suitable housing.

- 14 households replied that they did know of someone

### 5.4 Current tenure

All of the respondents provided details of their current tenure. 156 (92%) own their own home, 8 (5%) rent from a private landlord. The remaining 3% are made up of 5 who rent from a housing association and 1 with a shared ownership property. Figure 2 below shows the breakdown of tenure.



### 5.5 Main or second home

5 of the respondents were second home owners.

### 5.6 Parish of Residence

Respondents were asked which parish they lived in.

- 59 households are resident in Stoodleigh
- 58 households are resident in Washfield
- 51 households are resident in Oakford

### 5.7 Number of bedrooms in current home

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms their current home has. The replies are shown in Table 4 below.



**Table 4**

Number of bedrooms	1	2	3	4+
Respondents	4	22	60	76

### 5.8 Future plans

Respondents were asked whether they intended to move home within the next 5 years. If they answered Yes to this question they were asked to complete Part 3 of the form.

- 8 households stated they did intend to move within the next 5 years

### 5.9 Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

Respondents were asked whether they would consider becoming a member of a CLT.

- 9 households expressed an interest
- 138 households stated they were not interested

## 6. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 2 of the questionnaire was directed at residents over the age of 55. The number of people over the age of 55 is set to rise significantly across the UK over the next 20 years. In 2014 the Office for National Statistics published population projections for the next 20 years. These figures show that by 2034 the percentage of people over the age of 55 will have increased by 23% across Devon and by 24% in the Mid Devon district during that period.

211 people answered Part 2 of the survey from 127 households with at least one member over the age of 55. This is 75% of the total number of households responding.

### 6.1 Age of Respondents to Part 2 survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. As can be seen in Table 5 below, the majority of those who replied (76%) were aged between 55 and 75.

**Table 5**

Age Group	55-65	66-75	76-85	Over 85
Number	76	83	36	16

### 6.2 Future Housing Plans

Households were asked about their future housing plans.

- 23 households plan to move within the next five years. Of these, 9 would like to remain in their parish of residence.
- None of these households would need affordable housing.
- 14 further households expect to move after five years.
- 90 have no plans to move at the moment.

### 6.3 Adaptability of current home

Respondents were asked if their current home was adaptable to meet changing needs.

- 82 households felt that their home was adaptable to meet changing needs.
- 36 households felt that their home was not adaptable.

#### 6.4 Type of Accommodation preferred by older persons

Older households were asked what type of accommodation they may need in the future. The majority preferred a home better suited to their needs but not designed for older people. Preferences are shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 6**

Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons	Number
Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people	40
Home specially designed for older people	6
Residential/nursing home	3

#### 6.5 Considerations when choosing next home

Households were asked to list the most important considerations when choosing a new home. They could give more than one reason. The reasons are listed below in Table 7.

**Table 7**

Most important consideration	Number
Need to downsize to a smaller more manageable home	23
Proximity to shops/amenities	17
Cheaper running costs	16
Need to be near family / carers	14
Proximity to public transport	10
Need one level for medical reasons	9

The two most important considerations were that older persons wished to move to a smaller property closer to shops and amenities.

#### 6.6 Conclusion - Older Persons Needs

The older persons' survey shows that the majority of households (71%) have no plans to move home. However, the 3 parishes do have a number of older households who wish to downsize to smaller accommodation that is easier to maintain, has lower running costs and is close to amenities and support.

None of the households that expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in the 3 parishes believe they will need affordable housing. Small open market bungalows, flats and houses can be built, however, developers who build open market homes do not usually attach any kind of local connection covenant as this reduces the value of the homes. This means that any open market properties cannot be guaranteed for local people.

Meeting the housing needs of this group of people should be given further consideration.

## 7. Assessment of those wishing to move to a new home in the 3 parishes within the next 5 years

Part 3 of the survey was aimed at those who expect to need to move home within the next 5 years and remain in one of the 3 parishes. It asked questions regarding size and make-up of the new household, local connection and financial circumstances. This information helps to identify the number of households that are eligible for both open market and affordable housing in the 3 parishes and the size, tenure and type of homes required.

8 households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years, however 12 completed Part 3 of the survey. The needs of all 12 of these households have been included in this section of the survey.

### 7.1 Minimum bedroom requirement

Respondents were asked the minimum number of bedrooms they would require in their new home. Table 8 below shows the breakdown. It should be noted that there are criteria relating to affordable housing that set the number of bedrooms that a household are eligible for based on the number of adults and children in that household.

**Table 8**

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom
1	7	4	0

### 7.2 Timescales for moving

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify when they would need to move.

- 6 households indicated a need to move within the next 1-3 years.
- 6 households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years.

### 7.3 Housing tenure

Respondents were asked what type of accommodation they would consider moving to. The results are shown in table 9 below. Respondents could choose more than one option.

**Table 9**

Shared ownership/equity	Affordable/Social rent	Self-build	Discounted market	Rent to buy	Open market
1	2	2	3	2	9

### 7.4 Reasons for moving

Respondents were asked why they wished to move home. They could tick more than one box.

Table 10 shows why households need to move

**Table 10**

Reason for wishing to move	No of respondents
Need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms	7
Wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection	4
Need to move for health/mobility reasons	4
Will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately	1
Struggling to afford current home	1
Need to move to a home with more bedrooms	1
Home is in poor condition	2
Other (garden too big)	1

### 7.5 Budget for new home

Respondents who wished to purchase a home were asked about their budget. Table 11 below shows the breakdown of replies.

**Table 11**

Under £150,000	£150,000 - £200,000	£200,000 - £250,000	£250,000 - £300,000	£300,000 - £350,000
1	2	3	1	2

## 8. Assessment of those in affordable housing need

This section of the survey looks at the number of households who would qualify for an affordable home in the 3 parishes, based on their household income and savings.

### 8.1 Exclusions

All of the households who expressed a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in one of the 3 parishes have been assessed and 9 have been excluded as they already own their own home so do not qualify for affordable housing

This leaves 3 who may qualify for affordable housing.

### 8.2 Local Connection

In order to qualify for affordable housing, respondents must have a local connection to Stoodleigh, Oakford or Washfield. The local connection criteria for Mid Devon are detailed below:-

- The intended household has been continuously resident in the Parish for at least five years.
- The intended household is permanently employed in the parish and their work is primarily based in the parish. For the purposes of this criterion, 'permanently employed' means having held a permanent employment contract for a minimum of 16 hours per week for at least the preceding 6 months.
- The intended household were previously resident in the parish for a period of at least three years within the last 10 years.
- The intended household has a close living relation resident in the parish. This means immediate family members (parents, siblings, dependent and non-dependent children) who themselves live in the Parish and have done so for at least the preceding five years.

Only 1 of the households meets the local connection criteria. This leaves 1 household in housing need.

### 8.3 Tenure

This household would be interested in a rent to buy property but did not express an interest in affordable rented accommodation. This household meets the financial eligibility criteria to be eligible for affordable housing.

### 8.4 Other evidence of housing need

As well as this survey other evidence of housing need should be considered. The housing waiting list or register for Devon is called Devon Home Choice. Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. There are 6 households resident in the 3 parishes registered on Devon Home Choice (3 in Stoodleigh and 3 in Washfield). Details are set out below:-

**Table 12**

Devon Home Choice band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Band A (Emergency need)	0	0	0	0	0
Band B (High)	3	0	0	0	3
Band C (Medium)	0	0	0	0	0
Band D (Low)	2	0	0	0	2
Band E (No Housing Need)	0	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>

None of the households who are registered on Devon Home Choice completed the survey. Due to this apparent disparity, all those who are registered with Devon Home Choice and living within the 3 parishes were contacted separately by letter. 1 reply was received which confirmed that the person would be interested in affordable housing in Stoodleigh. This was added to the survey figures giving a final need of 2 households.

The need is for 2 x 1 bedroom homes for single people.

## 9. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for Stoodleigh, Oakford and Washfield

Overall, it must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving. Any provision of affordable housing, would, by necessity, need to take account of this. However, given the level of response to the survey, and in spite of the potential for circumstances to change, the Parish Councils can feel confident in the results of this survey. The survey has identified a need in the near future for 2 units of affordable housing.

Any further action taken towards meeting this housing need will require the support of the Parish Councils and wider community consultation. Should the Parish Councils wish to address the identified housing need, the Rural Housing Enablers are available to provide any ongoing assistance that may be required.

As the needs of households are constantly evolving the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide. In particular it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years. However if there is a significant development of affordable housing in one of the parishes which is subject

to a local connection requirement and substantially meets the need identified in the report it will normally be necessary to re-survey before any further development to address local needs is considered.

### **Recommendation**

**It is recommended that the Parish Councils:**

- **Note this report**
- **Consider the options for addressing the need for 2 affordable homes.**

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