

Housing Needs in Broomley and Stocksfield Parish



eljay research

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“When my grandchildren leave school soon and need a place of their own, where will they live? They could never afford the big deposits that are needed now. In just a few years the kids will have nowhere to live”.








“Stocksfield is a great place to live, but it has got busy and full in the last 30 years. Please try to retain its unique character - which is the reason why we moved here”.

“There is a need for affordable housing within the Stocksfield area. I have lived here all my life, and to be able to keep local people here we need to be able to offer them homes”.

“There wouldn’t be a Stocksfield if development hadn’t been allowed. I have no time for snobs who are completely selfish. Young people need to set up home and every opportunity should be made available for them to do so, as well as for the elderly wishing to see out the rest of their days in Stocksfield by downsizing into care facilities”.

Acknowledgements are extended to all
Broomley and Stocksfield Residents for
their time and interest in this survey.

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Introducing the Area in Focus - Broomley & Stocksfield Parish

Broomley and Stocksfield parish lies in South Northumberland (see figure 1), some 15 miles from Newcastle upon Tyne.

The parish includes some 1,275 households, housing just under 3,000 residents - as indicated by the 2011 Census. In the context of minor population growth in the county, regionally and nationally, over the last ten years Broomley and Stocksfield has remained largely static in its size. The recent publication of the latest UK census results provides further key demographics about the parish.

Figure 1



- Properties are most frequently detached (38%), semi-detached (35%) and terraced (21%).
- Just under one quarter (24%) of households contain just one person; 41% contain two people; 16% contain three people and 19% contain 4 or more people.
- Just over 1% of the population of the parish is of a minority ethnicity.
- Around 60% of households are described as 'not deprived in any dimension'. Dimensions of deprivation are indicators based on the four selected household characteristics - Employment (any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick); Education (no person in the household has at least level 2 education, and no person aged 16-18 is a full-time student); Health and disability (any person in the household has general health 'bad or very bad' or has a long term health problem); and Housing (household's accommodation is either overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating).
- 83% of properties are owned or mortgaged in the parish; 9% are privately rented; 5% are Council or housing association rented and 3% are of another tenure.
- 47% of households comprise two or more adults with no children; 24% of households comprise a single person; 24% comprise 2 or more adults with dependent children and 5% comprise lone parents.

Introducing Broomley and Stocksfield's Housing Needs Survey

Following on from the 2009 Parish Plan survey, this study was undertaken on behalf of Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council and SCATA (part of Stocksfield Community Association).

Both are currently interested in establishing the degree of local need and demand for new homes in the parish, whether they are affordable, and whether they are rented, shared ownership or full ownership.

This information is intended to provide essential guidance on future housing opportunities in the parish, helping the community to resist plans for development on inappropriate sites, but supporting development of the right type and in the right places.



The Research Methodology

In early September 2013, every household in the parish received a self-completion, housing needs survey questionnaire. An online alternative to this postal survey was also provided. Designed to gather a comprehensive range of information, the questionnaire collected facts relating to:

- household composition by gender, age and ethnicity;
- house type and number of bedrooms;
- adequacy of current housing to meet the households needs;
- future moving intentions;

The intentions of concealed households, including:

- when people expect to move;
- who is forming new households;
- how much they can afford, the household savings and income;
- preferred tenure, type, size and location of the housing they require;

Opinion of all households on potential future housing development within the area.

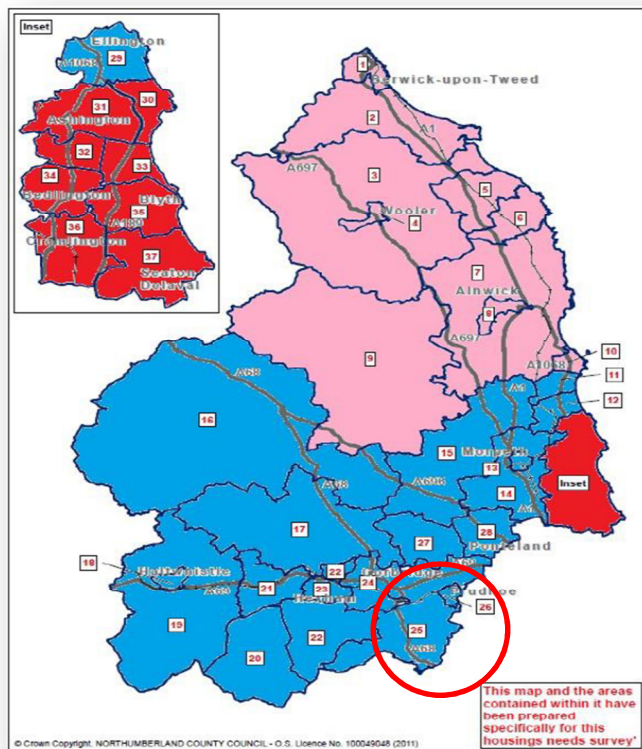
The questionnaire was designed in consultation with the Parish Council and SCATA, and based upon tried and tested questionnaires used in previous, similar housing need assessments.

Following a total of 480 returned postal/online questionnaires, a further 150 face to face interviews were sought across the parish, boosting the postal survey response rate to almost 630 households. These interviews were undertaken across Monday to Sunday from 9am to 7pm, by an experienced researcher, with adherence to the Code of Conduct as recommended by the Market Research Society.

Participation was encouraged via pre-survey publicity in the NE43 newsletter, mid-survey publicity in the Hexham Courant, and a prize draw incentive.

Responses have been rounded and may therefore not total exactly 100%. Missing responses have been excluded from calculations. All secondary research is sourced from:

- The 2011 Census¹.
- Northumberland's Housing Needs Survey 2012² (from which comparisons with the wider 'City Region Commuter' sub-area, shown in blue below, and in which Broomley & Stocksfield sits, are taken).



¹<http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadDatasetList.do?a=3&b=11121297&c=broomley+and+stocksfield&d=16&g=6453533&i=1001x1003x1032&m=0&r=1&s=1375951548153&enc=1&domainId=61>

² Northumberland 2012 Housing Needs Survey Sub-Area Report, DCA, 2012

Executive Summary



The Research Findings

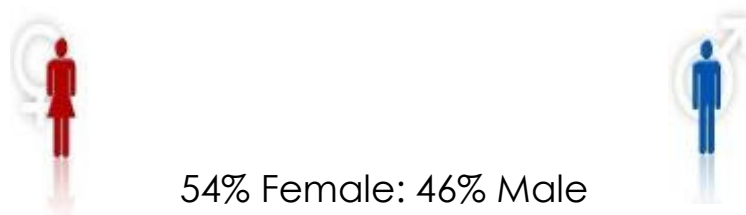
Characteristics of Participants

A total of **629** households participated in the 2013 Housing Needs Survey. This is a figure which represents a response from approximately **49%** of the **1,275** households in Broomley and Stocksfield - or around half of all households. This is a response rate which ensures that the generated statistics are highly robust, with a level of accuracy of around **+/-2.75%**. In other words, the results quoted are no more than 2.75% either side of those that would have been generated had every household in Broomley and Stocksfield parish participated.

The Gender of Respondents

As shown in figure 2 – and typical of surveys in general - slightly more females than males participated in the survey.

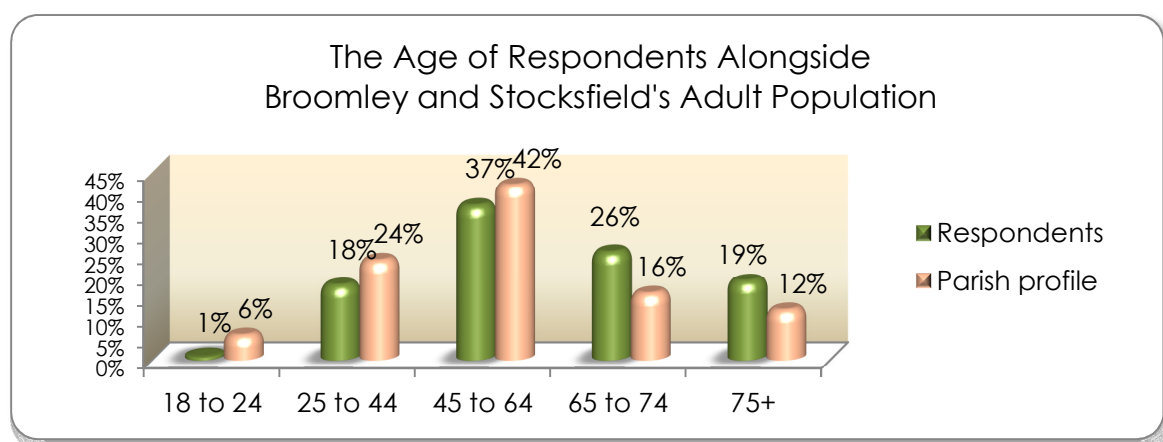
Figure 2



The Age of Respondents

Figure 3 shows that just 1% of residents were aged 18-24; 18% were aged 25-44; 37% were aged 45-64; and 45% were aged 65 and over. This is perhaps an outcome to be expected in the context of the survey seeking information about households, and younger residents being less likely to be actual householders than their older counterparts. Also shown in Figure 3 is the *actual* adult age profile of the parish.

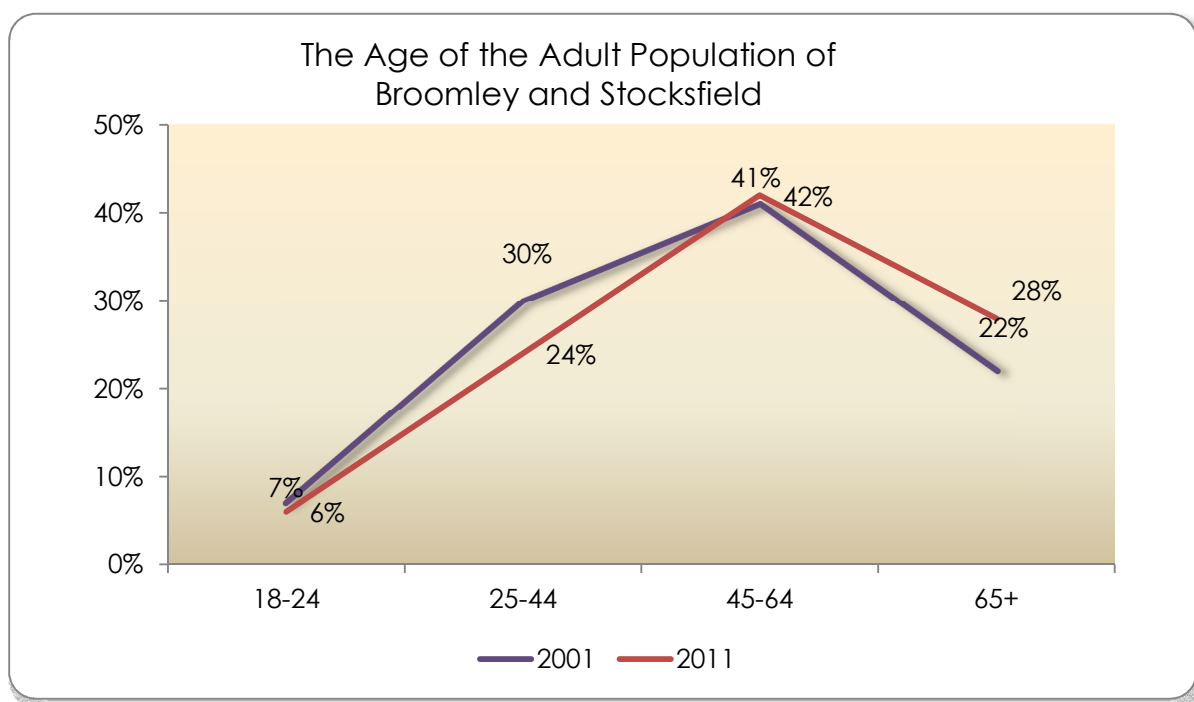
Figure 3



How the Population of Broomley and Stocksfield is Ageing, and Older than that of the County

This is a profile in which the proportion of older residents has risen (increasing from 22% of residents aged 65+ in 2001, to 28% currently). (See figure 3a). This current figure of 28% is notably higher than that for Northumberland as a whole (20%).

Figure 3a



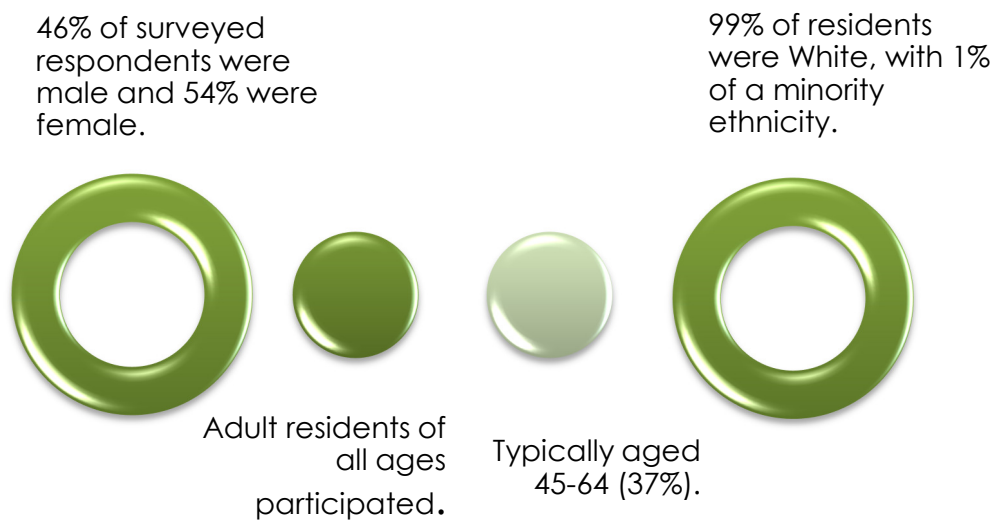
The Ethnicity of Respondents

99% of respondents described their ethnicity as White (a category which in theory includes British, English, Scottish, Welsh, Northern Irish, Irish, Gypsies and Travellers). Minority ethnicities in the parish included Mixed Race and Chinese.

These are figures consistent with the 2011 Census profile of the parish (which shows a 99% White area profile) and of the county (showing 98.4% White profile).

Figure 4 summarises the gender, age and ethnic profile of survey respondents.

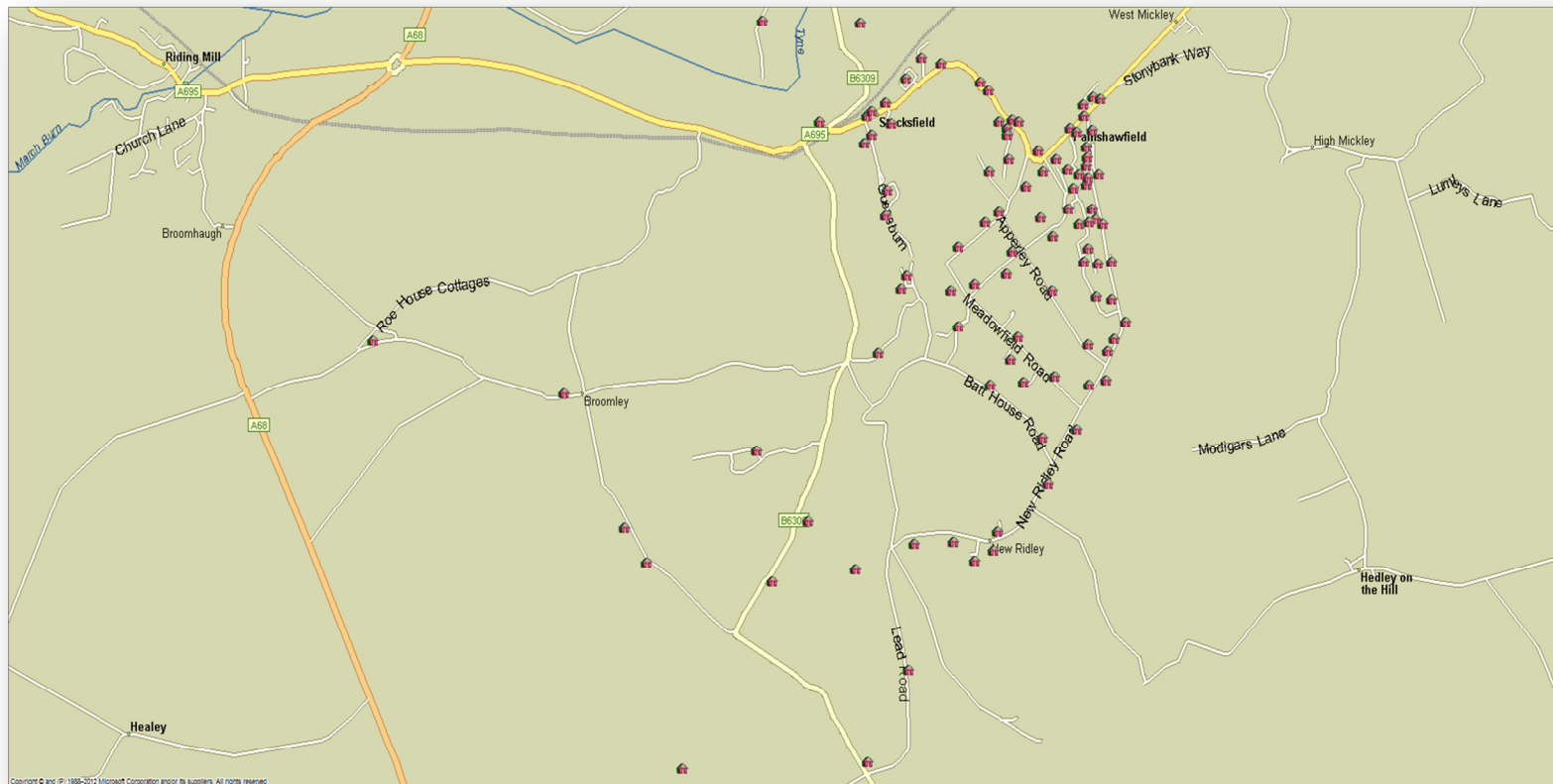
Figure 4



Participation from Across the Parish

In terms of geography, residents from across the length and breadth of Broomley and Stocksfield participated in the 2013 Housing Needs Survey. Figure 5 shows the distribution of respondents. Note that as this is a *postcode-based* plotting, red markers often represent more than one property.

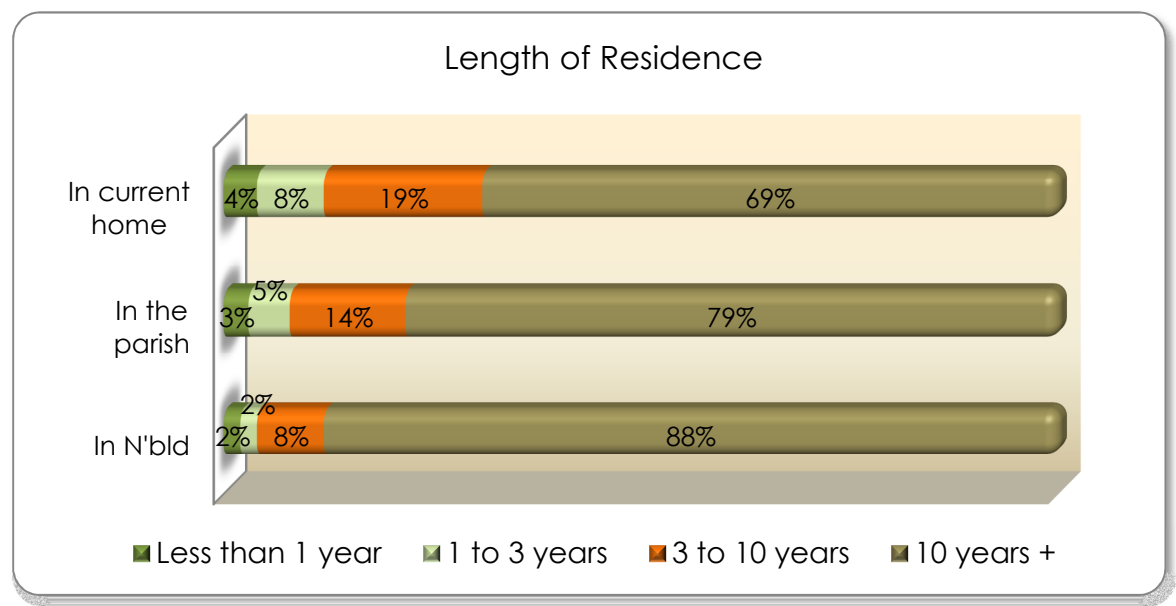
Figure 5



Length of Residence

Just under 70% of respondents had lived in their current home for more than 10 years; just under 80% had lived in the parish for more than 10 years, rising to almost 90% who had lived in Northumberland for this length of time.

Figure 6



Where New Residents Travel From to Live in the Parish

Those who are relatively new to the parish, in residence for less than a year, were predominantly (over 75%) from surrounding areas within the north east. Figure 7 shows all previous areas of residence.

Figure 7



The Characteristics of Respondent Homes



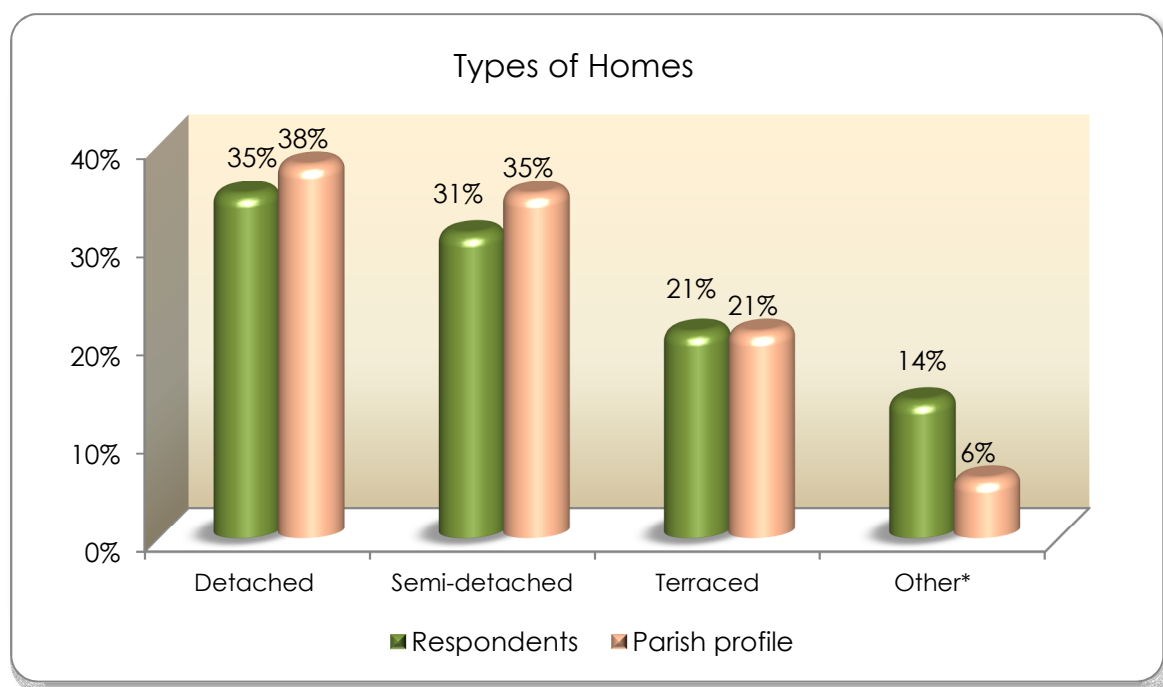
Having considered the characteristics of survey respondents we can now move on to examine characteristics of properties.

For all but 2 of the 629 respondents, their property was their main home.

Property Types Which are Typically Detached and Semi-Detached Houses

Property types were dominated by detached and semi-detached houses, accounting for two-thirds of all properties. Figure 8 shows property types of respondents alongside those which comprise the parish profile. These figures are both notably higher than the county-average (25%) and sub-area average (27%) for detached properties.

Figure 8



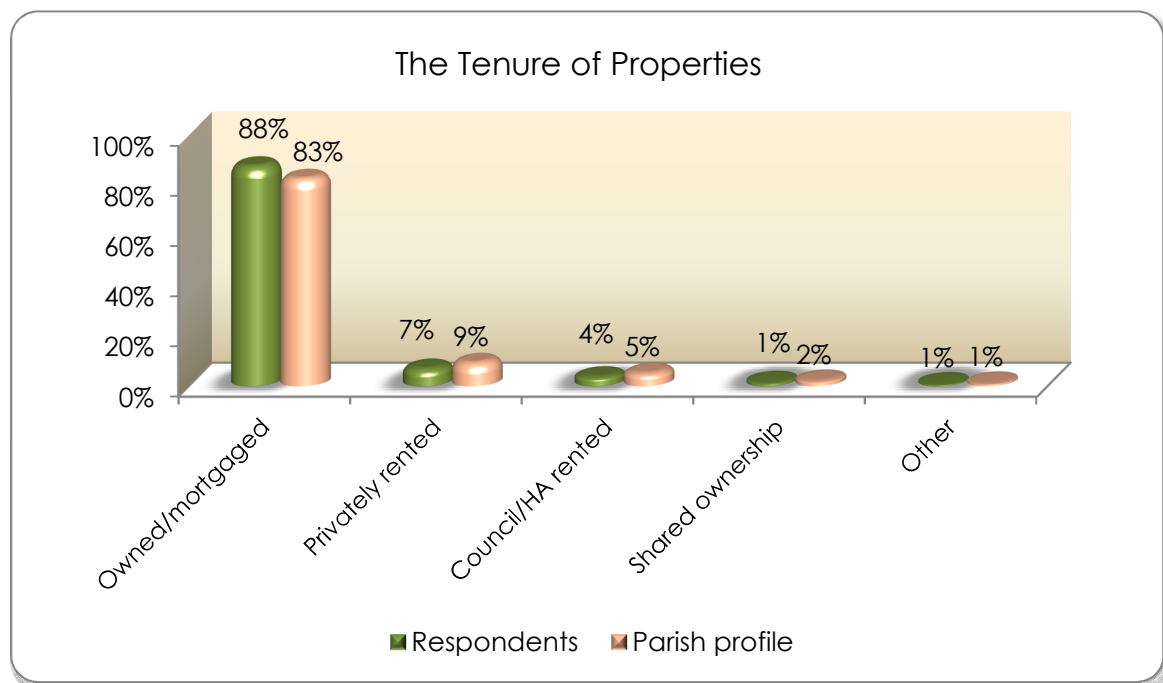
*Other property types include flats, bungalows, cottages, halls, link-detached properties and shared accommodation.

The Tenure of Properties Dominated by Owned/Mortgaged Properties

Residents were most likely to be living in **owned or mortgaged properties (88%)**. Figure 9 shows the tenure of all survey respondents' properties, set alongside that of the parish profile.

As a majority of respondents (88%) owned/mortgaged their home, and this was slightly higher than the percentage who own their home as defined by the 2011 Census (83%), the data was weighted by this key variable to exactly reflect Broomley and Stocksfield's tenure profile.

Figure 9

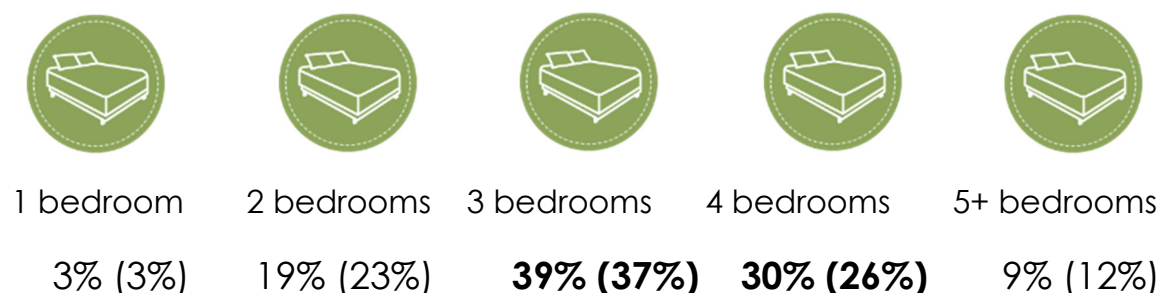


At 83%, Broomley and Stocksfield clearly shows a higher than county (around 66%) and sub-area average percentage of owner occupied properties (74%), and a notably lower percentage of social and private rented properties (14% in the parish, compared to 25% in the sub-area and 32% in the county).

Properties Which Typically Include Three or Four Bedrooms

Around 70% of households detailed by survey respondents contained 3 or 4 bedrooms. (See Figure 10). These are figures close to those recorded in the 2011 Census for the parish (shown in brackets) and show a higher number of bedrooms than in both the county and the sub-area.

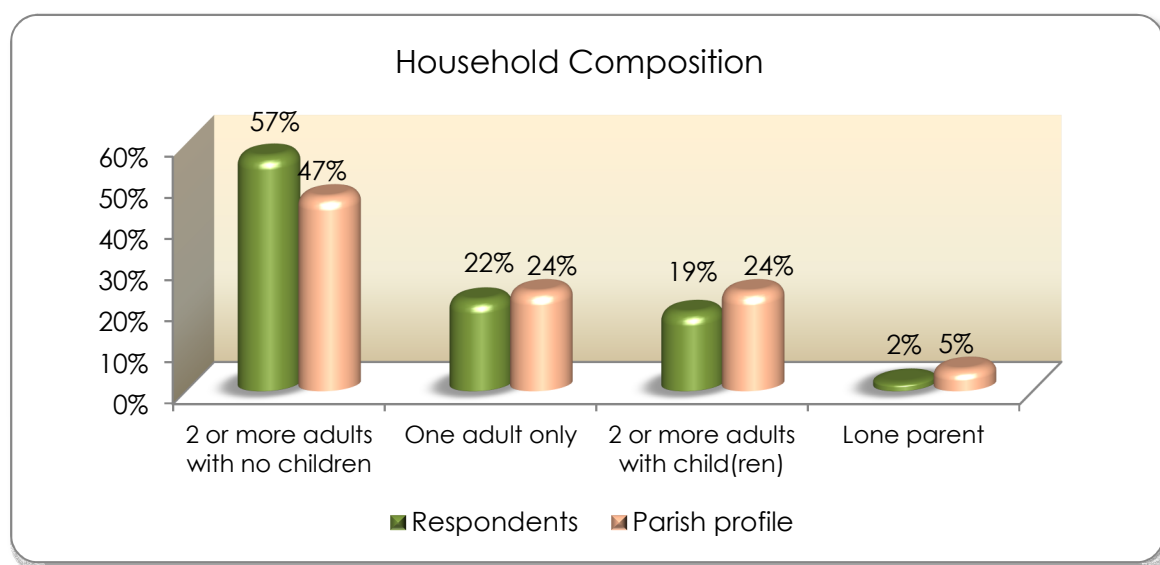
Figure 10



Household Composition

Survey respondents were most commonly living as a couple with no dependent children (57%) or a one person household (22%). Figure 11 shows the survey profile (respondents) set alongside that of the parish.

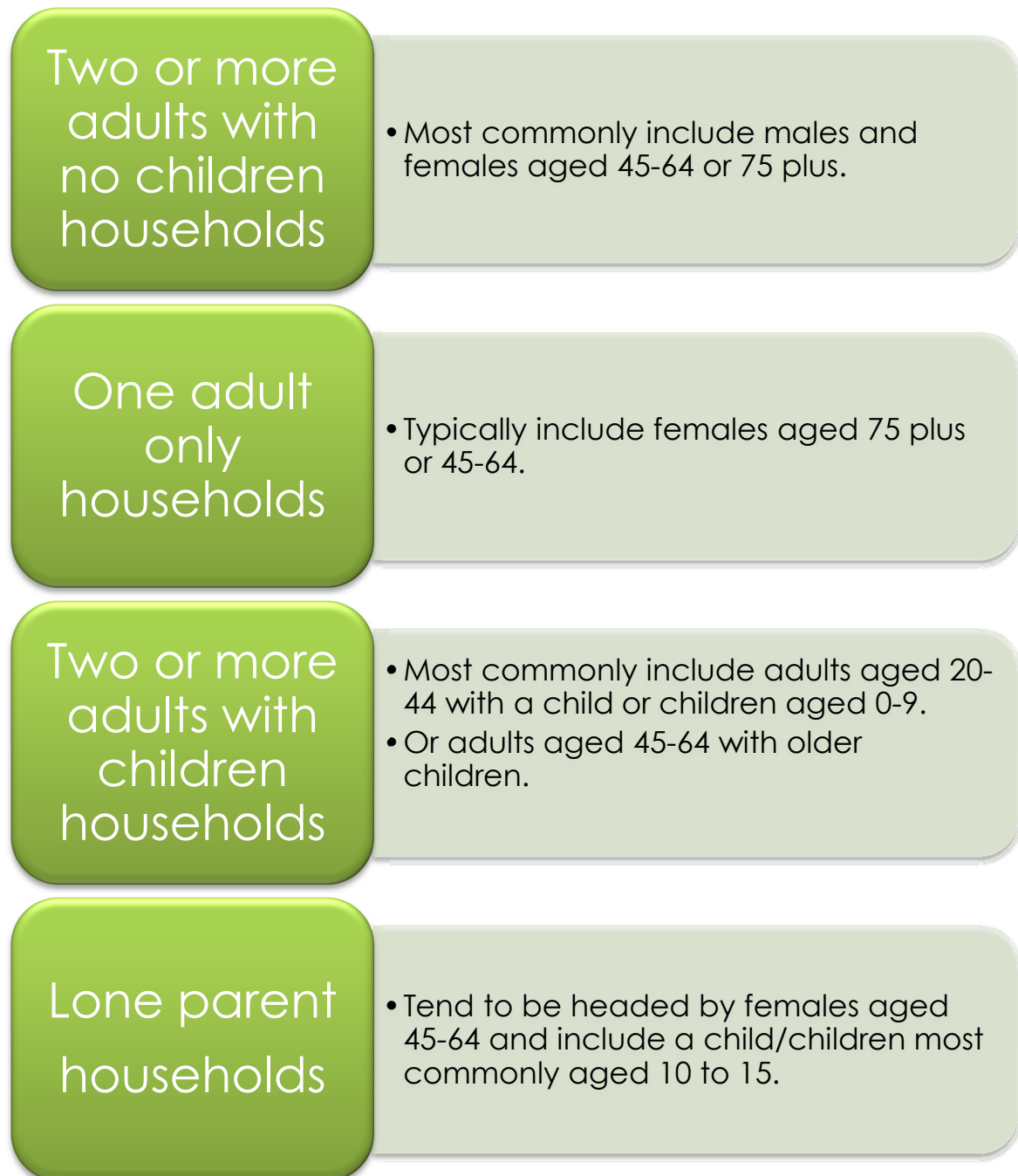
Figure 11



Further Information Relating to Current Household Composition

Further information about the composition of current households in Broomley and Stocksfield can be gleaned in figure 11a.

Figure 11a

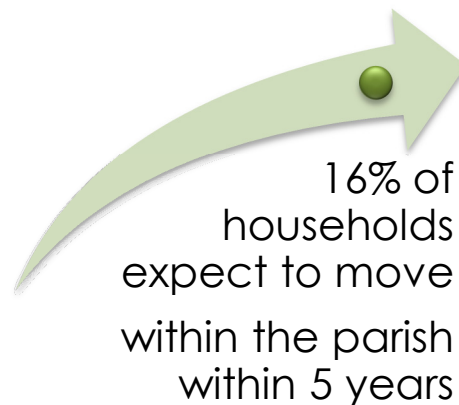


We now move on to examine the housing needs of survey respondents.

Households Expecting to Need to Move within the Parish Within Five Years

As shown in Figure 12, 16% of households - or around 1 household in every 6 - expects to need to move within the parish within the next five years.

Figure 12

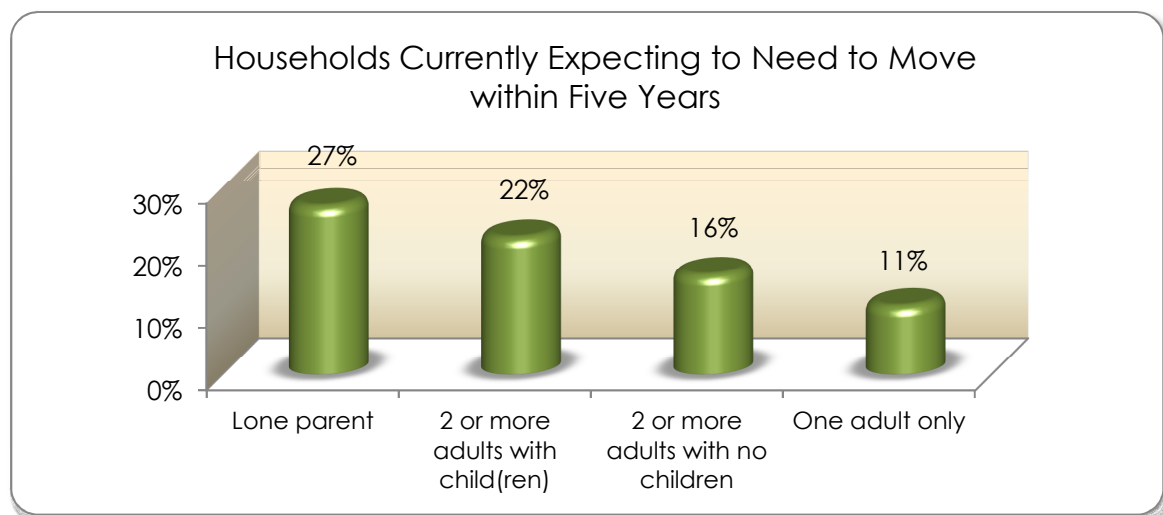


This is a figure which is slightly higher than the 14% recorded at county level in the 2012 Housing Needs Assessment.

Current Household Types Expecting to Need to Move within the Parish within the Next 5 Years

As shown in figure 13, the types of current household who most commonly indicate a house move within the parish in the next five years are those with children – including lone parent households (27% of lone parent households anticipate such a move) and two plus adults with children households (22% of these households anticipate such a move).

Figure 13



When Households Expect to Need to Move

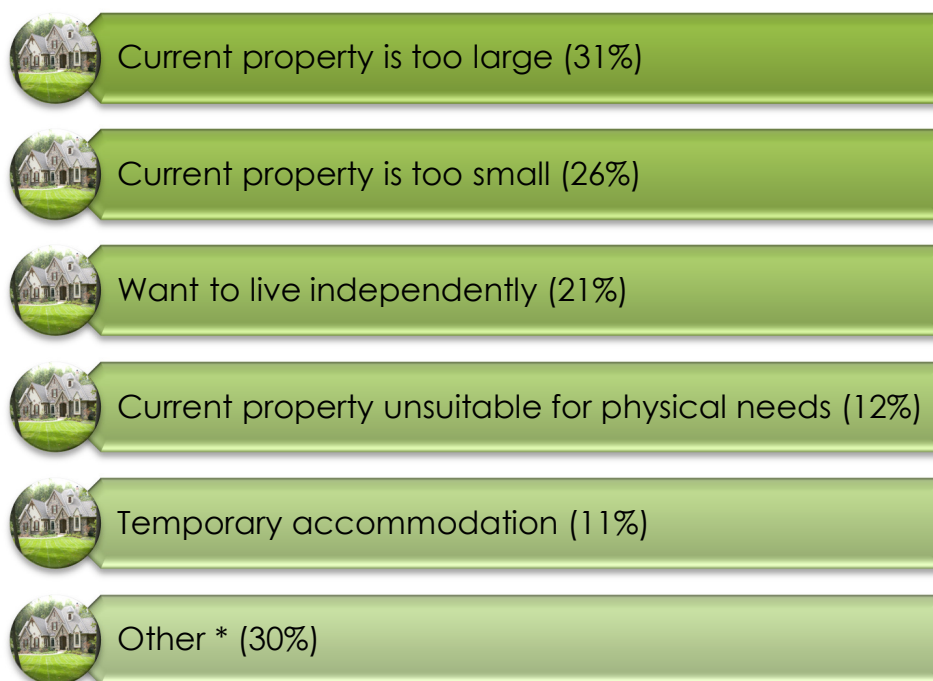
The most common scenario underpinning a move is within 1 to 3 years – a timescale indicated by around half of all those respondents anticipating to move within the parish.

- Immediately (2%)
- Within 1 year (21%)
- More than a year but within 3 years (49%)
- Between 3 and 5 years (29%)

Reasons for Needing to Move?

Reasons underpinning a move tend to focus on current properties being considered an inappropriate size (too small or too large) and/or wanting to live independently.

Figure 14



*Other reasons included needing to move closer to relatives, employment or education; major physical repairs needed to the property; a desire to change tenure type; a preference for a more rural or private property; problem neighbours; and a landlord selling properties currently being rented.

Broomley and Stocksfield with a High Prevalence of Properties Which are Considered Too Large

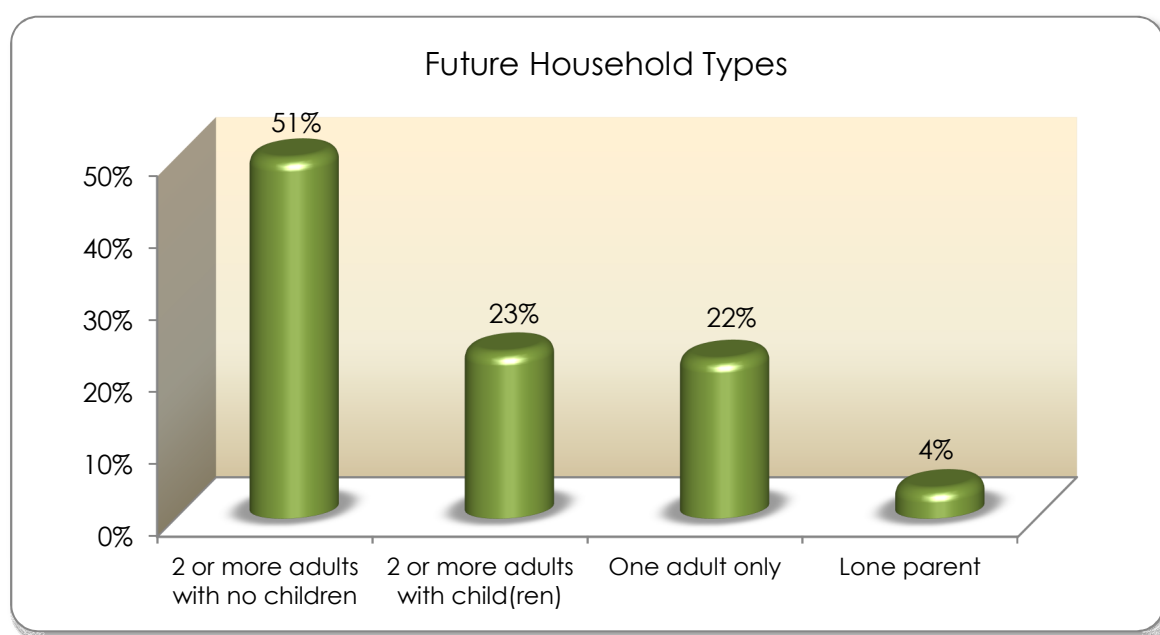
Similar information available at Northumberland sub-area levels suggests that inadequacy of current housing is more commonly underpinned by properties 'requiring major repairs' or being considered 'too small'.

In contrast, Broomley and Stocksfield's reasons suggest a greater focus on outsize properties, not as evident elsewhere in the City Commuter Region sub-area of Northumberland.

Future Household Types

As show in figure 15, the types of future new households (i.e. the composition of households once they HAVE moved) within the parish in the next five years is typically two adults with no children (51%). This is followed by two adults with children (23%) and one adult only (22%).

Figure 15



Thus, these are new households which will be typically comprised of:

couples (51%)

single people (22%)

families (27%)

Bedrooms Needed by Households Expecting to Need to Move

These are also households which typically need 2 (36% of households) or 3 bedrooms (36%). Just 11% need one bedroom, with 17% needing four or more bedrooms. A need for three bedrooms is most frequent among households seeking a move within the City Region Commuter sub-area of Northumberland.

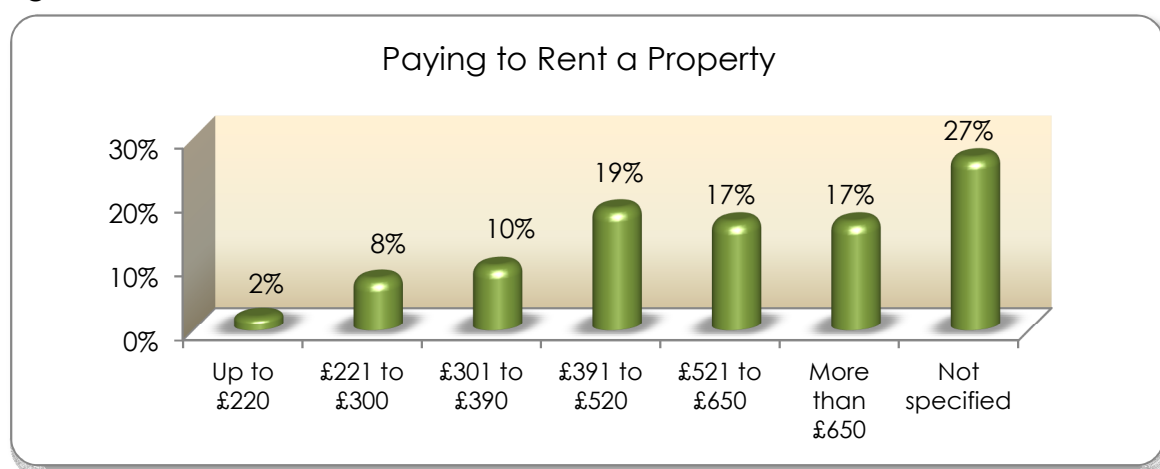
Specific Housing Needs Indicated by Around A Third of Households Intending to Move within the Parish Within Five Years

Just over a third (35%) of those who intended a move within the parish within five years indicated that this household would have a specific housing need. This was typically for a bungalow (22%), a house (11%) or a flat (2%).

Paying to Rent a Property

One in five (20%) of those who are intending to move within the Parish are looking for an affordable rented property of less than £391 a month. Others are intending to pay more. (See Figure 16).

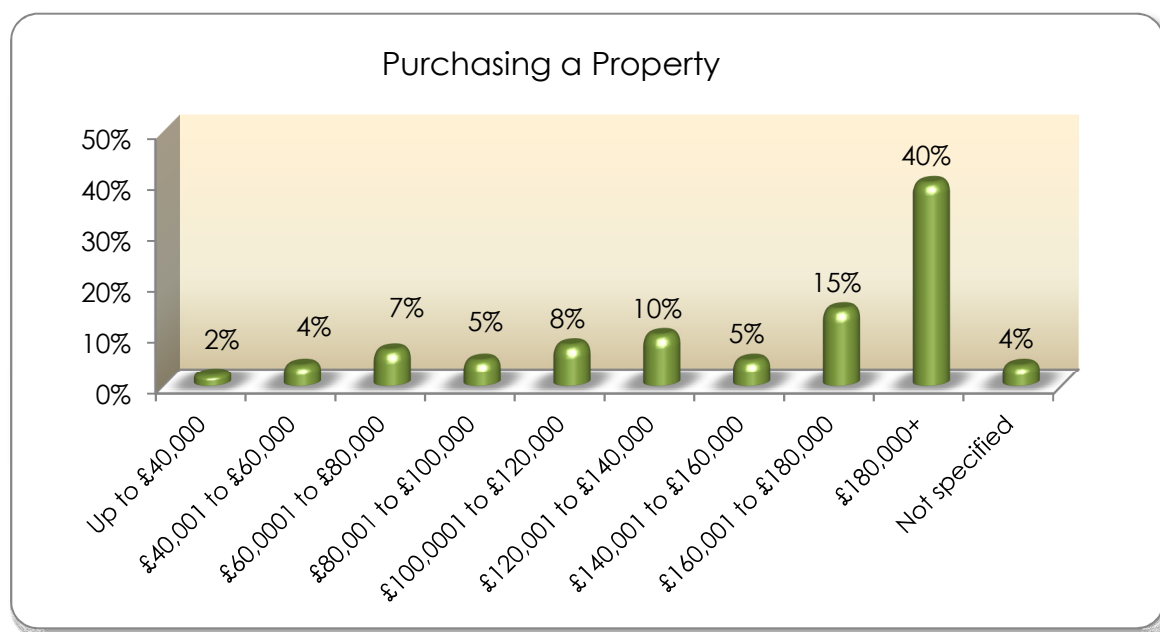
Figure 16



Purchasing a Property In Excess of £180,000

A price in excess of £180,000 emerges as a typical purchase figure if buying - with 40% of those looking to move within the parish in the next five years anticipating seeking a property for this amount. (See Figure 17). This is a figure in the context of the City Region Commuter sub-area demonstrating the highest earnings across Northumberland.

Figure 17



Purchasing Accommodation on the Open Market

The vast majority (89%) of those who are looking to move within the parish within the next five years anticipate purchasing on the open market.

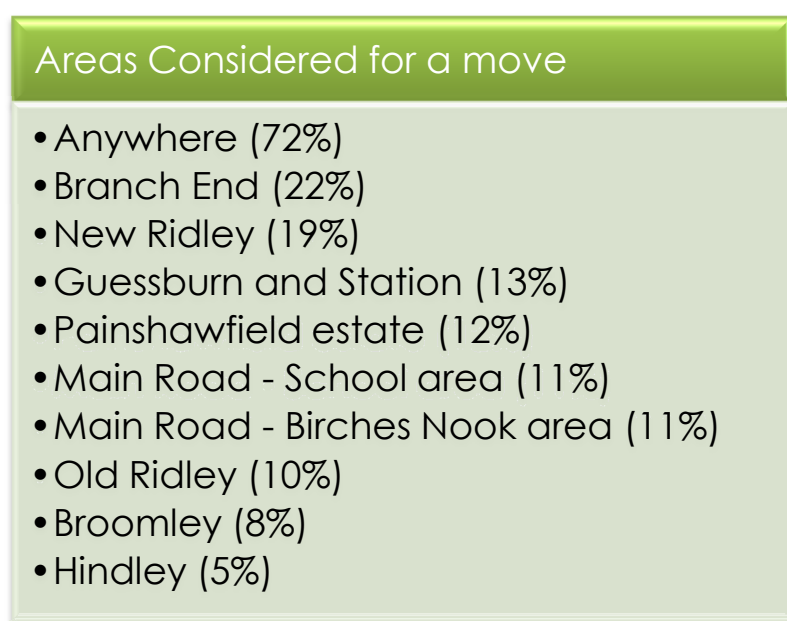
30% would consider renting from a housing association; 26% would consider privately renting, and 18% would consider purchasing as a shared owner with a housing association. 13% would consider self-build. (Note that more than one response could be specified).

a strong desire to purchase
on the open market

Areas in Which Households Expecting to Move Would Consider Living

Over 70% of those expecting to move within the parish within the next five years would consider *any* location within the parish. (See Figure 18). (Again, note that more than one response could be specified).

Figure 18



Registration with Northumberland County Council's Homefinder

Just 8% of households expecting to move within the parish within the next five years are registered with Northumberland County Council's Homefinder.



Others Wishing to Set Up Home in the Parish

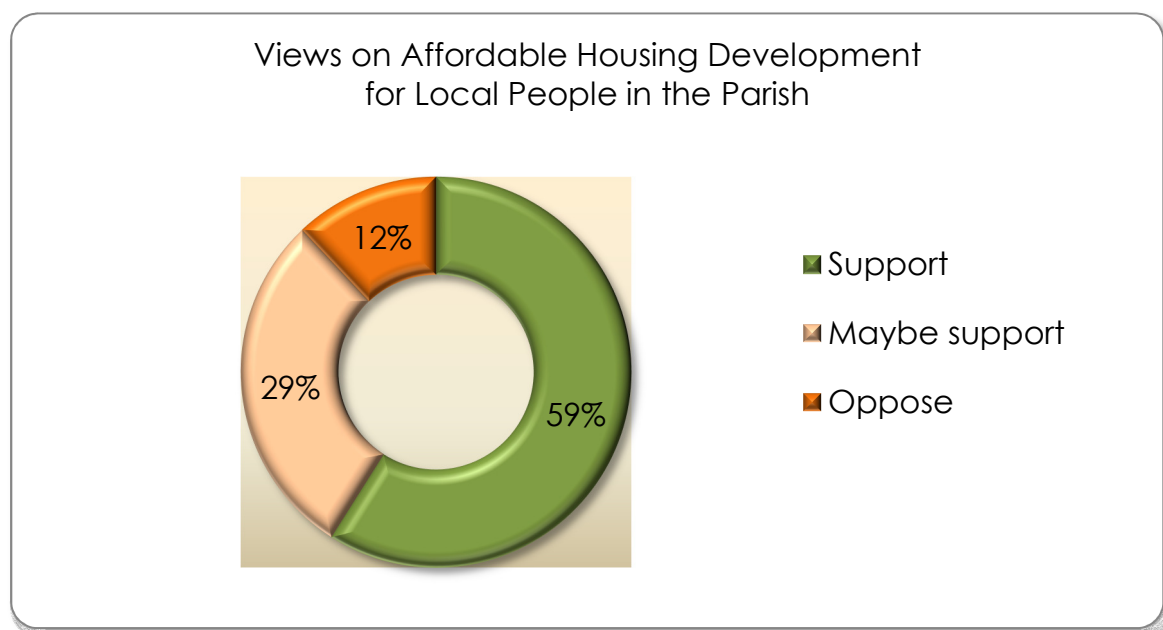
Around 9% of respondents were aware of another person(s) wishing to set up home in the parish.

Views on New Housing Development in the Parish

Affordable Housing Development for Local People in the Parish

89% of householders express general or qualified support for new housing development in the Parish for local people. Just under 60% support the idea of new affordable housing development for local people in the parish, subject to an identified need and the availability of suitable sites. A further 29% say maybe, and just 12% oppose this. (See Figure 19).

Figure 19



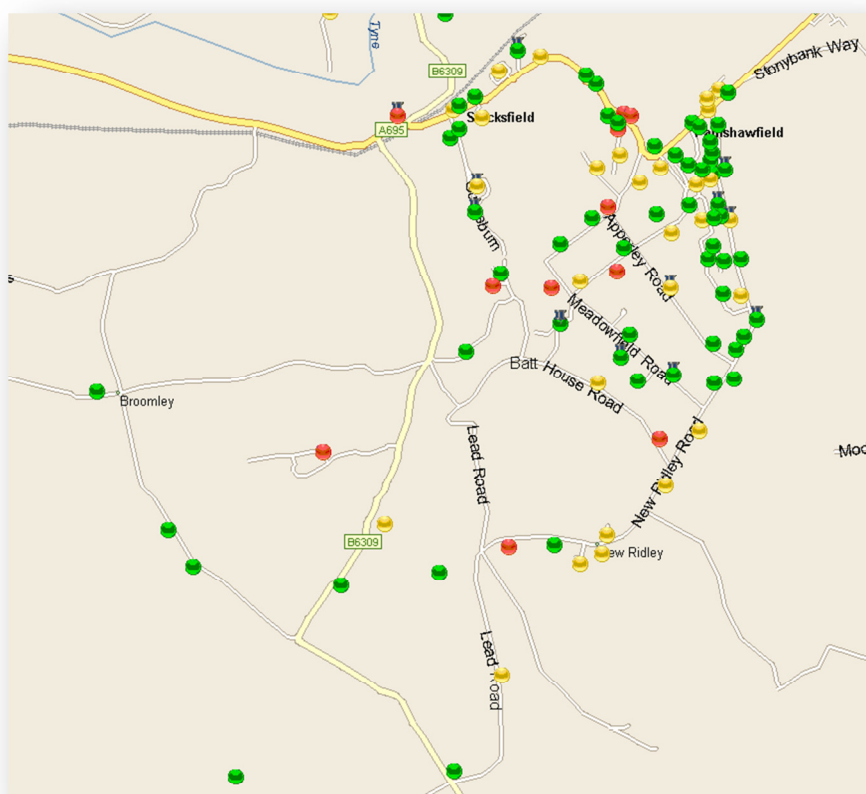
How Support for Affordable Housing Development Varies by Age and Gender

Males (63%) are slightly more likely than females (57%) to support housing development in the parish. It's also interesting to note that, in general, older residents are more receptive to new housing development than their younger counterparts. Support peaks among those aged 45 plus (around 62%), in contrast to just 50% of those aged 25 to 44 voicing their support.

How Support for Affordable Housing Development Varies by Residence

It can also be noted how opinions about affordable housing development in the parish vary by residence, with **GREEN** markers plotting support, **RED** markers plotting opposition and **YELLOW** markers indicating maybes. Note many yellow markers at New Ridley and along New Ridley Road, with red markers towards the mid and north of the parish. (See figure 20).

Figure 20



Why Affordable Housing Development is Supported

Underpinning support for affordable housing development in the parish is a cluster of perceptions which focus on a strong need for homes for younger, first-time buyers:

“first time buyer homes are desperately needed as young people are having to move away”

“we need more developments for young people starting out... 2 to 3 bedroom properties”

“it should be possible for young people to live here if they were raised here. It would help to keep young families in the village”

“young people without the financial assistance of parents are often unable to afford to buy and the cost of renting a place is excessive for poor accommodation”

“the local youth are squeezed out due to inflated house prices”

“I think the parish needs affordable housing for young people”.

At the opposite end of the age spectrum, older people are also highlighted as being in need of affordable local housing:

“there needs to be more provision for older people with more shops and with accessibility a priority”

“we need more homes for elderly living alone who need help”

“there is a significant lack of accommodation for elderly people”

“there are lots of old people living alone in huge houses, they need support, and the big houses could be turned into care homes”.

Note also a number of perceived potential benefits which residents foresee housing development bringing to local facilities - including shops, schools and public transport:

“if we had more people it would encourage more shops”

“Keeps schools and shops going”

“it may help to reinstate a bus service to New Ridley”

“Stocksfield needs a village hub. A new development should include a model village”

“it would also reinforce community spirit”.

This support is sometimes accompanied by feelings borne out of personal experience:

“I bought my son a house in Prudhoe because we couldn’t afford anything in Stocksfield”

“I was on a waiting list for 6 years prior to my tenancy, so there is definitely a need for affordable housing in the village”

“my daughter would like to move back to Stocksfield but the house prices are prohibitive”

“my partner grew up in the parish and we both have family here but are struggling to afford to buy a suitably sized property for our family needs”

“I have a married son with a child who would like to move back before his next child is born”.

However, note that there are some caveats accompanying support – including a desire that development should be affordable, accessible only to local people, suitably sited, and shaped in the context of the local environment.

Why There is Concern About Potential Affordable Housing Development

Residents who are 'maybes' are concerned about four key factors, but are perhaps open to persuasion given the right conditions/criteria. These factors include:

Non-encroachment of greenbelt:

"as long as it did not use up green belt or green field locations"

"it depends entirely on there being a suitable and sustainable location and not on any greenbelt area"

"it depends on the site/development potential"

"I would not support any housing development that would encroach upon the green belt"

the ability of the existing infrastructure to withstand additional usage:

"you need to sort infrastructure before you add people!"

"the basic infrastructure would need to be considered, such as roads, junctions and drainage"

"provided the schools and shops could cope and it wasn't built on green belt land. If the local community supported it, then I would support it"

"it depends on the number of houses and impact on facilities"

the character/appearance of any new properties:

“I am always worried about what planners will allow. We already have examples of house designs that are completely out of character with established housing designs in Stockfield”

“I do not want Stockfield to be a Wynyard Hall or Darras Hall!”

“there needs to be more control over the way houses are designed and built, these new houses are ridiculous...garages where you cannot open the car doors, bedrooms where you can hardly walk around the beds, etc.”

and a proviso that local development is truly intended for local people:

“provided it was truly for local people and not a new influx”.



Why Some Residents Oppose Affordable Housing Development

Those who oppose are keen to retain the small, rural nature of the parish:

“any new housing would presumably have to be built on agricultural land or green belt, and the village would quickly lose its identity as a village, not to mention the effect on wildlife”

“no more houses are needed - it's busy enough and it would ruin the villages”

“we need to maintain the character of the village”

highlighting current properties already on the market, some of which are not selling:

“a brief search on Zoopla reveals 48 properties in this area for rent at less than £500 a month and many houses for sale at less than £100k. This is no reason for house building in my opinion”

“there is plenty of affordable housing already available on the outskirts of Stocksfield”

“there are too many empty houses in Stocksfield as it is”

and the ability of the infrastructure in terms of facilities and transport to be able to cope with increased pressure:

“pressure on local services is not taken into account”

“the village is already large enough, there is a lack of infrastructure for more housing”

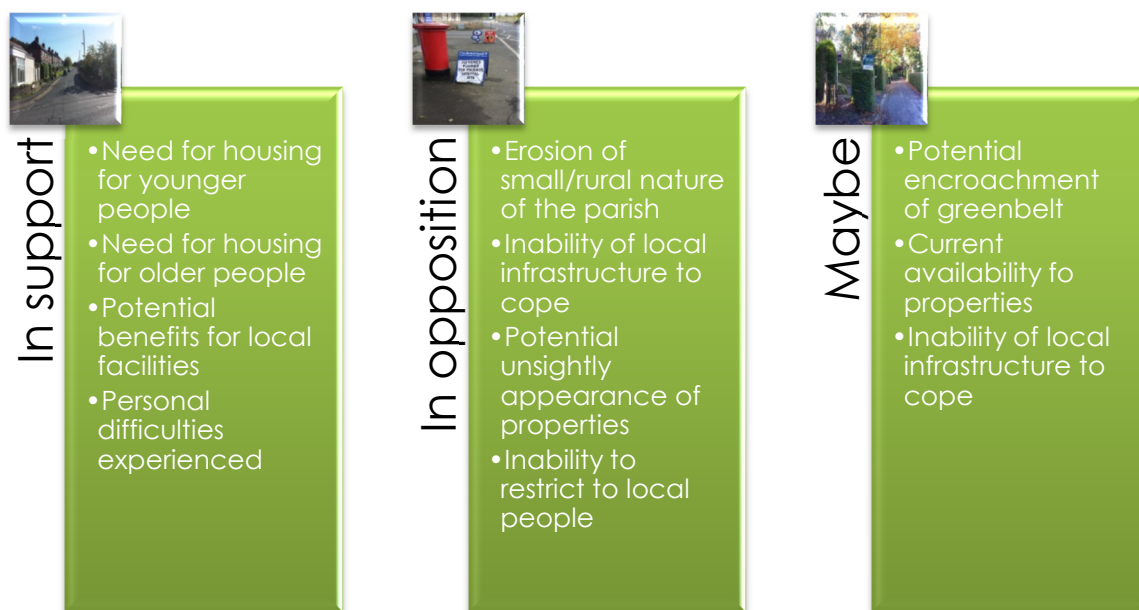
“it's already populated enough”

“Stocksfield is becoming incredibly busy and the infrastructure does not seem to be able to cope with the number of residents at the doctors surgery. Also driving down New Ridley Road now is unpleasant due to the vast number of parked cars. I am not against affordable housing, but not in Stocksfield since it is just too full already”

“Stocksfield is big enough. There's a lack of parking on New Ridley Road which is a major problem, and too many cars coming to houses”.

Figure 21 summarises key reasons underpinning support, opposition and feelings of 'maybe' relating to local affordable housing development.

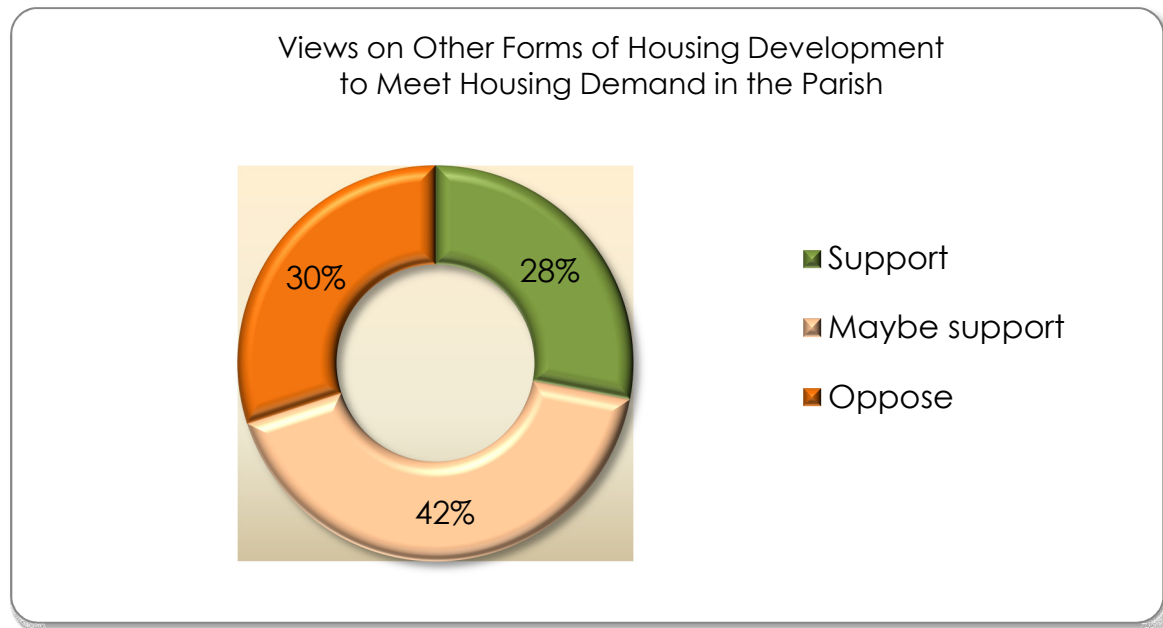
Figure 21



Thoughts on Other Forms of Housing Development in the Parish

30% of households oppose other forms of housing development such as executive housing or general homes for sale. However, this is a figure countered by 28% who support the idea and 42% who are 'maybes'. (See Figure 22).

Figure 22



How Support for Other Forms of Housing Development Varies by Age and Gender

Males are again (37%) more likely than females (23%) to support other forms of housing development in the parish.

However, in a direct reversal of the findings relating to affordable housing when in general, older residents were more receptive to new housing development than their younger counterparts, in relation to other forms of housing it is younger residents who are more likely to support this type of housing than their older counterparts.

Support peaks among those aged 24-45 (37%), in contrast to just 26-28% of those aged 45+ voicing their support.

Key reasons underpinning opposition to this principle largely focus on a perceived need to focus on homes for younger and older residents:

“first time buyer and care homes are needed only”

“it’s the young, married couples who desperately need help to acquire housing”

“there’s a demand for smaller dwellings is evident due to an acute shortage”

“executive housing does not help the elderly or 1st time buyers, the money goes to the developers and not the community”

“it’s all too expensive; we need more affordable housing for those on lower incomes”

“there needs to be homes built for people on lower incomes”.

These are feelings often set in the context of current 'executive' housing provision already thought to be outstripping demand:

"definitely no more executive type housing...there are scores for sale"

"the village has enough executive homes"

"there are already a lot of houses for sale in the area which are not selling very quickly. This will not help this, particularly in Birkdene and surrounding streets".

Those who were 'maybes' largely felt that this was dependent on location, complementary styling and development size:

"it depends on location. We oppose building on the surrounding fields"

"it depends on the scale and the site"

"it depends on the criteria of applicants and if it affects the open spaces"

"will it fit in with the current housing stock?"

In contrast, support was led by feelings of simply having no real reason to object, accompanied by a comparatively philosophical attitude and perceived benefits to the infrastructure:

"if there is a need and it is not obscene, then why not?"

"if we provide a range of good quality shops it will attract more people to the area to shop and live"

"Stocksfield has a certain quality to it that needs to be upheld, so as long as development is in keeping aesthetically this would be OK"

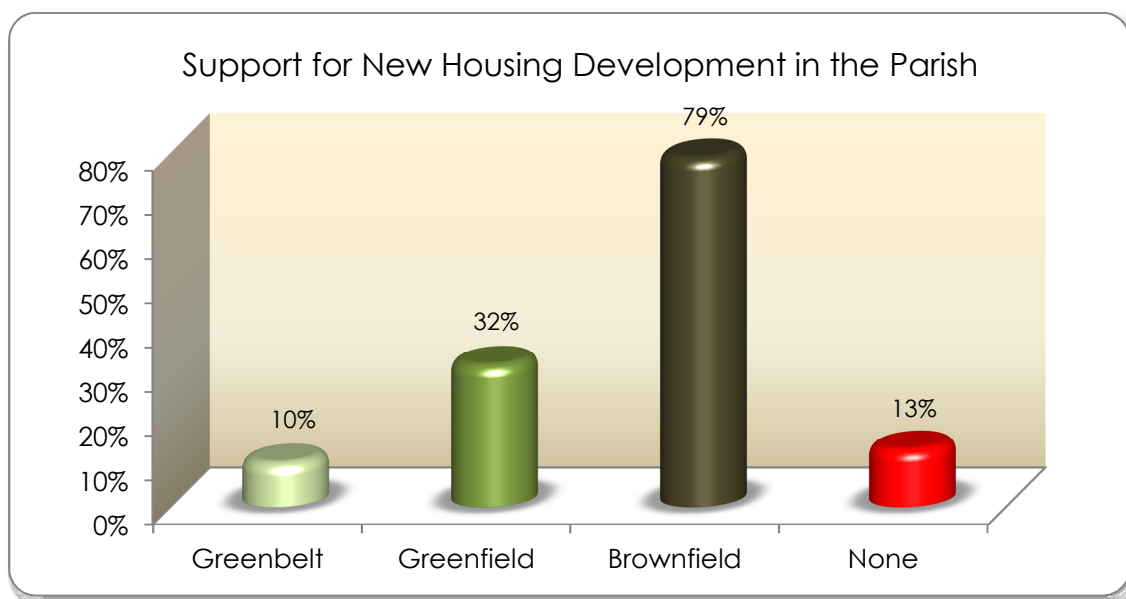
"whatever is needed is needed. Where did Stocksfield start? It wasn't like this years ago, so development is a matter of course"

"whatever is needed".

Overall Support for Housing Development in the Parish

In overall terms there is broad support for housing development in the Parish – with 87% of respondents supporting *at least* one type of locational development and just 13% registering their opposition. (See Figure 23 – more than one type of development was often selected).

Figure 23



This 87% is a figure which outstrips that previously collected in 2008, when Broomley and Stocksfield Parish Council commissioned a residents' survey³ to inform a Parish Plan.

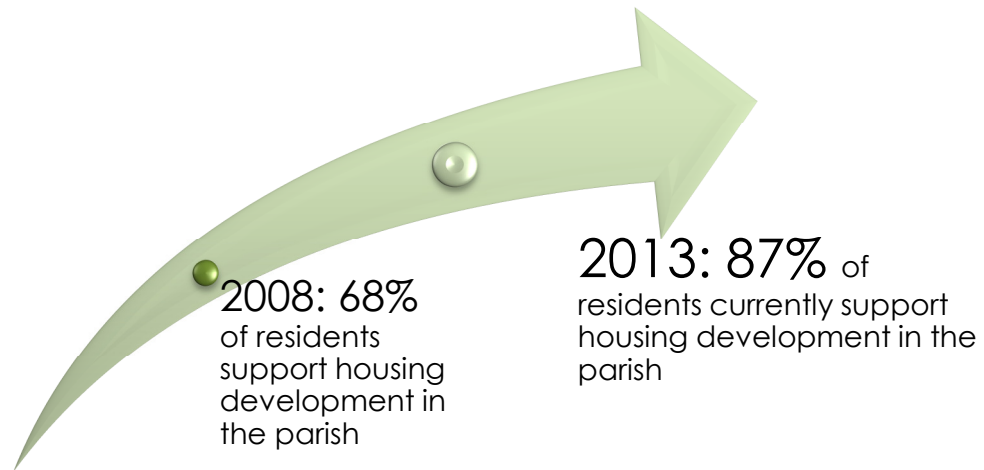
Five years ago the aforementioned survey reported that 68% of residents agreed with the principle of new housing and development in Stocksfield to meet current and future needs, with 26% in opposition and 6% uncertain.

³ Informing a Parish Plan, Consultation with Residents of Broomley and Stocksfield, eljay research, October 2008

Rising Support for Housing Development in the Parish

Thus, five years on, and the statistics suggest that support for new housing development has increased, rising from the 68% previously recorded, to 87% currently. (See Figure 24).

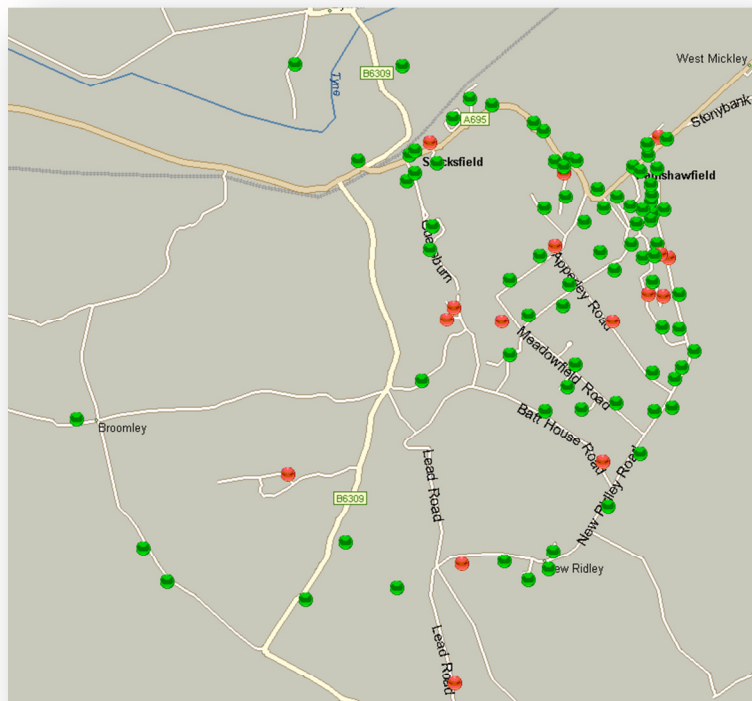
Figure 24



How Opinions Vary by Residence

It can also be noted that objections to affordable housing development in the parish tend to be from residents towards the mid to north of the parish. (See figure 25, plotting support with **GREEN** markers and opposition with **RED** markers).

Figure 25



Opposition to Greenbelt and Greenfield Housing Development With Some Variance by Age and Gender

Across all demographics, a majority of householders *oppose* greenbelt and greenfield development.

This greenbelt development opposition is higher among females (93%) than males (85%). Similar figures are evident in relation to greenfield development (males 59% opposing; females 73% opposing).

Older residents are more likely to oppose both greenbelt and greenfield development than younger residents.

Greenbelt opposition peaks (93%) among those aged 75+, who clearly view this as an asset which should be left untouched. A similar trend is evident in relation to greenfield development, with opposition figures rising from 59% to 70% as the age of residents increases.



How Support for Brownfield Housing Development Varies by Age and Gender

Support for brownfield development is consistently high among both males (80%) and females (79%).

Younger residents are more likely to support brownfield development than older residents, peaking among those aged 25-64 (84%), and dropping slightly among those aged 65 plus (77%).

Sites Considered Suitable for a Local Housing Scheme

Around 20% of residents suggested sites suitable for a local housing scheme. In terms of frequency, these focused on Branch End (behind the car salesroom/Quaker House), Guessburn (beside the old hut) and Merryshields Quarry. Remaining sites were specified by a small number of residents.

- Branch End - next to the Quaker Meeting House/behind Car salesroom/behind public toilets
- Burnside
- Bywell Estate
- Guessburn - the old hut behind the tennis courts/to the west/fields near
- Merryshields Quarry
- Mickley
- New Ridley Village end to Wheelbirks
- New Ridley - opposite Golf Club
- Railway Station - next to car park
- Ridley Village – the end of The Grove
- Sandy Lane
- School/Hall Farm Close - facing



Sites Considered Definitely Unsuitable for Development

Around a third (35%) of respondents listed sites which they would definitely NOT wish to see developed. These focused on two sites – specifically land opposite Broomley First School, and more generally any greenbelt land. Remaining sites were specified by a small number of residents.

Sites included:

- Agricultural, woodland, greenbelt, open countryside and woodland
- Any land
- Any sports fields/ play areas
- Batt House Road - facing
- Branch End playing field
- Broomley/Stocksfield Primary School – opposite
- Broomley Village intersection area
- Broomley Woods
- Cade Hill Road – fields behind
- Guessburn – behind/next to old hut/tennis courts
- Hall Farm Close/school – facing
- Hindley
- Merryshields Quarry/farmland area and surrounding fields to the east of Birches Nook
- New Ridley - land opposite Golf Club
- New Ridley – adjacent to The Grove
- Old Ridley
- Ridley Village
- Stocksfield - Cricket Club

Key Messages

A superb sample obtained - one of the initial key messages of this research is that of the outstandingly high participation rate in the research. Incorporating the views of almost 50% of all householders in Broomley and Stocksfield, the study is informed by a superb sample of opinion.

This participation rate was undoubtedly boosted by the pre-survey NE43 newsletter publicity, the mid-survey Hexham Courant publicity, word of mouth and the prize draw incentive. But perhaps most of all it was shaped by a real and genuine interest in the research by parish residents.

The survey results' accuracy of $\pm 2.75\%$, is significantly better than the 'good' levels of $\pm 5\%$ for sub-areas, normally applied in housing assessments. This gives a significant level of confidence that the findings obtained are representative of the parish as whole. Incorporating the views of male and female residents of all ages from across the parish, the results are current, informative and robust, and independently present the experiences, perceptions and views of residents of Broomley and Stocksfield.

So what are the key messages from these results?

An Ageing Population – The population of the parish is ageing in its distribution. The percentage of residents who are aged 65+ has increased to almost 30% in the last ten years, and is notably higher than the equivalent percentage for Northumberland as a whole. This clearly has implications for the housing needs of the parish, and is something which should be borne in mind accordingly.

A Very Settled Population – This is a population among which the vast majority (80%) have lived in the parish for more than ten years. And whilst the Census does not include any type of comparative figures in relation to this finding, it is fair to say that this *feels* like a very stable and settled population, for whom living in the parish is something which they have known for a significant length of time. It can be argued that in this context they are perhaps likely to *continue* to want to, and intend to live in the parish.

A Predominance of Owner Occupied Detached and Semi-Detached Properties – This is a parish in which properties are characteristically dominated by detached and semi-detached housing, with a very high rate of owner occupation.

Three and Four Bedroom Properties as the Norm – as evident in around 70% of properties, and higher than the surrounding region of Northumberland, and indeed Northumberland as a whole.

Couples with no children – comprise the most typical household type in Broomley and Stocksfield.

The vast majority of householders (84%) do not intend to move within the parish within the next five years – however, 16% do intend to need to make such a move. This is a figure slightly higher than the 14% recorded for the county as a whole.

A move that is most likely (49%) within one to three years – of the remainder, 23% of those households intending to move foresee this happening prior to a year, with the other 29% anticipating a three year plus move.

Properties which are simply the wrong size – is the number one reason which underpins anticipated moves. This is typically a feeling which stems from properties which are felt to be *too large* (31%) or, conversely, *too small*. Note also that a proportion of those intending to move (around 20%) want to live independently.

Two or more adults with no children (couples) – form the most likely households to move within the parish the next five years.

Properties which Comprise Two or Three Bedrooms – are those most frequently requested.

No specific, specialist housing needs – are identified by two-thirds of those intending to move. Among those who do identify such a need, bungalows emerge as their preferred housing type.

A typical anticipated weekly rent of at least £391 for a property – is evident, with renting from a housing association the most typical scenario being considered.

A typical anticipated purchase price of at least £180k for a property – is evident, with a likely purchase from the open market.

Location within the parish is unimportant – for over 70% of those looking to move. Most popular locations include Branch End and New Ridley.

Just under 90% of households express general or qualified support for new affordable housing development for local people in the parish – this is a figure countered by just 12% who oppose this idea. Conditional support is largely dependent on considerations of development sites, sizes and shapes. In this context, reassurance about the protection of greenbelt and the ability of the local infrastructure to bear additional demand is felt to be necessary.

Levels of support vary – according to the age and location of householders. Males, older residents and those living in the mid to north-east of the parish are most likely to support the idea of local, affordable housing.

A strong focus on the needs of younger, first-time buyers and older residents – emerge as key reasons underpinning support for local affordable housing. These are often as a result of direct, personal experience.

Opposition to development is founded on concerns about rural preservation – with some residents anxious that development will erode the character of the parish. These are anxieties accompanied by concerns which relate again to the ability of the infrastructure to withstand additional people-pressure, and the view that many houses in the parish, despite being on the market, remain unsold. This latter point is emphasised also in relation to the possible development of other forms of housing, such as executive homes.

An increasing percentage (87%) of householders support *at least one* type of housing development in the parish, with just 13% registering their opposition – this is support which is largely focused on brownfield development, and which is evident across the length and breadth of the parish. In contrast, note majority opposition for both greenbelt and greenfield development.

Branch End - emerges as the most frequently suggested site for housing development.

In contrast, opposite Broomley First School and on any greenbelt – emerge as the most frequently suggested sites which are considered to be unsuitable for housing development.

