



A DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE HOUSING NEED OF CULWORTH

**Produced by
Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association
in conjunction with
Culworth Parish Council and
South Northamptonshire Council**

December 2002

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Purpose of the Survey
3. Respondent details
 - i) Sub-Areas
 - ii) Household size of respondents
 - iii) Tenure of all respondents
 - iv) Property type
 - v) Local connection
 - vi) Period of residence
 - vii) Desirability
 - viii) Migration
 - ix) Local support
4. Housing need analysis
5. Conclusion
6. Comments

1. Introduction

Northamptonshire Rural Housing Association has been chosen by South Northamptonshire Council to be a specialist agency to work with their four other “preferred partner” registered social landlords to assist in the provision of affordable housing in the rural areas of the borough. In particular, the Association is to work with Parish Councils to investigate “local” social housing needs and assist in the provision of housing to meet any identified need.

In this respect we were introduced, by South Northamptonshire Council, to the Parish Council for Culworth who had expressed an interest in investigating the housing needs of their village as part of their work for the Village Plan. It was agreed that a detailed housing need survey should be conducted within the village to determine the levels of local needs, the findings of which could then be incorporated within the completed Village Plan. A Housing Plan Sub-Committee had been established as part of the Parish Council, and it was agreed that we should liaise directly with this group in order to progress the survey.

Accordingly, the survey form was agreed with the Sub-Committee who then arranged delivery to every household in the village during the last week of November 2002 (a copy of the survey form is attached at Appendix 1 to this report). The return date for the survey was 20th December 2002, giving respondents approximately 3-4 weeks to complete and return their forms.

As at the 1991 Census, Culworth had a population of 457 people and 156 households. However 177 survey forms were delivered around the village.

2. Purpose of the Survey

The survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of the housing need in the village of Culworth. This evidence can then be incorporated within the Village Plan and also 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. This Policy is incorporated within South Northamptonshire Council’s Local Plan as Policy H9.

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.

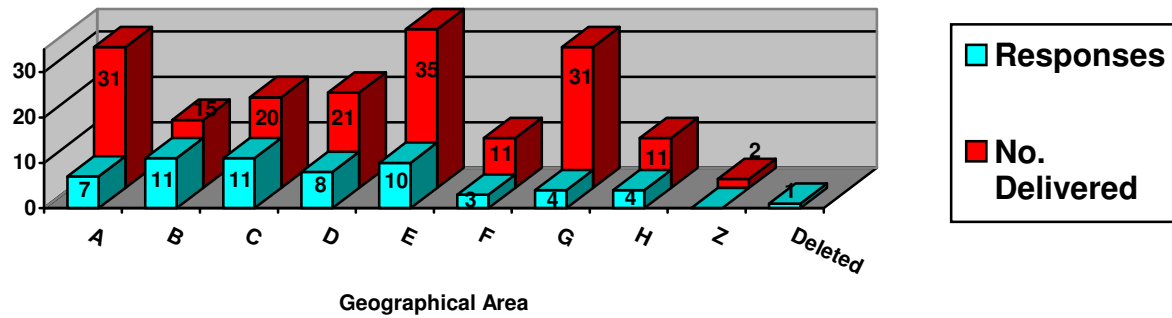
Indeed, if anything is to be done about the local needs of the village, support at the local level is vital before anything can be done to address it.

3. Respondent details

A total of 59 survey forms were received, giving a return rate of 33%. This is a good 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.

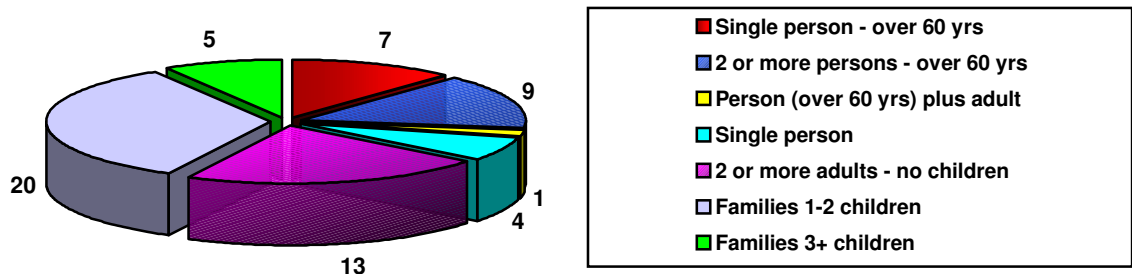
i) Sub-Areas

In order to gain a better understanding of the response rate, the Sub-Committee separated the village into 8 geographical areas plus one for respondents who are not currently resident (Zones are detailed at Appendix 2). The following chart details the breakdown:



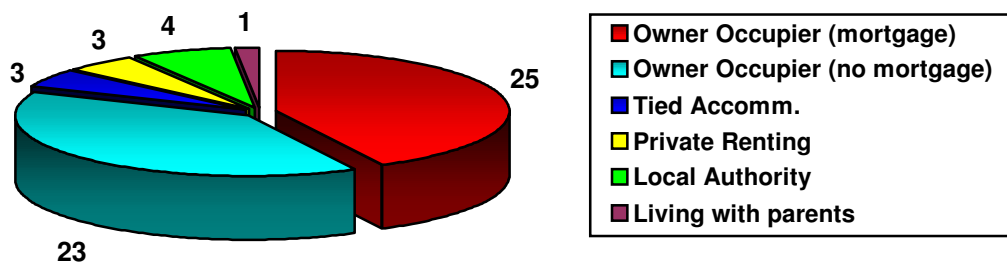
ii) Household Size of Respondents

There was a good mix in terms of household sizes, covering all categories from singles and couples, families and elderly persons.



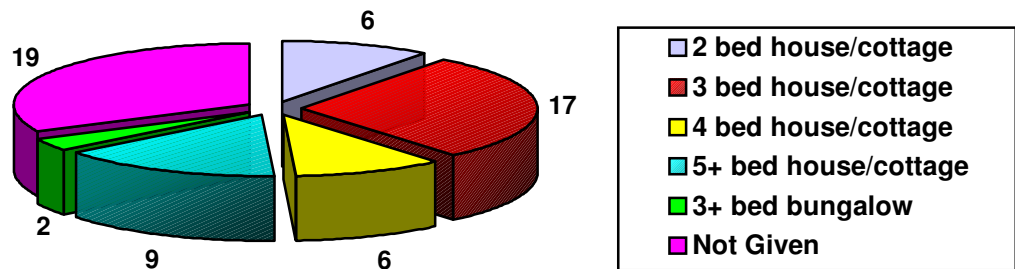
iii) Tenure of all Respondents

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 just over 81%, with a significant percentage of these being from residents who do not have an outstanding mortgage.



iv) Property Types

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



From this chart we can conclude that there is a variety of houses represented within the village. However, it should be noted that there is a distinct lack of responses from individuals who live in bungalow accommodation, which would suggest a problem regarding the availability of homes for individuals with mobility difficulties.

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 Culworth, which has resulted in a less accurate picture of the village make-up.

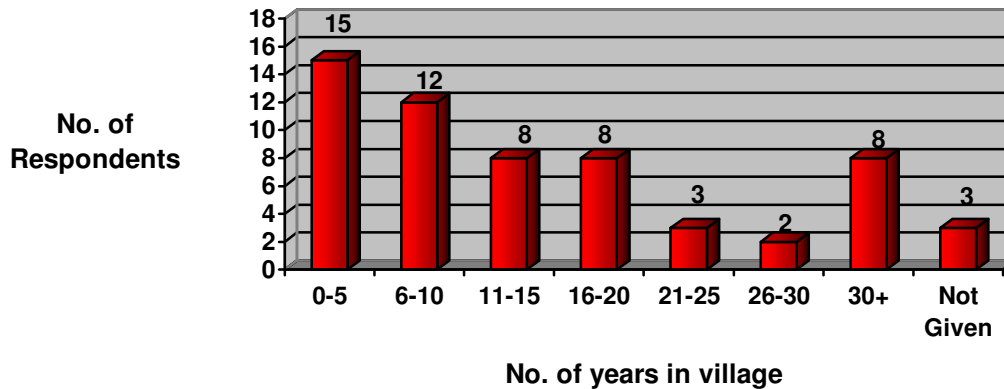
v) Local Connection

Clearly the survey forms are only delivered to properties within the village, however, the questionnaire is also directed at people who may not currently be living in the village but who have a close connection.

In this instance, all but 1 of the returns were from individuals who are currently resident within the village. The remaining questionnaire was returned from a respondent with a period of previous residency.

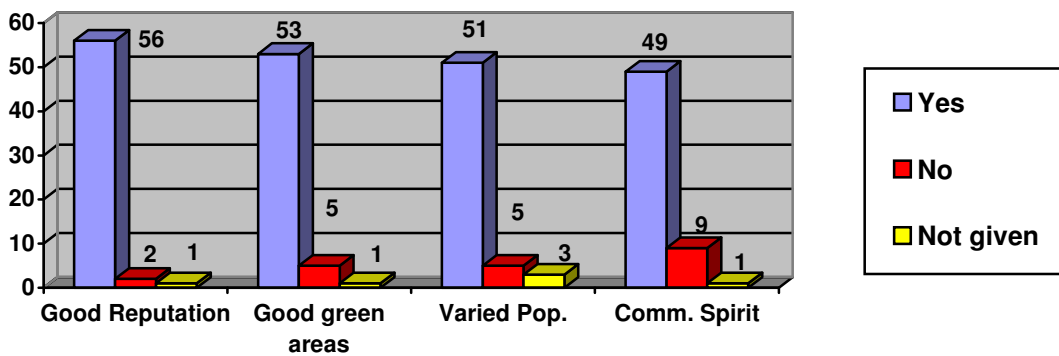
vi) Period of Residence

The table below gives the number of years that respondents have lived in Culworth. From this table we see that the single largest category is from residents who have lived in the village for less than 5 years. The chart gradually reduces in numbers until it rises slightly at the 30+ year period. This would suggest a high level of inward and, potentially therefore, outward migration.

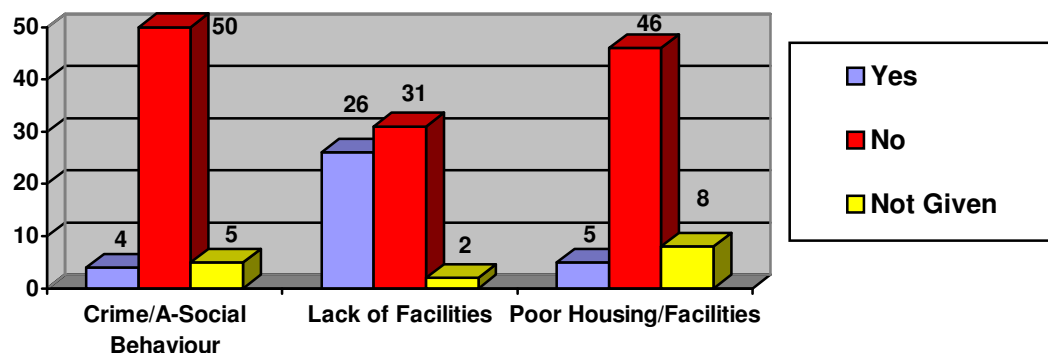


vii) Desirability (Sustainability)

The following two charts detail respondents' answers to the "desirability" questions. The answers to these questions allow us to build up a picture of life within Culworth. 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.



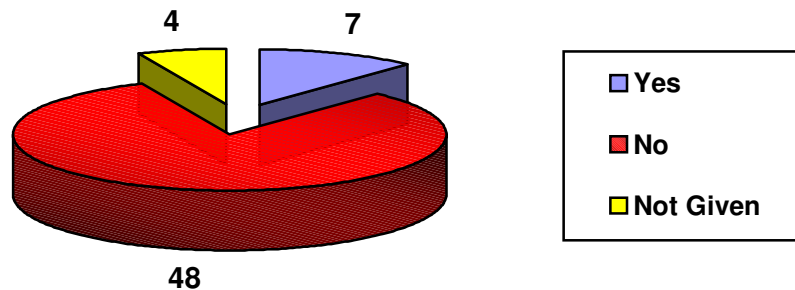
From this first chart we note that the vast majority of residents consider that Culworth has a good reputation, pleasant and well maintained green areas, a varied and balanced population and a friendly atmosphere/community spirit.



The second chart shows that the vast majority consider that there is very little crime/anti-social behaviour and that the built-up area is generally in good order. However, there was a split regarding availability of facilities, and some suggestions included:

1. Better bus service
2. Increased playing facilities
3. Increased shopping opportunities/choice

viii) Migration

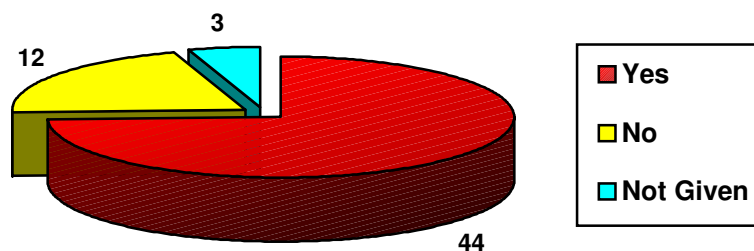


The survey also asked whether respondents knew of people who had had to leave the village because of a lack of suitable, affordable accommodation.

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

ix) 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. The vast majority of respondents, over 74%, would be in favour of a small local needs affordable housing development.



NOTE: Unfortunately, due to a printing error, the question of support also asked respondents if they supported the possibility of further recreation land. This should not have been included on the Culworth survey as it was a duplication from a previous survey in another village. We can only apologise for this oversight.

4. Housing Need Analysis:

Of the 59 returns, 55 were from people who were 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 Culworth. These were therefore discounted from the rest of the analysis. Accordingly, as far as the requirement for affordable housing is concerned there are 4 returns detailing a housing need.

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

RESPONDENT	WHAT REQUIRED	REALITY TENURE
Family (1 child) local authority renting. Wish to invest in own home in the village, instead of renting, but can not afford to purchase on the open market	3 bed house – shared ownership	3 bed house – shared ownership
Couple, living with parents. Require independence but do not wish to leave the village and are unable to secure property locally	2-3 bed house – rent	2 bed house – rent
Couple, living in tied accommodation. Current home will have to be relinquished with employment, but will not be able to secure a suitable property in the village	2 bed bungalow – rent	2 bed bungalow – rent
Family (1 child) private renting. Current home is in poor condition and very expensive. Tenancy is not secure	3 bed house – any tenure	3 bed house – shared ownership

5. Conclusion

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

There is a small need for both rented housing and shared ownership purchase, and the exact need is as follows:

1 x 2 bedroom house for rent

1 x 2 bedroom bungalow for rent

2 x 3 bedroom houses for shared ownership purchase

Our recommendation is that a single mixed development of 4 social housing dwellings should be considered, as detailed above. This development will alleviate the current housing need for those who can not afford to secure a suitable property in Culworth, but who wish to stay in the village, or return to be close to family and friends for support, and work commitments.

6. Comments

Detailed below is a cross-section of comments that were expressed by respondents, including whether they would support a small development to meet local needs:

- a) **YES:** *“Any development must be limited in concentration and in-keeping with the character of the existing housing and environment.”*
- b) **YES:** *“Suitable housing for the elderly in the village where they have spent most of their lives, e.g. sheltered accommodation or flats.”*
- c) **NO:** *“For many years young people have not been able to afford property in the village they grew up in. This is not new. Young people have to move up the property ladder as we all have had to until eventually they can move back into their old village or one like it...”*
- d) **YES:** *“I think this village needs affordable housing for some people. I don’t think it should be extended – it would lose its “village” atmosphere. It should remain “small”. There are larger villages in this area, so not necessary. However, it seems ridiculous that cottages; 2 up/2 down are achieving £125,000!”*
- e) **YES:** *“We strongly support the building of new affordable housing for younger people, singles and couples.”*
- f) **NO:** *“There is enough already.”*
- g) **YES:** *“Lack of housing for younger and single people. Shortage of affordable housing, i.e. not many council houses left (many now sold). We could end up as an elderly population/commuter village.”*

Zone Area

- A:** Barley Hill
- B:** From end of village on Sulgrave Road to Walnut Close inclusive
- C:** From Butts Close to the Old Rectory on Queens Street
- D:** After the Old Rectory, down remainder of Queens St, Banbury Lane, Back Lane
- E:** High Street, both sides – from Red House to Manor
- F:** Left hand side of High Street from opposite Nook, to end of village
- G:** Right hand side of High Street, from Nook, to end of village
- H:** Outlying farms
- Z:** Additional, out of village participants

[back to top](#)