

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

GILSTON PARK ESTATE

DECEMBER 2019

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1 Overview

- 1.1 The private and affordable homes at the Gilston Area will serve the needs of a wide range of East Hertfordshire's households. However, it is particularly important that a proportion of the homes respond specifically to local issues, meeting the needs of people in local parishes.
- 1.2 This Housing Needs Survey has been undertaken to better understand the needs and desires of local households. The results of this survey will be used to inform the housing mix of the initial phases and raise local peoples' awareness of housing options which meet their needs. The survey is the first in a series which will be undertaken periodically over the life of the development, ensuring changing needs are addressed.

2 Survey Methodology

- 2.1 In order to maximise useful information the survey was undertaken on a “door to door” basis by a specialist consultant, Opinion Research Services (ORS). ORS was selected given its extensive track record in similar surveys, quality management systems and accreditation by relevant professional bodies.
- 2.2 The broad survey approach was:
- Suitable survey questions developed by Quod, ORS and Places for People.
 - Strategy for handling of personal data in line with the GDPR developed and verified by each organisation.
 - Pre-alert letter issued to all households within the parishes of Eastwick, Gilston, High Wych, Hunsdon and Widford (1,412nr households). This letter provided warning of the forthcoming survey visit and an opportunity to arrange a convenient time if preferred.
 - Visits to households over a 4 week period, ensuring at least 1 visit per household but targeting 3 visits (weekday, evening, weekend).
- 2.3 In order to ensure a meaningful output a minimum of 350 successful interviews were targeted. The survey substantially exceeded this, achieving 667 interviews (just under half of all households).
- 2.4 The survey will be repeated periodically throughout the development of the Gilston Park Estate to ensure that changing needs are addressed.

3 Profile of Respondents

- 3.1 This section of the report outlines the profile of the households who responded to the Housing Needs Survey.
- 3.2 Face to face interviews were carried out in the parishes of Gilston, Hunsdon, Eastwick, Widford, and High Wych. A total of 667 households responded to the Housing Needs Survey. The breakdown by parish is outlined in table 3.1 below.

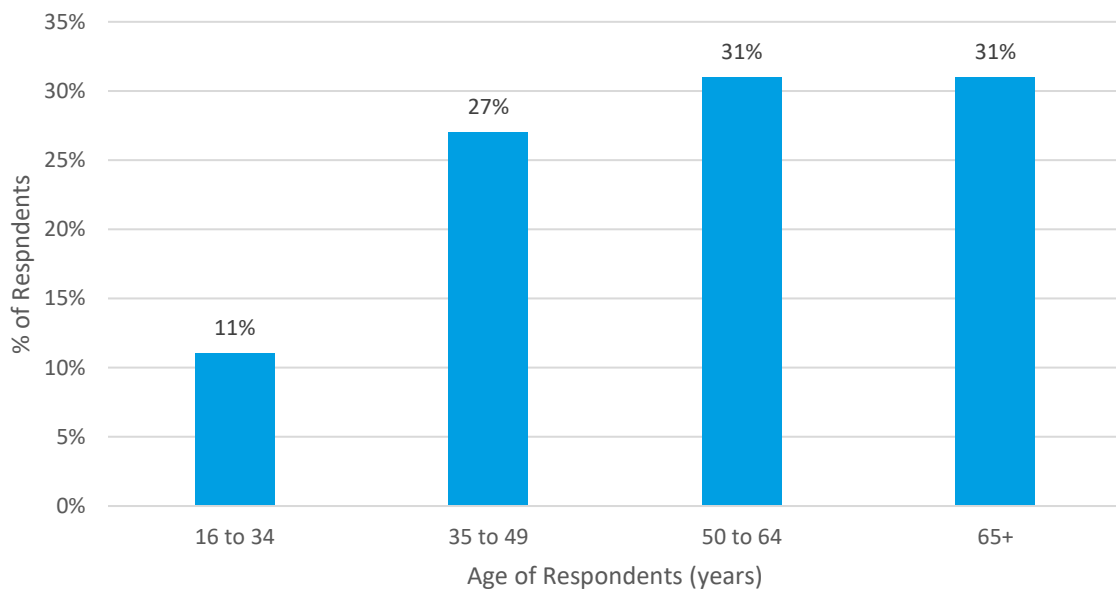
Table 3.1 – Breakdown of respondents by Parish

Parish	No. of Residents
Eastwick	47
Gilston	139
High Wych	129
Hunsdon	228
Widford	124
Total	667

Age Profile

- 3.3 Figure 3.1 below identifies the age profile of the respondents. A significant proportion of the respondents were aged over 50 (62%).

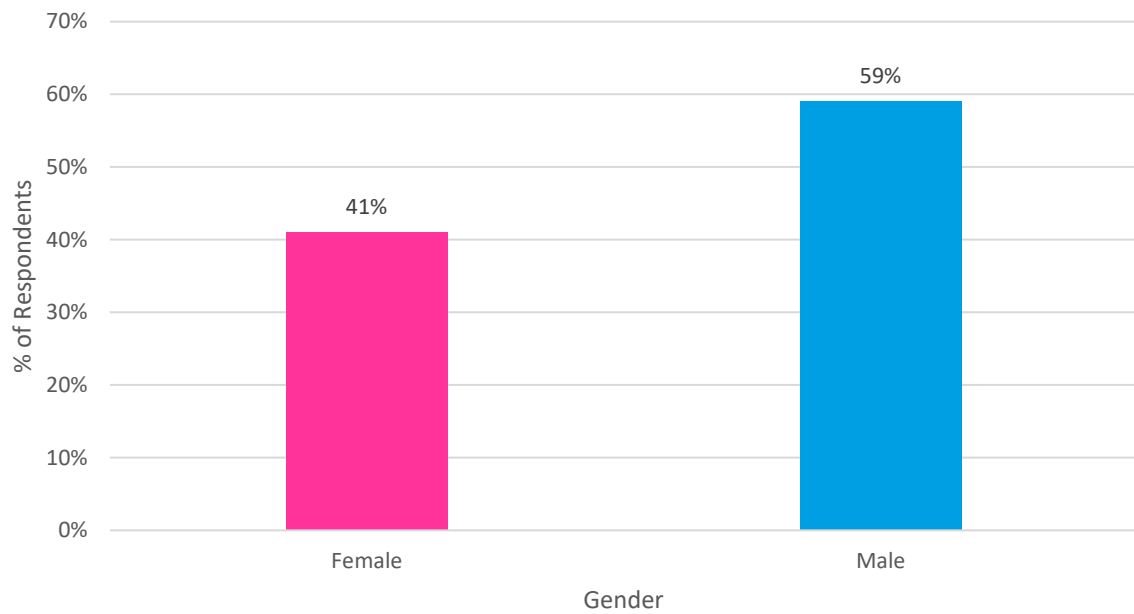
Figure 3.1 – Age of respondents



Gender Analysis

- 3.4 Figure 3.2 below identifies the split of male and female respondents. Of all the people who responded to the survey 59% were male.

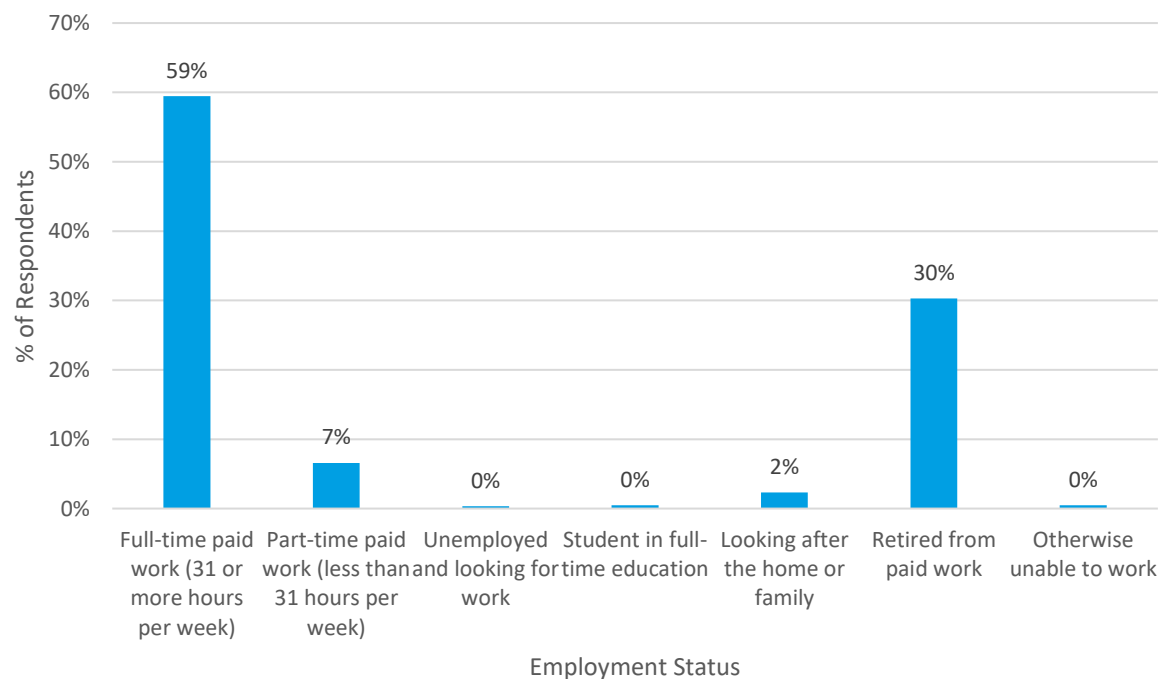
Figure 3.2 – Gender Analysis



Working Status

- 3.5 Figure 3.3 below outlines the working status of the respondents. A significant proportion of the respondents were retired from paid work (30%), however the majority were in full time employment (59%).

Figure 3.3 – Working status of respondents



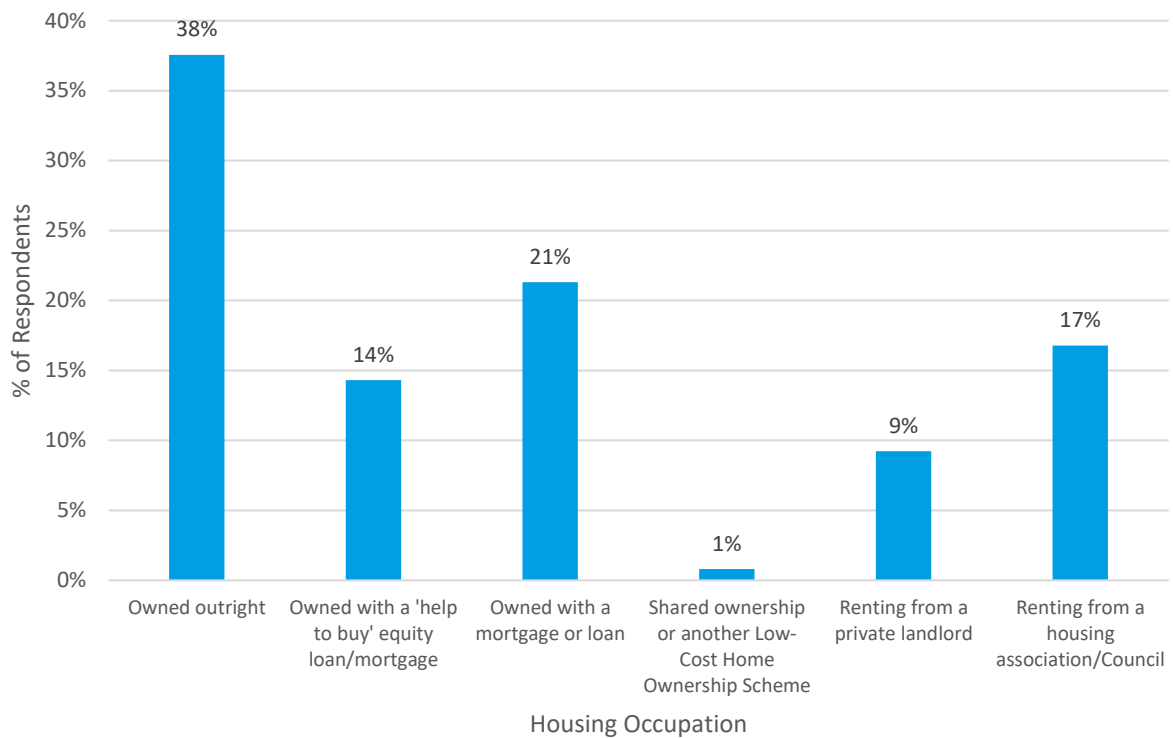
4 Current Housing Stock

4.1 This section of the report identifies the existing housing stock of the 5 Parishes.

Ownership / Rented

4.2 Figure 4.1 below breaks down the current housing position of the residents who responded to the survey. The majority of the respondents were owner occupiers (73%), however a significant proportion currently rent from a private landlord or from a housing association / Council (26%).

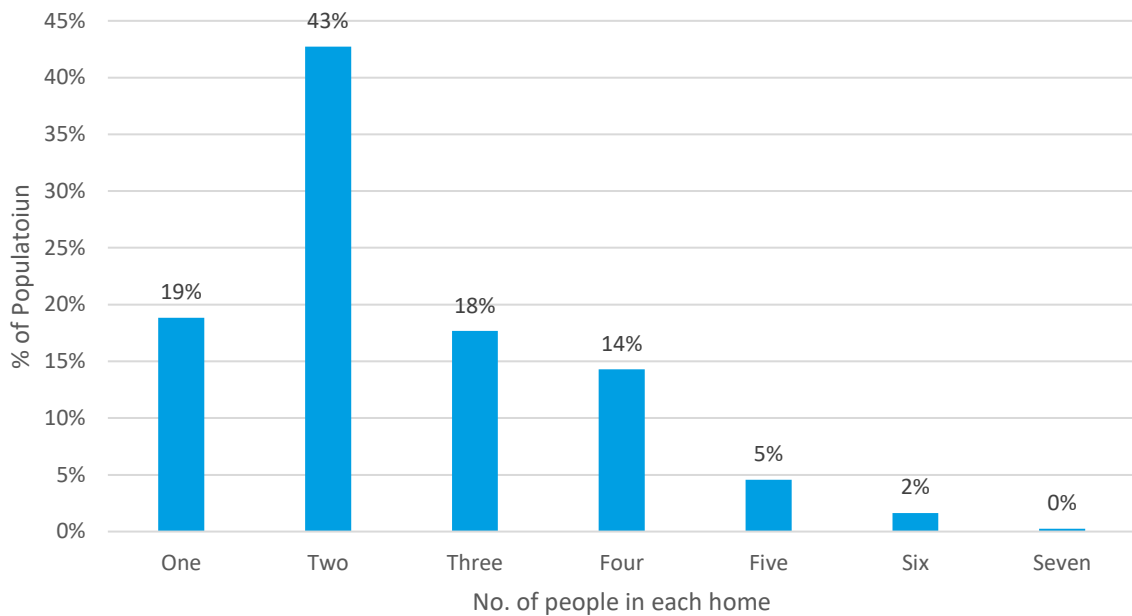
Figure 4.1 – How respondents occupy their home



Tenure / Unit Type

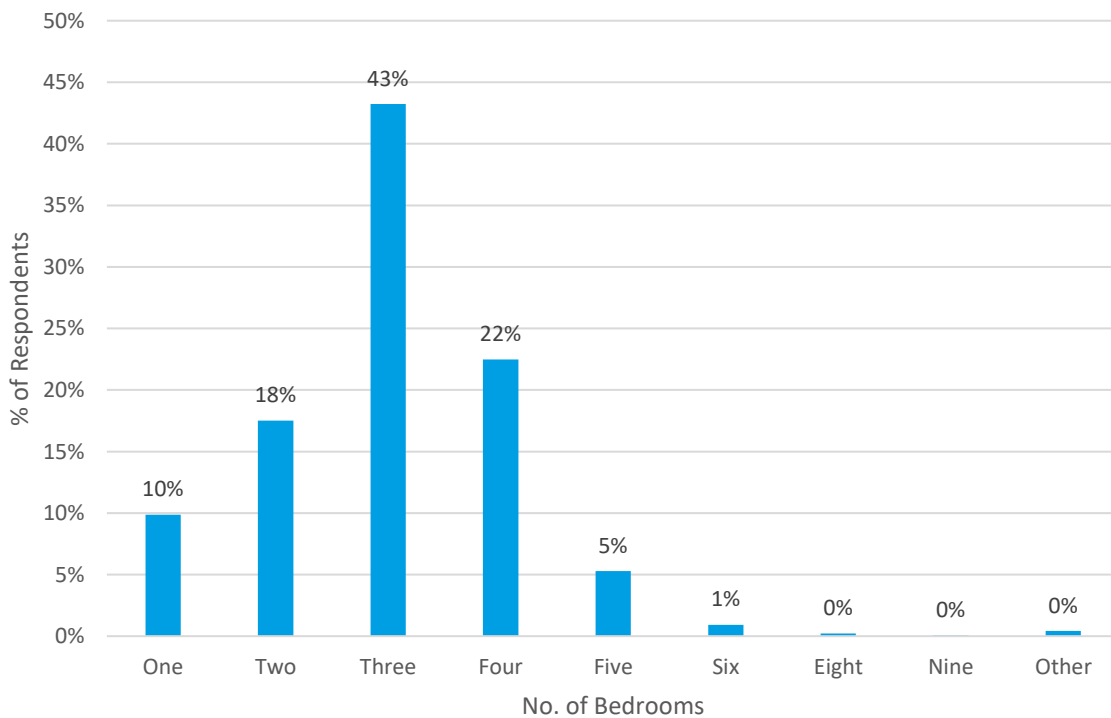
4.3 Figure 4.2 below identifies the number of people that live in the home of each respondent. The results show that 43% of the households contain two people and 38% of the households contain three or more people. The more detailed data also shows that residents who have lived in the area for 10+ years are more likely to live with 1 or 2 people (i.e. singles/couples), whereas newer residents are more likely to live with 3+ people (generally families).

Figure 4.2 – Number of people living in each household



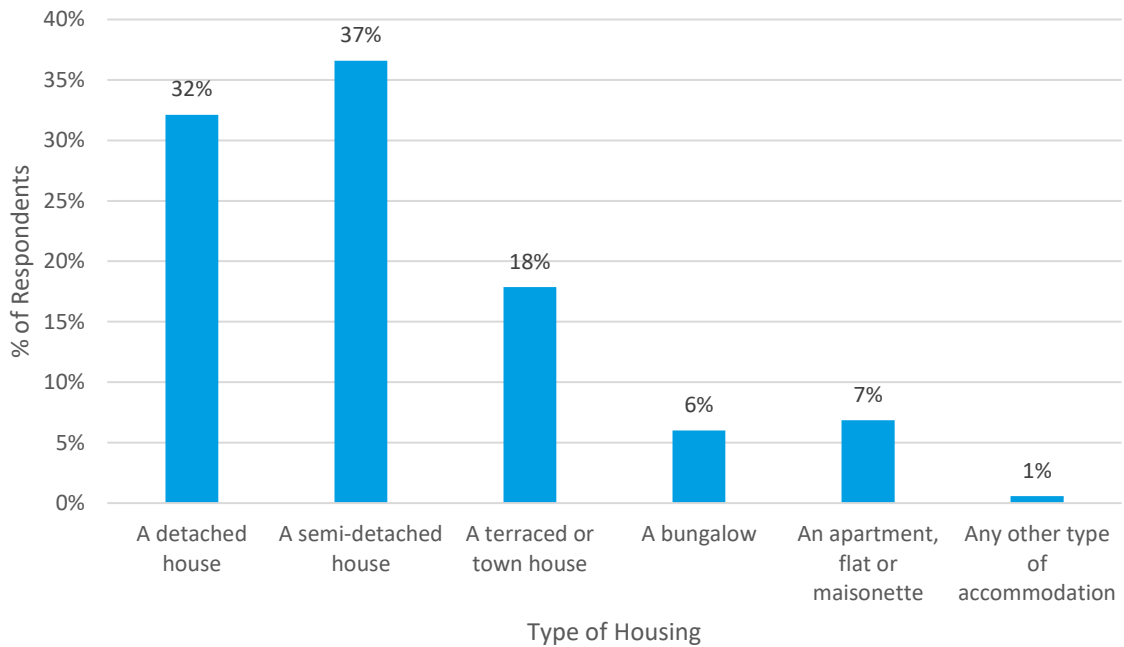
- 4.4 Figure 4.3 below identifies the proportion of different unit types among the respondents. The largest proportion of people live in 3-bedroom homes (43%). The large number of residents living with 1 or 2 people (62%) and the significant number of 3 and 4 bedroom homes suggests a level of under-occupancy. This indicates some households may want an option to downsize in the future.

Figure 4.3 – Number of bedrooms in each home



- 4.5 Figure 4.4 below outlines the overall type of housing that the respondents live in. The more detailed survey data also identified that 16% of families are either renting from a private landlord or occupying a Shared Ownership home.

Figure 4.4 – Type of accommodation



5 Identified Housing Need

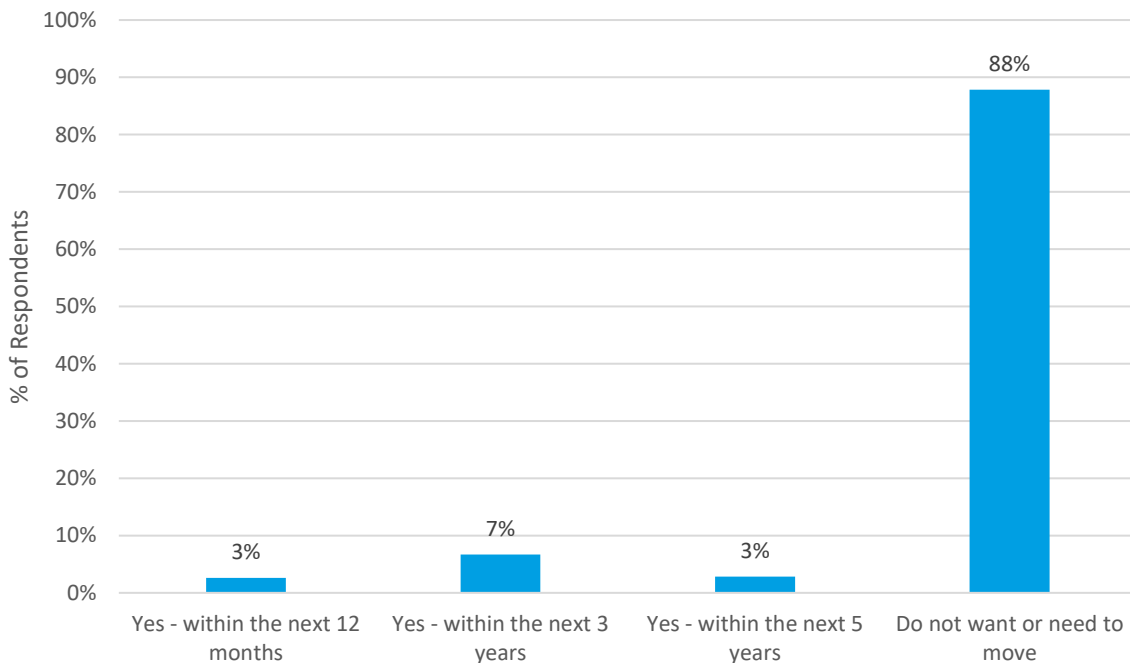
- 5.1 This section of the report draws out how many people want / need to move house and identifies specific housing needs within the 5 Parishes.
- 5.2 The Housing Needs Survey identified that c.93 people (c.12%) want or need to move to a new house. This is within a typical range in an area that is characterised by high levels of home ownership.

Overview of Housing Need

How many residents want to move from their current home?

- 5.3 Figure 5.1 below identifies the proportion of residents who want to move from their current home. The survey suggests that 12% of households want / need to move from their current home within the next 5 years.

Figure 5.1 – Residents who want to move from current home

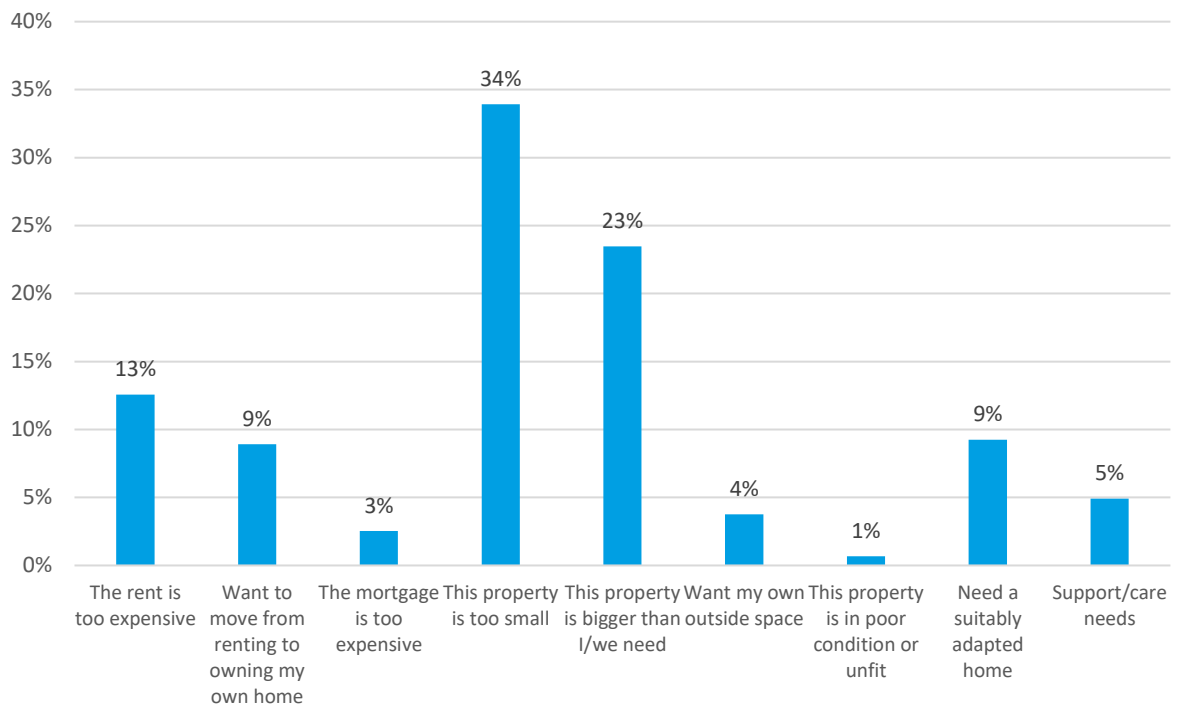


- 5.4 Whilst the overall proportion of households who wish/need to move is within the normal range, the more detailed data shows that there are significant variations between the different household types. A higher proportion of couples with dependent children (26%) wish to move from their current home within the next 5 years, suggesting they are looking for larger homes.

Why do residents need to move?

- 5.5 Figure 5.2 below outlines the different reasons that residents need to move. The extracted data focuses on residents who want to move because they need something different in terms of housing and not because they are unsatisfied with the current / future area.

Figure 5.2 – Why do residents need to move?

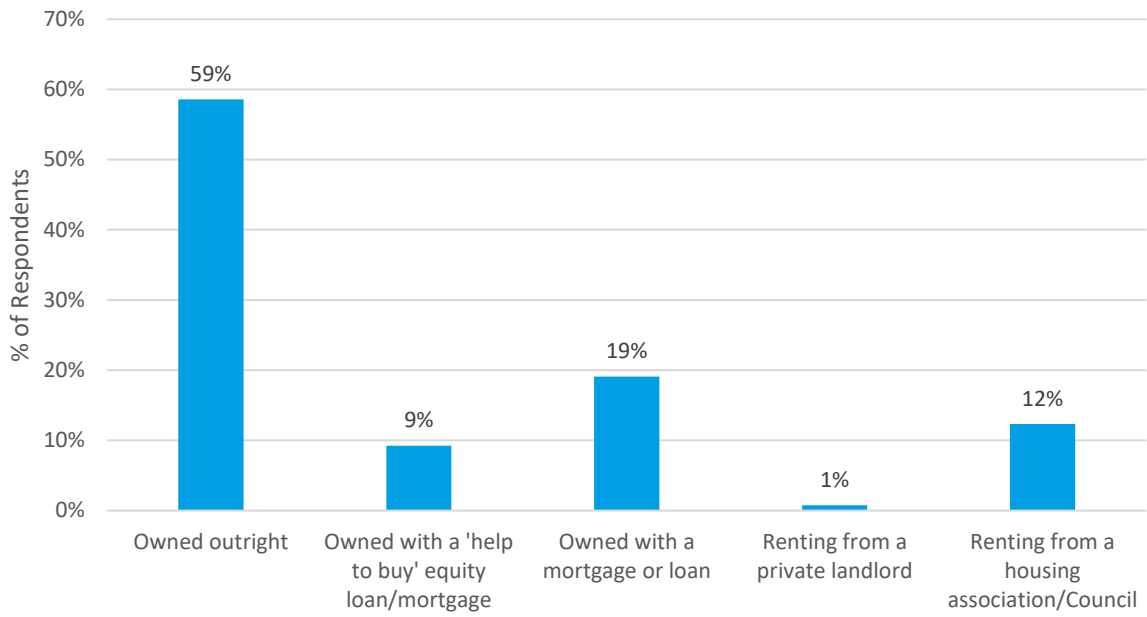


- 5.6 The data evidences that 57% of residents who want to move are unhappy with the current size of their home, identifying that their property is either too small or too big. The issue becomes more apparent when looking within the more detailed data for families, where 46% said that their property was too small and 26% said the property was too big. It is evident that there is a need to provide a variety of additional family homes to meet the needs of existing residents.

How do people expect to occupy their next home?

- 5.7 It is clear that the majority of respondents expect to purchase their next home outright (59%). There is however still a significant proportion of residents (28%) who expect to own with a 'Help to Buy' loan or with a mortgage. These households may benefit from discounted market sale products, particularly if the 'Help to Buy' scheme winds down.

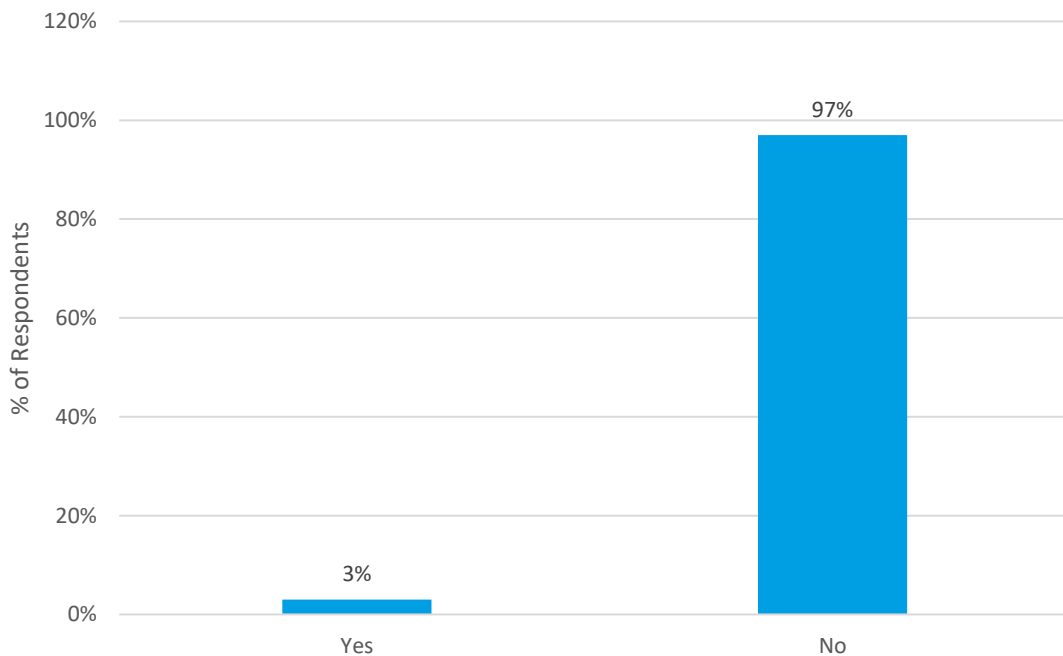
Figure 5.3 – How do people expect to occupy their next home?



Number of people on the housing waiting list

- 5.8 The survey identified that 3% of the respondents are currently on the Local Authority's housing waiting list, therefore qualifying for some form of affordable homes.

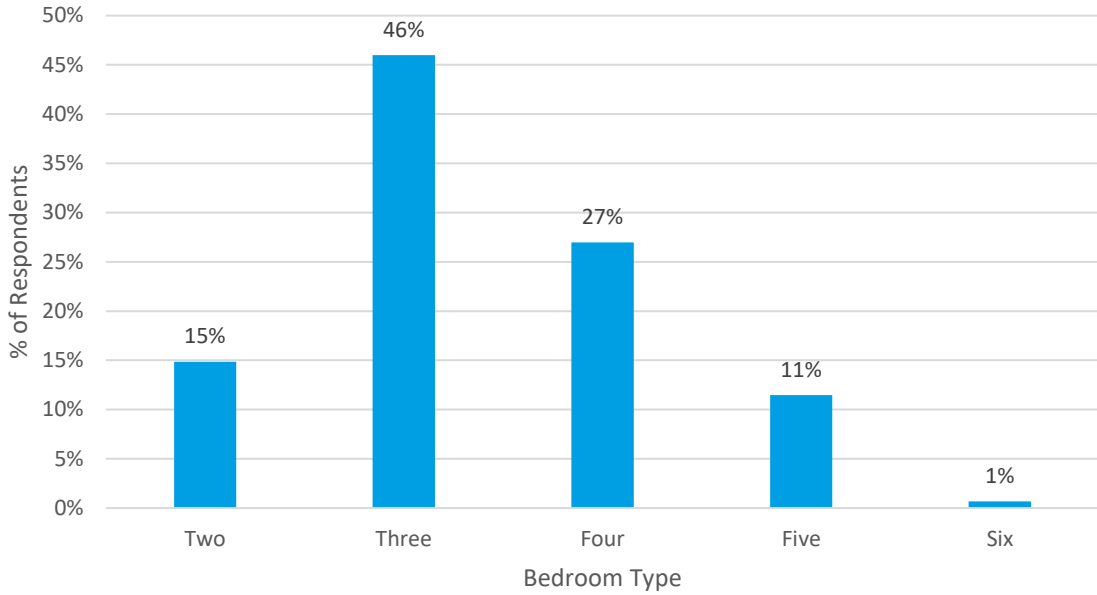
Figure 5.4 – Housing Waiting List



Housing / Unit Type

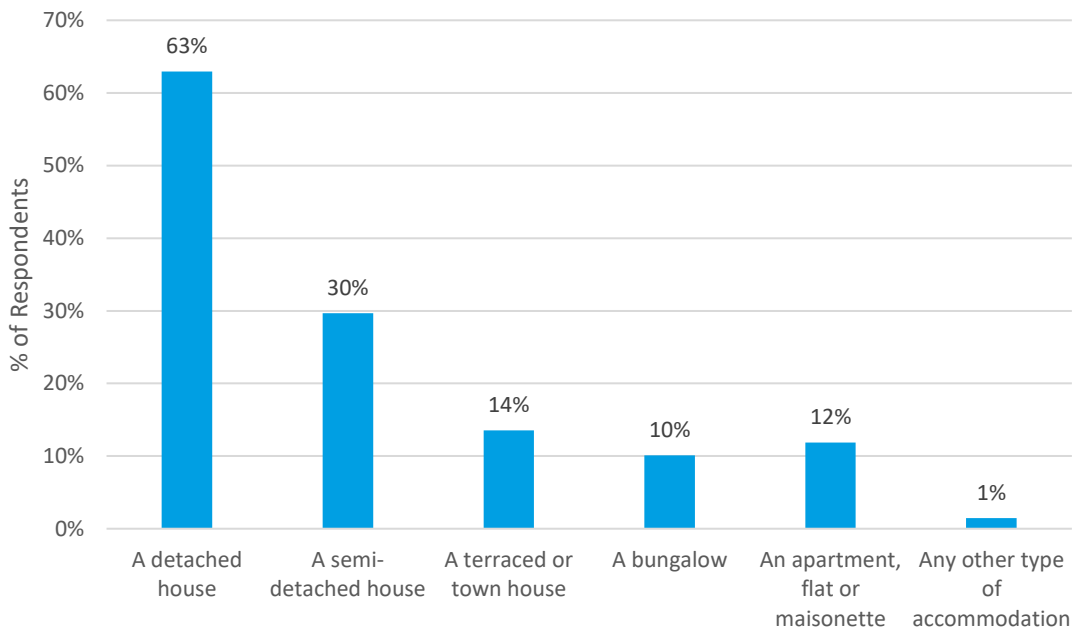
5.9 Figure 5.5 below identifies the number of bedrooms that respondents want in their next home.

Figure 5.5 – Bedroom / Unit Mix Requirement



5.10 Figure 5.6 below outlines the preferred housing type for each respondent. The data identifies that 63% of the respondents want to move into a detached house. The more detailed survey data also shows that 80% of families want to live in a detached house, whilst a higher proportion of couples (20%) want to live in an apartment, flat or maisonette.

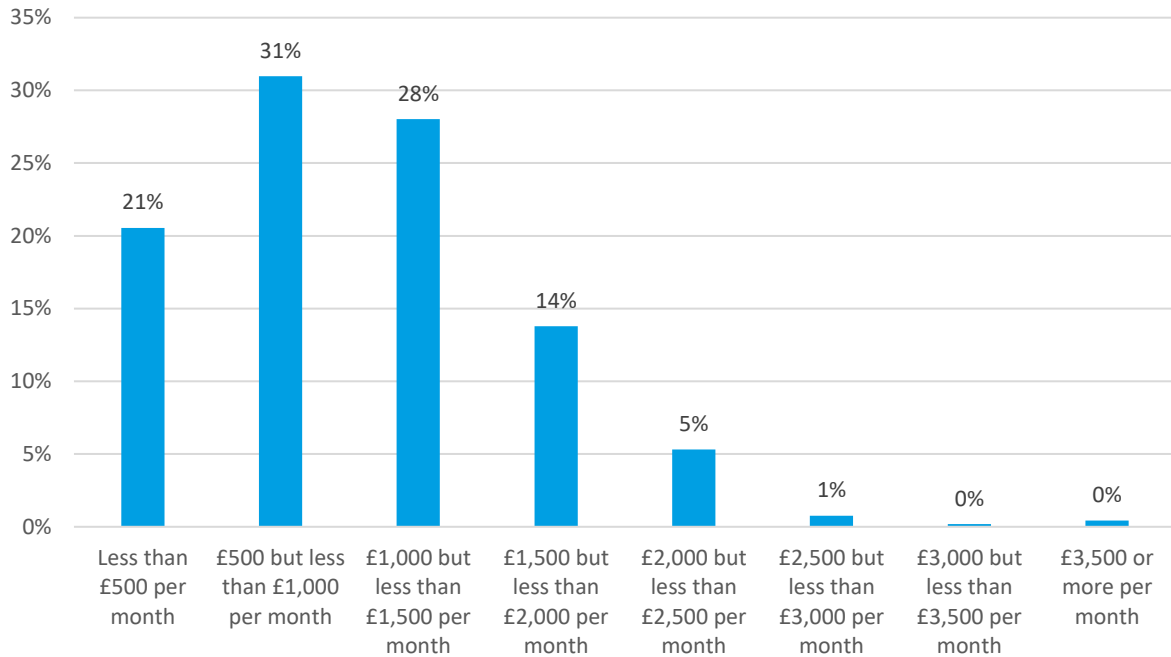
Figure 5.6 – Housing Type Requirement



Household Affordability

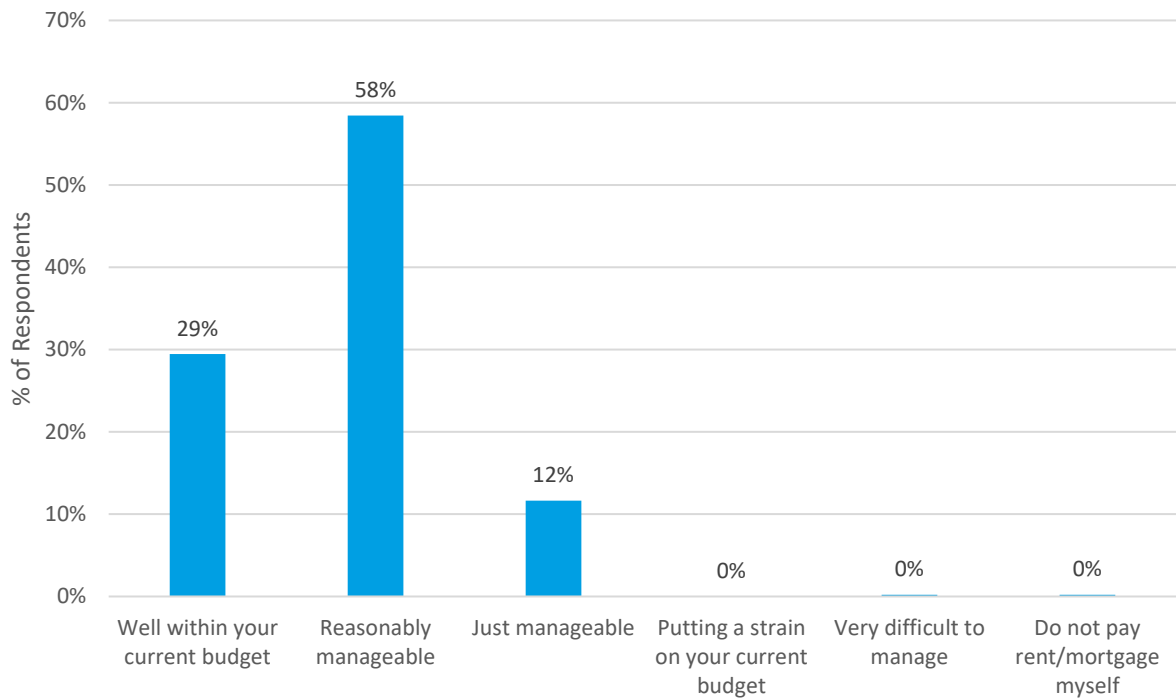
5.11 This section will look at the affordability constraints of the local respondents. Figure 5.7 below identifies how much money per month residents spend on housing costs (rent, mortgage repayments or service charges). It is clear that the majority of residents (73%) spend between £500 and £2,000 per month on housing costs.

Figure 5.7 – Monthly Housing Costs



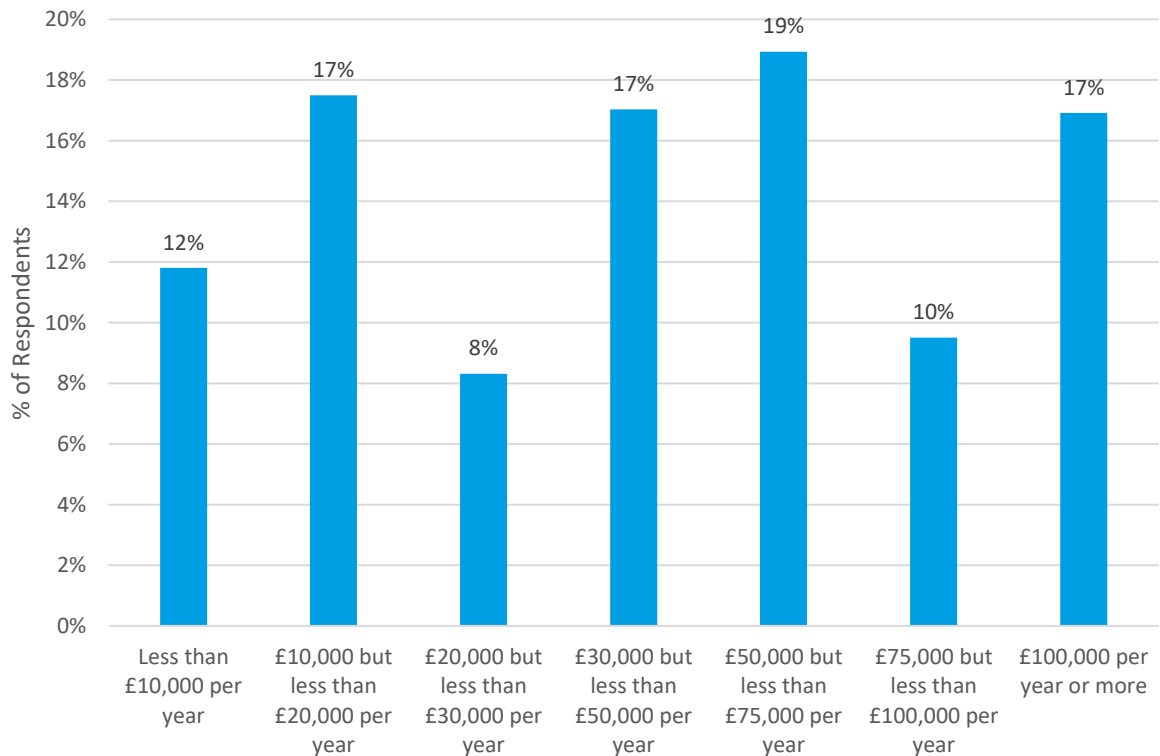
5.12 Figure 5.8 below outlines the difficulty with which residents pay their monthly housing costs. A significant proportion 'just manage' to pay their housing costs (12%) and the majority state costs are 'reasonably manageable' (58%). The affordability issue is particularly prominent in the rented / affordable rented sector where 25% of residents state they are just managing to pay housing costs.

Figure 5.8 – Housing Costs Affordability



5.13 Figure 5.9 below outlines the gross household income of the respondents.

Figure 5.9 – Gross Household Income

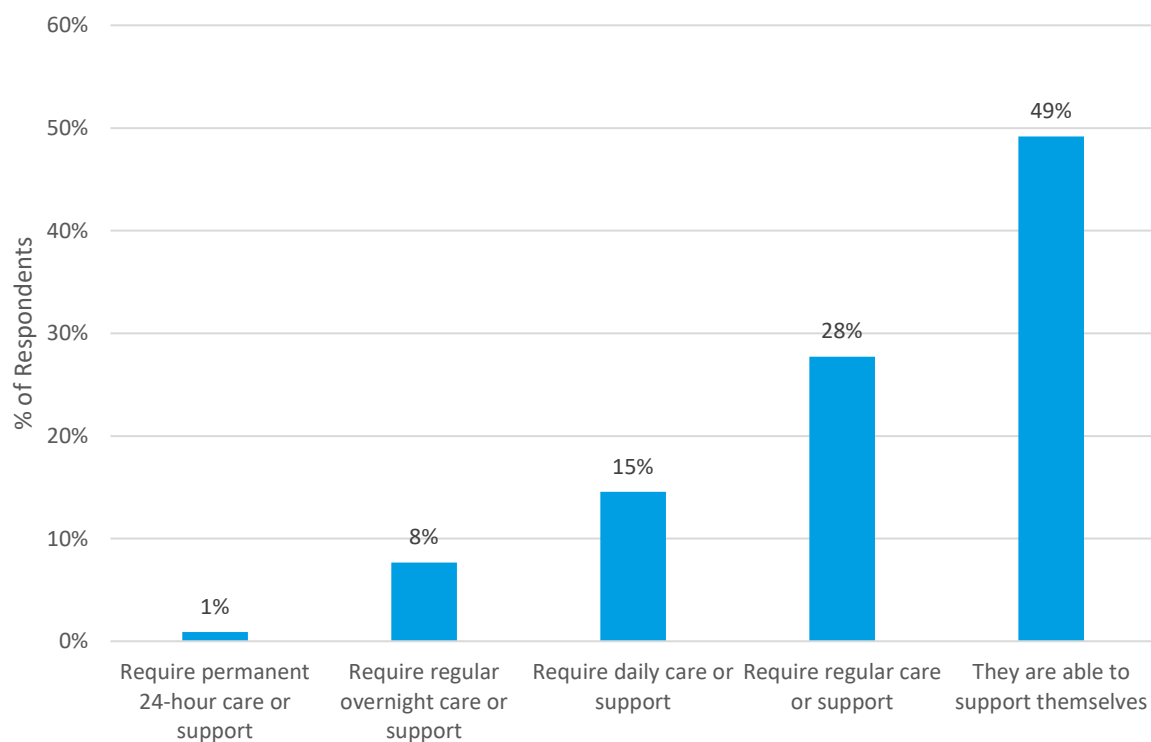


5.14 The detailed survey data identified that 71% of respondents living in private rented / affordable rented housing earn less than £30,000 per year. It also identified that 67% of families have incomes of between £30,000 and £75,000 per year.

Specialist Housing

- 5.15 The Housing Needs Survey identified that 15% of respondents have someone living in their household that suffers from life limiting health problems such as: long term illness, disability or infirmity. Figure 5.10 below outlines the level of support that is required for each respondent. The survey identified that c.52% of respondents require varying levels of regular care or support.
- 5.16 The vast majority of those requiring care or support described themselves as retired and lived within households resident in the area for 10 years or more. This suggests that many of these respondents will need housing adapted for older persons (albeit in line with the general profile of all households, most do not currently wish to move).

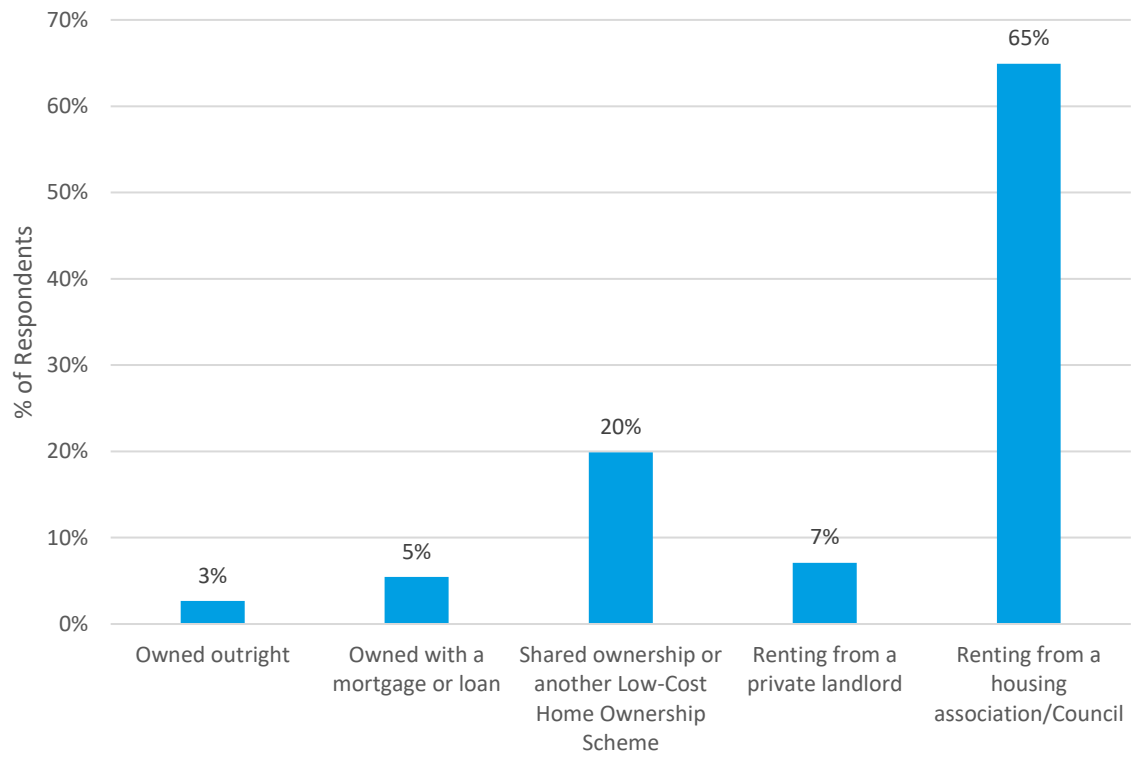
Figure 5.10 – Level of Support Required



Emerging Households

- 5.17 The Survey identified that c.2% of respondents have 1 or more persons currently living with them that they expect to move to a separate home within the next 5 years. The survey identified that c.90% of the new households will be under 35 years of age and 95% of the households will consist of a single person (and no others).
- 5.18 Figure 5.11 below outlines the ways in which respondents expect the new households to occupy their next home. The data shows that 65% expect that they will rent from a housing association / Council and 20% expect them to purchase a shared ownership home. Only 8% of respondents expect the new households to be owner occupiers (with or without a mortgage).

Figure 5.11 – New Households



6 Implications for Gilston Park Estate

- 6.1 This section of the report will distil the data from the earlier sections to determine how the scheme can respond to the needs of residents. Whilst the survey provides very useful information, there are inevitably overlaps in the types and tenures of product which could be suitable to meet each household's wants and needs. The following section therefore attempts to forecast the most likely suitable approach, whilst also recognising that there will be a range of solutions around this central estimate.
- 6.2 Table 6.1 below identifies the overall number of each unit type that may be appropriate to provide in order to meet the need identified in the Survey.

Table 6.1 – Unit Type Mix

Unit Type	Existing Households		Emerging Households	
	Respondents	Scaled up to include total households	Emerging Households	Scaled up to include total households
1 Bed Apartment	-	-	8	18
2 Bed Apartment	5	11	8	18
3 Bed Apartment	24	51	-	-
2 Bed House	4	7	-	-
3 Bed House	22	46	8	15
4 Bed House	26	56	-	-
5 Bed+ House	12	25	-	-
Total	93	196	24	51

- 6.3 Table 6.2 outlines the total number of homes that will needed to be provided within each housing tenure.

Table 6.2 – Tenure Split

Unit Type	Existing Households		Emerging Households	
	Respondents	Scaled up to include total household	Emerging Households	Scaled up to include total households
Open Market Sale	54	115	-	1
Market Rent	1	1	-	-
Affordable Rent	5	9	16	33
Intermediate Rent	7	15	2	4
DMS / Starter Home / Shared Ownership	26	56	6	13
Total	93	196	24	51

- 6.4 Homes adapted for older persons or those with specialist needs are not included within the table above. Whilst a reasonable proportion of survey respondents (15%, almost all of which were retired) had a household member with some form of health problem, the vast majority of these did not currently wish to move home.
- 6.5 Whilst it is not clear from the survey, experience elsewhere is that older persons and those with health problems often do not consider moving as specialist homes are either not available or unattractive. The Gilston Park Estate will be delivering a range of private and affordable homes adapted for those with mobility issues. In addition around 600 older persons' homes are anticipated, with a range of support issues. Given the relatively high potential need it may therefore be appropriate for a proportion of these homes to be included within the local allocations scheme, ensuring that local households who may benefit have the option to consider them.
- 6.6 Table 6.3 overleaf provides a scaled-up summary of a potential approach, assuming that the need identified within the surveyed households was replicated across the un-surveyed households.

Next Steps

- 6.7 The detailed local allocations strategy will be developed in conjunction with East Herts District Council. However, it is likely that this will include:
- The ways in which homes for the local allocations will be identified, prioritised and made available.
 - The relevant homes within the first Village and first development plot and timescales for local people to express interest in these.
 - A programme of activities to maintain awareness of the homes available for local people.
 - The timings of future surveys (anticipated every 5 years).

Table 6.3 – Housing Need Summary (including emerging households)

Tenure	1 Bed Apartment	2 Bed Apartment	3 Bed Apartment	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5 Bed + House	Total
Open Market Sale	-	1	33	5	33	31	14	117
Market Rent	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Affordable Rent	11	11	5	2	11	2	1	43
Intermediate Rent	2	10	3	-	3	1	-	19
DMS / Starter Home / Shared Ownership	4	6	10	-	14	22	11	67
Older Persons' homes	Proportion of all older persons homes to be included in the local allocations scheme							
Adapted specialist homes	Proportion of all adapted homes to be included in the local allocations scheme							
Total	17	29	51	7	61	56	26	247