



**Community First**  
*Building better communities*

**Leigh and Bransford Parish Council**

**Housing Needs Survey Report**

**Of**

**Leigh and Leigh Sinton**

**July 2009**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2008 Leigh and Bransford Parish Council, working with Community First , distributed a Housing Needs Survey to 488 houses in the Leigh Parish. The purpose of the survey was to determine if there was a need for affordable housing within the Leigh Parish.

235 (48.15%) forms were returned by the due date of the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008. Over 52% of the respondents were in favour of affordable housing being provided for local people in the village, whilst 30% were against such provision and 18% were unsure.

The survey asked those who believed they had a need for housing in the Parish to indicate the type of tenure and property they would require over the next 5 years.

The analysis of the returns indicate that for those people who met the local connect criteria there is a requirement for 9 Housing Association rented homes, 3 Housing Association shared ownership homes and 7 open market ownership homes. The accommodation required ranges from 1 and 2 bedroom flats and bungalows to two and three bedrooms houses.

The Parish Council must now consider the results of the survey and how best to meet the housing needs in the Parish over the next 5 years. To assist in their deliberations an open meeting will be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> September in Leigh and Bransford Village Hall to explain the survey results and to invite parishioners to contribute to the debate.

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## **Introduction**

On 27<sup>th</sup> May 2008, Leigh and Bransford Parish Council agreed with a proposal from Community First that a Housing Needs Survey should be undertaken within the area. The purpose would be to update a previous survey which had been carried out during 2000 and help assess whether there would be sufficient local housing need to justify the provision of new affordable dwellings.

In September 2008, notice of the Parish Council's decision was given in the Parish Magazine and at the end of September 2008, explanatory letters and survey forms were hand delivered by Parish Council volunteers to 488 addresses in the parish. Householders were asked to make their return by the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008 in the pre-paid envelopes provided as part of the survey documentation.

## **Survey Content**

All householders were asked to complete and return Part A of the survey form in a reply-paid envelope. Part A sought information on the current housing profile of the area, and also asked householders for their views on the need for new affordable housing in the area.

Householders were also asked to complete and return a Part B questionnaire, where they identified a current or future housing need for affordable housing for local people.

Part C of the form requested name and address details in order to give the opportunity for respondents with a housing need to be contacted again and to be sent an application form if they wished to register onto the Home Choice Plus Common Housing Register.

The forms were available on-line and could be downloaded from the Community First web-site.

## **Survey Response**

The following forms were received:-

Part A – 235 completed forms (a response rate of 48.15%)

Part B – 23 completed forms (a response rate of 4.71%)

Part C – 11 completed forms

## **Survey Analysis and Report**

All forms were received by Community First at the Malvern office and subsequently detailed individual responses were inputted onto computer software. This software collated the responses from which the housing need results have been analysed as set out in this report. Any references that could identify a respondent have been removed from this report to maintain confidentiality.

## **Summary of Housing Need Results**

The 23 respondents to Part B of the survey form stated that they were either in current housing need or anticipated that a future need would arise over the next five or more years. Their households ranged in age and number from single people to couples to families with children. Of the 23 respondents, 4 did not qualify under the local connection criteria. From the details supplied, the required housing tenure and property types can be quantified as follows:-

9 Housing Association rented homes.

3 Housing Association shared ownership homes.

7 Open market home ownership homes.

The property types include flats, bungalows and houses.

A detailed analysis of the needs and requirements is set out in the report.

## Analysis of the Part A Survey Returns

### Current Households

One person household	Two person household	Three person household	Four person household	Five Person household	Six Person household
39	131	35	17	7	4

### Age Profile of Households

Age Bands	0-15 years	16-24 years	25-44 years	45-59 years	60-69 years	70+ years
Total number	36	22	54	71	89	73
345						
Number as a % of 345	10.0%	6.0%	16.0%	20.5%	25.8%	21.2%

**Comment** – The housing needs survey does not cover the total population of the Leigh and Leigh Sinton. The results indicate that the parish has a predominately older population with a majority of single person and two person households.

### Living in Leigh and Leigh Sinton

Leigh and Leigh Sinton	Living elsewhere
231	2

**Comment** – 233 responses were received, 231 living in Leigh and Leigh Sinton and 2 living elsewhere.

### Time Lived in Present Home

0- 4 years	5 – 9 years	10 – 19 years	20 + years
45	43	71	74

**Comment** – The results show that the majority of households have lived in the parish for more than 10 years. The length of time that householders live in their present home could indicate a number of factors such as:-

- contentment with the locality
- a sustainable location to live
- lack of 'turnover' in vacancies occurring
- amount of new house building in the area in recent years
- an aging population
- unable to afford to move either within parish or elsewhere

### Housing Tenure – Current Home

<b>Home Owner</b>	<b>Private Renting</b>	<b>Housing Association Renting</b>	<b>Housing Association Shared Ownership</b>	<b>Lodging with another household</b>
<b>212</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Living with parents /relatives</b>	<b>Tied accommodation</b>	<b>Fixed equity ownership</b>	<b>Other</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

**Comment** – From the details provided, there is a predominance of owner occupation in the parish (91%) followed by 8% households living in rented accommodation.

### Current Accommodation

<b>House</b>	<b>Bungalow</b>	<b>Flat/apartment</b>	<b>Mobile Home</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>188</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

**Comment** – The majority of the respondents live in houses and bungalows (93%).

<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>	<b>One</b>	<b>Two</b>	<b>Three</b>	<b>Four</b>	<b>Five</b>	<b>6+</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b>

**Comment** - In response to the question about the number of bedrooms in the property, the survey revealed that the majority of dwellings had three and four bedroom accommodation.

### Household members who have moved away within the last three years

**Yes 40 No 179**

**Comments** – 14 did not respond.

## Reasons for leaving

Lack of Affordable Housing	Lack of Public Transport	Take up Employment elsewhere	Go to College	Lack of Suitable Housing	Other
10	0	10	16	0	4

**Comment** – Attendance at college accounted for the greatest number of reasons for leaving. This was followed by lack of affordable housing and taking up employment elsewhere. Respondents could tick more than one reason.

## In Favour of Affordable Housing

**In favour** - 118

**Not in favour** - 67

**Unsure** - 39

**Comment** – Of the 224 responses received 52.7% of the respondents answered that they were in favour of additional affordable homes being provided for local people, 29.9% were against, and 17.4% were unsure.

## Household members living elsewhere and likely to need affordable housing now or within the next five years.

**Yes** - 23

**No** - 212

**Comment** – The result is self explanatory.

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**Analysis of the Part B Survey Forms (including 4 non-qualifying applicants)**

**When will you need to change your accommodation?**

Presently Qualify under Local Connection Criteria

<b>Now</b>	<b>Within 12 months</b>	<b>1 – 3 years</b>	<b>3 – 5 years</b>	<b>5+ years</b>	<b>Not Known</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>

Will qualify in 1 – 4 years under the Local Connection Criteria

<b>Now</b>	<b>Within 12 months</b>	<b>1 – 3 years</b>	<b>3 – 5 years</b>	<b>5+ years</b>	<b>Not Known</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>

**Comment –** The survey indicates that the majority of respondents need to move with the next three years.

**Why do you need to move?**

<b>Need local affordable accommodation</b>	<b>Need independent accommodation</b>	<b>Need larger accommodation</b>	<b>Need smaller accommodation</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Present home in poor state of repair</b>	<b>Need to be closer to employment</b>	<b>Need permanent accommodation</b>	<b>Need older persons accommodation</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Need to be closer to a carer</b>	<b>Need specially adapted accommodation</b>	<b>Family breakup</b>	<b>Need to be closer to relatives</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Moved away and wish to return</b>	<b>Other</b>		
<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>		

**Comment –** The survey shows that the majority of reasons given to move are the requirement for local affordable accommodation and the need for smaller accommodation.

**What is your current housing status?**

Presently Qualify under Local Connection Criteria

<b>Housing Association Rent</b>	<b>Housing Association Shared Ownership</b>	<b>Living with Parents/Family Member/Friends</b>	<b>Tied Tenant</b>	<b>Private Renting Tenant</b>	<b>Home Ownership</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>



Will qualify in 1 – 4 years under the Local Connection Criteria

Housing Association Rent	Housing Association Shared Ownership	Living with Parents/Family Member/Friends	Tied Tenant	Private Renting Tenant	Home Ownership
0	0	1	0	2	1

**Comment –** The survey shows a mix of tenure amongst current housing status.

### Type of accommodation required

Presently Qualify under Local Connection Criteria

Housing Association Rent	Housing Association Shared Ownership	Fixed Equity	Private Rent	Home Ownership
9	3	0	0	7

Will qualify in 1 – 4 years under the Local Connection Criteria

Housing Association Rent	Housing Association Shared Ownership	Fixed Equity	Private Rent	Home Ownership
2	0	0	0	2

**Comment –** The Survey shows that the majority of respondents require affordable rent or home ownership, either as a full owner or in a shared ownership form of tenure. Respondents were asked to give one main type of tenure.

### Registered on the Common Housing Register

**Yes 6 No 8**

**Comment –** The majority of respondents who replied are not registered on the Common Housing Register. This may indicate:-

- lack of knowledge about the register
- non registration because of lack of apparent housing opportunities in the village
- lack of housing need.
- may prefer private renting/market housing

### Shared Ownership Preference –Assessed Maximum Mortgage

Below £50,000	£50,000 - £55,000	£55,000 – £60,000	£60,000 – £65,000	£65,000 – £70,000	£70,000 – £75,000
0	2	0	2	0	0
£75,000 – £80,000	£80,000 – £85,000	£85,000 - £90,000	£90,000 - £95,000	£95,000 - £100,000	£100,000 +
0	0	0	0	1	1

**Comment** - In assessing the affordability of shared ownership, 5 respondents stated that they could raise a mortgage up to £100,000 (when multiplying their income, by 3.5 times annual salary plus 1 times a partners annual salary if appropriate), and 1 respondent stated they could raise a mortgage of over £100,000.

For comparison purposes, local Estate Agents are marketing as at November 2008 a 2 bedroom flat for £140,000, 3 bedroom house at £200,000 and 4 bedroom house for £400,000 in the parish.

As an example of affordability, a family with a single income of £18,000 – £20,000 per annum, could obtain a mortgage of between £63,000-£70,000 for an open market property. This would exclude them from purchasing local open market properties, but the option of shared ownership (purchasing a 35% - 50% share) could be available.

If shared ownership schemes are to be developed, the survey suggests that in Leigh parish, minimum shares of less than £65,000 must be available.

### **Lived in Leigh and Leigh Sinton in three of the past five years**

**Yes - 19      No - 4**

**Comment** – 19 respondents who answered the question stated that they had lived in the parish in three out of the past five years,

### **Local Connection through Work in Leigh and Leigh Sinton**

**Yes 2**

**Comment** - Only 2 respondents have a local connection through employment in the parish.

### **Local Connection through previous residency in Leigh and Leigh Sinton**

**Yes 3**

**No 1**

**Comment** – 3 respondents stated they had lived in Leigh and Leigh Sinton previously.

### **Local connection through close family in Leigh and Leigh Sinton**

**Yes - 6**

**No – 3**

**Unanswered 9**

**Comment** – The 6 respondents above who had previously resided in the parish in stated that they had close family living the Leigh and Leigh Sinton.

**NOTE** 4 respondents who stated they had a housing need, could not demonstrate that they satisfied the local connection criteria in terms of the Malvern Hills Rural Lettings Policy (see Appendix) .

**Offer of employment but unable to take up the offer because of the lack of affordable housing.**

**Yes 0**

**No 7**

**Unanswered 11**

**Comment** – The survey indicates that the lack of affordable housing in the area was not a significant reason for not taking up employment.

**Local involvement in the Parish**

<b>School</b>	<b>Child in Local organisation</b>	<b>Sports Club</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Social Group</b>	<b>Voluntary helper</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

**Comment** – Respondents could tick more than one activity. Local involvement does not count in the eligibility criteria for affordable housing, but gives an indication of respondents' contributions to the local community.

**Employment in the Parish**

Of the households stating they were in housing need, 1 was in permanent full time employment and 1 was self employed in the parish.

**Choice of Area to Live**

Preferred Choice of village for affordable housing

Leigh Sinton	12
Other Area	4
Leigh or Bransford	4
Any Area Within Parish	2
No Comment	1

## **Analysis of the Part C Survey Forms**

As a result of this survey, 11 households provided their contact details in Part C of the form. These details have been forwarded to Festival Housing Group (administering the Common Housing Register on behalf of Malvern Hills District Council) to check whether the households are already registered. If not, application packs will be posted to them, in order that they can formally apply to join the Register

## **Conclusion of Part A, Part B and Part C of the Housing Need Survey**

From the results of the survey it is apparent that Leigh Parish is a settled community with 81% of the population having lived in their homes for more than 5 years, and with 32% having lived in their homes for more than 20 years. As with many rural areas within Worcestershire, the age range of this parish reflects an older age profile with twice as many people falling into the category of over 45 years than under this age group.

The majority of householders (91%) are owner-occupiers with 93% of all respondents living in houses and bungalows. The high percentage of owner occupation and houses and bungalows in the area, means that alternative accommodation options to meet local housing needs are limited e.g. Lack of rented affordable rented accommodation.

Of the 224 responses received 52.7% of the respondents answered that they were in favour of additional affordable homes being provided for local people, 29.9% were against, and 17.4% were unsure.

It can be concluded that the survey shows that a significant need exists for the provision of new affordable housing for the following reasons:-

- the stated demand for such accommodation
- the housing and financial circumstances of the respondents to Part B of the Survey
- the lack of alternative forms of accommodation in the area,
- the low number of vacancies occurring in the existing Housing Association stock

The type of affordable dwellings that would be required over a five year period are a mixture of houses, flats and bungalows, with a tenure mix of rent and shared ownership. The mix and number of dwellings would be determined to reflect the identified housing needs by a nominated Housing Association working in partnership with the Parish Council and Malvern Hills District Council. The survey also identified a stated need for open market dwellings to meet the needs of local people.

## **Housing Need Survey – Household/Tenure/Property Type Details**

Summary of applicants and their assessed housing accommodation requirements.

From the replies received, the following need has been estimated for a range of tenure, although 4 do not qualify under the local connection criteria:

### **Immediate**

Affordable Rent x 2

- Family + 2 children
- Couple 60+

Shared Ownership x 1

- Single person

Open Market Purchase x 0

Private Rented x 0

### **Within 12 months**

Affordable Rent x 1

- Couple 60+

Shared Ownership x 2

- Single person
- Single person

Open Market Purchase x 3

- Single person
- Couple (do not qualify under local connection criteria)
- Couple 60+

Private Rented x 0

### **Within 1 – 3 Years**

Affordable Rent x 5

- Single person (does not qualify under local connection criteria)
- Single person
- Single person
- Single person
- Single person
- Couple 60+

Shared Ownership x 0

Open Market Purchase x 3

- Single person 60+
- Couple
- Couple 60+

Private Rented x 0

### **Within 3– 5 Years**

Affordable Rent x 0

Shared Ownership x 0

Open Market Purchase x 0

Private Rented x 0

### **5+ Years**

Affordable Rent x 3

- Family + 1 child (do not qualify under local connection criteria)
- Single person 60+
- Single person 60+

Shared Ownership x 0

Open Market Purchase x 3

- Family + 2 children (do not qualify under local connection criteria)
- Single person
- Couple 60+

Private Rented x 0

**Assessment of the Need for New Affordable Housing  
in Leigh Parish**

**Type of new affordable dwellings required**

Of the 23 three respondents, the 4 non-qualifying respondents have been removed from the figures below.

From the household details submitted, the following type of new affordable homes would be required: -

Housing Association affordable rent = 9  
Housing Association shared ownership = 3

In addition 7 new home ownership dwellings would be required via the open housing market.

**Mix of tenure for the affordable dwellings required (rent and shared ownership) and number of dwellings.**

The final tenure mix and number of dwellings would be determined by a nominated Housing Association working in partnership with the Parish Council and Malvern Hills District Council, after assessing the number of applicants meeting the local connection criteria, their financial means to meet rent and mortgage costs, and site and planning considerations.

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## **Malvern Hills District Council Rural Lettings Policy**

### New Affordable Homes in the Parish

Any new Housing Association affordable homes (for rent or shared ownership) in the Leigh parish would enable people in housing need to remain in the parish, or to return to the area, provided that they have an association relating to current or past residence, family connections, or employment.

### **Who qualifies for the New Affordable Homes?**

The allocation of any new homes that may be built will be carried out in accordance with the Malvern Hills District Council Rural Lettings Policy which requires that priority be given to those applicants who have a connection with the parish according to the following criteria, which are ranked in priority order:-

- (i) has lived in the parish as the principal place of residence for at least five years;
- (ii) has worked in the parish for at least six months;
- (iii) has lived in the area for at least five years out of the previous fifteen years;
- (iv) needs to live in the parish in order to care for (or receive care from) close relatives;
- (v) has a formal promise of work in the parish;

*Note: If homes prove difficult to let, the properties can be open to people in housing need, under the following prioritised criteria:*

- (vi) applicants living or working in the Malvern Hills District Council area;
- (vii) applicants living in other parts of the country.

The District Council reserves the right to nominate applicants who do not meet the above criteria, where it is considered that the circumstances of the individual case warrant special consideration.

### **How can you apply for a New Affordable Home**

Please complete and return Part B and Part C of the Housing Needs Survey. Part B is important for establishing if a local housing need exists in the parish and for influencing the type of housing development that might be considered.

Part C should be completed so that you can be registered onto the Common Housing Register, Home Choice Plus. Festival Housing Group administers the Common Housing Register on behalf of Malvern Hills District Council. Allocations for new affordable homes in the parish will be made only to applicants registered on the Common Housing Register.



### **Allocation of the new homes**

If new affordable homes are built in the parish, an authorised observer from the Parish Council and a Ward Councillor will be invited to the allocation meeting to see that the allocations are undertaken in accordance with the above lettings criteria. However, they will have no authority to determine the specific allocations.

**Nigel Potter**  
**Worcestershire Rural Housing Enabler**