



Housing Needs Survey

June 2021

Produced for: Fivehead and Swell Parish Council

Contact: Clerk for the Parish Council, Email: fiveheadpc@gmail.com

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Aims of the Survey 2

Methods..... 2

Key Findings.....3

Survey Findings 4

 Living in the Parish 4

 Views about Housing Development in the Parish 5

 New Open Market Housing..... 6

 Housing for Older People..... 8

 Affordable Market Housing 8

References 9

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Summary of identified housing needs of Fivehead residents.....3

Figure 1: Age profile of households of survey respondents.....4

Figure 2: Word cloud of valued aspect of living in Fivehead and Swell Parish.....5

Figure 3: Responses about the amount of housing currently available in Fivehead.....5

Figure 4: Concerns about future housing development in Fivehead.....6

Figure 5: Timescales for moving: open market housing.....7

Figure 6: Budget for housing: Open Market Housing.....7

Figure 7: Budget for housing: Older people.....8

Introduction

The Parish of Fivehead and Swell (hereafter referred to as Fivehead) is located in the heart of Somerset within the ward of Islemoor and South Somerset District Council Authority. It lies 8 miles east of Taunton, the county town, and 5 miles west and 7 miles north of the market towns of Langport and Ilminster respectively. In the South Somerset Local Plan (2006- 2028)¹, Fivehead is classed as a 'Rural Settlement' and, as such, is considered as part of the open countryside to which national countryside protection policies apply, subject to exemptions given in the Local Plan. There are 3 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI), an RSPB Reserve, multiple records for protected species and 30 heritage listed properties in the parish.

Census 2021 was conducted in March but initial findings will not be available until March 2022. Based on the 2011 census², a population of 609 was usually resident as part of 272 households in the parish. Islemoor ward, which includes Ilton, Isle Abbots, Isle Brewers, Curry Mallet, Beercrocombe, Hambridge & Westport, as well as Fivehead & Swell, had a population total of 2772 as part of 1156 households. Population estimates in 2019 indicate that there was a 4.6% increase in the population in South Somerset since the 2011 census³. Islemoor population was estimated to increase to 2,810; Fivehead population was estimated to be 560, a decrease of 49³.

According to the 2011 census, the majority of households in Fivehead were owner-occupied with 12% in social rental and 4% in private rental properties². In Islemoor ward, the proportion of households in social rental was 10% and private rental was 9%². For the year ending September 2020, the average house price in Fivehead was estimated to be £404,056 (median: £420,000)⁴. For the same period, the average house price in Islemoor was £325,612 (median: £285,000) and in South Somerset was £268,637 (median: £229,725)⁵. The annual mean pay for 2019/2020 financial year in South Somerset was £25,721 (median: £23,380)⁶. Average gross household income for the local area for the latest available data (2017/2018 financial year) was £32,100⁷. House prices are high relative to annual pay and household income. Housing availability for purchase or rental also tends to be limited. Currently, there are 2 properties being marketed for sale within the parish and 10 within Islemoor ward⁴. There is 1 room marketed to rent within Fivehead⁸ and 2 properties marketed to rent within Islemoor ward⁴.

Sufficient supply of housing to meet local needs and national planning requirements is a key consideration for communities and local planning authorities. The South Somerset Local Plan (2006- 2028)¹ sets out to meet requirements through focused development of identified market towns (Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Wincanton, Somerton, Langport/Huish Episcopi, and Ansford/Castle Cary) and rural centres (Ilchester, South Petherton, Martock /Bower Hinton, Bruton, Milborne Port and Stoke Sub Hamdon). All other settlements, including Fivehead, are considered to be within open countryside and identified as rural settlements. Yet, Fivehead has had a number of planning applications in the past 2-3 years that have raised questions about housing development and local community needs. This has resulted in the Parish council determining to conduct a housing needs survey to better understand current housing needs of parishioners and to inform future planning development.

Aims of the Survey

The aims of this housing needs survey are to:

- determine the views of current residents of the parish about housing developments within the parish;
- explore the future housing needs of those within the parish with specific focus on open market housing, housing for older people and affordable housing.

Methods

The housing needs survey was based on similar surveys conducted within South Somerset District Council region. It was prepared as a paper copy with the option to complete online via Qualtrics^{XM} platform. The online version was accessed via the Parish of Fivehead and Swell website and was password protected. The password was provided on the paper copy.

A paper copy of the survey was delivered to 265 households in the parish. Respondents had the option to complete the survey online or to complete the paper copy and return to local collection points. The survey was open from 8th February 2021 to 8th March 2021. During this period, reminders to complete the survey were posted on the village notice boards and online via the village Facebook page and Nextdoor Fivehead and Swell.

61 completed online responses were received along with 3 blank online responses which were removed from the record. 44 completed paper copies were returned and inputted to the online survey. In total, 105 completed responses were received giving a response rate of 40% for the number of households and 82% confidence level for the survey.

The survey was managed and analysed by an experienced researcher resident within the parish. A descriptive analysis of the results of the survey is provided. The number of responses and percentages are used to represent the findings. Percentages were rounded up where they exceeded 0.5% only; this means that in some instances, the figures may not total 100%. Where the sample size is small (< 10), summaries of question responses are given to maintain anonymity of respondents.

Key Findings

- The majority of respondents (70%) think that the amount of housing in the parish is about right.
- 60% of respondents would support more housing for those living here already or with a connection to the parish.
- 17% (18) of respondents identified future housing requirements within the parish. Of these, 39% (7) were interested in open market housing, 44% (8) in housing for older people and 17% (3) in affordable housing. Table 1 summarizes housing requirements and indicated budgets for housing. The average current open market values for property in Fivehead ranges from £260,000 to £435,368⁴ which indicates the affordability gap for a number of parish residents.
- No respondents were registered on the Housing Register.
- The majority of respondents were considering longer term needs in 3-5 years and 5-10 years.
- Given the current approved planning developments in the parish, affordable housing and smaller 1-2 bedroom properties are the priorities to meet housing needs.

Note: The summary of housing needs is based on survey responses only. Housing needs may be addressed through a combination of availability of existing provision and new developments.

Table 1: Summary of identified housing needs of Fivehead residents

House Price				
Open market housing/ Housing for older people	Up to £200,000	£200,000 to £300,000	£300,000 to £500,000	Over £500,000
1 bed bungalow	1			
2 bed house		1		
2 bed bungalow	3		1	
3 bed house			3	
3 bed bungalow		1	2	
4 bed house			1	1
Monthly rent/mortgage				
Affordable Housing	Up to £400	£401 to £550	£551 to £700	
1 bed flat/house		1		
2 bed flat/house/bungalow	1		1	

Survey Findings

Living in the Parish

- All respondents (105) lived in the parish.
- The size of households of respondents to the survey ranged from 1 to 7. 20 (19%) were occupied by a single person, 57 (54%) by two people and 28 (12%) by three or more people. This profile is similar to the ward household composition (single person 23%, couple 51% and family 19%). The age profile of the households is shown in Figure 1.

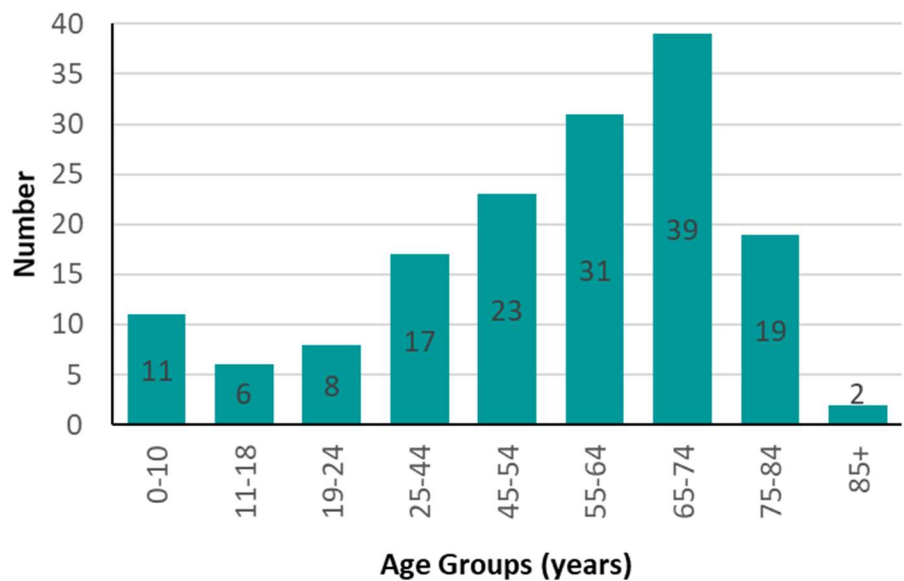


Figure 1: Age profile of households of survey respondents

- All commented on aspects of living in the parish that they valued the most. These comments are reflected in the word cloud below (Figure 2). The rural environment and countryside featured strongly, along with enjoyment of the peace, quiet and space and living in a friendly village community.



Figure 2: Word cloud of valued aspect of living in Fivehead and Swell Parish

Views about Housing Development in the Parish

- Of the 105 respondents, 74 (70%) thought that there was enough housing in the parish. 12 (11%) thought that there was too much already and 19 (18%) that some more were needed (Figure 3).

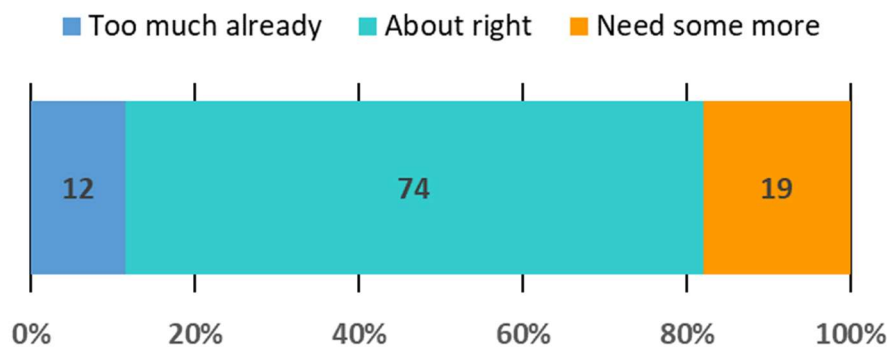


Figure 3: Responses about the amount of housing currently available in Fivehead

- 54 out of 90 (60%) would support future developments to meet housing needs or parishioners or those with local connections. However, all respondents were concerned about future housing developments with the majority identifying multiple concerns (Figure 4). The top concerns were busy roads/access issues (87/105), insufficient local services and amenities (85/105), the impact on the environment (75/105) and development on non-designated land (72/105).

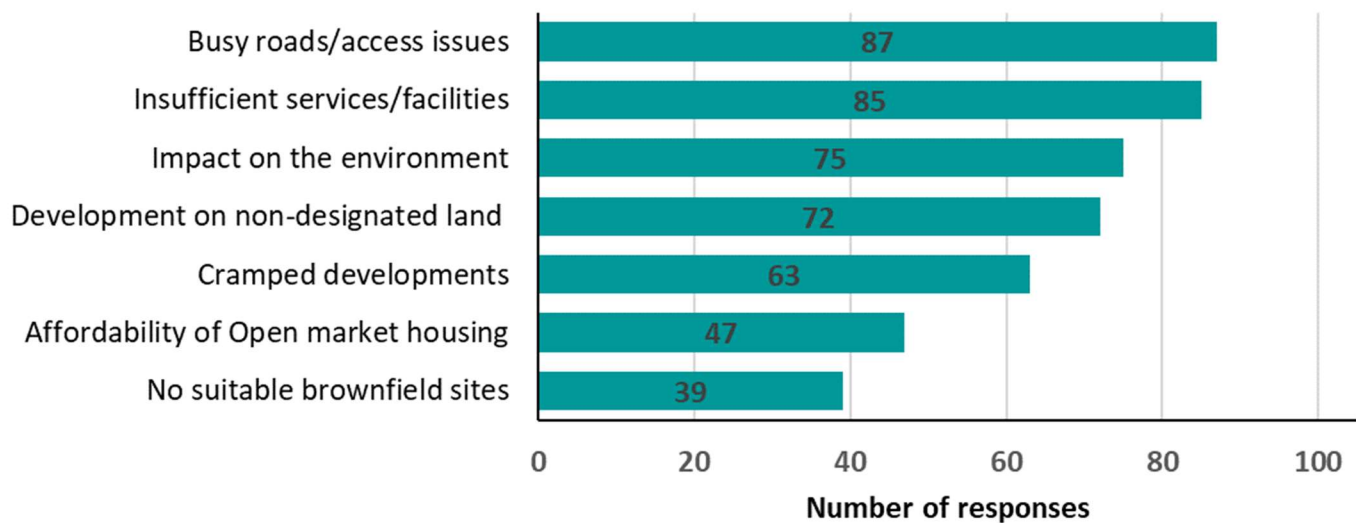


Figure 4: Concerns about future housing development in Fivehead

- 40 people provided additional comments about concerns about development. While comments reflected the concerns identified above, the following additional points were raised by several respondents. There were concerns that the impact of agreed planning approvals for housing developments in Fivehead that have yet to be realized along with the lack of adherence/revisions to approved plans. The size of developments was also commented on with a preference for small developments that does not over-crowd the village. Several highlighted the lack of affordable housing and the impact that it has on the village population.

New Open Market Housing

- Eleven respondents (10%) expressed interest in purchasing a newly built or converted home on the open market. Three respondents were also interested in housing for older people and one in affordable housing. The former 4 responses are included in the subsection sections and the 7 unique responses are considered here for open market housing.
- Respondents were interested in moving for various reasons. Some wanted to move because they required a larger house but more wanted to move to a smaller more manageable house with cheaper running costs. One person was a first-time buyer. The majority would like to be able to move within the next 5 years or 5-10 years (Figure 5).

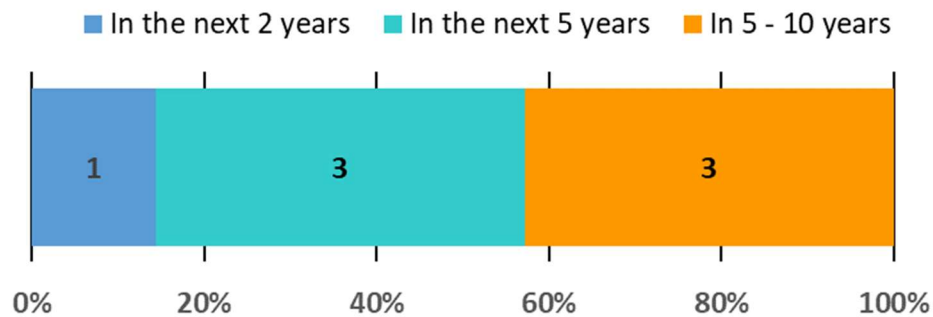


Figure 5: Timescales for moving: open market housing

- Because reasons for wanting to move were varied, the type of housing required was also variable. There was a preference for houses. The housing requirements were as follows: one 2 bedroom house, three 3 bedroom houses, one 3 bedroom bungalow and two 4 bedroom houses. The maximum budget for housing ranged from £250,000 to greater than £500,000 (see Figure 6).

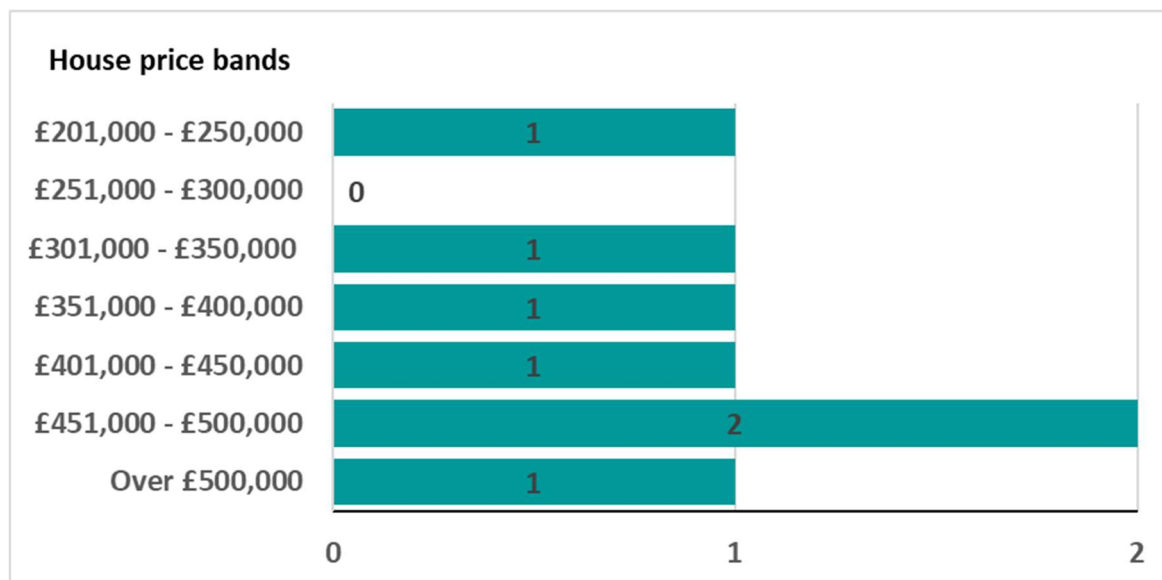


Figure 6: Budget for housing: Open Market Housing

Housing for Older People

- Eight respondents (8%) expressed interest in moving into open market purpose-built/converted older people housing. The most important factors for moving were to have a smaller more manageable home, to stay independent and to have a home on one level.
- The majority thought that they could remain in their present home if alterations, adaptations or support were provided. If they were to move, the majority (75%) thought that they would look to do so in 5-10 years and that they would be interested in a home to buy. There was a strong preference for bungalows, a mixture of 1 bedroom (n=2), 2 bedrooms (n=4) and 3 bedrooms (n=2). Several identified a wet room as desirable. The maximum amount that respondents would be prepared to pay is shown in Figure 7.

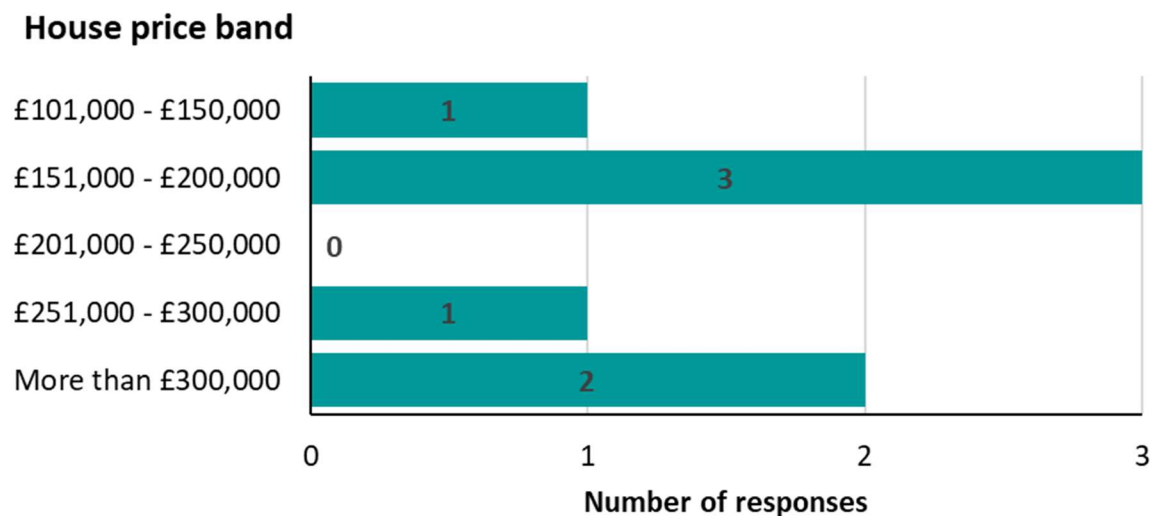


Figure 7: Budget for housing: Older people

Affordable Market Housing

- Seven respondents (7%) indicated that a member of their household is likely to need an affordable home in the parish. Of the 7 respondents, 2 did not identify a need for affordable housing within the next 5 years, 2 were identifying a need for another member of their household and 3 respondents completed the survey to identify their needs. The remaining points focuses on their responses.

- All respondents currently live in the parish. Respondents were looking to move because they were living with parents or someone else's home and did not expect to be able to rent or buy on the open market or because they needed to be closer to a carer or dependent. None were registered on Homefinder Somerset.
- The type of housing required was a 1 bedroom flat/house and two 2 bedroom houses or bungalow with at least one as a single level dwelling. Most respondents were open about the affordable options. For affordability/budget, the monthly costs of rent/mortgage would need to be from under £400 to a maximum of £700.

References

1. Source: https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/1250/j-plan_pol-web-site-2018-1-local-plan-local-plan-2006-2028-south_somerset_local_plan_2006-2028_adoption_version_march_2015.pdf
2. Source: <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/census-datasets/>
3. Source: <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/population-estimates/>
4. Sources: <https://www.onthemarket.com/> and <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/> (accessed: 10/04/2021)
5. Sources: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing>
6. Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/placeofresidencebylocalauthorityshetable8>
7. Source: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/bulletins/smallareamodelbasedincomeestimates/financialyearending2018>
8. Source: <https://www.spareroom.co.uk/> (accessed: 10/04/2021)
9. Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>