



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

SWIMBRIDGE

North Devon

April 2012



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

Exmoor, North Devon & West Somerset

The Rural Housing Project has been running since 2002 and is a partnership between Exmoor National Park Authority, North Devon Council, West Somerset Council, English Rural Housing Association, Falcon Rural Housing, Hastoe Housing Association, North Devon Homes, Devon and Cornwall Housing Association and Magna Housing Association. It has been working hard to address the shortage of affordable housing within a predominantly rural area. The area covered by the project displays an extreme disparity between incomes and house prices, which makes it hard for many to gain secure footing within the housing market.

The Rural Housing Project is designed to help promote and deliver affordable rural housing strategically across the project area and helps deliver Exmoor National Park housing policies within the Park. This is being achieved by informing people about affordable rural housing, providing help and advice, carrying out research at parish level to assess the affordable housing need and bringing together the community and various partners to help deliver housing where it is needed.



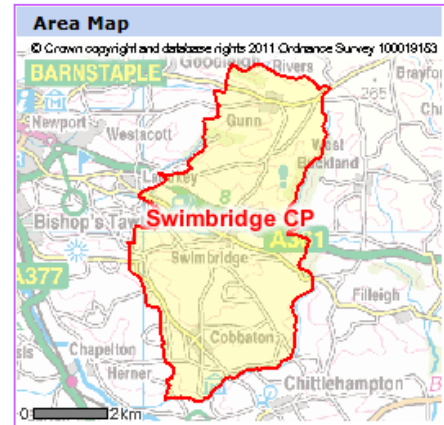
Colin Savage, Rural Housing Enabler

One of the tasks for the project is to work with the Parish Council and the local community to assist them in carrying out a housing needs survey, in order to identify whether there is a need for affordable housing for local people in the parish.

SWIMBRIDGE PARISH HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

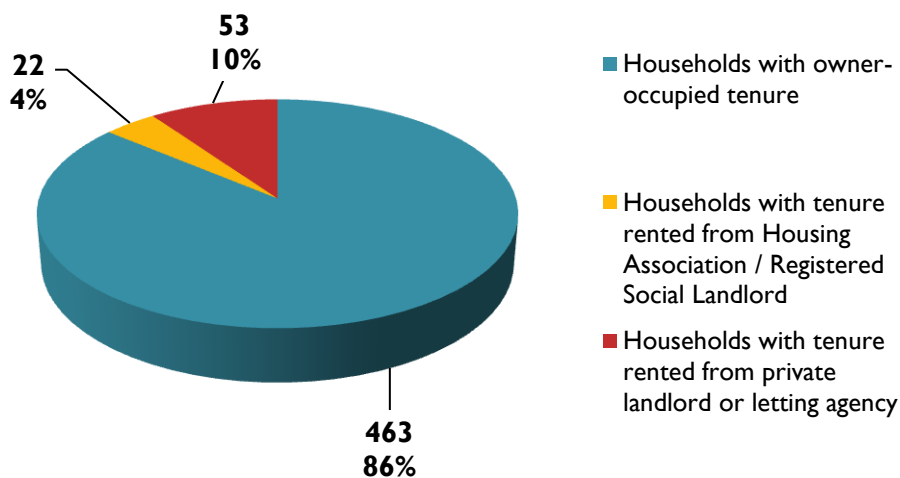
Introduction

Swimbridge is a parish and village in North Devon. The village is situated 4 miles south-east of Barnstaple and is famed as the home of the Rev. 'Jack' Russell who first bred Parson Jack Russell terriers. With a population of around 1,300 Swimbridge is the 18th largest parish in North Devon. It includes the hamlets of Gunn, Cobbaton, Accott, Newland, Hannaford, Yarnacott and Hearson.

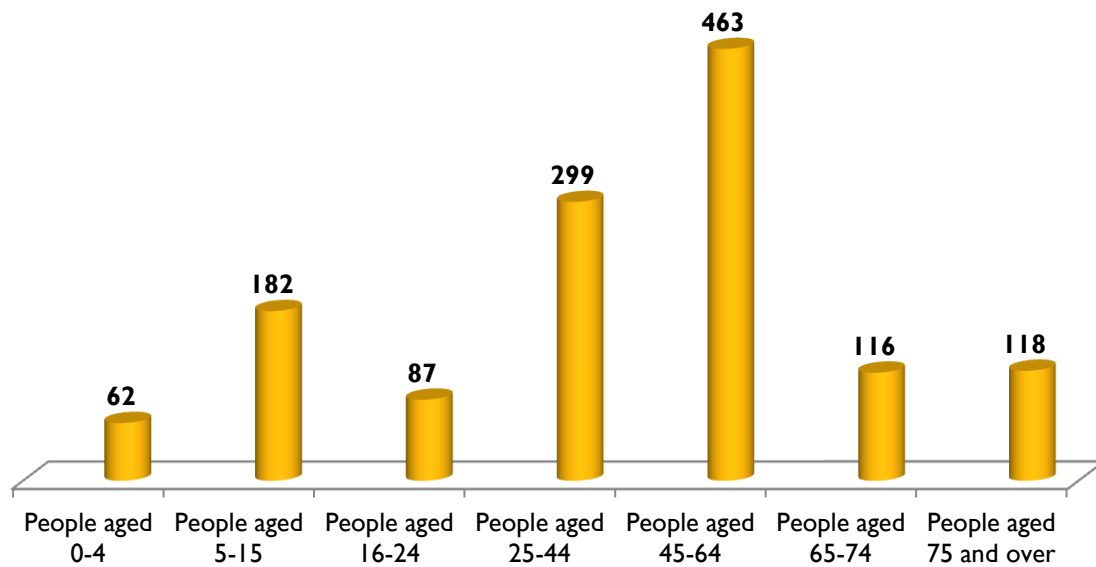


North Devon Local Plan defines Swimbridge as a “large village” situated within the Priority Area for Rural Regeneration (PARR). It is deemed to be reasonably self sufficient and situated outside any nationally designated landscape area. The emphasis is to maintain rates of development in order to help sustain the viability of the community and promote greater self sufficiency. Any development should be appropriate to the needs of the community and the character of the settlement and surrounding area. A moderate level of growth may prevent local services such as schools and shops from becoming unviable and help create a more mixed and balanced community. Particular support will be given to proposals in the form of a development package to facilitate the provision of a facility required for the local community and to improve the self sufficiency of the settlement. All “large villages” are subject to a development boundary in order to control and regulate their growth. Particular policies applying to these villages include Housing Policy HSG2, Economic Policy ECN3 and Policy COM4 which deals with community facilities - see appendix at the end of this report.

Most homes in Swimbridge are owner-occupied, see chart below for breakdown of tenure:

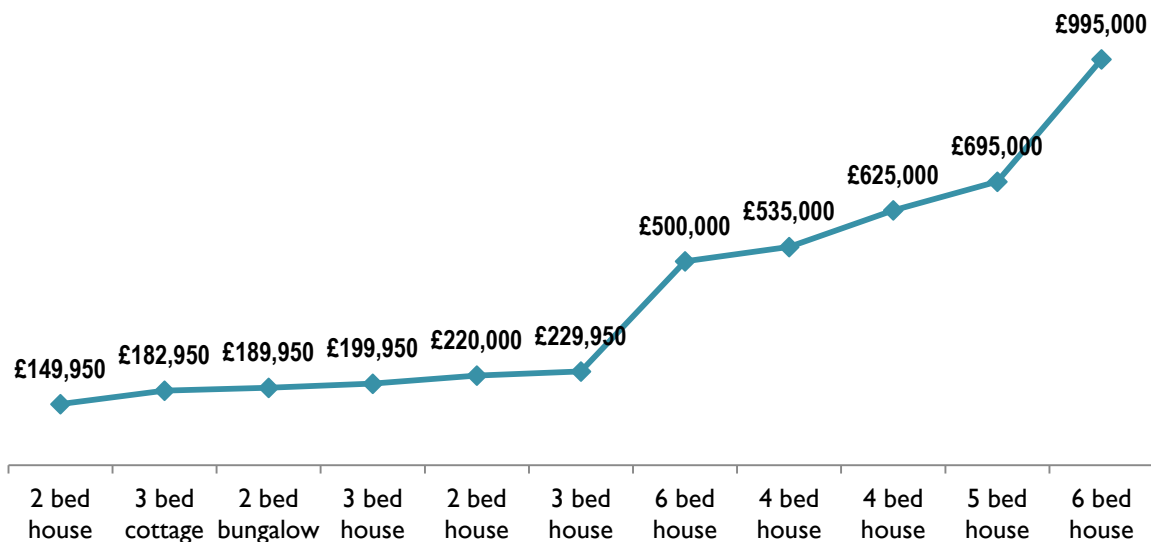


Swimbridge Parish has a population of 1,327¹ of which 665 are male and 662 female, living in a total of 432 households. Age groups are as shown in the following table:



Local House Prices

As at April 2012 there were eleven residential properties for sale within a mile of Swimbridge village². The lowest priced property was a 2 bed house on the market for £149,950. To obtain a mortgage on this property a household would need an income of £34,000 plus a £15,000 deposit or £30,500 with a £20,000 deposit.³



¹ Census 2001 : Office of National Statistics Last Updated: 28 April 2004

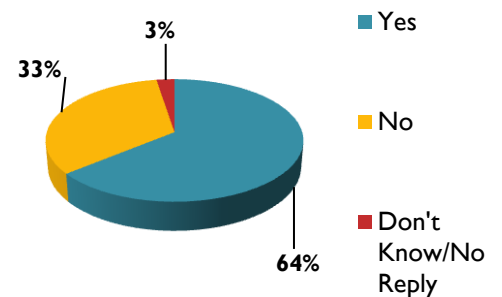
² www.findaproperty.co.uk

³ www.santander.co.uk

The Survey

Following discussions with Swimbridge Parish Council and with their agreement, initial housing needs survey forms were sent to all households in Swimbridge Parish, along with a covering letter from the Rural Housing Enabler. Copies are appended to this report.

27% of surveys were returned. The first question asked whether people would be in favour of a small number of new homes being provided to help meet the proven housing needs of local people in the parish. Around two thirds of those who responded were in favour, as shown in this chart →



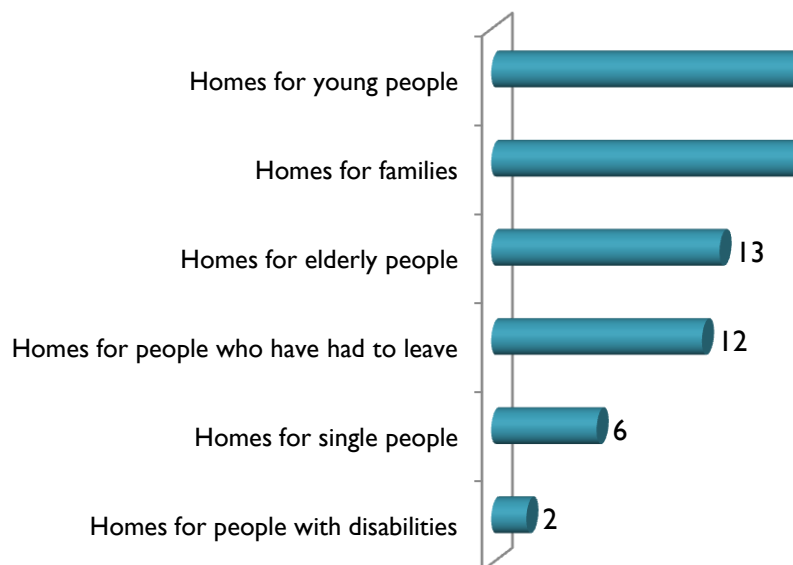
Comments were invited on three areas of interest:

- The provision of a small number of new homes (as mentioned above)
- Any other development that might be needed to benefit the community (e.g. open space, community buildings, employment opportunities)
- Suggestions of sites where a small development could be built or buildings that could be converted for affordable housing.

Many comments and suggestions were received and these are listed at the end of the report (Appendix A).

Perception of Housing Need

Respondents felt that those in greatest need for provision of housing the parish were in the following groups:



Of the 117 returns, 20 households completed Part Two indicating that they were likely to move home locally in the next five years, and they were subsequently sent a follow-up form requesting more detailed information on their needs and aspirations.



Four questionnaires were returned completed:

- Single woman living with parents, wants to live independently in small house or flat within easy reach of home.
- Single man in private rented accommodation, finding it too expensive; would like low cost home ownership.
- Couple, 60s, owner occupiers, finding present home too large, would like to live in a retirement complex for elderly but able people.
- Retired single man, renting privately, would like a more secure tenancy, needs to be near family (local).

Rural Housing Enabler's Comments and Recommendations

In an attempt to reduce paper wastage, the Rural Housing Project has tried splitting its survey process into two stages, with only those identifying some level of housing need being asked to return the second, detailed questionnaire. However, response rates to that second part of the survey have been low, with only a quarter being sent back.

From the Part One surveys and the four Part Twos returned, there are 17 households wanting some form of housing in the next five years. This includes owner occupation as well as affordable housing.

	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms
Affordable	8	3
Owner Occupied	4	2

From the information received it is not possible to identify accurately a mix of affordable rented and low cost home ownership.

The Rural Housing Enabler would recommend provision of

- **5 x 2 bed**
 - **2 x 3 bed**
- affordable homes.

Colin Savage

Rural Housing Enabler

July 2012



**Comments from People who said YES
to a small number of new homes being built if the need is proven**

- Dependent on price of homes. We have had new development of 14, 2 were affordable rent. The rest overpriced and unachievable for local families.
- Important to maintain a younger element in the community.
- There are plenty of places where one or more homes could be built without adversely affecting the environment.
- I am retired and will have to move into a smaller and more manageable property preferably with sheltered housing connections to help. There is none that I know of in the area. I have lived in the parish for almost 30 years and before that in Bratton Fleming.
- An older person's complex rather than an old people's care home.
- 13 14 15 & 16 Archipark were built for the elderly but now sold but never replaced and every village normally have elderly homes that's affordable.
- We are currently living with parents and are desperate for our own place, still within this area. We would definitely welcome new homes and an opportunity to be in our own place.
- Need more homes for homeless.
- The property market is ridiculous and out of proportion with a great number of the population. Rentals are far too high and prohibit people from saving.
- It is important to have a full range of ages for the local economy and, like a lot of the area, population is becoming older.
- House prices too expensive for young/first time buyers.
- Ultimately people do need homes. Important that homes are built sympathetic to existing property and with needs of current residents fully balloted.
- Only with reservation – i.e. if full consultation is made with existing residents of Swimbridge as in “Planning for Real” model on Exmoor.
- Swimbridge is such a beautiful village and people tend to live in their houses for many, many years leading to an increased shortage of housing for new families. I had to leave Swimbridge 2 years ago and cannot move back as no homes are available to rent.
- New housing for young people needs to be addressed, schools, youth clubs etc will cease to exist if no young people in parish.
- I believe that village life is very important as a community and all young people with families should have access to affordable housing in their local area.
- We probably need more rental accommodation or small reasonable priced property for local young people to get on the housing ladder.
- Prefer small developments which can more easily integrate into parish rather than change its character or conflict with.

- The village has to retain its younger occupants.
- There is little chance for young local people to buy in Swimbridge in the new development only 2 became available and I believe one was bought for the daughter of a local resident even though she lives out of the county.
- Would love a low cost 3 bedroom house/flat. There aren't many places to rent, houses are too expensive. Swimbridge has a lovely community that drastically needs investment. We love living here.
- Everywhere and particularly here in North Devon needs "new blood" to keep the community alive.
- We need young families to be brought back into the village.
- There might not be a need now. There was some time ago and there may be a need in the future. However, they must be for local people not "bussed in" from outside the parish.
- A small number of new homes is acceptable but do not change the character of small villages such as Swimbridge. Any large expansion of these villages would have to include supporting infrastructure, which would ruin what countryside we have left – just as those bloody turbines have done!!
- We recently had a new build at Liverton Drive which provided several new and expensive houses but only 2 were provided for social housing or shared ownership.
- Affordable housing is needed for low income earners. By this I mean housing that is kept off the grossly inflated private housing market.
- We want to retain young people in the village
- Needs must.
- There is a national scandal of empty houses, flats etc. Before any additional accommodation is built ALL unoccupied properties MUST be brought back into use. Any development should be in existing housing areas, NOT in rural areas which have very poor infrastructures.
- I feel that there is not enough done to keep young families in their local environment regarding wages and affordable housing.
- But not for holiday homes.
- Provided houses were built on brown field sites, particular need at Gunn. Many people work at Gunn but no housing available.
- But the houses/maisonettes should be affordable by young families and not 4 bedroom detached with double garages etc.
- Children who have grown up here can't afford to buy houses here due to the local wages. It definitely needs looking at and sorting out.
- Happy to accommodate the real needs of society
- I feel that affordable housing is badly needed in the Swimbridge area.
- I know at least 2 people who have had to move away as the housing association does not have any 1 bed properties available. Instead are really big expensive new homes that nobody will buy! Small houses are needed.
- I think a community needs to grow if it is to be sustainable other than as an "old folks' ghetto".
- I would emphasise that accommodation should be for LOCALS not to encourage more people to come here from up country.

- If the need is proven, I would be surprised to see any objections
- Must be affordable.
- Need to bring new people into village. Need to have affordable accommodation for locals.
- New houses should be affordable and restricted to people living (e.g. with parents) and working locally. Few people on less than the average wage can service a £100,000+ mortgage; such houses should be for rental and not sold at a discount.
- Not enough affordable homes for the young.
- Not in middle of village
- Stipulation that these homes are not to be allowed for holiday lets.
- There are too many properties which are too expensive for young families.



Comments from People who said NO to a small number of new homes being built if the need is proven

- With respect, I came to Devon to live in a village. I don't think there is room for further development. We have already, many years ago, won a battle over building houses and destroying more green fields.
- With insufficient work in N. Devon, in my view we have had enough houses built in the area and thought must be given to the water situation and the general infrastructure.
- We have recently had a small number of houses built in the village of which some are still empty. There are houses also for sale which have not been sold.
- We have just had 14 new homes built half of which are still empty a year on.
- We have empty houses that have been built last years, so no houses needed.
- We already have some new homes that haven't sold, but it is the size of the village as it is, and as it has been over the centuries, that makes it such a lovely close knit community. The valleys keep the size of the village under control and closely centred round the church.
- We already have had new homes built and they stand empty because there are no buyers.
- Too many houses have been built in the village in the last 10 years or so and the sewers cannot cope.
- There is an increasing number of "second homes" in the village, particularly in the High Street and Church Lane. Also, nearly half of Liverton Drive remains empty. There are empty homes in the village which need to be brought into use by price reduction and/or national policy. The answer is not to build more.
- There are many Brownfield sites in and around Barnstaple that are suitable for development – villages should not be destroyed by further development.
- There are enough properties for sale in the parish but are all out of reach financially from the younger people.
- The present sewage pipe is inadequate to accommodate present demand and it overflows on occasion into the river. The cost of improving this service would be prohibitive. The local school is unable to take more pupils.

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- The new housing estate in Swimbridge is standing mostly empty. The houses have not sold; until they are fully occupied, it would seem to be pointless and detrimental to the environment to build any more.
- The houses that have just been built or the ones that are up for sale should be affordable for the local people of the village.
- Swimbridge is a lovely small village with a great community. If more homes were to be built it would take away the small village feel that we all love. We would hate to see Swimbridge become bigger (like Landkey).
- Stop uncontrolled immigration. Problem solved! Why should we provide houses for those who have never had to work and buy them for themselves?
- Stop uncontrolled immigration. Problem solved! Why should we provide houses for those who have never had to work and buy them for themselves?
- Still new homes for sale in the village.
- Some recent new builds remain unsold – no need for more.
- School full no more places available. Sewage pumping station cannot cope with any more demand.
- Recent housing development is still largely empty/vacant and has already spoiled the character of the village.
- Purely selfish; we moved here for the views. Empty new build houses in Swimbridge.
- Not in favour of any further development locally. Do we really want a Landkey/ Swimbridge conurbation? Why do we always have to worry about “affordable housing”? Build in Barnstaple, not in Swimbridge.
- We have a beautiful countryside all around us. People come here to enjoy it.
- Not enough dental or doctors or school places to support more housing, which will be filled by outsiders.
- More houses have been built here in the last few years. I worry about losing green areas. Once developed they can never be got back.
- I moved to the village specifically because of its small size. There are unsold houses in the village across all price ranges.
- I believe that rural hamlets should remain just that. The reason I moved here was because of the beautiful area and its isolated hamlets. I do not wish it to be spoilt.
- Houses still for sale over the price range including starter homes.
- Homes have already been built in the centre – more would spoil the village.
- Have recently had a small development built in Swimbridge. These houses are not fully occupied; therefore one would assume no need for more.
- As the most recent housing development has proved hard to sell, it would seem foolhardy to build more houses.
- Already homes in Swimbridge on new housing development which haven't sold
- A new development of 1, 2, 3, 4 bedroom houses has been built including affordable housing and social housing. Six of these properties still remain empty after over a year. People who have lived in the village all their lives are moving away because the village is being spoilt by over development.

SITE SUGGESTIONS IN SWIMBRIDGE PARISH

- Around Yeocot Lane or Yeoland Lane.
- Bestridge Lane
- Empty properties to be identified and absentee landlords – and used.
- Empty property in Berry Lane Road has been empty for over 3 years and starting to fall down. Young person working at Gunn would like to buy but old owner will not sell. Should be made to pay council tax whilst it is empty.
- Extend Chittlehampton to the north.
- Farmers often have disused barns. They might be happy to have these converted which will mean people can stay in this area.
- From Travellers Rest old church to old Methodist church.
- Infill larger plots
- Land adjacent to the new Glebefield open space and Marsh Cross. All main facilities are to hand and I know First Step Homes have looked at it.
- Land behind Jubilee Hall.
- Land/gardens behind houses in Station Hill (lower end of street) opposite church.
- Liverton Drive
- Near the Swimbridge nursing home.
- Needs to be located close to village centre and amenities and close to a bus route.
- Old Tannery.
- Perhaps the empty new homes could be used for affordable housing!
- Possibly along Hannaford Lane or down the road to West Buckland.
- Round the back of Hannaford in the old tannery yard that's doing nothing
- The buildings that are at the tannery seem to be vacant a log, maybe they could be converted.
- The old tannery x 10
- The tannery site is a “Brownfield” site which is ripe for a mixed development of affordable/council/housing association houses with industrial units.
- The old tannery building is ugly and needs removing first!
- The tannery site is already identified for housing but provides the only industrial employment in the village.
- There are many vacant sites in Barnstaple. Rather than build yet another unrequired supermarket, build much needed houses instead. The benefits to the town will be considerable.
- There's not much wasteland but hills and fields are in abundance!
- To be taken with full local consultation rather than decisions taken and imposed on the community for maximum profit.
- To rear of parish hall.
- To the south of Archipark.
- Tree Beech House, Gunn (x 2)
- We have a site on our land which could accommodate a 2 bed dwelling but have been advised that planning would not be forthcoming. (Yeoland Lane, Swimbridge)

SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

- A community shop.
- A park and play area. Would like to see a local shop instead of a house that's been partly converted to a post office.
- A park space.
- A play park for young children
- A shop would be lovely
- A shop.
- Allotments.
- Care home
- Children's play area
- Employment opportunities x 11
- Employment opportunities, affordable/low rent workshops and buildings to set up small businesses.
- Good employment opportunities. My husband has a 100 mile round trip each day due to inability to secure job in local area.
- Holiday homes – we need visitors willing to spend their money here
- Improve church as community service
- Improve Jubilee Hall
- It is vital that the school, shop, church and pub remain.
- Keep current community buildings in good working order.
- Mixture of open space, community buildings and employment opportunities would all be beneficial.
- More open space for public use.
- New village hall – larger, to meet all needs
- Open space for all to enjoy
- Open space.
- Outdoor sports facilities appear inadequate.
- Park
- Park – social meeting/walks
- Play spaces for young people
- Please refer to www.pubisthehub.org.uk – scope for discussion there. Also more “linked up” footpaths/local countryside management areas incorporating the area's fine view points with history, archaeology. Employment locally to construct way marks, benches etc.
- Public footpath on road into village from South Molton direction (from public footpath leading down to road)
- Public transport provision
- Renew outside toilet at the Jubilee Hall for public use – grants are available
- Renovation of village hall needed.
- Retain Post Office
- Return of the post office/shop in Goodleigh

- Small industrial estate in the village. There is one at the north of the parish but few if any village people work there.
- Small shop (e.g. like one in Landkey)
- Somewhere to be part of the village community.
- Sports pavilion in field for school and community use.
- The miniscule village (hamlet would be a better description) of Filleigh has an enormous village hall – does not take too many brain cells to work that one out – Landkey and Swimbridge survive on rather out-dated accommodation. New Halls needed now!
- The reinstatement of the bus service to and from South Molton through the village and not straight down the Link Road.
- There's lack of car parking space and a tea room for the visitors to look at the local church and the local walks.
- Vast improvements to the Jubilee Hall, as it is a well used hall with very poor facilities.
- Village shop (farm shop with local produce)
- We have been trying for many years to have a new community hall and a park.
- We now have open space for youngsters (Glebe Field). Any employment opportunities should be considered but not at expense of quality of life of residents.
- No – very rural area which should remain rural
- No: People need places to visit that are quiet and peaceful. It is just as important to humanity as entertainments and activities. We need to conserve, protect and retain our still areas.
- I don't think community buildings need providing as the village hall seems to provide adequate use. New business units at South Molton provide employment for the area and people seem happy to travel.
- No: This is a waste of time!



HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY – SWIMBRIDGE

The purpose of this survey is to identify local housing requirements for people in all tenures - rented and owner-occupied.

SECTION 1 – EVERY HOUSEHOLD PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

In your opinion, who do you think is in greatest need of a new home in the parish? *(Please tick one)*

Homes for young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homes for elderly people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for families	<input type="checkbox"/>	Homes for single people	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for people with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	No further homes are needed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homes for people who have had to leave	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other, please specify	

If need is proven, would you be in favour of a small number of new homes to help meet the housing needs of local people in your parish?

Yes No

Please briefly explain your views:

Is there any other development you would like to see in your community?
(e.g. open space, community buildings, employment opportunities)

Can you suggest a site where a small development could be built, or building/s that could be converted for affordable housing?

Thank you for completing this.

If you will need to move home locally in the next five years, please also complete the other side of this form.

SECTION 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY ALL HOUSEHOLDS WHO ARE LIKELY TO NEED TO MOVE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

HOUSING REQUIREMENTS		
Your present home is: <i>(please mark x)</i>		Type of home you need: <i>(please mark x all that apply)</i>
	Owner occupied	
	Low cost home ownership	
	Private rented	
	Housing association rented	
	Shared ownership	
	Conversion of existing building	
	Self-build	
	Tied to employment	
	Other <i>[specify]</i>	

Size of present home: <i>(please mark x)</i>		Size of home you need: <i>(please mark x)</i>
	1 bedroom	
	2 bedrooms	
	3 bedrooms	
	4 bedrooms	
	5+ bedrooms	

CONTACT DETAILS	
Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number/s:	
E-mail address:	
Date form completed:	

The Rural Housing Project will contact you in due course for further details.



RURAL HOUSING PROJECT

EXMOOR, NORTH DEVON AND WEST SOMERSET

Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset.TA22 9HL

☎ (01398) 322249 ✉ cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

16 March 2012

Dear

Thank you very much for completing and returning the housing needs survey we sent out recently.

You filled in Section 2 for people likely to need to move in the next five years, and we are therefore enclosing a further form designed to give us the information we need to try and help as many local people as possible to live in a home that is the right size and location for their needs. Please complete and return this as soon as possible.

We attach a photocopy of your first form, for your reference.

All information received will be stored confidentially and used to work out what can be provided in terms of development to benefit the community. We will get in touch if a housing scheme is brought forward that could meet your requirement.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Colin Savage

Colin Savage
Rural Housing Enabler

Enc.

FOLLOW-UP HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY - SWIMBRIDGE

1. WHO NEEDS HOUSING?

Please provide the following information about yourself & everyone who will need to move with you:

Living at present home: <i>(please mark x)</i>	Relationship to you (e.g. wife, partner, son)	Age	Male/Female (M/F)	Will live at the home you need: <i>(please mark x)</i>
	<i>Myself</i>			

Why do you need to move (you can give more than one reason)?

a) First independent home		b) Couple setting up home together	
c) Present home too small		d) Present home too large	
e) Health/Disability		f) Need specially adapted home	
g) Present home in poor condition		h) Present home too expensive	
i) Renting but would like to buy		j) Moved away and wish to return	
k) Private tenancy, need more security		l) In tied housing, need more security	
m) Family break up		n) For family care/support	
o) To be near work		p) Living with parents or in someone else's home	
Other <i>[please explain]</i>			

Which of the above is your main reason?

please state one letter only

What is preventing you from moving?

a) Suitable rented housing is not available locally		b) Suitable housing to buy is not available locally	
c) Suitable rented housing <u>is</u> available locally but I/we cannot afford it		d) Suitable housing to buy <u>is</u> available locally but I/we cannot afford to buy it	
Other <i>[please explain]</i>			

2. LOCAL CONNECTION

a. Where do you need to live?

Please tell us which settlements you need to live in, in order of preference, and give the reasons for your choices (e.g. near work, near family, born/brought up there, close to school/other facilities etc.)

1st <u>Reasons</u>	2nd <u>Reasons</u>	3rd <u>Reasons</u>

We may need evidence to support your local connection.

b. Long Term Residence

Please provide all addresses and dates of residence for your household members - or the people you need to live close to - during the last 20 years:

Address (including postcode)	From (month/year)	To (month/year)

Continue on a separate sheet if necessary

c. Employment

Can you demonstrate that you have a real need to live locally because you have permanent employment?

Yes / No

Please describe the nature of that work and why you need to live nearby.

Where is your place of work?

Post code:

If you work from home, does your new housing need to take account of this?
If so, please provide more detail:

d. To provide care or support

Is there someone living locally who needs you to live nearby in order for one of you to provide support or care to the other, for age or medical reasons?

Yes / No

Please state their relationship to you: _____

and provide their addresses in 2 b. above.

e. Are you a former resident of this parish who wishes to return?

Yes / No

If yes, please tell us why you originally left and why you wish to return:

f. Do you need different housing because of age or health reasons? Please explain:

g. Do you have any other relevant local connection to the area? If so, please describe:

3. INCOME AND SAVINGS

In order to fully assess the type of housing you can afford, it is necessary to know about your current income, savings, capital and investments. This information should be combined for couples/households.

a) Which of the following ranges of annual income does your household have? (gross income, before deductions).

	x
Less than £20,000 per annum	
£20,000 - £24,999 per annum	
£25,000 - £29,999 per annum	
£30,000 - £39,999 per annum	
£40,000 - £49,999 per annum	
Over £50,000 per annum	

b) If you are interested in purchasing a property, would you need to borrow money?
Yes / No

c) How much deposit could you raise? (round up or down to nearest £1000):

£.....

4. HOUSING REGISTER

If your household needs affordable housing, it is essential that you are on the Council Housing Register.

Are you currently registered on the Local Authority housing waiting list?

	x	
Yes		Band:
No		
Application submitted		
Intend to apply soon		

If you have any queries about this form, affordable housing or the Rural Housing Project please contact:

Colin Savage ~ Rural Housing Enabler
 Exmoor House, Dulverton. TA22 9HL ☎ 01398 322249
 E-mail: cbsavage@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

NORTH DEVON LOCAL PLAN

Relevant Policies

POLICY HSG2 (DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARIES)

Residential development will be permitted within the development boundary of a town or village where it does not harm the character and setting of the settlement.

POLICY ECN3 (EMPLOYMENT WITHIN OR ADJOINING A RURAL SETTLEMENT)

Employment development will be permitted within or on the edge of an identified village or small rural settlement where:-

- a) the scale and type of development is compatible with the size and location of the rural settlement; and
- b) it does not harm the rural character and setting of the settlement or the surrounding area.

POLICY COM4 (COMMUNITY FACILITIES)

1. A development proposal for a community facility will be permitted within or immediately abutting the main built up area of a town, identified village or identified rural settlement providing:-
 - a. the scale of the facility is related to the needs of the local community;
 - b. it does not harm the character of the settlement or the surrounding countryside; and
 - c. it is accessible to a range of transport modes.
2. A development proposal involving the loss of a community facility will only be permitted where:-
 - a. there is no demand for the facility from the local community or the facility is unviable; or
 - b. there is a replacement or alternative facility available of at least equivalent standard and accessibility to the community served by the original facility; or
 - c. any replacement facility or rationalisation of an existing facility provides benefits to the local community which outweigh any harm from loss of the original facility.