

Lea and Cleverton

Parish Housing Needs Survey

Survey Report

August 2019

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1. Parish Summary

The parish of Lea and Cleverton is in the Malmesbury Community Area within the local authority area of Wiltshire.

The 2011 census shows a population of 812 in 314 households. The housing is split 73.8% in Lea, 9.2 in Garsdon and 7.1% in Cleverton respectively, with the remaining 9.9% being in scattered isolated properties and farms.

It is a small, rural and predominantly agricultural Parish lying two kilometres east of Malmesbury. Chippenham (19km), Swindon (22km) and Bath (40km) are the nearest major towns and are the major economic centres in the area. Junction 17 of the M4 lies approximately 10 kilometres to the south.

The Parish covers 11.75 square kilometres of gently rolling open countryside within which lies the small village of Lea together with the hamlets of Cleverton and Garsdon which are of Saxon and medieval origin.

Low hills and shallow valleys create a pattern of meandering watercourses which include the Woodridge Brook and the Charlton Stream. Parish boundaries to the west, north and east partly follow existing watercourses (Bristol Avon & Charlton Stream).

Land use is dominated by farmland with pasture and arable occupying 60% and 34% of total land area respectively. Remnant woodland covers 15-20ha in the form of Lea and Garsdon Woods and Woodbridge Copse.

The Parish sits between the B4040 to the north and the B4042 to the south. These main roads are linked by The Street, a C class road which runs through the Parish and provides the main access route into Lea village.

Connected to The Street is a network of single track, mostly high hedged country lanes throughout the Parish. These narrow lanes comprise three-quarters of all roads and provide access between Lea village, the hamlets of Garsdon and Cleverton, the many farms and the single or small clusters of dwellings scattered throughout the Parish.

Currently there are 343 houses or dwellings in the Parish. The majority of these (85%) are detached or semi-detached houses, the remainder being bungalows (11.2%) with a limited number of lower cost terraced properties (3.8%) (*Source: Neighbourhood Plan survey and database: 2019*).

Some 73.8% of all properties are in Lea village which, together with gardens, open spaces and roads, occupy some 30 ha or 2.5% of the Parish area. Property density in Lea varies between 3 and 30 dwellings per ha, with an average density of 7 per ha. The remaining dwellings (26.2%) are scattered throughout the Parish including Cleverton and Garsdon and occupy an estimated 2% of Parish area.

Historically settlement in the Parish evolved mainly as linear developments centred on the older Manor Houses, churches, chapels and farms. Some 130 or 38% of current dwellings

appear on a Parish Map of c1840, though only a few of these are listed buildings. It is around this core of each settlement that further development has taken place.

The core area in Lea was focused on St Giles Church and the Manor House, and formed the basis of the present Lea Conservation Area which occupies some 12ha equivalent to 40% of the area of Lea village.

Since the 1970s an estimated 91 new houses have been built in Lea, equivalent to 18 per decade, utilising land from redundant farms, vacant land between existing properties and redefined agricultural land on the boundaries of the settlement. More compact developments included those at Pembroke Green, Old Bakery Close, Manor View, Rushcroft Close and The Cedars. Also since the 1970's an estimated 163 houses or 30 per decade have been either converted or extended and enlarged. The scale of development over the past 50 years has thus involved 260 new or extended and enlarged houses, equivalent to 70% of the current housing stock. (*Source: Ibid and Neighbourhood Plan Housing Stock Analysis data 2019*)

Lea and Garsdon Church of England primary school is in Lea village and takes pupils from the Parish, surrounding villages and from the town of Malmesbury. There are currently 107 children attending the school which is planned for expansion in the near future. The Rose and Crown public house stands at the site of an original 18th century inn. Lea Village Hall which was built in 1934 is used by residents, local clubs and organisations and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Playing Field, which was acquired by the Parish Council in 1977, provides outdoor play areas and equipment for families and visitors to the Parish.

Places of worship include the Anglican churches of St Giles at Lea which dates back to the 15th century, and All Saints church at Garsdon which dates back to the 13th century; and non-conformist chapels at Lea and Cleverton which date back to the early 19th century.

2. Introduction

In spring 2019, Wiltshire Council's Development Officers discussed carrying out a rural housing needs survey with Lea and Cleverton Parish Council, to establish if there was a proven need for affordable housing in the parish and potentially to use the findings of the survey to inform the Neighbourhood plan.

Such surveys assist officers in identifying those areas with the greatest housing problems so that scarce financial resources can be put to best use.

Experience has shown that these surveys need to be carried out at regular intervals if the results are to remain relevant in identifying trends.

- The Principal Development Officers are employed by Wiltshire Council's Service Development and Enabling Team to assist in the delivery of new affordable housing.
- The Principal Development Officers work closely with rural communities, housing associations, local authorities and landowners to meet the affordable housing needs of rural communities.
- The survey is funded by members of the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership (WRIP).¹
- 'The Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership brings together representatives from the economic development, regeneration, spatial planning, service development and enabling teams of Wiltshire Council together with Registered Provider [housing association] partners and Homes England to enable and promote the sustainable delivery of new build housing in the rural communities of Wiltshire.'²

¹ The members of WRIP that contribute to the survey funding are Wiltshire Council and six Registered Providers of social housing (housing associations) - Aster, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing and White Horse Housing Association.

² Para 1.1, 'Purpose', *Terms of Reference for the Wiltshire Rural Investment Partnership*. Full WRIP membership: Wiltshire Council, Aster, White Horse Housing Association, GreenSquare, Guinness, Stonewater, Selwood Housing, Homes England, and the Wiltshire Community Land Trust.

3. Aim

The aim of carrying out the survey is to investigate the affordable housing needs of local people (or those who need to live) in the Lea and Cleverton parish.

- 'Housing need' can be defined as the need for an individual or household to obtain housing that is suitable to their circumstances.
- It implies that there are problems or limitations with the household's current housing arrangements and that the household is unable to afford or to access suitable accommodation in the private sector.
- Such problems may be concerned with housing costs, size, location, layout, state of repair, or security of tenure either immediately or in the future.

4. Survey Distribution and Methodology

In order to carry out the housing needs survey, questionnaires were delivered to the Parish Council for distribution on the 24th June 2019.

To encourage a good response, households were given a pre-paid envelope in which to return the completed survey. The council applies the data protection policy to responses, ensuring that all survey responses remain anonymous.

Residents were asked to return the completed surveys in the pre-paid envelopes by 5th August 2019. The forms were recorded and analysed by the Service Development Officers at Wiltshire Council.

- A total of 354 questionnaires were distributed to the parish.
- Everyone was asked to complete the first section of the form.
- If a household considered itself in need, or likely to be in need, of affordable housing within the next five years, it was invited to complete the rest of the survey.
- There was a very good response rate of 35% with 124 replies received.
- This report describes the views only of the residents who returned the questionnaires and these views may not be representative of the wider population of Lea and Cleverton.
- 7 responses were made online.

5. Key Findings

This report is divided into two parts. The first section looks at existing households in the parish in order to provide a description of the current housing in Lea and Cleverton. This section also describes the levels of new housing, if any, which would be supported by respondents to the survey.

The second section examines the households who have declared a need for new housing in Lea and Cleverton. The section begins by describing the overall need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment is then made in order to determine the numbers of households who have a current need for new affordable housing. The results of this assessment are summarised in the recommendations of the report (Section 8).

Part One – Households currently living in the parish

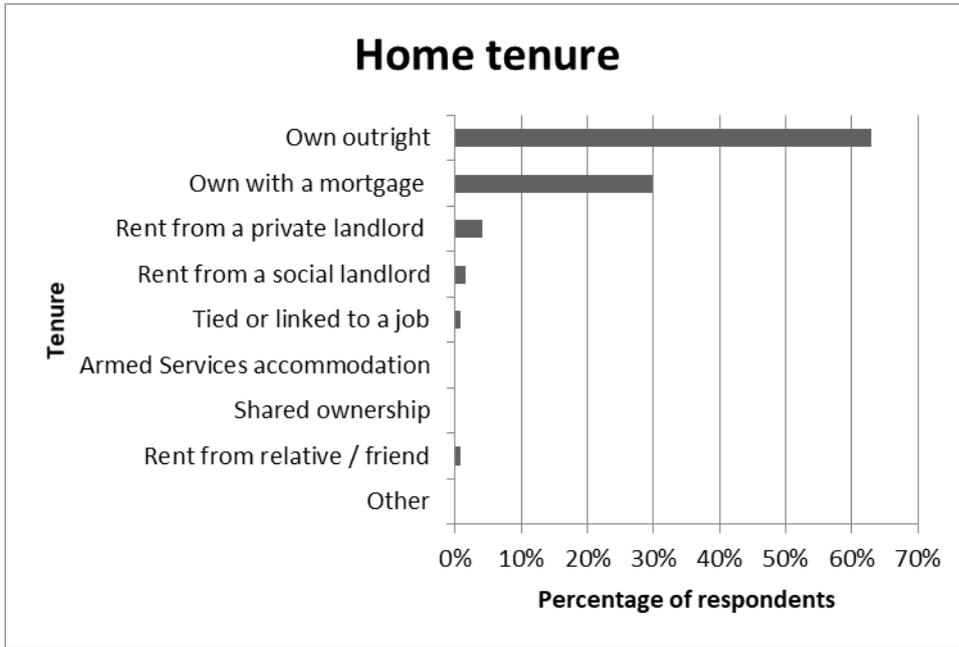
The first question asked on the survey was whether the respondents' home in Lea and Cleverton was their main home. 100% of those who replied said that it was.

The 2011 Census data for Lea and Cleverton indicates that 81.2% of households in the parish were owner-occupying, 0.6% were shared ownership, 6.4% were renting from social landlords, 9.9% were privately renting and 1.9% of households were living rent free.³

The chart below shows the tenure of respondents to the survey. The majority (92.7%) of respondents were owner-occupiers, while 1.6% of respondents were living in socially rented properties, 4.0% were renting from a private landlord or letting agency, 0.8% were living in accommodation tied to their employment, 0.8% were renting from a relative or friend and none were living in a tenure described as 'other'. These results indicate a bias in the survey responses toward those living in owner-occupied homes and the rest of this section should be read with this in mind.

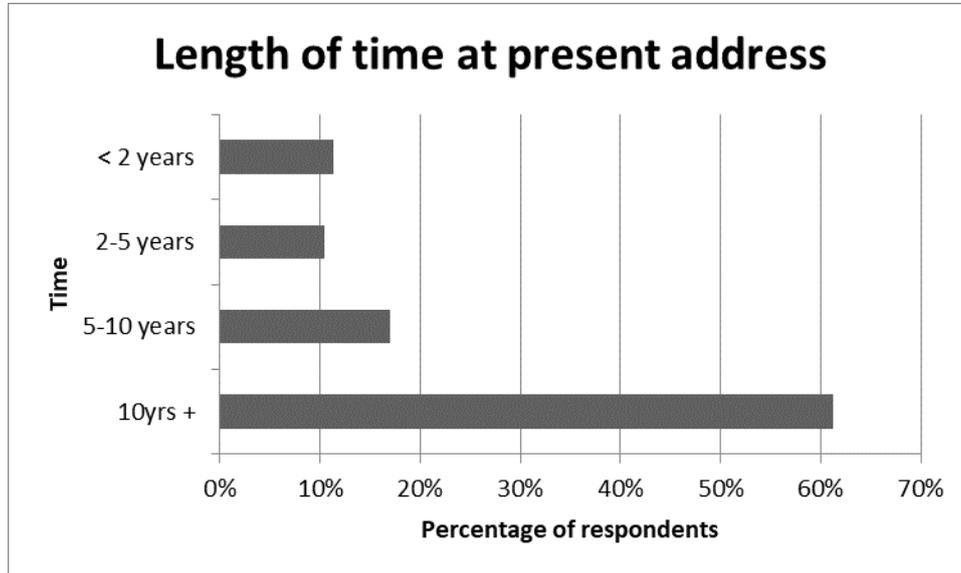
³ <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Chart 1



The chart below indicates the length of time that respondents have lived in their current home. It shows that the majority of people who responded to the survey have lived in the parish for more than ten years, which is appropriate for the high levels of owner occupation among survey respondents:

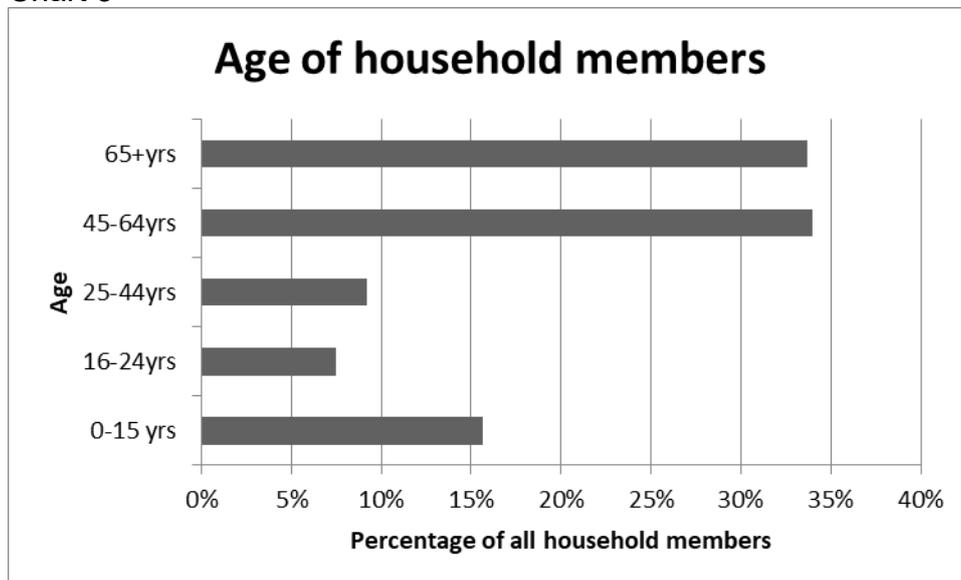
Chart 2



Many respondents to the survey lived in larger family homes, with 21.8% of respondents having five or more bedrooms in their property. 43.5% lived in four bedroom homes, 31.5% had three bedrooms, 3.2% two bedrooms. None of the respondents lived in homes with one bedroom.

The spread of ages recorded in the survey indicates that around a third (33.7%) of respondents' household members were aged 65+:

Chart 3



The distance travelled to work can also be a good measure of the sustainability of local housing development, as more people working locally can indicate an ongoing need for local housing. The table below shows how far people in the respondents' households travelled to work:

Table 1

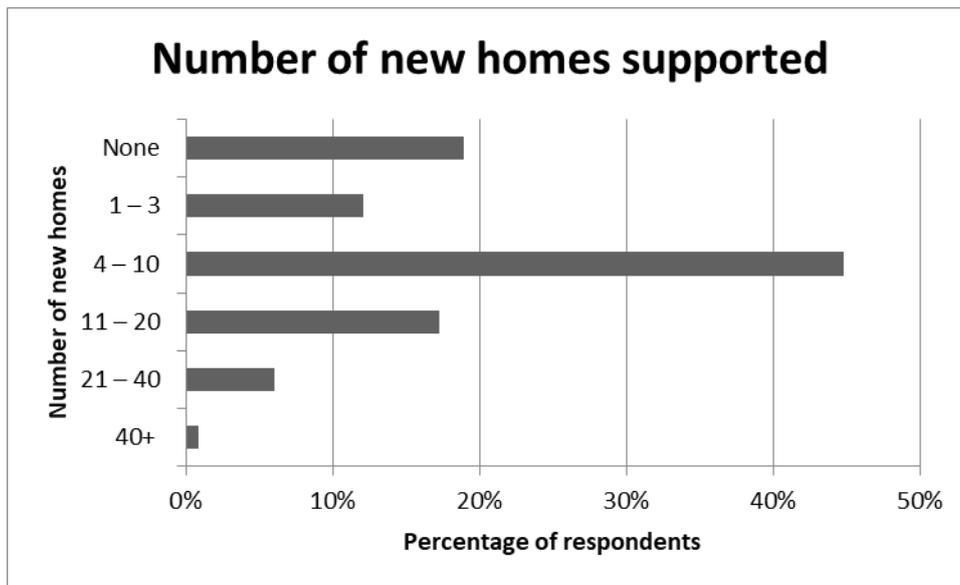
Persons in household	Distance to work				
	Up to 2 miles	2 - 10 miles	10 - 50 miles	50 miles +	Total
Person 1	12	15	25	14	66
Person 2	9	14	14	2	39
Person 3	0	1	1	0	2
Person 4	0	0	1	0	1
Person 5	0	0	0	0	0
Total	21	30	41	16	108

These results suggest a mixed level of sustainability for new housing development in Lea and Cleverton, indicated by the survey respondents' access to local sources of employment. While 47% of the households' working members usually travel less than ten miles to their place of work, 53% travel more than that, suggesting a potential lack of more local sources of employment.

Respondents were also asked whether anyone currently living in their household would need separate accommodation in the parish now or in the near future, to which 2.5% of respondents (three households) answered 'yes', indicating a low level of sustained need for housing in the parish.

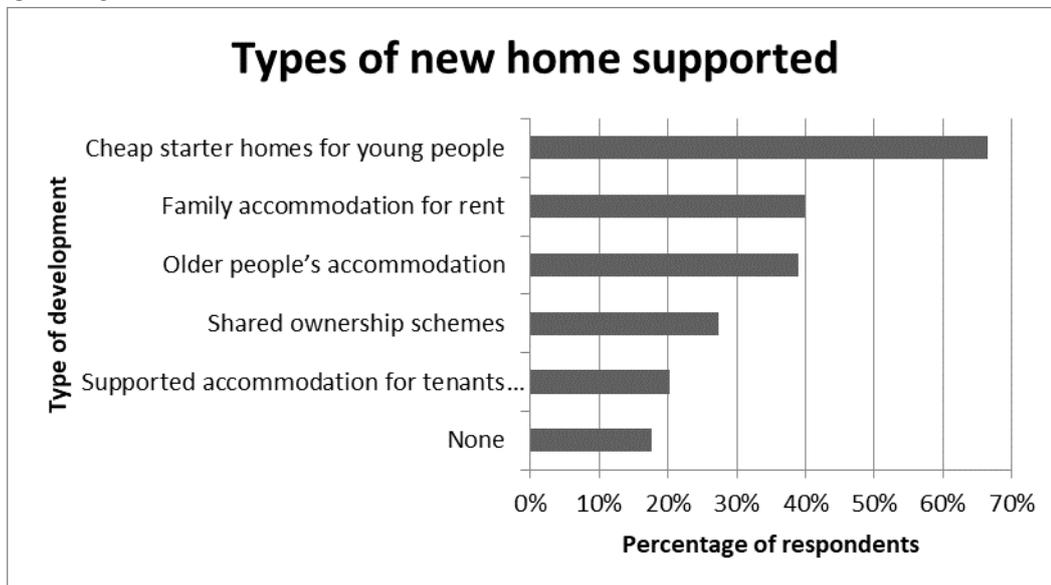
Respondents were then asked how many new homes they would support being built in the parish. A large majority of respondents (81%) were in support of some new housing in Lea and Cleverton, with the most popular option (44.8% of respondents) being for between four and ten new homes. 19% of respondents were opposed to any new housing in Lea and Cleverton parish:

Chart 4



Respondents to this section were finally asked what types of housing development, if any, they would support. The types of housing considered most needed in Lea and Cleverton by the survey respondents were affordable starter homes for young people (66.4%) and Family accommodation for rent (39.8%). Full results are given in the chart below (more than one answer could be given):

Chart 5



Part two – Households requiring accommodation in the parish

This section of the report looks initially at all the responses to section two of the survey in order to give a broad picture of the need for both market and affordable housing in the parish. A financial assessment and an evaluation of the current affordable housing in Lea and Cleverton are then made in order to describe in more detail the need for specifically affordable (i.e. non-market) housing.

One respondent replied to this section of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Lea and Cleverton.

The respondent requiring accommodation in the parish was asked what type of tenure they sought. The expressed need was to buy or have shared ownership of their home. The respondent also indicated a desire for privately rented accommodation.

Respondent to this section was also asked what type of housing they required. The respondent expressed a need for a terraced, semi-detached or detached three bedroom home.

The respondent was then asked if there was a lack of suitable existing housing in Lea and Cleverton to meet their needs, to which the household answered 'yes'.

In order to assess the need for **affordable** housing in Lea and Cleverton, it is necessary to consider the equity, income and savings levels of the respondent. Please note that due to the need to preserve the confidentiality of respondents, only a short summary of the financial assessment is presented below.

The household responding to this section of the survey reported having equity in an existing property. They also reported being in a lower income bracket with limited savings.

Comparing income, savings and equity levels with affordability in Lea and Cleverton suggests that this household would require public assistance in order to achieve their required housing and so would be considered 'in housing need' as defined in Section 3 of this report. This household informs the recommendation of this survey for new affordable housing in Lea and Cleverton, presented in Section 8.

6. Affordability

In order to investigate affordability, further research has been carried out on house prices in the area.

It is possible to estimate the average property prices in the Lea and Cleverton area:⁴

Bedrooms	August 2019
1	£232,500
2	£287,200
3	£358,900
4	£522,100
5+	£802,000

Example calculation for a mortgage

Typically, a household making a single application can obtain a mortgage of 3.5 times their annual income, or 3x annual income for joint applications. Households would generally expect to need a deposit of around 15% of the total price.

If an average two-bedroom property sold in Lea and Cleverton cost £287,200 then a household may require £34,875 as a deposit. Annual household income would have to be at least £56,464 for a single applicant or £65,875 for joint applicants. The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings indicates that the gross annual median income of employed persons in Wiltshire in 2018 was £28,329:⁵

- It would be unlikely that a household would be able to purchase a property in this parish without a large deposit, some equity in an existing property or a substantial income.
- First time buyers would generally struggle to meet the criteria necessary for obtaining their own home.
- In some cases intermediate housing (shared ownership or low cost market housing) would be a suitable option, whilst in other instances affordable rented accommodation would be appropriate.

⁴ House price estimates from the Mouseprice local area guide to the SN16 postcode area, www.mouseprice.com/area-guide/average-house-price/ . Please note that the SN16 postcode covers a wider area than Lea and Cleverton parish and that there may be significant internal variation in house prices.

⁵ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2018, resident analysis. Gross annual pay of full time employed persons resident in Wiltshire, www.nomisweb.co.uk . Note that while the mortgage calculation refers to household income, i.e. to the combined income of all persons in the home, the ASHE figure refers to individual income.

7. Summary

This survey's recommendations (see Section 8 below) concentrate on those households who are unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

This is just a quarter of the research needed for this assessment: the Housing Register of Wiltshire Council, the local Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the advice from allocation staff who manage the Register must also be taken into account.

- In August 2019, there were no households on the Wiltshire Council Housing Register seeking affordable accommodation in Lea and Cleverton parish. Full assessment of housing need in the parish must take account of the Register.⁶
- The 2011 Census recorded twenty social homes in the parish.⁷ These properties represent 6.4% of the total housing in Lea and Cleverton, which is lower than the Wiltshire affordable housing average of 14.7%.⁸
- The social housing in Lea and Cleverton had a **zero** re-let rate in the past year: from the first to the fourth quarter of 2018/19.⁹
- The low levels and turnover of social housing in the parish suggest that **none** of the households responding to section two of this survey and in need of affordable accommodation could meet their needs through accessing the existing social housing within the parish.

⁶ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

⁷ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, English parishes / Welsh communities.

⁸ Table QS405EW, 2011 Census: Tenure – Households, local authorities in England and Wales.

⁹ Wiltshire Council, Housing Strategy, live tables.

8. Recommendations

This survey's recommendations concentrate on households unable to afford accommodation on the open market.

The following indicates the minimum need over the next three years for new affordable housing development in the parish, based on the responses to the survey. The recommendations describe a snapshot of the need for affordable housing at the time the survey was conducted and do not take account of future changes in need, for example arising from the changing housing needs of employees of local businesses. The recommendations may not represent the parish's full housing need as responses were not received from every household. In order to fully assess the housing need in the parish, the recommendations need to be considered alongside evidence provided by Wiltshire Council's Housing Register, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, and the advice of allocation staff who manage the Register.

Subsidised rented housing ¹⁰

- None

Shared ownership / discount market homes¹¹

- 1x three bedroom home

Sheltered housing for older people

- None

¹⁰ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in subsidised rented properties are where possible made in line with the 'family size' criteria implemented as part of the Housing Benefit changes by the 2012 Welfare Reform Act.

¹¹ Please note that recommendations for numbers of bedrooms in shared ownership/discounted market properties are based on the number of bedrooms wanted by respondents, applicants can purchase the size of home they are able to afford.