

Parish of Lamerton Housing Needs Report



Produced by: Devon Communities Together

**On behalf of: South Hams District and West
Devon Borough Council**

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1 Executive Summary

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for up to 8 affordable homes within the next 5 years.

Key findings

Affordability

- The survey found 7 households in housing need who could not afford to buy or rent in the open market.
- no additional replies were received by households on Devon Home Choice who had not completed the survey but were eligible for affordable housing in the parish.

Tenure

- 3 of the households in need qualified for affordable housing for rent
- 5 may be able to afford a low cost home ownership property.

Size of Property Required

- Five 1 or 2 bedroom properties for singles / couples
- One 2 bedroom property for families
- Two 3 bedroom properties for families

Other Findings

- 373 surveys were delivered and 132 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 35 %.
- 69% (91 responses) of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. 9 (7%) households did not answer this question.

2. Aims of the Survey

- To investigate the housing need, tenure and size of homes required for local people living or working in the parish and those wishing to return.
- To establish the general level of support for new homes in the parish with an emphasis on homes for local people with housing needs.
- To establish the views of the whole community on future housing in the parish.
- To assist the Parish Council and District Council with future planning for the parish.

3. Survey history, methodology and response

3.1 History

Lamerton Parish Council in conjunction with South Hams District and West Devon Borough Council decided to carry out a survey to assess future local housing need to support the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. After discussions with the Rural Housing Enabler survey forms were finalised and 373 forms were posted to every household in the parish. Parishioners were able to return the survey in a reply paid envelope. The survey was also available for completion online. The deadline for the return of the survey was 13th December 2021.

3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology approved by local planners.

The survey form was in 3 parts. The first section asked a limited number of questions about the type of household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents. The third part of the survey was designed to be completed by households who intend to move home within the next 5 years and wish to remain living in the parish. Both those who have an affordable housing need and those who wish to buy on the open market were invited to complete this section of the form. A reminder was also sent to those on the Devon Home Choice register who did not complete a survey form.

3.3 Response

- 132 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 35% of all dwellings surveyed.
- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. Out of the returned surveys, 23 were returned with Part 3 completed.
- All but 3 of the respondents live in Lamerton.

It should be noted that whilst apparent inconsistencies in responses are followed up, the information given is taken at face value.

4. Introduction and Information about Lamerton

4.1 Overview of Lamerton

Lamerton is a rural parish which is situated 3 miles from Tavistock within the District of West Devon. It is a very rural parish with little industry or employment. The village has a church,

primary school, sports and community hall with a children's playground and recreation field and allotments. There is a limited bus service between Lamerton and Tavistock (3 times per week). Part of the village near St Peters Church is designated as a conservation area

4.2 Population Figures

In the 2011 census the population of the Parish was 859 living in 361 households. There were 326 dwellings with at least one usual resident and 35 dwellings which were either empty, second homes or holiday lets. The estimated population in 2020 was 852 (Office of National Statistics Mid 2020 population estimates).

4.3 Type of Accommodation

In the 2011 Census the types of accommodation in the parish were broken down as in Table 1 below. The largest category is detached houses or bungalows. There are few terraced houses and very few flats.

Table 1

Detached house/bungalow	Semi-detached house/bungalow	Terraced house/bungalow	Flat	Caravan / mobile home	Total
188 (52%)	88 (25%)	55 (15%)	26 (7%)	4 (1%)	361

4.4 Bedroom numbers

In the 2011 Census the number of bedrooms per dwelling were broken down as in Table 2 below.¹ The vast majority of homes (69%) have between 3 and 4 bedrooms with very few smaller 1 bedroom properties (9%).

Table 2

1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	4 or more	Total
28 (9%)	71 (22%)	121 (37%)	106 (32%)	326

When viewed together these tables show that there is a lack of smaller, cheaper accommodation in the parish with detached dwellings and properties of 3 bedrooms plus being the most prolific. Therefore there are very few properties suitable for those on low incomes to buy or rent.

4.5 Property Prices and Rent

In the last 2 years the Land Registry has recorded 23 property sales in the parish. The average price of properties was £329,000. Prices ranged from £77,000 for one bedroomed accommodation for the over 55s to £710,000 for a detached house.

There are currently 12 property listings on the Rightmove website, 8 of which are sold subject to contract (STC). The cheapest properties on the market at the moment are a one bedroom retirement apartment with an asking price of £125,000 and a two bedroom retirement apartment with an asking price of £150,000. There are two family sized properties that are on the market and not sold STC, a two and three bedroom house both with an asking price of £325,000.

¹ These tables only give details for 326 dwellings, this is because there is no data for empty homes in this dataset.

It is a feature of the housing market during 2021 that properties are showing as sold STC for many months before the transaction completes. This is due to the restrictions in place for viewing properties due to the Covid pandemic, which means that a potential home mover must secure an offer on their property before they can start to view homes which causes delays. This has also resulted in much fewer properties being marketed at the current time, and a significant backlog demand from prospective purchasers. This is not a situation unique to Devon.

To assess whether a household can afford to buy in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. This is done by comparing information on recent house sales and homes currently on the open market. Average rents are identified by comparing local private rents gained from the housing need survey with rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical rents to assess affordability. There were no one bedroom properties for rent on the open market at the time of writing this report therefore data has been taken from surrounding rural areas.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Size	Property price	Weekly rent
1 bedroom	£110,000	£109.00
2 bedroom	£240,000	£170.00
3 bedroom	£325,000	£190.00

There are currently 39 council/housing association owned properties Lamerton. 3 have been let in the last 2 years. Therefore lettings of current affordable housing stock will have little impact on future need figures.

5. General Survey Findings

5.1 In favour of a small local development

Respondents were asked if they would be in favour of a small number of homes for local people being built if the need for affordable housing were proven. 74% of those answering the question said they would be in favour. 26% said they were against any development. It should be noted that 9 households did not respond to this question.

5.2 Site suggestions and general comments

66 individuals made suggestions for possible housing sites within the parish and made more general comments about housing in the parish. These suggestions and comments will be made available to the Parish Council on a separate document.

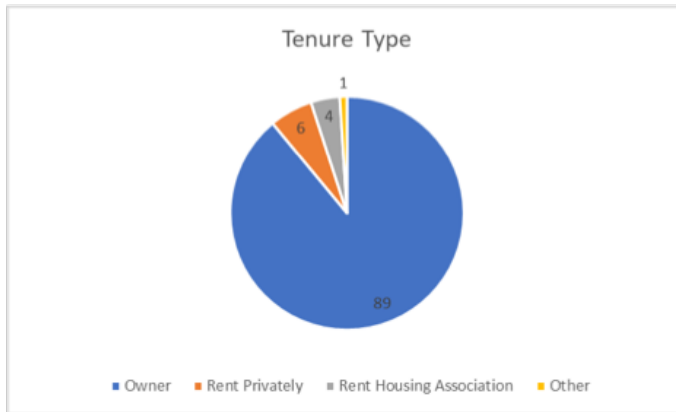
5.3 Knowledge of those who have left parish in last 5 years

Respondents were asked if they knew of anybody who had had to leave the parish in the last 5 years due to lack of suitable housing.

- 13 households replied that they did know of someone

5.4 Current tenure

Of the 132 respondents who provided details, 118 (89%) own their own home, 8 (6%) rent from a private landlord and 5(4%) rent from a housing association. The remaining households are staying with relatives. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of tenure.



5.5 Main or second home

Of the respondents 1 was a second home owner, and 2 respondents did not answer the question. All other respondents were responding from their main home.

5.6 Parish of Residence

Respondents were asked which parish they lived in. 129 (98%) respondents stated that they live in Lamerton, with 3 living outside the Parish.

5.7 Number of bedrooms in current home

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms their current home has. The replies are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Number of bedrooms	1	2	3	4+
Respondents	1	18	54	55

5.8 Future plans

Respondents were asked whether they intended to move home within the Parish within the next 5 years. If they answered yes to this question they were asked to complete Part 3 of the form.

- 17 households stated they did intend to move within the Parish within the next 5 years

5.9 Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

Respondents were asked whether they would consider becoming a member of a CLT.

- 13 households showed an interest

6. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 2 of the questionnaire was directed at residents over the age of 55. The number of people over the age of 55 is set to rise significantly across the UK over the next 20 years. In 2014 the Office for National Statistics published population projections for the next 20 years. These figures show that by 2034 the percentage of people over the age of 55 will have increased by 23% across Devon.

108 households answered Part 2 of the survey, which is 82% of the total responses.

6.1 Age of Respondents to Part 2 survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. As can be seen in Table 5 below, the majority of those who replied (78%) were aged between 55 and 75.

Table 5

Age Group of individuals within household	55-65	66-75	76-85	Over 86
Number	69	71	35	5

6.2 Future Housing Plans

Households with someone over 55 were asked about their future housing plans.

- 23 households plan to move within the next five years. Of these, 6 would like to remain in Lamerton.
- Of these 6 households 5 expect to be able to meet their housing need by purchasing on the open market and 1 did not answer the questions.
- 9 further households expect to move after five years.
- 75 have no plans to move at the moment.
- 1 household did not answer the question.

6.3 Adaptability of current home

Respondents were asked if their current home was adaptable to meet changing needs.

- 58 households said their home was adaptable
- 41 households said their home was not adaptable

6.4 Type of Accommodation preferred by older persons

Older households were asked what type of accommodation they may need in the future. The majority (52%) did not answer this question. Of those that did 32 (63% of responses) preferred a home better suited to their needs but not designed for older people. Preferences are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6

Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons	Number
Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people	32
Home specially designed for older people	16
Residential / nursing home	3

6.5 Considerations when choosing next home

Households were asked to list the most important considerations when choosing a new home. They could give more than one reason. The reasons are listed below in Table 7.

Table 7

Most important consideration	Number
Need to downsize to a smaller more manageable home	22
Cheaper running costs	14
Proximity to shops/amenities	18
Proximity to public transport	16
Need to be near family / carers	10
Need one level for medical reasons	18

The most important consideration was that older persons wished to move to a smaller property more manageable home. It is of note that 18 respondents require accommodation on one level for medical reasons.

6.6 Conclusion – Older Persons Needs

The older persons' survey shows that the majority of households 75 (69 %) have no plans to move home. However, the parish does have a number of older households who wish to downsize to smaller accommodation that is easier to maintain, has lower running costs and is close to amenities and support.

The survey indicates that none of the 6 households that expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Lamerton will need affordable housing. All of the respondents indicated that they would require open market housing. There was a significant preference from older households for accommodation on one level. Small open market bungalows and flats could be considered, however it would be important to give consideration to how any open market properties can be identified for local people.

7. Assessment of those wishing to move to a new home in Lamerton within the next 5 years

Part 3 of the survey was aimed at those who expect to need to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Lamerton. It asked questions regarding size and make-up of the new household, local connection and financial circumstances. This information helps to identify the number of households that are eligible for both open market and affordable housing in the parish and the size, tenure and type of homes required.

17 households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in Lamerton. However 23 completed Part 3 of the survey. The needs of these 23 households have been included in this section of the survey.

7.1 Minimum bedroom requirement

Respondents were asked the minimum number of bedrooms they would require in their new home. Table 8 below shows the breakdown. It should be noted that there are criteria relating to affordable housing that set the number of bedrooms that a household are eligible for based on the number of adults and children in that household.

Table 8

1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom	4 bedroom
2	13	5	3

7.2 Timescales for moving

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify when they would need to move.

- None of the households indicated a current need to move.
- 7 households indicated a need to move within the next 1-3 years.
- 13 households indicated a need to move within the next 3-5 years.
- 3 households did not answer the question

7.3 Housing tenure

Respondents were asked what type of accommodation they would consider moving to. This gives an indication of respondents' aspirations rather than confirming which type of housing they are eligible for. The results are shown in table 9 below. Respondents could choose more than one option.

Table 9

Shared ownership/equity	Affordable housing for rent	Self-build	Discount market	Rent to buy	Open market
5	9	9	4	6	10

7.4 Reasons for moving

Respondents were asked why they wished to move home. They could tick more than one box.

Table 10 shows why households need to move

Table 10

Reason for wishing to move	No of respondents
Need to move to a home with more bedrooms	2
Need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms	8
Need to move for health/mobility reasons	7
Will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately	4
Private tenancy ending	0
Wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection	3
Home is in poor condition	3
Other	11

7.5 Budget for new home

Respondents who wished to purchase a home were asked about their budget. Table 11 below shows the breakdown of replies.

Table 11

£150,000 - £200,000	£200,000 - £250,000	£250,000 - £300,000	£300,000 - £350,000	£350,000 +
8	2	2	0	6

8. Assessment of those in affordable housing need

This section of the survey looks at the number of households who would qualify for an affordable home in the parish, based on their household income and savings.

8.1 Exclusions

15 of the households who expressed a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in Lamerton have been assessed and have been excluded for the following reasons:-

- They could afford to buy on the open market;
- They stated they were only interested in open market housing;
- They gave insufficient details to assess their eligibility;
- They already own their own home so do not qualify for affordable housing.

This leaves 8 households who would qualify for affordable housing. Of these 3 households are already in affordable rented homes. 2 of these need to downsize as they are in properties that are too large for them.

8.2 Local Connection

To qualify for affordable housing, respondents must have a local connection to Lamerton. This connection is determined West Devon District Council and is set out below:-

- The person has lived in the parish/town for 3 out of the 5 years preceding the allocation.
- The person has immediately prior to the allocation lived in the parish/town for 6 out of 12 months preceding the allocation.
- Immediate family have lived in the parish/town themselves for 5 years preceding the allocation. For avoidance of doubt The Local Government Association guidelines define immediate family as parents, siblings and non-dependent children.
- The person has permanent employment in the parish/town with a minimum contract of 16 hours per week which has continued for the 6 months preceding the allocation without a break in employment of more than 3 months such employment to include self-employment. This should not include employment of a casual nature.

All of the 8 households identified have a local connection.

8.3 Housing Options

The housing options available to the households identified as being in need of affordable housing have been reviewed. One of the households is already in affordable rented housing that is suitable for their household size, leaving 7 households in need.

Respondents provided information on income and savings along with household size which allows an assessment of what type of affordable housing is best suited to the household's financial circumstances. The breakdown of housing needs of the 8 households that were identified as having a need for affordable housing are shown in the table below:-

Table 13

	1 bedroom	2 bedroom	3 bedroom
Social rent	1	1	0
Low cost home ownership	4	0	1

8.5 Other evidence of housing need

As well as this survey other evidence of housing need should be considered. The housing waiting list or register for Devon is called Devon Home Choice. Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. There are 4 households resident in the parish registered on Devon Home Choice. Details are set out below:-

Table 14

Devon Home Choice band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Band A (Emergency need)					
Band B (High)			1		
Band C (Medium)					
Band D (Low)	2				
Band E (No Housing Need)	1				
Total	3	0	1	0	4

None of the households who are registered on Devon Home Choice completed the survey by the closing date. Due to this apparent disparity, all those who are registered with Devon Home Choice and living within the parish were emailed separately and asked to complete the survey. However, no further replies were received.

8.6 Housing Mix

The suggested mix of housing is shown in Table 14 below. This takes account of the family makeup as declared on the survey form and the type of housing required. Two households require affordable rented property with level access, one with a one bed need and the other with a three bed need.

Table 14

Type of Property	Affordable Housing for Rent	Low cost home ownership	Totals
1 or 2 bedroom property for single people	1	1	2
1 or 2 bedroom property for couples	0	3	3
2 bedroom property for families	1	0	1
3 bedroom property for families	1	1	2
Totals	3	5	8

9. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for Lamerton

Overall, it must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving. Any provision of affordable housing, would, by necessity, need to take account of this. The survey has identified a need in the near future for up to 8 units of affordable housing.

As the needs of households are constantly changing the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide. In particular it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years. However, if there is a significant development of affordable housing in the parish which is subject to a local connection requirement and substantially meets the need identified in the report it will normally be necessary to re-survey the parish before any further development to address local needs is considered.