

CHARTRIDGE PARISH
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

HOUSING NEEDS
SURVEY REPORT

August 2009

CONTENTS

➤ Introduction – The Parish	1
➤ Survey process	2
➤ Response	
➤ Household make-up of respondents in housing need	
➤ Support and opposition	3
➤ Comments	
➤ Housing need	6
➤ Analysis of need	
➤ Main points to note.....	7
➤ Property prices in Chartridge Parish	8
➤ Rural Housing Enabler comments	
➤ Summary	9

Chartridge Parish Council Housing Needs Survey Report

Introduction

The Parish

With a population of approximately 1600 people, the parish of Chartridge lies approximately 2 miles North West of Chesham. The parish includes the village of Bellingdon and the hamlets of Asheridge, Pednor and Hundridge.

The Bellingdon village magazine, published 4 times a year and the village website www.chartridge.org.uk help keep the parishioners up to date with local news and events and the community benefit from a wide and varied choice of clubs, activities and societies including; the Horticultural Society, The Ladies Club, Table tennis, art classes, archery and indoor mat bowls. Also on offer in the parish are Ki Aikido, a wine club and the Women's Institute. There are village halls and playing fields in both Chartridge and Bellingdon. Chartridge has a football and a cricket club and Bellingdon hosts the annual fete. Regular services are held at St John's in Bellingdon and the church plays host to numerous other events held throughout the year. The parish boasts three pubs, The Bell, The Blue Ball and The Bull.

The village has the added advantages of Chartridge Combined School for pupils from the ages of 4 through to 11, the popular Chartridge Park Golf Club, set in an area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with views over the Pednor Valley and the Chartridge Conference Centre, set in 25 acres of beautiful landscaped grounds, offering modern conference facilities for delegates.

In July 2009 the Parish Council wanted to update the results of the survey conducted in 2004 and find out whether there was still a need for need for some affordable homes for villagers and asked Jean Fox, the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE), from Buckinghamshire Community Action (BCA) to help them conduct the survey.

This report is a summary of the information gathered through that survey.

Survey Process

Survey forms were provided by the RHE, using a format that is supported by Chiltern District Council and one that has been gradually refined over the years. In July 2009 these forms were delivered to every household in CHARTRIDGE PARISH. They were returned by Freepost with a deadline set for return at the 31 of July 2009. All parishioners were given the opportunity to respond.

Response

It is to be expected that the majority of people living in the area are well housed and would not necessarily respond to any survey seeking information about housing needs.

In the experience of the Rural Housing Enabler, the majority of responses in any survey of this kind come from:

- People who feel themselves to be in need of housing now or in the near future
- Their relatives
- People involved in some way in community affairs who probably have an appreciation of the problems affecting the community as a whole, even if they are not in housing need
- People who feel strongly that there should not be any more development in the village

Of the 578 questionnaires distributed, 154 (over 26%) completed or partially completed forms were returned. The average return rate from these surveys is around 25%

Household Characteristics of Respondents in housing need

There were 20 respondents/households to the Survey who stated they were in housing need, seventeen had been resident in the parish for over 10 years, two between 3 and 10 years and one who did not state the length of their connection but has family resident in the parish.

Nearly 13% of the households who responded reported that family members had left the village over the last few years due to a lack of affordable housing. An additional 10% of responding households reported that family members had left Chartridge Parish as a result of further education and employment.

Support and Opposition

The survey asked villagers whether or not they would support a small scheme of affordable housing for local people in the parish. Although the Parish Council in principal supports the initiative, it is important that the community supports the idea. On the whole, the responses were very positive. 120 households (77.9%) were in favour of a scheme and this includes the respondents who conditionally supported a potential scheme. 22.07 % of responding households were not in favour of a project. On this basis it is fair to say that the survey responses illustrate general support for an affordable housing project in the village.

Comments

Some households used the additional space provided to make comments on the issue of affordable housing provision. Below is a selection of the comments taken from the survey:-

- If something isn't done, there will be no young people of families left in the village, no one can afford property here if they have an average income and children
- For the village to survive, this is vital for the community. The village will just have a very old population with no roots. We have lost the cricket and football teams over the last 10 years through lack of youth
- We have two children and our accommodation is too small, we can't afford a mortgage for a larger property
- Affordable housing would allow village children the option to stay where they were born
- It is important to complete the proposed development in Bellingdon as soon as is practicable. Any other development would be a bonus
- We are concerned about the amount of local brownfield private development allowed by the LPA in deference to affordable housing
- Vital in order to maintain mixed, vibrant local communities rather than dormitory towns and to enable local workers to retain their jobs
- The village will die without homes for its children
- A very good idea, our children can't afford to live here

- Not before time
- Support dependant on design and location
- Generations of my family have lived here for over 100 years and at least 3 need affordable homes
- I know that there are a number of younger people, children of residents that would like to live in Bellingdon and Asheridge but who are currently priced out of the market
- Long overdue
- I think affordable housing locally is necessary for future generations. My own family moved out of the area due to unaffordable housing in the 1980's
- Many villages in this area are becoming dormitory villages for wealthy people working in the city. We need to encourage and help the young local people to stay in the villages and re-build communities which are disappearing
- It is wrong that in certain areas the price of housing puts it out of reach of the majority of people. In addition that means that people in key services cannot live in such areas, resulting in a serious effect on the community
- Our children cannot afford to buy privately, I think affordable housing is essential.
- I strongly support the principle of affordable housing in rural parishes. My family can only afford rented accommodation in Milton Keynes
- Some people have worked 45 years in order to enjoy peaceful ENGLISH rural countryside, not so the likes of some do-gooders can home people who do not fit into these surroundings. No need - keep away. Better birth control would reduce housing needs. Awareness of how unwanted brats should not be allowed to be created. Basic education, more discipline and less idiots!
- The proposed site is strongly contested by locals who already put up with high speed traffic past the site – more vehicles would only compound pressure on the area. The proposed Bloomfield Cottage site is completely inappropriate – there are other sites in Bellingdon/Asheridge that are already clear of trees and would be less contentious.
- I cannot see the benefits you mention, ie. A more vibrant community – why? Benefits for the village – why? There are no shops, there is no community. We commute to work and we commute to the shops in Chesham or Aylesbury. Brownfield sites in Chesham or Amersham would make more sense

- The road is already busy and no consideration is given to the 30mph speed limit
- There is too much traffic going through the village now, so more houses would mean more traffic
- We prefer the village as it is now
- There is enough affordable housing in Chartridge at the caravan park. They will be built where no-body else could build and the density would be unacceptable for the people living in the area. There is no such thing as affordable housing in the south east and the 50/50 schemes have been proved to be unworkable
- Chartridge and the surrounding area has had enough development, the area is spoilt now without any more.
- The houses no doubt would be sold off in years to come as other 'council' houses have. This is an area for home owners who have moved up from their starter homes when they can afford to. That is what most of my neighbours have done.
- If there is so much concern about providing affordable housing in this area, why wasn't it included in the Berkley Avenue developments, rather than taking up yet more of what used to be a quiet rural location. After all it is certainly close enough to Chartridge even if it comes under Chesham. You need to consider the bigger picture!
- Area of AONB with dense woodland. Land is all in greenbelt area
- Adequate local affordable housing is available. There is already too much building on greenbelt
- Affordable housing would ruin the village and ultimately bring down the house prices. The character of the area would suffer
- Further development is unsustainable, the infrastructure cannot support it, ie. Water, electricity, gas, sewerage, schools, hospitals, parking, road system
- Bellingdon/Asheridge/Cholesbury are very close to Chesham, Tring and Wendover. We are greenbelt/AONB, people can travel the short distance to get here should they wish. Of course people want to stay next to their family but as I have stated, cheaper houses are hardly far away and building in the greenbelt is going to ruin it, a few houses now, a few houses next year and so on.

- A small development would have little or no impact on Bellingdon. Housing is part of the general economy, tinkering with it will not provide the solution
- Area is becoming overcrowded already. Increased traffic. More housing spoiling rural nature of village. Likely increase in crime/noise/litter
- A previous application for affordable housing was turned down on land adjacent 1-4 Bloomfield Cottages. I do not support the development of affordable housing within our village. From a personal point of view my children and their friends regularly play in Bloomfield Copse and also enjoy the wildlife and nature it has to offer.
- The land earmarked for development at the moment is greenbelt, AONB and is covered by a blanket tree preservation order
- I do not support it because affordable housing is hideously designed, having to live in each other's pockets. No gardens for children to play in
- I do not believe these houses would always remain affordable. Policy and financial changes in the future could change the current rules and thinking. Any homes built in Bellingdon should be on the open market

Housing Needs

20 respondents/households filled out the second part of the form, indicating a need for affordable housing at some point in the next five years. In all of the responses, a current need (0-2 years) was indicated.

Analysis of Need

The survey form also asked for details of why respondents consider themselves to be in housing need, it should be noted that at this stage, these statements are self assessed and have not been verified in any other research. It is my experience that these surveys are relatively accurate, as people do not bother to reply if they feel they could satisfy their housing requirements in any other way.

Main Points to Note

The housing need surveys for rural affordable housing schemes used in Chiltern District area are the starting point for ascertaining whether affordable housing might be needed in a parish. This form of survey, with slight regional variations, is currently the recognized method used by Rural Housing Enablers to establish a housing need in a parish.

As part of the analysis process respondents who state for example that they have a large property and would like to downsize, state that they earn sufficient to afford open market housing or are adequately housed would not be considered to have a housing need and would not be included in the final recommendation to determine the size of any development.

The completed responses form the basis of a primary assessment and help determine the initial recommendations for the mix and tenure.

The unique housing need for each individual parish changes as a scheme progresses and can be subject to alterations and amendments as necessary. Before a planning application is submitted, a village consultation day is held, where plans are displayed and all parishioners are given an opportunity to view and comment on the draft layouts, register an interest in the properties and talk to staff from the Housing Association, the Parish Council.

All respondents in housing need require subsidised housing, although not all require rented housing. Those who hope to buy on the private market would probably not reply to a survey of this kind. Some households aspired to shared ownership but it does not appear that they could all afford shared ownership offered at anything more than 35 – 40% of current values.

Property sold in postcode area HP5 2 in the last 2 years

Property Type	No of sales	Average Price
Detached	94	£489,889
Semi-detached	127	£291,648
Terraced	59	£231,319
Flats	37	£161,415

Source Rightmove

The current (August 2009) Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for rented accommodation in the Chiltern District Area is £599.99 per calendar month for a 1 bedroom property, £794.99 for a 2 bedroom property and £950.00 for a 3 bedroom dwelling.

Rural Housing Enabler Comments

As stated earlier nearly 78% of respondents were in favour of a scheme and the majority of comments recorded were supportive of an affordable housing development to meet the requirements of people with a local connection to Chartridge Parish.

To calculate the number of homes required in a parish to meet local housing need in perpetuity, the indicator used by many local authorities to ensure sufficient demand in future years, is to build 50 – 60% of the need established by response to the survey. The response level to this survey is very good, and an acceptable primary gauge of the needs and attitudes toward further housing development in the locality, taking into account all the information provided.

11 respondents are hidden households living with family members, 5 are in private rented accommodation, 3 are owner/occupiers in mobile home accommodation, one is in Housing Association accommodation. Therefore the total number of households in need of affordable housing is 20.

Summary

On the basis of the survey data there is currently enough evidence to warrant a scheme of around 12 units in Chartridge Parish.

The need profile illustrates a demand for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties. The data indicates that there should be a mix of six available for rent and six available for shared ownership, or intermediate rent. It should be noted that one of these households has a recorded medical condition that will require a 3 bedroom property with aids and adaptations

Therefore my initial recommendations for scheme size, mix and tenure are:

- 2 x 3 bedroom rented houses
- 2 x 2 bedroom rented houses
- 2 x 1 bedroom rented flats
- 4 x 2 bedroom shared ownership houses
- 2 x 1 bedroom shared ownership flats

Please contact me if you have any queries regarding the information provided in this report.

Mrs Jean Fox
Rural Housing Enabler
Buckinghamshire Community Action
Unit B The Firs
Bierton
Aylesbury
HP22 5DX

Telephone: 01296 421036
Email: jean@bucks-comm-action.org.uk