

Housing Needs Study for Milton Malsor

**Produced by South Northamptonshire Council in
conjunction with
Milton Malsor Parish Council**

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1. Introduction

Rising house prices and the loss of social housing stock, as a result of the right to buy policy, have seen many first time buyers and those on more modest incomes forced out of the villages where they have lived all their lives. In some villages the knock on effects of this is the loss of key services such as schools, pubs, Post Offices, village shops etc, along with the sustainability of the village.

Milton Malsor has a population of approximately 721. This is based on projections from the 2001 Census. The village also has a number of services including a primary school, public house and bus service. If a local housing need is identified then the village would be considered suitable for sustaining a small-scale housing development.

South Northamptonshire Council's Housing Market and Needs Assessment Study has shown a strong need for affordable homes across the district. In order to obtain a more localised perspective a parish housing need surveys can be carried out. Through a housing needs survey it is possible to assess the level of need for affordable housing in a village. If a need is shown to exist, then there are steps that can be taken to encourage the development of affordable housing. South Northamptonshire Council was commissioned by Milton Malsor Parish Council to undertake a village level housing needs survey.

The survey was a two-stage process and both survey forms were agreed with the Parish Council. The first stage was sent to all households in the village and general questions on affordable housing were asked. The Parish Council delivered this survey to all households in January 2006. If the respondent expressed that they were in housing need then a further survey was sent to give us more detailed information about their housing circumstances. Copies of the surveys can be found in the appendices.

2. Purpose of the survey

This survey was conducted to establish if there is a housing need in Milton Malsor and if so the extent of this need. This information can then be used to assess what type and tenure of homes would best suit local needs. If a need is identified then South Northamptonshire Council will work in partnership with the Parish Council to identify suitable sites. Sites can fall within two categories, exception sites and planning gain sites.

Exception sites are exclusively for affordable housing and use the 'exceptions' criteria set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (Housing). These sites are located outside of the village confines where development of market housing is not usually allowed. In order to build on these sites there must be evidence of a local housing need and a housing needs survey is the best way of doing this.

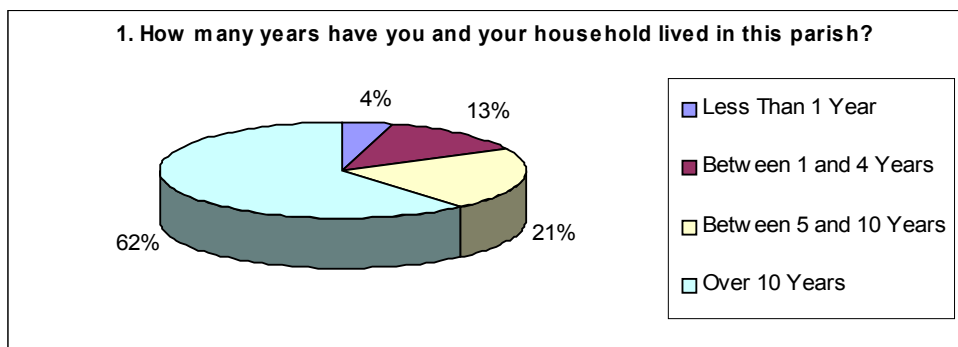
Planning gain sites are sites that are primarily for market housing however, South Northamptonshire Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing states that on developments with 25 or more units, 40% of these should be for affordable housing. Information from this survey will be used by the Planning Department as evidence that there is a need for affordable housing.

The information from a housing needs survey is also useful at a local level, in particular with parish council activities. It can be used when decisions on housing issues are required. Support of the village is imperative in developing affordable housing schemes.

3. First stage results

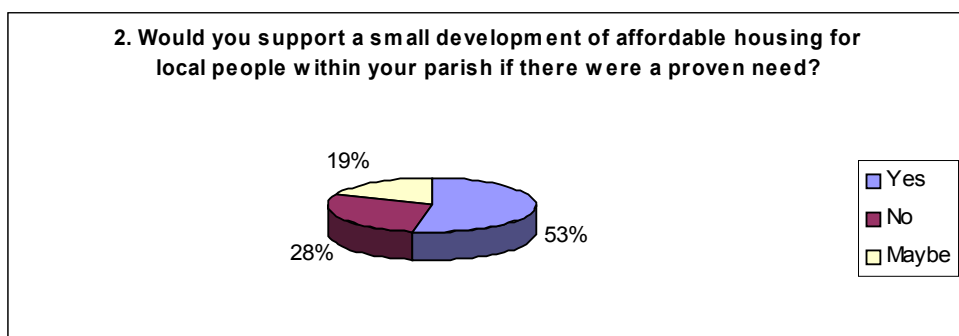
A total of 300 survey forms were distributed and 133 were returned. This gives a response rate of 44%, which is very good, and robust conclusions can be drawn from the results.

a) Period of Residence

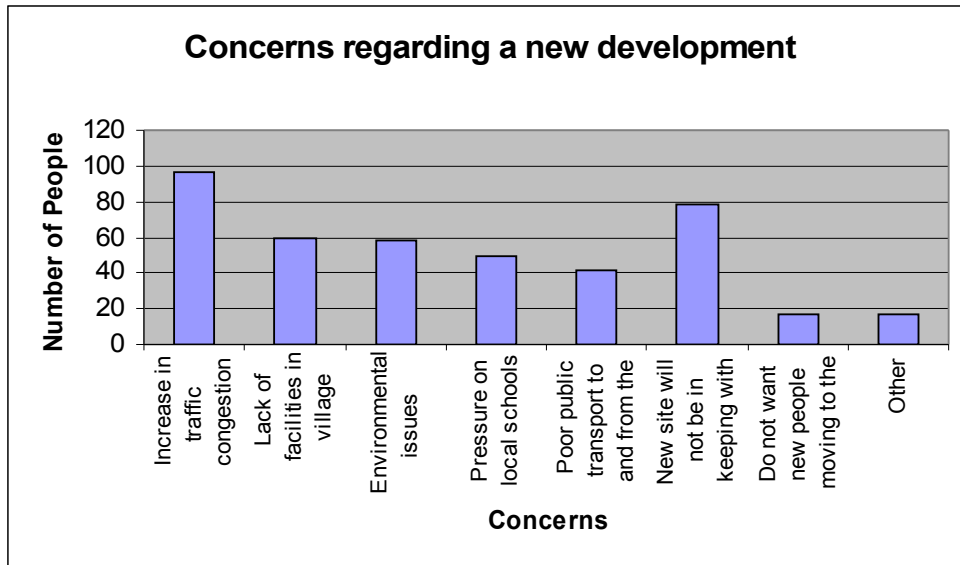


This pie chart represents the length of time that residents have lived in the Parish. The majority of people have lived in Milton Malsor for over 10 years (62%). 21% of the people who responded, have lived there between 5 and 10 years and 13% between 1 and 4 years. Only 4% of people have lived in Milton Malsor for less than 1 year.

b) Support for development and areas of concern



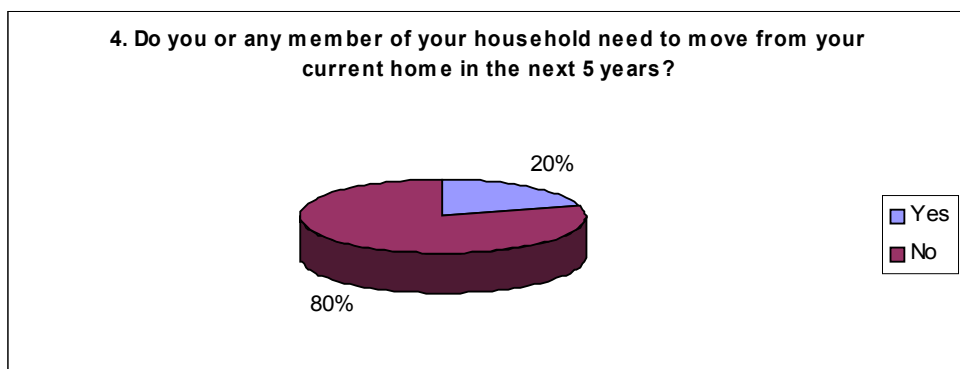
Only 2 people did not respond to this question. Of the 132 people who responded, 53% (70) stated that they would support a small development of affordable housing. 19% said maybe and 28% said that they would not support any future development. This means that 72% of respondents said either 'Yes' or 'Maybe'.



This bar chart shows the type and number of concerns regarding any new development. There were a total of 419 concerns given in this survey, which is an average of just over 3 concerns per respondent. The main concerns given were an 'Increase in Traffic Congestion' and 'New site will not be in keeping with the village'. 17 other responses were given and below are examples of the comments given:

- "Size of the development a concern"
- "I moved to the village because I enjoy a village environment. I would not want the village to grow any more."
- "Not on the two Green areas within village."
- "Losing Village Identity"
- "Ruins the countryside we have."

c) Housing need analysis



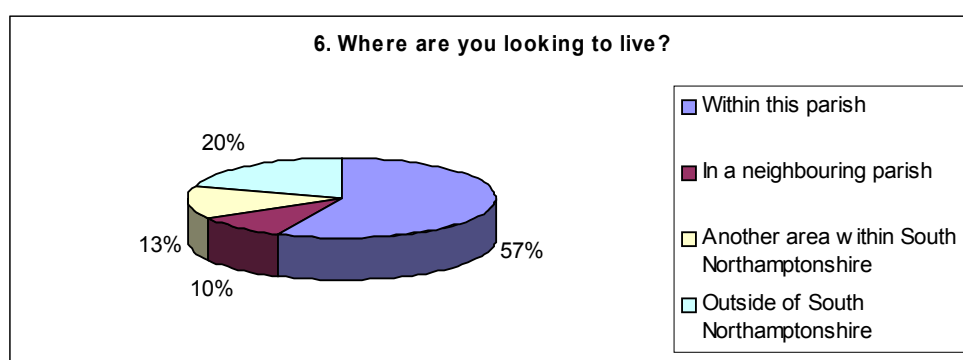
Of the 130 people who answered this question, 26 (20%) said that they would require a move from their current home in the next 5 years.

The following questions should have only been answered by those who responded “yes” to the above question.

There were a number of responses to “What is the main reason for needing to move” these included: need larger accommodation, need smaller accommodation, would like to set up home for the first time”. Four people also selected other and gave the following responses:

- “Children leaving home”
- “Rented Accommodation”
- “Need a floor accommodation for disabled son”
- “Problem neighbour”

Need larger accommodation	5
Need smaller accommodation	8
Present home is difficult to manage	1
Need physically adapted accommodation	1
Present home too expensive to maintain	4
To be closer to employment	3
To be closer to carer or dependent, to give or receive support	1
To avoid harassment	0
I would like to set up home for the first time	10
Present home is tied accommodation and insecure	0
Other	4

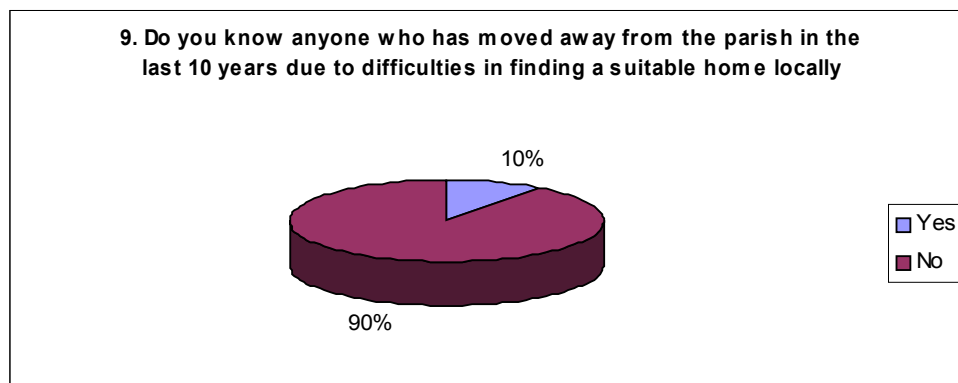


When asked, “Where are you looking to live?” just over half (17) said that they would be looking to live within the Milton Malsor Parish. 3 people said that they are looking to live ‘In a neighbouring parish’ and 4 said they are looking to live in another area within South Northamptonshire. 6 people are looking to move outside of South Northamptonshire.

Of the 27 people who responded to this question, 25 are not on the local authority or housing association register or waiting list.

Of the 26 people who specified that they need to move within the next five years, 14 were willing to complete a 2nd stage survey. However, 2 people did not provide their addresses and therefore further contact was unable to be made. In total, 12 surveys were sent out in the 2nd stage.

There were only 11 people who had known people who moved away from the Parish due to difficulties in finding a suitable home locally, however, only 4 addresses were given so these 4 people were sent a stage 1 questionnaire.



d) Comments

In question 10, people were asked to write any comments they had regarding any questions or general comments. A number of people replied and below are a few examples of the main issues raised.

- “It would be preferable to develop brown sites in order to regenerate towns like Northampton. New homes developments in villages and countryside have impact on environment and people's quality of life. Greater effort should be made to convince the Government to implement legislation favouring brown sites development through tax incentives and proper planning.”
- “As I am the councillor for Milton Malsor some residents have commented on the fact that they have children who have moved away because of the housing shortage.”
- “I would welcome housing which increased the number of young families in the village. Many residents are elderly. There is an excellent school in the village, but with many pupils travelling in from Northampton, the school is not an active part of the community. Young families would address the balance.”
- “I feel that to keep adding housing estates to the villages in our area is ruining the villages. Deanshanger is a perfect example of this. It is no longer a village and has been spoilt. I used to live there I would hate the same thing to happen to Milton Malsor. I moved to a village because I wanted to live in a village.”
- “The road infrastructure is inadequate to support additional housing developments. The roads are narrow and the additional traffic would constitute a risk not only to other road users but also to pedestrians (particularly children). Narrow lanes combined with narrow pathways

and an already large parking problem would only increase the probability of accidents.”

- “No Concerns, everyone should live somewhere and not on the streets. I’m all for affordable housing.”
- “My main concern for new housing is that they will be built in harmony with the village architecture and not just cheap looking houses where the only consideration is the base line cost of the project. Give people affordable housing that they can be proud to live in.”

e) Ethnicity

White British	97
White Irish	1
Any other White background	2
Caribbean	1
Other	2
Question refused	8
Unanswered	23
Total	111

111 people responded to this question and 23 left this question unanswered. 8 people refused the question. 97 out of 111 people selected ‘White British’ (87%), 1 person selected ‘White Irish’, 2 people selected ‘Any other White background’ and 1 person selected ‘Caribbean’.

4. Second stage results

Following the first stage survey, second stage surveys were sent to those who identified themselves in housing need and provided contact details. 12 second stage surveys were sent out and a total of 9 were returned. These returns form the basis for the analysis of the second stage.

a) Housing need analysis

The following table lists details of the respondents who feel that they have a housing need. Respondents were asked to identify what they felt they needed in terms of property type and size together with a preferred tenure type. In reality it is not possible to meet the aspirations of each respondent therefore a “reality tenure” is suggested. This has been determined using the Councils Housing Register Allocations Policy, but also their need has been examined and judged against the current entry level housing in the village.

Ref	Respondent	Property & tenure requested	Reality tenure
1	Couple under 60 with 2 children. Currently live in a 4 bedroom bungalow which is rented from a private landlord. Need to move as current home is too	4 bedroom house or bungalow for shared ownership.	3 bed house for shared ownership

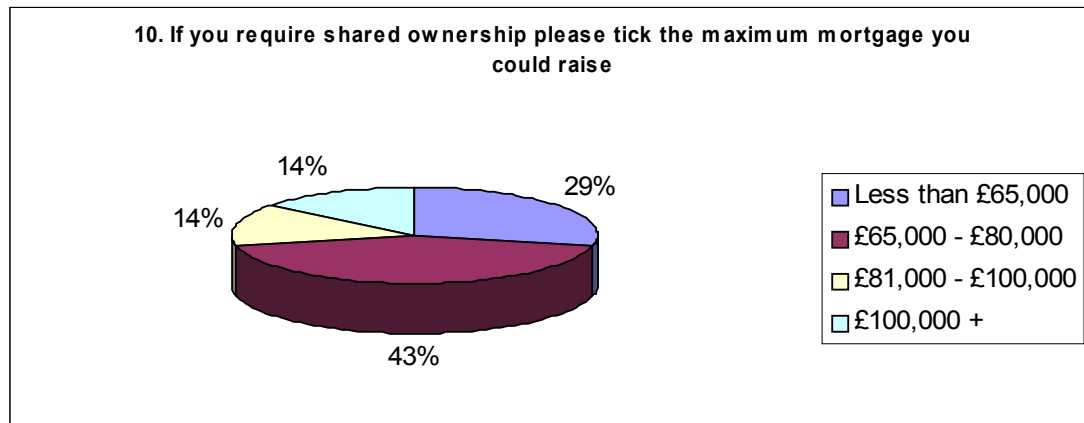
	expensive to maintain.		
2	Responding on behalf of her 2 sons who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 x 2 bed houses on the open market	2 x 2 bed flats for rent
3	Couple over 60. Currently live in a four-bedroom house, which is owned with a mortgage by a household member. They would like to move as their current home is too expensive to maintain and they would like a smaller property.	2 bedroom bungalow for rent or shared ownership	2 bedroom sheltered bungalow for rent
4	An adult under 60 who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom house on the open market	Discounted from this analysis as they would like to move out of South Northamptonshire.
5	3 friends who currently live in a three-bedroom house. They would like to move to be closer to employment and set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom shared ownership house	Discounted from this analysis as they would like to move outside of South Northamptonshire
6	An adult under 60 who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom house either on the open market or shared ownership	2 bedroom house for shared ownership
7	An adult under 60 who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom house on the open market	Discounted from this analysis as their needs will be met on the open market.
8	An adult under 60 who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom house for shared ownership	2 bedroom flat for rent
9	An adult under 60 who would like to set up home for the first time.	2 bedroom house for shared ownership	2 bedroom house for shared ownership

b) Affordability

The following questions were asked to try and determine how much the respondents could afford if they were to rent or to be considered for shared ownership. The responses to these questions also provide an indication whether the respondents could afford an entry-level property on the open market.

Data from Land Registry as of 2004 was used to determine the average house price for an entry-level property (this is considered to be a 2 bedroom house) in Milton Malsor. For Milton Malsor this was £98,165.

Of the respondents whose preferred tenure was rent, all of them stated that they could afford rent within the £50-£74 per week bracket. Of the respondents who would prefer shared ownership the maximum that they could raise via a mortgage is shown in the following table.



It can clearly be seen that the majority of respondents could raise a mortgage of between £65,000 - £80,000. In addition to the amount that they could raise for a mortgage respondents were asked if they had savings in excess of £3,000 to cover legal fees, surveys etc. 5 respondents stated that they have savings or able to raise the money.

c) Ethnic monitoring

Of the 8 people who responded to this question all considered themselves to be white British.

5. Limitations of the survey

Most surveys of this nature will have limitations. Whilst compiling the results the following issues have been noted:

Stage 1

Question 4: The answers to this question will be subjective; therefore some people who have answered “no” may in fact have a housing need, and therefore will not be included in the final analysis of need.

Question 8: This question asked whether the respondent was willing to complete a further questionnaire. In total 14 people answered yes to this, however only 12 gave their address for the second stage survey to be sent out.

6. Local authority data

Data already held by South Northamptonshire Council is an additional source of information that can be used in addition to the findings of the survey. Below gives a summary of the data already held.

a) Housing stock profile

This information has been collated from Council Tax records and shows the number of properties in the village and which council tax band they fall into. This gives an indication of the distribution of relative property values.

Band	Number of current properties
A – Up to £40,000	29
B - £40,001 - £52,000	49
C - £52,001 – £68,000	75
D - £68,001 - £88,000	27
E - £88,001 - £120,000	62
F - £120,001 - £160,000	34
G - £160,001 - £320,000	30
H - £320,001 and above	2
Total	308

b) Affordable housing profile

The table below shows the current levels of affordable housing in the village.

Local authority stock (rent)	Housing association stock (rent)
6 x 1 bed sheltered bungalow	2 x 3 bed house
14 x 2 bed sheltered bungalow	
6 x 2 bed sheltered flat	
6 x 2 bed flat	
1 x 2 bed house	
21 x 3 bed house	
1 x 4 bed house	

The following local authority properties have become available for re-letting during the period 1st April 2005 – 31st March 2006.

1 x 2 bed sheltered bungalow
1 x 2 bed sheltered flat
2 x 3 bed house

c) Waiting list analysis

As the statutory authority, South Northamptonshire Council holds a housing waiting list for the district. This register allows a household to request to be considered for housing anywhere in the district and is therefore an additional way to measure housing need.

Applicants can request as many areas as they wish and also have the opportunity to request a 'preferred village/area'. Figures gleaned from analysing the waiting list can be used to complement the findings of the survey.

Total applicants who have requested Milton Malsor as a village they would like to be housed in = **317**.

Total applicants who have stated Milton Malsor as their preferred village = **26**.

The table below shows the property types that would be most suitable for the applicants who have requested Milton Malsor as their preferred village.

Property type	Number of applicants
2 bed sheltered property	7
2 bed flat	4
2 bed house	10
3 bed house	5

This information shows that there is a strong need for affordable housing in the village. This is reflected in the number of applicants who have registered an interest in living in the village, the existing affordable housing in the village and the turnover of this stock.

There are however limitations with this information as we are unable to assess how local these applicants are. In our experience however applicants generally select a village as their preferred area as they already have an existing local connection. From the above information from the local authority database we would assess that the greatest need is for two and three bedroom units.

7. Conclusion

South Northamptonshire Council has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of Milton Malsor village. This study has not only investigated the actual housing need, but has also ascertained resident views with regard to living in the village, as well as identifying local support for a development to meet local needs.

The support for a small future development was high with 72% of respondents stating that they were either in favour or may be in favour. The main concerns raised by respondents were the increase in traffic congestion and the new site will not be in keeping with the village. Further consultation and appropriate measures would be put in place to address these concerns prior to any development.

20% of respondents felt that they would require to move within the next 5 years and the majority of these were due to wanting to set up home for the first time. 57% of those needing to move wish to do so within this parish. This shows that there is a need for starter homes now and in the future.

A need has been identified for both rented housing and shared ownership purchase. Of the 10 respondents who expressed a need for housing and completed the second stage survey, only 7 have been assessed as having a genuine need for alternative housing.

The identified needs is as follows:

- 1 x 2 bed sheltered bungalow for rent
- 3 x 2 bed flat for rent
- 1 x 3 bed house for rent

- 2 x 2 bed house for shared ownership

As with any survey, we would apply a discounting factor. This is to take into account that during the time it would take to develop a scheme some respondents will have to satisfy their own housing needs. For this we would normally apply a 25% discount to the rental units and 40% to those wishing to purchase a property via shared ownership. In addition to the findings of the survey the existing social housing within the village has also been factored into the equation. Taking this into account the suggested housing mix required would be:

- 2 x 2 bed flat for rent
- 2 x 2 bed house for rent
- 1 x 3 bed house for rent

- 1 x 2 bed house for shared ownership

Our recommendation is that a development, which would incorporate the above mix, would help to alleviate the current level of identified need within

the village. It must also be noted that additional need is evident via data from South Northamptonshire Councils database. In light of this it is felt that there is sufficient housing need for a slightly larger site if one were to become available in the village. Provision from either planning gain or a purpose built affordable scheme on an exceptions site would be suitable methods of meeting this identified need.