

A DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE HOUSING NEEDS OF BRANSTON



PRODUCED BY
MIDLANDS RURAL HOUSING

FEBRUARY 2016



CONTENTS

1.	SUMMARY	2
2.	INTRODUCTION	2
3.	RURAL HOUSING AND THE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY	3
4.	CONCLUSION	4
	APPENDIX 1 - HOUSING NEED ANALYSIS	5
	i) RESPONDENT ANALYSIS	5
	ii) HOUSE PRICE DATA	6
	iii) LOCAL CONTEXT - FOR SALE	7
	iv) LOCAL CONTEXT - SOLD	7
	APPENDIX 2 - RESPONDENT DETAILS	8
	i) TYPE OF HOUSING REQUIRED IN THE VILLAGE	8
	ii) TENURE OF ALL RESPONDENTS	9
	iii) SUPPORT FOR HOMES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS	10
	APPENDIX 3 - CONTACT INFORMATION	11

1. Summary

- A Housing Needs Survey was carried out in the village of Branston in January 2016.
- Results obtained showed there was a need in the next 5 years for up to 2 affordable homes and 0 open market (sale) homes for local people enabling them to be suitably housed within the community. Both of the respondents in affordable housing need would be happy to move to Croxton Kerrial to meet their housing needs.
- Local needs affordable homes could be developed on a ‘rural exception site’¹, if available, and subject to local support some open market sale homes could be used to cross-subsidise the affordable homes.
- The alternative to this is that the local homes that are needed are developed as part of a larger development if the opportunity arises and if the needs cannot be met by existing properties.
- The housing needs that have been identified along with the potential ways to meet them, if desired and necessary, will be explored further by the Croxton Kerrial & Branston Parish Council, the local community, Melton Borough Council and Midlands Rural Housing.

2. Introduction

Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) is one of the leading providers of rural housing services in the UK. MRH works with government organisations, developers, architects, builders, parish councils, local authorities, and housing providers to assess the needs for as well as enable access to excellent affordable homes in the Midlands. More details of the work of MRH can be found on the web site (www.midlandsrural.org.uk).

In Leicestershire, MRH works on behalf of a collaborative rural housing partnership. The Leicestershire Rural Housing Group is guiding the work of Midlands Rural Housing to assess and meet the housing needs of people in the villages of Leicestershire. Partners are focused on delivering affordable homes for local people and having a positive impact on our rural areas. The Group is a dedicated formal partnership between the County Council, six rural District and Borough Councils (including Melton Borough Council) and three Housing Associations who fund enabling work in Leicestershire to investigate housing needs and bring forward affordable housing schemes where they are needed. The Group also includes non funding organisations such as the Rural Community Council, National Housing Federation and the Homes & Communities Agency.

In 2015, Melton Borough Council (MBC) instructed MRH to investigate the local housing needs of the residents of Branston, Leicestershire. This formed part of a rolling 5 year programme of Housing Needs Surveys that MBC have to understand the housing needs of its rural communities. MRH worked with Croxton Kerrial & Branston Parish Council to agree and arrange the Housing Needs Survey of the whole Parish.

¹ An exception site is a piece of land outside but touching the village boundary that can be developed as an exception to normal planning policy. Planning permission is only granted on sites where it has been demonstrated that housing is needed and the homes provided will be affordable and reserved for local people as a priority in perpetuity i.e. now and in the future.

3. Rural housing and the Housing Needs Survey

Average property prices in rural areas have increased more than urban areas in monetary terms over the past 5 years² forcing many local residents to move away from their towns and villages in order to find suitable and affordable homes. House prices in the countryside are now from £20,000 to £50,000 higher than in urban areas, despite average wages being lower.

The number of people on waiting lists for affordable homes in rural England has soared to around 750,000³. New household formation is outstripping supply by 3 to 1 (source: CLG). Increasing house prices and the limited availability of appropriate properties has resulted in local people being unable to find a home within their community and this may be happening in Branston.

The Branston Housing Needs Survey questionnaires were delivered to every household in the Parish in early January. The return date for the survey was 31st January and returns were made via a postage paid envelope directly to MRH. Survey forms were distributed to all households in the village as well as to those who contacted MRH to say that they had moved away from Branston or had a strong connection to the Parish and wished to complete a form. In total 61 survey forms were distributed.

The Housing Needs Survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of any local housing need for a range of housing tenures for Branston residents. This evidence will be made available to Melton Borough Council and Croxton Kerrial & Branston Parish Council; used to inform Housing Strategy and the Neighbourhood Plan; and provide clarity on what type and tenure of housing is required to meet local needs.

In addition, the information can be used positively in the planning process. It provides a foundation on which to negotiate 'planning gain' opportunities with developers. In short, it gives planners and parish organisations evidence that can be used to obtain an element of 'local needs' housing in negotiations with house builders, should such situations arise in the village.

The information obtained from a Housing Needs Survey is also invaluable at the local level, particularly in relation to local authority, parish council and neighbourhood planning activities. Such information can be acted upon locally and taken on board in the decision making process when housing issues arise.

² Halifax Rural Housing Review 2014 - "a house in a rural area costs £206,423 on average, which is 13 per cent more than the typical cost of a property in an urban area at £182,710."

³ National Housing Federation, Rural housing research report 2014

4. Conclusion

MRH has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of Branston up to 2021. This study has not only investigated the affordable housing need of the village, but also for market rent level housing and open market housing.

The survey has identified a need for affordable and open market properties in need in the next 5 years for those with a connection to Branston.

Of the 2 respondents who indicated a housing need in the next 5 years:

- 0 were assessed as being in need of open market housing (for local people) to purchase
- 2 were assessed as being in need of affordable housing for rent and shared ownership

2 x 2 Bed bungalow - affordable rented

It should be noted that both of these cases would move to Croxton Kerrial to satisfy their housing need.

These results were cross referenced with the Melton Borough Council Housing Register. Respondents to the Housing Needs Survey who were also on the Housing Register would not be analysed again (so no double counting takes place), but there were no further households who have been assessed as being in housing need who feature on the Housing Register.

THERE IS AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR
0 OPEN MARKET HOMES AND 2 AFFORDABLE HOMES
IN BRANSTON FOR THOSE WITH A LOCAL CONNECTION

Appendix 1 - Housing Need Analysis

Of the 16 returns, 14 were from people who felt that they were adequately housed at present. These respondents completed a form primarily to offer their support, objection or thoughts towards 'local needs' housing and comments on life in the village. It was, therefore, not necessary to process these in the 'housing needs analysis' as they had not indicated a housing need for the next 5 years.

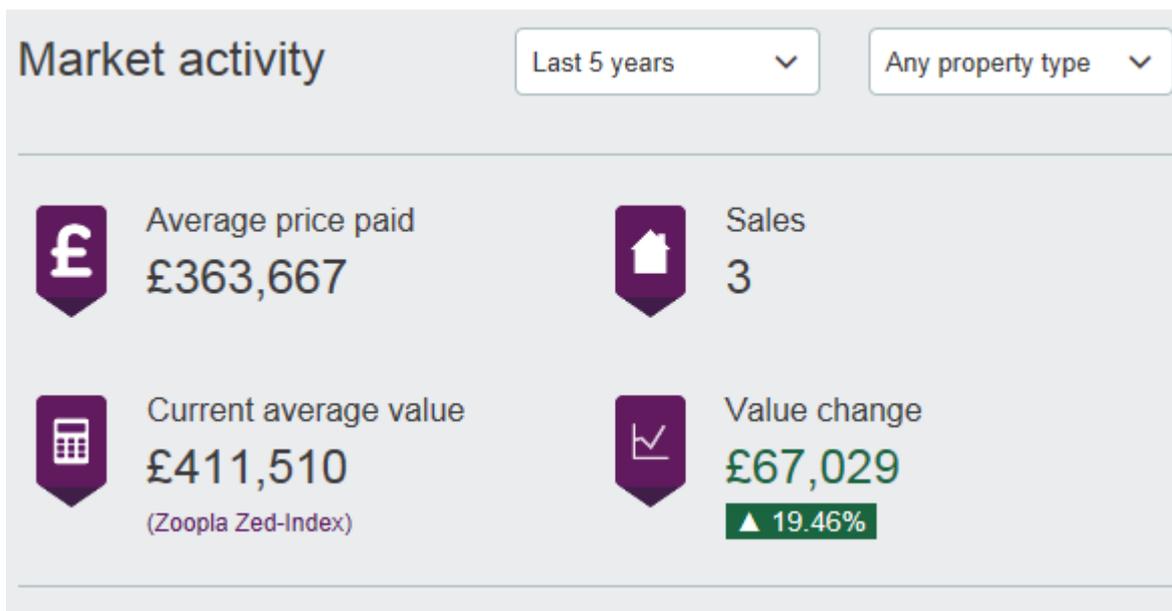
i) Respondent analysis

The following table lists details of the 2 respondents who stated that they are in housing need in the next 5 years as well as those assessed as being in need on MBC's Housing Register. Respondents were asked to identify what they felt is needed in terms of property type and size together with a preferred tenure type. In reality it may not be possible to meet the aspirations of each respondent. Incomes and likely property prices are considered in order to ensure that any proposed future homes would indeed meet the needs of those to be housed. Therefore a 'likely allocation/purchase' is suggested to outline realistic provision.

RESPONDENTS BELOW HAVE A NEED THAT IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS						
Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household details	Reasons for need	Preferred home and tenure	Likely allocation / purchase
9	Yes	No	Single person living in privately rented home	Present home too expensive	2 bed bungalow - Affordable rented (would also move to Croxton Kerrial)	2 bed bungalow - Affordable rented
11	Yes	No	Single person living in privately rented home	Present home too expensive	1 bed house / bungalow / flat - Affordable rented (would also move to Croxton Kerrial)	2 bed bungalow - Affordable rented

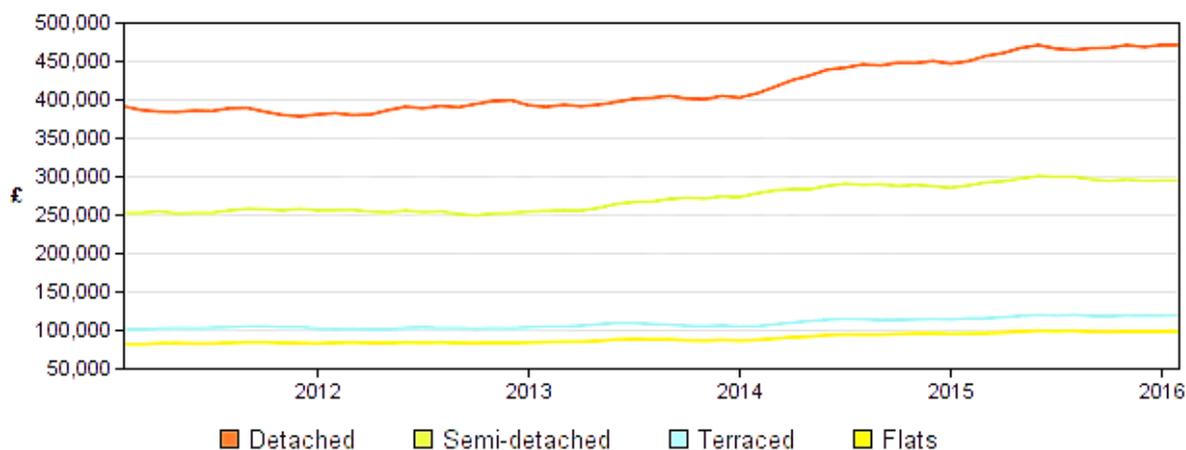
There were no current applicants on the Melton Borough Council housing register who had a connection to the village.

ii) House price trends



Property prices in the village have, overall, increased over the past 5 years. During that period prices have increased by an average of 19.46% (£67,029).

Value trends in Branston, Grantham



iii) Local context - properties for sale

By way of local context, the tables below shows prices of properties that were for sale or private rent in Branston in February 2016 (source: www.zoopla.com).

Current asking prices in Branston, Grantham

Property type	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	5 beds
Houses	-	-	-	-	-
Flats	-	-	-	-	-
All	-	-	-	-	-

Current asking rents in Branston, Grantham

Property type	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	5 beds
Houses	-	-	-	-	-
Flats	-	-	-	-	-
All	-	-	-	-	-

There are currently no properties for sale and or rent in Branston.

iv) Local context - properties sold

Property value data/graphs for Branston, Grantham

Property type	Avg. current value	Avg. £ per sq ft.	Avg. # beds	Avg. £ paid (last 12m)
Detached	£470,224	-	4.7	-
Semi-detached	£294,082	-	-	-
Terraced	-	-	-	-
Flats	-	-	-	-

Affordability is calculated using a mortgage multiplier of 3.5 times household income with a 20% deposit.

The average property price for actual sales since February 2015 is not possible to calculate as there were no sales in that period. Based on the affordability criteria explained above, to purchase a semi-detached house at the average current value (£294,082) would require a deposit of £58,816 and income in excess of £67,000 per annum.

Appendix 2 - Respondent details

A total of 61 survey forms were distributed and 16 were received in return, giving a return rate of 26% against the number distributed. In our experience this is an average level of response for a survey of this type in a settlement of this size.

Given the total numbers of responses it was not felt worthwhile to display the analysis to all questions but some key findings are shown below.

i) Type of housing required in the village

Question 7 of the survey asked for opinions on the types of housing that respondents believe are needed in the village. The results are given in the chart below (fig 1.1):

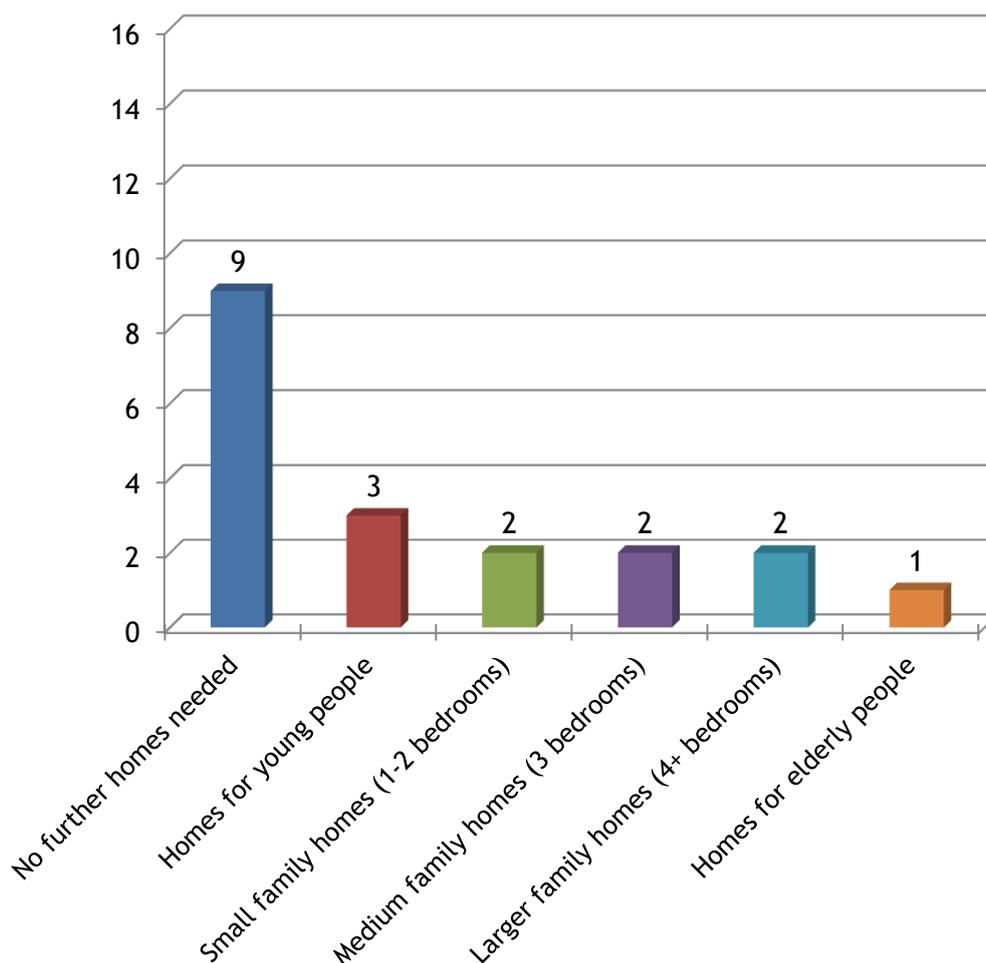


Fig 1.1 - Type of housing needed in the village

It should be noted that respondents were able to tick as many options as they felt appropriate, hence the total number is higher than the number of individual responses received.

Fig 1.1 shows that 56% respondents thought that no further homes were needed in Branston.

Of those that believed more homes were needed, the most popular choice was homes for young people.

ii) **Tenure of all respondents**

The current household tenure of respondents was asked at question 3 and the results are given in the chart below (fig 1.2):

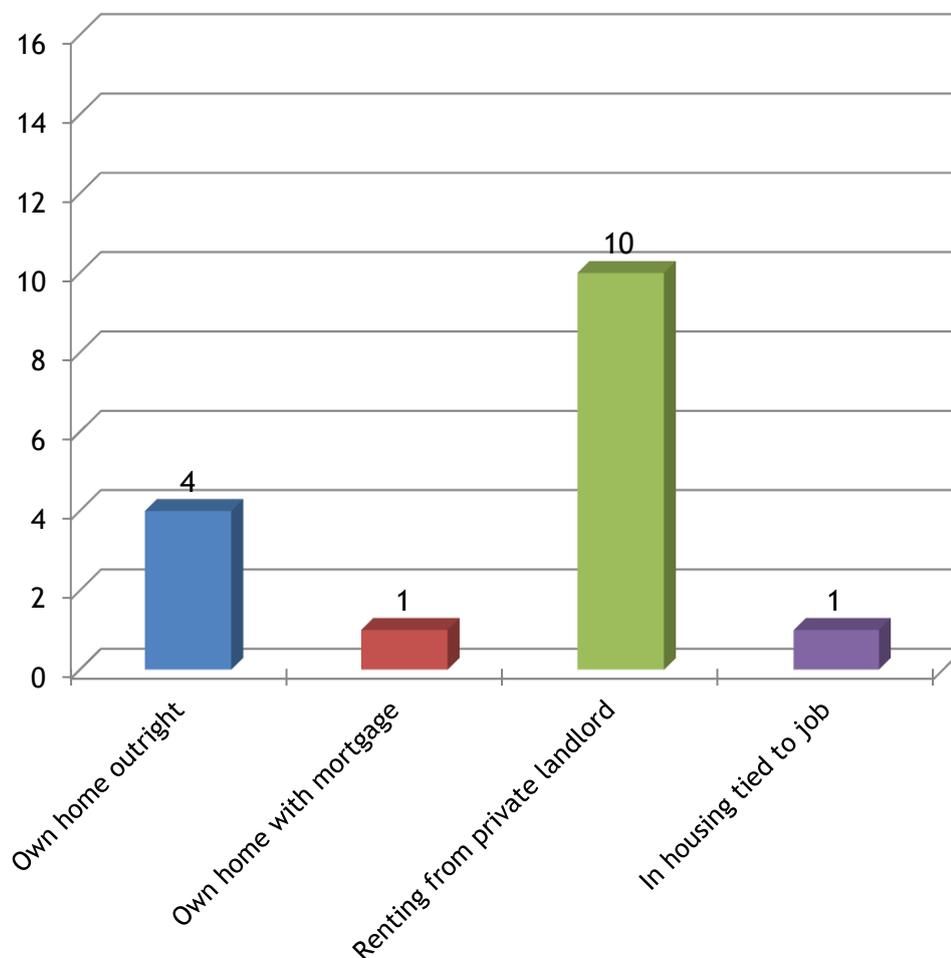


Fig 1.2 - Tenure of respondents

It shows that private renters were the largest tenure group accounting for 63% of responses.

The second largest number of responses were from 'owner-occupiers' (31%) with 6% of responses coming from those whose home is tied to their job.

iii) Support for small number of homes to meet local peoples' needs

A fundamental question in the survey was question 9 which asked whether people are in favour of a small number of new homes in the village to meet the needs of local people.

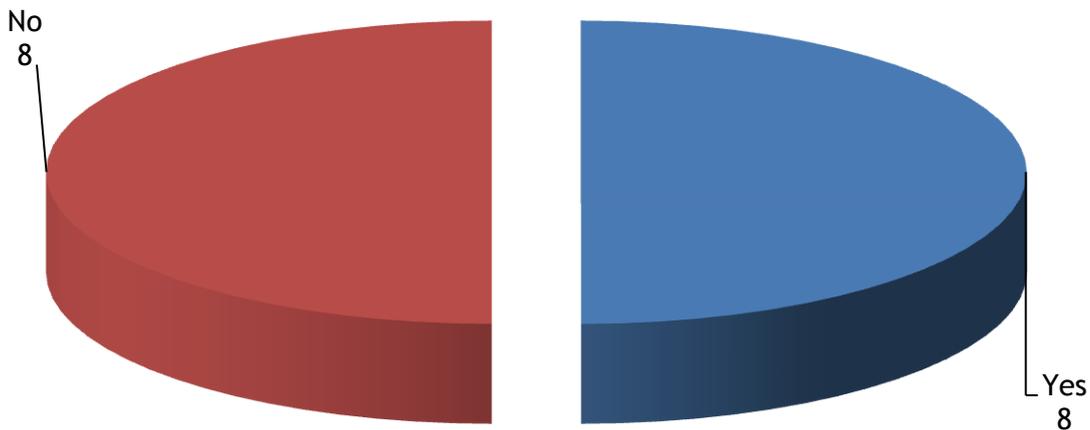


Fig 1.3 - Support for homes for local people

Fig 1.3 shows that half of respondents are in support of a small number of homes to meet local peoples' needs, while half said that they are not in support.

Appendix 3 - Contact information

Midlands Rural Housing

Whitwick Business Centre
Stenson Road
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 4JP



Telephone: 0300 1234 009

Email: richard.mugglestone@midlandsrural.org.uk

web: www.midlandsrural.org.uk



@MidlandsRural