

# **A DETAILED INVESTIGATION INTO THE HOUSING NEEDS OF PLUNGAR, LEICESTERSHIRE.**



**PRODUCED BY  
MIDLANDS RURAL HOUSING  
FOR  
DOUGAL DEVELOPMENTS  
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## 1. Summary

- A housing need survey was carried out in Plungar in December 2018. Questionnaires were sent directly to 116 household addresses.
- Results obtained showed there was a requirement for up to 2 open market (sale) homes and 1 affordable home for local people, enabling them to be suitably housed within the community.
- These could be developed on an 'infill site' or alternatively, on a 'rural exception site' if available, and subject to local support. Open market for sale homes could be used to cross-subsidise the affordable homes.
- The alternative to this is that these homes could be developed as part of a larger development.

## 2. Introduction

Average property prices in rural areas are consistently higher than in urban areas<sup>1</sup>. Between 2011 and 2016, there has been a 30% increase in rural house prices. This is forcing many people to move away from their towns and villages in order to find suitable and affordable homes.

House prices in the countryside are now up to £42,894 higher than in urban areas. The average rural house price is now £203,535 and is now over 7 times annual earnings<sup>2</sup>.

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 Plungar.

Midlands Rural Housing (MRH) work with local authorities, town and parish councils, registered providers (housing associations/registered social landlords), private developers and local communities in order to investigate the need for, and facilitate, affordable and local needs homes in towns and villages throughout the Midlands. The first step in this research is to undertake a Housing Needs Survey which will give an overview of the current housing situation in a parish and provide details of the need for local housing.

The Plungar Housing Needs Survey questionnaires were delivered to every household in the Parish by December 2018. The return date for the survey was 31st December 2018 and returns were made via a postage paid envelope directly to MRH. Survey forms were distributed to all households as well as to those who contacted MRH to say that they had moved away from their village or had a strong connection to it and wished to complete a form. In total 116 survey forms were distributed.

1. Halifax Rural Housing Review 2016 - a house in a rural area costs 20% more than the typical cost of a property in an urban area.

2. Halifax Rural Housing Review 2016.

### 3. Purpose of the Survey

The survey was conducted in order to obtain clear evidence of any local housing need for a range of housing tenures for local residents. This evidence can be made available to Melton Borough Council; used to inform Housing Strategy; 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 the planners evidence that can be used to obtain an element of 'local needs' housing in negotiations with house builders, should such possibilities 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 and parish council activities. Such information can be acted upon locally and taken on board in the decision making process when housing issues arise.

The survey questionnaire is divided into three sections. Section 1 -General Information (questions 1 - 9) seeks to discover general information about household members, their current housing situation, and their connection to the parish. Section 2 - Life in your Village' (questions 10 - 12) seeks to discover peoples' perceptions of life in the parish and gives an opportunity to make comments. Section 3 (questions 13 - 22) seeks to identify the future housing requirements of the household and their reasons for needing housing in the future.

## 4. Conclusion

MRH has conducted a detailed study of the housing needs of Plungar. This study has not only investigated the actual affordable housing need of the Parish, but also for market rent level housing and open market housing. In addition, the survey ascertained residents' views with regard to living in the Parish and support for local needs housing to help sustain local communities.

The survey has identified an immediate a need for 1 affordable and 2 open market properties.

Of the 4 respondents who indicated a housing need in the next 5 years:

- 2 were assessed as being in need of open market housing (for local people) to purchase
  - 1 x 3 bed house - Open market purchase
  - 1 x 4 bed house - Open market purchase
- 1 was assessed as being in need of affordable housing for rent / shared ownership
  - 1 x 3 Bed house - Shared ownership

These results were cross referenced with the Melton Borough Council Housing Register. There were no respondents on the Housing Needs Survey who were resident in Plungar.

**THERE IS AN IDENTIFIED NEED FOR**  
**2 OPEN MARKET HOME AND 1 AFFORDABLE HOME IN**  
**PLUNGAR FOR THOSE WITH A LOCAL CONNECTION.**

## Appendix 1 - Housing Need Analysis

Of the 17 returns, 13 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 as well as to give their comments regarding life in the Parish. These were, therefore, discounted from the rest of the analysis.

As far as the requirement for housing, 4 returns indicated a need for housing.

### i) Respondent analysis

The following table lists details of those respondents who stated that they are in housing need. 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 scheme would indeed meet the needs of those to be housed. Therefore a 'likely allocation' is suggested to outline realistic provision.

Those marked with a \* indicate that the respondent is currently housed in Housing Association/Council accommodation which would be available to other people in need on waiting lists if the current residents were able to be re-housed in a more suitable property.

RESPONDENTS BELOW HAVE A NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE HOUSING IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS						
Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Preferred Home and Tenure	Likely Allocation
1	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Present home too large	Unknown	Unable to assess as insufficient information provided by respondent
2	Yes	No	Family living in own home	Moved away but wish to return to be closer to family	4 bed house Open market purchase	3 bed house Open market purchase

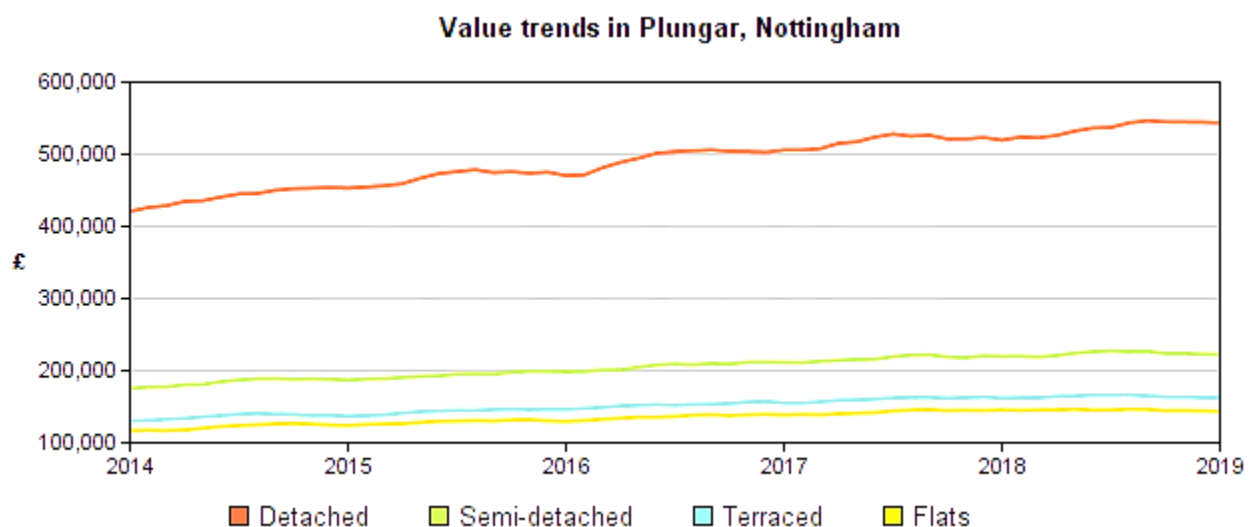
Ref	Local Connection?	On Housing Register?	Household Details	Reasons for Need	Preferred Home and Tenure	Likely Allocation
3	Yes	No	Family living in own home	Moved away but wish to return to be closer to family	3 bed house Open market purchase	3 bed house  Shared ownership
4	Yes	No	Family living in own home	Present home too small, moved away but wish to return to be closer to family	4 bed house Open market purchase	4 bed house  Open market purchase

i) House price data

## House prices in Plungar



Property prices in the village have, overall, increased over the past 5 years. During that period prices have increased by an average of 27.99% which means average increases in home values of £103,236 (source: [www.zoopla.com](http://www.zoopla.com)).





## ii) 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 the village in December 2018 (source: [www.zoopla.com](http://www.zoopla.com)).

### Current asking prices in Plungar

Average: **£567,500**

Property type	1 bed	2 beds	3 beds	4 beds	5 beds
Houses	-	-	-	-	<b>£567,500</b> (2)
Flats	-	-	-	-	-
All	-	-	-	-	<b>£567,500</b> (2)

### Current asking rents in Plungar

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

At the time of the report being written (December 2018) according to Zoopla there were two properties for sale in Plungar, both were 5 bedroom detached properties.

There were no properties for private rent in the village.

### iii) Local context - properties sold

Property type	Avg. current value	Avg. £ per sq ft.	Avg. # beds	Avg. £ paid (last 12m)
Detached	£542,324	£245	3.8	£730,000
Semi-detached	£220,862	£246	3.4	-
Terraced	£160,938	-	3.3	£164,500
Flats	-	-	-	-

**Affordability is calculated using a mortgage multiplier of 3.5 times household income with a 10% deposit.**

The average property price for actual sales over the past 12 months can be seen in the chart above. There have been 3 sales in the past 12 months.

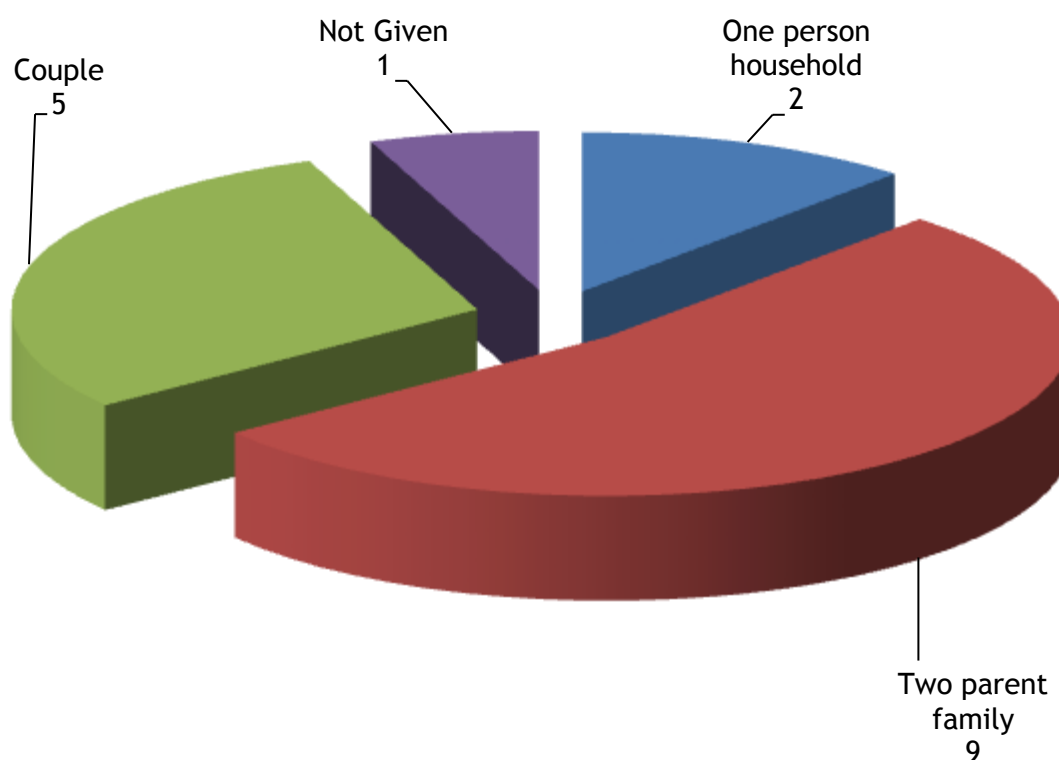
The average current value of properties can be seen in the left hand column of the charts above. Based on the affordability criteria explained above, to purchase a terraced house at the average current value in Plungar (£160,938) would require a deposit of over £16,000 and income just less than £41,000 per annum. To purchase a semi-detached house at the average current value in Plungar (£220,862) would require a deposit of over £22,000 and income of just over £56,500 per annum. To purchase a detached house at the average current value in Plungar (£542,324) would require a deposit of over £54,000 and income of over £139,000 per annum.

## Appendix 2 - Respondent details

A total of 116 survey forms were distributed and 17 were received in return, giving a return rate of 15% against the number distributed. In our experience this is a poor level of response for a survey of this kind and it is only those who have a housing need or are interested in a local needs development and general village life that are likely to respond.

### i) Household type

The questionnaire asked village residents to indicate the type of household they are.



*Fig 1.1 - Household type*

The chart above (fig 1.1), shows the breakdown of households that responded to the survey.

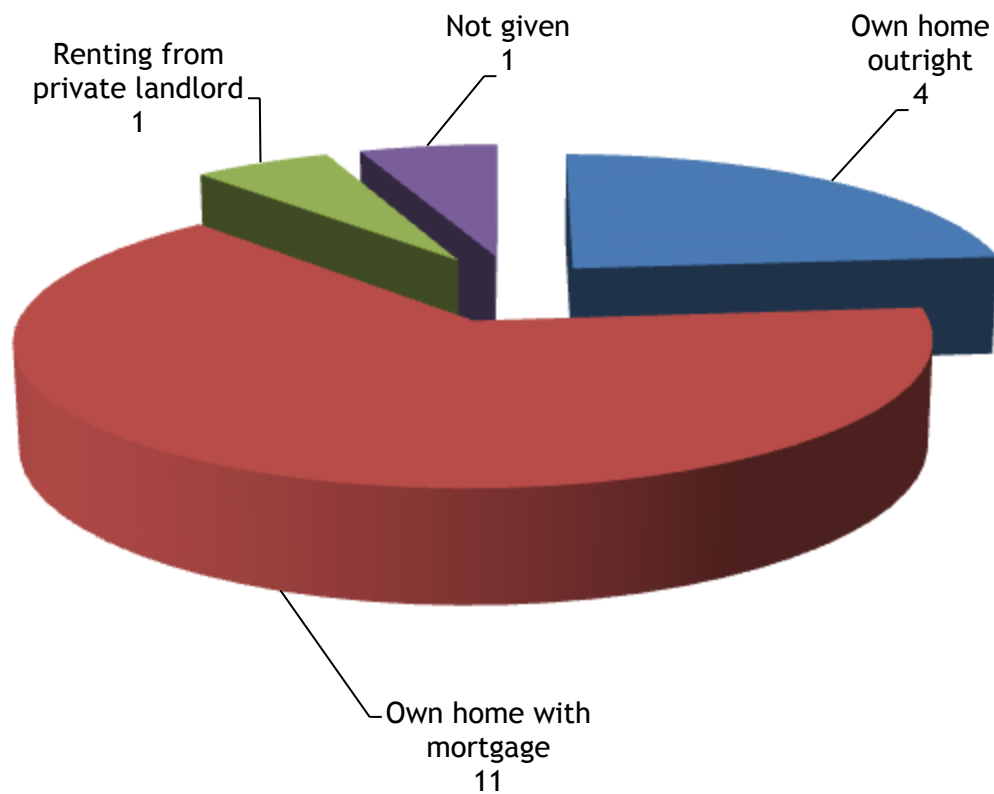
The largest number of responses were from households made up of two parent families; 53% of total responses were received from this type of household.

29% of responses came from households made up of couples and 12% of responses came from one person households.

One respondent did not provide any details for this question.

## ii) Tenure of all respondents

The current household tenure of respondents is given in the chart below (fig 1.2):



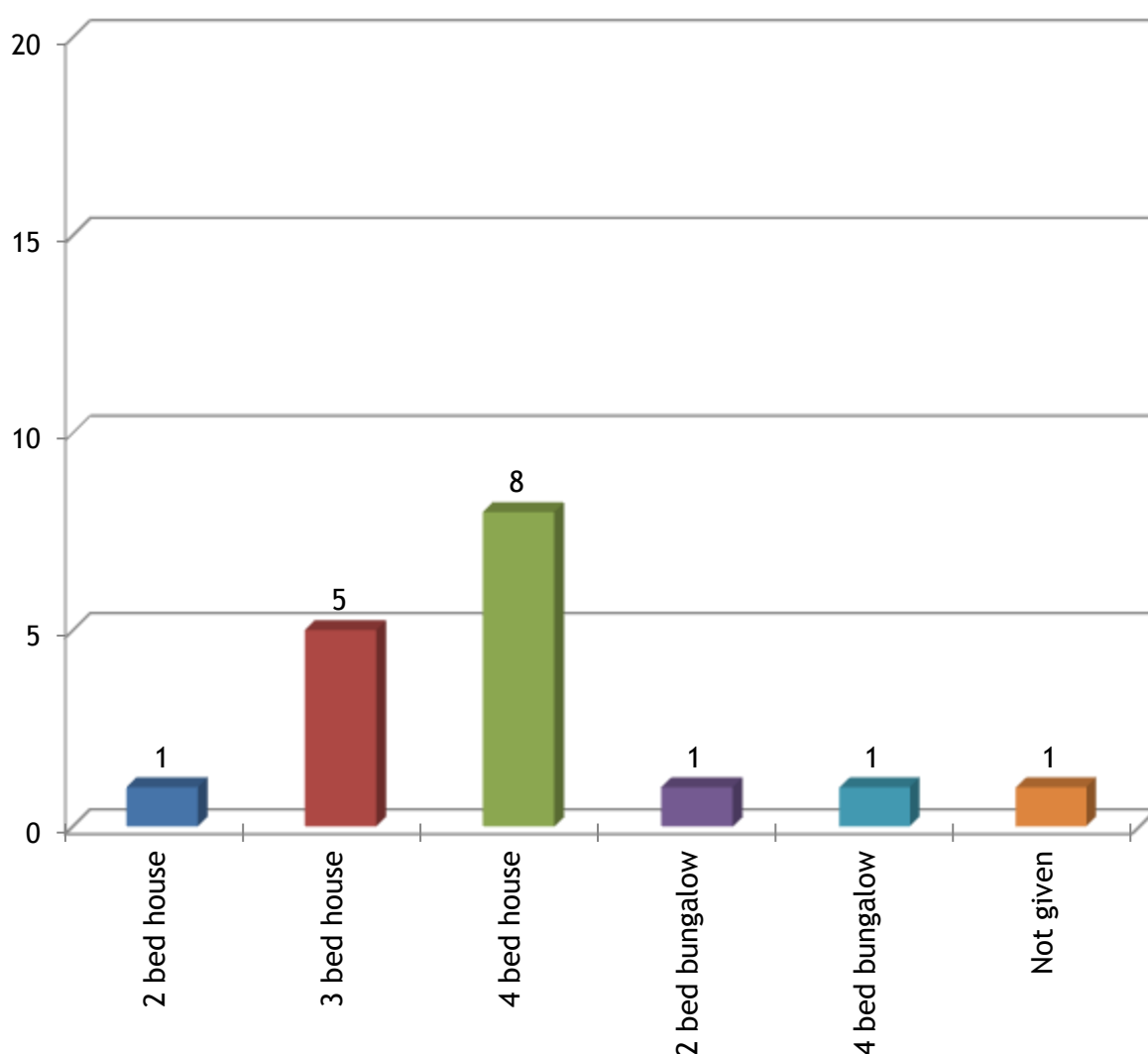
*Fig 1.2 - Tenure of respondents*

It shows that 'owner-occupiers' were by far the largest tenure group accounting for 89% of replies (24% of total survey respondents owned their home outright and have no outstanding mortgage on their property and 65% have a mortgage on their home).

15% of respondents advised that they rent privately and one respondent did not provide details about their tenure.

### iii) Property Types

The following chart (fig 1.3) details the type of property that respondents currently reside in:



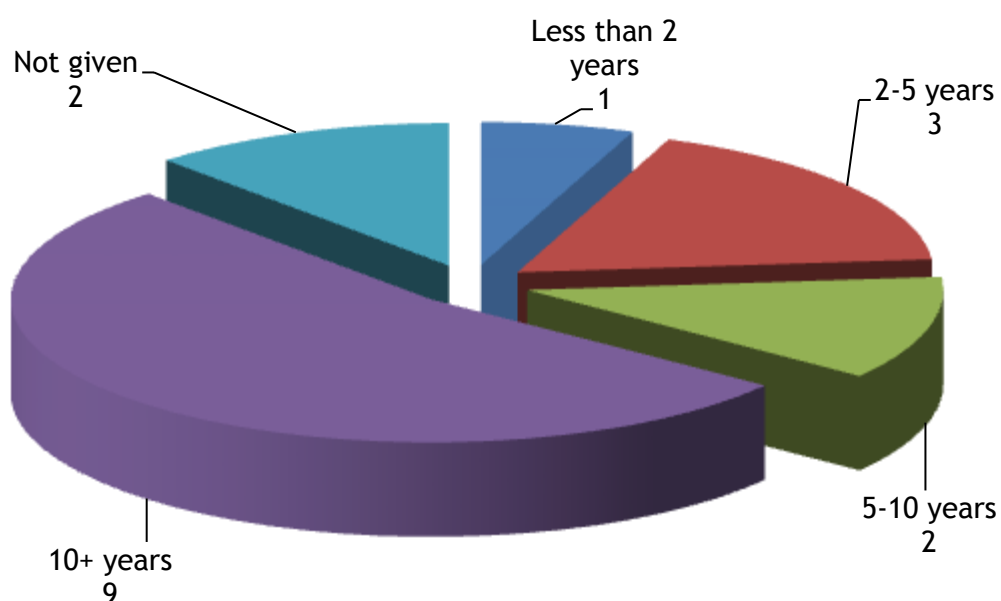
*Fig 1.3 - Property types*

82% of respondents live in a house and 35% live in a bungalow, and the remaining 5% of respondents did not complete this question.

Those living in 4 bedroom houses were the largest group (47% of responses), followed by those living in 3 bedroom houses (29%), followed by those living in 2 and 4 bedroom bungalows (5% of the respondents in each type). One respondent did not fill in this question.

#### iv) Length of residence in Parish

The length of time that respondents have lived in Plungar is given in the chart below (fig 1.4):



*Fig 1.4 - Length of residence in Parish*

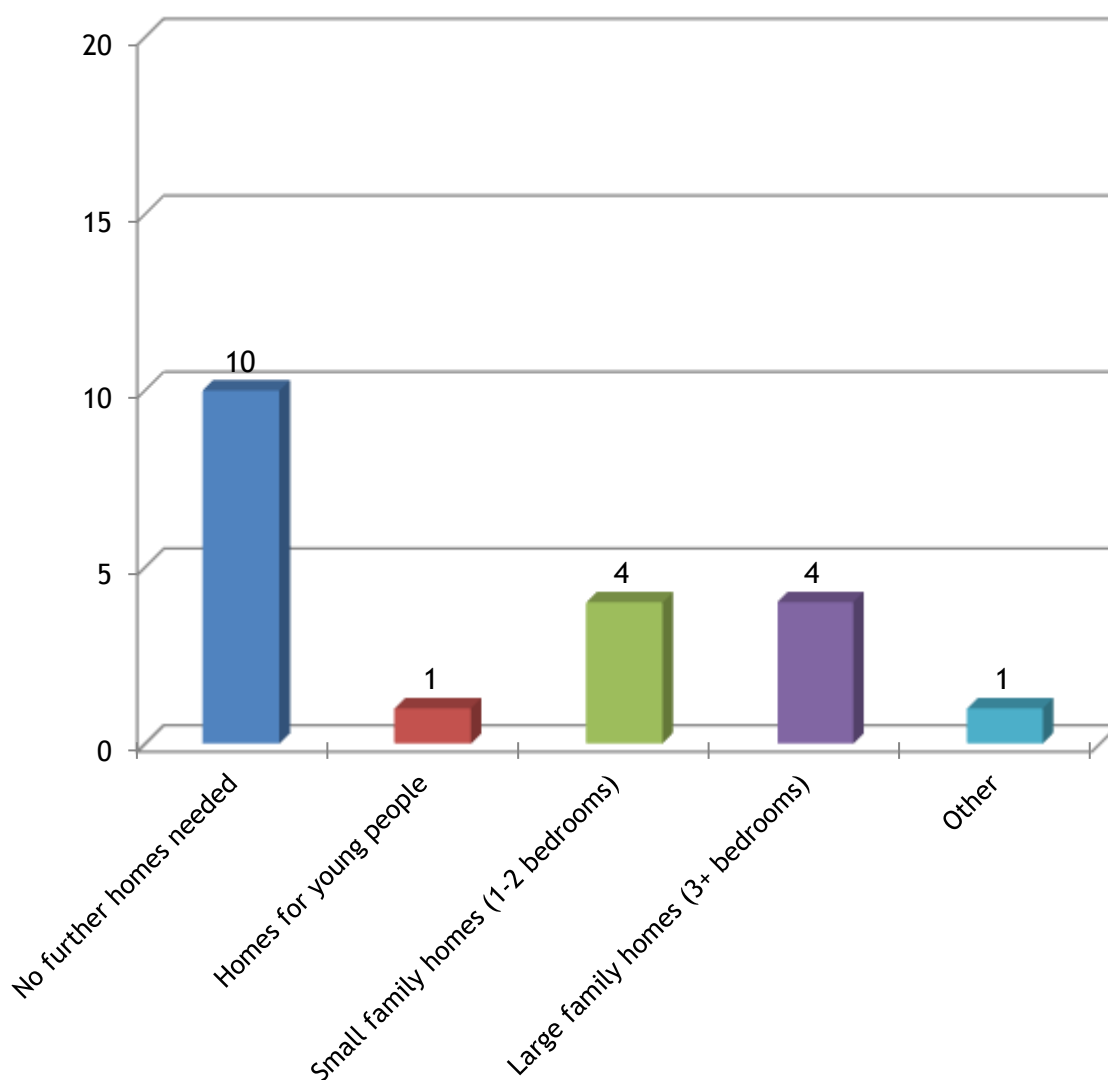
It shows that 53% of completed surveys came from households that have lived in the Parish for in excess of 10 years.

12% of respondents have lived in Plungar for between 5 and 10 years, and 18% have been there for between 2 and 5 years. 6% of responses came from those who have lived in the village for less than 2 years.

Two respondents did not provide information for this question.

## v) Type of housing required in the Parish

The questionnaire asked for opinions on the type of housing that respondents believed is needed in the Parish. The results are given in the chart below (fig 1.5):



*Fig 1.5 - Type of housing needed in Plungar*

It shows that 59% of respondents thought that no further homes were needed in Plungar.

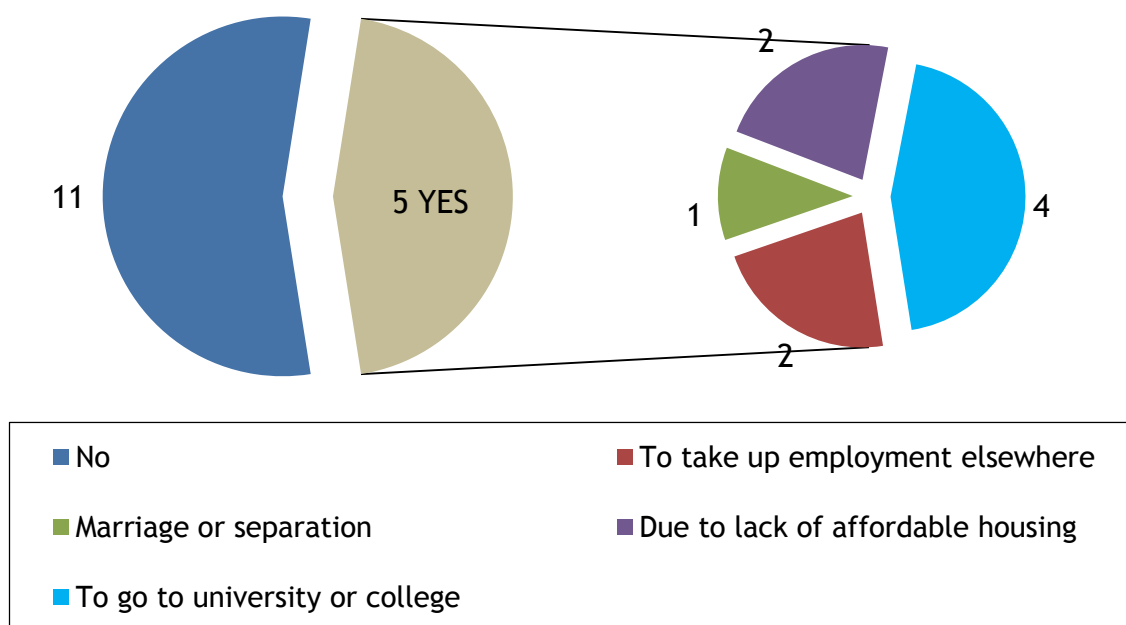
Of those who believed that more homes were needed, the most popular reasons were:

- Large family homes
- Small family homes
- Homes for young people

One respondent suggested in the other category that there should be more 'rental properties' available in the village.

vi) **Migration and reasons for leaving**

The survey asked whether respondents had experienced former members of their household leaving the Parish over the last 5 years and, if so, what the reasons were for them leaving.



*Fig 1.6 - Migration and reasons for leaving*

Fig 1.6 shows that 26% (5) of Parish residents who returned questionnaires were aware of others who have had to leave the Parish in the last 5 years.

The total number of those who have left the respondent households in the parish over the last 5 years totalled 9 people.

The reasons for members of these households leaving can be seen in the chart above, but it is worth noting that 2 of the 9 left due to a lack of affordable housing.



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

One of the fundamental questions in the survey is that which asks whether people are in favour of a small number of homes in the village to meet the needs of local people.

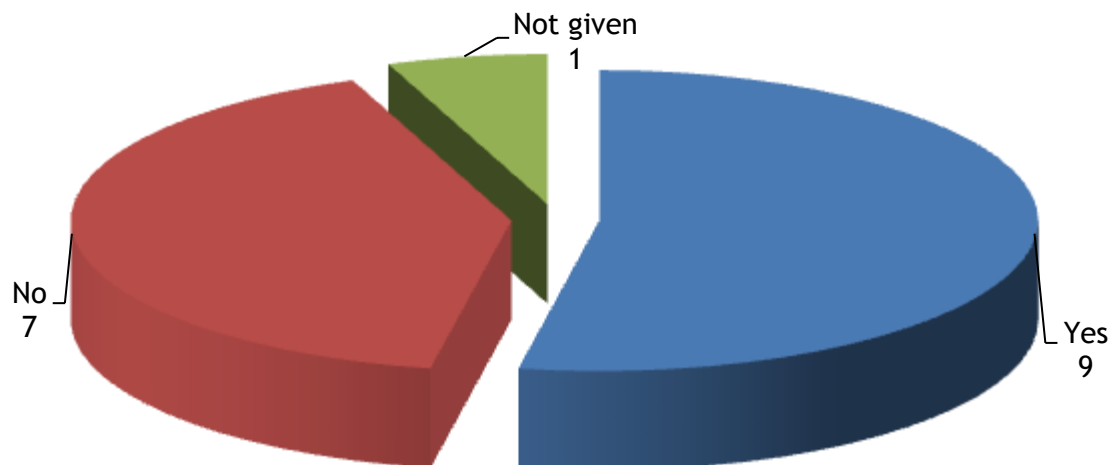


Fig 1.7 - Support for homes for local people

Fig 1.7 above shows that 53% of respondents are in support of a small number of homes to meet local peoples' needs, while 41% said that they are not in support.

The survey asked for the respondents concerns if they were not in support of building a small number of homes to meet the needs of local people. The comments made by respondents are shown below.

**IF NO, PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN YOUR CONCERNS**

I completely disagree with building on greenfield sites. My concerns are rooted in the protection of our diminishing rural environment and in the protection of wildlife. This is a small village and the infrastructure would not support any more housing and consequent pressure on rural roads.

But only a small number of new properties. We will not support a large scale or greenbelt development of expensive executive homes.

Roads not suitable for traffic volume - schools too small. Houses never seem to go to local people as they are outside their price bracket. Apart from the odd few over 70's there aren't any local people in the village.

I don't feel further housing is required in the village, it is important to maintain the beauty of the area. New builds are often built to be as cheap as possible and this does not fit with the aesthetics of the village.

There are already empty houses in the village.

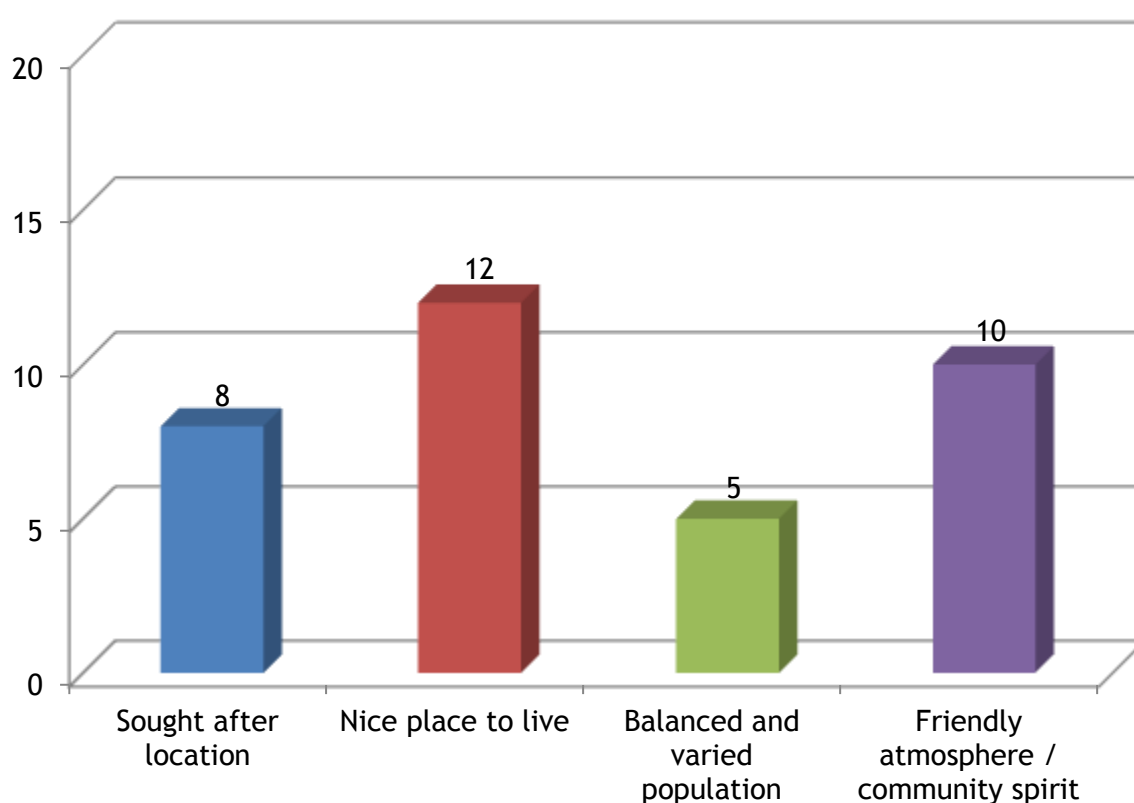
There are many houses currently for sale but not being brought - Plungar and surrounding area.

### viii) Life in the Parish

The following two charts detail respondents' answers to the 'life in the Parish' questions.

The views expressed allow a picture of life within the Parish to be built up. This information can help assess whether any homes that are subsequently provided in the village will be considered desirable and sustainable. Ensuring that people will want to take up residency and live in a village both now and in the future are important factors when considering the provision of new home.

The first question (question 10) asked village residents which of the 'positive' factors of life in the village best described their settlement.

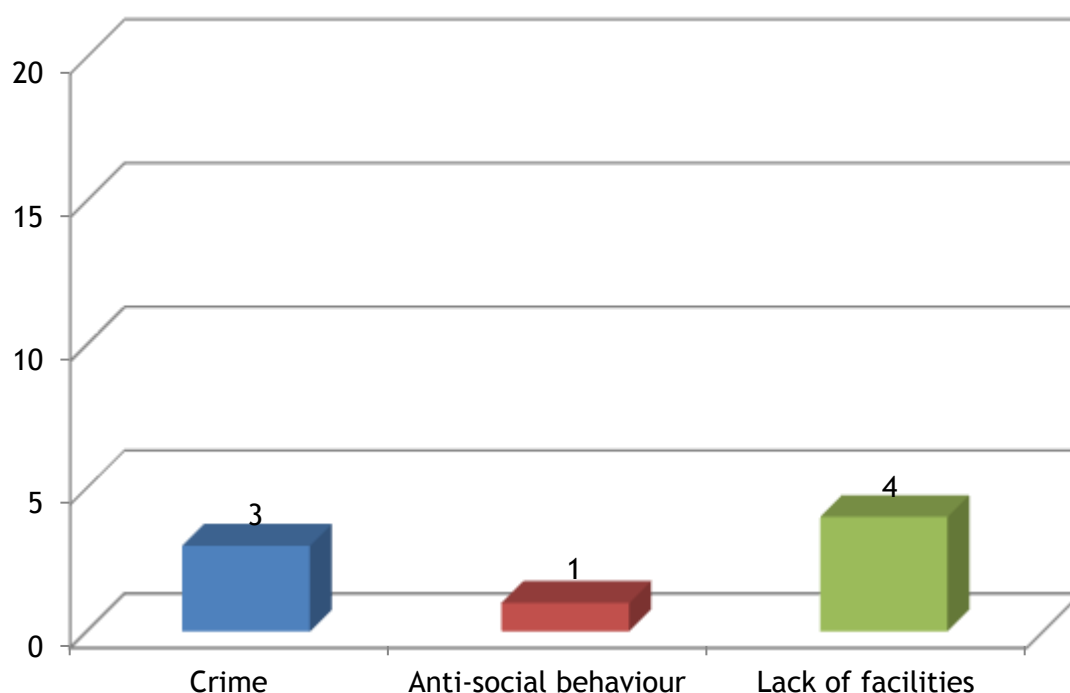


*Fig 1.8 - Life in the Parish - positive factors*

From fig 1.8, above, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are very positive about life in Plungar. 70% believed that the Parish is a nice place to live and 59% believed that Plungar enjoys a friendly atmosphere and a sense of community.

47% of questionnaires came from those who believed the village to be in a sought after location and 29% of respondents felt the village has a balanced and varied population.

The second question (question 11) sought village residents' perceptions on the potentially negative aspects of life in the Parish.



*Fig 1.9 - Life in the Parish - negative factors*

As it can be seen from fig 1.9 above, some respondents consider that Plungar suffers from some of the 'negative factors' around a lack of facilities that affect many communities.

23% of respondents believe that there are a lack of facilities in the village.

Only 18% think that crime is a factor with 6% believing that anti-social behaviour is a problem.

Many respondents made comments in response to the question 'What would you like to see happen to improve the situation?'. Please find the specific comments made listed below;

Increased policing in area.

Better bus services to Bingham, Grantham etc.

More buses and a shop.

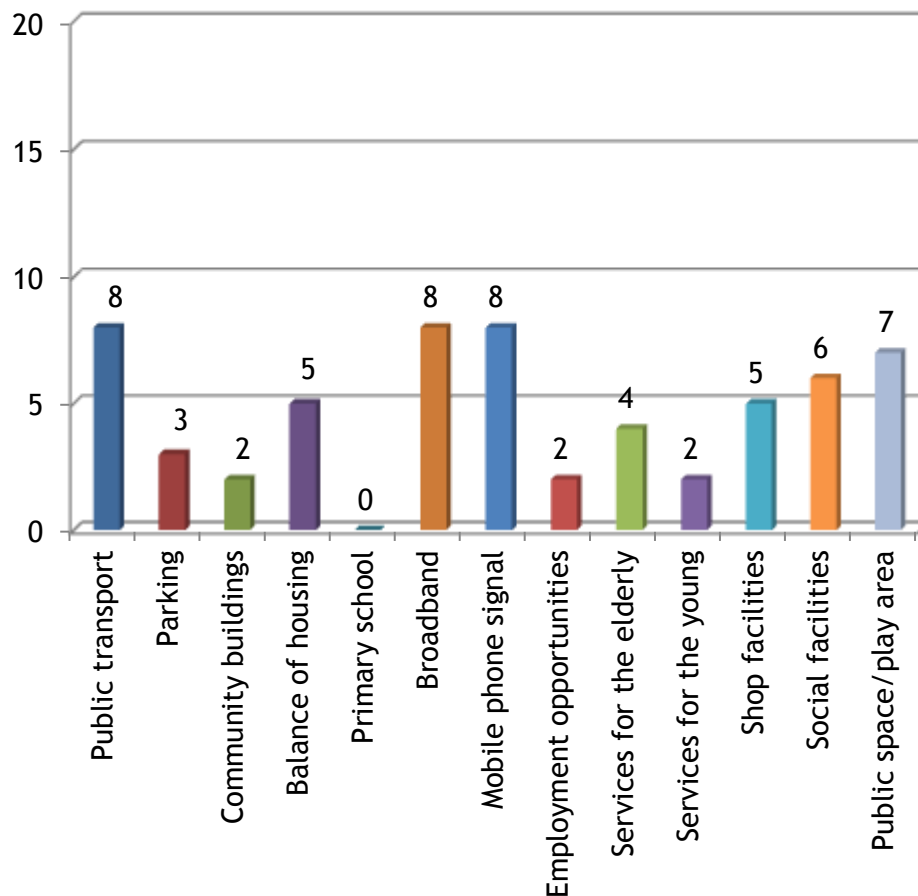
Convenience store/shop. Children's play area/play ground. Allotments.

The only addition which would be beneficial would be a small play park as there are now many children in the village. One similar to the park in Redmile would be great for young families.

More police resource.

### ix) The Most Important Factors for the Future of the Village

The last question in part 2 of the survey asked respondents to select what they believed to be the three most important factors for the future of the village.



*Fig 2.0 - Most important factors for the future of the village*

As you can see from the above graph 47% of respondents felt that Public transport, broadband connectivity and a mobile phone signal were the most vital factors required to ensure the future of Plungar.

The provision of a public space/play area was felt to be important by 41% of residents followed by social facilities (35%) balance of housing and shop facilities (29%).

A primary school, employment opportunities, community buildings and services for the young were not felt to be as important as the factors above.

## 5. Contact information

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