



# Stoke St Gregory Parish Housing Needs Survey 2016



Conducted by  
Taunton Deane Borough Council

May 2016

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## Summary of Affordable Housing Needs Findings

**Surveys Sent – 429**

**Responses received – 128 (30%)**

### **11 Respondents stated to be in need of Affordable Housing**

#### Current Property Size

- 1 x 1b
- 1 x 2b
- 6 x 3b
- 2 x 4b
- 1 x 5b

#### Current Tenure

- 4 x Homeowner
- 1 x Living with Parents
- 3 x Private Rent
- 3 x Social Rent

#### Preferred Affordable Housing Option

- 5 x low cost homeownership (of which 3 also expressed also having a non-affordable tenure preference )
- 1 x low cost homeownership or social rent
- 2 x Social Rent
- 3 x Non-Affordable Housing Tenures

## Introduction

The Housing Needs Survey was undertaken on behalf of Stoke St Gregory Parish Council, which approached Taunton Deane in January 2016. The purpose of this community consultation was to gather views of the residents of Stoke St Gregory Parish to determine the housing needs. The most recent Housing Needs Survey for Stoke St Gregory was conducted in 2004, which identified the need of 12 homes and the consequent development of Willow Mead.

Stoke St Gregory is located in the core of Somerset between the Rivers Tone and Parret, near Athelney Island. It is 8 miles north-east of Taunton, 5 miles north west of Langport and 1.5 mile from Athelney Bridge Railway Station. The Parish also covers the areas of East Curry, Curryload, and Stathe.

The village has a primary school and pre-school, two churches, a village shop, two pubs/restaurants, a playing field, a new village hall and a regular bus service.

<b>Housing</b>		
	<b>Stoke St. Gregory</b>	<b>Stoke St. Gregory</b>
		<b>%</b>
<b>Total number of dwellings</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Detached	232	55.2%
Semi-detached	116	27.6%
Terraced	54	12.9%
Flats	16	3.8%
<b>Tenure</b>		
<b>Total number of households</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
Owner occupied	300	75.4%
Social Rented	56	14.1%
Privately rented	36	9.0%
Average household size (persons per household)	2.4	

**Table 1 - The nature and type of dwellings and households within Stoke St Gregory (ONS Census, 2011).**

The Land registry records nine sales in 2015 at an average of £317,500, all of which are detached houses.

At the time of the survey there were eight properties for sale on Rightmove within the Parish of Stoke St Gregory:

- 1 x 3 bed at a cost of £92,500 (Shared Ownership – 50% buy/50% rent)
- 1 x 3 bed at a cost of £95,000 (Shared Ownership – 50% buy/50% rent)
- 1 x 3 bed at a cost of £350,000
- 1 x 4 bed at a cost of £350,000
- 1 x 4 bed at a cost of £389,995
- 1 x 4 bed at a cost of £495,000
- 1 x 4 bed at a cost of £599,950
- 1 x 5 bed at a cost of £675,000

There is also a broad mix of existing Affordable Housing within the Parish:

There are 67 properties for rent, being a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed houses, bungalows and flats. Of these, 18 are Housing Association owned and the remainder owned by Taunton Deane Borough Council. Two properties have been available to rent within the past 12 months. The choice based lettings system, Homefinder Somerset has four applicants expressing Stoke St Gregory as their parish first choice.

There are also 10 Shared Ownership properties, being a mix of 2 and 3 bed houses managed through two housing associations. This includes the 2 x 3 bedroom properties on the market at the time of the survey being undertaken.

## Aims of the Survey

### Primary aim:

To identify whether there is a current affordable housing need within the Parish of Stoke St Gregory and if so, to ascertain the number, nature, type and size of affordable homes that are required.

### Secondary aims:

- To investigate the affordable tenure, property and household sizes of local residents, those wishing to return and those who work in the village (i.e have a local connection) and identify any additional living needs e.g. facilities for disabled, elderly or children.
- To explore the reasons for residents migrating in and out of the area.
- To identify the need of affordable housing for both existing residents and those wishing to return.
- To explore the views of current residents to help determine housing needs within the parish in the short, medium and long term.
- To target future affordable housing provision as identified in the recommendations of the report.

## Methodology

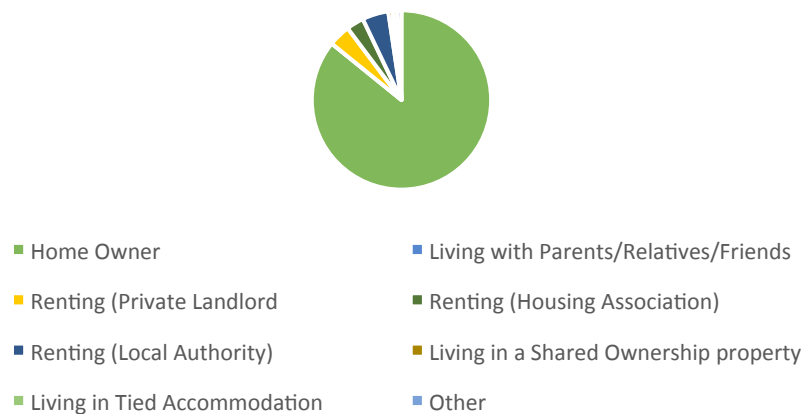
1. Notify the Parish residents of the forthcoming Housing Needs Survey through the Parish Newsletter.
2. Check the number of properties in the Parish via the Council's Electoral Services Department and obtaining address details of these.
3. Draft and amend the survey in conjunction with the Parish Council. In arranging the survey, the Housing Enabling Team worked closely with Stoke St Gregory Parish Council and attended a meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016, where the procedure of the survey was explained. Following this, a draft of the Housing Needs Survey was sent to the Parish Council, which was amended in accordance with the suggestions made. The Housing Needs Survey comprised of two sections - All household were invited to complete Section one of the survey, whereas only those requiring affordable housing were asked to complete Section two.
4. Post surveys to all households. The dates for both posting out and returning the survey were agreed with the Parish Council. A total of 429 surveys were sent by post to all households in Stoke St Gregory on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016, along with a covering letter from the Housing Enabling Lead, explaining the survey in more detail. Further copies of the survey were made available from the Village Stores for any other relevant parties in need of affordable housing within the Parish.
5. The closing date for surveys to be returned was set as Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2016. A return pre-paid envelopment was also sent to all households. The return envelope was addressed to the Taunton Deane Borough Council for analysis to ensure full confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. The covering letter set out clearly the date by which the survey should be returned and details that the survey could be dropped off at the Village Stores as an alternative to the post.
6. An additional incentive was offered by a local business, whereby all those who completed and returned the survey were included in a prize draw to win a £25 voucher. A member of the Housing Enabling Team also attended the Annual Parish Meeting to provide a brief update on survey returns to date and request that outstanding surveys are chased.
7. Following the return of the surveys, the results were monitored, recorded and assessed. Tables of the results were prepared and the data also presented in graphical format. A total of 128 responses were received, giving a response rate of 30%. 11 people stated to be in need of affordable housing, by completing Section Two of the survey.
8. The findings were assessed and a Housing Needs Survey report prepared and submitted to the Parish Council.

## General Survey Findings

### Current Living Situations of Respondents

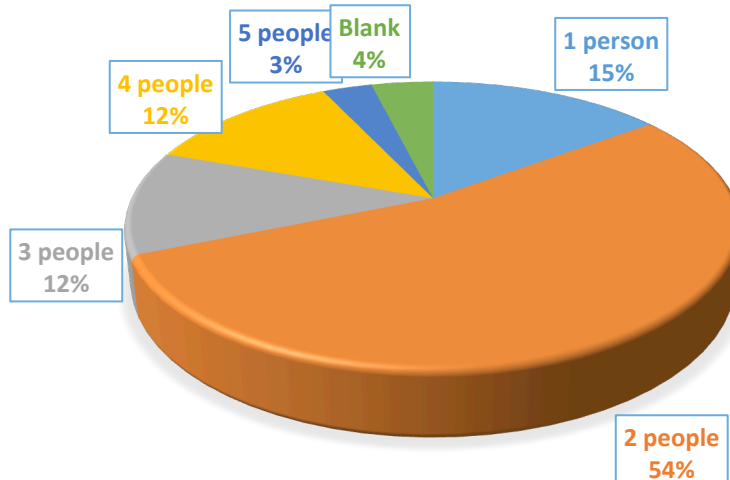
A significant proportion of respondents (86%) are currently home owners, with 12% renting (4% privately, 3% through a Housing Association and 5% through the Local Authority). Only a very small proportion were living with family or in tied accommodation.

Chart 1 - Current Living Situations of Respondents



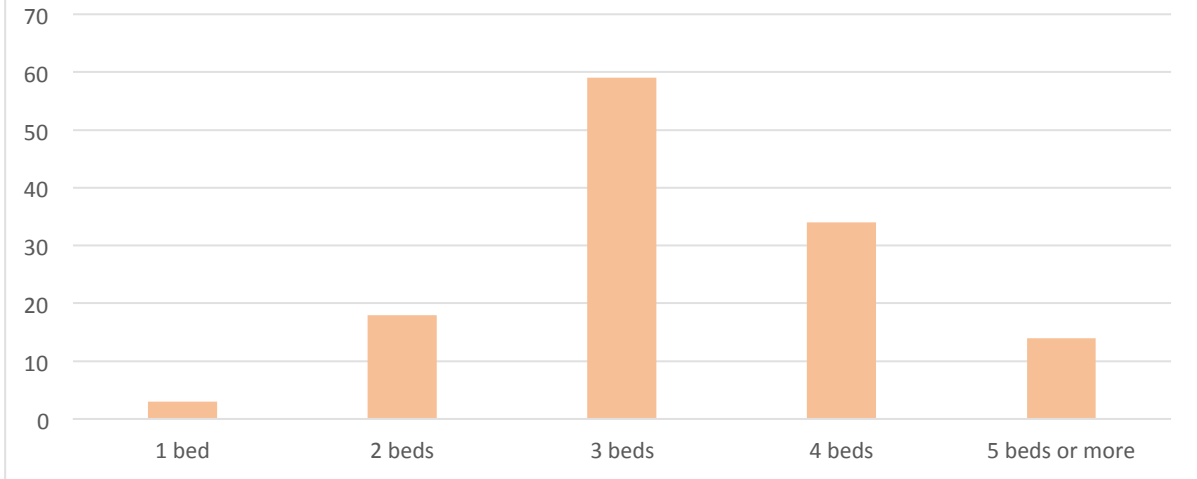
Over 54% of respondents live in a 2 person household and 15% live in a single person household. Despite such a large proportion of single and 2 person households, 84% of respondents live in properties of three bedrooms or larger, with only 16% living in one or two bedroom properties.

Chart 2 - Size of Current Households





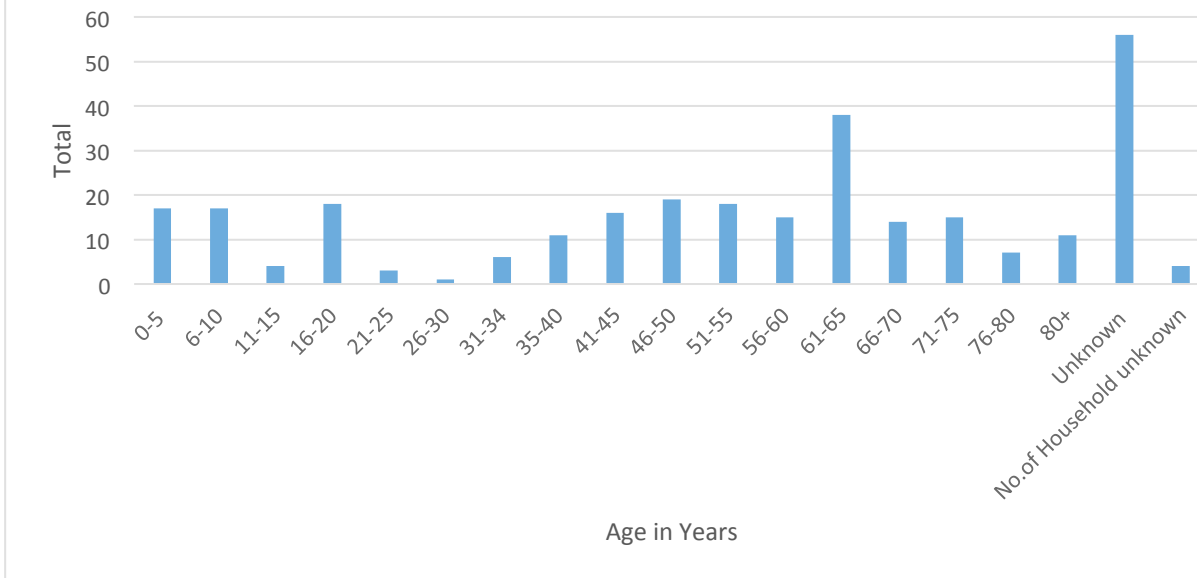
**Chart 3 - Size of property of respondents**



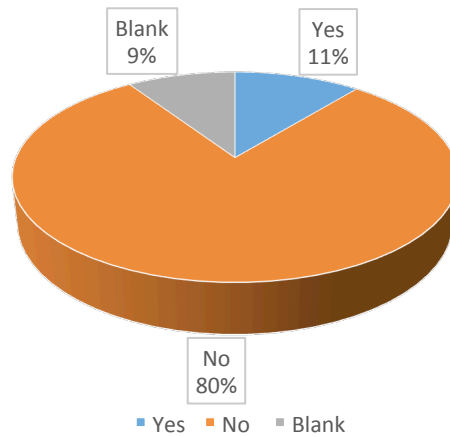
### Age Groups of Respondents

Whilst a large proportion of residents did not provide an answer to this question, it is evident from the survey that there are a large proportion of younger people below 20 years old, with a significant amount aged 61 – 80 and over. Despite this ageing demographic, only 11% of respondents stated that special adaptations (e.g to accommodate a wheelchair, stair lift, etc) were likely to be needed.

**Chart 4 - Respondents household age groups**  
(respondents may have ticked more than one box)



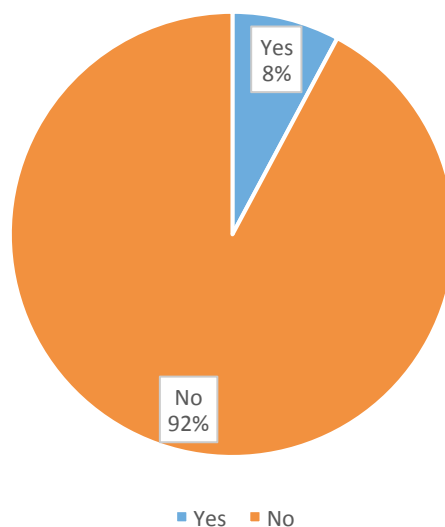
**Chart 5 - Special Adaptation Requirements**



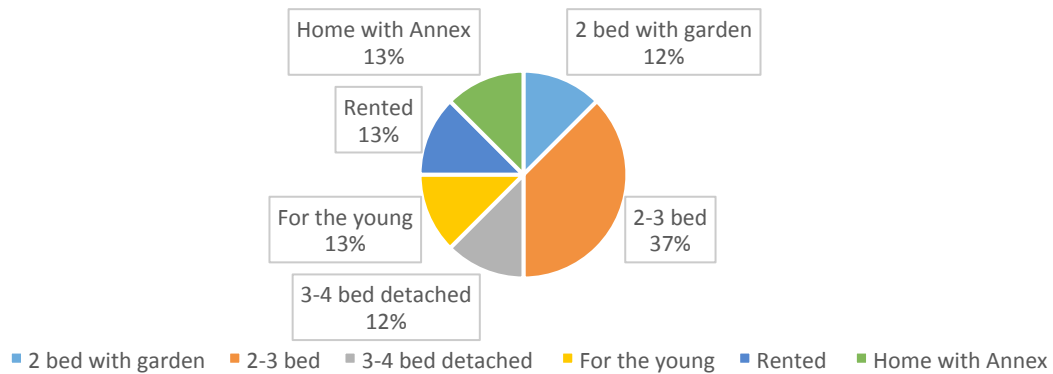
### Overview of Housing Needs in the Parish

Of all respondents, 92% did not consider themselves to be in need of affordable housing, leaving only 8% that did. This falls in line with the 10% of respondents stating that members of their family had been forced to move away as they were unable to afford to buy or rent in the Parish and highlights the low level of respondents living in the village within the 20 – 35 age bracket. Of those which said they would move back to the village if they could afford to, nearly half (49%) would be looking for a 2-3 bedroom property and 12% were seeking a 3-4 bedroom property. 13% were seeking rented accommodation, 13% favoured a home with an annex and 13% stated it should be for the young.

**Chart 6 - Respondents stating to be in Housing Need**



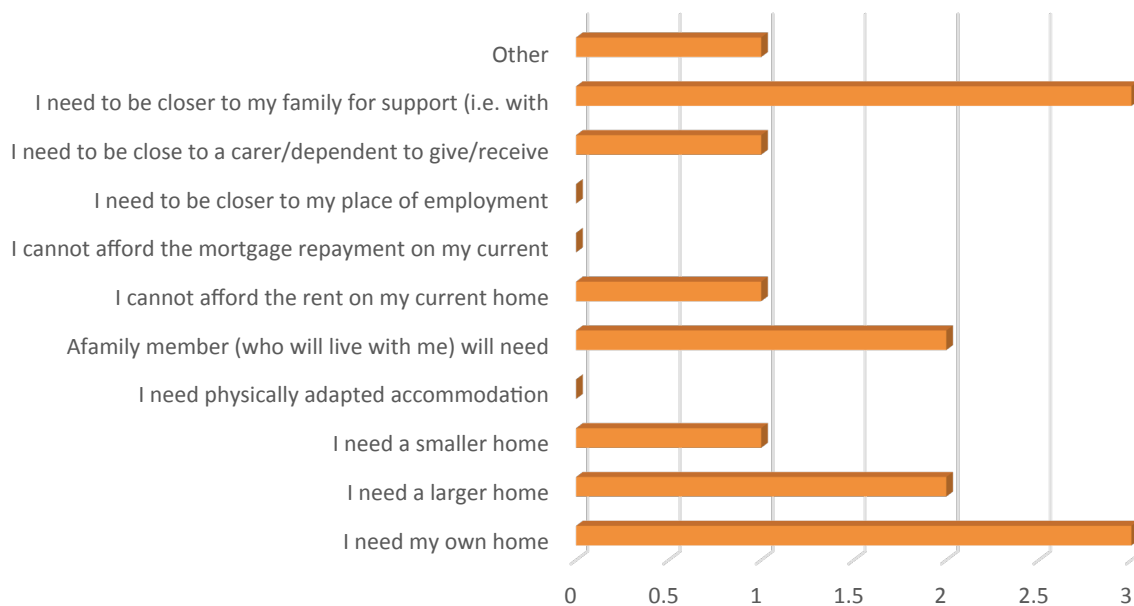
**Chart 7 - Type of accomodation sought by family members if they returned**



11 respondents stated to be in need of affordable housing by completing Section 2 of the questionnaire. Some respondents gave more than one reason, which included the following: wishing to move to be closer to family for support, needing their own home, seeking a larger home, seeking a home with special adaptations, needing a smaller home, unable to afford to stay in their current home and needing to be closer to a carer/dependent for support.

**Chart 8 - Reasons why those in Affordable Housing Need wish to move**

(respondents may have ticked more than one box)



The respondents in affordable housing need were able to provide more than one housing option preference. Of the responses received, 9 stated that they would be keen to buy a property (either on the open market, as discounted open market properties or as shared ownership homes). Of these three advised they were seeking a form of open market housing (1 homeowner and 2 private rented).

For the 6 respondents expressing a need for low cost home ownership, three were existing homeowners seeking to either downsize or reduce their mortgage payments, one in private rented within the Parish, one living with family within the parish and one renting through a housing association.

Whilst there was some preference for buying a property, not all of the respondents completed the section regarding financial income, making it difficult to assess their eligibility for their preferred tenure.

Three respondents expressed a need for social rented housing. All are renting through a housing association within the Parish. Two are seeking larger properties than their existing 3 bed homes and one is seeking to move out of district.

## Conclusion

It is important to note that this Housing Needs Survey represents the findings at a set point in time. Personal circumstances are constantly changing and this should be taken into account when making any recommendations for the provision of affordable housing.

Whilst it is noted that two respondents highlighted a preference for Social Rent accommodation, in view of the range of this type of accommodation already present within the Parish, it is not considered necessary to provide additional Social Rent properties at this time.

From the 9 respondents indicating a need for homeownership, 6 expressed a need for low cost homeownership, but it may not be prudent to provide specifically for the housing need highlighted by this survey as some households may not be eligible for affordable housing provision and in view of the lack of financial information submitted affordability has been difficult to assess.

Furthermore, in view of ever-changing personal circumstances, some respondents, who are in need at the current time may be re-housed through other means, decide to re-locate or simply not wish to proceed for other reasons. It is also important to note that three of the respondents were seeking non-affordable tenures and four were already homeowners, who were looking for a more affordable open market home ownership option and down-sizing opportunities. There are currently 10 shared ownership properties within the Parish of which at the time of survey two are available to purchase.

In view of the information received through the survey and the existing housing options available within the Parish it is not considered necessary to provide any additional affordable housing at this time, however it is recommended that a housing needs survey is undertaken every 3 – 5 years to reassess the housing need within the parish.

## Appendix 2

### Survey Results Summary Tables

**Which of the following best describes your current living situation (please tick only one):**

Home Owner	109
Living with Parents/Relatives/Friends	0
Renting (Private Landlord	5
Renting (Housing Association)	4
Renting (Local Authority)	6
Living in a Shared Ownership property	1
Living in Tied Accommodation	1
Other	1
Not completed	1
TOTAL	128

**How many bedrooms does your property have (please tick only one):**

1 bed	3
2 beds	18
3 beds	59
4 beds	34
5 beds or more	14
TOTAL	128

**How many people live in your household?**

1 person	19
2 people	69
3 people	15
4 people	16
5 people	4
Left Blank	5
TOTAL	128

**Will you, or anyone in your household who will live with you, require any special adaptations, for example wheelchair access, a wet floor shower or a stair lift?**

Yes	14
No	102
Blank	12
TOTAL	128

**What is the age of residents within your household? (Respondents may have ticked more than one)**

0-5	17
6-10	17
11-15	4
16-20	18
21-25	3
26-30	1
31-34	6
35-40	11
41-45	16
46-50	19
51-55	18
56-60	15
61-65	38
66-70	14
71-75	15
76-80	7
80+	11
Unknown	56
No.of Household unknown	4

**Have any members of your family moved away as they were unable to afford to buy or rent a property in your village?**

Yes	13
No	104
Blank	11
TOTAL	128

**Would they move back to the village if they could afford to buy or rent a home there?**

Yes	12
No	89
Blank	27
TOTAL	128

**If so, what type of accommodation would they require?**

2 bed with garden	1
2-3 bed	3
3-4 bed detached	1
For the young	1
Rented	1
Home with Annex	1
Left Blank	4
TOTAL	12

**In need of affordable housing?**

Yes	11
No	117
TOTAL	128

**Please indicate the reasons you wish to move. (Respondents may have ticked more than one)**

I need my own home	3
I need a larger home	2
I need a smaller home	1
I need physically adapted accommodation	0
A family member (who will live with me) will need adapted accommodation	2
I cannot afford the rent on my current home	1
I cannot afford the mortgage repayment on my current home	0
I need to be closer to my place of employment	0
I need to be close to a carer/dependent to give/receive support	1
I need to be closer to my family for support (i.e. with childcare)	3
Other	1
TOTAL	14

**Which of the following housing options would you prefer? (Respondents may have ticked more than one)**

Buy on the Open Market	4
Buy a Discounted Home on the open market	4
Buy a Shared Ownership Property	3
Rent from a Private Landlord	3
Rent from a Housing Association	2
Rent from the Local Council	2
Other	1
TOTAL	19

**If you are interested in buying an affordable home, please provide an indication of your household income, which will help us to assess the type of housing that you may be eligible for.**

£15,000-£20,000	1
£21,000-£25,000	2
£26,000-£30,000	0
£31,000-£35,000	1
£36,000-£40,000	0
£41,000-£45,000	1
TOTAL	5



## Appendix 2

### Summary of Additional Comments Received

<b>Comments on special adaptations required</b>
Yes, in the future due to health condition. May need to adapt house for stair-lift/wheelchair access and wet room
Special adaption already made
If we remain, I have little doubt that one or all of the above will feature and we will provide them. (Wheelchair access, a wet floor shower, a stair lift)
Shower
Not Yet
Perhaps – in ten years time
Not at the moment – maybe in the future
No, but might in the future
No More Builds
I may require additional assistance using the above later on in the years : wheelchair access, a wet floor shower or stair lift
Wet floor shower would be good.
May need all of these : wheelchair access, a wet floor shower, a stair lift
Yes – stair lift installed; wheelchair access
No
Not yet! But in years to come, almost certainly
Yes as had an accident last year
Yes, wheelchair access, a stair lift
Who knows what I might require in my later years.
Should any be required, I will arrange for the work to be carried out and paid for
I might need access other than steps. I could live downstairs as bathroom is on the ground floor.
Wet floor shower, very urgent and need doing up
Have a stair lift and step in shower
Not yet
Not yet
We have it done, I have the shower and wet floor

<b>Comments on people forced to move away due to affordability</b>
Yes – Daughter currently lives abroad
No, but we know of several young families/couples who have moved away
Our daughter was living with us a couple of years ago and could not find accommodation in the village. She now lives in a flat in Taunton
It floods
No, but we know of several young families/couples who have moved away
No, moved away for work
No
Yes, 2 sons

Yes, my son
Yes, mother to a nearby village
Yes, but we moved back to rent rather than buy
Daughter
Yes
To Wellington as cheaper
Yes, daughter
2 children could not afford local housing in village.
2 sons moved away for employment

<b>Comments on people wishing to move back</b>
Yes - 2 Bed House with decent garden
Yes, Housing suitable for young families – 2-3 bedroom affordable houses
Not now
Not now
Yes, 3-4 bedroom detached
They might one day return to the village. But affordability is not an issue.
Possibly, rented
Yes, home with annex
Daughter
Yes
2/3 bedroom home
Yes -2/3 beds
Possibly
Possibly in later life. 3/3 bed. Open market detached

<b>Comments on any suitable sites</b>
We have a very large front garden – some of which could have 2 small semi-detached built on it without compromising our property.
Yes - just the other side from Willow Mead.
At the very bottom of Polkes Field, there is a small parcel of land
More homes built 1/4 mile of the village square would help make the village shop, school, pub more viable with the increase in population.
Yes
Most farms have old buildings
A plot of land adjacent to Huntham Close, planning permission has been refused twice on this land.
Old Coal Yard, English Hurdle Centre
Polkes Field
The bus service and local doctors would have to be better as living in a rural area is not the cheapest option, cost of oil as no gas, transport, etc
No - we would not want a housing development in close proximity to our home. Our road is already busy without adding to this
Polkes Field
No homes should be built here. It's a flood plain. Building more would make it worse

Fields alongside roads
Polkes Field
No, we like green field, Keep the country country
Polkes Field and Glebeland behind church
Field behind Church Close and Polkes Field
Yes, mixed development adjoining Church Close, Willey Road frontage close by village hall, playing field, allotment available.
Behind Church Close
Polkes Field
No, we already have planning permission for 3 low-cost houses that has not been invoked
Polkes Field, Huntham Close, Willey Road
No, when the application was granted for the site (2nd phase) in Polkes Field, it was on a conditional agreement that they would only be available for people who lived in the village, but this was not followed through. Hopefully this would not happen again
Polkes Field
Plenty, but all belong to farmers - land owners
Yes, some sites at Meare Green Farm, Stoke St Gregory
Land at Polkes Field - set aside
Field on Willey Road/behind Church Close. Field below Polkes Field. Both of these fields would complement existing developments.
Old Coal Yard
The field by Church Close
Country side should be left alone for the nature to live its life. Too many houses and humans about.
Polkes Field
The Willows, Curload. Field behind Church Close
Some 'infill' sites in Meare Green. Meare Green Farm has a number of suitable sites as it is like a mini hamlet, already a lot live there, but they say the council won't allow infill or brownsites?
No, suitable sites have already been sold or used
Between Polkes Field and Stoke House
No, there are already affordable homes. The school has no excess capacity. Current reception class is full!
No. A housing association has outstanding permission for building affordable homes in the village. This site should be developed before any further sites are identified
The Old Coal Yard
Land adjoining Church Close
Between Polkes Field and the new village hall
The field by Church Close

<b>Additional General Comments</b>
Convert an old agricultural building into a retirement home.
Stop building on our countryside, it floods. Did you not see what happened in 2013. The whole village was under water and you still want to build here.
Not opposed to small number of affordable houses for those required to live in village. But too much development would surely be opposed by most villagers. School is oversubscribed, medical surgery struggles to cope, road between Stoke and Thornfalcon is not fit for heavy traffic it currently carries. Advise: Joined-up thinking with planning.
This is hopeless, what about building houses for private owners to downsize to in Stoke St Gregory