

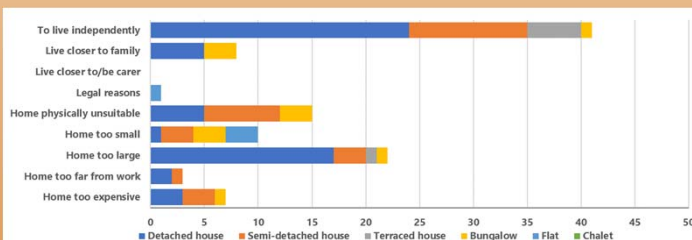


## Introduction

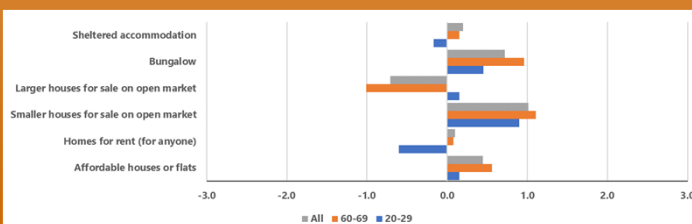
Whilst many villagers work from home, there is no discernible demand for more business premises within the village, so our review of the built environment is actually a focus on housing.

## Village survey

The village survey asked several questions about housing needs and why, perhaps, people might need to move house. The biggest reason was from people wanting to live independently, so mainly demand from people growing up and leaving the family home. However homes being too large, unsuitable or too small also featured quite highly.



The survey then explored the type of housing that respondents might like to see in any new development. Scores could range from -3 for strongly disagree to +3 for strongly agree. Most respondents were in favour of most types of housing, though most opposed the building of larger detached houses. Comments included a desire for housing specifically designed for older residents and a desire for houses which would attract families with young children. Several respondents stressed the need for sustainable housing, affordable housing and energy efficient housing. A small number indicated that they were against any new housing. Many respondents noted that, whilst they could see the need for more housing, they also wanted to preserve Riding Mill's rural character.



# Housing needs

## Older people

Northumberland as a whole has an aging population and Riding Mill has a population that is aging even more. Indeed, the number of people aged over 75 is expected almost to double between 2019 and the end of 2021.

The county strategy has identified a need to increase the range of accommodation with support solutions for older people. Moreover, the Housing Needs Assessment estimates that some 26-38 specialist accommodation units might be needed within the plan period up to 2036. At present, there is only one specialist care home within the parish.

Arguably, this means that there is a potential need for more specialist housing for older people, and perhaps suggests that new housing should require standards of accessibility and adaptability that go beyond the emerging Local Plan.

**We aim to enable people to maintain their independence and to continue to live within and participate in Riding Mill's vibrant community.**

## Younger people

Younger people struggle to buy in Riding Mill because of high costs of housing. The income required to buy an average Riding Mill home is more than would be expected to be available to those on average household incomes. Arguably, therefore, there is a need for affordable housing, that is, "housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market".

The Housing Needs Assessment, undertaken on behalf of the steering group by AECOM, suggests that there is a relatively large group of households in the parish who may be able to afford to rent privately but cannot afford home ownership. Moreover, the results of their life-stage modelling suggest that there is a need to increase the proportion of smaller (one and two bedroom homes) reflecting the village survey responses.

**An increase in the number of one and two bedroom properties could help to provide alternatives for younger people without children and older residents wishing to downsize.**

## Objective

Taken together, the survey responses, the changing demographics and the housing needs assessment, combined with thinking from the other strategic objectives, lead us to propose this housing objective

**To ensure a balanced provision of housing, reflecting Riding Mill's demographic, all of which meets the Riding Mill design code and targets zero carbon**

## Affordable housing

Affordable housing is defined in national planning policy and includes housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market. It can include affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership.

The Housing Needs Assessment estimates that Riding Mill requires roughly seven units of affordable rented housing and 26 units of affordable home ownership over the period of the plan (up to 2036)

## Your views

We are anxious to hear your views.

Do you agree with our assessment? Specifically, do you agree that there is a mismatch between supply and demand? Do you believe that building a restricted number of smaller houses might begin to address this mismatch?