

Boxford

LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY 2025 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This HNS report has been prepared by Community Action Suffolk (CAS) at the request of Boxford Parish Council.

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The full report contains commercially sensitive information and, except where/if noted (summary section) should under NO circumstances be shared, copied, or reproduced without written permission from Community Action Suffolk. This is to avoid complications that can arise with 'competing' open market developers and any other interested parties that are not listed within the agreement.

CAS advises Boxford Parish Council to inform parishioners with a copy of this summary together with how the Boxford Parish Council wishes to proceed to the next stage.

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Survey Method and Return rate.

The Housing Survey used was compiled by Community Action Suffolk in agreement with Boxford Parish Council. The aim of this survey was to understand the existing and future housing needs for Boxford residents including family members (not necessarily living in Boxford) and other members of the household. The study was also designed to understand Boxford's current housing stock and whether this is affordable to local people.

This study included-

- General information about the current housing in Boxford including 2021 Census data.
- A Housing Survey to determine the housing needs of current households.
- Contextual information about Boxford.
- Information from the Gateway to Home Choice register to cross check the findings.

190 surveys were returned fully or partially completed via post and on-line. 420 surveys were not returned. Data entry of the surveys was undertaken by Community Action Suffolk using bespoke in-house software. Each survey form was allocated a unique code so that the data could be cross referenced to provide a comprehensive level of information. Individual people or households were not able to be identified. A 20% sample of the surveys input were checked for accuracy

	Number	%
Surveys returned completed (full or partial)	190	31
Surveys not completed or returned or blank	420	69
Total Surveys distributed	610	100

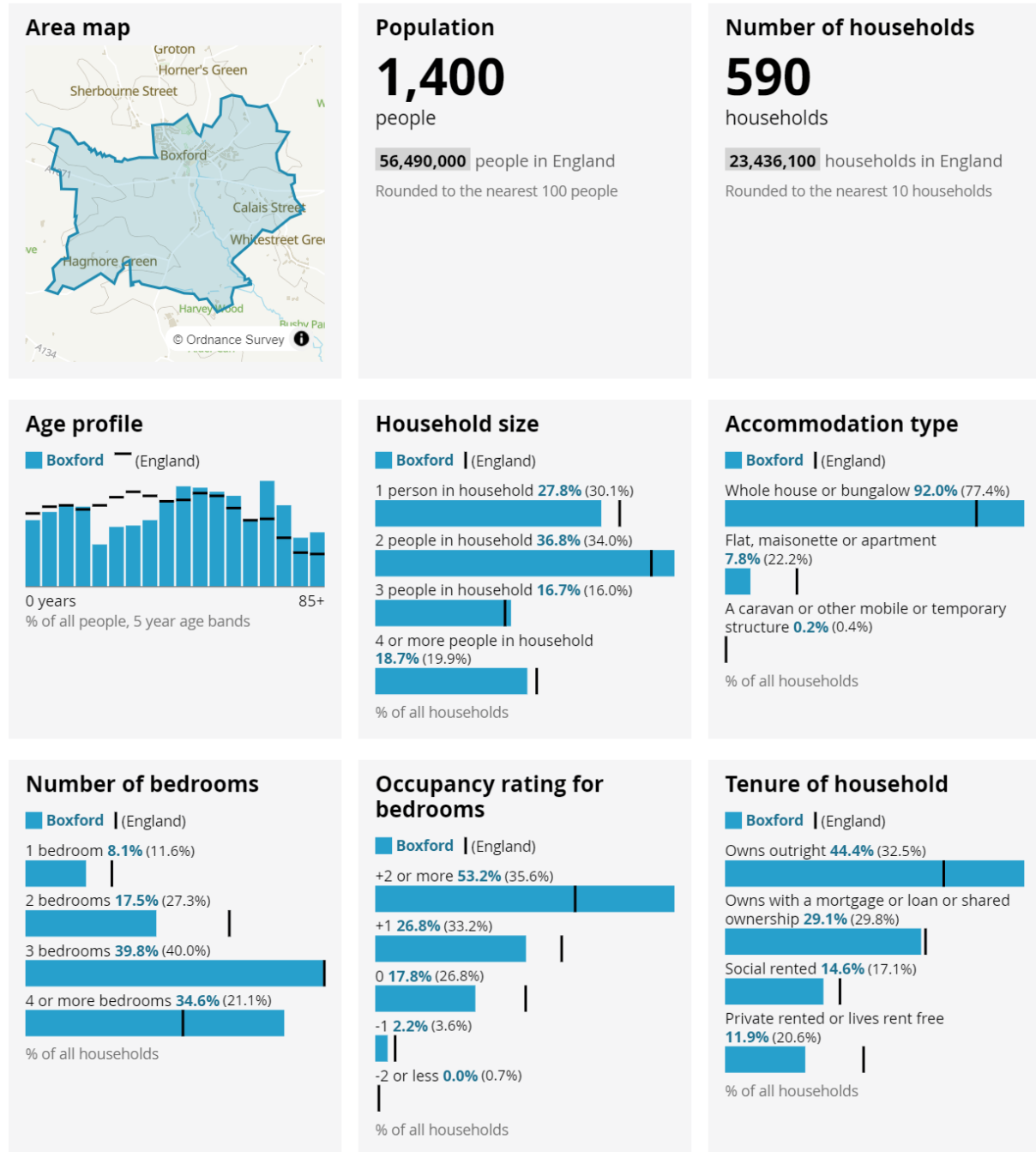
Table 1 Survey distribution and returns.

Contextual background

Boxford is a village and civil parish in the Babergh district of Suffolk, England. It is located around six miles east of Sudbury straddling the River Box. The parish includes the hamlets of Calais Street, Hagmore Green and Stone Street. The parish borders Assington, Edwardstone, Groton, Kersey, Newton and Polstead. The parish encompasses amenities such as pubs, church, and primary school. The 2021 census recorded the parish population as 1400 people in 590 households.

Area profile – Boxford (Comparison with England)

Boxford



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Figure 1 Area Profile BOXFORD 2021

Boxford parish has a higher proportion of middle aged and older adults ranging from 50 – 74. The younger age group seems relatively smaller compared to Babergh and England. The parish has a high proportion of smaller households i.e., 1 or 2 persons with majority of the households living in homes with 3, 4 or more bedrooms. 44.4% of the households own their property outright with only 14.6% living in socially rented properties.

Affordability of homes within Boxford and Babergh

Source [Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk)

It is possible to explore the affordability of homes in Boxford and Babergh by comparing house prices with workplace-based earnings. These figures are available on a district level from the ONS.

BABERGH 2023	
Median House Price	£331 250
Median Gross Annual Workplace Earnings	£28 500
Ratio of Median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings	11.62

Table 2 Ratio of Median House price to Median workplace earnings Babergh 2023

From the above it can be seen that across Babergh, house prices were over 11 times the median income levels in 2023. With mortgages typically offered at 3.5 times the household income, a single-income family on low or medium income would be unable to purchase a property on the open market. A two-income household with two median incomes would need a significant deposit to buy on the open market.

Summary of general information from ALL respondents

Section 1 of the survey collected general information from respondents. The pattern of responses received from the survey follows the pattern of the data from the 2021 Census. This indicates that responses came from a representative sample of the population.

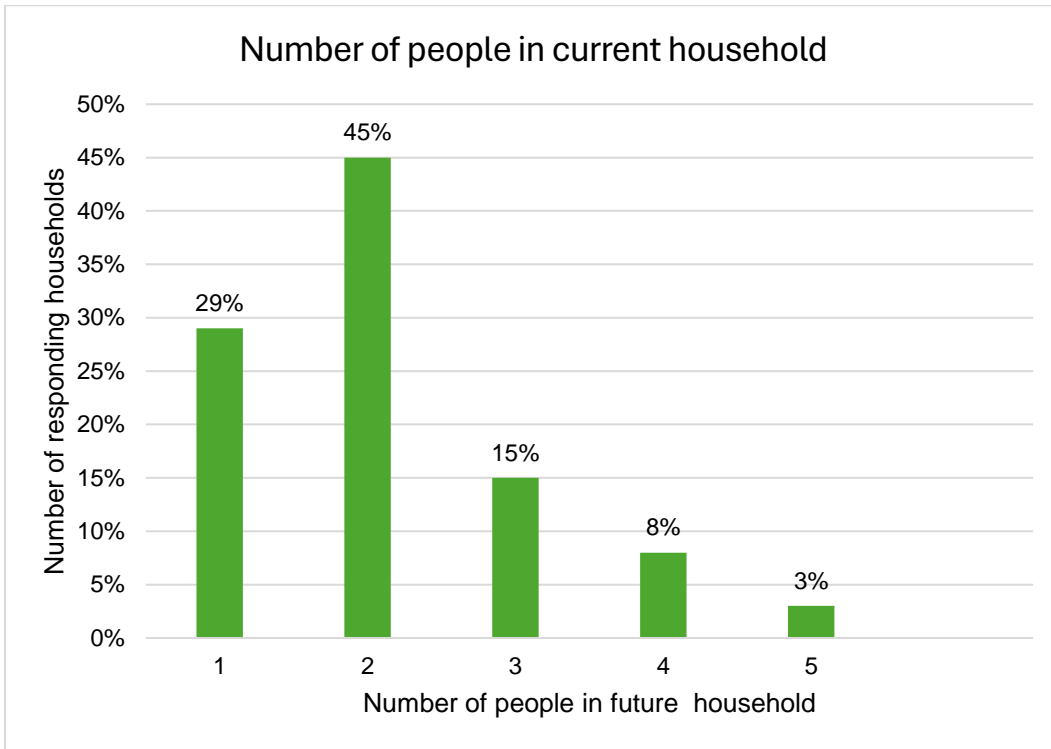


Figure 2 number of people living in household

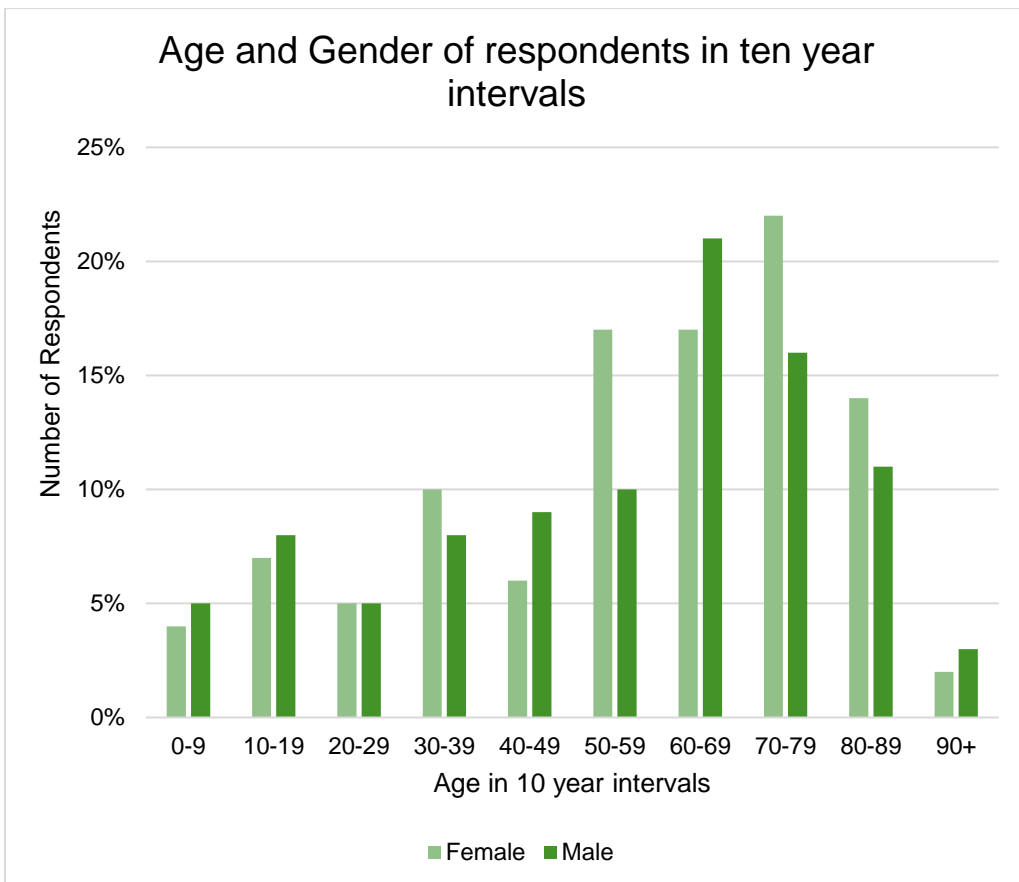


Figure 3 Age and gender of respondents

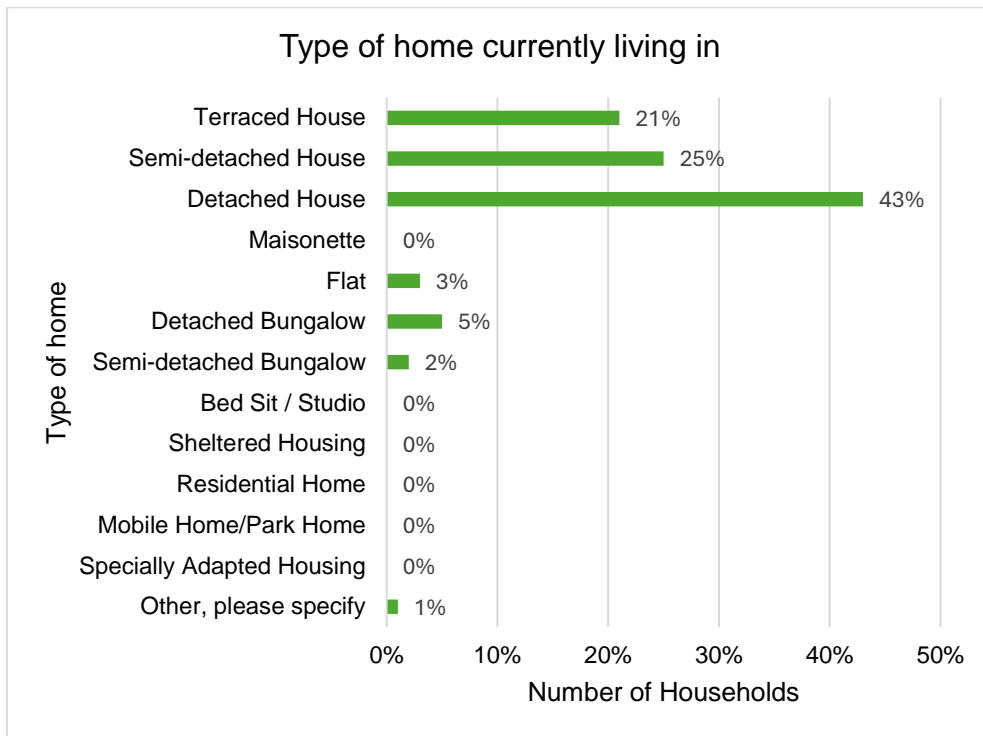


Figure 4 Current accommodation of responding households

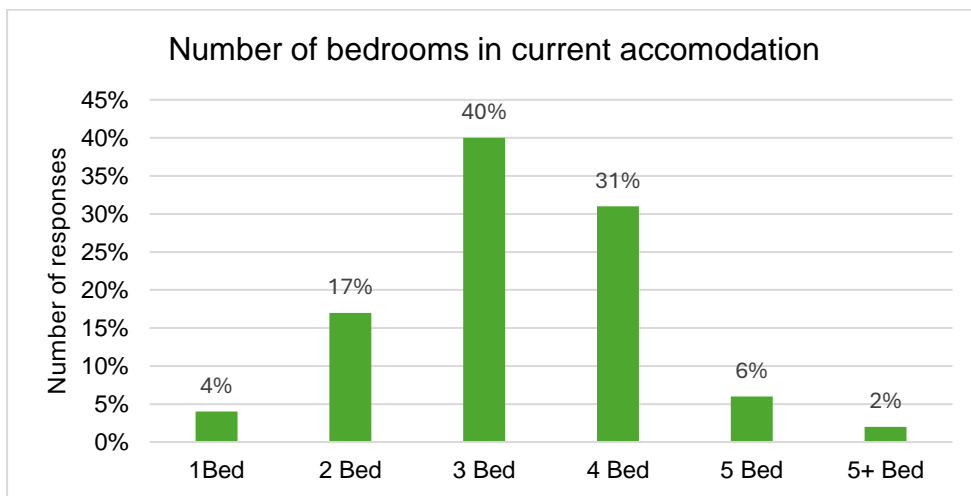


Figure 5 Number of bedrooms in existing accommodation

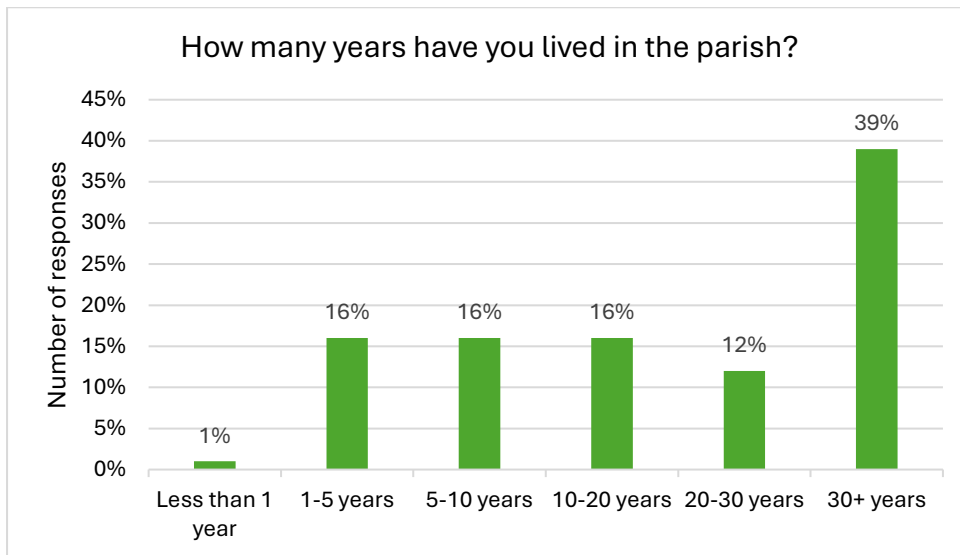


Figure 6 Length of time resident in parish

12 of the responding households indicated having family members move away from the parish in the last 5 years due to the lack of a suitable home in the parish.

Residents' views on future housing development

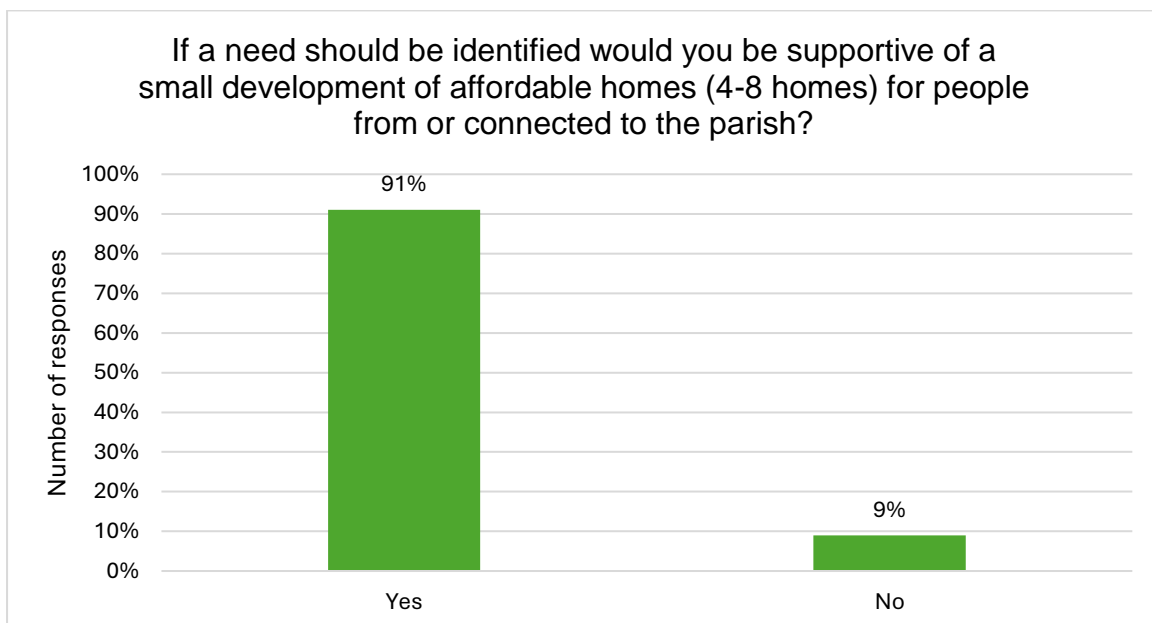


Figure 7 Support for small development of affordable homes for local people

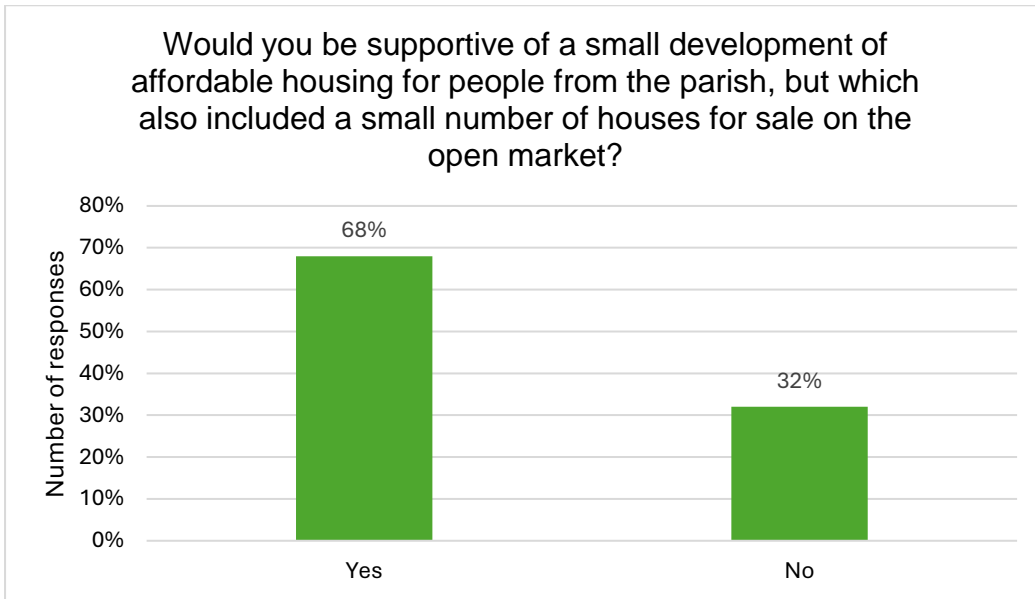


Figure 8 Support for small development of affordable housing which includes some houses for sale on the open market

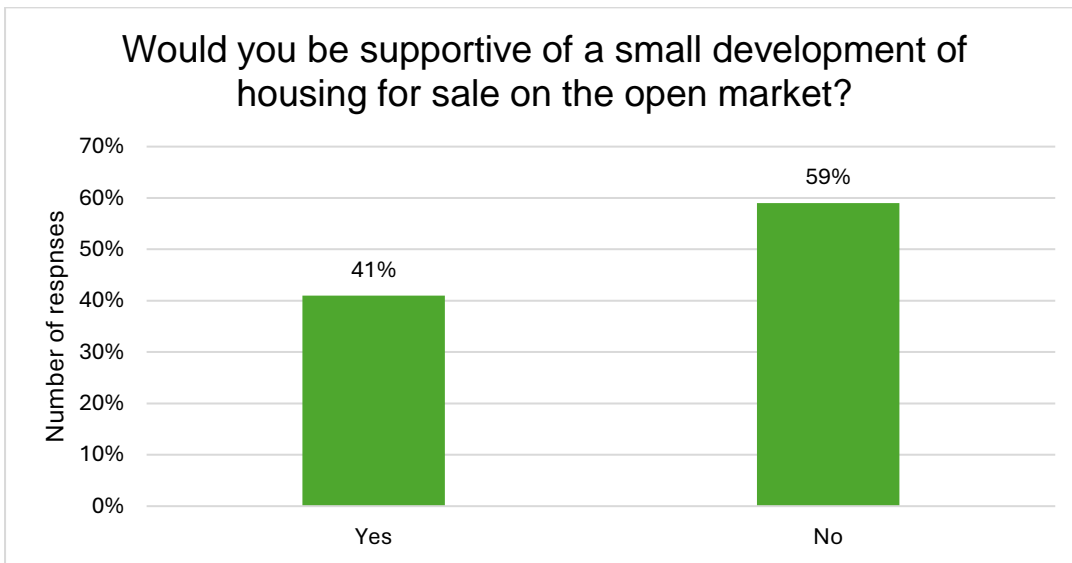


Figure 9 Support for small development of open market housing

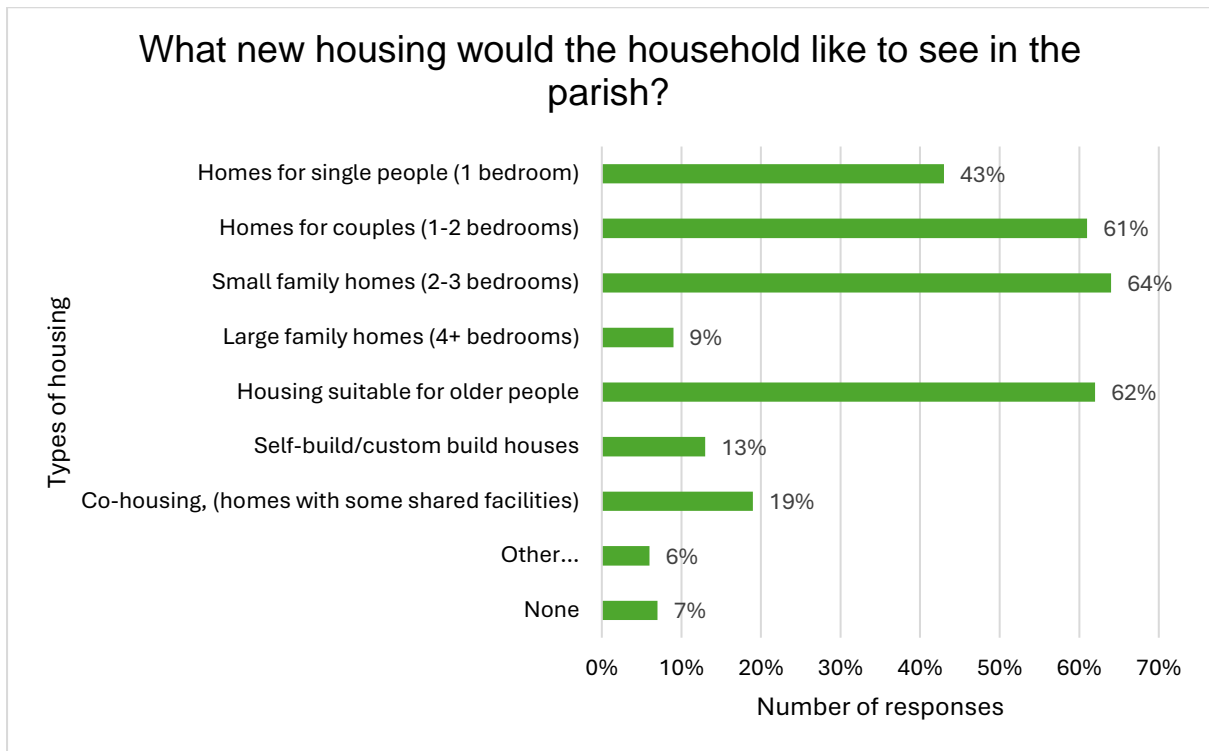


Figure 10 preferred types of new housing

Summary of housing need

Section 2 of the survey was designed to be completed only by those households with a housing need. The following analysis is of the 19 households who responded YES to question 17 indicating that they had a housing need. 16 of these households were currently residents in Boxford.

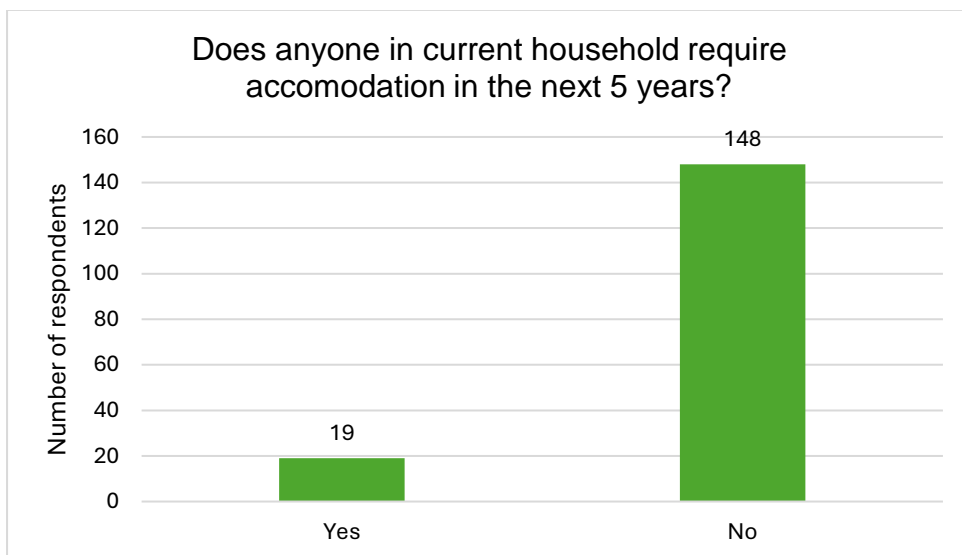


Figure 11 housing need identified by responding households

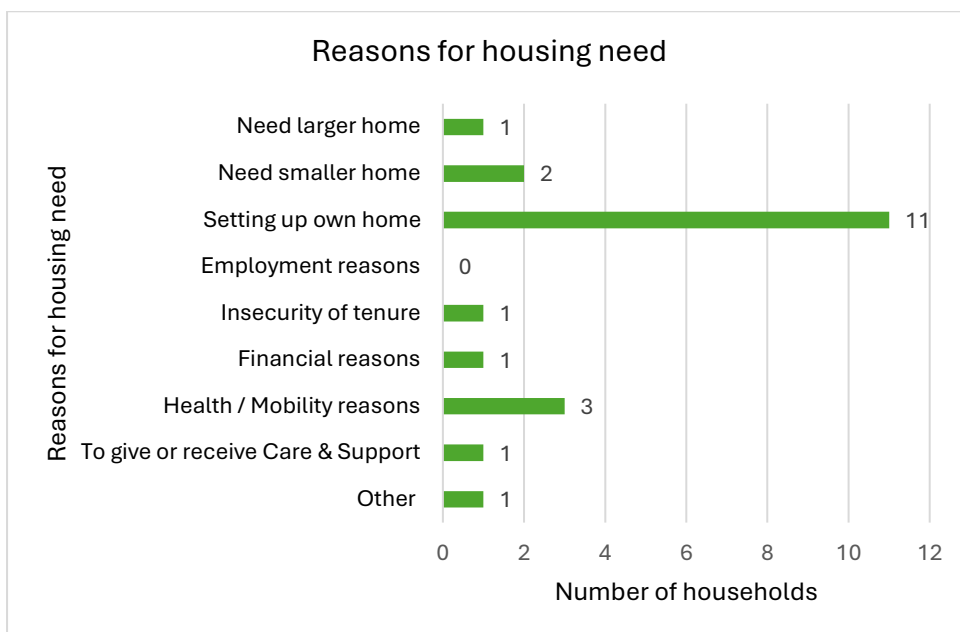


Figure 12 Reasons for housing need

19 households indicated a housing need in question 17 with 10 households wishing to live in the Parish, 4 households within the district council area, 3 households outside the district council area but within Suffolk and 1 household outside of Suffolk. The remaining 1 household did not indicate the preferred location of future accommodation.

The responses of the 10 willing to live in the parish were used to assess the size, tenure and type of property that would best meet their housing needs.

The survey responses used to assess the size and tenure appropriate for the households who had identified a need included the makeup of the household, the savings, equity, income, and the employment status of the household. The number of bedrooms allocated for the open market homes were based on respondents' choice and not on the household make up.

Housing Need	Open Market	Affordable Purchase	Affordable Rent	Social Rent	Shared ownership	Total
1 Bed			1			1
2 Bed	3	4				7
3 Bed				1		1
4 Bed			1			1
5 Bed						
Total	3	4	2	1		10

Table 2 Housing need in BOXFORD identified by HNS survey 2024

The local housing register, Gateway to Home Choice, shows 11 applicants with a local connection to Boxford. Four of the survey respondents indicating a housing need indicated that they had registered with Gateway to Home Choice. From this it can be assumed that there are at least 7 additional households with a local connection to Boxford in housing need.

Housing Need					
Band	A	B	C	D	E
1 Bed	1				6
2 Bed			2		
3 Bed		1			1
4 Bed					

Table 3 Housing need in BOXFORD from Gateway to Home Choice 2024

Conclusions

From the ONS statistics and Rightmove house price guide, it is apparent that the current price of property is too high for those on median or lower income to be able to purchase on the open market. Property prices are currently more than 11 times the median workplace income in the Babergh district. The availability of rental homes, from either the affordable housing sector or private rented sector is limited. Boxford parish has a higher proportion of middle aged and older adults ranging from 50 – 74. The parish has a high percentage of smaller households i.e. 1 or 2 persons with majority of the households living in homes with 3, 4 or more bedrooms.

91% of the respondents were in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people. When asked what new housing they would prefer to see in the parish, 64% of the respondents were in support of small family homes of 2-3 bedrooms. 61% of the respondents were in favour of 1–2-bedroom homes, 62% were in favour of housing suitable for older people, 43% were in favour of 1-bedroom homes, 19% in favour of co-housing and 13% in favour of self-build houses. Only 9% were in favour of large family homes. 7% of the respondents were not in favour of any new housing.

To assess the size and tenure appropriate for the households who had identified a need, the survey responses to questions on the makeup of the household, savings, equity, income, and employment status were used. The number of bedrooms allocated for the open market homes was based on the respondents' choice and not on household make-up.

Of the 190 responding households, 19 households indicated a housing need in question 17 with 10 households wishing to live in the Parish, 4 households within the district council area, 3 households outside the district council area but within Suffolk and 1 household outside of Suffolk. The remaining 1 household did not indicate the preferred location of future accommodation. The responses of the 10 were used to assess the size, tenure and type of property that would best meet their housing needs.

The survey showed a need for affordable purchase and open market sale housing for respondents looking to set up their own home, for health and mobility reasons and the need for a smaller home. The survey also showed a need for affordable rent houses for respondents wishing to downsize for health and mobility reasons, financial reasons and insecurity of tenure.

These numbers do not include any unidentified need from those who did not respond to the survey and those looking to move into Boxford who have not already been identified by close family currently living in Boxford or registered with Gateway to Home Choice. They also do not include those looking to move outside of the Parish.

The final number of properties will need to be agreed, together with the size, type, and tenure of the dwellings with the Parish Council, Local Authority and appointed Registered Provider. The number and mix of properties will be subject to the constraints of any suitable site(s) together with evidence of people registering their interest.