

WILSFORD  
NORTH KESTIVEN

# HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY REPORT

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Working in Partnership



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## **Housing Needs Survey Report**

### **Wilsford**

The attractive village of Wilsford has a population of approximately 392<sup>1</sup>. It is situated next to the A153 approximately 5 miles south-west of Sleaford and about 9 miles north-east of Grantham. From the road it is masked by weeping willows that border the “Beck” a small rivulet that becomes the River Slea. Wilsford neighbours the roman village of Ancaster.

The Village is mentioned in the Domesday Book as Wiuelesforde, and many of the houses are built from the local limestone known as Ancaster stone which was used extensively in the houses of Parliament. Wilsford has been given Conservation Village Status which means it will keep the character that is typical of many Lincolnshire villages.

Wilsford has managed to keep its Post Office despite recent closures and has an excellent Pub with a small restaurant. The Parish Church, St Mary’s is a typical English Stone Church with parts dating back to Saxon times and was restored in 1871. As well as the Post Office and Church, the village also has a well-used Village Hall.

The parish magazine, The Wilsford News and Views, keeps the parishioners up to date with local news and events and the villagers benefit from a wide and varied choice of clubs, activities and societies. These include; Brownies, Theatre Group, University of the Third Age and a Mothers, Toddlers and Friends Group, amongst others.

In June 2008, North Kesteven District Council felt that there may be a need for some affordable homes for villagers and asked the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) from Community Lincs to conduct a Housing Needs Survey to establish whether a scheme was required.

This report is a summary of the information gathered through that survey.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Census 2001 statistics

## The Housing Needs Survey

### QUESTIONNAIRE SECTION 1: Affordable Housing

#### Distribution and Response

Survey forms were provided by the RHE and delivered to every household in the parish with the Parish Newsletter. They were returned by either by Freepost or via a collection box sited in the village Post Office with a deadline set for return by the 20<sup>th</sup> March. All parishioners were given the opportunity to respond.

It is to be expected that the majority of people living in the area are well housed and would not necessarily respond to any survey seeking information about housing needs.

In the experience of the Rural Housing Enabler, the majority of responses in any survey of this kind come from:

- People who feel themselves to be in need of housing now or in the near future
- Their relatives
- People involved in some way in community affairs who probably have an appreciation of the problems affecting the community as a whole, even if they are not in housing need
- People who feel strongly that there should not be any more development in the village

**Of the 191 questionnaires distributed, 38 (20%) completed or partially completed forms were returned.**

#### Support and Opposition

The survey asked parishioners whether or not they would support a small scheme of affordable housing for local people in the parish. On the whole, the responses were positive. **21 households (57%) were in favour of a scheme.** 38 % of responding households were not in favour of a project, and 5% did not respond. On this basis it is fair to say that the survey responses illustrate general support for an affordable housing project in the village.

#### Respondents Comments

Some households used the additional space provided to make comments on the issue of affordable housing provision. Below is a selection of the comments taken from the survey:-

- Affordable housing is required so that young people and older people can stay in the village they have lived in. When I was younger I live in

a village and my income would not allow me to leave home before I moved in with my husband.

- As you can see most of this survey does not apply to us. Why didn't the person who set up this questionnaire take that into consideration before sending it out in its present format? This is the second HNS delivered here in the last month.
- no wonder! - on front page
- Since I do not have any housing needs, I have not given my name and address, as I do not need to be contacted with regard to future housing developments. In fact, I feel this form is only for people with specific housing needs and it should not be necessary for people like myself to complete any part of the form, I have merely completed it as a matter of courtesy
- There are lots of houses for sale in the village why build more? People say they can't afford them. People selling them had to buy them. Maybe they can't get a mortgage. Should not have sold off council housing. I do not know if building more is the answer. Map drawn of possible site for development.
- This is a small village with not many amenities or bus service. There has been talk about building on a pocket size of land behind the village hall which when Lincolnshire has so many open spaces this may happen.
- We are hard working and pay our own way. So should everyone else, we do not want the sort of people you are after living in our village thank you
- After relocating back to the UK 4 years ago, at our age raising funds for a deposit on our own home and paying the mortgage by retirement age is an extremely high improbability. We therefore are eager for assistance
- Bath has been leaking from day 1 and still is, this heating affected me I lost my appetite and I now weigh 9.5 stone compared to normal 11 stone. I am affected in every way. I have told everyone including woman from council and have been ignored everytime I told welfare lady I need lock on kitchen window and shed by contrast she listened and window was fixed, new lock useless, door lets rain in
- If affordable housing was built in Wilsford we would be extremely grateful to be considered to live in such a development. There is lack of housing in the village for people like us and there seems to be an increase in the number of people from other areas being allocated housing before locals. Priority to local people should be given to help restore the community spirit
- Myself and my husband don't drive and can't get a job because of poor transport. Could you send us the forms to transfer to a different area
- We found the form very difficult to complete as we do not know what you mean by local. Without having own transport living in Wilsford is difficult, no school, surgery, etc apart from access to shops. We

manage our budget to take into account heating costs and if necessary adapt to keep them manageable.

- Would feel a lot more secure renting from a local authority than a private landlord not knowing when you are going to get that months notice popped through your door. It's hard to feel safe and secure which is all we want in life. It's not a lot to ask please consider us. Thank you.

### **Suggested sites**

Respondents were given the opportunity to suggest potential sites for the proposed affordable housing development. Popular suggestions included:

- School Lane
- In a field/ Arable farmland
- Field by village hall
- RAF and army bases
- No such available site as all available spaces in-filled with private developments

### **People Who Have Moved Away**

**4** households who responded (11%) reported that family members had left the village due to a lack of affordable housing. Of those, all **4** said that those family members would return if affordable housing was provided.

### **Possible Independent Householders**

**5** households who responded (14%) reported that that there was someone in their household that would like to live independently if alternative accommodation was available.



### Analysis of Need

14 households filled out the second part of the form, indicating a need for affordable housing at some point in the next five years.

The survey form also asked for details of why respondents consider themselves to be in housing need, it should be noted that at this stage, these statements are self assessed and have not been verified in any other way.

As part of the analysis process a number of respondents who indicate a housing need are ruled out of consideration. This may be for a number of reasons, the main ones being:

- The respondent does not wish to remain living in the local area.
- The respondent is already adequately housed e.g. they have a large property and would like to downsize.
- The respondent does not provide enough information with which to accurately assess their needs.

Of the 14 households who filled out the second part of the form, 8 were ruled out of consideration.

Of the remaining 6 responses, a current need (0-12 months) was indicated by 3 households, on one survey a future need (within the next one to five years) was recorded, and the remaining 2 surveys did not specify when they would be in need of affordable housing.

### Current Accommodation

The table below shows the current accommodation type and tenure of the six households judged to be in housing need:

Property	Number of Bedrooms	Tenure		
		Housing Association / Local Authority	Family Home	Private landlord
Flat	1.5	1		
House	2			1
	3	1	1	2

### Affordability of Open Market Properties

In March 2009 there were a total of 2 properties for sale in Wilsford<sup>2</sup>:

- 4 bedroom detached property for £350,000
- 3 bedroom detached property for £250,000

From the financial information provided the above properties would be unaffordable for all of the respondents in housing need.

There were no properties available to rent at this time.

### Property Recommendations

The table below shows the recommended property types to meet the needs of those respondents judged to be in housing need. Recommendations have been based on the eligibility criteria set out in North Kesteven District Council's Allocations policy, therefore recommendations may vary from the preference given on the survey form.

Caution has been exerted when suggesting possible housing tenures and attention has been paid to the idea of a householder **not** having to pay more than 25% of their net income on rent or mortgage. Where respondents have an annual income of between £16,000 and £22,000, they have been deemed eligible for a shared ownership property (as per the eligibility test set out by home2you.)

Respondent	Desired			Recommended		
	Property	Bedrooms	Tenure	Property	Bedrooms	Tenure
6	House/Flat	2	Buy Open Market/RSL Rent	Flat	2	RSL Rent
15	Flat	1	RSL Rent	Flat	1	RSL Rent
16	House/Bungalow	2	RSL Rent	Bungalow	1	SO
20	House	3	RSL Rent	House	3	RSL Rent
33	House/Bungalow	2	RSL Rent	Bungalow	2	RSL Rent
35	House/Bungalow	2	SO	Bungalow*	2	RSL Rent

\*Respondent requires single level property with level threshold.

### Local Connection

Of the six respondents judged to be in housing need, 4 have lived in the parish for between 4 and 44 years, and the remaining 2 respondents did not specify their connection to the village.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

### **Respondents on the Local Housing Waiting List**

There are currently **718** people on North Kesteven District Councils housing register who have expressed a preference to live in Wilsford. Of those **1** has a **direct local connection**.

Whilst 2 of the respondents to this survey indicated that they are registered with North Kesteven District Council, cross referencing with the housing register indicated that only **1** is actually registered.

There are therefore no local people additional to those who responded to the survey who are in need of affordable housing.

### **Summary and Conclusion**

On the basis of the survey data there is evidence to warrant a scheme of 6 units in Wilsford.

The need profile illustrates a demand for 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties, mostly for rental. The data indicates that there should be a mix of five available for rent and one available for shared ownership. In order to provide the greatest flexibility for the future, a majority of two bedroom units of mixed tenure are suggested.

Therefore my recommendations for scheme size, mix and tenure are:

- 2 x 2 bedroom rented flat
- 2 x 2 bedroom rented bungalows
- 1 x 2 bedroom shared ownership bungalow
- 1 x 3 bedroom rented house