

Caddington and Slip End Housing Needs Survey Report

August 2013

*Completed on behalf of Caddington and Slip End Parish Councils by BRCC
(Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity)*



This report is the joint property of the Housing Provider who funded it and the local housing authority and parish council to which it relates. Should another Housing Provider want to use the survey findings to develop an affordable housing scheme, it shall reimburse the Housing Provider who originally funded the survey for the actual cost of the survey based on submitted paid invoice evidence.

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1. Introduction

1.1 About this survey

The Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan steering group requested for a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) to be carried out by BRCC in July/August 2013 to identify the housing needs of local people over the next 20 years, as part of the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

The survey aimed to assess the need of local people for affordable housing, which could be brought forward through a Rural Exception Site development (see 1.2); and for wider market housing, to be brought forward through the Neighbourhood Plan itself (see 1.3).

1.2 Rural Exception Site housing

Development in rural areas is generally restricted to designated Settlement Policy Areas. Outside Settlement Policy Areas, affordable housing in rural areas can be progressed on Rural Exception Site developments – this is where the planning authority accepts that there is a need for affordable housing in the parish, and is prepared to grant an “exception” to planning policy, providing that the development is for affordable housing that will be available to local people in perpetuity. There does not appear to be any reason why a Neighbourhood Plan should not also contain a Rural Exception Site policy.

Affordable housing aims to meet not only current needs but also future need, with government guidelines that regulate its price, eligibility criteria and resale. It is usually provided by Registered Providers such as housing associations. Affordable housing can be affordable rented property (where rent is charged at up to 80% of market value), or it can be shared ownership in which people can own a share in the property and pay rent on the remainder.

Households seeking affordable rented accommodation through any new exception site development would have to apply through the Bedfordshire Choice Based Lettings scheme, through which they would have to demonstrate both a housing need and a local connection to Caddington or Slip End. In 2013 a new Local Lettings Policy for Rural Exception Sites was adopted by Central Bedfordshire Council, which lays out the order of priorities under which applicants would be considered. (This Policy has been adopted for the new rural exception site development in Caddington.)

1.3 Wider market housing

The parishes of Caddington and Slip End are preparing a joint Neighbourhood Plan laying out their own local planning policies, which will come into force provided that the Plan passes an independent examination and is approved at a local referendum.

The market housing policies for the Neighbourhood Plan (e.g. proposed numbers, size and type) would need to be based on a broad evidence base. This would include local housing need identified through this survey, although the wider housing market would also need to be taken into consideration, as there would be no restrictions placed on the sale of this housing.

2. About Caddington and Slip End

2.1 Population and demographics

In 2001 in the parish of Caddington there were 1,529 households containing 3,673 residents. By 2011 this had grown slightly to 1,583 households containing 3,703 residents¹.

In 2001 in the parish of Slip End there were 860 households containing 1,976 residents. By 2011 this had reduced to 831 households containing 1,831 residents.

The age profile in 2011 (compared to 2001, and then to Central Bedfordshire as a whole in 2011) is shown below.

Age	% Cadd'n 2011	% Cadd'n 2001	% Slip End 2011	% Slip End 2001	% C Beds 2011
0 – 15	16.6	20.2	14.7	17.1	19.6
16 – 24	8.5	6.9	7.4	7.8	10.0
25 – 44	23.1	26.6	23.8	30.1	26.8
45 – 64	30.1	28.5	32.4	29.6	27.9
65 – 84	19.6	16.4	20.0	13.7	13.8
85+	2.1	1.4	1.8	1.8	1.8

Over the 10 years between 2001 and 2011, the proportion of children and young people in Caddington and Slip End has reduced, as has the proportion of 25 to 44 year olds. Correspondingly, the proportion of people aged 45 and over has increased, particularly in Slip End. The overall effect has been that the populations of Caddington and Slip End are relatively old for Central Bedfordshire.

2.2 Household Composition

	% Cadd'n	% Slip End	% C Beds
1 person - pensioner	16.2	13.6	11.2
1 person - other	10.9	15.2	14.7
Couple - no children	20.1	23.6	20.5
Couple + dependent children	19.6	16.2	23.1
Couple + non-dependent children	8.8	7.2	7.3
Lone parent + dependent children	4.7	5.3	6.5
Lone parent + non-dependent children	3.6	3.6	3.1
All aged 65 and over	11.9	11.4	8.7
Other	4.2	3.9	4.9

In both parishes there are lower levels of households with dependent children, and higher levels of lone and multiple pensioner households, than Central Bedfordshire as a whole, reflecting the figures in 2.1.

¹ 2011 census data – other data also from this source unless otherwise specified

2.3 Housing Tenure

	% Cadd'n	% Slip End	% C Beds
Owned outright	45.2	45.8	31.6
Owned with mortgage/loan	37.7	37.4	40.9
Shared ownership	0.2	0.6	0.8
Social rented	10.1	3.9	13.4
Private rented	6.3	11.3	12.1
Living rent free	0.6	1.0	1.1

There are significantly higher levels of outright ownership, and lower levels of renting, than for Central Bedfordshire as a whole. The level of social renting is particularly low in Slip End, while private renting is low in Caddington.

2.4 Dwelling Types

	% Cadd'n	% Slip End	% C Beds
Detached house	30.8	25.5	28.2
Semi-detached house	46.9	26.0	33.8
Terraced house	15.2	26.5	25.3
Flat	3.3	1.3	11.7
Caravan/other temp. accommodation	8.1	24.9	1.0

Unlike most of rural Bedfordshire, Slip End has relatively fewer detached and semi-detached houses. This is because of the unusually high level of caravans and other temporary accommodation, due to there being a number of caravan parks in the parish. Caddington also has a caravan park, but also has higher levels of detached and semi-detached houses (and lower levels of terraced houses). There are few flats in the area.

2.5 Housing in poor condition

	% Cadd'n	% Slip End	% C Beds
Households in overcrowded conditions	2.9	2.5	4.6
Households without central heating	1.5	0.7	1.7
Households in fuel poverty (2009)	15.6	15.4	10.9

The highest levels of non-decent homes (that do not pass the Housing Health & Safety rating system) are found in smaller rural communities, particularly the more isolated areas. This is often due to the age of properties, with older housing (proportionately more common in rural areas) most likely to be in this condition.

Overcrowded housing can highlight areas with pressing needs for more affordable housing, and overcrowding counts as a housing need for households applying through the Choice Based Lettings scheme. In 2011 there were 70 households in Caddington and Slip End classified as being overcrowded (data is rounded to nearest 5), which works out as less than the Central Bedfordshire average.

Where central heating is not present, fuel poverty is significantly more likely; and fuel poverty in Central Bedfordshire tends to be more of an issue in rural areas. Although

the levels of households without central heating in Caddington and Slip End are under the Central Bedfordshire average, levels of fuel poverty (according to the previous definition where a household spends 10% or more of income on energy costs) are higher.

2.6 People on low incomes

In 2010, 345 people in Caddington and 160 people in Slip End were classified as “income deprived” (figure is rounded to nearest 5). At around 9% and 8% respectively of the populations of each parish, this is lower than the national average.

However, there is evidence of concentrations of deprivation in the area, particularly the north of Caddington parish, Woodside and Pepperstock². In these areas there are some of Central Bedfordshire’s highest levels of both older people and children suffering from income deprivation, as well as other indicators such as low qualification levels and long-term limiting illness.

2.7 Residents on Central Bedfordshire Council Housing Register

There are currently 29 households (20 from Caddington, 9 from Slip End) on the Central Bedfordshire Council housing register (the waiting list for affordable housing through the Choice Based Lettings scheme). These break down as follows:

Bedrooms required	Caddington	Slip End
1 bedroom	15	6
2 bedrooms	3	3
3 bedrooms	2	0

Assessed housing need	Caddington	Slip End
Band 1 (urgent housing need)	0	0
Band 2 (high housing need)	1	1
Band 3 (medium housing need)	6	4
Band 4 (low housing need)	13	4

It should be noted that the difficulty of securing affordable housing, particularly in villages, can act as a significant deterrent to people in housing need from placing themselves on the register; so this figure does not therefore necessarily represent the true number of residents in housing need. At the same time, since applicants to the register are no longer asked where they would prefer to live, it is not possible to know how many of the above would wish to remain in the parish.

² Data from Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2010

3. Housing Availability and Affordability in Caddington and Slip End

3.1 Home purchase

Overall housing affordability in Central Bedfordshire

The 'affordable housing ratio' (the lowest 25% of house prices as a ratio of the lowest 25% of earnings) in Central Bedfordshire as a whole is 10.1. In other words, the most affordable houses on the market cost 10.1 times the lowest incomes³.

Dwellings in lower Council Tax Bands

17.2% of dwellings in Caddington, and 17.6% in Slip End, are in Council Tax Band A (the cheapest), compared to only 8.6% for Central Bedfordshire as a whole. This probably reflects the high numbers of mobile homes in the area. However, only 3.1% of dwellings in Caddington, and 2.7% in Slip End, are in Band B, compared to 20.4% for Central Bedfordshire. This suggests that there may be a relative shortage of cheaper permanent housing in the area.

Snapshot of current housing market in Caddington and Slip End

At the end of July 2013, an online search revealed 56 properties on the market in the area⁴:

Caddington

Dwelling size / type	Number	Asking price range
1 bedroom flat	2	£110 – £120,000
2 bedroom park home	1	£170,000
2 bedroom terraced	2	£200 – £210,000
2 bedroom semi	3	£225 – £250,000
3 bedroom terraced	1	£220,000
3 bedroom semi	5	£260 - £290,000
3 bedroom detached	5	£275 - £475,000
4 bedroom detached	8	£325 – £550,000
5 bedroom detached	4	£350 - £500,000
4 bedroom equestrian facility	1	£795,000

Slip End

Dwelling size / type	Number	Asking price range
2 bedroom park home	4	£110 – £120,000
2 bedroom terraced	6	£175 – £250,000
3 bedroom terraced	3	£190 – £235,000
3 bedroom semi	7	£220 – £350,000
4 bedroom semi	1	£375,000
4 bedroom detached	3	£285 – £425,000

This represents around 2.5% of total private housing stock in the two parishes. It should be noted that the housing market is generally quieter during the summer.

³ Data from community profiles for Caddington and Slip End, © ACRE, RCAN, OCSI 2012

⁴ Data sourced from www.rightmove.co.uk

Property sales over last 2 years

Property sales over the last 24 months can be broken down as follows⁵:

£	Caddington	Slip End
Under 100,000	0	0
100,001 – 150,000	0	3
150,001 – 200,000	12	13
200,001 – 300,000	59	15
300,001+	26	5
Total	97	36

No properties for under £100,000 have been purchased in the parish in the 2-year reference period, and just 3 for under £150,000. The most consistent market overall has been for properties costing between £200,000 and £250,000.

Slip End generally has better availability of cheaper properties, especially relative to settlement size.

Minimum household income required to purchase in Caddington and Slip End

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) provides a guideline that "A household can be considered able to afford to buy a home if it costs 3.5 times the gross household income for a single earner household or 2.9 times the gross household income for dual-income households."⁶ According to this guidance, in order to purchase the cheapest property currently or recently available in Caddington and Slip End (a 1 bedroom flat at £110,00), a single earner household would need an annual gross income of over £31,000, and a dual-income household would need a gross income of nearly £38,000. For the cheapest house (2 bedroom terraced at £175,000) these figures rise to around £50,000 and £60,000 respectively. It should be noted that median annual household income in the UK in 2010-11 stood at £26,572⁷.

Minimum deposit required to purchase in Caddington and Slip End

The biggest barrier to entry to the property market for first-time buyers is the high deposit needed for a good mortgage rate, particularly over the last few years. The average loan to value for first time buyers nationally in March 2013 was 80%⁸, unchanged for over two years, and this figure remains the benchmark for most mortgages. Some smaller deposit mortgages are still available despite the credit crunch, however they come with interest rates of almost double those charged to borrowers with larger deposits⁹. (The government's NewBuy mortgage indemnity scheme, which enables mortgages to be offered at up to 95% loan to value, only applies to new build housing; and Central Bedfordshire is not part of the Local Authority Mortgage scheme, which provides access to indemnified mortgages).

Currently, in order to purchase the cheapest property highlighted above, a first-time buyer household would need a deposit of £22,000.

⁵ Data sourced from www.rightmove.co.uk

⁶ Strategic Housing Market Assessments: Practice Guidance Version 2 (DCLG 2007)

⁷ Institute of Fiscal Studies, June 2012

⁸ Council of Mortgage Lenders, March 2013

⁹ From story on www.thisismoney.co.uk website, 21 November 2011

It should be pointed out that there are a small number of shared ownership properties in Caddington and Slip End, which would be accessible to first-time buyers with smaller deposits. (According to the 2011 census, 8 households were in shared ownership.)

3.2 Home rental

At the end of July 2013, an online search revealed 7 properties in Caddington and Slip End available for private rent¹⁰, ranging from a 2 bedroom cottage in Slip End at £695 per month to two 4 bedroom houses in Caddington for around £1,800 per month.

According to the above DCLG guidance, "A household can be considered able to afford market house renting in cases where the rent payable was up to 25% of their gross household income." (The 'Rent Payable' figure is defined as the entire rent due, even if it is partially or entirely met by housing benefit.) To rent the 2 bedroom cottage mentioned above, a household's gross annual income would therefore need to be around £33,300.

¹⁰ Data sourced from www.rightmove.co.uk

4. Survey process and response

To study the housing need in Caddington and Slip End, a survey form put together by BRCC (Appendix A) was hand-delivered to all 2,400 or so households. The survey form also gave contact details to request additional forms in the event of there being more than one case of housing need in the household, or for anyone who previously lived in the parish and would like to move back; however, no additional forms were requested. A FREEPOST envelope was provided to enable residents to return their survey to BRCC by 23rd August 2013.

The survey form was in two parts. Questions 1 to 4 were for completion by all respondents and aimed to gain data on residence and migration in and out of the area (see chapter 5). The rest of the form was for completion by (or on behalf of) any household member currently looking for different accommodation, or who would be looking within the next 20 years. The findings from this section are analysed in chapters 6 and 7.

We received 412 responses, a return rate of around 17%. This is a lower than expected response rate for a housing needs survey (typical return rate is 20-25%), although lower response rates are common in larger villages, and it should also be pointed out that all households had received a broader Neighbourhood Plan survey only a few months previously. The return rate for Caddington (20%) was twice as high as for Slip End (10%), meaning that 80% of responses were from Caddington.

5. Residence, migration and future plans

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) had lived in the parish for over 10 years, and a further 18% for 5-10 years (Q2).

Respondents were asked where they lived immediately before moving to Caddington and Slip End (Q3). Of the 385 who responded to the question, nearly half (42%) had previously lived in Hertfordshire; 23% in Luton; 13% somewhere else in Central Bedfordshire; 22% somewhere else altogether; and 7% had never lived outside Caddington & Slip End (despite the nature of the question, some respondents gave more than one answer).

Respondents were then asked what their current plans were for their housing over the next 20 years. Responses were as follows (some respondents ticked more than one):

I/we plan to stay in existing housing for at least 20 years	238 (58%)
I/we plan to move out of Caddington and Slip End over the next 20 years	97 (24%)
I/we are intending to move to different accommodation in Caddington and Slip End over the next 20 years	79 (19%)
A member of my household (e.g. son/daughter) intends to move to different accommodation in Caddington and Slip End over the next 20 years	29 (7%)
No response	9 (2%)

Respondents ticking the third or fourth option were invited to complete the rest of the form.

6. Analysis of need – affordable housing

6.1 Level / timescale of housing need

97 respondents in total indicated that either they or somebody in their household (or both) was currently intending to move to different accommodation in Caddington and Slip End over the next 20 years. These respondents are therefore regarded in principle as being in some form of housing need.

Out of these, 69 were existing owner occupiers, and a further 6 could afford to buy or rent on the open market based on their financial data. These 75 respondents would be unlikely to be eligible for affordable housing, and were generally looking to buy on the open market in any case – they are considered in Chapter 7.

The remaining 22 respondents will be considered in this section. The timescale in which these respondents would be looking for different accommodation (Q5) was as follows:

Timescale	Caddington	Slip End
Currently looking	2	3
Within 0-3 years	6	3
Within 4-10 years	4	2
Within 11-20 years	1	1

6.2 Nature of local connection

If an exception site is to progress, evidence of housing need must come from people with a strong local connection. The local connections identified by the 22 respondents (Q6) were as follows (respondents could tick more than one):

Nature of local connection	Caddington	Slip End
Current resident of the parish	13	8
Previous resident of the parish (for 10 years or more)	3	1
At least 1 immediate family member (parent/child/sibling) is resident of the parish	5	2
Permanently employed in the parish	1	1

Under Central Bedfordshire Council's new Local Lettings Policy for rural exception sites, the current residents of Caddington and Slip End would be given top priority (provided their need is assessed within bands 1-3); followed by those people (also within bands 1-3) with an immediate family member resident in the parish.

6.3 Preferred parish of residence

Respondents were asked in which parish they would prefer to live (Q7). 14 ticked Caddington, 6 Slip End, and 1 both (1 did not answer the question). In almost all cases, respondents wanted to stay in their current parish of residence.

6.4 Housing tenure of households in need

The current (and preferred future) housing tenure of the 22 respondents (Q8) breaks down as follows (some respondents ticked more than one for future tenure):

Housing tenure	Current	Future
Owner occupied	2	14
Shared ownership	1	3
Living with parents	10	0
Private rented	8	6
Housing association / Council rented	1	8
Provided with job	0	0

2 owner occupiers have been considered in this section because they had issues to do with health/disability or relationship breakdown, and had low levels of equity.

There is a clear demand for affordable rented properties. While 14 respondents aspired to purchase, most of them were unlikely to be able to do so in the foreseeable future due to their financial circumstances (see 6.8 and 6.9), making affordable rent or shared ownership more realistic options.

6.5 Reason for housing need

Applicants for affordable rented housing through an exception site must demonstrate a clear housing need. The needs identified by the 22 respondents (Q9) can be summarised as follows (respondents were able to identify more than one need):

Need	Number of households
Need/want larger home	4
Need/want smaller home	4
Want to move out of the family home	13
Want to buy for the first time	14
Present home too expensive	6
Present home in poor condition	1
Currently have insecure tenure	1
Relationship breakdown	3
Moved away and wish to return to the area	0
Be closer to family/carer support	2
Medical reasons/disability	3
Need specially adapted home	2

The fact that 14 respondents wanted to buy (but did not have the financial means to do so) suggests that there is a need for some more shared ownership properties.

6.6 Perceptions of affordability and availability

7 out of the 22 households believed that suitable accommodation was available in the parish; just 2 respondents believed that it was affordable (Q10).

7 households might be interested in self-build as an option (Q11).

6.7 Composition of households in need

The composition of the 22 households (Q12) **at the planned time of moving** breaks down as follows:

Household composition	No. of households
Single adult	17
Couple without children	3
Family with dependent child(ren) (2 bedroom need)	2
Family with dependent children (3 bedroom need)	2
Family with non-dependent child(ren) (2-3 bedroom need)	2

'Household' here refers just to the people requiring new accommodation (thereby forming a new household) rather than the entire existing household, which may be larger (e.g. single adults currently living with their parents). Some respondents had more than 1 individual seeking to form their own household in Caddington and Slip End in the future, generally children growing up, so the total is more than 22.

Bedroom needs have been assessed against Choice Based Lettings criteria under the Central Bedfordshire Housing Allocations policy, based on data provided by respondents. Bedroom needs can change over time due to e.g. different sex children growing older or new children joining the family.

6.8 Gross income of households in need

We saw in Chapter 3 that, in order to purchase the cheapest property currently or recently available in Caddington and Slip End, a single earner household would need an annual gross income of over £31,000, and a dual-income household would need a gross income of nearly £38,000. We also saw that, to rent the cheapest rental property recently available, a household's annual gross income would need to be around £33,300.

The current gross annual income of anyone responsible for paying the rent/mortgage for the 22 households under analysis (Q13a) breaks down as follows:

Current gross annual income	No. of households
Less than £20,000	9
£20,000 to £30,000	7
£30,000 to £40,000	3
£40,000 to £50,000	2
Not specified	1

Based on the data provided, 16 respondents could not currently afford to purchase on the open market within Caddington and Slip End.

6 respondents might in theory be able to afford the cheapest rental property available (a 2 bedroom cottage), however they were all looking for 3-bedroom properties, which would be more expensive.

6.9 Savings or equity of households in need

As we saw in Chapter 3, the minimum deposit required for a first-time buyer to purchase the cheapest property currently available in Caddington and Slip End is £22,000.

The savings or other equity that these 22 households could use to contribute towards a mortgage (Q13b) breaks down as follows:

Savings/equity	No. of households
Less than £10,000	20
£30,000 - £50,000	1
Not specified	1

Only 1 respondent had enough savings or equity in theory to raise a deposit, however this household's annual income was insufficient to purchase. It can be assumed from other data provided that respondent who did not answer the question had insufficient savings or equity.

7. Analysis of need – market housing

7.1 Level / timescale of housing need

Chapter 7 will consider the 75 households (mentioned in 6.1) being considered in relation to market housing rather than a rural exception site. All of these respondents were currently planning to move to a new property within Caddington and Slip End purchased on the open market within the next 20 years.

Although clearly a local connection is not required to purchase housing on the open market, it should be noted that all but 2 of these respondents (Q6) were current residents.

The timescale in which these 75 respondents indicated that they would be looking for different accommodation (Q5) was as follows:

Timescale	No. of households
Currently looking	4
Within 0-3 years	25
Within 4-10 years	25
Within 11-20 years	18
Not specified	3

7.2 Preferred parish of residence

Respondents were asked in which parish they would prefer to live (Q7). 60 ticked Caddington, 13 Slip End, and 2 both. In almost all cases, respondents wanted to stay in their current parish of residence.

7.3 Sizes and types of house required

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms they currently owned, and how many they would be looking for in the future (Q8) (some people ticked more than one for future home). This question is more relevant than household composition when looking at market housing, which is dictated by choice and resources rather than an assessment of housing need.

Number of bedrooms	No. respondents: Current home	No. respondents: Future home
1 bedroom	0	8
2 bedrooms	10	32
3 bedrooms	28	33
4 bedrooms	33	22
5+ bedrooms	4	8

The average demand is for smaller properties than those currently inhabited.

The proportion of people who wanted more or fewer bedrooms in future breaks down as follows:

More or fewer bedrooms	No. bedrooms at present			
	2	3	4	5+
More bedrooms	6	9	2	0
More or the same number of bedrooms	1	1	2	0
The same number of bedrooms	3	2	1	1
Fewer or the same number of bedrooms	0	3	4	0
Fewer bedrooms	0	11	23	2
Not specified	0	2	1	1

The general trend is for people in 2 bedroom houses to want more bedrooms, and those with 4+ bedrooms to want fewer.

Respondents were also asked about housing type, now and in the future (some people ticked more than one for future home):

Housing type	Current home	Future home
Flat	1	8
House	67	45
Bungalow	5	35
Extra care	0	8
Not specified	2	5

Based on these figures, there appears to be a significant demand for more bungalows, as well as some demand for more flats and extra care housing.

7.3 Reason for housing need

The reasons identified by the 75 respondents for looking for new housing (Q9) can be summarised as follows (respondents were able to identify more than one):

Need	Number of households
Need/want larger home	20
Need/want smaller home	41
Present home too expensive	8
Present home in poor condition	2
Currently have insecure tenure	1
Relationship breakdown	2
Moved away and wish to return to the area	0
Want to move out of the family home	6
Want to buy for the first time	5
Be closer to family/carer support	2
Medical reasons/disability	8
Need specially adapted home	4
Other	7

There is a particular demand for smaller homes.

7.4 Perceptions of affordability and availability

44 out of the 75 households believed that suitable accommodation was available in the parish; 43 respondents believed that suitable accommodation was affordable (Q10). 29 households might be interested in self-build as an option (Q11).

7.5 Gross income of households in need

The current gross annual income of anyone responsible for paying the rent/mortgage for the 75 households under analysis (Q13a) breaks down as follows:

Current gross annual income	No. of households
Less than £20,000	9
£20,000 to £30,000	16
£30,000 to £40,000	11
£40,000 to £50,000	8
£50,000 to £60,000	5
More than £60,000	18
Not specified	8

In general, those on lower incomes were looking for smaller properties, so the ability of respondents to meet their needs on the open market in Caddington and Slip End (provided the availability of suitable properties) generally appears feasible.

7.6 Savings or equity of households in need

The savings or other equity that these 75 households could use to contribute towards a mortgage (Q13b) breaks down as follows:

Savings/equity	No. of households
Below £10,000	8
£10,000 - £20,000	7
£20,000 - £30,000	4
£30,000 - £50,000	8
£50,000 - £100,000	11
Above £100,000	26
Not specified	11

It is unusual for owner occupiers to have less than £10,000 in equity, so it is possible that some of these responses were in error. In general, those with lower levels of savings/equity were looking for smaller properties, so the ability of respondents to meet their needs on the open market in Caddington and Slip End (provided the availability of suitable properties) appears feasible.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

8.1 Need for affordable housing

Analysis of the data considered in Chapter 6 has identified a need for affordable housing within Caddington and Slip End from households resident in (or with strong links to) the parish, that is unlikely to be met by normal market provision. Most of this need comes from young adults living with their parents who want to move out (or young people who will be in this position in the future); although there is some need from families, as well as older people wanting to 'downsize'.

Based on data supplied by respondents, 26 households with a local connection would be suitable for housing within a rural exception site development, whether for rent or shared ownership (remembering that some respondents had more than one case of need). However, it must be recognised that this is a snapshot of current, self-assessed need: some respondents may withdraw, move, or be housed by other means during the planning and development of any future scheme. Also, four of these cases of need will not be looking for new housing for over 10 years.

In order to have reasonable confidence that any new housing provided through a rural exception site will be taken up by people with a local connection to Caddington and Slip End, our recommendation is meet just over 50% of the need identified over the next 10 years, which would be **12 units**. This need is supported by the 29 Caddington and Slip End residents currently on the waiting list for affordable rented housing in Central Bedfordshire.

Our assessment from the data is that the 12 units could be broken down as follows:

2 x 1 bed bungalow
 6 x 1-2 bed house
 1 x 2 bed house
 3 x 3-bed house

In making this assessment we consider a number of factors including household size and circumstances; the type and tenure being sought by respondents; and their financial means. This breakdown is explained further below:

2 x 1 bed bungalow

4 households were older single adults who were looking for smaller properties. 2 of these identified issues to do with health/disability.

6 x 1-2 bed house

There were 13 younger single adults in need, as well as 3 couples without children. These 16 respondents would require a 1 bedroom property based on need; however, it should be noted that, in order to help to ensure sustainability in rural areas, it is generally accepted that young people/couples should be allowed to under-occupy 2-bed properties in the first instance, as this enables them to remain in the parish if and when they decide to start a family. On the other hand, recent government welfare reforms may make it unaffordable for some people to under-occupy properties.

1 x 2 bed house

2 households comprised a single adult plus a dependent or non-dependent

son/daughter.

3 x 3 bed house

5 respondents were families with a 3-bedroom need (e.g. dependent children of different sexes).

Most of the properties should be for rent, given the lack of savings/equity currently possessed by these households; although some consideration should be given to a few shared ownership properties, given the aspiration of many to get on the housing ladder.

This need could either be met through one rural exception site development or two (one in each parish). In the event of the latter being chosen, the suggested breakdown based on the geographical location and preference of respondents is as follows:

Caddington

1 x 1 bed bungalow
 3 x 1-2 bed house
 1 x 2 bed house
 2 x 3-bed house

Slip End

1 x 1 bed bungalow
 3 x 1-2 bed house
 1 x 3-bed house

In order to ensure the feasibility of these developments, it may be necessary to bring forward affordable housing on the same site as market housing. While this was not previously permitted on rural exception sites, it is now provided for in the National Planning Policy Framework, provided that there is a sound case for cross-subsidy between the two. The Neighbour Plan steering group may wish to consider developing its rural exception site policy along these lines.

The final number of houses and mix of tenures (i.e. rented v shared ownership) would be agreed between the appointed Registered Social Landlord, Caddington and Slip End Parish Councils and the local authority.

8.2 Need for market housing

While the need for market housing has not traditionally formed part of rural Housing Needs Surveys, this data may be useful for the following reasons:

- The need identified within this survey could contribute to the evidence base for the Caddington and Slip End Neighbourhood Plan
- Although the development of market housing is not generally based on identified need in the same way as affordable housing a rural exception site, identified housing need may be considered within the planning application process
- The National Planning Policy Framework in 2012 introduced the flexibility for

planning authorities to allow small amounts of market housing on rural exception sites where this was necessary for the viability of the scheme (see 8.2)

Analysis of the 75 respondents considered in Chapter 7, and other evidence considered in chapters 2 to 5, suggests that there is a need in Caddington and Slip End for smaller houses, bungalows and flats, targeted at older people in particular. The evidence for this is as follows:

- The relatively high average age of the population, partly due to the increase in the 65+ age group between 2001 and 2011
- The relative lack of permanent properties targeted at older people (particularly bungalows and retirement flats) in the two parishes
- The high proportion of owner occupier respondents (7.3) who would be looking for smaller properties at some point over the next 20 years, most of whom were in older age groups
- 35 owner occupier respondents were looking for bungalows, compared to 5 respondents currently living in them; and 8 were looking for flats, compared to 1 respondent currently living in one
- 8 respondents were considering extra care accommodation

If suitable smaller properties were more widely available, this would be likely to free up larger houses for growing families to purchase as they work their way up the housing ladder.

There is also a limited need for smaller houses targeted at first time buyers, which would also provide progression opportunities for households taking up affordable rented or shared ownership properties in the first instance (see 8.1).

Consideration should be given to combining market and affordable housing within rural exception site developments (see 8.1), which would increase the feasibility while ensuring that local people would be prioritised for the affordable element.

Over half of the 75 respondents considered in Chapter 7 believed that properties suitable for their needs were available or affordable in the parish, suggesting that they could meet their needs through the existing housing market in Caddington and Slip End. Most owner occupier respondents appeared to possess reasonable financial means for operating in the housing market.

Clearly, market housing would not be restricted to people with a local connection, and this should be considered in responding to this report. Historically, in-migration appears to have come mainly from the surrounding areas of Hertfordshire, Luton and the rest of Central Bedfordshire, and the strategic needs identified by the local authorities for these areas may need to be considered. At the same time, around a quarter of respondents plan to leave the area over the next 20 years, helping to meet much of the need created by in-migration.

The housing needs of local residents (both affordable and market) will change over time. It is recommended that a further housing needs survey be carried out in 5 years time (in 2018).