

# Puncknowle, Swyre & West Bexington

Housing Needs Survey

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WITH DORSET COUNCIL  
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# Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Housing Needs Survey 2025



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# Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Housing Needs Survey 2025



<https://consultation.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/housing/c4f83e29>

The activity ran from 01/11/2024 to 25/11/2024

Supplementary Survey from 06/02/2025 to 12/02/2025

Responses to this survey: **134**

Estimated response rate: **134/247 Households = 54 % Response Rate**

**Response Rates -**  
according to The National  
Council for Voluntary  
Organisations (NCVO)

20-30% – acceptable

30-50% – good

more than 50% – great.

## PARISH COUNCIL SUMMARY

The Parish Council of Puncknowle & Swyre welcomes this report on the Housing Needs Survey and thanks Jacqui Cuff of Dorset Community Action for all the work that she put in to producing such a clear and useful report. We would also like to thank Housing Enabling Team and Neighbourhood Planning Team at Dorset Council for their support throughout the process.

The report fulfils national and local policy requirements for determining the minimum housing needs of the community.<sup>1</sup> It will serve as input into the Neighbourhood Plan and help formalise the communities view on housing development, focusing policy on affordable housing in perpetuity, of a small scale and limited to people with a local connection.

## REPORT SUMMARY

As part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Council need to provide evidence of the housing need in the area. The three key means of sourcing this evidence are via analysis of secondary housing data through desktop research using information from sources including from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), Dorset Council, Housing Retail sites etc.; the Dorset Council Housing Register provides qualified information regarding social/affordable housing need; and a physical survey, online and printed, to assess the area's current housing need, directly from households with a local connection. None of these methods offer a precise measure of the current housing status or housing need, together they offer the best reflection of circumstances as they were at the time of the survey and on the 23rd March 2025, when the secondary data were collated.

The secondary research of 2021 Census data, via Office of National Statistics, clearly evidenced three key issues that impact the long term sustainability of the three villages. Firstly, the considerable lack of children and young adults under the age of 45 years, significantly below the national average, most residents being over the age of 50 years. Housing availability is an issue across the different tenures, with very few social or private rent opportunities and below national average of one and two bed properties in the area. Secondary research on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025, illustrated the high cost of housing in comparison to the average income for Dorset, rent within 3 miles of the area is 64% of income, with average house prices being 14 times the average income for the area.

The Dorset Council Housing Register on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025, showed there were 7 households with a local connection to Puncknowle & Swyre, in need of 1, 2 and 3 bed social/affordable housing.

The Housing Needs Survey carried out from 1 November to 30 November 2024 showed a level of consistency proportionate to the data from the Office of National Statistics in relation to the current housing situation and age profile. There was strong support for affordable homes for people with a local connection. The survey

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF paragraph 62

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identified 15 households with a housing need, i.e. their current accommodation did not meet the accepted criteria of adequacy, suitability and affordability, across various tenures and needing 2 or 3 bed homes. It showed an aspiration for open market housing with 8 households wanting to buy but only 4 able to afford property in the area, one of which would like to self-build.

Overall, there were 21 households identified as having a housing need for 1, 2 and 3 bed properties across various tenures including open market housing, shared ownership, self-build social/affordable housing. The need may be understated due to a minimum of 46% of households not completing the survey, the difficulty in accessing households who have a local connection but no longer live in the area and there is no accounting for future need. However, this report provides sufficient evidence and context to help Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Council and the community determine how they wish to use the information to guide the development of the area, over the timeframe of their Neighbourhood Plan.

## INTRODUCTION

Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Council commissioned Dorset Community Action and Dorset Council to carry out a Housing Needs Survey to investigate the current housing situation, identify any housing need and to assess the support for affordable housing in the Parish. The Housing Needs Survey was designed to gather first-hand information from residents of Puncknowle, Swyre & West Bexington and the surrounding hamlets, as well as people with a local connection living elsewhere, to help the Parish and Dorset Council guide future housing and planning strategy in the area.

Housing is a basic human need and plays a critical role in shaping the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. Housing needs can be defined as households whose housing falls below at least one of the normative standards of affordability, suitability and adequacy, which includes issues of overcrowding, poor property condition, underoccupancy, change in medical or physical needs etc.

The accepted standard for lack of affordability is that the household would have to spend at least 30% or more of its before-tax income to access acceptable local housing. It is widely recognised that market housing costs, to buy or to rent, in many areas throughout England, far outstrip local incomes.

The UK Government uses a formula called ‘the standard method’ that incorporates a baseline of local housing stock which is then adjusted upwards to reflect local affordability pressures to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for. The latest housing development target for Dorset is 3,246<sup>2</sup> new homes per year and whilst the majority of that will be within defined development boundaries or on the outskirts of towns and larger villages, there is an opportunity for rural communities, who have a need for affordable housing, to contribute to that target.

However, there are strict guidelines, and any potential development must be able to identify a housing need, for people with a local connection, a suitable plot of land and create a design in keeping with the village and to a high standard of energy efficiency etc. Whilst any developer or housing association may be able to satisfy these conditions, it is important for the community, with their local knowledge, to have as much input and influence as possible, either through the Parish Council, a Neighbourhood Plan or a Community Land Trust. The Housing Needs Survey and Report is the first step.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/documents/35024/6459724/Housing+Numbers+background+paper+-+August+2025.pdf/501b6adc-4ef5-b94e-f860-b4b7f4fc5884>

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## METHODOLOGY

It is difficult to obtain exact figures for housing needs because the concept of "need" is complex and influenced by various factors, making it challenging to measure and predict. Different methodologies and data sources will give varying results; secondary or desktop data such as the standard method used by the government rely on using a formula to determine resulting figures and are very useful for national, regional and county level decision making. There is not enough secondary data available at local level in the detail needed for a Neighbourhood Plan, especially with regard to size and tenure of properties needed.

Dorset Council Housing Register is the most effective source of social and affordable housing need, with each applicant being vetted following completion of a comprehensive form, detailing their local connection, their need and level of affordability. However, with so few social or affordable houses available, particularly in rural villages, many households who are eligible, do not apply. Others would not consider themselves as potentially eligible, not realising that their situation qualifies them as 'in need'. There are many reasons why households do not consider registering and will continue living in circumstances that are less than adequate or suitable, often they will manage until the situation reaches crisis due to poor health, loss of income, or breakdown in relationships etc.

Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group felt that a housing needs survey would help identify the type, size and tenure of housing needed at local level with responses direct from people living in the community or having a connection with the area.

This report includes all three sources of information to give an overall understanding of the housing need specific to the parishes of Puncknowle and Swyre.

Citizen Space, a web based community engagement platform was used to design and deliver the online and print version of the survey, in consultation with Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Council and scrutiny from the relevant departments in Dorset Council, with accessibility and relevance in mind, as well as compliance with the Neighbourhood Planning process.

The survey was promoted prior to and during the survey, using leaflets and posters designed by Puncknowle & Swyre Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, delivered to residents in the Parishes, emails were sent to local businesses and posters being put up in community locations. Neighbouring Parish Councils were also informed and had promotional posters. The survey was promoted in local press, Bride Valley News October and November Editions, Bridport News and Dorset Echo and also on social media by the Steering Group and Dorset Council. Dorset Council advertised the survey on their website and intranet.

Flyers with a link and QR code to Citizen Space were hand-delivered to every household and business in the three villages of Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington and the surrounding hamlets. Posters with the survey link and QR code were put up in community and public spaces. Printed copies of the survey were also made available and in person or phone assistance was offered to help complete the forms.

In addition, Puncknowle & Swyre Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group held drop-in events in all three villages during the survey period, to provide help to complete the survey, answer questions and receive feedback.

The survey asked questions regarding the current housing situation, local connection to the Parishes, the potential need to move within or into the area and asked for opinions regarding support for a small-scale affordable housing development and suggestions about where it might be located.

The response rate was well above average for standard surveys, which reflected the importance of the topic to respondents and the work involved in promoting the survey, especially by the Puncknowle & Swyre Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. It should be noted the response rate is estimated and has been calculated

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as a percentage of the number of households in the Parishes. Of the 11 responses received from outside of the Parishes, 6 had family households living in the area, 5 worked in the area. On balance, it seems reasonable to use the number of households, to create a basis of standard assessment of response rate for comparison to other Housing Needs Surveys.

The analysis was completed by Dorset Community Action and presented at a community meeting held at Puncknowle Village Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The meeting was well attended and had a positive and proactive response, with good questions being asked.

A supplementary survey was carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> February to 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 for 15 respondents that had given email details out of the 36 responses that had answered 'Don't Know' on the online survey, to the question of needing to move to or within the Parishes. The set up on the survey did not allow them to continue to the Housing Needs section of the survey. Based on previous experience of a paper-based survey, respondents had answered 'Don't Know' and then continued with evidence of a housing need. As a result, a further five households were identified as needing to move within the next 5 years. It is possible there was housing need not identified with the 21 'Don't Know' respondents who were not contactable.

## CURRENT HOUSING STATUS

National and county-wide data clearly show that incomes are not keeping up with house prices and rental costs. In September 2023, according to Office for National Statistics (ONS), the average house price to local income ratio in Dorset is **10.25 times higher**, it is believed to be even higher in rural and coastal areas, but specific figures are not currently available. According to Dorset Council Plan 2024 – 2029 'At a Glance' figures **average income** for Dorset is **£30,108 per annum (£2,509 pcm or £579 pw)**, this figure has increased from £28,392 pa, possibly due to more people able to work from home.

Average house prices in Pucknowle, Swyre and West Bexington for the 8 properties for sale on Rightmove, on 23 March 2025 were **£418,000**, with £315,000 being the lowest and £525,000 the highest. The average price of the 4 properties sold in the last year was **£542,500**, the lowest at £450,000 and the highest at £775,000.

There were **0** properties available for rent in Puncknowle, Swyre or West Bexington and no historical data publicly available. On 23 March 2025, there were 2 properties available for private rent within a 3 mile radius, according to [Home.co.uk](https://www.home.co.uk), one with a holiday let condition at £1,490 pcm, the other, a 4 bed property was available for £1,600 pcm. Three properties were available in Bridport, 6 miles away, 2 x 1 bed and 1 x 1 bed with an average rent of £913 pcm. There is a scarcity of properties available for private rent in the area, primarily due to being a popular tourist destination with a high demand for holiday accommodation. According to Dorset Council, 19% of properties in the Parishes are classed as second homes, which are privately owned properties that are periodically occupied, substantially furnished and no persons sole and main residence.

The accepted measure of affordability is housing costs should be 30% of income to be affordable. Based on the above average figures, **rent within 3 miles is currently 64% of income**, compared to 36% in Bridport. According to Experian, most lenders allow for between 4 and 5 times income, to purchase property for the average house price of £418,000 you would **need to be earning 14 times higher than the average income** above. Household income less a 5% deposit of £20,750 would need to be between £78,850 - £103,750pa. Even to purchase the lowest price property at £315,000, the average income is 10.5 times.

The information below is from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Dorset Council Website and gives an overall view of the population, household numbers, tenure, number of bedrooms, household size and age profile of those that completed the Census Survey in 2021.

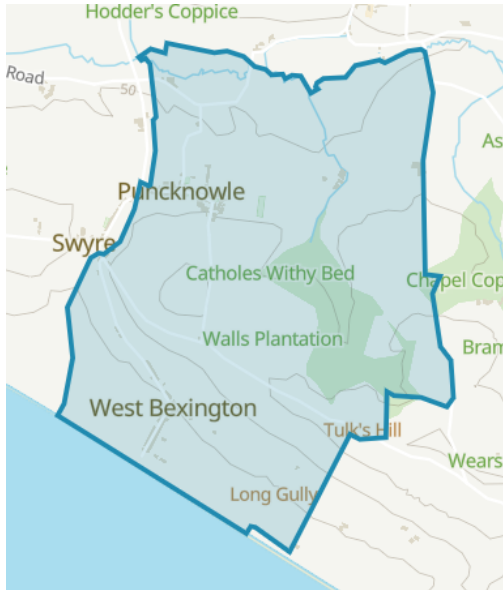
# Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Housing Needs Survey 2025



More information regarding the Parish area is available on both the ONS website and Dorset Council website<sup>3</sup>

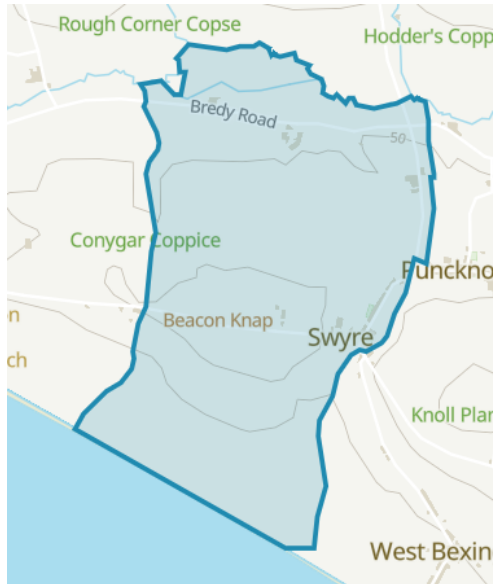
## Puncknowle

Population 442 Households 206



## Swyre

Population 90 Households 41



Total  
Population = 532

Total  
Households = 247

**Puncknowle figures include West Bexington**

### Tenure of household

**Puncknowle** | (England)

Owns outright **62.6%** (32.5%)

Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership **16.7%** (29.8%)

Social rented **4.4%** (17.1%)

Private rented or lives rent free **16.3%** (20.6%)

% of all households

### Tenure of household

**Swyre** | (England)

Owns outright **64.3%** (32.5%)

Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership **21.4%** (29.8%)

Social rented **2.4%** (17.1%)

Private rented or lives rent free **11.9%** (20.6%)

% of all households

The vertical black line indicates the comparison with the national average, clearly showing the overwhelming number of properties owned outright in the area. Significantly less properties are available for social rent. According to Dorset Council records 2.8% of homes belong to Housing Association.

<sup>3</sup> [Build a custom area profile - Office for National Statistics](https://build-a-custom-area-profile-office-for-national-statistics)  
<https://gi.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/insights/AreaProfiles/Search>

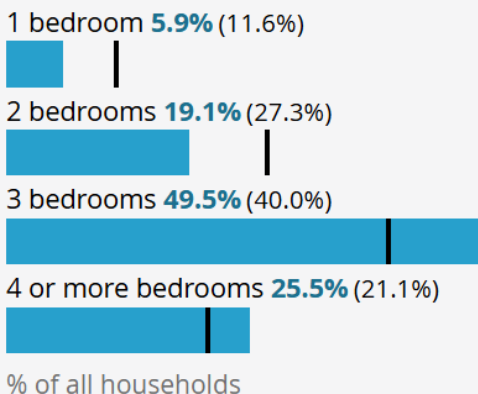
# Puncknowle & Swyre Parish Housing Needs Survey 2025



## Puncknowle

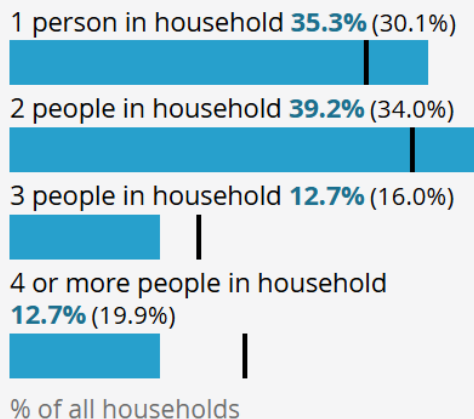
### Number of bedrooms

**Puncknowle** | (England)



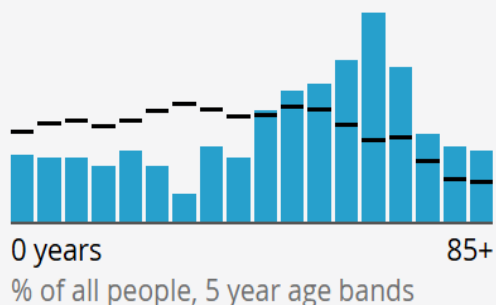
### Household size

**Puncknowle** | (England)



### Age profile

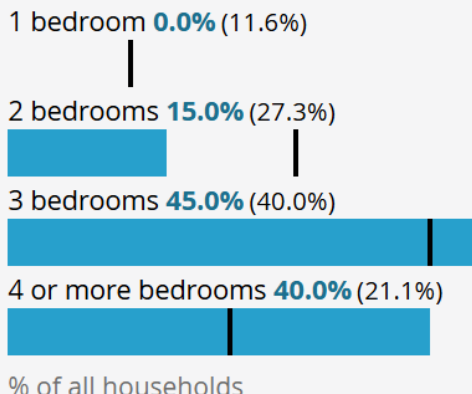
**Puncknowle** — (England)



## Swyre

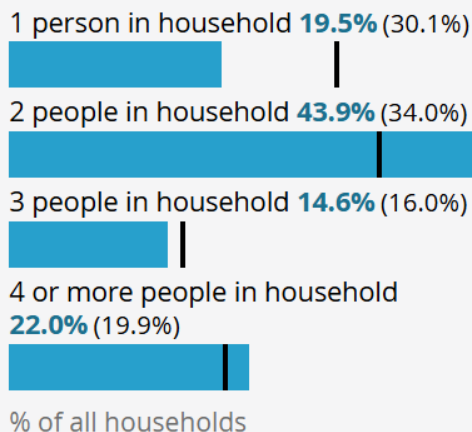
### Number of bedrooms

**Swyre** | (England)



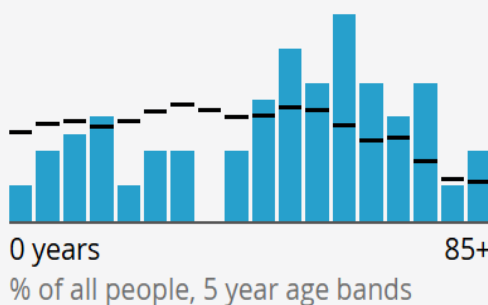
### Household size

**Swyre** | (England)



### Age profile

**Swyre** — (England)



This illustrates a definite lack of one bed properties and of two bed homes, whereas three and four+ bed houses are above the national average.

Significant number of 2 people households, suggesting many properties are likely underoccupied, with above average 1 person households in Puncknowle and West Bexington.

The age profile shows the older demographic is above the national average starting at 45 yrs, with noticeably fewer residents of younger working age 20 – 44yrs.

The Housing Needs

Survey data closely relates to the Office of National Statistics (ONS) percentages, except there were more respondents from 2 person households at 61%, by comparison to the average ONS two person households of 41.6% (39.2% in Puncknowle and 43.9% in Swyre).

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## PRE-EXISTING EVIDENCE OF HOUSING NEED

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2025, Dorset Council had 6,856 households on the Housing Register, with more applications coming in than those accessing housing via Dorset Home Choice. It gives an indication of affordable and social housing need in the area, although not everyone who is eligible will apply and those that do, do not necessarily tick 'Puncknowle & Swyre' as a local connection because of the known lack of social or affordable housing availability in the area.

Every household on the list has been verified and must produce evidence to show their local connection to the area, if they indicate they have one. There were 7 households indicating a local connection to the Parishes that are on the housing register; only 1 household responded to the survey. Those who did not respond to the survey may have considered their housing need as already identified or may have been unaware of the survey taking place. Six of these have family living in the Parishes, with 1 working in the area. Two households live in the area and five households live within 12 miles of the Parishes.

For further information about the Dorset Council Housing Register, please visit <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/housing-register>

Dorset Council housing allocations policy is designed not only to consider those most in need of housing to bid on properties, but the policy is also tailored to consider a household's 'local connection' to an area as a priority.

Local Connection means living or have lived in the community, have family who are living or have lived in the community or work in the area for more than 16 hours a week – this connection must be evidenced. For information regarding eligibility and local connection criteria, please visit <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/eligibility-criteria-for-the-housing-register>

This is particularly important in rural Dorset, where most people are fairly self-sufficient but those connections provide social interaction and support when needed, including care and transport. Those without a local connection may find they become isolated and have difficulty accessing the essential services they may need because of a lack of an existing support structure and services.

These households on the Housing Register have indicated a **Local Connection to the Parishes**. They will have priority, regardless of which band they are in, if they have applied for housing where there is a related planning condition (commonly called Section 106) or a Local Lettings Policy in place, this does not include former Council housing stock.

Puncknowle & Swyre - Local Connection Housing Need:				
14/01/2025				
Count of Band	Bedrooms			
Row Labels	1	2	3	Grand Total
<b>Band C - Medium Housing Need</b>	3		2	5
<b>Band D - Low Housing Need</b>	1	1		2
<b>Grand Total</b>	4	1	2	7

Puncknowle & Swyre - Preferred Area Housing Need:					
14/01/2025					
Count of Band	Bedrooms				
Row Labels	1	2	3	5	Grand Total
<b>Submitted online</b>	1	1			2
<b>Band A - Urgent Housing Need</b>			1		1
<b>Band B - High Housing Need</b>	4	5	2	1	12
<b>Band C - Medium Housing Need</b>	1				1
<b>Band D - Low Housing Need</b>	7	1	1		9
<b>Grand Total</b>	13	7	4	1	25

The **Preferred Area** numbers are households who have ticked that Puncknowle & Swyre as an area they would like to live in but do not have a local connection to the Parish. They may have a local connection to neighbouring parishes or to the wider county of Dorset. It is possible they may be on the 'Exceptions List' which includes Forces Veterans.

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## HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY OUTCOMES

### GENERAL

There were 15 households indicating they were considering moving house into or within the communities of Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington.

- 8 preferred Puncknowle, 3 chose Swyre, 1 West Bexington and 3 had No Preference
- 32 said they 'Didn't Know' if they would be planning to move, 10 of those do not live in the area but have a local connection.
- 38 people in total - 29 are over 18yrs, 10 are young people under 17yrs.
- 6 households described as family, 8 households as couples and 1 single person.
- 9 households have lived in the Parish for more than 10 years, 4 households have lived in the Parish for between 3 and 10 years, 1 has lived in the Parish 1 to 3 years, 1 has lived in the Parish for less than 1 year and has family living in the Parish.
- 4 of the above households currently live elsewhere, Loders, Litton Cheney, Portland and Westfield in Devon and have a local connection through work, residency or family.

### HOUSING NEED

- 5 households currently living with family, would like to live independently, cannot afford to move out.
- 3 households need to live close to work.
- 2 households would like to move to larger home.
- 1 household is living in tied accommodation.
- 1 household needs more outside space and more parking.
- 1 household is looking to downsize.
- 1 is struggling to afford current accommodation.
- 1 needs to live closer to family.

### TENURE AND NUMBER OF BEDROOMS

Puncknowle & Swyre - Housing Needs Survey Results				12/02/2025
Tenure	Bedrooms			
	1	2	3	Total
Self-Build (Social/Affordable Rent) *			3	3
Social/Affordable Rent		1		1
Private Rent ** (1 Ground Floor)		2		2
Shared Ownership			1	1
Open Market £200,000 - £300,000 (Discount) ***		3	1	4
Open Market £300,000 - £400,000			1	1
Open Market £400,000 - £500,000 (Self Build)			1	1
Open Market Over £500,000		1	1	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>

\*Self Build – if planning application not successful, 3 Social/Affordable homes needed

\*\* Private Rent – unlikely to source due to scarcity, could access and be included in social/affordable rent

\*\*\* Open Market £200,000 to £300,000 - may be suited to First Homes or Discounted Market Homes, as they are unlikely to be able to purchase on open market, due to scarcity of available properties and significant competition from outside of the area.

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## HOUSING TENURE OPTIONS

Including the information from Dorset Council Housing Register, there is a need for an additional **21** mixed tenure homes, ranging from one bed to three bed homes, in the villages of Puncknowle, Swyre and West Bexington.

The Housing Register indicates need for the following Social/Affordable Rent

4 x 1 bed property, 1 x 2 bed property and 2 x 3 bed property (1 responded to survey – shared ownership)

**TOTAL HOUSING NEED = 21 Households (15 from Survey + 6 from Housing Register)**

**Open Market Housing** was a preferred option for four households who indicated they could afford to buy. Whilst there are properties available for sale, between £300,000 - £500,000+, they are in competition with a national, potentially global market and will not have priority because of their local connection. There could be some provision made to include one 2 bed and two or three 3 bed open market homes, either as infill, redevelopment of existing property or as cross subsidy to help fund an affordable housing scheme – these will be dependent on Dorset Local Plan and National Planning Policies.

**Discount Market Homes or First Homes** offers the opportunity for those four households that can afford £200 - £300,000 but may find it difficult to find open market property in this range. As all those respondents would like to live independently, they may qualify for discounted home ownership, through First Homes - 3 x 2 bed and 1 x 3 bed. Discounted Homes are available at up to 80% of market value and households with an income of £80,000 or less are eligible.

**Shared Home Ownership** is also a good way to start on the housing ladder, with the ability to purchase part of the equity in a property for example 25%, then paying rent for the 75% portion of the property, in effect renting at 75% market rent. If the property rises in value, so does the 25% portion that is owned, which could make a good deposit on an open market home later. 1 household was interested in a shared ownership property, and it could also be a suitable route for the 2 households who were considering private rent – however one of those properties will need to be Ground Floor (G/F) accommodation. Households with an income of £80,000 or less are eligible.

**Self-Build or Custom Build** is encouraged in Dorset. Custom build refers to projects where a developer helps an individual or group to create their own home by coordinating the design and construction process, allowing for significant input into the final layout and design. It differs from self-build in that the individual has a developer oversee and manage the project rather than organizing everything themselves. Provided planning conditions are complied with, 3 or 4 households were interested in Self Build properties, with 2 possibly 3 already in the pipeline. However, if planning is not successful, 3 households will be needing social/affordable rent.

**Private rental properties** were not available during the survey period. Provided the households have an income of less than £60,000 pa or are over 55, they may be eligible for social housing. The 2 x 2 bed (one is G/F accommodation) and 1 x 3 bed Rental Properties have been included as social/affordable rent, due to scarcity of private rent

**Social/Affordable Rent** is usually available from a Housing Association, also known as a Registered Provider, many of whom took over existing council stock. Social rent is calculated as a formula that includes 30% of the rent is based on relative property values, 70% of the rent is based on relative local earnings and is also based on the number of bedrooms you have. Social rent is approximately 60% of the open market rent. Affordable rent is based on 75% or 80% of the open market rent costs and includes service charges. Applications must be

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made to the Housing Register to determine eligibility based on your needs, circumstances and a household income of £60,000pa or less, unless you are over 55, when your income is not assessed.

## HOUSING NEEDS SUMMARY

With 21 households needing to move for a number of reasons, within the next 5 years, it is important that Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group consider how the Plan can offer the best solutions based on the tenures indicated and size of homes. The 21 homes could be built organically over a period of time or could be spread across identified sites to be built as and when funding is available or all in one or two suitable sites, if found, to minimise disruption and quickly deal with the housing deficit in the area. Many developers and housing associations are reluctant to deliver sites of fewer than 20 due to the costs and logistics involved, which may also be a consideration.

However, recent changes in planning and other government policies are also influencing factors and key to any development is having suitable plot(s) to build on. The figures are not prescriptive, they are a guide as to what has been evidenced as needed in the area and some flexibility may be needed to adjust and adapt according to what the community is willing and able to support, within the timeframe of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Puncknowle & Swyre - Overall Housing Need Summary				23/03/2025
Tenure	Bedrooms			
	1	2	3	Total
Self-Build (Social/Affordable Rent) *			3	3
Social/Affordable Rent	4	1	2	7
Private Rent ** (1 Ground Floor)		2		2
Shared Ownership			1	1
Open Market £200,000 - £300,000 (Discount) ***		3	1	4
Open Market £300,000 - £400,000			1	1
Open Market £400,000 - £500,000 (Self Build)			1	1
Open Market Over £500,000		1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Option	Total	Percent
Yes	91	67.91%
No	11	8.21%
Maybe	32	23.88%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

The survey revealed strong support for small-scale affordable housing, please see above table.

### POSITIVE FEEDBACK HIGHLIGHTED:

- Strong need for affordable housing for younger residents.
- Support for older residents to downsize and stay local.
- Desire to retain families and workers with local ties.

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- Could address concern regarding locals being forced to leave due to housing costs.
- Affordable housing is seen as a way to support those with local ties while maintaining the area's rural economy and character.

## CONDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM "MAYBE" RESPONSES FOCUSED ON:

- Homes must be high-quality, durable, and match village aesthetics.
- Must be truly affordable and prioritised for local people.
- Development should consider local facilities and infrastructure.
- Design should reflect the area's history and natural surroundings.

## CONCERNS RAISED INCLUDED:

- Risk of overdevelopment and loss of village character.
- Distrust in developers and the planning system.
- Lack of suitable land due to agricultural use or protected status.
- Poor infrastructure (transport, utilities, services).

## ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS INCLUDED:

- Reducing second/holiday homes to free up existing housing.
- Subsidised rents instead of new builds.
- Allowing families to build on their own land.
- Involving local tradespeople in construction.

## SUGGESTED LOCATIONS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There were 63 responses to this question, and whilst many sites were suggested, they will only be considered if they meet the planning criteria for a 'Rural Exception Site' and pass an intensive Site Assessment process, which includes proximity to protected landscapes, archaeological sites, flood risk, highway access etc.. As part of the Neighbourhood Planning process, the community will be consulted regarding sites that come forward and meet the above prerequisites. An official call for sites will follow, this list below are suggestions only.

### SITE LOCATIONS

- Top of Hazel Lane, Swyre
- Land immediately West of Hazel Lane
- South side of Looke Lane
- Field opposite the houses in Swyre, to the North of the A35, past the Church
- Look Farm
- Fields next to Springfield, extend Springfield Close
- Hoopers/Looke Lane
- Swyre Lane
- Swyre Caravan Site
- West Bexington
- Land used for pasture, accessible from B3157, close to bus stop by the War Memorial
- On or off Clay Lane, above current housing either side
- Somewhere near the Bull Inn, Puncknowle
- North East of Rectory Lane

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- Old Berwick Farm Site
- Manor Farm buildings, Puncknowle
- Farm track that joins up with clay lake
- On the side of Napier Close – not the paddock side
- Caravan Park, Home Farm, down Rectory Lane, Puncknowle
- Home Farm Caravan Site

## OTHER SUGGESTIONS

- Fill in Gaps
- Small plots of land adjacent to different parts of the villages
- Garden plots
- Brownfield sites
- Barn Conversions
- Estate Land
- Sites in proximity to bus stops
- Prefer new houses were not on a single site but in small units within the existing built landscape

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Protect green spaces
- Ensure Bride Valley views are not impaired
- Ensure adequate parking and Wifi
- Improvements to infrastructure – public transport, water and sewage management
- Need to remain affordable in perpetuity and for local people

## CONCLUSION

- **21 households** have an evidenced housing need (15 from the survey, 6 from the Housing Register), mostly for **2–3 bed homes**.
- **Housing need spans tenures:** social/affordable rent, shared ownership, discounted market homes, and self-build.
- **Open market housing** is aspirational but unaffordable for most; discounted options like First Homes may help.
- **Private rental is scarce**, often replaced by holiday lets; social/affordable rent is more viable.
- **Self-build interest exists** but depends on planning success; fallback options may be needed.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** can guide development by identifying suitable sites, tenures, and housing types.
- **Community Land Trust** is suggested for greater local control over housing delivery.
- A **mixed scheme** (e.g. 4 open market, 4 discounted, 9 affordable rent, 4 shared ownership) could meet current and future needs.
- Alternatively, a **smaller scheme** (e.g. 10 affordable rent homes) could address immediate need.
- The report provides **guidance, not prescriptions**, and should be used flexibly as circumstances and policies evolve.