

Hook Norton

Community Consultation Report
April 2018



lemondrizzle

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1. Exec summary

The great response to the survey gave a strong indication of community feeling.

The survey clearly shows that there is wide support for the project in the village.

There is a need with existing residents for new, energy efficient, affordable homes.

37 local people actively want to live in one of the new community homes. Their needs and aspirations vary but they are the tip of a much larger potential audience. How large will depend on the qualifying criteria for the scheme. Although only one was on the Housing Register, 7 have disabilities, 15 are on minimum wage, 4 received benefits and 6 are on a fix/low pension. All but one have left contact details so further consultation is possible.

Although houses are the strongest preference, there is sufficient demand in all areas for the developer to have flexibility over the housing mix and financial model in a small development.

Negative survey responses were generally about increased pressures on the existing village infrastructure as well as concerns about parking.

2. Introduction

In January 2018 Lemon Drizzle were commissioned by Hook Norton Low Carbon to design community engagement activity and prepare a survey and analyse the results. The project's aim was to gather the views of the community of Hook Norton on the needs and opportunities for a small, affordable and sustainable housing project.

This was more than a Housing Needs Survey. While it aimed to assess interest and local need, it was not designed to duplicate the 2011 survey. This project was not assessing social housing need or municipal quotas, but measuring the needs and desire for a different approach to housing in a project that would test new community development principles.

There has been considerable commercial housing development in the area in recent years, adding to the spread of the village, but there are very few affordable options. This project aims to offer a new approach in that the land would be donated by the local district council to form a Community Land Trust and the development would be delivered by a non-profit organisation. The removal of a large portion of cost and the need to make a profit would allow genuinely affordable houses to be built. The scale and nature of these houses would be based on the needs of local people and the design would be intrinsically low carbon and sustainable.

The mix and style of the homes will be based on feedback from the community which will influence ongoing discussions and design. The feedback will also inform the subsequent Feasibility Study which will explore and develop different options as the project genuinely aims to make a long term positive contribution to the village and doesn't want to build cheap homes that will be sold at a short-term profit.

Parish profile

Key Stats – from [2011 Census](#)

All Residents:	2,596
Number of households:	1,071
Average household size:	2.40
Residents in households:	2,593
Residents in communal living:	3
Area (hectares):	3,289
Population density (people per hectare):	0.80

The parish (and ward) of Hook Norton is within Cherwell district. More information can be found on the community website: <http://hook-norton.org.uk/>

Types of housing

Whole house or bungalow:	Total 1,043
Flat, maisonette or apartment:	43

3. Project summary

3.1. The format

The aim of the project was to listen to the community, improve understanding about the potential project and engage people with the development process. To do this we initiated several activities.

- a short [video](#) was made by interviewing and filming local residents at random on a Saturday morning in the High Street. The community were very supportive and spoke openly about their feelings on the need for affordable, sustainable housing in the village.
- Leaflets and posters promoting the community meetings were distributed throughout the village and information was shared on the village website and the Hook Norton Low Carbon [website](#). A full-page article explaining the concept of the project and inviting the whole community to attend two open meetings was printed in the Hook Norton newsletter.
- Two open community meetings were held in Hook Norton at the end of February. One was held on a weekday evening, the other during the day on Saturday. This was to allow as many people as possible to attend. The aim of the meetings was to introduce the concept, explore it's possibilities and hear people's views and ideas and try to motivate them to complete the forthcoming survey Over 50 people attended each event. However, the demographic was limited with a low attendance by those under 45.
- A survey was delivered to each household and also made available online. The survey aimed to be clear and friendly in layout and be easy to navigate and as short as possible to encourage completion.

3.2. Community engagement workshops

The two Open Meetings started with introductions from HNLC, a showing of the short film, "Community Housing in Hooky - What's Your Vision? ", followed by a presentation from Architectural Designer Charlie Luxton. After a question and answer session the attendees were asked to participate in a vision workshop. The room was divided into five tables. A series of five questions were proposed and the groups discussed each of them on their tables before feeding back to the room as a whole. This was designed to stimulate conversations between villagers and to allow issues and concerns to be openly raised without confrontation.

The feedback on the various questions can be seen below as Word Clouds.

While the overall responses about the project were extremely positive, there were lots of frank discussions about potential issues, cynicism about the project's viability and the

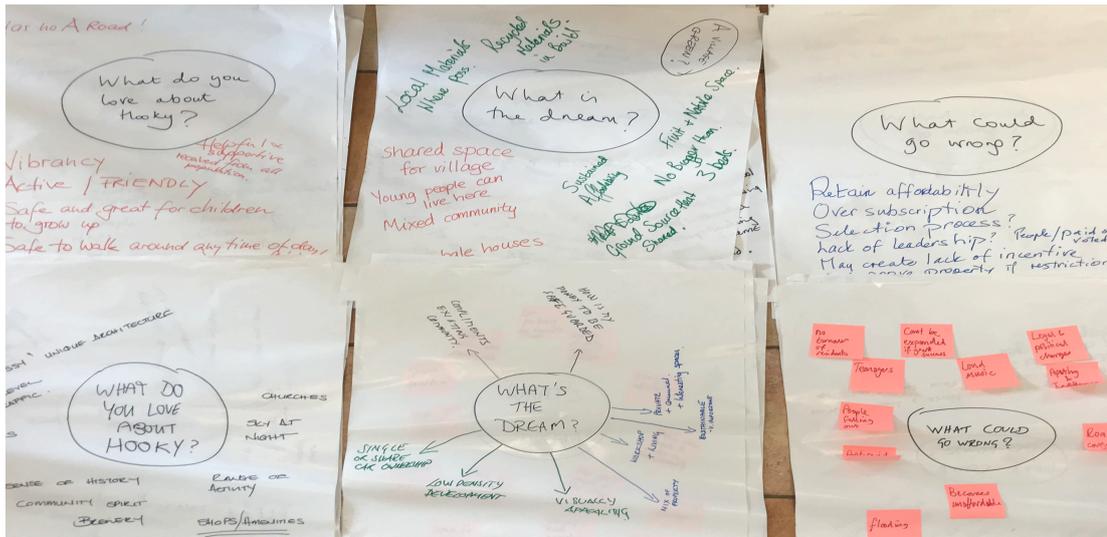


Figure 5: Flip charts from workshops



Figure 6: Saturday workshop

3.3. Survey

On Sunday 11th March 2,000 surveys were delivered to each home around the village with the aim of every household receiving two copies. Everyone aged 16yrs and over was invited to complete the survey. A link to the online survey was also provided to ensure that everyone who wanted to respond was able. Paper surveys were collected from households on 20th March and many were deposited at a large collection box at the village shop. Some additional responses were received after that at the village collection point. The online survey was officially closed on 7th April.

All surveys were returned to Lemon Drizzle for processing and analysis.

The 2011 census identifies Hook Norton as having, in total, 1071 households and 2,596 residents. A total of 548 surveys were completed (219 were on line, 329 were on paper), giving a whole population response of 21%.

On return it was found that 69 of the paper surveys included multiple answers for question 6. These surveys could not be processed with the others and, rather than discarding them as spoiled, they were analysed separately and are referred to as Survey

2. Where appropriate figures from the 69 will be shown in green. Significant differences or anomalies in the data are included in the Analysis.

Not all respondees answered all questions. However, there was an extremely high return rate, with only three questions receiving less than 366 responses; Q16 – How long have you lived in Hook Norton?, Q29 - Would you like to be involved as the project progresses? And Q31 – Additional Comments.

94% (100%) of the respondees lived in Hook Norton and just 3 (12) people only worked in HN with the rest living and or working in the village. All responses are valid ie; none neither worked, lived in the village or had relatives in the village. (A third of all those answering the survey had relatives in the village).

The survey does not claim to be representative of the entire population of the parish but it is encouraging to get such a high return with a good demographic and socio-economic distribution of responders. While those aged between 40 and 75 represented 70% (79%) of responses there were still responses from all other age groups consulted. When compared to 2011 census data the main group of under responders were 30-40 year olds.

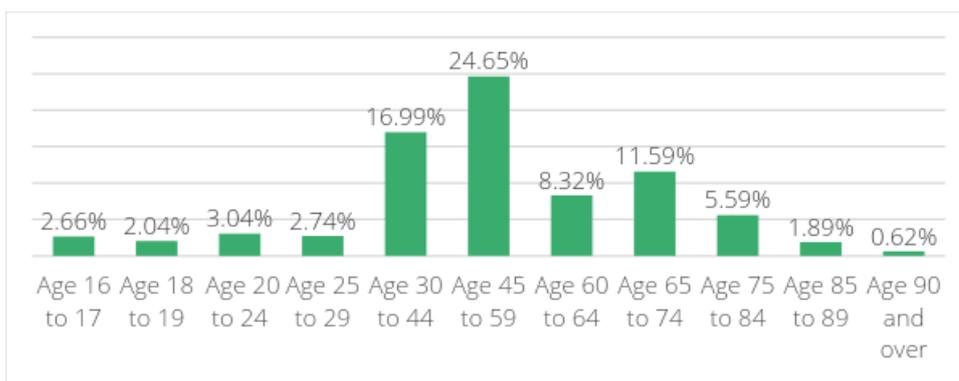


Figure 7: 2011 Census population age data

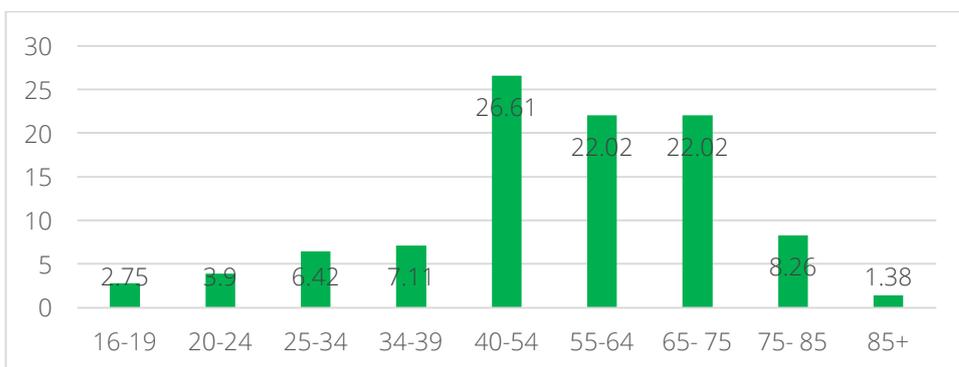


Figure 8: LD survey responders age data

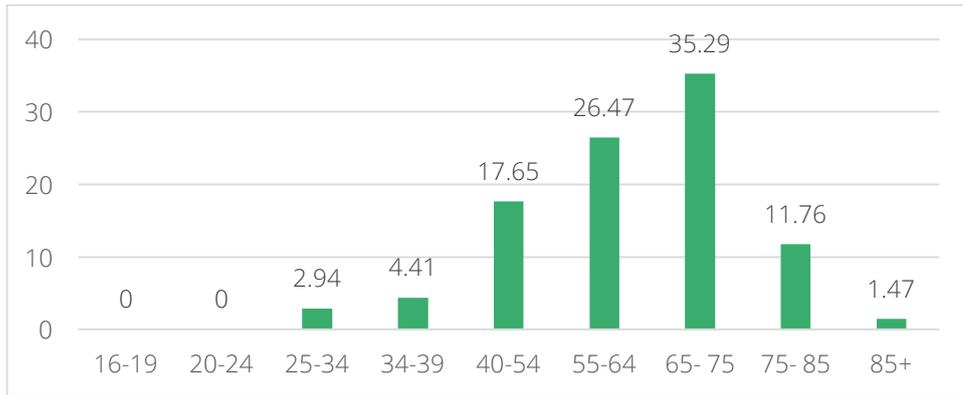


Figure 9: Age distribution in survey 2

The number of men and women responding to the survey was roughly equivalent to the local population distribution which represents a balanced response. Survey 2 was 60:40 women to men.

While not exactly in line with census levels of economic activity, the overall distribution is similar and again suggests a representative response.

Tenure status figures are similar in all surveys. With home ownership at 79-80% in both surveys and 2011 census. This distribution again suggests a representative response.

19 responses were from people whose primary residence was not in Hook Norton. These responses have been individually assessed for their validity. Several were from students living away from home. Most were from family members unable to live in the village. Four were from people with second homes and were filtered out of the analysis section.

4. Analysis

4.1. What were people's thoughts on what the village needed?

When asked what they thought of the current housing provision in Hook Norton 74% of respondees thought that there were areas that needed addressing; with 45% saying that affordable housing was their primary concern. 26% felt that the current mix was just right.

However, Survey 2 told a different story with 100% of respondees thinking there were areas that need addressing; with, 'Homes that are genuinely affordable' uniting the most responses (96%).

24% (38%) of respondees said that they knew someone who had left the village in the last five years due to lack of suitable housing. While those living in the village longest had the most likelihood of knowing people who had left (32%) it was interesting to see that even 10% of newcomers recognised it as an issue.

56% (65%) of responses thought strongly that starter homes at were the most needed, followed by, affordable and 'right-sized' homes.

With homes with a single floor ranking last (27% (32%).

4.2. What did people say they needed?

30% (130 out of 436 people) 36% (25 out of 69) said that they or someone in their household would be looking for a new home in Hook Norton in the next 5 years. Of those, 50% 33% were looking to downsize with the vast majority hoping to buy (41%)(29%). 45% 15% were hoping to rent or buy a starter home and 55% 21% would like to rent or buy a family home. Obviously there is some duplication in those figures so it might be more helpful to look at the preferences for type of home.

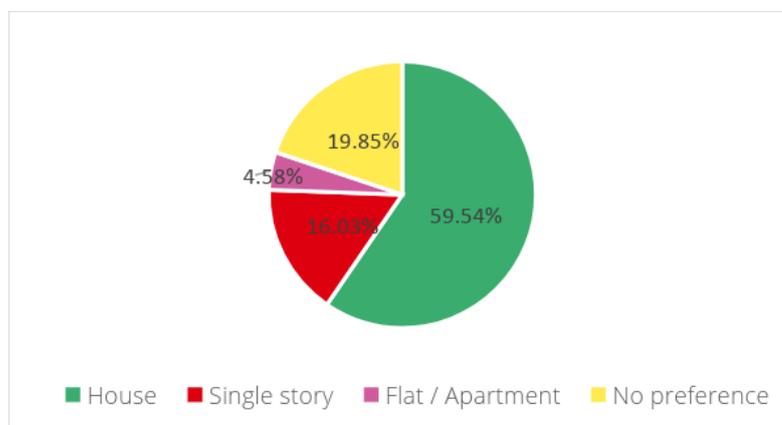


Figure 10: showing preferences amongst those who expressed a desire for a new home

Survey 2 had similar proportions but there were no preferences for Flat/Apartments.

It is also interesting to note that, amongst those who expressed a desire for a new home in the next five years, none were unemployed, 68% already owned their own home. 18 are on a fixed or low pension, 38 are on low or minimum wage, 7 were on the Housing Register.

Most respondees are either employed or retired.

If the results are further filtered by those reporting to 'need' to move to different sized home (people) the preference for houses increases as does those wanting single level living.

When the demographics for this cohort is examined the distribution is much more even.

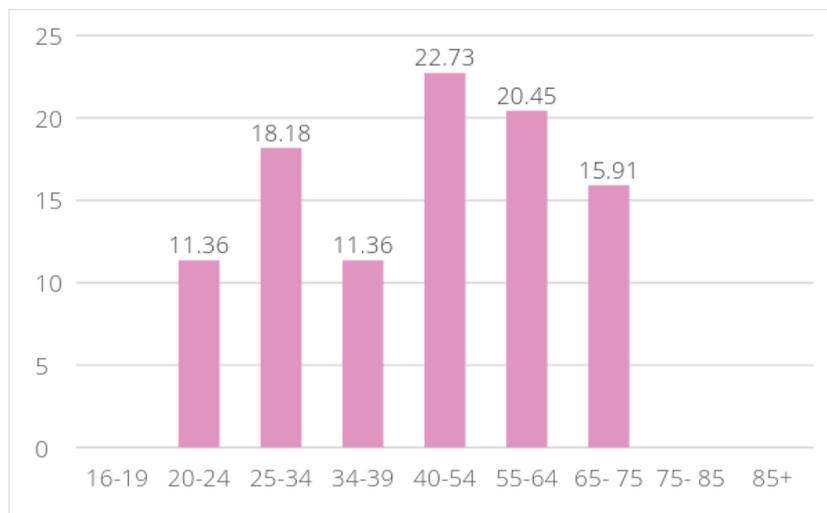


Figure 11: Showing age distribution of those 'needing' a new home in the next five years

In broader terms, looking at all responders, energy efficiency (66%) and low running costs (64%) were most important factors wanted in a new home followed by privacy and security. 14% of respondees didn't feel energy efficiency was important to them. All the 'shared facilities' options received low support while private outdoor space ranked 5th in importance.

In the cohort that 'need' to move, privacy and security were the main drivers followed by energy efficiency

67% felt strongly that the homes needed to relate well to the surrounding architecture and 51% were strongly in support of landscaping that is wildlife friendly.

The comments section (see Annex) was a great indicator of underlying trends with the majority being positive. The main concerns were for priority to go to existing residents and the fear of pressure on existing village services.

4.3. What was the interest in the project?

Question 29 asked if respondees were interested in living in one of the new community homes.

37 people answered positively and 36 left contact details.

If we consider the 37 people who stated they were actively interested in living in the proposed development the main features they want to see in the homes are:

- Private and secure
- Low running costs
- Private outdoor space
- Energy efficient

There was a low preference for all the shared space offers. The majority wanted to buy starter homes for young people and smaller affordable homes.

It was also important that;

- Landscaping is wildlife friendly
- Homes relate well to the existing feel of Hook Norton?
- Mixed age groups live side by side
- Homes had low carbon emissions

The most popular types of homes;

	Buy	Rent	Share Ownership
Right size	18	2	1
Starter home	19	4	2
Family home	16	5	0

Key information from the survey about the 37

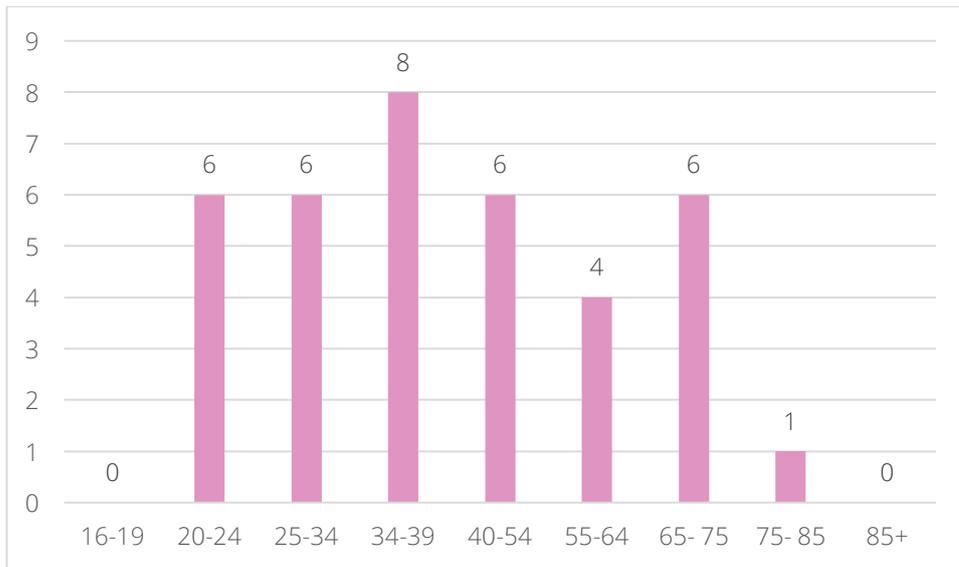


Figure 12: Age distribution of those interested in living in one of the properties

- 1 is on the Housing Register
- 7 have disabilities
- 15 are on minimum wage
- 4 received benefits
- 6 are on a fix/low pension

Comments from this group;

Some people "fall through the net". A suitable home for a single elderly man who has been connected to Hook Norton for 40 years is desperately needed. He does not seem to have a chance of social housing at the moment.

At the moment I am renting a property that could be used by a family. I am single and don't need all the room I have. My rent and all other bills i.e council tax, oil etc take three quarters of my fixed income, not including food. This scheme would be of huge benefit to myself.

I am a working adult living with my parents in the village as I am unable to move out due to financing a home on my own. I have lived in hook norton all of my life

5. Summary and conclusions

There is no doubt that there is a need with existing residents for new, energy efficient, affordable homes. 37 local people actively want to live in one of the new community homes. Their needs and aspirations vary but they are the tip of a much larger potential audience. How large will depend on the qualifying criteria for the scheme.

Although houses are the strongest preference, there is sufficient demand in all areas for the developer to have flexibility over the housing mix and financial model. The majority want to buy a home but there are distinct cohorts who would be interested in renting, (although not those downsizing).

There was general support in the village for a new development. Most negative comments related to pressures on village services and infrastructure and the requirement to meet needs of local people but not to the development itself.

There were a couple of negative comments about the problem of mixing families at different life stages. However, the attendees at the workshops felt otherwise.

It was also interesting that there had been a high interest in shared spaces at the workshops which was not reflected in the survey. There are several potential reasons for this including; those at the meetings were given more information on the nature of potential shared spaces and, the survey did not have sufficient space to explain concepts and designs. Many comments on the survey suggested the need for further information to be shared.

One idea that came through strongly in the comments was sheltered housing. It is not surprising, given the older demographic living in Hook Norton, that there was a strong interest from people wanting to stay in the village as they got older.

It is also highly possible that young people weren't engaged satisfactorily. They were underrepresented at the meetings and surveys aren't the most engaging tool.