

Letchworth Garden City Local Housing Needs Study

Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation

March 2019

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Executive Summary

This Local Housing Needs Study has been produced by Lichfields on behalf of the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to provide an assessment of affordable housing needs in Letchworth in the context of the allocation of land North of Letchworth, which is expected to provide c.900 new homes. This study is one of several reports prepared by Lichfields over recent years for the Foundation.

Background

The purpose of this study is to help the Foundation understand in more detail, the housing needs of its residents (particularly for affordable housing) and how the allocation North of Letchworth can best serve these needs. In mid-2018 the Foundation commissioned Lichfields and Meeting Place Communications to undertake this research; Lichfields prepared the questions for a housing needs survey (“the survey”) which was then distributed to Letchworth residents by Meeting Place Communications. Lichfields then analysed the results.

Previous research – what we know

Lichfields’ previous reports reviewed publicly-available information and conducted interviews with local agents to build a picture of Letchworth and its housing market. The findings of our previous work are summarised in this study, and are used to identify gaps in our knowledge which the survey could help to fill.

We know that in the mid/late-2000s Letchworth Garden City saw relatively little population and housing growth. In recent years, housing development has picked up which has led to the town’s population reaching a record high of just under 35,000 people. Whilst house prices in Letchworth are similar to the District average, prices across the District have risen sharply in recent years and the ratio of house prices to earnings is now at the highest ever. Entry-level house prices in Letchworth and North Hertfordshire are now around £260,000.

Our work has highlighted several gaps which could be filled by undertaking a local survey. These gaps included the perception of Letchworth, the housing needs of existing households, newly-forming households, elderly households and other types of housing needs (namely self-build and CLT).

Survey findings and implications

The survey achieved good coverage with a range of responses from all tenures and households from different incomes. However, there may be some under-representation of those in the social rented sector in our responses, which should be noted when interpreting results.

New households

Newly-forming households are those (individuals, couples or families) which are currently living as part of another household but would like to move into their own home in the near future. This could be, for example, an adult child (or couple) living in the family home with parents. By undertaking a survey, it is possible to understand what sort of income these people would have and what type of housing they want, which can inform decisions about future housing provision in Letchworth.

The survey found that most newly-forming households wanted to remain living in Letchworth. There is a need for a range of tenures to accommodate newly-forming households; from social rented housing for those with lower incomes and affordable purchase options for those on average (or higher) incomes. There appears to be an affordability ‘gap’ for those on incomes of around £40k-£50k; these households may struggle to obtain anything larger than a 2-bed flat/small house on the open market (without a substantial deposit), but could afford a larger home through shared ownership (where households part own and part rent their home) or discounted market housing (where homes are sold with at least a 20% discount on the market value).

Single person households typically wanted smaller housing, whether owner or rented. For those wanting to move into ownership, shared ownership or discounted market housing might be an option as those in incomes of around £30k might be able to afford a 1-2 bed flat with either discounted market or shared ownership housing. Households forming with others had higher incomes as expected (these were more likely to be dual-income), and these typically expressed a preference for owner-occupied or shared ownership housing. None of these households expressed a preference for flats, which suggests if affordable homes for purchase are provided in Letchworth they should be small family homes with outdoor space suitable for young couples and families.

Older households

In line with national trends, North Hertfordshire and Letchworth are expected to see significant growth in the number of older households in the future, and it is important that their needs are understood. As may be expected, the survey has found that the majority of older households (especially owner-occupiers living in larger housing) typically do not want to move. This may be due to costs/hassle associated with moving, wanting to maintain a large home/extra rooms for visitors or for sentimental reasons, since many will still be living in the family home.

Of those that do want to move, many noted there was a lack of options available currently in Letchworth. Around half stated they would prefer a home on one level (e.g. ground floor flat or bungalow), with around one-third being open to sheltered housing options. The lack of downsizing options highlighted by survey respondents correlates with our research of homes currently for sale in Letchworth, which suggests that there is very little availability of small bungalows available in Letchworth and those that are, are very expensive. Even an older (owner-occupier) household living in a 3-4 bed home is unlikely to be able to raise enough capital to buy bungalows currently on offer in Letchworth, without raising additional funds (e.g. through a mortgage – which is likely to be difficult for older households). Given that the movement of older households out of family homes will subsequently increase the supply of such homes available for families to occupy, the Foundation should consider how the provision of new housing can address the demands of downsizers.

Self-Build and Community Land Trust (CLT) Housing

Finally, the survey suggested that there was some appetite for self-build housing and to a lesser extent CLT housing. Some households were ready immediately to pursue self-build housing, others were still in the planning stage.

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Appendix 3: Review of additional responses

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Local Housing Needs Study has been produced by Lichfields on behalf of the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation (“LGCHF”, “the Foundation”) to provide an assessment of affordable housing needs in Letchworth. This is in the context of the emerging North Hertfordshire Local Plan and the provision of affordable housing on the strategic allocation North of Letchworth. The Foundation wishes to understand in more detail the housing needs, particularly affordable housing need, of its residents and how the allocation North of Letchworth can best serve these needs.
- 1.2 Letchworth Garden City was founded in 1903 by First Garden City Ltd under Ebenezer Howard’s vision to create a ‘third alternative’ way of living which encompassed the benefits of town and country living through zoning, careful design and affordable housing combined with local jobs. In addition, the central ethos was that all profits were reinvested back into the estate; the assets and responsibilities of First Garden City Ltd were transferred to a public-sector organisation in 1962 (the Letchworth Garden City Corporation) and today those responsibilities lie with the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation. Through generation of revenue from its land, the Foundation supports and funds activities in the local community, ranging from the environment, heritage, culture, leisure and wellbeing.

Context

- 1.3 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan (“the Local Plan”) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in June 2017. The Hearing Sessions took place between November 2017 and March 2018, and in November 2018 the Council published its proposed schedule of Main Modifications (MMs). As of March 2019, the North Hertfordshire District Council is consulting on the MMs to the Local Plan.
- 1.4 The MMs clarify that between 2011 and 2031 Letchworth Garden City is expected to see the delivery of 2,167 homes in total (Policy SP2 of MMs). This includes completions and sites with permission to date (totalling 592 homes), 900 homes at North of Letchworth, a further 623 homes on 13 other allocated sites, and 50 homes in the town centre (broad location) (see MMs para 13.214 and Policies LG3 to LG18). Policy SP15 relates to the allocation North of Letchworth and confirms that the site will be expected to deliver a new 2 form of entry primary school, neighbourhood retail and community space, a GP surgery, plots for self-build housing and a care home. As per Policy HS2, 40% of dwellings will need to be affordable, with an expectation that 65% of these will be rented and 35% will other forms of affordable housing.

Previous work

- 1.5 This report represents one of a series of reports prepared by Lichfields on behalf of the Foundation in recent years:
- 1 LGCHF Economic Assessment of Growth Options, November 2013. This Report undertook an assessment of the present socioeconomic position of Letchworth Garden City and an assessment of the impact of different scales of expansion. This was undertaken in the context of the then-emerging North Hertfordshire Local Plan;
 - 2 LGCHF Economic Assessment of Growth Options Update, April 2016, which was an update to the November 2013 Report; and
 - 3 LGCHF Local Housing Study, August 2016. This report undertook a more detailed assessment of the current local housing market in Letchworth, reviewed the need for

affordable housing and undertook several further scenarios for future housing needs in the town. This report is herein referred to as the “LHS”.

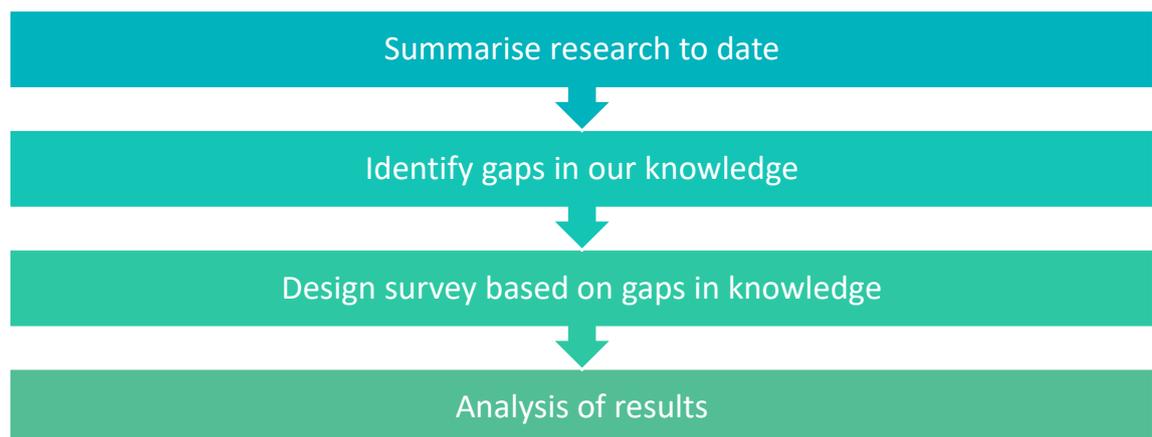
Purpose of this report

- 1.6 In mid-2018 the Foundation commissioned Lichfields to undertake research and analysis on local housing needs in Letchworth. Having previously prepared a number of reports for the Foundation, Lichfields prepared the questions for a housing needs survey (“the survey”) which was then distributed to Letchworth residents by Meeting Place Communications. The survey was distributed between October and December 2018 and closed to responses on 3rd January 2019. This report represents the next stage in the process.
- 1.7 The purpose of this report is two-fold:
- 1 To summarise – and update where possible – research undertaken to date reviewing the housing market context of Letchworth, including housing completions, socio-economic characteristics and house prices; and
 - 2 To analyse data collected by Meeting Place Communications and the Foundation as part of the survey conducted in Letchworth in October-December 2018. This is to:
 - a Understand the needs – specifically for affordable housing - of households currently living in Letchworth;
 - b Understand in more detail the needs associated with other types of affordable housing, including shared ownership and other affordable homes for purchase, particularly associated with concealed and newly-forming households; and
 - c Identify whether there are any other specific housing needs which the allocation North of Letchworth could help to address.

Methodology

- 1.8 This report has been prepared based on a broad methodology as set out in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Broad methodology for Local Housing Needs study



Source: Lichfields

Report structure

- 1.9 This report is set out in as follows:
- 1 **Part 1: Letchworth’s Housing Market** – provides a brief summary of the local housing market context (including the findings of our interviews with estate agents undertaken as

part of the LHS), summarising previous work undertaken by Lichfields on behalf of the Foundation (in August 2016) and providing updates where possible. This section also highlights gaps in existing data which the survey will help to fill. Amongst other indicators, it reviews completions in Letchworth, house prices and turnover, migration, income and affordability and demand for affordable housing;

- 2 **Part 2: Local housing needs** – summarises and analyses the findings of the survey which was undertaken in Letchworth;
- 3 **Summary and Conclusions** – summarises the findings of Parts 1 and 2, including the implications of the findings for future provision of housing in Letchworth.

Part 1 – Letchworth’s Housing Market

2.0

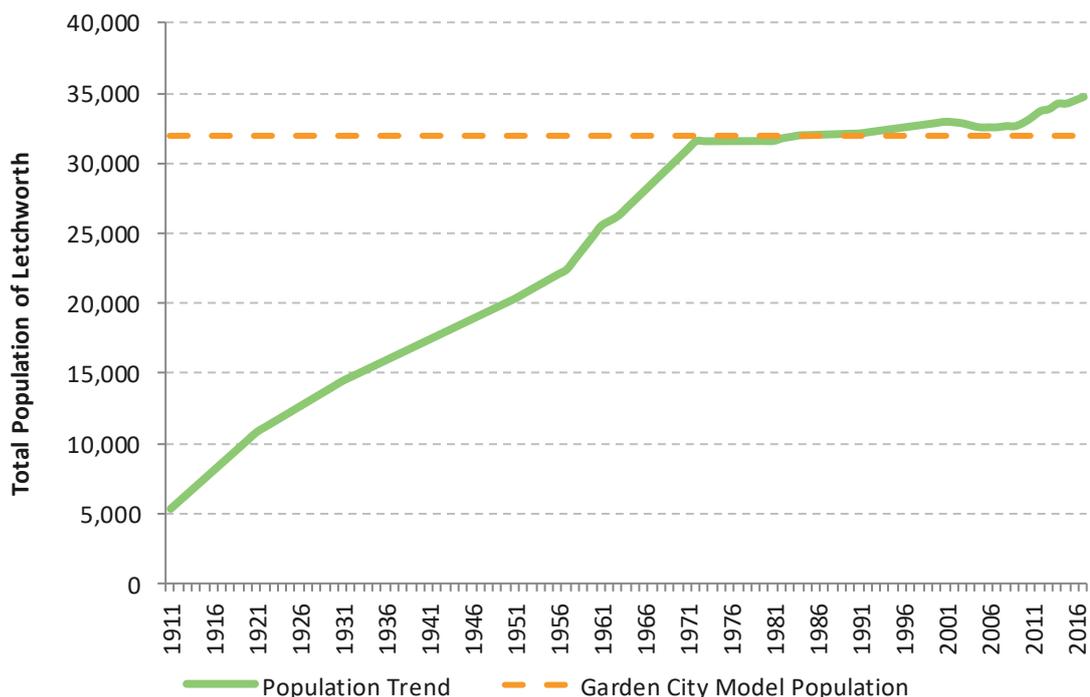
People and households

Population growth

2.1

Letchworth’s population grew steadily from around 5,000 in 1911 to around 32,000 by 1971. This was driven by the original development of Letchworth as a Garden City, with various extensions taking place in the 1940s, 1960s and early 1970s. After 1971, population growth was almost flat, and reached 33,000 30 years later in 2001. The town has seen more population growth in the last recent years than was seen in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, as shown in Figure 2.1, likely due to housing development.

Figure 2.1 Population Change in Letchworth - 1911 to 2017



Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates, the Foundation

2.2

Recent data on housing completions in Letchworth is published by North Hertfordshire District Council. Between 2013/14 and 2016/17 Letchworth saw 189 net completions, including 64 affordable homes, the majority of which were completed in 2016/17 at Blackhorse Road. Last year (2016/17) a total of 110 dwellings were completed in Letchworth, accounting for one-fifth of all completions in the District, as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Recent housing development in Letchworth

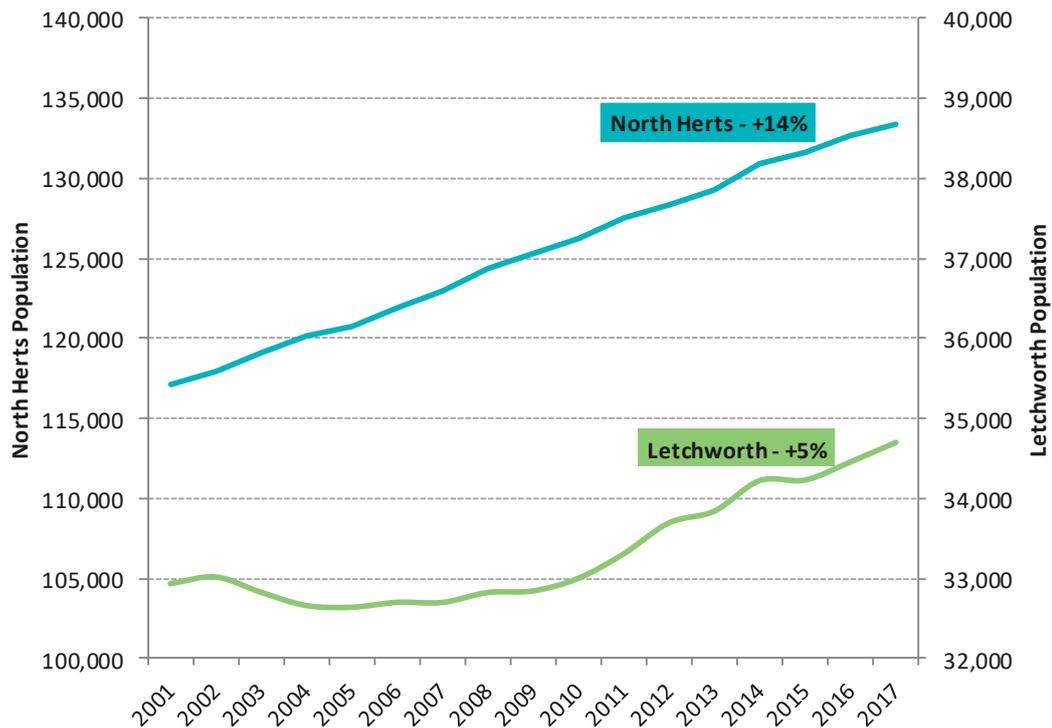
	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Net Completions - Letchworth	~	~	27	7	45	110
of which affordable	~	~	1	0	8	55
North Herts total	384	291	259	180	341	539
Letchworth as a % of District total	~	~	10%	4%	13%	20%

Source: North Hertfordshire Annual Monitoring Reports 2013/14 to 2016/17. Data for completions in Letchworth is not available prior to 2013/14.

Letchworth today

2.3 The population of Letchworth currently (at 2017) stands at 34,697; its highest population to date. However, despite recent growth, population growth in Letchworth has fallen significantly behind North Hertfordshire since 2001, with Letchworth growing by just 5% since 2001 compared to North Hertfordshire’s growth of 14%, as shown in Figure 2.2. Letchworth currently represents just over one-quarter of North Hertfordshire’s population of 133,300.

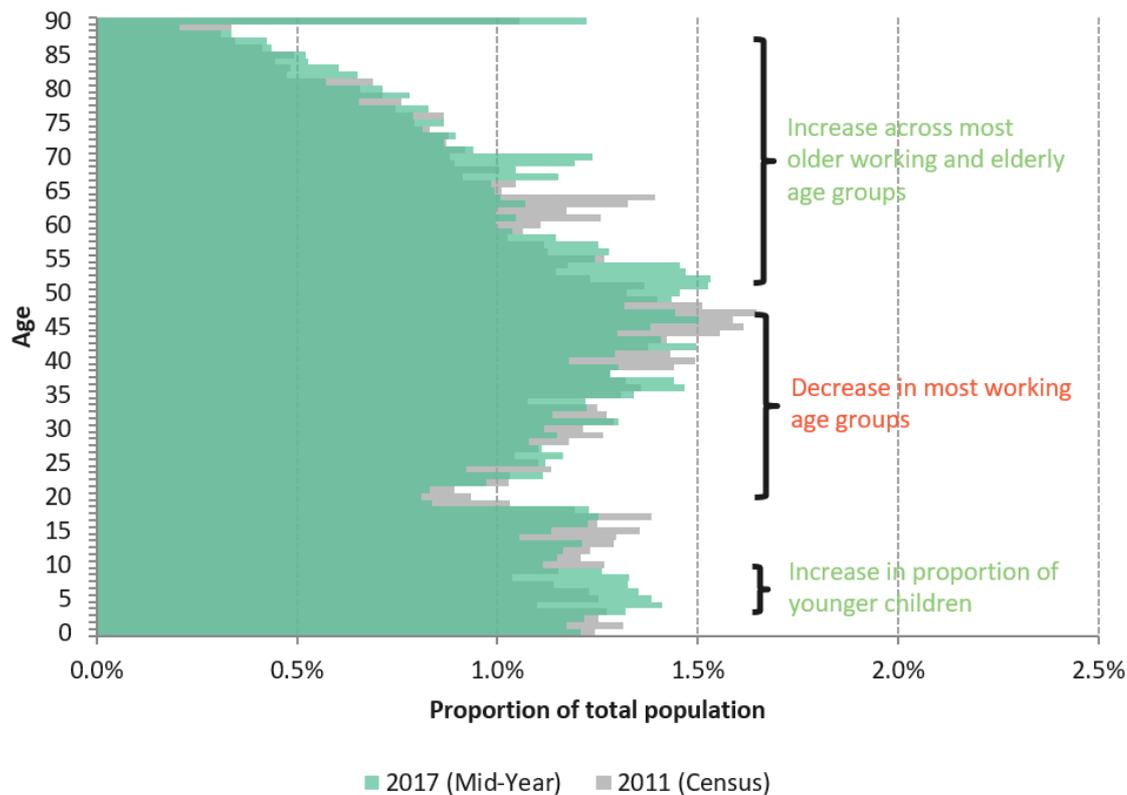
Figure 2.2 Total Population - North Hertfordshire and Letchworth - 2001-2017



Source: Lichfields based on Census/ONS Mid-Year Estimates. Letchworth Population for 2001 taken from 2001 Census, all other values taken from ONS Mid-Year Estimates

2.4 The provision of new housing in the town in recent years appears to have helped attract new families to the area, as evident from the increase in the proportion of children living in Letchworth over the last 6 years, as shown in Figure 2.3. There have been slight declines in the proportion of residents who are around age 18-34, which is likely to be associated with young adults moving away to attend university and/or for employment opportunities in larger nearby cities, e.g. London and Cambridge. The town has also not been immune from wider trends around ageing, with increases in almost all age groups above 65 – this is consistent with trends seen nationally.

Figure 2.3 Age Structure of Letchworth - Change 2011-2017



Source: Lichfields based on 2011 Census and ONS 2017 Mid-Year Estimates

2.5

According to the most recent population projections, the population of North Hertfordshire is expected to increase by 16% by 2041 to around 154,000. Growth is expected across all age groups, as shown in Table 2.2, albeit in the younger working age group (18-44) this growth is only marginal. The fastest growth is expected in the number of 65+ year olds which will increase from around 25,000 to 39,000 by 2041, reflecting wider trends of ageing. This means although the number of children (0-17) and working age adults (18-64) are expected to increase, as a *proportion* of the total population they will see an overall decline. The number of elderly residents is expected to increase from around 19% of the total population currently to 25% in 2039.

Table 2.2 Change in population by broad age group - North Hertfordshire 2016-41

	2016 Population	2041 Population	Absolute Change	Age Structure	
				2016	2041
0-17	29,051	30,724	1,673	22%	20%
18-44	43,700	43,777	77	33%	28%
45-64	35,218	40,014	4,796	27%	26%
65+	24,686	39,128	14,442	19%	25%
Total	132,655	153,642	20,987	100%	100%

Source: Lichfields based on ONS 2016-based SNPP

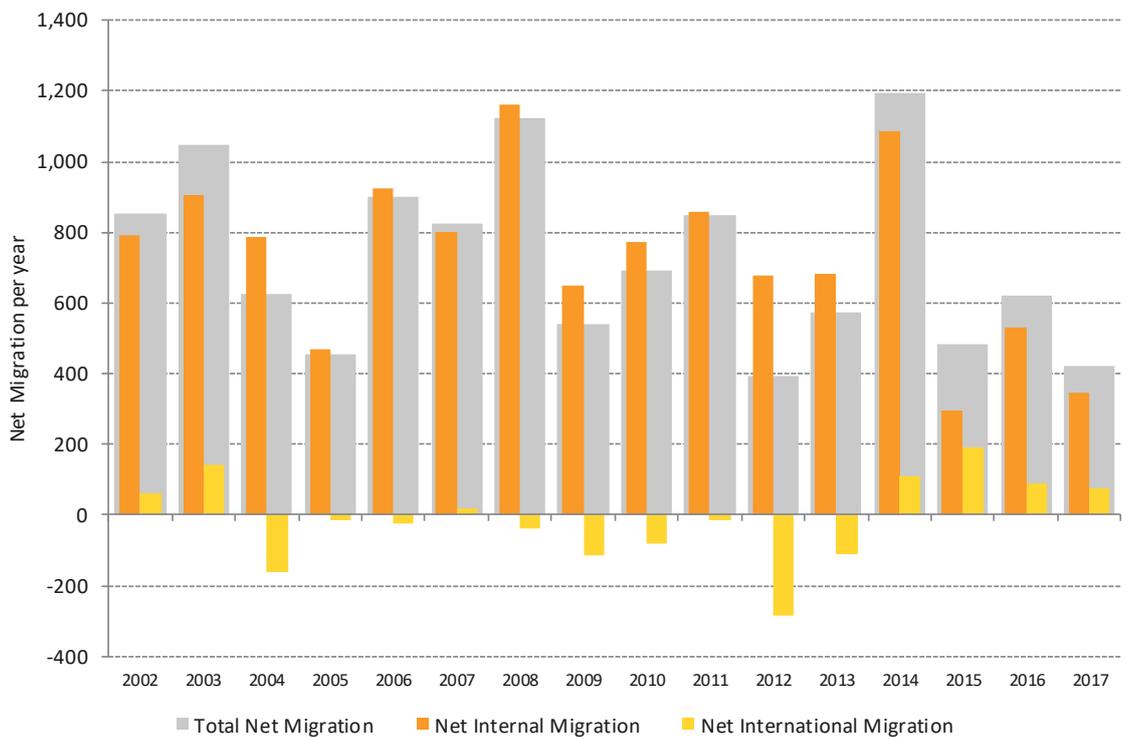
Areas for further research

Information on population and housing growth provides a starting point for understanding Letchworth today. One aim of the survey is to understand (qualitatively) what current residents think of the town and its housing. Residents are given the opportunity to provide any comment on Letchworth’s housing market and/or the needs of the town’s residents.

Migration

2.6 Migration levels to North Hertfordshire have been relatively low in recent years at around 400-600 persons per annum; several times in the last 15 years the District has seen net migration in excess of 1,000 per annum, as shown in Figure 2.4. Typically the District sees net in-migration from the rest of the UK (internal migration), ranging from around 300-1,200 per annum. The District sees little net migration from overseas; this ranges from around -300 to 200 per annum.

Figure 2.4 Annual Net Migration - Internal, International and Total - North Herts - 2001/02 to 2016/17



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates

2.7 The 2011 Census provides the most recent detailed information on migration to/from North Hertfordshire and to Letchworth. Whilst ONS publishes annual migration estimates for local authorities, these do not give detailed information such as age, household characteristics or migration at a sub-district level. A detailed review of migration using 2011 Census data was undertaken in the LHS, at paras 3.5-3.19 (for migration to North Hertfordshire) and 3.20-3.29 (for migration to Letchworth). In summary, the LHS found that:

- 1 North Hertfordshire typically had lower levels of self-containment than nearby towns (e.g. Milton Keynes, Luton, Bedford and Stevenage) but higher self-containment than South Cambridgeshire and Uttlesford (see LHS Figure 3.2);
- 2 Families with children typically had the highest self-containment rate of all households in North Hertfordshire (LHS para 3.8);
- 3 North Hertfordshire's strongest migration links (in terms of gross flows) are with Stevenage, Central Bedfordshire and London (LHS Figure 3.6). 45% of migrants to North Hertfordshire came from neighbouring local authorities; and a further 20% came from London. Compared to neighbouring authorities a relatively small proportion of North Hertfordshire's migrants come from further afield (LHS Figure 3.8). The District does however see overall out-migration of 15-19 year olds, including to University towns and cities such as Leeds, Nottingham, Bristol, Canterbury and Brighton;
- 4 In the future, the latest population projections expected net migration to North Hertfordshire to be steady at around 900-1,000 per annum;
- 5 In Letchworth, over half of households which moved into the town originated either in Letchworth itself or elsewhere in North Hertfordshire (this reflected the findings of estate agent surveys, which suggested around half of those in search of housing came from the local area, with the rest coming from areas to the south along the A1 corridor and London);
- 6 Families with children and single person households were most likely to move, and were also most likely to remain in North Hertfordshire (including remaining in Letchworth) (see LHS Table 3.3);
- 7 Couples over 65 and young couples without children were most likely to move out of North Hertfordshire (see LHS Figure 3.10). For retirees, this is likely to reflect longer distance moves for lifestyle purposes, e.g. to retirement destinations such as coastal areas. In younger couples, moves out of Letchworth are likely to be associated with movements for lifestyle and/or employment opportunities; and
- 8 Compared to nearby towns Hitchin and Royston, households moving into Letchworth were more likely to be from the local area – 59% of in-migrating households originated from within North Hertfordshire compared to 52% for Hitchin and 46% for Royston.

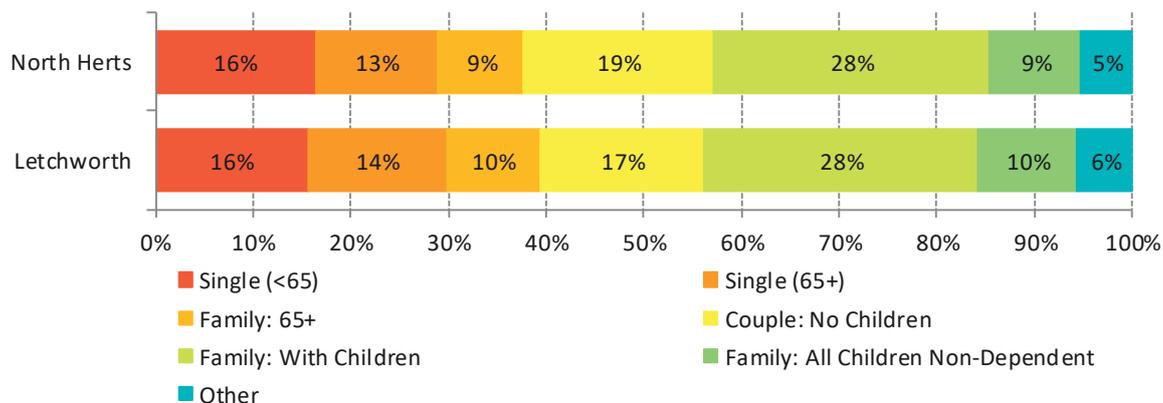
Areas for further research

Information from the Census provides a clear picture of where people move to and from, in North Hertfordshire and Letchworth. As part of the survey we will seek to understand whether residents' current housing meets their needs, and if not, why this is. We will interrogate whether households plan on moving in the near future, including where they want to move to, what income they have and what type/tenure they would prefer to move to.

Households

- 2.8 Information on households is only available in detail from the 2011 Census, therefore there is no more up-to-date information which has become available since the publication of LHS. The LHS found that between 2001 and 2011, the household profile of Letchworth remained fairly stable and that the household profile of Letchworth was similar to the District, regional and national averages, as shown in Figure 2.5. Families with children make up the largest group in Letchworth, representing around one-third of all households, which is the same as the District average. Letchworth has slightly more single person/family households age 65+ and families with all children non-dependent than North Hertfordshire, and fewer couples (<65) without children.

Figure 2.5 Household profile – Letchworth and North Herts - 2011



Source: Lichfields based on Census 2001 and 2011

2.9 Similarly, the most up-to-date information on occupancy patterns (i.e. what type of homes do households live in) is also only available from Census data. As set out in the LHS¹ there had been an increase in levels of overcrowding in Letchworth between 2001 and 2011, with families with children seeing the greatest increases in overcrowding. At 2011, this meant that there were almost 360 families with children living in overcrowded housing².

2.10 The LHS also found that there were a number of small households living in very large housing – known as ‘under-occupancy’³. In the case of older residents (where these households are sometimes known as ‘empty nesters’) it is possible that a lack of suitable options for downsizing is limiting the ability of such households to move (in turn, releasing larger housing for families). Research undertaken for the LHS (interviews with local agents) found that smaller housing which could specifically cater for elderly residents, e.g. bungalows, rarely came onto the market in Letchworth and generated a lot of interest when they did⁴. Estate agents noted that those looking to move typically sought small, manageable homes which would be suitable for those with mobility impairments (i.e. single-storey) and with a small amount of outdoor space. Given growth in the number of older households in Letchworth and across North Herts in the future, the provision of housing which specifically caters for the needs of older households seeking to downsize is likely to be of increasing importance in meeting local housing needs, and this is an area which is explored further in the survey.

Areas for further research

In undertaking the survey we hope to identify concealed households which would like to move in the near future and if those households wish to remain in Letchworth. The survey will also ask what income they would have; which would help us understand what type and tenure of housing would be affordable.

There is also currently a lack of information on whether the needs of older households are met through their existing housing, and if not what options those households would consider when moving. The survey will aim to fill this gap in the data.

¹ See LHS paras 4.5-4.12

² See LHS Table 4.1

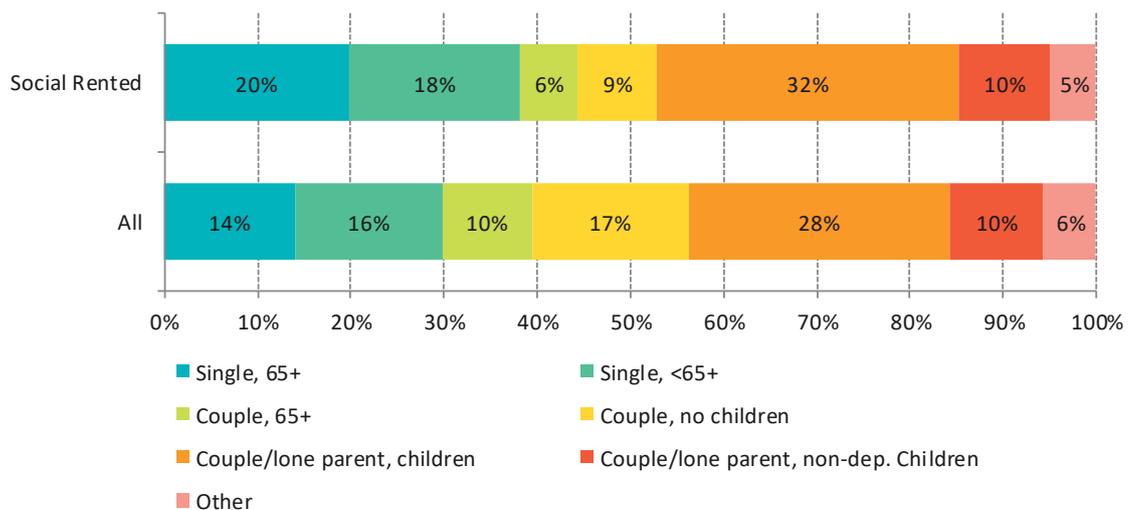
³ See LHS Table 4.2

⁴ See LHS para 4.11

Households in affordable housing

- 2.11 The LHS did not provide a detailed review of households specifically living in affordable housing Letchworth. However, this is of relevant context for the purposes of this study, therefore we set out below in more detail what we can discern about the current profile of households living in affordable housing in Letchworth⁵. The information provided in the Census provides a starting point for context.
- 2.12 Letchworth contains a much higher proportion of households in the social rented tenure than North Hertfordshire and England, representing **31%** of households at the time of the 2011 Census compared to **19%** across the District and **18%** nationally. Households in social rented housing in Letchworth are more likely to be older single person households and families, particularly lone parents with children, as shown in Figure 2.6. In Letchworth, over half (881 out of 1,534) of lone parent households were in social rented housing at the time of the Census, which is similar to the case across North Hertfordshire and reflects the fact that lone parent households are single earners but have a need for at least a 2-bed home, making it difficult to afford rents in the open market. There are a lower proportion of couples of all ages in social rented housing compared to overall; such households are most likely to be dual earner (or at least dual income, in the case of pensioner households) meaning they are less likely to need social rented household compared to other households.

Figure 2.6 Household composition in Letchworth - Social Rented households and all households

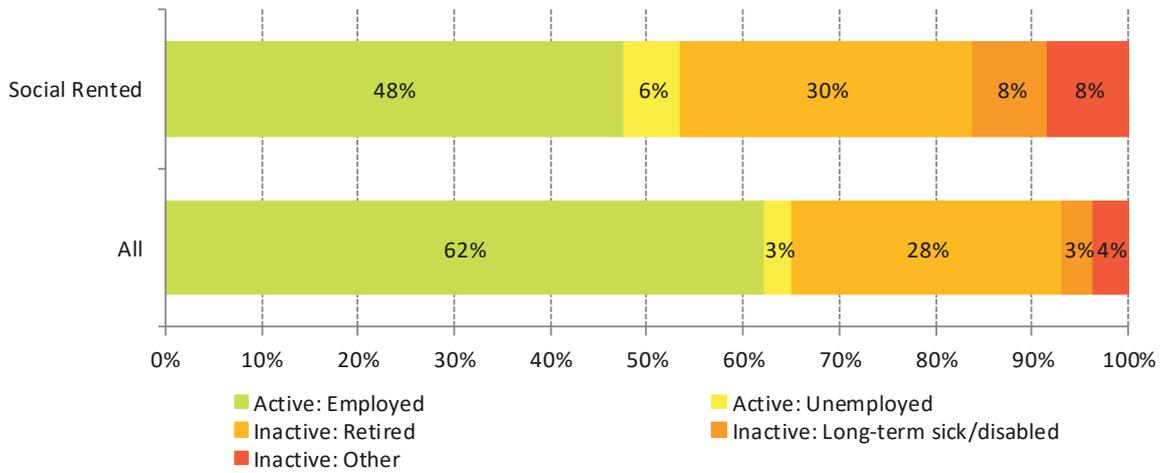


Source: Lichfields based on 2011 Census

- 2.13 Looking at economic activity, households in the social rented sector are more likely to be retired than all households, although this reflects the fact that the social rented sector contains more older households (particularly single person households). The majority (around 90%) of households in the social rented sector in Letchworth which are economically active are in employment; around 2,100 households out of 2,300. As expected, the proportion of households in the social rented sector which are inactive either due to being long-term sick/disabled or looking after the home/family is higher than the average for all households, as shown below.

⁵ The most up-to-date information on household characteristics is available from the Census. In most of its datasets, the Census combines shared ownership housing with 'owner-occupiers', therefore for the purposes of this study 'affordable housing' refers to the tenure of 'social rented' set out in the Census 2011 (either rented from a Council or other provider).

Figure 2.7 Economic Activity (of household reference person) - Letchworth, 2011 - by tenure

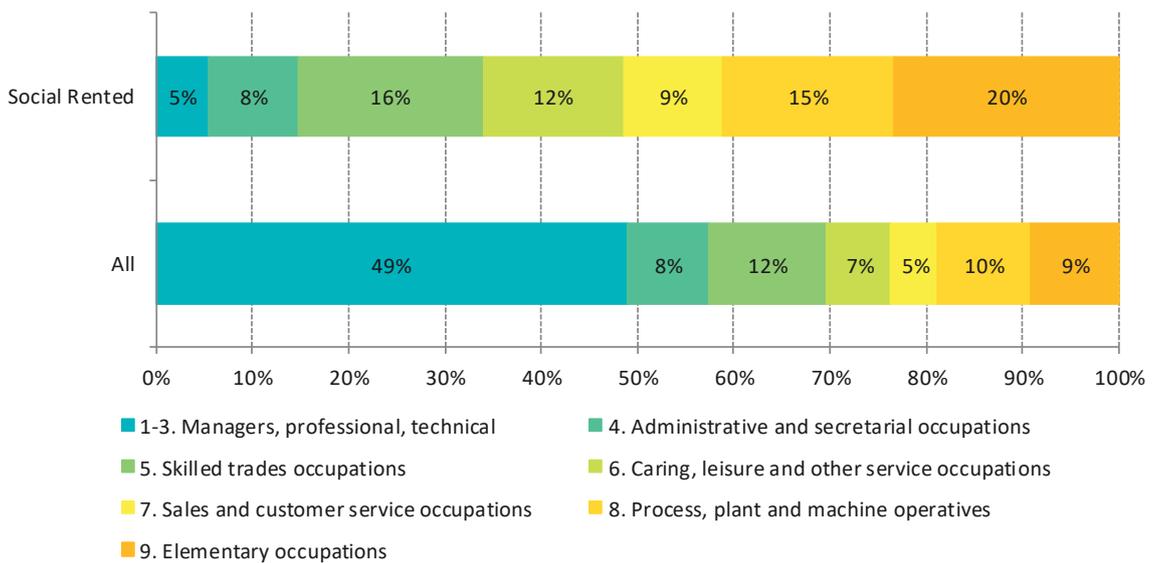


Source: Lichfields based on 2011 Census

2.14

Figure 2.8 shows how social rented households in Letchworth compare to all households in NS-SeC (national statistics socio-economic classification, which indicates socio-economic classification based on occupation). As expected social rented households are significantly less likely to be managers, directors, senior officials, or those in professional/technical occupations, and are far more likely to be in elementary occupations (for example retail workers, cleaners, refuse collectors, and some factory jobs). Social rented households are also more likely to be employed in caring, leisure and other service occupations.

Figure 2.8 NS-Sec - Social Rented Households and all households - Letchworth, 2011



Source: Lichfields based on 2011 Census

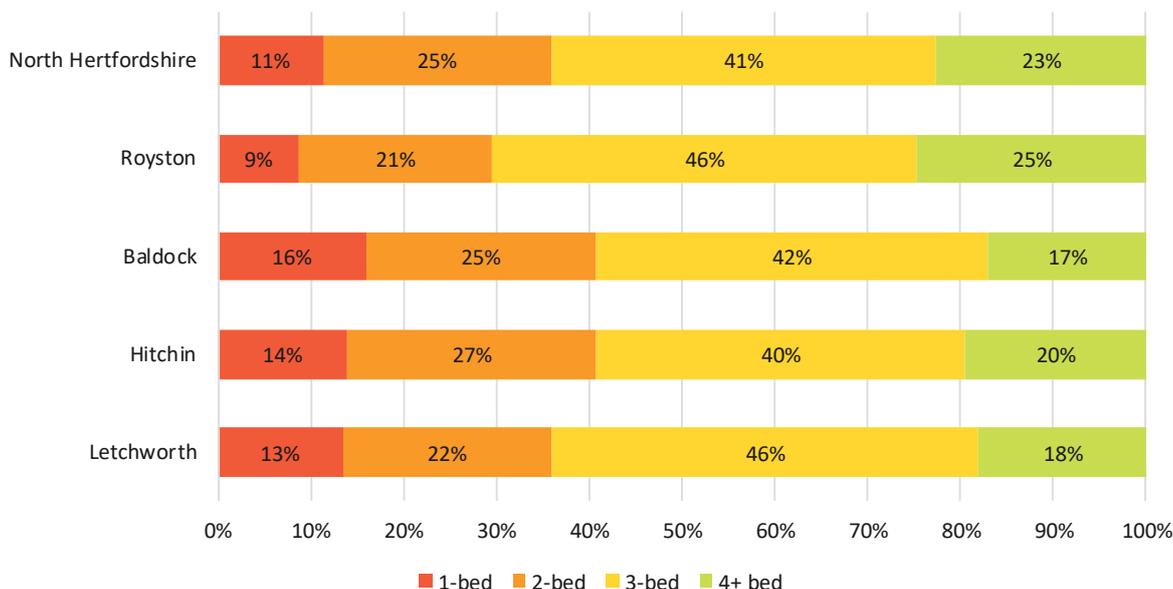
3.0 The housing stock, prices and affordability

3.1 The need for housing across North Hertfordshire is well established in the Council’s evidence base and in its emerging plan. Housing is needed across North Hertfordshire to cater for population and household growth, address suppressed household formation and to improve affordability. The North Hertfordshire Plan expects to deliver 15,950 homes between 2011 and 2031, of which just over 2,100 (13%) will be in Letchworth.

Housing stock

3.2 The 2011 Census provides the most recent detailed picture of the housing stock in Letchworth. It identified just under 14,000 dwellings in the town, albeit this has likely increased since then due to recent development in the town. Like Hitchin and Baldock, Letchworth has more 1-bed dwellings than the District average. However, Letchworth has fewer 2-bed dwellings than the District average or other towns (except Royston), as shown in Figure 3.1. Letchworth’s housing stock is more skewed towards 3-bed dwellings compared to Hitchin, Baldock or North Hertfordshire, with almost half of all homes in the town being 3-bed (the same as in Royston). There are a similar proportion of 4-beds in Letchworth to other towns, with the exception of Royston where the stock is skewed more toward larger dwellings compared to the rest of North Hertfordshire.

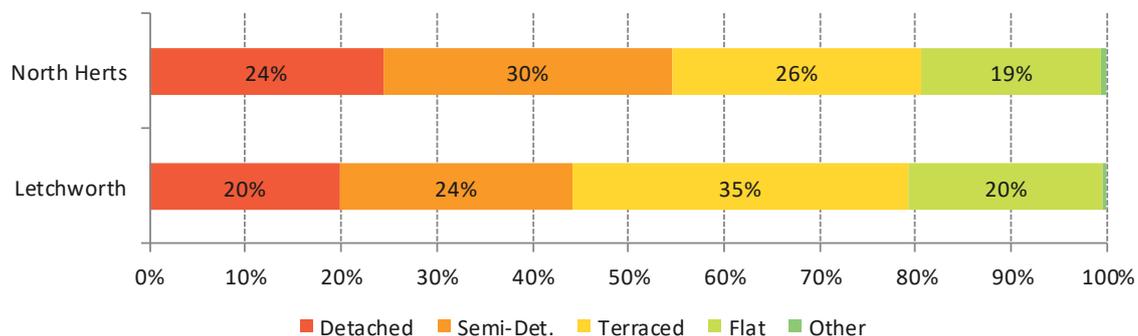
Figure 3.1 Dwelling stock - Letchworth, Hitchin, Baldock, Royston and North Hertfordshire - 2011



Source: Census 2011 QS411EW

3.3 Letchworth contains a relatively high number of terraced housing compared to the District average, with fewer detached and semi-detached homes and marginally more flats (Figure 3.2). Despite the fact that Letchworth has a relatively high number of terraced homes, it was noted by estate agents (in the LHS) that there appeared to be a shortage of mid-range terraced housing suitable for young families coming to the market. This could be because there are a shortage of homes coming to the market and/or those which are coming to the market are not at affordable price points.

Figure 3.2 Dwelling stock by type - Letchworth and North Herts (2011)



Source: Census 2011

- 3.4 As noted in the LHS, the level of housing growth in Letchworth has fallen behind that of nearby towns (e.g. Hitchin) between 2001 and 2011 (para 2.3/Table 2.1 of LHS). However, housing growth has picked up in recent years. Primary research undertaken as part of the LHS found that according to estate agents there was significant interest and demand for mid-range small to medium sized family homes. Estate agents stated that such homes often attracted significant attention and multiple bids when they became available, and that there was a lack of such homes coming to the market in general. It is possible that the provision of new housing in Letchworth in recent years has helped meet some of this demand, given the growth in the number of children seen since 2011, albeit such demand is likely to continue given the number of children and young working age people is expected to continue growing across North Hertfordshire in the future.

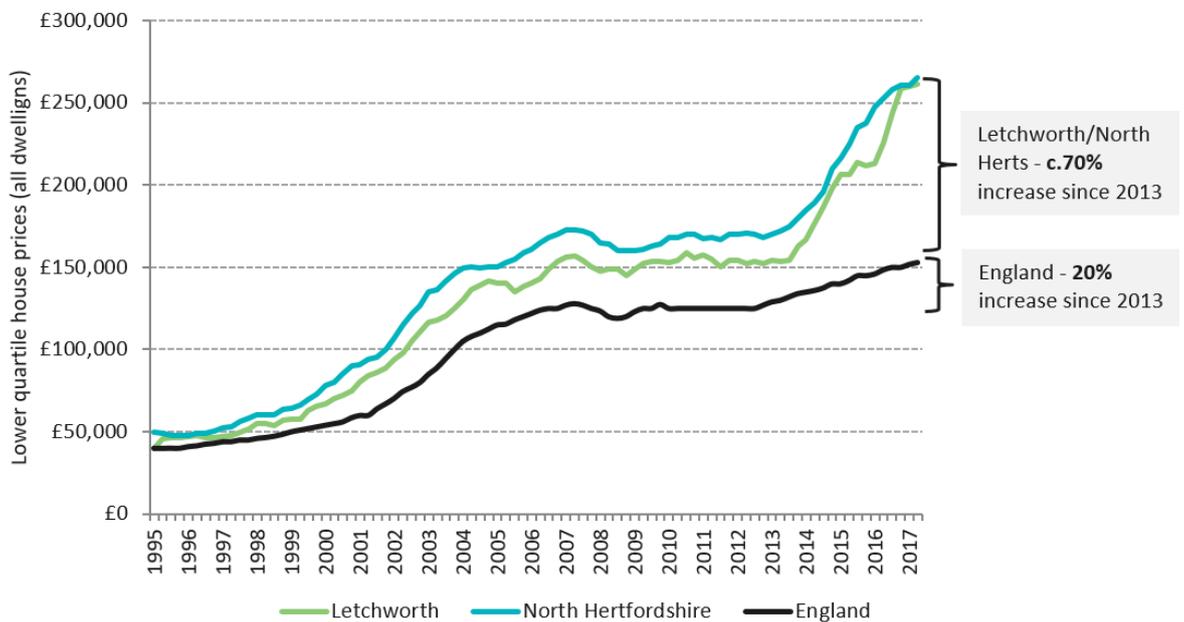
Area for further research

Contextual analysis and our interviews with agents undertaken in the LHS suggested that there was a particular demand for small to medium family-sized homes (amongst other types of housing, such as bungalows). By undertaking the survey, we will seek to confirm whether this is the case, and understand what type of housing households are looking for if planning on moving in the near future.

House prices

- 3.5 House prices in Letchworth have broadly followed trends across North Hertfordshire historically, as shown in Figure 3.3. However, house prices across North Hertfordshire and Letchworth have significantly outpaced national growth in recent years.
- 3.6 Following the recession, lower quartile house prices at the national level were fairly steady at around £125,000. In 2013, national prices began to rise slowly and now stand at just over £150,000 – an increase of around 20% in the last 5 years. In Letchworth, lower quartile house prices were fairly steady at around £150,000 following the recession, with prices across North Hertfordshire over the same period slightly higher at around £160,000. However, since 2013, house prices in Letchworth and North Hertfordshire have increased by around £100,000 – an increase of over 70% in just 5 years. Lower quartile house prices in Letchworth (and North Hertfordshire) now stand at around £260,000 – over £100,000 more than the national average.

Figure 3.3 Lower Quartile House Prices - Letchworth, North Hertfordshire and England, Quarterly, 1997 to March 2018



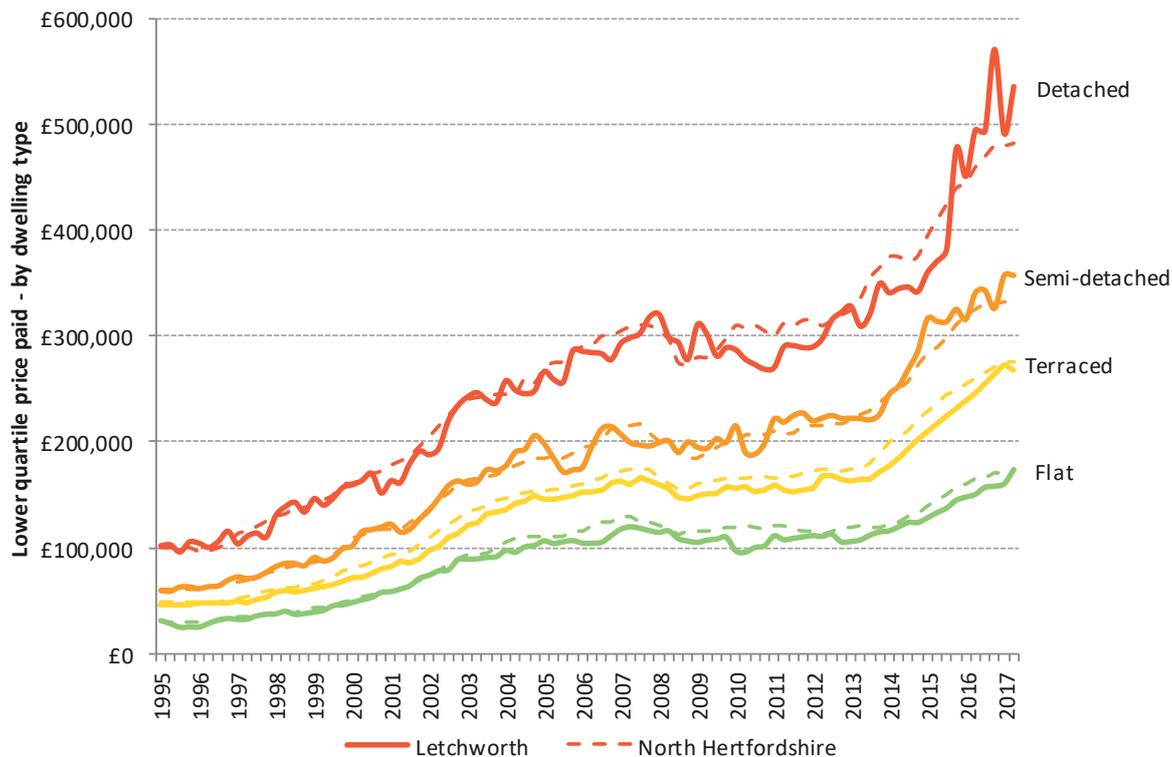
Source: Lichfields based on ONS HPSSA Datasets 4 and 15. Letchworth estimate obtained using average of MSOAs North Herts 003, 006, 007, 008 and 009

3.7

Figure 3.4 shows lower quartile house prices for Letchworth and North Hertfordshire by type of housing; evidently trends in Letchworth have closely followed the District average over recent years. As at March 2018, prices ranged from around £175,000 for flats, around £270,000 for terraced house up to around £500,000 for detached housing. Prices has risen sharply in the last 5-6 years in Letchworth, for example:

- 1 The cost of **flats** has risen **56%**, from just over £110,000 in 2012 to almost £175,000 in March 2018;
- 2 The cost of **terraced** housing has increased from £155,000 in 2012 to almost £270,000 in 2018 – an increase of **73%**;
- 3 The cost of **semi-detached** housing has increase by **63%** from £220,000 in 2012 to £358,000 in 2018; and
- 4 The cost of **detached** housing (which has seen the biggest increase of any type) has increased by **85%** from £290,000 in 2012 to just over £535,000 in 2018.

Figure 3.4 Lower Quartile House Prices by type - Letchworth, North Hertfordshire and England, Quarterly, 1997 to March 2018



Source: Lichfields based on ONS HPSSA Datasets 4 and 15. Letchworth estimate obtained using average of MSOAs North Herts 003, 006, 007, 008 and 009

3.8

Looking at the different parts of North Hertfordshire, Letchworth is the most expensive area to buy detached housing and the second most expensive area for semi-detached housing and flats. Terraced housing in the town is less expensive than the other parts of North Hertfordshire, and estate agents (in the LHS) noted that this was typically in highest demand. This could be because local wages (or the wages of those looking to buy in Letchworth) may be lower than other parts of the District, meaning that although terraced housing is cheaper, it may not be more affordable.

Table 3.1 Lower Quartile house prices by type within North Hertfordshire – year ending March 2018

	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats
Letchworth	£536,000	£358,000	£269,000	£174,000
Hitchin	£523,000	£387,000	£323,000	£196,000
Rural area	£514,000	£357,000	£287,000	£159,000
Royston	£400,000	£281,000	£272,000	£148,000
Baldock	£402,000	£295,000	£248,000	£167,000
Rank				
Letchworth	1	2	4	2
Hitchin	2	1	1	1
Rural area	3	3	2	4
Royston	5	5	3	5
Baldock	4	4	5	3

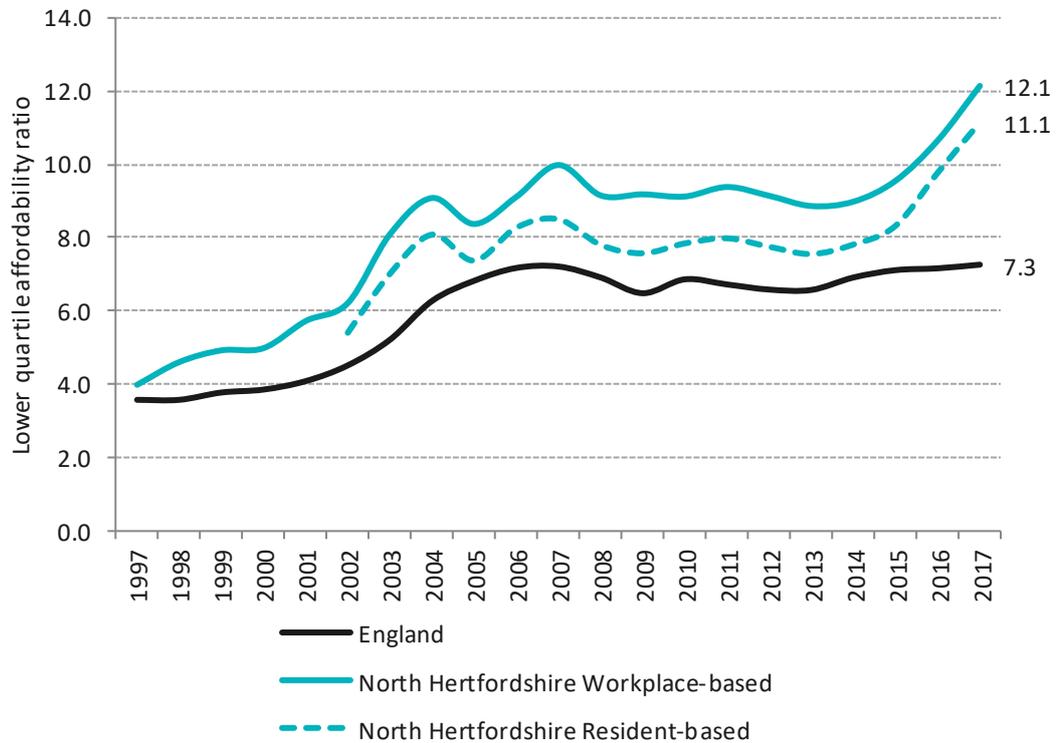
Source: Lichfields based on ONS HPSSA Dataset 15 - Lower Quartile House Price by MSOA

- 3.9 A review of properties listed for sale on Rightmove as at January 2019 shows:
- 1 **1-bed properties** – there are two 1-bed properties listed for sale at around £130,000 on the edge of the town (both flats). Most 1-bed flats are listed for around £170,000-£200,000, although some are listed for c.£230,000+;
 - 2 **2-bed properties** – there are numerous 2-bed flats listed for sale, starting at around £200,000 and with many listed at around £230,000. There is one shared ownership 2-bed flat listed for a 50% shared at £105,000. There are several 2-bed houses, with the cheapest starting at £250,000 with most listed at between £275,000 and £300,000. There are four 2-bed bungalows for sale, the cheapest listed at £330,000 (in need of modernisation) rising to £450,000-£475,000;
 - 3 **3-bed properties** – 3-bed houses were the most common type of listing with over 70 properties for sale as at January 2019. Some were listed for around £260,000-£270,000 (these were typically smaller and/or lower quality than average) although the vast majority were listed at around or over £300,000. There are a few 3-bed bungalows listed for sale, all listed at over £500,000;
 - 4 **4-bed properties** – there are around 30 4-bed houses listed for sale, starting at around £425,000 (this includes detached and semi-detached homes, including some new builds). 4-bed homes with larger gardens/garages etc are typically listed at around £575,000-£600,000, rising to £1m+.

Affordability

- 3.10 At a national level, growth in wages has broadly kept pace with growth in house prices, with the ratio of house prices to wages remaining at around 7 since the recession (currently standing at 7.3). However, this clearly masks geographical differences, with some areas experiencing poor and worsening affordability, including North Hertfordshire.
- 3.11 As expected, growth in wages has not kept pace with the growth in house prices in North Hertfordshire in recent years, and as a result lower quartile house prices are currently (as at 2017) 12.1 times workplace-based earnings and 11.1 times resident-based earnings. By both measures, North Hertfordshire has now met and exceeded its pre-recession peak. The fact that housing is less affordable to those working in the District suggests that those residents from outside with greater purchasing power are moving into the District and commute to higher paid jobs elsewhere (including those moving from London, who might have higher income and/or equity from a previous home).
- 3.12 The significant worsening of affordability in recent years in North Hertfordshire is primarily due to the sharp increase in house prices. Having a sufficient supply of housing which is affordable to those on all incomes is a central facet of any efficiently functioning economy. A lack of housing which is affordable to those working locally could lead to an increase in unsustainable commuting patterns (and increases in transport costs, putting pressure on incomes), an ability for local businesses to attract and maintain workers and pressure on local services (e.g. schools and healthcare) which rely on lower paid workers.

Figure 3.5 Affordability Ratio - North Hertfordshire and England



Source: ONS Affordability Data

3.13 The fact that affordability pressures are becoming increasingly acute in North Hertfordshire is not only likely to disadvantage lower paid workers but also young people, particularly those looking to take their first step on the housing ladder. High house prices relative to local earnings is likely to mean households need to find even bigger deposits to find their first home. Without assistance from family, these households would likely need to continue living in the private rented sector (or even in the family home) for longer than expected in order to find enough money.

Areas for further research

In light of the contextual analysis around prices and affordability, we will seek to gain a more in-depth understanding of the incomes of those looking to move or set up a new household in Letchworth. This will help understand what type of housing existing and newly-forming households can afford and whether the provision of specific types of housing, including affordable homes or purchase, might help address these needs.

Part 1 - Summary

3.14 By the mid/late-2000s Letchworth Garden City was seeing relatively little population and housing growth. In recent years, housing development has picked up which has led to the town’s population reaching a record high of just under 35,000. Still, the town has seen a much slower rate of growth compared to the District as a whole since 2001 and is not immune to wider trends of ageing.

3.15 Letchworth has a significantly higher proportion of social rented homes compared to the District and national averages, with 31% of households in social rented housing as at 2011. In

line with wider trends, social rented households in Letchworth are more likely to be older single person households and lone parents with children compared to all households; notwithstanding almost half of all social rented households are in employment.

- 3.16 The town contains a greater proportion of 3-bed homes than nearby towns and the District average, and house prices are similar to the District average across all types. However, prices across North Hertfordshire have risen sharply in recent years and affordability ratio is now at the highest ever. Entry-level house prices in Letchworth and North Hertfordshire are now around £110,000 more than the national average, at £260,000.

Gaps in existing information

- 3.17 Our research and analysis using publicly available information and primary research carried out as part of previous work has highlighted several gaps in the information which can be filled by undertaking a local survey. These cover five key areas:

- 1 **Perceptions of Letchworth** – there is a significant amount of quantitative information about Letchworth and its housing market; its population and age profile, its dwelling stock, house prices, etc. However, the survey affords us an opportunity to understand how residents in Letchworth perceive their town and its housing market, and identify common areas which residents perceive positively/negatively.
- 2 **Needs of existing households** – information from the Census and other ONS data provides information on household composition and migration patterns. However, we hope to understand in more detail whether or not households' current housing meet their needs, and if not, why this is the case.
- 3 **Newly-forming households** – there is currently a lack of information on concealed households, particularly those which want to form their own household in the near future. There is no information on what incomes these households would have (and therefore what type/tenure housing would be best suited to them) and what aspirations they have, nor what type of household they would form and where they want to live. The survey provides an opportunity to fill these gaps.
- 4 **Elderly households** – some contextual information is available from existing data and information has been gathered through interviews with agents about demand for housing from older households. However, there is a lack of understanding of the reasons why current housing might not be meeting needs, whether older households plan on moving and the type housing options they would consider if moving.
- 5 **Other needs** – limited information from secondary sources is available on interest in self-build and community land trust housing. We hope to understand whether or not there is interest in these types of housing through the survey, and whether households are/are considering actively pursuing these options.

Part 2 – Local Housing Needs

4.0 Survey background

Areas for further research

4.1 The analysis in sections 2 and 3 highlighted where there were gaps in the existing data and areas requiring further research. The survey questions were therefore structured based on addressing these broad themes:

- 1 **Perceptions of Letchworth** – What are residents’ perceptions of Letchworth and its housing market? What are the perceptions of affordable housing on offer?
- 2 **Needs of existing households** – Do households’ current housing meet their needs? If not, why? What are the incomes of these households and what type/tenure of housing are they looking to move to?
- 3 **Newly-forming households** – What types of household contain concealed families which want to move out in the near future? What income would they have and what type of housing?
- 4 **Elderly households** – Are the needs of elderly households met in existing housing? If not, why not? What options would those households consider moving to in the future?
- 5 **Other needs** – Are households interested in self-build housing? Are households interested in Community Land Trust (CLT)⁶ housing?

Purpose of the survey

4.2 This purpose of the survey was to supplement information about Letchworth which was already available in order to understand:

- 1 Understand the needs – specifically for affordable housing - of households currently living in Letchworth;
- 2 In more detail the needs associated with other types of affordable housing, including shared ownership and other affordable homes for purchase, particularly associated with concealed and newly-forming households;
- 3 Whether there are any other specific housing needs which the allocation North of Letchworth could help to address.

4.3 The scope, methodology and content of the survey was agreed in collaboration with North Hertfordshire District Council Planning and Housing Departments, Settle and Howard Cottage Housing Associations. The results from the survey will be shared with these local organisations as part of a wider collaborative exercise.

4.4 The findings of the survey should not be interpreted as a direct indication of what new housing should be provided on the allocation at Land North of Letchworth and should not be used to unduly restrict the type of development provided. The final mix of housing to be provided on the site will be influenced by a wide range of factors beyond the needs identified in the survey, such as viability, environmental factors, locational factors and wider policy requirements. Rather, the findings of the survey can inform discussions about development and help identify issues which the development could seek to address. It also provides a baseline ‘snapshot in time’ which could be updated in the future.

⁶ A community land trust (CLT) is a non-profit corporation that develops and manages housing (including affordable housing) and other community assets (gardens, commercial spaces, etc).

Circulation and responses

- 4.5 The survey was circulated in paper form (by Meeting Place Communications) and online and to all households in Letchworth in October 2018 and responses were open until 3rd January 2019. A copy of the survey is included for information at Appendix 1. A total of 516 responses were received, representing a response rate of around 4% of all households in Letchworth which is considered a good response rate for such an exercise and is comparable to response rates received for Parish Housing Needs Surveys in North Hertfordshire⁷. The quantum of responses adds meaningful inputs to the wider discussion.
- 4.6 Whilst the total number of surveys received back was 516, not all respondents answered all questions, and therefore there are not necessarily 516 completed responses to every question (some questions are also not applicable to all respondents). For some questions, some respondents listed more than one answer; for this reason totals do not always sum to 516.
- 4.7 A summary of the responses received to each question is set out in Appendix 2. This shows that the survey achieved a good cross-section of the town covering a variety of households in different tenures/types of housing.

Further responses received

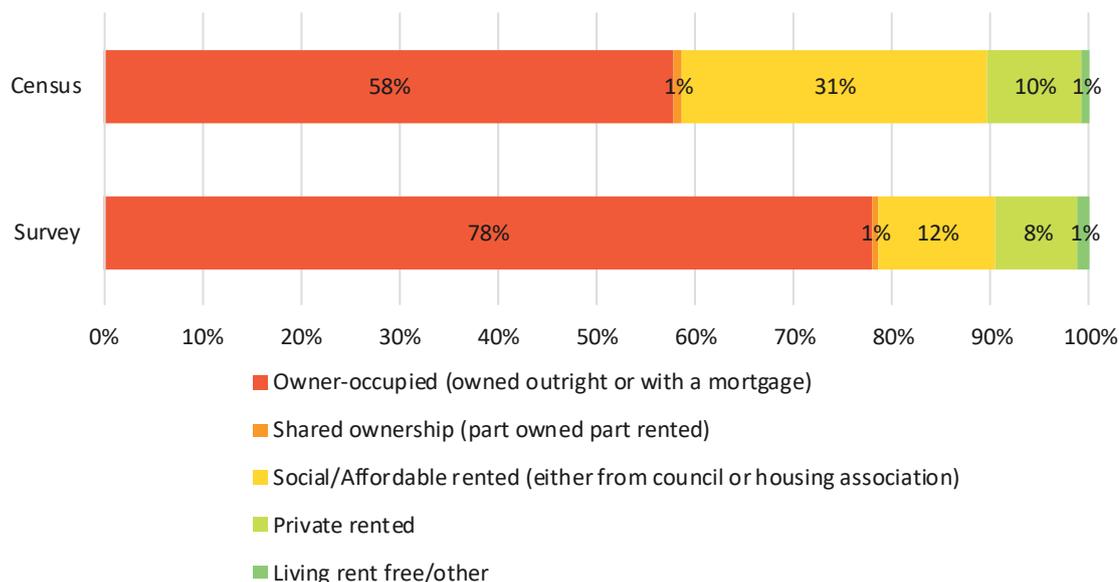
- 4.8 Following the initial drafting of this report, which covered all responses received up to 3rd January 2019, a further 9 responses were received. These 9 responses are not included in the analysis set out in Sections 5.0 to 9.0 however have been reviewed in Appendix 3 to confirm consistency with the main findings.

Survey coverage

- 4.9 The survey achieved good coverage, receiving responses from households in all tenures across a range of incomes, household types and house sizes. However, a comparison with the household profile based on the Census gives an indication of how representative the survey is likely to be of the town.
- 4.10 Figure 4.1 compares the tenure profile of Letchworth from the Census and from the survey. The most significant differences are the coverage of the social rented and owner-occupied sectors; whilst the Census identified that 31% of households in Letchworth were in the social rented sector, only 12% of survey respondents were. On the contrary, the survey achieved a disproportionately high response from the owner-occupied sector (78%, compared to 58% in the Census). Therefore, it should be noted that the survey and its findings might be under-representative of the social rented sector.

⁷See Census 2011 data on number of households by Parish (QS113EW - Household composition - Households) and <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/housing/housing-strategies-and-plans/housing-need-north-hertfordshire>

Figure 4.1 Comparison of tenure - Survey and Census



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey and 2011 Census (KS402EW)

Affordability assumptions

- 4.11 Respondents were asked to provide information about their income so that assumptions could be made about what type/tenure of home that household could likely afford. In all cases, the following assumptions have been made:
- 1 For open market housing, households can borrow 4.5x their annual household income and have a 15% deposit⁸;
 - 2 For discounted market housing/started homes, we assume a 20% discount is offered;
 - 3 For shared ownership housing, we assume households purchase a 25% (with 15% deposit and borrowing 4.5x their income) and pay rent on the remaining 75% at a rate of 3% per annum, with rent taking up 30% of annual household income⁹.
- 4.12 It is acknowledged that households which may be equity rich (e.g. older households) but have lower incomes might not conform to these affordability assumptions, however these are considered reasonable for assessing affordability associated with first-time buyers and most other households.

⁸ For context, the English Housing Survey (2015/16) analysis of First-Time Buyers found the median deposit for first-time buyers was 15.9% nationally.

⁹ It should be noted that providers can offer for sale equity of between 25% and 75% so the actual percent purchased may be higher. However, we have assumed that 25% is purchased on the basis that this will give the maximum total property value a household can purchase on their stated income (given that to buy a greater share of a home of the same value, a greater income would be needed).

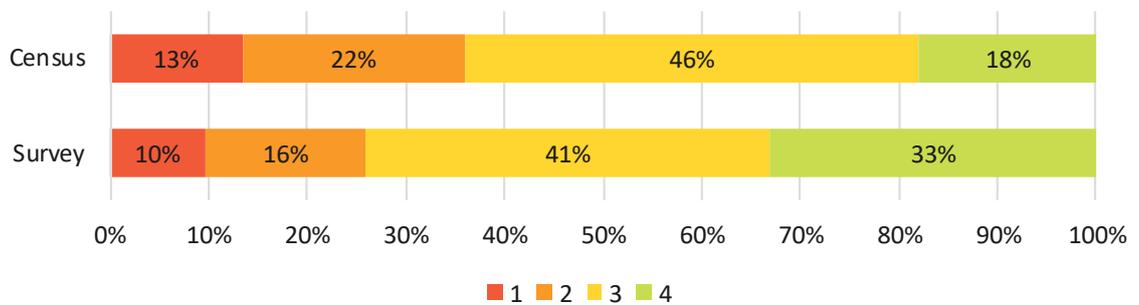
5.0 Context

Current residence

5.1 Households were asked information about their current residence; this was to ensure a good cross-section of the town was covered and to provide context for other questions (e.g. newly-forming households and elderly needs). The results are set out in detail at Appendix 2 and are summarised below for context.

5.2 The survey covered a range of households living in 1 to 4+ bed homes, as shown in Figure 5.1. The survey covered a greater proportion of households living in larger homes compared to the Census, as shown below. Households in larger homes are more likely to contain families with older children (and therefore newly-forming households) or older households (who may wish to downsize), and this may explain why this yielded a greater response rate.

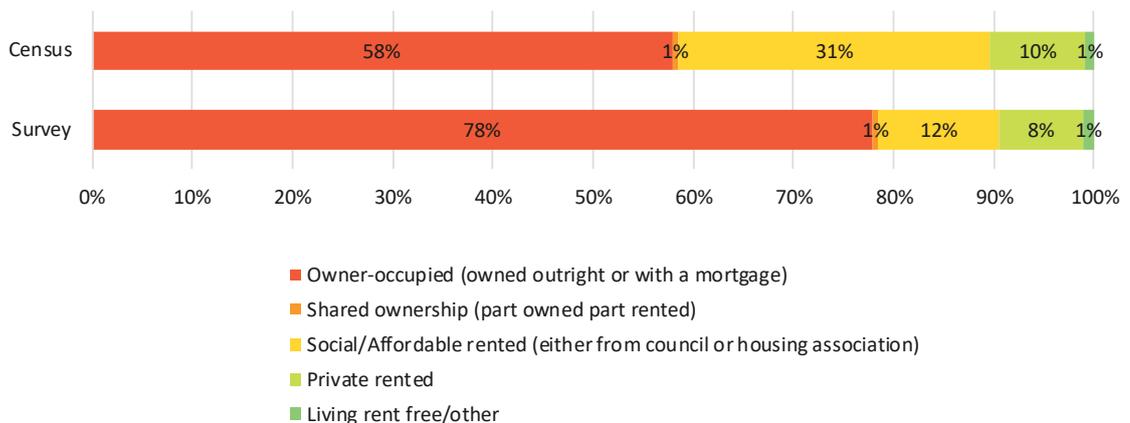
Figure 5.1 Number of bedrooms - Survey and 2011 Census



Source: Census 2011/Letchworth Housing Survey

5.3 Similarly, the survey also covered more households living in houses rather than flats (compared to the Census). The survey also covered more respondents living in owner-occupied housing and fewer living in social/affordable rented housing, as shown in Figure 5.2. Coverage of private rented households was consistent with the Census.

Figure 5.2 Household Tenure - Census and Survey



Source: Census 2011 and Letchworth Housing Survey

Household income

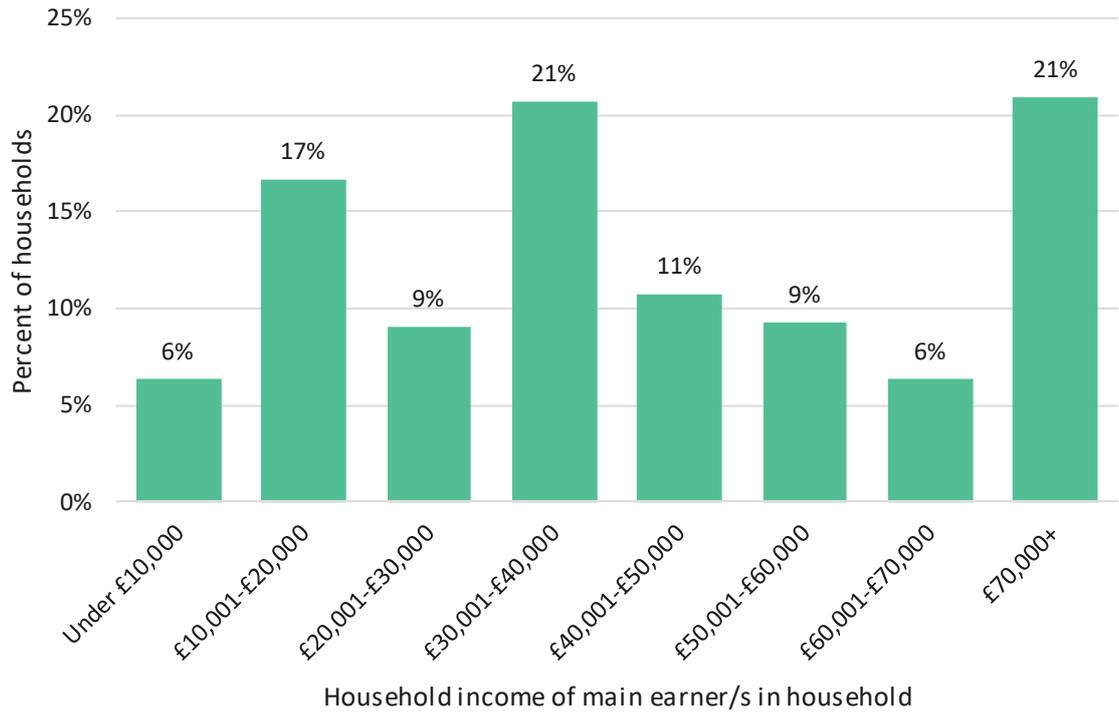
5.4 The household income distribution of survey respondents is shown in Figure 5.3. This relates to the income of the main earner/s in a household. Such data on household income is not publicly

available so it provides useful context for the analysis however it is not possible to compare this to another data source. Notwithstanding, the survey appeared to achieve good coverage, with incomes of households ranging from under £10,000 to over £70,000.

5.5

The survey also asked respondents about the household income of any newly-forming households in order to understand if their preferred tenure/type of home was likely to be affordable to them. This information is set out later in this part of the report.

Figure 5.3 Household income distribution of Survey respondents (income of main earner/s in household)



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

6.0 Perceptions of Letchworth

- 6.1 Respondents were asked about their perception of the available housing stock in Letchworth (in terms of cost, availability, types etc) and their perception of affordable housing in particular. In relation to housing in general, there was a mix of positive and negative responses, albeit mostly were negative and related to housing cost, choice and availability. Many respondents noted that there appeared to be a lack of available housing which was suitable either for young single people (even those with good salaries) or young families, and that much development which has taken place in Letchworth had been larger, executive housing. This perception is interesting given that Letchworth has a significantly greater proportion of 3-bed homes than nearby towns and North Hertfordshire as a whole, with just under half of all homes being 3-bed. A lack of 3-bed housing could be being perceived because of a lack of 3-bed homes coming to the market and/or those which are being too expensive. The demand for 3-bed homes was also apparent in interviews with estate agents who noted that small to medium family-sized housing attracted significant attention. Notwithstanding, it should be noted that many respondents believed there to be a variety of stock available at a range of price points.
- 6.2 Another area where perceptions varied was price; some respondents perceived prices to be rising sharply, while others perceived prices to be fairly flat. Several respondents stated that whilst prices in Letchworth might appear high, in the context of its location and transport links to London this was not surprising, and reflective of wider market circumstances (including nearby towns such as Hitchin) in the wider South East. Respondents noted other issues for example the location of housing and local infrastructure, such as issues around street lighting and safety, as well as issues around the condition of homes (especially older homes which may have issues with insulation, damp or being in general disrepair).
- 6.3 Owner-occupiers had mixed views on housing in Letchworth – some believed there to be a good choice of homes at all price points, others believed most housing to be too expensive and with prices rising quickly. Some perceived there to be gaps in the market (particularly for young families starting out and larger family homes in the range of £500,000-£600,000), and others noted that houses for sale in Letchworth often needed complete renovation or some degree of modernisation, adding to costs. Respondents also commented on new housing in Letchworth, believing that newer stock was too small with a lack of outdoor space for parking and gardens.
- 6.4 Some households (most of which were older) noted a lack of housing for older people including sheltered housing or small homes (e.g. 2-bed homes and bungalows) suitable for downsizing. Some of these households stated they had attempted to downsize but had given up due to a lack of availability and associated costs. Such concerns appear to reflect the reality – a review of bungalows available for sale in Letchworth (as set out in Section 2.0) found very few for sale, with most exceeding the cost of a typical 3-bed home. This suggests that for many looking to downsize, the costs would likely be more than their current home, making downsizing difficult or not possible.
- 6.5 Almost all households in the private rented sector perceived housing to be too expensive in Letchworth, whether that related to households' current housing costs or the cost of moving into owner-occupation. Households perceived there to be a shortage of good quality affordable homes available either for young single households or young families, even for households on modest incomes. This appears to be reflect the availability of housing in Letchworth currently as per the review of properties listed for sale in Letchworth, which found that 2-bed homes were typically listed at around £275,000-£300,000, and 3-bed homes at £300,000+. Without substantial deposits, these prices are likely to be out of reach for households with incomes of £40,000-£50,000. Even households on the highest incomes (£50,000-£70,000+) which were

renting perceived housing in Letchworth to be too expensive with a lack of mid-range 3-bed homes, with some noting the value for money in Letchworth to be poorer than nearby towns, e.g. homes lacking parking and space (outdoor and indoor).

- 6.6 Households in social rented housing which were content with their current circumstances were more likely to perceive the available stock of social housing positively, noting that there was a good availability of social rented housing at acceptable rent levels. Conversely, households in social rented housing which did not meet their needs, e.g. because they did not have enough bedrooms or because of the condition of their home, were more likely to perceive the availability of social housing more negatively – as expected. Similar to owner-occupiers, some older households in social rented housing (including those in large houses, including 3-beds) perceived there to be a lack of housing suitable for downsizing, particularly bungalows. Social rented households also noted issues with the overall condition of their home; an issue which is explored in more depth later in this section.

Summary

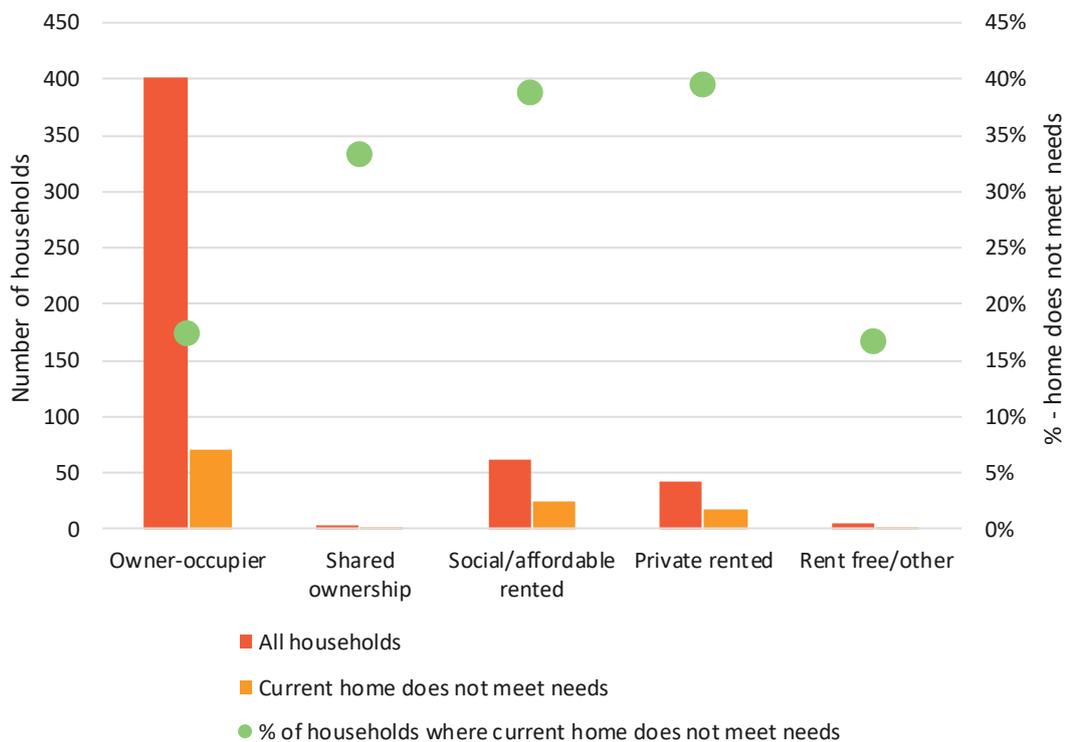
- 6.7 The perception households have of housing in Letchworth varies, in many instances based on a household's current circumstances. A common theme was that housing – whether privately rented or for purchase – was out of reach to young households, and that housing was generally affordable only to those with the highest incomes – this being despite the fact that Letchworth has a disproportionately high proportion of 3-bed housing and prices not being significantly different to the District average. Notwithstanding, some perceived there to be a range of stock available at all price points. Another common theme amongst older households in all tenures was a perception that there was a lack of housing suitable for downsizing, which appears to reflect reality based on our preliminary research.
- 6.8 Many perceive also there to be issues with the condition of housing stock in Letchworth, whether those were households in social rented housing with issues with their current home or households believing that homes for sale are sometimes in poor condition. The issue of the condition of social rented housing is explored in more detail later in the report.

7.0 Needs of existing households

Current housing

7.1 Households were asked if their current home met the needs of all members now and in the immediate future; 78% of respondents stated that their home did, while 22% (113 households) stated that their home did not. Social and private rented households were most likely to state that their household did not meet their needs (with around 40% of households in both tenures stating their home did not meet their needs), as shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Responses to whether current home meets needs of household by tenure



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

7.2 It is important to note that where households have indicated their current home does not meet their needs, this does not necessarily need to be reflected in new housing provision in Letchworth. Many households are likely to be able to meet their needs in the existing market by moving or through changes to their existing home. However, where households persistently note issues which are unlikely to be sufficiently met by existing housing, the Foundation may wish to use this information to inform the mix of new development. In addition, some of the issues with existing housing cited could be used to inform the layout and design of new housing schemes to avoid such issues persisting.

Social rented households

7.3 The reasons given by social rented households for why their existing housing did not meet their current needs, grouped by broad theme, are summarised in Table 7.1. Adaptability (and accessibility) was the most common issue, cited by almost half of all households. A high proportion (42%) stated their existing home was too small; mostly these were couples and families living in 1-2 bed homes. 17% of households highlighted issues with the condition of

their home, and 13% issues with location (all related to the lack of public transport). 2 households stated their home was too large, although 1 of these households is expected to move out imminently.

Table 7.1 Reason current home does not meet household needs by number of bedrooms - social rented households

	Adaptability	Size (too small)	Condition	Location	Size (too big)	Other
1-bed	2	2	0	0	0	2
2-bed	3	4	1	2	0	0
3-bed	6	3	2	1	2	0
4-bed	0	1	1	0	0	0
Total	11	10	4	3	2	2
% mentioning issue	46%	42%	17%	13%	8%	8%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey. Note: Households were able to cite more than one reason, hence total does not sum to 100%.

All households

7.4 Looking more generally across all households in Letchworth helps build a broader picture of why residents do not think their current household meets their needs. It should be noted that many households, particularly owner-occupiers, may be able to move to address issues with their current home in the existing market, and therefore the findings set out below should not be taken as a direct indication of what new housing in Letchworth should seek to address.

7.5 Of the 113 households (across all tenures) which stated their current home did not meet their needs, 110 provided information on why. The reasons noted by these households are shown below in Table 7.2 (households could give more than one reason).

Table 7.2 Reason/s house does not meet current household needs – all households

	Size (too small)	Adaptability	Location	Size (too big)	Condition	Other
No. times mentioned	57	25	16	13	11	16
% mentioning issue	52%	23%	15%	12%	10%	15%

Source: Lichfields analysis of Letchworth Housing Survey (Q8 responses). Percentages do not add to 100% as respondents were able to give more than one reason.

7.6 The key themes cited by households as to why their household did not meet their needs were:

- Size (too small)** – as expected most households commenting that their current housing was too small were couples and families. The vast majority wanted at least an extra bedroom, although households noted other size issues for example wanting a separate dining room, larger kitchen or extra bathroom. Overall, the survey suggests a wide range of households are seeking to upsize;
- Adaptability** – 23% of households noted issues with adaptability/accessibility of their home, with many currently living in the social rented sector. Notwithstanding, owner-occupiers noted similar adaptability issues, with many citing the need for an additional and/or downstairs bathroom/wet room;
- Location** – 15% of households cited location issues, ranging from the distance to schools, transport links (e.g. buses) and to the town centre. Whilst some location issues (e.g. distance to schools) cannot be addressed for existing households, the Foundation may wish to take such factors into account when designing the development north of Letchworth (e.g.

ensuring schools, shops and services are well-linked to houses, and coverage of transport links);

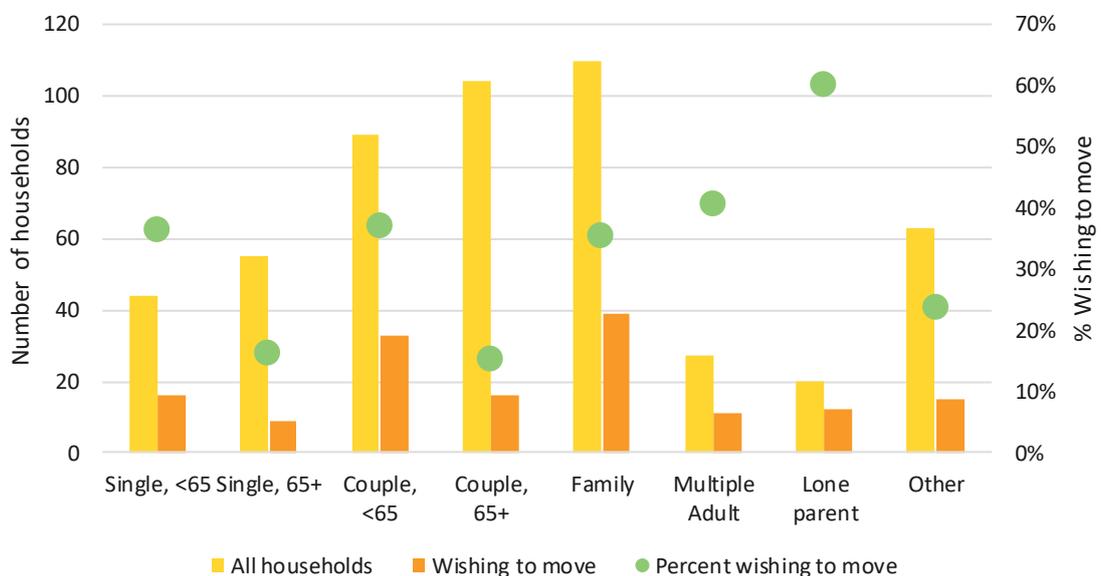
- 4 **Size (too big)** – almost all of these respondents were older households from the owner-occupied sector living in 3-4 bed houses. Many noted a lack of suitable smaller alternatives and some also stated that downsizing would be costly and a hassle – this reflects existing knowledge about downsizing options in Letchworth. A household in a modest 3-bed home or even a 4-bed home at the lower end of the market would likely struggle to raise the required capital to downsize to a bungalow, as these typically start at around £450,000-£500,000;
- 5 **Condition** – most respondents citing issues with the condition of their home were from the social rented sector, noting issues of mould, damp and general disrepair. Of the few owner-occupiers citing issues with their homes’ condition, all related to insulation; and
- 6 **Other reasons** – some of the other reasons households stated their home was not suitable included households in the private rented sector stating their rent was too expensive and/or did not provide long term stability, issues with parking space, traffic and driveway/road conditions and issues with the layout of homes.

Moving intentions

7.7

A total of 151 households (29%) stated that they would like to move now or in the immediate future, and would either like to remain in Letchworth or had no preference on location¹⁰. Figure 7.2 shows the breakdown by household type¹¹; the results follow wider trends, notably that older households are the least active in the market and families the most active.

Figure 7.2 Households wishing to move (either within Letchworth or with no preference) by household type



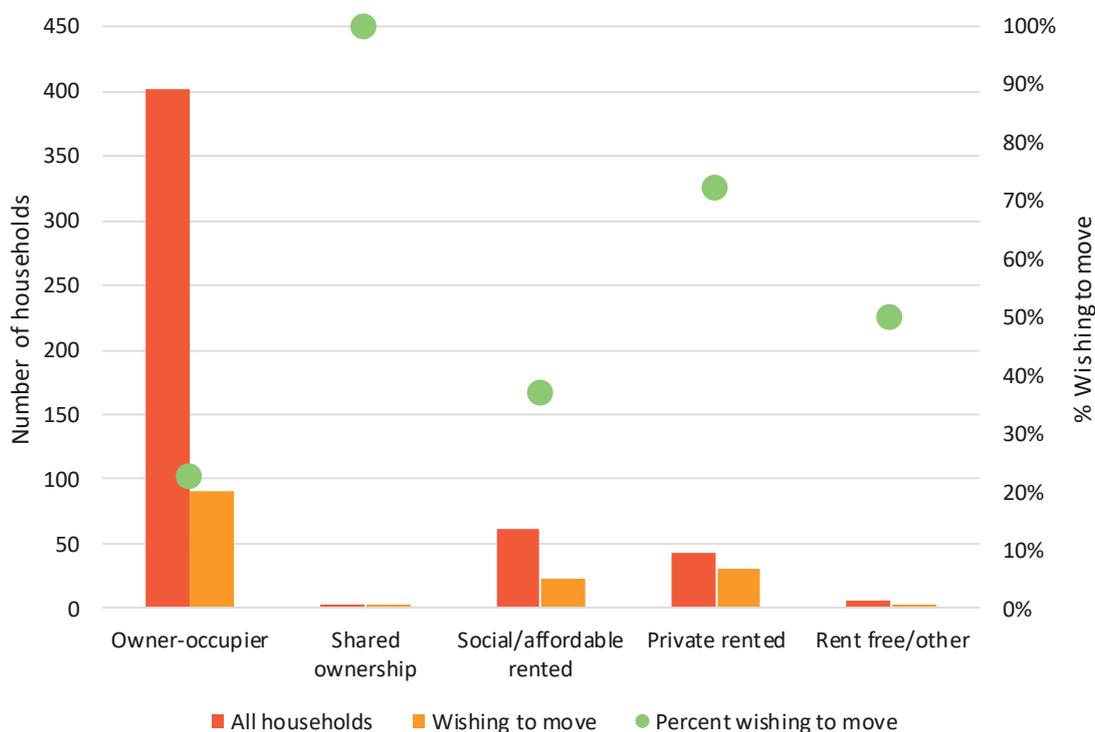
Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

¹⁰ Those households which stated their preference was to move out of Letchworth were not included in the analysis.

¹¹ Respondents were asked to provide the number of residents in the household by age; unlike the Census the Survey did not ask information on the relationships between different household members. For the purposes of this analysis and for ease of understanding we have grouped households according to the number of members and their age and have named each according to the household type that household is most likely to be. Further detail is set out in Appendix X. However, it is acknowledged that not all households in this group will fit exactly the description, as the relationship between household members is unknown.

7.8 Figure 7.3 shows the breakdown of households wishing to move by tenure; owner-occupiers were the least likely to want to move, and this reflects the fact that owner-occupiers were the least likely to say their current home did not meet their needs. Interestingly, those in shared ownership housing were most likely to want to move – 100% of households in this group stated a desire to move (albeit the sample size was small, with only 3 shared ownership households responding to the survey). Almost three-quarters of private rented households stated they wished to move, however these households are typically the most active in the market so this is to be expected. 37% of social rented households stated they wished to move – this is similar to the proportion of social rented households who said their current home does not meet their needs.

Figure 7.3 Households wishing to move (either within Letchworth or with no preference) by tenure



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

7.9 Looking at the reasons household want to move and where/what they want to move to reveals the following:

- 1 Of owner-occupiers, most younger couples wanted to upsize, either for more bedroom/s, larger living space and/or outdoor space. Where older households wanted to move, most cited maintenance issues or the need for adaptations. The vast majority indicated they would prefer modern, single storey accommodation with 2-3 bedrooms with good access to shops and services.
- 2 The number of respondents in shared ownership housing in the survey was small, however all stated that they wished to move. All had incomes of £30k -£40k. Most wanted to upsize to either a 2 or 3-bed house (for shared ownership, a household on £30k-£40k would be able to afford a home with an open market value of £245,000-£327,000).
- 3 Of those in social rented housing, couples typically expressed a preference for small homes, bungalows, more manageable outdoor space and/or accessible homes (some were living in

2-3 bed homes which they considered too large). There were also several families which lived in flats who had a preference to move into 2-bed housing with a garden.

- 4 Private rented households – most households wishing to move were younger couples, who wanted to move due to unstable tenancies, costs and living conditions. Most stated a preference to move to either shared ownership or owner-occupied housing, either into flats or small to medium sized family housing (2-3 beds). Households in the private rented sector wishing to move had incomes ranging from £10,000-£20,000 up to £70,000+. Those with incomes of around £30k or more are likely to be able to afford discounted market or shared ownership housing, and those with higher incomes potentially open market housing.

Summary

7.10 The survey suggests that to help meet the needs of existing households wishing to move, the Foundation could consider the following options:

- 1 Housing specifically designed to meet the needs of older households wishing to downsize, particularly single storey accommodation with manageable outdoor space. In the open market and in the social rented sector this could help free up larger homes currently occupied by older households for younger couples and families to move into;
- 2 Shared ownership options for households wanting to move into small family sized housing. As households do not have incomes above £40,000, these homes would need to have market values of around £327,000 at most. Lower cost shared ownership options (at around £150,000-£250,000) could also help meet the needs of those in private rented housing on lower incomes of around £20k-£30k; and
- 3 In the social rented sector there appears to be a need for a range of housing, from small homes suitable for downsizers to family homes with 2-3 beds to accommodate families currently living in accommodation which may be too small for their needs.

8.0 Newly-forming households

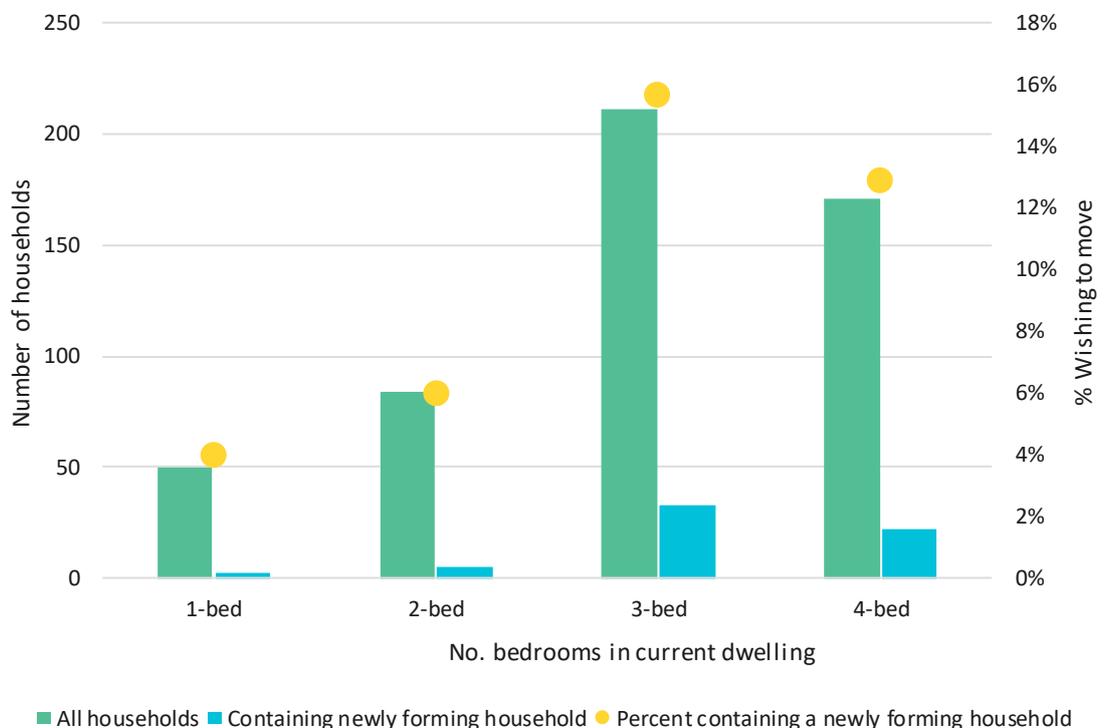
8.1 The survey asked households if anyone in the household planned to move out in the near future to set up their own home. Respondents were asked where this household would prefer to live, what type of home and number of bedrooms they would prefer, who they would be forming the new household with and what tenure they would be moving into.

8.2 For the purposes of understanding housing needs in Letchworth, this analysis focuses only on those households who stated a preference for living in Letchworth (this amounted to **55** households), or who currently did not plan to live in Letchworth but would if a suitable/affordable home were provided (amounting to **7** households). This amounts to **62** households in total. Respondents who stated the new household would not plan to live in Letchworth even if suitable/affordable housing were available were not included in the analysis – such households would move away from the town regardless of whether suitable housing were available (e.g. moving for employment reasons).

Context

8.3 The survey found that 12% of all households in Letchworth contained at least one member who intended to move out and form a new household now or in the near future. Households living in larger homes were most likely to contain a newly-forming household, with 16% of households in 3-bed homes and 13% of households in 4-bed homes containing at least one member looking to move in the near future, as shown in Figure 8.1. This is because larger homes are more likely to contain families with older children or multiple adult households.

Figure 8.1 Households containing newly-forming households by number of bedrooms



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

8.4 As expected, multiple adult households (which includes families where all children are adults) were the most likely contain newly-forming households, along with ‘other’ households. Almost

one-quarter of family households with older children contained newly-forming households. Half of all newly-forming household would form a single person household, as shown in Table 8.1. A quarter would form a household with others from a different household in Letchworth, and very few would form a new household with someone from outside Letchworth. This shows that there is a need for housing to meet the needs of those already living in Letchworth, either in shared housing or with family. Without suitable and affordable housing in Letchworth, these newly-forming households would almost certainly be forced to look elsewhere to more affordable locations (or continue living in sub-optimal living conditions). This could have knock-on implications for the local economy, for example reducing the local labour force, lower spending (in turn leading to the decline of local shops and services) and population decline.

Table 8.1 Who newly-forming household would form with

	Number
Alone	31
Alone or With others from the current household	1
With others from the current household	8
With others from a different household in Letchworth	15
With others from a different household not in Letchworth	4
Not stated	3
Total	62

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Income and housing needs

- 8.5 When households express a preference for a specific tenure, it is important to consider whether their preferred tenures and their incomes are aligned. This helps determine the types of price points new homes of different tenures may need to be in order to be affordable to new households.
- 8.6 Table 8.2 shows the preferred tenure by household income of the 62 newly-forming households. Those expressing a preference for owner-occupied housing (25 households) had widely varying incomes, from £10,000-£20,000 up to £70,000+. Whilst this suggests market housing at a range of price points would be appropriate, for households on the lowest incomes it might not be possible to offer market housing at a low enough cost to be affordable. For these households, shared ownership or discounted market housing could provide a suitable alternative. However, it is possible that households on lower incomes could be equity rich (particularly if they are older) and therefore be able to afford owner-occupation even with a lower household income.
- 8.7 Overall the tenure preferences of respondents broadly correlate with household income, i.e. respondents typically stated a preference for a tenure which was likely to reflect their income circumstances. We take a more detailed look at the needs of different types of newly-forming households below.

Table 8.2 Preferred tenure by household income of newly-forming households

Preferred tenure	Income of newly-forming household									
	Under £10,000	£10,001-£20,000	£20,001-£30,000	£30,001-£40,000	£40,001-£50,000	£50,001-£60,000	£60,001 - £70,000	£70,000+	Not stated	Total
Owner-occupied		5	7	4	3	2	1	3		25
Owner-occupied or shared ownership				1	1	1			2	5
Shared ownership	1	3	2	2						8
Private rented		1	1		1	1				4
Social/Affordable rented	2	6	4	1					2	15
Not stated									2	2
Any		3								3

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

- 8.8 For context, Table 8.3 below shows some of the costs households on different incomes can afford. For example, a household with an income of £40,000 would likely be able to afford a home on the open market with a value of around £212,000. If discount market housing (or starter homes) were available with a 20% discount, that same household could afford a home with an open market value of £265,000. With shared ownership, that household could afford a home with an open market value of £327,000.

Table 8.3 Affordability by household income - open market, discount market/started homes and shared ownership

Household income	Open market house	Discount market/Starter Homes (full market value)	Shared ownership (full market value)
£10,000	£53,000	£66,000	£82,000
£20,000	£106,000	£132,000	£164,000
£30,000	£159,000	£199,000	£245,000
£40,000	£212,000	£265,000	£327,000
£50,000	£265,000	£331,000	£409,000
£60,000	£318,000	£397,000	£491,000
£70,000	£371,000	£463,000	£573,000

Source: Lichfields analysis

Single person households

- 8.9 As set out above, half of newly-forming households stated that they would be living alone. Figure 8.2 shows the tenure preferred of single person households by household income; most would have incomes of between £10,000 and £40,000.

Figure 8.2 Single person newly-forming households - preferred tenure by income



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

8.10

Looking at tenure preferences of single person newly-forming household shows that:

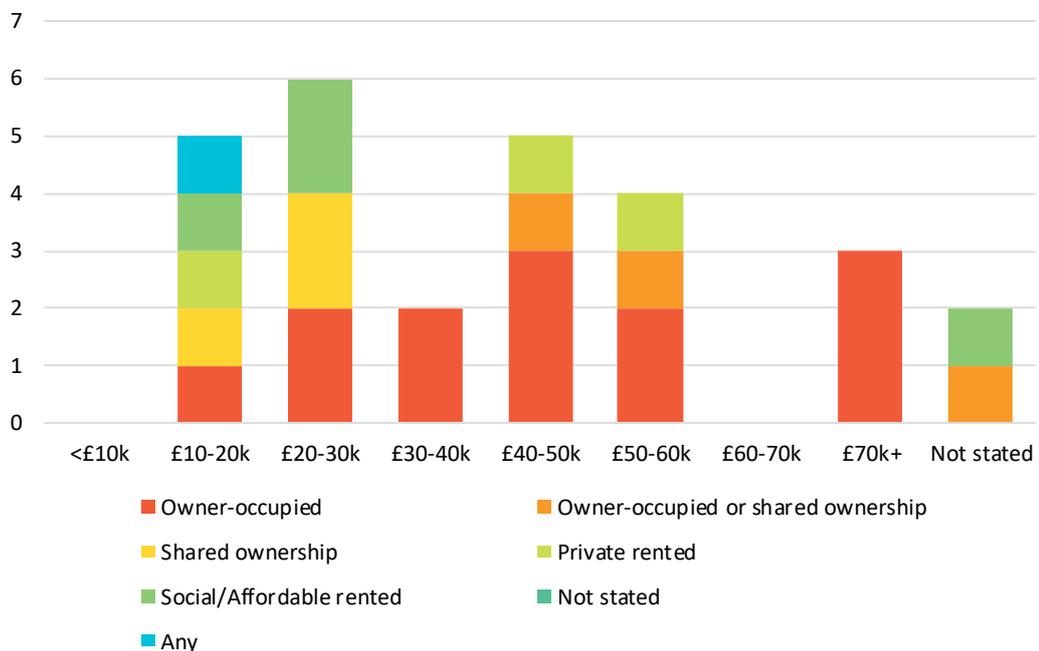
- 1 Of those stating a preference for **owner-occupied** housing, many specifically stated that they currently had adult children living at home who wanted to move out. The most common preference amongst single person households was for a 2-bed house. With incomes of up to £40k (with which a household is likely to be able to afford a home of around £212,000 in the open market), these needs might be better met through shared ownership or discounted market housing, for example:
 - a A single person household on around £25k would be able to afford a shared ownership home with a market value of £210,000, which represents roughly the cost of a 2-bed flat; and
 - b A household on a slightly higher income of £35k would be able to afford a home with a value of around £230,00 if offered at a 20% discount and a home worth around £280,000 if offered with shared ownership. This represents the cost of a 2-bed flat or potentially a 2-bed house;
- 2 Of single person households stating a preference for the **social/affordable rented** sector, most had incomes of £10k-£20k, and stated a preference for 1-bed housing (including flats);
- 3 Of single person households stating a preference for **shared ownership**, there was variation amongst the size/type of housing preferred, reflecting income. For example:
 - a Households on lower incomes (e.g. £10-20k) stated a preference for 1-2 bed housing (either flats or houses). Those with incomes of £20k would like be able to afford shared ownership housing of homes with a market value of up to £164,000, so a 2-bed home is potentially out of reach unless other options (e.g. rent-to-buy) were available; and

- b Households on £30-40k stated a preference for 2-3 bed housing, which is likely to be possible given such households could afford homes with a value of around £245,000-£327,000.

Other newly-forming households

8.11 Of households forming with others, around half were looking to move into the owner-occupied sector and typically had higher incomes than single person households (this is to be expected given they are likely to be dual-earner). Some households on lower incomes expressed a preference for social/affordable rented or shared ownership housing. This is shown in Figure 8.3. Few households provided detail of the age/relationships of newly-forming households but of those who did, these were typically young couples.

Figure 8.3 Newly-forming households forming with others - preferred tenure by income



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

8.12 Looking at preferences of households by tenure shows:

- 1 Of newly-forming households expressing a preference for **owner-occupation** or **shared ownership**, all expressed a specific preference for a house (or stated no preference). Households wanting to move into shared ownership had incomes from £10k to £30k; whilst shared ownership might not be possible at the lower end of this range, those on £30k would likely be able to afford a home with a market value of around £245,000. Discounted market housing could also provide an option for households wanting to move into 2-3 bed housing with incomes of around £40k.
- 2 Newly-forming households preferring **social/affordable rented** had incomes of less than £30,000, with some specifically stating that they had adult children (including some in couples or with families) in their current household living at home who were unable to move out;
- 3 Newly-forming households stating a preference for **private rented** housing stated a preference for 1-2 bed housing, including flats. Some noted that whilst it would in fact be preferable to buy a home, renting is currently the only affordable option. These households

may be able to move into ownership through other means, particularly those with incomes of £40-£60k, which would be able to afford around £265,000 to £409,000 through discount market or shared ownership.

Summary

- 8.13 The survey has found that housing aspirations of newly-forming households typically reflect a household's income, with those in lower incomes stating a preference for social rented housing and those on higher incomes stating a preference for owner-occupied housing. Overall there appears to be an affordability gap, whereby households on incomes of up to around £40-£50k would struggle to obtain anything larger than a 2-bed flat/small house on the open market, but could afford significantly more through shared ownership or discounted market housing. This gap is unsurprising, given entry-level house prices in Letchworth have increased over 70% in the last 5 years alone (from around £150,000 in 2013 to £260,000 currently).
- 8.14 Single person households typically wanted smaller housing, whether owner or rented. For those wanting to move into ownership, shared ownership or discounted market housing might be an option as those in incomes of around £30k might be able to afford a 1-2 bed flat with either discounted market or shared ownership housing. Households forming with others had higher incomes as expected (these were more likely to be dual-income), and these typically expressed a preference for owner-occupied or shared ownership housing. None of these households expressed a preference for flats, which suggests if affordable homes for purchase are provided in Letchworth they should be small family homes with outdoor space suitable for young couples and families.

9.0 Elderly and other needs

Elderly needs

- 9.1 The survey asked if the respondents' household contained any resident/s over age 65 which intended to move in the near future (this could be either the entire household moving or moving into a new household, e.g. out of a larger family home).
- 9.2 A total of 24 respondents stated that their household contained at least one member looking to move in the near future, and households were asked whether they would consider one or more of a range of housing options. All but one provided at least one response, and Table 9.1 summarises the type of housing households preferred (more than one option could be selected). The majority of these households came from the owner-occupied sector.
- 9.3 As expected based on earlier responses to the survey, around half of older households wishing to move expressed a preference either for a home on a single-level and/or a smaller home. This does not necessarily mean a home with fewer bedrooms; for example an older household living in a 2 or 3-bed home currently may wish to stay in a home with 2-3 bedrooms, but move into a bungalow with a more manageable garden. This highlights the importance of responding to the demands of those wishing to downsize through housing which specifically meets the needs of older households, rather than attempting to encourage downsizing by the provision of typical 2-3 bed housing (which may be unsuitable for older households due to being on 2 levels or having too much outdoor space). Interestingly, only one-quarter of households would consider an adaptable/accessible home, which suggests that having a manageable sized home on one-level was significantly more important than having a home which is adaptable or accessible.
- 9.4 After a smaller home (or one on a single-level), the next most common preference was for some form of retirement housing where some on-site assistance was provided. Very few households expressed a preference for care/nursing homes, which could reflect the fact that older households typically prefer to maintain a degree of independence for as long as possible¹².
- 9.5 The moving patterns of older households in the social rented sector typically reflected the overall average; most wanted to move either to a home on a single level or to retirement/sheltered housing.

¹² This could also be because those households more likely to be planning to move into nursing homes might not have been covered by the Survey.

Table 9.1 Moving preferences of older households

	Number	% (out of 23 respondents)
Home on single level (e.g. bungalow/ground floor flat)	12	52%
Smaller home (e.g. smaller garden, smaller living space)	11	48%
Home with fewer bedrooms	8	35%
Sheltered housing with some on-site assistance (e.g. warden)	8	35%
Accessible/adaptable home	6	26%
Retirement housing with on-site assistance	6	26%
Similar home to current (but, for example, in a different location)	4	17%
Larger home (more bedrooms, more living space, etc)	2	9%
Extra-care housing with 24-hour assistance (including on-call nurse)	2	9%
Care or nursing home	1	4%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Self-build/CLT

- 9.6 A total of 112 respondents expressed an interest in self-build or CLT (community land trust) housing. However, some respondents simply provided comments, for example stating it would be good for the community to have a CLT, that self-build offers the opportunity to build energy-efficient and eco-friendly homes and expressing an interest in helping run a local CLT. These were typically households on lower incomes who said that whilst interested, they would be unlikely to be able to afford self-build housing.
- 9.7 Around half of respondents specifically stated they would consider (or are actively pursuing) self-build or CLT housing, most of which were on the highest incomes. There were some households who stated they were currently preparing for self-build and would be ready as soon as land became available. Some stated that they had attempted to pursue self-build previously but had been unable to secure land locally. Other respondents also stated that younger members of their household may be interested in self-build in the medium to longer term. There were also some older households who were interested in self-build as a way of designing a home which would meet their specific needs throughout retirement and old age.
- 9.8 Overall self-build housing appeared to be more popular than CLT; several respondents highlighted potential concerns about CLT, for example whether it would maintain Garden City principles and the desire to own the freehold to reduce household expenses.

Table 9.2 Self-build/CLT interest

	Number	% (out of 112)
Yes – Self Build	59	53%
Yes – CLT	36	32%
Yes - Self Build and Yes - CLT	14	13%
Yes - Preference not stated/Yes and No	3	3%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

10.0 Summary

- 10.1 This Local Housing Needs Study has been produced by Lichfields on behalf of the Foundation to provide an assessment of affordable housing needs in Letchworth. The Foundation wishes to understand in more detail the housing needs, particularly affordable housing need, of its residents and how the allocation North of Letchworth can best serve these needs.

What we know

- 10.2 In the mid/late-2000s Letchworth Garden City saw relatively little population and housing growth. In recent years, housing development has picked up which has led to the town's population reaching a high of just under 35,000. The town has a significantly higher proportion of social rented homes compared to the District and national averages, with 31% of households in social rented housing as at 2011.
- 10.3 The town contains a greater proportion of 3-bed homes than nearby towns and the District average, and house prices are similar to the District average across all types. However, prices across North Hertfordshire have risen sharply in recent years and affordability ratio is now at the highest ever. Entry-level house prices in Letchworth and North Hertfordshire are now around £110,000 more than the national average, at £260,000.

Gaps in existing information

- 10.4 Our research and analysis using publicly available information and primary research carried out as part of previous work has highlighted several gaps which could be filled by undertaking a local survey. These covered; perceptions of Letchworth, the needs of existing households, newly-forming households, elderly households and other needs (namely self-build and CLT).

Survey findings and implications

- 10.5 The perception of housing in Letchworth varies significantly, with some households believing there to be a wider variety of housing available whilst others identified specific gaps where there were apparent shortages, for example options for young families and for older households looking to downsize.
- 10.6 The survey suggests that to help meet the needs of existing households wishing to move, the Foundation could consider housing specifically designed to meet the needs of older households wishing to downsize, shared ownership options (ranging from homes with values of £200,000 up to around £327,000) and a range of homes in the social rented sector, suitable for downsizers and families.
- 10.7 The survey has found there to be a need for all tenures from newly-forming households, social rented housing for those in lower incomes and affordable purchase options for those on average (or higher) incomes. There appears to be an affordability 'gap', whereby households on incomes of up to around £40-£50k would struggle to obtain anything larger than a 2-bed flat/small house on the open market, but could afford significantly more through shared ownership or discounted market housing. This gap is unsurprising, given entry-level house prices in Letchworth have increased over 70% in the last 5 years alone (from around £150,000 in 2013 to £260,000 currently).
- 10.8 As expected, the survey has found that the majority of older households typically do not want to move. However, of those that do, many noted there was a lack of options available. This appears justified, given a household living in a 3-4 bed home is unlikely to be able to raise enough capital to buy bungalows currently on offer in Letchworth, without raising additional funds (e.g.

through a mortgage). Given that the movement of older households out of family homes will subsequently increase the supply of such homes available for families to occupy, the Foundation should consider how the provision of new housing can address the demands of downsizers.

- 10.9 Finally, the survey suggested that there was some appetite for self-build housing and to a lesser extent CLT housing. Some households were ready immediately to pursue self-build housing, others were still in the planning stage, whilst for others it was an option which may be pursued in the future if land were available and it was viable.

Appendix 1: Letchworth Housing Survey

Appendix 2: Summary of Survey Outputs

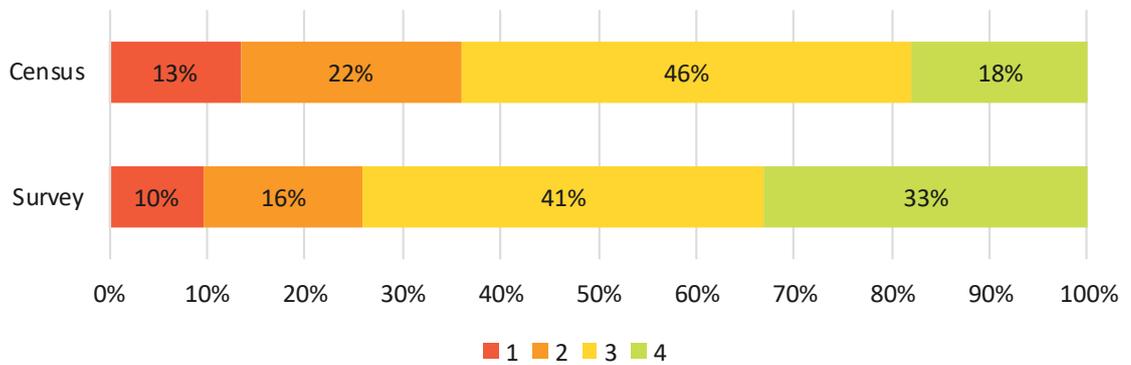
Q3. How many bedrooms does your current home have?

Table A2.1 Q3 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question (response rate)	516	100%
1 bedroom	50	10%
2 bedrooms	84	16%
3 bedrooms	211	41%
4+ bedrooms	171	33%
Total	516	100%
Average number of bedrooms	2.97	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.1 Comparison of number of bedrooms - Survey and Census



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey and 2011 Census (Qs411EW)

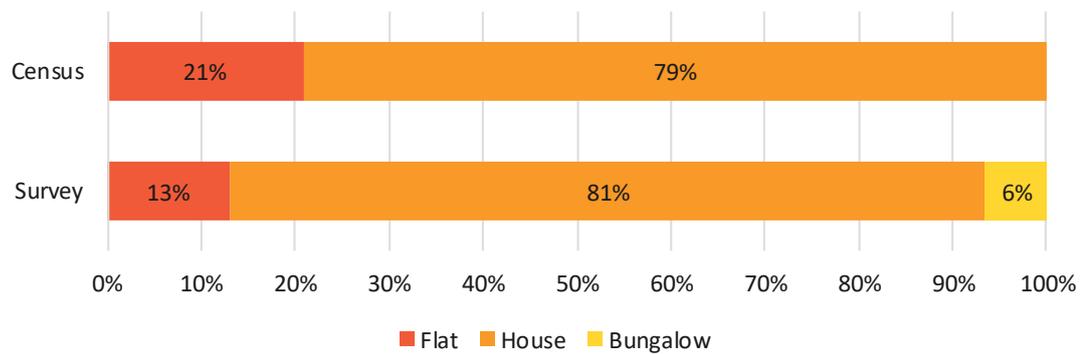
Q4. What type of property do you live in?

Table A2..2 Q4 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	513	99%
Flat	67	13%
House	413	81%
Bungalow	33	6%
Total	513	100%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.2 Comparison of house type – Survey and Census



Source: Letchworth housing survey and 2011 Census (KS401EW) *Note: The Census does not distinguish between houses and bungalows

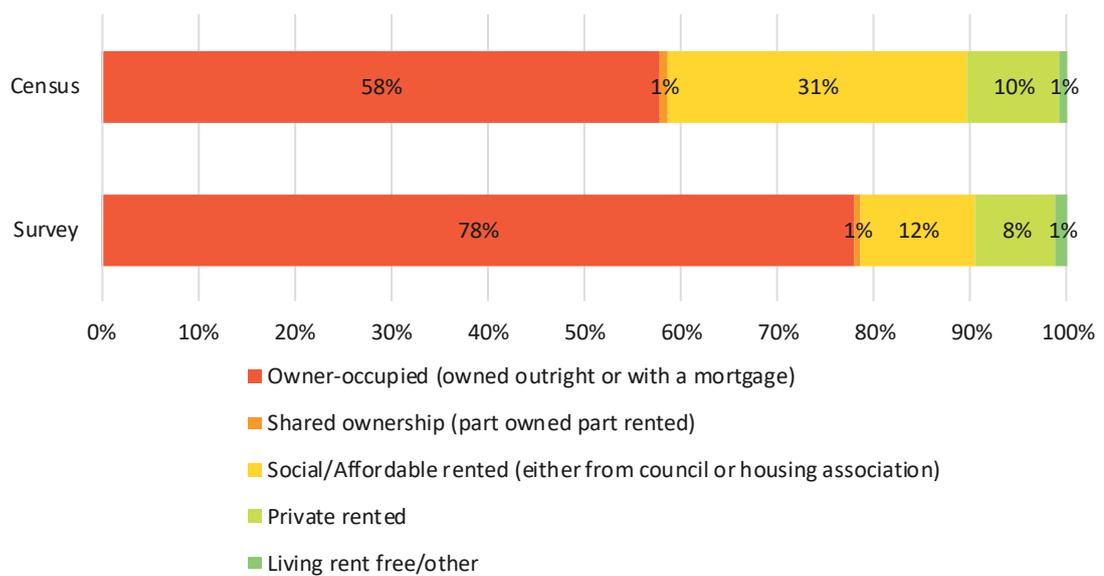
Q5. What tenure is your current residence?

Table A2.3 Q5 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	516	100%
Owner-occupied (owned outright or with a mortgage)	402	78%
Shared ownership (part owned part rented)	3	1%
Social/Affordable rented (either from council or housing association)	62	12%
Private rented	43	8%
Living rent free/other	6	1%
Total	516	100%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.3 Comparison of tenure - Survey and Census



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey and 2011 Census (KS402EW)

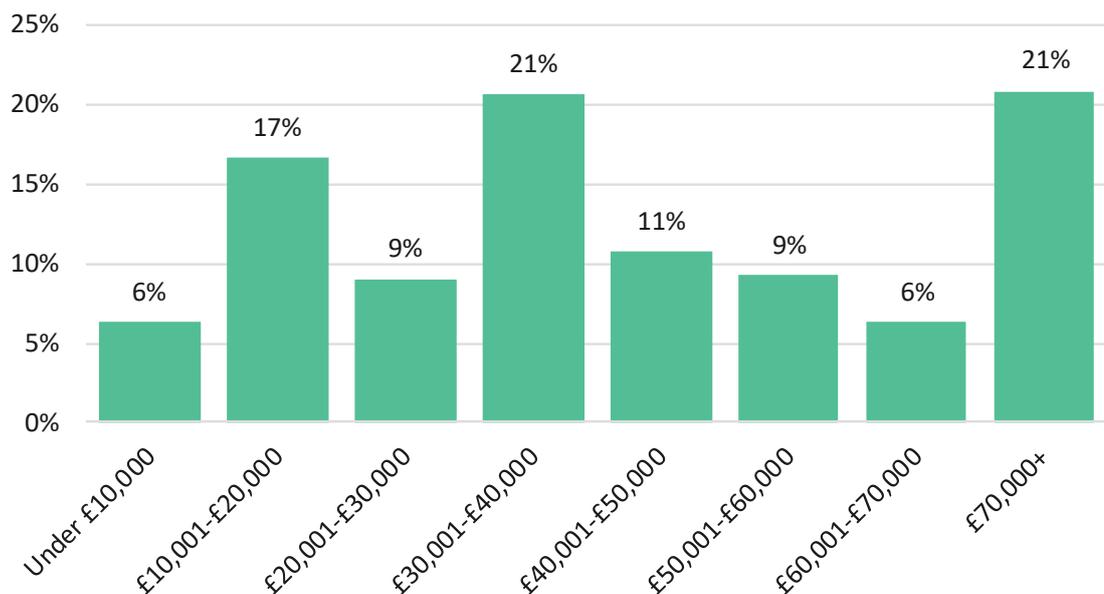
Q6. What is the approximate gross annual income of the main earner/s in your household?

Table A2.4 Q6 responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	474	92%
Under £10,000	30	6.3%
£10,001-£20,000	79	16.7%
£20,001-£30,000	43	9.1%
£30,001-£40,000	98	20.7%
£40,001-£50,000	51	10.8%
£50,001-£60,000	44	9.3%
£60,001-£70,000	30	6.3%
£70,000+	99	20.9%
Total	474	100%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.4 Q6 Responses - Income distribution of households



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q7. What are the ages of residents in your households?

This question asked respondents to provide the number of residents in the household by age – 0-10 years, 11-20 years, 21-64 years and 65+ years. Unlike the Census, the Survey did not ask information on the relationships between different household members (in part to prevent the survey from becoming too long). From the responses, households were grouped according to type. These groupings are set out in the table below.

For the purposes of this analysis and for ease of understanding we have labelled each of the above types according to the household type that household is most likely to be (the ‘general

term' shown below), however it is acknowledged that not all households in this group will fit exactly the description, as the relationship between household members is unknown.

Table A2.5 Grouping of households - composition and general term

Grouping	Composition	General term
One member age 21-64 years	Single person <65	Single person <65
One member age 65+ years	Single person 65+	Single person 65+
Two household members age 21-64	Two adults. Most likely to be a couple but could be two unrelated adults or a lone parent with an adult child	Couple
Two household members age 65+	Most likely to be elderly couple, but could also be unrelated adults or a single person living with a parent	Couple, 65+
Two members age 21-64 and at least one member age 0-10	Most likely to be a couple with a child, but could be lone parent with child and another related or unrelated adult or a multi-generation family	Family, young children
Two members age 21-64 and at least one member age 11-20 years	Most likely to be a couple with a child, but could be lone parent with child and another related or unrelated adult or a multi-generation family	Family, older children
Two members age 21-64 and two or more members of 0-10 and 11-20 years	Most likely to be a couple with children, but could be lone parent with child and another related or unrelated adult or a multi-generation family	Family, children
More than 2 members aged 21-64 years	This could be sharing households (e.g. a group of young adults living together) or could be families with adult children living at home	Multiple adult
One member age 21-64 years and any member age 0-10 or 11-20 years.	Most likely to be lone parents with children	Lone parent with child/ren
Any other composition	Any other composition	Other

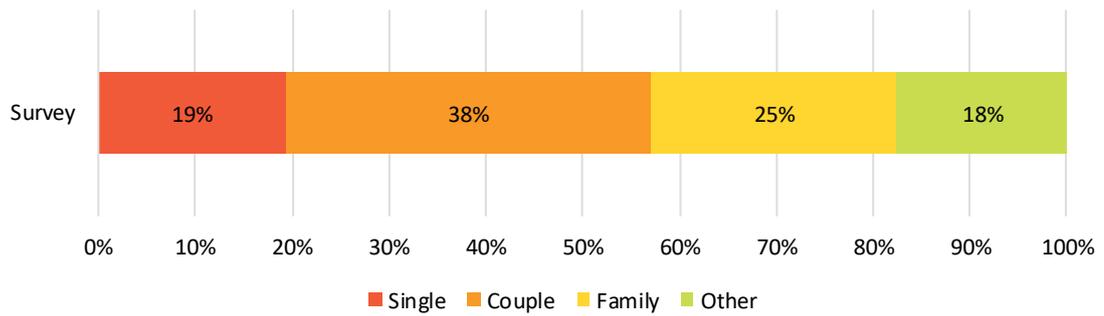
Source: Lichfields

Table A2.6 Q7 Responses (derived)

	N	%
Total responses to question	44	9%
Single <65	55	11%
Single 65+	89	17%
Couple	104	20%
Couple, 65+	49	10%
Family, young children	45	9%
Family, older children	16	3%
Family, children	27	5%
Multiple adult	20	4%
Lone parent with child/ren	63	12%
Other	44	9%
Total	512	

Source: Lichfields based on Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.5 Q7 Responses (derived) – household (broad type)



Source: Lichfields analysis of Letchworth Housing Survey

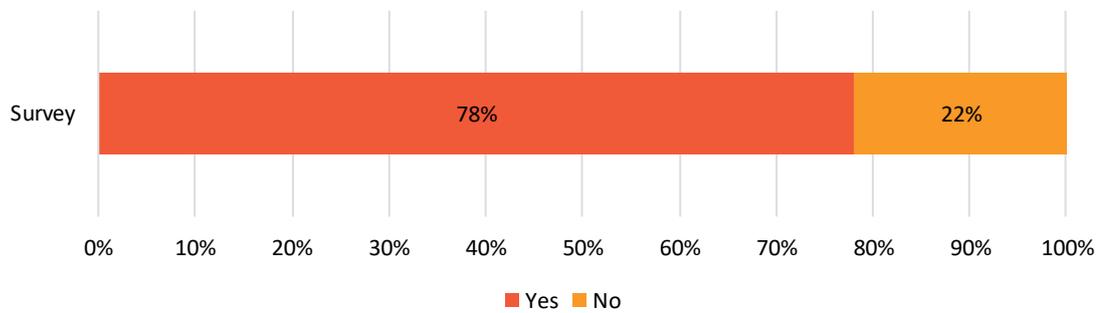
Q8. Does your home meet the needs of all occupants now and in the immediate future?

Table A2.7 Q8 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	515	99.8%
Yes	402	78%
No	113	22%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.6 Q8 Responses – does your home meet needs



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

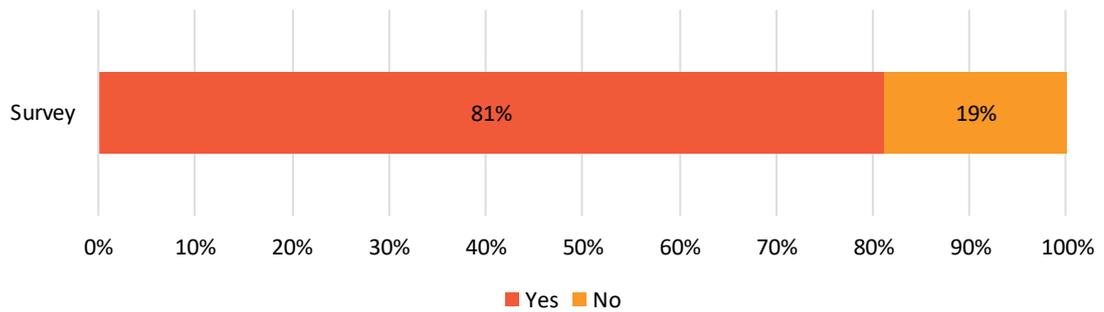
Q9. In your view, are your current housing costs affordable?

Table A2.8 Q9 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	512	99%
Yes	415	81%
No	97	19%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.7 Q9 Responses – are costs affordable



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

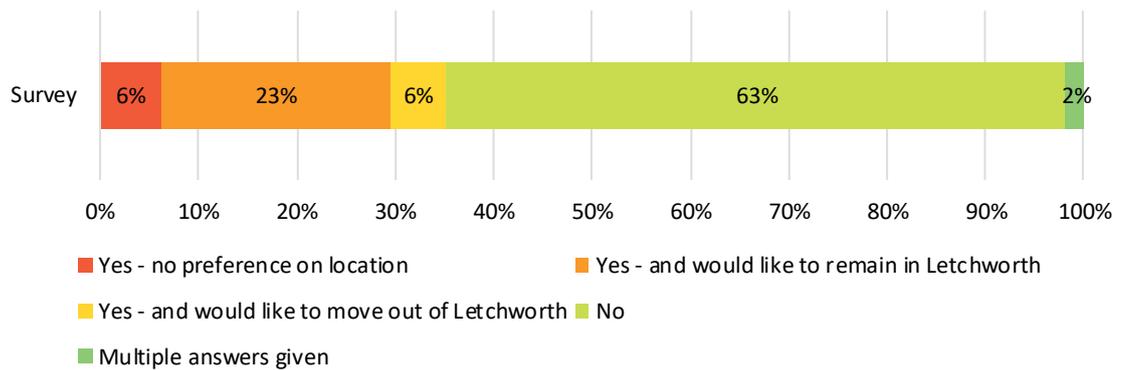
Q10. Would you and those living in your home like to move now or in the immediate future?

Table A2.9 Q10 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	512	99%
Yes - no preference on location	32	6%
Yes - and would like to remain in Letchworth	119	23%
Yes - and would like to move out of Letchworth	29	6%
No	323	63%
Multiple answers given	9	2%
Total	512	

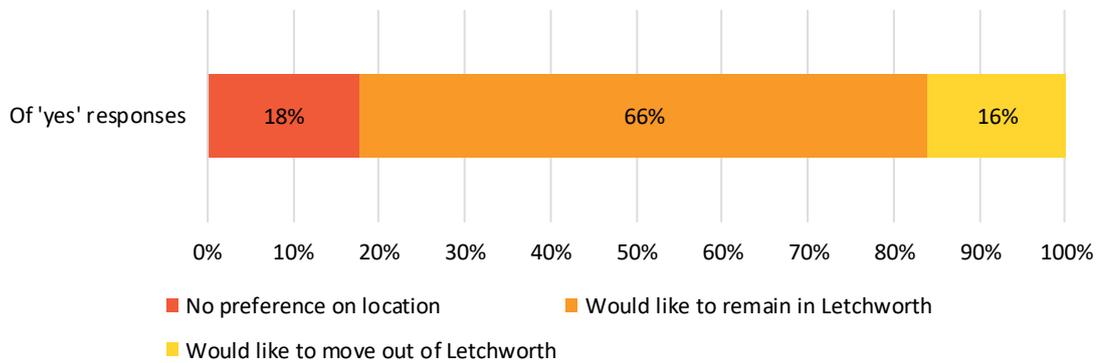
Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.8 Q10 Responses - would household like to move



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.9 Q10 Responses - breakdown of those who answered 'yes' by preference on location



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q11. Does anyone living in your home wish to leave now or in the immediate future to set up their own home?

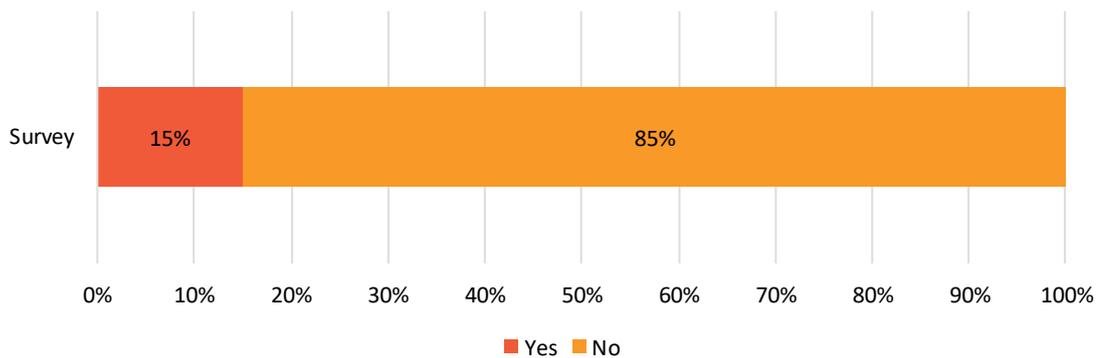
Note – single person households who responded ‘yes’ to this question were replaced with ‘no’ as their moving intentions were already captured in their response to Q10. The purposes of Q11 was to identify where new households would be created as a result of one or more household members moving out (not where existing households are looking to move, which would occur if a single person household moved).

Table A2.10 Q11 Responses

	N	%
Total responses to question	489	95%
Yes	73	15%
No	416	85%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.10 Q11 Responses - does anyone wish to leave to set up own home



Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q12. Would those setting up a new home plan to live in Letchworth?

Responses of those who indicated ‘yes’ when asked Q11 – whether anyone in their household planned to move out and set up their own home in the near future.

Table A2.11 Q12 Responses

	N	%
Yes	55	75%
No	18	25%
Total	73	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q12. (cont.) Would they consider living in Letchworth if a suitable and/or affordable home were available?

Responses of those who indicated that someone in their household did plan in moving out to set up their own home, but stated that they did not plan to live in Letchworth.

Table A2.12 Q12 (cont.) Responses

	N	%
Yes	7	39%
No/not stated	11	61%
Total	18	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q13. Which tenure would this household be looking to move into?

Table A2.13 Q3 Responses

	N	%
Owner-occupied	25	40%
Owner-occupied or shared ownership	5	8%
Shared ownership	8	13%
Private rented	4	6%
Private rented or Social/Affordable rented	0	0%
Social/Affordable rented	15	24%
Any	3	5%
Not stated	2	3%
Total	62	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q14. Who would they be moving in with?

Table A2.14 Q14 Responses

	N	%
Alone	31	50%
With others from the current household	8	13%
With others from a different household in Letchworth	15	24%
With others from a different household not in Letchworth	4	6%
Alone or With others from the current household	1	2%
Not stated	3	5%
Total	62	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q15. What would be their annual income?

Table A2.15 Q15 Responses

Under £10,000	3
£10,001-£20,000	18
£20,001-£30,000	14
£30,001-£40,000	8
£40,001-£50,000	5
£50,001-£60,000	4
£60,001 - £70,000	1
£70,000+	3
Not stated	6
	62

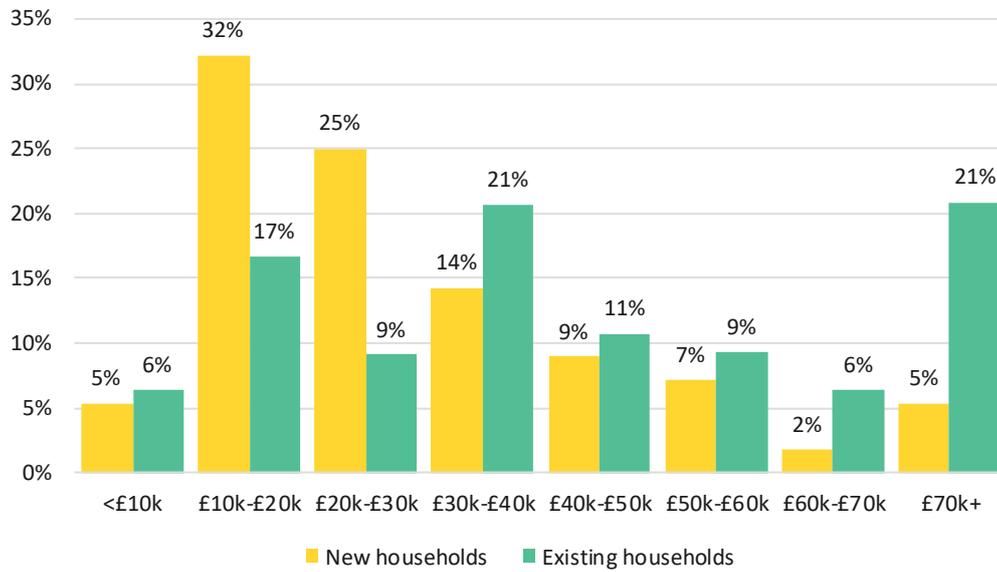
Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Table A2.16 Comparison of household income - existing households and newly-forming households

	New households	Existing households
<£10k	5%	6%
£10k-£20k	32%	17%
£20k-£30k	25%	9%
£30k-£40k	14%	21%
£40k-£50k	9%	11%
£50k-£60k	7%	9%
£60k-£70k	2%	6%
£70k+	5%	21%

Source: Lichfields analysis of Letchworth Housing Survey

Figure A2.11 Comparison of household income - existing households and newly-forming households



Source: Lichfields analysis of Letchworth Housing Survey

Q16. How many bedrooms would they require?

Table A2.17 Q16 Responses

	N	%
1	20	32%
2	30	48%
3	8	13%
4+	1	2%
Not stated	3	5%
Total	62	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q17. Would this household prefer a house or a flat?

Table A2.18 Q17 Responses

	N	%
House	23	37%
Bungalow or House	1	2%
Bungalow	3	5%
Flat	9	15%
Not stated	26	42%
Total	62	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q18. Is anyone living in your home who is over the age of 65?

Table A2.19 Q18 Responses

	N	%
Yes - in either a single person or couple household	96	19%
Yes – living as part of a larger household	5	1%
No	415	80%
Total	516	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q19. Does the location of your home suit your needs?

Responses only relate to those who indicated that someone over age 65 was resident in their household.

Table A2.20 Q19 Responses

	N	%
Yes	93	92%
No	6	6%
Not stated	2	2%
Total	101	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q20. Does your current home meet your accessibility needs?

Table A2.21 Q20 Responses

	N	%
Yes	90	89%
No	10	10%
Not stated	1	1%
Total	101	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q20. (cont.) If not, could your home be adapted to meet your needs in the future?

Table A2.22 Q20 (cont.) responses

	N	%
Yes	7	7%
No	3	3%
Not stated	1	1%
Total	11	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Q21. Does any elderly member/s of your household currently, or in the immediate future, intend to move?

Table A2.23 Q21 Responses

	N
Yes	24
Yes – and indicated at least one preference	23

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Table A2.24 Q21 (cont.) Responses

	Number	% (out of 23 respondents)
Home on single level (e.g. bungalow/ground floor flat)	12	52%
Smaller home (e.g. smaller garden, smaller living space)	11	48%
Home with fewer bedrooms	8	35%
Sheltered housing with some on-site assistance (e.g. warden)	8	35%
Accessible/adaptable home	6	26%
Retirement housing with on-site assistance	6	26%
Similar home to current (but, for example, in a different location)	4	17%
Larger home (more bedrooms, more living space, etc)	2	9%
Extra-care housing with 24-hour assistance (including on-call nurse)	2	9%
Care or nursing home	1	4%

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey. Respondents could indicate more than one preference

Q22. Would you be interested in a self-build housing scheme or involvement in a Community Land Trust (CLT)?

Table A2.25 Q22 Responses

	N	%
Yes – Self Build	59	53%
Yes – CLT	36	32%
Yes - Self Build and Yes - CLT	14	13%
Yes - Preference not stated/Yes and No	3	3%
Total	112	

Source: Letchworth Housing Survey

Table A2.26 Income of households which expressed an interest in Self-Build/CLT Housing

	Interest	
Under £10,000	3	3%
£10,001-£20,000	16	15%
£20,001-£30,000	6	5%
£30,001-£40,000	18	16%
£40,001-£50,000	12	11%
£50,001-£60,000	16	15%
£60,001-£70,000	11	10%
£70,000+	28	25%
	110	

Source: Lichfields analysis of Letchworth Housing Survey

Appendix 3: Review of additional responses

Review of responses

Following the drafting of this report (which covered all responses to the survey up to 3rd January 2019), a further 9 responses were received. These responses included:

- 1 3 older households (singles/couples ages 65+) living in 1-2 bed housing. 2 households were owner-occupiers with incomes of £10,000-£20,000 and 1 household was a social renter and did not provide their income;
 - Only 1 of these households provided responses on whether their current home met their needs (this households' response was 'yes')
 - None of the 3 households indicated they planned to move in the near future
- 2 2 single person households (under 65) both on low incomes and living in 1-bed housing. 1 was in the social rented sector (with an income of <£10,000) and 1 was in the private rented sector (with an income of £10,000-£20,000).
 - The household in the private rented sector was the only household which indicated their home did not meet needs now and in the future, and that its current housing costs were not affordable. This household planned to move into the social rented sector upon retiring (preferably a 1-2 bed ground floor flat/bungalow with some outdoor space);
- 3 3 family/multiple adult households, 2 owner-occupiers and 1 privately renting, all with incomes of £40,000+;
 - 1 of these households indicated that someone wanted to move out in the near future – this person would be living alone, plans to live in Letchworth, would have an income of £30,000-£40,000 and would prefer a 2- bed home (owner-occupied, no preference for house or flat);
 - All of these 3 households expressed an interest in CLT housing, with 1 also expressing an interest in self-build housing, however none provided further comments.
- 4 1 household who did not provide information on its member/s, but was living in a 1-bed social rented flat an income of <£10,000.

Overall the additional 9 responses received subsequent to 3rd January were consistent with the main responses and findings.

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