



Housing Needs Survey Process

What is a Housing Needs Survey (HNS)? A Housing Needs Survey is a local evidence gathering process in the form of a questionnaire that is distributed to every household in the parish with the aim of identifying local housing need. This gives everyone the opportunity to state if someone in their household requires alternative accommodation. It identifies not only if there is a need but indicated number, size and tenure of homes required. A report is produced providing a detailed account of the results plus parish specific recommendations.

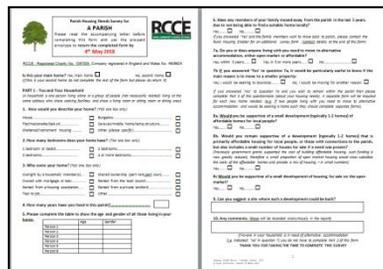
Who carries out the survey? The Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) is employed by the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) to work independently with local communities and can therefore carry out the HNS and produce a report summarising the responses from an impartial standpoint. The parish council would not see the completed forms since they contain sensitive information and are treated as confidential.

What will it cost my parish? The RHE post is funded by contributions from several local authorities and housing associations, and so for parishes in those areas the council will not be charged for the RHE's time. The only cost to the parish council is for photocopying of the Housing Needs Survey forms, reply envelopes and return postage (for the survey forms). Where there is no agreement between RCCE and the local authority a charge will be made. For surveys connected to neighbourhood planning, RCCE can quote for carrying out a survey as part of the evidence gathering.

How long does it take? The whole process can take between 2-3 months depending largely on how long it takes to finalise the materials and also on how many respondents complete the survey.



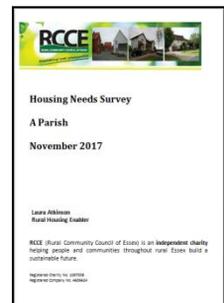
Letter



Survey



Pre-paid envelope



Report

Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE)

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Registered charity no. 1097009 Company limited by guarantee no. 4609624





Step 1 Parish Council holds initial meeting with the Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) to discuss local housing need and affordable housing options



Step 2 RHE provides a quotation based on the number of households in the parish and response rate – average response rate for Essex is currently 25%



Step 3 RHE designs draft materials (letter and survey) for the Parish Council to review and sign off. Survey deadline is agreed.



Step 4 RHE prints letter and survey and delivers with pre-paid envelopes to the Parish Council for distribution to each household - usually via village newsletter or similar. Average of 6 weeks is given to complete and return.



Step 5 RHE receives returned surveys directly for data processing and analysis. RHE returns completed report to Parish Council.



Step 6 RHE attends Parish Council meeting to discuss feedback and results. RHE provides recommendations and guidance on next steps.



If a need is established, the RHE can assist with finding a housing association and site (if required). It is important that the community are involved and the RHE can attend consultation events if required (subject to availability and notice). The whole process can take a few years from start to finish, but the first step is to contact the RHE at RCCE on the details below.



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