

Chalfont St Giles Parish Council

response to the arc4 Housing Needs

Survey Draft Report

Following an agreement at the Parish Council meeting 41/19 on 2 October 2019, a workshop consisting of 4 Councillors and the Clerk met on Thursday 10 October 2019 to discuss the arc4 housing needs survey draft report (HNS) September 2019.

Foreword

The HNS was distributed to all councillors as a confidential, restricted report for them to feed comments into the working party.

1. The Study Area

1.3 Census 2011 information 5925 people lived in the parish in 2402 households. We can only assume that these figures were used in your calculations as these figures appear at the beginning of the document.

Your survey was sent out to 2953 residences (para 5.1). Using the figures from this report the survey went to 551 more residences than the census 2011 figures. That is 22.9% more households were included in the survey. This is significant increase would definitely have an effect on the figures

More current information about the number of residences in Chalfont St Giles Parish from the valuation authority 17 Feb 2015 suggest that the number of houses is 2476. Even using these figures the survey was sent to 477 more residences than existed in the parish in 2015. This means that the survey went to 19% more properties than exist within the parish again this significant increase would definitely have an effect on the figures.

Arc4 provided a list of the addresses used in the survey which confirms that the survey was sent to Chalfont St Giles ward. This is not Chalfont St Giles Parish.

Map 1 This map is not a map of Chalfont St Giles Parish.

2. Methodology

2.2 Paragraph 2.2 is vitally important as this paragraph sets out where the information used in this document comes from.

- Official data from the census and other sources to profile housing and households in the study area.

Which census – we assume 2011 but it should state. What are the other sources? These should be named so that the data can be checked. There should be a detailed bibliography at the end of the document referring to every source used

- Population projections

Whose population projections and from when?

- Data from the local authority,(the SHMA and other housing needs studies) including local data from the housing register where available.

SMHA – what is this, it is the first time it appears in this document, please explain whose SMHA was used from which year? Was local data from the housing register used or not? We need you to be very specific here.

- Evidence from local housing specialists such as estate and letting agents and housing associations.

Which ones were used? Why were agents used outside of the village? To get the best evidence surely it would have been better to look at the three agents that have the largest portfolio in Chalfont St Giles, this would have given the most accurate feedback.

2.4 The data provides an incomplete picture of parish household intentions.... This statement is correct as throughout the document the figures for Chalfont St Giles ward, parish, postcode and district have been melded to appear to create figures for the parish. “Data weighting is used to adjust for this “ An explanation of how this works would be useful as it is not apparent in this document?

3. The Parish Profile

3.7 This information in the census has been misinterpreted. The census figures are for tenure - people (see below data). The report states 80% of homes in the parish are owner occupied – this should read 81% of residents live in owner occupied properties. The rest of the figures quoted follow suit.

Tenure - People (QS403EW)		
	Chalfont St Giles	
	Parish	% Chalfont St Giles Parish
All Usual Residents in Households	5925	100
Owned; Total	4806	81.11392
Owned; Owned Outright	2254	38.04219
Owned; Owned with a Mortgage or Loan	2552	43.07173

Shared Ownership (Part Owned and Part Rented)	55	0.92827
Social Rented; Total	469	7.915612
Social Rented; Rented from Council (Local Authority)	68	1.147679
Social Rented; Other Social Rented	401	6.767932
Private Rented; Total	521	8.793249
Private Rented; Private Landlord or Letting Agency	482	8.135021
Private Rented; Employer of a Household Member	10	0.168776
Private Rented; Relative or Friend of Household Member	9	0.151899
Private Rented; Other	20	0.337553
Living Rent Free	74	1.248945

3.8 This summary suggests that the biggest requirement of housing stock over the next 25 year period should be bungalows or homes for the elderly.

3.18 This statement is universal due to the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the 'bedroom tax'.

4. House prices, affordability market appraisal and wider context

4.1 Local estate agents. As there are several estate agents in the village why was one of the two agents questioned actually in Chalfont St Peter? See comments at 3.3 above.

4.4 Our primary interest is the 25th percentile price – why is this? When the district is predicting an increase in the over 65's population.

Table 4.1 Comparing Chalfont St Giles to Chiltern District is not acceptable. Within Chiltern District there are Chalfont St Giles and Chesham. The demographic of both areas are not comparable but they are here being compared in this table. "From the household survey data we can estimate local income levels "The questionnaire seems to ask for salaried income Q 34. i.e. before any deductions of tax and national insurance. What about other income i.e. investments, interest etc.? How can a household survive on an income £5,200 - £7,800 ?

Table 4.3 Household income (existing households). The data collected in response to this question cannot be relied upon, household income needed to be qualified better in the question. The minimum wage is £16010 therefore there are approx. 15% of the people who responded to the survey that are living below the minimum wage in CHALFONT ST GILES. The figure £5,200 to under £7,800 is the amount that one can pay oneself if you have a private company, however there are dividends etc that make up a much larger income that is not covered here. Also as the survey had code numbers people may have been more cautious about revealing their actual income. The total number of households in

this group was 575. Is this 575 of the 707 responses received? What happened to the other 132 responses?

Table 4.4 Household income (newly forming): This data supports a housing need for the older population rather than the younger population.

4.12 to 4.17 These are national problems and not specific to CHALFONT ST GILES.

4.20 Zoopla uses the postcode for Chalfont St Giles as its data source. This is different from the parish and therefore this data cannot be used to support or refute any findings relating to the parish. Many of the properties within the HP8 postcode are in Little Chalfont: Doggetts Wood Lane – average price according to zoopla £1,600,000, Doggetts Wood Close average value £1,597,097, Burtons Lane £1,200,000. Compare this to zoopla prices for properties within Chalfont St Giles parish - Sycamore Road £396,290, Stylecroft Road £964,480, Bottrells Lane £742,500.

Table 4.7 Income required to service rents at LHA rates. Sources are VOA 2019, arc4. Can the source be arc4? Are they producing independent data on rental that the survey can be compared to?

Table 4.8 Shared ownership 50%? To achieve this there are only a limited number of mortgage providers who will provide shared ownership at 50% otherwise you need to seek specialist mortgage providers. Where the share owned is less than 50% there are further limitations and even fewer providers. In reality this is not accessible to most people needing low cost home ownership. Also with this option service charges need to be paid often making the rent + service charge more expensive than the mortgage.

4.29 – Table 4.9 A brief search of the internet brings very different figures to those stated. Police officer £39150, Median nurse £23000, Fire officer £29934, Teacher £25,000 to 37000. The attributed source of this data is arc⁴. We were not aware that arc⁴ is a source of country wide salary data? This data must have come from other sources, which ones?

4.30 This does not take into consideration the incentives for key workers who have been in position for over 2 years for example matched funding. A government backed scheme to assist with buying is available. This provides a secured loan against the property, however if the value of the property falls, so does the loan amount – this prevents negative equity.

4.31 The figure 25% income is deemed affordable in relation to rents was put to a local rental agent. This was refuted and a figure of 30 x rent was considered affordable in this area. For example if a rent is £1000 then a salary of £30000 is expected.

4.43 This statement is not acceptable as it is not attributable.

4.45 Flats that are leased privately will not always register with the agents consulted and many can and do rent privately.

4.49 As per point 4.29, these figures are disputed

The Housing Survey and Local Housing Requirements

Table 5.1 What are the numbers here – it appears that the weighting has gone wrong! If there were 707 responses to the survey how does that equate to the figures shown here.

5.6 – Table 5.2 The data presented is not reflected correctly in the narrative – once again what are the figures and what weighting is used?

Table 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 what does actual base mean?

5.9 An estimated 22% of households responded..... This is arc4's data, was it 22% or was it not. They should not be estimating their own data.

5.16 These figures add up to 746. As there were 707 responses were actually received – this response appears to have been weighted. It would be far better to see the actual response numbers and then the weighted responses then the percentages. Also the wording is not consistent in this report. This table very clearly shows that 57% felt that they were able to move.

There appears to be a contradiction in the data in table 5.2 and 5.10. Table 5.2 suggests that priority for future housing would be small homes for single people /couples, small family homes 2-3 beds and townhouses. Table 5.10 shows a surplus of 1 or 2 bedroom homes, a surplus of 3 bedroom houses and a surplus of 3 bedroom flats. This also shows a shortfall of 1 or 2 bedroom flats?

5.31 The priorities for future housebuilding for first time buyers is not supported in table 5.10 the surplus of 1-2 bed homes and 3 bed homes does not support these figures either.

5.33 Around 8% - was it 8% or not? If this is 8% with a rounding figure of 3.2% does this mean that 3.2% is included in the rounding error margin!

5.34 This is a very important point. Were the respondents unable to find unsuitable property – for example aged residents wanting to move into bungalows or affordable property – residents who want to move but the housing available to them is not affordable. This data must be extrapolated out of the survey as they are very separate requirements.

5.36 Over 50% of the newly forming households wish to stay in the parish. This is not supported by the evidence in table 5.5.

The need for affordable housing

The heading for this section should be the need for suitable housing.

Table 6.1 What is this data? There are no data headers.

6.11 This statement is incorrect. The data in table 6.2 shows that the need is for 2 bedrooms.

6.12 Nearly half of those wanting to move have already stated that they wish to leave the parish so they are not leaving due to the lack of affordable housing in the parish.

6.16 According to Paradigm Housing this capacity generated an annual supply of 9 affordable homes equivalent to 4.3% capacity. There are currently 18 households from Chalfont St Giles on the Housing Register. The number of allocations of properties in Chalfont St Giles were: 2014 – 11, 2015 – 6, 2016 – 25, 2017 – 12, 2018 – 11, 2019 – 4 (so far). Data does not exist to show whether these allocations were to people already living or with a connection to Chalfont St Giles. However if the supply of 9 and 3 proposed below were all to be allocated to households from Chalfont St Giles, they would have satisfied the affordable housing needs of the Parish for three of the last 5 years.

6.17 Let us look at the local plan figures (shown in figure 123 pg 25) for housing required over the next 22 years.

7300 homes are needed across Chiltern in the next 22 years of which 1000 need to be affordable.

From the census 2011

Chalfont St Giles parish contains 5925 people – Chiltern district contains 92635 people

Therefore Chalfont St Giles Parish makes up 6.39% of Chiltern District.

$6.39\% \times 6300 = 402$ market rate houses required in the parish over 22 years therefore 18 houses per year.

$6.39\% \times 1000 = 64$ affordable houses required in the parish over 22 years therefore 3 houses per year.

According to these statistics Chalfont St Giles requires 21 houses per year over the next 22 years.

Over the last three years 33 new houses have been built –an average of 11 per year leaving a shortfall of 10 houses per year. It is important to remember here that arc⁴ data shows that nearly 50% of newly forming households have said that they wish to leave the area!

Conclusion

7.1 Please can the government guidance be referenced

7.2 The data has been cherry picked to support paradigms desire to provide affordable housing.

7.3 This paragraph is incorrect - this is not the biggest need according to the data.

7.4 In this paragraph the word suitable should replace affordable.

7.5 The data regarding choice should be removed from this document as this is a housing needs survey not a wish list for what people would like.

Housing Needs Survey Workshop Conclusions

This document has been badly put together.

7.3 Concludes that the type of housing that is needed is 1 and 2 bed roomed flats mostly made up of newly forming households (which has already been established that 50% want to move away from the area), and 3 bedroom bungalows for the older person household (though the survey shows that amny of these people will stay in their larger homes with help provided). This 'need' does not match the table on page 31;

50.5% Small family homes 2/3 bed (this does not mean exclusively flats as they infer)

31.9% Small homes for single people/ couples

31.9% Town Houses (3 storeys)

19.5% Bungalows

For information, there are relatively few three storey town houses in Chalfont St Giles. If arc⁴ had carried out any research into the housing stock of the village they would not have included that element in their data.

Statistics for Chalfont St Giles are taken from Chalfont St Giles Parish, Chalfont St Giles ward, Chalfont St Giles postcode (HP8) all of which cover different areas. In particular the area covered by the survey covers over 20% more households than exist in Chalfont St Giles Parish – does this mean that the data should be downgraded by 20%?

There should be a bibliography at the end of this document so that sources can be checked.

Tables within the document have been lifted from other documents and not referenced correctly for this document e.g table 5 or figure 123?

The figures provided which aim to show our affordable housing need are greatly at odds with the figures in the Chiltern and South Bucks Local Plan.

With the number of inaccuracies found within the document the working party have no confidence in the accuracy of this housing needs survey and cannot support the findings.