

MINUTES OF PILTON PARISH COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MEETING held at Pilton Village Hall Wednesday 21 January 2026

Present: Cllrs: R Noble, C Connock, N Hall, R Woodhouse, K Sumner (Chairman), T Moulder, L Roberts, O Powell, A Wynn

In Attendance: 8 members of the public present and Cllr Sully (Somerset Council) and Mrs H Richardson (Clerk)

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

- A resident was pleased to report that 2 branches have been cleared from Weir Lane Footpath
- A resident asked for an update on their question raised at the December meeting, whether Heras fencing on disputed land was contravening planning. It was reported that Heras fencing would be classed as a temporary structure and so would not need planning, no matter how it was fixed to the ground. It was suggested that the resident should contact Somerset Planning Enforcement if they wanted it to be investigated further.
- A resident asked for an update on item 127.a) 'Defacement of property' as the Parish Council had agreed to contact the police and also agreed to facilitate a CCTV/Ring Doorbell sharing scheme and encourage the revival of the Neighbourhood Watch. The Chair reported that he had contacted the police and would share the communication with the resident. He also reported that he had put a request in Roundabout for anyone interested to make contact but had not received any interest so far. He would consider the best way of creating a map for ring doorbell information.
- A resident noted that water was still running down the road on Abbots Way. This issue is to be discussed later.
- A representative from GFEL asked the Parish Council to help communications with Somerset Council regarding a proposed new pavement on Neat Lane, funded by GFEL. It was agreed Cllr Sully would arrange a meeting with GFEL & Cllr Moon
- The Agent for the planning application at Platterwell Lane presented the application and offered to answer any questions from the Parish Council.

150. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO CONSIDER THE REASONS GIVEN: All councillors present

151. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: Cllr A Wynn (156b- 2025/2304/FUL), Cllr R Noble(156b- 2025/2304/FUL), Cllr N Hall (158 Glastonbury Trainlink Project)

152. DISPENSATIONS

- a. Cllr N Hall (158 Glastonbury Trainlink Project)

153. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- a. **RESOLVED:** To confirm and sign the minutes of the Pilton Parish Council meeting of 7th January 2026.
Proposed: Cllr Moulder, 2nd Cllr Wynn. Approved

154. EXTERNAL REPORTS

- a. Somerset Council - Cllr Sully reported that rubbish collected from the litter picks would be collected by the end of this week. She has been appointed to the Board of the Somerset Rivers Authority and has been circulated flood warnings this week. She is keen to help the community with flooding issues and will circulate a report on a successful flood prevention project in Croscombe, who now have a device which records rapid flood water rises which records to an app. They have also successfully received a grant to pay to unblock a 19th Century Culvert. She is keen to see what she can do to help prevent flooding in Pilton.

155. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mobile phone signal & broadband speed improvements.
Vodafone have said that they will install 5G prior to the next Festival.
The company that provides Worthy Farm broadband has offered to install permanent broadband for residents if they receive a commitment from 300 homes on a potential internet provider. IT was noted that phonelines would be going digital in 2027. The Parish Council will discuss further next meeting.

- Somerset/kier abandoned road signs.
At least 6 discarded road signs have been reported to Somerset several times, Somerset have responded to say that they have notified Kier as they own them. We will keep on at them until they are collected.
- Shutwell Lane drain.
Previous works have shown some reduction in the amount of water running down Shutwell Lane, but the issue has not been resolved. Somerset have apologised and admitted that the drain had not been connected to the rest of the system correctly and they would return to complete the works.
- The old laptop has been returned.
- Lloyds Bank
The clerk still needs to be given access to the Lloyds bank account. Cllr Woodhouse would contact Lloyds in Wells and the Clerk & Cllr Woodhouse (& Cllr Sumner if necessary) would visit the bank to complete the set up.

156. PLANNING & LICENCING

- a. To receive an update on the 2018/1843/OTS at Mid Somerset Showground, Cannards Grave Road. (Shepton Mallet 620-dwelling development). Report on Committee Notification and confirm Pilton representatives for discussions on this development.

It was reported that the Committee Sat on 6th January to discuss a revision of the existing proposal which included an amendment to how the developer will deal with Phosphates. The Committee approved the amendment but did comment that there was no community centre included in the proposals. There will be further consultation on the application when the Reserved Matters application is submitted. It was generally agreed that the Parish Council should continue to be involved in discussions. Cllr Hall is already in communication with Shepton Mallet TC and suggested that a triad or working group should be created to formally take the lead. This will be included on next months agenda after further consideration. Cllr Sully advised that the Parish Council should be involved in discussions on Active Travel. Cllr Woodhouse reported that a resident had asked the PC to ensure that any infrastructure promises from the Developer materialise.

Cllr Noble requested a report on impact of the proposal on the infrastructure & roads in Pilton.

Cllr Sully suggested that the Parish Council should lobby Somerset for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as is common place in other parts of Somerset. It was reported that the draft Heads of Terms for the S106 has already been circulated so it maybe too late for this development.

- b. To consider the Planning Applications below and any that arise before the meeting.
[2026/0010/FUL](#): Barrington House, Old Wells Road, Croscombe: Change of use of office to dwelling house (retrospective) and construction of two storey extension

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application on the condition that the applicant produces a satisfactory Biodiversity Net Gain Report and acts upon it.

Proposed: Cllr Noble, 2nd Cllr Wynn. Approved

[2025/2304/FUL](#): Land At Platterwell Lane, Pilton. Erection Of A Self-Build Replacement Dwelling.

RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application as it is an improvement in Design & Appearance on the previously approved application. The layout provides a small footprint on the site, and the application offers a generous package of Biodiversity enhancements within the Design & Access statement. The Parish Council requests that the Biodiversity enhancements are made a condition of approval.

Proposed: Cllr Woodhouse, 2nd Cllr Moulder. Approved

157. PILTON COMMUNITY CAR SCHEME

Through the LCN, Shepton Mallet Town Council are considering establishing a Shepton Community Car Scheme, similar to one already in operation in Frome. Volunteer drivers are paid mileage to drive other residents to appointments and other activities, it is anticipated that this would particularly benefit elderly and young people. Other Parishes within the LCN have been invited to take part in discussions to investigate establishing their own Community Car scheme on the same model.

It was agreed that Cllr Hall should take part in further discussions to enable the Parish Council to decide whether the scheme would be viable or needed in Pilton and find answers to Councillors questions.

Cllr Connock asked what the impact would be on bus services.

Cllr Woodhouse asked what provision their might be for disabled passengers.

Cllr Powell asked how the drivers would be insured.

158. GLASTONBURY TRAIN LINK PROJECT

The project would establish a 7 day direct bus service from Glastonbury to Castle Cary Station stopping in Pilton and possibly other villages on the route. £120,000 is required to commission a 12 month pilot and they already have pledges of £26,000 including £2,000 from Pilton and £5,000 from the festival. The Parish Council agreed to help to distribute leaflets to publicise the project and request feedback.

Cllr Sumner reported that the Parish Council still needed to write the terms of the pledge. To be discussed again next meeting.

159. OVERGROWN VEGETATION

Cllr Hall circulated a priority list of overgrown vegetation, recorded in October. It was agreed that the list should be updated to remove locations which had been cut back and the remaining sites would be graded A-D. It was suggested that councillors would knock on doors to ask residents on the list to attend to their vegetation, starting with the highest priority.

160. PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Cllr Wynn asked the Parish Council to consider asking Somerset Council for road safety improvements for pedestrians using the pavement opposite the Crown. This narrow pavement is used daily by children on their route to school. A picture of a high kerb was circulated which would push vehicles back into the road if they go too close to the pavement, but concern was raised that it could create a more dangerous situation due to the width of the road.

Cllr Sumner reported that he had previously asked Somerset for a Zebra crossing by the bus stops and traffic lights, but they replied saying it would cost the Parish Council £20-30,000 for a feasibility study and even if it gave a positive outcome there was no budget to implement it.

Cllr Noble suggested traffic calming outside the Crown, but it was agreed that this would not work on the bend and traffic lights allowing traffic through in one direction at a time would be better,

Cllr Wynn suggested a sign in each direction warning oncoming traffic in the middle of the road.

Cllr Sumner agreed to approach Somerset again and Cllr Hall agreed to ask the LCN to look at it once they have completed current considerations of the Heavy Vehicle route.

161. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS/TRIADS AND RESOLVE ANY ACTIONS ARISING

a. Affordable Housing Triad - No update

b. Biodiversity Triad

i) Report of Water Quality in Whitelake River, Pilton during Glastonbury Festival

The Parish council was pleased to note that the report showed that no incidents had originated from the festival, however an incident occurred in a farm upstream of the festival site where an ammonia spike was observed and quickly dealt with using dilution tanks

RESOLVED: Cllr Hall to ask the Environment Agency whether the incident occurred in a temporary off-site campsite or unrelated to the festival. And whether the dilution tanks use chlorinated water?

Proposed: Cllr Powell, 2nd Cllr Wynn. Approved

c. Burial Ground Triad - topsoil would be brought in when the weather is dryer to distribute around some of the headstones. The siting of the bench still needed to be agreed and the loose stone has not yet been removed.

d. Flooding Triad - Shutwell Lane was still a problem as previously reported, and Whitestone Lane is still flooding after Somerset reported that they had gulped. The Chair is co-ordinating the map of drains to be jetted.

e. Footpath Working Group-West Compton footpath has reopened after a massive hornets nest has been cleared.

f. Highways Triad - Cllr Noble reported that complaints have been received about the silage bails in West Compton and hundreds of Tonnes of waste dumped in a field and all over the lane. Cllr Hall agreed to report it.

g. LCN update - No LCN meeting since last PC meeting. Next LCN meeting on 26th Jan.

162. FINANCE

- a. **RESOLVED:** To note payments & receipts listed.
Proposed: Cllr Woodhouse, 2nd Cllr Powell. Approved

163. MATTERS OF REPORT

- a. The Clerks report would be included at the end of the agenda so that issues from the report can be discussed if necessary.
- b. Due to the change of meeting date, the deadline for Roundabout is now prior to the meeting and so notices for Roundabout need to be considered prior to the meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS: Council Meeting -, 18th February 2026, 18th March 2026 The meeting closed at 9.02pm

February 2026

Mendip South Lib Dem Councillor Monthly Report

Flooding in Somerset: why a "major incident" was declared

Somerset Council declared a major incident after Storm Chandra because exceptionally heavy rain fell on already saturated ground, causing rapid rises in river and moorland water levels and localised flooding across the county. Calling a major incident is used as a precautionary, multi-agency trigger: it allows councils, emergency services, the Environment Agency and voluntary partners to pool resources quickly, run a central incident cell, redeploy staff, share information, stand up rest centres if needed, and prioritise support for the most vulnerable. The declaration does not automatically mean mandatory evacuations, but it signals the heightened risk and ensures a coordinated, scalable response while further warnings and flood alerts remain in force.

Storm Chandra followed multiple recent storms, producing new short-duration rainfall records in the south-west and rapid flooding across previously less-affected areas.

[Experts argue the pattern is directly linked to global heating \(warmer air → more water vapour → heavier downpours\)](#) and that communities are already experiencing impacts earlier than expected.

Local leaders and flood scientists warn that emergency, short-term measures (pumps, cranes, contractors) are necessary but insufficient without sustained funding, maintenance and nature-based interventions; some voices even raise the difficult prospect that, without major investment, some settlements may become increasingly hard to protect long term.

This is a rapidly changing situation for updates please see links below:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/beaches-ports-and-flooding/flooding-information-and-advice/>
<https://www.somerset-rivers-authority.org.uk/news/>
https://www.facebook.com/travelsomerset/?locale=en_GB

Somerset opens new eco-homes in Minehead as national commentary highlights political significance

Somerset Council and Homes in Somerset have completed and officially opened 54 zero-carbon council homes on Seaward Way/Rainbow Way in Minehead — 33 flats and 21 houses — all let to local people with strong connections to the area. The development is the first council housing scheme in West Somerset for a generation.

Council leaders describe the scheme as a milestone for Somerset, delivering energy-efficient, affordable homes that support local jobs and wellbeing and were allocated under the council's local lettings policy.

"The Seaward Way development opening marks the first council homes to come to Minehead in 30 years. This is a huge achievement by everyone involved, bringing the types of home to the area that residents can be proud of," says Cllr Bill Revans, Leader of Somerset Council.

[A Guardian opinion piece frames the Minehead project](#) as part of a wider revival in publicly led council housebuilding, arguing developments like this carry national significance for housing policy and politics.

Mendip South Lib Dem Councillor Monthly Report

Council delays budget meetings after Government postpones funding announcement

Somerset Council has revised its budget timetable after the Government confirmed the Final Local Government Settlement will be published on the 9th of February 2026, a week later than expected. The delay reduces the time available to analyse the settlement, complete approvals and prepare statutory budget papers.

The 9th of February announcement is also expected to confirm whether councils may set Council Tax above the 4.99% referendum limit and whether financial support will be provided for the accumulated Dedicated Schools Grant deficit. Decisions on Exceptional Financial Support via a Capitalisation Directive — which last year arrived in late February — may also be delayed.

Revised meeting timetable for budget decision making:

- 11th of February: Executive
- 25th of February: Extraordinary Executive
- 4th of March: Rescheduled Full Council — Budget and Council Tax setting

Nearly two-thirds of Somerset residents back council tax rise to protect services

Nearly two-thirds of residents (62%) said they would accept a council tax increase to avoid cuts, according to Somerset Council's December 2025 budget consultation of more than 1,400 people who responded to the survey. Of those, 27% favoured a rise below 4.99%, 21% supported 4.99% and 15% favoured a larger increase; 36% opposed any rise.

A strong 86% want the council to lobby central government for more funding and reform. Top priorities were roads and pavements (55%), followed by crime (29%), public transport and schools (28% each); 83% opposed cuts to road maintenance and 68% opposed cuts to waste services.

Fewer residents now back giving the council more local control over council tax (38%, down from 49%), citing concerns about perceived waste on consultants and regeneration.

Drug seizure near Watchwell Drove

Street and Glastonbury neighbourhood officers recovered approximately 0.5kg of Class A drugs near Watchwell Drove, close to the villages of Butleigh, Baltonsborough and just outside Glastonbury. The drugs have been seized and an investigation is underway. If you have any information that will help this police investigation:

Report anonymously: CrimeStoppers 0800 555 111

February 2026

Mendip South Lib Dem Councillor Monthly Report

Somerset recognised for road condition with green ratings for condition and maintenance

Somerset Council earns green ratings for the condition of its A, B, C and unclassified roads and for its preventative maintenance under the Department for Transport's new traffic-light gradings. In 2025/26 the council plans to resurface 55 km and apply preventative treatments to 185 km of road; of nearly £45m capital and just under £5m revenue funding, around 89% is earmarked for preventative work. Despite strong condition and maintenance ratings, the council receives an overall amber rating because it is graded red for capital spend, even though it is on track to use 98% of its DfT capital allocation this year. The council says it will keep prioritising preventative work to maintain road standards. [Report problems via the council's online portal](#) and follow [@TravelSomerset](#) on Facebook and on [X \(formally Twitter\)](#) for live updates.

Residents to shape Somerset's adult social care future

Somerset Council has launched a short consultation to refresh its Adult Social Care strategy for 2026–2029 and is inviting residents, unpaid carers and organisations to contribute. The council will combine face-to-face engagement with an online survey to gather views on recent experiences of care, barriers faced, what good care looks like and priorities for the next three years. Responses will inform the revised strategy and a continuous improvement plan. The consultation closes on 27 March 2026.

Have your say: Somerset Adult Social Care Strategy (2026–2029) consultation page — <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/consultations/>

Have your say on Green Lane proposals

Somerset Council is consulting on trial changes at five rural/edge-of-residential routes (Burcott Lane, Wells; Comeytrowe Road, Taunton; Neville's Batch, Gurney Slade; Downend Road, Puriton; Touches Lane, Chard) to improve access for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and wheeling users by removing through motor traffic where appropriate. Trials would be followed by further consultation before any permanent changes. Nearby residents and businesses will be notified by letter.

Take part: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/consultations/green-lanes-consultation>

Changes to recycling collections for people in flats

Somerset Council will roll out expanded communal recycling collections from the end of March for about 13,000 households in flats and other communal properties. New collections will include plastic bottles, pots/tubs/trays, tins/cans/foil/aerosols, glass bottles and jars, cartons, food waste, and plastic bags/wrappers. A leaflet with start dates will be posted to affected residents; if you do not receive a letter, your collection remains unchanged. The scheme is funded by the Government's Simpler Recycling programme.

More information: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/waste-recycling-and-environment/recycling/>

Mendip South Lib Dem Councillor Monthly Report

Bus service improvements proposed

Somerset Council is considering how to spend a government Bus Service Fund award (around £11.4m capital to 2029/30 and £13.1m revenue to 2028/29) to boost bus services, better integrate with rail, expand Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT), improve links to employment and health, develop transport hubs, and prepare for Project Coral multi-operator ticketing. Decisions on measures and costings will be taken by the Council's Executive in early March.

More information: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/buses/>

Dawn French Sitcom and Agatha Christie A-List Drama Put Somerset on Screen

Somerset is enjoying a screen moment as two high-profile productions showcase the county and boost the local economy.

Can You Keep a Secret?, a new sitcom starring Dawn French largely filmed around Axbridge and Cheddar, is now available on BBC One and iPlayer, with viewers enjoying scenes of Axbridge's medieval town square, Cheddar Gorge and local cafés. Agatha Christie's Seven Dials, a lavish three-part adaptation that filmed key scenes on the West Somerset Railway at Blue Anchor and Minehead and at The Bottle Yard Studios, is currently riding high on Netflix's must-watch list, drawing attention to Somerset's coastal and heritage locations.

Both productions receive support from Screen Somerset, the council's film office, and film and TV work is estimated to bring £4.2m to the Somerset economy last year, supporting local businesses and tourism as audiences take in the county's scenery on screen. Somerset is continuing to reap benefits as filming activity keeps shops, cafés and tourism businesses busy and raises the county's profile, with local streets and heritage sites remaining in demand for future productions.

Somerset joins national Holocaust Memorial Day "80 candles"

Somerset took part in the national Holocaust Memorial Day "80 candles for 80 years" initiative in January, hosting the memorial candle in a handcrafted willow holder at Taunton Library from 5th to 16th of January. The display, chosen as one of 80 across the UK to mark the 80th anniversary of Auschwitz-Birkenau's liberation and the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, became a countywide community project: the travelling candleholder collected ribbon flowers representing persecuted groups and prompted residents to share personal and family stories. The project highlighted Somerset's historical links to global conflicts and encouraged reflection, listening and dialogue as the holder continued its journey around the county.

February 2026

Mendip South Lib Dem Councillor Monthly Report

Report it first: useful Links to share with your communities

Visit - Report a Problem on the Road: - A list of all reporting pages to do with roads, pavements, lighting:
[Report a problem on the road](#)

Potholes and road damage - Somerset Council repair potholes and other road defects, and maintain our roads, for the safe access of all road users:
[Potholes, road damage and edge loss](#)

Report a problem with a street light - We maintain and repair street lights to national standards to provide safe access to all road users:
[Report a problem with a street light](#)

Roads, travel and parking, road signs, markings and lighting - Includes information about non-illuminated bollards, pedestrian crossings, requesting a village nameplate or a new road sign:
[Road signs, bollards and road markings](#)

Speed limits - Request information about new or existing traffic calming measures:
[Speed limits](#)

Traffic lights - We maintain over 200 traffic light locations throughout the County:
[Traffic lights](#)

Street and roadworks - We maintain the roads and pavements that are managed at public expense in Somerset:
[Street and roadworks problems](#)

Traffic - updates and roadworks follow:
[Travel Somerset on X](#) and [Travel Somerset on Facebook](#).

All ongoing roadworks - available on the Somerset Council website interactive map
[Roadworks and travel information](#)

Somerset Waste - collection days, replacement bins or recycling bags and missed collection reporting:
[Bins, recycling and waste](#)

Travel and Tourist Information
[Travel Somerset - Art, Culture, Events, History & More](#)

Sign-up for the latest climate news from across Somerset:
[Climate newsletter sign-up](#)

Open Somerset Council Consultations - which anyone can complete and take part in shaping the future of Somerset
[Somerset Council - Citizen Space - Consultations](#)

SOMERSET COUNCIL TELEPHONE NO - 0300 123 2224

Annex 3: Item 172. CRIMESTOPPERS GRANT APPLICATION

Good morning ,

I am the regional manager for the independent charity Crimestoppers . My area is the South West and I cover Devon, Cornwall, The Somersetshires, Bristol and Gloucestershire. I am seeking funding to promote our charity call to action into our parishes across the South West to help people speak up about crime with a 100% guarantee of anonymity to help keep their communities safe. More explanation is below.

I have respectively set out my ask below should there be an opportunity to apply for a community safety grant through your parish .

I look forward to hearing from you .

Best regards

Karen

Name of organisation; Crimestoppers South West Region

Contact ; Karen MacDonald Regional Manager for the South West

Crimestoppers Trust, registered charity in England & Wales (1108687), Scotland (SC037960). A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales No. 05382856. Registered address: Sedulo London, Office 605, Albert House, 256-260 Old Street, London EC1V 9DD. Postal address: Crimestoppers Trust, PO Box 324, Wallington SM6 6BG.

website www.crimestoppers-uk.org

facebook profile www.facebook.com/CrimestoppersintheWestCountry

Amount applied for ;£200

Purpose of grant ; Increase reporting of crime , improve public confidence to report and increase community safety.

What will the money help you achieve ; Raise awareness of our independent charity . We are the only crime fighting charity offering anonymous reporting through our free number 0800 555 111 or our website www.crimestoppers-uk.org

What will you spend the money on ; Digital, social and print media within your parish plus presentation to a parish meeting explaining our call to action which is to speak up, stop crime and stay safe whilst remaining 100% anonymous. Always . Examples of resources attached = generic piece for the parish council website, example of a generic social media asset and an example of a leaflet (drink/drug drive)

Anticipated benefit to the Parish ; Increase reporting of crime , improve public confidence to report , decrease crime and improve cohesion in your community.

What resources are being contributed - Project management , volunteer time and presentation to parish council and registration into our Ambassador programme [Community Ambassadors | Crimestoppers](#)

Thankyou for your attention.

best regards

Karen

Pilton Parish Council

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

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Introduction

Each council will have its own IT setup and, as such, a single 'one-size-fits-all' IT policy is unlikely to be appropriate. Some smaller parish councils may operate with minimal equipment, while others may manage multiple devices connected to a central server. These guidelines are intended to help councils identify key considerations when developing or updating their own IT policy.

Councils that use external IT providers should ensure their policies accurately reflect current practices and contractual arrangements.

Purpose of the IT Policy

The purpose of an IT policy is to establish clear parameters for how councillors, staff, and other authorised users use council-provided technology or equipment in the course of their duties. A well-defined policy helps to:

- Set expectations for appropriate use of equipment and systems;
- Raise awareness of risks associated with IT use;
- Safeguard the council's data and digital assets;
- Clarify what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable use;
- Outline the consequences of policy breaches.

Councils will also need to determine and clearly state whether limited personal use of IT equipment is permitted (for example, checking personal email or online shopping during lunch breaks).

Monitoring of IT Use

As an IT provider, the council has the right to monitor the use of its IT equipment and systems, provided there is a legitimate reason for doing so and councillors, employees and other authorised users are informed that such monitoring may take place. Any monitoring must be proportionate and comply with relevant data protection and privacy laws. Other persons may be included if they access or use council systems e.g. if they have a council e-mail address

Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, and other authorised users, regardless of their working location or pattern, including those who are home-based, office-based, or work on a flexible or part-time basis. It sets out the expectations for the appropriate use of IT equipment and systems provided by the council.

Computer use

1.1 Hardware

1.1.1 Council computer equipment is provided for council purposes, however reasonable personal use is permitted (reasonable interpreted as in the opinion of the Clerk. Any personal use of our computers and systems should not interrupt our daily council work in any way. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are asked to restrict any personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours.

1.1.2 Locking computers when leaving desk, all councillors, staff, and other authorised users must lock their computers when leaving their desks to prevent unauthorised access. This applies to all council and personal devices used for work. Failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action.

1.1.3 All computer and other electronic equipment supplied should be treated with good care at all times. Computer equipment is expensive, and any damage sustained to any equipment will have a financial impact on the council.

1.1.4 Computer and electronic hardware should be kept clean, and every precaution taken to prevent food and drink being dropped or spilled onto it.

1.1.5 All computer and mobile equipment will carry a number which is logged against the current owner of that equipment. A database of equipment issued will be kept.

1.1.6 Equipment should not be dismantled or reassembled without seeking advice.

1.1.7 Councillors, staff, and other authorised are not to purchase any computer or mobile equipment (including software). Unless previously authorised.

1.1.8 Personal disks, USB stick, CDs, DVDs, data storage devices etc cannot be used on council computers without the prior approval of the Clerk

Equipment

2.1 Portable equipment

2.1.1 Portable equipment includes laptop computers, netbooks, tablets, mobile and smart phones with email capability and access to the internet etc.

2.1.2 It is particularly emphasised that council back-up procedures specific to portable equipment should be followed at all times.

2.1.3 All portable computers must be stored safely and securely when not in use in the office, i.e. when travelling or when working from home. Portable equipment (unless locked in a secure cabinet or office) should be kept with or near the user at all times; should not be left unattended when away from council premises and should never be left in parked vehicles or at any council or non-council premises.

2.1.4 It is important to ensure all portable devices are protected with encryption in case they are lost or stolen. All smartphones or tablets that hold council data, including emails and files, must be protected with a pin code. Where possible, these devices should also be programmed to erase all content after several unsuccessful attempts to break in. Any security set on these devices must not be disabled or removed.

2.1.5 Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a security process that requires users to verify their identity using two or more independent methods—for example, entering a password (something you know) and confirming a code sent to your mobile device (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and sensitive data. NALC recommends implementing MFA as a best practice to enhance information security and support compliance with data protection obligations under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2.1.6 If an item of portable equipment is lost or damaged this should be reported to the Clerk. If the loss or damage is due to an act of negligence, the individual responsible may be liable to meet a proportion of the loss/damage.

2.1.7 To protect confidential information, unless it is a requirement of the job and this has been authorised, it is forbidden for photographs or videos to be taken on council premises, without the prior written permission of the Clerk. This includes mobile telephones with camera function, camcorder, tape or other recording device for sound or pictures - moving or still.

2.1.8 Under no circumstances should any non public meeting or conversation be recorded without the permission of those present. This does not affect statutory rights (under The Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014).

2.1.9 In addition, the council does not permit webcams (which may be pre-installed on many laptops) to be used in the workplace, other than for conference calls for council purposes. If there is any doubt as to whether a device falls under this clause, advice should be sought from the Clerk

2.2 Use of own devices

2.2.1 The Council recognises that some councillors, staff, and other authorised users may wish to use their own smartphones, tablets, laptops etc to access our servers, private clouds or networks for normal council purposes, including, but not limited to, reading their emails, accessing documents stored on the council's network or to store data on the council's server(s) or access data in other services. Any such use of personal devices will be at the discretion of the council, but consent for standard systems (MS Windows, Mac OS X, Linux - in commercial configurations) will normally be permitted. Such devices should be kept up to date so that any vulnerabilities in the operating system or other software on the device are appropriately patched or updated.

2.2.2 However, the same security precautions apply to personal devices as to the council's desktop equipment. For continuity purposes, calls made to external must be made on council landlines or mobile phone numbers to ensure that only these numbers are used and/or stored by the recipient, rather than personal numbers. Any emails sent from own devices should be sent from a dedicated email account and should not be shared with others.(eg members of the family)

2.2.3 Councillors, staff, and other authorised persons that use council systems are expected to use all devices in an ethical and respectful manner and in accordance with this policy. Accessing inappropriate websites or services on any device via the IT infrastructure that is paid for or provided by the council carries a high degree of risk, and, for employees, may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal (without notice). For Workers or Contractors, we may terminate the worker agreement. This is irrespective of the ownership of the device used. An example would be downloading copyright music illegally or accessing pornographic material.

2.2.4 In cases of legal proceedings against the council, the council may need to temporarily take possession of a device, whether council-owned or personal to retrieve the relevant data.

2.2.5 Wherever possible the user should maintain a clear separation between the personal data processed on the council's behalf and that processed for their own personal use, for example, by using different apps for council and personal use. If the device supports both work and personal profiles, the work profile must always be used for work-related purposes.

2.2.6 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who intend to use their own devices via the council's infrastructure must ensure that they:

- use a 6-digit pin, strong password (i.e. one which uses three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver) or finger print (preferably the latter) to protect their device(s) from being accessed. For smartphones and tablets this should lock the device after number of failed login attempts;
- configure their device(s) to automatically prompt for a password after a period of inactivity of more than 30 minutes.
- always password protect any documents containing confidential information that are sent as attachments to an email, and notify the password separately (preferably by a means other than email);
- ensure secure WiFi networks are used;
- ensure that work-related data cannot be viewed or retrieved by family or friends who may use the device;
- inform the Council/Clerk if their device(s) is/are lost, stolen, or inappropriately accessed where there is risk of access to council data or resources. To prevent phones being used, they will need to retain the details of their IMEI number and the SIM number of the device as their provider will require this to deactivate it.

2.2.7 Personal data relating councillors, staff, and other authorised users, associates, residents, or external stakeholders should not be saved to any personal accounts with third-party storage cloud service providers as this may breach data protection legislation or create a security risk if the device is lost or stolen. This applies especially if the passwords used to store/access data are saved onto the device, or if the service permits councillors, staff, and other authorised users to remain logged in between sessions.

2.2.8 Personal information and sensitive data should never be saved on councillors, staff, or other authorised users own devices as this may breach confidentiality agreements, especially if the device is used by other people from time to time.

2.2.9 If removable media are used to transfer data (e.g. USB drives or CDs), the user must also securely delete the data on the media once the transfer is complete.

2.2.10 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who open any attachments should ensure that any cached copies are deleted immediately after use. Risks include data belonging to the council being accessed by unauthorised persons if the device(s) is lost, stolen, or used without the owner's permission.

2.2.11 Any work done on user's own equipment should be stored securely and password protected and should always be backed up in accordance with the council's standard backup procedures.

2.2.12 Prior to the disposal of any device that has work data stored on it, and in the event of a user leaving the council, councillors, staff, and other authorised users are required to allow the IT provider to access to the device to ensure that all passwords, user access shortcuts and any identifiable data are removed from the device.

2.2.13 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must take responsibility for understanding how their device(s) work in respect to the above rules if they are accessing council servers/services via their own IT equipment. Risks to the user's personal device(s) include data loss as a result of a crash of the operating system, bugs and viruses, software or hardware failures and programming errors rendering a device inoperable. The council will use reasonable endeavours to assist, but councillors, staff, and other authorised users are personally liable for their own device(s) and for any costs incurred as a result of the above.

Health and safety

3.1.1 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work in council offices will be provided with an appropriate workstation.

3.1.2 The council has a duty to ensure that regular appropriate eye tests, carried out by a competent person, are offered to employees using display screen equipment.

3.1.3 Any VDU user who feels that their workstation requires changes to make it compliant must speak to the clerk.

If any hazards are detected at a workstation, including 'noises' from the IT equipment, this should be reported immediately to the Clerk/Council.

Password and Authentication Policy

4.1.1 All user accounts must be protected by strong, secure passwords. The council follows the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) recommendations for creating passwords using three random words (e.g. PurpleCandleRiver). This method helps create passwords that are both strong and easy to remember, while offering effective protection against common cyber threats such as brute-force attacks. This approach is endorsed in NALC guidance.

In addition to strong passwords, Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) should be enabled wherever possible. MFA requires users to provide two or more independent forms of verification—for example, a password (something you know) and a code sent to your phone (something you have). This significantly reduces the risk of unauthorised access to systems and personal data.

To further strengthen account security:

- Initial user account passwords must be generated by the IT provider.
- Default passwords provided by vendors or the IT provider must be changed immediately upon installation or setup.
- Service or System (e.g. Website) account passwords are generated and managed by the IT provider.
- The council recommends these practices as part of its commitment to robust information security and to support compliance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For more guidance, see the NCSC's advice on password security: [NCSC Password Guidance](#)

4.1.2 Access to Passwords

- Passwords are personal and must not be shared under any circumstances.
- Only the assigned user of an account may access or use the associated password.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., incident response or employee offboarding), access to system credentials may be granted to authorised personnel from the IT provider with appropriate approvals and logging.
- Administrative credentials must be stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel with a copy provided to the chair of council or Clerk, in a sealed envelope, only to be accessed in an emergency.

4.1.3 Password Storage and Management

- Passwords must not be stored in plain text or written down in insecure locations.
- Passwords must be stored using a council-approved, encrypted password manager (e.g., LastPass, Bitwarden, or KeePass).

4.1.4 Password Change Requirements

- Immediately change password if compromise is suspected.

4.1.5 Password Access Control and Logging

- All access to administrative or shared credentials must be logged and auditable.
- Attempts to access unauthorized passwords will be treated as a security incident.

4.1.6 Responsibility

- Users are responsible for creating and maintaining secure passwords for their accounts.

The IT security provider is responsible for:

- Managing system/service credentials.
- Enforcing password policies. Auditing and monitoring password-related security practices.

Monitoring

5.1.1 The council reserves the right to monitor and maintain logs of computer usage and inspect any files stored on its network, servers, computers, or associated technology to ensure compliance with this policy as well as relevant legislation. Internet, email, and computer usage is continually monitored as part of the council's protection against computer viruses, ongoing maintenance of the system, and when investigating faults.

5.1.5 The council will monitor the use of electronic communications and use of the internet in line with the Investigatory Powers (Interception by Councils etc for Monitoring and Record-keeping Purposes) Regulations 2018.

5.1.6 Monitoring of an employee's email and/or internet use will be conducted in accordance with an impact assessment that the council has carried out to ensure that monitoring is necessary and proportionate. Monitoring is in the council's legitimate interests and is to ensure that this policy is being complied with.

5.1.7 The information obtained through monitoring may be shared internally, including with relevant councillors and IT staff if access to the data is necessary for performance of their roles. The information may also be shared with external HR or legal advisers for the purposes of seeking professional advice. Any external advisers will have appropriate data protection policies and protocols in place.

5.1.8 The information gathered through monitoring will be retained only long enough for any breach of this policy to come to light and for any investigation to be conducted.

5.1.9 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in the council's data protection policy.

5.1.10 Such monitoring and the retrieval of the content of any messages may be for the purposes of checking whether the use of the system is legitimate, to find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure, to assist in the investigation of wrongful acts, or to comply with any legal obligation.

5.1.11 All computers will be periodically checked and scanned for unauthorised programmes and viruses.

Remote working

6.1.1 Increased IT security measures apply to those who work away from their normal place of work (e.g. whilst travelling, working from home or any other different venue), as follows:

- if logging into the council's systems or services remotely, using computers that either do not belong to the council or are not owned by the user, any passwords must not be saved, and the user must log out at the end of the session deleting all logs and history records within the browser used. If the configuration of the device does not clearly support these actions (for example at an internet café), council services should not be accessed from that device;
- the location and direction of the screen should be checked to ensure confidential information is out of view. Steps should be taken to avoid messages being read by other people, including other travellers on public transport etc;
- any data printed should be collected and stored securely;
- all electronic files should be password protected and the data saved to the council's system/services when accessible;
- papers, files or computer equipment must not be left unattended unless arrangements have been made with a responsible person for them to be kept in a locked room or cabinet if they are to be left unattended at any time;
- any data should be kept safely and should only be disposed of securely;
- papers, files, data sticks/storage, flash drive or backup hard drives should not be left unattended in cars, except where it is entirely unavoidable for short periods, in which case they must be locked in the boot of the car. If staying away overnight, council data should be taken into the accommodation, care being taken that it will not be interfered with by others or inadvertently destroyed;
- where possible the ability to remotely wipe any mobile devices that process sensitive information should be retained in the case of loss or theft;
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who work away from the office with sensitive data should be equipped with a screen privacy filter for mobile devices and should use this at all times when accessing such data away from the office.

6.1.2 Those issued with a 'dongle' to enable internet access from a laptop via 3G or 4G networks whilst away from their normal workplace should note that the cost of internet access can be very high. Dongles should therefore be used for essential council purposes only, especially if abroad.

6.1.3 Similarly, use of paid for Wi-Fi access, for example at airports should be carefully monitored and restricted to essential council use.

Email

7.1.1 Council email facilities are intended to promote effective and speedy communication on work-related matters. Although we encourage the use of email, it can be risky. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users need to be careful not to introduce viruses onto council systems and should take proper account of the security advice below.

7.1.2 On occasion, it will be quicker to action an issue by telephone or face to face, rather than via protracted email chains. Emails should not be used as a substitute for face to face or telephone conversations. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are expected to decide which is the optimum channel of communication to complete their tasks quickly and effectively.

7.1.3 These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks run when using email at work and to guide councillors, staff, and other authorised users as to what may and may not be done. If there is something which is not covered in the policy, councillors, staff, and other authorised users should ask, rather than assuming they know the right answer.

7.1.4 All councillors, staff, and other authorised users who need to use email as part of their role will either use a dedicated email address, which no-one else has access to, or be given their own council email address and account. The council may, at any time, withdraw email access, should it feel that this is no longer necessary for the role or that the system is being abused.

7.1.5 Email messages sent on the council's account should be for council use only. Personal communications are permitted provided they do not encroach upon working time or interrupt council business in any way. Employees and other authorised users are asked to restrict their personal use to official lunch breaks or before or after working hours, and to use their personal email accounts, rather than council addresses.

Use of the Internet

8.1 Copyright

8.1.1 Much of what appears on the Internet is protected by copyright. Any copying without permission, including electronic copying, is illegal and therefore prohibited. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 set out the rules. The copyright laws not only apply to documents but also to software. The infringement of the copyright of another person or organisation could lead to legal action being taken against the council and damages being awarded, as well as disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against the perpetrator.

8.1.2 It is easy to copy electronically, but this does not make it any less an offence. The council's policy is to comply with copyright laws, and not to bend the rules in any way.

8.1.3 Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should not assume that because a document or file is on the Internet, it can be freely copied. There is a difference between information in the 'public domain' (which is no longer confidential or secret information but is still copyright protected) and information which is not protected by copyright (such as where the author has been dead for more than 70 years).

8.1.4 Usually, a website will contain copyright conditions; these warnings should be read before downloading or copying.

8.1.5 Copyright and database right law can be complicated. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should check with the clerk if unsure about anything.

8.2 Trademarks, links and data protection

8.2.1 The council does not permit the registration of any new domain names or trademarks relating to the council's names or products anywhere in the world, unless authorised to do so. Nor should they add links

from any of the council's web pages to any other external sites without checking first with the council/ the clerk.

8.2.2 Special rules apply to the processing of personal and sensitive personal data. For further guidance on this, see the council's data protection policy, a copy of which is on the Parish Council Website.

8.3 Accuracy of information

8.3.1 One of the main benefits of the internet is the access it gives to large amounts of information, which is often more up to date than traditional sources such as libraries. Be aware that, as the internet is uncontrolled, much of the information may be less accurate than it appears.

Use of social media

9.1.1 Social media includes blogs; Wikipedia and other similar sites where text can be posted; multimedia or user generated media sites (YouTube); social networking sites (such as Facebook, LinkedIn, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, etc.); virtual worlds (Second Life); text messaging and mobile device communications and more traditional forms of media such as TV and newspapers. Care should be taken when using social media at any time, either using council systems or at home.

9.1.2 Personal use of social networking/media and chat sites should be restricted to breaks during working hours, or after hours with permission.

9.1.3 The council recognises the importance of councillors, staff, and other authorised users joining in and helping to shape sector conversation and enhancing its image through blogging and interaction in social media. Therefore, where it is relevant to use social networking sites as part of the individual's position, this is acceptable.

However, inappropriate comments and postings can adversely affect the reputation of the council, even if it is not directly referenced. If comments or photographs could reasonably be interpreted as being associated with the council, or if remarks could be regarded as abusive, humiliating, sexual harassment, discriminatory or derogatory, or could constitute bullying or harassment, the council will treat this as a serious disciplinary offence. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users should be aware that parishioners or other local organisations may read councillors, staff, and other authorised users' personal weblogs, to acquire information, for example, about their work, internal council business, and employee morale. Therefore, even if the council is not named, care should be taken with any views expressed.

9.1.4 To protect both the council and its interests, everyone is required to comply with the following rules about social media, whether in relation to their council role or personal social networking sites, and irrespective of whether this is during or after working hours:

- Contacts from any of the council's databases should not be downloaded and connected with on LinkedIn or other social networking sites with electronic address book facilities, unless this has been authorised.
- Any blog that mentions the council, its current work, councillors, employees, other users associated with the council, partner organisations, local groups, suppliers, parishioners, should identify the author as one of its councillors or employees and state that the views expressed on the blog or website are theirs alone and do not represent the views of the Council. Even if the council is not mentioned, care should be taken with any views expressed on social media sites and any views should clearly be stated to be the writer's own (e.g. via a disclaimer statement such as: "The comments and other content on this site are my own and do not represent the positions or opinions

of my employer/ the council.”) Writers must not claim or give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the council.

- Any employee or councillor who is developing a site or writing a blog that will mention the council, must inform the Clerk/Council that they are writing this and gain agreement before going ‘live’.
- The council expects councillors, staff, and other authorised users to be respectful about the council and its current or potential plans and not to engage in any name calling or any behaviour that will reflect negatively on its reputation. Any unauthorised use of copyright materials, any unfounded or derogatory statements, or any misrepresentation is not viewed favourably and could constitute gross misconduct.
- Photos or videos that include employees or other workers wearing uniforms or clothing displaying the council’s name or logo should not be posted on social media if they could reflect negatively on the individual, their role, their colleagues, or the council. Additionally, photos, videos, or audio recordings must not be taken on council premises without explicit permission
- Comments posted by councillors, staff, and other authorised users on any sites should be knowledgeable, accurate and professional and should not compromise the council in any way.
- Inappropriate conversations with external Stakeholders should not take place on any social networking sites, including forums.
- Any writing about or displaying photos or videos of internal activities that involves current councillors, staff, and other authorised persons, might be considered a breach of data protection and a breach of privacy and confidentiality. Therefore, their permission should be gained prior to uploading any such material. Details of any kind relating to any events, conversations, materials or documents that are meant to be private, confidential or internal to the council should not be posted. This may include manuals; procedures; training documents; non-public financial or operational information; personal information regarding other councillors, staff, and other authorised users anything to do with a disciplinary case, grievance, allegation of bullying/harassment or discrimination, or legal issue; any other secret, confidential, or proprietary information or information that is subject to confidentiality agreements. This does not affect statutory requirements to publish information including under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users must be aware that they are personally liable for anything that they write or present online (including on an online forum or blog, post, feed or website). Councillors should always be mindful of the Members Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles. Employees may be subject to disciplinary action for comments, content, or images that are defamatory, embarrassing, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment. They may also be sued by other organisations, and any individual or council that views their comments, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition, other councillors, staff, and other authorised users can raise grievances for alleged bullying and/or harassment.
- Postings to websites or anywhere on the internet and social media of any kind, or in any press or media of any kind, should not breach copyright or other law or disclose confidential information, defame or make derogatory comments about the council or its Councillors or staff, or disclose personal data or information about any individual that could breach data protection legislation.
- Contacts by the media relating to the council, should be referred to the Clerk or the Chair.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook must ensure that the information on their profile is accurate and up to date and must update their profile on leaving the council.
- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who use X.com, LinkedIn, or other social media/networking sites for council development purposes must ensure they provide the council with login details, including password(s), so that these sites can be accessed and updated in their absence.

- Councillors, staff, and other authorised users who have left the council must not post any inappropriate comments about the council or its councillors, staff, and other authorised users on LinkedIn, Facebook, X.com or any other social media/networking sites.
- During your employment/ involvement with the council, you may create or obtain access to a variety of professional contacts and confidential information. This includes, but is not limited to, contacts made through professional networking platforms such as LinkedIn, where those contacts have been established or maintained in your capacity as a councillor, member of staff, or other authorised user. All such contacts will be considered council property and may be subject to disclosure upon request.

9.1.5 Note that the council may, from time to time, monitor external postings on social media sites. Any employee who has a profile (for example on LinkedIn or Facebook) must not misrepresent themselves or their role with the council. Councillors, staff, and other authorised users are also advised that social media sites are not an appropriate place to air council concerns or complaints: these should be raised with the council or formally through the grievance procedure.

9.1.6 It is important to note that external stakeholders contact details and information remain the property of the council. In addition, councillors, staff, and other authorised users leaving the council will be required to delete all council-related data including external stakeholders contact details from any personal device/equipment.

Misuse

Misuse of IT systems and equipment is not in line with the council's standards of conduct and will be taken seriously. Any inappropriate or unauthorised use may lead to formal action, including disciplinary proceedings or, in serious cases, dismissal.

Guidance

Where there is text in [square brackets] this part may be updated or be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.

Important notice

This is based on an example of a policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

This document was commissioned by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

This document has been written by Worknest HR – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish Councils. Please contact them on 01403 240 205 for information about their services.



REPORT

SECOND DRAFT

03 February 2026

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1 Summary: Affordable Housing Need and other findings

1.1 The number of households who qualify for an affordable home in the parish is assessed on household income, savings, and respondents' local connection to Pilton in this Housing Needs Survey.

16 people who plan to move in the next 5 years and remain in Pilton parish have been assessed for their eligibility for affordable housing. Of these:

- 9 respondents are either deemed to have adequate resources to meet their own needs based on current homeownership status or income, or did not provide sufficient details on their income and household size to assess their needs.
- **7 respondents do not have sufficient resources to either purchase or rent in the private market in Pilton, meaning they are eligible for affordable housing.**

1.2 **Of the respondents eligible for affordable housing, the housing need is for 7 dwellings of the following size.**

- **3 x 2-bedroom properties**
- **4 x 3-bedroom properties**

None of the respondents required level access or adaptations.

1.3 5 of the 7 respondents who are eligible for affordable housing are registered on Homefinder Somerset, the County's choice-based lettings system. The other 2 respondents had not applied as they perceived the waiting list to be too long or that there is a lack of affordable housing in the parish.

1.4 **Other evidence of housing need**

In addition to this survey, Homefinder Somerset provides other evidence of housing need. Applicants are given a banding between Emergency, Gold, Silver, and Bronze based on their level of need. They may also choose a first, second and third area that they prefer to live in.

1.5 There are 59 applicants registered on Homefinder Somerset who have expressed a preference for living in Pilton. **31 of them have a local connection to the parish** and have expressed an interest in moving to Pilton.

1.6 **Pilton is the first area of preference for 4 registrants with a local connection. 9 registrants with a local connection chose Pilton as a second area of**

preference and Pilton is the third choice for the remaining 18 applicants with a local connection.

- 1.7 Data produced through Arc4's Rural Affordable Housing Model ¹ identifies rural affordable housing need through secondary indicators. **Their model indicates a gross annual need of 11 dwellings, and a net annual need of 1 dwelling.**

The Housing Needs Survey findings are a snapshot in time, and represents 12% of households in Pilton, while the Arc4 model includes all households using a range of economic and social indicators. Personal circumstances are constantly changing, and the need for affordable social rented housing in the future may change.

As the needs of households are constantly evolving the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide, and it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years.

Other findings

- 1.8 **There is a significant level of support for affordable housing for local people, with 31 respondents in agreement.** 11 respondents were unsure, and 11 said they did not support more affordable housing.
- **30 respondents** thought the parish would benefit from **affordable housing for families.**
 - **28 respondents** thought there was a need for homes for **young people.**
 - **24 respondents** thought there was a need for **social rented properties.**
 - **15 respondents** would like homes for **older, retired people.**
 - **14 people** support **self build.**
 - **12 respondents** said they would like to see **shared ownership properties** available, and **9** would like homes for sale at **discounted market value.**
 - **6 respondents** would like more **private rental properties.**
 - **2 respondents** cited **open market properties.**
 - **9 people** said **no new homes.**

¹¹ <https://www.arc4.co.uk/sectors/housing-needs-surveys-and-assessments>

1.9 Affordability

High house prices and a limited and expensive private rental market have meant that most properties in Pilton are unaffordable to those on a low to medium income. Young people and those working in occupations such as health and social care, hospitality and agriculture can only afford to meet their own housing needs elsewhere.

2. Introduction

2.1 The parish is comprised of Pilton and the surrounding hamlets of East and West Compton, Upper and Lower Westholme, East Town, Steanbow and other outlying properties such as Beardly Batch and Platterwell Lane.

The A361 main road runs through the village, connecting to Shepton Mallet (6 miles) and Glastonbury (6 miles), both of which are commercial and employment centres. Pilton is considered within commuting distance for Yeovil, Bath, and Bristol, although none are easily reached through public transport. A six-days-a-week bus connects to the nearest towns. Village facilities include a church, village hall, a pub, and shop/post office. There is a pre-school in the village, however there is no primary school in the parish.

The area is largely rural farmland with a scattering of orchards and pockets of ancient woodland and specie- rich grassland.

2.2 Pilton is a vibrant village, famous as home of the Glastonbury Festival. It offers key facilities, including the Co-op store with Post Office and EV chargers, a refurbished pub, (The Crown Inn) a social club, a coffee shop, a village hall, and a historic Tithe Barn, and is home to numerous community groups. It also has a Recreation Ground with playing fields, skate park, and playground, plus a Methodist Chapel and Parish Church.

Pilton School closed in 1967, although a Pre-School runs in the Methodist Church.

2.3 The most recent census update in 2024 shows a population of 1,132 in 454 households (a 2021 figure).² The 2021 Census also shows that Pilton has a higher level of homeowners with 75.5% compared with 62.3% in England, and the majority are homes are owned outright without a mortgage. A small number live in privately rented property (15.2%), well below the average in England

² Office for National Statistics, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/#E04008577> [Accessed 26.11.25]

(20.6%). 9.3% of all households live in social housing, compared to the average in England of 17.1%.

2.4 Earnings and Affordability

The Eastern area of Somerset Unitary Authority (formerly Mendip District) has historically had one of the highest disparities between average earnings and average house prices in Somerset.³ House prices in Pilton parish are high in relation to average incomes – £574,000 average for the last five years (2020-2024)⁴ compared to estimated median earnings for Somerset £36,816 (ASHE 2025)⁵. Even considering the cheapest 25% (lower quartile) house prices in the area – typically £404,000 - the income required to afford this type of house would be £103,886.

The ratio of median house price in Pilton parish to median annual earnings in Somerset is 16.82. Put simply, a typical house in Pilton costs nearly than seventeen times the typical annual wage in Somerset (figures are only available for the Somerset Unitary Authority). This means that owning a house is out of reach of many, particularly younger people, women, or families wishing to remain in the area.

2.5 Current Property Prices and Rent

The latest information on house prices in England shows that average house prices continue to rise in the South West, up by 0.9% over the year to September 2025.⁶

There were thirteen residential properties for sale in Pilton parish in October 2025. (12 x 3-bedroom houses, 1 x 5-bedroom house). The cheapest 3-bedroom house is semi-detached at £270,000 and the most expensive a 5-bedroom detached house at £1,175,000. In the year to October 2025 eight residential property sales were completed: 3 x 3-bedroom properties at an average of £433,000 and 4 x 4-bedroom property at £628,000 and a 5-bedroom property at £940,000.⁷

To see if a household can afford to buy on the open market, we look at the price of an entry-level property in the local area. Table 1 provides a snapshot of the

³ Somerset Council, Somerset Trends: Economy & Planning Team (Research & Intelligence) <https://www.somersetrends.org.uk/topics/wages-wellbeing/housing-affordability/> [Accessed 26.11.25]

⁴ Using ARC4 Rural Affordable Housing Needs Model & Rightmove data [accessed 26.11.25]

⁵ Office for National Statistics, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings: April 2025, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/annualsurveyofhoursandearnings/2025> and <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc3068/fig06/index.html> [Somerset] [accessed 4.9.25]

⁶ HM Land Registry, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-house-price-index-for-september-2025> [accessed 26.11.25]

⁷ HM Land Registry, <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/> [accessed 26.11.25]

typical prices a resident would currently expect to pay to buy or privately rent a property in the lowest priced 25% of homes (based on Land Registry sales in the last year, current open market prices, and average rents). Owing to the limited availability of smaller and 4-bedroom properties in Pilton and the wider rural area, the search area was extended to a 5-mile radius and included properties in Shepton Mallet, Glastonbury and Wells.

Table 1 – Typical property prices and rent levels: cheapest 25% (lower quartile)

Property size	Sale price	Private rent monthly (weekly £ rounded)	Maximum monthly Local Housing Allowance that can be claimed ⁸	Lower quartile monthly rent Pilton ³	Income required to afford lower quartile monthly rent Pilton ³
1-bedroom	£120,000	£738 (£170 pw)	£598.35	£1,359	£65,208
2-bedrooms	£245,000	£1,150 (£265 pw)	£772.89		
3- bedrooms	£425,000	£1,375 (£317 pw)	£972.31		
4- bedrooms	£613,750	£1,550 (£358 pw)	£1,346.28		

2.6 Affordable homes availability

At the time of this research there were no properties to bid on in Pilton or nearby towns on the Homefinder Somerset website, the county’s choice-based lettings system (housing register).⁹

There appear to be around 59 socially rented homes in the parish.¹⁰ They comprise mixed developments of 2 bed and 3 bed houses, bungalows, and flats. Between February 2023 to September 2024, 28 new properties were let in the affordable housing stock with an average application rate of 155 households per property.¹¹

2.7 There are 59 applicants registered on Homefinder Somerset. **31 of them have strong local connection to the parish** and have expressed an interest in moving to Pilton. Pilton is the first area of preference for 4 applicants on Homefinder

⁸ UK Government Local House Allowance rates, <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/> [accessed 26.11.25]

⁹ Homefinder Somerset Website, <https://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk/choice/homes.aspx> [accessed 26.11.25]

¹⁰ Somerset Council <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/news/affordable-housing-success-in-somerset/> and The Guinness Partnership Housing Association <https://www.guinnesspartnership.com/development/maggies-farm-pilton/> [accessed 26.11.25]

¹¹ Homefinder Somerset Co-ordinator email to Thrive, 31.10.25)

Somerset. 9 applicants chose Pilton as a second area of preference and Pilton is the third choice of place to live for 18 applicants.

3 Survey Background

3.1 The Community Plan produced in 2024 did not cover housing issues specifically. Pilton Parish Council therefore took the opportunity offered through Thrive to conduct a Housing Needs Survey the following year. The research was funded by DEFRA through ACRE's Rural Housing Enablers (RHE) Programme in which Thrive is a delivery partner.

3.2 Pilton Parish Council promoted the survey widely through social media, posters, and the parish newsletter. The survey was conducted online between 7 November and 8 December 2025 and paper copies were available. In total 53 valid responses were received, all online, giving a 12% response rate.

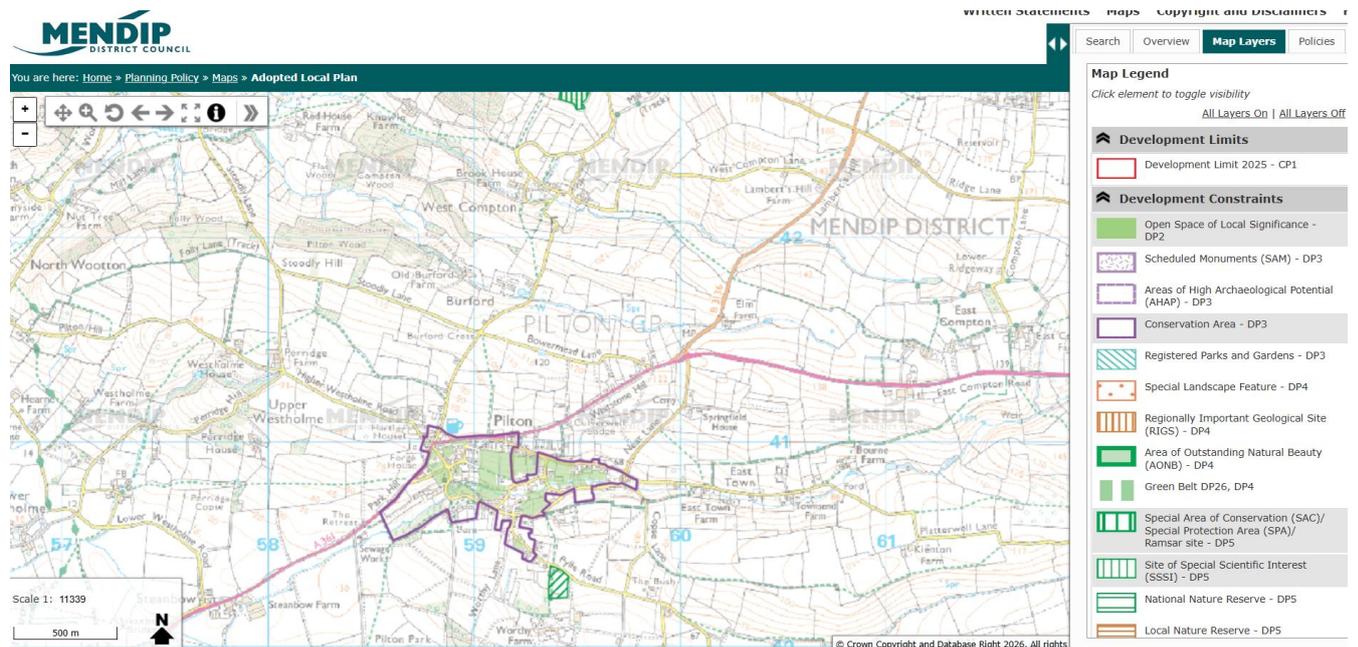
3.3 Aims of the Housing Needs Survey

- To find out what kinds of homes local people will need over the next five years – including sizes, types and tenures – for those living or working in the parish, and for anyone with local connections who wishes to return.
- To understand how many people need affordable housing and what challenges they face when trying to find a suitable home in Pilton.
- To listen to local views on affordable housing and see how much support there is for new homes for local people if a need is shown.
- To help inform future planning for the parish.

3.4 Planning considerations

Much of the village of Pilton is within a Heritage Conservation area in the Mendip Local Plan (DP3). Somerset Council have adopted the Mendip Local Plan 2014, until the new unitary authority has adopted a comprehensive Somerset Local Plan due in 2029. The plan also identifies Open Space of Local Significance (DP2) within the village, and the Recreation Ground in Pylle Road is protected as a formal and informal Recreation Space and allocated as Open Space and Green Infrastructure (DP16), as shown in the map below.

Map 1: Somerset Council's Planning Policies: Mendip Local Plan 2014¹²



<https://www.planvu.co.uk/mdc/index.php>

4 Survey Methodology

4.1 The survey was available for completion online and promoted with a web link and QR code. Paper surveys were also available on request from Pilton Parish Council and were distributed with a postage paid envelope for return to Thrive.

The survey was widely promoted through all the available communications channels in the parish. There was an added incentive of a prize draw to encourage residents to participate - a meal for two at Pilton Stage.

4.2 Research was conducted between 7 November – 8 December 2025. In total 53 responses were received giving a 12% response rate. A large number of invalid and duplicate responses were removed from survey results.

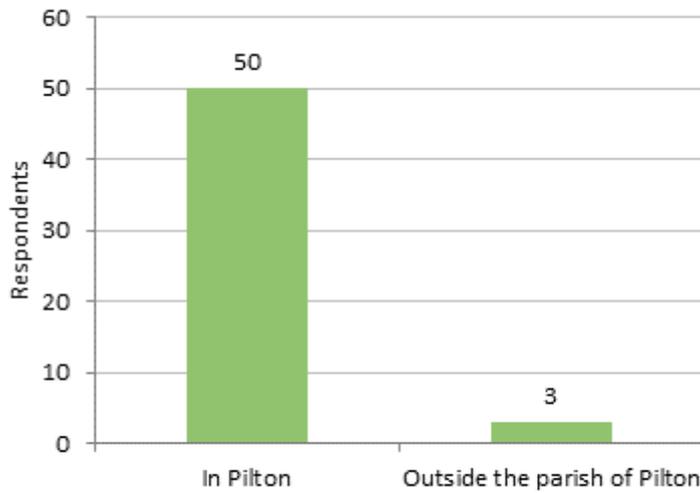
¹² <https://www.planvu.co.uk/mdc/index.php>

5 Survey Findings

Part 1: Completed by all households

1. Where do you live?

Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0

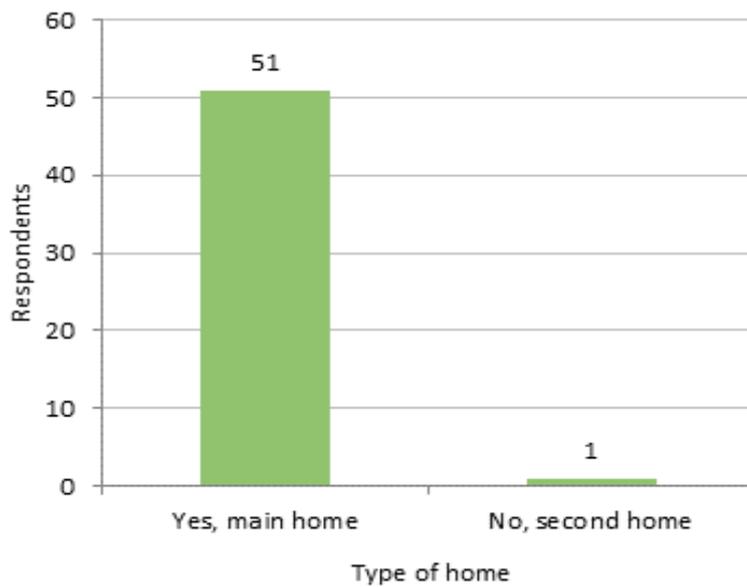


Where people live

50 of the 53 respondents live in the parish of Pilton, whereas 3 respondents live elsewhere.

2. Is this your main home?

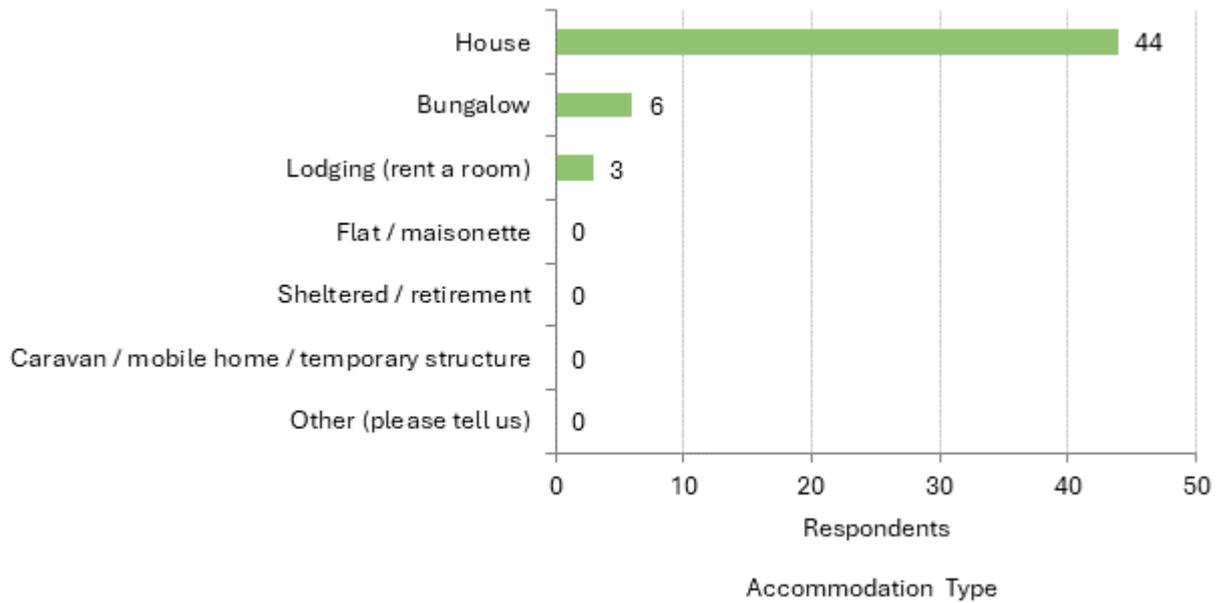
Answered: 52 Did not answer: 1



1 respondent acknowledged they had a second home in the parish.

3. What type of home do you live in?

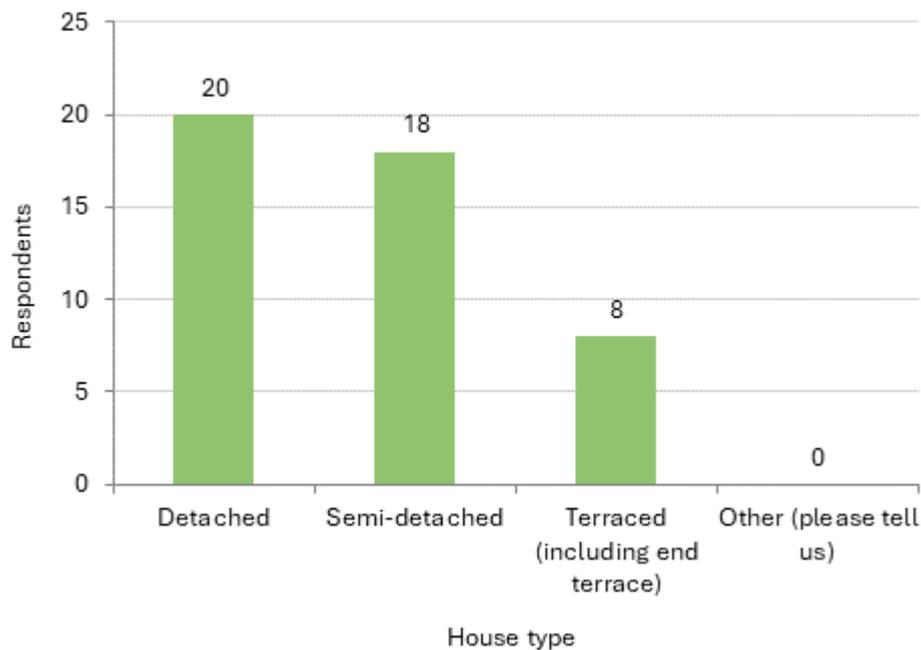
Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0



- 44 respondents live in a house and 6 in a bungalow.
- 3 respondents said they were renting a room.

4. If you ticked house or bungalow, is it?

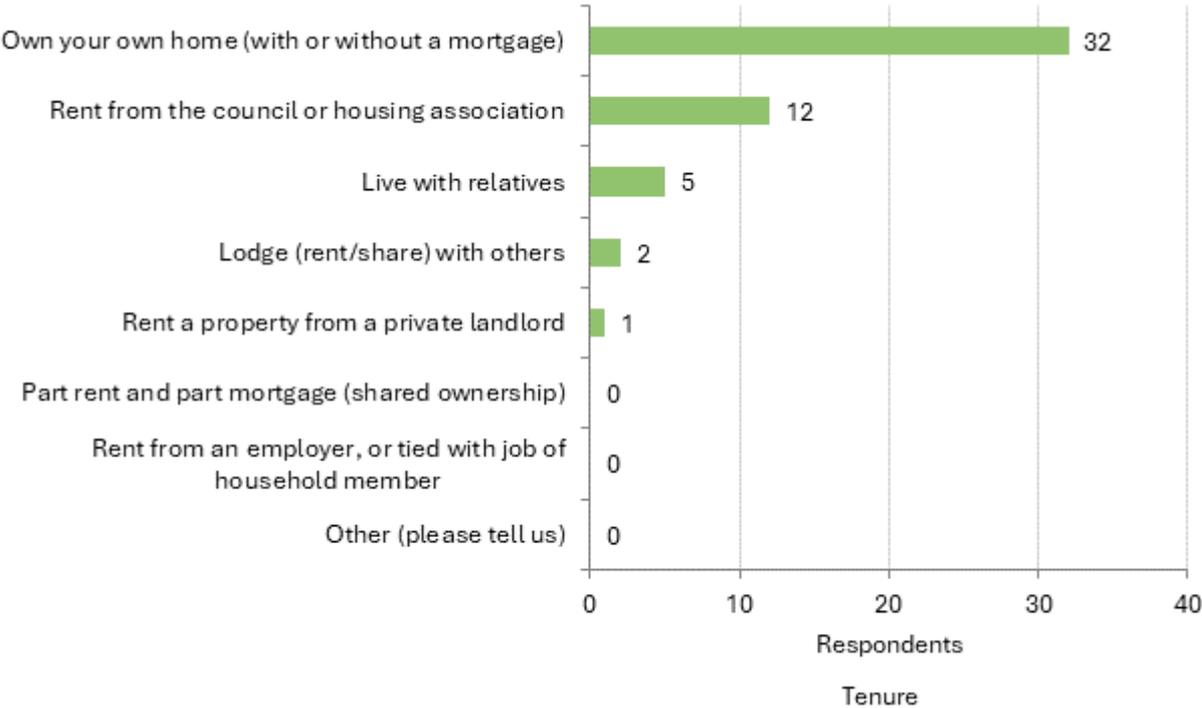
Answered: 46 Did not answer: 7



Of 46 respondents to this question, 20 live in a detached house, 18 in a semi-detached house and 8 in a terraced house.

5. Current tenure: Do you?

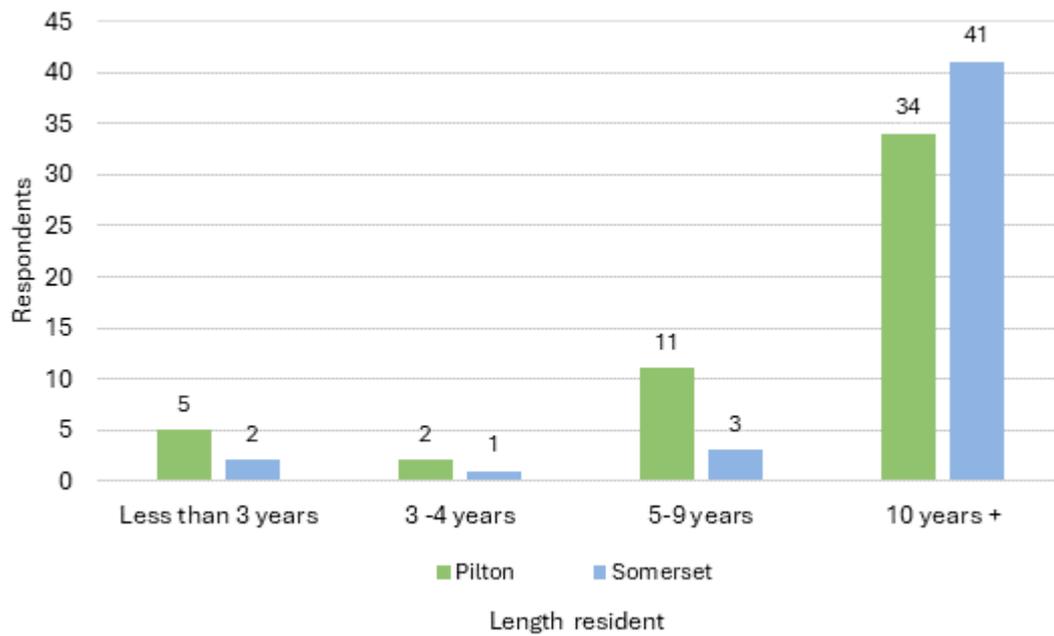
Answered: 52 Did not answer: 1



- Most respondents (32) own their own home with or without a mortgage.
- 12 respondents rent from the council or housing association.
- 5 respondents live with relatives while 2 rent or share with others.
- Only 1 respondent rented privately.

6. How long have you lived in Pilton/Somerset?

Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0

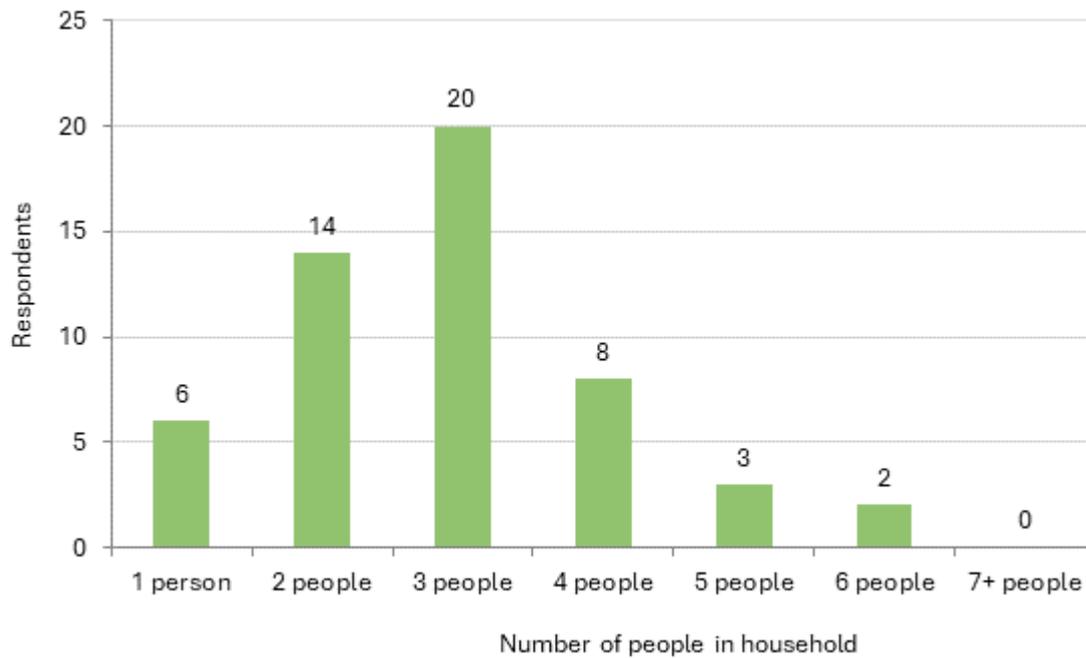


- The majority of respondents (41) have lived in the parish for over 10 years.
- 11 respondents have lived in the parish for 5-9 years.
- Relatively few respondents (7) have lived in the parish for less than 4 years.

This may indicate that it is difficult to find smaller homes within the parish.

7. How many people live in your household? (adults and children)

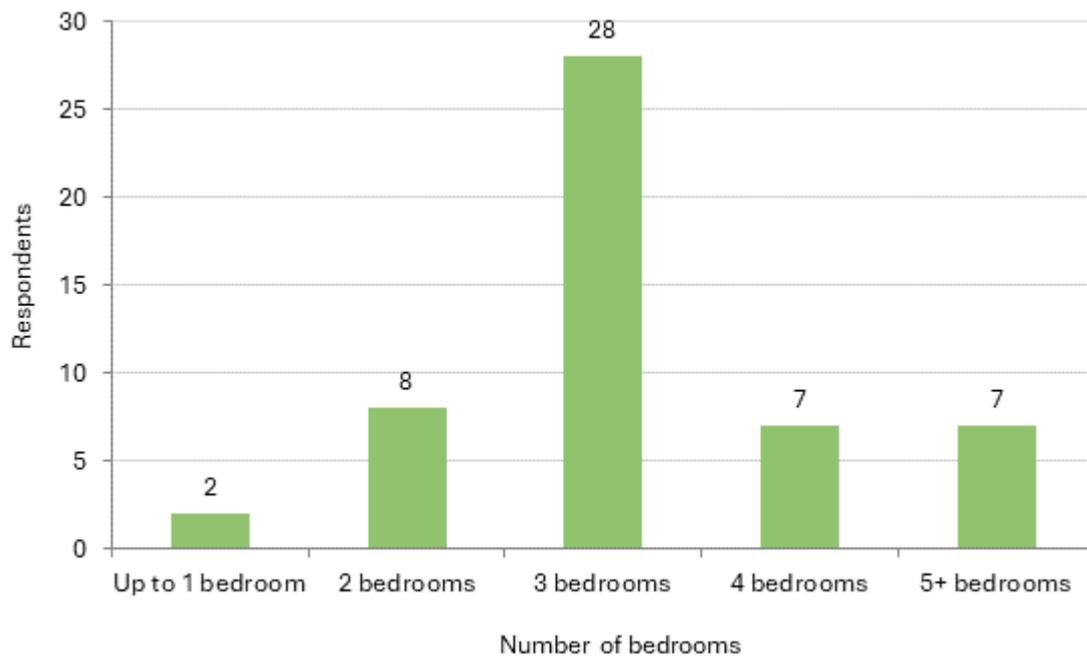
Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0



- 20 respondents lived in households of 3 people.
- 14 respondents live in households of 2 people.
- 6 respondents live alone.
- 13 respondents live in households of 4 to 6 people.

8. How many bedrooms does your household have?

Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0



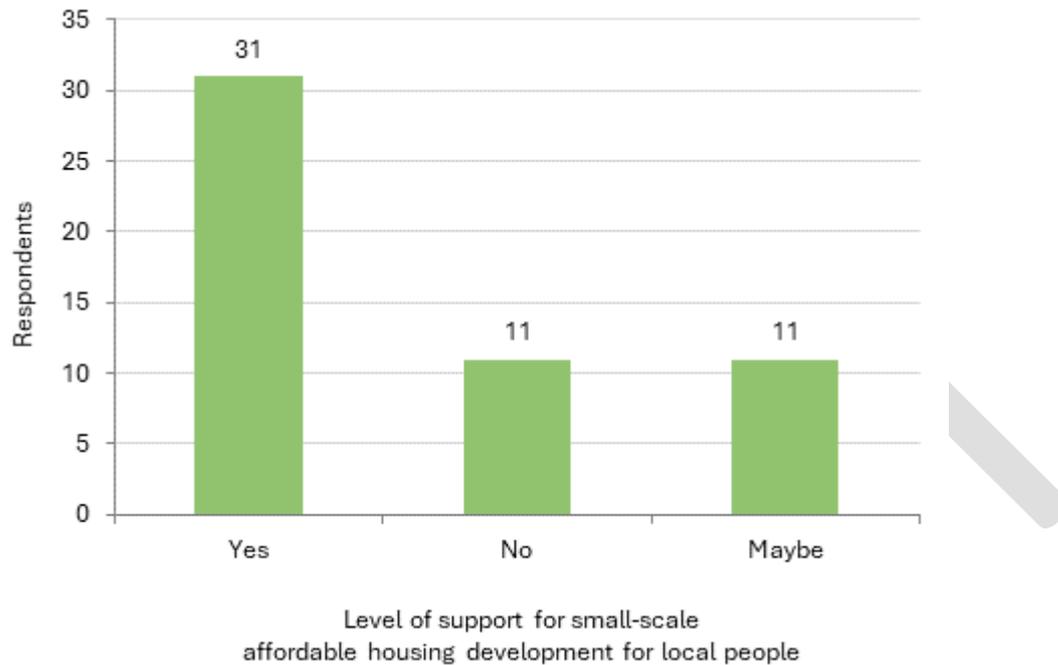
28 respondents live in a 3-bedroom property.

- 8 respondents live in a 2-bedroom property.
- Only 2 people live in a 1-bedroom property indicating that if 6 people live alone then at least 4 people are under-occupying their house.
- 7 people live in a 4 bedroomed house, and 7 in a 5-bedroomed house.

Views on affordable housing

9. If a need is identified, would you support a small development of affordable housing for local people in Pilton?

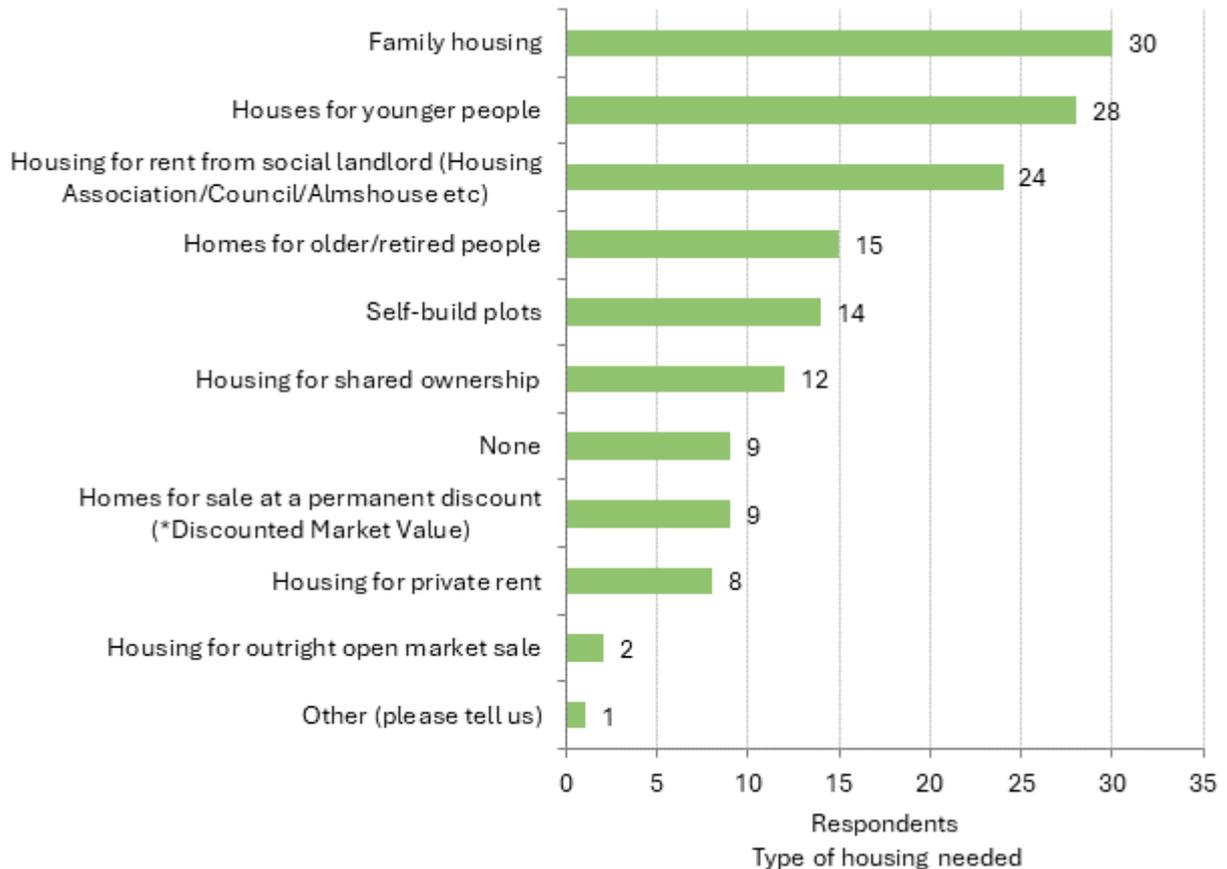
Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0



There is a significant level of support for affordable housing for local people, with 31 respondents in agreement. 11 respondents were unsure, and 11 said they did not support more affordable housing.

10. What type of housing for you believe the parish would benefit from?

Answered: 52 Did not answer: 1



- 30 respondents thought the parish would benefit from affordable housing for families.
- 28 respondents thought there was a need for homes for young people.
- Housing for social rent was also popular with 24 respondents.
- 15 people would like homes for older, retired people.
- There was also interest in self build by 14 respondents.
- 14 people are interested in self build.
- 12 respondents said they would like to see shared ownership properties available, and 9 would like homes for sale at discounted market value.
- 6 respondents would like more private rental properties.
- Only 2 respondents cited open market properties.
- 9 said they don't want any new homes.
- The other comment was not valid.

Favourable comments towards affordable housing for local people

1. "Because property in Pilton is expensive young people from the village struggle to afford to stay here."

2. "Because there is always the need for affordable homes. However, 'affordable' homes to buy seem only to be affordable on the first sale."
3. "Because we need a bigger house due to the limited bedroom space with have and we also don't want to leave the village due to our family being here."
4. "For local people only - not just first dibs, then thrown open to anyone deemed more needy from anywhere else."
5. "I think it's unfair that people who have local connections or grew up here, do not have the opportunity or the funds to live here as rents are stupidly high."
6. "I would not support the development proposed Mid way up Whitstone Hill (directly behind Colverwell Cottages) unless the development was halved in size, it is not practical with current infrastructure. Maybe six or seven max dwellings would suit this site. Generally, there is definitely a need for social housing... I think lots of small developments (less than 10 dwellings) for social housing dotted around the village would be a great idea..."
7. "If it's for people with connections to Pilton or people that currently rent in Pilton then yes."
8. "If there is a need then more homes should be built."
9. "If they really are for local people, as in people born or lived in Pilton for many years and maybe can't afford to buy or rent privately in the village. Not necessarily those who have lived or worked in the village for a short time."
10. "If we there is a need we should all support it."
11. "It is important for everyone to have a home to live in that they can afford in a place that they want to live."
12. "It would be good for youngsters and people within the village. Current social housing allows people without a village connection."
13. "Local people should have the opportunity to live locally
A community is for all."
14. "Lots of people in the village including myself cannot afford to buy in the village."
15. "My son lives with us and desperately wants to stay in Pilton I was born here and would love to see my children settled here before i pass."
16. "Need somewhere to live."
17. "Small- development to keep younger people in the village."
18. "So, my children can return to the village."
19. "Speaking from a person who has all her family living in Pilton... I would love to live in Pilton and be close to my family, but it is priced so high."
20. "The children of people living in Pilton should have the chance to build a life here too."
21. "The house prices are not affordable for most people."
22. "The need for affordable housing is great my adult children can not afford to buy/rent in Pilton."

23. "The village isn't accessible for young families /couples'/ singles/anyone without buckets of cash."
24. "We are fortunate to have homes in Pilton at an affordable rent, but people tend to stay in those houses so new stock will always be required."
25. "We need to enable our young people to stay in the village where they grew up and where their extended families are."

Those who maybe or unsure

26. "It depends where."
27. "Only with links to village as we need people who care about Pilton and keeping it the beautiful place to stay. Feel there has been increase in feeling a little less safe at times due to the village increasing in size."
28. Combined comment from duplicate incomplete survey\] Worry about safety... even though I live in social housing feel it's losing something with all the houses being built."
29. "Rent so expensive husband 69".
30. "Why?"

Comments from respondents who do not want affordable housing.

31. "I believe there are enough affordable houses already."
32. "I don't believe that young people currently living in Pilton would be able to buy these houses."
33. "I think we have enough affordable housing - any more and the East Town end of Pilton will start looking like a 'sink estate'. The removal of green spaces... Why not let other villages provide affordable housing?"
34. "The reason regularly quoted for a need for more housing is the number of people on the electoral register... A change in the allocation of festival tickets... would see the housing need slashed to zero. Furthermore, the roads... cannot cope with more traffic."
35. "The village already has social housing provided by Glastonbury Festival."
36. "The village have more than enough affordable housing!"
37. "There has already been mass development in the village."
38. "There is adequate housing within the village... There is no such housing need within Pilton."
39. "There is already adequate affordable housing provided in the village."
40. "There is already social housing in Pilton. There are many towns within a local distance also with social housing and more to be built."
41. "There is plenty of social housing in Pilton, I had to fight to get my house... Local people are not being put at the top of the housing list for these houses!"
42. "Think we have quite a lot already, and not sure they are always allocated to people with strong Pilton connections. Not sure we need any more..."

43. "We have over 50 social houses in the village. I think this is plenty for a small village like ours."
44. "When does it end? Already had two estates built of late and understand many of the houses did not go to locals in any case."

11. Please give any suggestions for potential housing sites that could be considered:

Answered: 20 Did not answer: 33

Specific site suggestions

- Fields above Top Street
- Field back of Culverwell Cottages
- Platerwell Lane
- Just along from Hartley Cottages
- Flat fields near Hartley Cottages
- Higher Westholme Road, past Hartley Cottages
- Land adjacent to John Burns Cottages & Margaret Bondfield Close
- Land between Top & Lower Street
- Near to Margaret Bondfield Close
- North of Hartley Cottages
- Opposite around the latest estate. Behind the pub. Off Whitstone Hill
- Mid Whitstone Hill (behind Colverwell Cottages, Top Street)
- Behind the Crown Pub, Totterdown Lane
- North of Margaret Bondfield
- West of Margaret Bondfield and John Burns
- Neat Lane
- East Town Lane
- The field next to Kelly Sumner's place
- Top Street / Neat Lane as development already begun.
- West Pennard or North Wootton

General suggestions

- The village has few smaller bungalows for older people.

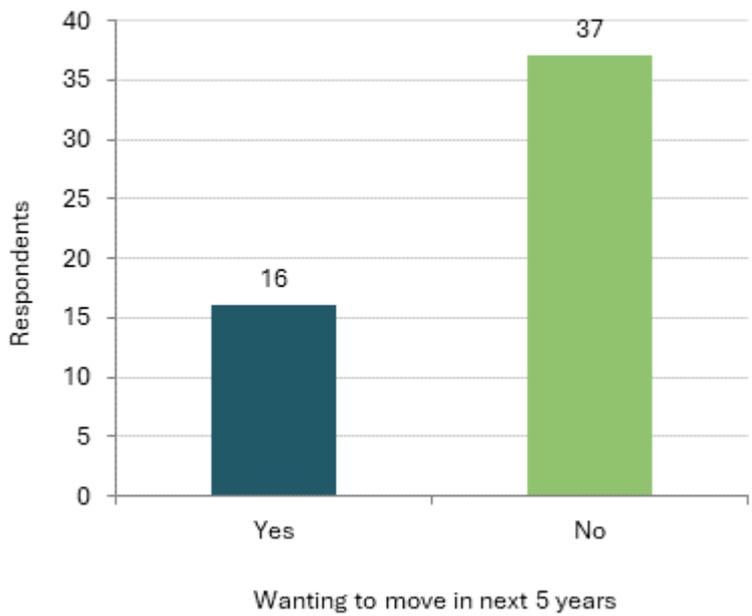
No suggestion / opposed / unsure

- Don't know.
- I have no idea who owns what land or even what land is suitable for housing.
- I'm not up to date with building areas so I couldn't really suggest.
- None as everything around us is green belt.
- None!!

- Not sure
- Pilton as a village has a very delicate landscape... suggests more housing at nearest towns instead.
- The village has already had mass development over the last 10 years. The village doesn't require more housing just because people want to stay in the village.

12. In the next 5 years, do you want to move to a new home in Pilton?

Answered: 53 Did not answer: 0

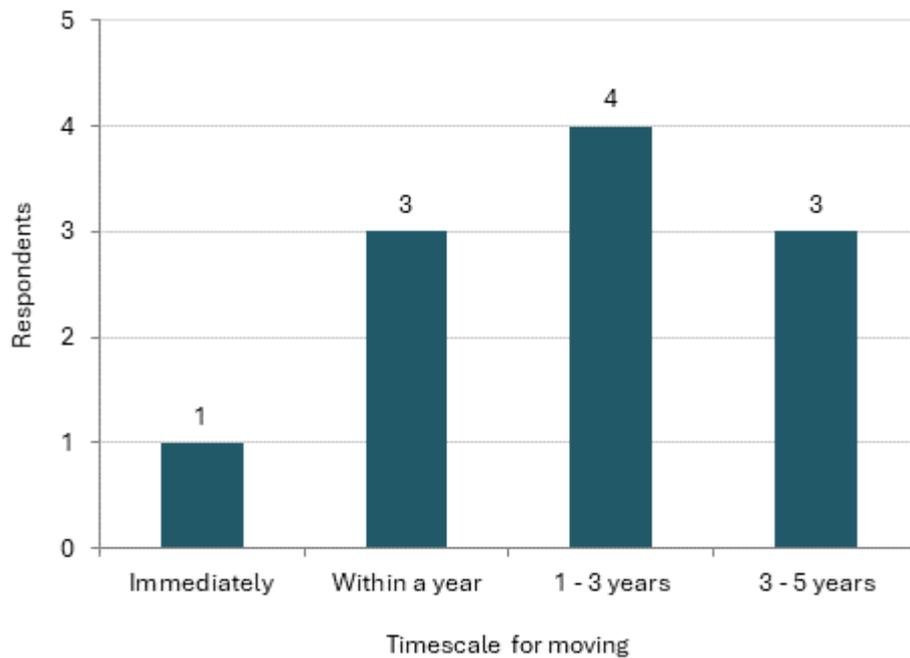


16 respondents said they would like to move over the next 5 years.

Part 2: All households who want to move in the next five years (16 respondents.)

13. When do you think you will need to move house?

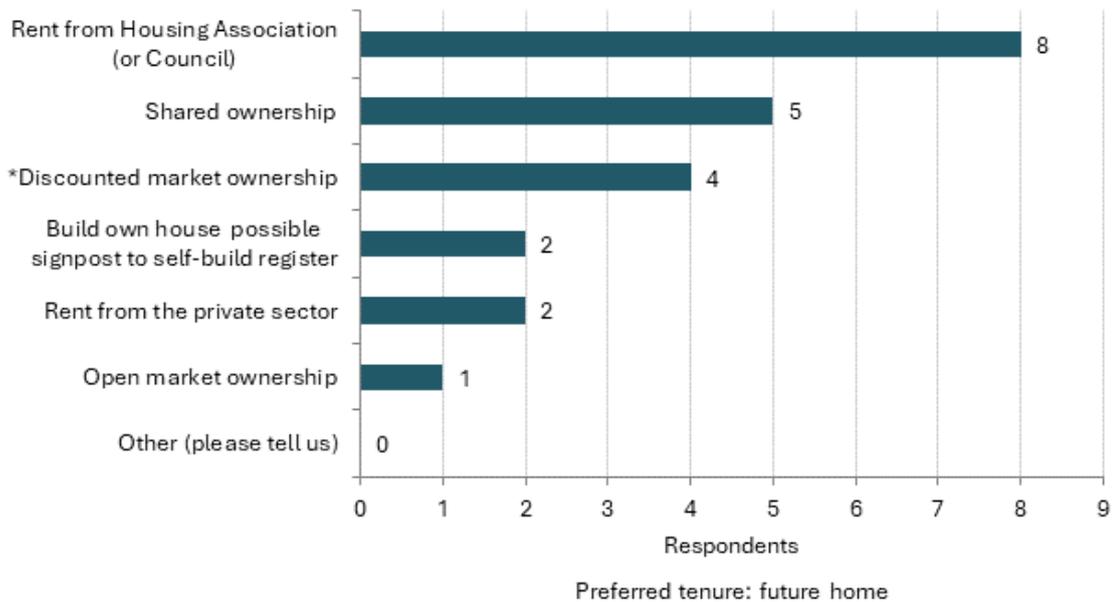
Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5



- Of the 16 respondents who said they would like to move within Pilton, 11 said they would like to move in the next 3-5 years.
- Of these, 1 respondent must move immediately, 3 within a year, 4 within 1 to 3 years, and 3 within 3 to 5 years.

14. What type of housing are you interested in? Tick all that apply.

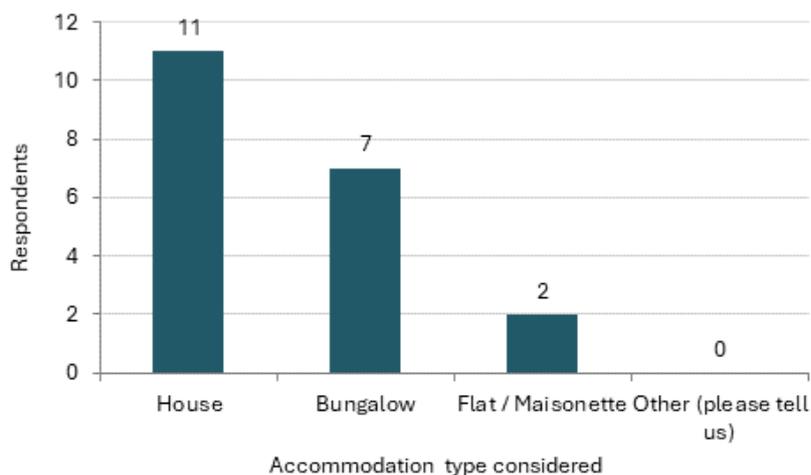
Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5



- The most popular option of the 11 respondents was to rent from Housing Association or Council (8).
- Shared ownership would be of interest to 5 respondents.
- Discounted market ownership interested 4 respondents.
- 2 people said they have an interest in self-building.
- 2 people said they would like rent from the private sector.
- 1 respondent said they are interested in open market ownership.

15. Would you consider?

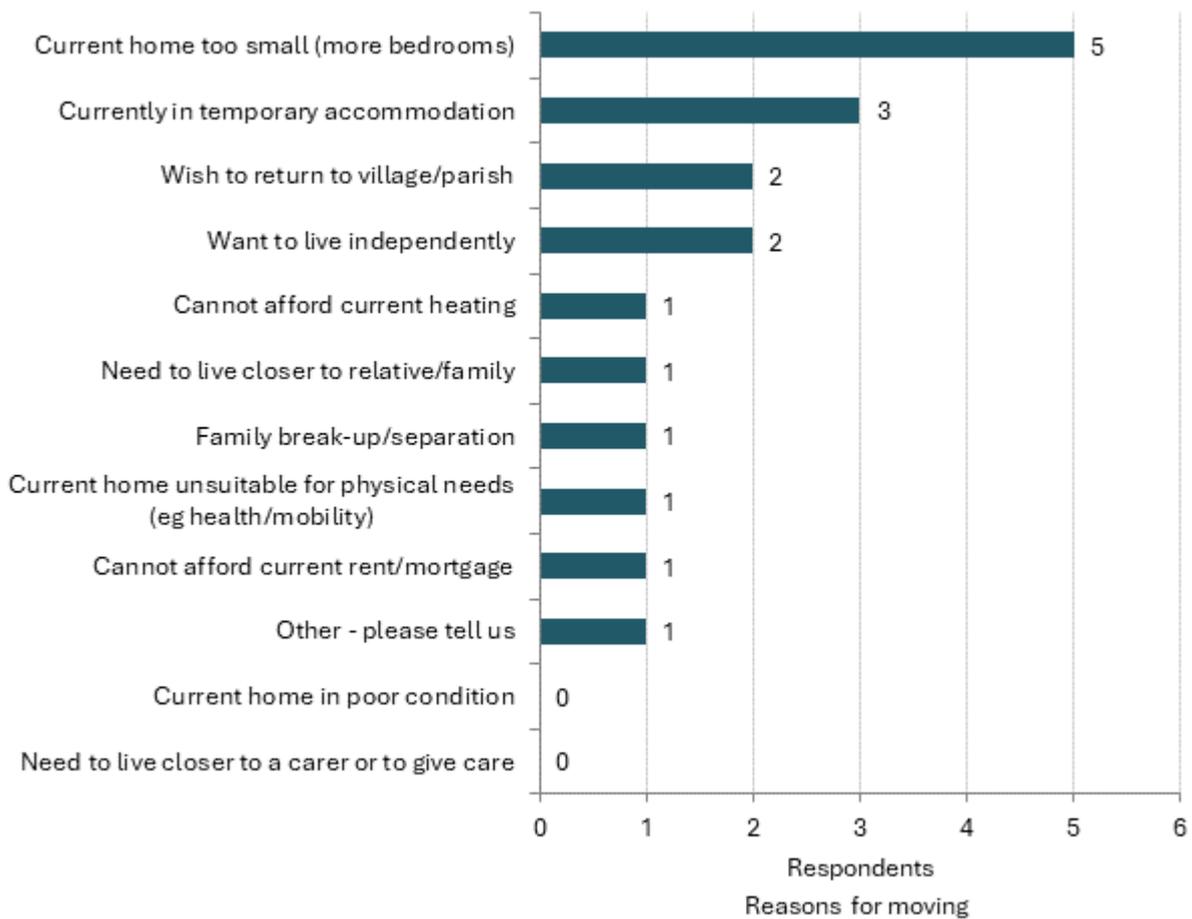
Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5



- 11 respondents would like a house.
- 7 would like a bungalow.
- 2 would consider a flat or maisonette.

16. Why do you need to move? Tick all that apply.

Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5



- The most common reason respondents need to move in the next 5 years is that their current home is too small (5 respondents).
- 3 respondents are in temporary accommodation.
- 2 respondents wish to return to the village.
- 2 respondents said they want to live independently.
- Affordability of rent/ mortgage or heating was factor for 2 people.
- Current home is no longer suitable for one respondent's health needs.
- Needing to be nearer family was cited by 1 respondent.
- However, 1 respondent was experiencing a family breakup.

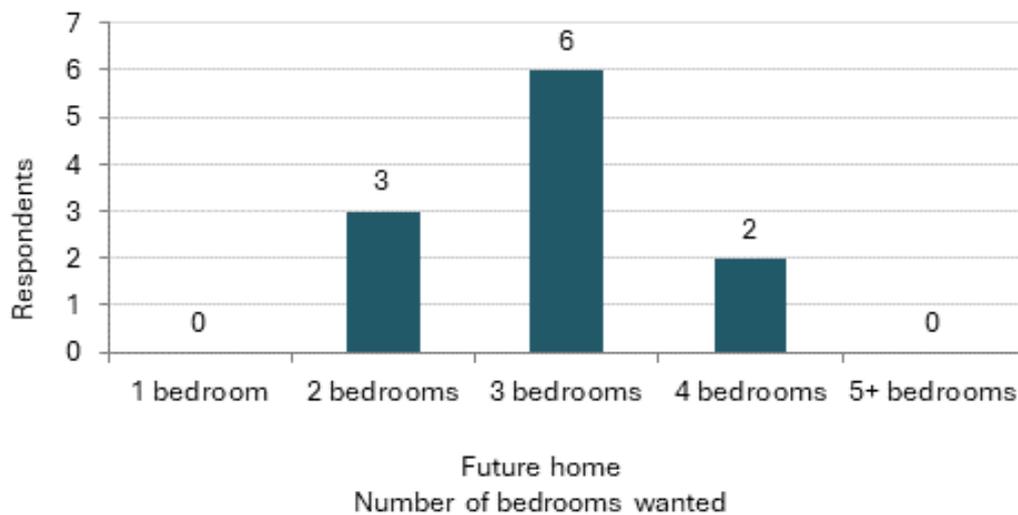
17. Who would be moving with you?

Answered: 9 Did not answer: 7

We used this confidential information to help in our overall assessment of for housing need. Results cannot be published in this report.

18. How many bedrooms do you expect to have?

Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5

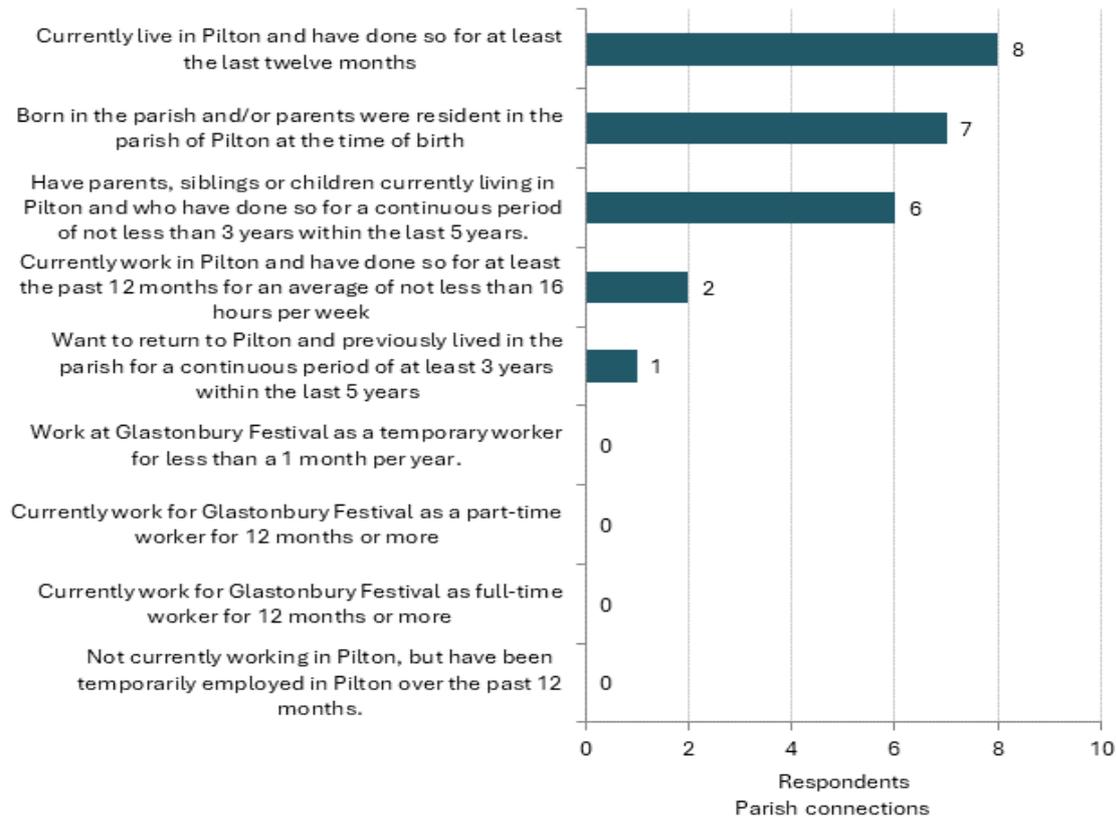


- 6 respondents said they need a 3 bed-roomed property.
- 3 respondents said they need 2 bedrooms.
- 2 respondents said they would like 4 bedrooms.
- Nobody said they needed a 1- bedroom property.

This indicates a need for more sizeable homes for those looking to move.

19. What is your connection to Pilton?

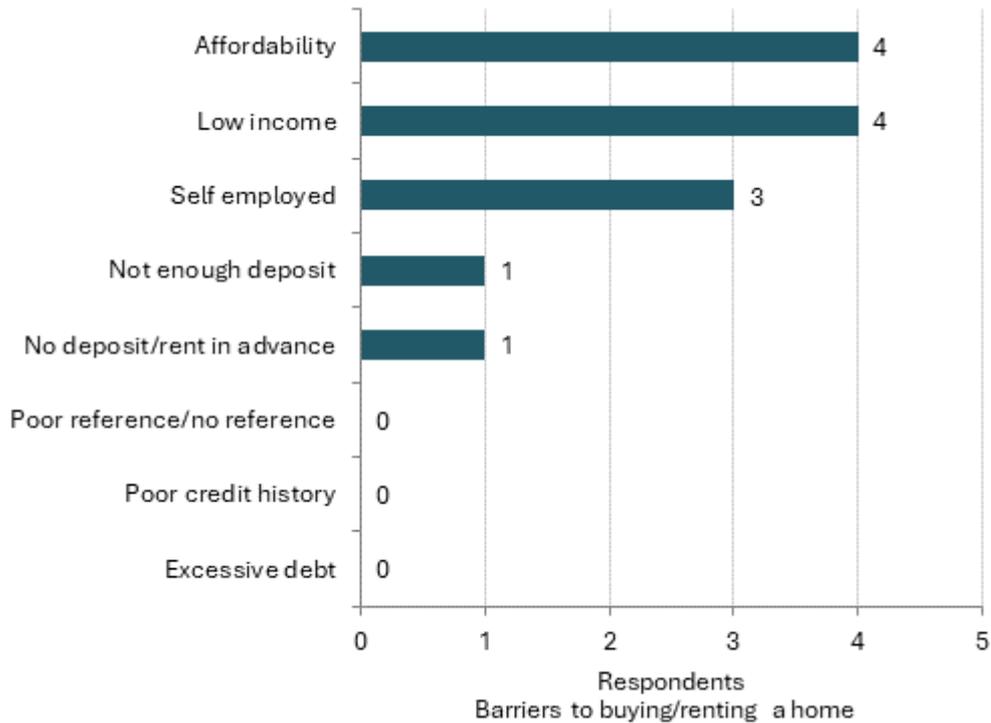
Answered: 11 Did not answer: 5



- 7 of the 11 respondents looking to move in the next 5 years, were born in the parish.
- 6 respondents have family currently living in Parish for over 3 of the past 5 years.
- 2 people have been working in Pilton for at least a year.
- 1 person said they had previously lived in Pilton for at least 3 of the past 5 years and wanted to return.
- No respondents worked for Glastonbury Festival.

20. What, if anything, is currently stopping you from buying or renting a home? Tick all that apply.

Answered: 8 Did not answer: 8



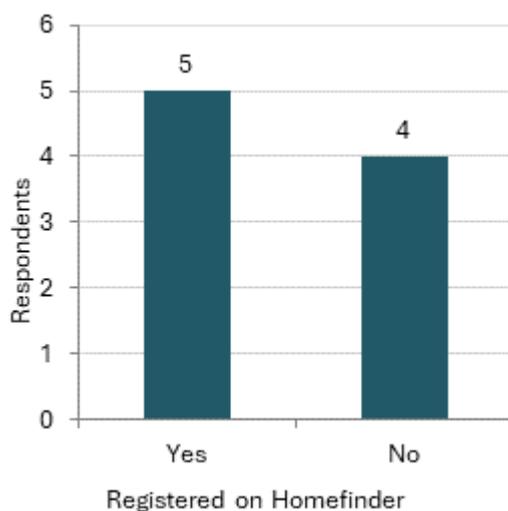
- Affordability and low income are the key barriers to buying or renting a home in the parish, with 4 responses to both categories. This impacts on being able to afford enough deposit to buy (1 response) or rent (1 response).
- However, no respondents were in more challenging financial difficulties or could not offer a reference.

Questions 21-24 asked for confidential information to help in our overall assessment of for affordable housing need and establish overlap between this survey and Homefinder Somerset data. Results cannot be published in this report. The questions asked:

- What is your household's approximate total income per year (before tax)?
- Do you have savings, investments or equity in your current home or gifts.
- How much rent/ mortgage / lodgings do you pay per month for your current home?
- If renting, do you currently receive Housing Benefit or UC to help towards this?

25. Are you registered on Homefinder Somerset (the housing register)?

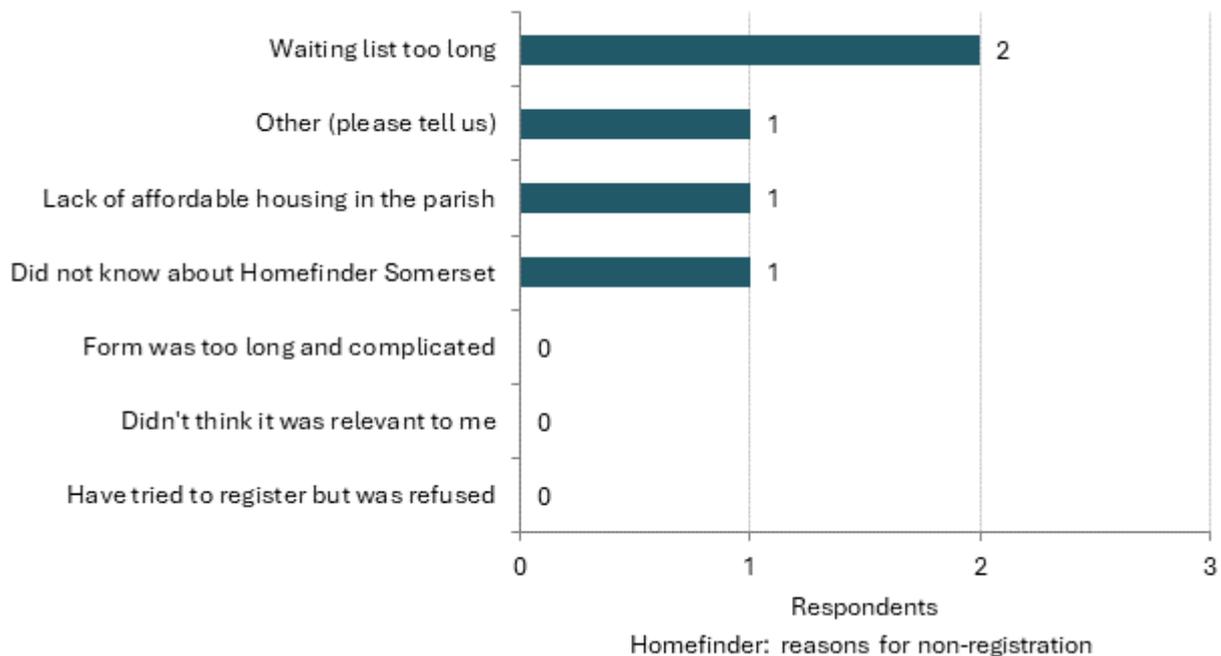
Answered: 9 Did not answer: 7



- 5 respondents state they are registered on Homefinder Somerset.
- 4 respondents are not registered.

26. If you have not registered with Homefinder Somerset, please tick reasons why.

Answered: 5 Did not answer: 11



- Reasons given for not registering on Homefinder Somerset include their expectation that the waiting list is too long (2 respondents) and there is a lack of affordable housing in the parish (1). This perception is known to defer applicants to register for social housing.
- 1 respondent was going on to further education and did not know where they would be living in the future so had not registered.
- 1 respondent did not know about Homefinder Somerset.

6 Assessment of Affordable Housing Need

6.1 The assessment of the number of households who would qualify for an affordable home in the parish is based on their household income, savings, and local connection.

16 people say they plan to move in the next 5 years and remain in Pilton parish. 9 respondents were excluded from further assessment for affordable housing as they are deemed to have adequate resources to meet their own needs based on current homeownership status or income, or have not provided sufficient detail.

6.2 This leaves **7 households who qualify for affordable housing**. Of these, 5 respondents are registered on Homefinder Somerset, the County’s choice-based lettings system. The other 2 respondents, who are currently renting, had not registered as they perceive the waiting list to be too long or that there is a lack of affordable housing in Pilton.

6.3 Local Connection

To qualify for affordable housing, people must primarily have a proven local connection to Pilton parish. Local connections are defined by Homefinder Somerset as:

- The applicant has lived in the parish for the last two years or for three out of the last five years.
- They have employment in parish on a permanent basis (>16hrs pw for longer than three months) or moving to the parish for permanent employment.
- They have strong family connection in the parish, and the family member or members have lived in the parish for a minimum of five years.
- They need to provide critical medical or other support where significant harm would result if not provided.

The family members who give a family connection are parent, siblings, and nondependent children. In some exceptional circumstances other family members may be considered.

The 7 households who qualify for affordable housing meet the local connection criteria.

6.4 Preferred tenure

Renting from a Housing Association was the preferred option for all the respondents looking to move in the next 5 years. (Table 2.)

Table 2: Preferred Tenure of those people wanting to move in the next 5 years.

Preferred Tenure	Respondent numbers
Rent from a Housing Association or Council	8
Shared ownership	5
Discounted market ownership	4
Self Build	2
Rent from the private sector	2
Open market housing	1

6.5 Assessment of affordability of tenure

An assessment of what each household can afford to pay for their tenure was made for those respondents who provided sufficient financial detail.

Given the financial information provided including savings and access to a deposit, only 1 household can clearly be able to afford a house on the open market or a shared ownership home. 6 respondents already own their own home but gave no further detail, so there is an assumption that they have sufficient resources to meet their own needs. The others gave insufficient detail.

7 households would be eligible for social housing, requiring:

- 3 x 2-bedroom properties
- 4 x 3-bedroom properties

6.6 Respondents registered on Homefinder Somerset

5 of those who are eligible for social housing are already registered on Homefinder Somerset. The other 2 respondents who have not registered thought the waiting list was too long or that there is a lack of affordable housing in Pilton.

6.7 Other evidence of housing need

Homefinder Somerset

In addition to this survey, Homefinder Somerset provides other evidence of housing need. Applicants are given a banding between Emergency, Gold, Silver, and Bronze based on their level of need. They may also choose as first, second and third area that they prefer to live in.

There are 59 applicants registered on Homefinder Somerset. **31 of them have strong local connection to the parish** and have expressed an interest in moving to Pilton. Pilton is the first area of preference for 4 applicants. Pilton is the second area of preference for 9 applicants, and the third choice of place to live for 18 applicants. (Table 3).

Table 3a – All Homefinder Somerset registrants: November 2025

Somerset Homefinder band	1- bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4-bedrooms	Total
Emergency	0	0	0	0	0
Gold (high)	2	3	0	0	5
Silver (medium)	9	6	8	1	24

Somerset Homefinder band	1- bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4-bedrooms	Total
Bronze (low)	21	8	1	0	30
Total	32	17	9	1	59

Table 3b: Homefinder Somerset registrants with local connection: November 2025

Somerset Homefinder band	1- bedroom	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4-bedrooms	Total
Emergency	0	0	0	0	0
Gold (high)	2	2	0	0	4
Silver (medium)	5	2	6	1	14
Bronze (low)	10	3	0	0	13
Total	17	7	6	1	31

Arc4 Secondary Data

6.8 Arc4's Rural Affordable Housing Model ¹³, identifies rural affordable housing need through secondary indicators. **Their model indicates a gross annual need of 11 dwellings, and a net annual need of 1 dwelling.**

6.9 The Housing Needs Survey findings are a snapshot in time, and represents 12% of households in Pilton, while the Arc4 model includes all households using a range of economic and social indicators. Personal circumstances are constantly changing, and the need for affordable social rented housing in the future may change.

Housing mix for respondents

6.10 The suggested mix of housing for each survey respondent who want to move is shown in Table 4. This takes account of the family makeup declared in the survey and the type of housing required.

9 of the 16 people who plan to move did not provide enough information on their household size or finances to identify their needs.

¹³¹³ <https://www.arc4.co.uk/sectors/housing-needs-surveys-and-assessments>

Table 4: Realistic affordable housing mix for those needing affordable housing

Property type or size	Current situation	Future tenure they can afford	Anticipated Homefinder Banding
2-bedrooms	Rents from relatives	Social Rent	Silver if current household too small with relatives
2-bedrooms	Rents 1 bed from Housing Association	Social Rent	Silver probably if health condition deteriorated needs Adult Social Care reassessment
2-bedrooms	Rents outside Pilton	Social Rent	Bronze
3-bedrooms	Rents 2 bed from Housing Association	Social Rent	Silver
3-bedrooms	Owner occupier	Owner occupier/Discounted Open Market/ Shared ownership	
3-bedrooms	Rents from private landlord	Social rent	Bronze
3-bedrooms	Rents from HA/council outside the parish	Social rent	Bronze

7 Conclusion – Future affordable housing need in Pilton

- 7.1 16 respondents who plan to move in the next 5 years and remain in Pilton parish have been assessed for their housing need. 7 households are eligible for affordable housing.
- 7.2 Of the 7 identified households who would be eligible for social housing, 5 say they are on the Homefinder register.

- 9 respondents are deemed to have adequate resources to meet their own needs based on current homeownership status or income.
- 7 respondents do not have sufficient resources to either purchase or rent in the private market in Pilton, meaning they are eligible for affordable housing.

7.3 Of the respondents eligible for affordable housing, the housing need is for 7 dwellings of the following size.

- **3 x 2-bedroom properties**
- **4 x 3-bedroom properties**

7.4 It is worth noting that this Housing Needs Survey represents the findings at a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly changing, and the need for affordable social rented housing in the future may change.

As the needs of households are constantly evolving, the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide, and it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years.

7.5 With high house prices outstripping affordability income and a lack of private rented accommodation, there are very few options for people on a low to medium income to remain in the parish. This means many local younger people and families rely on social housing to stay in Pilton.

7.6 With most respondents indicating they would support affordable housing for local people, these findings provide evidence and the mandate to consider identifying a small site and potentially developing a small affordable housing scheme in the parish.

Recommendations for action

8.1 It is recommended that Pilton Parish Council consider these report findings, and its potential use as evidence for making the case for further affordable housing in the parish, when private development applications come forward.

8.2 Pilton Parish Council could also consider setting up an Affordable Housing Working Group to progress the concept of providing further affordable homes with the community, and to collaborate with stakeholders to develop interest and plans.

This working group could then:

- Explore the establishment of a CLT or alternative legal model.
- Identify potential sites (there are suggestions in the findings).
- Undertake site assessments and identify any satisfactory solutions to development opportunities.
- Consult with Somerset Council about affordable housing plans.
- Start discussions with Housing Associations to discuss potential construction costs, investment options, and management of an affordable housing scheme.

Appendix 1: Housing Needs Survey



Pilton Housing Needs Survey 2025

We need your help to plan housing for Pilton's future

Closing date: Sunday 7 December 2025

This survey is for **everyone aged 18 or over** who lives in the parish of Pilton.

Please complete **one survey per household** - either online or by returning the form in the envelope provided.

- If someone in your household (aged 18 or over) hopes to set up their own home in the parish, they should complete a separate form.
- If you've moved away from Pilton but would like to return, you can complete this survey too — please share this with anyone you know in that situation.
- If you're registered with Homefinder Somerset*, it's especially important that you complete the survey.

If you would like to enter the **prize draw for a Thai meal for two at The Stage**, please leave your email at the end of the survey.

Your information is confidential. This survey is being conducted by **Pilton Parish Council** with **Thrive** to help plan future housing, especially affordable homes for local people. Responses will be anonymised in the final report, which will be shared with the Parish Council, Somerset Council, and relevant housing providers.

Our **Privacy Statement** is at the end of this survey.

***Homefinder Somerset** is a lettings scheme for people to apply for social housing in Somerset.

Your home and your household

1. Where do you currently live?

- In Pilton
- Outside the parish of Pilton

2. Is this your main home?

- Yes, main home
- No, second home

3. What type of home do you live in?

- House
- Bungalow
- Flat / maisonette
- Lodging (rent a room)
- Caravan / mobile home / temporary structure
- Sheltered / retirement
- Other (please tell us)

4. If you ticked house or bungalow, is it?

- Terraced (including end terrace)
- Semi-detached
- Detached
- Other (please tell us)

5. Do you?

- Own your own home (with or without a mortgage)
- Part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)
- Rent a property from a private landlord
- Rent from the council or housing association
- Rent from an employer, or tied with job of household member
- Live with relatives
- Lodge (rent/share) with others
- Other (please tell us)

6. How long have you lived

	Less than 3 years	3 -4 years	5-9 years	10 years +
In Pilton	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In Somerset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How many people live in your household? (adults and children)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 or more

If more than 7 please state the number below.

8. How many bedrooms does your household have?

- Up to 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 bedrooms
- 5 or more bedrooms

Views on local affordable housing

This section is to find out about local people's views on new housing in the area. All replies will be treated in the strictest confidence, however anonymised comments and reasons may be included or directly quoted in reports.

9. If a need is identified, would you support a small development of affordable housing for local people in Pilton?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Please tell us your reasons:



10. What type of housing do you believe the parish would benefit from?

- Houses for younger people
- Family housing
- Homes for older/retired people
- Housing for private rent
- Housing for rent from social landlord (Housing Association/Council/Almshouse etc)
- Housing for shared ownership
- Homes for sale at a permanent discount (*Discounted Market Value)
- Housing for outright open market sale
- Self-build plots
- None
- Other (please tell us)

* **Discounted Market Value:** Where homes are bought at a discounted rate, but on sale this discount has to be passed on to the new purchaser and may be limited to local residents and other eligibility criteria. The equity on the discount is not realised on resale.

11. Please give any suggestions for possible housing sites that could be considered:

* 12. In the next 5 years, do you want to move to a new home in Pilton?

- Yes
- No



Pilton Housing Needs Survey 2025

Part 2 - Housing Need (for those looking to move)
Please complete if you answered yes to Q12.

This section is for any household that expects to need to move within Pilton in the next five years, the size of home needed and how it will be paid for.

A separate form/survey for each household that wants to move should be completed. For example, each grown up child (18 years of age or over) in a family, who wants to set up their own home, should complete a separate form, giving their own financial details and personal circumstances, not that of the main household.

IMPORTANT: To accurately assess affordable housing need, we have to ask for some sensitive information. Please see our Privacy Statement at the end of this survey.

13. When do you think you will need to move house?

- Immediately
- Within a year
- 1 - 3 years
- 3 - 5 years

14. What type of housing are you interested in? *Tick all that apply*

- Rent from the private sector
- Rent from Housing Association (or Council)
- Shared ownership
- *Discounted market ownership
- Open market ownership
- Build own house possible signpost to self-build register
- Other (please tell us)

*** Discounted market ownership:** Where homes are bought at a discounted rate of the market value, but on sale this discount has to be passed on to the new purchaser and may be limited to local residents and other eligibility criteria. The equity on the discount is not realised on resale.

15. Would you consider? *Tick all that apply*

- House
- Flat / Maisonette
- Bungalow
- Other (please tell us)



16. Why do you need to move? *Tick all that apply.*

- Current home too small (more bedrooms)
- Current home too large (less bedrooms)
- Cannot afford current rent/mortgage
- Want to live independently
- Current home unsuitable for physical needs (eg health/mobility)
- Currently in temporary accommodation
- Been asked to leave current home
- Family break-up/separation
- Need to live closer to employment
- Need to live closer to relative/family
- Need to live closer to a carer or to give care
- Wish to return to village/parish
- Cannot afford current heating
- Current home in poor condition
- Other - please tell us

17. Who would be moving in with you?

Please complete the table below including each member of your household, whether they currently live together or not.

Scroll sideways for all questions.

	Age	Gender	Level Access needed?	Wheelchair Accommodation needed?	Relationship to you
Person 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 6	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 7	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 8	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Person 9	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

If a member of the household has a specific need which is not covered above please provide details below:



18. How many bedrooms would you expect to have?

- 1 bedroom
- 2 bedrooms
- 3 bedrooms
- 4 bedrooms
- 5 or more bedrooms

19. What is your connection to Pilton? *Tick all that apply.*

- Currently live in Pilton and have done so for at least the last twelve months
- Want to return to Pilton and previously lived in the parish for a continuous period of at least 3 years within the last 5 years
- Have parents, siblings or children currently living in Pilton and who have done so for a continuous period of not less than 3 years within the last 5 years.
- Born in the parish and/or parents were resident in the parish of Pilton at the time of birth
- Currently work in Pilton and have done so for at least the past 12 months for an average of not less than 16 hours per week
- Not currently working in Pilton, but have been temporarily employed in Pilton over the past 12 months.

NOTE: If you intend to purchase an open market property and believe that you have sufficient resources - please go to Q29, in the next section.

20. What, if anything, is currently stopping you from buying or renting a home?

- Low income
- Self employed
- Excessive debt
- No deposit/rent in advance
- Affordability
- Poor credit history
- Poor reference/no reference
- Not enough deposit

21. Income

What is your household's approximate total income per year (before tax)?

For couples this should be the combined income.

You should include benefits and pensions - but NOT housing benefit.

- Less than £20,000
- £20,001 - £25,000
- £25,001 - £30,000
- £30,001 - £35,000
- £35,001 - £40,000
- £40,001 - £45,000
- £45,001 - £50,000
- £50,001 - £55,000
- £55,001 - £60,000
- £60,001 - £70,000
- £70,001 - £80,000
- £80,000 and above

22. Do you have savings, equity in your current home or will someone gift you money towards a new home? If yes, please indicate amounts to the nearest £1,000.

Yes - Savings /
Investments £

Yes - Equity £

Yes - Gift £

None

23. How much rent / mortgage / lodgings do you pay per month for your current home?

- Nothing weekly / Nothing monthly
- Under £92 weekly/ Under £400 monthly
- £92 - £138 weekly / £400 - £599 monthly
- £139 - £184 weekly / £600 - £799 monthly
- £185 - £230 weekly / £800 - £999 monthly
- £231 - £276 weekly / £1,000 - £1,199 monthly
- £277- £323 weekly / £1,200 - £1,399 monthly
- £324 or above weekly / £1,400 or above monthly

24. If renting, do you currently receive Housing Benefit or Universal Credit to help towards this?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

25. Are you registered on Homefinder Somerset (the housing register)?

- Yes
 No

What is your Homefinder reference number, if known?

26. If you have not registered with Homefinder Somerset, please give reasons why:

- Did not know about Homefinder Somerset
 Do not understand Homefinder Somerset
 Have tried to register but was refused
 Waiting list too long
 Didn't think it was relevant to me
 Form was too long and complicated
 Lack of affordable housing in the parish
 Other (please tell us)



Pilton Housing Needs Survey 2025

Contact details and prize draw

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Please provide your contact details below. Your details will not be passed to any other organisation unless you have given your consent. This will only be to Somerset Council and other housing providers such as a Housing Association as it is their duty to provide such housing. This information will not be passed to any other organisations in accordance with our Privacy Statement below.

* 27. AFFORDABLE HOUSING: PERMISSION

I give my permission for the information I have supplied to be passed in confidence in discussions of my specific housing need with to Somerset Council and other housing providers for discussions of my specific housing needs.

- Yes
 No

28. Affordable Housing: Contact details

Your name	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>

29. PRIZE DRAW (open to 18 years and over only).

To enter the prize draw for, please confirm your age and provide your contact details below.

- Please enter me for the prize draw. I am 18 years or older.
- No thanks

30. Contact details for the prize draw, if not given above:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Telephone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Privacy Statement

Analysis will be conducted by Thrive, the operating name for Community Council for Somerset (CCS). Data is captured for legitimate and contractual purposes. Information is collected and analysed under Thrive's role as a Data Controller and Data Processor. Thrive uses personal/sensitive data to provide information for the Housing Needs Survey Report and summary information on rural housing needs.

Digital copies are retained for 12 months and deleted after this period. Any personal data that is captured is anonymised with the report and held securely for the purposes of analysis. Hard copies of consultation surveys are kept for the duration of the consultation period and destroyed after the final report is signed off by the commissioner of the survey.

No data will be published which can identify an individual. The anonymised report will be shared with Pilton Parish Council, Somerset Council, and other appropriate housing providers.

If you would like to find out more about how we use your data or want to see a copy of information about you that we hold, please contact info@thrivesomerset.org.uk or call 01823 331222. Protecting your Personal Data is important and we fully comply and adhere to the Principles of Data Protection set out in our Data Protection / Privacy Statement visit: <https://thrivesomerset.org.uk/privacy-notice/>.

Appendix 2: Promotional Poster & Social Media

DRAFT



We need your views

Looking for a new home in Pilton? Have your say on affordable housing in Pilton.

We're planning for the future of our village – and we need your views!

- Do you live in Pilton?
- Are you over 18?
- Do you know someone who had to move away but would love to return?

It helps us understand what local people need and want – whether that's homes to rent, buy or build.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/PiltonHousingSurvey

Call 07592945085 for delivery of a paper copy, your answers are completely confidential.

Housing Survey Opens: 7th November

Closes: 7th December 2025



Prize draw – for a chance to win a Thai meal for two at The Stage in Pilton.

Let's shape the future of our housing – together! Thank you

**Pilton Parish
Council**

supported by:



**Funded by
UK Government**

**Looking for a new home in Pilton?
Have your say on affordable
housing in Pilton.**



supported by:



Funded by
UK Government

Have your say on housing in Pilton

- Do you live in Pilton?
- Are you over 18?
- Do you know someone who had to move away but would love to return?

**Please complete
our housing
needs survey**

**Closing on 7th
December 2025**

Payments

February 18th

Voucher	Code	Date	Ref	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
88	Staff Costs	18/01/2026	Month 11	H Richardson	Pilton Parish Council	X	£552.92		£552.92
89	Office Costs	18/01/2026	inv-15514	Scribe	Starboard Systems Ltd t/a	S	£31.00	£6.20	£37.20
90	Working from Home allowance	18/02/2026	Month 11	H Richardson	Pilton Parish Council	X	£26.00		£26.00
	Staff Costs	18/02/2026	Month 11	Burial Groundsman	Pilton Parish Council	X	£0.00		£0
Total							£609.92	£6.20	£616.12