

Lavenham Housing Needs Survey

Executive Summary and Key Findings

September 2022

Lavenham CLT carried out a Housing Survey to determine the level of need for housing across all tenure types (privately owned or rented) in the parish. The Housing Survey used was compiled by Community Action Suffolk in agreement with Lavenham CLT. The survey was distributed to each of the 950 households within the parish boundary.

The aim of the survey was to understand the existing and future housing needs for Lavenham residents including family members (not necessarily living in Lavenham) and other members of the household. The study was designed to understand Lavenham's current housing stock and whether this meets the needs of residents and is affordable to them.

This study included-

- General information about existing housing in Lavenham including 2011 Census data
- A Housing Survey to determine the housing needs of current households
- Contextual information about Lavenham
- Information from the Gateway to Home Choice housing register to cross check the findings

Community Action Suffolk have independently undertaken data analysis and the writing of this report.

Key Findings

	Number	%
Surveys Returned Completed (full or partial)	248	26%
Surveys Not Completed or Returned or Blank	702	74%
Total Surveys Distributed	950	100%

248 completed surveys were returned fully or partially completed via post and on-line. 702 surveys were not returned. The Lavenham Housing Survey 2022 achieved a 26% return rate which indicated a need for additional housing by 99 households (205 people), with respondents in favour of homes for older people, small family homes and homes for couples. The average return rate for HNS is generally between 30 - 40% which indicates that the number of responses received provide a slightly less robust sample snapshot of Lavenham parish.

From the 248 surveys returned;

- 55 households responded indicating a need within existing Lavenham households totaling 103 people.
- 44 households identified a need for 102 family members (people with a local connection) wishing to move or return to Lavenham.
- The majority of respondents indicated that they were prevented from moving due to a financial reason.

- 26 households indicated they could afford to move, but there was a lack of suitable property.
- Both those households expressing a housing need and those not indicating a need, show a preference for any new housing to be smaller dwellings.
- Many households looking for smaller homes and many of those wishing to move for health and mobility reasons own their current properties outright
- The majority of those looking for larger homes are currently renting, mainly in the private sector. Most of these households would prefer to move to affordable housing.
- 40% of households returning the survey expressed a housing need. (99 from 248 surveys returned) This high rate of housing need may indicate that those with a housing need were more likely to complete and return the survey than those who did not have a housing need

The current figure for those registered on Gateway to Home Choice provided by Babergh District Council is 27 applicants on the housing register indicating a local connection to Lavenham.

The final mix of properties will be subject to the constraints of any suitable site(s) together with evidence of people registering their interest as the scheme progresses. When making this decision, all parties should note the need indicated for units to downsize to in the open market sector.

The final number of properties will need to be agreed, together with the size, type & tenure of dwellings with the CLT, Parish Council, Local Authority, and appointed Registered Provider. The relevant parties involved may wish to consider providing housing on phased basis and on more than one site.

1. Survey Method

The Housing Survey used was compiled by Community Action Suffolk in agreement with Lavenham CLT. The survey was distributed to each of the 950 households within the parish boundary by a local team of volunteers from Lavenham. The survey contained 45 questions and can be found in Appendix A. The closing date for the survey was 25th June 2022.

One survey form was provided per household with a unique code to allow the household to complete on-line or send a completed hard copy back. The unique code was to ensure that residents were only able to respond once to prevent the results being skewed. Households that had more than one housing need i.e. two or more people requiring housing going forward in different households could request additional forms from Lavenham CLT or Community Action Suffolk.

A return rate of 26% was achieved which indicated a need for additional housing by 99 households (205 people). The average return rate for HNS is generally between 30 - 40% which indicates that the number of responses received provide a slightly less robust sample snapshot of the parish.

248 surveys were returned fully or partially completed via post and on-line. 702 surveys were not returned. Data entry of the surveys was undertaken by Community Action Suffolk using bespoke in-house software. Each survey form input was allocated a unique code so that the data could be cross referenced to provide a comprehensive level of information. Individual people or households were not able to be identified. For quality purposes a 20% sample of the surveys input were checked for accuracy.