

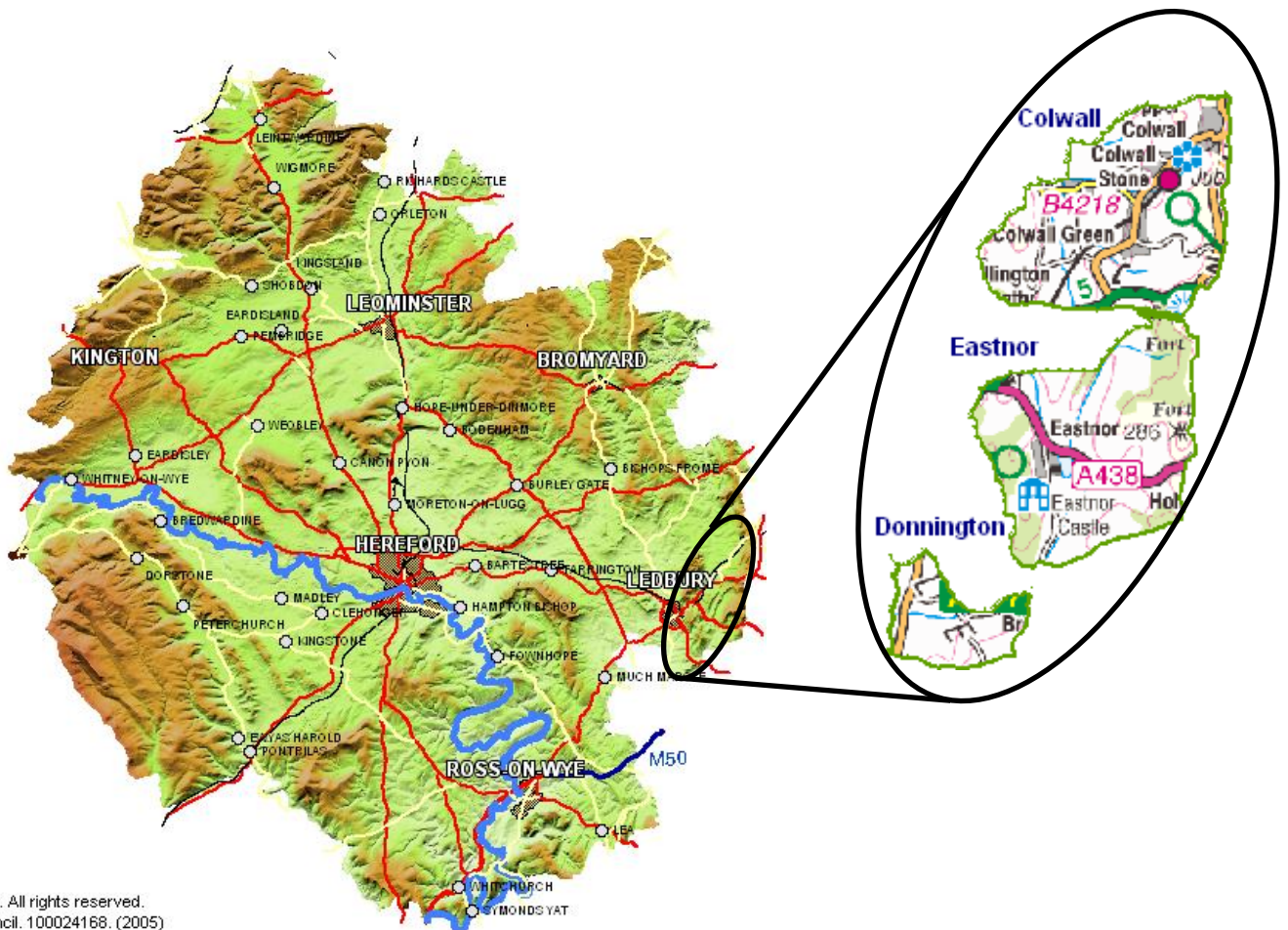
Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for the Colwall area

Including the parishes of Colwall, Donnington and Eastnor

Version 1.0

Herefordshire Council Research Team

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Executive Summary

- The “Colwall area” covers the parishes of Colwall, Donnington and Eastnor. These parishes have been grouped together, as they are geographically linked with Colwall which is the most appropriate “main village”.
- Questionnaires were mailed out to all households in the “Colwall area” totalling 1,098 households, 40 questionnaires were returned from households who wish to move into affordable accommodation in the area within the next three years.
- Of the 40 responding households **32 were found to need affordable accommodation** within the “Colwall area” in the next three years.
- Two additional households may have an affordable need, but there is insufficient evidence to place them into this category with confidence.
- Six households were excluded from the reported total, as they were not considered to be eligible for affordable accommodation.

Introduction

- In May 2010, Herefordshire Council’s Homes and Communities Division commissioned a housing needs survey for the “Colwall area”. The survey is designed to assess the need for affordable housing over the next three years, forming part of the rolling programme of surveys across the county, as a statutory duty to assess housing needs under the Housing Act 1985. The survey area includes the parishes of Colwall, Donnington and Eastnor.
- In accordance with local and national planning policy, any residential housing development in rural areas is restricted to villages that have been identified as being “main villages”. “Main villages” are identified in the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (2007) as having “both the potential of providing a relatively good level of public transport, linking to Hereford and the market towns as the main locations for employment and other services, and are also settlements with a significant level of community facilities.” Outside of these “main villages” development is more controlled in order to protect the landscape and the wider environment.
- As the “main village”, Colwall would serve as the most sustainable delivery point for housing (open market and affordable) to meet the overall housing need. Therefore, development in Colwall generally would meet the need not just of the immediate village, but could also meet need arising in the surrounding settlements.
- The parish lies on the eastern edge of Herefordshire. The village of Colwall is situated approximately five miles to the South-West of Great Malvern (in Worcestershire) and 13 miles to the South-West of Worcester city. Ledbury is the closest market town in Herefordshire, lying roughly 5 miles to the South-West of Colwall. The village is served by a railway station that has regular direct services to destinations between Hereford and Birmingham New Street (including Hereford, Ledbury, Great Malvern & Worcester). There is also a less frequent, but direct, service to London Paddington. Colwall is also served by a bus service between Ledbury and Great Malvern.
- Facilities in the village include a doctor’s surgery, one Local Authority maintained and two independent primary schools, a village hall and according to the ‘Colwall Parish Plan’¹:

¹ The ‘Colwall Parish Plan’: [www.colwall.net/Presentation%20all\(reduced\).pdf](http://www.colwall.net/Presentation%20all(reduced).pdf)

“The village has five shops catering for day to day requirements – Greengrocery, Grocery & Provisions, Pharmacy, Post Office and Butchers. In addition there are three other premises providing for Hairdressing, Picture Framing and Estate Agent’s”

Within the wider parish, there are several pubs and a restaurant.

- The following summary of residents’ views on housing within the parish of Colwall is quoted from the Parish Plan:

“Overall, respondents indicated they were content with the mix of property, but also would give qualified support to more homes, seemingly in favour of more affordable housing, within the guidelines of the village design statement.”
- Census figures show that in 2001 the overall level of household spaces that were vacant or used as a second home or holiday accommodation in Colwall parish was 3.3% - 8 dwellings that were second homes or holiday accommodation and 28 dwellings that were vacant. This figure was 3.8% for Donnington & Eastnor Group Parish - no dwellings that were second homes or holiday accommodation and 6 dwellings that were vacant.

Methodology

- A self-completion questionnaire was posted to every household in the parishes of Colwall, Donnington and Eastnor, together with a reply-paid envelope for responses. Only residents who are likely to have a need for affordable housing in the “Colwall area” within the next three years were prompted to respond. A copy of the questionnaire can be found at the end of this report. Residents were given 4 weeks in total to respond.
- Respondents were asked whether they were happy to provide contact details, so that they may be contacted at a later date in order to assess their housing needs in more detail.
- In furtherance of the Council’s Empty Property Strategy, each household was sent a slip of paper with the main questionnaire, asking if they know of any properties that appear to have been empty for a long period.

Need for affordable housing as found from the survey

- Figure 2 on page 7 shows the resulting analysis of the housing needs. Existing households are those that intend to move together. The newly forming households are usually formed by an adult child leaving the parental home to become independent.
- Questionnaires were mailed out to a total of 1,098 households in the “Colwall area”. **The survey found 32 households with an affordable need** in the area within the next three years, 15 of which were existing households. Of the 15 existing households, four were already in affordable accommodation (renting from a Housing Association) and have specified a wish to move to another rented Housing Association property within the area.
- Respondents were asked whether there is a family member who wishes to return to the parish – if so, they were given the opportunity of completing a separate “Needs form”. There were three requests for this type of “Returners” form.
- Two further households have been classified as having a “borderline open market need”. This is because they indicated that they could afford a property within a given range of values, which for the specified number of bedrooms needed, border on the lower end of the housing market.
- Six households were excluded from the reported total as they were considered to be able to afford a property on the open market.

Figure 1 – Diagram illustrating the process used to classify housing needs in this area needs survey

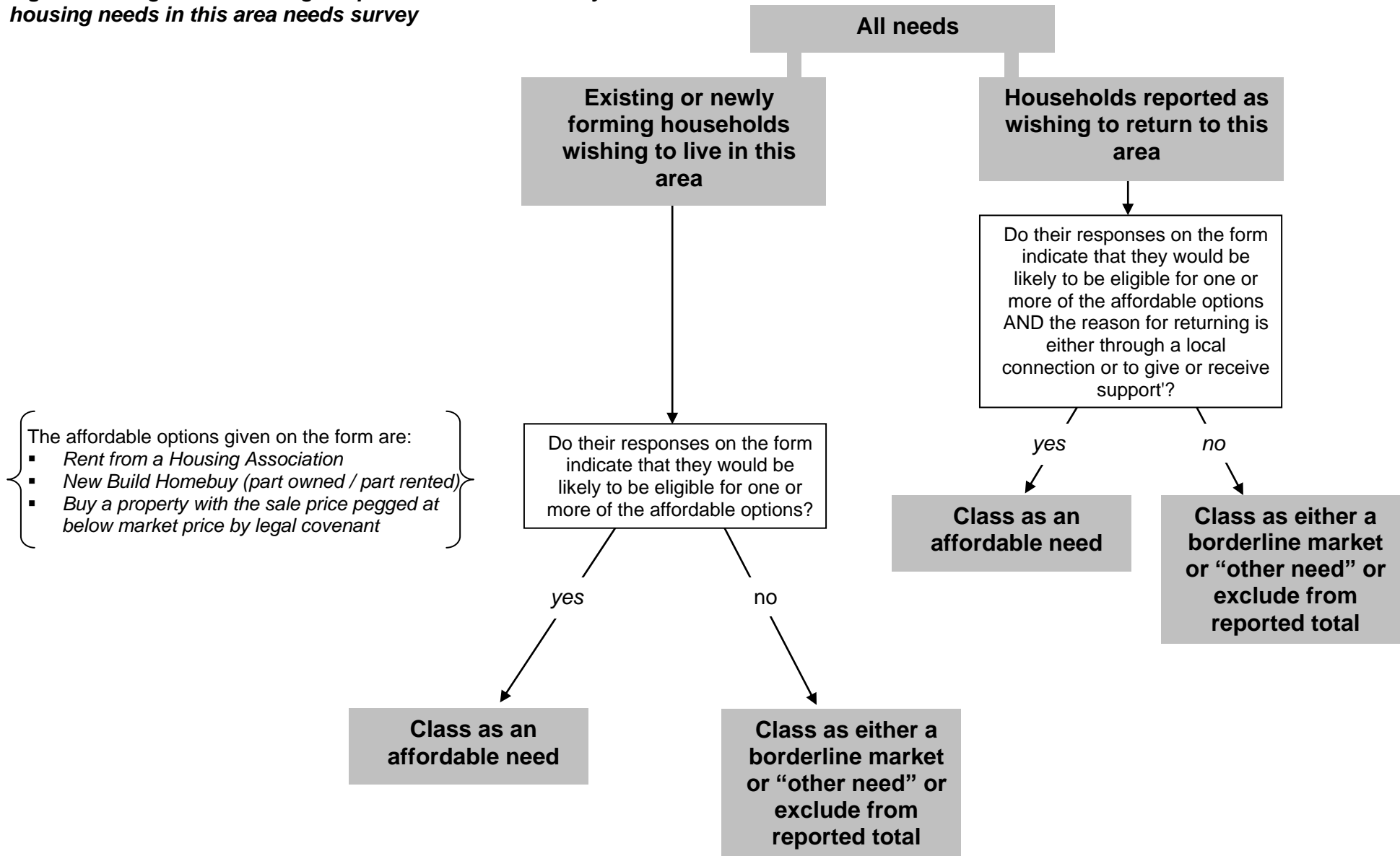


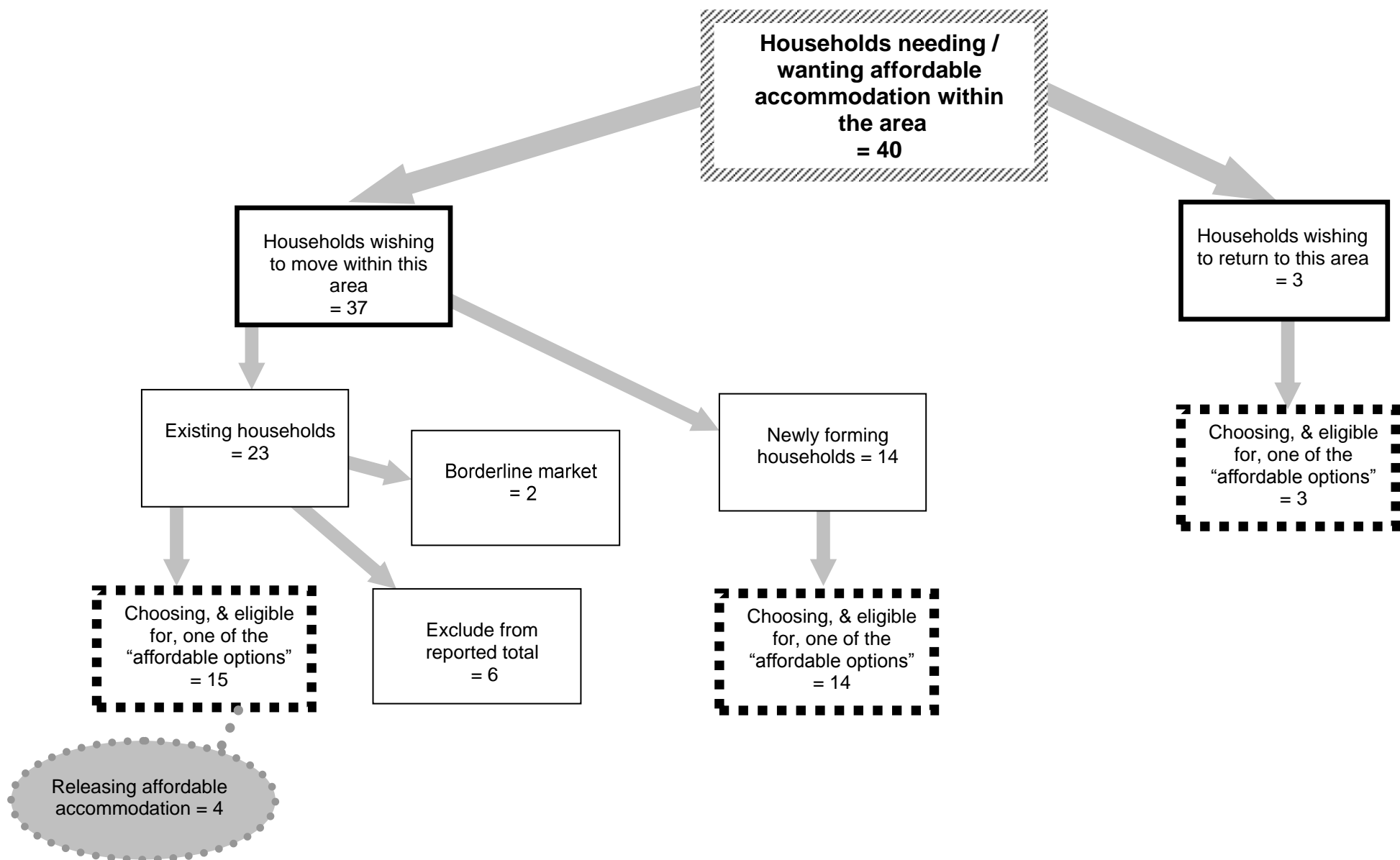
Figure 2 – Pattern of housing need in the Colwall area from survey results

Colwall area Housing Needs survey 2010

Key



Potential affordable need



- Figure 2 shows the housing needs or requirements within the “Colwall area”, found from residents who were surveyed. Table 2 below defines these requirements in more detail by showing the dwelling sizes and tenures indicated by the respondents.
- Analysis of need is undertaken on a case-by-case basis, if a responding household’s requested number of bedrooms is not consistent with the prospective composition of the household, the specified need will be downsized. It should, however, be noted that for long-term sustainability of developments in rural locations, one-bed properties are not usually built, in which case those seeking one-beds may be considered for a two-bed property.

Table 2: Affordable housing needs in the “Colwall area” – breakdown by size and tenure required

Number of bedrooms required	Tenure options chosen	Number of households
1	rent from a Housing Association	7
	property pegged at below market price	3
	shared ownership	3
	rent from a Housing Association or property pegged at below market price	1
	rent from a Housing Association or shared ownership	1
	rent from a Housing Association, property pegged at below market price or shared ownership	1
	not specified	1
Total one-beds required		17
2	rent from a Housing Association	3
	rent from a Housing Association or shared ownership	1
	property pegged at below market price or shared ownership	2
	rent from a Housing Association, property pegged at below market price or shared ownership	1
Total two-beds required		7
3	rent from a Housing Association	4
	property pegged at below market price	1
	shared ownership	1
	rent from a Housing Association or property pegged at below market price	1
	property pegged at below market price or shared ownership	1
Total three-beds required		8

- Of the 32 households listed in table 2, 17 expressed an interest in one or more of the affordable purchase options (i.e. “New Build Homebuy”, formerly known as “Shared Ownership” and “property whose sale price is pegged at below market price by legal covenant”). Further information about the requirements of these 17 respondents is provided in table 3 on page 9, by showing the amount towards the price of a home that households can afford up to and the required dwelling sizes.

Table 3: Affordable housing needs in the "Colwall area" – breakdown by tenure, size required and the specified amount a household can afford up to

Tenure choice	Can afford up to	Number of bedrooms required	Number of households
Property pegged at below market price	£200,000	3	1
	£120,000	1	2
		2	1
	£90,000	1	1
		3	1
n/s	1	1	
Total number of households that chose "a property whose sale price is pegged at below market price by legal covenant" as one of their preferred tenure options			7
New Build Homebuy	£200,000	3	1
	£120,000	1	1
	£70,000	1	2
	n/s	1	1
		2	1
Total number of households that chose "New Build Homebuy" as one of their preferred tenure options			6
Property pegged at below market price & New Build Homebuy	£150,000	2	1
		3	1
	n/s	1	1
		2	1
Total number of households that chose both "a property whose sale price is pegged at below market price by legal covenant" & "New Build Homebuy" as two of their preferred tenure options			4

Note: n/s denotes households that did not know or did not specify how much they could afford.

- Table 4 below provides information about where households, classified as having a likely need for affordable accommodation, prefer to live and where they are currently residing. Of the 32 households having an affordable need, 30 specified Colwall as one of their preferred parishes to live in.

Table 4: Affordable housing needs in the "Colwall area" – breakdown by where households would prefer to live

Parish currently residing in	Parish household wishes to move to	Number of households
Colwall	Colwall	20
	Colwall or Eastnor	2
	not specified	1
Total from Colwall		23
Donnington	Donnington	1
Total from Donnington		1
Eastnor	Colwall	1
	Colwall or Eastnor	2
	Colwall, Donnington or Eastnor	2
Total from Eastnor		5
Outside the "Colwall area"	Colwall	3
Total from outside* the "Colwall area"		3

*Refers to people with a "local connection" to the "Colwall area"

- As the main village, Colwall would serve as the most sustainable delivery point for housing (open market and affordable) to meet the overall housing need. Therefore, development in Colwall generally would meet the need not just of the immediate village, but could also meet need arising in the surrounding settlements.

Current Housing Association rented stock

- Within the surveyed area there are 157 units of Housing Association stock, of which 156 are rented and 1 is a shared ownership property. Of the rented stock, 154 are located in the village of Colwall and 2 in the village of Eastnor. 14 Housing Association properties in Colwall are subject to a section 106 Local Connection restriction. The breakdown of rented stock is given in Table 5 below.
- Since 2002, Herefordshire has been operating a “Choice based lettings” system whereby people who are seeking affordable housing register with an agency called Home Point. They then submit “bids of interest” for properties where they would like to live. At the end of March 2010, the number of applicants on the Home Point database stood at 5,064. Four of the households classified as having an affordable need within the “Colwall area” were registered with Home Point.
- Between October 2002 and June 2010, 86 Housing Association properties in Colwall have been advertised for rent (can refer to the same unit advertised more than once). Table 5 shows the numbers of “bids of interest” received for these, with the overall median number of bids across Herefordshire for comparison.

Table 5: Housing Association properties in Colwall advertised for rent by Home Point from October 2002 to June 2010

Parish	Property type	Current stock in parish	Median number of bids for this property size & type across the county	No. of properties advertised (can refer to the same unit advertised more than once)	Median number of bids of interest received
Colwall	one-bed bedsit	16	2	18 (9 is sheltered accommodation, 4 are designated for those aged 55+ & 1 is designated for those aged 40+)	4
	one-bed bungalow	23	11	22 (7 is sheltered accommodation, 1 is designated for those aged 60+, 3 are designated for those aged 55+, 2 are designated for those aged 50+ & 8 are designated for those aged 40+)	10
	one-bed flat	20	17	16 (3 are designated for those aged 40+)	1
	two-bed bungalow	11	8	9 (1 is sheltered accommodation, 1 is designated for those aged 60+, 1 is designated for those aged 55+, 1 is designated for those aged 50+ & 3 are designated for those aged 40+)	5
	two-bed flat	24	20	10 (3 are designated for those aged 40+)	10
	two-bed house	17	29	5	33
	three-bed bungalow	1	17	0	n/a
	three-bed house	41	19	6	19
	four-bed house	1	12	0	n/a
Eastnor	three-bed house	2	19	0	n/a

Empty properties

- As mentioned under “Methodology”, each household was sent a slip of paper asking for details about any properties that appear to have been empty for a long period of time. Four such empty property slips were returned that yielded information about several addresses in the parish of Colwall. These have been forwarded to the relevant officer for further investigation.

Conclusions

- Questionnaires were mailed out to all households in the “Colwall area”, a total of 1,098, who were requested to return them if they foresaw a need for affordable housing in the next 3 years. 40 questionnaires were returned from respondents who expressed a wish to move into affordable accommodation in the area within the next three years.
- The survey found **32 households** that would need affordable accommodation in the “Colwall area” in the next 3 years – 17 one-bed, 7 two-bed and 8 three-bed. The tenure choices of these 32 households are shown in Table 2.
- There are a further two households that may have an affordable need, but there is insufficient evidence to place them into this category with confidence (see page 5).
- Six households were excluded from the reported total, as they were not considered to be eligible for affordable accommodation.