

Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers

Housing Needs Survey

22 June 2026 – 13 July 2026

Report date September 2026

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Background to the Survey

Corfe Castle Community Land Trust (CLT) has been working with Corfe Castle Charity (landowner) and Aster Group (registered provider) to bring forward a piece of land off Tabbits Hill Lane, Harmans Cross, for affordable rented homes for those with a local connection. This land sits within the parish of Corfe Castle, but the land is on the edge of Harmans Cross, adjacent to the Worth Matravers Parish boundary. All parties involved were keen to engage with both Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers Parish Councils in the development of this project.

Aster, in collaboration with the CLT, is preparing to submit a planning application for the site in 2027. Engagement with residents of both Corfe Castle and Harmans Cross will take place once proposals have been developed. This survey will help gather evidence of local support for affordable housing within the community. Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers Parish Councils were advised of the survey in April, and support was given to carry it out. The survey was designed to gather evidence of community support for affordable housing.

The survey could be completed by all residents of both parishes and anyone with a local connection with either parish, regardless of their housing situation. A local connection means that the household or family currently live or have previously lived in one of the parishes, or they work more than 16 hours per week in one or both parishes.

The survey went live on the 22 June 2026, and the return date was the 13 July 2026. There was an online and paper survey, and flyers were distributed around the parishes promoting the survey to the community.

The CLT provided on the ground promotion, delivering flyers and answering questions if required. Every effort has been made to contact households with a local connection to Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers and articles have been put in the press, parish magazine and on social media.

All personal information is safeguarded by Dorset Council, with only the final report provided to Corfe Castle Parish Council, Worth Matravers Parish Council and the CLT.

Summary of Report

Households were asked to return the survey to provide a clear indication of the need for additional affordable housing in Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers, including whether the local community would support an affordable housing development.

In total 296 households completed the survey:
184 with a local connection to Corfe Castle
112 with a local connection to Worth Matravers.

Of the 296 surveys completed 69 households demonstrated a housing need in addition to the 28 households on the Dorset Council Housing Register. This gives a total of 97 households with a local connection to the parish requiring housing in Corfe Castle or Worth Matravers.

Out of the 97 households the type of accommodation they would like is as follows:

Rent from a Housing Association or Community Land Trust = 73 (65 Corfe Castle and 8 Worth Matravers)

Buy a first-time buyer/discounted open market home = 16 (13 Corfe Castle and 3 Worth Matravers)

Shared Ownership = 2 (2 Corfe Castle)

Self-Build = 4 (4 Corfe Castle)

Not Answered = 2 (2 Corfe Castle)

There were also 8 households (6 Corfe Castle and 2 Worth Matravers) that indicated they wanted to buy on the open market. These eight households have not been included in the figures in need of affordable housing.

The support for an affordable housing development was:

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	127 (Corfe Castle 108 and Worth Matravers 19)	42.91%
Somewhat support	27 (Corfe Castle 16 and Worth Matravers 11)	9.12%
Neutral	13 (Corfe Castle 11 and Worth Matravers 2)	4.39%
Somewhat oppose	17 (Corfe Castle 8 and Worth Matravers 9)	5.74%
Strongly oppose	110 (Corfe Castle 40 and Worth Matravers 70)	37.16%
Don't know	0	0.00%
Not Answered	2 (Corfe Castle 1 and Worth Matravers 1)	0.68%

Comments received

All the comments received have been anonymised and shared with the Community Land Trust (CLT), Corfe Castle Parish Council and Worth Matravers Parish Council for information. A summary of the comments received is provided below.

Key Positive Comments

Need for affordable housing

The strongest theme was support for more affordable housing to help local people remain in the area. Many respondents felt house prices and rents are beyond the reach of local families, young people and key workers.

Retaining young families

Many comments highlighted concerns that young people are being forced to move away, resulting in an ageing population and fewer children attending local schools. Respondents felt affordable housing would help maintain vibrant communities.

Impact of second homes and holiday lets

A significant number of respondents felt that second homes, holiday lets and rising property prices have reduced the availability of homes for local residents and contributed to housing need.

Supporting local services and businesses

Several respondents stated that affordable housing is needed to maintain local schools, shops, community facilities and local businesses by ensuring local workers can continue to live nearby.

Preference for local occupancy

Many supportive comments stressed that any affordable housing should be prioritised for people with strong local connections and remain affordable in perpetuity.

Key Concerns Raised

Suitability of the Harmans Cross site

The most common concern was that Tabbits Hill Lane/Harmans Cross is not considered an appropriate location for affordable housing due to its limited services and infrastructure.

Lack of infrastructure

Respondents frequently cited:

- No school or preschool.
- No GP surgery.
- Limited shopping facilities.
- Absence of year-round public transport.
- Limited employment opportunities.

Traffic and road safety

Many comments raised concerns about:

- Increased traffic.

- The narrow single-track nature of Tabbits Hill Lane.
- Safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- Construction vehicle access.

Environmental and landscape impact

A large number of respondents were concerned about:

- Impact on the Dorset National Landscape/AONB.
- Loss of countryside and agricultural land.
- Harm to wildlife habitats.
- Light pollution and loss of dark skies.

Flooding and drainage

Numerous comments referred to existing drainage issues and concerns that development could increase flooding risks in the area.

Pressure on local services

Some respondents expressed concern that additional housing could place further pressure on GP services, schools, roads and utilities.

Affordable housing management

Several comments questioned:

- Whether homes would remain affordable.
- Whether homes would always be allocated to local people.
- The future role of housing associations and concerns regarding disposal of affordable homes.

Housing Needs Surveys

This survey did not require a minimum response rate. Everyone with a local connection to the Parish of Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers was given the opportunity to provide feedback and express their views on affordable housing in general but also whether a small-scale rented development would be suitable in the area.

The new allocations policy launched on 1 September 2026, bringing a change in the local connection criteria, to be eligible for the housing register applicants will need to be a resident in the Dorset Council area for a minimum of two years, have family who are living or have lived in the community for the last 2 years or you are employed in the Dorset Council area for 2 years or more for a minimum of 16 hours

a week. For information regarding the updated eligibility and local connection criteria please visit [Dorset Council Allocation Policy 2026 to 2031](#).

General functions of a housing needs survey:

1. Determine if the local community support affordable rented housing development.
2. Determine if there are many households whose housing needs are not being met.
3. Raise awareness of the Corfe Castle Community Land Trust.
4. Raise awareness of the local housing / income affordability gap.
5. Encourage households in housing need to register on the [housing register](#).

What is Affordable Housing

The current definition of affordable housing is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) as follows:

Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers or national military housing needs); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a. Social Rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for Social Rent; (b) the landlord is a registered provider; and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
- b. Other affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the government's rent policy for Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- c. Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes

and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

- d. **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.
- e. **Military affordable housing:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is sub market military rent as determined by the Ministry of Defence; and (b) it includes provisions to remain as affordable housing for future eligible households, service personnel and veteran households (including widowed partners and spouses of service personnel), or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Rural exception sites

Sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

The proposed community-led housing scheme at Harman's Cross is being promoted under national decision-making policy HO10, which supports both rural exception sites and community-led housing developments where they meet identified local housing needs.

Housing Information

The information below is from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Dorset Council Website and gives an overall view of the population, household numbers, tenures, number of bedrooms, household size and age profile of those that completed the Census Survey 2021.

Housing Tenures

According to the Dorset Council Plan 2024-2029, Dorset's weekly earnings for residents is 90% of the national figure. The average income for Dorset is £579 per week. The national figure is £646 per week.

Map of Corfe Castle Parish area

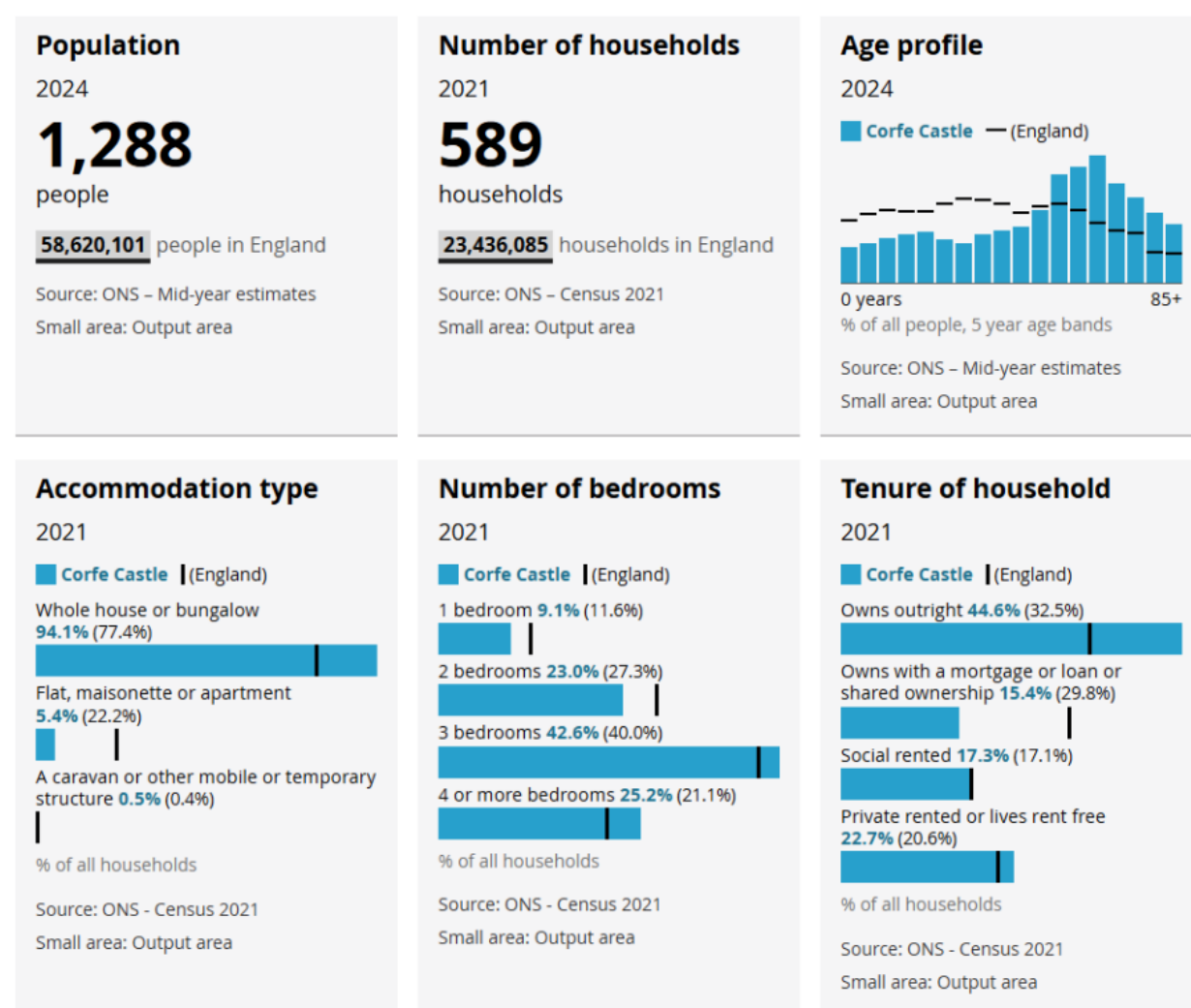


Intermediate Housing Corfe Castle

- The number of properties with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership in Corfe Castle is lower than national average with only 15.4% compared to 29.8% across the rest of the UK.
- There is also a higher-than-average rate at which people own outright compared to the rest of the UK.
- Corfe Castle currently has 64 dwellings registered as a second homes.
- Some residents list their properties as holiday lets so pay business rates and not council tax so they will not be identified in this figure. The rules have tightened around this, and they now must provide evidence to the Valuation Office Agency that their property is let for 70 days a year.
- Approximately 50 properties are actively listed as holiday homes or holiday lets on Airbnb this does not include holiday lets advertised through other platforms such as Vrbo, Sykes, Classic Cottages, Dorset Cottage Holidays, or direct booking websites, so the total short-term holiday accommodation stock in Corfe Castle is likely higher.
- House prices in Corfe Castle remain high. Recent sales data indicates an average house price of approximately £767,857 over the last year, reflecting the strong local housing market and the affordability challenges facing many households with a local connection to the parish.

- Most properties sold in Corfe Castle during the last year were detached properties, selling for an average price of £1,077,500. Terraced properties sold for an average of £355,000.
- Overall, the historical sold prices in Corfe Castle over the last year were 64% up on the previous year and 27% up on the 2021 peak of £603,936.
- As of August 2026, 14 properties are being advertised with prices ranging from £1,200,000 for a 7-bedroom detached family home to £275,000 for a 2-bedroom terraced property. There is also an end of terrace property for sale by auction with a guide price of £195,000.

Corfe Castle



Rented Housing

- As of August 2026, there was a 2-bedroom cottage on Rightmove available for rent for £1300 per calendar month.

- Expanding the search to a 5-mile radius, 13 properties are available in Swanage, Wareham and Kimmeridge
- 6 of these rental properties were in the form of flats / apartments, with the remaining in the form of houses
- Based on an average Dorset wage of £579 per week (£30,108 per annum), a household would need to spend approximately 55% of its gross income to rent an average two-bedroom property at £1,384 per month. This is substantially above the commonly accepted affordability threshold of around 30-35% of household income and demonstrates the significant affordability challenges faced by many local households.

Housing Stock in the Area

- There are currently approximately 60 properties listed as affordable housing in Corfe Castle.
- The last two-bedroom house was advertised in April 2023 for rent through the Council Housing Register and received 118 bids. No three-bedroom properties have been advertised since the new system started in December 2021.

The last affordable housing development in Corfe Castle was in 2008 providing 5 affordable rent and 8 shared ownership homes.

Corfe Castle Current Housing Needs

All information is provided by Dorset Council Housing Register and on the 19th of August 2026, Dorset Council had 6805 active households on the Housing Register, with more applicants applying. It gives an indication of the need for affordable housing in the area, although not everyone who is eligible for housing applies.

Corfe Castle – Local Connection

Band	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	Total
Submitted Online	3	0	2	5
Band B - High Housing Need	2	1	0	3
Band C - Medium Housing Need	4	1	1	6
Band D - Low Housing Need	9	2	1	12
Total	18	4	4	26

*Submitted Online means applications that are still being processed so do not yet have a housing band – some of these will not progress due to lack of information/change in circumstances.

Corfe Castle – Preferred Area

Band	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
Submitted Online	10	3	2	3	18
Band A – Urgent Housing Need	4	0	0	1	5
Band B - High Housing Need	9	7	5	2	23
Band C - Medium Housing Need	14	8	3	6	31
Band D - Low Housing Need	67	25	6	0	98
Total	104	43	16	12	175

To break this down further for Corfe Castle, this represents 26 households accepted on the housing register with a local connection and a further 175 households who listed Corfe Castle as a preferred area to live if affordable housing for rent becomes available.

The 175 households shown in the preferred area table are in addition to those with a local area connection.

Map of Worth Matravers Parish area



Intermediate Housing Worth Matravers

- The number of properties with a mortgage, loan or shared ownership in Worth Matravers is lower than national average with only 22.6% compared to 29.8% across the rest of the UK.
- There is also a higher-than-average rate at which people own outright compared to the rest of the UK.
- Worth Matravers currently has 68 dwellings registered as second homes
- Some residents list their properties as Holiday Lets so pay business rates and not council tax so they will not be identified in this figure. The rules have tightened around this, and they now must provide evidence to the Valuation Office Agency that their property is let for 70 days a year.
- Approximately 35 properties are actively listed as holiday homes or holiday lets on Airbnb this does not include holiday lets advertised through other platforms such as Vrbo, Sykes, Classic Cottages, Dorset Cottage Holidays, or direct booking websites, so the total short-term holiday accommodation stock in Worth Matravers is likely higher.
- House prices in Worth Matravers remain high. The last registered sale was in 2025 for £485,000, reflecting the lack of properties for sale and the affordability challenges facing many households with a local connection to the parish.
- As of August 2026, 7 properties are being advertised with prices ranging from £1,300,000 for a 5-bedroom detached family home to £650,000 for a 3-bedroom bungalow property. There is also a plot of land for sale by auction for £400,000.

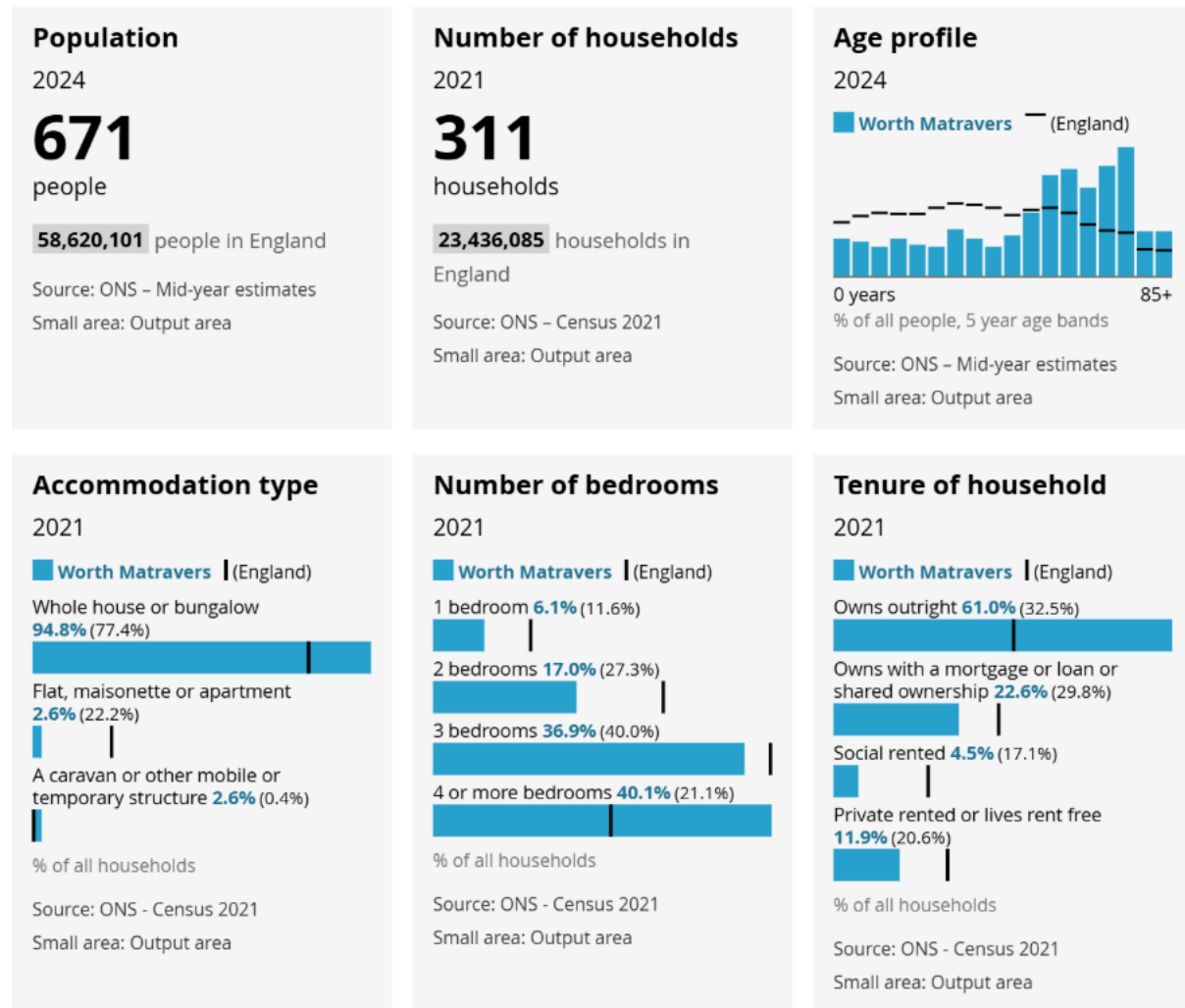
Rented Housing

- As of the August 2026, there were no properties available on Rightmove to rent.

Housing Stock in the Area

- There are currently approximately 19 properties listed as affordable housing in Worth Matravers.
- There have been no properties advertised for rent since the new system started in December 2021.
- The last affordable housing development in Worth Matravers was in 2019 providing 5 affordable rent and 4 shared ownership homes.

Worth Matravers



Worth Matravers Current Housing Needs

All information is provided by Dorset Council Housing Register and on the 19th of August 2026, Dorset Council had 6805 active households on the Housing Register, with more applicants applying. It gives an indication of the need for affordable housing in the area, although not everyone who is eligible for housing applies.

Worth Matravers – Local Connection

Band	1 Bed	Total
Band D - Low Housing Need	2	2
Total	2	2

Worth Matravers – Preferred Area

Band	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
Submitted Online	2	0	0	1	3
Band A – Urgent Housing Need	1	0	0	0	1
Band B - High Housing Need	4	0	1	0	5
Band C - Medium Housing Need	5	1	1	1	8
Band D - Low Housing Need	9	6	1	0	16
Total	21	7	3	2	33

*Submitted Online means applications that are still being processed so do not yet have a housing band – some of these will not progress due to lack of information/change in circumstances.

To break this down further for Worth Matravers, this represents 2 households accepted on the housing register with a local connection and a further 33 households who listed Worth Matravers as a preferred area to live if affordable housing for rent becomes available.

The preferred area table number of 33 are in addition to those with a local area connection.

Tenure Needs Identified in the Survey and Housing Register

Overall Need:

Based on the housing register figures and those provided by the housing needs survey, a development of the proposed 25 dwellings could be considered for affordable rent in the Corfe Castle area. Despite some desire for open market housing, the current housing climate in Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers does not make open market purchases viable for many people with a local connection. However, discounted market housing if available could offer a more viable opportunity for those seeking home ownership who cannot afford current house prices in the Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers.

Preferred Affordable Housing Tenure Type (the housing register applicants have been added in)

Tenure	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed +	Total
Social/Affordable Rent	39	16	15	2	1	73
Low-Cost Home Ownership	10	4	4	0	0	18
Self Build	2	1	0	1	0	4
Not specified	1	1	0		0	2
Total	52	22	19	3	1	97

Open Market	4	2	2			8
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97 in total (these figures are taken from preferred tenure types from the housing needs survey and housing register)

Key Findings from the applicants requiring affordable housing from the housing needs survey and housing register:

How long have you lived in the parish?	Amount
Less than a year	6
1 to 2 years	4
2 to 5 years	9
More than 5 years	70
Not specified	8

From the 296 completed surveys, 43 households (14.5%) have had family move away from the parish in the last 5 years specifically due to the cost of local accommodation.

Who in your household needs to move:

Need to form a new household	35
Everyone in your household needs to move	32
Your household had to leave the parish and need to return within the next 5 years	5
Not specified	25

What is your current accommodation:

Own your own home with a mortgage	9
Rent privately	40
Rent from employer, or tied to job	1
Rent from Housing Association	10
Live with Family or friends	22
Not Stated	15

What are the reasons your current home does not meet your housing needs:

More than one option can be chosen

Too small/overcrowded	24
Too large	7
Can't afford to live independently	27
Have an insecure tenancy	14
Unsuitable for physical needs	5
Temporary accommodation	1
Need to live close to relative/family	10
Need to live close to carer or to give care	2
Need to live close to employment	12
Struggling to afford current accommodation	17
Accommodation in poor condition	16
Tied accommodation	2
Other	9

Do you need specialist accommodation:

No	89
Yes, accessible accommodation on the ground floor	4
Yes, housing for older people	3
Not answered	1

One household said they could stay in their own home if adaptations were made.

Approximately what percentage of your household income is spent on mortgage and/or rent:

0 to 30%	21
31 to 50%	40
51 to 70%	13
71 to 100%	2
Not applicable	20
Not answered	1

Which band is your household income in:

This was an optional question

Less than £60,000 pa (May be eligible to join Dorset Council Housing Register)	64
£60,001 to £80,000 pa (May qualify for Discounted Market Homes, First Homes or Shared Ownership)	12
Not answered	21

How much would your household be able to afford if renting:

It is normal to consider one third of the household's net income for the period.

I don't want to rent	5
Less than £100 per week	4
£101 to £150 per week	20
£151 to £200 per week	23
£201 to £250 per week	19
More than £250 per week	10
Not answered	13

Next steps

Corfe Castle CLT acknowledges the ongoing need for affordable rental homes for local people, which remains essential to sustaining the village and wider community.

A press release has been issued of the high level results of the housing needs survey (after the Corfe Castle and Worth Matravers Parish Councils received a draft report and presentation from Dorset Council).

The final housing needs survey report will be published on both the Dorset Council website and the CLT website.

At its September meeting, the CLT Board agreed to proceed to the next stage of the Tabbits Hill Lane project, including preparation of an outline design for up to 25 affordable rented homes.

Any questions for the CLT can be emailed to corfecastlecommunitylandtrust@gmail.com

Index

[Airbnb Corfe Castle – Holiday Rentals & Places to Stay – Corfe Castle, Dorset](#)

[Airbnb Worth Matravers – Holiday Rentals & Places to Stay – Worth Matravers, Dorset](#)

[Build a custom area profile - Office for National Statistics](#)

[Dorset Council Housing Allocations Policy 2026 to 2031.](#)

[Dorset Council Area Insights](#)

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

[Properties To Rent in Corfe Castle/Rightmove](#)

[Properties For Sale in Corfe Castle/Rightmove](#)

[Properties To Rent in Worth Matravers/Rightmove](#)

[Properties For Sale in Worth Matravers/Rightmove](#)