

# VIGO HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

## AUGUST 2024



In partnership with Gravesham Borough Council and Vigo Parish Council

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## INTRODUCTION

Kent's Rural and Community Housing Enabling service (RACE) undertook a local Housing Needs Survey in the parish of Vigo. The survey was undertaken as part of Gravesham Borough Council's service level agreement with RACE to undertake 1 survey per year.

Housing Needs Surveys investigate the affordable housing needs of people who live in or have close ties to a parish, town or rural area and provide an independent report of that need, using a transparent and robust methodology. They investigate the needs of older households of any tenure needing to downsize or move to more suitable housing for their needs.

The Vigo Housing Needs Surveys is valid for 5 years, to August 2029.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The 2021 '[Parish Councillors' Guide to Rural Affordable Housing](#)' states that 'Across the country there is a lack of affordable housing to rent or buy in many villages, in some there is none at all. This causes hardship for people across the generations, young people just starting out on an independent life, families trying to provide for their children and older people who have lived in the village for most of their lives but whose growing frailty means they can no longer manage in their current home.'

The Kent Rural Housing Protocol '[A Guide to Developing Affordable Homes in Rural Communities](#)' states that 'Within the County of Kent, most land (85%) is classed as "rural" and over 40% of businesses in Kent are based in rural areas. KHG recognise that provision of affordable housing is vital to ensure that communities continue to thrive and prosper.'

Small developments of local needs housing can provide affordable homes for local people, thereby enabling them to stay in their community, benefit from family and friends' networks and contribute to local life. This can make a real difference to the sustainability of communities and the vitality of local services and amenities.

The housing needs of older people has also been a subject of concern given the growing numbers in that age group whose needs are not being met by the market. A nine-month enquiry starting in 2017 on Housing and Care for Older People concluded in their report<sup>1</sup> that 'policy makers must recognise the growing housing needs of older people living in the countryside. It recommends that Local Planning Authorities ensure provision of new homes for older people, noting the value of both the building of small village developments – "perhaps six bungalows on an unused scrap of land" or larger scale retirement schemes in towns close by.'

RACE is an independent service for Kent, delivered through the [Kent Housing Group](#) and is supported by Local Authorities across Kent and Medway, including Gravesham Borough Council. RACE's Rural Housing Enablers will undertake a housing needs survey, analyse the results, and where appropriate, help identify potential suitable sites for the development of new local needs housing, ie Rural Exceptions Sites, or to secure a proportion of the affordable housing to be provided on larger sites to meet the needs of local people, ie Local Lettings Plans.

If new local needs housing is to be developed on a Rural Exceptions Site, a partnership will be established between the Parish Council, the preferred housing provider, eg Housing Association, and the local authority. Proposals for new local needs housing will be developed and the community

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<sup>1</sup> [Rural Housing for an Ageing Population](#): Preserving Independence. Happi 4- The Rural HAPPI Inquiry. April 2018. Jeremy Porteus

consulted. The independent role of the Rural Housing Enablers helps to ensure any eventual local needs housing scheme proceeds smoothly and for the benefit of the community.

## HOUSING IN VIGO

The Census 2021 tells us 89.6% of households in Vigo parish are owner occupiers, 1% live in social housing and 9.4% live in private rented housing or are living rent free. The housing stock comprises 1.7% flats and maisonettes and 98.3% houses or bungalows.

According to the Census 2021 there are a total of 8 social housing properties in Vigo parish, none of which are provided as local needs housing. Local needs housing is where priority is given to those with a strong local connection to the parish. All other social housing is let in accordance with Gravesham Borough Council's Housing Allocation Scheme Policy, or direct by the landlord Housing Association, ie a new tenant is unlikely to have a local connection to the parish.

High property prices mean that some local people are unable to afford a home in Vigo. At the time of writing the report the cheapest property for sale was a 3-bedroom house for £340,000; for a first-time buyer to afford this property an estimated 10% deposit of £34,000 would be required along with an income of £68,000 based on a mortgage of 4.5 x income. There were no 1 or 2 beds available. There were no private rental properties found available in Vigo.

## SURVEY METHODOLOGY

An A5 postcard providing information and online links for completion of the survey was posted to every household in the parish of Vigo in May 2024. Only residents with a housing need were asked to respond. 797 surveys were posted with 16 completed surveys returned.

### SUMMARY

Of the 16 returns, a need for up to 12 affordable homes, for the following local households was identified:

- 2 single people
- 1 couple without children
- 9 families with children
- 9 of the households live in Vigo and 3 live outside Vigo but indicated local connections.

In addition to the above, the survey identified a need for 1 open market property for older homeowners wishing to downsize/move to more suitable housing for their needs.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Following the receipt of the completed surveys analysis of the responses was undertaken and the results are detailed below:

- 16 surveys were completed
- 3 surveys were disallowed for the following reasons:
  - 1 x did not want to stay in Vigo
  - 1 x insufficient information to make an assessment of housing need
  - 1 x no housing need indicated

### Identified need for Affordable Housing

Total Number of Affordable Homes Required	12	
Respondent Current Location	9 x live in Parish 3 x live outside Parish	
Respondent Current Housing	6 x private rented 4 x living with relatives 1 x owner occupier (older person) 1 x other (park home)	
Household Composition	2 x single people 1 x couple 9 x families	
Tenure Preference (more than one choice allowed)	10 x Affordable Rented* 3 x Shared ownership 2 x First Homes	} Low-cost home ownership
Level Access Housing Required	None	
Older Households	2	
Specialised housing requirement	None	
Analysis shows that 2 respondents indicated having a deposit towards a low-cost home ownership option. This indicates that the majority need is for social housing.		

### Identified need for alternative housing for older homeowners

Total Number of Homes Required	1
Respondent Current Location	1 x lives in Vigo
Respondent Current Housing	1 x owner occupier
Household Composition	1 x couple
Tenure Preference (more than one choice allowed)	1 x Open Market 1 x Self-build
Level Access Housing Required	0
Type of housing required (more than one choice allowed)	1 x house 1 x bungalow

## ADDITIONAL INDICATION OF LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS

Information obtained from Kent Homechoice indicates there are currently no households on the housing register who have stated a local connection to Vigo.

## CONCLUSION

The Vigo Housing Needs Survey demonstrates that at least **12 new affordable homes** are required to meet the needs of local people. From the responses received it is currently demonstrated that **1 open market property** for older homeowners wanting to downsize or move to more suitable housing, is required.

The Housing Needs Survey is an important source of evidence in measuring the housing needs of local people. Complementary indicators of housing need, including data from the Gravesham Borough Council Housing Register, verified local registrations of interest held by partner Housing Associations and data captured through ongoing engagement within the local community, can provide suitable robust evidence.

The Housing Needs Survey together with complementary indicators, ensure local housing needs data remains valid over a five-year period. All such evidence may be used to support the delivery of new affordable homes to meet the needs of local people.



## VIGO HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

May 2024

Dear Resident

### **Affordable Housing Need and Older Homeowners seeking Alternative Housing**

The Rural and Community Housing Enabling service across Kent (RACE) is working with Gravesham Borough Council and Vigo Parish Council to establish whether there is a need for **affordable housing** in the parish.

It is widely recognised that people living on low or even average incomes can face real difficulties trying to find a secure and affordable home in the area where they live or work. RACE is working to understand what the local housing need is in your area and how local households, can be supported to stay close to their support networks work or education.

We also know that some older people, including homeowners, can struggle to find alternative housing that better suits their needs whilst allowing them to remain in their community. The survey also seeks to see whether there is a need for smaller 'downsizing' homes for older people who own their homes.

This survey will help establish if affordable housing is needed in Vigo for households with a strong local connection. The local connection criteria can be seen at Q6 of the survey form. If you or anyone in your household has a housing need, even if they've had to move away to find housing elsewhere, please return this survey by **10<sup>th</sup> July 2024**.

Please complete this survey if you think that you, someone who lives with you such as an adult child, or a household forced to move away from the area, are in housing need. **The survey should take no more than 15 mins to complete.**

The findings of the survey will inform a report on Housing Need in Vigo compiled by RACE. The report will be made available by the end of July and will be published on the Parish Council and Gravesham Borough Council websites.

**Instructions for returning the survey are at the end of the form.**

**Thank you. Your input is important and appreciated.**

**RACE (Rural and Community Housing Enabling)**  
[www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/race](http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/race) 07825 967570



The Rural and Community  
Housing Enabling Service

## VIGO HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

1. **Are you in need of affordable housing?** (Housing Association or Council rented housing at 50%-80% of open market costs. Shared ownership (part rent/part buy). First Homes - purchase with a minimum 30% discount)  
 Yes  No
2. **Are you an older person/household wanting to downsize/move to more suitable housing for your needs?**  
 Yes  No
3. **When do you think that you will need new housing?**  
 Now  Within the next 3 years  Within the next 5 years
4. **If you currently live in Vigo, do you wish to stay there?**  
 Yes  No  N/A
5. **If you live outside of Vigo, do you wish to return?**  
 Yes  No  N/A
6. **What is your connection with Vigo? Please tick any that apply**  
 I currently live in the parish and have done so continuously for the last 10 years  
 I currently live in the parish and have done so continuously for the last 5 years  
 I do not currently live in the parish but have previously lived in the parish for 5 out of the last 10 years  
 I do not currently live in the parish but have close family (meaning parents, children over the age of 18 years, brothers or sisters) who currently live there and have done so continuously for the last 10 years  
 I do not currently live in the parish but have previously lived in the parish continuously for at least 10 years and, in my opinion, was forced to move away due to a lack of suitable accommodation
7. **What is your current housing situation?**  
 Private rented  Renting from housing association  Owner occupier  
 Renting from Local Authority  Shared ownership  Living with relatives  
 Other

If other, please specify

8. **How many bedrooms does your current home have?**

- 1       2       3       4       5+

9. **What type of household will be living in the new accommodation?**

- Single person       Couple       Family       Other

If other, please specify

10. **What size will your household be in the new accommodation (total number of people)?**

- 1 person       3 people       5 people       7 people  
 2 people       4 people       6 people       8 people

**Please use the boxes below to state the age and gender of each person who will be living in the new accommodation (include yourself).**

11. **Age**

Person 1	<input type="text"/>
Person 2	<input type="text"/>
Person 3	<input type="text"/>
Person 4	<input type="text"/>
Person 5	<input type="text"/>
Person 6	<input type="text"/>
Person 7	<input type="text"/>
Person 8	<input type="text"/>

12. **Gender**

Person 1	<input type="text"/>
Person 2	<input type="text"/>
Person 3	<input type="text"/>
Person 4	<input type="text"/>
Person 5	<input type="text"/>
Person 6	<input type="text"/>
Person 7	<input type="text"/>
Person 8	<input type="text"/>

13. **Which tenure would best suit your housing need?**

Indicate any options that apply

- Affordable Rent - rent levels are between 50%-80% of open market rent  
 Shared ownership - part rent/part buy  
 First Homes - purchase with a minimum 30% discount. Maximum price after discount is £250,000  
 Open Market  
 Self-Build - see your local authority self and custom build register. Call Gravesham Borough Council on 01474 337000

14. **What type of housing would you prefer?**

Indicate any options that apply

- Flat
- House
- Bungalow
- Level access accommodation suitable for older persons/persons with disabilities without support
- Level access accommodation suitable for older persons/persons with disabilities with support e.g. extra care
- Cohousing for older people - a small development of self-contained homes for older people that includes shared spaces e.g. communal vegetable garden. The group will influence the design of the development and control its on-going management
- Other

Please specify

15. **How many bedrooms would you need in new accommodation?**

Please note - If you need affordable rented housing, your local authority housing register allocation policy will determine how many bedrooms you would be eligible for.

- 1                       2                       3                       4

16. **Do you or a member of your household have any particular or specialised housing requirements e.g. due to a disability or special need?**

- No     Yes

If you answered Yes, please state what they are

17. **Please state the total gross annual income of the household in housing need (joint if a couple). Do not include housing benefit or council tax benefit.**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under £10,000     | <input type="checkbox"/> £25,000 - £30,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £50,000 - £60,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £10,000 - £15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £30,000 - £35,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £60,000 - £80,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £15,000 - £20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £35,000 - £40,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £80,000 +         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £20,000 - £25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £40,000 - £50,000 |  |

18. **If you are interested in Shared Ownership or First Homes, please tell us how much money you can raise towards a deposit on a new home**

19. **Why are you seeking a new home? Tick any that apply**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current home in need of major repair           | <input type="checkbox"/> Current home too expensive            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current home affecting health                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Setting up home with partner          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative accommodation due to age/infirmity | <input type="checkbox"/> To move to a better/safer environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless/threatened with homelessness          | <input type="checkbox"/> To be nearer family                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Need smaller home                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability/disabled                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Access problems                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Private tenancy ending                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased security                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/separation                             | <input type="checkbox"/> First independent home                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty maintaining current home            | <input type="checkbox"/> Need larger home                      |

If other, please specify

20. **Are you registered on your local authority housing register?**

- Yes  No

21. **We may wish to contact you again to update you on any local housing opportunities. If you are happy to do so, please provide your name and email or phone number. These will not be passed to any third parties.**

Name:

Email, home address or phone number:

**Thank you for completing this survey.**

**Please return this survey in the pre-paid envelope provided by 10th July 2024. Alternatively you can call RACE on 07880 151872 for assistance.**

To apply for affordable rented housing you must register on Gravesham Borough Council's Housing Register. If you would like to register go to [www.kenthomechoice.org.uk](http://www.kenthomechoice.org.uk) or contact the council on 01474 337000

Rural and Community Enabling (RACE) is the data controller for any personal information collected in this survey. Your information will be used to understand the housing need in the surveyed area. Collection and processing is being conducted under the public task lawful basis. We will always anonymise your data before using it in any publically available reports. We won't share your personal information with any third parties unless we are required or permitted to do so by law. For more information about your data protection rights please see our data protection pages Privacy Policy Kent Housing Group or contact the Data Protection lead at [RACE@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:RACE@ashford.gov.uk)