

Housing Needs for Northmavine

Compiled by Northmavine
Development Company
February 2008

Introduction

In December 2007 the Northmavine Development Company (NDC) carried out a housing needs survey in the area. This was undertaken after local community consultation suggested there was demand for housing in the area.

Survey Process

The questionnaire was compiled in two parts. Part one asked for details of resident's current accommodation situation. Questions were also asked regarding future housing needs and those requiring additional accommodation within the next 5 years were asked to complete and return part two of the survey.

Survey forms were sent to all households in Northmavine along with the quarterly newsletter produced by the NDC. A stamped addressed envelope was included to allow return. As well as receiving results from residents living locally, part two of the questionnaire was also added to www.northmavine.com. This would allow the NDC to assess need from people out with the area who may wish to move into Northmavine within the next 5 years.

Initially the deadline for return of questionnaires was mid December 2007, but due to the festive season, this deadline was extended until 31st January 2008.

Response

Out of the 326 questionnaires distributed locally, 50 (15%) forms were returned. This could indicate that the majority of people living in the area have their housing requirements currently met and would not necessarily respond to survey seeking information about their housing situation or housing needs.

Out of the 50 forms returned, 15 (30%) also completed part two of the survey, indicating their need for housing in Northmavine within the next 5 years.

10 responses were received through the on-line survey available through www.northmavine.com. In totalling the responses, overall, 25 responses were received indicating a need for housing in Northmavine in the next 5 years.

Summary of Housing Need

The survey has shown that there is considerable interest in living in Northmavine. From the answers given in Part Two of the survey, we can ascertain that a mixture of housing solutions are being asked for in Northmavine covering all geographical areas almost equally. In addition there is some interest in gaining accommodation in some of the smaller hamlets of Northmavine such as Gluss and Hamar.

Crofts, private builds and social housing are required in almost equal measure. Respondents also requested smaller, 2 bedroom detached properties in the main. The largest majority of those seeking accommodation in Northmavine are under the age of 29. Only 4 persons out of the total 42 people making up the 25 responses are over 50.

Out of the 25 postal and on-line responses 11 are from people already living in the Northmavine area, but require independent accommodation. The remaining 14 respondents are either indigenous people who have moved out of the area and now wish to return, or people who wish to move to Northmavine for the first time from somewhere on the UK mainland.

If the accommodation needs of the survey respondents could be met, this would mean a population increase of over 5% based a population of 770. The vast majority are young people who will contribute to the local economy, bring skills to the area, use and enhance local services. If new social housing is only built in areas of very high demand, this will only serve to increase the demand on those areas as people currently living in remoter rural areas are forced to leave to seek accommodation in the areas where social housing is being constructed.

The Parish

Northmavine is made up of five geographical areas consisting of Sullom, Ollaberry, Hillswick, Eshaness and North Roe. The area totals 326 households and has a population of 770 individuals (Local Survey, 2007). In terms of local services, Ollaberry has a primary school, shop with fuel pumps, garage and post office; Hillswick has a shop, post office and a hotel with a public bar. A primary school with nursery provision is sited at Urafirth. North Roe has a local post office and primary school, whilst Eshaness has a café, which is open most of the year and a post office. Sullom is without local services.

Household Characteristics of Respondents

Over half of the respondents to part one of the survey (56%) have lived in Northmavine for over 20 years. In addition, 20% have resided in the area from 10 - 20 years and 18% for less than 10 years. The remaining percentage did not answer the question.

44% of those responding lived in 1 or 2 person households. Respondents were also asked to supply the age group and sex of those living in their household. In the male category, the largest majority were between 19 - 29 years old. This was followed by 0 - 18 years and 30 - 49 years. The female category saw the majority in the 30 - 49 years range, followed by 0 - 18 years and +65 years

Respondents were also asked where they and any members of their household were employed. The majority were retired. The next largest group worked in Northmavine followed by Lerwick. 12% of those responding did not have access to a vehicle.

Support for Affordable Homes

The survey asked people whether or not they would be in favour of development of affordable homes if there was a proven need. 86% were in favour, 2% indicated that they would possibly be in favour and the remainder did not answer the question. On this basis, it is fair to say that there is strong support for the development of affordable homes in Northmavine.

Respondents were also asked which areas of Northmavine they thought would benefit from affordable housing. Choices were not limited to one geographical area. Eshaness, Hillswick, Ollaberry, Sullom and North Roe all received a comparative number of answers. The results were as follows:

Sullom	21
Ollaberry	25
Hillswick	25
Eshaness	26
North Roe	23

In addition respondents also specified the following areas: Gluss, Lochend, Nibon, Enisfirth, Urafirth and Bardister.

Respondents were then asked to list any suitable pieces of land that could be used for affordable housing or private house sites. The following comments were received:

- *North Stow smolt hatchery - large developed site.*
- *Empty buildings in Hillswick village.*
- *SIC owned buildings and ground at Urafirth.*
- *Extend Runnadale.*
- *Identify crofters who set aside land and gain outline planning permission to simplify the process.*
- *Drainage solutions required from the SIC.*
- *We own land that may be used.*
- *I have non-croft land that may be used.*
- *I would like to see IatE money being put into developing sustainable building plots or at least a list of crofters who will sell land*

Respondents were also asked if they knew of any empty properties that could be turned back into lived in accommodation. Although quite an extensive list of empty properties was gathered during the survey, no owner/occupier declared an interest in developing the property either on a private basis or as part of a community development. The following comments were received:

- *Capin, Leascole, Eshaness*
- *Capoot, Leascole, Eshaness.*
- *Priesthoulland, Eshaness.*
- *Lower Heogaland, Eshaness.*
- *The Hoop, Eshaness.*
- *Easthouse, Tangwick, Eshaness.*
- *The Haa, Tangwick, Eshaness.*
- *The Old Murrion Shop, Eshaness.*
- *Bringa, Eshaness.*
- *Buildings near Johnie Notions, Eshaness.*
- *Caravan site at New Cottage..*
- *Urafirth Schoolhouse.*
- *North house, Gluss.*
- *Sooth hoose, Gluss.*

Respondents were also asked for comments regarding this questionnaire or on the issue of affordable housing in Northmavine.

- *Empty sites/properties could be brought back into use without creating new sites.*
- *It's difficult to a) get a house site at a reasonable price b) get a building warrant because of drainage problems.*
- *House cost more to build than it is valued at. Most folk can't do that, so they build elsewhere. This is a crucial issue to sort out.*
- *Increasing fuel costs and long commutes may mean folk will move nearer to jobs. Devolving more employment opportunities from Lerwick may help.*
- *Give grants to young people to make building or buying affordable.*

Housing Needs - Part Two

Out of the 50 households who responded, 15 (30%) filled out the second part of the survey. In addition 10 responses were received through the on-line survey, resulting in a total of 25 respondents in need of affordable housing in Northmavine in the next 5 years. 13 required housing within 2 years, 8 in 2 - 5 years and 4 in 5 years or more.

Tenure Type

Housing requirements were varied. Most respondents, a total of 8, would prefer Local Authority/Housing Association tenure, 7 asked for a croft in Northmavine, Own build was the preferred choice of 5 respondents, whilst 3 would prefer to buy on the open market. Shared Ownership was the choice of 1 respondent. Some respondents listed more than one choice, hence the outcome figures.

Size of Housing

2 bedroom accommodation was the first choice for 15 of the respondents with 7 requiring 1 bedroom/bedsit accommodation. 3 preferred 3 bedroom accommodation.

Housing Type

The majority of respondents to Part Two would prefer detached housing with 17 out of the 25 returns requesting this. 3 would be happy with semi detached. In addition 3 would like a flat/single unit, 1 didn't know and 1 would be happy with any type of accommodation.

Reason for Accommodation

When asked to explain the reason respondents would like to live in Northmavine, 17 needed to set up independent accommodation, 3 wished to return to Northmavine, 1 wanted to move into the area to set up a business, 1 wanted to move from a rented accommodation to own a property, 1 wanted to live away from a main road, 1 wished to retire to the area and the final respondent was looking for the rural way of life.

Local Authority/Housing Association Waiting List

Respondents were asked if they currently were on a Local Authority or Housing Association waiting list for Northmavine 2 responded that they were and 23 answered no. Out of the respondents who answered No, 9 reported that this was due to the fact that there was no suitable accommodation in their area.

Age range of respondents to Part Two

Taking into account the total number of persons who would be moving into the households with the 25 respondents, the total number would be 42. Out of these, 26 were male with a majority in the 19 - 29 years category. The majority of the 16 females were also 19 - 29 years.

Preferred Area for Accommodation

Respondents were asked to note any of the areas in Northmavine that they would be happy to live in. The results are the number of responses each area was given, and are as follows:

Sullom	9
Ollaberry	11
Hillswick	15
Eshanness	15
North Roe	13

Other (single responses) - Anywhere on bus route, Anywhere, Gluss, Hamar

The following comments were noted by respondents on the subject of affordable rural housing:

- Please make any future developments sympathetic to the environment.
- It's space and environment that attracts people
- I feel strongly that housing is not an issue - it is THE issue.
- Information required on assistance for house builders.