

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register Progress Report 2019

November 2019

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1. Introduction

The terms 'Self-Build' and 'Custom Build' are used to describe situations where individuals or groups are involved in creating their own home. The difference between the two is the level of personal involvement; Self-Build is where an individual directly organises and commissions the design and construction of their new home whereas Custom Build is where a developer co-ordinates the whole process for those involved. Section 9 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 defines Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding as "the building or completion by individuals, associations of individuals, or persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. It does not include the building of a house on a plot acquired from a person who builds the house wholly or mainly to plans or specifications decided or offered by that person". Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing. Furthermore the Housing and Planning Act 2016 places a duty on Local Authorities to grant suitable development permission for enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding identified by the Register in any given "base period". The first base period is 1st April 2016 to 30th October 2016, with each subsequent base period the 12 months thereafter. The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 came into force on 31st October 2016 and allowed the Register to be broken up into two parts; Part 1 for those who meet all criteria including any Local Eligibility Conditions and Part 2 for those who meet all criteria excluding any Local Eligibility Conditions. For those on Part 2 of the Register, the Council does not have to meet certain requirements relating to the number of planning permissions granted for serviced plots. A serviced plot of land, as defined in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) has access to a public highway and has connections for electricity, water and waste water, or can be provided with those things in specified circumstances or within a specified period.

2. Worcester City's Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register

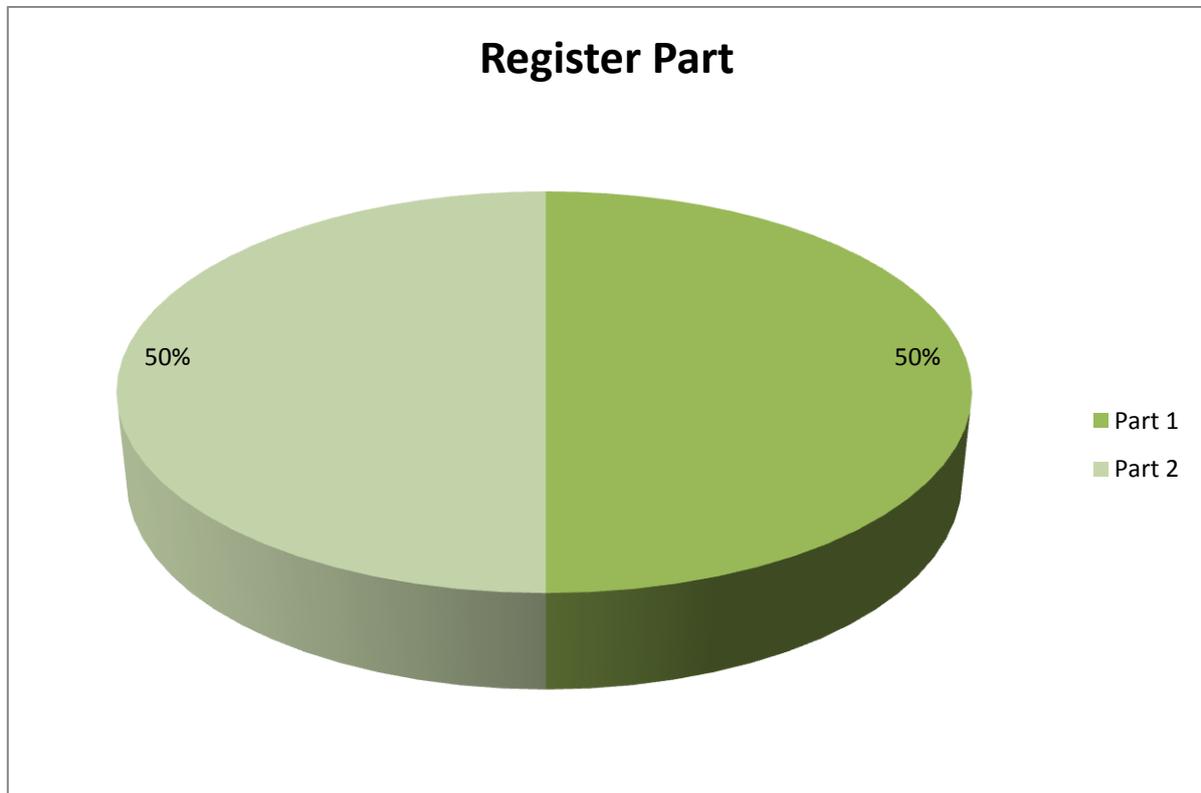
Worcester City Council's Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Register were established on 1st April 2016 and have subsequently been available for individuals and organisations to register via an online form. In the first base period between 1st April 2016 and 30th October 2016, there were 43 entries on the Register.

Following the introduction of the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016, the Register went through an update in May and June 2017 in order to introduce a 'Local Connections Test' to separate the register into Part 1 and Part 2. Those entries already on the register were exempt from the local connection test and were able to remain on Part 1 of the register subject to them confirming their continued interest and completing an update form by 30th June 2017.

At 31st October 2019, there are 34 entries on the Worcester City Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Register, and headline data is provided below:

i) Part 1/ Part 2

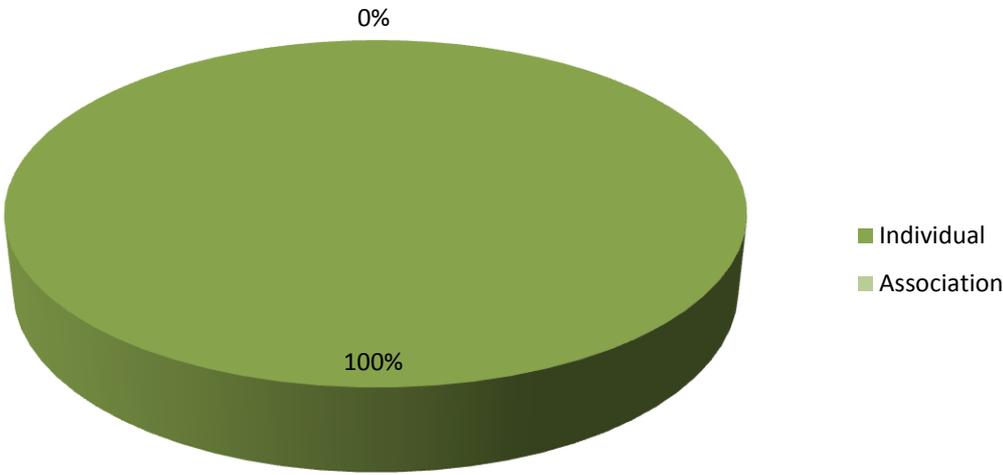
There are 17 entries on Part 1 and 17 entries on Part 2 of the Worcester City Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register. The number of people on Part 1 of the register has not altered. However, there has been an increase of 10 entries of Part 2 of the register.



ii) Individuals/ Associations

Of the 34 entries on the Worcester City Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register there are 34 individuals and no association.

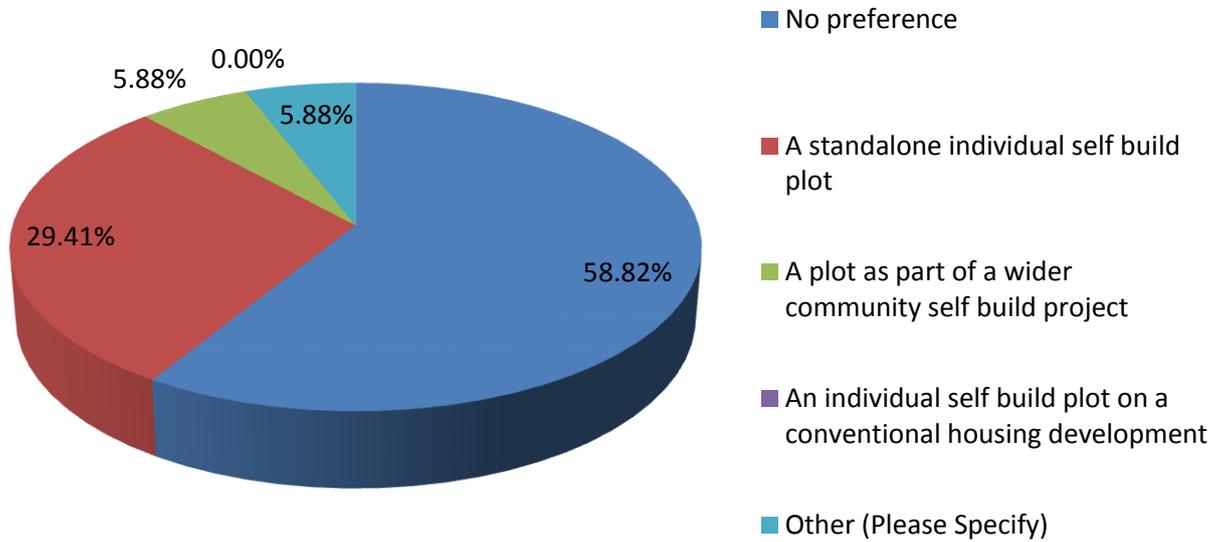
Do you wish to register as an individual or an association?



iii) Types of Projects Sought

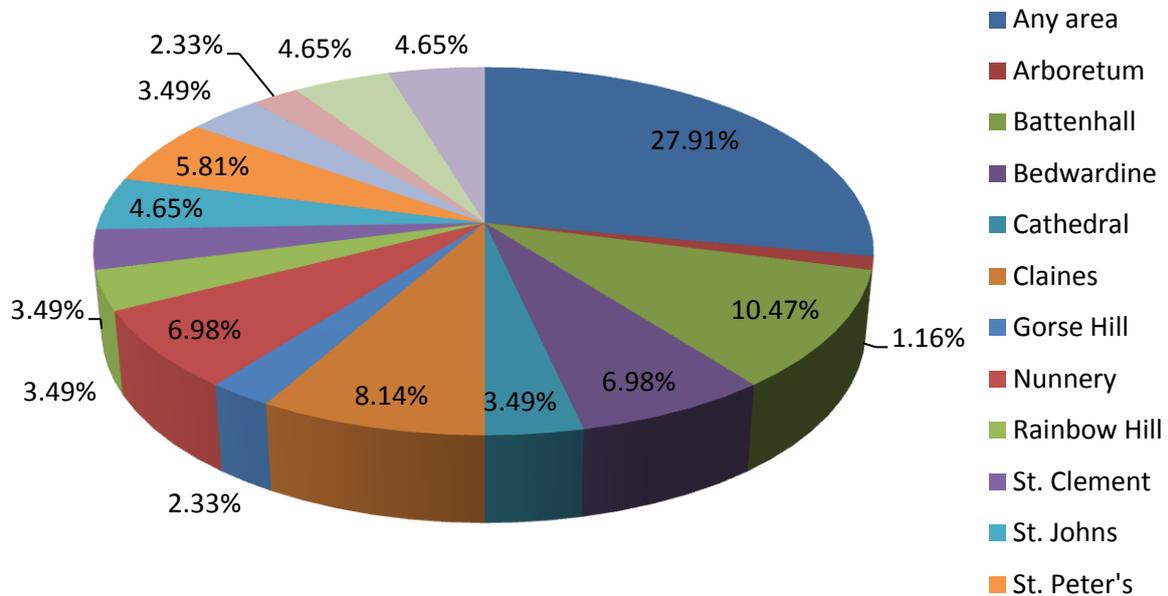
The most common answer for the question "Which project type would you prefer to be a part of?" is 'No Preference' with 20 respondents selecting this option, making 58.82% of the total respondents. A further 10 entries stated that they are seeking a 'standalone, individual Self-Build plot'. Interest on plots as part of a wider community self build project yielded a smaller percentages with only 2 respondents opting for this type of project. Finally, two of the respondents have detailed "Other" preferences - one suggesting that "I already have a self-build plot subject to planning permission" and the other "conversion of brown site".

Project Type



iv) Areas of Interest

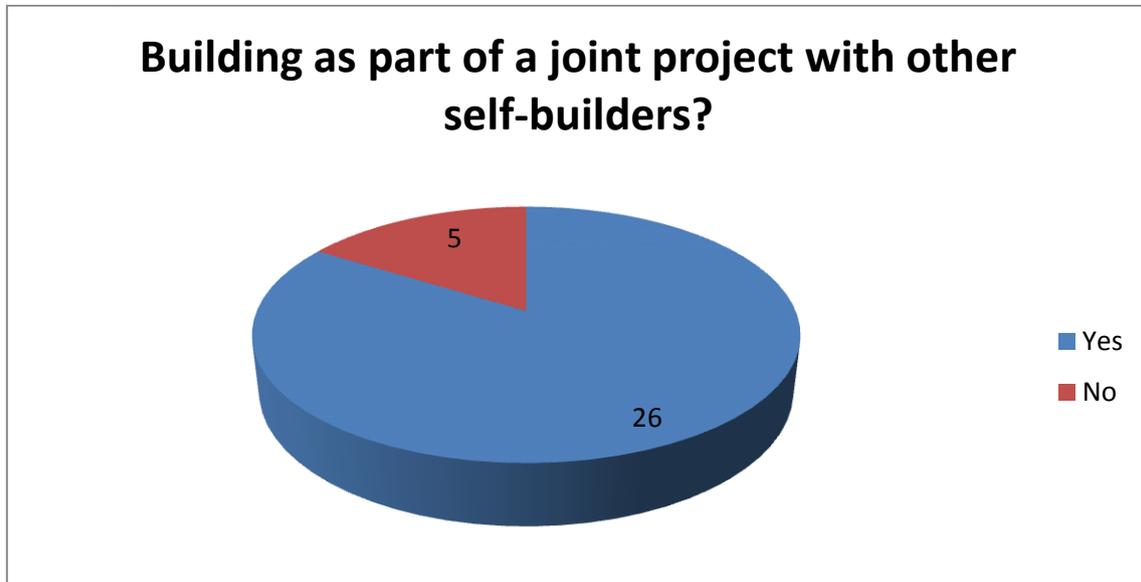
Area of interest - Wards



The most common answer for the question “Within which area(s) are you seeking a plot?” is “Any Area” with 24 responses. The most common area-specific choices are Battenhall (9), Claines (7), Bedwardine (6) Nunnery (6), St. Peters’ (5), St Johns (4), Warndon Parish South (4), Warndon Parish

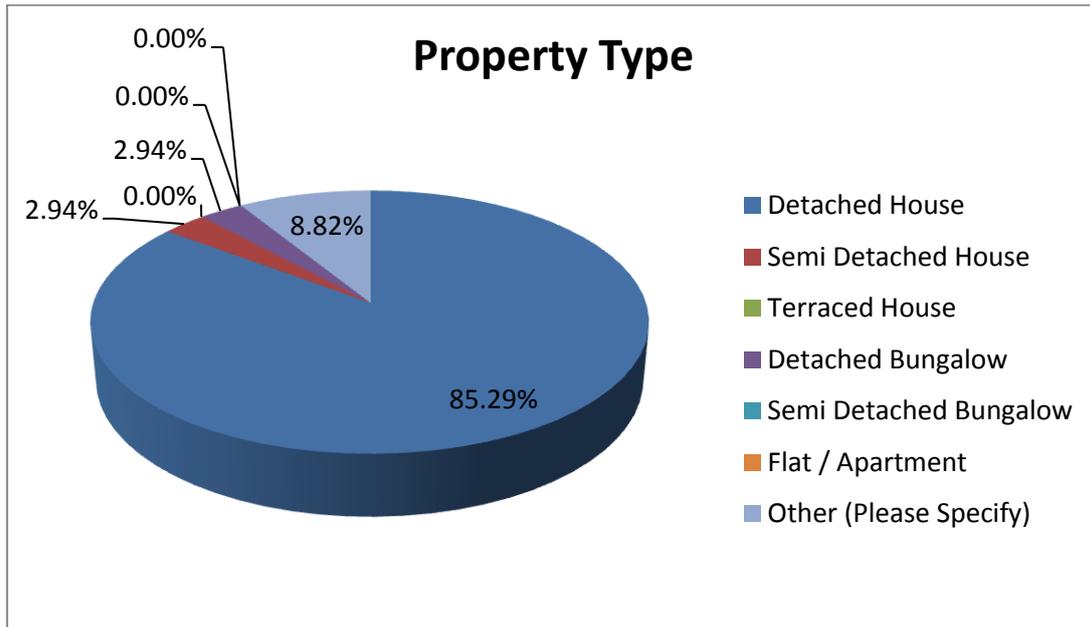
North (4), Cathedral (3), Rainbow Hill (3), St Clements (3), St Stephens (3), Warndon (2), Gorse Hill (2), and Arboretum (1), Respondents could tick as many areas of Worcester that they are seeking a self build or custom-housebuilding plot.

v) Building as Part of a Joint Project with Other Self-Builders?



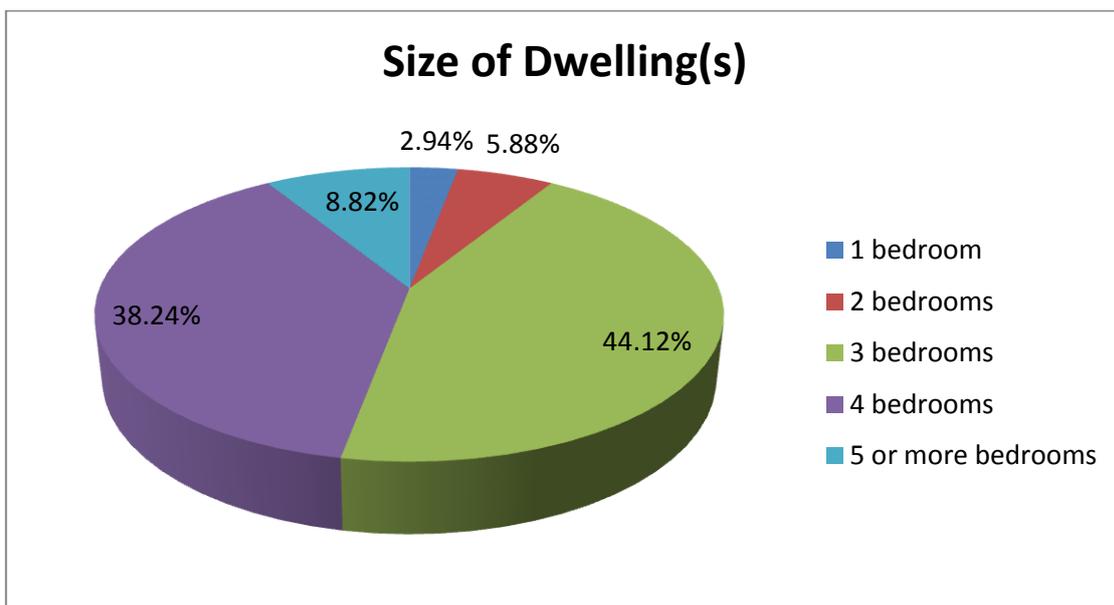
Self-build also includes projects where the self-builder arranges for an architect/contractor to build their homes for them. Community-led projects are defined as self-build too. Often a group will organise and do a lot of the construction work. Custom-build projects tend to have a specialist working for them. The specialist tends to take on most of the issues face when self-building, for example – from securing or providing a site, through to managing the construction work and even arranging the financing for you- a much more hand-off approach. Some custom-build developers also provide a menu of custom build options – for example they may offer a serviced plot for you to buy and then takeover and organise all aspects of the build. Within the responses for the Worcester City Self-Build 76.74% (26) of respondents would welcome the opportunity to work as part of a joint project or with other self-builders. Whereas five respondents (14.71%) would like to work alone on their self-build and three of the respondents didn't answer the question. These results are inconsistent with the responses found in the 'projects sought' question above; only 5.88% opted for a particular preference in working with wider community of self-builders.

vi) Type and Size of Property Sought



A large majority of 85.29% of people registered for self-build would prefer a site where they could build a 'detached house'. 'Detached Bungalow', 'Semi-detached house' and 'other' property types all yield 14.7% of the total demand from the register. Whereas 'Flats/Apartments', 'Terraced House' and 'Semi-detached bungalows' currently have no interest from people on the register for the third consecutive year.

The final graph below illustrates the amount of demand for different sized dwellings. The most popular dwelling size is '3 bedrooms', 15 respondents stated that this would be their preferred option. Second in demand are '4 bedroom' properties where 13 respondents declared this as their preference. There is a small demand for '1 bedroom' properties with 1 respondent declaring this as their preferred option. The high number of completions in 1-2 bedroom properties historically in Worcester may be a result of these findings.



3. Supporting the Demand

In order to meet the demand for self-build and follow the Government's initiative of producing self-build and custom house building opportunities by delivering sites Worcester City Council will be considering all sites for self build when they receive relevant contact. Across the three south Worcestershire councils (Worcester City, Malvern Hills and Wychavon) the South Worcestershire Development Plan (adopted 2016) underpins and supports the principles of developing self-build plots within the defined boundaries (SWDP2 C) and on housing allocations (SWDP43 – SWDP59). This includes individual Self-Build plots; sites made up of a number of Self-Build plots; and Self-Build plots as part of the wider market housing mix on larger developments (SWDP14). Worcester City Council is required to give suitable permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for the self-build and custom housebuilding in its area. There is no duty to permission land which specifically meets the requirements expressed by those on the register. Although Worcester City Council will use preferences expressed by those, however, taking into account the preferences expressed will increase the likelihood of permissions being implemented. The council will also inform those on the register when they have permissioned suitable land in order that they can express an interest in plots. Any plot that is not taken up by registered personnel will be then advertised on the open market. As Worcester City's built up area is tightly constrained there is limited space in the administrative area, which proves to be a strategic issue when meeting any housing needs and demands. The redevelopment of brownfield sites for self-build plots does provide an opportunity to deliver development which is consistent with the principles of sustainable development.