

Supplementary Evidence: Formal Request For Settlement Hierarchy Reassessment

Further to our formal request to reassess Darley Dale's Tier 2 settlement status on 4th April 2026, Darley Dale Town Council (DDTC) wanted to verify with evidence;

- 1) The feeling within the community was that buyers of new houses in DD were not workers coming to Darley Dale (DD) to take up employment in DD.
- 2) The community did not believe that there were sufficient employment opportunities in DD to attract new workers.
- 3) The community thought that most workers either now worked from home and commuted out of town for part of the week, or commuted full time.
- 4) That DD was a destination for retirees.

Early in 2026 the Town Council **surveyed specifically the buyers of new houses** on 3 recently built new housing developments in DD (Boden Close, Whitworth Dale and Normanhurst Park) to inform it of the actual position of DD in terms of its Tier 2 designation. In particular DDTC wanted to verify, or otherwise, the houses for employment link and the self-containment aspects of its Tier 2 status.

For clarity, DDTC understands that the **definition of self-containment** in this setting means:

A self-contained settlement is one where most day-to-day needs—particularly employment, services, and facilities—can be met locally, without significant reliance on travel to other towns. This is usually evidenced by:

A Local Employment Base

- A number of meaningful jobs within the settlement
- A balance of people who live and work in the settlement
- Assessed by job to worker ratio, and commuting patterns (in vs out)

Access to Facilities and Services

- Shops, schools, healthcare, community facilities
- Ability to meet daily needs locally

Reduced Need to Travel

- Lower dependence on commuting for employment

Sustainable Movement patterns

- Walkable / cyclable access to local work and services
- Use of public transport

Survey flyer:



WHY DO PEOPLE BUY HOUSES ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN DARLEY DALE?

To better understand and plan for the town's future housing needs, Darley Dale Town Council is inviting feedback from residents who have recently moved into new developments within Darley Dale.

The short survey explores why residents chose a new development, their employment circumstances and their daily travel patterns.

To complete the survey either scan the QR code or use the below link:
www.surveymonkey.com/r/darleydale

If you prefer a paper form, please call in at the Town Council office at The Whitworth.

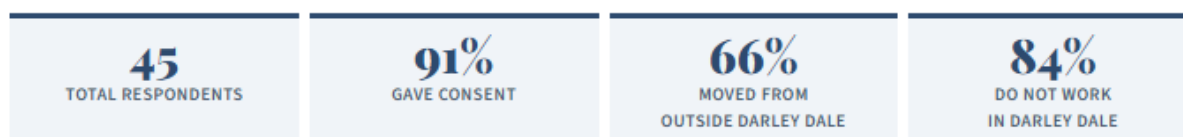
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT: The Local Plan, which sets out how many homes can be built and where, is currently being reviewed. With new national housing targets, Darley Dale is likely to be required to deliver more homes than in the existing plan. To inform its response, the Town Council needs to understand where future demand may come from and how it can be met, while also considering infrastructure capacity, flood risk, and the availability of suitable land.

CONTACT US  01629 735248  townclerk@darleydale.gov.uk

Analysis of the DDTC ‘New Home Buyers’ survey March-April 2026

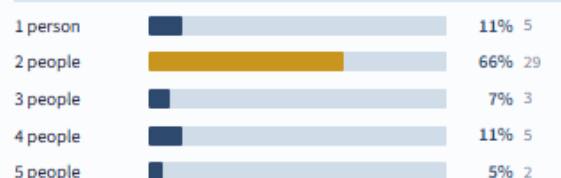
A total of 200 new houses were invited to take part in the survey with responses restricted to the recent 3 new developments. To date 45 responses were received, or 22.5%. The sample was therefore deemed acceptable for use as analysis.

The survey results;

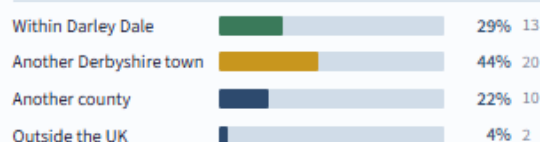


Household Composition & Origins

Q5 – HOUSEHOLD SIZE (N=44)

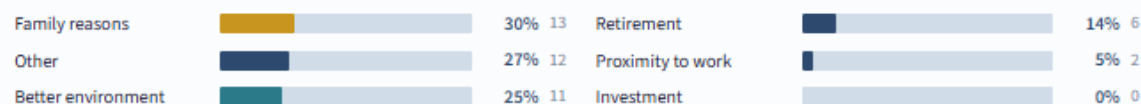


Q7 – MOVED FROM WHERE? (N=45)



Primary Reason for Purchasing in Darley Dale

Q6 – PRIMARY REASON FOR PURCHASE (N=44)

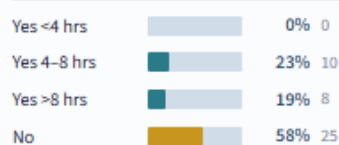


Employment & Commuting Patterns

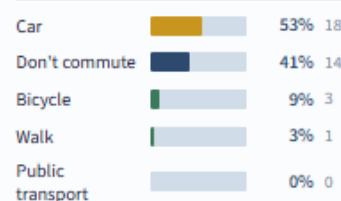
Q8 – WORK IN DARLEY DALE? (N=44)

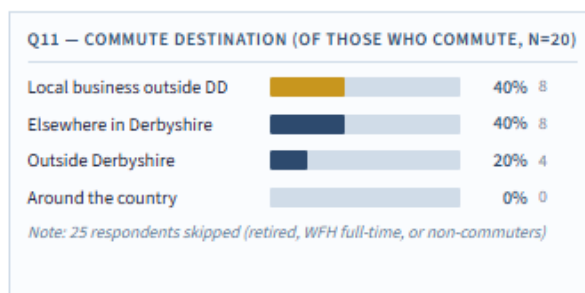
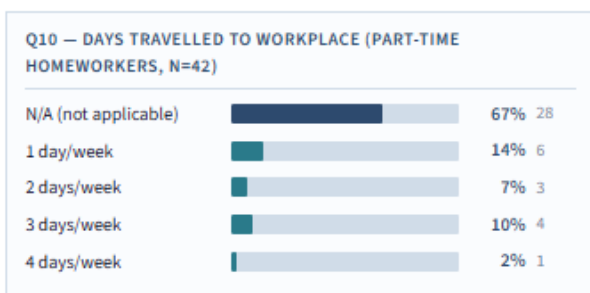


Q9 – WORK FROM HOME? (N=43)

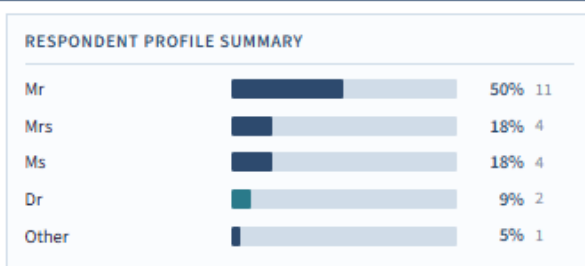
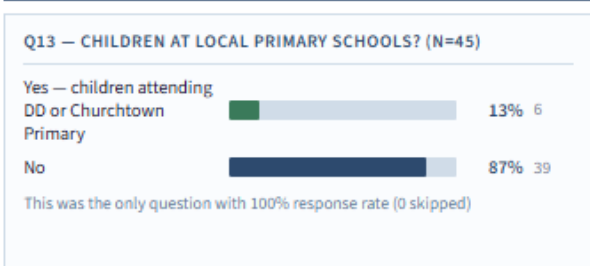


Q12 – COMMUTE MODE (N=34)





Community & Local Services



Key Points:

1. Limited local employment linkage.

Only 16% of respondents work in DD, 84% either commute out, are retired, or unable to work. New housing is therefore NOT driven by local employment. Only 5% bought a new house on a new development for proximity to work.

2. Inward migration dominant.

71% of new residents moved from outside DD. New housing is absorbing district and regional demand, not solely local need.

3. Car dependant

Of those that commute 53% travel by car, 0% used public transport. This highlights a growing capacity concerns for the A6 route through DD.

4. Work from home adds to daytime demand on infrastructure

42% of respondents work from home (19% full time) placing additional strain on local services and drainage infrastructure during the daytime.

5. Minimal school-age children

Only 13% of households have children at the local primary schools, suggesting that the new housing stock disproportionately serves retirees and couples (66% two-person households) rather than young families.

Conclusions

- a. The link between buyers of new houses in DD to take up employment in DD is disproved by this survey evidence.
- b. If over 80% of residents do not work in DD it cannot be described as self-contained.
- c. Among those working, none use public transport.

DDTC believes that:

- This survey evidence shows that DD is a commuter town with a high proportion of retirees, therefore the assumption that Darley Dale can sustainably accommodate significant housing growth on the basis of local employment and self-containment is **not supported by the evidence**.
- This survey provides current, real-world evidence to support DDTC's formal request for reassessment of its Tier 2 settlement designation.

DDTC requests that this document be considered alongside the outstanding formal request for Tier 2 status reassessment and that it be entered into the Local Plan review evidence base.

Prepared by: Cllr D Chapman

Date: 1st May 2026