

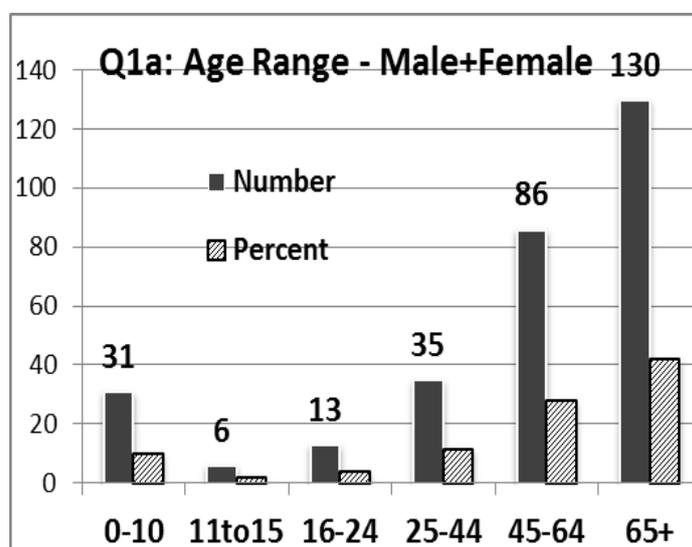
Nether Kellet in October 2012

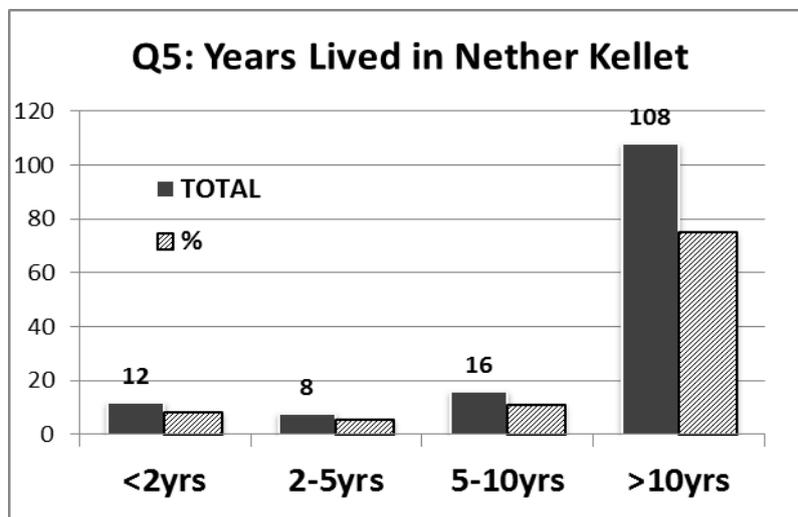
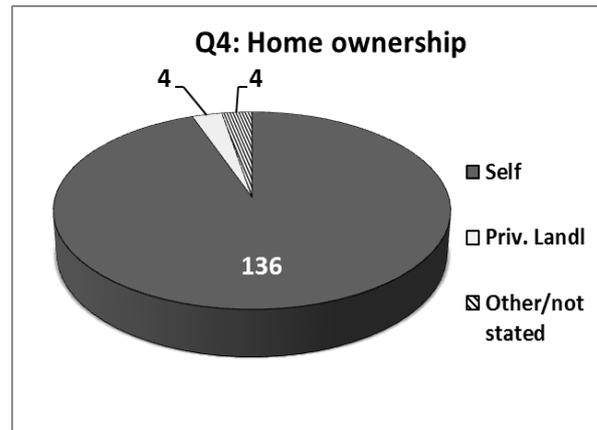
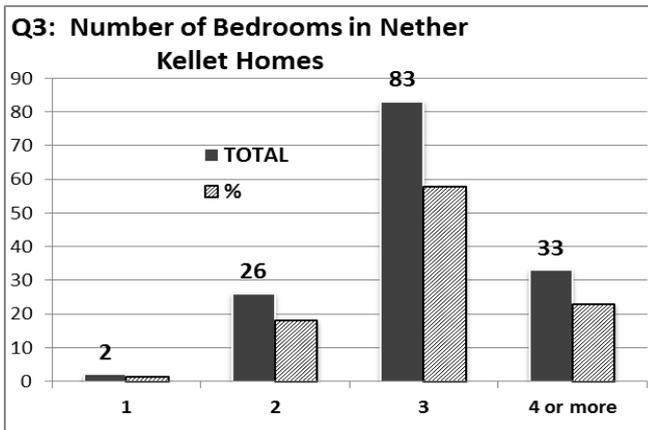
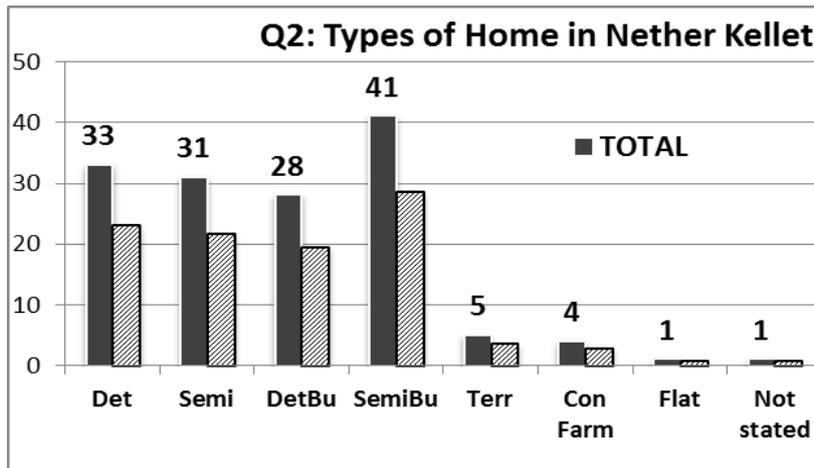
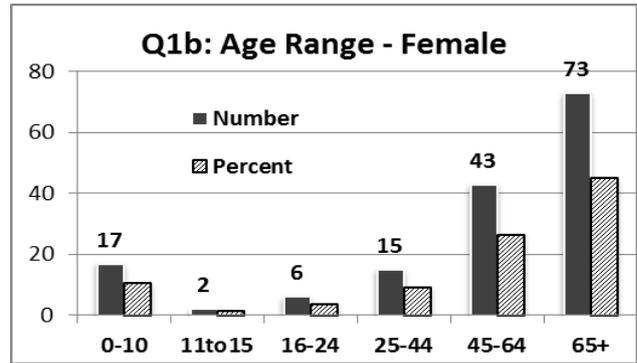
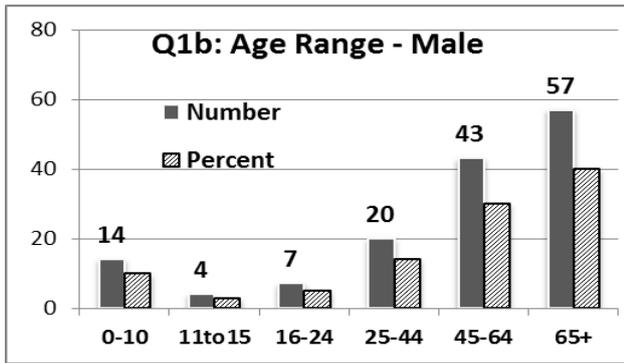
Early results from the Parish Council questionnaire put out to villagers this Autumn give a snapshot of village life. The questions were designed by a team of four being Judith Bentham and George Smith (Parish Councillors), together with Stephen Langtree and City Councillor Roger Mace, and were based on precedents from other villages, and advice from David Hayward, a member of the Planning staff at Lancaster City Council.

A public meeting was held to introduce the questions before the questionnaire was distributed and the results will be the subject of a public presentation at Nether Kellet Village Hall at 7.45 p.m. on January 10th 2013 at which everyone will be welcome. A short series of articles on selected sections of the questionnaire will also be published in the next few issues of *Round and About*.

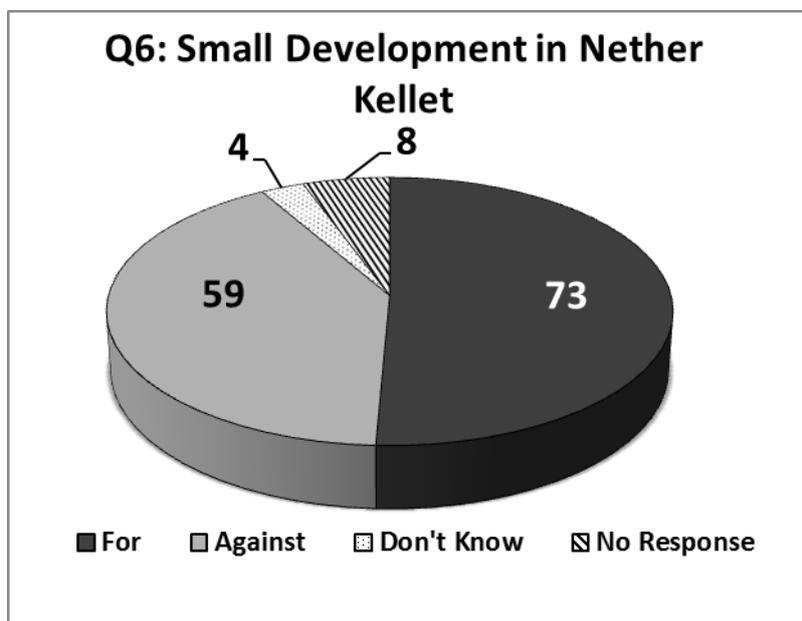
The Parish Council has been very pleased with the success of the project, in that of the 285 questionnaires distributed to households, 144 (51%) have been returned. A return as high as this is enough to give a broad view of attitudes of villagers to the issues raised in the questions, though it is accepted that 100% return would have been required to ensure that everyone's views were represented in the summaries. Results have been collated by Judith Bentham, David Manning and Roger Mace (with support from Peter Riley and George Smith) and analysed by David Manning who has used Spreadsheet and Presentation Software to facilitate the analysis.

The first seven questions set the framework against which the answers given to the subsequent questions are to be interpreted. It is clear that responses came for the most part from people at or approaching a pensionable age [Q1]. Our village is an aging village with many respondents living in 3 and 4 bedroom bungalows [Q2 and Q3] owned predominantly by themselves or family members [Q4]. Villagers tend to stay in the village for long periods of time [Q5] and the responses to this question help to explain the sense of community that prevails in the village, in turn possibly accounting in part for the high response rate to the questionnaire.





Question 6 asked if respondents would support a small development of new housing in the village if there was a proven need from households in the area or with a genuine local connection. This was the first question asking for *opinion*, rather than for *fact* - and the answers showed the potential for controversy over issues of local development [Q6].



The supplementary question to question 6 asked those respondents who would support a small development to expand their answer to say how many homes, of what type (style/size/tenure) they would support and when they thought they should be ready for people to live in them.

This was the crucial question in the section asking about housing. It is not possible to reproduce all 59 written comments in this article, but responses reflected widely differing views with some emphasising affordability while others talked of requiring a variety of styles and sizes to provide for differing needs. Homes for people with connections to the village were frequently spoken of - including starter homes - and smaller houses and old peoples bungalows and pensioner homes for people to downsize to - but uncertainty was also expressed as to how many young people in the area would wish to stay on....

Reverting to *facts*, rather than *opinion*, further answers showed that very few people from households that are still represented in the village had left the village in recent years because of a lack of suitable housing [Q7]. Three people were recorded as having left 0-2 years ago, and 15 people were recorded as having left 3-5 years ago.

A summary of all the responses received about prospective housing needs in the village is to be submitted by the Parish Council to Lancaster City Council as part of the ongoing consultation (ending on 14 Dec 2012) on the Draft Local Plan.

J. R. Mace.