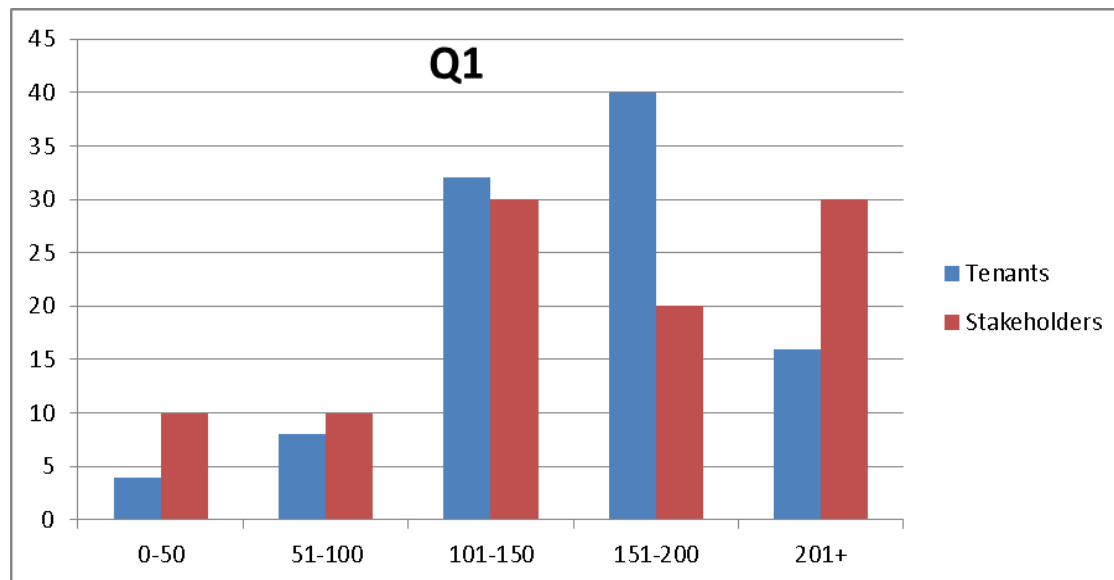


## Summary of Questionnaire responses.

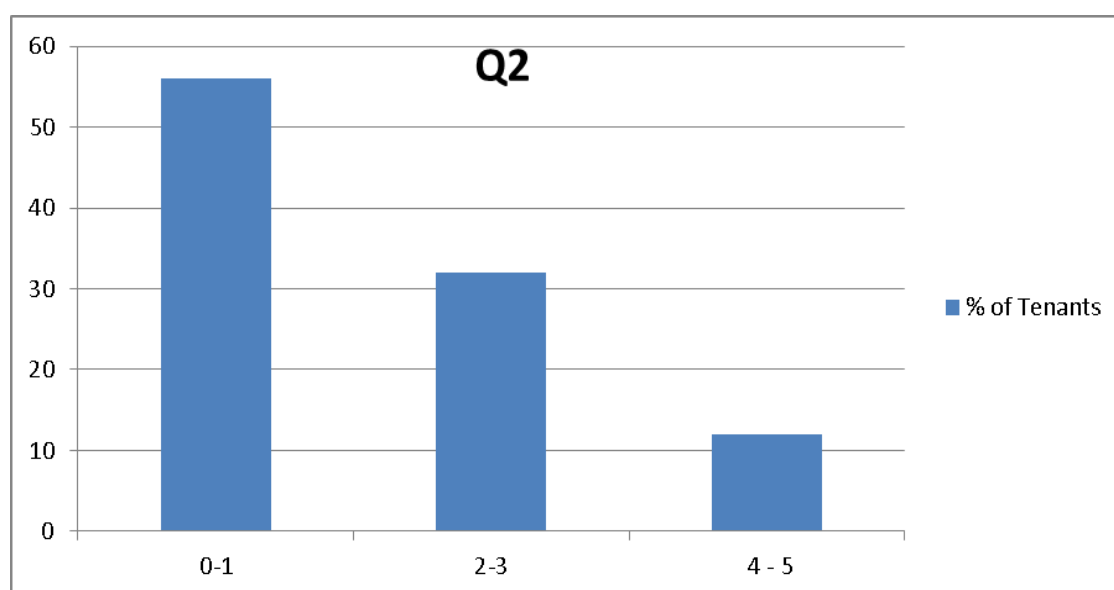
### Tenants

Q1 What minimum size acreage do you consider to be a viable unit in order to make a living off the holding?



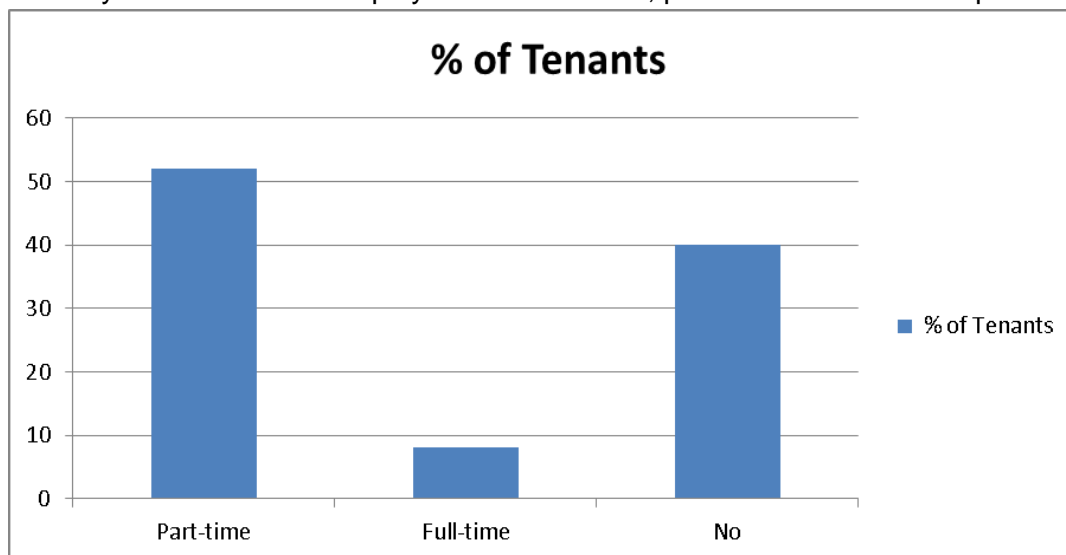
**80% of stakeholders responding felt that the minimum size acreage to make a living from any smallholding would be greater than 100 acres. Indeed, 30% felt that 201+ acres should be the minimum size required. 64% of the Council's smallholdings are 100 acres or below. 40% of tenants thought 151 to 200 acres would be the minimum.**

Q2 How many people does your smallholding employ directly (please tick)?



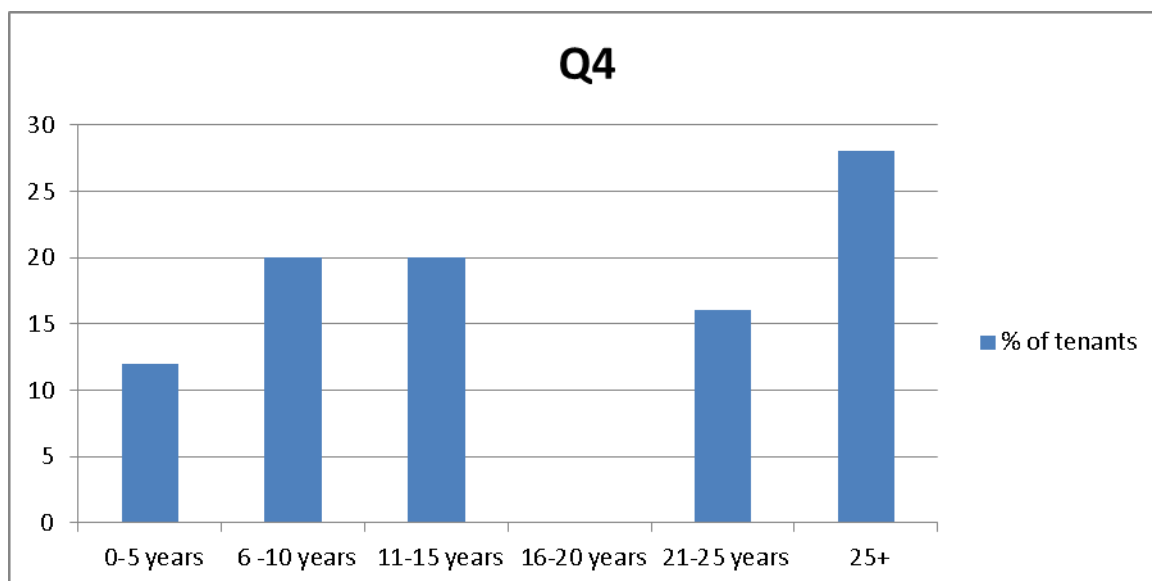
55% of tenants responding stated that their smallholding only supported one person directly. 32% employed 2-3 and only 11% employed more than 3.

Q3 Do you have to seek employment off the farm, please state full-time or part-time and why?



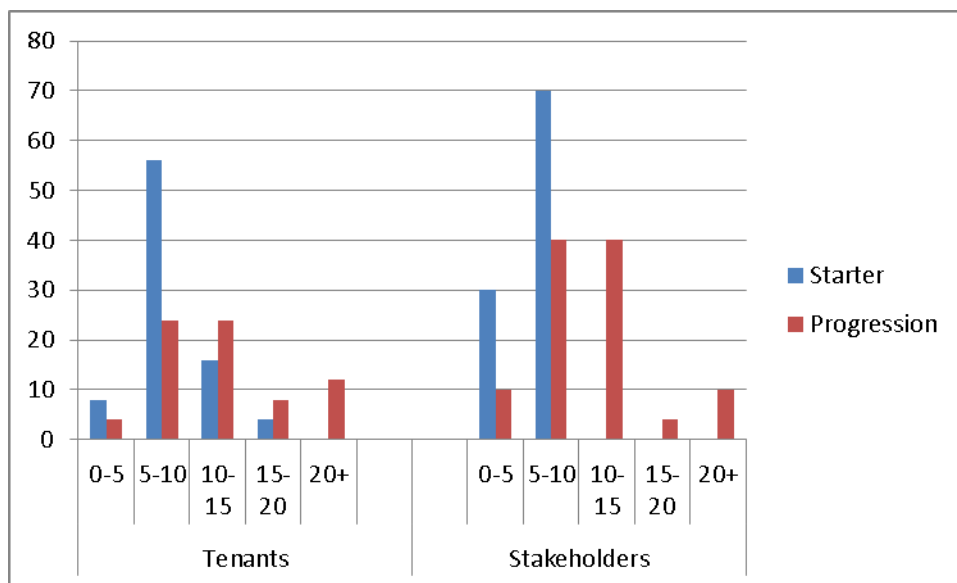
Out of the respondents, 40% did not have to seek employment off the holding, whereas 52% participated in part time work and less than 10% had to seek full time work. The main reasons stated were that the outside work enabled them to build up capital, support cash flow and aid expansion of the business. The outside work mainly comprised of agricultural contracting or general farm work.

Q4 The current policy states that a starter farm is between 50-100 acres, how many years have you been, or were you on a starter farm (please tick)?



28% of respondents had been on their starter farm for over 25 years. 36% of respondents had been on the starter farm for between 11 and 25 years and the remaining 32% had been on one for less than 10 years.

Q5 What do you think is a suitable/appropriate length of tenancy for a starter holding and a progression holding and why?



**70% of stakeholders responding thought that starter tenancies should be 5 to 10 years in length. None indicated any greater length. However, 20% of tenants responding felt that starter tenancies should be over 10 years. Over 60% of tenants, however, though the tenancies should be up to 10 years with the vast majority indicating a length of 5 – 10 years.**

Q6 Is it your ambition to progress (please tick)?

Q6	Yes	No	N/A
% age	64	20	4

Q7 If you have not progressed, why not and (even if you have) what do you think are the barriers to progression?

The main theme from the respondents was that there is a lack of larger farms both in the private sector and on a national basis and there is a lot of competition for those that do become available both in numbers applying for them and the level of rent.

Q8 Do you think that there are other means of entry into farming other than through council smallholdings, please expand?

Q8	Yes	No
	56	40

Many respondents felt that share farming did provide additional opportunities but it was not that easy to get into. A few stated that landowners who were investment companies could provide opportunities. Generally it was felt that council holdings provided a realistic way into farming and that it was the few places where there were houses, buildings and land available to rent. In addition it was the only sector that was let to new entrants rather than existing farms becoming larger.

Q9 Does your smallholding support and assist young farming community, if it does how and if not why?

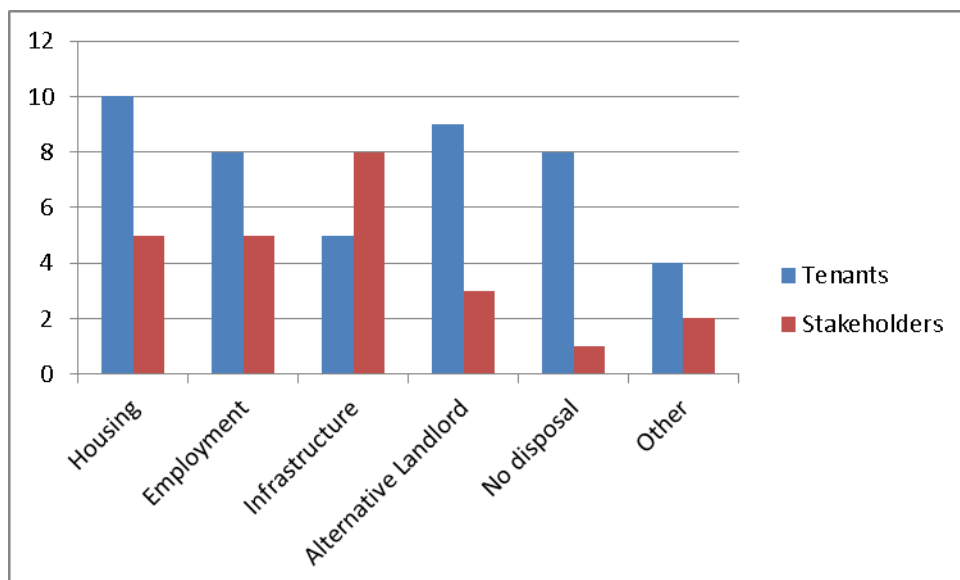
Q9	Yes	No
	60	36

Most of those responding did take on students during busy times such as lambing, shearing and harvest. Those that didn't employ directly used contractors that had set up a new businesses or were local to the area. A couple of tenants were also directly involved in Young Farmers.

Q10 Please state how your smallholding contributes to the economy and prosperity of the countryside?

Almost all the respondents stated that each individual business supports other rural businesses through the sourcing of machinery, farm sundries and animal feeds. One business stated that they support over 30 different suppliers and businesses in the area. Others stated that they rear livestock and sell in the local market and that the children attend the local school.

Q11 Would you support the disposal of any of the smallholdings land and/or buildings for the following purposes?



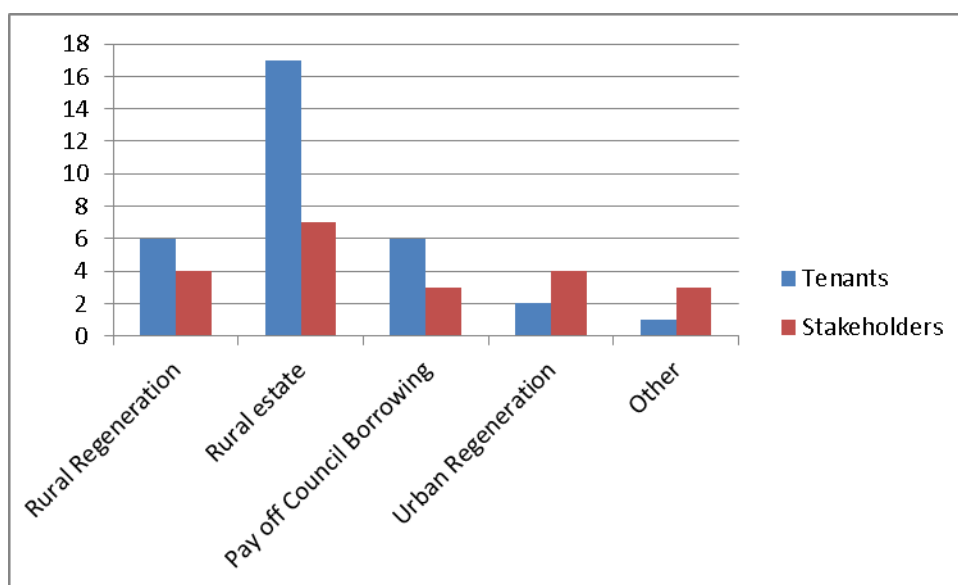
The majority of Tenants supported disposal for some options, these being housing, employment, infrastructure and ownership by an alternative landlord. A greater proportion of tenants than stakeholders preferred that there was no disposal.

Of the “other” comments, two respondents felt that the tenants should have first option to buy at a discounted rate.

Generally there was support for selling off high maintenance and/or surplus houses and buildings and adding to land to other holdings to make them viable. It was stated by a few respondents that disposal should be managed in an strategic way and in accordance with an asset management plan.

In terms of no disposals, it was felt that the land should be kept for new entrants and some disagreed with the Council asset stripping altogether.

Q12 How do you consider any capital raised from any disposal should be spent?



The greatest proportion of tenants felt that any capital disposals should be reinvested back into the estate, however there was support for a proportion of receipts going back in to support the work of the Council including reducing debt.

Q13 Are you in an Environmental Scheme?

Q13	Yes	No
	60	40

If there was a scheme would you be interested?

Yes	No
40	8

The majority of the comments related to the fact that the tenancies expiring in 2017 were not long enough to be able to access schemes.

The other comments mainly related to the lack of size and the amount of paperwork for very little reward.

Q14 How do you implement best practice in rural estate and sustainable countryside management?

The main theme around the comments received related to environmental schemes, farming in accordance with cross-compliance, being in farmed assured schemes and traditional farming methods.

Q15 Do you grow crops for renewable energy schemes?

100% said No.

Comments

- Acreage too small would like to expand and be able to grow crops
- We do not grow crops for renewable energy as our tenancy agreement does not allow

Q16 Have you enquired into renewable energy technologies on your smallholding; if yes what and if no why and include any barriers or problems?

Q16	Yes	No
	32	68

The main theme of comments was that the tenancies were not long enough to reap the rewards and lack of funds for capital outlay.

Q17 What community involvement has there been on or with your smallholding, i.e. local groups, schools, other public initiatives, if none why not?

This produced an array of responses from one or two holdings holding primary school visits , YFC events or work experience, but the majority stated reasons that they had not due to biosecurity risks, they had never been asked and that it would not help pay their rent.

There was a comment made about health and safety issues and lack of investment prevented public access.

#### Q18 Diversification

36% of Respondents have attempted to diversify in the following ways:

Seasonal farming enterprises such as turkeys. Others relied on agricultural contracting and a couple of farm shops.

72% of Respondents have not attempted to diversify for the following reasons:

This produced a high proportion of responses mainly around the length of tenancies preventing any long term investment. Other comments were around the rural situation of the farms and capital outlay as well as the practical management of having to work off the holding to support the core business of farming.

Q19 Would you like the opportunity to buy your farm at open market value, with individual sales assessed on a farm by farm basis, and conditional on the impact on any wider estate policy?

Q19	Yes	No
	36	44

Of those that answered yes, they would only consider it if they reflected a suitable discount. Some stated that if they could afford to buy a 100 acre holding they would have already done so.

Of those that answered No, the main theme was that they should be retained for new entrants and a way into farming and that the estate should continue to support local business and communities.

Q20 Any other comments you wish to make?

The main areas of comments were:

Short term tenancies prevent investment and restricts progression, decision making and forward planning. More investment is needed in the estate whilst using local contractors. Rationalisation was supported. Herefordshire is an agricultural county and the Council should take pride and note of this.

Equally there were comments relating to the fact that small farms become a way of life and that tenants don't want to move on and this was also reflected in the fact that tenants are waiting for the next door neighbour to retire to enable their holdings to get larger rather than moving on and giving other people a chance.