

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Rural Services Survey

August 2011 Update



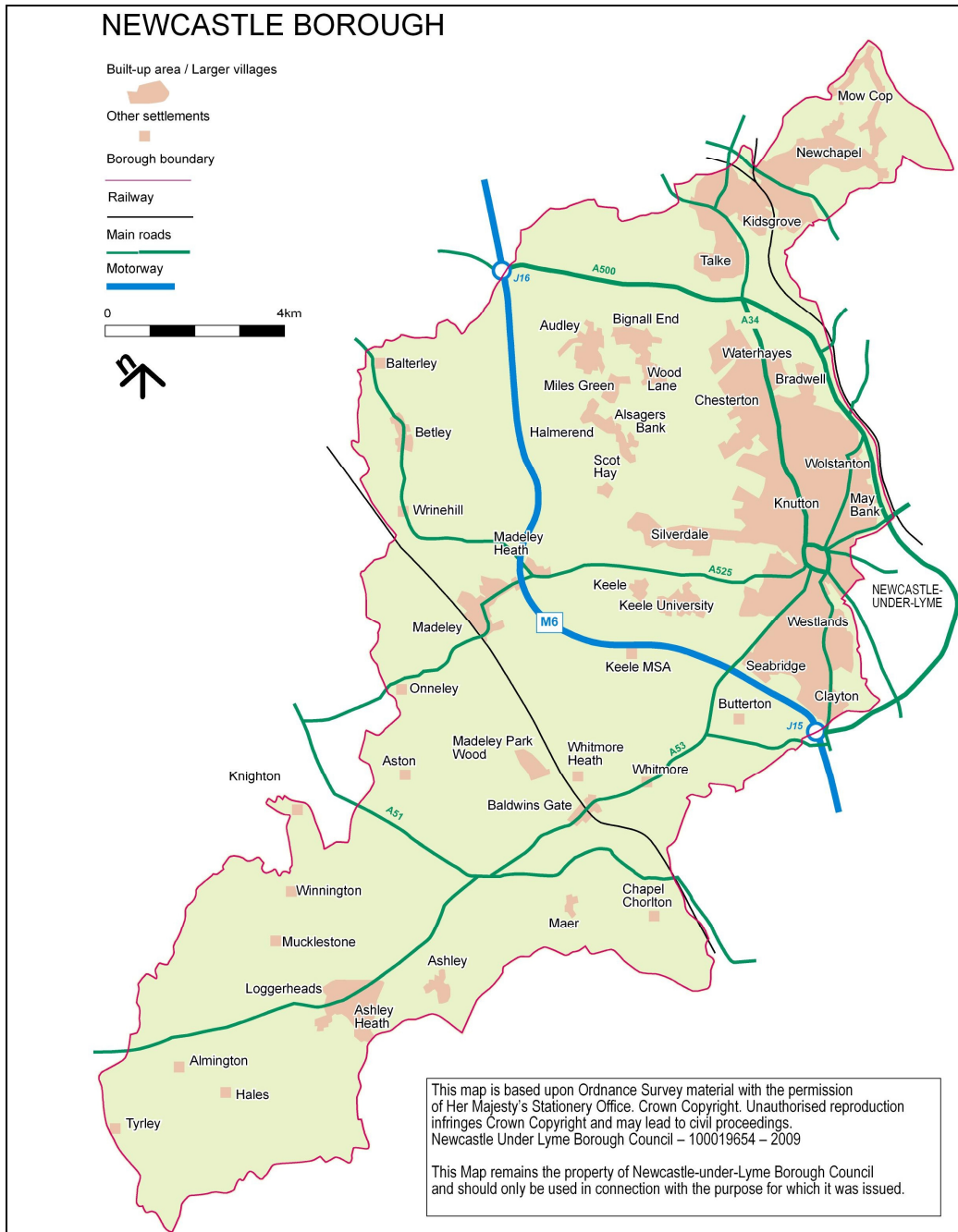


Diagram 1: Illustration of the Rural Service Centres and other main rural settlements within the Borough

Rural Services Survey 2011 – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough

Introduction

A survey of all the key rural settlements in the borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme was originally undertaken between December 2007 and February 2008 to analyse and clearly indicate what services are available to the local residents. The survey was updated in 2009.

This report provides an update of the surveys undertaken in 2008 and 2009. The survey was conducted in August 2011.

The survey continues the methodology from previous years to develop a profile for each village/settlement in each parish in order to identify a hierarchy of rural service centres. In seeking to achieve this aim, the following three objectives were undertaken:

- The mapping of the rural settlement boundaries for each rural location
- A survey of all identified settlements, recording all services available to the local community
- Analysis of available Census data to assess the sustainability of each settlement

Survey findings will provide an evidence base to inform the development of local planning policy in Newcastle-under-Lyme, which seeks to ensure that both local rural housing needs are met, and access to essential services and facilities such as doctors, schools, shops and community facilities is maximised.

1. Background to the survey

Rural Newcastle-under-Lyme, whilst dominating the borough in spatial terms is home to just 21% of the Borough's population. However the importance of these areas to the borough's resident population and economy should not be underestimated. The area is home to: a vibrant and diverse range of rural economic activities; distinctive rural landscapes; a wealth of international, national and locally designated wildlife sites and nature reserves; and distinctive and attractive villages.

The loss of services such as village stores, post offices, garages, public houses can strip the heart out of rural life. As well as a loss of local employment opportunities, it produces an increased need for individuals to travel and hence promotes car usage where passenger transport is inadequate. Individuals without a car can feel isolated and experience acute problems in travelling to essential services, often situated in the more distant larger towns such as Newcastle. A decline in the traditional rural industry and agriculture, together with the loss of local services results in limited employment opportunities. Particular problems are faced by young people seeking employment.

In spite of this the rural area is central to the image of the borough as a pleasant and attractive location for people and inward investment.

The results of the survey was used to inform the development of the Rural Area Spatial Strategy set out in the adopted Newcastle –under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent

Core Spatial Strategy. This Strategy seeks to prioritise investment/development in the Rural Service Centres as these have been identified as the most accessible and sustainable locations.

2. Policy Context

Local Development Framework: Core Spatial Strategy

The importance of the rural area within the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme and its special characteristics are detailed within Section 3 of the Core Spatial Strategy Spatial Portrait. Section 4: Strategic Aims, identifies a number of key objectives in order to meet the aim of rural renaissance. To help realise these and the other aims of the Core Spatial Strategy, the rural area is identified as one of the six distinctive sub areas. The importance of linked communities, which have a range of services and are well connected to major employment and service centres, is a key priority of the Core Spatial Strategy. The analysis and findings of this survey inform and support the strategic approach endorsed within the Strategy.

National Policy

On the 25th July 2011 the Department for Communities and Local Government published the consultation draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF is intended to bring together existing Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and some Circulars into a single consolidated document.

The draft NPPF contains a number of references to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the need to support economic growth through the planning system. It advises that local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances in order to support the rural economy.

Whilst the draft NPPF is a consultation document and, therefore, subject to potential amendment, it nevertheless gives a clear indication of the Government's 'direction of travel' in planning policy. Therefore, the draft National Planning Policy Framework is capable of being a material consideration, although the weight to be given to it will be a matter for the decision maker's planning judgment in each particular case. The current Planning Policy Statements, Guidance notes and Circulars remain in place until cancelled.

Planning Policy Statement 1 – Sustainable Development aims to ensure that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community.

Planning Policy Statement 7 – Sustainable Development in Rural Areas states that local planning authorities should identify in their development plans the centres which provide the best access to essential local services and employment opportunities. These 'local service centres' might be a country town, a single large village or a group of villages. New development should be focused in or near to these centres.

Planning Policy Guidance note 13 – Transport states that in remote locations well away from large urban areas, local authorities should focus most development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services in or near to local service centres, to

help ensure it is served by public transport and provides some potential for access by walking and cycling. These centres (which might be a market town, a single large village or a group of villages) should be identified in the development plan as the preferred locations for such development. They should also be the main focus for significant additional housing, to enable it to be accessible to a range of services and to help support the use and quality of local services.

3. Scope of the Survey

To profile each village/settlement, the following services have been audited using the following criteria:

- Shopping facilities
- Chip shops/ Takeaways/ Cafes
- Post Offices
- GP Services
- Primary Schools
- Private nursery's
- Pubs/ Restaurants
- Churches
- Community Halls
- Places of employment other than farms, evidence of seasonal employment and working at home, tourism including B&B
- Public Transport provision/ Accessibility
- Sports provision

4. The Survey

An analysis of the services available to residents within the rural areas of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough was undertaken. This involved a "site-by-site" analysis, logging all facilities and services available (as noted under 'Scope of the Survey'). The following rural communities have been surveyed:

- Loggerheads
- Baldwin's Gate
- Whitmore
- Bignall End
- Madeley Heath
- Keele Village
- Betley
- Wrinehill
- Madeley
- Wood Lane
- Miles Green
- Alsagers Bank
- Halmerend, and
- Audley
- Ashley

These settlements were chosen for analysis due to their designation as an established village settlement, the majority defined within the adopted Proposals Map.

Population Sizes

The table below shows the populations of the above settlements, where census data was available:

Location	Population Size (ONS 2001)
Loggerheads	2798
Baldwin's Gate	746
Whitmore	----
Madeley Heath	666
Keele Village	3490
Betley	656
Wrinehill	----
Madeley	3398
Audley (Parish)	5054

NB – population data for the smaller settlements is not currently available. Furthermore the population data should be read with caution - 2001 Census data provided for the settlements within the Parish of Audley was only available as a summed cumulative total under 'Audley'. This summation includes the settlements of Halmerend, Alsagers Bank, Miles Green, Wood Lane and Bignall End, as well as the settlement of Audley itself.

Public Transport

As many rural areas are isolated and residents rely on the car for transport, it is important that rural areas have adequate provision and access to public transport. As an indicator of a sustainable location, each of the rural communities listed was analysed to see whether provision was sufficient to enable easy access to the services and facilities of larger nearby settlements, such as Newcastle. Attached as **Appendix C**, the table outlines the major services operating within each village and gives a general indication of where is most accessible within the rural parts of the borough. **Diagram 1**, at the front of this report, also outlines the main highway network - giving an indication of how accessible each settlement is.

The results clearly show that the following settlements are the most accessible by public transport:

- **Audley Parish** – The communities within Audley Parish, in particular Audley and Bignall End, are easily accessible by buses. Three bus services pass through these settlements on a frequent basis (every 30 minutes).
- **Keele** – Of all the settlements studied, Keele is the area best served by public transport. There are four bus services that operate within Keele, ranging from every 10 minutes to every hour. The likely reason for this frequency is for the buses to serve the university student population.

Areas to the South of the borough, towards Baldwins Gate and Loggerheads, continue to be inadequately served by public transport. The main bus service for this route (to and from Newcastle) only runs every 60 minutes. This is surprising considering the size of Loggerheads, although it should be noted that Loggerheads does have greater links to larger settlements such as Market Drayton to the south-west of the borough.

5. Key findings of the survey

To aid the analysis, the following definition was used as a benchmark against which communities would be assessed – A sustainable rural location is deemed to be close to services and jobs. It is considered, as a minimum, the inclusion of: a village shop, school, doctor's surgery and bank are likely to be important. This provides a clear picture of the procedure which was taken when surveying the settlements and to give an indication of what was felt important for considering whether a settlement serves its residents well.

For the purposes of this study and the key strategic documents it will feed into, it was also felt that accessibility to public transport along with access to readily available jobs would be a key determinant in assessing the quality of a person's life within the rural areas.

The following commentary outlines the key services that have been identified within each settlement. Full details of service provision are provided in **Appendices A** and **B**.

Level of local service provision

Larger rural settlements

Audley, one of the larger settlements within the study, is four miles west of Newcastle town and of all the studied settlements, has the greatest range of services and facilities within the rural areas. Key services available to local residents include: a post office, a doctor's surgery and pharmacy, numerous food outlets, a library, dental practice and a wide variety of retail outlets.

Bignall End, a smaller settlement immediately adjacent to Audley accordingly shares many of their facilities. This therefore helps to ensure a wide range of services are available to residents of both villages. Services available to residents within Bignall End include: a post office, 2 food shops, a village hall, school, 2 pubs and numerous other facilities.

Loggerheads, one of the borough's larger rural settlements, it is located to the South of Newcastle halfway to Market Drayton. Loggerheads has a wide range of local services and is located within a very sustainable and accessible location along the A53. Within the village there is: a post office, 2 food shops, 2 restaurants/takeaways, a school, a pub, a cash point, a library and other local amenities.

Madeley, a village to the west of the borough, is split into three parts: Madeley, Middle Madeley and Little Madeley. The majority of the settlement sits between the M6 and through the A525, connects to the A500. The settlement contains a wide range of local facilities, including: three churches, a post office, six food shops, three

village halls, a library, dentists, doctors, six restaurants/takeaways and many other services.

All of the above villages are well served by public transport, with the majority of the sites including at least three bus stops and fairly regular bus services.

Services available in the smaller rural settlements

Baldwin's Gate – Is reasonably well served. Services include: a church, food shop, doctor's surgery, primary school, petrol garage and post box.

Whitmore – Due to its proximity to Baldwin's Gate, it shares many of the facilities recorded as being within Baldwin's Gate (see above). Services individual to Whitmore include: a church, post office, two pubs, and a village hall.

Madeley Heath – Within close proximity to Madeley, the settlement is fairly developed and offers a reasonably wide range of services. These include: a church, pub, a primary school, petrol station and a restaurant.

Keele Village – Located to the west of the Borough, this settlement includes the residents of Keele Parish but also those of the adjacent Keele University. Keele is a small village with very little in terms of local amenities. There are however a number of facilities located on the university campus that are open and easily accessible to members of the public, although this is extensive it must be noted that Keele Village is quite distinct from the campus and separate from the main entrance to the university campus by some distance.

Betley – Bearing in mind the size of the settlement, Betley has a reasonable range of services. These include: Two churches, a post office/ shop, a pub, a primary school, and village hall.

Wrinehill – A very small settlement within the rural area that has very little to offer other than two pubs.

Wood Lane – A small settlement located within Audley Parish containing: One church, one village hall, two post boxes and a primary school.

Miles Green – Located within Audley Parish, within close proximity of Audley and Bignall End. For a settlement of its size, there are a reasonable number of facilities and amenities, including: a food shop, pub, two post boxes and a restaurant.

Alsagers Bank – Another settlement within Audley Parish. The settlement offers very little in terms of services and facilities, but is particularly well served by local bus routes.

Halmerend – Similar in size and location to Alsagers Bank, the settlement is also within Audley Parish. It is well served by public transport and has a fair offer of local services and amenities including: a church, post office, food shop, doctor's surgery, village hall, post box and two restaurants/take aways.

6. Summary

The results of the survey clearly show that in 2011, the main larger rural settlements within the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme continue to be well served with a good provision of services. In particular, the settlements of Audley Parish (in particular Bignall End), Loggerheads and Madeley are the best served with a wide range of local services and amenities that ensure the settlements are generally sufficiently equipped to meet the needs of the residents they serve.

The summaries are able to show that the majority of the settlements within the borough have a reasonably good range of services and amenities, but many are lacking what would be considered 'core' services that would make the areas attractive for residents and to also consider them to be sustainable locations.

Therefore the settlements that offer the most sustainable locations for additional development to meet local needs and to support the vitality and viability of local service provision are –

- The villages of Audley Parish
- Loggerheads
- Madeley
- Keele

Further statistical information, outlining the results in tabular form is presented in **Appendices A-C** to this report. The table records all of the available services, amenities etc within each study area.

	Church	Post Office	Food Shops + other shops	Pub	Doctor's Surgery + Pharmacy	Village Halls / Community centre	Bus Stops	Schools	Petrol Stations/ Garages	Cashpoints	Post Box	Library	Restaurants + take aways	Hair Salons
Loggerheads		1	2	1	Pharmacy		1	P		1	1	1	2	2
Baldwin's Gate	1		1		1		1	P	1		1			
Whitmore	1	1	1	2		1	2				2			
Bignall End	2	1	2	1		1	4	P	1		1		1	2
Audley	3	1	9	2	1 + Pharmacy	5	4			2	2	1	6	5
Wood Lane	1					1	1	P			2			
Miles Green			1	1			2		2		2		1	
Alsagers Bank	1			1			1	P						
Halmerend	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	HS			1		1	
Madeley Heath	1			1			2	P	1		2		2	
Keele Village	1		1	1		1	4	P			1			
Betley	2	1	1	1		1	1	P						1
Wrinehill				2			2							
Madeley	3	1	6	1	2	1	4	HS, P (x2), pre-school			1	Mobile every Tues	6	1
Ashley	2			2	1	2	2				1			

Appendix A – Table of Results

Appendix B - Table of Other Services Available

The following table includes further information gathered which outlines additional services available within the study areas. Clearly Audley has an abundance of additional services and amenities along with Loggerheads and Bignall End. This evidence further supports the conclusions reached in this study.

Settlement	Additional Services
Loggerheads	Vets, dance school, engineers, telephone box
Baldwin's Gate	Engineers, BT office premises, country hotel
Whitmore	Telephone box, iron mongers
Bignall End	Football club, telephone box, funeral directors, cricket club, playground, designer dogs outlet
Audley	Car park (x2), builders merchants yard, recycling centre, offices, theatre, dentist, funeral directors, dog grooming and horse care centre, phone box, public toilets, cricket club, walking green, bowling green, residential home, scout hall
Wood Lane	Cricket club, playground, telephone box
Miles Green	Telephone box
Alsagers Bank	Sports ground, playground, telephone box
Halmerend	Iron mongers, sports ground, playground, telephone box, public garden
Madeley Heath	Light industrial units, playground and playing fields, telephone box, boarding cattery
Keele Village	University, management centre, telephone box
Betley	Office, phone box, reading room, vets
Wrinehill	Phone box
Madeley	Workingmen's club, telephone box, playground, dentist, nursing home, country house accommodation, football fields, police station
Ashley	Fire station , telephone box,

Appendix C – Summary of main bus routes serving each settlement

Location	Service Number	Frequency
Alsagers Bank	No. 94 (First Travel) No. 94A (First Travel)	(Hanley via Newcastle) Every 30 min
	No.20 (First Travel)	(Hanley to Crewe) Every 20 mins
Audley	No. 94 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle via Silverdale) Every 30 mins
	No. 94A (First Travel)	(From Newcastle via Knutton + Silverdale) Every 30 mins
	No. 34 (D & G)	Only on Sundays – Every 60 mins
Baldwin's Gate	No. 64 (Arriva)	(From Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Betley	No. 85A (D & G)	(From Crewe via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Bignall End	No. 94 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle via Silverdale) Every 30 mins
	No. 94A (First Travel)	(From Newcastle via Knutton + Silverdale) Every 30 mins
	No. 34 (D & G)	Only on Sundays – Every 60 mins
Halmerend	No. 94 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 30 mins
Keele Village	No. 24 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 30 mins
	No. 25 (First Travel)	Every 10-15 mins
	No. 85A (D & G)	(From Crewe via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
	No. 52 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 6 hours
Loggerheads	No. 64 (Arriva)	(Hanley via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Madeley	No. 51 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 2 ½ hours
	No. 52 (First Travel)	Every 2 ½ hours
	No. 85A (D & G)	(From Crewe via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Madeley Heath	No. 51 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 2 ½ hours
	No. 52 (First Travel)	Every 2 ½ hours
	No. 85A (D & G)	(From Crewe via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Miles Green	No. 94 (First Travel)	(From Newcastle) Every 30 mins
Whitmore	No. 64 (Arriva)	(From Hanley via

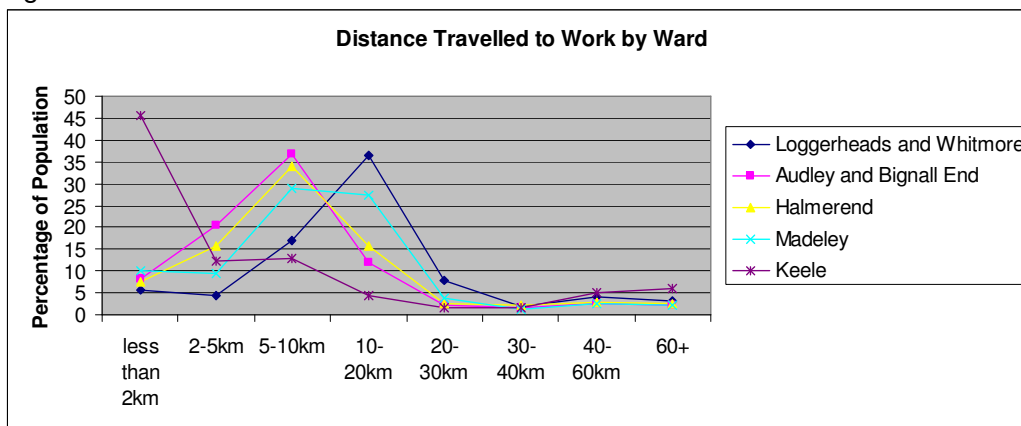
		Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Wood Lane	No. 34 (D & G)	(From Hanley via Newcastle) Every 60 mins
Wrinehill	No. 85A (D & G)	(From Newcastle) Every 30 mins

(Source: Newcastle Area Public Transport Timetable, Staffordshire County Council, January 2011)

Appendix D – Statistical Analysis

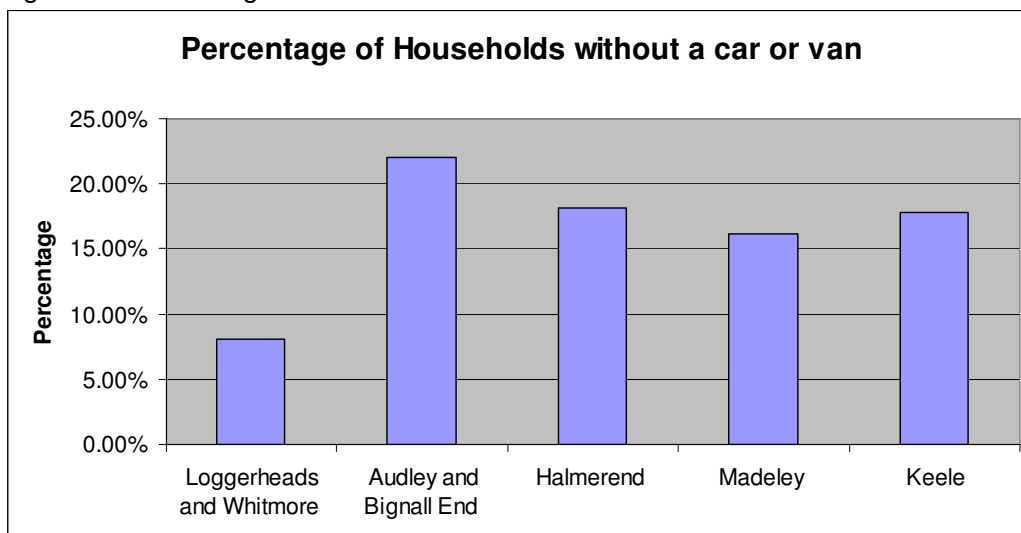
Where 2001 Census data was available, a brief analysis of data indicators which provide a picture of the accessibility of settlements was undertaken. Data was unfortunately only available at ward, rather than settlement level.

Figure 1 – Distance travelled to work



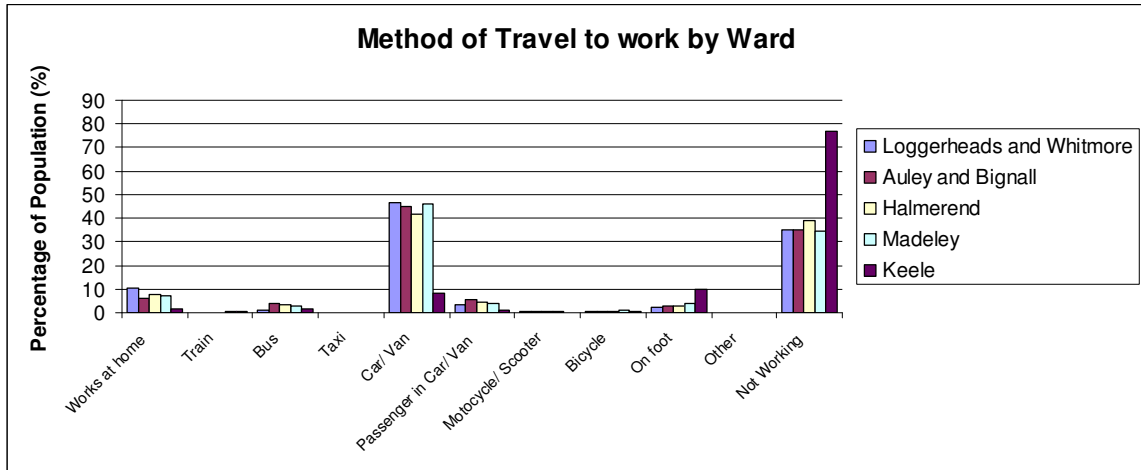
Data suggests that residents of the ward of Loggerheads and Whitmore have the furthest distance to travel to work, with 35% of the population travelling 10-20km. However, within the ward of Keele 45% of the population travel less than 2km to work.

Figure 2 – Percentage of Households without a car or van



Data suggests that residents within the area of Audley Parish and Keele have the lowest level of car ownership. Consequently, these areas are served best by public transport.

Figure 3 – Method of Travel to Work



Data suggests that the predominant mode of travel for rural populations is by either car or van. Furthermore, a high proportion of residents in the ward of Keele have recorded that they do not work. This data seems to suggest that a car is a necessity within the rural areas of the borough.