

Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown Community Profile

Summary

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1 Introduction

Oxfordshire is one of the most affluent areas of the country. However, this hides the fact that, as reported by the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2019¹, there are 10 wards in Oxfordshire which include areas ranked in the 20% most deprived in England.

To better understand the needs and priorities of these communities, Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health team is undertaking a programme of work with local partners to create community profiles, providing an in-depth understanding both of local health needs as well as supportive community assets. The community profiles use local data and community insight that was based on an asset-based community development model (ABCD).

This profile focusses on one of these wards – Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown.

The aim of this profile is to:

- Understand the experiences of those living in Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown in relation to health and wellbeing,
- Outline the health outcomes and the factors which can influence these health outcomes and bring this to life through the voices of the community
- Provide information and recommendations for local organisations, stakeholders and residents working to improve health and wellbeing in this area

Note that this report is a summary and highlights the key findings from two in-depth reports:

1. *Grimsbury and Hightown Community Insight Project Report* by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO),
2. *Community (data) profile of Banbury Grimsbury* compiled by the Public Health Intelligence team of Oxfordshire County Council.

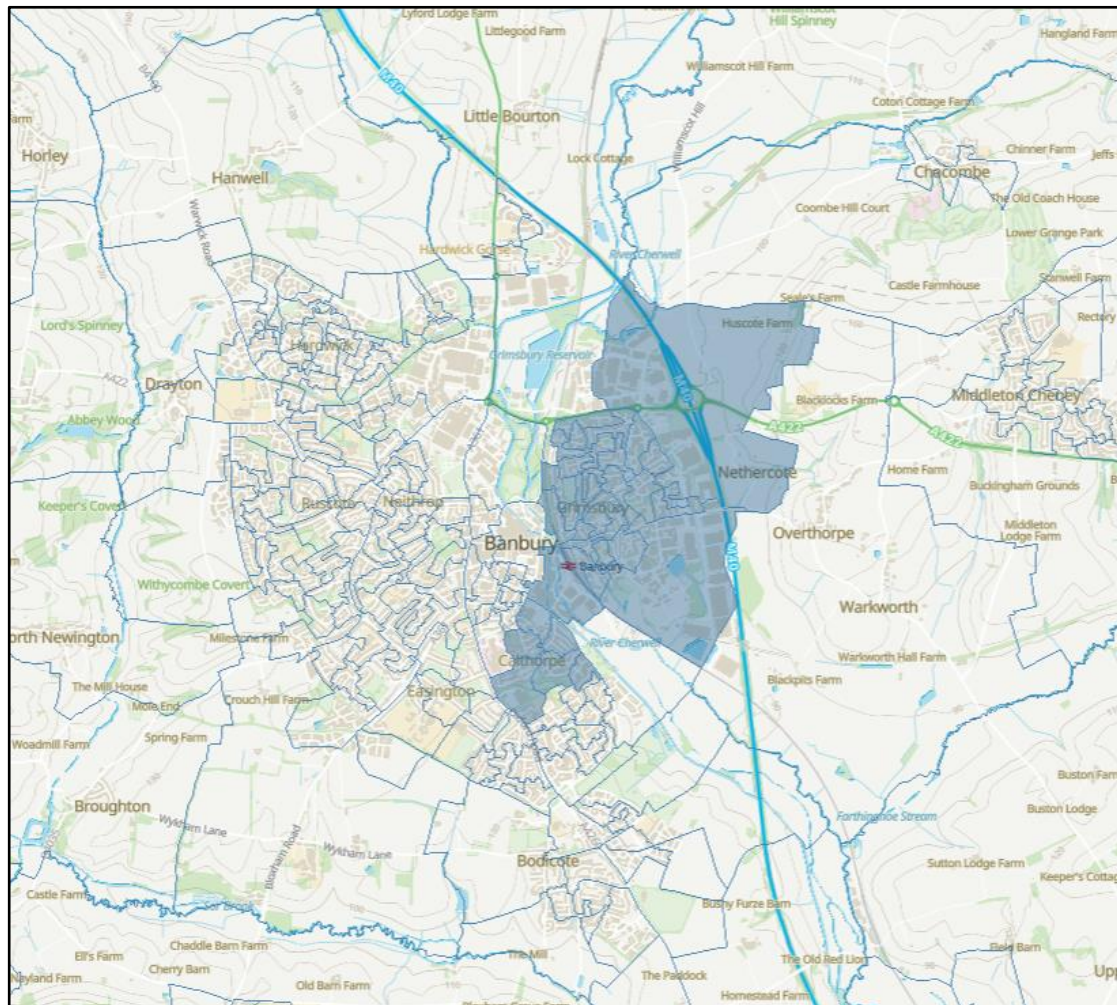
This summary contains quotes from Community insight gathering, these quotes have been edited to aid readability and identifiable information has been removed to anonymise the respondent.

With thanks to the Grimsbury Steering Group, Community First Oxfordshire and especially to the residents of Grimsbury and Hightown who gave their time to talk to CFO researchers. Thanks also to officers at Cherwell District Council and local councillors for their support and guidance.

2 Location

Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward is in north-east Banbury and the area covers the Grimsbury housing estate, the industrial and retail area north of Hennef Way, the junction with the M40 motorway, Thorpe Way Industrial Estate and the railway station to the south.

Figure 1 Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward



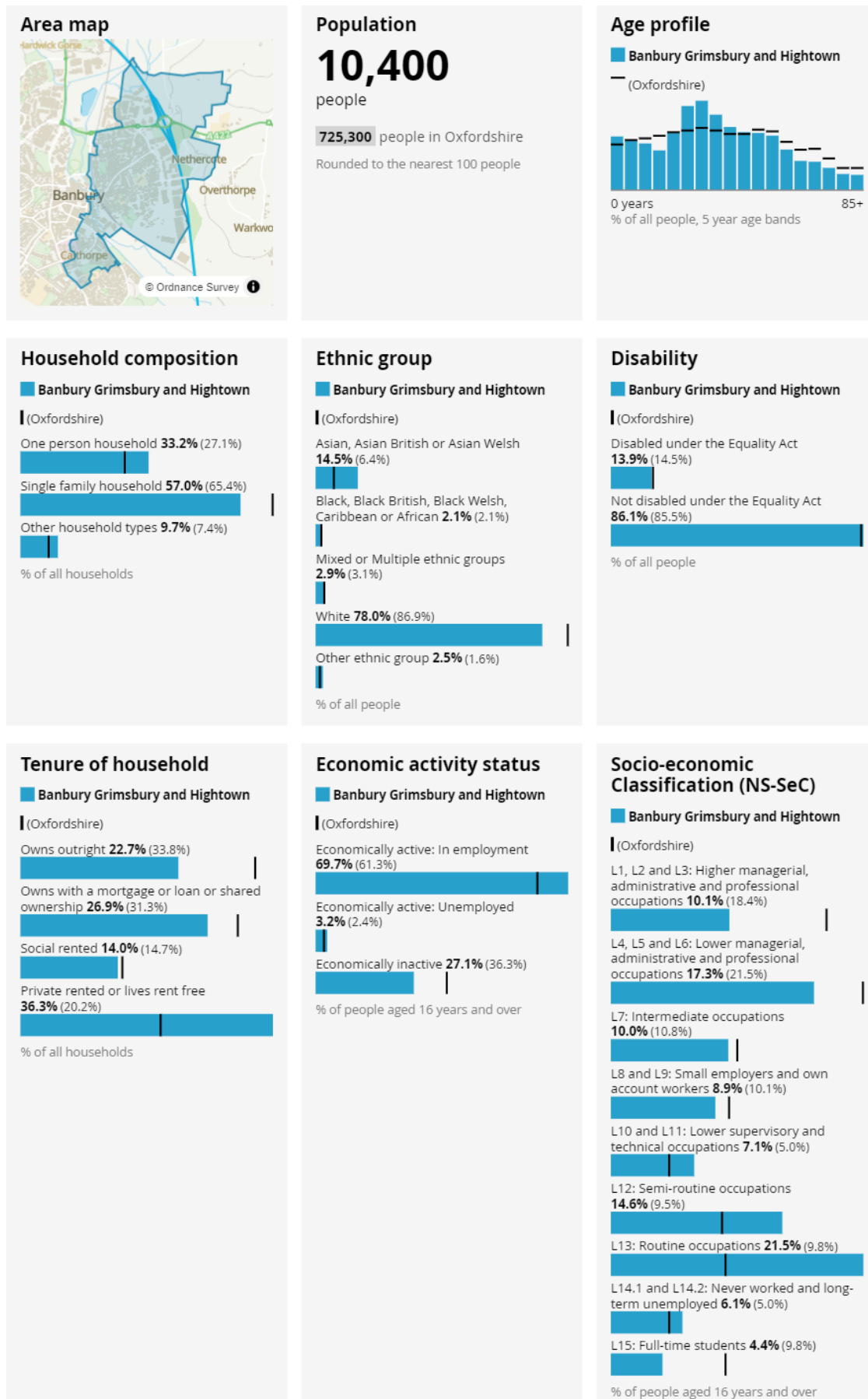
Map from [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

3 Summary of population and health data

Census 2021 data shows that, compared with Oxfordshire as a whole, Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward had an above-average proportion of:

- Younger working age residents (aged 25 to 39 years)
- People in Routine and Semi-routine occupations (36% vs 19%)
- One person households (33% vs 27%)
- People living in private rented accommodation (36% vs 20%)
- People from an Asian ethnic background (14.5% vs 6.4%)

Figure 2 Census 2021 profile of Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward



From [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

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The Banbury Grimsbury area has higher rates of unemployment and poverty than the Oxfordshire average.

Working aged people and families

- 3.2% (count=235) of working aged residents in Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward were claiming unemployment-related benefits as of February 2023¹, above the rate for Oxfordshire of 2.1%. Note that this value has been obtained from DWP and is available every month, it differs from the self-declared unemployment data from the Census (as in figure 2 above).
- The latest fuel poverty data² (for 2020) showed that the Banbury Grimsbury ward area had almost 400 households estimated to be in fuel poverty, equivalent to 8.3% of households and just above the average for Oxfordshire (8.1%).

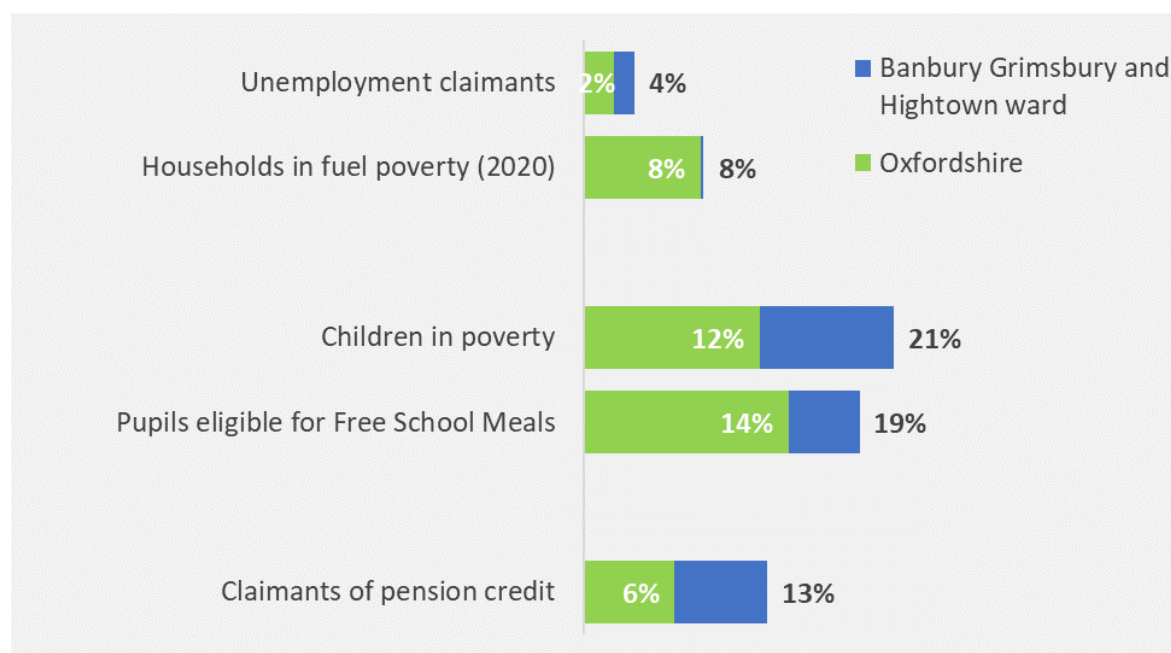
Children and young people

- 21% (count=403) of children were living in poverty³ in Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward, almost double the average for Oxfordshire (12%).
- 19% (count=241) of primary and secondary pupils living in Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward were eligible for Free School Meals⁴, above the average for Oxfordshire of 14%.

Older people

- 12.7% (count=166) of older residents were claiming pension credit in Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward as of August 2022, double the average for Oxfordshire (6.3%).

Figure 3 Indicators of low income



¹ DWP claimant count January 2023 from nomisweb.co.uk including Job Seeker Allowance and Universal Credit claimants who are out of work

² Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2020 Dept for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Fuel poverty refers to households living in a property with fuel energy efficiency rating of band D or below as well as households which after paying their energy bill to heat their home the residual income is below the official poverty line.

³ DWP statXplore, children aged 0-15, 2021/22; refers to households with an income less than 60 per cent of the UK average income

⁴ January 2022 pupil census, Oxfordshire County Council

Indices of deprivation

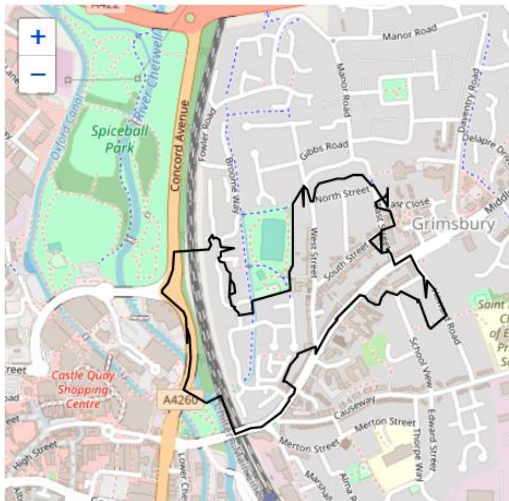
Found within Grimsbury, LSOA Cherwell 004G falls within the 20% most deprived areas in England.

This LSOA is also ranked within the 10% most deprived in each of the domains; *Education, skills and training* and *Income Deprivation Affecting Older People*.

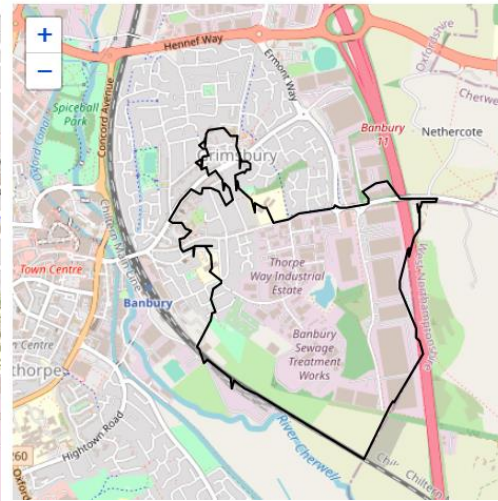
The LSOA Cherwell 004F is within the 10% most deprived on the *Living Environment* domain.

Figure 4 Maps of LSOA Cherwell 004F and LSOA Cherwell 004G

Map of E01028440 : Cherwell
004F



Map of E01032941 : Cherwell
004G



Maps from www.nomisweb.co.uk

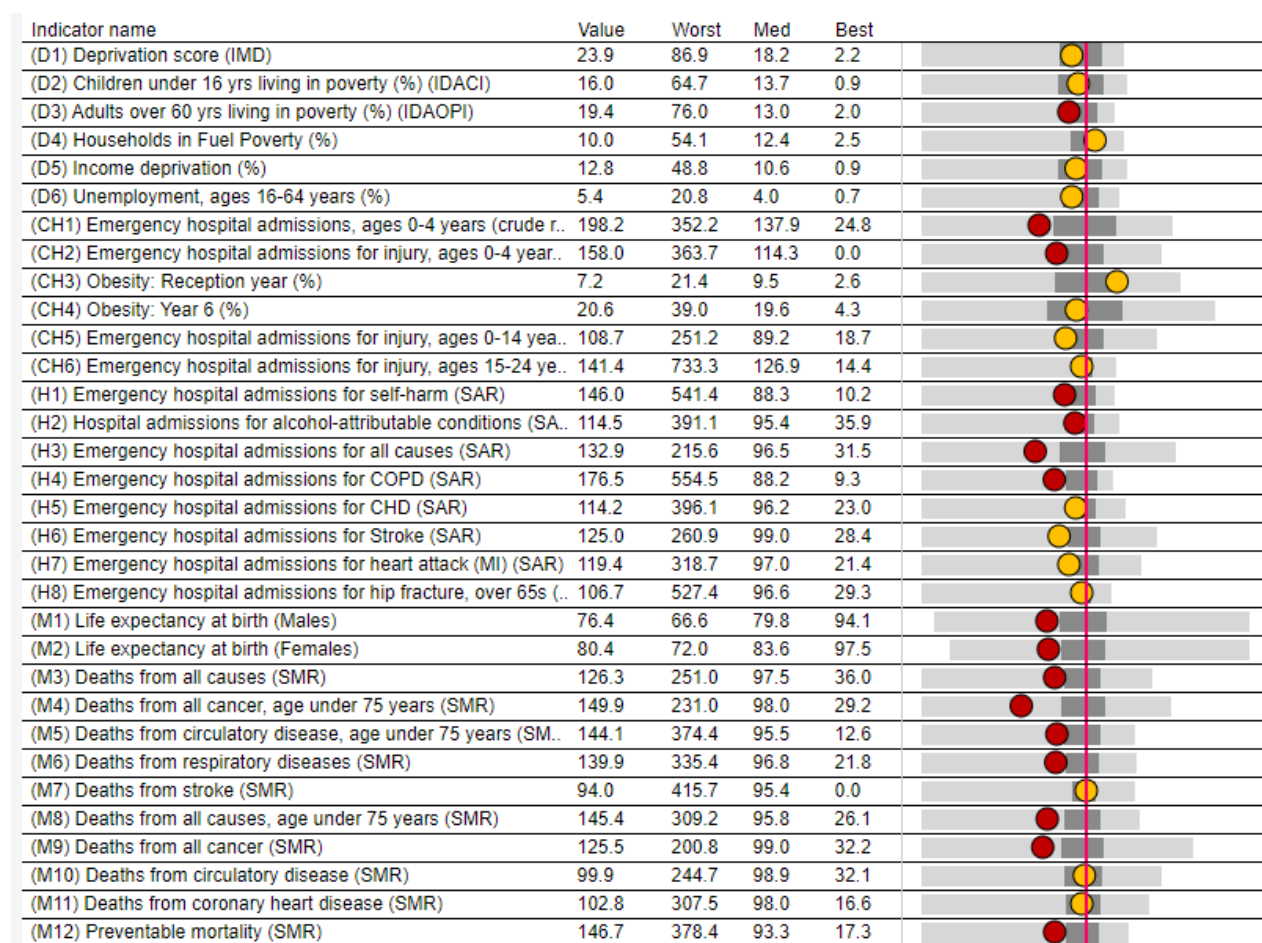
Health and wellbeing Indicators

A range of **health and wellbeing indicators** for Banbury Grimsbury Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) show that the Banbury Grimsbury area has a relatively poor health profile.

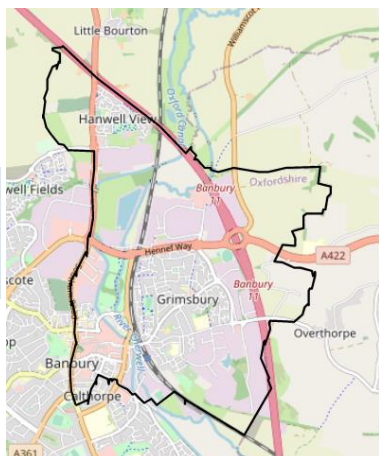
Half (16 out of 32) of local health and wellbeing indicators are ranked **as worse** than the England average, including:

- Life expectancy (lower than average for males and females),
- Emergency hospital admissions for all causes and deaths for all causes,
- Premature deaths from all causes,
- Preventable deaths.

Figure 5 Health and Wellbeing profile of Banbury Grimsbury MSOA*



Area map –
Grimsbury
MSOA



Source: OHID Local Health from Oxfordshire JSNA
inequalities dashboard [Workbook: Oxfordshire Local
Area Inequalities Dashboard \(tableau.com\)](#)

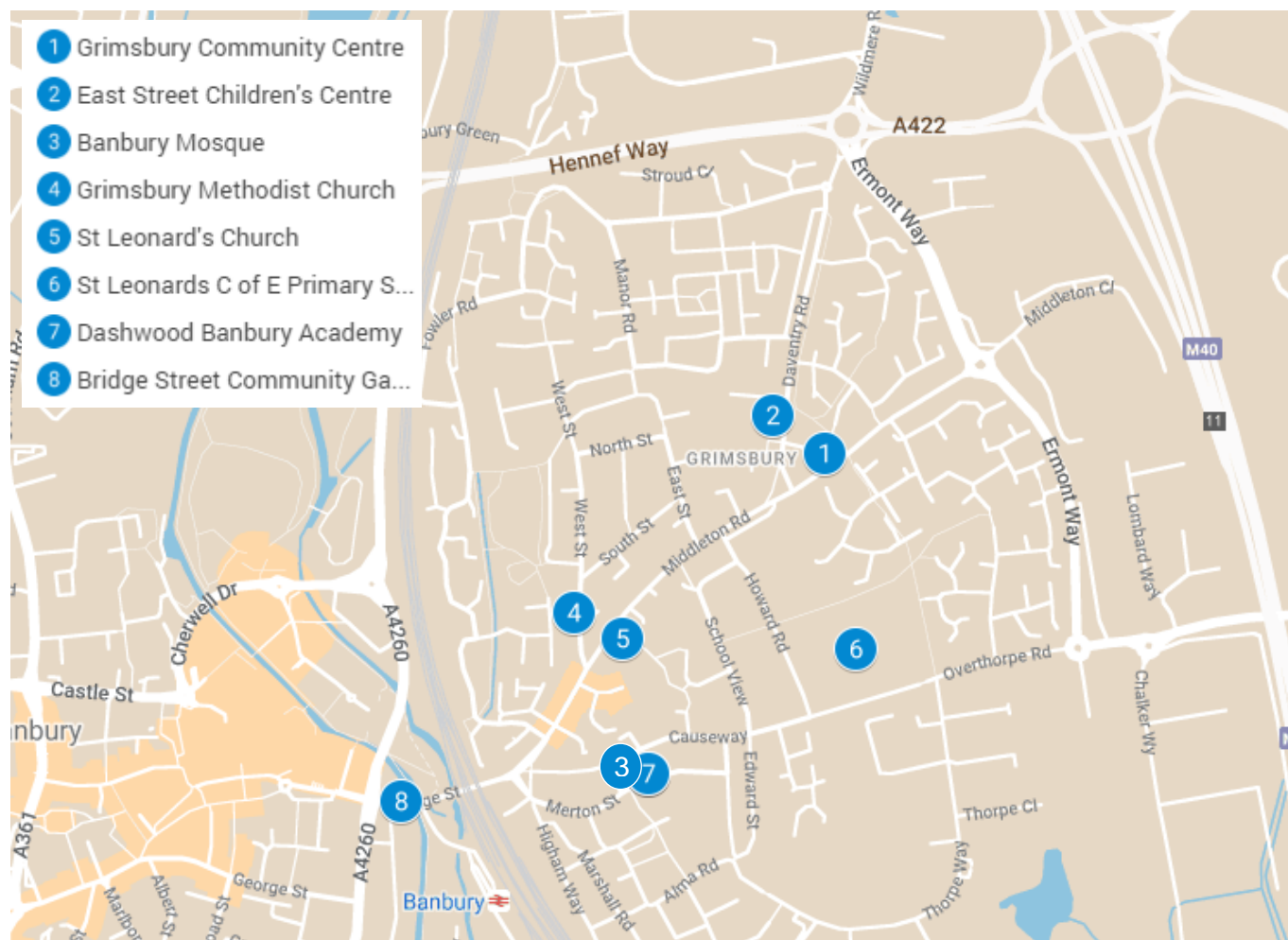
4 Community assets and local groups

A local asset-mapping exercise carried out by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) from November 2022 to January 2023 found that the Grimsbury area has benefited from long term community development work, which local residents and groups recognise as often high quality, well-targeted and well-received.

The mapping exercise developed a long list of assets and activities for residents including those based at the Grimsbury Community Centre, local places of worship (Banbury Mosque, Methodist and Church of England Churches) and schools and offered by organisations with a focus on specific communities, those with health conditions or supporting vulnerable groups.

The map below shows community venues within the Grimsbury Area, a full list of community assets is available in Appendix 2.

Figure 6 Banbury Grimsbury community venues



Map created by Oxfordshire County Council

5 Community research

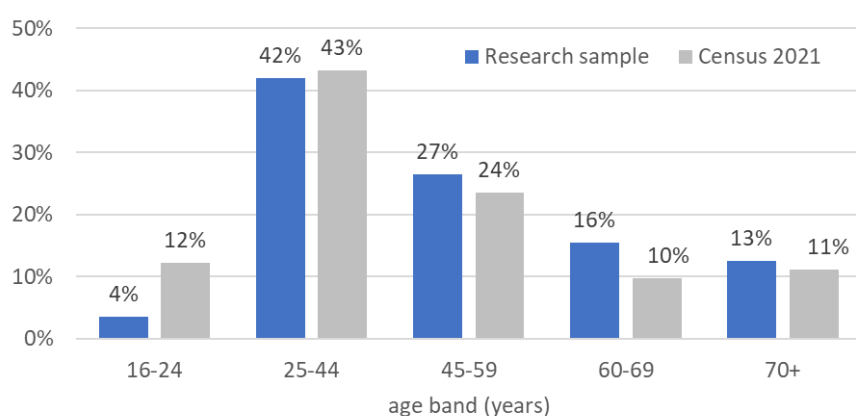
5.1 Research methodology and sample

Community insight research by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO), included:

- 24 interviews with local residents,
- 17 interviews with representatives from local organisations,
- 2 focus groups attended by 19 people in total
- An online survey completed by 180 respondents.

The age profile of respondents was broadly similar to the profile of residents (Census 2021) aged 16 and over. For example, 42% of respondents were aged 25-44 and 43% of the population of the ward (aged 16+) were aged 25-44.

Figure 7 Proportion of respondents in Grimsbury insight research by broad age vs split by age of total population of Banbury Grimsbury & Hightown ward



Research sample = 227 in total, excludes 13 respondents working for organisations and agencies outside the area. ONS Census 2021 age group 16 and over; table TS007 for Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward from www.nomisweb.co.uk

The Asian group is the main non-white ethnic group in the area and this group was very well represented in the online survey.

- 22% of respondents to the online survey were from an Asian background. Census 2021 data shows that 14.5% of residents of Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown ward were of an Asian ethnic background.
- *Note that this is not fully comparable as the survey data is for people aged 16 and over and the Census 2021 data (as published in February 2023) is all ages.*

5.2 Living in Banbury Grimsbury

Respondents reported many positive aspects of living in the Grimsbury area overall and it was clear to the CFO researchers that there are well-developed local community networks and a commitment to improving the area for residents.

Banbury Grimsbury as a place to live

Around half of online survey respondents were satisfied with Grimsbury area as a place to live with 46% (of those answering the question) fairly or very satisfied and 14% very or fairly dissatisfied (40% neutral).

The proportion dissatisfied was slightly higher than respondents to the Oxfordshire residents survey (2022) where 11% of respondents county-wide were fairly or very dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live⁵.

The top things that survey respondents (base=156) liked about living in the area were:

- Local shops and services (56%)
- Green and open spaces (42%)
- Canal and river (40%)
- Community feeling (38%)

Focus groups and interviews highlighted the neighbourliness of the community.

- *“This community has a great mix of different nationalities and I love it”.*
- *“Everyone looks out for each other and are very friendly”.*
- *“Very well-defined area, very local feel”.*

Getting around

When asked which mode of transport “you use most often” on a typical day, online survey respondents selected:

- Car (73%)
- Walking (72%)
- Public transport or taxi (23%)
- Cycling (6%)

Local opportunities to learn new skills

The majority of online respondents (80%) agreed that they have the skills/qualifications to find employment.

A significantly lower proportion agreed that there are local opportunities to learn new skills and/or gain qualifications.

- Around a quarter (26%) of respondents agreed that there are local opportunities to learn new skills and/or gain qualifications and 36% disagree.
- A similar proportion (26%) felt able to access local opportunities to learn new skills and/or gain qualifications (40% disagree).

The Retail Park and Banbury town are walking distance, there are good local shops with lots of choice.

5.3 Keeping healthy

Exercise and access to green space

Getting enough exercise and access to local green spaces were each valued by respondents.

- 61% (base=131) of survey respondents agreed that getting enough exercise was important to the health and wellbeing of ‘you/your family’.

⁵ Note that the profile of the sample of the Grimsbury survey is different to the weighted sample used in the Oxfordshire residents survey and the question wording was slightly different. Grimsbury respondents were much more likely to be neutral about their area as a place to live (40% compared with 11% across Oxfordshire).

Healthy eating

Most respondents agreed that healthy food habits are important.

- 59% (base=131) of survey respondents agreed that healthy habits around food and eating was important to the health and wellbeing of 'you/your family'. This was just below exercise (61%) and above "dealing with stress" (47%).

I use a variety of fresh foods to cook our meals and don't use ready meals.

5.4 Challenges to keeping healthy

Anti-social behaviour (including drugs and alcohol)

When asked about things that were most challenging to health and wellbeing, the key issues of concern were anti-social behaviour, litter (Including dog mess), pavements and roads.

- The top response from online survey respondents was anti-social behaviour (23 of 76 respondents chose this option).
- Interviews and focus group attendees highlighted litter including broken glass and dog mess, poor quality pavements and roads.
- 66% of survey respondents had noticed drug taking and/or drug litter in the area.

Crime data shows the Banbury Grimsbury area had a high rate of police-recorded Anti-Social behaviour and Oxfordshire drug treatment data shows relatively high rates in the Grimsbury area.

- Street level police recorded crime data⁶ shows that the Banbury Grimsbury area had the third highest rate of Anti-Social behaviour (ASB) out of the 86 MSOAs in Oxfordshire and the highest number of ASB crimes (22.8 per 1,000 population in 2021).
- The overall crime for Banbury Grimsbury was 185 crimes per 1,000 population and it ranked first out of the other 86 MSOAs.
- The rate of adults in drug treatment in Banbury Grimsbury (2021-22) was above the Oxfordshire average.

Feeling safe

It is possible that respondents in Grimsbury feel less safe in their area than the average for Oxfordshire, however the questions from the two sources used below are not fully comparable.

- 70% of Grimsbury survey respondents agreed that they felt safe in their neighbourhood.
- The county-wide Oxfordshire residents survey (2022) showed that 91% of respondents felt safe when outside in their area during the day and 65% after dark.

In relation to the question about feeling safe, some specific comments were made by interviewees about drug dealing and alcohol.

- *"I feel safe but not in South Street in the evenings - there's lots of drug dealers there so I don't go anywhere near it".*
- *"I don't like the drinkers who hang around by the benches or in the park. There seems to be a lot of men around in the daytime. It's low-level anxiety but I do think about what I would do if there was trouble, because of being with small children".*

⁶ [Community safety | Oxfordshire Insight](#) Oxfordshire Crime Dashboard with data from police.uk

Impact of COVID-19

When asked about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for “you or for the community”, respondents highlighted loneliness, stress/anxiety and activities being stopped.

- Around half of online survey respondents reported feeling lonely with just under 1 in 10 (7.8%) feeling lonely all or most of the time.
- *“Things have shut down that used to bring us all together. If it wasn't for the common room I'd be very lonely”- Interviewee (aged in 50s)*
- *“Loads of activities had to stop and they mostly haven't come back again. Lack of people to run things I guess”.*

People have got out of the habit of being sociable, after being stuck at home so much. A lot of my neighbours are very worried about going out in case they get ill. It's very sad the way it has made people housebound.

Cost of living

Cost of living as an issue for health and wellbeing was raised by residents and was a concern for representatives of local community groups.

Foodbanks are being used by 14% of survey respondents and the mosque was mentioned as providing support.

- *“The mosque is brilliant! They deliver food parcels, a chap goes round on his bike delivering to old people, the mosque has a community fridge that people can go to and take what they need”.*

Need is coming to us like a tsunami
Local organisation

Good food costs more

5.5 What more could be done to support health and wellbeing

When asked what more could be done to support health and wellbeing, respondents proposed community events to help people build connections and support to help people access events (including better publicity).

- Just over half (56%) of survey respondents agreed that free or reduced cost access to events and activities would help improve health and wellbeing.
- Suggestions of support to help people access activities included childcare, activities at different times of the day, better sharing of information about local activities.
- Proposals by interviewees and focus group attendees included:
 - A new and ongoing programme of healthy activities for all sections of the community. Healthy cooking classes, how to budget, money saving ideas.
 - Better publicity about existing activities such as health walks.
 - *“More people would benefit if they knew about [health and wellbeing] walks. They absolutely help with mental health”.*

There used to be “cooking on a budget” courses at East Street which were excellent.

6 Recommendations

The following is a brief summary of recommendations clustered by theme, that have been derived from the community insight project.

Further discussion of the recommendations is available in the community insight report.

1. Community spaces

- Improvements to local environment - new bins and better management of play areas and communal greenery (trees and verges)
- Improve lighting in certain areas - improving street lighting to increase sense of safety

2. Community cohesion and communication

- Develop a community-wide communication strategy by exploring ways to reach the community and specific target groups.
- Run language classes for speakers of English as a second language
- Develop a programme of whole-community events - developing a community calendar and exploring the best ways to increase attendance and diversity at such events

3. Community action: innovation and resilience

- Funding and bid-writing support - key partners to discuss how current funding streams can be innovated to best meet local need.
- Improve joint-working and networking - Map current partners and their activities to identify gaps and crossovers in key themes, complement existing activity, avoid duplication, and identify new provision
- A (North) Banbury volunteer drive

4. Community action: meeting locally- identified needs

- Additional support for young people - more affordable activities for school age and Up children and young people
- Community-based mental health initiatives - a mental health visitor to undertake one-to-one and group support sessions at community venues
- Fund additional (or extend) sessions which already offer peer-to peer support, such as the Community Club and Grimsbury Community Centre.
- Explore food-based initiatives – such as learn to cook courses and community bring and share meals.
- Produce a map of foodbanks
- Introduce community-based life skills sessions - developing community-based support on topics such as, household budgeting or energy saving