



Your views on health and wellbeing in Wood Farm and Town Furze

February 2025

Commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council Public Health

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Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the residents of Wood Farm and Town Furze who shared their experiences with us, and to everyone who supported us with this project, particularly Wood Farm Youth Club for the photos; Bullingdon Community Association for help promoting and completing surveys; Oxford Preservation Trust, whose Wood Farm Community History Project formed the basis of our children's art project; community artist Alex Singleton; Wood Farm Primary School; local councillors; and the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Community Profile Steering Group.

Executive Summary

Wood Farm is a neighbourhood in Headington, Oxford. It has a rich and varied history and is home to a diverse mix of communities. As part of Oxfordshire County Council Public Health's work listening to communities in areas where residents are most likely to experience health inequalities about the strengths and challenges to health and wellbeing within their local areas, Healthwatch Oxfordshire was commissioned to hear from residents of Wood Farm and Town Furze about what it is like to live in the area.

Between July and November 2024, Healthwatch Oxfordshire carried out insight gathering to hear from Wood Farm residents. We asked people what supports them to be healthy and well, what makes this difficult, and their ideas for making Wood Farm a healthier, happier place to live. We heard from people using a mixed-methods approach, including a combination of online and paper surveys, face to face outreach, and interviews.

We heard from a total of **255 people**:

- **225 local residents** through our online survey and outreach
- **10 professional stakeholders** who shared their perspectives in interviews or in writing
- **20 children** who took part in an art engagement activity.

What people told us:

We heard from a wide range of people, representing varied and contrasting experiences and viewpoints. People's experiences varied depending on where they live, for how long, their circumstances and life stage, and their relationship with the place. It was clear that wider social and economic factors – including income, work and community connections – strongly influence how people experience Wood Farm as a place to live.

What supports people to be healthy and well?

- We heard that Wood Farm has a wealth of assets that support health and wellbeing, and many residents were positive about it as a place to live.
- We heard from people who appreciate the **peace and quiet** of Wood Farm, its **convenient location** and its **community spirit** and **friendly people**.
- People told us about the **assets and facilities** in the area that help them to be healthy and well, including Wood Farm's **woods, parks and green spaces, sports facilities**, good **transport links**, good **housing** and nearby **health services**.
- We heard that people value the **facilities and services for young people**, especially for young families, **community spaces** like Bullingdon Community Centre and Wood Farm Youth Centre, and **community groups and activities** like the 7 O'clock Club.

What makes it harder for people to be healthy and well?

- We also heard that there are things about Wood Farm that make it hard for people to stay healthy and well, and that people experience **barriers** to making the most of Wood Farm's assets.
- People told us about fears and experiences of **safety, crime and anti-social behaviour**, which was affecting their ability to make the most of local green spaces and other facilities.
- We heard that people felt there were **not enough facilities and activities** locally, especially for **young people**.
- People told us about the impact of the high **cost of living** on their wellbeing, including challenges with high rents, affordable housing, getting healthy, affordable food, and using transport to get to other services and facilities.
- Other challenges we heard about included problems with **traffic and transport**, accessing **health services**, **isolation**, and **not feeling listened to** by services or involved in improving the area for the local community.

What ideas do people have for making Wood Farm a healthier, happier place to live?

- **Activities and events to bring the community together** and make the most of the area's strengths and assets, and support and funding for existing groups and activities
- **Community spaces**, run by and for the community, to bring people together and provide people with the food and other resources they need to live well
- **Improvements to infrastructure** and facilities to make them feel more cared-for, safer and more accessible
- **Better communication** about what is already happening on Wood Farm.

Recommendations

Based on what people told us about living in Wood Farm, we have made a number of recommendations to the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and other stakeholders. These focus on three main areas:

- Tackling health inequalities by providing **targeted support for those who need it most**, for example people with long-term health conditions or physical impairments living in isolated parts of Wood Farm
- **Supporting, connecting and joining up** the community activities and assets that already exist in Wood Farm, and supporting residents and community groups to build on these
- **Addressing specific barriers and challenges** to health and wellbeing raised by residents in this report, including:
 - Improving people's sense of safety and reducing crime
 - Making the most of existing community spaces, addressing barriers to access and exploring the potential for a new community space
 - Supporting residents with the cost of living and improving communication between residents and social housing landlords
 - Working with young people to better meet their needs
 - Exploring the potential for improving access to healthy, affordable food
 - Improving road safety and access to bus services, and providing more support for active travel
 - Improving access to green spaces, for example through new access points, improved path surfaces and lighting and community walking groups, and working with residents to improve less used areas
 - Ensuring that next steps are co-produced with local residents and improving communication between decision-makers and residents
 - Proactively supporting residents with their health and wellbeing

- Building a sense of community spirit by creating opportunities to bring residents together and improving communication about what is happening in the local area.

1. Background

Community insight profiles

Since 2022, Oxfordshire County Council Public Health has been carrying out a programme of work, aimed at listening to communities in areas where residents are most likely to experience health inequalities. Together with local Health and Wellbeing Partnerships and steering groups, they have produced community insight profiles, giving an oversight of the enablers, challenges and opportunities for local areas with regard to health and wellbeing. This insight helps make sure that planning to tackle health inequalities and development of local services is informed by people's lived experience and embedded in local knowledge of that place.¹ This is part of a move towards more joined-up working between health and care services and greater involvement of local communities in planning and delivering services.²

As part of this, Healthwatch Oxfordshire was commissioned to hear from residents of Wood Farm and Town Furze about what it's like to live here.³ This report shares what we heard through our community engagement in the area, between July to November 2024. This community insight profile will be followed by the launch of a grant funding programme for organisations and activities to promote the health and wellbeing of Wood Farm residents, as well as the appointment of a new Oxford City Council Community Health Development Officer for the area to support translating recommendations into action, both funded by Oxfordshire County Council Public Health.

¹ <https://data.oxfordshire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/community-insight-profiles/>

² See also Oxfordshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its intention, launched in December 2024, to become a Marmot Place to tackle health inequalities and the wider determinants of ill health: <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/new-partnership-aims-to-deliver-a-fairer-and-healthier-county/>

³ Healthwatch Oxfordshire is the county's independent health and social care watchdog. We listen to people's experiences of using health and care services and use what we hear to inform and influence those who run and commission services. Find out more about us at healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

About Wood Farm

Wood Farm is a residential area of Oxford. It sits between Headington to the north, Cowley to the south, the Eastern bypass A4142 to the east, and Lye Valley and the Churchill Hospital to the west. The area's long and rich history – from ancient forest to housing estate – strongly shapes how people see Wood Farm today. This is discussed in more detail, drawing on work by Oxford Preservation Trust, in [Appendix 2: an introduction to Wood Farm](#).

Notes on this report:

- At the request of the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Steering Group, we collected community insight about both Wood Farm and the neighbouring area of Town Furze, also known as the Girdlestone Road area. Survey questions asked about both areas. In this report, we use 'Wood Farm' to refer to both areas, except when talking about Town Furze specifically.
- We heard from many respondents about facilities and services near to but not within Wood Farm, and we have included these in the report as community assets – while acknowledging that their location may affect people's ability and desire to access them.

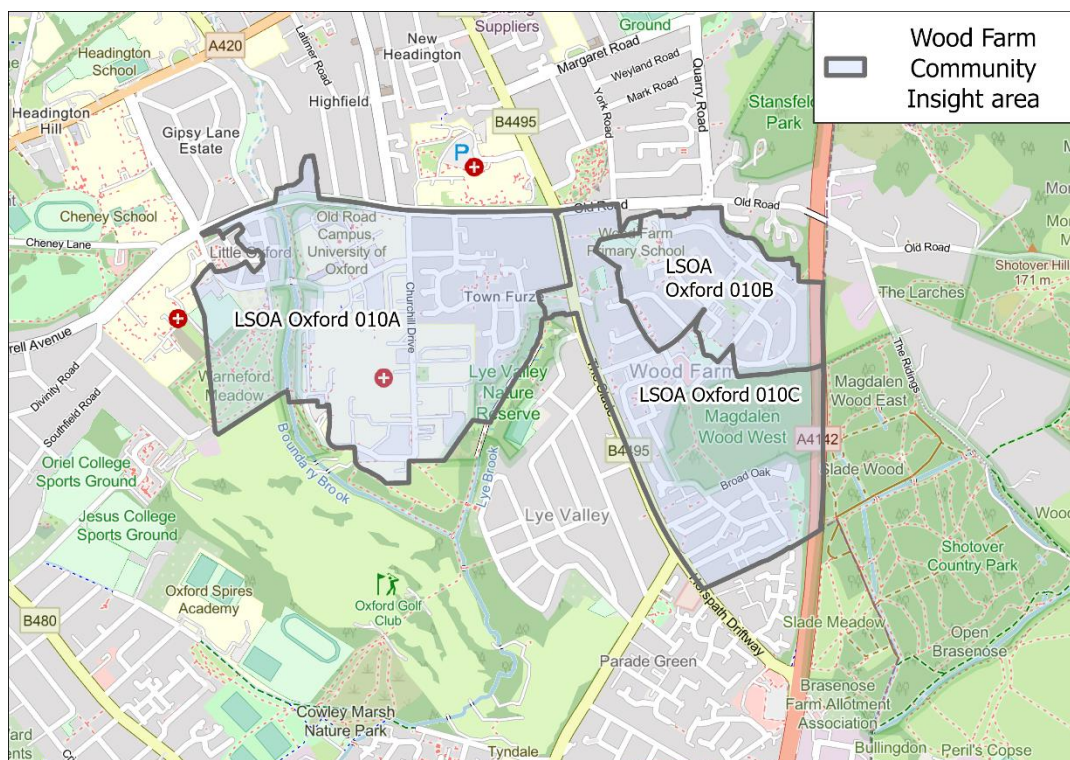


Figure 1: Map of the Wood Farm Community Insight area. Wood Farm is labelled LSOA Oxford 010B and LSOA Oxford 010C, and Town Furze is labelled LSOA Oxford 010A. (Source: Oxfordshire Public Health; map from nomisweb.co.uk).

2. How did we engage with residents?

We used a range of different methods to make sure we heard from a range of people who live and work in Wood Farm. From July 2024 Healthwatch Oxfordshire worked with the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Community Steering Group to identify key themes to explore, as well as key demographic groups and stakeholders to hear from. Our methods included a survey, in-person outreach, and interviews with residents and stakeholders. Our engagement took place from July to November 2024.

Online survey and interviews

Together with the Steering Group, we developed an online survey for Wood Farm residents aged 18 and over, building on surveys used in previous local community profiles. This was shared widely through the Steering Group and community links, including through posters with QR codes, newsletters and with Oxford City Council tenants in Wood Farm and Town Furze. We offered print and translated versions of the survey on request, and the option to complete the survey over the phone. As part of this survey, we asked people to provide contact details if they wanted to share their experiences in more detail, through an **in-depth phone interview**.

We also carried out **interviews with stakeholders**, representatives of local organisations and professionals who work in Wood Farm and Town Furze, including local councillors.

In-person outreach

We developed a simplified paper version of the survey for face-to-face outreach in the local community, to make sure we heard from people who are less likely to complete an online survey. This version of the survey was distributed via local networks, including being completed by people taking part in activities at the Bullingdon Community Centre, with support from Chair of the Bullingdon Community Association. Local councillors also distributed copies of the outreach survey to residents.

We **visited community groups** and completed the survey with members, including Wood Farm Youth Club, 7 O'clock Club, Date Palm, Bullingdon Lunch Club, Silver Shakers and at Atkyns Court.

We also made sure that we carried out **extensive face to face conversations**. We spoke to people on the street around Wood Farm and Town Furze throughout our

engagement, including around the Atkyns Road shops, local parks and play areas and outside Wood Farm Primary School. We spoke to people at a Health Promotion Event, organised by Oxford City Council and local GP practices, at Bullingdon Community Centre. We also heard from residents through door-knocking in Foresters Tower, and in Town Furze with a local councillor.

Hearing from young people

We used a **collaborative art project** to make sure we captured the perspectives of Wood Farm's younger residents, and to bring a visual element to the community insight gathering. We worked with the Year 3 class at Wood Farm Primary School, who had been working with Oxford Preservation Trust to find out more about their local area, as part of the Wood Farm Community History project. Healthwatch Oxfordshire commissioned a community artist, Alex Singleton, who supported the children to use their drawings and notes from a history walk, together with an illustrated map from the Wood Farm Community History project, to create an artwork on large painted boards. This included capturing the things children like about Wood Farm or thought could be improved.

The Wood Farm Youth Club kindly shared with us photos the young people took to illustrate their views of the local area, some of which we have included in this report.

Analysis

Once collected, we compiled the data and carried out a thematic analysis of the qualitative responses. See [Appendix 1](#) for longer extracts from conversations and interviews with residents.



Figure 2: Left, children taking part in the collaborative art project; right, outreach at Bullingdon Lunch Club.

3. Who did we hear from?

We heard from a total of **255 people**:

- **58 people** through our online survey, including two who shared their experiences in more detail through a telephone interview
- **167 people** through our outreach survey
- **10 professionals and stakeholders** who shared their perspectives in interviews or in writing
- **20 children** who took part in our art engagement activity.

We heard from a wide range of people in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. Of the online and outreach survey respondents who told us about themselves:

- We heard from people across the life course, with just over half (55%, 110 people) aged 25-49

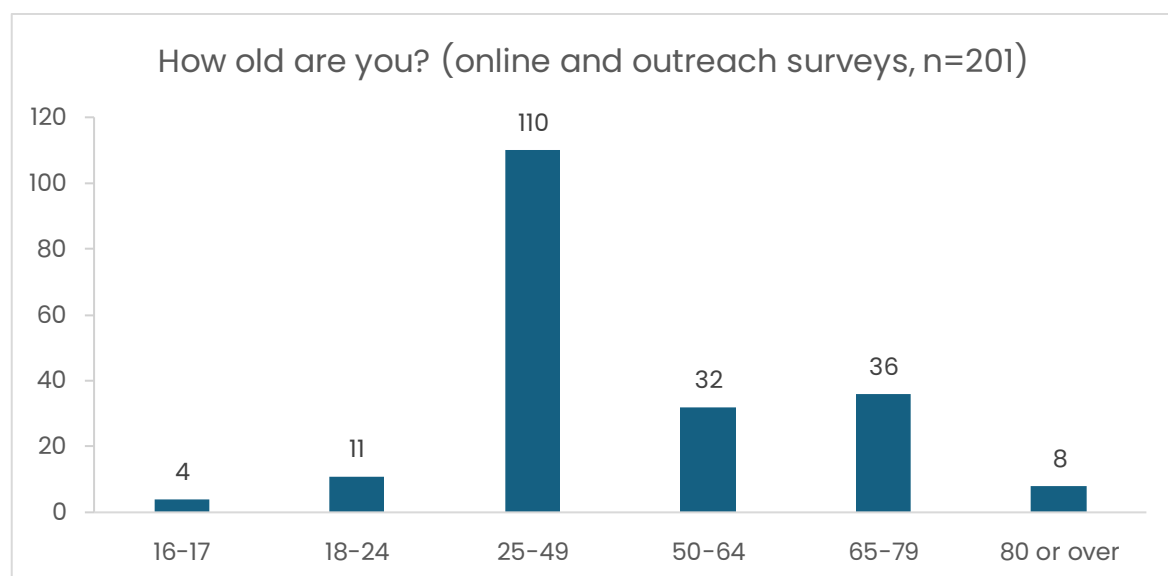


Figure 3: Graph showing responses to online and outreach survey questions about the age of respondents.

- We heard from 122 women (60%) and 81 men (40%)
- 60% of respondents said their ethnicity was White British (121). We also heard from people from a wide range of other ethnicities including:
 - Asian / Asian British: Indian (14 people, 7%)
 - Other White ethnicity (11 people, 5%)
 - Arab (9 people, 4%)
 - Asian / Asian British: Pakistani (8 people, 4%)
 - Black / Black British: African (6 people, 3%)

- Black / Black British: Caribbean (5 people, 2%)
- Afghan, Timor-Leste, Indonesian, Nepalese, Kurdish, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Polish (all <1%) and mixed ethnicities (6 people, 3%)
- Most of the people we heard from live in Wood Farm (176 people, 78%) or Town Furze (28 people, 12%). We also heard from a small number of people who live elsewhere but have connections to Wood Farm (21 people, 9%) including residents of Lye Valley and the Slade, and people who come to Wood Farm to use facilities such as Wood Farm Primary School and sports facilities.
- Over a quarter of people who told us about themselves (51 people, 29%) said they are disabled or have a long-term condition.

4. What did we hear?

Many people we spoke to were positive about Wood Farm as a place to live. While talking to people on the street, it was clear that many people travel to Wood Farm from across Oxford to make use of the area's strengths and assets – including its sense of community, and its parks, sports facilities, well-known Fish and Chip shop, school and nursery.

We heard from a wide range of people, representing varied and sometimes contradictory experiences and viewpoints – there is no one view of Wood Farm. People's experiences varied depending on where they live, for how long, their circumstances and life stage, and their relationship with the place. This included hearing from those who have moved to Wood Farm recently, as well as those who have lived in the area for their whole life.

For example, some people told us how 'peaceful and safe' they feel in Wood Farm, while others said they were 'concerned about crime and anti-social behaviour'. Some people felt a strong sense of community and belonging, while others felt a sense of isolation or disconnection. For some, especially those who are mobile or have access to transport, Wood Farm's location between Headington and Cowley means that it feels well connected, with access to most of the services and facilities needed to live a good life. For others, for example people with mobility impairments or without a car, the range of facilities that are accessible feel more limited, reflecting the small number of facilities and services in Wood Farm itself. People appreciate the green spaces, but not everyone feels able to enjoy the green spaces in Wood Farm fully.

These differences and contradictions came through strongly in what people told us. It's clear that the wider determinants of health⁴ – particularly the impact of the built and natural environment, income, work and community connections – influence how people experience the area. The data presented in the next section reflects those differences in people's circumstances – such as their housing tenure and access to transport – as well as those diverging views and experiences of Wood Farm.

What helps people in Wood Farm to be healthy and well?

To understand what supports Wood Farm residents with their health and wellbeing, and the area's strengths, we asked people to tell us what they like most about living in Wood Farm or Town Furze. People who responded to the online survey told us that they value its location (41 people, 75%) and the woods and green spaces (33 people, 60%). People also told us that they like the sense of community (12 people, 22%), the local shops and services (23 people, 42%), the play parks and sports facilities, the community groups and services in the area, and the local schools.

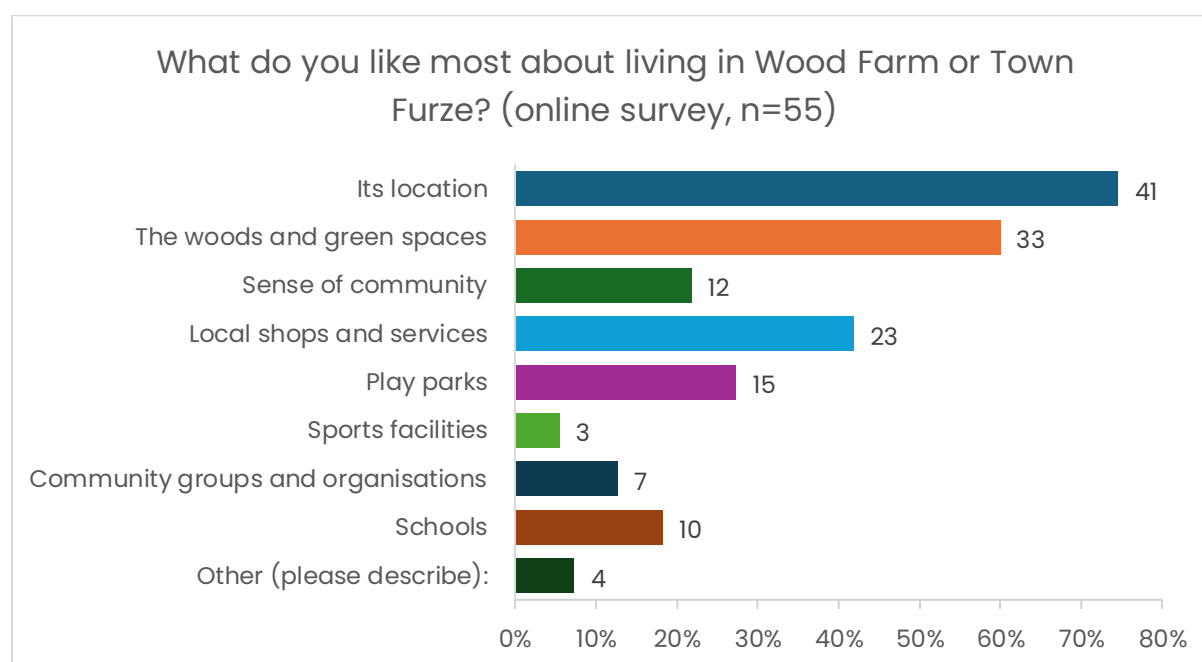


Figure 4: Graph showing responses to online survey question about what people like most about living in Wood Farm and Town Furze.

⁴ The wider determinants of health are the things beyond a person's control that affect their health and wellbeing, and which are the main cause of health inequalities – for example, the types of work that's available to people in a particular area and how well paid these are, or the quality and cost of housing someone has access to.

Similarly, in the outreach survey on the streets and face to face interviews, the things people told us they liked, or that helped them to be healthy and well, included (in descending order of how frequently they were mentioned):

- **Woods, parks and green spaces** (57 comments)
- **Facilities and spaces that support people to be physically active** (57 comments), like the basketball court, nearby gym and green spaces
- **Community spirit**, friendly people and good relationships with neighbours (44 comments)
- Positive comments about **facilities and infrastructure**, such as shops, pharmacy, post office, hairdresser (44 comments)
- Positive comments about **location and transport links**, particularly being close to Headington and the hospitals, and connections to Oxford City Centre (40 comments)
- **Access to affordable food nearby** (36 comments)
- People feeling the area is **peaceful, quiet and safe** (34 comments)
- Positive comments about **local health services** (33 comments)
- Positive comments about **facilities and services for children and young people**, including Wood Farm Primary School, Slade Nursery and Wood Farm Parent and Toddler Group (31 comments)
- **Community spaces** such as the nearby Bullingdon Community Centre, Wood Farm Youth Centre, and the community hall (12 comments), and the **community groups and activities** that take place there (4 comments) such as the 7 O'clock Club, Bullingdon lunch club and Keralan church services
- **Good quality housing** (12 comments) – including affordability, being well maintained or having mobility adaptations installed
- **Having family nearby** (7 comments).

What makes it harder for people in Wood Farm to be healthy and well?

We also heard that some things about Wood Farm and Town Furze make it hard for people to be healthy and well, or to make the most of the area's assets and strengths.

In the online survey, we asked people what challenges they face in looking after themselves. The cost of living was the most significant challenge that most people said affected them – 37 people (74%) said this affects them a bit or a lot, and only one person said it does not affect them at all. Other challenges that more than half of people said affected them included transport (27 people, 56%), access to healthy and affordable food (28 people, 58%), good quality and affordable housing (29 people, 58%), and a physical and/or mental health

condition (29 people, 58%). These cut across age, gender and ethnicity, although only women said that caring responsibilities affect them 'a lot'.

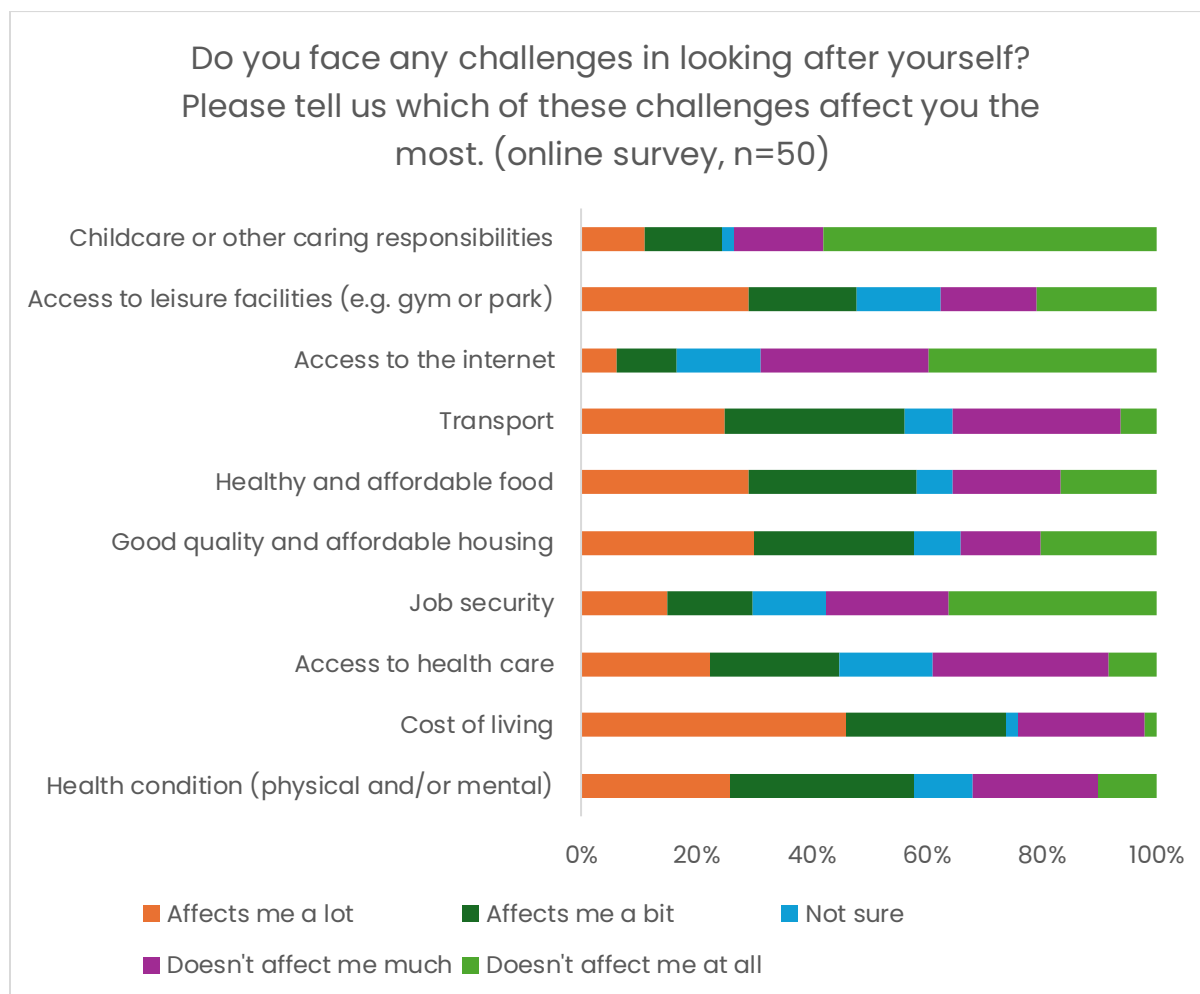


Figure 5: Graph showing responses to online survey question about what challenges people face in looking after themselves.

In the survey and during outreach, people told us about the following challenges and barriers to their health and wellbeing (in descending order of how often they were mentioned):

- Fears and experiences of **safety, crime and anti-social behaviour** (194 comments), including a perception of high levels of drug use and drug-taking in the area, especially the woods
- A perception that there are **not enough facilities** locally (88 comments), including a lack of leisure facilities and a lack of a drop-in community space or café, and in some cases a feeling that there is 'nothing' in Wood Farm that supports health and wellbeing
- **Poverty and the cost of living** (84 comments), including high rents and bills, the high cost of food, and low wages.

- **Problems with housing** (64 comments), including high rents, lack of maintenance, issues with building quality, housing not meeting people's needs, a lack of outside space, problems with neighbours. People also spoke about unresponsive landlords or housing associations, and distant housing officers
- **A lack of facilities and activities for young people** specifically was noted by both adults and young people (61 comments). Adults in particular felt this was contributing to anti-social behaviour from groups of young people 'hanging around the shops' or on the ground floor of Foresters Tower
- **Challenges accessing affordable, healthy food** (61 comments), including the limited choice and high prices of the local Co-op, and lack of transport to get to shops offering more affordable or culturally appropriate food options
- **Problems with transport, traffic and pollution** (54 comments), including fast driving around the estate, difficulty safely crossing Wood Farm Road to get to and from Wood Farm Primary School, traffic congestion and unreliable buses. Some comments indicated concerns that the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in East Oxford and proposed bus filter on Holloway are creating more traffic around Wood Farm
- **Problems with green spaces** (42 comments) – whilst people valued the green spaces, they also mentioned a perceived lack of maintenance, uneven paths, litter and a lack of lighting. This contributed to people feeling unsafe, and affected people's ability to be physically active
- The **impact of personal circumstances** (33 comments) – such as illness, disability and low motivation – on health, wellbeing and ability to participate in community activities
- **Challenges accessing health services** (27 comments), particularly the lack of a local GP practice (reflecting on views that there used to be one on the estate), and difficulties making GP appointments. People also noted long waits for mental health care and special educational needs (SEN) support for children
- **Not feeling listened to** or not feeling able to have a say in what happens in the area (19 comments), including a perceived **lack of information and communication** about what is happening in the local area (17 comments)
- **A lack of community spirit** or neighbourliness (18 comments)
- The impact of **other people smoking** (11 comments)
- **Barriers to getting education and training** (2 comments)
- A sense that Wood Farm has **changed for the worse** or has been neglected in comparison to other parts of Oxford (2 comments).

In the rest of this section, we look at each of these themes in more detail. Where we heard both positive and negative comments about the same theme – which was the case for many of the themes – these are presented together.

Satisfaction with Wood Farm as a place to live

Just under half of people who responded to our online survey (28 people, 49%) said they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with it as a place to live (see Figure 6, below). Similarly, just over half of those (74 people, 53%) who responded to our outreach survey indicated they were 'very happy' or 'happy' with Wood Farm as a place to live.

However, for both surveys, a small but noticeable number of people said they were 'dissatisfied' (7 people, 12%) or 'very dissatisfied' (4 people, 7%) in the online survey, or were 'unhappy' (13 people, 9%) or 'very unhappy' (10 people, 7%). A substantial proportion of respondents said they were 'neutral' – neither particularly satisfied nor dissatisfied, suggesting they felt ambivalent or had mixed feelings about Wood Farm as a place to live (18 people, 32% for the online survey, and 44 people, 31% for the outreach survey). These differences cut across gender, age and ethnicity, although older people were the most likely to feel satisfied or happy with Wood Farm. Across the two surveys, only three of the 48 people aged over 65 we heard from (6%) said they were dissatisfied/unhappy or very dissatisfied/unhappy, compared to 22% of people aged 50–64 (8 people) and 11% of people aged 25–49 (12 people).

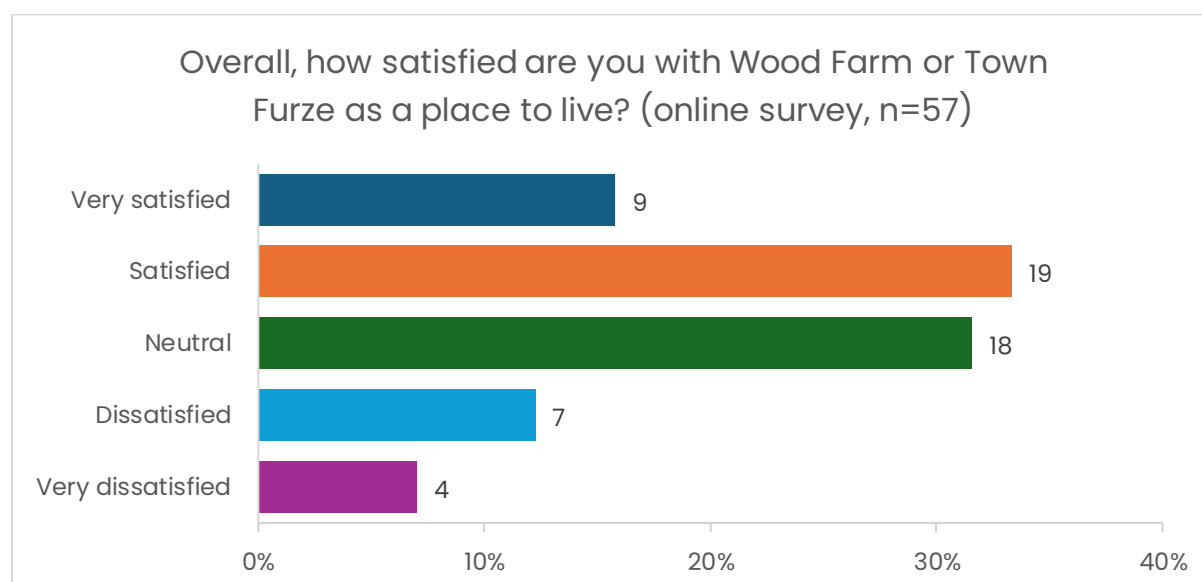


Figure 6: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how satisfied people are with Wood Farm or Town Furze as a place to live.

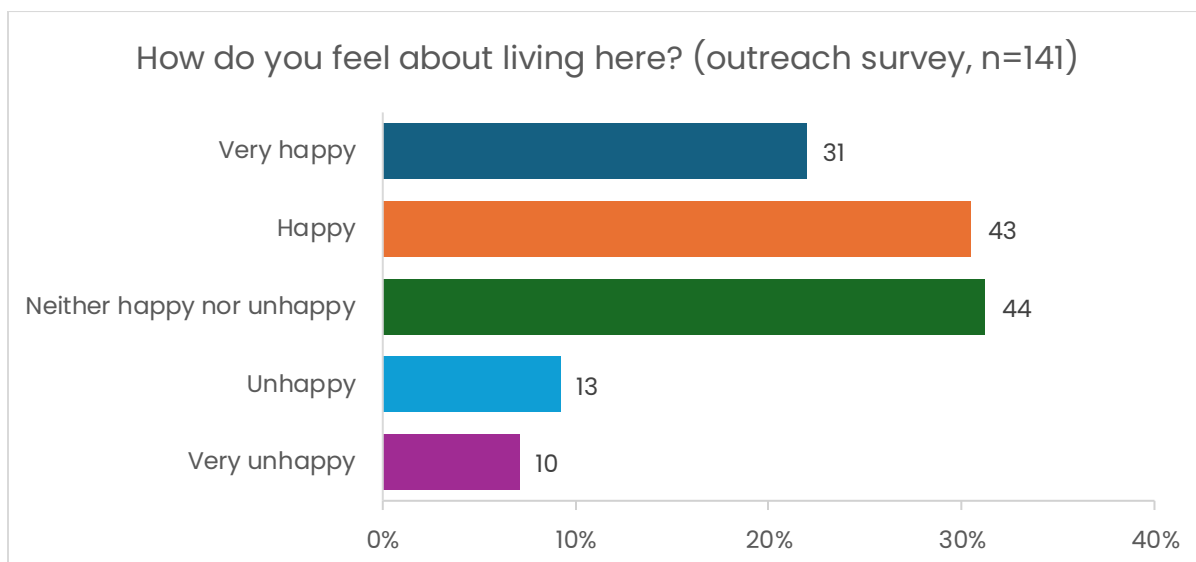


Figure 7: Graph showing responses to outreach survey question about how people feel about living in Wood Farm or Town Furze.

Community spirit, belonging and connection

People told us about their friendly, helpful neighbours and the community feel of the area. This was particularly a view of, but was not limited to, people who have lived in Wood Farm for a long time. Several people mentioned their appreciation for the ethnic and cultural diversity of the area. People also told us about a sense of belonging to Wood Farm, their long connections with the area, particularly for those who grew up, raised families here, and love for its rich history and community.

"It's a close-knit community, friendly neighbours." (resident)

"I have lived in the same house for 47 yrs. It's nice and quiet and I have lovely neighbours." (resident)

"Neighbours are always ready to help and it feels safe." (resident)

"People are polite and friendly. The ones I often see, we exchange pleasantries such as a smile." (resident)

"The tower block has mostly pleasant people, you sometimes see the same face and they're all friendly." (resident)

"I get on really well with my neighbours, I've been here for 9 years and I know everyone on my street." (resident)

"Generally the people are friendly and multi-cultural." (resident)

"It feels like there is community - children have a mix of friends and there is the Indian community that we are part of." (resident)

"Pretty safe community and diverse, which I like." (resident)

"Things could be improved but overall, the area is nice enough to live and feel at home." (resident)

Several people told us that their family support them to stay healthy and well, or that what they like about Wood Farm is that their family live nearby.

"I have a daughter, granddaughter and a great granddaughter on Wood Farm who I can visit." (resident)

We also heard from some residents that they felt there was a lack of community spirit in Wood Farm. In the online survey, we asked people questions about how connected they feel to others in Wood Farm and Town Furze (see Figure 8, below). People's responses reinforced what we heard from people about a lack of community spirit, and a lack of opportunities and places for different people to meet each other and build community. Only a quarter of people agreed with the statements 'there are community spaces I feel comfortable to go to in Wood Farm' or 'people from different backgrounds can mix in Wood Farm', and only 21% of people agreed with the statements 'I know where I can meet other people in Wood Farm' or 'I never feel lonely'. 19 people (36%) said they didn't know how to meet other people in the local area, and 9 people (17%) said they feel lonely often or most of the time.

However, responses did also suggest potential to build more community – 21 people (40%) said they would like to meet more people in their local community.

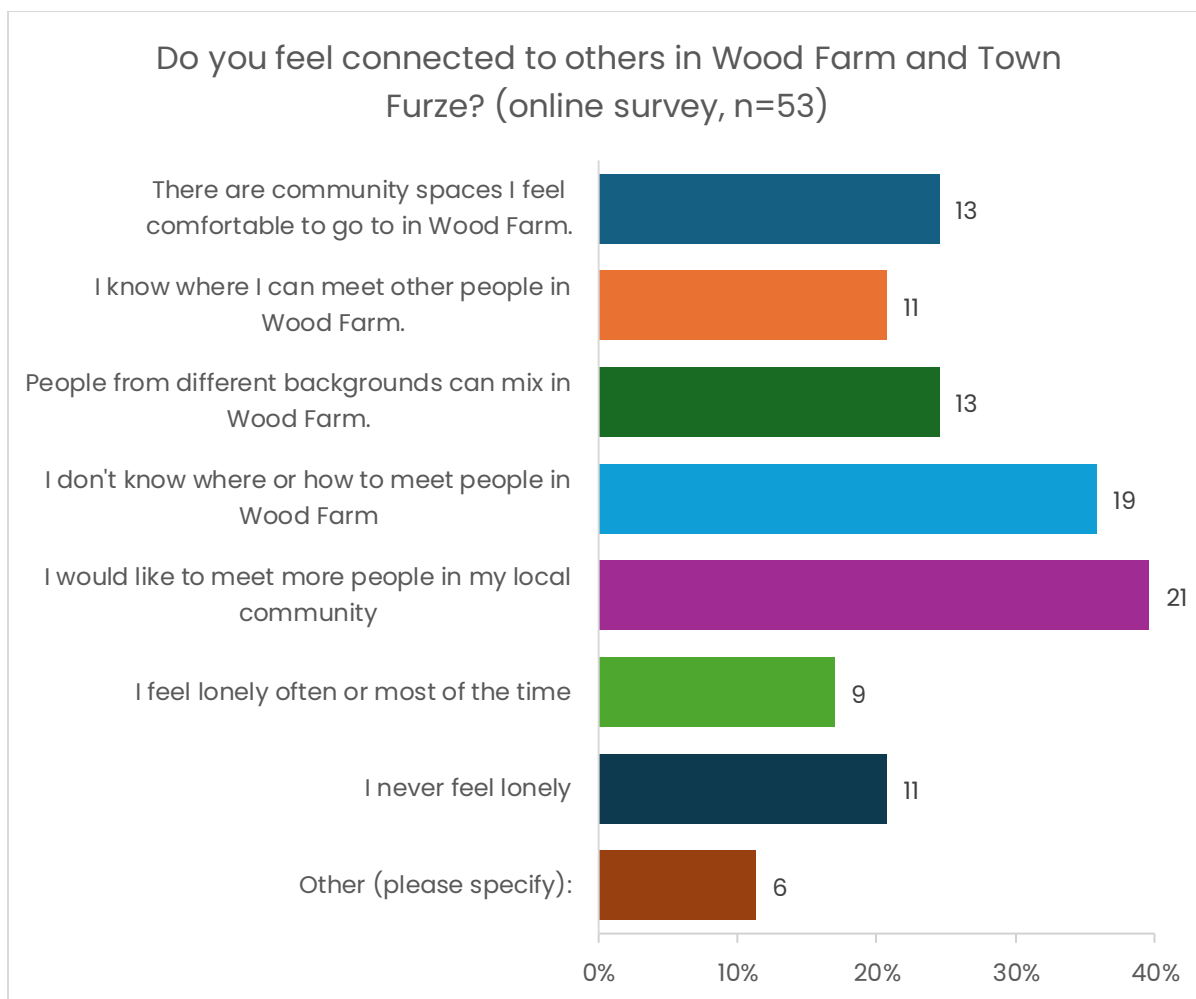


Figure 8: Graph showing responses to online survey questions about how connected people feel to others in Wood Farm and Town Furze.

During outreach conversations, we heard that some people link the lack of community spirit to changes in society and the demographic and housing make-up of Wood Farm – for example, an increase in diversity, as well as more people living in private rented accommodation for a short time and not putting down roots.

"There's definitely a segregation within Wood Farm. Different communities don't tend to mix which is very sad. And I think contributes to the lack of community spirit." (resident)

"It's dirty and people aren't very friendly. Just too many LET houses, it used to be a lively estate where people cared." (resident)

We also heard that people felt the lack of community spirit was linked to the lack of a community space on Wood Farm where everyone could come together, or

community association to bring people together. As mentioned above (see [A lack of facilities in Wood Farm and Town Furze](#)), not everyone sees Bullingdon Community Centre as a space for Wood Farm residents.

"I grew up on Wood Farm and apart from when I was a child, I have never seen the community come together, there is no space for them to do so." (resident)

"No, people with disability, are older or in fact adolescents are left with nothing to occupy their minds or potential skills, the estate has the reputation of a ghetto and needs to be changed, there are many good people living here, good neighbours and good citizens, but when they get home they close the door on the rest of the community as there is nothing and no-one to bring them together." (resident)

"To me the community space is probably the most important thing, because I just feel that there isn't really anywhere where people can gather together anymore and that's particularly older and more isolated people." (stakeholder)

Community spaces and assets

People told us about the assets that Wood Farm has in terms of facilities and infrastructure – including places where people can find services that support their health and wellbeing, and as important places for taking part in community life, connecting with others and taking care of their health. We asked people who responded to the online survey about what facilities they know about and use in the local area (see Figure 9, below). In particular, the Leys pharmacy (42 people, 75% said 'I use this') and local shops (45, 80% said 'I use this') stand out as those that are most used.

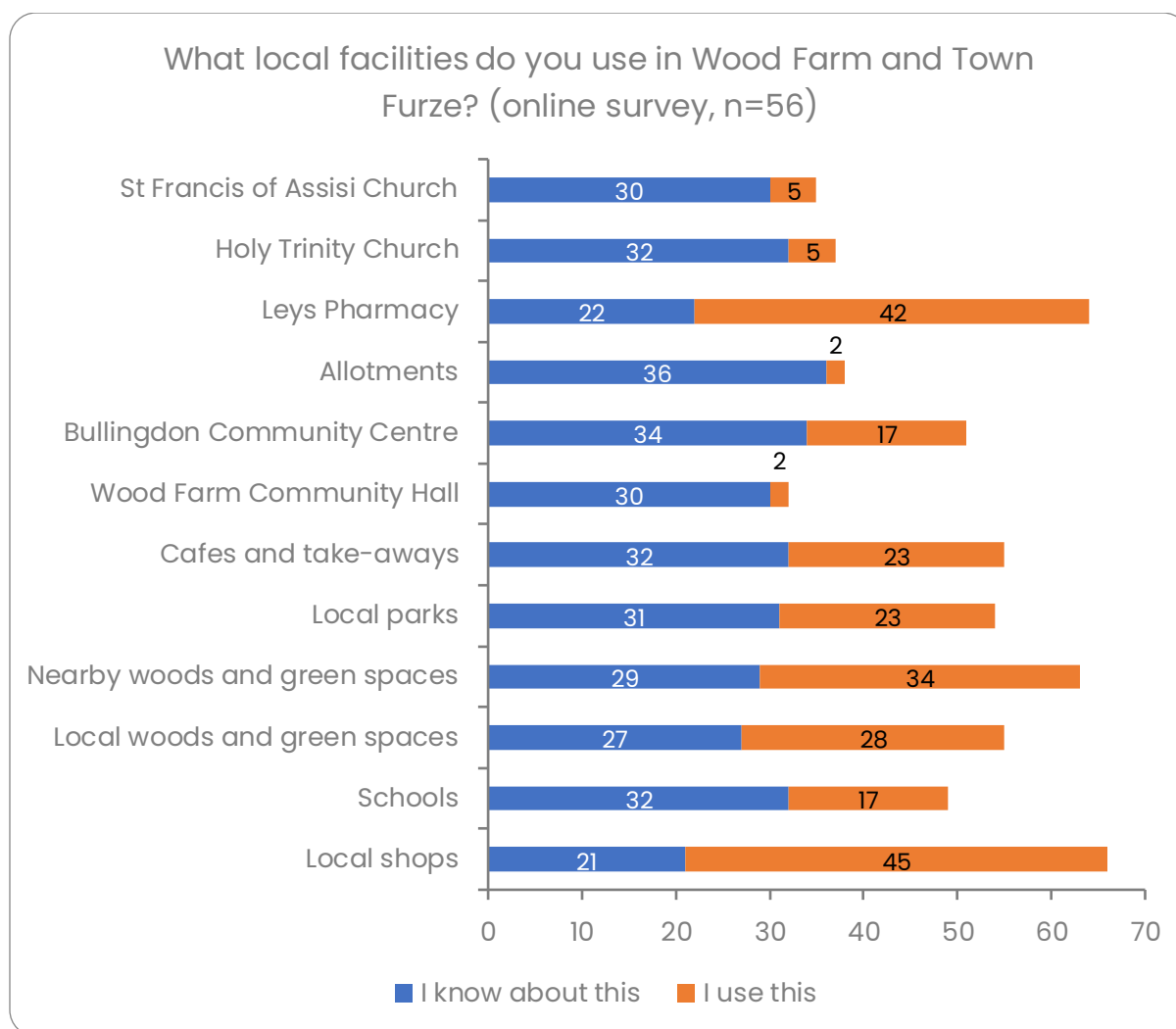


Figure 9: Graph showing responses to online survey question about whether people know about and use local facilities in Wood Farm and Town Furze.

Positive comments that people made about the facilities and infrastructure in Wood Farm included appreciation for the shops, post office, pharmacy, hairdresser and fish and chip shop (all of which are at Atkyns Road shops), as well as nearby facilities such as a local food bank. People commented on the quality of the shops as well as their convenient location in the centre of Wood Farm. Some also pointed out that the shops provide a key point of relationship and social interaction in the community, and speaking to business owners it was clear that they play a key role in helping people feel connected to their community. Franca's Café on Atkyns Road and Ace's Laundrette on Girdlestone Road were used as polling stations in the general and local elections.

"Fish & chip shop is great and the staff are very welcoming." (resident)

"Local GPs, community health services, the local school, activities, based at the Bullingdon Community Centre and the St. Francis Church (e.g. food bank)." (resident)

"Local post office and parcel services at Co-op. Community notice boards, communal planters containing herbs (rosemary, mint)." (resident)

"Local shops - all very central." (resident)



Figure 10: Left, Bullingdon Community Centre, and right, mural by Atkyns Road shops

However, people also told us that they felt there were not enough facilities on Wood Farm itself. These included leisure facilities, such as a leisure centre or outdoor exercise equipment. We heard that this particularly affects people who do not drive or who are on benefits or a low income, and for whom travelling to leisure centres elsewhere might be challenging or costly.⁵

"We need a leisure centre here – they are far away in Barton, Blackbird Leys and Rose Hill – you have to take 2 buses to get there." (resident)

"No where to meet up with dogs and no exercise equipment like they have in other communities across Oxford." (resident)

We also heard about a lack of community space – both inside and outside, and particularly for people to meet casually, rather than for regular booked activities. Although people value the Bullingdon Community Centre, it is outside Wood Farm

⁵ While people receiving benefits can get subsidised access to Oxford City Council leisure facilities, this is not the case for the private gyms near Wood Farm.

and can feel hidden or difficult to get to for some Wood Farm residents, across the busy Slade. It is used by people from all over Oxford, but not particularly well used by Wood Farm residents. There are also barriers to using the community hall in Wood Farm Primary School, which can only be used through formal bookings, and outside school opening hours. Unlike the old Wood Farm Community Centre, it is owned by the school and managed through a private company, rather than being run by a community association.

"Lack of community space, distance from swimming pool and gym, lack of seating/gathering area in park for adults outside playground." (resident)

"The Bullingdon centre is inaccessible to many elderly people on Wood Farm as it is not on a bus route and some are unable to walk that distance." (resident)

"Bullingdon does serve Wood Farm, but actually it is the other side of the road and whilst it's what a 2 minute walk or what have you, it still fails. A barrier and it's an emotional barrier as well as the sort of physical barrier of the road." (stakeholder)

"So there is a need and we don't have a community centre in the centre of Wood Farm. There was supposed to be one built and then it didn't get planning permission. And then we have got a community room with the school. But the community room is not open access – it can't be, because of the way the building was planned, and it's booked up all the time. It's just a facility that groups book and it's full, it's constantly used and so there is a real need for some sort of place, some sort of hub that can support people and help them, and not least the many people that come in for short times. You know, a place that they can come and find out where there's a doctor's surgery." (stakeholder)

Other facilities that people said were lacking, which may reflect people's sense of loss and neglect due to recent closures of services and changes, perhaps a reflection on 'how things used to be' (e.g. health centre, local pub, and community centre). This included:

- **Health facilities**, such as a GP practice on Wood Farm

"There isn't a GP in Wood Farm." (resident)

- Facilities for accessing **affordable, healthy food**, getting food that is appropriate for people's culture, and access to emergency food support for

those who need it such as a food bank (see also [Access to healthy, affordable food](#) below)

“More community shops run by the community for the people.” (resident)

- **Social spaces** such as pubs or cafés

“Lack of community centre, cafes or pubs in Wood Farm are a real problem.” (resident)

“There isn’t any cafes to get breakfast to meet up with friends after a school drop off it would nice to have a cafe where we could all go.” (resident)

Other comments again included the **sense of loss of social infrastructure**, partly since COVID-19. Some comments reflected lack of a mosque or religious schools on Wood Farm, and noting the closure of several facilities over the last decade.

“The Wood Farm estate has lost a number of local facilities over the last 10 – 15 years. These include the Wood Farm Community Centre, The Children’s Centre, the Crown and Thistle pub, the Territorial Army Social Club.” (resident)

Community spaces, groups and activities

People told us about the wealth of local community spaces, groups and activities that support their health and wellbeing. We heard mostly about the Bullingdon Community Centre and the groups and activities there, such as the Bullingdon lunch club, Indian classical dance classes and the 7 O’clock Club for people with a learning disability (which has been running for over 50 years). We also heard about Reach mental health support groups for adult women held at Wood Farm Youth Centre, activities in the Wood Farm community hall, and community spaces and groups further afield. See Appendix 3 for a full list of community groups and activities in and around Wood Farm.

“I use a group that is at Wood Farm community centre that I enjoy.” (resident)

“The Bullingdon Community Centre runs lots of courses and activities that keep the mind and body stimulated.” (resident)

“Bullingdon Community Centre is brilliant.” (resident)

"New Bullingdon building – the old club had no space at all. 7 O'clock club."
(resident)

"Mum's group in Cheney School, Arabic School, Manzil Way Mosque."
(resident)

"My own community (Keralan – about 15–16 households on this road) based at Wheatley Park School and Corpus Christi Church (Keralan mass on Sundays). Bullingdon – never been but a friend goes to Indian classical dance classes." (resident)

"Reach groups for mental health." (resident)

Assets and services for children and young people

We heard about how much people value the facilities and services for children and young people on Wood Farm, particularly those serving young children and their parents: Wood Farm Primary School, the Slade Nursery, Wood Farm Parent and Toddler Group and Wood Farm Youth Club, as well as the play parks on Wood Farm Road and Girdlestone Road. Young people are also involved in activities further afield, such as boxing in Cowley Centre and playing football with East Oxford United.

"The Slade Nursery is an amazing facility especially the stay and play on Wednesday." (resident)

"The nursery and school are doing a great job with the children and a little bit with adults which is helping some of the parenting and social issues which are prevalent." (resident)

"We found a fantastic toddler group. I recommend this place for the little ones and mums. Nice and warm and welcoming. Kids can play and mum can meet other mums. This group is good placing near Wood Farm school." (resident)

"Wood Farm parent and toddler group it supports mothers in the community and has done for many years. I have attended it for nearly 20 years it has always been a friendly, supportive and diverse group."
(resident)

"Fantastic play park – well used." (resident)

"Very good school." (resident)



Figure 11: Photos taken by members of Wood Farm Youth Club: left, the basketball court on Wood Farm Green and right, the community hall at Wood Farm Primary School.

Despite these positive comments, people told us that there is not enough on Wood Farm for young people to do. We heard that there is a range of activities for children and young people on Wood Farm and at Bullingdon, but that there are gaps in free activities for children aged 5–11 who fall between the provision for pre-school age children and the Youth Club. The only free activity currently running for teenagers on Wood Farm is the Youth Club. We heard about this lack of activities and facilities from young people themselves, as well as from adults.

“There needs to be more for teenagers to go to, outdoor or indoor.”
(resident)

“Nothing for children around here except the parks. There's the youth club but that's only for 11+.” (resident)

“Young people don't have much – that park out there is a load of – it could do with something a little bit different – they get tired of the swings and playing football.” (resident)

“The youth club but since everyone has moved out, the youth club does not get many people anymore and apart from that there's nothing.”

One person noted that they felt the lack of facilities for teenagers was affecting access to play parks for younger children.

"I feel that there is nothing for our children to engage in, because of this the older children use the younger children's areas to accumulate, and this causes the younger children and adults to feel intimidated, thus the park and play areas do not get used for their intended purpose." (resident)

Several people explicitly linked the lack of spaces and activities for young people to the tendency of young people to hang out in groups on the estate, which some people found intimidating.

"Young kids don't have any place to go, that's why they hang around pestering people." (regular visitor)

"If the youths hanging round had something to do, they're not that bad, they hang around in the bottom of the flats, but they're not rude when I go to see my friend who lives there. You can smell the weed on them but that's just life." (resident)

We also heard that the youth club needs more funding and support, that play parks could be improved, and that the area needs more support and opportunities for children with special educational needs and disabilities. We heard that Oxford City Council's Youth Ambition team are working to revive support for and participation in Wood Farm Youth Club.

"Young people have got a Youth Centre but it's not ideal – could be supported from the outside." (resident)

Woods, parks and green spaces

We heard that people use and enjoy the many green spaces within Wood Farm and in the surrounding area, including Lye Valley Nature Reserve and Shotover Country Park.

"It's green around, healthy feeling." (resident)

"Lye Valley is just the most wonderful, magical place in Oxford. [...] It's like being in the middle of the countryside in the middle of a housing estate. It's really nice. So, there's lots of nature." (resident)

"Shotover is out the back, and the countryside is not far away." (resident)

"Having playgrounds and natural spaces like Magdalen Wood and the Lye Valley help." (resident)

“There are two parks, one round the corner and one across the road. You get to see more people and see more things outside, like birds and dogs.”
(resident)

These spaces are particularly important because a relatively high proportion of families in Wood Farm do not have access to their own garden or outdoor space.



Figure 12: Left, entrance to Lye Valley Nature Reserve from the Slade; right, Girdlestone Road allotments.



Figure 13: Photos taken by members of Wood Farm Youth Club: left, a view over Wood Farm from Foresters Tower towards Shotover, and right, Brasenose Woods

However, we also heard that, although people value the variety of Wood Farm’s green spaces, parks and woods, they do not always feel able to make the most of them. This can be due to littering and a perceived lack of safety in these areas (as noted under [Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour](#) above). Other problems raised included:

- **Uneven paths** making it difficult for people to walk through them

"I love walking through Brasenose Woods but unfortunately it is not too safe underfoot. Have had a few falls recently walking through there as the foot path is need of major repairs now. Large amount of holes and tree roots are making it unsafe to walk." (resident)

- A **lack of lighting** in green spaces, especially the path through Magdalen Woods, which links the Three Fields area with the rest of Wood Farm

"Street lights not always working. Very dark areas lighting needs to be brighter hedges need cutting and trees need to be kept in better condition." (resident)

- **Neglected spaces** which have the potential to be better used by the local community, for example as a park or community allotment, including Green Field in Town Furze, and land off Stubbs Avenue and behind Warren Crescent

"There is land that is wasted in Stubbs Avenue which a community allotment would be ideal for here with a communal BBQ set up. The area here is mainly over 55's and disabled people. The council declined this but never gave a reason for this. It would be great for people who live in this area who can't walk far due to disabilities and would help with loneliness." (resident)



Figure 14: Green Field in Town Furze – an area that local people said had potential to be better used by the community

Several people also raised maintenance issues, including the loud noise made by basketball hoops on Wood Farm Green and uneven ground on the football field.

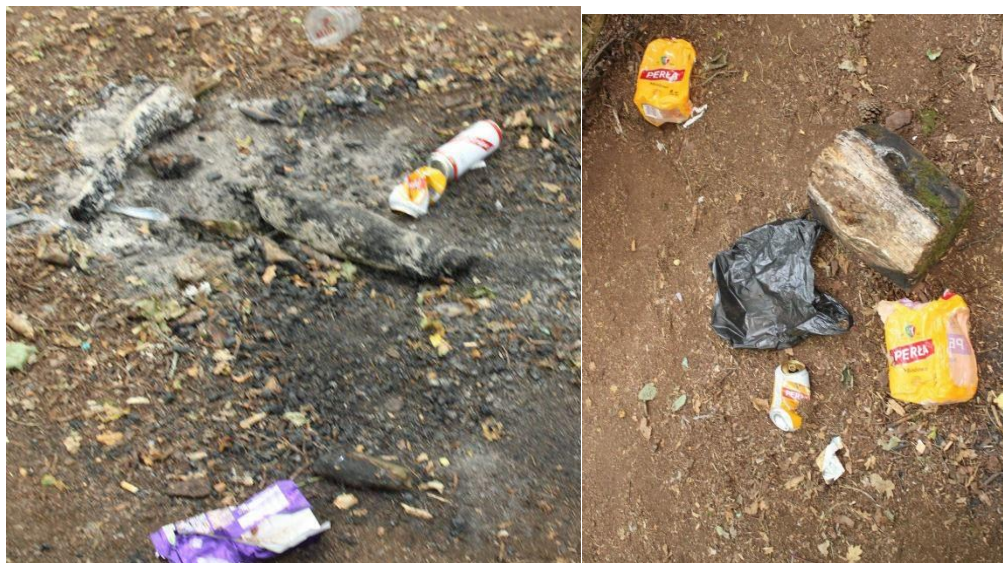


Figure 15: Photos taken by members of Wood Farm Youth Club, showing litter and fire damage in Magdalen Woods.

Access to healthy, affordable food

In the online survey, people told us about where they usually go to get the food that they need (see Figure 16 below). The most popular option was a local supermarket like Aldi (37 people, 71%). Over half of people also said they often or sometimes get food online, at London Road shops, from Cowley Centre or from the Wood Farm shops – but fewer people said they ‘always’ use these. A small number of people said they use community food support services (11 people, 22%) or a garden or allotment (14 people, 30%), but most people said they never use these (38 people, 78% for community food support services, 33 people, 70% for garden or allotment).

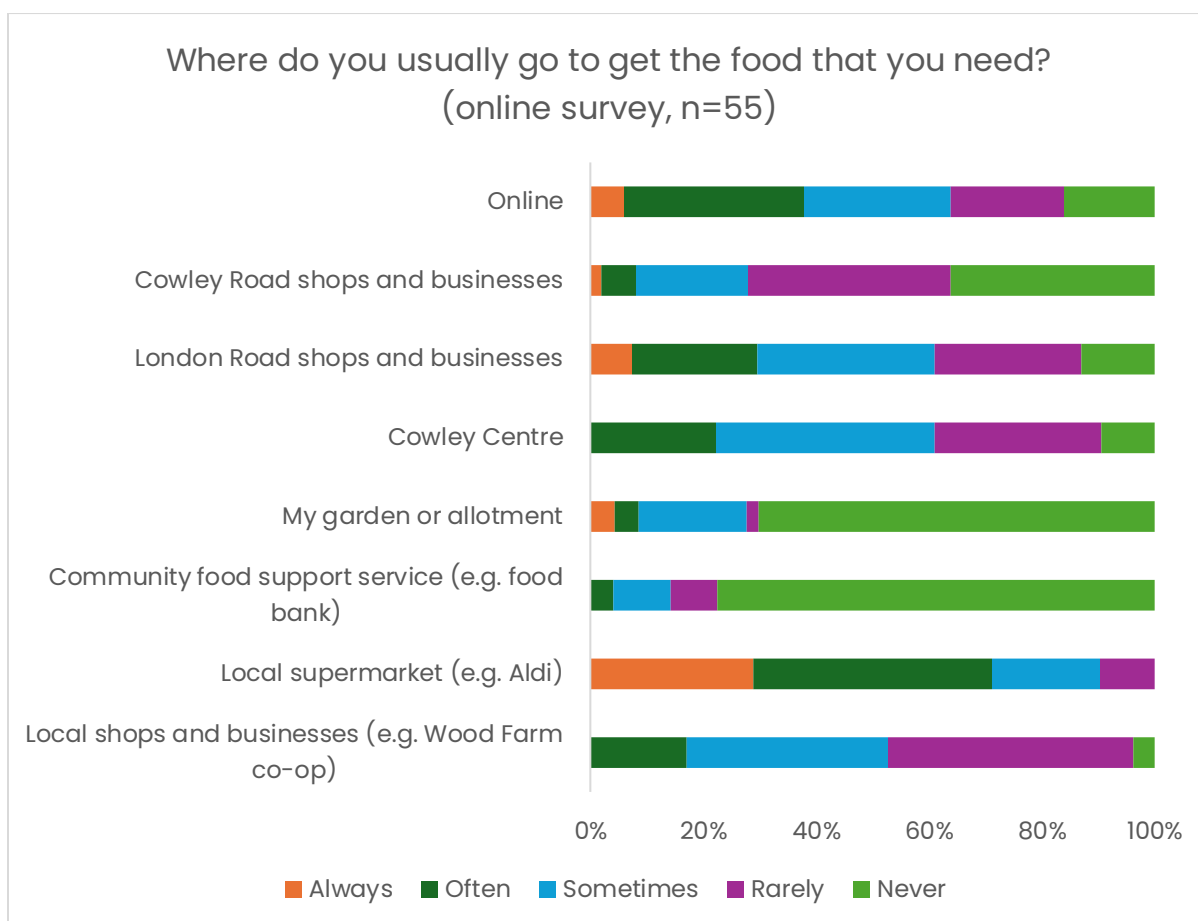


Figure 16: Graph showing responses to online survey question about where people usually go to get the food that they need.

We asked people more about what makes it difficult to get the food that they need to live a healthy life. Responses were mixed, but most people indicated they already know what healthy eating is – most said they did not want more information and support to be able to make healthy choices (28 people, 61%). Over half indicated they could not find affordable and healthy food in Wood Farm (27, 52%). Nearly half of respondents said that they find it hard to afford healthy food (24 people, 47%). Some people told us that it can be difficult to get to shops where they can buy affordable and healthy food (14 people, 28%) – this included those without access to a car, but also several people who said they walk every day, reflecting the distance to more affordable shops outside Wood Farm. While many people said they can access food from their culture in Wood Farm (19, 40%), this may reflect the fact that most online survey respondents were White British.

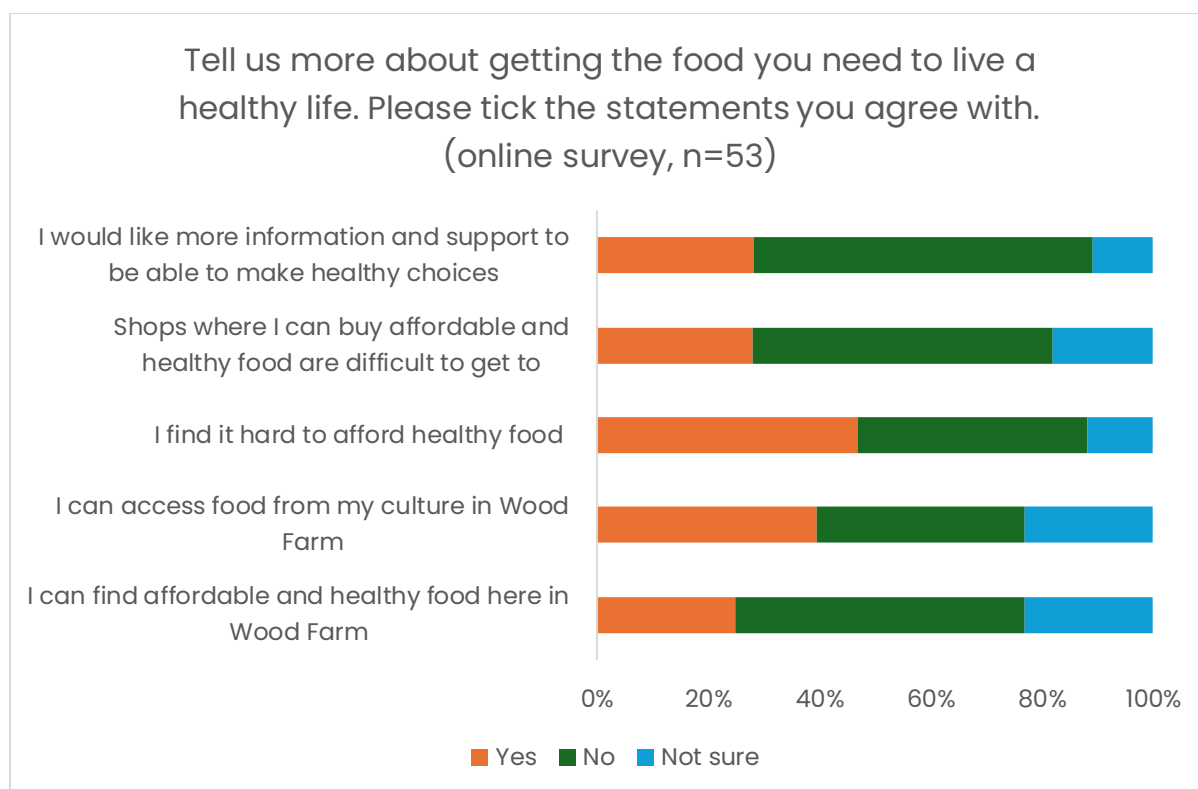


Figure 17: Graph showing responses to online survey question about challenges and support for getting the food people need to live a healthy life.

People told us about where they get healthy, affordable food – mostly these were in neighbouring areas, such as London Road shops (Headington), Cowley Centre, Cowley Road, Headington market or Aldi at Horspath Driftway. Several people commented how much easier it was to get healthy and affordable food if they had access to a car. People also spoke about the influence of culture on their diet and access to healthy food – for example sharing food with other members of their community or home cooking.

“Good free parking at Aldi and good prices.” (resident)

“Headington market good on Saturdays for fresh vegetables etc.”
(resident)

“Online deliveries help support my lifestyle.” (resident)

“Easy that Co-op provides basic staples but Aldi is cheaper but is a drive away.” (resident)

“Healthy food – Lidl in Cowley Centre and the market stall in Templar’s Square.” (resident)

“Shop is OK – we go to Lidl (my husband drives). Sharing food at festivals and with other parents.” (resident)

“We cook from home a lot as we are a Polish family.” (resident)

No respondents told us about using food support services, but there are two available in the local area: a food bank available to families whose children attend the Slade Nursery, and a food bank at St Francis of Assisi Church on Hollow Way.

Comments about barriers to accessing healthy, affordable food included:

- The cost of living, as noted above (see [Poverty and the cost of living](#))
- The high cost of food, particularly healthy food, in the small shops within Wood Farm, and the high proportion of processed and unhealthy food available – with two hot food takeaways now running at Atkyns Road
- Limited access to healthy, affordable food for people who do not have access to a car, due to the lack of bus routes connecting people to cheaper shops such as Aldi, and difficulty of carrying shopping home on foot
- Being made to feel unwelcome by some staff in some local shops, including experiences of racism
- Limited access to food that is appropriate to people’s culture or choices, including Asian groceries and vegan or organic options
- Lack of access to allotments or food growing space for people with mobility impairments
- Limited access to food banks for emergency food supply (the Slade Nursery runs a food bank, but this is only for the parents and caregivers of children attending the nursery).

“Wood Farm shops are expensive with limited choice unless you want copious amounts of alcohol.” (resident)

“Co-op is too expensive for students, so I usually go to Aldi, but the bus is costly as well, it’s pretty tough carrying my shopping bags home.” (resident)

“Healthy food can be more expensive, especially with other household bills to pay.” (resident)

“Vegetarian/vegan supplies are hard to find on Wood Farm and I need to shop elsewhere. Similarly, organic or healthy food options are limited.” (resident)

"The Co-op used to stock more real food and lately the percentage of junk food (crisps, soft drinks, sweets) is higher." (resident)

"No food bank nearby, limited local shop options." (resident)

"More diverse shops – shops that sell Asian food." (resident)

Facilities and spaces that support physical activity

People told us about the facilities and spaces that support them to be physically active, including Wood Farm's green spaces and parks, as well as gyms in neighbouring areas, and exercise classes at Bullingdon Community Centre and in the Wood Farm community hall. We especially heard about walking and cycling and how the built and natural environment of Wood Farm support this. While conducting street outreach, we spoke to young people who travel regularly from as far as Abingdon Road to use the basketball courts by Wood Farm green.

"Joining my neighbours on walks most weekday afternoons." (resident)

"Lots of walking places, like the woods." (resident)

"Bullingdon Community is great – I go to the exercise classes." (resident)

"We go boxing in Cowley Centre." (resident)

"We meet friends and chill, use the cage for football and stuff. We play football at Bullingdon." (resident)

"Going to the gym like I do should help me a lot – I've got a PT to help me with balance." (resident)

"We come here to play basketball. We feel safe here." (resident)

Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour

We asked people who responded to the online survey about how safe or unsafe they feel during the day and after dark in Wood Farm and Town Furze. During the day, most respondents said they felt safe or very safe (36 people, 65%) and seven people (13%) said they felt unsafe or very unsafe. However, after dark, this changed – 17 people (31%) said they felt unsafe or very unsafe, while 18 (33%) felt safe or very safe.

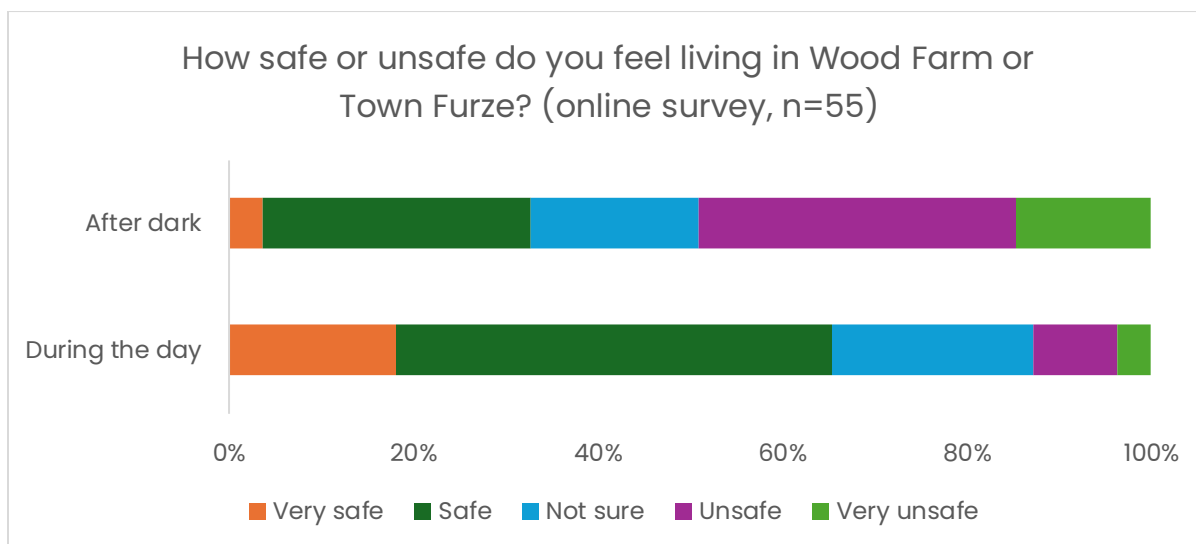


Figure 18: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how safe or unsafe people feel living in Wood Farm or Town Furze.

There were some demographic patterns to these responses, reflecting wider social perceptions and statistics on who is most at risk of crime. All those who said they felt unsafe or very unsafe during the day were women. Those who felt unsafe or very unsafe at night also included men with a non-white ethnicity. Of the 15 people who told us they have a long-term illness or disability, only two said they feel safe or very safe after dark.

Qualitative responses reflected these differences in experience. Some people told us that they find Wood Farm generally a peaceful, quiet and safe place to live – including new residents and those who have lived in the area their whole life.

"I've only been here two weeks, I'm a student at Brookes – but it's wonderful, 100% feel safe." (resident)

"Been here my whole life and never had anything serious happen." (resident)

"A happening place but calm too." (resident)

"Generally it is a safe and quiet neighbourhood." (resident)

However, the majority of negative comments about Wood Farm were related to people's feelings of safety, and perception that the area has high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. People recognised that not all of this was generated by local residents, but sometimes by people from outside the area.

People told us about frequently seeing drug dealing and drug use. They mentioned feeling intimidated by people drinking alcohol by the shops, groups of young people wearing balaclavas, and hanging out and damaging the lobby of Foresters Tower. They also noted anti-social behaviour such as littering, fly-tipping, noise late at night and cars at night.

"Lots of young people with balaclavas on can feel unnerving. Lots of addicts hanging around." (resident)

"Lots of anti-social behaviour by people who don't live in area as well as those that do." (resident)

"Girdlestone Road shops drug and anti-social behaviour, taking drugs in [an area near the shops]." (resident)

"Parks and walkways through Magdalen Woods do not feel safe to walk through in the day (even worse at night!) due to the amount of drug dealing & anti-social behaviour by teens who smash bottles everywhere. The same applies for Broad Oak Park." (resident)

"A large amount of people who live here don't seem to care much about the rest of us who live here, they litter the place, keep unsociable hours and have very little respect for anyone or anything other than themselves." (resident)

"There have been cars broken into in the area recently, and in some places the street lighting late at night if you are walking home from the bus stop isn't very bright." (resident)

"The intercom isn't working properly - kids come into the tower block downstairs and do something to it. It annoys me if I've got Amazon coming and they can't get through to me. I've reported it but they haven't sorted it. I had a stroke so I can only use one arm and I need to do online shopping." (resident)

"My daughter's bike has been pinched a couple of times. There's a lot of broken glass around the Broad Oak basketball court. My daughter had money taken off her by someone at the cash point, the police said they'd get in touch but nothing's happened and we still see the man around." (resident)

"A lot of yob youth around here ripping off the shops, don't think they've got enough security, mainly women working there. A lot of screaming and shouting in the park – you don't know what the hell's going on, sometimes at 2 o'clock in the morning. Not being funny but if someone was getting raped no one would take any notice, it's like the boy who cried wolf."
(resident)

People told us they were concerned by their neighbours' anti-social or potentially criminal activity.

"My downstairs neighbour has a [big dog], and I'm scared of the dog and the neighbour who smokes weed from time to time." (resident)

"One of the neighbours sells something and his customers coming to the block, leaving fire door open. They are loud and unkind. They stay at the lobby. That makes me feel unsafe." (resident)

"Half this block is [expletive] junkies and that. Dogs [pooing] in the stairwell. Women throwing used sanitary towels, nappies, books out of windows. You can see drug drops happening in broad daylight, in the lunchtime, the afternoon – druggies at the bottom on their phones, saying, I've transferred the money, and then the drugs chucked out of the windows. The Council won't do nothing, police don't do nothing. If you put yourself out there [e.g. on resident's panel] you're the one who gets victimised, your flat trashed." (resident)

We heard that past violent crimes and associated media coverage on Wood Farm also affected how safe people feel.

"There are quite a few people dealing directly. It's in the evening and there have been a few stabbings resulting in death so I never go out alone after dark. We need police patrol to make us feel safe." (resident)

We asked online survey participants if they were aware of crime happening in their local area. 69% (37 out of 55 participants) answered 'yes'. 19 people said they would report a crime, had done so in the past, or both. Several people said they had reported in the past but did not feel it made a difference, for example because by the time police arrived the event would be over. One person said they felt the police targeted the wrong people in response to reports of anti-social behaviour.

"I have reported repeatedly. I'm losing hope 😞" (resident)

"Yes, but useless. They are not interested in drug dealing." (resident)

"Police do not help with anti-social behaviour, I report fly tipping regularly but not bike theft - nothing gets done." (resident)

"The police target wrong people regarding ASB." (resident)

Reasons people gave for not reporting crimes to the police included not believing that they would be kept anonymous, a fear of retribution, or thinking that there was no point.

"I don't trust authorities would keep it confidential. I fear revenge from criminals." (resident)

We heard how fears and experiences of crime and a lack of safety can affect people's ability to stay healthy and well, for example making them less likely to walk around the estate, to spend time in the woods, or making it harder to avoid unhealthy behaviours such as substance use.

"Scared, I don't want to get out to exercise." (resident)

"It's not a good place for me here - because people know me, it's easy to slip back into drink and drugs." (resident)

"Drug dealing in the woods, has spoiled it, and it has put me off going through the woods, so I have to go around the side, there are needles around on the floor around the tree logs." (resident)

"We spend a lot of time in the park. But you get 12 year olds smoking cannabis in the park, and people with dogs coming in the park, my friend is scared of dogs and ran away." (resident)

"Parks and walkways through Magdalen Woods do not feel safe to walk through in the day (even worse at night!) due to the amount of drug dealing & anti social behaviour by teens who smash bottles everywhere. The same applies for Broad Oak park." (resident)

Several people told us that better lighting and a greater police presence on the estate would make them feel safer. We heard from stakeholders that discussions with the council about lighting were ongoing. People also commented that they

felt that if there was more for young people to do in Wood Farm, this would reduce levels of anti-social behaviour (see [Ideas](#) below).

“After 7.30/8pm, it's isolated and pretty dark – I think the street lighting could be better.” (resident)

“I don't feel safe in the woods, I wouldn't go through alone. Feeling isolated in flat – after late shift it is a bit scary. Hope there will be more police surveillance around Three Fields in the winter.” (resident)

“We need more community officers – we haven't seen much, they've been here a couple of times but personally I think there should be more for people's safety. We close at 9.30pm and customers especially ladies and even a gentleman said they are afraid to come here late – especially older people but even younger customers. They should feel safe enough to come to our business and other businesses here.” (local business owner)

We spoke to stakeholders from Oxford City Council's Community Safety Team and Thames Valley Police, who are aware of the concerns we heard in our insight gathering. They told us the most commonly reported types of anti-social behaviour in Wood Farm over the last year included noisy neighbours, fly-tipping and a small number of cases of violence and harassment. There are much higher numbers of reports of crime and anti-social behaviour during the summer. The picture of crime has changed over time – for example, around 12–18 months ago, Thames Valley Police had a high number of reports of anti-social behaviour by young people near the shops, but this has reduced significantly since then, possibly due to the young people growing up and moving away. Reports of crime and anti-social behaviour in Wood Farm are generally similar to or lower than nearby areas such as Headington. In response to local concerns, Thames Valley Police told us they have started regular patrols in Wood Farm on Friday and Saturday evenings, which they feel will make it easier to respond immediately to reports of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Location, travel and transport

We heard that people like Wood Farm's location, with many of the services that people need are within walking distance or a short bus ride away.

“Most things are close by and within walking distance.” (resident)

“Proximity to hospitals and Headington Town.” (resident)

"Easy to go to the City Centre, shopping, school, everything is central."
(resident)

"I like living here because I am close to work (I work at the hospital)."
(resident)

We asked people responding to the online survey how they and their family usually get around (see Figure 19, below). The most popular means of transport were walking (35 people, 69% use this every day or often), car (26 people, 52% use this every day or often) and bus (26 people, 49% use this every day or often). Smaller numbers of people use other forms of transport on a regular basis, including taxis, bicycle or e-scooter. We did not hear from anyone who uses a motorbike or moped. People also told us about getting lifts from relatives or friends.

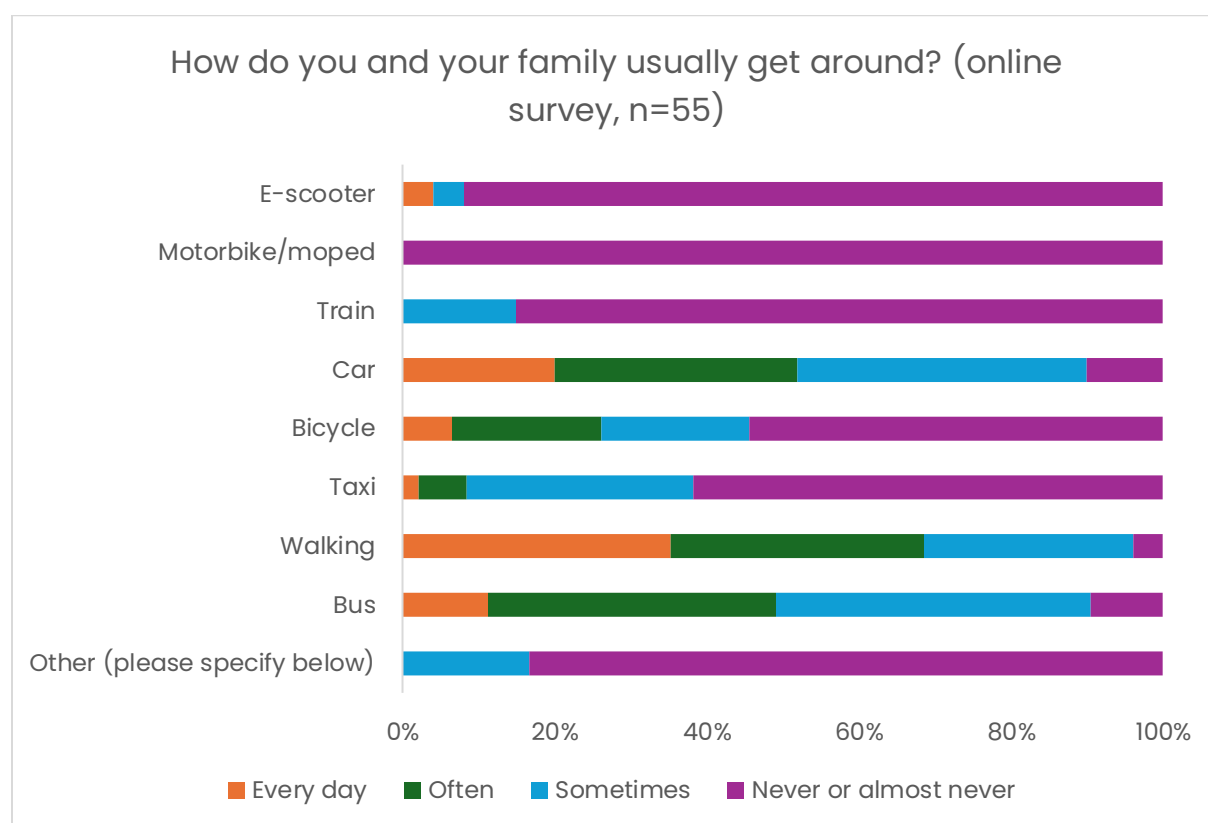


Figure 19: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how people usually get around.

We also asked people how easy they find it to travel (see Figure 20, below). The overwhelming majority of online survey respondents said they found it easy or very easy to travel into and around Wood Farm or Town Furze (43 people, 80%), and most find it easy or very easy to travel into and around Oxford (31 people,

57%), although a significant number find it very difficult to travel into and around Oxford (7 people, 13%). Many people (18 people, 35%) said they were not sure how easy it was to travel in Oxfordshire.

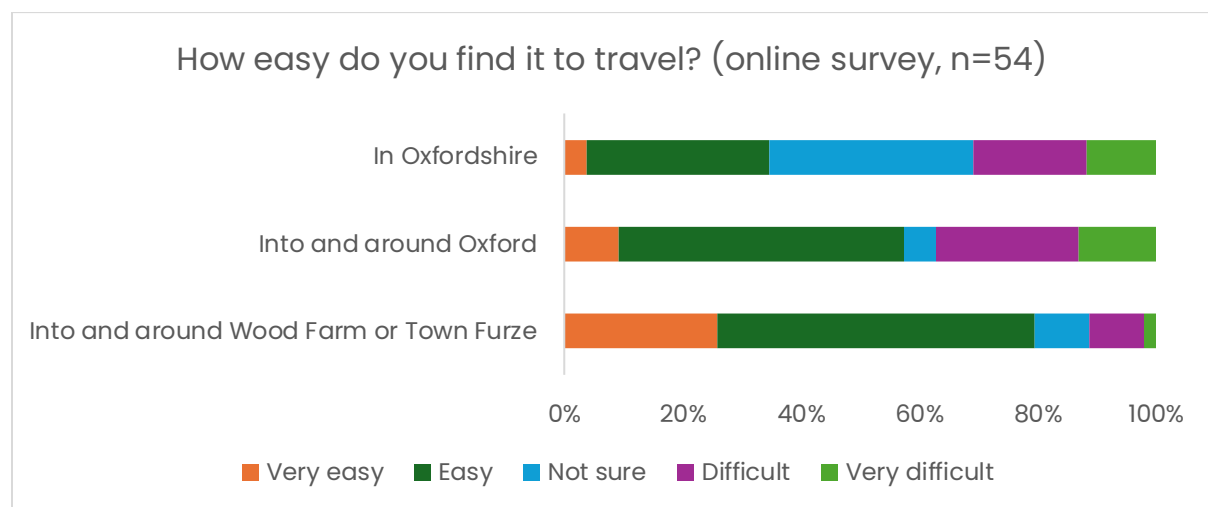


Figure 20: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how easy people find it to travel into and around Wood Farm or Town Furze, into and around Oxford, and in Oxfordshire.

People told us that they like the good bus connections to Headington, nearby hospitals and into Oxford city centre. They also told us about good parking availability on Wood Farm, and the ease of walking and cycling around the area.

"Good bus service to town centre, Headington and Cowley. Plenty of parking for visitors." (resident)

"Limited mobility, but walking and bus service is most easily accessible." (resident)

"The bus routes are good and there are no LTNs to create traffic jams on nearby roads." (resident)

"Bus networks are good – it's far from the city centre but the connections are good." (resident)

"There are lots of little tiny cut throughs, little lanes between houses that lead you through to another. Which is nice. There is also a wood, which is very nice to walk through." (resident)

Although most people told us they find it easy to travel around Wood Farm and into Oxford, we also heard about challenges with transport, traffic and pollution.

Several caregivers told us about concerns around crossing Wood Farm Road to get to school with their children.

"Hard that there's nowhere safe to cross with children (apart from some traffic lights) cars speed or bikes use road space instead of dedicated lanes and they don't stop at red lights." (resident)

"Not a single decent crossing to Titup Hall Road on Wood Farm Road to get to school. I'm the sort of [informal] lollipop lady every morning. The only kind of crossing is right down at the Slade." (resident)

We heard from several people about how they felt traffic issues in Oxford, including the impacts of new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, have affected their ability to travel to other parts of the city.

"LTNs are a huge problem. Getting to Cowley Road is horrible now." (resident)

"I will put off going to Barton Leisure centre due to how bad traffic has become. I dread it." (resident)

"Traffic is so bad that you dread driving. I would love to use my bike more, but I have no where safe to keep it." (resident)

People also told us about the effect increased traffic had on their physical health.

"I would be very satisfied if it wasn't for the noise and pollution from The Slade." (resident)

"The LTN's in Holloway have pushed traffic to a standstill outside my house and has made my asthma worse. I'm not even 40 yet and I'm being sent for a lung function test and have had my asthma medication increased. Before LTN's my asthma was well controlled. Now it's really bad and I feel residents who live on the streets where traffic is now pushed on too are made to suffer. I can't even have my windows open in the summer anymore because of how bad the traffic is and this has only been since the introduction of the LTN's it has become this way." (resident)

"People use Three Fields as a cut through when traffic is bad too - which has had a massive impact on my asthma since the LTN's have been introduced. I am dreading the bus gates being implemented in Holloway as it will make it so much worse 😞" (resident)

People told us about delays and problems with the reliability of buses. This could be especially challenging for those without access to digital information.

"Bus delays, waiting at the bus stop for a long time. Also timetables not reflecting [this]. Start work at 7am and do 12-hour shift to come back home. Weekend impossible." (resident)

"Don't have a smartphone for updates on late buses and route changes." (resident)

"If you're coming from town around the time you finish work, you can't get a bus. Between about four and 6 o'clock, you can't get on the bus and sometimes the buses don't even run to Wood Farm, they just run to the Churchill Hospital site." (stakeholder)

We also heard that residents of Town Furze feel particularly disconnected due to a lack of bus services in this area.⁶

"There is no connection for travelling to Town Furze from Wood Farm or vice versa." (resident)

"Bus service from Wood Farm is good for local hospitals, Cowley Centre and city centre... but there isn't any for people who live in Town Furze without having to walk a distance to a bus stop which isn't always possible for elderly, disabled or parents with children." (resident)

A stakeholder also pointed out how these issues can disproportionately affect people who are disabled or have a physical impairment.

"I know there's a stay and play and there's obviously the all the groups that happen in the Bullingdon, absolutely brilliant. But if you're not mobile or not very mobile, how are you getting from one end to the other with no bus route, and that's the kind of things that I feel people have got a lot to say about, is the actual community feel within the estate, that isn't there." (stakeholder)

⁶ Note that the 15 and 100 bus routes connect Girdlestone Road with Wood Farm Road and the Slade – the lack of connectivity may reflect different experiences depending on where you are trying to get from and to, or possibly a confusion with Town Furze road in Lye Valley, which is not on a bus route.

Other issues people raised included a lack of parking, people parking in cycle lanes, speeding and dangerous driving, potholes and problems with the quality of roads.

Poverty and the cost of living

Wood Farm residents told us that poverty, low income and the high cost of living was affecting their ability to look after their health and wellbeing. We heard about problems including long working hours and low wages, benefits not covering the cost of living, high rents, high fuel bills, and the expense of paying for access to services and facilities such as gyms, school meals and nursery places. People also told us that local events and activities were not affordable for them.

"Cost of living is very high. I struggle to pay my rent." (resident)

"Sometimes you get kids at the door asking for lunch money, begging for money." (resident)

"We rent our house - I don't work because of the little ones, and my partner just started a new job and it's a decent paid job but still really tight - car, rent, bills so having enough for little treats is hard." (resident)

"Benefits must be increased to equal value of foods and others." (resident)

"Nothing affordable in Wood Farm." (resident)

"Cost of living is very high. I have young children it is so tough being a single parent." (resident)

"It's very expensive to live in Oxford and there's very few free events for families." (resident)

Housing

In the online survey, we asked people to tell us about their housing. Over half of respondents (30 people, 55%) rent from a housing provider. Nearly a third (17, 31%) own their own home. A smaller number rent privately (6, 15%) or live in sheltered or supported housing (2, 4%).

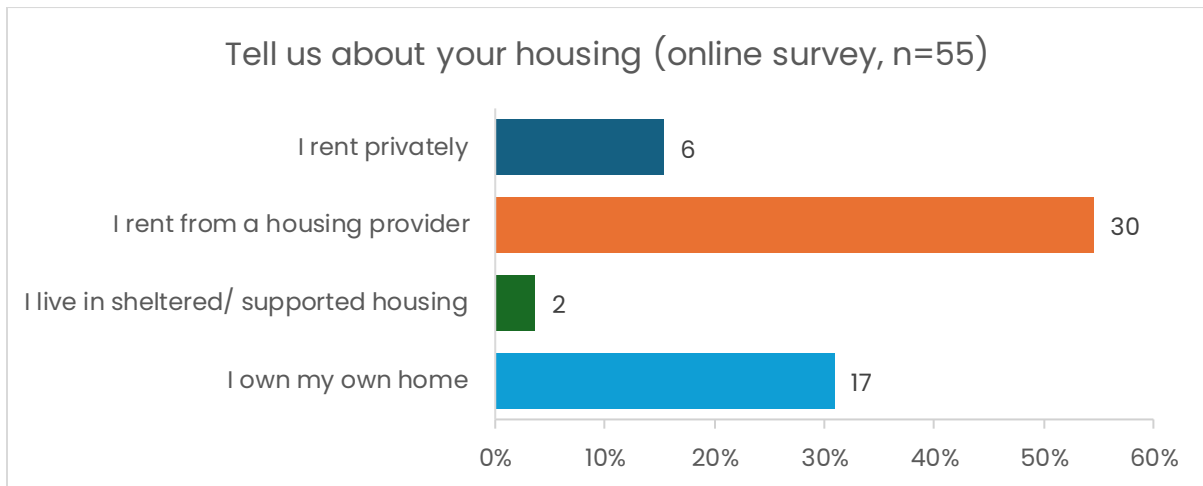


Figure 21: Graph showing responses to online survey question about their housing tenure.

Of those who told us they rent from a housing provider, 77% (26) rent from Oxford City Council, and a small number of people rent from A2 Dominion, Peabody and Green Square Accord.

When asked about how satisfied people are with their housing, results were mixed. Fewer than half of people (24, 45%) said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their housing, while 28% (15) said they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. We heard from people who were satisfied and dissatisfied across all types of tenure.

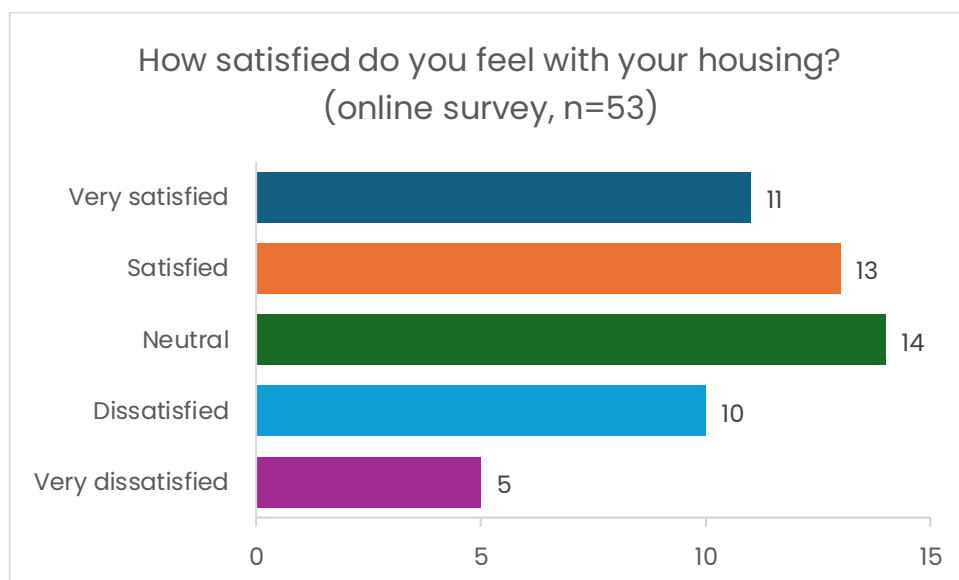


Figure 22: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how satisfied people feel with their housing.

Some people told us they were happy with their housing – including affordable rents, good landlords, and their home being well-maintained or in a good location for their needs.

“My house is my home because we have spent time and money to make it ours. I make sure repairs are reported when needed and will ask for improvements when things go into disrepair. Our home is an old 1950s house which feels solid and safe.” (resident)

“It's a nice house in a close with a green in front, and nice neighbours.” (resident)

“They adapted our home when my husband became disabled. They do repairs reasonably quickly. Rent is an affordable price.” (resident)

“My flat's got a perfect view over Bagley Wood and sun all afternoon. I moved here with my wife and we had a lovely time here.” (resident)

“We rent our house privately through a contact at the hospital, so it's affordable.” (resident)

“Tower Block- Good ventilation, lifts, stairs, bin chute, car parking.” (resident)

We also heard about challenges people had with their housing. As well as problems with the cost of housing noted above, people told us about problems with the condition and maintenance of their homes, and the impact on this on their health and wellbeing, including problems with damp and mould.

“My house is concrete so it never warms up and is always dusty. I would like to extend my house but it's too expensive. We currently have 4 people sharing 1 bathroom.” (resident)

“Bungalow has damp and mould issues. No access to rear garden so nowhere to lock a bicycle.” (resident)

“One issue which I regularly experience as part of my job is damp and mould in accommodation, this is particularly an issue in Council housing.” (stakeholder)

“Leaseholder in former Oxford City Council property, ODS seem a bit distant from the needs of leaseholders.” (resident)

"The private rented housing in particular is insecure, often overcrowded and as a result, a lot of people living with damp as well. There's a lot of flats in the ward and a lot of families living in flats, so a lot of families without any real outdoor space to call their own and that also has its problems. I would say it was really quite obvious during the pandemic, quite how badly a lot of families coped in the ward because they were all cramped up together." (stakeholder)

Residents of Foresters Tower told us about problems with people and dogs leaving urine and faeces in the stairwell, which we also observed during outreach. We also heard about problems including poor soundproofing, a lack of adaptations or access to housing for disabled people, and a lack of well-maintained outdoor space for people living in flats.

"Poor build. Very noisy. Council won't do much about it. Like living in a jungle." (resident)

"Housing shortage and lack of support with disability needs." (resident)

During outreach we spoke to one resident of a block of flats whose child has ADHD and finds it difficult to spend a lot of time in their flat. As a result, the family spend a lot of time in the nearby play park, in all weathers. A group of older people we spoke to told us that they felt the growing number of multi occupancy houses on the estate has made the population feel more transient and less community oriented. There was also a perception that this can mean more cars parked on pavements and fewer front gardens, as there are more likely to be multiple cars per household and a lack of parking space.

"I think we have one or two [HMOs] in my close and that seems absolutely fine. But I think the more you get, the less sort of community you have because there's students who are transient." (resident)

We also heard from several people who are leaving Wood Farm due to the lack of suitable housing for older people in the area.

"Sad to have to move away from my neighbours and community after 30 years as need smaller accessible house and downsize nothing suitable here. Will miss social networks." (resident)

Health, illness and disability

We asked people how often they feel healthy and well in themselves. Responses were mixed – most people said they 'felt healthy and well often' (21, 42%) or

sometimes (15, 30%), while 11 people (22%) said they rarely feel healthy and well. Three people (6%) said 'always' and no-one answered 'never'. Responses cut across gender, age and ethnicity, although a higher proportion of men (6 men, 67%) said they feel healthy and well 'often', whereas a higher proportion of women said they feel healthy and well 'sometimes' (13 women, 38%), or 'rarely' (5 women, 15%).⁷

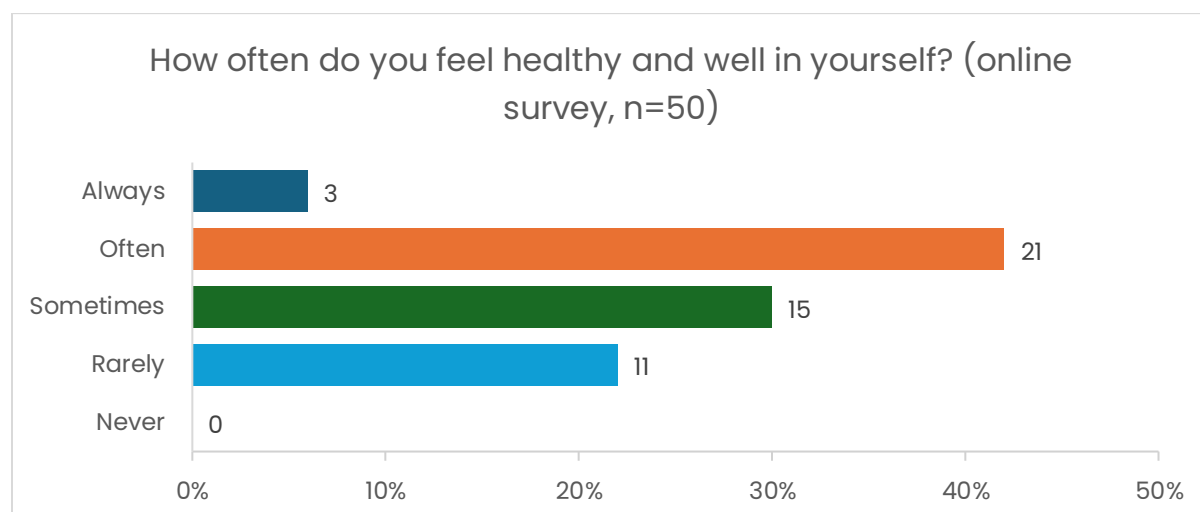


Figure 23: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how often people feel healthy and well in themselves.

People told us about how their long-term condition or disability, or caring responsibilities for someone with a health condition or disability, affected their quality of life and how much they were able to participate in the community and look after their health and wellbeing.

"Having disabled children is isolating. Having extra challenges that others don't understand or won't understand makes life harder." (resident)

"Because of my health I do not leave the house. I sometimes feel isolated." (resident)

We also heard from a stakeholder how poverty, unemployment and physical and mental health issues can interact with each other.

"I think with any area of deprivation, there's a lot of mental health. There's a lot of drug and alcohol, there's a lot of unemployment and what comes with that in terms of isolation or social issues then turning into mental

⁷ Note the sample size, particularly of men responding to the online survey, is small so there is high uncertainty around these trends.

issues because of depression and anxiety and all those sorts of things.”
(stakeholder)

Local health services

People had mixed views about how easy they find it to get the help they needed from health and care services. Just over half of online survey respondents (27 people, 55%) said it was OK, 14 people (29%) said it was difficult and 6 (12%) said it was easy.

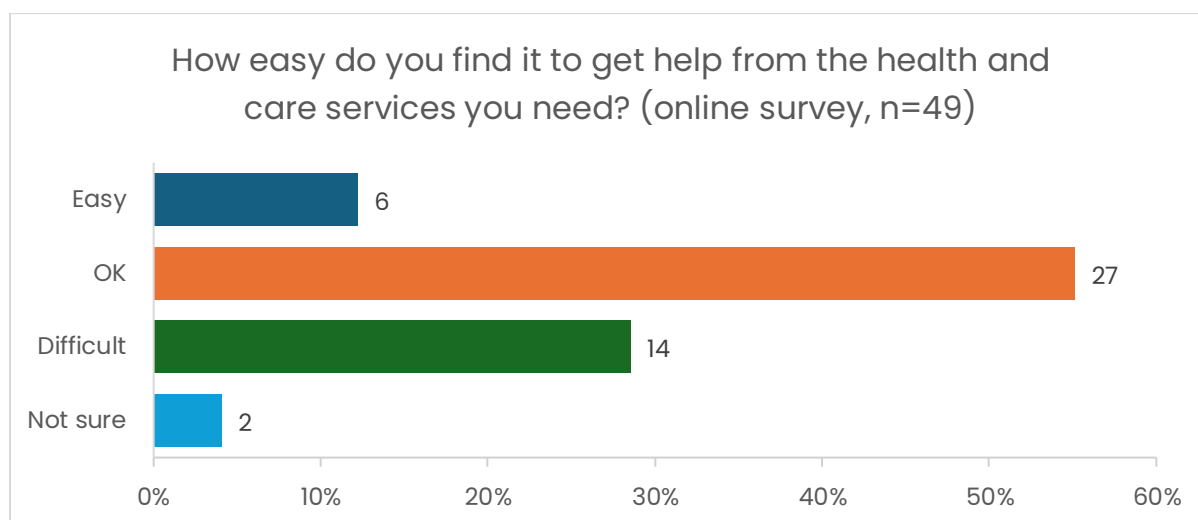


Figure 24: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how easy people find it to get the help they need from health and care services.

In the next section, we look first at the positive comments we heard about Wood Farm – what people like about living here, and what supports them to be healthy and well. We then look at the barriers and challenges people told us about. The many common themes between these two sections – including Wood Farm’s green spaces, facilities, location, and community spirit (or lack of it) – highlight the inequalities in people’s experiences of life in Wood Farm.

People told us about good experiences of local GPs and hospitals, and that they appreciate having the pharmacy on Wood Farm and easy access to hospitals.

“Manor surgery – good, especially for kids. If it’s children, definitely will get an appointment, or if it’s an emergency they will make an arrangement – they did this for my husband when he was ill after having covid.” (resident)

“I go through the woods to my GP (Holloway) – very happy with my GP.”
(resident)

"Happy with care at Nuffield Orthopaedic – hydrotherapy." (resident)

"Temple Cowley Health Centre is my Drs, and I can get an appointment if I need one and I have diabetic and asthma health checks regularly." (resident)

"I am near hospitals, so appointments are easy to get to." (resident)

"Good local chemist." (resident)

We also heard about barriers to people accessing health and care services included difficulty travelling to GP practices outside of Wood Farm.

"There is no local GP on Wood Farm or health provision. I have to travel to access healthcare." (resident)

"It would be better to have a GP practice here in Wood Farm." (resident)

"There's a lack of dentistry, there's a lack of GPs and generally a lack of primary medical care. There is a pharmacy which is good, that's helpful." (stakeholder)

"Have to travel to Manzil Way GP when Hollow Way not open. Hard to get to." (resident)

"The bus route [to Headington / Manor Surgery] isn't like your sort of Barton route where it's every couple of minutes, they are like a lot longer, they're not as accessible." (stakeholder)

People told us they had experienced challenges in making a GP appointment, including for those who are unable to take time off work to book and attend appointments. We also heard about problems accessing community services such as podiatry. These are common themes that Healthwatch Oxfordshire hears across the county through our [feedback centre](#). Long waits on the phone to book an appointment can have a hidden cost for patients, especially those on pay as you go contracts, which often includes people with less secure incomes and older people from immigrant communities.

"Never any appointment available especially if you work." (resident)

"It's hard to make an appointment at Bury Knowle, it takes over two weeks, they say oh we're fully booked. I have autism so I need to see my own

doctor, so I have to wait. It's hard for me with work and everything. I ring every Monday and they're fully booked every time.” (resident)

“Registered with Bartlemas Surgery for more than 30 years. 45 minutes on hold each time we ring for appointments.” (resident)

“GP service (Bury Knowle) – really hard to get an appointment – have to do an electronic form and they say they will call back, but you never get a call the same day even if you are really sick, and end up going to A&E. My husband is a nurse and went to A&E but they didn't do any investigations, he was on sick leave for 3 months and had to go back to India to get tests done.” (resident)

“Podiatry is now nearly impossible to get regular treatment ... even though consultant for dermatology and diabetic nurse say I should have my feet done every 6 to 8 weeks. I often have to wait 4 months or more.” (resident)

People told us about challenges accessing mental health and special educational needs support for children and young people.

“My children require specialist help and support. It takes years to get to any kind of help. This affects the whole family. Stress, anxiety, worry.” (resident)

“We've been waiting for my daughter's ADHD and autism assessment for more than 2 years.” (resident)

We also heard from several Wood Farm residents who work at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and had comments on health services from a staff perspective.

“Parking charges at the hospital are outrageous and lack of parking is a massive problem especially for staff – staff regularly arrive late for work having parked on a verge or double parked at the JR.” (resident)

We heard from staff at Hedena Health who are working together with the Manor Surgery and other health services to deliver a new 'integrated neighbourhood team' model of healthcare, focusing on prevention poor health and tackling health inequalities.⁸ As part of this, a newly appointed Community Health and

⁸<https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s71255/Integrated%20Neighbourhood%20Teams%20in%20Oxfordshire%20Main%20Report.pdf>

Wellbeing Worker will reach people on priority streets in Wood Farm through a door-to-door approach. They will build relationships locally and make sure people get the help and support they need. GP practices are also working with their social prescribing teams to reach people living in Wood Farm who may be feeling isolated.

Smoking, vaping and substance use

We asked people completing the online survey about whether they had noticed litter or people doing things related to smoking, vaping, drinking alcohol or taking drugs in Wood Farm. Only a small number of people said they had not noticed drug taking (3 people, 7%), smoking (3 people, 7%), drinking alcohol (1 person, 2%) or vaping (1 person, 2%) in Wood Farm (see Figure 25 below).

Places where people said they noticed activity or litter were:

- People smoking, or litter from smoking, around bus stops (23 people) and school gates (11 people)
- People drinking alcohol or litter from drinking alcohol outside local shops (16 people)
- People doing things related to drug taking or litter related to drug taking at home or in local parks or green spaces (both 10 people).

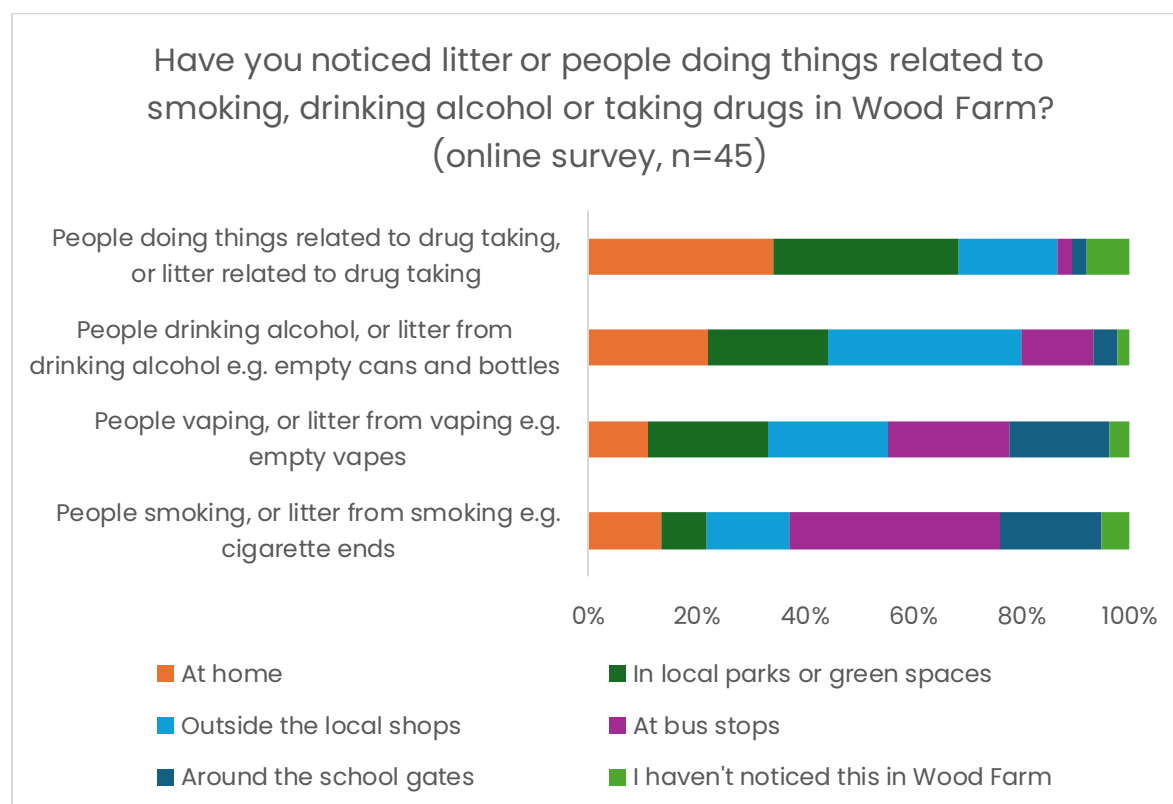


Figure 25: Graph showing responses to online survey question about whether people have noticed litter or people doing things related to smoking, vaping, drinking alcohol or taking drugs in Wood Farm.

As noted above ([Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour](#) and [Problems with green spaces](#)), behaviour and litter associated with drug taking and alcohol make people concerned about their own and their children's safety, and could make them less likely to go out and about on Wood Farm and use green spaces. Some people felt that many of those involved in dealing and using drugs on Wood Farm were from outside the area but taking advantage of the area's quiet and hidden spaces.

"Safety for my children, needles being left around the street by the shops."
(resident)

People also told us about their concerns around passive smoking.

"There is too much smoking here, and vapes inside the building [Foresters Tower], which makes asthma worse for me and my daughter." (resident)

"I am much worried about the harmful effects of passive smoking. Especially, when I am doing school run, I see people in front of me tends to smoke and I need to walk past them to escape from the smoke." (resident)



Figure 26: 'Proud to be smokefree' sign by Wood Farm Primary School gates.

Employment and training

We asked people responding to the online survey about the opportunities for work and learning skills in Wood Farm. Very few people agreed with the statements 'there are local opportunities for work that is good for me' (4, 9%) or 'I have opportunities to get the skills and qualifications I need to get a job that is good for me' (5, 11%). Although some people said they have the skills and/or qualifications

to find a job that is good for them (16, 36%), over half of people said that they did not agree with any of the statements (26, 58%).

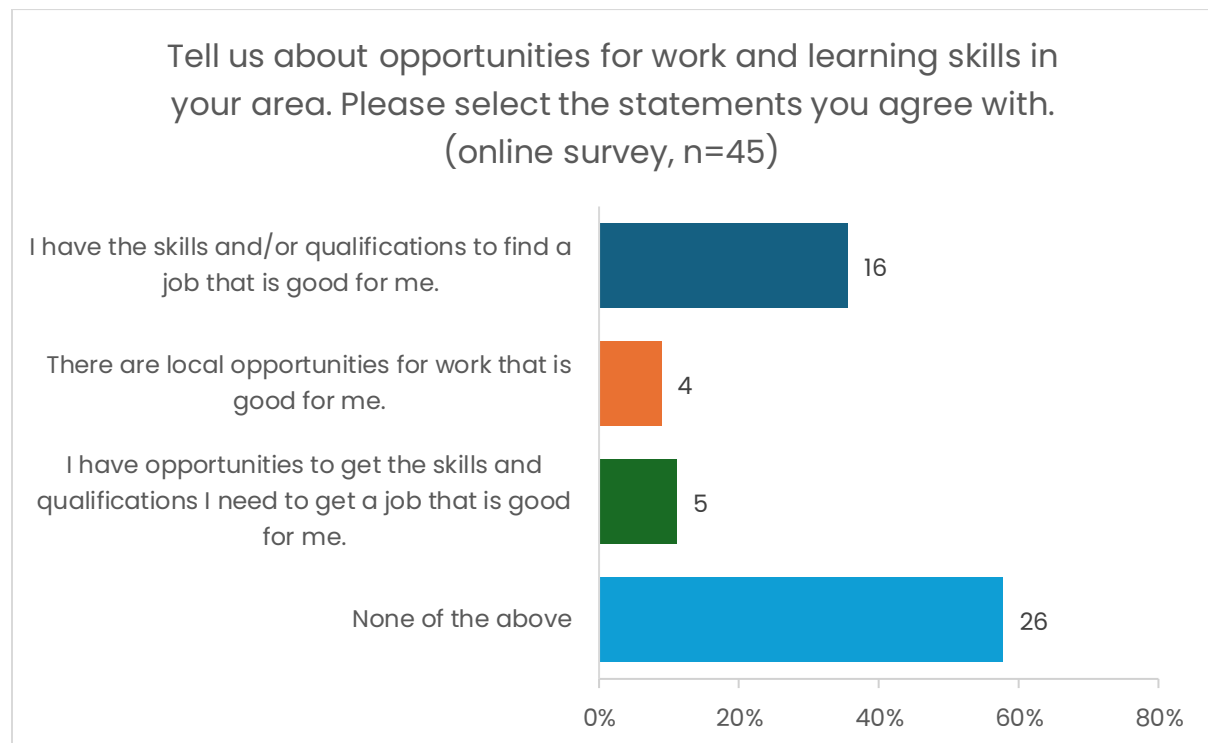


Figure 27: Graph showing responses to online survey question about opportunities for work and learning skills in Wood Farm and Town Furze.

People told us about barriers to education and training, including the cost for those not on benefits, childcare, English language proficiency, and a lack of local opportunities.

A stakeholder told us that although the employment statistics for Wood Farm are relatively high compared to Oxford's other priority areas, much of the employment available is in low paid jobs.

"So it's a high employment rate but not a high salary. And through assumptions we've kind of put it down to that actually they're so close to hospitals, they are probably the porters, the cleaners, the lower paid nurse sort of levels rather than the higher paid roles. And we've found that that's where those jobs generally are. So yeah, we found that it is quite high. It's not one of the lowest employment areas, but they are one of the lower pay scaled ones." (stakeholder)

Decision-making and feeling listened to

In the online survey, we asked people how involved they feel in decisions about their neighbourhood. This gave a strong sense that people felt that they were not involved and that there was a lack of being aware of how to influence and be part of decisions about where they live. Only a small number of people said they felt involved in decisions about their neighbourhood (4, 8%) or felt their views about living in the area were listened to by decision-makers (5, 9%), while the majority of respondents (41, 77%) said they didn't feel involved in decisions about their neighbourhood. We also heard that few people felt they were part of the local community (10, 19%) or knew where to get information about their neighbourhood (9, 17%) (this is discussed in more detail in the next section, [A 'lack of community spirit'](#)).

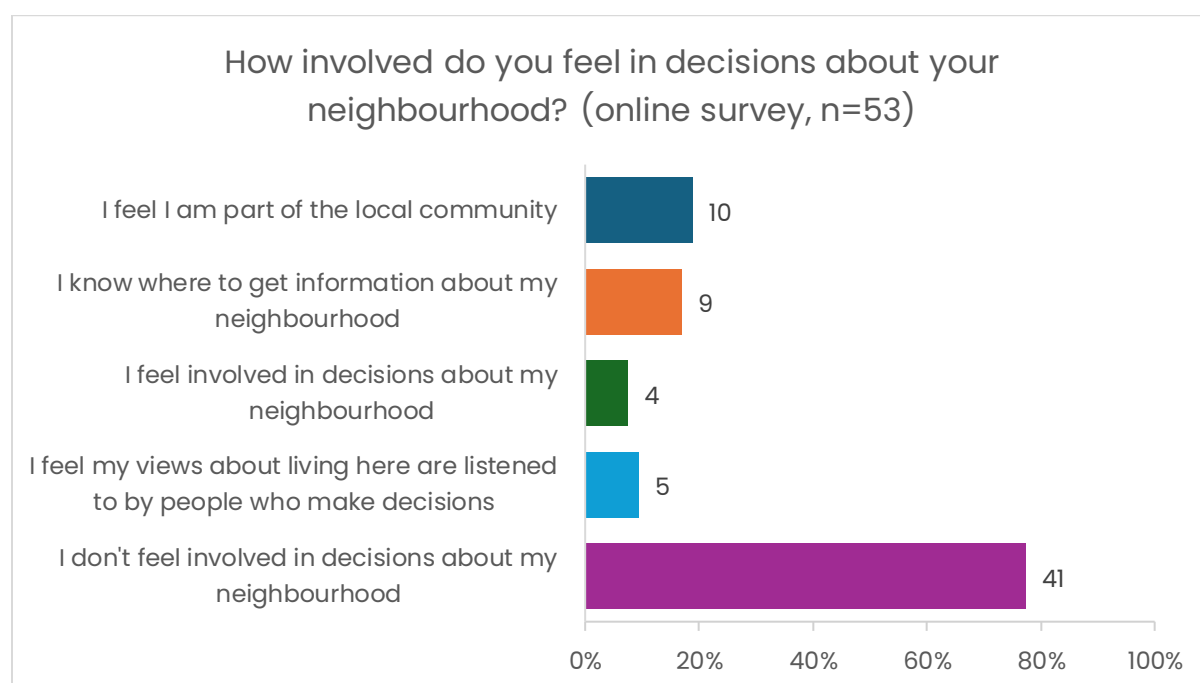


Figure 28: Graph showing responses to online survey question about how involved people feel in decisions about their neighbourhood.

People told us they did not feel listened to when they raise concerns or suggest ideas – including by their housing officer, by Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. People said they were disillusioned about sharing their views, because they felt ‘nothing would be done’. This is similar to what Healthwatch Oxfordshire has heard from local communities about the importance of meaningful community involvement in research and visible action in response to findings.⁹

⁹ <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/report/community-research-in-oxfordshire-november-2023/>

"Have made suggestions for community before and have been ignored."
(resident)

"The residents aren't consulted or asked. No resident engagement. Suggestions about improvements are declined or ignored. Concerns for health are ignored. Three Fields is used as a drag strip by cars and motorbikes and considering this area is for people who are less ambient, nothing has been put in place to slow people down even though I have raised this on fix my street." (resident)

"I feel that although we are asked, it doesn't feel actioned. Possibly due to money or objections?" (resident)

"Nobody listens to our views so we don't offer them anymore." (resident)

"Over the years there have been many researchers and surveys which I have been involved in but nothing changes!" (resident)

Others said they had not been asked about their views before, or did not know how to share their views.

"Not sure where to express views about neighbourhood." (resident)

"This is the first time I have been asked my opinion on the neighbourhood, and I am pleased with the survey." (resident)

"There is no place to voice your views - city councillors have no presence in Wood Farm except to knock doors occasionally. They need a weekly surgery or events where they are visible in the community." (resident)

One person raised the importance of making sure everyone could have a say and that any consultation and information was accessible to people with different communication needs.

"It feels like LTNs was not an Oxford decision - have they talked to people whose language is not English, have they paid for translators and talked to them? My mum can't read or write her own language because she didn't go to school, they should take those people into consideration." (local business owner)

Several people told us they felt that Wood Farm was neglected compared to other estates in Oxford, and this was reflected in the Wood Farm Youth Club's

photography project, in which the young people referred to the estate as “the forgotten one”.

“Wood Farm seems to be left out of things – other people getting this done, that done.” (resident)

Another barrier to community involvement was a lack of information about events and opportunities to meet others. We heard from some people that they did not know what was happening locally and did not know where to find this information. Although some residents receive housing newsletters or newsletters from local councillors, not everyone is linked into these, and we heard from stakeholders that no-one has access to community noticeboards.

“Don't know about anything. There was no newsletter, no local advertising so I have no idea.” (resident)

“Apart from the basic nothing else is advertised about events in the local facilities.” (resident)

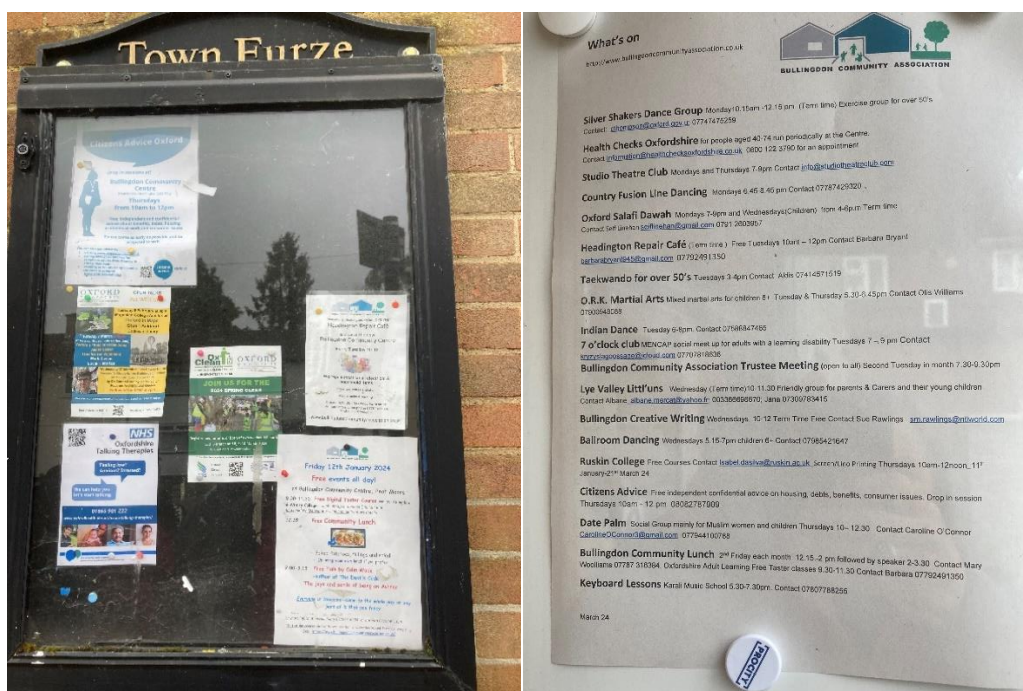


Figure 29: Left, Town Furze community noticeboard; right, Bullingtondon noticeboard.

5. What ideas do people have for making Wood Farm a healthier, happier place to live?

People told us about a wide variety of ideas they had for making Wood Farm a healthier and happier place to live. Their suggestions largely reflect what is already good about Wood Farm and what people feel could be better. In the word cloud below, the themes of community spirit, provision for children and young people, safety and better, more affordable shops come through strongly.



Figure 30: Word cloud showing common words in people’s ideas for how to make Wood Farm a healthier, happier place to live.

Suggestions covered several key themes:

Activities and events to make the most of Wood Farm's strengths

People shared ideas for activities and events to bring the community together and make the most of the area's strengths and assets, as well as support and funding for existing groups and activities. For example:

- Several people mentioned the idea of health walks or a walking group to help people feel safe and comfortable to enjoy spending time in the woods
- Other suggestions included more activities in the sheltered scheme, community trips, a family fun day, a local football team and after-school clubs

"A pavilion, keep fit courses, learning courses, coffee mornings/afternoon, citizens advice, sports training, keep fit for the older people, cooking training and advice, careers advice for all ages." (resident)

"Local walking groups to make it safer to walk in the woods with others." (resident)

Community spaces

Community spaces, run by and for the community, to bring people together and provide people with the food and other resources they need to live well, such as a community café, food bank, community shop, and community centre. Some people suggested using a former café space on Atkyns Road for this.

"A cafe in one of the closed shops for the community with healthy options at affordable prices." (resident)

"Convert old cafe to community hub for old and young people." (resident)

"It would be nice to see if maybe the school could offer the community space to put on a larder or have a community fridge, even if it's for the parents, it's better than nothing." (stakeholder)

Improvements to infrastructure, facilities and safety

We heard suggestions about potential improvements to Wood Farm's infrastructure and facilities to make them feel more cared-for, safer and more accessible, such as better lighting and resurfacing of paths through Magdalen Woods, installing outdoor exercise equipment, installing communal BBQs in green spaces, planting fruit trees and turning waste ground into community allotments or a dog park.

"Put in some new trees and make sure they get watered, fruit trees that people can pick and eat from – good for wildlife, good for people." (resident)

People also suggested making improvements to safety, for example through greater police presence, enforcement of 20mph speed limits and a road crossing on Wood Farm Road near Titup Hall Drive.

“Need pelican crossing outside school and the tower block.” (resident)

Communication and listening

People suggested having more communication with services and decision-makers, such as housing officers and local councillors, including face-to-face contact.

“People feel that there are some frontline staff who are not frontline and hard to get hold of, like housing officers. Everyone's online but they're not seen.” (stakeholder)

People would also like to see better communication about what is already happening on Wood Farm, including for those who do not have access to digital sources of information – for example by using community noticeboards or providing new residents with a welcome pack.

“To have a welcome pack for new tenants at Atkyns Court to include every about the area and all information about my tenancy. (resident)

“There are a lot of notice boards scattered over the Wood Farm area at the moment they are all effectively out of order because nobody has got any keys for any of them. [We need] new keys to be cut for all of them and then find someone local for each of them as well to hold a set of keys so that we can start getting a few more community notices up and that would be a way of doing things like advertising Bullingdon Community Centre and activities that are happening there and so on.” (stakeholder)

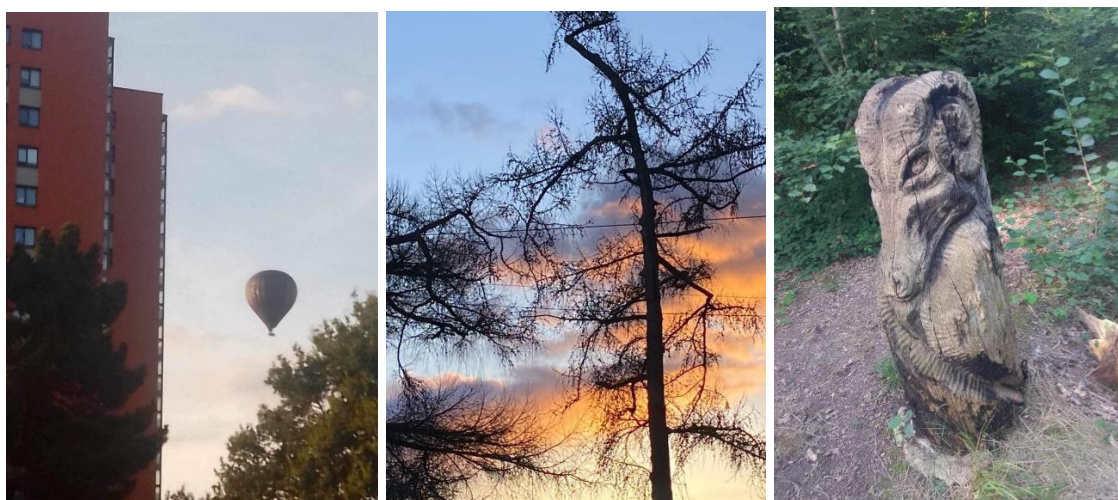


Figure 31: Photos taken by members of Wood Farm Youth Club: left, a hot air balloon rising next to Foresters Tower, centre, a sunset through trees, and right, the carved head of the Magdalen Woods dragon.

6. Young people's voices

We heard that many of the concerns about Wood Farm were around the lack of provision for young people and the impact on other residents when young people got involved in anti-social behaviour.

In this section we have drawn out the perspectives of some of the young people themselves. We heard that young people appreciate the good things about Wood Farm, but they feel there needs to be more for them to do socially and to be more physically active, or support to access facilities elsewhere. We heard that some young people feel unsafe, while others pointed out that a group of young people hanging out by the shops might seem intimidating but not actually pose a threat.

"Like the youth club and playing football with friends. Need more for youth club and more to do in WF. Nothing to do outside. Park is for little kids, no outdoor gym or swimming pool." (young resident, Wood Farm Youth Club)

[What supports you to be healthy and well?] "Going somewhere else off Wood Farm. Accessing swimming pool etc - Need free buses for under 18's." (young resident, Wood Farm Youth Club)

"Scared, don't want to get out to exercise. [What ideas do you have?] Fun Day once a year to get a community spirit." (young resident, Wood Farm Youth Club)

"The shops are amazing – food, post office, pharmacy. We meet friends and chill. Use the cage for football and stuff. We play football at Bullingdon. We're at college in Abingdon, plan is to join the army – we get to college on the bus.

[What would help people to be healthy and well?] More youth activities to stop people hanging around – I used to go to Bullingdon youth club. I feel safe sometimes – not at night. Other people say they don't feel safe but because I've grown up here I don't mind it. If you see a massive group in front of Coop wearing masks you might find it intimidating. You see crackheads on the stairs and handoffs everywhere you go.

[What ideas do you have?] Nerf gun stations – nerf gun fighting or a boxing ring in the cage, instead of actually injuring people" (young residents, street outreach)

Wood Farm Youth Club's photos have been used throughout this report. In a written piece accompanying the photos, the young people said:

"As we hope is clear from the images there is nice places on Wood Farm which isn't a lot but there is also a lot missing they would like on the estate. The young people described their estate as the forgotten one." (Wood Farm Youth Club)

In our art project with children at Wood Farm Primary School, assets and things that children said they like about Wood Farm included: the Atkyns Road shops, trees and wildlife including owls and hedgehogs, play areas, buses and iconic Foresters Tower. Children highlighted things that make it harder to stay healthy and well, such as traffic, litter, anti-social behaviour and the dominance of sweets and chocolate in local shops.



Figure 32: Sketches and stencils made by Year 3 children at Wood Farm Primary School, including top left – anti-social behaviour by Atkyns Road shops, top right – wildlife and a bus, and bottom – sweets and chocolate for sale at the Co-op.



Figure 33: Year 3 children at Wood Farm Primary School working on the art project.



Figure 34: Illustrated map created by Community Artist Alex Singleton and Year 3 children at Wood Farm Primary School, commissioned by Healthwatch Oxfordshire and drawing on Oxford Preservation Trust's Wood Farm Community History project.

7. Recommendations

We would like to make the following recommendations to the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and other stakeholders, based on what people told us about living on Wood Farm. We heard that there are big differences in people's experiences – some residents find it much harder to make the most of the area's assets, which can negatively affect their health and wellbeing. We recommend that agencies work to provide **targeted support to those who need it most** – for example people with long-term health conditions or physical impairments, living in more isolated parts of Wood Farm, with low incomes, or no access to a car.

We also heard that there is a wealth of community activities and assets on Wood Farm and nearby, but that **supporting, connecting and joining up** everything that is already happening would make a real difference. This could involve:

- Supporting people to know about and access what's already there
- Enabling local people to come together to improve and develop their local community in partnership
- Agencies working together to support people holistically
- Adopting a community development approach to support residents to set up new groups and initiatives on Wood Farm and strengthen what is already there.

We have also made specific recommendations based on the key challenges that people told us made it harder to be healthy and well, and their ideas for how things could be improved:

- **Safety and crime:**
 - To continue with operations ensuring a visible police presence and responsiveness to reports of crime
 - To continue to build a relationship and dialogue with the local community, for example through walkabouts with Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and tenancy managers
 - To link people into drug and alcohol support services where appropriate
- **Community spaces and facilities:**
 - To explore the potential to use an empty unit on Atkyns Road as a community space
 - To work with Wood Farm Primary School to explore how to make the most of the community hall, and improve the accessibility of this space to the local community

- To explore ways of improving physical and financial access to facilities outside Wood Farm, such as Bullingdon Community Centre and Barton Leisure Centre – for example, by looking into subsidised fees or shared use of Barton Community Association minibuses
- **Housing, income and cost of living**
 - To link residents up with opportunities to access advice and support locally, for example the Citizens Advice drop-in at Bullingdon Community Centre
 - To improve communication and responsiveness between social housing landlords and residents, including face-to-face contact, for example through walkabouts or housing surgeries
- **Young people**
 - To co-produce a plan with young people around what they need¹⁰
 - To explore the potential for organised sports activities using existing facilities (e.g. basketball courts) and supporting young people to access existing facilities and activities, for example through subsidised fees or bus fares
 - To join existing activities up with wider youth opportunities e.g. Youth Ambition
- **Affordable, healthy food**
 - To explore options to improve access to affordable food shops, e.g. bus connections to Aldi
 - To work with hot food takeaways to improve access to healthier options (building on Public Health work elsewhere in Oxfordshire)
 - To explore the potential for a “social supermarket”¹¹, community shop or larder in Wood Farm
- **Transport**
 - To improve road safety on Wood Farm, for example by providing a school crossing patrol or zebra crossing on Wood Farm Road near Titup Hall Drive
 - To support active travel, for example by improving lighting on footpaths and by providing more safe bike storage for residents of Foresters Tower and other blocks of flats
 - To support greater access to bus services, for example by exploring the potential to incorporate more areas of Wood Farm in existing bus routes, offering subsidised bus fares, or use community transport to connect people with facilities such as Bullingdon Community Centre

¹⁰ See, for example, picnic bench and shelter in Cowley Marsh Recreation Ground co-produced with young women and girls <https://fig.studio/projects/greenspace/>

¹¹ See, for example, social supermarket in Norwich: <https://thefeed.org.uk/our-projects/socsup>

- **Green spaces and physical activity**
 - To improve access to green spaces, for example by improving the Girdlestone Rd access to Lye Valley Nature Reserve, and improving lighting and path surfaces in Magdalen Woods
 - To work with residents to improve and maintain less used areas, for example by planting fruit trees or installing outdoor gym equipment
 - To support greater use of green spaces through community activities like walking groups, building on existing initiatives like the NHS routes and Oxfordshire Mind's Walking for Wellbeing
 - To link residents into existing support for physical activity including Active Oxfordshire's YouMove and Move Together, and explore ways to support more people to be active, for example providing taster sessions or discounts for Wood Farm residents at Barton Leisure Centre
- **Being listened to and involved in decision-making**
 - To adopt a community development approach for all new initiatives, and ensure any next steps are co-produced with local residents, for example by recruiting local residents to the Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Community Steering Group
 - To improve the visibility of responsiveness to engagement, for example through 'You said, we did' communications
 - To improve communication between residents and decision-makers through face-to-face contact – for example housing surgeries and walkabouts
- **Health services and health promotion**
 - To continue to take a proactive, targeted approach to supporting people with their health and wellbeing – including the 'integrated neighbourhood team' approach and the appointment of a Community Health Development Officer in Wood Farm
 - To link Wood Farm residents and activities into existing health promotion work including YouMove, Move Together, BeeZee, drug awareness, smoking cessation etc
- **Community spirit and information about what is happening**
 - To create opportunities to bring residents together e.g. summer play day, picnics and BBQs
 - To use and maintain community noticeboards and other channels (e.g. housing newsletters, new tenant information packs and LiveWell Oxfordshire) to keep residents informed about what is happening.

8. Useful links

- [Bullington Community Association website](#)
- Wood Farm Community Hall – [booking page](#)
- Oxfordshire County Council Public Health [community insight profiles](#)
- Oxford Preservation Trust [community history project in Wood Farm](#)
- Oxford Preservation Trust [history walk around Wood Farm](#)
- Thames Valley Police – [Oxford North-east crime map](#)
- Integrated Neighbourhood Teams – [report to Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on INTs in OX3 and elsewhere](#)
- [Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- [YouMove Oxford City](#)
- [Move Together](#)
- [BeeZee free healthy living courses](#)
- [LiveWell Oxfordshire](#) – directory of activities and services
- [Healthwatch Oxfordshire](#)

Appendix 1: Residents' stories

Outreach conversations with residents

"I like to keep my independence"

"I've got my four wheeler - I can't get about like I used to but I like to keep my independence and do everything I can - keep my flat tidy, keep on the go, visit my daughter, go to the shops in Headington with my daughter, we like to go to Waitrose. I've got a sense of humour, that's the main thing! And there are people on this floor that are willing to help if I need it. Young people don't have much - that park out there is a load of - it could do with something a little bit different - they get tired of the swings and playing football. But I keep myself to myself and stay out of gossip." (older Wood Farm resident, door-knocking)

"We try to make of it what you can"

"I've lived here about 10 years. My [teenage son] will go out with his friends while it's light but I wouldn't let him go out later. We use the Stay & Play at church and the schools. My child does football on Barton. I try not to go to the Coop unless I run out of something - it's a bit dodgy round the Wood Farm shops, I'm not one to judge but people doing drugs sat outside shops. I try to do a proper shop in Headington or big Tesco - my partner drives which makes life easier. We rent our house - I don't work because of the little ones, and my partner just started a new job and it's a decent paid job but still really tight - car, rent, bills so having enough for little treats is hard. My child came home from school the other day with a trip for £700 and my other child had a trip that was £350. We try to make of it what you can - we come to the park while the weather's nice. Though what are half of these concoctions in the park - what's wrong with a classic swing and seesaw? [What ideas do you have?] More things for kids like a youth club. My son did go to a small youth club in the summer holidays but it's not all the time. A community centre that offers something to people who live round here. If you look at Barton community centre there's a lot going on, trips and that, and Wood Farm hasn't got anything like that, specially for people that can't drive - like day trips, Christmas trips, trips in the holidays - that would be affordable during the cost of living." (Town Furze resident, street outreach)

“Society has changed too much”

“I can't wait to get out of here, out of Oxford. I was born and bred here but it's different to what it used to be. The rise of criminal activity. Kids running round the streets here. You can't look at people in the street. Half this tower block is [expletive] junkies and that. Dogs [pooing] in the stairwell. Women throwing used sanitary towels, nappies, books out of windows. You can see drug drops happening in broad daylight, in the lunchtime, the afternoon – druggies at the bottom on their phones, saying, I've transferred the money, and then the drugs chucked out of the windows. The Council won't do nothing, police don't do nothing. If you put yourself out there [e.g. on resident's panel] you're the one who gets victimised, your flat trashed. It's too late, society has changed too much.

When I was a kid, you didn't disrespect your elders. If your neighbour saw you doing something wrong, they'd give you a clip round the ear and take you home, and then you'd get a clip round the ear in front of the neighbour, and then another clip for bringing shame on the house. The system is corrupt, I work every [expletive] day and support people who've never done a day's work. All the surveys in the world won't change that. The shops are all closing. I remember the days of the community centre – you'd go and get a pop and some crisps, something like that would be nice – but the kids today aren't like the kids then, just look at those shootings in Oxford recently.” (Wood Farm resident, door-knocking)

“We had a lovely time here”

“Been here 17 years, you get a few [expletive] but all in all can't complain. My flat's got a perfect view over Bagley Wood and sun all afternoon. I moved here with my wife and we had a lovely time here. The council put in a shower for me and I got physiotherapy – it was all very efficient and quick. I like a walk or a bike ride. I've got lovely neighbours. I like a pint at the Cornerhouse with my mates. I keep myself to myself. Sometimes you get kids at the door asking for lunch money, begging for money. [What would you like to see?] A club with a bar – like Northlink Northway. And not get rid of our last remaining pub at the Cornerhouse!” (older Wood Farm resident, door-knocking)

“I don't feel safe in the woods”

“I've been here for 2 years. It's OK, it's calm. I used to live [near the primary school] and had good access to everything, hospitals, I felt more safe. Now I'm [nearer Horspath Driftway]. It feels like there is community – children have a mix of friends and there is the Indian community. We go to church. [Where do you get food?] go to Aldi because it is the cheapest. We rent our house privately through a contact at the hospital, so it's affordable.

Food – go to Aldi because it is the cheapest. Manor surgery is good, especially for kids. If it's children, you definitely will get an appointment, or if it's an emergency they will make an arrangement – they did this for my husband when he was ill after having covid. I don't feel safe in the woods, I wouldn't go through alone. I feel isolated in my flat – after late shift it is a bit scary. I hope there will be more police surveillance around [my area] in the winter.” (Wood Farm resident, street outreach)

Stories collected in phone interviews

“I have lived here since I was a baby”

“I absolutely love it here and I wouldn't want to move anywhere else. I've been asked to live abroad and all over the place, but I'm happy here and this is my home. My mother & father were one of the first people to ever live in this road. There were no houses on this drive then (as they were all being built) and it was almost like Rock Edge! Mr and Mrs Palmer were the first people to move into the Road, they lived a couple of doors away. It was named Palmer Road because of them – but it would have been named after us if we'd have been first!

I have lived here since I was a baby. There were no big flats when I came here. There was the wood and the old farm, and I would have to go there and get my mother's eggs for her. Fresh eggs from the farm...yes, I remember that farm very well. And now it's all gone, isn't it, but this is why it's called Wood Farm.

Then we got the park over the field. When I moved in that was all done and ready to use. It used to be a huge field where I would go over there and play football with the boys. I absolutely loved it. It was our field, you know, the children all went over there, and we really played on that field. I know it's lovely to see it but it's now fenced off where children can play safely. Very often the parents are with them, but it's not like the one I remember running about wild playing football with the boys. My brother was also there and that gave me confidence to be there with the boys!

The flats were not there then, it was all barren ground. I personally think that now it's been overbuilt which has made things not as good. It's sad as we now have drugs and things, things that never used to be like that here. We also had a lot of drugs going on in the flats up there.

There are shops in the area but I'm afraid I stopped using them. For years and years the people were wonderful, and they were so good that at Christmas time I would go into the pharmacist, and I would buy a dish for

them because they overwhelm me with their kindness and loveliness. It's been taken over now and they are also lovely people but in between that it really went downhill. I always felt every time I went into the shops that I was nothing but a nuisance. It was a horrible experience and in the end I became so het up with distress I stopped going into that shop, so now I don't use the post office anymore unless I absolutely have to. I haven't been there for nearly two years. It's a shame as it used to be such a lovely, lovely place. I did all my mother's shopping there for many years, all through my childhood. I stopped going to the local shops and even though I need to use [a mobility aid] to get around, I prefer to go into Oxford. It's harder for me because I have to get buses and carry my shopping, which isn't fair because that was my shop.

Well, for the last year or so I went to the Bullingdon Centre and joined in at a club that helped you with the iPad and technology things. I went for a while, but the trouble is there were so many of us that he didn't have time to spare so much for each individual, so I'm still horrendous with my iPad and don't have much confidence with it. And then they did little groups and clubs. Which I don't know if that happens anymore. I seem to have lost touch with that and that dispersed. However, I do go to Silver Shakers now on occasions; they have exercise classes and I'm trying to get my balance. I mean, it's been about 3 years and it's still very, very bad but I do try and go to the centre. There's another one of my exercise classes down at the town hall, once a month, I absolutely love that. The town hall is great fun. We laugh and there's all different views going on as the town hall. There's a special room down below, underneath and lots of people go there and we have lots of fun. I love that.

There are lovely people here in Wood Farm, and I do have some lovely neighbours that I can call on here if ever I, you know, needed desperate help. The people across the road I've known for years and there's a little group of us here and we seem to look out for each other. Many times, I've had the chance to leave but I'm just happy here. I feel safe and this is where I would hopefully like to die.

We never had holidays as children, and I never saw the sea till I was 21. I mean, we couldn't afford holidays. Well, the big thing in my life, my father, I told you he loved nature, and he would take us up to Shotover and that was a huge part of my life. We would take our picnics up there, play in the sand. That was my first experience of sand. We spend hours up there with my father and that was a very special part of my life, Shotover. (older Wood Farm resident, interview)

"It's quite attractive for an estate from the 50s"

"I've lived in Oxford since [the 1970s] and I moved to Wood Farm [about 15 years ago]. I quite likely thought when I was looking for a house, that I had to find a house that's sort of the lower end of the price range. I looked at Wood Farm and I saw this house. One of my concerns was I wanted to be able to be fairly near buses so I could get into town and get into Headington and I liked the fact that there was a parade of shops nearby because at some point you're not able to drive anymore – you get too old to drive, and it's nice to have shops that are nearby, and that was a nice factor. I saw this house, which I liked, and it had a very nice garden and a big shed.

Several friends said 'Oh Wood Farm... oh, you know you don't want to live there...there could be, you know, problems with youth and things and to check it out'. Anyway, I walked around, and it seemed perfectly nice. I came upon two young policeman. I guess they were community police, so I asked if they could tell me something about the area because people said Wood Farm had a bit of a reputation and you know it's a problem. And they said, well, occasionally we have an incident but you know what, occasionally we also have incidents in the very posh areas of North Oxford! They said it's no different from anywhere else. So that was absolutely fine, and I moved into the house. I live in a nice little close and I have good neighbours on either side. Unfortunately, my best neighbour who's become a very good friend just moved away a week or so ago.

So that's how long I've lived here and I like it! I have easy access to the number 15 bus into town and the number 10 into Headington where I can also get a coach to London if I want. I've got shops which is nice, although I must say the Co-op has sort of deteriorated a bit over the years in the sense that they're now stocking more sweets and drinks and not as much real food and fresh produce but it's not bad and is still OK. And there's a hairdresser and the fish and chip shop is the best in Oxford! The fish is really superb, especially the haddock. It's all fried fresh and it's really, really good. And there's an off licence and a new little pizza place that's open and a post office and a pharmacy, so it's good.

What I also like is the way in which Wood Farm itself is laid out, it's nice. And it's quite attractive for an estate from the 50s. There are lots of little, tiny cut throughs, little lanes between houses that lead you through to another. Which is nice. There is also a wood, which is very nice to walk through, which is just that the edge of the shops you can walk through. It's not very large and it was originally larger and it's been cut in half by the

bypass, so the other half it's on the Shotover side, but it's a lovely little wood and I often wandered through there.

There is Shotover which is really close and there's the Lye Valley, which is just the most wonderful, magical place in Oxford. I think it's managed by a volunteer group and there's a boardwalk to walk all the way through and it's just lovely. It's like being in the middle of the countryside in the middle of a housing estate. It's really nice. So, there's lots of nature.

When my grandchildren come, they're older now, but when they used to come when they were younger, there are little to playgrounds in Wood Farm, which is a nice amenity. And now that they're older, they're very into basketball and there's about two or three basketball courts within 5 minutes' walk. So that's peaceful.

I think when the estate was planned, there were lots of trees planted, which is very nice, so it's attractive. The newer housing developments, the private ones as well as the Council ones, really minimise the size of gardens and the plantings so there's lots of hard paving. Whereas in Wood Farm, there are quite a variety of trees and things that are planted, which is very nice, and it makes it attractive.

Well, I just thought of another good thing, the Community Centre. I got very active and not long after I moved in, I saw a little advert in the Oxford Mail that they were starting a course in mosaics. It was a sponsored thing. Anyway, I joined that and made some really good friends, and we produced a mosaic that's now installed in the Wood Farm shops. That's there and it's about 6ft by 3 or 4ft or something like that. It is a really nice mosaic of Wood Farm and there was lots of consultation with the people of Wood Farm as to what they like included in it, and it's really attractive. So, we did that and then we did another mosaic that's been installed in the new, sort of refurbished Community Centre. It's a very nice Community Centre but because it was falling down (it was only built, I think, as a temporary one in the 40s or something like that) and the council refurbished it very nicely and they run lots of courses there now, and I took and a college sponsored class in drawing there. It's a nice centre that's very well ran - so that's an amenity that's incredibly useful.

The little school, the primary school, which I really don't have anything to do with, has a very good reputation. And they've done some nice projects.

There are areas of Wood Farm (not just one area, it's a little sprinkle all over) that are not as neat and tidy. Lots of rubbish in the gardens and people leave things out on the pavements for people to take away perhaps, but they're too big. You can find that anywhere more houses are being turned to into places of multiple occupation. And it's OK. I think we have one or two in my close and that seems absolutely fine. But I think the more you get, the less sort of community you have because there's students who are transient. When I bought my house, it was affordable for me, and it was at the lower end of the price range. I think prices have risen a lot, especially because of the new Headington University campus, I think. I just think it's going to become less affordable for ordinary people. There are still some council houses and that's nice because it means that there's a mixture of people.

I do keep active and I go to lectures and talks but if I become really ill or incapacitated in any way, that's going to be really difficult for me and I won't be able to stay here and that's sort of sad but there's nothing I can do about that really.” (older Wood Farm resident, interview)

Appendix 2: An introduction to Wood Farm

Wood Farm has a long and rich history, which has recently been documented through a project by Oxford Preservation Trust, including a historical report by Liz Woolley, which we have drawn on here.¹² It was home to Roman pottery kilns. For centuries the woodland and open grazing of Magdalen Woods, Brasenose Woods and Open Magdalen were used by local people for food and fuel. The main road from Oxford to London (now Old Road) ran alongside the area. The local inn at 'Titup' Hall (which Titup Hall Drive gets its name from) was said to be so named because it was on the last flat section of ground before the steep hill over Shotover. There are still mounting stones where riders and coach passengers would get off to walk over the hill on foot.

The farm that gives Wood Farm its name was established in the late 1700s. Later, the area was used for the site of camp for Italian and German prisoners of war during the Second World War. The camp buildings were converted into council housing after the war. Some older residents of Wood Farm also have memories of traveller people who stayed at a camp on the Slade.

The development of the Wood Farm and Town Furze estates

From the 1950s onwards, Wood Farm changed dramatically. Oxford City Council acquired the land around Wood Farm and began to build social housing. A junior school was built on Titup Hall Drive in 1955 – Wood Farm Primary School and the Slade Nursery now occupy the same site. The eastern bypass was built in 1959, cutting Magdalen Wood into two. Other key developments in this period included building 260 homes on the Town Furze estate, across the Slade from Wood Farm, from 1958 onwards, and the opening of a row of shops on Atkyns Road by 1960.¹³ Wood Farm's highest building, Foresters Tower, was completed in 1967. The farm buildings of Wood Farm itself were demolished in the early 1970s, as development on the estate continued, including the building of several bungalows for disabled people.

¹² <https://www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/wood-farm-community-history>; *A History of Wood Farm, Oxford: A Report for Oxford Preservation Trust* by Liz Woolley, using research by Stephanie Jenkins (September 2024)

¹³ https://web.archive.org/web/20101124160223/http://headington.org.uk/history/misc/council_estates.html

Changes since the 1970s

Since the 1970s, changes on Wood Farm have included the effects of the 1985 Housing Act, which brought in the 'Right to Buy', meaning that some of Wood Farm's social housing has shifted to private ownership as tenants have chosen to buy their own homes. The boundaries of city council and county council 'wards' have also changed over time, meaning that some areas that used to be thought of as part of Wood Farm, such as around Bulan Road, are now part of other administrative areas. Today, social housing providers in Wood Farm include Oxford City Council, Peabody, Orbit, Home Group, A2Dominion and Green Square Accord.

As Oxford's economy has changed, so has Wood Farm and its residents. Many of the first residents of the estate were employed at the Cowley car factory. Since the Radcliffe Infirmary moved to its current site at the John Radcliffe Hospital, the Churchill, Warneford and Nuffield Orthopaedic hospitals have expanded, bringing more hospital workers to the area. Oxford Brookes University has changed and grown, bringing more students to Wood Farm.

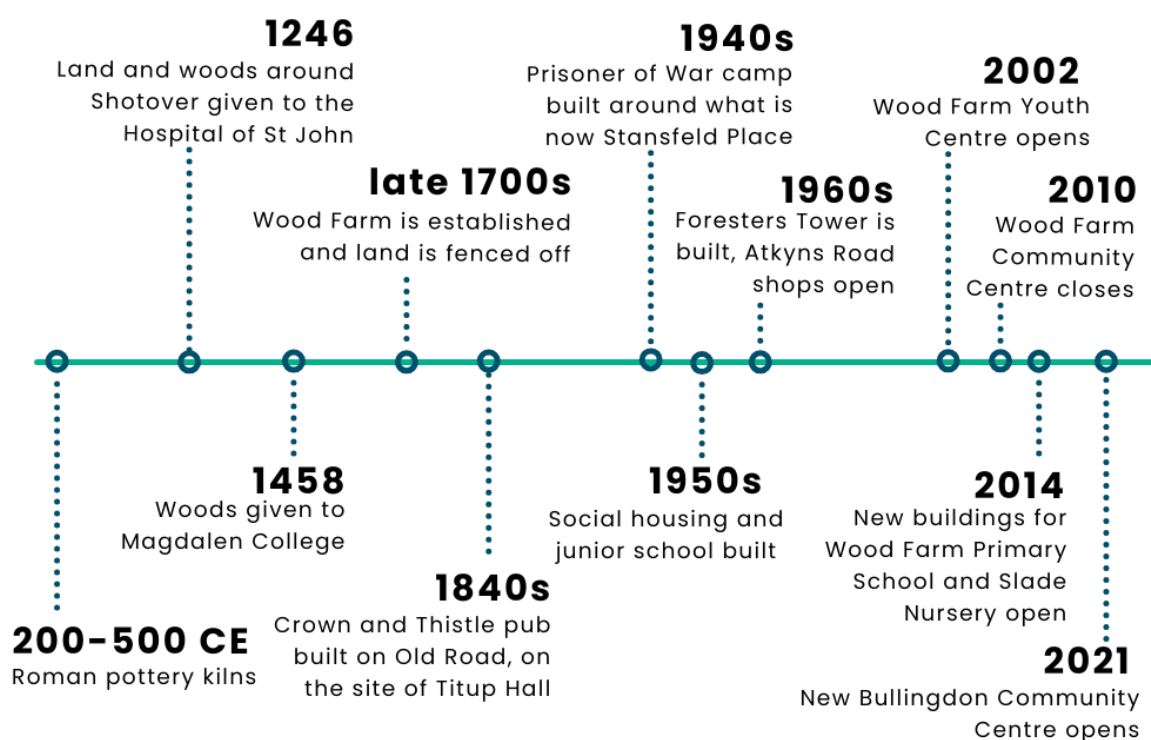


Figure 35: Selected timeline of Wood Farm's history.

Facilities and services

Wood Farm Youth Centre was opened in 2002 following a long campaign for support for young people. The newly developed buildings for Wood Farm Primary School, the Slade Nursery and a new Sure Start children's centre were completed in 2014, though plans for a community centre as part of this were scaled back to a community hall above the children's centre. When Wood Farm Community Centre closed in 2010, most of the groups using the centre relocated to the nearby Bullingdon Community Centre and Wood Farm Youth Centre. Bullingdon Community Centre was redeveloped, and the new building opened in late 2021.¹⁴ Many of the Sure Start centre's services were cut due to national austerity measures in the 2010s.

While the Wood Farm GP practice on Leiden Road recently closed, the two main GP practices in the area, Hedena Health and the Manor Surgery, are exploring a proactive approach to supporting people most likely to experience health inequalities. This involves rolling out an approach to community health care at a neighbourhood level, drawing on a Brazilian Family Health model working with local community health workers, and supporting the development of 'integrated neighbourhood teams'. The former GP practice on Leiden Road has recently opened as an abortion and vasectomy clinic serving Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and West Berkshire, operated by MSI Reproductive Choices.

A number of other local facilities in Wood Farm have recently closed, including the Crown and Thistle pub on Old Road and Franca's Café on Atkyns Road. As with many places, the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns had a significant effect on Wood Farm's services and community life, and we heard that some of the groups that were thriving before the pandemic have stopped or found it hard to restart.

Wood Farm has had several new public artworks created in recent years, including a mural by the Atkyns Road shops in 2000, a mosaic nearby made in 2017, and a carved and woven dragon in Magdalen Woods, created in 2015.

¹⁴ For more background on Bullingdon Community Centre and an account of the successful nine-year campaign for a youth centre on Wood Farm, Richard Bryant's history of the Bullingdon Community Centre, *We Refuse to Accept That Ours is a Back Alley Community Centre*, Parchment Press 2023.

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About Healthwatch Oxfordshire

This community insight report was commissioned by Oxfordshire Public Health as part of its ongoing programme of creating community insight profiles for areas of Oxfordshire most likely to experience health inequalities. Healthwatch Oxfordshire brought additional capacity and resource into this work, through its core role of listening to people’s experiences of using health and care services in Oxfordshire.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire is an independent charity for people who use health and social care services. We find out what matters to local people and make sure their views are heard by the people who make decisions about those services. We can also provide help and advice if you have a question about local health services.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire's friendly staff are here for you to help answer questions or give you information on health and care services in Oxfordshire. If you need more information or advice, call us on **01865 520520** from 9am-4 pm Monday to Friday

Visit our website www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk (with translation facility)
email us on hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

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