

Wood Farm Community Insight Profile

Summary

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1 Introduction

Community Insight profiles are being created to ensure that we understand as fully as possible the health outcomes, and factors that influence these outcomes within wards in Oxfordshire where residents are most at risk of poor health or experiencing health inequalities.

Ten wards were identified in the [Oxfordshire Director of Public Health Annual Report \(2019\)](#) as having the greatest number of small areas that were listed in the 20% most deprived in England in the Index of Multiple Deprivation update (published November 2019). Profiles for all of these areas are now published.

Further community insight profiles are now being created for areas across the county identified as falling within the 30-40% most deprived nationally according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019) and where local partners feel there would be added benefit to developing the profile. Wood Farm contains two small areas that fall within this range, but after discussions with the steering group and based on local need, this profile focused on three small areas with the additional inclusion of the small area covering Town Furze.

Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health team are working with local partners to develop the community insight profiles, which provide a detailed picture of both the health needs and the supportive resources in the community. The community insight profiles use local data and community feedback following an asset-based community development model (ABCD).

The aim of this profile is to:

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

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

1. *Wood Farm Community Insight Project Report* by Healthwatch Oxfordshire,
2. *Community data profile of Wood Farm* compiled by the Public Health Intelligence team of Oxfordshire County Council.

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

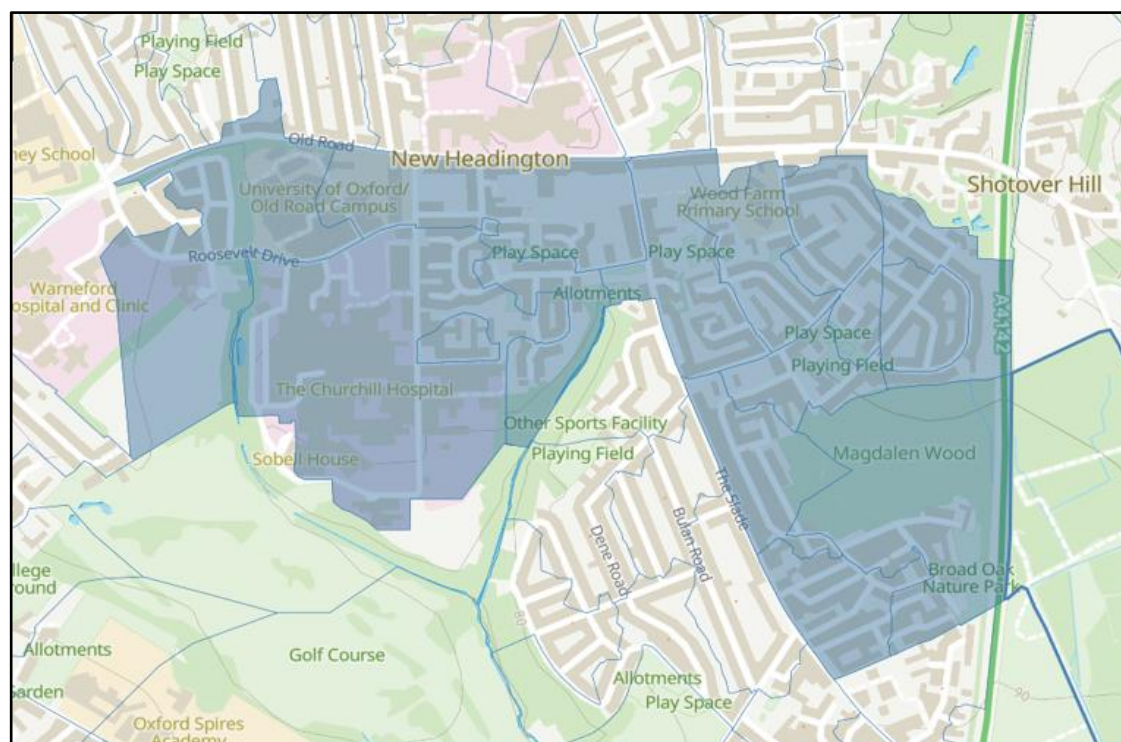
With thanks to Healthwatch Oxfordshire for the work to produce the community insight report, Oxford City Council, local councillors, Bullingdon Community Association, Wood Farm Youth Club, Oxford Preservation Trust, Wood Farm Primary School and the Wood Farm Health and Wellbeing Partnership and Community Profile Steering Group who have supported each stage of the profile's development.

2 Location

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 Wood Farm area included in the Community Insight profile is based on a geographical area built from smaller Output Areas (see Figure 1), focusing on the Wood Farm and Town Furze areas and excluding Lye Valley. This area is referred to in this profile as the Wood Farm Community Insight profile area and further detail on how the boundary was selected can be found in Annex 1 of the data profile report.

Figure 1 Map showing Output Areas selected for the Wood Farm Community Insight area



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

3 Summary of population and health data

Population and housing

- According to the latest ONS population estimates (mid-2022) the Wood Farm Community Insight area had a resident population of 5,461. The area had a slightly younger population than the Oxfordshire average.
- Between the 2011 and 2021 Census surveys the total number of residents in the Wood Farm Community Insight area increased at a similar rate (8.4%) to the Oxford rate of increase (7%), but below the Oxfordshire rate of increase (11%).
- The change in Wood Farm's population by broad age between 2011 and 2021 shows that the number of younger people aged 0-19 years and working aged people has increased (by 14% and 11% respectively), while the number of older people has declined (by 9%).
- The area is more ethnically diverse than Oxfordshire as a whole. 44% of residents in the Wood Farm Community Insight area were from a non-white background compared with 13% for Oxfordshire.
- The proportion of social rented housing in the Wood Farm Community Insight area in 2021 (45% of households) was three times the average for Oxfordshire (15%), and above the average for Oxford (21%).

Health and wellbeing

- 9 out of 32 local health and wellbeing indicators for Churchill Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA), which includes the Wood Farm Community Insight area are ranked as worse than the England average:
 - Children under 16 years living in poverty (%)
 - Adults over 60 years living in poverty (%)
 - Emergency hospital admissions for self-harm (SAR)
 - Hospital admissions for alcohol-attributable conditions (SAR)
 - Emergency hospital admissions for all causes (SAR)
 - Emergency hospital admissions for COPD (SAR)
 - Life expectancy at birth (males)
 - Deaths from all causes (SMR)
 - Deaths from all causes, age under 75 years (SMR)
- No health and wellbeing indicators for the Wood Farm Community Insight area are ranked as better than the England average.
- The proportion of adults receiving structured treatment for drugs or alcohol in the Wood Farm Community Insight area (10.0 per 1,000) was higher (worse than) the Oxfordshire rate (5.6 per 1,000).
- The prevalence of children classified as overweight (including obesity) at aged 4-5 years in the Churchill MSA (19.5%) was similar to the England (21.9%) and Oxfordshire (19.4%) averages, however the prevalence of overweight (including obesity) in children aged 10-11 years (39.1%) was significantly higher than the Oxfordshire average (32.1%).

Employment

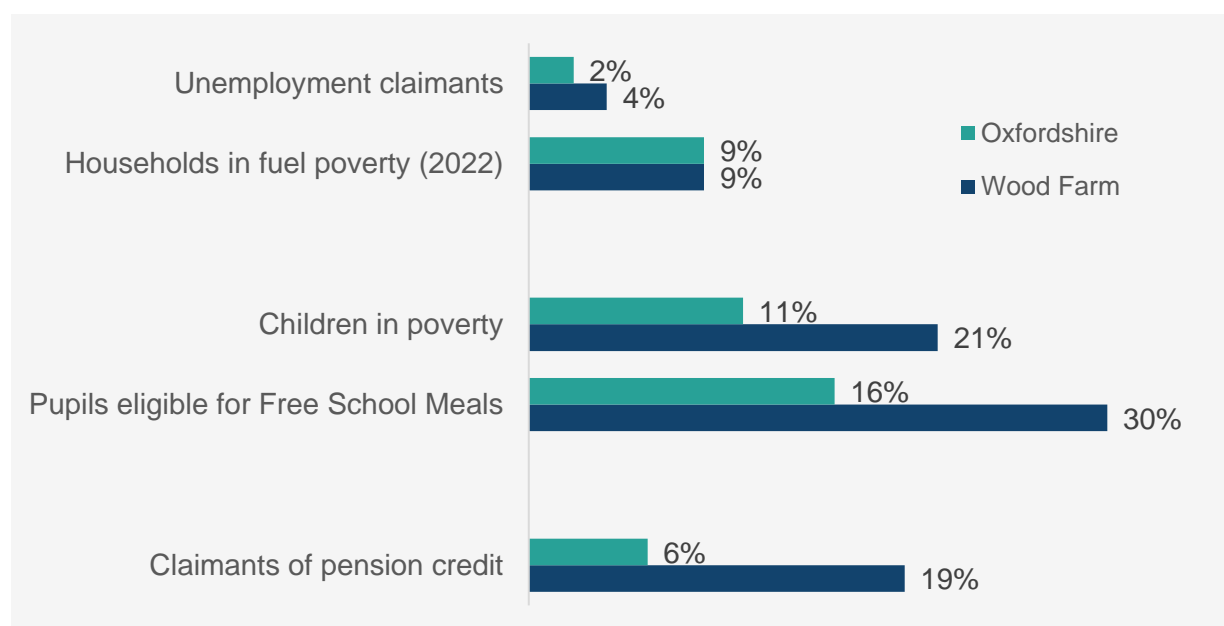
- According to the Census 2021, 30.3% of people in employment in the Wood Farm Community Insight area were in the (generally low paid) caring, leisure, process and elementary occupations. This was higher than the averages for Oxford (24.0%) and Oxfordshire (22.1%).

- The proportion of people who were looking after home or family and those who were long-term sick or disabled in the Wood Farm Community Insight area (6% and 5% respectively) were each higher than the averages for Oxford (4% and 3% respectively) and Oxfordshire (4% and 2% respectively).

Poverty and deprivation

- The Wood Farm Community Insight area has a higher proportion of households classified as deprived in one or more dimensions according to the 2021 Census (57.5%) than the Oxford (47.9%) and Oxfordshire (44%) averages.
- A higher proportion of working aged residents in the Wood Farm Community Insight area were claiming unemployment-related benefits (4.0%) compared to the averages for Oxford (2.7%) and Oxfordshire (2.3%).
- The Wood Farm Community Insight area has a similar proportion of households estimated to be in fuel poverty compared to the Oxfordshire average (both 9%).
- Rates of child poverty and pupils eligible for free school meals in the Wood Farm Community Insight area (21% and 29.7% respectively) were nearly double the averages for Oxfordshire (11% and 15.7% respectively).
- The rate of older people in poverty and claiming pension credit in the Wood Farm Community Insight area (19.3%) was over three times the average for Oxfordshire (6.1%).

Figure 2 Indicators of low income¹



Crime and community safety

- The overall rate of crime in Churchill MSOA (103.1 crimes per 1,000 residents) was above (worse than) the Oxfordshire rate (74.5 crimes per 1,000 residents).

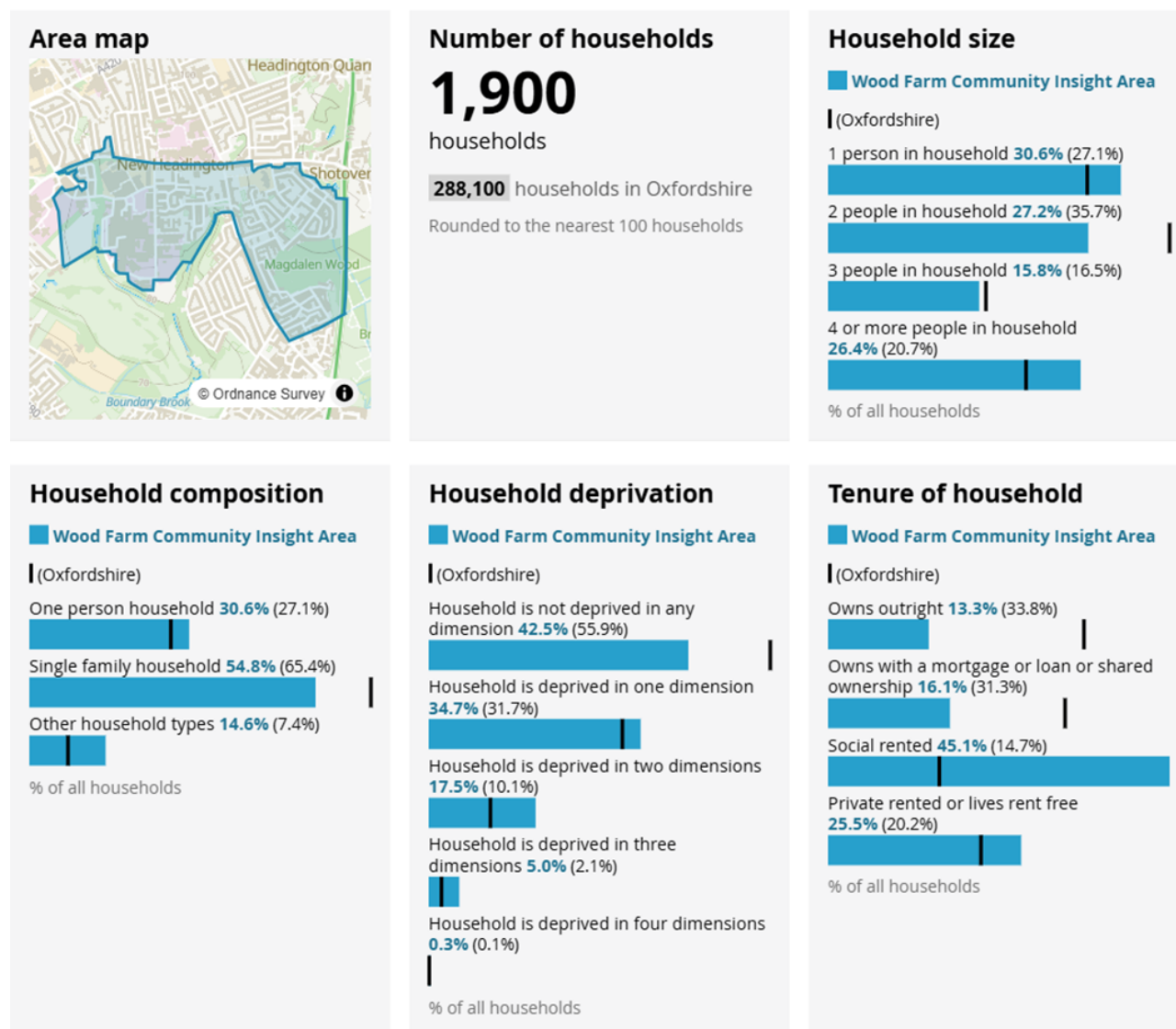
¹ Sources: DWP claimant count Oct 2024 from nomisweb.co.uk, Claimant count is a measure of the number of people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed, based on administrative data from the benefits system; Sub-regional fuel poverty data 2022 Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, fuel poverty refers to households living in a property with fuel energy efficiency rating of band D or below as well as households which after paying their energy bill to heat their home the residual income is below the official poverty line; Child poverty from DWP statXplore, children aged 0-15, 2022/23; FSM from January 2024 pupil census, Oxfordshire County Council; Pension credit (February 2024) from DWP statXplore as of November 2024.

Living environment

- There are no GPs located in the Wood Farm Community Insight area and it is at least a 20-minute walking time from the majority of the area to a GP practice. There is a pharmacy located in the Wood Farm Community Insight area and the majority of the area is within an estimated 12-minute walking time of the pharmacy site.
- Mapping by Natural England shows that the Wood Farm Community Insight area is surrounded by accessible natural green spaces including woodland, playing fields, public parks, and other sports facilities.

Figure 3 Census 2021 profile for the Wood Farm Community Insight area

Wood Farm Community Insight Area



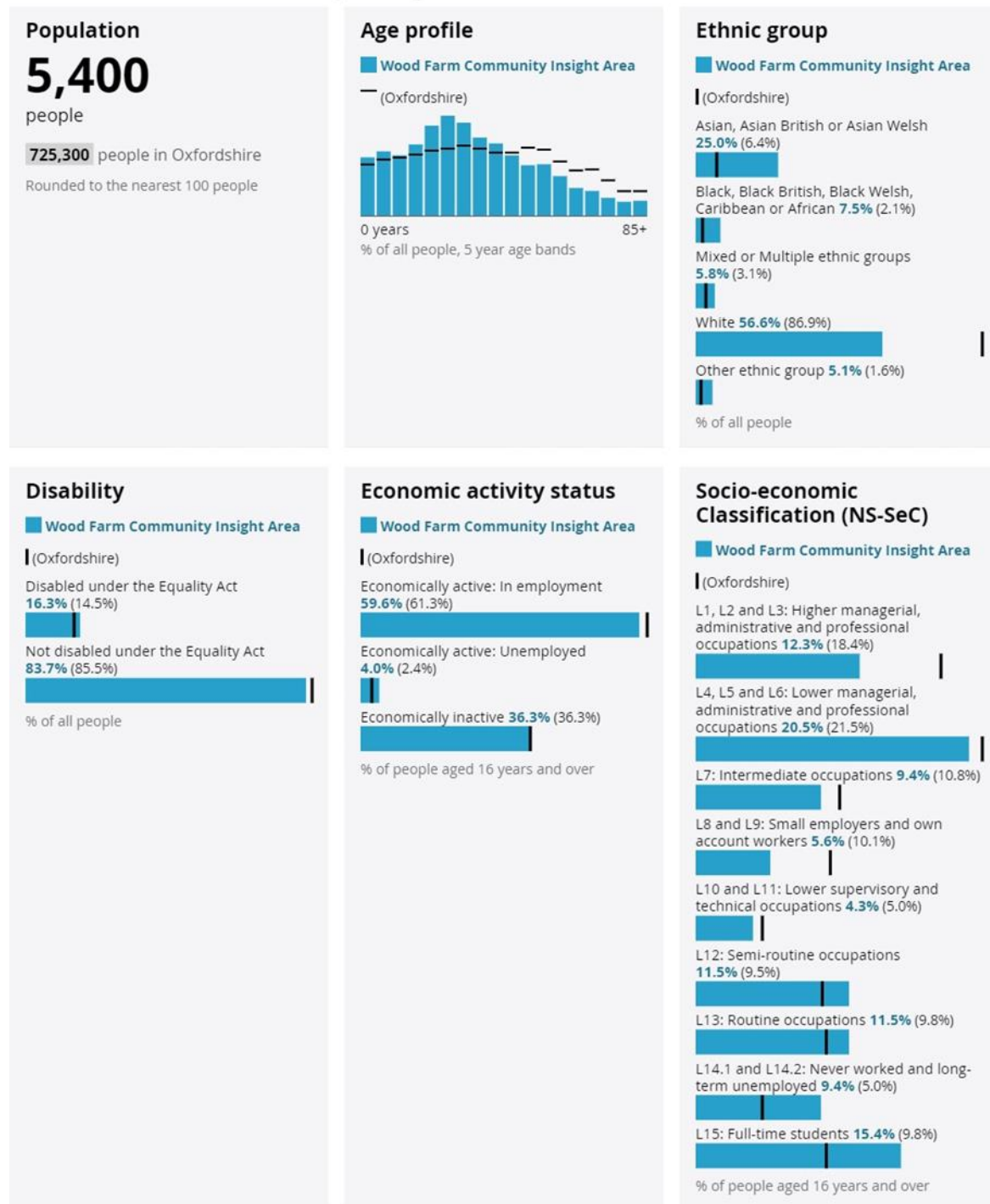
Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

From [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS²](#)

² Please note that in other parts of the full Wood Farm data report the most recent mid-year 2022 population estimates have been used.

Figure 4 Census 2021 profile of the Wood Farm Community Insight area continued

Wood Farm Community Insight Area



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

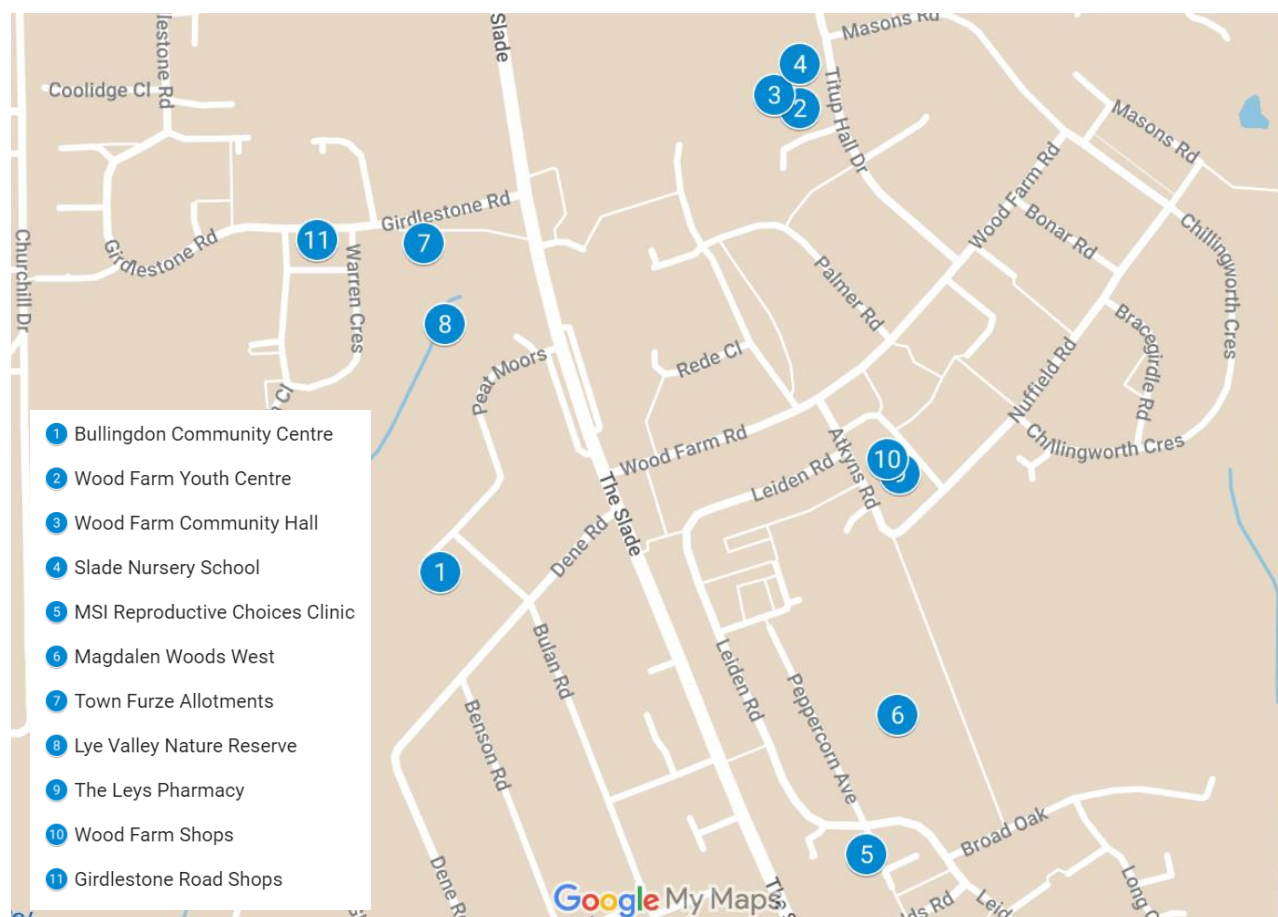
From [Build a custom area profile - Census 2021, ONS](#)

4 Community assets and local groups

A local asset-mapping exercise to identify the community assets in the Wood Farm Community Insight area was carried out by Healthwatch Oxfordshire from July to December 2024.

The map below shows a selection of the community venues surrounding and within the Wood Farm Community Insight Profile area. A full list of community assets, including local activities and community groups are set out in Appendix 2 of the *Wood Farm Community Insight Profile Report*.

Figure 5 Wood Farm Community Venues



Map created by Oxfordshire County Council using [Google My Maps](#)

5 Community engagement

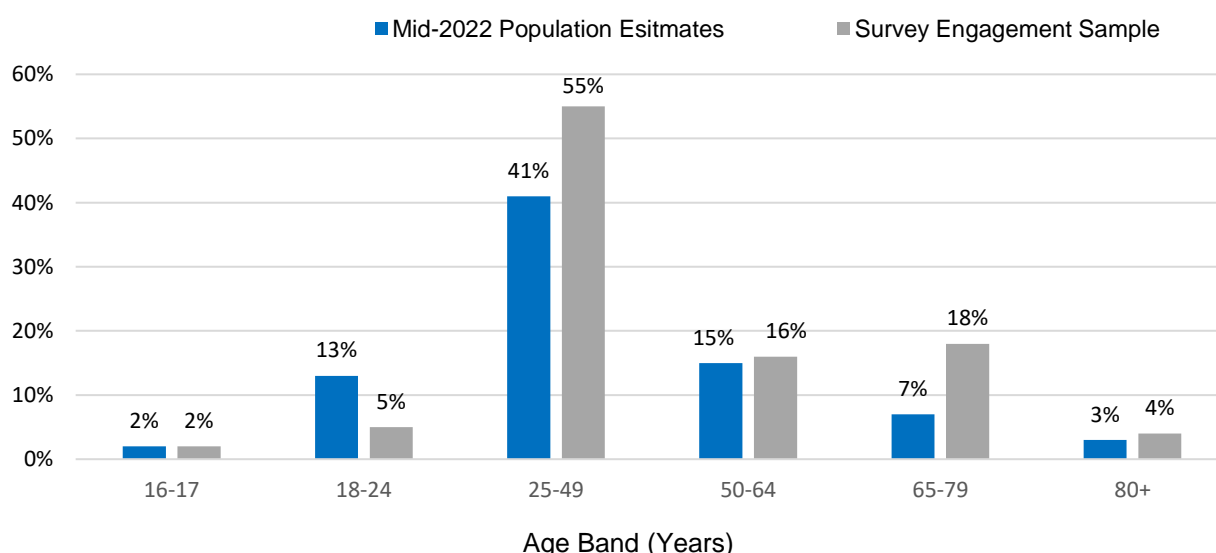
5.1 Engagement methodology and sample

Healthwatch Oxfordshire carried out Community Insight engagement between July to November 2024. The engagement reached 255 people in total, which included:

- An online survey completed by 58 respondents,
- 167 responses to the face-to-face outreach survey,
- 10 one-to-one interviews with stakeholders, representatives of local organisations and professionals,
- A collaborative art engagement activity with 20 local children.

The proportion of survey respondents in the 16-17, 50-64 and 80+ age bandings were somewhat similar to the age profile of residents according to the mid-2022 population estimates. For example, 16% of survey respondents were aged 50-64 and 15% of the Wood Farm population were aged 50-64.

Figure 6 Proportion of survey respondents of the Wood Farm Insight engagement by broad age vs split age of total population of the Wood Farm Community Insight area



Research sample = 225 total survey respondents (excludes interviewees and art engagement participants). ONS mid-year 2022 population estimate for Wood Farm Community Insight area from the Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk).

The main ethnic group in the Wood Farm Community Insight profile area according to the Census 2021 survey³ was 'white', and this group was well represented in the online and outreach engagement survey.

- The proportion of the resident population from a 'white background' was 57%
- 60% of survey respondents were from a 'white background'

Ethnic minority groups were less well represented. The comparisons between the proportion of engagement survey respondents and the resident population were:

- Asian – 11% survey versus 25% resident population
- Black – 5% survey versus 8% resident population

³ ONS Census 2021 table TS021 from <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk>

5.2 Living in Wood Farm

Wood Farm as a place to live

Around half of online survey respondents (n=57) were satisfied with Wood Farm as a place to live, with 49% very satisfied or satisfied. Similarly, 52% of outreach survey respondents (n=141), were very happy or happy about living in Wood Farm. A small but noticeable number of people were dissatisfied (19%) or unhappy (16%).

The proportion of dissatisfied residents was slightly higher than responses to the [Oxfordshire residents survey \(2024\)](#), where 15% of respondents county-wide were fairly or very dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live.⁴

The top things that online survey respondents (n=55) liked about living in the area were:

- Location (75%)
- Woods and green spaces (60%)
- Local shops and services (42%)
- Play parks (27%)

Location and transport links

When asked 'how do you and your family usually get around', online survey respondents (n=55) selected the following modes of transport as used every day or often:

- Walking (68%)
- Bus (49%)
- Bicycle (27%)
- Taxi (8%)
- E-scooter (4%)

Residents reported liking the good bus connections to nearby hospitals and into Oxford City Centre, as well as the good parking availability on Wood Farm and ease of walking and cycling around the area.

"Most things are close by and within walking distance"

"Local shops - all very central"

Community spirit and belonging

Respondents frequently mentioned their friendly, helpful neighbours and the community feel of the area. There was a strong sense of belonging and long connections, particularly for those who grew up and raised families in Wood Farm.

- 22% of online survey respondents (n=55) reported liking the sense of community
- In the outreach survey and interviews, several residents highlighted their appreciation for the ethnic and cultural diversity

"It's a close-knit community, friendly neighbours"

"Generally, the people are friendly and multi-cultural"

⁴ Note that the profile of the sample of the Wood Farm engagement survey is different to the weighted sample used in the Oxfordshire residents survey and the question wording was slightly different. Wood Farm respondents were more likely to be neutral about their area as a place to live (28% of survey respondents compared with 13% across Oxfordshire).

5.3 Keeping healthy

When asked ‘what in Wood Farm has helped you to be healthy and well’, outreach survey and interview respondents (n=177) reported:

- Woods, parks and **green spaces** (57 comments)

“Having playgrounds and natural spaces like Magdalen Wood and the Lye Valley help”

- **Facilities** that support people to be physically active (57 comments)

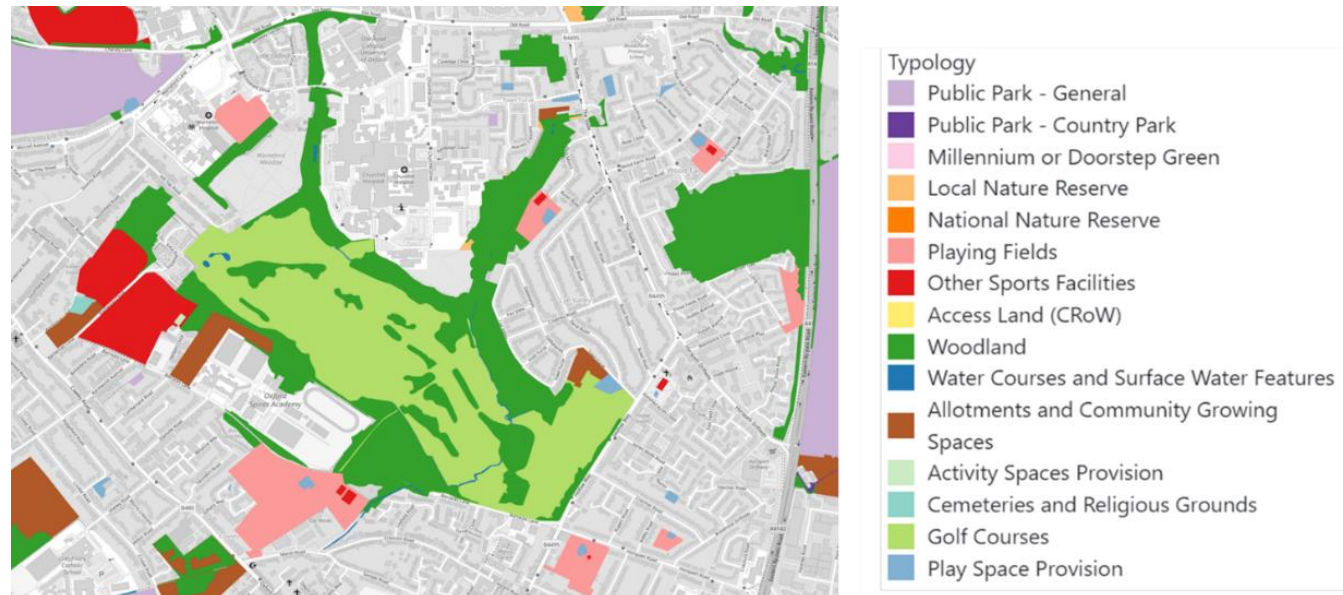
“Bullington Community is great - I go to the exercise classes”

- **Community spirit** (44 comments)

“People are polite and friendly. The ones I often see, we exchange pleasantries such as a smile”

Mapping by Natural England shows that the Wood Farm Community Insight area is surrounded by natural green spaces, including woodland, playing fields, public parks and other sports facilities.

Figure 7 Natural England mapping of Green and Blue infrastructure in the Wood Farm Community Insight area



Source: [Green Infrastructure Map](#)

5.4 Challenges to keeping healthy

Poverty and cost of living

Respondents outlined that poverty, low income and the high cost of living affected their ability to look after their health and wellbeing. This is reflected in corresponding data which shows that unemployment-related benefit claimants and rates of children in poverty in Wood Farm were well above Oxfordshire averages.

- 74% of online survey respondents (n=50) reported that the cost of living is the most significant challenge to looking after themselves
- In interviews and during outreach, 84 comments (n=177) mentioned by participants highlighted poverty and cost of living as a barrier to health and wellbeing, including high rents, bills and the high cost of food and low wages

“Cost of living is very high. I struggle to pay my rent”

“Nothing affordable in Wood Farm”

Safety, crime and anti-social behaviour

The majority of challenges outlined by residents related to feelings of safety and the high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Police recorded crime data demonstrates this, showing that the overall crime rate in Wood Farm was above the Oxfordshire average, as well as higher than the Oxfordshire average rates of adults receiving drugs or alcohol treatment.

- Fears and experiences of safety, crime and anti-social behaviour, including a perception of high levels of drug use and drug-taking in the area were mentioned 194 times by interview and outreach participants (n=177)
- A high amount of online survey respondents (69%) reported being aware of crime happening in the local area
- 35% of online survey respondents (n=45) observed people drinking alcohol and 22% noticed people doing things related to drug taking
- Around a third of online survey respondents (31%) said they felt unsafe or very unsafe after dark

“There is too much smoking here, and vapes inside the building, which makes asthma worse for me and my daughter”

“Scared don’t want to get out to exercise”

“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”

Problems with housing

Residents noted concerns with the condition and maintenance of their homes and the impact of this on their health and wellbeing, including problems with damp and mould. Corresponding data highlights that the proportion of households in social rented accommodation in Wood Farm was above the Oxfordshire average.

- 28% of online survey respondents (n=53) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their housing
- Interviewee and outreach survey participants highlighted concerns on the lack of suitable housing for older people, the cost of housing and maintenance

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

“Housing shortage and lack of support with disability needs”

Lack of facilities and activities

Respondents mentioned that they felt there were not enough facilities on Wood Farm itself. Several residents also noted the lack of activities and facilities particularly for young people.

- 46% of online survey respondents (n=50) reported that access to leisure facilities was a challenge to looking after themselves
- In interviews and outreach, people said they were lacking various facilities such as a health facility, social spaces, a community centre, a leisure centre or outdoor exercise equipment
- Several interviewees highlighted the lack of spaces and activities for young people, linking this back to the tendency for young people to hang out in groups which some residents find intimidating

“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”

“There needs to be more for teenagers to go to, outdoor or indoor”

Transport, traffic and pollution

Problems with transport, traffic and pollution included reports of fast driving, difficulty safely crossing to and from Wood Farm Primary School, traffic congestion and unreliable buses.

- Over half of online survey respondents (54%) reported transport as a challenge to looking after themselves
- Residents of Town Furze mentioned feeling particularly disconnected due to a lack of bus services in the area

“I know there's a stay and play and there's obviously all the groups that happen in the Bullingdon, absolutely brilliant. But if you're not mobile or not very mobile, how are you kind of 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)

“There is no connection for travelling to Town Furze from Wood Farm or vice versa”

“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”

5.5 Young people's voices

Young people participating in the community engagement highlighted appreciating the good things about Wood Farm but also outlined factors that make it harder to stay healthy and well.

In an engagement art project with children at Wood Farm Primary School, young people outlined the following (see Figure 8 for illustration):

- Liking the wildlife, play areas, buses and iconic Forest Towers in Wood Farm
- Things that made it harder for children to stay healthy included traffic, litter, anti-social behaviour and the dominance of sweets and chocolate in local shops

"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"

Figure 8 Sketches and stencils made by Year 3 children at Wood Farm Primary School



Photos provided by Healthwatch Oxfordshire

See the full Wood Farm Community Insight Report for further details and visualisation of young people's voices gathered from the art engagement project.

5.6 What ideas do people have for making Wood Farm healthier and happier

Respondents proposed a wide variety of ideas they had for making Wood Farm a healthier and happier place to live. Suggestions reflected what is already good about Wood Farm and what people feel could be better. The proposed ideas included:

- Activities and events to bring the community together
- Community spaces
- Improvements to infrastructure and facilities
- More communication with services and decision makers
- Improvements to safety
- Better communication about what is already happening

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

"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"

6 Recommendations

A range of recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of Wood Farm residents derived from the community insight gathering are summarised in brief below. A detailed discussion on these can be found in the recommendations section of the full Wood Farm Community Insight report.

6.1 Targeted support to those who need it most

- Agencies to work together to provide targeted support to those who need it most

6.2 Supporting, connecting and joining up

- Supporting people to know about and access what is already available
- Agencies working together to support people holistically
- Enabling local people to come together to improve their community in partnership

6.3 Safety and crime

- Ensure a visible police presence and responsiveness to crime
- Continue building relationships with the local community (for example, through walkabouts with Police Community Support Officers)
- Link people into drug and alcohol support services where appropriate

6.4 Community spaces and facilities

- Explore potential use of empty unit on Atkyns Road as a community space
- Identify how to make the most out of the community hall and improve accessibility
- Explore improvements to accessing facilities outside of Wood Farm

6.5 Housing, income and cost of living

- Link up residents to opportunities to access advice and support
- Improve communication and responsiveness between social landlords and residents

6.6 Young people

- Co-produce a plan with young people around what they need
- Explore potential for organised sport activities and supporting young people to access these
- Join up existing activities with wider youth opportunities

6.7 Affordable and healthy food

- Explore options to improve access to affordable shops
- Work with hot food takeaways to improve access to healthier options
- Explore the potential of a social supermarket, community shop or larder in Wood Farm

6.8 Transport

- Support greater access to bus services
- Improve road safety on Wood Farm
- Support active travel

6.9 Green spaces and physical activity

- Improve access to green spaces
- Work with residents to improve and maintain less used areas
- Support greater use of green spaces through community activities
- Link residents into existing physical activity support

6.10 Being listened to and involved in decision-making

- Ensure any next steps are co-produced with local residents
- Improve visibility of the responsiveness to engagement
- Improve communication between residents and decision makers

6.11 Health services and health protection

- Continue to take a proactive and targeted approach to supporting people with their health and wellbeing
- Link into existing health promotion work

6.12 Community spirit and information about what is happening

- Create opportunities to bring residents together
- Use and maintain community noticeboards and other channels to keep residents informed