

Abingdon Caldecott Community Insight Profile (Update 2024)

Summary

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1 Introduction

Oxfordshire is one of the most affluent areas of the country. However, this hides the fact that, as reported by the [Oxfordshire Director of Public Health Annual Report 2019](#), there are 10 wards in Oxfordshire which include areas ranked in the 20% most deprived in England.

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

This summary of findings is an update to the Community Insight report previously published for Abingdon Caldecott ward, which includes one small area listed in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) as being amongst the 20% most deprived nationally.

The profile aimed to:

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

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

1. *Abingdon Caldecott Community Insight Project Report* by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) published in 2022,
2. *Community (data) profile* of Abingdon Caldecott (Census 2021 update) compiled by the Public Health Intelligence team of Oxfordshire County Council.

This summary contains quotes from Community Insight gathering in 2022, these quotes have been edited to aid readability and identifiable information has been removed to anonymise the respondent.

With thanks to Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) for the work to publish the insight report in 2022 and the Abingdon Caldecott Community Insight Profile Steering Group who have continued to work to action the recommendations from the community insight report.

2 Profile update

An initial Community Insight Profile for Abingdon Caldecott was published in September 2022, combining both the quantitative data and the qualitative community insight into a single report. To aid accessibility, improve accuracy and create consistency with the other profiles, an updated data pack has been developed to include Census 2021 data, as well as this summary report which highlights findings from both the 2022 community insight report and the 2024 community data profile report.

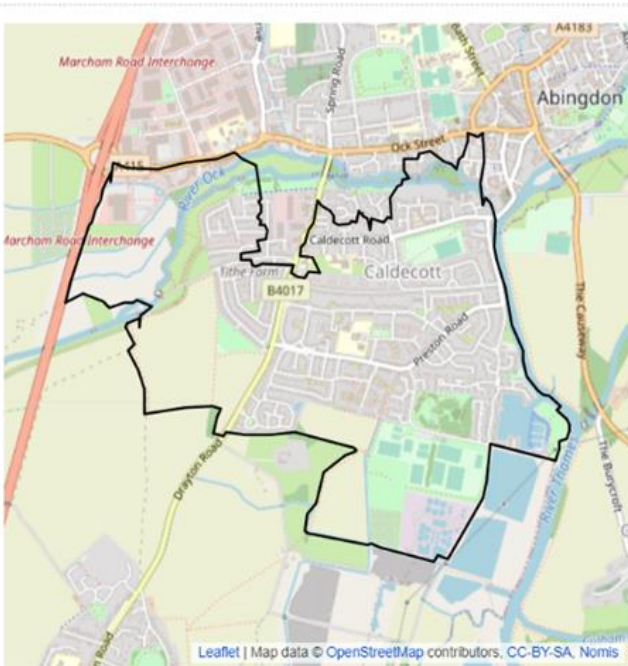
3 Location

Abingdon Caldecott ward is located in South Abingdon. It is bordered to the north by Ock Street, to the east by the river Thames, to the south by the Southern Town Park, and to the west by the B4017 road to Drayton.

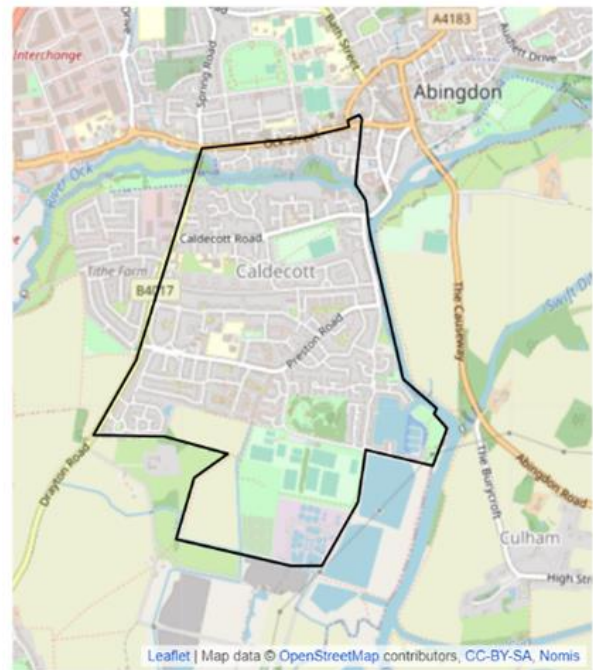
In 2015, the Abingdon Caldecott ward boundary changed and the image below on the right shows the new ward boundary. For the purposes of statistical comparison, the data report uses the Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA) boundary, shown in the image on the left, which has remained unchanged, this is explained in further detail within the data report.

Figure 1 Map showing Abingdon Caldecott MSOA and ward area

Map of E02005985 : Vale of White Horse 008



Map of Abingdon Caldecott



Maps from www.nomis.co.uk

4 Summary of population and health data

Population and housing

- According to the latest ONS population estimates (mid-2022) the Abingdon Caldecott area (MSOA) had a resident population of 7,836. The area had a slightly older population than the Oxfordshire average.
- Between the 2011 and 2021 Census surveys the total resident population in the Abingdon Caldecott MSOA increased by 5%. This was well below the percentage increase across Vale of White Horse district (15%) and Oxfordshire (11%).
- The change in Abingdon Caldecott's population by broad age between 2011 and 2021 shows a 3% decline in the younger population aged 0-19 years.
- The area is slightly less ethnically diverse than Oxfordshire as a whole. 9% were from a non-white background compared with 13% for Oxfordshire.
- The proportion of households in social rented accommodation in Abingdon Caldecott MSOA in 2021 was above the average for Vale of White Horse district (25.5% vs 14.3%) and Oxfordshire (14.7%).
- Households in Abingdon Caldecott MSOA in 2021 were more likely to be living in terraced housing or purpose-built flats than the average for Oxfordshire.

Health and wellbeing

- According to the 2021 Census, there were 1,400 residents in Abingdon Caldecott MSOA with a (self-reported) disability, which limited day to day activities "a lot" or "a little". This was above the average for Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire.
- Compared with England, out of 32 local health and wellbeing inequalities indicators, Abingdon Caldecott had 18 indicators which are ranked as similar, 11 that scored better than average and 3 indicators that scored worse:
 - Emergency Hospital Admissions for 0-4 Years
 - Emergency Hospital Admissions for injury 15-24 years
 - Emergency Admissions for self-harm
- Compared with Oxfordshire, Abingdon Caldecott MSOA had 11 health and wellbeing inequalities indicators scoring worse than average.
- The proportion of adults receiving structured treatment for drugs or alcohol in Abingdon Caldecott was below (better than) the Oxfordshire average
- The prevalence of children classified as overweight (including obese) at aged 4-5 years and aged 10-11 years were each similar to the values for Oxfordshire and England. Just over a third of children aged 10-11 years were measured as overweight or obese in the area.

Employment

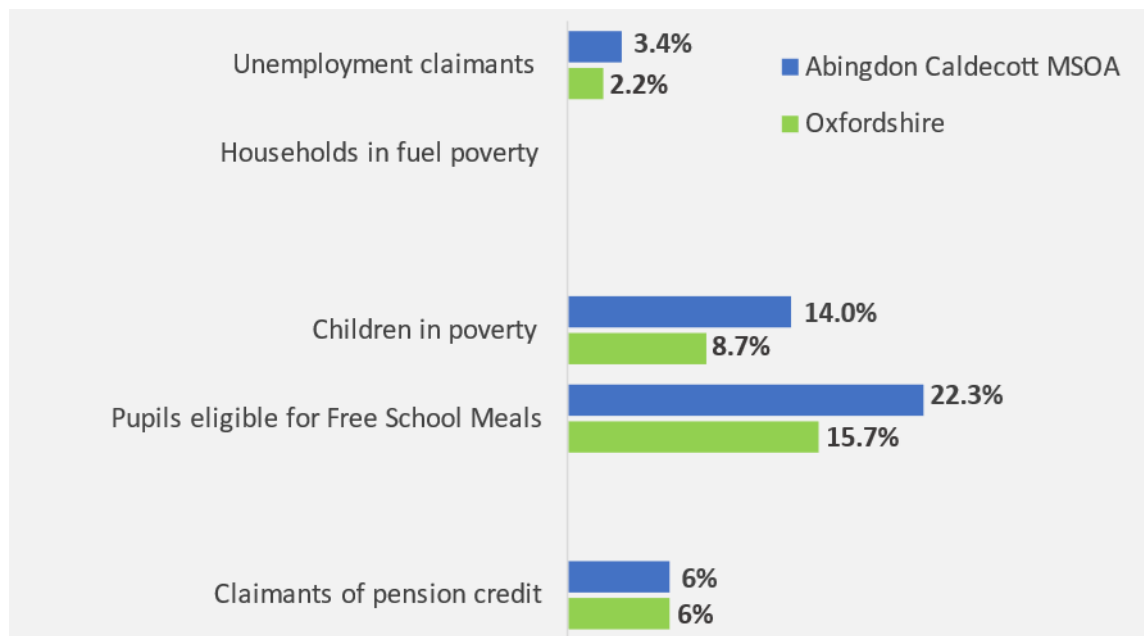
- Abingdon Caldecott had a higher proportion of people who were (self-assessed) long term sick or disabled, than the Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire averages (2021).
- Workers in Abingdon Caldecott were less likely than the Oxfordshire average to be in managerial and professional occupations and more likely to be in routine and elementary occupations.

Poverty and deprivation

- Abingdon Caldecott (MSOA) has a higher proportion of households classified as deprived according to the 2021 Census than the averages for Vale of White Horse and Oxfordshire.

- The proportion of residents claiming unemployment-related benefits in Abingdon Caldecott was above that for Oxfordshire.
- A slightly lower proportion of households in Abingdon Caldecott were estimated to be in fuel poverty to that of Oxfordshire.
- Rates of child poverty and free school meals in Abingdon Caldecott were each well above (worse than) the average for Oxfordshire.
- The rate of older people in poverty and claiming pension credit in Abingdon Caldecott was similar to the Oxfordshire average.

Figure 2 Indicators of low income¹



Crime and community safety

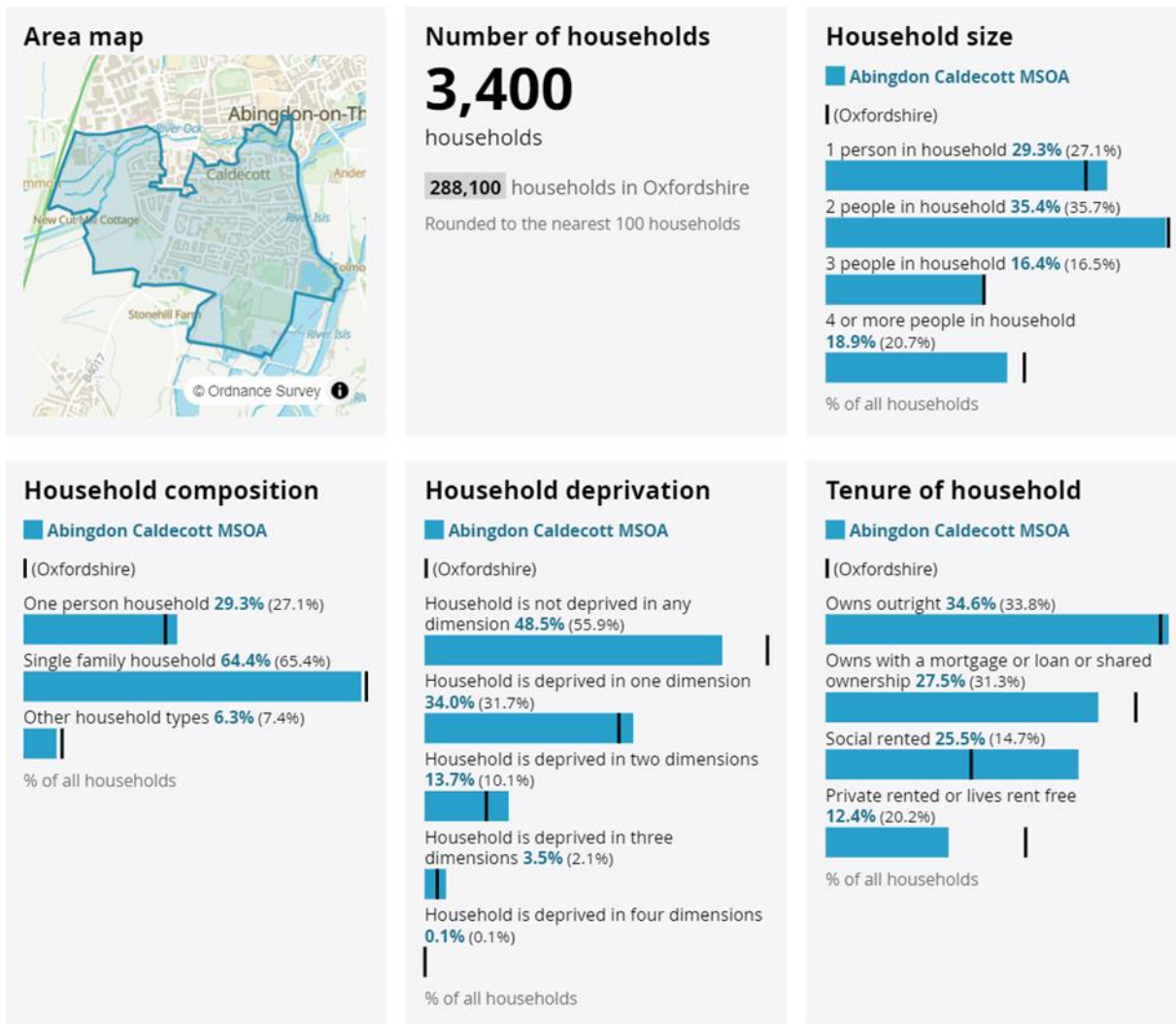
- The overall rate of crime in Abingdon Caldecott was below (better than) the Oxfordshire average.

Living environment

- A 2024 study of greenspace-deprived neighbourhoods highlighted Abingdon Caldecott ward as an area of Oxfordshire that is both relatively socio-economically deprived and has relatively poor provision of local, accessible greenspace.
- There is one pharmacy and no GP practices located within the Abingdon Caldecott ward. For most of the ward it is an estimated 20-minute (or more) walking time to the nearest GP practice. The whole of the ward is within a 20-minute journey time by public transport to a nearby GP practice.

¹ Sources: DWP claimant count March 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 Dept for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, fuel poverty refers to households living in a property with fuel energy efficiency rating of band D or below as well as households which after paying their energy bill to heat their home the residual income is below the official poverty line; Child poverty from DWP statXplore, children aged 0-15, 2022/23; FSM from January 2024 pupil census, Oxfordshire County Council; Pension credit from DWP statXplore as of August 2023.

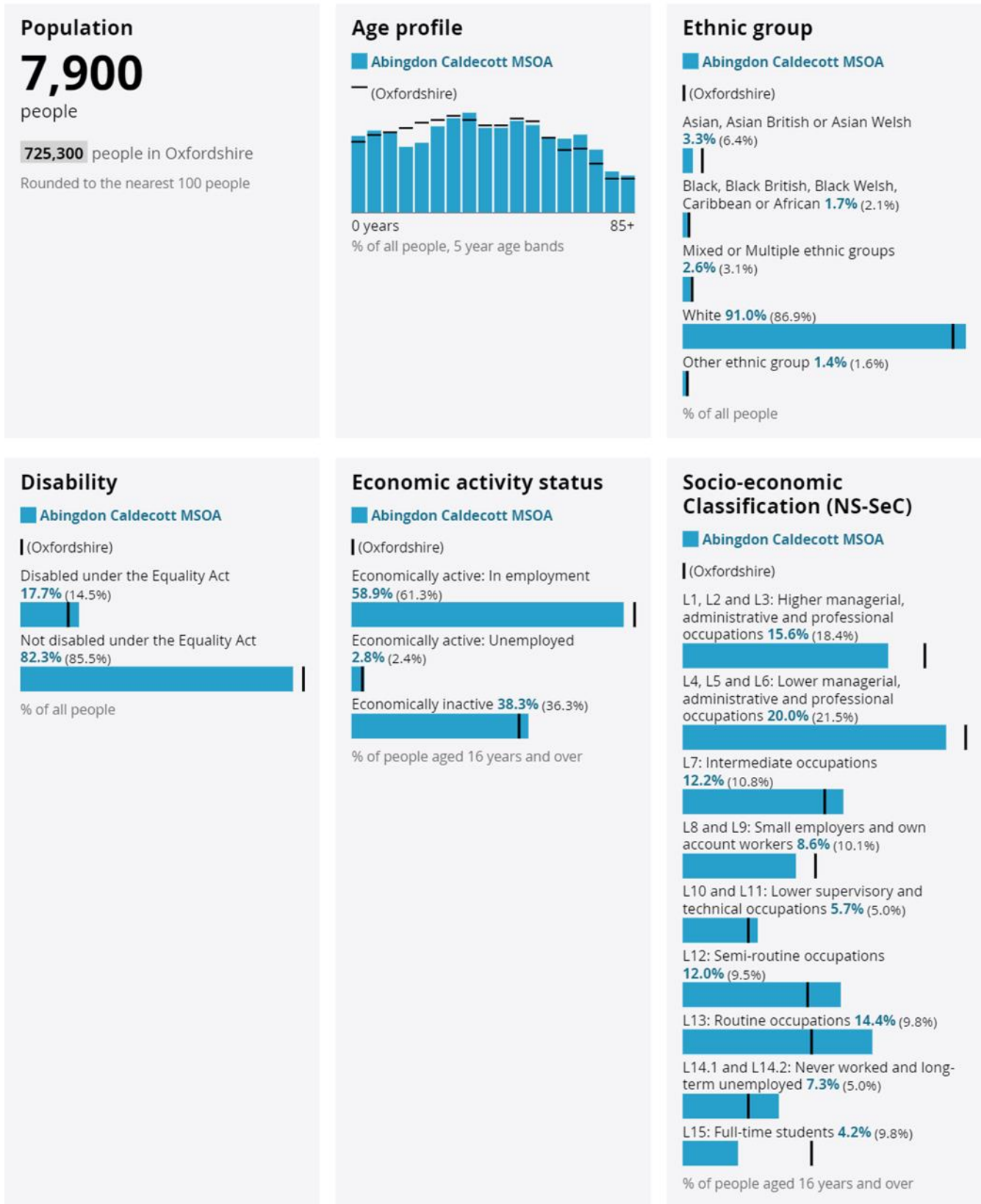
Figure 3 Census 2021 Profile for Abingdon Caldecott MSOA – households



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Source: [Build a custom area profile – Census 2021 ONS](#)

Figure 4 Census 2021 profile for Abingdon Caldecott MSOA - population



Source: [Build a custom area profile – Census 2021 ONS](#)

5 Community assets and local groups

In order to understand more about the range and types of community action and activity, a local asset-mapping exercise was carried out by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) in 2022.

The mapping exercise identified a range of local assets which support and enable health and wellbeing needs of the community within the Community Insight Profile area. This included activities and groups based at local places of worship, schools, the Carousel Family Centre and Preston Road Community Centre.

The map below shows a selection of the community venues within the Abingdon Caldecott Community Insight area. A full list of community-based activities and initiatives can be found within Annexes 1 and 2 of the Abingdon Caldecott Community Insight Profile published on the [Oxfordshire Insight website](#).

Figure 5 Abingdon Caldecott community venues



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

6 Community research

6.1 Research methodology and sample

Community insight research by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) between May and June 2022, included:

- 53 one-to-one interviews with local residents,
- 10 one-to-one interviews with key representatives from local groups and organisations,
- 4 focus groups attended by 38 people,
- An online survey completed by 18 respondents.

The majority of local residents involved in one-to-one interviews (base=53) were female (68%), and the highest percentage of resident interviewees were in the 70-90 years age grouping (23%).

6.2 Living in Abingdon Caldecott

The top strengths that online survey respondents (base=12) liked about living in the area were:

- Family, neighbours and friends (42%)
- Green spaces and the river (33%)
- Walks (25%)
- Church (17%)
- Being close to the town (17%)
- Play areas (8%)

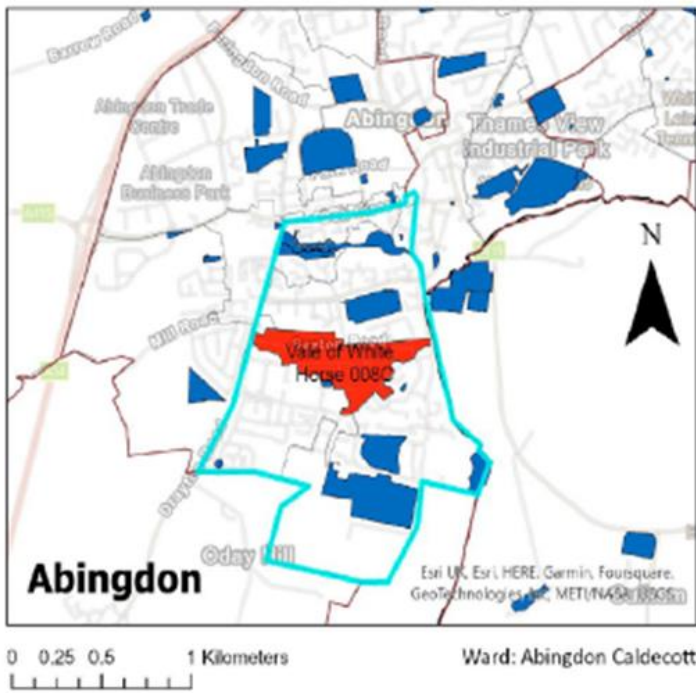
Access to greenspaces and the riverside setting were the most mentioned by respondents in one-to-one interviews (46%) and focus groups when asked what they liked about living in Abingdon Caldecott.

“It’s good round here, lots of green spaces and the river. We’re lucky in Abingdon.”

Conversely, a March 2024 report on greenspace-deprived neighbourhoods² funded by the University of Oxford’s Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery, highlighted Abingdon Caldecott ward as containing an area of Oxfordshire that is both relatively socio-economically deprived and has relatively poor provision of local, accessible greenspace (see Figure 6 below).

² Crockatt et al [Oxfordshire’s greenspace-deprived neighbourhoods \(March 2024\)](#)

Figure 6 Map showing accessible greenspace in and around Abingdon Caldecott



- More deprived area of Abingdon Caldecott
- Accessible Greenspace

Contains data supplied by Natural England, Ordnance Survey, Forestry Commission, Historic England © Natural England Source: [Oxfordshire's greenspace-deprived neighbourhoods \(March 2024\)](#)

Travel and transport

- 8% of one-to-one interviewees (base=53) mentioned poor bus service as a challenge that impacts their health and wellbeing
- Poor public transport was mentioned as affecting access to local food shops (Tesco and Lidl) and other services

“A bus to take people shopping or to the leisure centre would also be helpful for himself and others who do not have transport.” Quote from Personal story

Identity and belonging

From the insight gathering process a strong “sense of place” in Abingdon Caldecott was reported. Nevertheless, respondents raised several concerns around the reputation of the community insight profile area:

- Residents were conscious of wider and long-held negative perceptions of Abingdon Caldecott as a ‘difficult and troubled community’
- Young people particularly talked about how Caldecott is ‘branded’ negatively, decreasing their aspirations for the area
- Despite these concerns, a sense of identity with the area was also mentioned, alongside awareness of local history and character

“The reputation of South Abingdon is detrimental to peoples’ mental health – people feel stigmatised. Some people feel devalued because they come from here.”

6.3 Keeping healthy

When asked about what was important to their personal health and wellbeing:

- 79% of online survey respondents (base=18) identified happiness as being of utmost importance
- Living pain free, access to healthy and nutritious food, and managing stress were also identified by 64% of online survey respondents as important to their health and wellbeing

Interviewed residents (base= 53) had many strategies they used to promote their health and wellbeing including:

- Walking (64%)

“You can have a nice 20-minute walk get some exercise and still be in South Abingdon”

- Socialising with friends and family (23%)

“She currently goes into town to meet friends which she says is good for my mental health” Quote from personal story

- Attending community groups (11%)

“We’re quite lucky, there are good support services available locally, if you know about it”

6.4 Challenges to keeping healthy

Built environment

In relation to the built environment and street scene, residents mentioned problems with litter, overgrown vegetation and pavement quality.

- 17% of interviewees (base=53) referenced the built environment and unfriendliness as a challenge to their health and wellbeing
- Mobility affected by poor parking and a lack of dropped kerbs was also a barrier to health and wellbeing for 13% of interviewees

“Doing the area up would improve things straightaway and make people feel better.”

Crime and feelings of security

Participants in interviews and focus groups mentioned concerns around anti-social behaviour and drug use. However, police recorded crime data shows that the overall rate of crime in

Abingdon Caldecott MSOA was below the Oxfordshire average, as well as just below the Oxfordshire average for adults in drug and alcohol treatment.

- An emerging theme from focus groups was that some (particularly older people) did not feel safe when out in the community, especially at night

“He notes that there are some problems with anti-social behaviour but that the police and PCSO presence is not very visible.” Quote from local story

“The estates are very run-down. The vegetation is overgrown, and it is dark at night. This makes me feel unsafe.”

Food and healthy eating

In the insight gathering, access to healthy food was a frequent topic of discussion. This is reflected in the poverty statistics for Abingdon Caldecott MSOA that indicates a much higher percentage of primary and secondary pupils eligible for free school meals than the Vale of the White Horse and Oxfordshire averages.

- Concern was expressed regarding having poor education around food and nutrition
- In focus groups, some residents commented that it was difficult to access the community larder since it moved from the children’s centre to the town centre
- A lack of shops, the quality and the cost of local food means people shop outside the community insight profile area, with mobility issues often leading to difficulty accessing healthy food

“Poor access to shops to get fresh food makes me more likely to rely on frozen food.”

Impacts of COVID-19

When asked about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic for “you or for the community” respondents highlighted mental health with themes of anxiety, stress and isolation.

- The majority of online survey respondents (72%) expressed moderate or severe stress and worry during the COVID-19 pandemic
- 21% of online survey respondents (base=14) experienced no or little stress related to the COVID-19 pandemic
- In interviews, loneliness, isolation and impacts on mental health were discussed by 40% (base=53), whilst 17% expressed increases in worry and anxiety

“I was isolated and struggled. I was anxious and worried about infecting others who had suppressed immune systems. Had to go on anti-depressants. I was very low, especially in the winter. I’m getting back to normal now, but the experience really shook me.”

“I felt like my life totally changed. There was a before and after covid. My mental health was affected and my memory is worse now. I am more anxious.”

Cost of living

The rising cost of living was a commonly expressed concern in relation to health and wellbeing. Corresponding data shows that unemployment-related benefit claims and rates of children in poverty within Abingdon Caldecott MSOA were above Oxfordshire averages.

- When asked about barriers to health and wellbeing, 28% of interviewees (base=53) mentioned the cost-of-living crisis
- In interviews, the lack of affordable housing was frequently referred to and people also stated cutting back on certain activities (e.g. leisure activities for children) because of rising prices

“Price of things is going up. Can’t afford to pay for leisure activities so do lots of walking.”

“I try to eat well but fruit and veg is getting expensive. Cost of weekly shop has almost doubled. It’s cheaper to eat at McDonalds.”

7 Recommendations

A range of recommendations derived in 2022 from the community insight are summarised briefly below. A detailed discussion of these can be found in the recommendations section of the insight report.

7.1 Local strengths and assets that support and enable health and wellbeing

- Additional insight work with young people
- Local environment improvement discussion
- A community (oral) history project to improve local identity

7.2 Challenges to health and wellbeing and improvements needed

- Improve project design and partnership working
- Develop the South Abingdon Partners Group (SAP)
- A commitment to genuine co-production from external agencies
- A South Abingdon community development and funding summit
- Create pavement health routes
- Run family fun activities during school holidays
- Coordinate a volunteers network
- A new ‘South Abingdon Community’ Facebook Page
- A ‘Celebration of Caldecott’ event
- Improve opportunities for potential provisions of community assets
- Investigate use of local real estate for community purposes

7.3 Impacts of COVID-19

- Learning lessons and building local resilience meeting

7.4 Food and healthy eating

- Learn to cook sessions
- Community food project
- Bus to Lidl and Tesco

8 Progress since publication

Following publication of the Community Insight report in September 2022, work to action the outcomes has been taking place supported by the local steering group and CFO. A Community Health Development Officer has been appointed in April 2024 to continue taking forward tasks outlined in an action plan.

In addition, [grant funding](#) has been made available and the money has now been allocated towards different activities which enact the community insight report recommendations. The Abingdon Caldecott community profile steering group is continuing to work alongside the community to action the recommendations and monitor the grants.

An example of the ongoing activities in direct relation to the Community Insight report recommendations taking place within Abingdon Caldecott, as of July 2024, are summarised briefly in the table below and is followed by a sample of feedback from the community:

Table 1 Recommendations and Related Ongoing Activities in Abingdon Caldecott

Recommendation	Ongoing Activities
Local strengths and assets that support and enable health and wellbeing	
Additional insight work with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funded Mental Health Natters (MHN) support for young people
Local environment improvement discussion and pavement health routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South and Vale District Councils have developed a South Abingdon Nature Trail Program and local benches are being restored
A community (oral) history project to improve local identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding for South Abingdon Community Activity Days during the 2024 Easter Holidays, which involved art activities on the history of Caldecott
Challenges to health and wellbeing, and improvements needed	
Improve project design and partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The town council is now represented on the Community Insight profile steering group
A commitment to genuine co-production from external agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfordshire County Council has produced an accessible poster summary of the Abingdon Caldecott community insight report to share outcomes with members of the public The Abingdon Caldecott community insight profile has been shared with a range of local organisations and stakeholders
A South Abingdon community development and funding summit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration with the Well Together Programme who are providing further grant funding for activities that address health inequalities in Abingdon Caldecott
Run family fun activities during school holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding has enabled the South Abingdon Community Activity Days during the Easter Holidays 2024, which involved a variety of free children's activities Grant funding for Abingdon Carousel free drop-in Saturday family sessions Grant funding is providing a Junior Park Run set up by Healthy Abingdon

Coordinate a volunteers network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steering group is working alongside Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA)
A new 'South Abingdon Community' Facebook Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consideration of digital exclusion and Facebook requiring scrolling to locate information, an initial Abingdon Caldecott community newsletter (created by a steering group made of local partners) has been published and planning is ongoing for future editions. See the title section below:

Figure 7 Caldecott Newsletter Cover



A 'Celebration of Caldecott' event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabled by grant funding, the South Abingdon Easter Holidays Activity Days included gathering of local insights for later development of a 'celebration' event
Food and healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding for Inspiring Mind's Make and Mingle cookery group
Actions in addition to recommendations	
Mental Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funded Mindfulness Movement Programme for young carers in Caldecott Primary School and Thameside Primary School Grant Funding for Tatty Bumpkins Yoga classes for pupils at Thameside Primary School
Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funded Age UK Oxfordshire's provision of social Teabooks reading group Grant Funding for Preston Road Community centre to provide opportunities for social interactions after community walks

8.1 Feedback from grant funded community activities

8.1.1 Tatty Bumpkins Yoga at Thameside Primary School

Thameside Primary received grant funding from the Community Insight profile grant to offer a Yoga Club and whole school workshops led by Tatty Bumpkins Yoga.

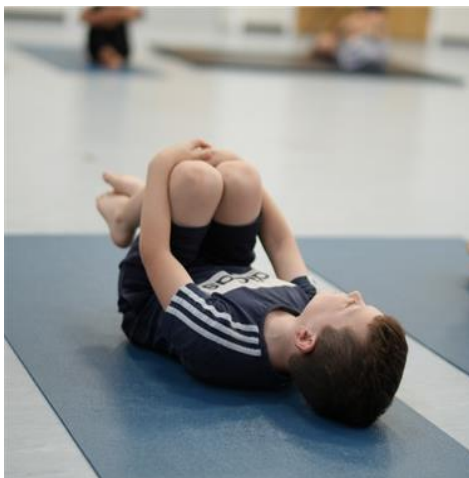
“Being able to offer yoga classes has significantly enhanced our mental wellbeing offer for our children – children have been highly engaged in the sessions and there has been a real, transferable impact into the classroom. The yoga has complemented our ‘Zones of Regulation’ well, providing children with strategies to help them self-regulate. The staff have also learnt lots too!” – Headteacher

Positive feedback has been received, reporting that the children have loved the sessions and they have provided opportunities for children who would not otherwise been able to access yoga due to financial and other barriers. Some quotes from participants are displayed below:

“It makes me feel relaxed.”

“It helps me to calm down – we stretch ourselves to warm up and then we have adventures!”

Figure 8 Young People Participating in Thameside Primary Tatty Bumpkins Yoga



Photos provided by Thameside Primary School

8.1.2 Abingdon Community Walks

Grant funding has facilitated the hiring of Preston Road Community Centre to allow for social interactions following wellbeing walks for vulnerable and primarily older people in the community. The additional funding aims to support increases in the number of residents attending the walks and enable not only increases in physical health but also enhance the mental health benefits of socialising.

8.1.3 South Abingdon Easter Community Activity Days

During the April Easter Holidays 2024, grant funding enabled Makespace to participate in holding art events across the three South Abingdon community activity days, alongside other local organisations.

As well as providing free family activities during the holidays, the events also had an intergenerational focus where attendees shared their South Abingdon stories and insight was gathered regarding local need. Quotes from attendees are presented below:

Figure 9 South Abingdon Community Activity Days Poster



Produced by Abingdon Carousel and Oxfordshire Play Association

"I have enjoyed working with my mum and my son – doing something I can do at home – now I want to transform my garden by painting my fence!"

"Thank you, really felt inspired and used my imagination. This is an amazing workshop and so unique"

"Totally unexpected and we've loved it!"

Figure 10 Photos of South Abingdon Community Easter Events Art Work



Photos and quotes provided by Makespace Oxford

8.1.4 Carousel Saturday Club

The Abingdon Carousel Family Centre received Community Insight profile grant funding to provide a free drop-in family Saturday Club for children aged 0-11 years old and their parents and carers. Quotes from families participating are stated below:

Version No: 1st edition Issue date: July 2024

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"I can't say enough good things about Saturday Club. As a parent of 3 children under 5, finding a place that caters to their needs while providing a fun and safe environment can be a challenge, but this club exceeded all expectations"

"I, myself, really appreciate the adult conversation and the hot drink, whilst my children are playing in a safe enclosed environment"

Figure 11 Photos of Abingdon Carousel Saturday Club



Photos and quotes provided by Abingdon Carousel

8.1.5 Mindfulness Movement Programme

The grant funded Be Free Young Carers Mindfulness Movement programme is tailored specifically for young carers, offering a blend of yoga, mindfulness, meditation and holistic wellness techniques. Through cultivating self-awareness, stress reduction, and overall well-being, the programme empowers young carers to nurture their own health and happiness amidst their caregiving responsibilities. Quotes from participants are shown below:

"I will do yoga every day now!"

"I will show my brother and everyone else in the school these breaths".

Figure 12 Photo of Mindfulness Movement Programme



Photo and quotes provided by Be Free Young Carers