

Berinsfield 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 experience 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. Berinsfield contains one small area that falls within this range.

Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health team is working with local partners to develop the community insight profiles, which give a detailed picture of both the health needs and the supportive resources in the community. The community 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 Berinsfield in relation to health and wellbeing,
- Outline the health outcomes and the factors which can influence these health outcomes and bring this to life through the voices of the community,
- Provide information and recommendations for local organisations, stakeholders and residents working to improve health and wellbeing in this area.

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

1. *Berinsfield Community Insight Project Report* by South Oxfordshire District Council,
2. *Community (data) profile of Berinsfield* 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.

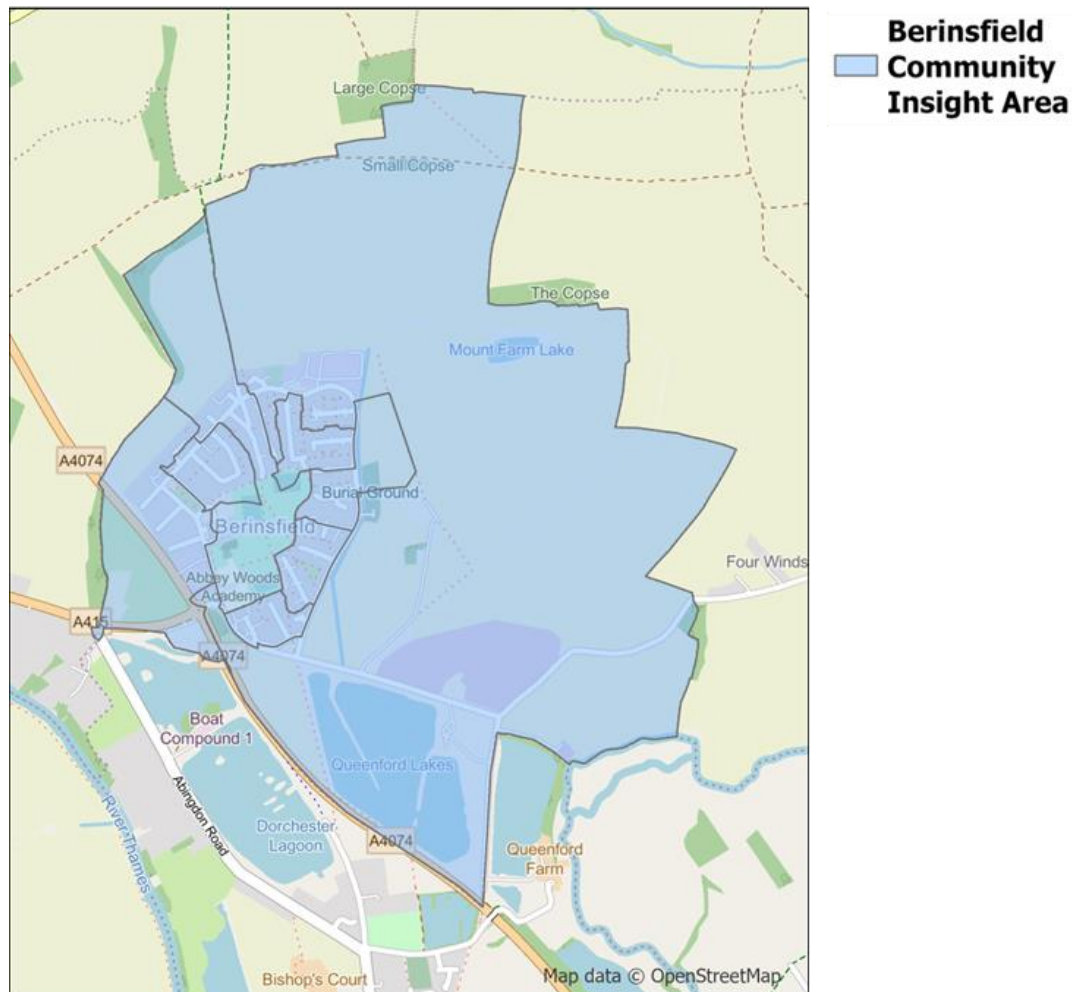
With thanks to South Oxfordshire District Council and especially to the Berinsfield Health and Wellbeing Steering group who provided a wealth of knowledge and influence at every stage of the profile's development.

2 Location

Berinsfield village is situated to the west of the South Oxfordshire District, 7 miles southeast of Oxford city. It is located within the Berinsfield ward which is comprised of three distinct localities Berinsfield, Dorchester-on-Thames and Drayton St. Leonard

The Berinsfield area included in the community insight profile is based on a geographical area built from smaller Output Areas (see Figure 1), focusing on the village and excluding the Dorchester-on-Thames village to the south. This area is referred to in the community insight profile as the 'Berinsfield 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 Berinsfield Community Insight area



Mapping by Oxfordshire County Council

3 Summary of findings

Population and housing

- According to the latest ONS population estimates (mid-2022) the Berinsfield Community Insight area had a resident population of 3,105 residents.
- Between the Census 2011 and Census 2021 surveys, the number of residents in Berinsfield showed a slight decline. This was different to South Oxfordshire district where there was an above-average increase in population.
- The change in Berinsfield's population by broad age between 2011 and 2021 shows that the population has aged; the number of children and working aged people has declined, while the number of older people has increased.
- The proportion of social rented housing in Berinsfield was over double the average for Oxfordshire.

Health

- The prevalence of hypertension, obesity and depression among GP patients in Berinsfield, was each well above the Oxfordshire average.
- 3 out of 32 local health and wellbeing indicators for Berinsfield were ranked as worse than the England average:
 - Life expectancy at birth for males
 - Deaths from all causes
 - Deaths from stroke

Employment

- A much higher percentage of people in employment in the Berinsfield Community Insight area were in the (generally lower paid) caring, leisure, process, and elementary occupations.
- A lower percentage of residents in the Berinsfield Community Insight area were retired compared to the averages for South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire.

Poverty and deprivation

- The Berinsfield Community Insight area has a higher proportion of households classified as deprived according to the 2021 Census than the South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire averages.
- Compared to the average for Oxfordshire, a higher proportion of working aged residents in the Berinsfield area were claiming unemployment-related benefits.
- The Berinsfield area has a higher proportion of households estimated to be in fuel poverty compared to the Oxfordshire average.
- Rates of child poverty and of pupils eligible for free school meals in the Berinsfield area were nearly double the average for Oxfordshire.
- The rate of older people in poverty and claiming pension credit in Berinsfield is higher than the average for Oxfordshire.

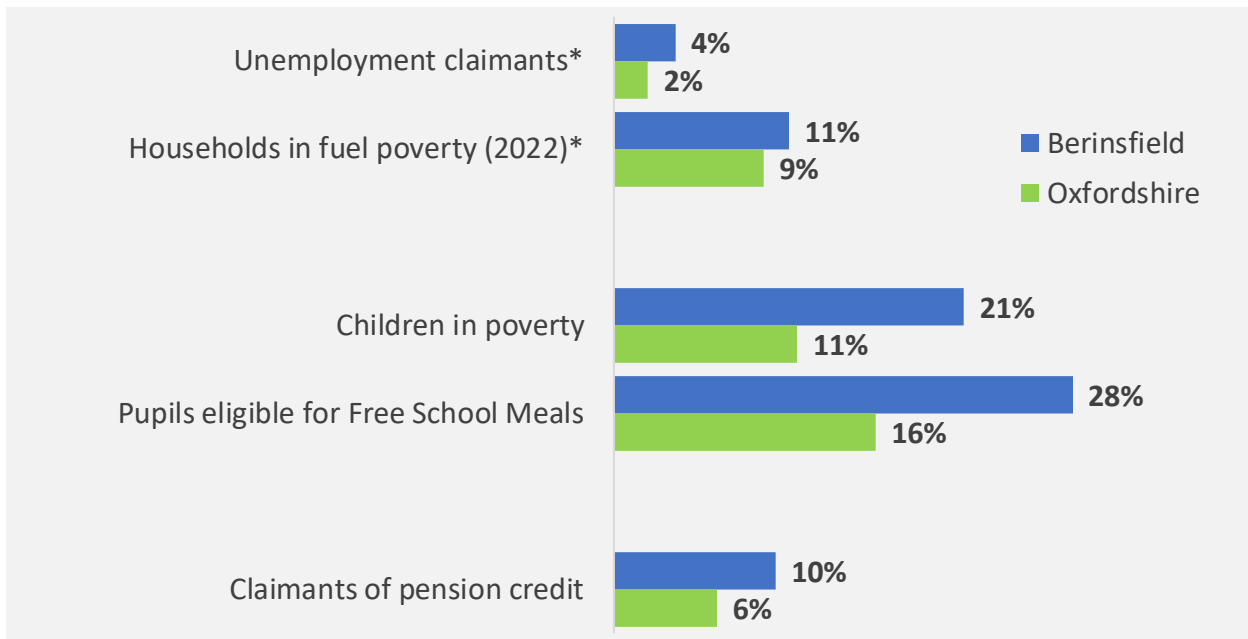
Crime and community safety

- The overall rate of crime in the Berinsfield area was below the Oxfordshire average.

Access to green space

- Mapping by Natural England shows that the Berinsfield area is surrounded by accessible natural green and blue spaces including woodland, water courses and other sports facilities.

Figure 2 Indicators of low income¹



*Note that the Berinsfield area being used for these indicators is the two LSOAs South Oxfordshire 006A and 006B, which is different to the other indicators which use data at Output Area level.

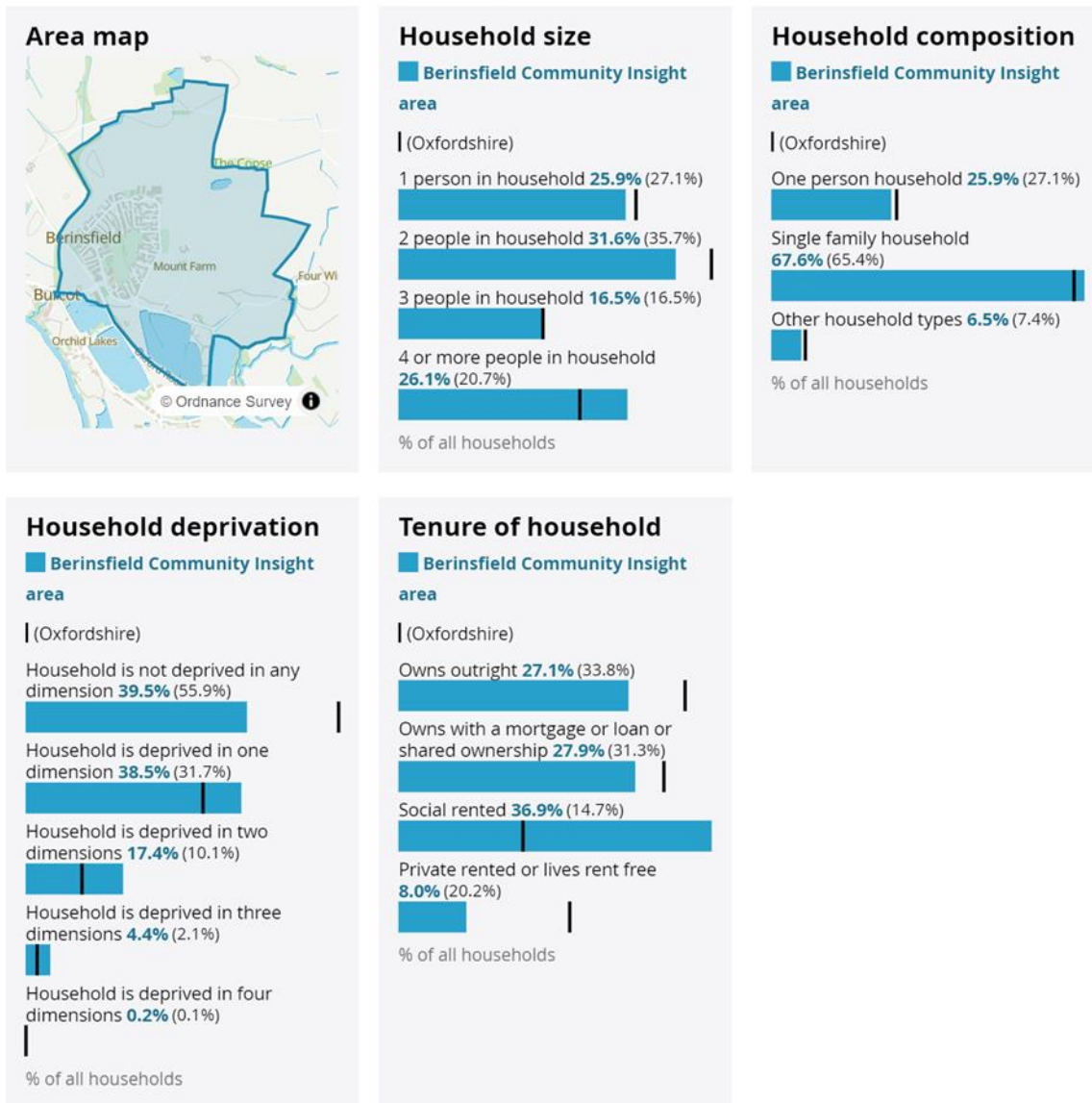
Travel to work

- Residents of Berinsfield were more likely to travel to work by car and less likely to work from home than the averages for South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire.

¹ Sources: DWP claimant count May 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 (November 2023) from DWP statXplore as of June 2024 .

Figure 3 Census 2021 profile of the Berinsfield Community Insight area

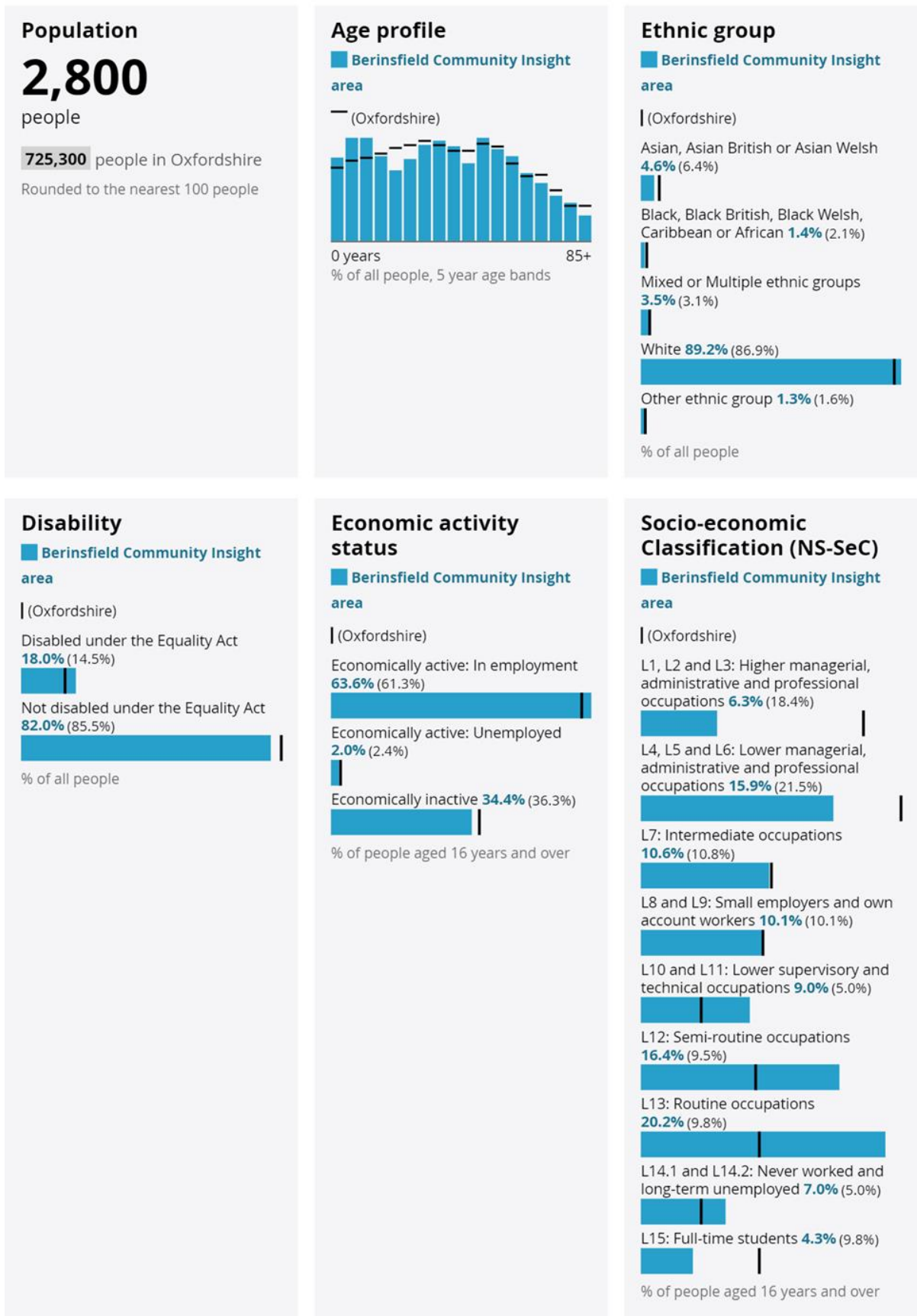
Berinsfield Community Insight area



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

Figure 4 Census 2021 profile of the Berinsfield Community Insight area continued

Berinsfield Community Insight area



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 Berinsfield was carried out by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC).

The mapping exercise concluded that Berinsfield has an abundance of facilities and physical assets that support the health and wellbeing needs of the community, these included green spaces, local shops and services, a leisure centre, community spaces and schools. There are also many groups and activities operating in Berinsfield.

The map below shows a selection of the community venues within the Berinsfield Community Insight Profile area. A full list of community assets, including local activities are set out in Appendix 1 of the *Berinsfield Community Insight Profile Report*.

Figure 5 Berinsfield Community Venues



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

5 Community research

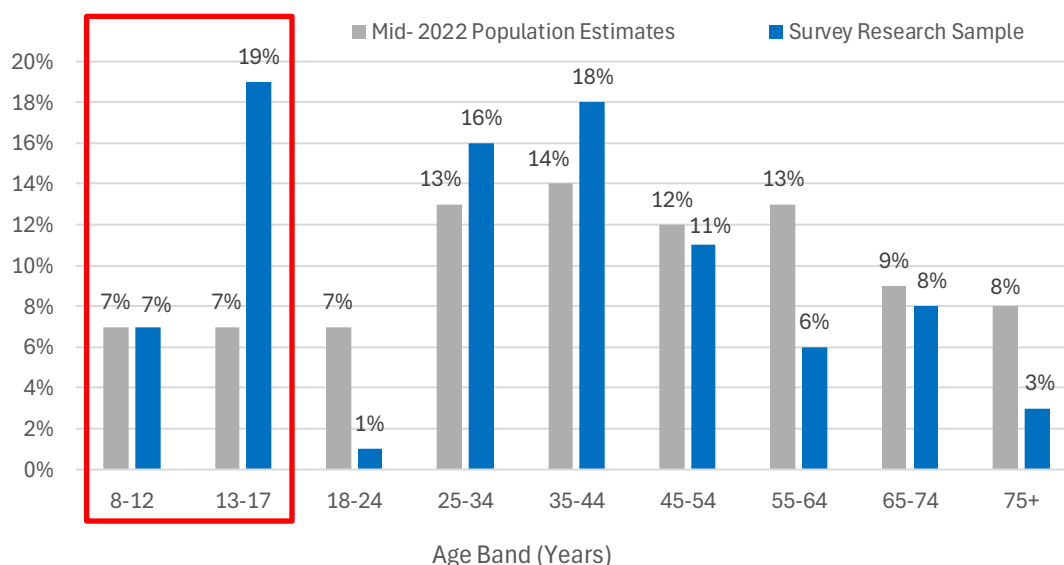
5.1 Research methodology and sample

South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) carried out community insight activities between July and November 2023, including:

- An online and hard copy survey completed by 61 adults and 34 young people,
- 14 one-to-one interviews with residents,
- 15 one-to-one interviews with local organisations,
- 5 focus groups (3 for young people, 1 for older people and 1 intergenerational) attended by 44 people in total.

The proportion of survey respondents in the 8-12, 45-54 and 65-74 age bandings were somewhat similar to the age profile of the Berinsfield residents according to the mid-2022 population estimates. For example, 8% of survey respondents were aged 65-74 and 9% of the Berinsfield population were aged 65-74. Additionally, the survey received an above total population average response rate for 13-16 year olds.

Figure 6 Proportion of survey respondents of the Berinsfield Insight research by broad age vs split age of total population of the Berinsfield Community Insight area



Research sample = 95 total survey respondents in total (excludes interviewed and focus group participants). ONS mid-2022 population estimates; ONS mid-year population estimate for Berinsfield Community Insight area from Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk).

The highlighted age bands are those survey respondents that were young people.

According to the Census 2021², the Berinsfield Community Insight area has a higher proportion of residents from a mixed ethnic background compared to both South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire averages.

- 2% of total survey respondents were from a mixed ethnic background and Census 2021 data shows that 4% of residents of the Berinsfield Community Insight area were of a mixed ethnic background.

² ONS Census 2021 table TS021 from www.nomisweb.co.uk

5.2 Living in Berinsfield

The top things that survey respondents liked about living in Berinsfield were (more than one option could be selected):

Adult respondents (base= 61)

- Green spaces (70%)
- Community facilities and activities (69%)
- Local family and friends (57%)
- Access to local services (54%)

Young people respondents (base= 34)

- Family and Friends (17%)
- Green Spaces (11%)
- Access to local services (11%)

Residents who were interviewed reported the following as strengths of the area – local choice of community facilities, services and activities and community spirit. A selection of quotes are shown below:

“Lots of community groups.”

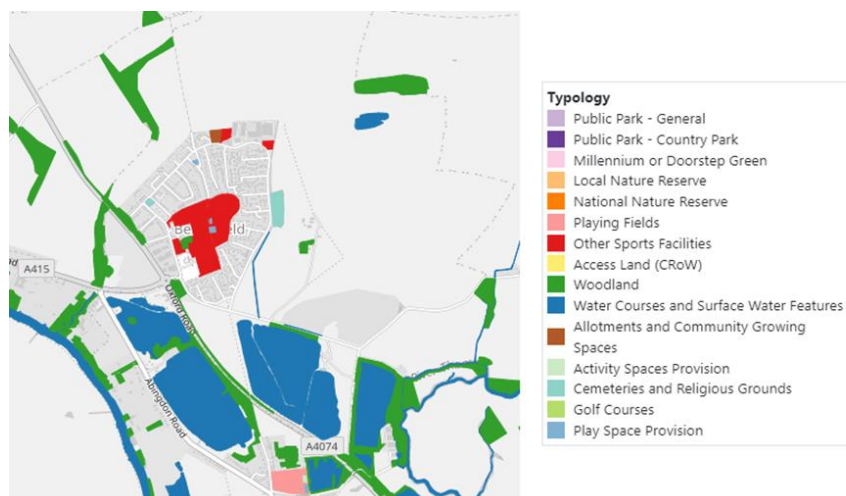
“The Community Spirit, especially the BCA.”

“It’s safe, everyone knows each other, there is always someone to chat too, I’m never alone. We have been well supported in times of need”

Mapping by Natural England shows that the Berinsfield Community Insight area is surrounded by accessible natural green and blue spaces including woodland, water courses and other sports facilities.

There is a variety of landowners near Berinsfield, including different levels of Local Authority (County, District and Parish councils), University of Oxford, government (e.g. Highways England), commercial and private entities.

Figure 7 Natural England mapping of green and blue infrastructure in the Berinsfield Community Insight area



Source: [Green Infrastructure Map \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](https://naturalengland.org.uk)

Getting around

When asked about which mode of transport was used most often to travel in and around Berinsfield, survey respondents reported as displayed in the table below (more than one option could be selected):

Table 1 Transport in and around Berinsfield

Transport	Adults	Young People
Walking	78%	100%
Car	65%	53%
Bicycle	13%	50%
Bus	3%	75%
E-scooter	2%	28%

Loneliness, identity and belonging

There appears to be strong feelings amongst respondents that they feel a sense of belonging within the community, despite some reports of personal discrimination and loneliness.

- 61% of adult survey respondents (base=61) and similarly 61% of young people survey respondents (base=34) reported that they felt part of the local community
- Conversely, in interviews comments were raised regarding discrimination and young people mentioned disappointment around equality and feeling listened to
- Amongst the survey respondents, 38% of adults and 24% of young people reported feeling lonely sometimes

“We love the people; we really feel part of the lovely community. Our grown-up children love to visit with our grandchildren”.

“Being coloured in a mostly white community has had its challenges, it’s easier now I am older and more accepted.”

“People need to be listening to young people more and not disregard their views - we have some good ideas”

Crime, safety and anti-social behaviour

In interviews and survey responses, respondents mostly expressed feeling safe. The crime data for Berinsfield reflects this, showing that the total crime rate in Berinsfield was lower than the Oxfordshire average, but the rates of adults in drugs and alcohol treatment was higher than the Oxfordshire average.

- 85% of adults and 41% of young people responding to the survey reported feeling safe during the day while 52% of adults and 31% of young people reported feeling safe at night. 8% of adults and 24% of young people reported not feeling very safe at night
- 92% of adult and 83% of young people survey respondents indicated that they saw people smoking and vaping in Berinsfield
- Around half of adult respondents (53%) and 57% of young people respondents had witnessed people handling/consuming drugs

"I feel safe after dark until around 8.30pm/9pm. Then I am not out anyway. I am more alert after dark and I don't use the alley ways alone night or day".

"Berinsfield has changed over the years it isn't really a nice village to live in if people aren't drinking and smashing bottles they're doing vapes and leaving them on floor!! And also doing drugs".

Education, employment and training

Despite acknowledgement of a variety of opportunities available for education and employment, the emerging views in both interviews and focus groups, were around barriers to access.

- The majority of adult survey respondents (80%) felt they have the skills and or qualifications to find employment, whilst 35% of young people survey respondents neither disagreed or agreed they had the skills to find employment
- 41% of adult survey respondents reported that they can access local opportunities to learn new skills/qualifications
- 20% of young people respondents disagreed that they were able to access local opportunities
- In focus groups, comments were made around barriers to accessing apprenticeships, difficulties with transport from Berinsfield to access further qualification colleges and further support needed for adults with neurodiversity/learning disabilities

"More training and skills opportunities need to be made available at places where people feel comfortable in going".

"I'm on a reduced timetable and alternative learning on certain days elsewhere. Getting there is long. If something was on in the village, I'd rather go to that."

5.3 Keeping healthy

The majority of survey respondents reported being mentally and physically well, however concerns were raised by local organisations around an increase in poor mental health being experienced by service users.

- 34% of adult respondents reported that they feel physically very well and 7% reported feeling quite unwell
- Half (50%) of young people respondents considered themselves as physically quite well
- A much higher proportion of young people reported experiencing poor mental wellbeing (21%) compared to adults (2%)

"There are a lot of mental health issues. – Anxiety and depression. The company signpost and have a mental health first aider on site. They refer to Riverside and CAB. There is social isolation particularly for young men with no transport."

When asked what helps with staying physically and mentally well, survey respondents reported various techniques that enabled their health and wellbeing.

For adult respondents (base=61):

- 70% stated that spending time outdoors or in nature supports wellbeing

- For 72%, physical activity and movement helps them to stay physically and mentally well
- 56% reported having a daily routine and structure helps keep them healthy

For young people respondents (base=34):

- The majority of young people respondents (85%) said that a strong social support network helps them to stay physically and mentally well

“My friends and family, they are a huge support structure to me.”

- 71% highlighted a healthy and balanced diet enables them to keep healthy
- 65% reported participating in physical activity and movement to help them to keep healthy

Healthy food and eating

- Over a third of adult survey respondents (72%) reported that they maintain healthy lifestyle habits around food and eating
- 75% of adult survey respondents agreed that they have access to affordable and healthy food
- A smaller proportion (24%) of young people responding to the survey felt they had access to healthy food options

“I like to grow my own vegetables with mum - I am vegan and like to be aware of what I am eating”.

5.4 Challenges to keeping healthy

Cost of living

When asked about the obstacles faced regarding health and wellbeing, the rise in the cost of living was cited several times. The data supports this, as it reveals that child poverty rates in Berinsfield were almost twice as high as the Oxfordshire average. However, the number of people claiming benefits related to unemployment was comparable to South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire averages.

- Almost half of adult survey respondents (48%) felt cost and affordability is one of the biggest challenges faced when trying to stay physically and mentally well
- 71% of young people reported cost and affordability as challenge to keeping healthy in survey responses
- The cost of living was frequently mentioned as a challenge to staying well during interviews with residents
- Local organisations also highlighted the impacts of the cost of living on their service user’s health and wellbeing during interviews

“With the cost of living, even Council-led cheaper swim activities are out of reach”.

“Our shopping bills are much higher; I can’t get to the cheap shops now.”

“Poverty makes everything hard. People don’t have choices – need to find a way for people to be able to make choices.”

Personal motivation

Participants mentioned in the survey and interviews, that personal motivation was a specific challenge for staying physically and mentally healthy.

- 74% of young people survey respondents felt personal motivation was one of the biggest challenges faced when trying to stay physically and mentally well
- 44% of adult survey respondents reported personal motivation as a challenge to keeping healthy

“Personal motivation - following COVID -19, lack of access to the internet - personal issue with connection at home, health issues - I wish I could just get better!”

Travel and transport

Many remarks were made about bus services and transport accessibility in Berinsfield. The Census 2021 shows that households in the Berinsfield community insight area have lower car ownership and higher travel to work rates than South Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire averages.

- Over half of young people respondents (59%) reported a lack of transport as a barrier to keeping physically and mentally well in the survey
- A smaller proportion of adult survey respondents (16%) felt a lack of transport was a challenge to keeping healthy
- In interviews, residents frequently referenced the poor bus connections and transport challenges
- Local organisations mentioned poor transport often leading to inaccessibility of services that improve physical and mental wellbeing

“Having transport to activities helps even within the village. - the day centre works well because they have transport”

“Transport in general is the biggest challenge, for me and for the oldies like my Mum, she can’t get to the clubs and activities that are put on and she would love to. I get her to bingo on a Sunday at the BCA (Berinsfield Community Association) but I’m working during the week, so she just stays at home. Which is a shame.”

5.5 Community suggestions for improving health and wellbeing

Through the different engagement options, participants offered various ideas for methods, projects and activities that could enhance the health and wellbeing of Berinsfield residents.

- Suggestions included:
 - Craft classes
 - Organised trips
 - Places to meet in the village
 - Safer cycling links to villages and cities
 - Informal and formal spaces for young people
 - Food cooking groups
 - Education and training opportunities
 - Health Checks
 - Creche facilities

“Events like the Beri fest or other community events, like the summer carnival, a yearly beer festival for instance. A time to bring everyone together”.

“Events are important for community spirit and bring people together it is important to have accessible and well-advertised sports provisions”.

6 Recommendations

A range of recommendations to improve the health and wellbeing of Berinsfield 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 community insight report.

6.1 Communication, coordination and coproduction

- Enhance the communication and coordination amongst different agencies, organisations and residents
- Involve the community in the design and delivery of services and activities
- Build on the Community Network meeting
- Further development of the community calendar
- Exploration of reaching hard to reach groups and a wider diverse audience

6.2 Community activation and cohesion

- Encourage agencies with outreach services to strengthen community ties and relationships
- Maintain the positive momentum of village participation to boost collaboration and community spirit
- Support the integration of new residents while preserving existing community bonds
- Discuss and utilise the community development role to support organisations strategically

6.3 Loneliness, identity and belonging

- Prioritise the use of community spaces to combat loneliness and foster belonging – events that strengthen social ties
- Implement activities that connect different age groups, promoting cultural exchange and reducing isolation
- Sharing of traditions between generations to address discrimination and enhance community identity
- Steering group to explore usage of venues and potential new or existing activity locations

6.4 Health food and eating

- Education initiatives and practical opportunities around healthy cooking and eating
- Address the lack of fresh food options in the village
- Liaison with the Social Prescriber to ensure healthy food and eating is promoted
- Target pre-school and primary school aged children with outcomes that encourage early behaviour change

6.5 Education, employment and access to opportunities

- Collaborate with local educational partners or employees to explore increasing learning opportunities
- Bring educational opportunities into the community
- Explore a greater variety of times available for learning opportunities - day, evenings, weekdays and weekends
- Build and maintain relationships with local employers
- Introduce community-based life or support skills and alternative education

6.6 Access to services and information

- Enhance mechanisms for residents to easily find and access beneficial information and services
- Focus on affordability through discounts and incentives, especially during the cost-of-living crisis
- Prioritise dedicated spaces and activities for young people as well as youth workers to mitigate future health risks
- Implement low-cost, accessible drop-ins, particularly for mental health services for young people
- Explore more community-based service options to reduce stigma and improve access to support

6.7 Fuel poverty

- Explore feasibility of community-led renewable energy projects in the area

6.8 Staying physically and mentally healthy

- Diversify and increase access to alternative leisure than sports play
- Targeted provision to address local demand
- Discussions regarding improved support for community-based mental health initiatives
- Explore community-led support groups assisted by trained professionals

6.9 The built environment and infrastructure

- Continue healthy place shaping as part of site at Mount Farm and village regeneration
- Look for early opportunities in the existing village to improve infrastructure

6.10 Transport and active travel

- Pursue review of bus services in the area
- Improvements to public transport and wider active travel in connection with Mount Farm development plans
- Research and implement pilot initiatives to support transport and active travel