

Littlemore Community Insight Profile

Summary

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1 Introduction

Oxfordshire is one of the most affluent areas of the country. However, this hides the fact that, as reported by the [Director of Public Health Annual Report 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 is undertaking 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 use local data and community insight that was based on an asset-based community development model (ABCD).

This profile is focused on one of these wards – Littlemore.

The aim of this profile is to:

- Understand the experiences of those living in Littlemore 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. *Littlemore Community Insight Project Report* by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO),
2. *Community (data) profile of Littlemore* 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.

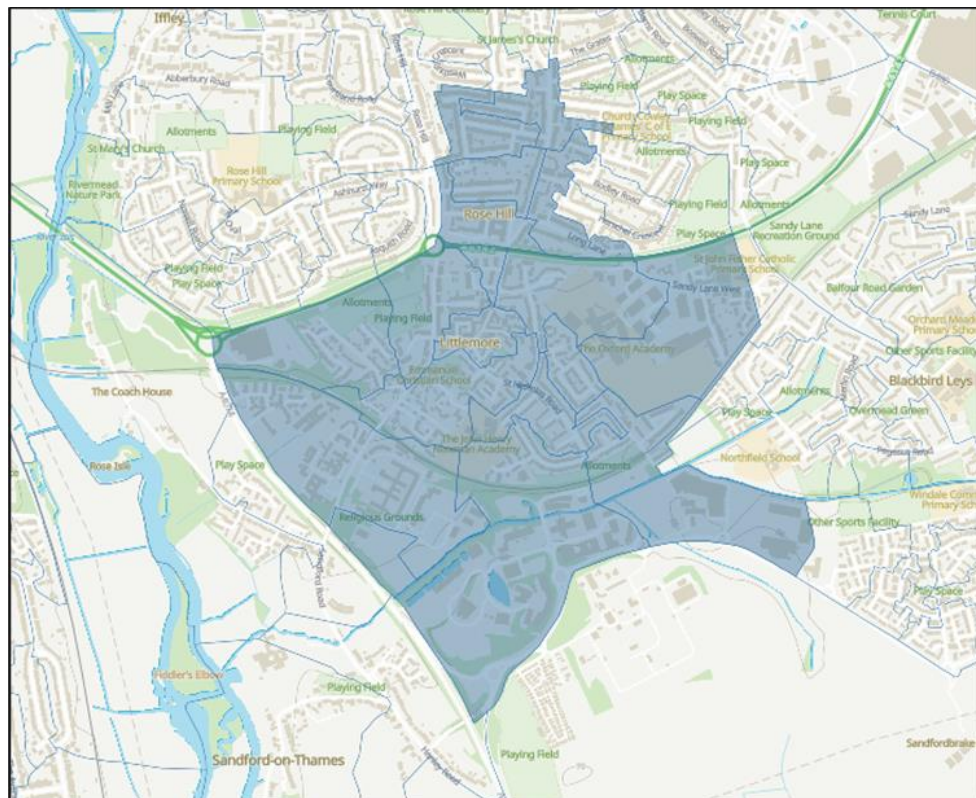
With thanks to Community First Oxfordshire (CFO), the Littlemore Steering Group, and especially to the residents of Littlemore who gave their time to talk to CFO researchers. Thanks also to officers at Oxford City Council and local councillors for their support and guidance.

2 Location

Littlemore ward is located approximately 2.5 miles south-east of the city centre of Oxford, between Rose Hill, Blackbird Leys, Cowley, and Sandford-on-Thames.

Please note that the Littlemore ward boundary differs slightly from the Parish boundary. There is little data available for the parish boundary and for consistency, data in this profile has focused on the ward boundary.

Figure 1 Littlemore ward



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

3 Summary of population and health data

Population and housing

- The total population of Littlemore ward according to the latest data (Census 2021), was 6,230 residents.
- Compared with Oxford and Oxfordshire, Littlemore has a higher proportion of young people (aged 0 to 15 years) and those of a working age (25 to 49 years).
- Over the past 10 years the population of the Littlemore area increased at above the Oxford and Oxfordshire rate. The area had a comparatively high birth rate and the growth in the number of young people was well above average.
- The proportion of social rented housing in Littlemore was above the averages for Oxford and Oxfordshire.

Health and Wellbeing

- 14 out of 32 local health and wellbeing indicators for Littlemore are ranked as worse than the England average including:
 - Emergency hospital admissions for self-harm
 - Emergency hospital admissions for all causes
 - Deaths from all cancers
 - Preventable deaths
- 3 out of 32 local health and wellbeing indicators for Littlemore are ranked as better than the England average.
- The proportion of adults receiving drugs or alcohol treatment in Littlemore ward has remained above the average for Oxfordshire since 2019.
- Littlemore had the third highest proportion of Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11 years) classified as overweight (including obesity) out of all areas in Oxfordshire. The proportion of overweight children in reception (aged 4 to 5 years) was also above (worse than) the Oxfordshire average.

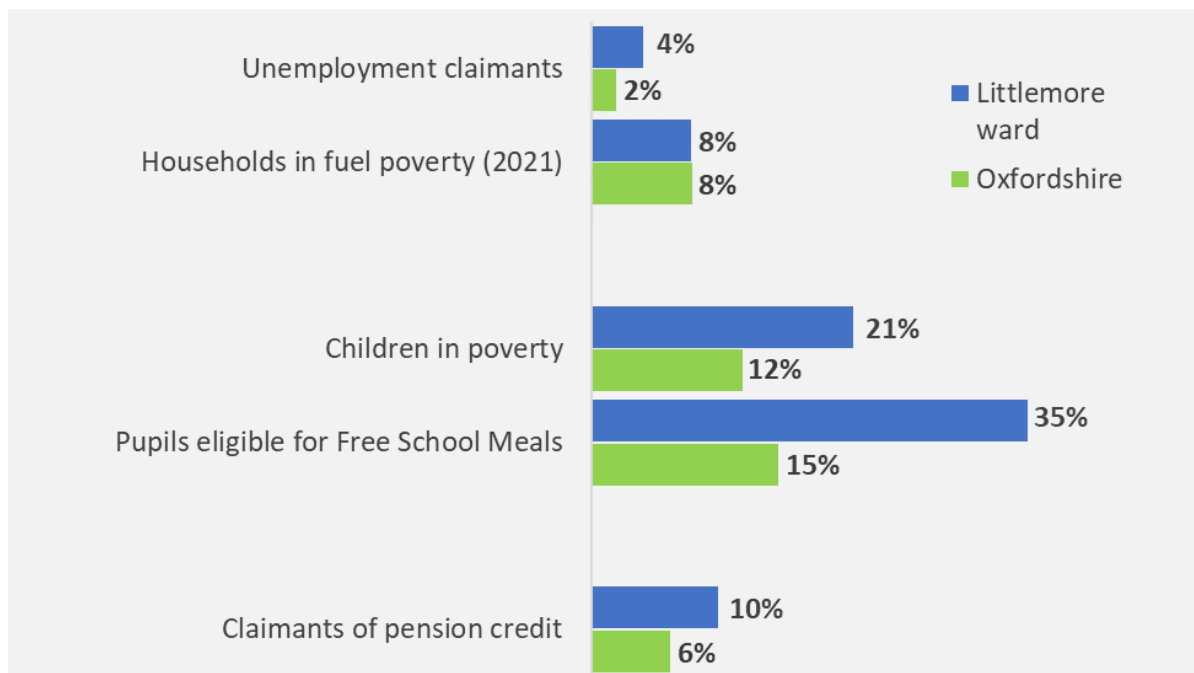
Employment

- A much higher percentage of people in employment in Littlemore were in the (generally lower paid) caring, leisure, process, and elementary occupations than the average for Oxford and Oxfordshire.
- Littlemore has a higher proportion of people looking after their home or family and a higher proportion who were long term sick or disabled, than the Oxford and Oxfordshire averages.

Poverty and deprivation

- Littlemore has a higher proportion of households classified as deprived in one or more dimensions than the Oxford and Oxfordshire averages.
- The proportion of residents claiming unemployment-related benefits in Littlemore was double that for Oxfordshire.
- A similar proportion of households in Littlemore ward were estimated to be in fuel poverty to that of Oxfordshire.
- Rates of child poverty and free school meals in Littlemore were well above (worse than) the average for Oxfordshire.
- The rate of older people in poverty and claiming pension credit in Littlemore was above the average for Oxfordshire

Figure 2 Indicators of low income¹



Note that the geography used for households in fuel poverty, children in poverty, claimants of pension credit indicators is the four LSOAs Oxford 016A, 016B, 016C and 016D.

Crime and community safety

- The overall rate of crime in Littlemore was well above the Oxfordshire average.

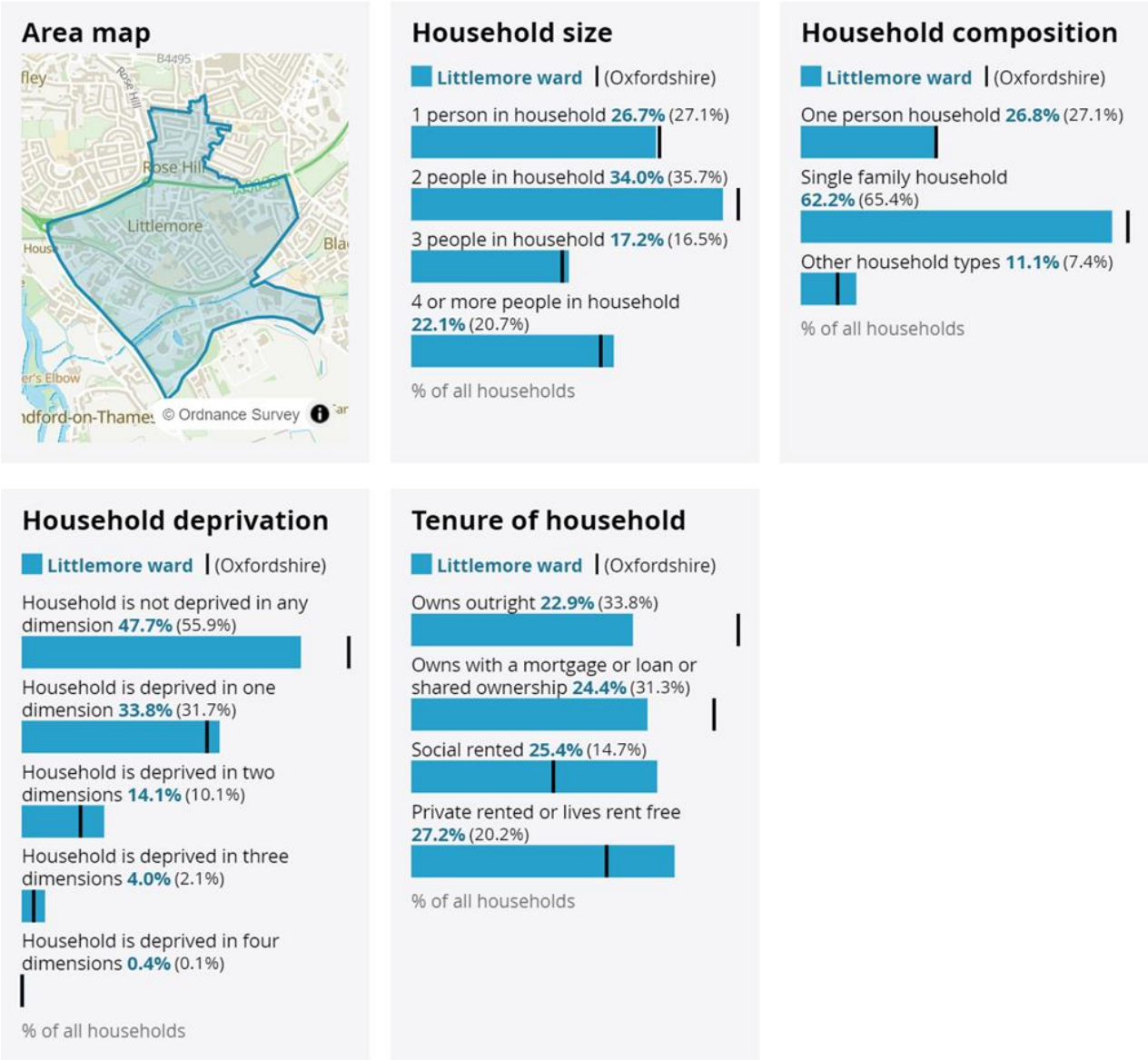
Living environment

- Littlemore ward is surrounded by accessible natural green and blue spaces including woodland, allotments, water courses and playing fields and public parks.
- There are no GPs located within the Littlemore ward and it is at least a 20-minute walking time from the majority of Littlemore ward area to a GP practice. There are also currently no pharmacies located within the ward but there are some pharmacies within a 20 – minute walking distance from most parts of the ward.

¹ Sources: DWP claimant count October 2023 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 2021 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, 2021/22; FSM from January 2023 pupil census, Oxfordshire County Council; Pension credit from DWP statXplore as of May 2023

Figure 3 Census 2021 profile for Littlemore ward

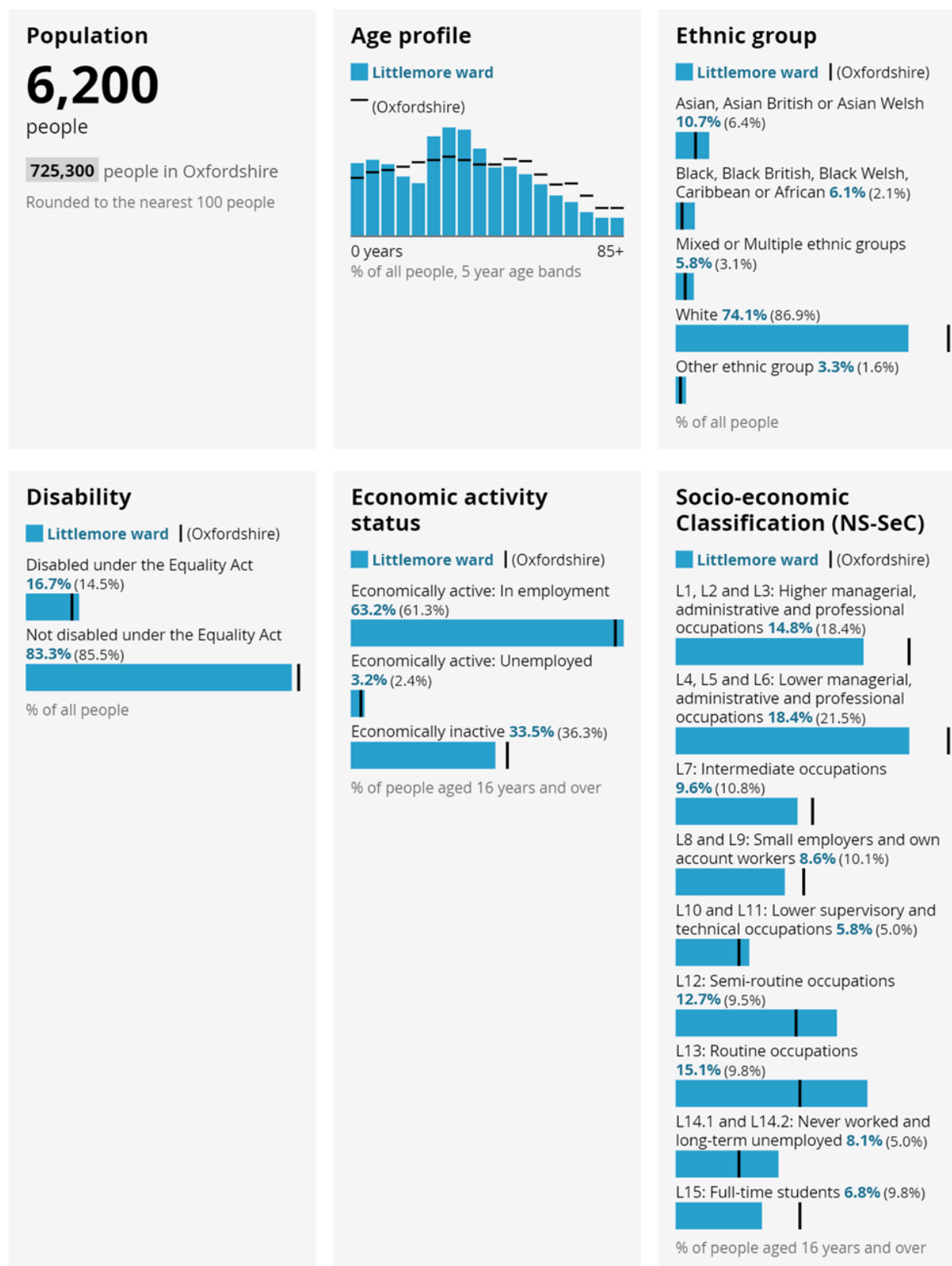
Littlemore ward



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

Figure 4 Census 2021 profile for Littlemore ward continued

Littlemore ward



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

4 Community assets and local groups

A local asset-mapping exercise was carried out by Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) from September 2023-mid-November 2023.

The mapping exercise developed a long list of assets for residents, from green and open spaces to local shops and services, community spaces, community groups running a range of activities and non-Littlemore-based institutions active locally.

The Littlemore Parish Council has produced [a map](#) which lists current local businesses, amenities, and services. The full list of community assets compiled by CFO is available in Appendix 2 of the Community Insight Profile report.

5 Community research

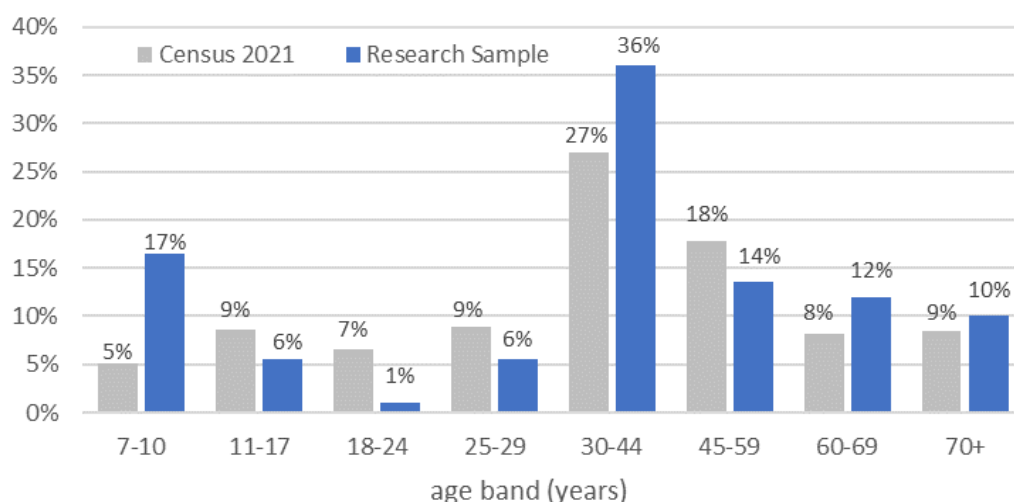
5.1 Research methodology and sample

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

- 26 one-to-one interviews with local residents,
- 14 one-to-one interviews with representatives from local groups and organisations,
- 4 focus groups attended by 40 people in total,
- An online survey completed by 106 respondents.

The age profile of respondents was broadly similar to the profile of residents (Census 2021). For example, 10% of respondents were aged 70+ and 9% of the population of the ward were aged 70+.

Figure 5 Proportion of residents of Littlemore research by broad age vs split age of total population of Littlemore ward



Research sample = 186 in total, excludes 4 respondents working for organisations and agencies outside the area, 16 survey respondents who did not give their age and 1 community 1 to 1 interviewee. ONS Census 2021; table TS007 for Littlemore ward from www.nomisweb.co.uk

The Asian group is the main non-white ethnic group in the area according to the Census 2021 survey and this group was somewhat represented in the research.

- 4.5% of people consulted were from an Asian Background. Census 2021 data shows that 11% of residents of Littlemore ward were of an Asian Background.

5.2 Living in Littlemore

Littlemore as a place to live

Around a third of online survey respondents were satisfied with Littlemore as a place to live, with 31% of respondents fairly or very satisfied and 36% very or fairly dissatisfied (33% neutral).

The proportion dissatisfied was slightly higher than respondents to the Oxfordshire residents survey (2023), where 13% of respondents county-wide were fairly or very dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live².

The top things that survey respondents (base=76) liked about living in the area were:

- Community feeling (42%)
- Green, open spaces and playparks (42%)
- Community groups and organisations (32%)
- Schools (28%)
- Local shops & services (26%)

Focus groups and interviews highlighted the neighbourliness of the community.

- *"I love it here, it is so peaceful. People are friendly but not gossipy or intrusive. I'm quite shy and people are kind but don't hassle you"*
- *"Everyone is friendly"*
- *"Reasonably quiet roads and people are quite friendly- there was a pub but I'm not sure if it's open"*

Getting around

When asked which mode of transport on a daily basis "you and your family use most often", online survey respondents selected:

- Walking (79%)
- Car (49%)
- Taxi (49%)
- Train (48%)
- Cycling (35%)

Local opportunities to learn new skills

The majority of survey respondents (72%) agreed that they have the skills/qualifications to find employment.

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

- 7% of respondents agreed that there are local opportunities to learn new skills and/or gain qualifications and 36% disagree.
- A similar proportion (10%) felt able to access local opportunities to learn new skills and/or gain qualifications (42% disagree).

² Note that the profile of the sample of the Littlemore survey is different to the weighted sample used in the Oxfordshire residents survey and the question wording was slightly different. Littlemore respondents were much more likely to be neutral about their area as a place to live (33% compared with 13% across Oxfordshire)

Anti-social behaviours (including drugs and alcohol)

Crime data for this area indicates that the overall rate of crime in Littlemore was well above the Oxfordshire average as well as having over double the Oxfordshire average rate of adults in drug and alcohol treatment. From the results of the community insight;

- 15% of survey respondents mentioned anti-social behaviour as affecting feelings of safety within the Littlemore neighbourhood, whilst 35% of survey respondents reported feeling generally safe
- Interviews and focus group conversations picked up multiple references to crime and anti-social behaviour across all demographic groups

"I've been told not to go out alone [because there have been incidences of crime] so I go out with my dad on our bikes and go to the park with my brother [supervised]."

5.3 Keeping healthy

When asked 'what do you do to keep health' respondents reported various habits that supported their mental, physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

- 69% of survey respondents (base=70) highlighted using **spending time outside** to keep healthy and 70% reported **keeping active** to help them keep healthy.

"Chose to live here because it's close to town but you can also get out in the countryside easily"

- 66% (base=70) of survey respondents agreed that they **maintained healthy habits around food and eating** to keep healthy. This was just above attending groups and organisations and going to religious settings/places of worship.

"I'm not a fan of take away and grow my own veg. However, there are no healthy eating places-nothing local"

- 83% of survey respondents (base=70) reported **socialising with friends** to keep healthy.

"Spending time on my phone communicating with friends."

5.4 Challenges to keeping healthy

Cost of living

The increase in the cost of living was a prominent issue in the research and this is reflected in the corresponding data which shows that unemployment- related benefit claimants in Littlemore were double that for Oxfordshire and rates of children in poverty were well above the Oxfordshire average.

- Cost of living was frequently mentioned as a challenge to health and wellbeing by residents in focus groups and interviews.

- 60% (base= 58) of survey respondents experienced barriers in relation to cost and affordability, whilst accessing affordable and healthy food was a barrier to 48% of survey respondents.

“The cost of living and energy crises have had huge [negative] impacts. There is increased loneliness with less money to go out. In some families, meals are being skipped. There is constant worry in some families about how to make ends meet.”

Housing

Residents and local organisations frequently raised the issue of accessing good quality and affordable housing. According to Census 2021 data, the proportion of households in social rented accommodation in the Littlemore ward was above the Oxford district average.

- Good quality, affordable housing was a barrier to looking after oneself for 22% of survey respondents (base=58).
- 26% of survey respondents were not at all satisfied/quite unsatisfied with the cost of housing.

“Housing has been a major issue in the last few months with rent increases and S21 [eviction] notices]. The shortage of affordable housing [is also an issue].”

Housing development was raised as a barrier to health and wellbeing in focus groups. Criticism was made that development happens in piecemeal form, with no apparent long-term strategy.

“The people who are coming into the big housing development [need to be able to access] the opportunities in the centre because they are going to be further away. If you are at the other end of Armstrong Road it is a quite a walk, particularly with young children, to get to the bus stop, and even further to walk round to the school.”

Access to health care services

There was much concern noted about a lack of access to health care services in the community insight.

- 34% of survey respondents noted that access to healthcare was a barrier to looking after themselves.
- Almost half of survey respondents (49%) found it difficult to access the John Radcliffe or Headington hospitals and 48% found it difficult to access a pharmacy.
- 46% of survey respondents found it difficult to access dental practice/services.

“[Medical appointments/ services] People find it very difficult to get where they want to be on time.”

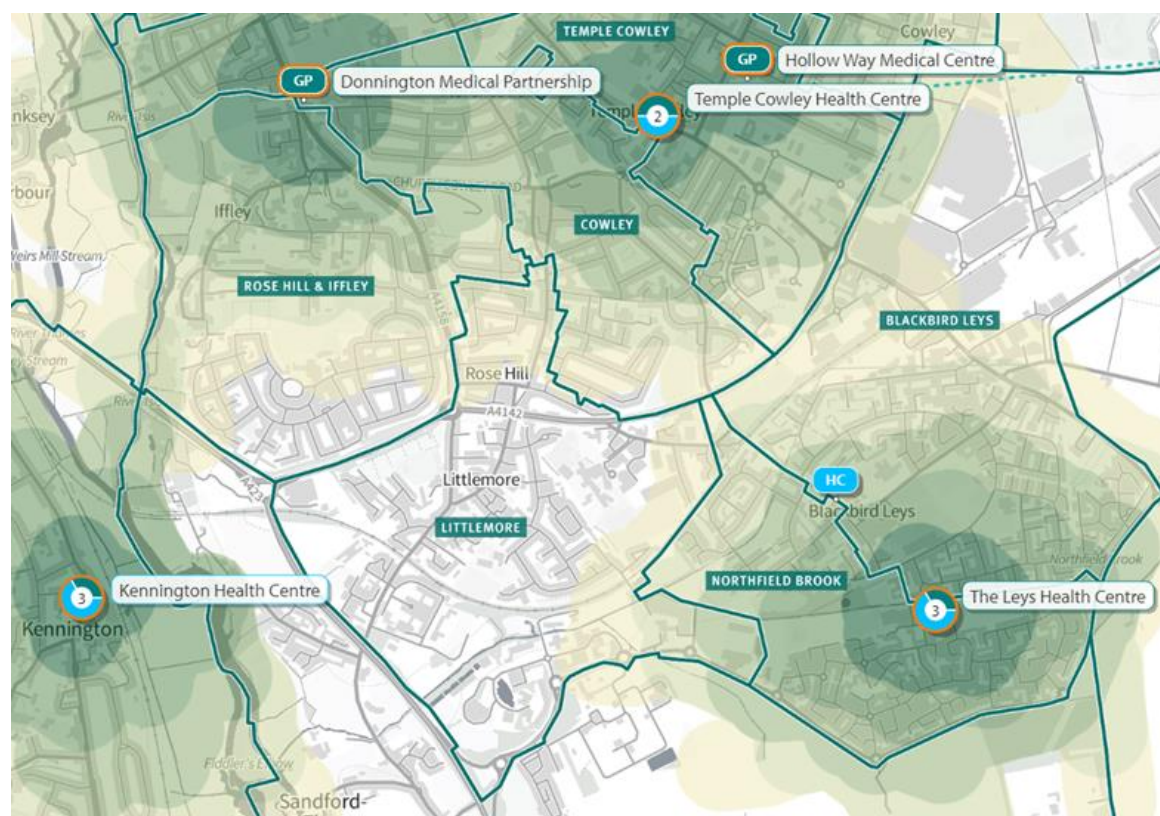
“It’s only more recently that we have had conversations about a lack of medical facilities but the City Council told us it is not our responsibility, it’s health.”

Accessibility and distances to local healthcare services (GPs, dentists, pharmacies and hospitals) are set out in Appendix 1 of the Community Insight report.

There are no GPs located within the Littlemore ward and it is at least a 20-minute walking time from the majority of Littlemore ward area to a GP practice. However, the whole ward is within a 20-minute journey time by public transport to a nearby GP practice.

Walk: by time

4 8 12 16 20 minutes



Note that the Leys Health Centre is the only current Health Centre in Blackbird leys despite the map showing another Health Centre. Estimated walking and public transport times are not shown for this practice.

When asked about the long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, residents and organisations highlighted loneliness, poor mental health, stress and isolation, reduced access to services and groups being stopped.

- Over half of survey respondents (54%) reported feeling lonely, with 13% reporting feeling lonely all or most of the time.
- 23% of survey respondents reported that across the long term, their/their families health and wellbeing was in general 'very negatively affected' by COVID-19.
- In interviews with local organisations, the implications of the pandemic on the running of local groups and activities were frequently reported.

“The numbers [attending my sessions] haven’t recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels.”

“Loneliness and isolation – people are still going out less, those who were previously isolated seem even more so. There is anxiety and it is easier to stay at home, especially if you don’t know what is going on [to tempt you out].”

Roads and transport

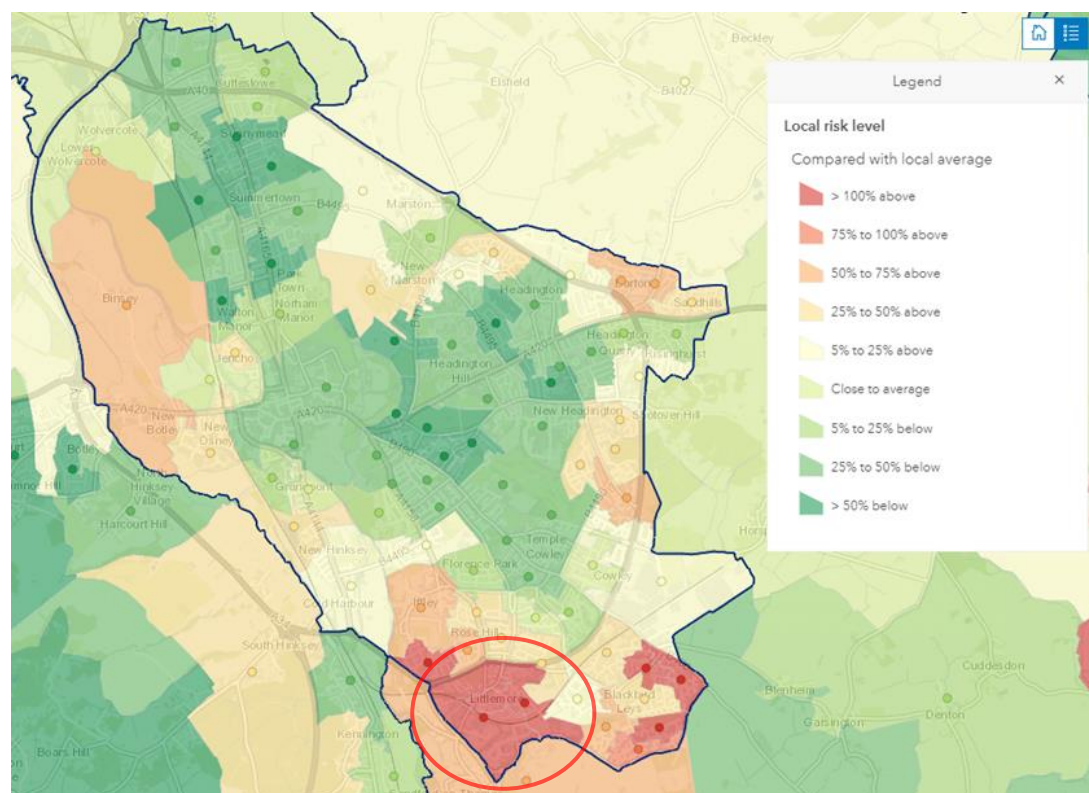
Public transport was a key theme in discussions and an identified barrier for respondents to the online survey. According to data relating to access to employment, education, healthcare and basic services, two areas in Littlemore are ranked as having ‘higher risk’ of transport-related social exclusion compared to similar areas across England and above Oxford average as indicated in figure 7 below. From the results of the community insight;

- 40% of survey respondents reported transport as a barrier to looking after oneself.
- Only 9% of survey respondents use the bus daily and 34% found it ‘not at all easy’ to get from Littlemore to other parts of the City.
- Interviews and focus group attendees provided a sense that the community is poorly served by public transport, has a lack of safe walking connections and that the Low Traffic Neighbourhood has had a negative effect on access beyond the parish.

“There’s plenty of community activities – if people could only get to them.”

“To get out of Littlemore you need to get on a bus but buses don’t come regularly so you walk a distance and then get a bus, like to Rose Hill [across the ring road].”

Figure 7 Map showing the risk of transport-related social exclusion for LSOAs compared with the average for Oxford City



Source: Transport-related social exclusion in England, 2022 from [Transport for the North](#)

5.5 What more could be done to support health and wellbeing

When asked what more could be done to support health and wellbeing, respondents proposed access to free events, improvement/creation of community spaces, awareness of mental health training, a SEND support group and intergenerational activities.

- Over half (66%) of survey respondents agreed that free or reduced cost access to events and activities would help improve their health and wellbeing.
- Proposals by interviewees and focus group attendees included:
 - *“A buddy system and free or low-cost activities.”*
 - *“Things for teenagers, cooking with kids, additional stuff in the parks, put flower beds opposite the Oxford Road shops. More groups for people with additional needs.”*
 - *“Need a better park environment and more things added to the parks [and need to separate] the basketball court and football courts.”*
 - *“There needs to be somewhere to go, somewhere to talk, somewhere to share concerns, get information or whatever.”*

6 Recommendations

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

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

Please note that it is not the intention of the report to offer detailed overviews of potential projects to meet the recommendations suggested, these will be further tested and explored in the next phase of the project, via Action Planning at the community level.

6.1 Public Realm and Services

- Primary and secondary healthcare provision: discussions to explore improvements to local services.
- Local environment/streetscape improvement discussion
- Anti-social Behaviour initiatives
- A ‘local infrastructure campaign’
- Public transport improvement discussions

6.2 Community cohesion and integration

- Develop a holistic, community-wide communication strategy
- Develop a programme of whole-community events
- Develop a Youth Council
- Extend community development worker support
- A Warm Spaces publicity campaign

6.3 Community action: innovation and resilience

- Improve joint-working and networking
- Explore innovation in community building usage and/or development of a community hub
- Explore funding avenues for community innovation
- Launch a Littlemore Volunteer Drive

6.4 Community action: meeting locally- identified needs

- Additional support for young people
- Community-based mental health initiatives
- Develop new or extend existing community activities and sessions
- Develop community-based Life Skills sessions
- Develop new or extend existing environment-based community activities, sessions and innovations
- Support group for parents of children with Special Educational Needs and groups for children/ young people
- Develop a community transport scheme/ Good Neighbours Scheme to facilitate better access to community activity
- Explore intergenerational innovation