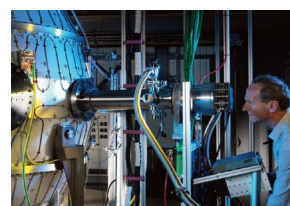# Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Screening and Scoping Report

South Oxfordshire and
Vale of White Horse
District Councils

May 2022

# Contents

# 1. Introduction

1.1. South Oxfordshire District Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council are working together to create a Joint Local Plan. The Joint Local Plan will cover the entirety of both districts and provide a set of planning policies guiding development in the area to 2041. The Councils have launched an "issues" consultation that marks the start of the plan making process, running from 12 May 2022 to 23 June 2022.

1.2. Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to carry out a sustainability appraisal of each of the proposals in a plan during its preparation. A sustainability appraisal will also incorporate the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.3. Henceforth, each time the Councils produce a consultation document or proposed options for change, we will subject this to a sustainability appraisal and publish the results. The aim of the appraisal is not to dictate the direction of the plan or set policies, but to be a tool to remind the Councils of key environmental, social, and economic objectives when preparing policies.

1.4. This screening and scoping report is the start of the sustainability appraisal process. The purpose of the report is to first identify whether an appraisal is needed to support the plan (screening). It scoping stage then goes on to review a series of plans, policies and programmes already in place to determine what environmental, social, and economic commitments are already in place that affect our districts. The report subsequently identifies how we are performing against these commitments by reviewing a series of baseline evidence and indicators across ten themes. Across each of these themes, we have identified the key sustainability challenges for that topic.

1.5. The report refines these sustainability challenges, into sustainability objectives that we will need to take into account when preparing the Joint Local Plan. These are as follows:

1. To reduce pollution of all kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality.

2. To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring new developments plan for "healthy places", with sufficient social, physical and health infrastructure in place.

3. To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel.

4. To achieve net gains in biodiversity across the districts, with new developments expected to secure at least 10% net gain.

5. To protect, and where possible, enhance the status of designated assets, including SACs and SSSIs.

6. To make a significant contribution to achieving net zero carbon emissions in both districts to meet the Councils' carbon reduction targets, specifically focussing on domestic and transportation emissions.

7. To ensure new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change, and that proposals do not weaken existing communities' and businesses' resilience to climate change.

8. To conserve, and where possible, enhance, all heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and their settings in the districts.

9. To improve pockets of income, education, skills and training across the plan area, while also improving access to services and facilities in remote areas.

10. To create safe places that are free from crime and free from the fear of crime, and protected from acts of terror.

11. To protect and manage the character and appearance of the landscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place, the countryside, Greenbelt and landscape quality.

12. To ensure great weight is given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty including development within their setting, which should be sensitively located and designed.

13. Ensure that extraction of resources takes place prior to any development in Mineral Resource Areas, Mineral Safeguarding Areas, Mineral Consultation Areas, and avoid development in Mineral Infrastructure Zones.

14. To minimise the use of new materials and prioritise the reuse and recycle of existing materials and aggregate.

15. To plan for enough housing to meet the needs of our residents, including the provision of affordable housing.

16. To maintain, and where possible, increase job opportunities across the districts.

17. To support the sustainable management of land for multiple benefits.

18. To maximise the efficient use of water, with an aspiration for achieving water neutrality.

19. To reduce the risk of, and damage from flooding, and to improve resistance and resilience to flooding from all sources.

20. To support the development of appropriately scaled, and well designed renewable energy schemes

1.6.    The report concludes by explaining the next steps for sustainability appraisal and setting out its relationship with the Joint Local Plan, and how we will assess emerging proposals in the plan against the sustainability objectives.

1.7.    This is a consultation version of the screening and scoping report. We are inviting comments on this document between 12 May and 23 June 2022. You can provide comments by using the survey form on either of our websites:

http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

1.8.    You can find further information and other consultation documents on the links above.

1.9.    Please contact us on 01235 422425 or email haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk for support to access the consultation materials.

# 2.    Methodology

2.1.    This report is both a screening and scoping report.  The first chapter assesses whether a sustainability appraisal is needed (screening).  As set out in National Planning Practice Guidance, we have had regard to regulation 9 and schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 in doing so.  The assessment concludes that the Joint Local Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore a sustainability appraisal is needed.

2.2.    The report then defines the scope of the sustainability appraisal by examining ten topic areas.  Before the UK's departure from the European Union, our sustainability appraisal legislation had its roots in the EU's Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.  Annex I of this directive identified the following topic areas that an assessment should consider: biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, and landscape.

2.3.    In the absence of updated guidance or legislation from UK government, we have decided that it is appropriate to continue to consider these topic areas as part of the assessment.  The scoping section of the report therefore considers the following topic areas:

- Chapter 4: Air quality
- Chapter 5: Biodiversity, flora and fauna
- Chapter 6: Climatic factors
- Chapter 7: Cultural heritage and townscape
- Chapter 8: Human health and wellbeing
- Chapter 9: Landscape
- Chapter 10: Material assets
- Chapter 11: Population
- Chapter 12: Soil Quality
- Chapter 13: Water Quality

2.4.    The National Planning Practice Guidance contains a flowchart on the relationship of the sustainability appraisal and an emerging local plan[1], which also sets out the key stages of the appraisal.  We have adapted this flowchart to show how the sustainability appraisal will relate to our Joint Local Plan in **Figure One**.

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[1]
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/580027/sea1_013.pdf

2.5. Across each of the topic areas we have undertaken an assessment of the relevant plans, policies, and programmes that contain policies, targets or aspirations for that area. This assessment has focussed on national or lower tier plans as these enshrine many of the higher tier targets into locally or nationally specific actions. This review sets out how the Councils should be performing across each topic area.

2.6. Following this, each chapter undertakes an assessment of baseline information to determine current performance under each topic. The quality of information varies across each topic area and indicator, with some containing very specific local information, and others being more regional or national.

2.7. From these topic-based assessments, we identified key sustainability challenges facing the districts. These key challenges informed the 20 sustainability objectives that will support the preparation of our joint local plan.

2.8. The final chapters of this report set out the "sustainability appraisal framework" that explains how we will assess the emerging policies and options in the Joint Local Plan.

2.9. This is the consultation version of the screening and scoping report. The National Planning Practice Guidance states that we must consult with the three consultation bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England on the content of this report. However, we are also inviting comments from any interested party. The deadline for comments is 23 June 2022.

2.10. Following consultation on this report we will make changes where necessary and publish a revised version at the next stage of consultation on the Joint Local Plan.

**Figure One: Sustainability Appraisal Process**

**Sustainability Appraisal Stage One:
Screening and scoping report**

This report identifies whether the plan should be subject to sustainability appraisal.   To determine the scope of the appraisal, the report assesses other plans, policies, and programmes that set environmental, social and economic aspirations for the area.  The report then reviews the current performance against these plans by assessing a series of baseline information.  This then allows the Councils to identify the key sustainability issues and problems, and create a series of sustainability objectives for the plan to help address them.  The report  identifies how these objectives will relate to the preparation of the local plan (the sustainability appraisal framework).   The report will be shared with the three consultation bodies for comment: the Environment Agency Historic England, and Natural England, although we will invite comments from all interested parties on this report.

**Local Plan Stage One:
Evidence gathering,
engagement and early stages of
consultation:**

Including consultation on the scope, issues and options of the Local Plan.  This is referred to as "Regulation 18" consultations, named after Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.   A local authority may consult multiple times under "regulation 18".

The consultations may contain "options" for addressing the challenges in the districts, such as plan objectives, determining how much development is required, and where it should go, through to less strategic policies (for example extensions to houses and detailed design policies).

**Sustainability Appraisal Stage Two:
Developing and refining alternatives and
assessing effects**

For each time the Councils produce a consultation version of the local plan containing "options" we will produce a sustainability report appraising those options against the objectives defined in Stage A.  The sustainability report will contain "reasonable alternatives" to the options set out in the local plan consultation document, so that the Council can understand the impacts of alternative approaches.  The report will consider ways of mitigating the adverse effects while maximising beneficial effects of the options.  It will also propose measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the local plan.

**Sustainability Appraisal Stage Three: Preparing and consulting on the sustainability appraisal report that supports the publication version of the local plan**

The Councils will produce an appraisal of the publication version of the plan, that assesses each of the proposed policies and decisions made in the plan, as well as the alternatives that we have considered.

**Local Plan Stage 2: Preparing and consulting on the publication version of the local plan**

The publication version of the local plan is the "final draft" that the councils prepare for consultation. Following this consultation all comments are submitted along with the plan to the Planning Inspectorate. There is no opportunity for the Councils to make changes before submitting the plan for examination.

**Sustainability Appraisal Stage Four: Post adoption reporting and monitoring**

Any modifications recommended by the Planning Inspectorate will need to be subject to a sustainability appraisal as set out above. Once the Councils adopt the plan, we will produce a post-adoption statement for the sustainability appraisal. The Councils will monitor the effects of the plan through our annual monitoring reports.

**Outcome of the examination, adoption of the local plan, and monitoring**

The Planning Inspectorate conduct an examination of the plan, and may recommend modifications to it to allow it to be found sound and adopted.

# 3. Sustainability appraisal screening

3.1. Regulation 9 and schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 advise how plan makers should determine whether a plan should be subject to sustainability appraisal. Schedule 1 contains several criteria that should inform this assessment, and we have set out our response to these below.

*Criterion 1(a): the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources*

3.2. The Joint Local Plan will be a key determining factor in planning applications across both districts, alongside other development plan and guidance documents such as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and Supplementary Planning Documents. It will be a plan that sets some of the strategic framework for neighbourhood development plans across the districts.

*Criterion 1(b): the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy*

3.3. The Joint Local Plan will set the strategic framework for neighbourhood development plans. It will be a plan that sets some of the strategic framework for development proposals across the two districts and will therefore inform the preparation and determination of planning applications for a variety of land uses.

*Criterion 1(c): the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development*

3.4. The plan will contain policies relating to the environment, social factors, and the economy. It is therefore highly relevant to the promotion of sustainable development.

*Criterion 1(d): environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and*

3.5. Within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse there are a number of environmental sensitivities and challenges to address. These are explained in detail in the scoping section of this report.

*Criterion 1(e)the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)*

3.6.    The Joint Local Plan may affect water bodies, habitats and designated biodiversity sites that were protected under European Community legislation when the UK was part of the European Union.  Many of the legislation which transposed the protection of these Community assets into UK law remains in place.

*Criterion 2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects*

3.7.    The Joint Local Plan will contain a spatial strategy and planning policies that guide new development across the districts.  The Councils will need to have confidence that the proposals within the plan are deliverable, and hence we assume that the probability of the plan's effects materialising will be high.  The new developments are likely to have a life span in excess of 100 years.

*Criterion 2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects*

3.8.    We do not currently know what policies or strategy the Joint Local Plan will contain, so it is hard to determine what the cumulative effects of the proposals within it will be.  It will have cumulative effects with other development plan documents (such as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050, Neighbourhood Development Plans, and development plans of neighbouring councils).

*Criterion 2(c) the transboundary nature of the effects*

3.9.    The transboundary nature refers to international borders.  The Local Plan is unlikely to have effects of an international scale, although the need to tackle climate change and ecological collapse is of international importance and should be tackled on a small scale at a local level.

*Criterion 2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);*

3.10.   The Joint Local Plan will facilitate development that could pose risks to human health if not managed properly.  For example, construction processes can directly lead to injuries, but indirect and consequential effects such as pollution and additional traffic movement could also pose risks to human health.

*Criterion 2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);*

3.11.   The Joint Local Plan will cover the entirety of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse districts.   Together these cover 125,615ha, with a resident population of 255,245 as of the 2011 census.  The plan will also have effects on residents of neighbouring areas.

*Criterion 2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—*

   i.    *special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;*

3.12. The districts are also home to numerous heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, and scheduled monuments. There are also Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) present in both districts, as well as locally designated wildlife sites.

*ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or*

3.13. Some indicators across the district show that river water and air quality standards have been exceeded. These are explained in more detail in the scoping section of this report.

*iii. intensive land-use; and*

3.14. We do not currently know whether the Joint Local Plan will contain site allocations, and if it does, the nature of such allocations is also currently unknown.

*Criterion 2(g)the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.*

3.15. Parts of the North Wessex Downs and the Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are within the districts.

3.16. Taking account of the above criteria, it is apparent that the Joint Local Plan has the potential to cause significant environmental and social effects. Consequently, the Councils consider that the plan should be subject to sustainability appraisal. The rest of this document identifies the scope of such an appraisal, and goes on to set out how the appraisal will inform the preparation of the Joint Local Plan.

# 4.    Air Quality

4.1.    Poor air quality has a direct effect on public health, habitats and biodiversity. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. Pollutants can also combine in the atmosphere to form ozone, a harmful air pollutant (and potent greenhouse gas) which can be transported by weather systems.

4.2.    As such, it is important that the potential impact of new development on air quality is considered where the national assessment indicates that relevant limits have been exceeded or are near the limit, or where the need for emissions reductions has been identified.

4.3.    The Local Plan will need to consider potential trends in air quality in the presence and absence of development, as well as any impacts and mitigation/improvement opportunities arising from the plan's proposals.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

### The Environment Act 2021
*HM Government 2021*

4.4.    The Environment Act 2021 sets out the framework and relies on secondary legislation to implement many of the requirements.   The Act establishes a legally binding duty on Government to bring forward at least two new air quality targets in secondary legislation by 31 October 2022.   A public consultation (ending in May 2022) is currently being run on plans to introduce new environmental targets under the Environment Act 2021. One of the targets should be a long-term target to be set in relation to air quality. There is also a specific requirement to set a shorter-term legally binding target to reduce particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) in ambient air.

4.5.    In addition, the Act places a duty on the Secretary of State to review the air quality strategy at least every five years, and to produce an annual report to Parliament on progress towards England's air quality objectives.

4.6.    The Act also requires local authorities in the UK to review air quality in their area and designate air quality management areas if improvements are necessary. An air quality action plan describing the pollution reduction measures must then be put in place. Responsibility for tackling local air pollution is now to be shared between designated relevant public authorities, all tiers of local government and neighbouring authorities. The changes to Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) include requirements for action plans where local air is in breach of air quality objectives. In England, concentrations of key pollutants in outdoor air are regulated by the **Air Quality**

**(Standards) Regulations 2010.** These Regulations seek to control human exposure to pollutants in outdoor air to protect human health and the environment by requiring concentrations to be within specified limit values. In the event of exceedances, the Regulations require the publication of Air Quality Plans setting out "appropriate measures" that will ensure that the exceedance period is kept "as short as possible".

4.7. These Regulations set:

   a. Legally binding limits for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health: sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, particulate matter (as $PM_{10}$ and $PM_{2.5}$), lead, benzene, carbon monoxide and ozone.

   b. Targets for levels in outdoor air for four elements; cadmium, arsenic, nickel and mercury, together with polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH).

**Clean Air Strategy 2019**
*Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs*

4.8. This strategy sets out the comprehensive actions required across all parts of Government and society to improve air quality. It complements three other UK government strategies: the Industrial Strategy, the Clean Growth Strategy and the 25 Year Environment Plan.

4.9. Relevant plans/policies/programmes related to the Industrial Strategy which aim to cut exposure to air pollutants and reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

   a. HM Government (July 2018) The Road to Zero:  Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy

   b. Defra/DfT (July 2017) UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations

   c. HM Government (October 2017) The Clean Growth Strategy: Leading the way to a low carbon future

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

4.10. Paragraph 105 requires that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health.

4.11. Paragraph 186 requires that planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality

Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement.

### National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

4.12. The PPG provides guidance on how planning can take account of the impact of new development on air quality. It explains that development plans can influence air quality in a number of ways, for example through what development is proposed and where, and the provision made for sustainable transport. Consideration of air quality issues at the plan-making stage can ensure a strategic approach to air quality and help secure net improvements in overall air quality where possible.

4.13. The PPG explains that where national objectives on air quality are not met, or at risk of not being met, the local authority concerned must declare an air quality management area (AQMA) and prepare an air quality action plan. These are areas where the levels of pollutants in the air have reached those identified by the government as harmful to health and are in breach of the national air quality objectives. An action plan identifies measures that will be introduced and can have implications for planning.

4.14. The PPG sets out the importance of ensuring that plan-making takes into account air quality management areas, Clean Air Zones and other areas including sensitive habitats or designated sites of importance for biodiversity where there could be specific requirements or limitations on new development because of air quality.

4.15. The PPG also highlights sources of information on air quality such as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), which publishes information and there is a range of other potential sources which can be drawn on, depending on the development and its proposed location.

4.16. The PPG also provides advice on dealing with planning applications that may affect air quality.

### Vale of White Horse District Council Air Quality Action Plan 2015
*Vale of White Horse District Council*

4.17. An action plan that sets out how the council will tackle air quality problems in the district's AQMAs at Abingdon, Botley, and Marcham.

4.18.   **Vale of White Horse District Council Air Quality Developer's Guidance**

*Vale of White Horse District Council*

4.19.   This document sets out how air quality should be considered in planning new developments.

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1**
*Vale of White Horse District Council, 2016*

4.20.   Core Policy 43: Natural Resources requires that developers take account of, and if located within an AQMA, ensure that development is consistent with, the Council's Air Quality Action Plan.

4.21.   Core Policy 34: A34 Strategy states that the council will work with Highways England, Oxfordshire County Council and other partners to develop an air quality monitoring framework associated with the A34 within the Vale of White Horse District to monitor any impact on the Oxford Meadows SAC.

4.22.   Core Policy 33: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility states that the council will work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to promote and support improvements to the transport network that increase safety, improve air quality and/or make our towns and villages more attractive

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 2**
*Vale of White Horse District Council, 2019*

4.23.   Development Policy 26: Air Quality is a detailed policy setting out the requirements for proposals that are likely to have an impact on air quality.

**South Oxfordshire District Council Air Quality Action Plan 2014**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

4.24.   This is an action plan that sets out how the council will tackle air quality problems in district's the AQMAs at Henley, Wallingford, and Watlington.

**South Oxfordshire District Council Air Quality Developer's Guidance**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

4.25.   This document sets out how air quality should be considered in planning new developments.

**South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035**
*South Oxfordshire District Council, 2020*

4.26.   Policy STRAT4: Strategic Development requires all proposals for strategic development to be supported by an Air Quality Assessment.

4.27.   Policy EP1: Air Quality is a detailed policy setting out the requirements for proposals that are likely to have an impact on air quality. It also requires all development proposals to include measures to minimise air pollution.


## Baseline Information

### Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs)

4.28.   AQMAs are designated where national air quality objectives are not being achieved or are not likely to be achieved.  AQMAs can be just one or two streets, or they can be a much bigger area.

4.29.   South Oxfordshire has three designated AQMAs due to high levels of $NO_2$ from traffic emissions:

   a.   Henley

   b.   Wallingford

   c.   Watlington

4.30.   Vale of White Horse has three designated AQMAs all due to high levels of $NO_2$ from traffic emissions:

   a.   Abingdon

   b.   Botley

   c.   Marcham

4.31.   It should also be noted that South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse directly adjoin the Oxford City AQMA. South Oxfordshire also directly adjoins the Reading AQMA. Cross-boundary impacts and opportunities should be considered through the plan-making process.

4.32.   As detailed in LAQM Policy Guidance PG16 (Chapter 7), local authorities are expected to work towards reducing emissions and/or concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ (particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5μm or less). There is clear evidence that $PM_{2.5}$ has a significant impact on human health, including premature mortality, allergic reactions, and cardiovascular diseases.

4.33.   Figures three and four show modelled background $PM_{2.5}$ levels in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse in 2020.

## Figure Two: Air Quality Management Areas



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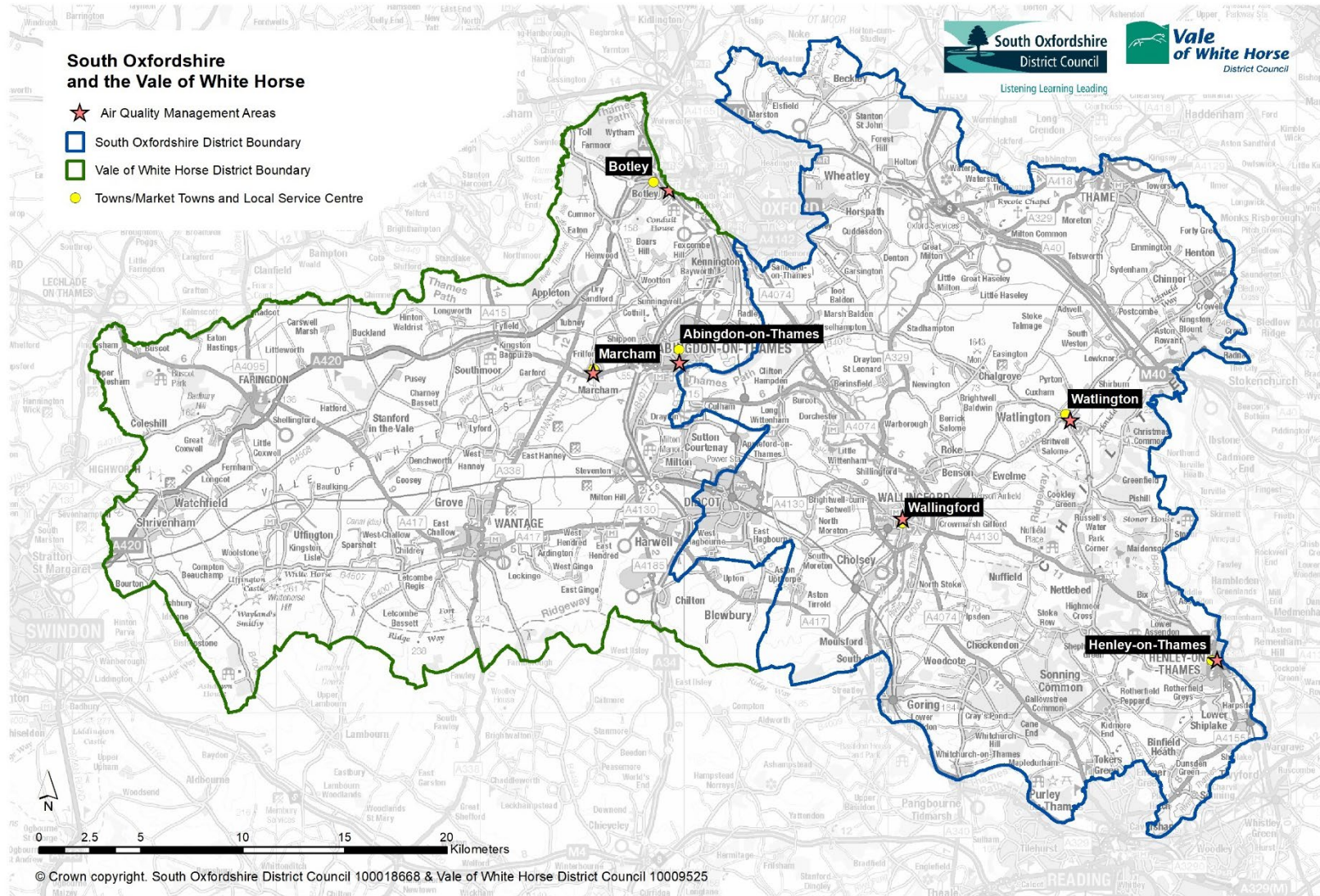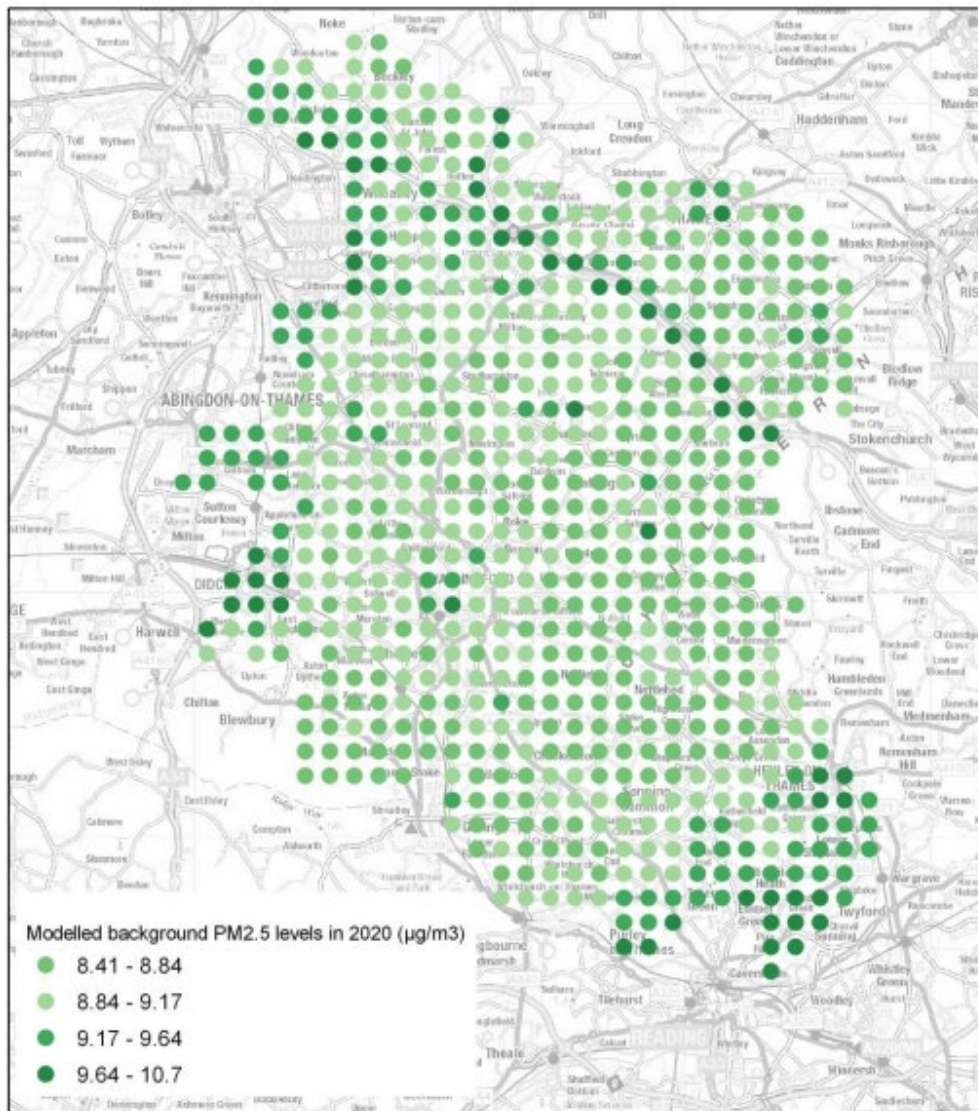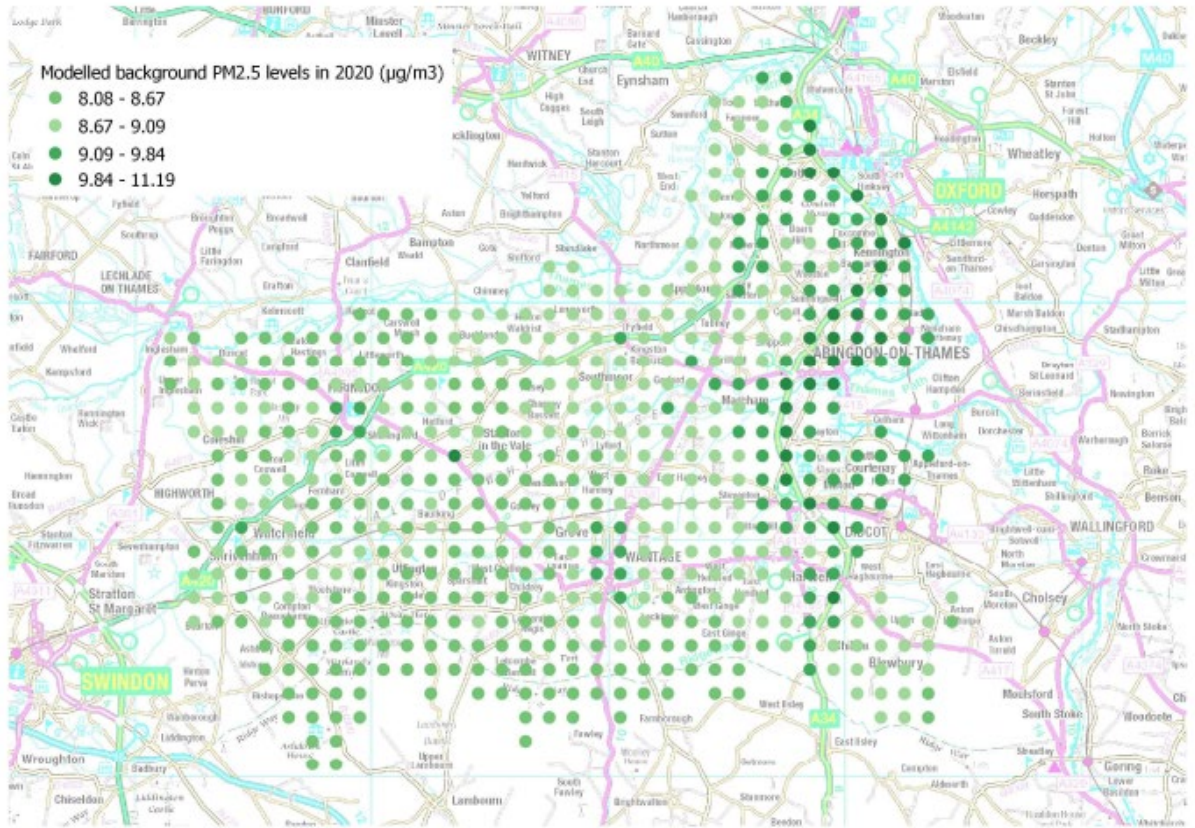
**Figure Three: Background PM2.5 levels in South Oxfordshire**



Source: Air Quality Annual Status Report June 2021 South Oxfordshire
District Council

**Figure Four: Background PM$_{2.5}$ levels in the Vale of White Horse**



Source: Air Quality Annual Status Report June 2021 Vale of White Horse
District Council

4.34.   South Oxfordshire generally has good air quality but the national air quality
standard for nitrogen dioxide is exceeded in Henley-on-Thames, Wallingford,
and Watlington town centres.  This pollution is attributed to vehicular traffic.
Air Quality Management Areas have been declared in these areas with an Air
Quality Area Action Plan produced to try and reduce pollution levels to within
national objective levels.

4.35.   Air quality hot spots have also been identified within the areas of Thame,
Didcot, Little Milton and Stadhampton.  Monitoring and careful management is
required in these areas to ensure the air quality objective levels are not
exceeded, as these are potential candidate AQMAs.

4.36.   Over recent years there has been a decrease in nitrogen dioxide levels in
South Oxfordshire, including in the areas currently covered by AQMAs. During
the most recent monitoring period no exceedances of either of the NO$_2$
objectives were identified in South Oxfordshire district, with 2020 monitoring
data supporting the decreasing five-year trend of NO$_2$ levels observed in
previous years.

4.37. Despite the overall improvement in air quality, the revocation of the existing AQMAs in South Oxfordshire is not yet being considered due to the exceedances in recent years and that more data is needed to support the decreasing trend before concluding that $NO_2$ levels will remain below the national objectives. Levels in 2020 were heavily influenced by the impacts of lockdowns due to Covid19, with significant falls in traffic volumes and a resultant fall in emissions.

4.38. In the Vale of White Horse the levels of $NO_2$ in Abingdon remained below the air quality objective in 2020 and serious consideration can now be given to revoking the AQMA. This will be one of the ideas explored when producing the new Air Quality Action Plan.

4.39. In Botley air pollution has been monitored since 1995. An AQMA was declared in 2008. The air pollution problem in Botley is attributed to the volume of traffic on the A34. Air pollution levels are high where there are homes close to the A34.

4.40. Air pollution monitoring in Marcham commenced in 2009 with an AQMA designated in 2015. The air pollution problem in Marcham is due to the volume of traffic on the A415 which passes through Marcham, congestion caused by the narrowness of the roads and the fact that some houses are very close to the road.

4.41. Overall, there has been a static, or gently falling, trend in $NO_2$ levels until 2019 across both districts. In 2020 there was a massive fall in monitored levels. The 2020 results should not be relied upon because they are atypical, recorded over a particularly exceptional year due to the impacts Covid19.

4.42. Tables One and Two provide estimated Carbon Dioxide ($CO_2$) emissions in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse from 2011 to 2019[2]. This shows reductions in the overall total and per capita emissions, however, these have come from business and domestic emission reductions, while transport emissions have changed less over the plan period.

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[2] Available from https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbondioxide-emissions-national-statistics

**Table One: Carbon dioxide emissions (kt $CO_2$) per sector and per capita - South Oxfordshire**

| Year | Industry and commerce | Domestic | Transport | Per capita |
|------|----------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| **2011** | 310 | 308 | 419 | 7.6 |
| **2012** | 338 | 334 | 405 | 7.8 |
| **2013** | 320 | 325 | 406 | 7.6 |
| **2014** | 281 | 278 | 406 | 6.9 |
| **2015** | 261 | 268 | 430 | 6.8 |
| **2016** | 231 | 255 | 436 | 6.4 |
| **2017** | 213 | 239 | 436 | 6.1 |
| **2018** | 203 | 241 | 419 | 5.9 |
| **2019** | 188 | 235 | 416 | 5.6 |

**Table Two: Carbon dioxide emissions (kt $CO_2$) per sector and per capita – Vale of White Horse**

| Year | Industry and commerce | Domestic | Transport | Per capita |
|------|----------------------|----------|-----------|------------|
| **2011** | 262 | 259 | 391 | 7.7 |
| **2012** | 330 | 282 | 382 | 8.4 |
| **2013** | 300 | 274 | 382 | 8.0 |
| **2014** | 273 | 234 | 380 | 7.3 |
| **2015** | 248 | 227 | 402 | 7.1 |
| **2016** | 222 | 219 | 413 | 6.8 |
| **2017** | 203 | 205 | 417 | 6.4 |
| **2018** | 197 | 209 | 407 | 6.1 |
| **2019** | 187 | 205 | 398 | 5.9 |

Source: 2005-2019 UK Local and regional CO2 emissions – data tables

4.43. Carbon dioxide emissions from the three key sectors of Industry and Commerce, Domestic and Transport are falling in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. The downward trend over the past few years is continuing. Per capita emissions are also continuing to improve in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

**Air Quality key challenges**

4.44. Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for Air Quality across the districts:

- Needing to reduce pollution of all kinds,

- Tackling air quality issues in populated areas to improve the health of our residents

- Reducing the need to travel by car due to its associated impact on negative air quality, and reducing emission from all forms of transport

- De-designating Air Quality Management Areas by supporting continuing trends of reduces $NO_2$ levels

- Reducing emission from all forms of transport

4.45. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective One:** To reduce pollution of kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality

- **Objective Two:** To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring new developments plan for "healthy places", with sufficient social, physical and health infrastructure in place

- **Objective Three:** To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel

# 5. Biodiversity, Flora, and Fauna

5.1. Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on the planet, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi. Biodiversity makes an essential contribution to human life and sustainable development, and the local plan will need to consider its impacts on biodiversity and how it will contribute to achieving biodiversity enhancements. This will include habitats and species within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, but also important biodiversity assets outside of the district boundaries.

5.2. This chapter assesses the relevant plans, policies, and programmes that affect biodiversity, flora, and fauna to identify targets and commitments that the councils, or our national government have signed up to. It then goes on to identify a baseline of information using locally specific information where available, or using regional, national, or international data where it is not.

5.3. This then provides the councils with an indication of the districts' current performance against our wider commitments. We have used this process to identify nine biodiversity, flora, and fauna challenges for the districts, which we have used to inform our sustainability objectives.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

5.4. This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance in relation to biodiversity, flora, and fauna. It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Many international treaties and commitments that affect planning for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or national legislation. Adopting this focussed approach has allowed the councils to identify locally tailored sustainability objectives that still reflect the aspirations of, and commitments to, international treaties.

**Environment Act 2021**
*HM Government*

The Environment Act introduces several laws that affect biodiversity and planning:

a) Planning permissions granted in England require a 10% biodiversity gain plan to be submitted and approved.

b) The biodiversity net gain register will identify land where someone is required to carry out habitat enhancement work under a conservation covenant or planning obligation. These site enhancements will be maintained for at least 30 years.

c) Biodiversity credits can be "purchased" from the Secretary of State to count towards biodiversity net gain.

d) Local Nature Recovery Networks are to be set up for areas in England. These should include a statement of biodiversity priorities for the area, and a local habitat map for the area.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

5.5.   Paragraph 174 requires planning policies to protect and enhance valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity, or geological value and soils.  It recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.  Plans should provide for net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks. Development should not contribute to soil, air, water, or noise pollution.

5.6.   Paragraph 175 distinguishes between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites.  It states that local plans should allocate land for development with the least environmental or amenity value.  Local planning authorities should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing habitats and green infrastructure, including working across boundaries to achieve this.

5.7.   Paragraph 179 require local authorities to identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks.  This should include designated sites, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them, and areas identified by national or local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation.  The local plan should promote the conservation, restoration, and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of priority species.

5.8.   Paragraph 181 gives the same level of protection as designated sites to potential Special Areas Conservation and Special Protection Areas, listed or proposed Ramsar sites, and sites identified as compensatory measures for adverse effects on designated sites.

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*(Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

5.9.   Planning authorities may adopt a strategic approach to protecting and improving the natural environment based on local priorities and evidence. However, councils should also consider the opportunities that development proposals may provide to conserve and enhance biodiversity, and contribute to habitat connectivity, including those set out in the UK's Nature Recovery Network. The PPG advises that local ecological networks can be identified and

mapped as a part of the plan-making process, with policies identifying appropriate levels of protection and opportunities to create, restore or enhance habitats or improve connectivity.

5.10. The PPG goes on to state that local plans should identify, map, and protect Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites as areas of substantive nature conservation value. When councils identify these sites, they should be based on clear and locally defined criteria with measurable thresholds.

5.11. Plans should set out a suitable approach to both biodiversity and wider environmental net gain, how it will be achieved, and which areas present the opportunities to deliver gains. Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. It can be achieved on-site, or off-site or through a combination of both. The councils can use a biodiversity metric to assess the distinctiveness of affected habitats, their condition, and the extent of the habitat to determine whether net gain can be achieved. Consideration should be given to the long-term stewardship of any biodiversity net gain measures.

5.12. Local plans should consider how trees can be planted within settlements to encourage walking, contributing to local environmental character and distinctiveness, providing habitats for wildlife, reducing noise and excessive heat, and supporting sustainable drainage.

5.13. The PPG also recognises that some brownfield (previously developed) land is of high environmental value, providing habitats for protected species and other environmental benefits. When allocating brownfield land for development, the local plan should take account of the biodiversity and geodiversity value of the site and its sensitivities. Any harm to these assets should be avoided, mitigated, or compensated.

5.14. The PPG recognises the role of green infrastructure in delivering sustainable development. It includes a variety of land uses, including parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees, streams, ponds, canals, and other water bodies. The local plan can identify the location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks and set out appropriate policies for their protection and enhancement. These can be supported by green infrastructure frameworks prepared at a district level. These frameworks should be evidence based and assess any gaps in provision.

5.15. Other guidance relates to the protection of National and Community Forests, Ancient Woodlands, and Ancient and Veteran Trees but these only apply to decision making exercises, as opposed to plan making.

**A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)**
*Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs*

5.16.    The Environment Plan sets out a series of goals and targets for the government to achieve.  Many of these targets have now been manifested into law through the Environment Act 2021.  Below we have summarised the key objectives in relation to biodiversity, flora, and fauna:

5.17.    Thriving plants and wildlife

    a.  Restoring 75% of the UK's one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term

    b.  Creating or restoring 500,000 hectares of wildlife-rich habitat outside the protected site network, focusing on priority habitats as part of a wider set of land management changes providing extensive benefits

    c.  Taking action to recover threatened, iconic or economically important species of animals, plants and fungi , and where possible to prevent human induced extinction or loss of known threatened species in England and the Overseas Territories.

    d.  Increasing woodland in England in line with our aspiration of 12% cover by 2060: this would involve planting 180,000 hectares by end of 2042.

5.18.    Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently

    a.  Maximising the value and benefits we get from our resources, doubling resource productivity by 2050.

    b.  Improving our approach to soil management: by 2030 we want all of England's soils to be managed sustainably, and we will use natural capital thinking to develop appropriate soil metrics and management approaches

    c.  Increasing timber supplies

    d.  Ensuring that all fish stocks are recovered to and maintained at levels that can produce their maximum sustainable yield.

    e.  Ensuring that food is produced sustainably and profitably

5.19.    The Environment Plan expresses government's wish to put the environment at the heart of planning and development to create better places for people to live and work.  It states government's intention to strengthen the requirement for the planning system to provide biodiversity net gains where possible, highlighting a potential consultation on making this requirement mandatory.

5.20.    The plan commits to the following actions in relation to biodiversity, flora, and fauna:

    1)  Making sure that existing requirements for net gain for biodiversity in national planning policy are strengthened, including consulting on whether they should be mandated alongside any exemptions that may be necessary

2) Working with MHCLG and development professionals to explore ways in which design can contribute to environmental improvements, leading to better places in which to live and work and a reduced environmental footprint.

3) Producing stronger new standards for green infrastructure

4) Exploring, through ongoing Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing-led reforms of developer contributions, how tariffs could be used to steer development towards the least environmentally damaging areas and to secure investment in natural capital

5) Ensuring that new development will happen in the right places, delivering maximum economic benefit while taking into account the need to avoid environmental damage. The government will protect ancient woodlands and grasslands, high flood risk areas and the best agricultural land.

6) Ensuring high environmental standards for all new builds. New homes will be built in a way that reduces demands for water, energy and material resources, improves flood resilience, minimises overheating and encourages walking and cycling. Resilient buildings and infrastructure will more readily adapt to a changing climate.

7) Enhancing of the Green Belt to make this land 'breathing space' for urban populations to enjoy, and diverse wildlife to flourish, while delivering the homes this country needs.

**UK Nature Recovery Network (November 2020)**
*Department of the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs*

5.21. The Nature Recovery Network is a major commitment in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan and part of the forthcoming Nature Strategy. The network has not yet been published, but its objectives reflect those set out in the Environment Plan:

a. restore 75% of protected sites on land (including freshwaters) to favourable condition so nature can thrive
b. create or restore 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites
c. recover threatened and iconic animal and plant species by providing more, diverse and better connected habitats
d. support work to increase woodland cover
e. achieve a range of environmental, economic and social benefits, such as carbon capture, flood management, clean water, pollination and recreation

5.22.   The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, Wild Oxfordshire, the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, and the Oxfordshire Biodiversity Advisory Group has produced a draft Nature Recovery Network Map.  This is shown on Figure 1 below.  The network is split into three different zones:

1) Core Zones – these contain all of Oxfordshire's current conservation assets. These are the areas with the highest level of biodiversity protection, management, and enhancement.  The aim within these areas is to improve habitats and restore natural ecosystems, develop agri-environmental schemes, secure biodiversity net gain, and to avoid development.

2) Recovery Zones – these are priority areas for habitat creation and restoration.  Within these areas:

    a. Focus on agri-environmental schemes
    b. Focus point for biodiversity net gain off-site mitigation measures
    c. Creating accessible natural greenspaces near towns
    d. Avoiding major built development
    e. Biodiversity-led mineral site restoration
    f. Natural capital investment and carbon offsets
    g. Rewilding areas of low agricultural value
    h. Establish "Big Nature Areas" of 5,000ha+

3) Wider Landscape Zone – in these areas the network would allow for:
    a. Nature-friendly farming
    b. Accessible natural greenspace
    c. Natural flood management
    d. New woodlands
    e. Developments that deliver biodiversity net gain

**Figure Five: Draft Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Network**
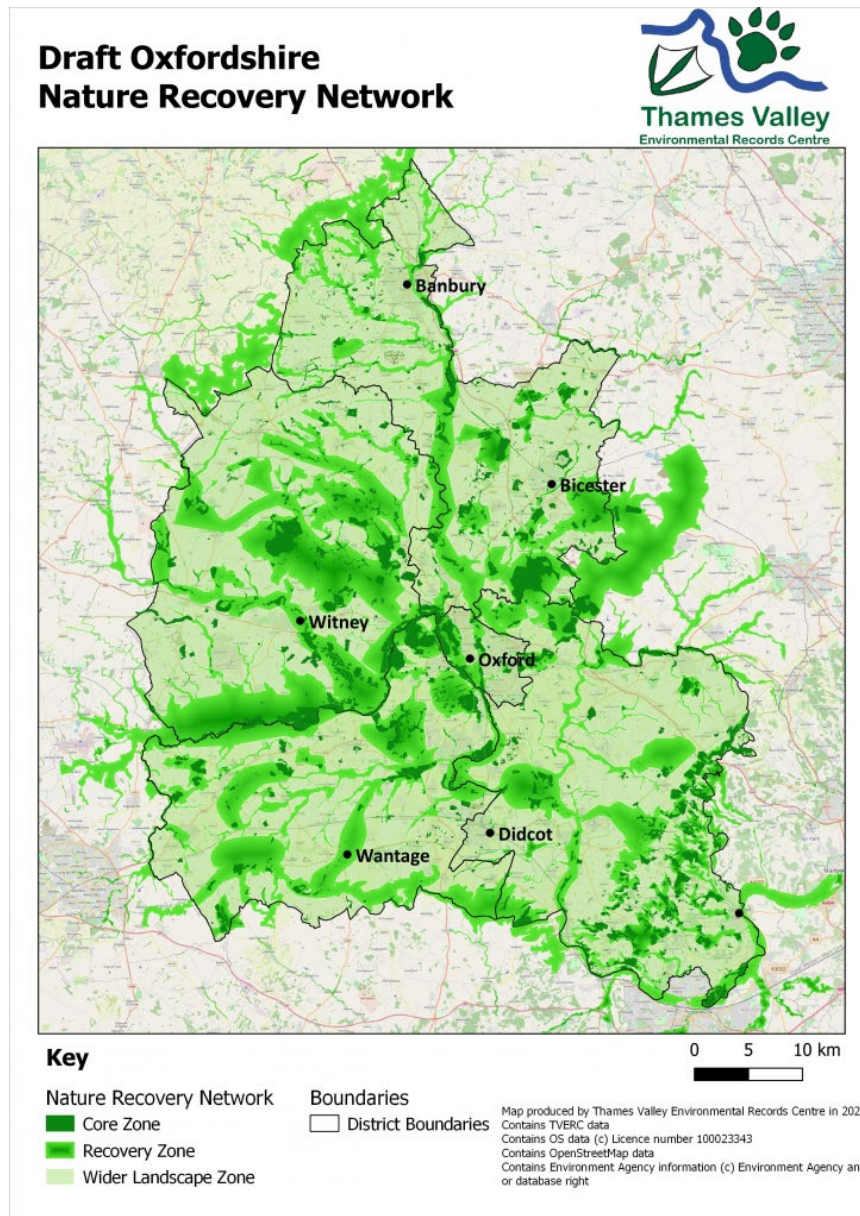


Source: Wild Oxfordshire

5.23. The Draft Recovery Network therefore discourages new development within the "core zones" and "recovery zones", with only smaller developments being appropriate in the latter. In the "wider landscape zone" the network would support development, provided that it can deliver biodiversity net gain.

5.24. The Nature Recovery Network is still in draft form, and at an early stage of its development. Therefore, the weight to attribute it in both plan making and decision taking is likley to be low.

**South Oxfordshire Corporate Plan 2020-2024 (October 2020)**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

5.25. The corporate plan highlights a need to address both the climate and ecological emergencies that we are currently experiencing. It sets out the following projects in relation to biodiversity, flora, and fauna.

- With partners, promote in depth mapping and surveying of ecosystems across the district, planning for restoration of the natural world and working closely with landowners and specialist agencies.
- Celebrate, protect and enhance our natural assets, including the River Thames and the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and their setting, promoting our rural district for tourism, leisure and wellbeing.
- Encourage the use of natural processes to combat risks arising from climate change, such as meadows and trees to reduce flooding.
- Recognise and support the vital role of farming in economic and ecosystem resilience, local food provision and the recovery of soils and natural processes.
- Call for the establishment of a Local Nature Partnership for Oxfordshire to promote an ambitious nature recovery programme, including tree and meadow planting, rewilding and providing habitats for wildlife including wildlife corridors.
- Mitigate climate change through planning and land use, enhancing biodiversity on our own land and strengthening the planning system to enforce environmental standards.

**Vale of White Horse Corporate Plan 2020-2024 (October 2020)**
*Vale of White Horse District Council*

5.26. The corporate plan highlights a need to meet local and national carbon reduction targets, making sure that the impact on the cliamte and the environment is assessed as part of all decision making. It sets out the following projects in relation to biodiversity, flora, and fauna.

- Include in the council's Open Space Strategy opportunities to increase biodiversity, increase tree cover, and consider carefully the use of our open spaces.
- Introduce sustainable growth and environmental policies to the Local Plan.
- Explore setting up a Habitat Bank to deliver biodiversity offsetting requirements and facilitate tree planting
- Develop a tree-planting strategy and work with partners to plant more trees across the district.
- Develop a Biodiversity Net Gain Targeting Strategy and contribute to a Nature Recovery Network for Oxfordshire.

## Baseline information

### Special Areas of Conservation

5.27. There are six Special Areas of Conservation wholly or partially within the joint local plan area. There are a futher 11 Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas within 20km of the boundaries of the plan area, and could therefore be affected by proposals within the plan.
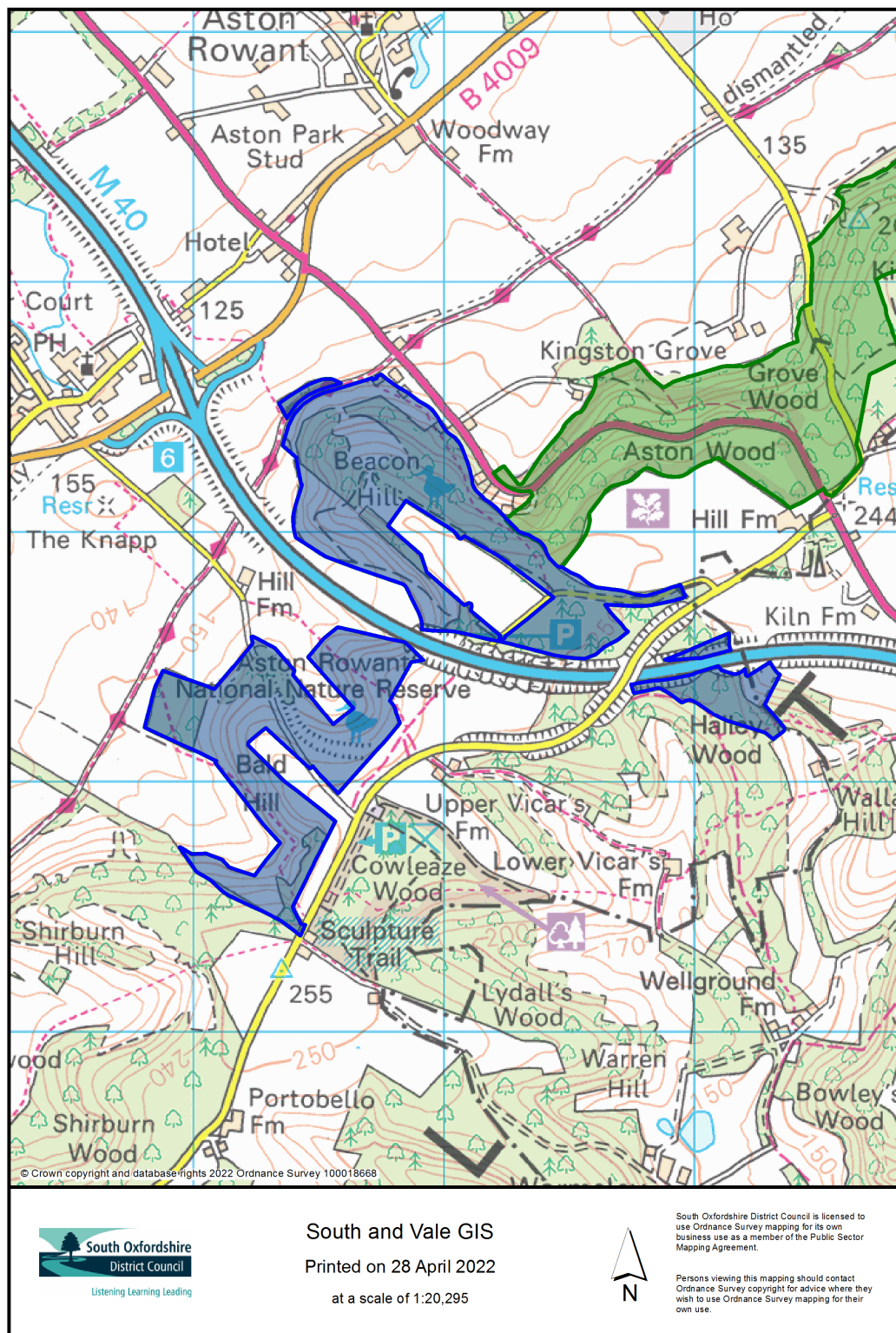
### Aston Rowant Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[3]

5.28. Aston Rowant SAC is situated in a prominent position on the scarp of the southern Chilterns National Character Area in Oxfordshire. The site has a wide range of habitats including species-rich chalk grassland, mixed chalk scrub and ash and beech woodland.

5.29. Previous Habitat Regulation Assessments for the South Oxfordshire Local Plan have identified that proximity to the M40 means that air quality is a potential impact pathway on the SAC[4].

5.30. Natural England's assessment of this site recorded it as being entirely within a favourable condition. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

   a. Maintain the overall extent, quality and function of any supporting features within the local landscape which provide a critical functional connection with the site
   b. The Critical Load for nitrogen is currently being exceeded at this SAC (September 2018)
   c. Maintain a graduated woodland edge into adjacent semi-natural open habitats, other woodland/ wood-pasture types or scrub.
   d. Maintain natural hydrological processes to provide the conditions necessary to sustain the beech forests within the site
   e. Ensure artificial light is maintained to a level which is unlikely to affect natural phenological cycles and processes to the detriment of the beech forests and their typical species at this site.

5.31. Natural England's assessment of this site recorded it as being entirely within a favourable condition. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

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[3] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5596085330378752
[4] South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2034 Final Publication Version 2nd, Habitat Regulations Assessment (March 2019)

**Figure Six: Aston Rowant SAC (shown in blue)**



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**Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation[5]**

5.32.  The Chilterns Beechwoods is an extensively wooded and farmed landscape underlain by chalk bedrock that rises up from the London Basin to form a north-west facing escarpment offering long views over the adjacent vales. It is made up of nine separate sites representing a range of semi-natural woodlands in which beech is a prominent or dominant canopy tree. Only one of the 9 sites are located in South Oxfordshire, the other 8 are located in Buckinghamshire, Dacorum, and Windsor and Maidenhead.  The woodlands are in a variety of landscape settings, from extensive areas of the northern Chilterns scarp slope, to dry valley slopes and moderately sloping areas of the Chilterns plateau.

5.33.  The site is comprised of nine Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and Natural England's most recent assessment of these is as follows:

- Aston Rowant Woods SSSI (the only SSSI located within the plan area) *Favourable (100%)*

  The following SSSIs are located within the SAC, but outside the plan area:
- Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI *Favourable (86%)* *Unfavourable recovering (14%)*
- Bisham Woods SSSI *Favourable (97%)* *Unfavourable recovering (3%)*
- Bradenham Woods, Park Wood and the Coppice SSSI *Favourable (100%)*
- Ellesborough and Kimble Warrens SSSI *Favourable (11%)* *Unfavourable recovering (89%)*
- Hollowhill and Pullingshill Woods SSSI *Favourable (100%)*
- Naphill Common SSSI *Favourable (100%)*
- Tring Woodlands SSSI *Unfavourable recovering (100%)*
- Windsor Hill SSSI *Favourable (27%)* *Unfavourable recovering (73%)*

5.34.  The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2018 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

- Maintain the overall extent, quality and function of any supporting features and habitats within the local landscape which provide a critical functional connection with the site

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[5] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4808896162037760

- There are critical levels for ammonia (NH3), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and sulphur dioxide (SO2), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. For this feature, the critical loads for nitrogen are currently being exceeded
- Maintain natural hydrological processes to provide the conditions necessary to sustain the beech forests within the site
- Ensure artificial light is maintained to a level which is unlikely to affect natural phenological cycles and processes to the detriment of the H9130 feature and its typical species at this site.

**Figure Seven: Chilterns Beechwoods SAC (shown in blue)**



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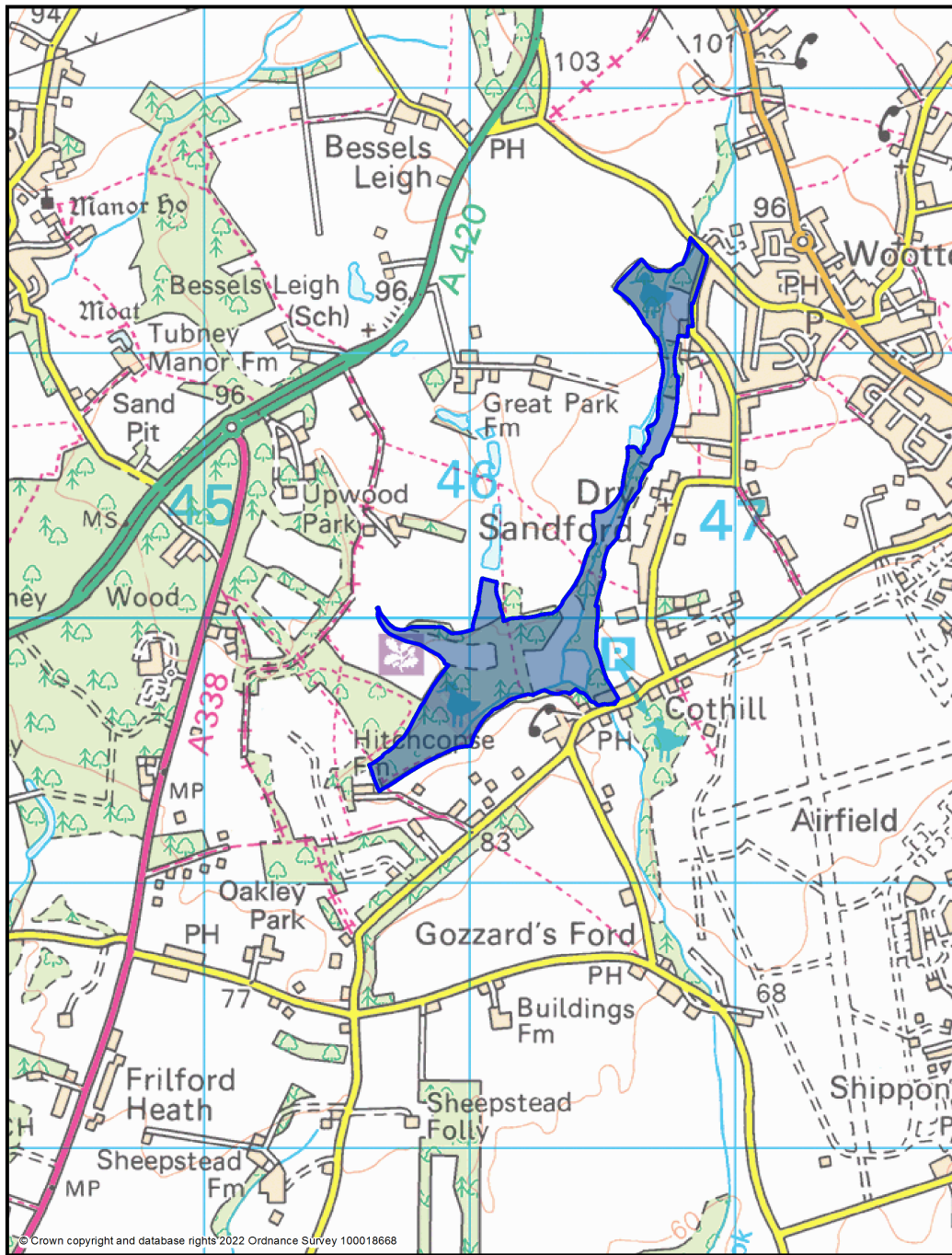**Cothill Fen Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[6]**

5.35.    Cothill Fen is designated as an SAC due to the presence of alkaline fens and alluvial forests.  Four of the five units of alkaline fens are in unfavourable but recovering condition.  The 5th is in favourable condition.  All units of alluvial forests are in favourable condition[7].

5.36.    The SAC owes its existence to unusual hydrological conditions arising from changes in the underlying geology. At the edge of the Vale of the White Horse, a Corallian limestone ridge merges with the Kimmeridge clay of the Oxfordshire clay vales. The ridge is sandy and free draining while the clay is impermeable. As a result, at the boundary between the two, calcareous springs which form fens and flushes arise, the most significant of which is Cothill Fen.

5.37.    The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

- At a site, unit and/or catchment level (as necessary), maintain natural hydrological processes to provide the conditions necessary to sustain the alkaline fens within the site, including a high piezometric head and permanently high water table with groundwater at or very near surface level (allowing for natural seasonal fluctuations).
- Maintain the low nutrient status of irrigating water, ensuring it is rich in base ions, particularly calcium.
- Maintain the overall extent, quality and function of any supporting features within the local landscape which provide a critical functional connection with the SAC
- There are critical levels for ammonia ($NH_3$), oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) and sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. There are currently no critical loads or levels for other pollutants such as Halogens, Heavy Metals, POPs, VOCs or Dusts. These should be considered as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

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[6] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5691343946907648

[7] https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSACFeaturesMatrix.aspx?SiteCode=UK0012889&SiteName=Cothill%20Fen%20SAC

**Figure Eight: Cothill Fen SAC**

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**Hackpen Hill Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[8]**

5.38. Hackpen Hill SAC includes extensive areas of species-rich, agriculturally unimproved chalk grassland which supports a wide range of characteristic downland plants including several orchid species. It also supports a significant population of the UK endemic plant early gentian Gentianella anglica. This is an annual or short-lived perennial plant which is restricted to calcareous soils. Natural England has assessed the site as being in favourable condition.

5.39. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

   a. Maintain the overall extent, quality and function of any land, habitat or supporting features within the local landscape which provide a critical functional connection with the site.

   b. Maintain or, where necessary, restore concentrations and deposition of air pollutants to at or below the site-relevant Critical Load or Level values given for this feature of the site on the Air Pollution Information System. There are critical levels for ammonia ($NH_3$), oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) and sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition.

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[8] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5182475147935744

**Figure Nine: Hackpen Hill SAC**

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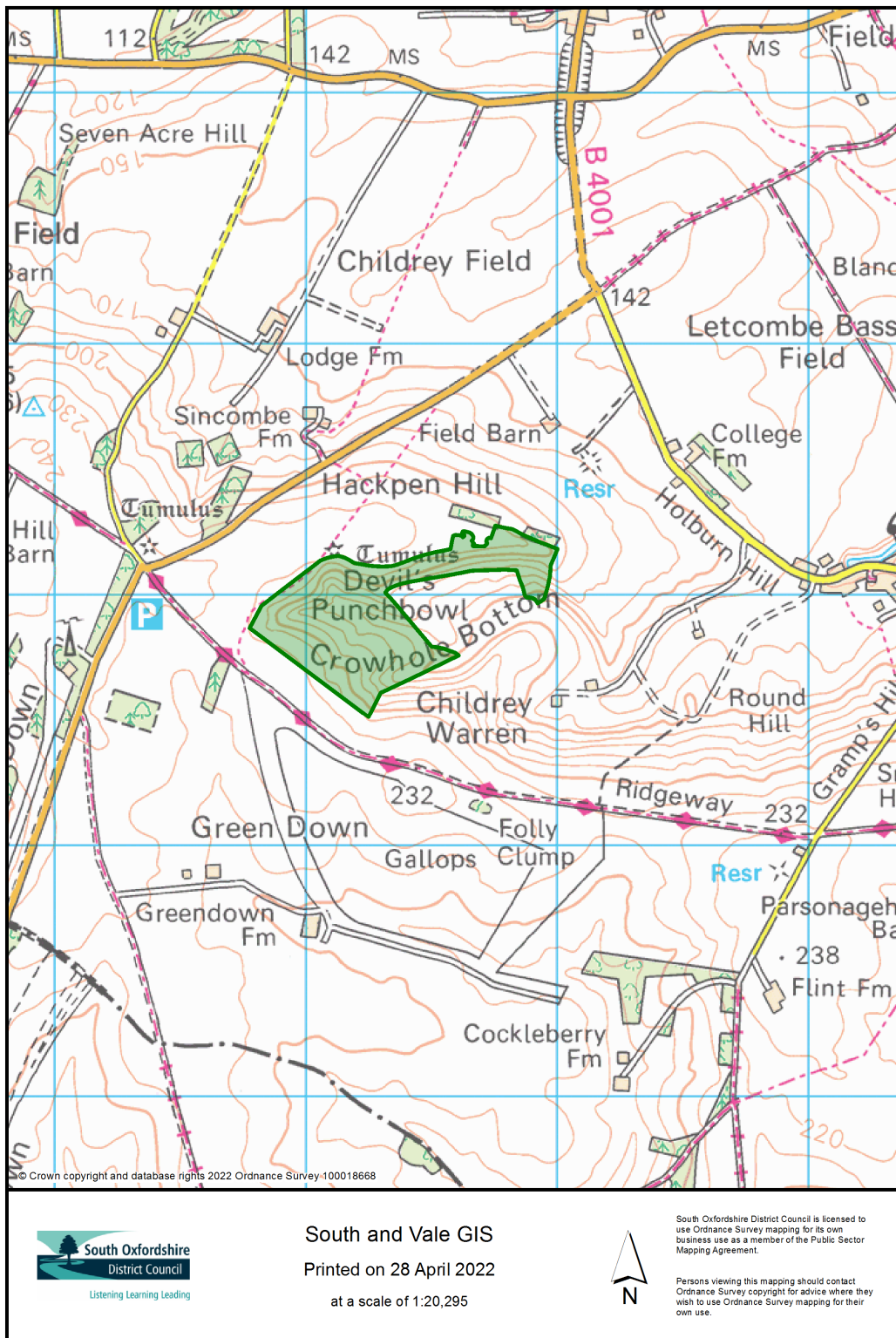
**Hartslock Wood Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[9]**

5.40. The steep slopes of this site above the River Thames on the chalk of the Chilterns National Character Area (NCA) comprise a mosaic of chalk grassland, chalk scrub and broadleaved woodland, and one of the few examples of ancient yew *Taxus baccata* woodland in the Chilterns.

5.41. Natural England's latest assessment of the status of this site records the taxus baccata woodland as being in favourable condition, while the dry grasslands were not surveyed.

5.42. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2017 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

- This habitat type is considered sensitive to changes in air quality. Exceedance of these critical values for air pollutants may modify the chemical status of its substrate, accelerating or damaging plant growth, altering its vegetation structure and composition and causing the loss of sensitive typical species associated with it. The critical values for atmospheric nitrogen and acidity are currently being exceeded (APIS accessed November 2016).

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[9] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5307946309255168

**Figure 10: Hartslock Wood SAC**
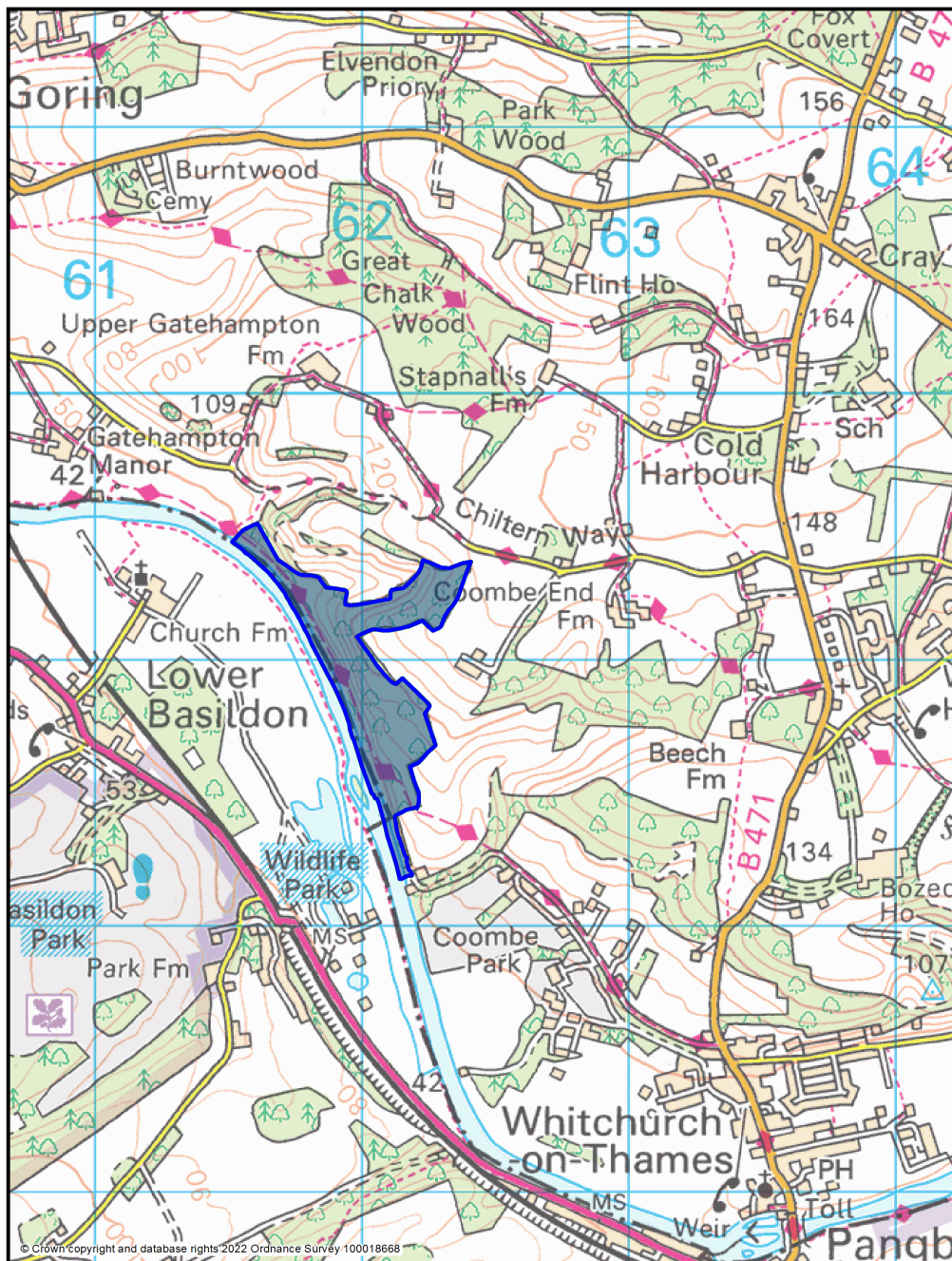
**Little Wittenham Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[10]**

5.43. The Little Wittenham Special Area of Conservation is situated in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Oxfordshire. The site is located beside the River Thames and consists of an area of woodland with ponds, as well as grassland and scrub on the slopes of a prominent hill. The underlying geology is made up by Lower Chalk, Greensand and Gault Clay. The overlying clay soils are for the most part moderately calcareous. This is one of the best-studied great crested newt sites in the UK, and supports one of the largest known populations of this species in southern England. These are mostly associated with two larger ponds in the woodland but they range widely throughout the surrounding woodland and grassland.

5.44. Natural England's assessment of this site recorded it as being entirely within a favourable condition. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

- Maintain or restore as necessary the connectivity of the SAC population to any associated meta-populations (either within or outside of the site boundary)
- Maintain the permanence of water within ponds in the site
- Maintain or, where necessary, restore concentrations and deposition of air pollutants to at or below the site-relevant Critical Load or Level values given for this feature of the site on the Air Pollution Information System. There are critical levels for ammonia ($NH_3$), oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) and sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. There are currently no critical loads or levels for other pollutants such as Halogens, Heavy Metals, POPs, VOCs or Dusts.
- Where the feature or its supporting habitat is dependent on surface water and/or groundwater maintain water quality and quantity to a standard which provides the necessary conditions to support the feature.

5.45. The Site Improvement Plan[11] for this site also identifies invasive species and public access / disturbance as key issues for the SAC.

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[10] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6104670577623040
[11] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6567758347108352

**Figure 11: Little Wittenham SAC**



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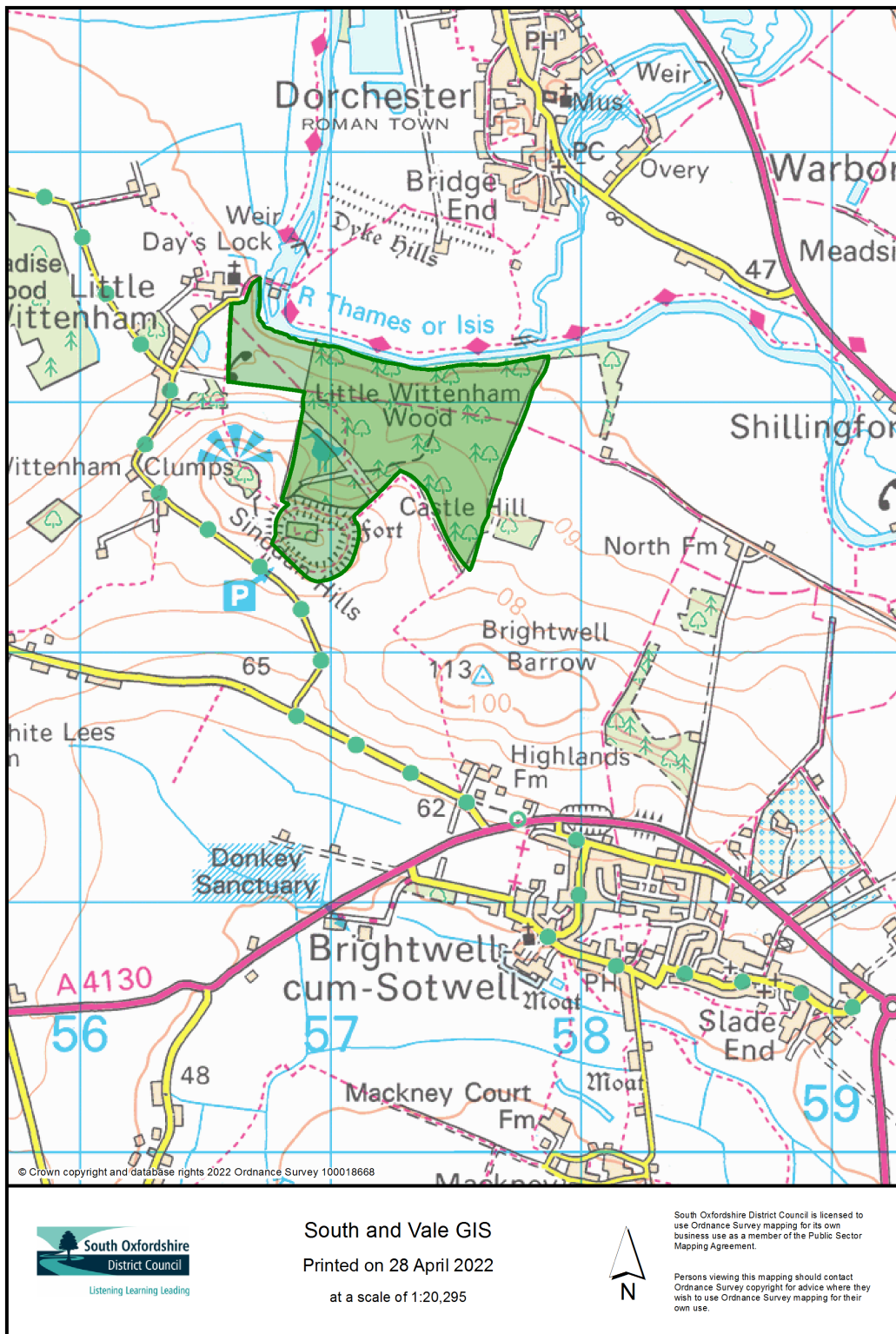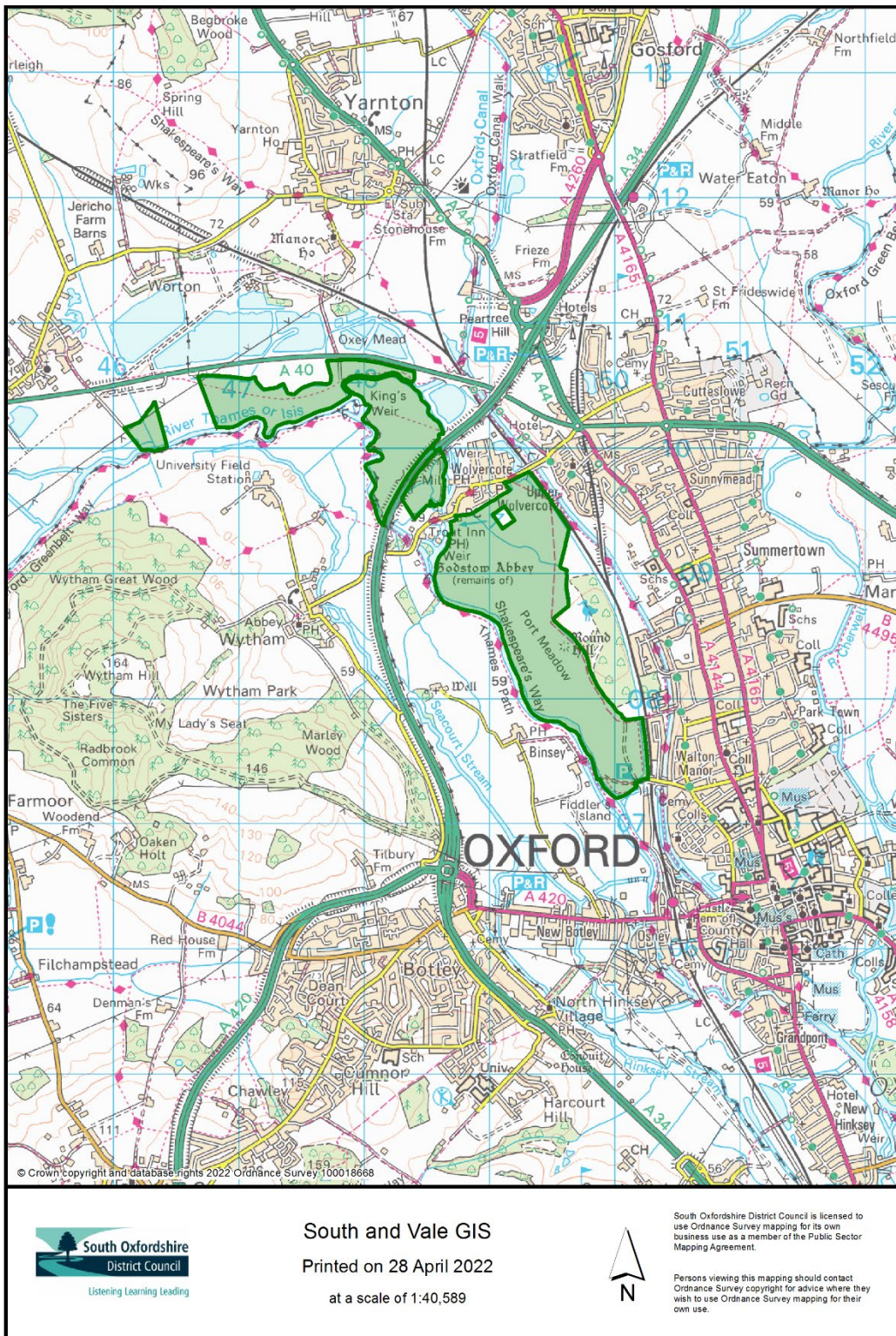
**Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC) status[12]**

5.46. Oxford Meadows is characterised by lowland hay meadows in the Thames Valley. It is located within Cherwell and Oxford City districts, but adjoins the plan area and is sensitive to increased traffic along the A34, a key transport corridor for both districts. Hence we have assessed it in detail in this scoping report. The site includes vegetation communities that are potentially unique in the world; reflecting the influence of the area's long-term grazing and hay-cutting on lowland hay meadows. The site has benefited from the survival of traditional management, which has been undertaken for several centuries, and so exhibits good conservation of structure and function. Consequently, Natural England records the site as being almost entirely within favourable condition. The site is protected for its lowland hay meadows and its creeping marshwort.

5.47. The Natural England Conservation Objectives (supplementary advice) published in 2019 advises further on the sensitivities of this site:

- The MG4 grassland type (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) occupies extensive areas of Pixey and Yarnton Meads SSSI, Wolvercote Meadows SSSI and Cassington Meadows SSSI. They are vulnerable to degradation through excessive nutrient input, changes in the cutting or grazing regime, and changes in hydrology.

- For the lowland hay meadows  soil P index should typically be between index 0 and 1 (< 15 mgl -1).

- For Oxford Meadows SAC groundwater supply should be assessed as 'good' in relation to Water Framework Directive targets. River water quality in the River Thames upstream of the SAC should be assessed as at least meeting the 'good ecological status' target.  As of 2019, the Environment Agency assessed the ecological status of the Thames (Evenlode to Thame) catchment as moderate, and its chemical status as a fail.

- Maintain a hydrological regime which provides a consistently near-surface water table and a well maintained cumulative surface flooding regime.

- There are critical levels for ammonia ($NH_3$), oxides of nitrogen ($NO_x$) and sulphur dioxide ($SO_2$), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition. There are currently no critical loads or levels for other pollutants such as Halogens, Heavy Metals, POPs, VOCs or Dusts. These should be considered as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

5.48. Proximity of the site to the A34 and the traffic associated with this is also a significant factor affecting the SAC.

5.49. The information relating to Oxford Meadows SAC clearly identifies that an extensive and proactive stewardship and land management system is needed.

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[12] http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5815888603250688

This is beyond the scope of the local plan, but there are characteristics that are affected by land use planning policies. It is clear that water quality needs to improve, and critical levels of ammonia, oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen and acid deposition need to be addressed. These are related to the site's sensitivity to traffic loading on the A34. The local plan would have a role in, ideally improving these metrics, but should avoid any proposals that make them worse.

**Figure 12: Oxford Meadows SAC**



South and Vale GIS

Printed on 28 April 2022

at a scale of 1:40,589

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**Conservation Target Areas**

5.50.    Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) identify some of the most important areas for wildlife conservation in Oxfordshire, where targeted conservation action will have the greatest benefit. CTAs cover just over 20% of the county by area (526.2 km²) and contain 95% of the SSSI land area in Oxfordshire. Each CTA supports one or more of the 20 priority habitats found in Oxfordshire. They provide a focus for coordinated delivery of biodiversity work, agri-environment schemes and biodiversity enhancements through the planning system[13].

5.51.    The extent of CTAs across the Joint Local Plan area are shown on Figure 13.

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[13] https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/conservation-target-areas/

**Figure 13: Conservation Target Areas in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**



South Oxfordshire
and the Vale of White Horse

▨ Conservation Target Areas
▢ South Oxfordshire District Boundary
▢ Vale of White Horse District Boundary
● Towns/Market Towns and Local Service Centre

Botley
Thame
Abingdon-on-Thames
Faringdon
Grove
Didcot
Wallingford
Wantage
Henley-on-Thames

South Oxfordshire
District Council
Listening Learning Leading

Vale
of White Horse
District Council

0  2.5  5     10     15     20
Kilometers

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### Sites of Special Scientific Interest

5.52.   There are 59 SSSIs located wholly or partially within the local plan area.  These are shown on Figure 14.  Natural England assesses the status of SSSIs, scoring them from "favourable condition" through to "destroyed".  The vast majority of the SSSIs in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are in favourable condition.  The following SSSIs are noted by Natural England as being at least partly in "unfavourable no change" condition or worse.  We have highlighted, where stated by Natural England, the key factors affecting this condition.

**Table 3: SSSI Status and commentary**

| SSSI | Status | Commentary |
|---|---|---|
| Woodeaton Quarry[14] | 100% Unfavourable and declining condition | The site's status relates to its geological interest.  There are large amounts of slumping, degradation and erosion affecting almost all sections of the western side of the quarry.  There are no measures in place to protect the key faces from further weathering. |
| Hurst Hill[15] | 56% unfavourable but recovering condition. 44 unfavourable and declining condition. | The assessment notes that geological and bryophyte (such as mosses) conditions on site require enhancing. The Natural England assessment identifies that a 2017 woodland management plan is awaiting sign off. |
| Tuckmill Meadows[16] | 100% Unfavourable and declining condition | Natural England last assessed the site in November 2020.  The site has not had any management for several years, however the landowner is seeking positive management for the fen in the future.  The declining condition seems to reflect the presence of different species on site, and hence is a commentary on the management of the site. |
| Buckland Warren[17] | 100% unfavourable no change condition | Natural England's assesment of this site indicates that bare soil is affecting its condition, with rabbit warrens worsening this.  It identifies tree planting on the western side of the SSSI that risks shading out more of the site. |

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[14]
https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001234&SiteName=woodeaton&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=

[15]
https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1001620&SiteName=hurst&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=

[16]
https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1000491&SiteName=tuckmill&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=

[17]
https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=S1005590&SiteName=buckland&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=

**Figure 14: Sites of Special Scientific Interest in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**
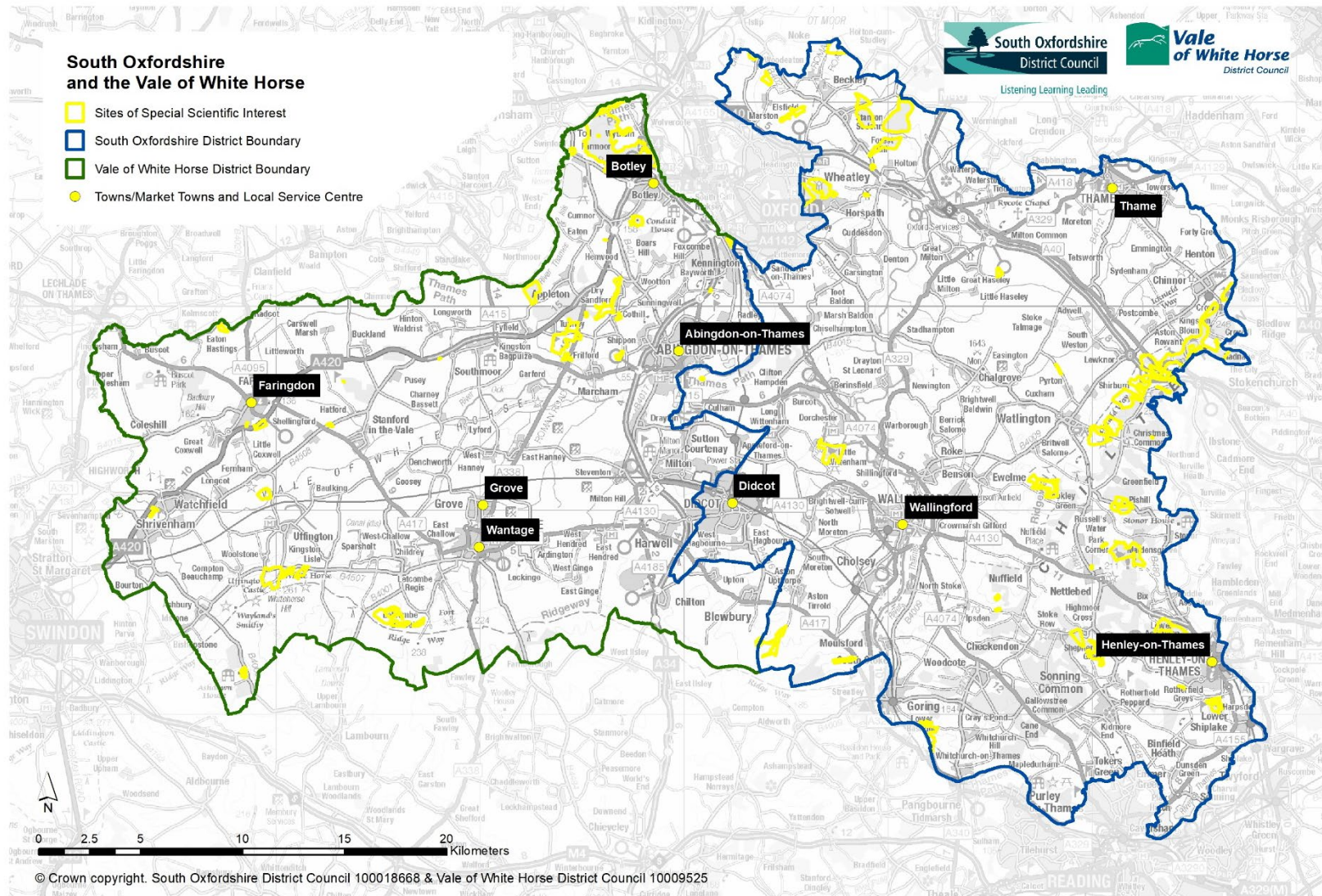
**Local wildlife and geological sites**

5.53.   As of 2021 there were 126 local wildlife sites in South Oxfordshire[18], and as of 2019 there were 43 local geological sites[19].  Since 2019, the extent of local wildlife sites in South Oxfordshire has grown from 1619.31ha to 1643.97ha; a growth of about 1.5%.  The extent of local geological sites appears to have remained static over the same period.

5.54.   In the Vale of White Horse there are 84 local wildlife sites[20].  Since 2019 the extent of local wildlife sites in the Vale of White Horse has grown from 1591.42ha to 1718.1ha; a growth of about 7%.  The extent of local geological sites has remained static at 69.22ha.

5.55.   The changes in Local Wildlife and Geological Sites is due to the fact that these are "living lists" with updates taking place at least twice a year.  The extent of the areas in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are shown on Figure 15, however this is data collected from our GIS database as of April 2022, and may therefore change during the course of the Local Plan's preparation.

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[18] Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC), Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2021 (South Oxfordshire)
[19] TVERC, Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2018 (South Oxfordshire)
[20] TVERC, Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2021 (Vale of White Horse)

**Figure 15: Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse (April 2022)**
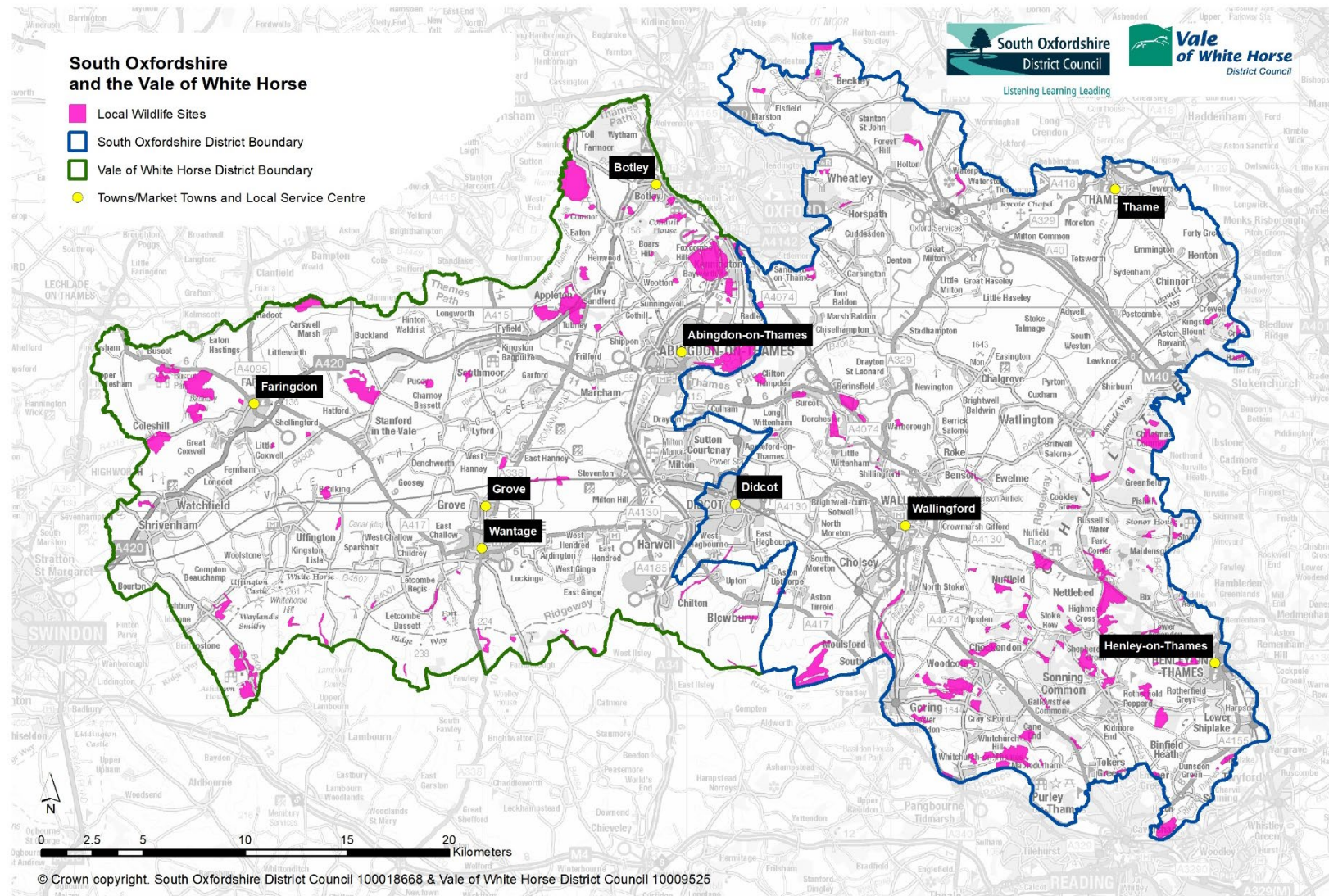
**Table 4: UK Priority Habitat resource South Oxfordshire[21]**

| Habitat (hectares) | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Percentage changes 2017 to 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh | 831 | 503.8 | 504.6 | 486.36 | 486.24 | -41.5 |
| Eutrophic standing waters | 271 | 271.8 | 266.06 | 268.75 | 273.98 | 1.1 |
| Lowland beech and yew woodland | 1781 | 1751.7 | 1759.24 | 1748.65 | 1740.8 | -2.3 |
| lowland calcareous grassland | 264 | 278.1 | 284.99 | 279.66 | 287.71 | 9.0 |
| lowland dry acid grassland | 12.3 | 12.3 | 12.32 | 9.93 | 9.93 | -19.3 |
| lowland fens | 46.5 | 47.1 | 47.44 | 47.41 | 46.45 | -0.1 |
| lowland heathland | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.31 | 4.321 | 4.31 | 0.2 |
| lowland meadows | 95.7 | 116.8 | 116.88 | 123.36 | 114.62 | 19.8 |
| lowland mixed deciduous woodland | 1200 | 1177.7 | 1177.83 | 1160.84 | 1173.14 | -2.2 |
| lowland wood pasture and parkland | 605 | 667.9 | 681.11 | 680.09 | 680.09 | 12.4 |
| open mosaic habitats on previously developed land | 29.5 | 29.6 | 29.61 | 29.59 | 29.59 | 0.3 |
| ponds | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.47 | 3.47 | 0 | -100.0 |
| possible priority grassland habitat | not recorded | 12.9 | 12.88 | 12.87 | 12.87 | -0.2 |
| purple moor grassland habitat | 2.4 | 1.6 | 2.37 | 2.37 | 2.37 | -1.2 |
| reedbeds | 4.5 | 2.1 | 2.13 | 2.13 | 2.23 | -50.4 |
| rivers | 16.6 | 55.2 | 15.05 | 2.84 | 2.84 | -82.9 |
| traditional orchards | 73.5 | 20.2 | 75.52 | 75.46 | 75.46 | 2.7 |
| wet woodland | 21.9 | 22.3 | 21.96 | 21.36 | 21.66 | -1.1 |
| **Total** | **5262.7** | **4978.9** | **5017.77** | **4959.461** | **4964.29** | **-5.7** |

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[21] TVERC, Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Reports 2017 to 2021 (South Oxfordshire)

**Table 5: UK Priority Habitat resource Vale of White Horse[22]**

| Habitat (hectares) | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | Percentage changes 2017 to 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arable field margins | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.0 |
| Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh | 959 | 717.07 | 718.58 | 703.39 | 700.44 | -27.0 |
| Eutrophic standing waters | 225 | 225.81 | 225.98 | 225.81 | 242.67 | 7.9 |
| Lowland beech and yew woodland | 5.2 | 5.22 | 4.8 | 5.23 | 5.23 | 0.6 |
| lowlad calcareous grassland | 241 | 228.31 | 228.58 | 213.53 | 208.16 | -13.6 |
| lowland dry acid grassland | 22.1 | 22.19 | 22.21 | 22.19 | 22.19 | 0.4 |
| lowland fens | 25 | 28.92 | 28.94 | 27.96 | 38.2 | 52.8 |
| lowland meadows | 170 | 94.19 | 95.89 | 95.5 | 96.45 | 479.6 |
| lowland mixed deciduous woodland | 990 | 985.89 | 986.48 | 983.86 | 985.26 | -64.8 |
| lowland wood pasture and parkland | 272 | 348.99 | 348.99 | 348.73 | 348.71 | -58.5 |
| open mosaic habitats on previously developed land | 132 | 132.19 | 132.29 | 132.19 | 112.94 | -14.4 |
| ponds | 4 | 4.02 | 4.02 | 4.02 | 0 | -100.0 |
| possible priority grassland habitat | n/a | 14.75 | 14.77 | 14.75 | 12.67 | -14.1 |
| reedbeds | 4.9 | 6.1 | 6.11 | 7.06 | 9.22 | -3.5 |
| rivers | 28.4 | 26.19 | 25.57 | 4.73 | 4.73 | 247.9 |
| traditional orchards | 100 | 86.77 | 98.98 | 98.79 | 98.79 | -50.8 |
| wet woodland | 47.8 | 47.39 | 47.41 | 42.49 | 49.23 | 3.0 |
| **Total** | **3226.4** | **2974** | **2989.6** | **2930.23** | **2934.89** | **-9.0** |

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[22] TVERC, Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Reports 2017 to 2021 (Vale of White Horse)

5.56. Overall, the coverage of priority habitat resources has declined by about 6% in the last five years in South Oxfordshire, and 9% in the Vale of White Horse. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre state that these changes are mostly attributable to new information such as confirmation of boundaries of habitat types. For example, in 2020/21, ponds were reclassified to "eutrophic standing waters".

**Biodiversity, flora, and fauna key challenges**

5.57. The protection, and subsequent enhancement of biodiversity, flora, and fauna is a key theme in many plans, policies, and programmes affecting the preparation of the Joint Local Plan. Both national government and the local district and county councils have committed to a nature recovery strategy, and this will need to be reflected in the local plan to ensure the proposasl within at worst, do not conflict with the recovery stratgegy, but ideally facilitate its delivery.

5.58. Most of the designated biodiversity assets in the districts are either in a favourable, or unfavourable but recovering condition. This suggests that there is an overall improvement in the designated sites in the period data was collected, with most negative indicators at Sites of Special Scientific Interest owed to management schemes, rather than wider land use issues. However, more generally outside these designated areas there is no clear data as to how biodiversity, flora and fauna has changed in recent years. Data from TVERC suggests there has been an overall decline in priority habitats across both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

5.59. The key challenges are therefore:

- Achieving net gains in biodiversity across the districts, with new developments expected to secure at least 10% net gain

- Protecting, and where possible enhancing all biodiversity assets in the districts and surrounding areas, not just designated assets.

- Achieving "good" ecological status in the River Thames upstream of the Oxford Meadows SAC, and maintain a hydrological regime which provides a consistently near-surface water table in the SAC.

- Reducing ammonia (NH3), oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and sulphur dioxide (SO2), and critical loads for nutrient nitrogen deposition and acid deposition across all SACs in the district. This should give particular attention to vehicular emissions at Aston Rowant and Oxford Meadows SACs.

- Maintaining natural hydrological processes to provide the conditions necessary to sustain the alkaline fens at Cothill Fen SAC.

- Maintaining surface water and/or groundwater water quality and quantity at Little Wittenham SAC, and to reduce recreational pressure on the SAC

- Maintaining the overall extent, quality and function of the wider supporting landscape and hydrological processes of the Aston Rowant and Chiltern Beechwood SACs

- Maintaining artificial light at a level that is unlikely to affect natural phenological cycles and processes at the Aston Rowant and Chiltern Beechwood SAC.

5.60. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective Four:** To achieve net gains in biodiversity across the districts, with new developments expected to secure at least 10% net gain

- **Objective Five:** To protect, and where possible, enhance the status of designated assets, including SACs and SSSIs.

# 6.    Climatic Factors

**Introduction**

6.1.    The climate is affected by the release of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gas emissions result from both natural processes and human activities, although the latter is the most significant contributor. Human activities which result in greenhouse gas emissions include transport, energy generation and use, industrial activities, waste management, and agriculture; activities which can help to reduce or stabilise greenhouse gas emissions include afforestation, restoring forests, grasslands and soils, and other increases in biodiversity.

**Relevant plans, policies, and programmes**

6.2.    This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance in relation to climatic factors.  It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.  Many international treaties and commitments that affect planning for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation.  Adopting this focussed approach has allowed the councils to identify locally tailored sustainability objectives that still reflect the aspirations of, and commitments to, international treaties.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2019)**
*(Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

6.3.    Paragraph 152 of the Framework highlights the need for the planning system to support a transition to a low carbon future.  It should help achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability from and improve resilience to a changing climate, encourage the reuse of existing resources, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

6.4.    Paragraph 153 states that local plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.

6.5. Paragraph 154 advises that development should be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the impacts arising from climate change. Where this is not possible, policies should ensure that these risks can be managed through suitable adaption measures. Development should also be planned in ways that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. However, any locally set standards for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.

6.6. Paragraph 155 states that plans should support the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat. Plans should set a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily. They should also consider identifying areas suitable for renewable and low carbon energy sources and supporting infrastructure identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable, or low carbon energy supply systems and for collocating potential heat customers and suppliers.

### National Planning Practice Guidance
*(Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

6.7. The guidance reiterates that addressing climate change is a core land use principle in the English planning system. It highlights the statutory duty on local authorities to include policies in their local plan designed to tackle climate change and its impacts. In doing so, local planning authorities should ensure that protecting the local environment is properly considered alongside the broader issues of protecting the global environment.

6.8. The guidance draws attention to Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which requires local planning authorities to include in their Local Plans "policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change"

6.9. Furthermore, the Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels (although the PPG is now out of date, and the legally binding target is now a 100% reduction by 2050). To drive progress and set the UK on a pathway towards this target, the Act introduced a system of carbon budgets, including a target that the annual equivalent of the carbon budget for the period including 2020 is at least 34% lower than 1990.

6.10. When preparing local plans, local authorities should integrate adaptation and mitigation measures and look for "win-win" solutions that will support sustainable development.

6.11. Local authorities should take account of climate change in a "realistic way" when promoting adaption within particular developments. They should consider no or low cost responses to climate risks that deliver other benefits, such as green infrastructure; build in flexibility for future adaptation measures; and consider the vulnerability of the development over its whole lifetime.

6.12. The guidance advises that a local risk assessment can be used to identify climate risks that the planning system can address, such as the built environment and development, infrastructure, services, and biodiversity.

6.13. Local plans will need to consider the different challenges and opportunities for reducing carbon emissions in their area, which will vary from place to place, such as:

- Robust evaluation of future emissions will require consideration of different emission sources, likely trends taking into account requirements set in national legislation, and a range of development scenarios.
- The distribution and design of new development and the potential for servicing sites through sustainable transport solutions, are particularly important considerations that affect transport emissions. Sustainability appraisal should be used to test different spatial options in plans on emissions
- Different sectors may have different options for mitigation. For example, measures for reducing emissions in agricultural related development include anaerobic digestion, improved slurry and manure storage and improvements to buildings. In more energy intensive sectors, energy efficiency and generation of renewable energy can make a significant contribution to emissions reduction.

6.14. The guidance notes that in some circumstances, particularly regarding designated heritage assets, planning permission may be needed for proposals to improve energy efficiency in buildings. The local plan should ensure guidance / policies are coordinated to ensure consistency between energy, design and heritage matters.

**Climate Change Act 2008**
*HM Government*

6.15. Through the Climate Change Act, the UK government has set a target to significantly reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a path to get there. The government amended the Act in 2019 to change the reduction target from 80% to 100% by 2050. Local Plans will be expected to contribute to this target. The Act also established the Committee on Climate Change to ensure that emissions targets are evidence-based and independently assessed. In addition, the Act requires the Government to assess the risks and opportunities from climate change for the UK, and to adapt to them. The

Committee on Climate Change Adaptation Committee advises on these climate change risks and assesses progress towards tackling them.

**UK Sixth Carbon Budget**
*Committee on Climate Change*

6.16.   The Climate Change Committee (CCC) is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008. Their purpose is to advise the UK and devolved governments on emissions targets and to report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

6.17.   The committee has recommended that the UK sets a sixth carbon budget that requires a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 78% by 2035, relative to 1990. This represents a reduction of 63% from a 2019 base date.

**UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 (January 2017)**
*HM Government*

6.18.   The Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies 56 individuals risks that it scores from "watching brief" (least severe) through to "more action needed" (most severe).

**Table 6: UK Climate Change Risk Assessment "More Action Needed" risks – only those relating to land use planning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Risks to species and habitats from changing climate space | Opportunities from new species colonisations |
| Risks to soils from increased seasonal aridity and wetness | Risks to natural carbon stores & carbon sequestration |
| Risks to agriculture & wildlife from water scarcity & flooding | Risks of land management practices exacerbating flood risk |
| Risks to habitats & heritage in the coastal zone from sea level rise; loss of natural flood protection | Risks to infrastructure from river, surface/groundwater flooding |
| Risks to infrastructure from coastal - flooding & erosion | Risks of sewer flooding due to heavy rainfall |
| Risks to transport networks from embankment failure | Risks to public water supplies from drought and low river flows |
| Risks to public health and wellbeing from high temperatures | Risks to people, communities & buildings from flooding |
| Risks to health and social care delivery from extreme weather | Risks to business sites from flooding |
| Weather-related shocks to global food production and trade | Risks from climate-related international human displacement |

**Table 7: UK Climate Change Risk Assessment "Research Priority" risks – only those relating to land use planning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Changes in suitability of land for agriculture & forests | Risks to bridges and pipelines from high river flows/erosion |
| Risks to energy, transport & ICT from high winds & lightning | Risks to building fabric from moisture, wind, and driving rain |
| Risks to culturally valued structures and historic environment | Risks to health from changes in air quality |
| Risks to health from vector-borne pathogens | Risks to business from loss of coastal locations & infrastructure |
| Long-term changes in global food production | |

**Table 8: UK Climate Change Risk Assessment "Sustain Current Action" risks – only those relating to land use planning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Extreme weather/wild-re risks to farming, forestry, wildlife & heritage | Extreme heat risks to rail, road, ICT and energy infrastructure |
| Risks to health from poor water quality | Risk of household water supply interruptions |
| Risks to business operations from water scarcity | |

**Table 9: UK Climate Change Risk Assessment "Watching Brief" risks – only those relating to land use planning**

| | |
|---|---|
| Risks & opportunities from changes in landscape character | Low/high river flow risks to hydroelectric generation |
| Subsidence risks to buried/ surface infrastructure | |

6.19. The National Adaptation Programme reviews the climate change risk assessment and sets out the government's response.  It identifies the actions government is, and will be, taking to address the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate.  It contains a number of objectives, along with key actions in a monitoring framework.  The relevant objectives & actions for the Joint Local Plan are as follows:

| Table 10: Relevant natural environment objectives of the NAP |
| --- |
| Protect and improve our protected sites and our other areas of important wildlife habitat to enhance resilience to climate change and progress our long term ambition to restore 75% of our protected sites to favourable condition |
| Restore degraded ecosystems, for example by restoring ecological and hydrological functions and expand and connect high quality wildlife-rich habitat, to contribute to our longer term ambition to restore or create 500,000 ha of wildlife-rich habitat |
| Develop and start to implement a Nature Recovery Network, linking habitat restoration and creation to improved access, flood protection and water quality, ensuring its design is based on evidence of what works for climate change adaptation |
| Use River Basin Management Plans and work with catchment partnerships to improve resilience to future pressures from climate change |
| Improve water quality, reverse the deterioration of groundwater, and reduce emissions of harmful substances |
| Explore greater use of natural flood management techniques where these are appropriate |
| To improve soil health |
| Plant 5,000-10,000 hectares of new woodland habitat (including new native woodland priority habitat) per year in England |

| Table 11: Relevant infrastructure objectives of the NAP |
| --- |
| Increase the resilience of energy, transport, and telecommunications infrastructure from all forms of flooding |

| Table 12: Relevant people and built environment objectives of the NAP |
| --- |
| Embed environmental net gain for development, including housing and infrastructure |
| Strengthen planning policy to embed the principle of net gain for biodiversity |
| Manage floods and coastal erosion to save lives, better protect communities and support economic growth |
| Provide a 'clean and plentiful water' for future generations [sic] |
| Deliver more, better quality and well maintained local Green Infrastructure that provides the multiple benefits local communities need and want, in particular for urban disadvantaged populations |
| A set of Green Infrastructure standards will be developed to help local GI planners, designers, managers and communities deliver good quality GI. |
| Protecting people from the impacts of heat and cold |

| Table 13: Relevant business and industry objectives of the NAP |
| --- |
| A food supply chain which is resilient to the effects of a changing climate |

**South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

6.20.   The Corporate Plan aims for the council's emissions to be net zero by 2025, and for the district's emissions to be net zero by 2030.  It aims for planning policies to advocate net zero homes, as well as the council embarking on its own project of net zero housebuilding.

6.21.   The plan aims for the planning system to mitigate climate change, and the council commits to enhancing biodiversity on its own land.  It sets out the council's ambition to work with Oxfordshire County Council to build on its commitments to active travel, such as walking, public transport and cycling infrastructure.

**Vale of White Horse District Council Corporate Plan 2020**
*Vale of White Horse District Council*

6.22.   The Corporate Plan aims to reduce the council's own emissions by 75% by 2025, and become a net zero council by 2030.  The plan aims for the district

as a whole to reduce its carbon emissions by 75% by 2030, and to become a carbon neutral district by 2045.

6.23. The plan aims to introduce zero carbon construction requirement, sustainable growth, and environmental policies in the local plan. Alongside this it aspires to develop a tree planting strategy, a biodiversity net gain targeting strategy, and to contribute to the Oxfordshire nature recovery network.

**South Oxfordshire Climate Action Plan 2022-2024**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

6.24. The Climate Action Plan contains a series of actions for the council across its different services.  The actions relevant to the Joint Local Plan are as follows:

- Include policies in the Joint Local Plan that will help deliver zero carbon development and encourage more sustainable choices

- Produce an options paper for setting up a carbon offsetting scheme for developers as part of the new Joint Local Plan

- Support the implementation of the air quality action plan across the district

- Prepare plan for Didcot Broadway site using sustainable designs and low carbon and water efficient standards, as well as including the provision for infrastructure that supports sustainable transport and has considered waste and recycling facilities

- Prepare Didcot Gateway site project plan to achieve the BREEAM excellent standard in addition to a 40 per cent reduction in carbon emissions compared with a 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case, and with consideration for sustainability and environmental impact throughout the design and construction of the site

- Support communities with their neighbourhood planning by providing up-to-date advice and guidance on climate measures and actions, encouraging climate considerations to be at the core of neighbourhood plans

- Identify areas in our community that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change to ensure they are properly supported and protected to promote wider community wellbeing

- Work with Oxfordshire County Council to support active and sustainable travel infrastructure initiatives

- Work with the Future Oxfordshire Partnership on a county-wide approach to reducing carbon emissions, building on the strategic vision and Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire

- Use our membership of Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) to ensure rapid growth of the green economy

- Support and influence the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 ensuring climate considerations are integrated throughout the plan

- Support the Thames Valley Rivers network to meet their aims and use this group to facilitate and influence work cross party and cross boundary to end pollution in the river and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of the River Thames

**Vale of White Horse Climate Action Plan 2022-2024**
Vale of White Horse District Council

6.25. The Climate Action Plan contains a series of actions for the council across its different services. The actions relevant to the Joint Local Plan are as follows:

- Include policies in the Joint Local Plan that will help deliver zero carbon development and encourage more sustainable choices

- Produce an options paper for setting up a carbon offsetting scheme for developers as part of the new Joint Local Plan

- Support the implementation of the air quality action plan across the district

- Support communities with their neighbourhood planning by providing up-to-date advice and guidance on climate measures and actions, encouraging climate considerations to be at the core of neighbourhood plans

- Identify areas in our community that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change to ensure they are properly supported and protected to promote wider community wellbeing

- Work with Oxfordshire County Council to support active and sustainable travel infrastructure initiatives

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- Use our membership of Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) to ensure rapid growth of the green economy

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- Support the Thames Valley Rivers network to meet their aims and use this group to facilitate and influence work cross party and cross boundary to end pollution in the river and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of the River Thames

## Baseline information

### Carbon emissions per capita

6.26. Government has recorded carbon emissions per capita across local authority areas since 2015. These show that there has been a general decline in carbon emissions per capita in both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, dropping 39.4% and 39.6% respectively. These are higher reductions than the Oxfordshire average (38%), but lag behind the England average reduction of 43%.

6.27. The per capita emissions are currently below the Oxfordshire average in South Oxfordshire, but above in the Vale of White Horse. Both authorities have higher per capita carbon emissions than the England average.

6.28. In 2019, transport accounted for 49% of all carbon emissions in both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. The next largest contributor was domestic, contributing 27% and 25% respectively. Together, these sectors therefore contribute around three quarters of our carbon emissions.

**Table 14: Carbon Dioxide Emissions in England, Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, and the Vale of White Horse**

|  | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Oxfordshire | 9.3 | 9.4 | 9.2 | 9.0 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 7.6 | 7.8 | 7.6 | 6.9 | 6.8 | 6.4 | 6.1 | 5.9 | 5.6 |
| Vale of White Horse | 9.7 | 9.7 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 7.7 | 8.4 | 8.0 | 7.3 | 7.1 | 6.8 | 6.4 | 6.1 | 5.9 |
| Oxfordshire | 9.2 | 9.3 | 8.9 | 8.8 | 8.0 | 8.3 | 7.5 | 7.9 | 7.6 | 6.9 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 6.1 | 5.9 | 5.7 |
| England | 8.6 | 8.5 | 8.2 | 7.9 | 7.1 | 7.3 | 6.6 | 6.9 | 6.7 | 6.1 | 5.8 | 5.4 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 4.9 |

Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019, *Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy*, (August 2021)

**Figure 16: South Oxfordshire Sector Based Carbon Emissions (tonnes) (2019)**



Industry 12%
Commercial 10%
Public Sector 2%
Domestic 27%
Transport 49%

Industry ■ Commercial ■ Public Sector ■ Domestic ■ Transport
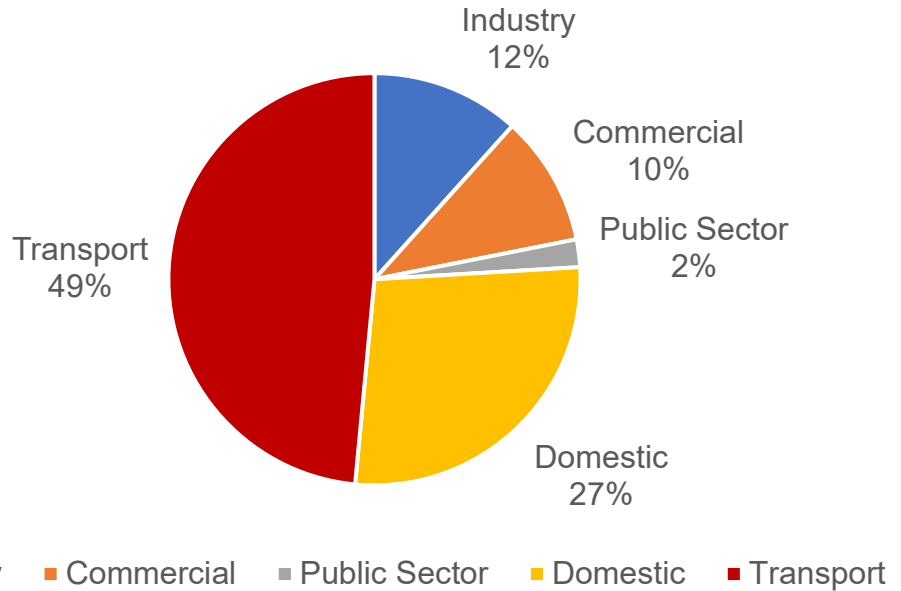
**Figure 17: Vale of White Horse Sector Based Carbon Emissions (tonnes) (2019)**
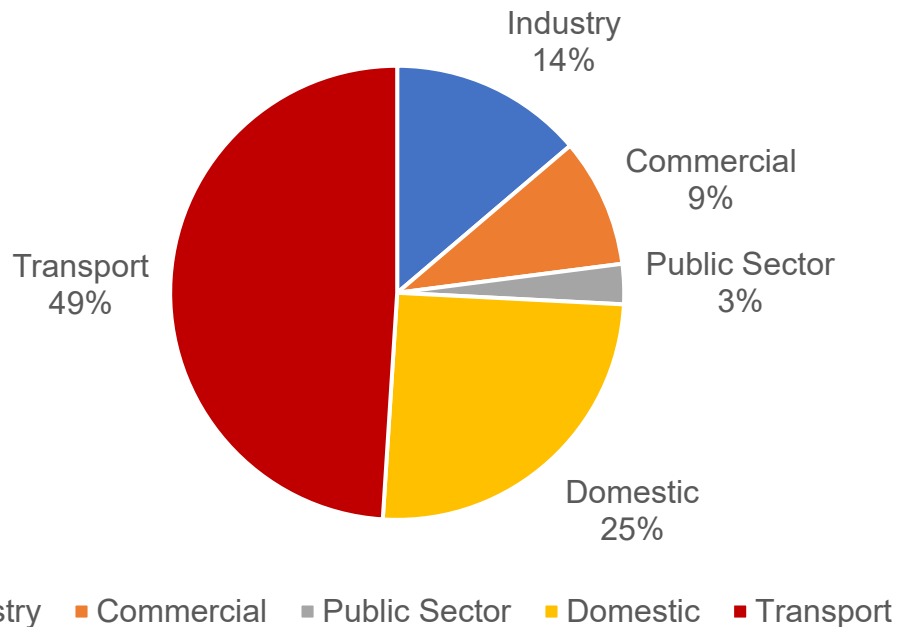


Industry 14%
Commercial 9%
Public Sector 3%
Domestic 25%
Transport 49%

Industry ■ Commercial ■ Public Sector ■ Domestic ■ Transport

Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019, *Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy*, (August 2021)

Note: Figures exclude net contributions from land use, land change and forestry category.

**Table 14: South Oxfordshire Sector Based Carbon Dioxide Contributions 2005 to 2019**

| Year | Industry | % | Commercial | % | Public Sector | % | Domestic | % | Transport | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | **173.4** | 13.9 | **208.5** | 16.7 | **42.4** | 3.4 | **369.5** | 29.7 | **452.0** | 36.3 | 1,245.7 |
| 2006 | **179.6** | 14.1 | **223.9** | 17.6 | **43.7** | 3.4 | **371.7** | 29.1 | **456.6** | 35.8 | 1,275.5 |
| 2007 | **171.1** | 13.7 | **212.0** | 16.9 | **41.6** | 3.3 | **363.3** | 29.0 | **464.6** | 37.1 | 1,252.6 |
| 2008 | **171.8** | 13.9 | **218.2** | 17.6 | **42.3** | 3.4 | **361.5** | 29.2 | **445.0** | 35.9 | 1,238.7 |
| 2009 | **144.1** | 13.3 | **162.7** | 15.0 | **32.4** | 3.0 | **326.5** | 30.0 | **421.3** | 38.8 | 1,086.9 |
| 2010 | **167.0** | 14.5 | **176.6** | 15.4 | **35.3** | 3.1 | **350.0** | 30.5 | **419.4** | 36.5 | 1,148.2 |
| 2011 | **145.0** | 13.6 | **164.9** | 15.4 | **31.1** | 2.9 | **308.1** | 28.8 | **419.1** | 39.2 | 1,068.2 |
| 2012 | **149.1** | 13.4 | **189.4** | 17.0 | **35.6** | 3.2 | **334.0** | 30.0 | **405.4** | 36.4 | 1,113.5 |
| 2013 | **140.3** | 12.9 | **180.3** | 16.6 | **34.4** | 3.2 | **325.2** | 29.9 | **406.2** | 37.4 | 1,086.3 |
| 2014 | **130.5** | 13.1 | **151.3** | 15.2 | **29.6** | 3.0 | **278.2** | 27.9 | **406.4** | 40.8 | 996.0 |
| 2015 | **122.4** | 12.4 | **138.7** | 14.0 | **30.6** | 3.1 | **268.0** | 27.1 | **429.8** | 43.4 | 989.4 |
| 2016 | **116.7** | 12.3 | **114.2** | 12.0 | **27.0** | 2.8 | **255.4** | 26.9 | **436.3** | 45.9 | 949.6 |
| 2017 | **108.8** | 12.0 | **104.3** | 11.5 | **21.3** | 2.3 | **238.6** | 26.2 | **436.0** | 48.0 | 908.9 |
| 2018 | **104.3** | 11.8 | **98.9** | 11.2 | **21.1** | 2.4 | **240.7** | 27.2 | **419.5** | 47.4 | 884.4 |
| 2019 | **99.9** | 11.7 | **87.7** | 10.2 | **18.6** | 2.2 | **235.1** | 27.4 | **415.5** | 48.5 | 856.8 |
| Change 2005 to 2019 | | -2.3% | | -6.5% | | | | -2.2% | | +12.2% | |

Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019, *Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy*, (August 2021)

Note: Figures exclude net contributions from land use, land change and forestry category.

**Table 15: Vale of White Horse Sector Based Carbon Dioxide Contributions 2005 to 2019**

| Year | Industry | % | Commercial | % | Public Sector | % | Domestic | % | Transport | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005 | 196.5 | 17.2 | 147.7 | 12.9 | 48.3 | 4.2 | 441.8 | 38.7 | 308.7 | 27.0 | 1,143.0 |
| 2006 | 199.0 | 17.3 | 152.0 | 13.2 | 47.6 | 4.1 | 438.1 | 38.2 | 311.2 | 27.1 | 1,147.9 |
| 2007 | 185.3 | 16.7 | 138.6 | 12.5 | 43.8 | 3.9 | 438.9 | 39.5 | 304.6 | 27.4 | 1,111.2 |
| 2008 | 191.5 | 17.2 | 153.4 | 13.8 | 46.8 | 4.2 | 420.3 | 37.7 | 303.4 | 27.2 | 1,115.5 |
| 2009 | 177.5 | 17.1 | 140.7 | 13.5 | 42.7 | 4.1 | 403.9 | 38.9 | 274.2 | 26.4 | 1,038.9 |
| 2010 | 186.0 | 17.4 | 142.6 | 13.3 | 43.6 | 4.1 | 402.5 | 37.6 | 294.7 | 27.6 | 1,069.5 |
| 2011 | 146.3 | 15.5 | 115.7 | 12.2 | 34.6 | 3.7 | 391.0 | 41.3 | 259.1 | 27.4 | 946.7 |
| 2012 | 172.1 | 16.5 | 158.2 | 15.2 | 46.7 | 4.5 | 382.3 | 36.7 | 281.6 | 27.1 | 1,040.9 |
| 2013 | 154.4 | 15.5 | 146.3 | 14.6 | 42.3 | 4.2 | 381.8 | 38.2 | 274.2 | 27.4 | 999.1 |
| 2014 | 145.4 | 15.7 | 127.6 | 13.8 | 37.0 | 4.0 | 380.6 | 41.2 | 234.1 | 25.3 | 924.8 |
| 2015 | 137.4 | 15.0 | 110.8 | 12.1 | 36.9 | 4.0 | 401.9 | 44.0 | 227.4 | 24.9 | 914.4 |
| 2016 | 130.5 | 14.7 | 91.5 | 10.3 | 32.2 | 3.6 | 413.0 | 46.6 | 219.0 | 24.7 | 886.2 |
| 2017 | 118.9 | 14.0 | 83.7 | 9.8 | 25.8 | 3.0 | 416.6 | 49.0 | 204.6 | 24.1 | 849.6 |
| 2018 | 118.6 | 14.2 | 78.3 | 9.4 | 24.4 | 2.9 | 407.0 | 48.6 | 208.5 | 24.9 | 836.8 |
| 2019 | 111.9 | 13.8 | 74.5 | 9.2 | 23.2 | 2.9 | 397.7 | 49.0 | 204.6 | 25.2 | 811.8 |
| Change 2005 to 2019 | | -3.4% | | -3.7% | | | | +10.3% | | -1.8% | |

Source: UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019, *Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy*, (August 2021)

Note: Figures exclude net contributions from land use, land change and forestry category.

**Renewable energy generation**

6.29. Government also records the number of renewable energy installataions and the renewble energy capacity in each local authority area. Since 2014, there has been a steady increase of provision in both districts. The Vale of White Horse has more than three times the energy capacity as South Oxfordshire.

**Table 16: Renewable energy generation in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**

| Year | Renewable energy installations | | Renewable energy capacity (MW) | |
|------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | South Oxfordshire | Vale of White Horse | South Oxfordshire | Vale of White Horse |
| 2014 | 1472 | 1347 | 14.5 | 132.4 |
| 2015 | 1772 | 1654 | 38.5 | 170.2 |
| 2016 | 1858 | 1708 | 44.4 | 170.8 |
| 2017 | 1936 | 1755 | 51.8 | 171.5 |
| 2018 | 1997 | 1821 | 52.1 | 171.9 |
| 2019 | 2049 | 1881 | 52.4 | 172.2 |
| 2020 | 2162 | 1994 | 53.1 | 172.8 |

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics

6.30. The breakdown of renewable energy sources across both districts is as follows:

**Table 17: Renewable energy sources in South oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**

| | Photovoltaics | Onshore Wind | Hydro | Anaerobic Digestion | Sewage Gas | Landfill Gas |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| South Oxfordshire | 2,155 | - | 3 | 3 | 1 | - |
| Vale of White Horse | 1,981 | 7 | 3 | - | - | 3 |

Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics

**Climatic Factors key challenges**

6.31.   There is a clear need to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the districts.  Every strategy from international to local places an emphasis on achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest, with more ambitious targets featuring in local documents.  The Joint Local Plan will clearly play an important role in reducing such emissions locally to help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

6.32.   In terms of adaptation, the Joint Local Plan must ensure that it only promotes development that is resilient to the effects of climate change.  In doing so, it should also seek to improve the reslience of those existing communities and developments that are vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

6.33.   The plan's policies on climate change will need to underpin a number of other topic areas due to their potential positive and negative contributions to climatic factors.  This will include housing and transport as the two largest contributors of greenhouse gases in the district.

6.34.   Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for climatic factors across the districts:


- Making a significant contribution to achieving net zero carbon emissions in both districts to meet the Councils' carbon reduction targets, specifically focussing on domestic and transportation emissions as the largest contributors in 2019.
- Ensuring new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change, and that proposals do not weaken existing communities' and businesses' resilience to climate change.
- Only supporting new development or growth proposals where they can achieve net zero carbon emissions and contribute to the green economy.
- Supporting the retrofitting of existing buildings to reduce their carbon emissions.
- Creating new carbon sinks (such as woodland and green infrastructure)
- Supporting battery storage technology to manage time of day challenges in electricity supply and tackling grid supply constrains.
- To support the delivery of new renewable energy installations


6.35.   These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:


- **Objective Three:** To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel

- **Objective Six:** To make a significant contribution to achieving net zero carbon emissions in both districts to meet the Councils' carbon reduction targets, specifically focussing on domestic and transportation emissions

- **Objective Seven:** To ensure new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change, and that proposals do not weaken existing communities' and businesses' resilience to climate change.

- **Objective 20**: To support the development of appropriately scaled, and well-designed renewable energy schemes

# 7. Cultural Heritage and townscape

## Introduction

7.1. Cultural Heritage, in plan-making, refers to the heritage assets of groups or societies inherited from past generations. This can, for example, include specific buildings, groups of buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments/objects and archaeological areas. It can also include customs and cultural traditions.

7.2. One of the greatest assets of the districts is their rich and varied built heritage, which contributes greatly to the distinctive character and cherished identity of their towns, villages and countryside. The districts display a range of building types and materials reflecting the underlying geology of the area. The historic landscape also plays an important role in shaping the varied character of the districts, as a heritage asset in itself.

7.3. The local plan will need to consider its impact upon cultural heritage and particularly heritage assets within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, but also potentially its impacts on cultural heritage assets that lie just outside borders of the district boundaries.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

7.4. This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance relating to cultural heritage. It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets and objectives for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Many commitments that affect planning, for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation. Adopting this focussed approach allows the councils to identify area-specific sustainability objectives surrounding cultural heritage that still reflect aspirations of international conventions.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
*(Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

7.5. Paragraph 189 highlights that heritage assets including sites and buildings of local historic value should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

7.6. Paragraph 190 explains Local Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. These strategies

should take into account: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

7.7.    Paragraph 191 states that when considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.

7.8.    Paragraph 192 states local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to: a) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

7.9.    Paragraph 193 states that local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

### National Planning Practice Guidance
*(Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

7.10.   The PPG advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment.

7.11.   It states, in line with NPPF paragraph 185, that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. In developing their strategy, plan-making bodies should identify specific opportunities within their area for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, including their setting. This could include, where appropriate, the delivery of development that will make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the heritage asset, or reflect and enhance local character and distinctiveness with particular regard given to the prevailing styles of design and use of materials in a local area.

7.12.   The PPG states that delivery of strategies may require the development of specific policies, for example, in relation to use of buildings and design of new development and infrastructure. Plan-making bodies will need to consider the relationship and impact of other policies on the delivery of the strategy for conservation.

7.13.   The PPG also states that where relevant, neighbourhood plans need to include enough information about local heritage to guide decisions and put

broader strategic heritage policies into action at a neighbourhood scale. It is beneficial for any designated and non-designated heritage assets within the plan area to be clearly identified at the start of the plan-making process so they can be appropriately taken into account. It confirms the historic environment record is a useful source of information on the local historic environment.

**The Council of Europe Landscape Convention**

7.14.    The ELC[23] is an international treaty dedicated to the protection, management and planning of all landscapes in Europe. The ELC cover land and water (inland and seas), and natural, rural, urban and peri-urban landscapes. It includes every-day or degraded landscapes as well as those that might be considered outstanding.

7.15.    Every landscape forms the setting for the lives of local people, and the quality of those landscapes can affect everyone's lives. The ELC does not confine itself to cultural or man-made landscape elements alone, but to all elements and the way they interact.

7.16.    The ELC does not advocate the same measures and policies for all landscapes. Instead, it encourages approaches that are adaptable to particular landscape types, and which respond to their unique characteristics.

**Articles of the ELC:**

7.17.    The ELC contains 18 articles which, collectively, promote landscape protection, management and planning and organising European cooperation on landscape issues.

7.18.    Article 1 defines the terms used in the ELC. These include:

    a.    "Landscape" – an area perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

    b.    "Landscape policy" – an expression by the competent public authorities of general principles, strategies and guidelines that permit the taking of specific measures aimed at the protection, management and planning of landscapes.

    c.    "Landscape protection" – actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity.

    d.    "Landscape management" – action, from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to

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[23] https://www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/home

guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes.

e. "Landscape planning" – strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscapes.

**ELC Articles 5 and 6**

7.19.    Articles 5 and 6 commit signatory states to a number of actions which are designed to help ensure compliance with the overarching aims of the ELC. These include the need to recognise landscapes in law, to establish policies aimed at landscape planning, protection and management and the integration of landscape into other policy areas.

**The Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe**

7.20.    The main purpose of the Convention[24] is to reinforce and promote policies for the conservation and enhancement of Europe's heritage.

7.21.    It also affirms the need for European solidarity with regard to heritage conservation and is designed to foster practical co-operation among parties. It establishes the principles of "European co-ordination of conservation policies" including consultations regarding the thrust of the policies to be implemented.

**The European Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage**

7.22.    The European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage[25] (revised) reflects change in the nature of threats to archaeological heritage, which came from major construction projects carried out all over Europe from 1980 onwards. It established a body of new basic legal standards for Europe, to be met by national policies for the protection of archaeological assets as sources of scientific and documentary evidence, in line with the principles of integrated conservation.

7.23.    It makes the conservation and enhancement of the archaeological heritage one of the goals of urban and regional planning policies. It is concerned in particular with arrangements to be made for co-operation among archaeologists and town and regional planners in order to ensure optimum conservation of archaeological heritage. The Convention sets guidelines for the funding of excavation and research work and publication of research findings. It also deals with public access, in particular to archaeological sites, and educational actions to be undertaken to develop public awareness of the

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[24] https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/granada-convention
[25] https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/valletta-convention

value of the archaeological heritage. Finally, the Convention constitutes an institutional framework for pan-European co-operation on archaeological heritage.

## Baseline information

### *National Heritage List for England*

7.24.   The National Heritage List for England (NHLE)[26] is the official, up to date, register of all nationally protected historic buildings and sites in England: these are listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks, registered parks and gardens, and battlefields.

- Vale of White Horse has 2271 features on the National Heritage List for England.
- South Oxfordshire has 3365 features on the National Heritage List for England.

7.25.   A full list of the district's features on the National Heritage List can be found via the Historic England website. Any planning proposals situated in or nearby features on the list must have regard to them; this will ensure they are preserved and also sustain their valuable contribution to the wider district.

7.26.   Please find below maps of all Listed Buildings in the districts

7.27.   Please see **Appendix 1** for a list of all Scheduled Monuments**, Appendix 2** for a list of all Registered Parks and Gardens and **Appendix 3** for a list of Historic Battlefields in the districts.

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[26] The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/advanced-search?searchType=nhleadvancedsearch
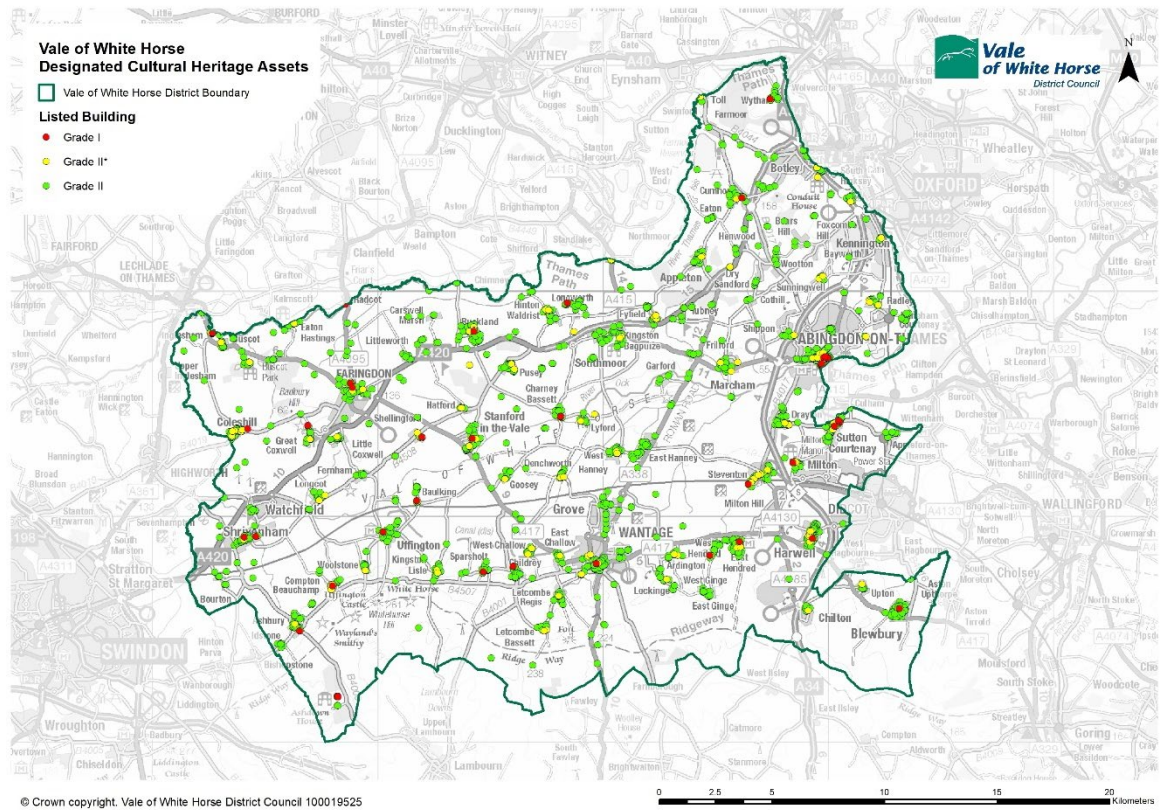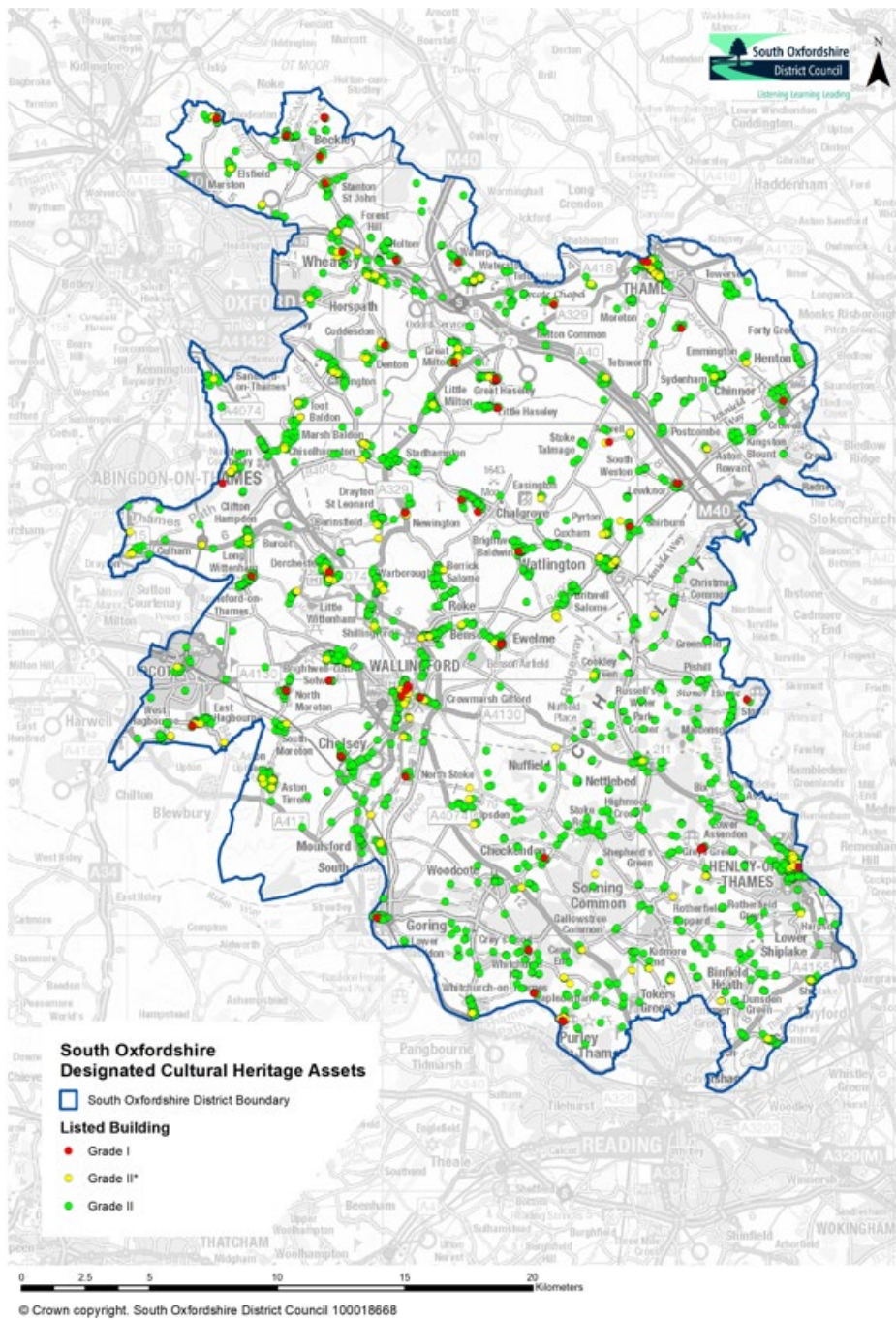
# Figure 18: Listed Buildings in the Vale of White Horse



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**Figure 19: Listed Buildings in South Oxfordshire**



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## Conservation Areas and Conservation Area Appraisals/Studies

7.28. Conservation areas are places of special architectural or historic interest, having a specific character or appearance that enhances the local area. By designating a conservation area, it means these features are better preserved and helps to ensure it will continue its valuable contribution to the wider district. It also means that extra planning controls apply to the conserved area. This means we can better protect and recognise the features that contribute towards its special character or appearance and guard against inappropriate

work throughout plan-making. Any planning proposals situated in or nearby the assessed areas must have regard to them.

7.29. There are **51** designated conservation areas across the Vale of White Horse[27], and **72** designated conservation areas across South Oxfordshire[28]. Please see **Appendix 4** for a list of these.

7.30. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities also have a duty to designate conservation areas, present proposals for their enhancement and management and periodically consider any additions and/or review the boundaries. In addition to initial designations, local authorities have a duty to assess the special interest, character and appearance of all conservation areas.

7.31. Such areas are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

7.32. Extra planning controls applicable in conservation areas that directly relate to plan-making include: **preservation and enhancement, designation or alteration of conservation areas, new development in conservation areas and biodiversity.**

7.33. The purpose of conservation area appraisals/studies is to define the special interest which warrants the designation of a place as a conservation area. This includes the quality and distinctiveness of the place, derived from its character and appearance. The appraisal will lead to a better understanding of the area and what makes it the place it is today, as well as provide the basis for positive management of the area in the future.

7.34. The Conservation Area Appraisals/Studies in the districts are as follows:

**South Oxfordshire**
- Aston Tirrold/Upthorpe
- Beckley
- Benson
- Brightwell Baldwin
- Brightwell cum Sotwell
- Britwell Salome
- Chalgrove
- Didcot Station Road
- Dorchester
- East Hagbourne
- Forest Hill
- Great Haseley

- Great Milton
- Greys Green
- Henley
- Mapledurham
- North Moreton
- Overy
- Pyrton
- Stanton St John
- Stoke Row
- Thame
- Wallingford, Parts 1 to 4
- Warborough
- Waterstock
- Watlington
- West Hagbourne
- Winterbrook

**Vale of White Horse**
- Abingdon Northcourt
- Bourton
- Cumnor
- East Hendred
- Milton
- Wytham

**Heritage at Risk Register**

7.35.   The Heritage at Risk Register, compiled and monitored by Historic England, includes buildings, places of worship, monuments, parks and gardens, conservation areas, battlefields and wreck sites that are <u>listed</u> and have been assessed and found to be at risk. Historic England also assess:

- Grade I
- Grade II*
- Grade II listed places of worship across England
- Grade II listed buildings in London. (Grade II listed buildings outside London, other than places of worship, are not included).

7.36.   The entries from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse listed below are on the Heritage at Risk Register, because they are noted by Historic England as being at least partly at risk as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development.   The heritage at risk register for both districts is given in Appendix 5.

**South Oxfordshire:**

- Church of All Saints, Church Street, North Moreton

- Fawley Court and Temple Island, Fawley / Henley-on-Thames / Remenham / Bix and Assendon
- Camp on Bozedown, Whitchurch-on-Thames / Goring Heath
- Romano-British settlement 520m north-west of Cooks Cottages, Warborough
- Defences to the Saxon town [within Bull and Kine Croft], Wallingford
- Motte of Wallingford Castle, Wallingford
- Settlement site at Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham / Little Wittenham
- Long Barrow 340m north-west of Cooks Cottages, Warborough
- Dike Hills, Dorchester
- North Stoke henge and ring ditch site, Crowmarsh / South Stoke
- Fernhouse, archway, gateway and walls, Mapledurham
- Walled garden approximately 30 metres west of Manor Farmhouse, North Weston, Great Haseley
- Well House, Wick Farmhouse, Barton, Beckley and Stowood
- Remains of St Nicholas's College, Wallingford Castle, Wallingford

**Vale of White Horse:**

- Church of St Margaret, Hinton Waldrist
- Church of St Mary, Buckland
- Settlement site south-east of church, Appleford-on-Thames / Long Wittenham
- Yew Down round barrow 950m south-west of Butterbush Reservoir, Lockinge
- Two round barrows 520m and 550m north of Lower Chance Farm, Blewbury
- Castle Mound at Fitzharris, Abingdon
- Milton Manor House, High Street, Milton

7.37. Further details are provided in the table overleaf. Any planning proposals situated nearby the heritage at risk areas must have regard to them. This will ensure they are preserved and also sustain their valuable contribution to the wider districts

**Design Guides**

7.38.    The councils' design guides assist landowners, developers, applicants, agents, designers and planners through all stages of the design and planning process to achieve high quality development. This includes the plan-making stage.

**South Oxfordshire Design Guide**

7.39.    South Oxfordshire's Design Guide[29] explains the background to the items on the National Heritage list, as also provided in this document, and emphasizes that developments should 'conserve and where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets, e.g. listed buildings, archaeological remains and historic features, spaces, routes and views'.

7.40.    Archaeology is also highlighted, explaining that 'scheduled ancient monuments are statutorily protected. Archaeology in South Oxfordshire is looked after centrally across the whole county by Oxfordshire County Council. The county archaeologists will be consulted on all planning applications and developments which have the potential to harm known archaeological remnants or deposits. Their comments will carry significant weight'.

7.41.    The guide also highlights that it 'does not override listed building considerations. Listed building consent will be necessary to alter or extend (or to demolish part of) a listed building in any way that affects its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. This includes the interior of a building as well as its exterior'.

**Vale of White Horse Design Guide**

7.42.    Vale of White Horse's Design Guide[30] also highlights that the conservation of cultural heritage is an important consideration in design. It's principles DG4 and DG5 address Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, highlighting that 'development proposals that have an adverse effect on the setting of listed buildings will need to balance the harm against the public benefit' and 'sites in or adjacent to Conservation Areas should refer to the respective Conservation Area appraisal and/or local plan policies on Historic Environments and clearly demonstrate that proposals are in line with this guidance'. Principle DG15 address heritage assets and the historic landscape in design, ensuring 'heritage assets and Historic Landscapes should be celebrated, enhanced and preserved where appropriate for the enjoyment of existing and future residents'.

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[29] https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/urban-design/develop-your-planning-proposals/
[30] https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/08/Vale-of-White-Horse-Design-Guide-2015.pdf

7.43.    The guide also highlights the importance of checking whether archaeological study is required for future development sites.

### Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project

7.44.    HLC[31] uses maps to examine the historic and archaeological processes which have influenced the modern landscape. It allows the identification of the specific characteristics of an area or district, to understand what makes that place special or distinct and helps organisations to make sure they are managed appropriately. It recognises that all parts of the landscape have historic value and contribute to the landscape in which we live.

7.45.    HLC data can be used for:

- the conservation and management of heritage sites and landscapes
- planning applications and development strategy
- landscape management schemes
- academic and local research
- community projects and initiatives.

7.46.    The areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse are the **Chiltern Hills**, and the **North Wessex Downs**.

### Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record

7.47.    This record allows LPAs to search for buildings, monuments, excavations, surveys and archaeological finds in Oxfordshire, being a digital index of all known archaeological and historical sites in the county.

7.48.    The Historic Environment Record[32] is tool that helps Local Planning Authorities when asked for advice on planning applications and policies.

### Locally Significant Heritage Assets identified through Neighbourhood Plans and Conservation Area Appraisals/Studies

7.49.    Local Planning Authorities must have regard to non-designated heritage assets through the planning process. Non-designated Local Heritage Assets have therefore been identified through the councils' Neighbourhood Plans and Conservation Area Appraisals/Studies, where local communities have nominated (and can continue to nominate) assets with a specific local heritage and historic value, though they do not receive the same statutory protection as listed buildings. Such Local Heritage Assets can be found in Neighbourhood Plans as well as the districts' Conservation Area Appraisals and Studies (see below).

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[31] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/landscape-characterisation
[32] https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/historic-environment-record

7.50. Any development proposals in the Joint Local Plan will need to have regard to these assets.

**Designated Cultural Heritage Assets**

7.51. Please find below maps referencing all designated cultural heritage assets in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse – depicting local heritage assets[33], registered parks and gardens, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and battlefields (lists of which can be found in **Appendix 1-4**).

7.52. Please also see the Listed Buildings section for a map of all listed buildings.

**Figure 20: Designated Cultural Heritage Assets in South Oxfordshire:**



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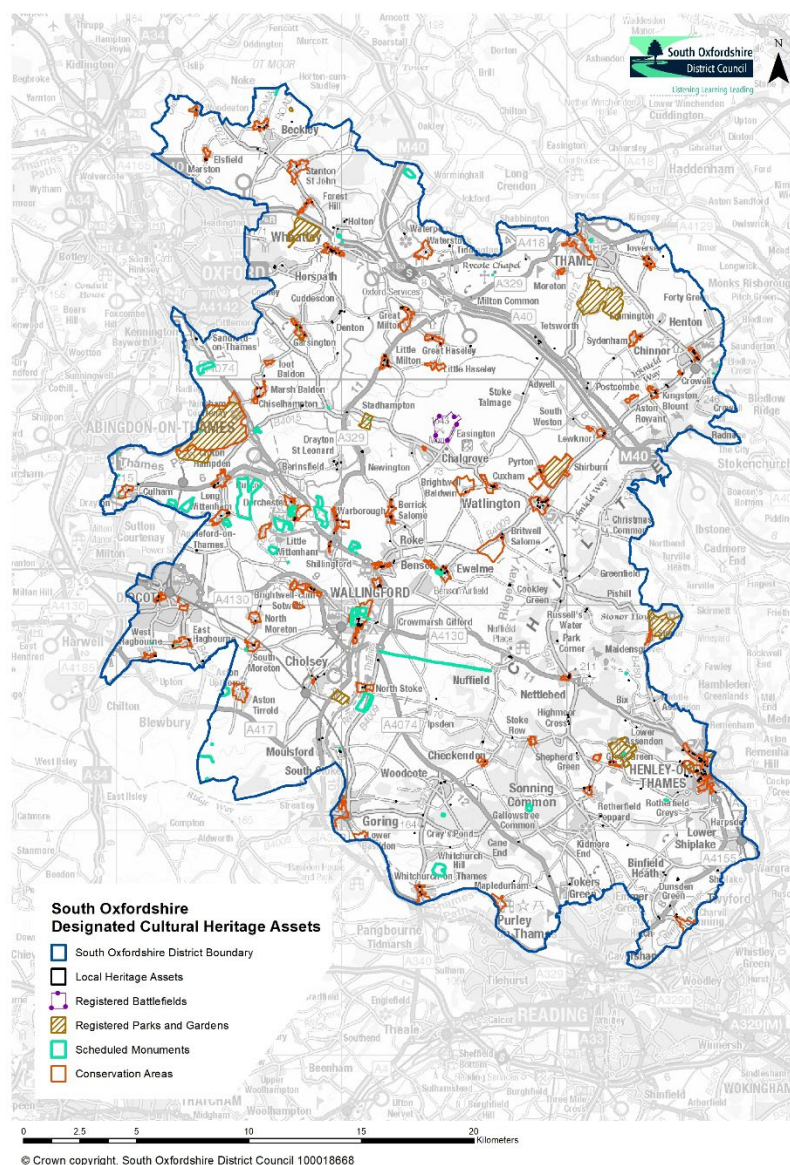
[33] Locally designated heritage assets from neighbourhood plans are not represented on these maps

**Figure 21: Designated Cultural Heritage Assets in the Vale of White Horse:**



© Crown copyright. Vale of White Horse District Council 100019525

## Heritage Impact Assessments
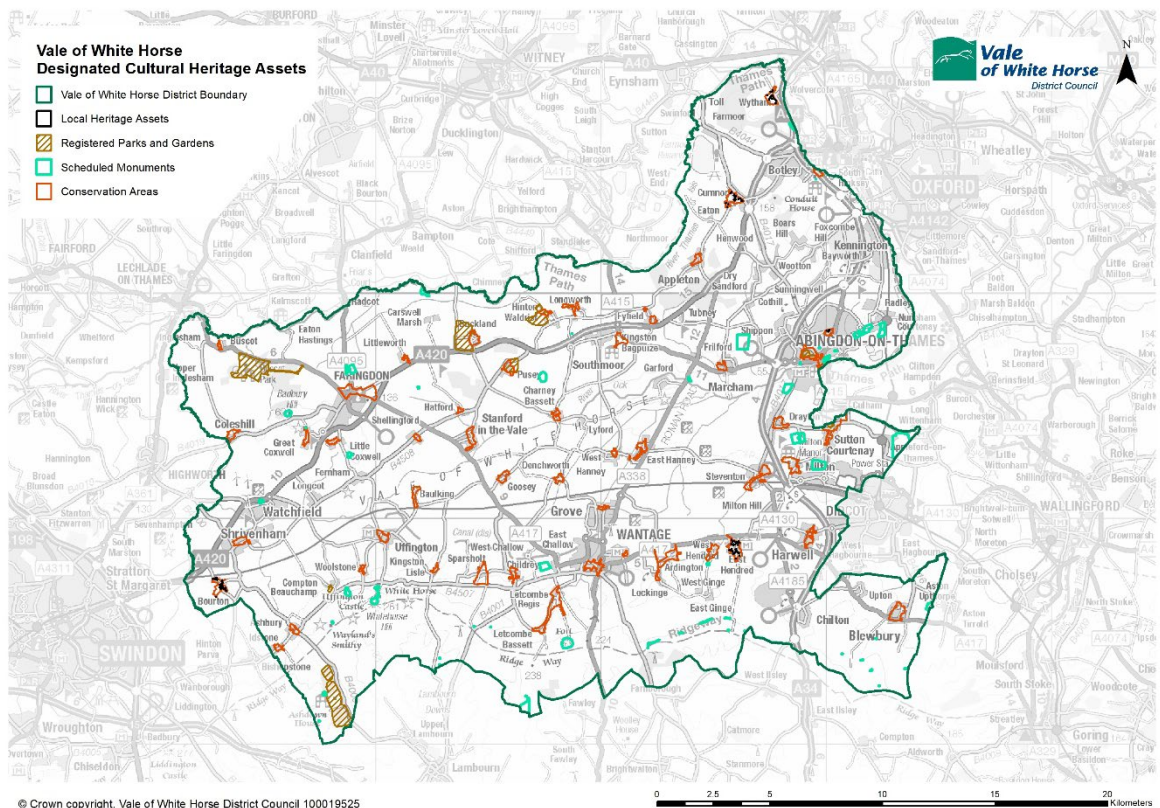
### South Oxfordshire

7.53.   South Oxfordshire commissioned John Moore Heritage Services to carry out a Heritage Impact Assessment (2019)[34] as part of the evidence base for its Local Plan 2035. This assessment considered heritage impacts relating to development of seven strategic allocation sites at Berinsfield, Chalgrove Airfield, Culham, Grenoble Road, Land North of Bayswater Brook, Northfield and Wheatley. The assessment graded these, and highlighted mitigation outcomes.

7.54.   Any development proposals nearby these assessed areas should have regard to this Heritage Impact Assessment. Please note, sites at Harrington and Thornhill were also assessed, but not brought forward as potential strategic sites in Local Plan 2035.

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[34]
https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=1421403305&CODE=E55EB7F2F D5C477B4D7927D451066EAF

7.55. The Vale of White Horse does not currently have a Heritage Impact Assessment.

**Heritage key challenges**

7.56. The conservation, and potential enhancement of cultural heritage is a key theme in many plans, policies, and programmes affecting the preparation of the Joint Local Plan. Both national government and the councils have committed to protection of cultural heritage, including heritage assets, and, where possible, non-designated heritage assets too, and this will need to be reflected in the Join Local Plan, for all development to have regard to these assets.

7.57. There is evidence from the Heritage at Risk register that South and Vale do have features that are at least partly at risk as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. Reducing the features at risk, by strengthened protection or enhancement, is a key issue to address in terms of cultural heritage.

7.58. Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for heritage across the districts:

- Conserving, and where possible, enhancing all heritage assets and their settings in the districts
- Reducing the number of heritage assets "at risk" in the districts
- Protecting, and where possible, enhancing the built character of existing settlements
- Providing a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay, or other threats.
- Continuing a recurring programme of review of the district's conservation areas and published documents
- Supporting the development of appropriately scaled renewable energy / energy efficiency improvements within the historic environment, where it is sensitively and appropriately designed

7.59. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objective that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective 8:** To conserve, and where possible, enhance, all heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and their settings in the districts.

# 8. Human health and wellbeing

## Introduction

8.1. The Joint Local Plan will need to consider its impact upon human health and wellbeing. When considering human health and wellbeing, plan makers will need to consider the relationship between the built and natural environment, and the hazards they pose to people. Issues from pollution, such as air quality, water quality and contaminated land have been assessed in other chapters, and so this chapter focusses on the "social aspects" of human health, such as crime, and overall health statistics from Public Health England.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

8.2. This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance relating to human health and wellbeing. It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Many commitments that affect planning for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

8.3. Paragraph 8 highlights the overarching social objective, to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

8.4. Chapter 8 of the NPPF sets out policies for promoting healthy and safe communities. It states that planning policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places that promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles. Plans should provide for share spaces, community facilities, and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities. Plans should support the delivery of local health, social and cultural wellbeing strategies, guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services and allow them to modernise, and ensure an integrated approach to the colocation of housing, economic uses, and community facilities.

8.5. Paragraph 92 explains that policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive places that are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion. It also

encourages the enablement and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

8.6.    Paragraph 93 explains local authorities must provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs and that planning policies and decisions should:

a.  plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and

b.  take into account and support the delivery of local strategies.

8.7.    Paragraph 131 highlights local authorities need to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

8.8.    Paragraph 94 states that Local plans should consider the benefits of estate regeneration, and support these to a high quality standard where appropriate.

8.9.    Paragraph 98 of the NPPF states access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.  Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless specific circumstances set out in Paragraph 95 are satisfied.

8.10.   Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

8.11.   The PPG advises on healthy and safe communities, explaining how positive planning can contribute to healthier communities, where planning and health need to be considered together in two ways: in terms of creating environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles, and in terms of identifying and securing the facilities needed for primary, secondary and tertiary care, and the wider health and care system (taking into account the changing needs of the population).

8.12.   The PPG explains that healthy places in plan-making support and promote healthy behaviours and environments and a reduction in health inequalities for people of all ages. It will provide the community with opportunities to improve their physical and mental health, and support community engagement and wellbeing.

8.13.   The PPG recognises that noise pollution may impact on human health, and states that planning policies may introduce noise standards to mitigate this. However, such standards should not be "rigid thresholds", as specific circumstances may justify some variation being allowed.

8.14.   Similarly, the PPG also recognises that light pollution can be a nuisance to people, but that it can also have benefits to human health – for example on extending the use of playing pitches in the winter.

8.15.   Finally, the PPG addresses how to plan for hazardous substances.  Local planning authorities should know the location of hazardous installations as they will have been informed of consultation zones by the Control of Major Accidents Hazards (COMAH) competent authority.   It is good planning practice for local authorities and businesses that need hazardous substances consent to work together when Local Plans are being prepared. This can help to reduce the potential for conflicting land uses and promote safety of people and protection of the environment.  The NPPF expects planning policies and decisions to help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. This may include the chemicals industry, distributors and other businesses that require hazardous substances consent.

**Oxfordshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018 to 2023)**
*Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Board*

8.16.   The strategy notes that residents live longer in Oxfordshire than elsewhere and remain healthy into older age for longer than the national average. Local people take more exercise than in neighbouring Counties and carry less excess weight. The county consistently outperforms other areas for measures such as breast feeding, teenage pregnancy and immunisation rates. However, it identifies four priorities for the period to 2023:

  ▪ Agreeing a coordinated approach to prevention and "healthy place-shaping".

  ▪ Improving the resident's journey through the health and social care system

  ▪ Agreeing an approach to working with the public so as to re-shape and transform services locality by locality.

  ▪ Agreeing plans to tackle critical workforce shortages.

8.17.   The strategy notes that there are issues outside the immediate functions of health and social care that need to be addressed.  It notes that the physical environment, the quality of housing, and opportunities for active travel have a big influence on health and wellbeing.  The strategy identifies the challenge of

ensuring the large scale of new housebuilding taking place across the county is planned in a way that promotes health and wellbeing, learning from the Healthy New Towns in Bicester and Barton. The support of friends and neighbours in communities is also good for physical and mental health and gets more crucial as the population ages.

8.18. Health and care workers form a significant proportion of the local workforce. High house prices in Oxfordshire mean that the county suffers from chronic and enduring challenges recruiting and retaining health and care staff, without which services cannot function.

**Police and Criminal Justice Plan 2021-2025**
*Thames Valley Police, June 2021*

8.19. The Police & Criminal Justice Plan sets out the five priorities of the police force starting from May 2021. These are: strong local policing, fighting fraud and cyber crime, improving the criminal justice system, fighting serious organised crime, and tackling illegal encampments.

## Baseline information

### Public Health England

8.20. Public Health England's overarching task is protecting and improving the nation's health. They provide 'Local Authority Health Profiles' to give a picture of people's health in districts. This allows local authorities (and health services) to understand the needs of communities so they can work together to improve people's health and reduce health inequalities. The details below provide the latest profiles for the districts in relation to overall England figures.

8.21. This profile gives a picture of people's health in the districts. It is designed to help local government and health services understand their community's needs, so that they can work together to improve people's health and reduce health inequalities.

8.22. A full breakdown of the health profiles for South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, and England are given in Appendix 6.

### South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Health Profiles[35]:

### Health in summary

8.23. **South Oxfordshire:** The health of people in South Oxfordshire is generally better than the England average. South Oxfordshire is one of the 20% least deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, however about 7.9% of

[35] Public Health England Local Authority Health Profiles: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles

children live in low-income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.

8.24. **Vale of White Horse:** The health of people in Vale of White Horse is generally better than the England average. Vale of White Horse is one of the 20% least deprived districts/unitary authorities in England, however about 8.5% (1,905) of children live in low-income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average.

### Health inequalities

8.25. **South Oxfordshire:** Life expectancy is 2.5 years lower for men and 1.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of South Oxfordshire than in the least deprived areas.

8.26. **Vale of White Horse:** Life expectancy is 5.8 years lower for men and 1.7 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Vale of White Horse than in the least deprived areas.

### Child health

8.27. **South Oxfordshire:** In Year 6, 13.0% (188) of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England. The rate for alcohol-specific hospital admissions among those under 18 is 33*. This represents 10 admissions per year. Levels of GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score), breastfeeding and smoking in pregnancy are better than the England average

8.28. **Vale of White Horse:** In Year 6, 15.7% (214) of children are classified as obese, better than the average for England. The rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays among those under 18 is 29*. This represents 8 admissions per year. Levels of teenage pregnancy, breastfeeding and smoking in pregnancy are better than the England average.

### Adult health

**South Oxfordshire:**

- The rate for alcohol-related harm hospital admissions is 479[36], better than the average for England. This represents 666 admissions per year.
- The rate for self-harm hospital admissions is 184*. This represents 230 admissions per year.

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[36] Per 100,000 population

- Estimated levels of physically active adults (aged 19+) are better than the England average.

- The rates of new sexually transmitted infections and new cases of tuberculosis are better than the England average.

- The rates of violent crime (hospital admissions for violence), under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases, under 75 mortality rate from cancer and employment (aged 16-64) are better than the England average.

**Vale of White Horse:**

- The rate for alcohol-related harm hospital admissions is 443[37], better than the average for England. This represents 586 admissions per year.

- The rate for self-harm hospital admissions is 191*. This represents 245 admissions per year.

- Estimated levels of smoking prevalence in adults (aged 18+) and physically active adults (aged 19+) are better than the England average.

- The rates of hip fractures in older people (aged 65+), new sexually transmitted infections and new cases of tuberculosis are better than the England average.

- The rates of statutory homelessness, violent crime (hospital admissions for violence), under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular diseases and under 75 mortality rate from cancer are better than the England average.

**Covid 19**

8.29. The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on human health across the globe. Within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, Covid death rates totalled 497 as of 18 March 2022[38]. The weekly deaths per 100,000 people in both districts was slightly higher than the Oxfordshire average, as shown on the graphs from Oxfordshire Insight below:

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[37] Per 100,000 population
[38] https://phdashboard.oxfordshire.gov.uk/?view=deaths&location=South+Oxfordshire and
https://phdashboard.oxfordshire.gov.uk/?view=deaths&location=Vale+of+White+Horse

**Figure 22: Oxfordshire weekly Covid 19 deaths per 100,00 population (18 March 2022)**
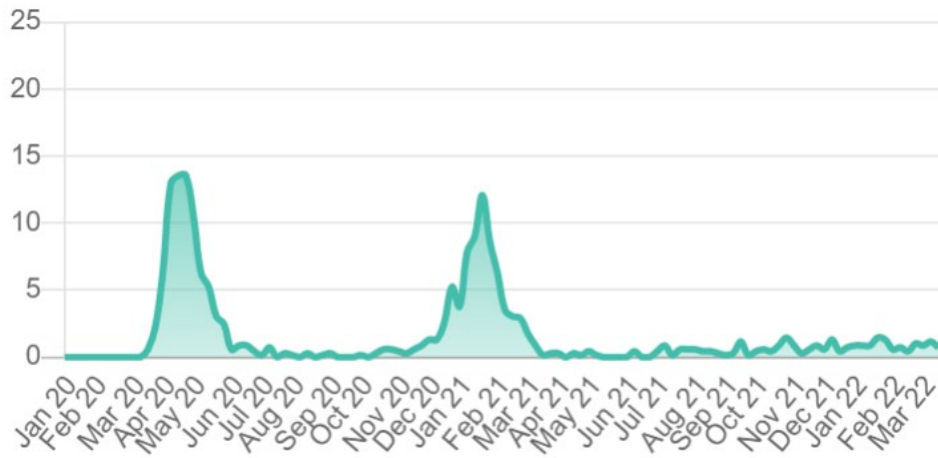


**Figure 23: South Oxfordshire weekly Covid 19 deaths per 100,00 population (18 March 2022)**
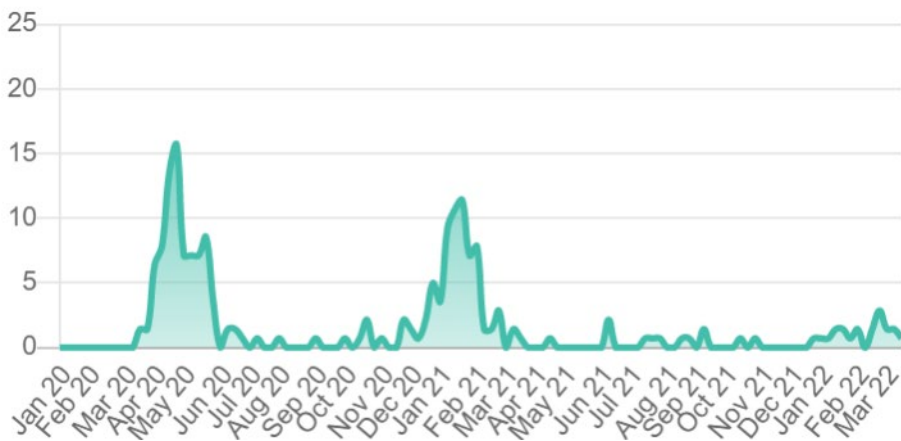
**Figure 24: Vale of White Horse weekly Covid 19 deaths per 100,00 population (18 March 2022)**
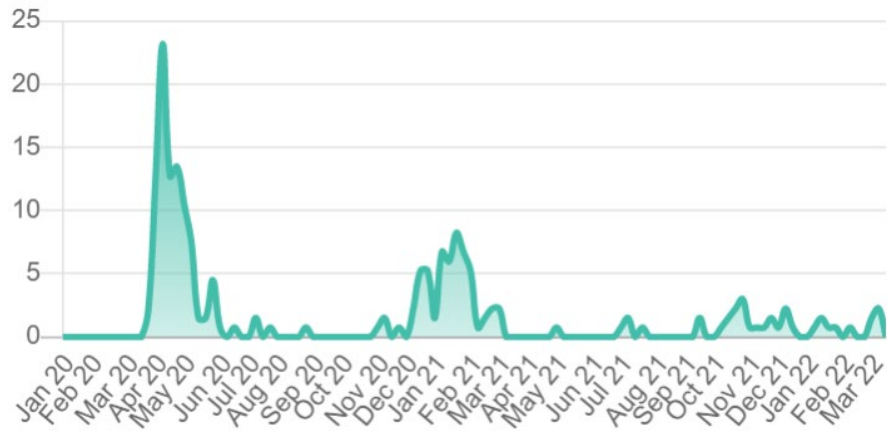


**Index of multiple deprivation**

8.30. Figures 25 and 26 below show the lower super output areas across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse and their position on the index of deprivation. The first map shows that generally, the districts are within the least deprived areas of the country. However, there are pockets within the districts at Abingdon, Berinsfield and Didcot that are within the most deprived areas. Figure 26 shows that deprivation scores across South Oxfordshire generally got worse between 2015 and 2019, while in the Vale of White Horse, they generally remained the same.

**Figure 25: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019, South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**
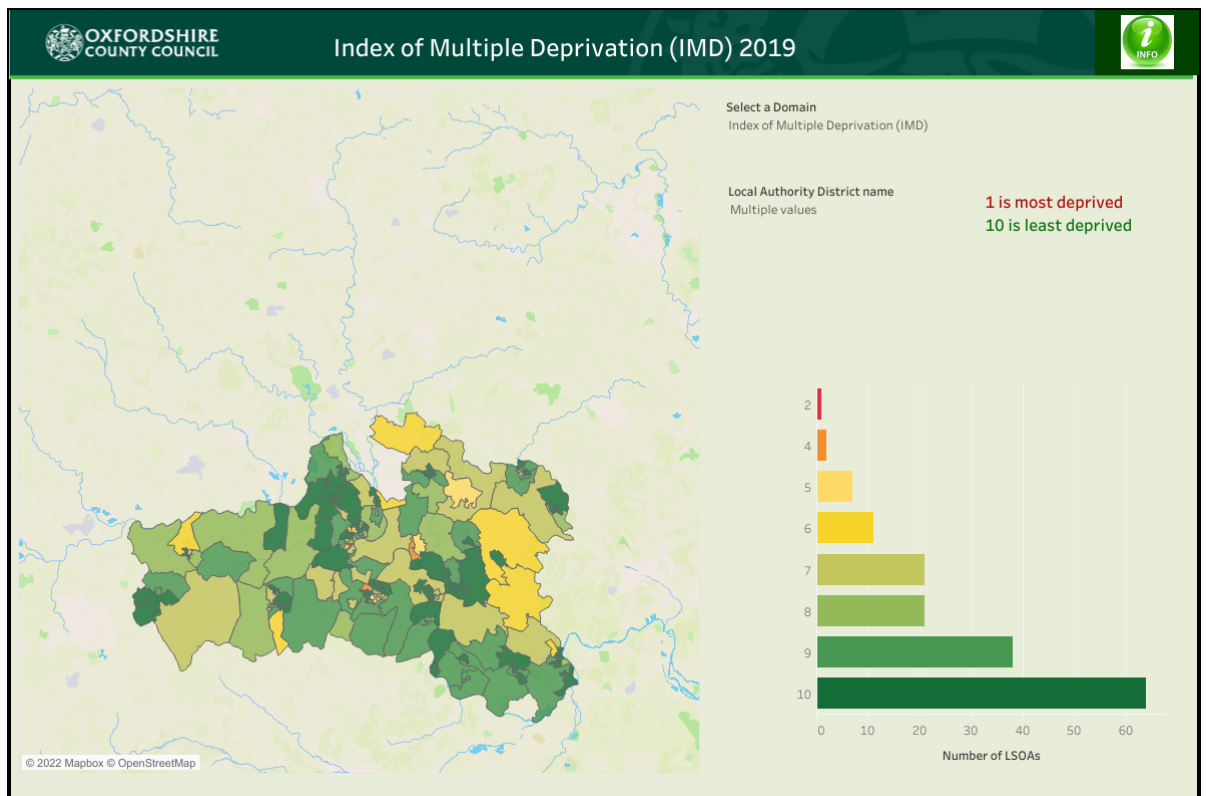


Source: Oxfordshire Insight[39]

39
https://public.tableau.com/views/IMD2019Oxfordshire/IMD2019?:embed=y&:display_count=no&:show
VizHome=no#1

**Figure 26: Changes in index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 to 2019, South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**
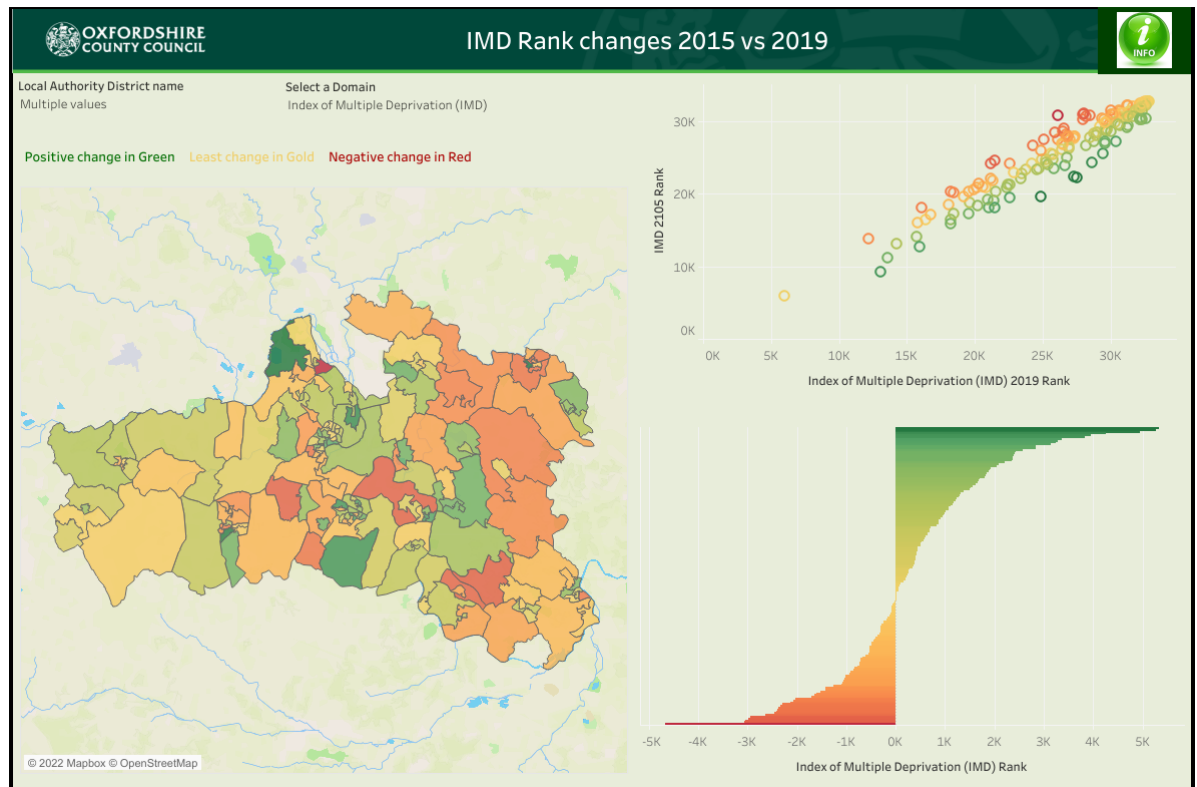


Source: Oxfordshire Insight[40]

8.31. The ten most deprived lower super output areas in both districts are shown in Appendix 7. The index of multiple deprivation (IMD) is a summary score of all the other indices of deprivation shown on the table. The reasons for areas scoring highly overall will vary, but key themes from the ten most deprived areas in our district are:

a) Education skills and training indicator measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: one relating to children and young people and one relating to adult skills[41]. In the most deprived areas in the plan area, it is generally children and young people that drive the overall low score in education skills and training. However, this is not always the case, with some areas also experiencing lower scores in adult skills too.

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40

https://public.tableau.com/views/IMD2019Oxfordshire/IMD2019?:embed=y&:display_count=no&:showVizHome=no#1

41

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835115/IoD2019_Statistical_Release.pdf, p.23

b) The Income Deprivation Domain measures the proportion of the population experiencing deprivation relating to low income. The definition of low income used includes both those people that are out of-work, and those that are in work but who have low earnings (and who satisfy the respective means tests)[42]. The most deprived areas in our districts generally perform poorly against this indicator. Income deprivation appears to affect children more than it does older people in these areas.

c) One exception to this trend is the Haseley Brook area that scores highly on general deprivation due to its barriers to housing and services and geographical barriers. This likely reflects the area's location in the centre of South Oxfordshire with few major settlements nearby.

**Crime statistics**

8.32.   Overall there has been a 14.6% increase in crime in 2021/22 compared to 2020/21. This may be due to coronavirus related lockdowns in the year 2020/21 resulting in lower crime rates. However, the overall crime rate in 2021/22 is still 11% higher than the pre-pandemic year of 2019/20. Victim based crime is the highest proportion of overall crime in the area, with violence against the person accounting for nearly half of all victim based crime.

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[42] Ibidem

| Table 18: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Crime Reporting Area Statistics 2019/20 to 2021/22 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crime | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | % Change |
| | | | | |
| All crime (excluding fraud) | 12,803 | 12,354 | 14,156 | 14.6 |
| | | | | |
| Victim based crime | 11415 | 10219 | 11206 | 9.7 |
| Violence against the person | 4094 | 4688 | 5434 | 15.9 |
| Sexual offences | 422 | 529 | 589 | 11.3 |
| Robbery | 53 | 55 | 55 | 0.0 |
| Burglary | 1062 | 693 | 749 | 8.1 |
| Vehicle crime | 1271 | 793 | 896 | 13.0 |
| Theft from person | 206 | 140 | 164 | 17.1 |
| Bicycle theft | 204 | 207 | 156 | -24.6 |
| Shoplifting | 799 | 627 | 559 | -10.9 |
| Making off without payment | 298 | 184 | 226 | 22.8 |
| All other theft offences | 1240 | 797 | 869 | 9.0 |
| Arson and Criminal damage | 1696 | 1506 | 1509 | 0.2 |
| | | | | |
| Crimes against society | 1388 | 2135 | 2950 | 38.2 |
| Drug offences | 389 | 623 | 600 | -3.7 |
| Possession of weapons offences | 82 | 110 | 78 | -29.1 |
| Public order offences | 657 | 1124 | 2018 | 79.5 |
| Miscellaneous crimes against society | 260 | 278 | 2544 | -8.6 |
| | | | | |
| Recorded hate crimes (included in above crimes) and incidents | 266 | 333 | 475 | 42.6 |
| | | | | |
| Domestic crime and incidents (domestic qualifier only) | 2094 | 2406 | 2356 | -2.1 |

Source: Thames Valley Police Performance Figures[43]


**Human health and wellbeing key challenges**

8.33.   Human health and wellbeing in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse is generally better than local and national averages. However, there are particular areas of deprivation that exist within the districts at Abingdon, Berinsfield, and Didcot. These disparities result in an average life expectancy difference of between 2.5 to 4.8 years between the least and most deprived areas in the districts.

8.34.   Local health strategies have also identified a need for new developments to create healthy places that enable people to travel actively, for example by foot

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[43] https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/thames-valley-police/priorities_and_how_we_are_doing/performance-figures/south-oxfordshire/summary-of-notifiable-offences-in-south-and-vale-march-2021-to-february-2022.pdf

or by bike.  This would help to address the slight increase in adult obesity shown in the Public Health England indicators, with physical exercise and access to green spaces also having benefits for mental health.

8.35.   Covid-19 death rates per 100,000 people in the districts appeared broadly consistent with the county average.  Furthermore, the government's strategy for Covid-19 has now relaxed in response to a high vaccination roll out, and a decline in cases at a national level.

8.36.   In the previous year crime rates rose by 14.6% in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, with the significant driver of these being victim based crime.  The NPPF states that local plans should create safe spaces that reduce crime, and reduce the fear of crime.  There is clearly a role for the lcoal plan in ensuring safe places in the districts.

8.37.   Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for heritage across the districts:

- Improving pockets of income, education, skills and training across the plan area, while also improving access to services and facilities in remote areas.
- Ensuring new developments create healthy places, ensuring residents can access services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active travel
- Creating safe places that are free from crime and free from the fear of crime, and protected from acts of terror.

8.38.   These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective One:** To reduce pollution of kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality

- **Objective Two:** To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring new developments plan for "healthy places", with sufficient social, physical and health infrastructure in place

- **Objective Three:** To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel

- **Objective Nine:** To improve pockets of income, education, skills and training across the plan area, while also improving access to services and facilities in remote areas.

- **Objective Ten:** To create safe places that are free from crime and free from the fear of crime, and protected from acts of terror.

# 9. Landscape

## Introduction

9.1. Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/ or human factors. Landscape character is a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

9.2. Townscape is the character and composition of the built environment including the buildings and the relationships between them, the different types of urban spaces, including green spaces, and the relationship between buildings and open spaces.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

9.3. This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance in relation to the landscape. It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Many international treaties and commitments that affect planning for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation. Adopting this focussed approach has allowed the councils to identify locally tailored sustainability objectives that still reflect the aspirations of, and commitments to, international treaties.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

9.4. Chapter 15 sets out national policies in relation to the natural environment, including landscape. Paragraph 174 states that planning policies should protect and enhance valued landscapes and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

9.5. Plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value. Local authorities should plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

9.6. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas.

9.7. When determining planning applications, local authorities should refuse permission for major development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, other than in exceptional circumstances.

9.8. The NPPF also affords significant protection to land within the Green Belt. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

9.9. The NPPG reiterates the NPPF's recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside. Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed.

9.10. The value of landscapes should be assessed through relevant management plans (such as AONB management plans). When developing planning policies, local authorities should use these management plans as part of the evidence base for the value and special qualities of these areas. Locally designated landscapes can be supported by a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment.

9.11. The guidance draws attention to Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. These require that 'in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land' in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, relevant authorities 'shall have regard' to their purposes for which these areas are designated.

9.12. The guidance emphasis that the scale and extent of development in areas of outstanding natural beauty should be limited, in view of the importance of conserving and enhancing their landscapes and scenic beauty. National policies for protecting these areas may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development in full through the plan-making process, and they are unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from adjoining (non-designated) areas.

9.13. Land within the setting of areas of outstanding natural beauty often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as

important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account.

9.14. The guidance also gives advice on light pollution.  Artificial lighting needs to be considered when a development may increase levels of lighting, or would be sensitive to prevailing levels of artificial lighting. It can be a source of annoyance to people, harmful to wildlife and undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky, especially in areas with intrinsically dark landscapes. Intrinsically dark landscapes are those entirely, or largely, uninterrupted by artificial light. National parks and nature reserves can serve as good examples, particularly where they support habitats for native nocturnal animals.

**The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2019 to 2024)**
*North Wessex Downs Council of Partners*

9.15. The North Wessex Downs extends into both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horsde.  The Council of Partners has set a vision for the North Wessex Downs as follows:

"*Vast, dramatic, undeveloped and distinct chalk downlands with nationally significant areas of semi-natural chalk grassland, contrasting with well-wooded plateaux, arable lands and intimate and secluded valleys, all rich in wildlife and cultural heritage; a high quality landscape of national and international significance which persists in increasingly urbanised surroundings; where people live, work and relax; where visitors are welcomed and contribute to a vibrant rural economy; and access to which supports the health and wellbeing of local residents and visitors alike.*"

9.16. The management plan identifies the following strategic landscape issues that are relevant to the Joint Local Plan:

a. The potential for development beyond the AONB boundary to visually damage or undermine the scale and critical qualities of landscape character areas.

b. The need to maintain and, where possible, extend chalk grassland habitat.

c. The need to conserve and enhance the remoteness and expansive open scale of the downland landscape.

d. The need to conserve and enhance the remote, secluded and relatively undeveloped character of more enclosed and intimate landscapes, including the character of the lanes.

e. Encouraging restoration of wood pasture landscapes, husbandry and ecology and ensuring future veteran tree succession.

f. The dominance of roads, in particular the impact of traffic noise, external lighting, road signs, insensitive materials and clutter on landscape character and people's experience of the landscape as they travel through it.

g. The need to maintain the pattern of discrete villages set within a quiet rural landscape, ensuring that the views to the surrounding dramatic scarps are undamaged.

h. The need to conserve and enhance the small-scale, secluded and rural character of the lowland mosaic, including the fragile lowland heaths.

i. Intense pressure for development throughout the AONB and its setting that threatens the character and quality of its landscape and risks merging of small settlements, encroachment by larger settlements and changes to the scale and nature of development boundaries.

j. The need to protect and enhance historic sites, buildings and landscapes and their setting.

9.17. It goes on to list the following landscape policies:

a) Encourage all partners and other stakeholders to have regard for AONB purposes across all relevant policies, programmes and activities.

b) Seek to identify and address the main factors that threaten the special qualities of the AONB landscape, e.g. water abstraction, agricultural practices including diffuse pollution of watercourses, lack of woodland management, damage to historic sites, and built development.

c) Use the North Wessex Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment[44] to inform policy and decision making across the AONB and its setting.

d) Support and promote good practice across all sectors that conserves and enhances the character and qualities of the North Wessex Downs landscape

e) Support and encourage efforts to conserve and explain the rich heritage of the North Wessex Downs, including archaeological sites.

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[44] https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/downloadable-resources/#general-resources

     f)     Ensure that all development in or affecting the setting of the AONB conserves and enhances the character, qualities and heritage of the North Wessex Downs landscape.

     g)     Raise the policy profile of the North Wessex Downs locally, regionally and nationally to secure the co-ordination and resourcing of policies and programmes for the benefit of the AONB.

**The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2019 to 2024)**
*The Chilterns Conservation Board*

9.18.    The Chilterns extends into South Oxfordshire, but not the Vale of White Horse. The Conservation Board has set a vision for Chilterns as follows:

*"Our vision is that the Chilterns will be cared for, forever and for everyone. A place where people are inspired by its distinctive natural beauty, space and tranquillity, to enjoy and care for the landscape. A place where natural beauty and cultural heritage is celebrated and enhanced. A place which gives space for nature to flourish and which provides us with the ingredients for healthy living, such as clean water, healthy soils and thriving wildlife. A place where communities live, work and breathe. A haven for people and wildlife."*

9.19.    The management plan identifies the following strategic objectives in relation to land, woodland and water that are relevant to the Joint Local Plan:

    a.    Protect and, where degraded, improve the Chilterns' natural capital resources, including soils, water, clean air, plant and animal life.

    b.    Ensure that the Chilterns remain a functional, working landscape with viable, sustainable and diverse farming, forestry and rural economy sectors.

    c.    Safeguard the Chilterns landscape by maintaining and enhancing all landscape features (such as hedges and trees), important wildlife habitats and cultural heritage at all times.

    d.    Increase resilience to and effective management of pests, diseases, non-native invasive species and climate change

    e.    Achieve Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives for the Chilterns water environment – rivers, valleys, wetlands and other riparian habitats.

    f.    Ensure that those who work in the landscape, local and national policy makers, and the public, understand the link between environmentally sustainable farming, forestry, rural economy sectors and a healthy Chilterns AONB.

9.20. It goes on to list the following land, woodland and water policies that are relevant to the Joint Local Plan:

a) Promote the production and processing of local produce, including venison, traditional orchard fruit juice and wood-fuel.

b) Encourage landowners and local communities to plant over 500 new hedgerow trees across the Chilterns per year.

c) Link and buffer valued habitats – including grasslands, woodlands, rivers and streams – by a network of field margins (both grass and annually cultivated unsown arable margins as appropriate), new tree and woodland planting and low intensity grassland areas

d) Ensure there is no net loss of woodland and no loss of irreplaceable ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees within the AONB

e) Manage glades, other open areas and woodland edges to provide a varied habitat for woodland birds, butterflies and plants.

f) Maintain and enhance traditional Chilterns orchards and encourage their use.

g) Protect and sensitively manage historic and cultural features.

h) Enhance and restore the natural form, function and connectivity of chalk streams and associated habitats

i) Encourage management that conserves and enhances the characteristic river valley landscape.

**Landscape Character**

9.21. The Vale of White Horse is covered by three of Natural England's broad scale National Character Areas and South Oxfordshire by 5. The national Character Areas within Vale of White Horse District are the 'Upper Thames Clay Vales' (Character Area 108), 'Midvale Ridge' (Character Area 109), and 'Berkshire and Marlborough Downs' (Character Area 116) and within South Oxfordshire District Council are 'Upper Thames Clay Vales' (Character Area 108), 'Midvale Ridge' (Character Area 109), 'Chilterns' (Character Area 110), 'Thames Valley' (Character Area 115) and 'Berkshire and Marlborough Downs' (Character Area 116).

9.22. A county-wide scale of assessment is provided by the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS 2004) which divides Oxfordshire into 9 large scale 'Character Areas' which broadly accord with the National Character Areas covering the county. Each Character Area consists of a mosaic of 24 smaller 'landscape types'.

9.23. Both Councils have a district-scale Landscape Character Assessment. The southern portion of the of the Vale of White Horse and a western portion of South Oxfordshire lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Natural Beauty (AONB). The 'North Wessex Downs AONB: Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2002)' categorises the AONB into a number of 'Landscape Types' and more detailed 'Character Areas', these Character Areas include the part of the AONB within the Vale of White Horse District. Central and southern areas of South Oxfordshire lie within the Chilton's Area of Natural Beauty.

9.24. The District Landscape Character Assessments have regard to all the above studies to ensure, wherever possible, a consistent approach to landscape characterisation across the County.

### Oxford View Cones Study 2015
*Oxford City Council, Oxford Preservation Trust, Historic England*

9.25. The Oxford View Cones Study covers the importance of the historic landscape and views of Oxford's 'dreaming spires' including their setting. Both the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council form the backdrop to some of the important views of the 'dreaming spires', with the Vale of White Horse containing 3 of the Oxford View Cone locations: views from the western hills, Raleigh Park, Boars Hill and A34 Interchange at Hinksey Hill. South Oxfordshire contains views from the north-eastern hills, Elsfield. The joint local plan will need to have regard to the unique sensitivities, setting and views of Oxford's 'dreaming spires'.

### Vale of White Horse Landscape Character Assessment 2017
*Vale of White Horse District Council (Hackinson Duckett Associates)*

9.26. The Vale of White Horse District consists of several distinctive bands of landscape crossing east-west through the District and beyond. As its name suggests, the Vale of White Horse District is centred on a broad valley feature, which rises to the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north, and the Chalk Downs (which includes the White Horse of Uffington), to the south. To the north and east, the landscape descends to the Thames valley, the edges of which lie just inside the District boundary.

9.27. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies Landscape Types that reflect the dominant influences on landscape character, often combining, geology, landform and land cover. In all cases the name conveys some sense of the character of the landscape. A single Landscape Type has broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern where it occurs. This does not mean that it will be identical across the extent of the Type, rather that there is a common pattern, which can be discerned. The twelve Landscape Types which create the unique and distinctive character of the Vale of White Horse District landscape are further sub-divided into 83 Landscape Character Areas which are described in more detail.

9.28. The Landscape Character Assessment contains Evaluation and Guidance for each Landscape Type including identifying factors that may have an effect on landscape character in the future. An outline landscape strategy which sets out broad objectives and principles to manage and direct landscape change in order to protect the highest quality and most sensitive landscapes from adverse change and to encourage positive change in weak or degraded landscapes. There are also guidelines to indicate the actions required, with reference to the overall landscape objective in order to ensure that distinctive character is maintained, these relate to both land management and prescriptions specifically related to built development.

9.29. It is not therefore possible to repeat all the information in this report. However, proposals for the joint local plan will need to have regard to the unique sensitivities and opportunities presented in each landscape character area.

**South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment 2017**
*South Oxfordshire District Council (Lepus Consulting)*

9.30. South Oxfordshire District consists of a number of areas of distinctive landscape character, extending south-west to north-east across the district and beyond. The Chiltern Hills form the south-eastern part of the district, with their north-western boundary defined by the distinctive escarpment. Below this sits the Clay Vale which extend across the north-western part of the district, between the Chilterns escarpment and the Midvale Ridge, a band of low-lying hills in the north-west. The Landscape Character Assessment divides the entire district of South Oxfordshire into eleven Landscape Character Areas and 24 Landscape Types. The Landscape Character Areas are the unique individual geographical areas in which landscape types occur. Landscape Types are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character.

9.31. The Landscape Character Assessment is structured around the Landscape Character Areas in which there are guidelines for planning, managing, and protecting distinctiveness and a 'checklist' for managing and mitigating change to help guide provide assistance to decision makers.

9.32. Landscape Character Assessment should be used to understand the landscape make up of an area to give context to proposals.

9.33. It is not possible to repeat all of the information in this report. However, proposals for the joint local plan will need to have regard to the unique sensitivities and opportunities presented in each landscape character area.

**Baseline information**

9.34. The Oxford Green Belt extends into South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. The extent of the Green Belt is shown in Appendix Eight.

9.35. The Landscape Character Assessments for both districts provide the most up to date information on the status of landscape parcels within the plan area. As with the above, it is too much information to replicate here. Instead, council officers will need to have regard to these assessments, or their replacement, when assessing reasonable alternatives for the plan.

**Key landscape challenges**

9.36. National planning policies and guidance recognise the intrinsic nature and beauty of the countryside, and that local plans should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. Greater protection should be afforded to protected landscapes, including the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty that extend into South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

9.37. Currently there is little local evidence about the value of non-designated, locally important landscape assets, including those areas enjoyed for their tranquillity. The local plan could be a key document in collecting this evidence and developing land use policies to protect these areas.

9.38. The Green Belt attracts significant protection in national planning policies and plays an important role in preventing the merging of settlements. Recent local plans have removed land from the Green Belt around Oxford, placing further pressure on its role and function.

9.39. Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for heritage across the districts:

- Protecting and managing the character and appearance of the landscape/townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place, the countryside and landscape quality.
- Ensuring great weight is given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty including development within their setting, which should be sensitively located and designed.
- Identifying and protecting locally significant landscape assets
- Avoiding development in the Oxford Green Belt where this would erode the functions of the Green Belt.

9.40. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective 11:** To protect and manage the character and appearance of the landscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place, the countryside, Greenbelt and landscape quality.

- **Objective 12:** To ensure great weight is given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty including development within their setting, which should be sensitively located and designed.

# 10.  Material assets

## Introduction

10.1.  Material assets can cover a number of characteristics and indicators across both districts.  They can usually be divided into one of two categories.  The first, built assets, includes infrastructure ranging from utilities such as energy, transport, water, through to social assets such as schools, healthcare and greenspace.  The second, natural assets include minerals, watercourses, natural flood management processes, forestry, woodland and agricultural land.

10.2.  This chapter assesses the relevant plans, policies and programmes relevant to climatic factors to identify targets and commitments that these councils or our national government have signed up to.  It then goes on to identify a baseline of information using locally specific information where available, or using regional, national, or international data where it is not.  This then provides the councils with an indication of the districts' current performance against our wider commitments. We have used this process to identify four climate focussed sustainability objectives.  As set out in the methodology section, we will use these to inform the development of the Local Plan 2041.

## Relevant plans, policies and programmes

10.3.  This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance in relation to climatic factors.  It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.  Many international treaties and commitments that affect planning for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation.  Adopting this focussed approach has allowed the councils to identify locally tailored sustainability objectives that still reflect the aspirations of, and commitments to, international treaties.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

10.4.  Chapter 8 of the Framework sets out the need to create healthy and safe communities.  This includes the need to plan for mixed use developments that facilitate community interaction, prioritise walking and cycling, reduce crime and the fear of crime, and to support healthy lifestyles.

10.5.  Paragraph 93 sets out the need to plan for shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses, and places of worship), and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

Local Plans should also support the delivery of local health and cultural strategies, guard against the loss of valued facilities and services, ensure that shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing, jobs, and community services and facilities.

10.6.    Paragraph 94 states that local plans should consider the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration.

10.7.    Paragraph 95 sets out the need for local plans to ensure a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local authorities should give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

10.8.    Paragraphs 98 to 103 set out the importance of access to open space. They identify the need to protect existing open spaces, sport and recreational buildings and land, resisting their loss. Planning policies should also protect and enhance public rights of way. Local Plans can also designate land as Local Green Space to identify and protect green areas of particular importance.

10.9.    Chapter 10 of the NPPF supports the development of high quality communications infrastructure. It states that planning policies should allow for the expansion of electronic communications networks (including 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Where communications masts are needed, they should be kept to a minimum, meeting the needs of consumers while providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Wide-ranging Article 4 direction bans on new communications infrastructure should be avoided.

10.10.   Paragraphs 119 to 123 set out how local plans should make efficient use of land, prioritising development on previously developed land. Planning policies:

a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including opportunities to achieve net environmental gains;

b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;

c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;

d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for

housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively; and

e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes.

10.11. Paragraph 209 of the NPPF identifies the need for a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy, and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.

10.12. The framework identifies how planning policies should be developed to allow for the extraction of minerals. However, these are largely not relevant to the Joint Local Plan as the Councils are not the minerals and waste authority (this is Oxfordshire County Council).

10.13. Within Mineral Safeguarding and Mineral Consultation Areas planning policies should avoid allocating non-mineral development. Where minerals do exist, and it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place, policies should facilitate the prior extraction of minerals.

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

10.14. The NPPG gives additional guidance to the topics discussed in the NPPF. It advises local authorities on: re-allocating land for alternative uses where a development has not yet taken place (where certain criteria are met); land assembly; meanwhile uses; increasing densities and the design factors associated with this; creating healthy and inclusive communities; and on mineral extraction.

10.15. Many of the topics relating to material assets are assessed in detail under other chapters in this report (for example, Population and Human Health cover social infrastructure).

**Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy 2017**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

10.16. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy identifies a number of Mineral Resource Areas (Policy M3), Mineral Safeguarding Areas (Policy M8), Mineral Consultation Areas, and Safeguarded Rail Depots (Policy M9).

10.17. Policy M3 identifies the following principal locations for working aggregate minerals in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse :

a) The Thames and Lower Thames Valley from Oxford to Cholsey (sharp sand and gravel)

b) The Thames Valley area from Caversham to Shiplake (sharp sand and gravel)

c) The Corallian Ridge from Oxford to Faringdon (soft sand)

d) The area east of Faringdon (crushed rock)

10.18. The Core strategy notes that a subsequent Site Allocations document will identify specific sites (quarry sites / extensions to quarry sites) within these areas.

10.19. Within the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, planning permission for development that would hinder the possible future working of these minerals will not be permitted unless it can be shown that:

a) the site has been allocated for development in a local plan or neighbourhood plan; or

b) the need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource; or

c) the mineral will be extracted prior to development taking place.

10.20. Policy M9 protects the infrastructure that supports the supply of minerals in Oxfordshire. This includes a rail depot at Appleford Sidings, Sutton Courtenay in the Vale of White Horse.

**Baseline information**

**Draft Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report 2018**
*Oxfordshire County Council (July 2020)*

10.21. The Minerals and Waste Monitoring report contains several indicators covering both minerals and waste recycling.

a) In 2018 the County Council permitted a new site for crushing and screening of reject and used asphalt to produce recycled asphalt in Sutton Courtenay[45]. It has a waste capacity of 50,000 tonnes per annum.

b) The following recycling / secondary materials sites were present in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse:

i. Aasvogel, Grove Industrial Park – 40,000 tonnes per annum

ii. Hundridge Farm, Wallingford – 5,000 tonnes per annum

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[45] Application reference MW.005/16

iii. Playhatch Quarry, 75,000 tonnes per annum

iv. Rumbold's Pit, Ewelme – 20,000 tonnes per annum

v. Ewelme No.2 Landfill – 12,000 tonnes per annum

vi. Dix Pit Complex – 95,000 tonnes per annum

vii. Prospect Farm, Chilton – 75,000 tonnes per annum

viii. Shelllingford Quarry – 100,000 tonnes per annum

ix. Sutton Courtenay Block Recycling – 62,500 tonnes per annum

x. Sutton Courtenay Asphalt Recycling Plant – 50,000 tonnes per annum

xi. Upwood Quarry, Besselsleigh – 15,000 tonnes per annum

xii. Stonepitt Barn, Frilford – 75,000 tonnes per annum

c) Across Oxfordshire, the following total secondary and recycled aggregate sales have been as follows since 2009:

**Table 19: total secondary and recycled aggregate sales 2009 to 2018**

| Year | Sales (tonnes) |
|------|----------------|
| 2009 | 286,000 |
| 2010 | 152,000 |
| 2011 | 236,000 |
| 2012 | 466,000 |
| 2013 | 422,000 |
| 2014 | 271,000 |
| 2015 | 453,000 |
| 2016 | 534,000 |
| 2017 | 417,000 |
| 2018 | 406,000 |

d) In Oxfordshire in 2018, recorded sales of secondary and recycled aggregates totalled 0.406 megatons, accounting for approximately 18.5% of the total sales of aggregates produced in Oxfordshire (2.205 megatons). There was not a 100% return rate for the annual survey that

collects this information, and therefore the actual proportion may be higher.

e) 3,000,000 tonnes of aggregate extraction was permitted in 2018. An increase of 385,000 tonnes since 2017 which saw 2,615,000 tonnes permitted.

**Key material assets challenges**

10.22. Many characteristics relating to material assets are addressed in other topic areas – particularly around infrastructure in so far as it relates to human health (such as GP surgeries, schools, open space) or its function in the natural environment (such as open space for flooding, biodiversity, climate change etc.).  Hence, much of this chapter has focussed on the minerals assets present in the districts.

10.23. Minerals and Waste policies are prepared and enforced by Oxfordshire County Council as the Minerals and Waste authority, and so much of the assessment relates to their functions.  However, the joint local plan has a role to play in protecting these material assets where they exist.

10.24. Based on the above, the council considers that the following are the key challenges for heritage across the districts:

- Ensuring that extraction of resources takes place prior to any development in Mineral Resource Areas, Mineral Safeguarding Areas, Mineral Consultation Areas.

- Avoiding development in safeguarded Mineral Infrastructure Zones.

- Minimising the use of new materials and prioritising the reuse and recycling of existing materials and aggregate.

10.25. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective 13:** Ensure that extraction of resources takes place prior to any development in Mineral Resource Areas, Mineral Safeguarding Areas, Mineral Consultation Areas, and avoid development in Mineral Infrastructure Zones.

- **Objective 14:** To minimise the use of new materials and prioritise the reuse and recycle of existing materials and aggregate.

# 11. Population

**Introduction**

11.1.   The Joint Local Plan will need to consider its impact upon population – i.e., all of the individuals occupying South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts, and those that will occupy the districts in the future. It will also need to accommodate a growing population and address the issue of providing sufficient, sustainable homes for the whole community. Any issues of deprivation and crime and any impacts on the health of the population must also be considered and addressed.

11.2.   This chapter assesses the relevant plans, policies, and programmes that affect our population and identifies a baseline of information using locally specific information as well as regional and national data where relevant.

11.3.   This then provides the councils with an indication of the districts' current picture and performance. We have used this process to identify 5 sustainability objectives.  As set out in the methodology section, we will use these to inform the development of the Joint Local Plan 2041.

**Relevant plans, policies and programmes**

11.4.   This section summarises the relevant plans, policies and programmes that contain objectives, policies or guidance relating to Population.  It is not an exhaustive assessment of every plan that sits above the local plan, rather an in-depth qualitative assessment of key documents with specific targets for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.  Many commitments that affect planning, for example, are already addressed in the National Planning Policy Framework or other national legislation.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

11.5.   Paragraph 8 highlights the three 'interdependent' sustainable development objectives that 'need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways'. These are economic, social and environmental objectives .

11.6.   The economic and social objectives are particularly relevant to this Population chapter; please see the Human Health chapter for focus on the environmental objective.

11.7.   Paragraph 8's overarching economic objective is to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

11.8. Paragraph 8's overarching social objective is to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

11.9. Paragraph 60 highlights the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, and how it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed and that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.

11.10. Paragraph 61 explains that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

11.11. Paragraph 62 explains that within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes).

11.12. Paragraph 66 highlights how strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period.

11.13. Paragraph 92 explains that policies should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive places that are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion. It also encourages the enablement and support of healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

11.14. Paragraph 93 explains local authorities must provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs and that planning policies and decisions should:

a. plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open

space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; and b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies.

11.15. Paragraph 131 highlights local authorities need to create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*(Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities)*

11.16. **School places:** the PPG highlights how local authorities with education responsibilities forecast the need for new school places and report this to the Government through an annual school capacity survey. They consider natural population change, such as birth rates, the effects of parental choice, and estimate additional needs from new housing with reference to pupil numbers from recent developments and other evidence. The Department for Education has also published the 'Securing developer contributions for education' guidance for local authorities on estimating pupil numbers from new housing and securing contributions for the creation of additional school places for all education phases (age 0-19 years and special educational needs) over the plan period.

11.17. **Facilities:** The PPG also emphasizes that Plans should seek to meet the development needs of their area, including community facilities, such as schools. It highlights that they should, at the most appropriate level, allocate sufficient suitable land for schools to meet the need anticipated over the plan period, taking into account needs that may cross local authority boundaries. Plan-makers will need to work with local authorities with education responsibilities and developers to coordinate the phasing and delivery of housing growth with the delivery of new school places to ensure that sufficient school capacity is available at the right time. Mainstream schools must be of a viable size and format and planned for on the basis of standard class sizes.

11.18. **Future-proofing** may also be considered, for example designating land adjacent to education sites to allow for future expansion if required. Where a plan safeguards additional land specifically for education, the land can be made available for purchase by the local authority within a suitable period, after which other uses may be permissible. If the additional land is required for education, this will preclude alternative uses for the purposes of land valuation.

11.19. **Housing needs of different groups:** The PPG provides advice on calculating overall housing needs and planning for the housing needs of different groups. This includes advice regarding affordable housing, rural housing and sustainable rural communities, the private rented sector, self and custom housebuilding, student housing, housing for rural workers, rural exception sites and housing for older and disabled people.

11.20. **Crime:** The PPG advises on safe communities. It states that planning provides an important opportunity to consider the security of the built environment, those that live and work in it and the services it provides.

11.21. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended) requires all local, joint and combined authorities (as well as National Parks, the Broads Authority and the Greater London Authority) to exercise their functions with due regard to their likely effect on crime and disorder, and to do all they reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder. Crime for these purposes includes terrorism.

11.22. **Resilience and security:** The PPG emphasises how good design that considers security as an intrinsic part of a masterplan or individual development can help achieve places that are safe, as well as attractive, which function well, and which do not need subsequent work to achieve or improve resilience. However, it explains good security is not only about physical measures and design; it requires risks and mitigation to be considered in a holistic way.

11.23. Local, joint and combined authorities are recommended through the PPG to undertake a Security Considerations Assessment (SCA) process (either through decision taking or plan-making) or take into account a SCA process undertaken by developers and other applicants as part of the design, construction and management of new developments or assembling a masterplan. SCA provides a mechanism by which organisations can demonstrate, through a fully documented process, that potential security-related vulnerabilities have been identified, assessed and, where necessary, addressed in a manner that is appropriate and proportionate.

11.24. **Good design** means a wide range of crimes from theft to terrorism are less likely to happen by making committing those crimes more difficult. It helps create safer places, infrastructure and buildings that are less vulnerable to terrorist attack and, should an attack take place, where people are better protected from its impacts. It can also reduce the cost and impact of security measures by avoiding retrospective works and enable mitigating measures to be blended into the environment.

**Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015)**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

11.25.  Paragraph 8 explains that explains that Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. To this end, they should be consistent with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development and this planning policy for traveller sites.

11.26.  Paragraph 9 highlights that local planning authorities should set pitch targets for gypsies and travellers and plot targets for travelling showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring local planning authorities.

11.27.  Paragraph 10 explains that local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan:

- identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against their locally set targets

- identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15

- consider production of joint development plans that set targets on a cross-authority basis, to provide more flexibility in identifying sites, particularly if a local planning authority has special or strict planning constraints across its area (local planning authorities have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries)

- relate the number of pitches or plots to the circumstances of the specific size and location of the site and the surrounding population's size.

11.28.  Paragraph 11 states that criteria should be set to guide land supply allocations where there is identified need. Where there is no identified need, criteria-based policies should be included to provide a basis for decisions in case applications nevertheless come forward. Criteria based policies should be fair and should facilitate the traditional and nomadic life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

11.29.  Paragraph 12 explains that in exceptional cases, where a local planning authority is burdened by a large-scale unauthorised site that has significantly increased their need, and their area is subject to strict and special planning constraints, then there is no assumption that the local planning authority is required to plan to meet their traveller site needs in full.

11.30. Paragraph 13 emphasizes that local planning authorities should ensure that traveller sites are sustainable economically, socially and environmentally.

**South Oxfordshire District Council Corporate Plan 2020**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

11.31. Key themes in the Corporate Plan that address the population and its needs include:

11.32. Improved economic and community well-being – the council want to:

- reimagine high streets, helping independent small businesses to thrive and to encourage cultural well-being for all
- encourage clean local economic development and support our business hubs, centres of scientific excellence and our educational establishments to become leaders in sustainable technology, innovation and enterprise
- help our community groups to strengthen cohesion, reduce social isolation and tackle areas of deprivation.

11.33. Homes and infrastructure that meet local needs – the council want to:

- ensure that new homes and infrastructure in South Oxfordshire meet local needs, are sustainable, zero carbon in their build and operation and high quality in design
- provide homes that people can afford to live in. New developments will be accessible with walking, cycling and public transport a priority. Neighbourhood plans and local participation will sit at the heart of our planning process.
- work with partners to ensure that development is appropriate for our communities.

**Vale of White Horse District Council Corporate Plan 2020**
*Vale of White Horse District Council*

11.34. Key themes in the Corporate Plan that address the population and its needs include:

Providing the homes people need – the council aim to:

- find ways to provide more genuinely affordable housing, including housing for social rent, to better provide for the needs of the Vale residents
- provide a mix of tenures in each development to build sustainable homes in balanced and sustainable communities
- use our influence on decision makers, where the responsibility lies outside of Vale.

11.35.   And explain they will do this by:

- exploring and considering opportunities to bring forward the delivery of homes people can afford
- adopting a policy framework that ensures those homes could be delivered in a way that supports the environment and people living healthy lives.

11.36.   *Building healthy communities* – the council aim to:

- contribute to making people's lives healthier by encouraging the switch to more active travel, improving air quality where people work and live, and providing active opportunities.

11.37.   And explain they will do this by:

- building strong communities and connections with a sense of place and strong community identity
- promoting healthy place shaping and active communities for everyone
- safeguarding and supporting our vulnerable residents.

### Baseline information

11.38.   The ONS[46] provide annual population estimates for a range of geographies and sub-groups nation-wide. Such information is important for plan-making; so that Local Authorities are aware of the current and predicted demographies of their populations, whether the population is increasing/decreasing; and whether there appear particular changes, or patterns of change, in different age groups. For example, an ageing population will mean that different types of housing, or specialist housing, may be required to accommodate their needs. The baseline information in this scoping document addresses the statistics gathered and projected by the Office of National Statistics for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

11.39.   The socio-demographic profile of an area helps councils and healthcare providers understand how to plan services and development for the future. Public Health England, in their Local Authority Profiles[47], advise that 'different population groups may have different health and social care needs and are likely to interact with services in different ways'.

11.40.   The ONS age profiles of and projections for the districts, compared to the UK population, are depicted overleaf:

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[46] ONS Population Estimates
https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates
[47] Public Health England – Local Authority Profiles 2018 and 2019 https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles

# Figure 27: UK, South Oxfordshire, and Vale of White Horse Population Profiles

## UK Population 2018

**66,435,550** people in 2018

All ages

**32,790,202** males    49.4%

**33,645,348** females    50.6%
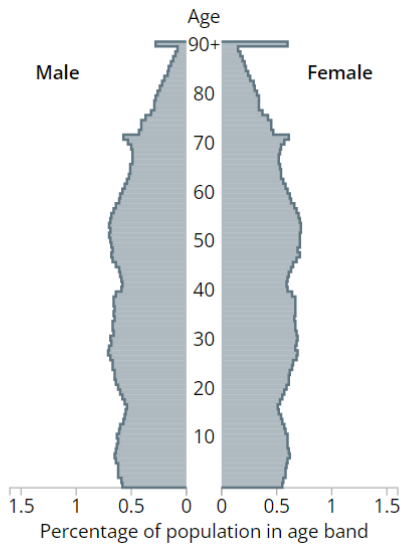
## South Oxfordshire 2018

**140,504** people in 2018

All ages

**69,336** males    49.3%

**71,168** females    50.7%
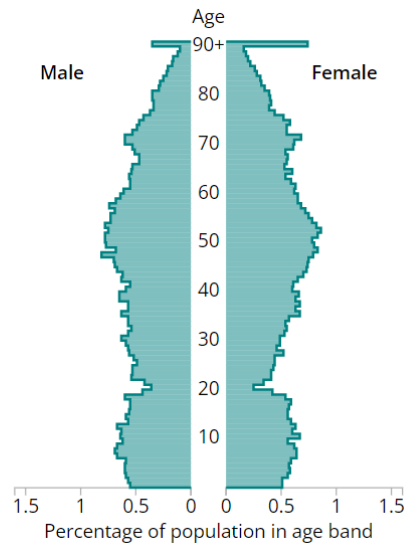
## Vale of White Horse 2018

**133,732** people in 2018

All ages

**66,650** males    49.8%

**67,082** females    50.2%
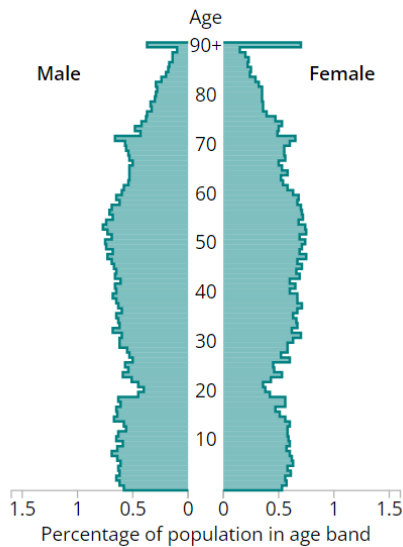
**Figure 28: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Population Projections 2028**

**South Oxfordshire Projection 2028**
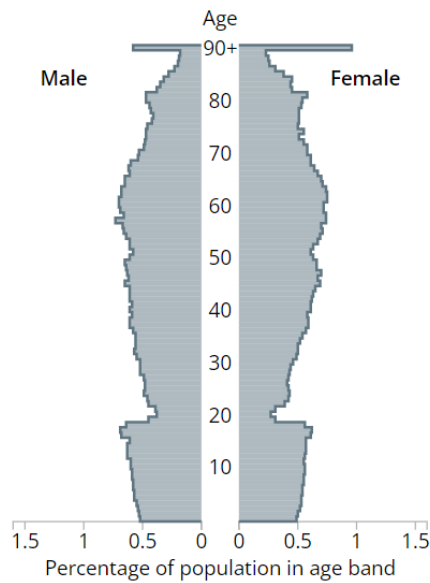
**Vale of White Horse Projection 2028**
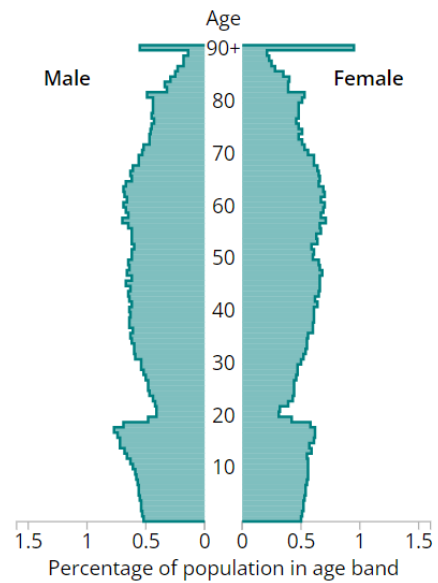


11.41. The ONS graphs highlight the following:

- South and Vale's current demographies are very similar to the overall UK population, with the main exception being the 19-22 year age group: the districts' smallest demographic and much smaller than the UK average.
- This difference is most likely a result of 19-22 years olds moving away from the districts to go to University, as neither district contains a major University.
- Both districts' populations are expected to increase by 2028; South Oxfordshire by 4.17% and Vale of White Horse by 3.98%.

11.42. Looking at the population aged 16-64 from latest ONS figures[48] is also important, as, for example, this is the age bracket for which housing is in most demand, has highest impacts on the housing market and is also the age bracket contributing the most to the economy.

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[48] ONS – Employment and Labour Market
https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/timeseries/lf2o/lms

**Oxfordshire Insight**
*Oxfordshire County Council*

11.43. Oxfordshire Insight[49] publish information and evidence about Oxfordshire and its population, in order to support the development of local services. The mid-2020 ONS estimate (from the ONS Release date of June 2021) of the district's populations was 143,782 (South Oxfordshire) and 137,910 (Vale of White Horse). This can be compared with a population of 134,961 (South Oxfordshire) and 121,891 (Vale of White Horse) in 2011, so a 6.54% increase in South and a 13.14% increase in Vale.

11.44. 2022 housing-led forecasts from the JSNA (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment) have also highlighted the following information which are of interest for plan-making because they depict projections by major settlements in the districts:

**Figure 29: JNSA Population projections South Oxfordshire**



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49 https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/population
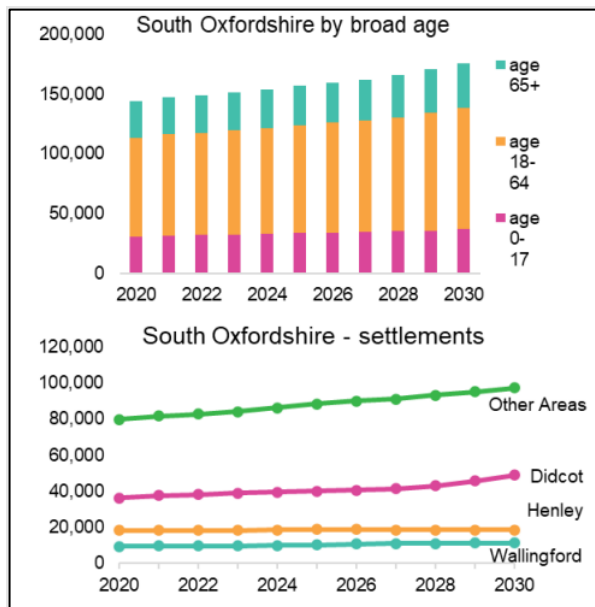
**Figure 30: JNSA Population projections Vale of White Horse**
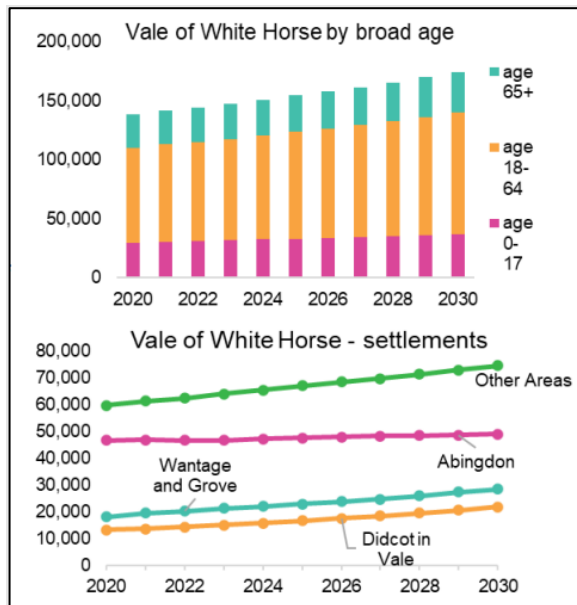


11.45. **South Oxfordshire:** The housing-led forecasts show the population of South Oxfordshire increasing from 143,800 in 2020 to 175,800 by 2030 (+32,000, +22%).

- There is expected to be a significant increase in Didcot due to Great Western Park. Near Culham, Chalgrove and bordering Oxford Science Park.
- The population of Didcot and the surrounding area is expected to grow from 36,400 to 48,800 (+34%).
- Note that Didcot-related developments to the west of the town, based in Vale of White Horse district, are included in the forecasts for Vale of White Horse.

11.46. **Vale of White Horse:** The housing-led forecasts show the population of Vale of White Horse increasing from 137,900 in 2020 to 174,000 by 2030 (+36,100, +26%).

- There is expected to be a significant increase in the population due to Valley Park housing development between Harwell and Didcot; Grove Airfield; Dalton Barracks and land north of Abingdon.
- The population of Wantage and Grove is expected to grow from 18,000 to 28,500 (+58%).
- The area west of Didcot in Vale is expected to grow from 13,200 to 21,800 (65%)'.

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**2020-2021 School Capacity Release and Local Authority Pupil Forecasts**
*UK Government*

11.47. The government's local authority pupil forecasts[50] suggest:

- Demand for primary school places will peak in 2021/22 and then decrease.
- Local authorities expect demand for secondary school places will rise until 2025/26 and then level off. This is due to the increase previously seen in primary pupil numbers continuing to move through the secondary phase.

11.48. This information is obtained from school place planning estimates and a similar picture is apparent across Oxfordshire. When considering the picture across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse for pupil forecasts and estimated school capacity, the vast majority of secondary schools show spare places are available. Across the board primary school figures in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse show, overall, schools currently have more capacity than places required; but individual schools tend to be over- or under- subscribed often dependent on their OFSTED results.

11.49. Such statistics are used by the government and councils to estimate the future need for additional school places, and also support a range of policy developments, such as need for housing in future years. Please see **Appendix Nine** for Pupil Forecasts by Area[51].

**Pupil Place Plan**
*Oxfordshire County Council*

11.50. Oxfordshire County Council published their latest 'Pupil Place Plan'[52] to 2026 in January 2022. It highlights how the county council expect school provision to change over the next few years. It brings together information from a range of sources and sets out the issues the county council will face in meeting its statutory duties for providing nursery and school places up to 2025 and beyond.

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[50] Schools Capacity 2020/21 - https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-capacity/2020-21
[51]
https://public.tableau.com/views/IMD2019Oxfordshire/DecileHeatMap?%3Aembed=y&%3Adisplay_count=no&%3AshowVizHome=no#1
[52] Oxfordshire County Council - Pupil Place Plan to 2026
https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/our-work-schools/PupilPlacePlan2021_22-2025_26_0.pdf

11.51. The plan explains that future demand for school places depends on six main factors:

- fertility and birth rates;
- migration;
- housing growth;
- troop movements in and out of the county;
- changes in the pattern of participation in state sector education;
- and crossboundary movement.

11.52. It explains that there has, since 2015, been 'an overall fall in births in Oxfordshire. However, the pattern is not consistent either between districts or at a smaller scale: differences between MSOAs and across towns suggest that the divergence of birth rates is likely to be related to large-scale housing development in some areas attracting young families. This divergence of births has resulted in very difference pressures across the county, with some areas still seeing rising demand for primary school places and others seeing sharp falls'.

**Figure 31: Births by district 2013 to 2020**
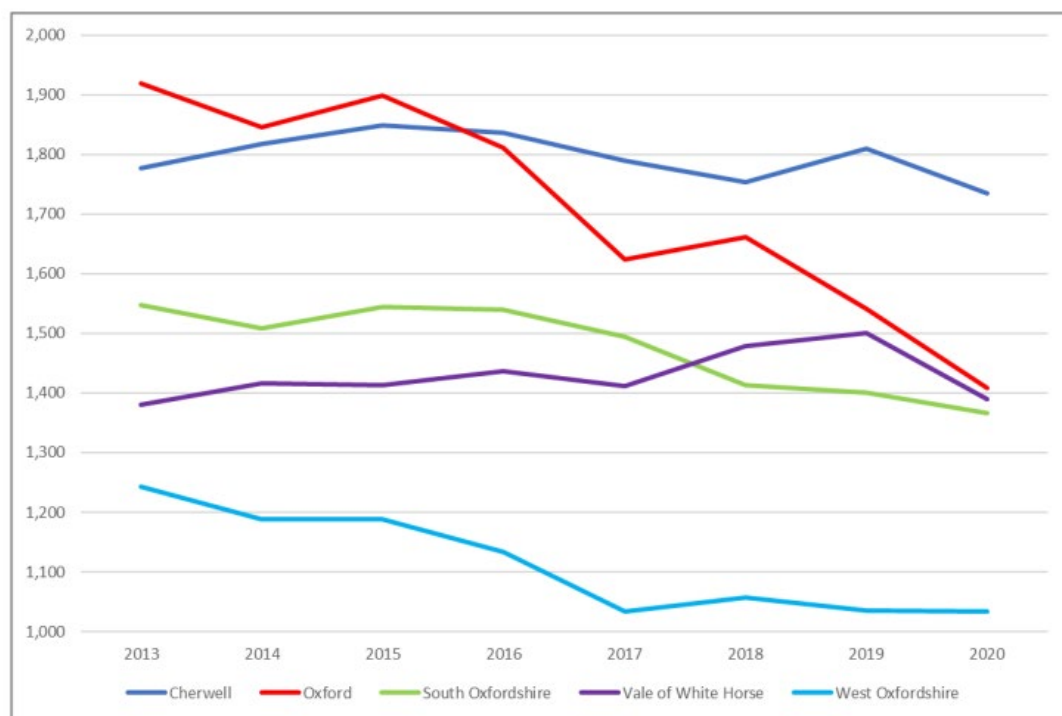


11.53. The graph above shows how, since 2015, births in South Oxfordshire have slowly, steadily decreased. In contrast, Vale of White Horse saw increases in 2016, 2018 and 2019, before a sharp fall in 2020; both districts highlighting the different pressures across the whole county.

**Figure 31: Planned housing delivery by district**
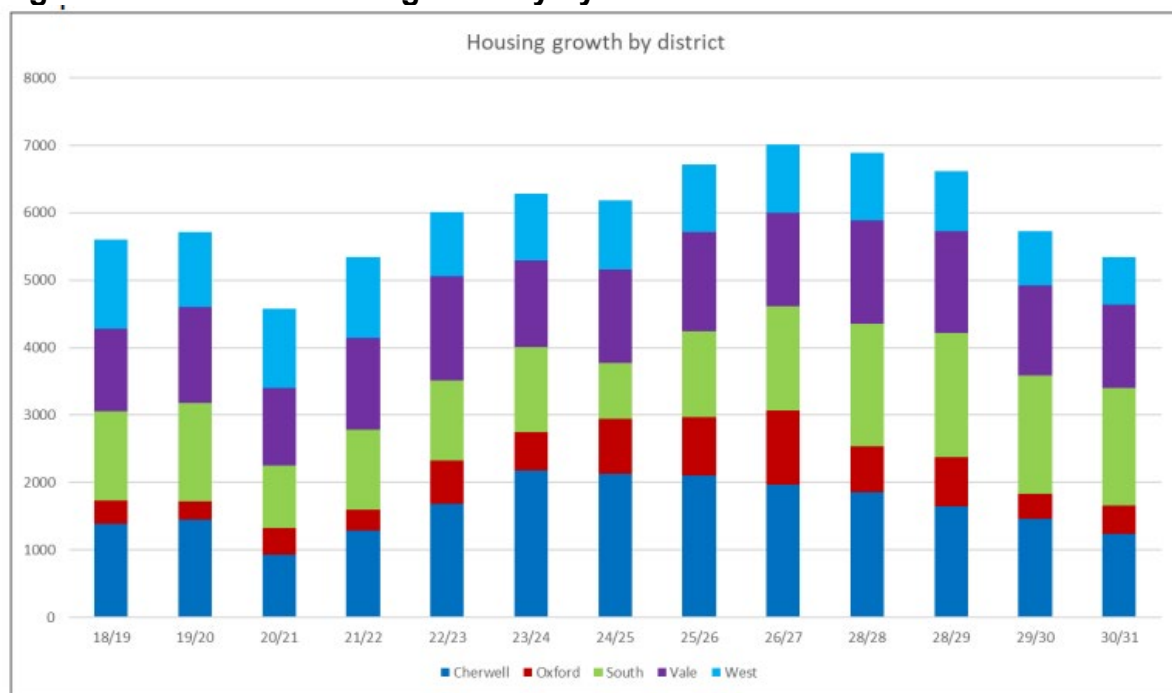


11.54. Key issues highlighted for South and Vale include

11.55. Migration: [Over the ten years to 2018]. For internal (within UK) migration, there was a net movement out of Oxford…and a net inflow to South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Net migration into Cherwell and Vale of White Horse rose markedly in the last two years, which correlates with where the bulk of new housing has been over that time period. In general, there is a pattern of families moving out of Oxford city into surrounding districts.

11.56. Troop movements in and out of the county: A sizable portion of Oxfordshire school children are therefore from Armed Forces families. The highest concentration is in the Vale of White Horse, where an estimated 5% of 0-15 year olds are from Armed Forces families. Troop movements can have significant effects on pupil numbers in several areas within Oxfordshire, particularly around Carterton, Bicester, Abingdon and Didcot. The impact can also be felt more widely, for example with the relocation of personnel from RAF Lyneham to RAF Brize Norton, where, due to insufficient military accommodation being available in Carterton, families were dispersed over a wider area, causing pressure on school places in towns such as Faringdon and Watchfield.

11.57. Cross-boundary movement: At primary level, imports and exports of pupils broadly balance. Most inward net movement of pupils is from Reading (adjoining Henley & Sonning Common planning areas).

11.58. Other areas which can be affected by net inward movement are: Faringdon planning area where there is movement of pupils from Swindon. Other areas which can be affected by net outward movement are: Bicester, Wheatley and Thame planning areas where there is movement of pupils to Buckinghamshire; and Chipping Norton, Burford and Faringdon planning areas where there is movement of pupils to Gloucestershire.

11.59. At secondary level, Oxfordshire is a net importer to the extent of around 1.6% of the school population. Most inward net movement of pupils is from Buckinghamshire (adjoining Bicester, Wheatley and Thame planning areas, mostly affecting Lord William's School in Thame), which is largely related to selective education in Buckinghamshire, and from Reading (adjoining Henley & Sonning Common planning areas), mostly related to a shortage of secondary school places in north Reading. There are also smaller net inflows from W Berks (adjoining Faringdon, Wantage, Didcot, Wallingford, Woodcote and Sonning Common planning areas) and Swindon (adjoining Faringdon planning area).

11.60. The 2021 annual review of early years sufficiency has confirmed several areas with potential place shortfalls including South-East Didcot, Chinnor and Grove.

**Office for National Statistics (Productivity)**

11.61. GVA (gross value added) means the value generated by any unit engaged in the production of goods and services[53]. Both South and Vale's GVAs, from 2011-2016, steadily increased:

| Table 20: Gross Value Added (Balanced) by Local Authority £ million | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| District | Industry area | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| South Oxfordshire | All industries | 3188 | 3292 | 3592 | 3738 | 3912 | 3993 |
| Vale of White Horse | All industries | 3233 | 3383 | 3506 | 3743 | 3842 | 3978 |

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[53] ONS Gross Value Added https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva
https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva/datasets/regionalgrossvalueaddedbalancedbylocalauthorityintheuk

**Office for National Statistics (Employment)**

11.62. Oxfordshire Insight[54], using ONS data, provide current statistics regarding unemployment claimants across Oxfordshire:

**Table 21: Change in unemployment claimants Feb 2021 to Feb 2022**

| | Feb 2021 Count | Rate | Feb 2022 Count | Rate | Feb 2021 to Feb 2022 Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cherwell | 3,985 | 5.20% | 2,335 | 3.00% | -2.15 |
| Oxford | 4,905 | 7.00% | 3,255 | 4.70% | -2.36 |
| South Oxfordshire | 3,030 | 4.30% | 1,810 | 2.50% | -1.72 |
| Vale of White Horse | 2,815 | 4.10% | 1,885 | 2.70% | -1.34 |
| West Oxfordshire | 2,425 | 4.30% | 1,485 | 2.60% | -1.66 |
| Oxfordshire | 17,155 | 5.00% | 10,765 | 3.10% | -1.87 |
| England | 2,295,430 | 8.50% | 1,556,140 | 5.70% | -2.73 |

**Table 22: Unemployment claimants by age group Feb 2022**

| | 16 to 24 Count | Rate | 25 to 49 Count | Rate | 50 + Count | Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cherwell | 320 | 3.50% | 1,475 | 3.40% | 540 | 2.30% |
| Oxford | 465 | 3.60% | 1,955 | 5.00% | 835 | 5.20% |
| South Oxfordshire | 225 | 2.60% | 1,065 | 2.70% | 520 | 2.20% |
| Vale of White Horse | 290 | 3.40% | 1,135 | 2.90% | 460 | 2.20% |
| West Oxfordshire | 240 | 3.40% | 865 | 3.90% | 375 | 2.00% |
| Oxfordshire | 1,540 | 3.30% | 6,495 | 3.40% | 2,730 | 2.70% |
| England | 245,380 | 6.60% | 928,600 | 5.90% | 382,120 | 5.10% |

11.63. The tables above highlight the rates of unemployment claimants have decreased by 1.72% (South) and 1.34% (Vale) in the last year (February 2021 to February 2022). Unemployment claimancy is also much lower in South and Vale than the England averages. With the exception of 16-24 age group in Vale, the districts also have lower unemployment claimancy than the Oxfordshire averages.

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54 Oxfordshire Insight – Unemployment claimants to February 2022
https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/unemployment-claimants-february-2022

11.64. South and Vale also have lower unemployment claimancy by all age groups when compared to both the Oxfordshire and England averages.

11.65. To continue to increase GVA and keep unemployment low, Local Plans are likely to contain policies that support sustainable economic growth (for example, continuing to safeguard or allocating new employment land). To continue to support South and Vale's increasing GVAs, the locations of new businesses/employment must be carefully considered in plan-making, to ensure, for example, that sustainable locations are found with easy access to sustainable transport (e.g. public transport, cycle lanes, footpaths) for employees.

## Population key challenges

11.66. Planning for an increasing and ageing population and continuing to maintain low income-deprivation rates (or improving these where necessary) are a key theme in many plans, policies, and programmes affecting the preparation of the Joint Local Plan.

11.67. Planning and design for safe developments and increasing job opportunities are also key themes and these will also need to be reflected in the Joint Local Plan.

11.68. It is evident from the 'Deprivation Domains' that both South and Vale, in comparison to other domains in which they are performing well, could improve on geographical barriers (the physical proximity of local services), and wider barriers, including issues relating to access to housing, such as affordability. These will continue to be key issues to address for an evidently increasing population.

11.69. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective Two:** To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring new developments plan for "healthy places", with sufficient social, physical and health infrastructure in place

- **Objective Three**: To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel

- **Objective Nine**: To improve pockets of income, education, skills and training across the plan area, while also improving access to services and facilities in remote areas.

- **Objective Ten:** To create safe places that are free from crime and free from the fear of crime, and protected from acts of terror.

- **Objective Fifteen**: To plan for enough housing to meet the needs of our residents, including the provision of affordable housing

- **Objective Sixteen**: To maintain, and where possible, increase job opportunities across the districts.

# 12.   Soil

**Introduction**

12.1.   Soil is a key part of our environment and soil degradation can have major implications for air and water quality as well as our climate, biodiversity and economy. Sustainable management and protection of soils is key to ensuring that soils can deliver essential functions vital for the sustainability of the environment and economy including:

- storing carbon and maintaining the balance of gases in the air;
- biomass production (including agriculture and forestry);
- filtering and buffering pollutants;
- regulating the flow of and providing storage for water;
- providing a physical environment for human activity (including built development);
- providing habitats and supporting biodiversity;
- a source of raw materials;
- preserving cultural and archaeological heritage.

12.2.   Climate change and changes in land use and land management practices, including built development, are the most significant pressures on soils. These overarching pressures result in a range of processes that damage soil quality such as loss of organic matter, soil sealing and soil loss, soil contamination, changes in soil biodiversity, erosion and landslides, and compaction and structural degradation. These can in turn result in damage to the wider environment, society and the economy. Changes in land use or land management which affect soil present a potential threat to the functions which soils fulfil.

12.3.   Maintaining sustainable agricultural land and practices is important in preserving the districts' rural character and landscape.


**Relevant plans, policies and programmes**

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

12.4.   Paragraph 174 advises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

134

12.5. This is defined in the glossary as: "*Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.*"

12.6. Footnote 58 states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.

**South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035**
*South Oxfordshire District Council*

12.7. Policy DES7: Efficient Use of Resources requires new development is required to make provision for the effective use and protection of natural resources where applicable, including: avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1**
*Vale of White Horse District Council*

12.8. Core Policy 43: Natural Resources requires avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality

**Baseline Information**

12.9. The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland. Agricultural land classified into five grades. Grade one is best quality and grade five is poorest quality. The best and most versatile land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a by policy guidance (see Annex 2 of NPPF). This is the land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non food uses such as biomass, fibres and pharmaceuticals.

12.10. The majority of agricultural land quality in South Oxfordshire is Grade 3 (good to moderate agricultural quality). Vale of White Horse District has a significant part of its land under cultivation for farming with the quality of the farmland ranging from Grade 4 up to Grade 2 in a number of locations.

**Figure 32: Map showing ALC in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse**
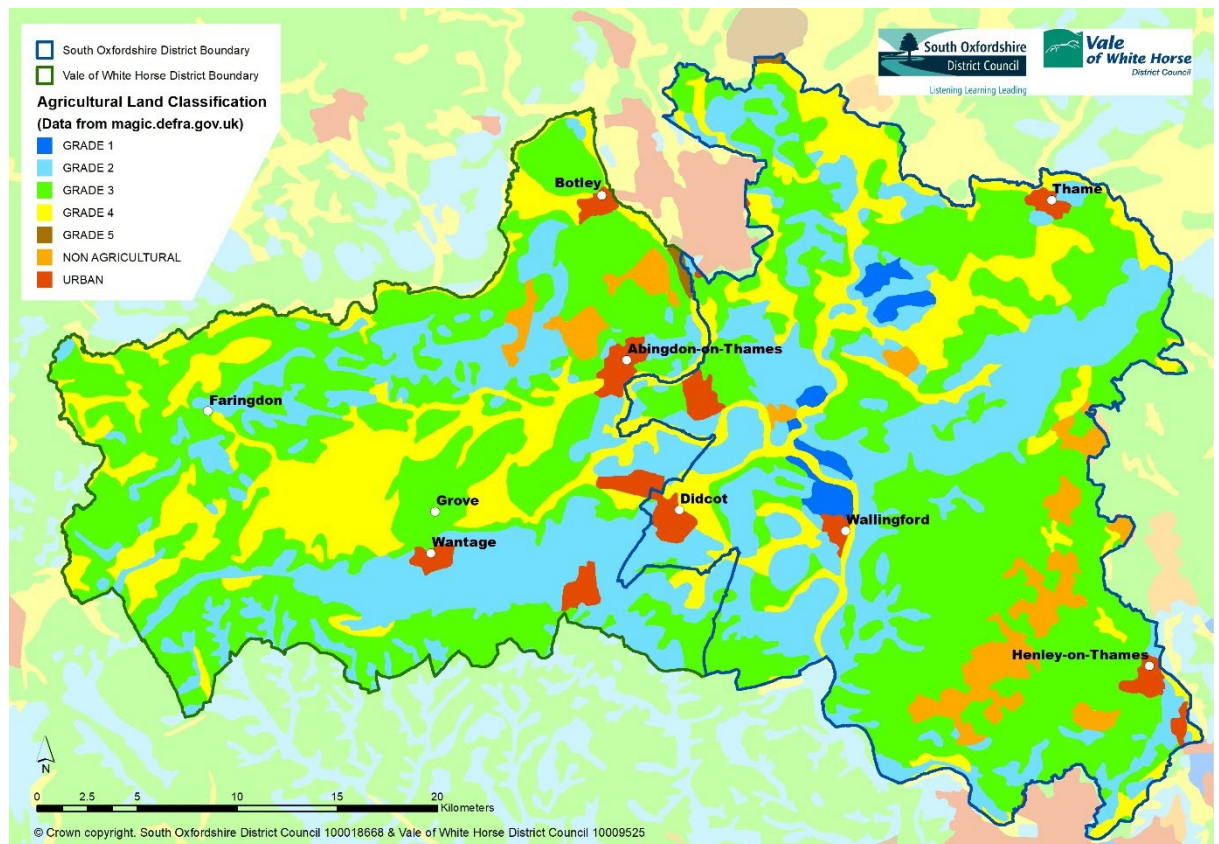


12.11. The districts contain a mix of classified agricultural land, the majority of which is Grade 3, with some areas of Grade 2 which, where possible, should not be lost or compromised by future growth.

### Contaminated land

12.12. Contaminated land contains substances in or under the land that are hazardous, or potentially hazardous, to health or the environment. The councils keep a register of land which has been formally determined as contaminated land and the remediation action that has been taken to return that land to an appropriate condition. There are two entries on the South Oxfordshire District Council contaminated land public register, and no entries logged for Vale of White Horse District

12.13. Land contamination is most commonly a result of former industrial activities.

### Soil key challenges

12.14. It is important that the joint local plan protects the best and most versatile agricultural land to ensure that local food production can still take place. The plan should also ensure that it does not give rise to contamination.

12.15. These key challenges have informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective One:** To reduce pollution of kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality

- **Objective Two:** To support the sustainable management of land for multiple benefits

# 13.  Water

**Water Quality**

**Introduction**

13.1.  Demand for water and the quality of water resources have become important local, national and international issues. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts lie within the Thames Water region, which is one of the driest in the country. The Environment Agency has assessed the Thames Water supply region as an area of 'serious' water stress which is expected to get worse. Increased demand and reduced water availability from less predictable rainfall as a result of climate change will affect the environment and reduce security of supply to homes and businesses.

13.2.  Water has a wide range of benefits, including for habitats and wildlife, leisure and recreation, landscape, and a sense of place.

13.3.  Water is abstracted from the River Thames, from groundwater aquifers and there is a reservoir at Farmoor in the Vale of White Horse. Taking too much water from waterbodies can result in changes to water flows, which can affect water quality (such as less water to diffuse pollution) and on habitats and wildlife. These effects are likely to be exacerbated by climate change.The Thames Valley Region is seriously water stressed, meaning that water will have to be imported from adjoining water resource management areas to meet demand. This has knock on implications for the carbon footprint of supplying water to residents as it is pumped or transported from further afield.

**Relevant plans, policies and programmes**

13.4.  The **Water Environment Regulations 2017** apply to surface waters and groundwater. These regulations set out requirements to prevent the deterioration of aquatic ecosystems; protect, enhance and restore water bodies to 'good' status; and achieve compliance with standards and objectives for protected areas.

13.5.  On 9 November 2021, the Environment Bill, the UK's law on environmental governance and regulation post-Brexit, received royal assent and became the **Environment Act** 2021. The Act requires water companies to take action on reducing sewage discharge into rivers, waterways and coastlines. It will see a duty enshrined in law to ensure water companies secure a reduction in the adverse impacts of discharges from storm overflows. New duties will also require the government to publish a plan to reduce sewage discharges from storm overflows by September 2022 and report to Parliament on the progress towards implementing the plan.

13.6.  Government is currently running a public consultation (ending in May 2022) on plans to introduce new environmental targets under the Environment Act

2021. These targets include proposals for water quality and availability. To address water quality a target is proposed to reduce the two principal sources of nutrient pollution by 2037. To address water availability a target is proposed to reduce the use of public water supply in England per head of population by 20% by 2037 against a 2019/20 baseline.

13.7.    HM Government (2018) **A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan** committed to restoring three quarters of our water bodies to be close to their natural state as soon as is practicable. We also committed to increasing water supply and incentivising greater water efficiency and reduced personal use.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

13.8.    Paragraph 174 requires that development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as River Basin Management Plans.

**National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

13.9.    The PPG advises on how planning can ensure water quality and the delivery of adequate water and wastewater infrastructure.

13.10.   The PPG highlights that local planning authorities must take River Basin Management Plans into account. These plans contain the main issues for the water environment and the actions needed to tackle them.

13.11.   The PPG provides guidance on how the planning system can plan positively for water supply and water quality. This can be achieved through good design, such as permeable surfaces, and mitigation measures such as habitat creation. The PPG also provides guidance on plan making specifically. In terms of planning for water infrastructure, the PPG identifies the following considerations:

  ▪ identifying suitable sites for new or enhanced waste water and water supply infrastructure. When identifying sites it is important to recognise that water and wastewater infrastructure can have specific locational needs (and often consists of engineering works rather than new buildings). This means exceptionally otherwise protected areas may have to be considered, where this is consistent with their designation.

  ▪ existing and proposed development in the vicinity of a location under consideration for water and wastewater infrastructure. In two-tier areas there will need to be close working between the district and county councils.

  ▪ whether new development is appropriate near to sites used (or proposed) for water and wastewater infrastructure (for example, odour may be a concern).

- phasing new development so that water and wastewater infrastructure will be in place when and where needed. The impact on designated sites of importance for biodiversity should be considered to ensure the required infrastructure is in place before any environmental effects occur.

13.12. In relation to water quality, the PPG sets out the following considerations for plan making:

- how to help protect and enhance local surface water and groundwater in ways that allow new development to proceed and avoids costly assessment at the planning application stage. For example, can the plan steer potentially polluting development away from the most sensitive areas, particularly those in the vicinity of drinking water supplies (designated source protection zones or near surface water drinking water abstractions).

- where an assessment of the potential impacts on water bodies and protected areas under the Water Environment Regulations 2017 may be required, consider the type or location of new development.

- whether measures to improve water quality, for example sustainable drainage schemes, can be used to address impacts on water quality in addition to mitigating flood risk.

13.13. The PPG also provides guidance on how to factor wastewater into plan making:

- the sufficiency and capacity of wastewater infrastructure

- the circumstances where wastewater from new development would not be expected to drain to a public sewer

- the capacity of the environment to receive effluent from development in different parts of a strategic policy-making authority's area without preventing relevant statutory objectives being met

**Thames River Basin District**

13.14. South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse districts lie within the Thames River Basin District. This river basin district covers a large area of the south-east of England, and is made up of 20 catchments. The catchments that cover most of our districts are Gloucestershire and the Vale (for Vale of White horse) and Thames and Chilterns South (for South Oxfordshire).

13.15. Each river basin district is covered by a River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) prepared by Defra and the Environment Agency. RMBPs are required under the Water Environment Regulations 2017, and are reviewed every 6 years. The current RBMPs were produced in 2015 and are currently being reviewed. A public consultation on the draft RBMPs runs until April 2022.

RBMPs set out:

- current state of the water environment

- pressures affecting the water environment

- environmental objectives for protecting and improving the waters

- programme of measures, actions needed to achieve the objectives

- progress since the previous plan

13.16. It also informs decisions on land-use planning because water and land resources are closely linked.

13.17. Both councils recognise that the districts lie within an area of water stress and that demand for water in the districts continues to increase. It is appropriate therefore that new development minimises the pressure on existing resources. Both local plans contain policies requiring new homes to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 litres of water per head per day (l/h/d).

**Vale of White Horse Local Plan Part 1**

*Vale of White Horse District Council*

13.18. Core Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction states that new developments are required to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 l/h/d for new homes.

13.19. Core Policy 43: Natural Resources requires that developers maximise water efficiency.

**South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035**

*South Oxfordshire District Council*

13.20. Policy INF4: Water Resources states that new developments are required to be designed to a water efficiency standard of 110 l/h/d for new homes. The policy also requires that proposals that increase the requirement for water will only be permitted where adequate water resources either already exist or can be provided without detriment to existing abstraction, river flows, groundwater flow to and from springs, water quality, biodiversity or other land uses. Applicants are also required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users.

**Baseline information**

13.21.   River Basin Management Plans describe the river basin district, and the pressures that the water environment faces. It shows what this means for the current state of the water environment in the river basin district, and what actions will be taken to address the pressures. It sets out what improvements are possible and how the actions will make a difference to the local environment.

13.22.   The Vale is included within the Thames River Basin District and is covered by the Gloucestershire and the Vale catchment which also includes Didcot and Swindon. Within this catchment there are several water bodies. The catchment includes the Rivers Ray, Cole, Ock and Ginge and Mill Brooks. There are a number of water-dependent Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in the area, designated in the main for their fen and meadow communities.

13.23.   The current health of the water environment is assessed in terms of its status. Surface waters are assessed for ecological status and chemical status. Groundwaters are assessed for quantitative status and chemical status. These status classifications indicate whether the quality of the environment is good or may need improvement.

13.24.   A range of quality elements are assessed in each water body. For a water body to achieve good, every element assessed must be at good status or better. If one element is below its threshold for good status, then the water body's status is classed as less than good.

13.25.   Ecological status can be classed as high, good, moderate, poor or bad.

13.26.   Surface water chemical status can be classed as good or fail. Since the current plans were published in 2016 the approach to chemical status classification has changed. A more advanced and sophisticated approach to classifying the chemical status of English water bodies is being used. This helps to more accurately reflect the accumulation of some of the more persistent substances which can be underestimated by monitoring water alone. The new approach means that for England the 2019 assessment of water body status shows that no surface water bodies meet the criteria for good chemical status.

**Figure 33: River Thames Basin Catchment Area**
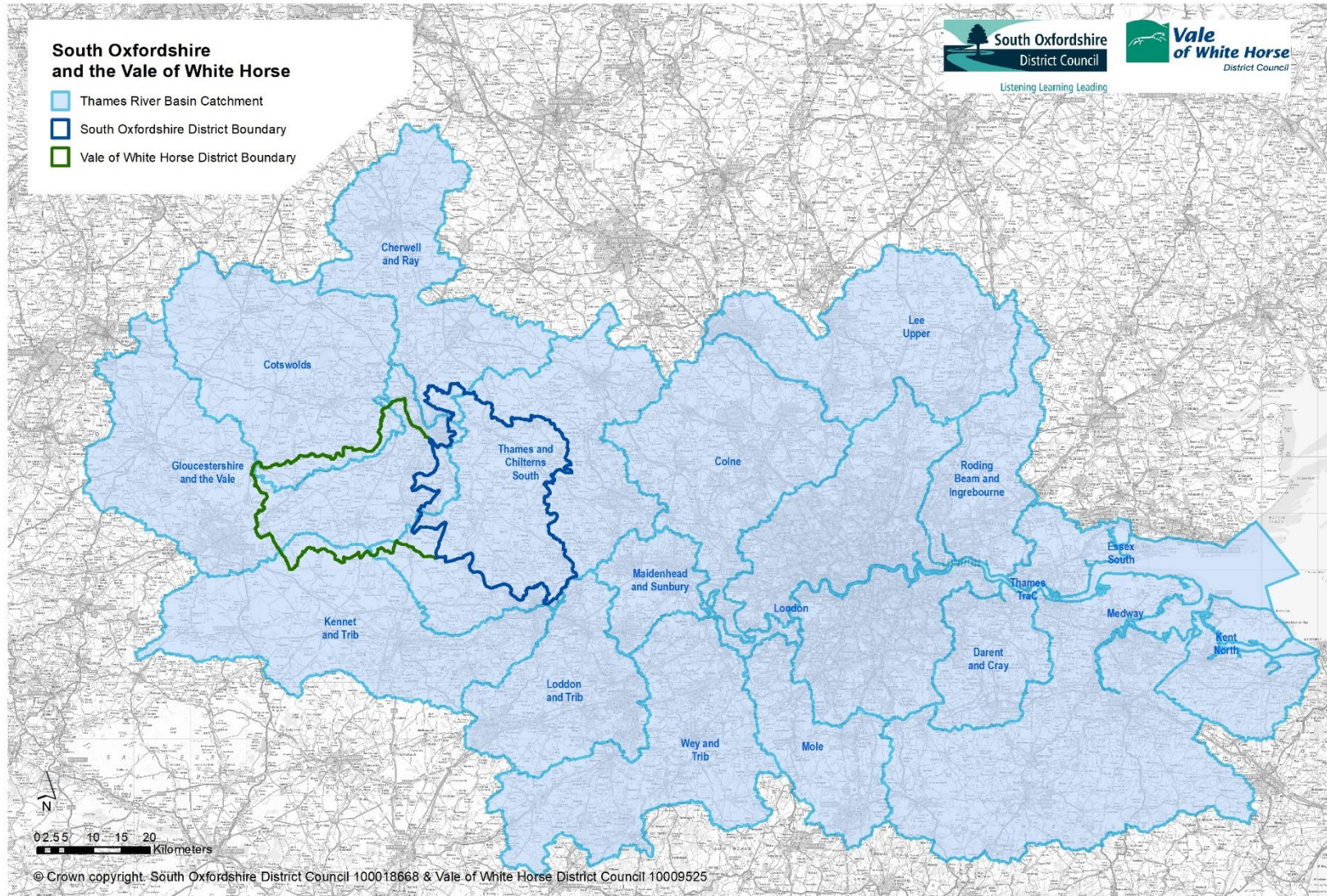
| Table 23: River water quality in South Oxfordshire - classifications by the Environment Agency 2019 | | |
|---|---|---|
| River | Ecological Status | Chemical Status |
| Bayswater Brook | Poor | Fail |
| Cholsey Brook and tributaries | Moderate | Fail |
| Mill Brook and Bradfords Brook system, Wallingford | Moderate | Fail |
| Moor Ditch and Ladygrove Ditch, Didcot | Poor | Fail |
| Ginge Brook and Mill Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Ewelme Stream | Moderate | Fail |
| Berrick Stream and Lady Brook | Poor | Fail |
| Chalgrove Brook | Poor | Fail |
| Lewknor Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Haseley Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Baldon Brook (South of Oxford) | Moderate | Fail |
| Latchford Brook at Tetsworth | Poor | Fail |
| Chinnor Brook and Sydenham Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Northfield Brook at Sanford-on-Thames | Moderate | Fail |
| Cuttle Brook (lower section) and tributaries at Thame | Moderate | Fail |
| Kingsey Cuttle Brook and tributaries at Thame | Poor | Fail |
| Scotsgrove Brook (Kingsey Cuttle to Thame) | Moderate | Fail |
| Thame (Scotsgrove Brook to Thames) | Moderate | Fail |
| Thames Wallingford to Caversham | Moderate | Fail |
| Thames (Evenlode to Thame) | Moderate | Fail |

| Table 24: River water quality in Vale of White Horse - classifications by the Environment Agency 2019 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **River** | **Ecological Status** | **Chemical Status** |
| Childrey Brook and Norbrook at Common Barn | Poor | Fail |
| Childrey and Woodhill Brooks | Moderate | Fail |
| Cow Common Brook and Portobello Ditch | Poor | Fail |
| Frilford and Marcham Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Ginge Brook and Mill Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Letcombe Brook | Poor | Fail |
| Moor Ditch and Ladygrove Ditch | Poor | Fail |
| Ock (to Cherbury Brook) | Moderate | Fail |
| Ock and tributaries | Poor | Fail |
| Sandford Brook | Poor | Fail |
| Stutfield Brook | Moderate | Fail |
| Thames (Evenlode to Thame) | Moderate | Fail |
| Thames (Leach to Evenlode) | Poor | Fail |
| Cole (Acorn Bridge to Bower Bridge) | Moderate | Fail |
| Cole (Bower Bridge to Thames) | Moderate | Fail |
| Lenta Brook, East of Swindon | Poor | Fail |
| Waterloo Ditch (East of Coleshill) | Good | Fail |
| Tuckmill Brook and tributaries | Poor | Fail |
| Wadley Stream | Bad | Fail |

**Water quality key challenges**

13.27. The majority of water bodies monitored in South Oxfordshire are of moderate standard, with some poor. There are currently no water bodies achieving good status. In Vale, there is one water body achieving good status, and one achieving bad status. The remaining water bodies are a mix of poor and moderate status.

**Flooding**

13.28. Development within areas of high flood risk, or the loss of greenfield land to development, could contribute to an increased chance of flooding, posing a risk to life, properties and businesses. Climate change is forecast to result in milder and wetter winters and more storms in summer months, with unpredictable patterns of rainfall. Changes in farming practices can reduce the ability of land to absorb water and water flow due to the removal of hedgerows and trees and the issue is likely to become increasingly important due to climate change. Pressure on existing sewer systems from new development can reduce their capacity, leading to more frequent flooding.

13.29. Local Planning Authorities should therefore develop policies that contribute to the active management of flood risk from all sources and can include for example, allocating new development outside areas of high flood risk or securing of flood protection measures and requiring sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) in new developments.

13.30. Flood Risk is defined as the combination of the probability of flooding occurring multiplied by the consequences of it occurring as defined by the Environment Agency. Flood Zones refer to the probability of river and sea flooding, ignoring the presence of defences. They are shown on the Environment Agency's website, as indicated in the table below.

| Table 25: Flood zone definitions | |
|---|---|
| **Flood Zone** | **Definition** |
| Zone 1 Low Probability | Land having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. (Shown as 'clear' on the Flood Map – all land outside Zones 2 and 3) |
| Zone 2 Medium Probability | Land having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding; or land having between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding. (Land shown in light blue on the Flood Map) |
| Zone 3a High Probability | Land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding; or Land having a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of sea flooding.(Land shown in dark blue on the Flood Map) |
| Zone 3b The Functional Floodplain | This zone comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood. Local planning authorities should identify in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessments areas of functional floodplain and its boundaries accordingly, in agreement with the Environment Agency. (Not separately distinguished from Zone 3a on the Flood Map) |

### Relevant plans, policies and programmes

**Flood Risk Regulations 2009**
*HM Government*

13.31. The Flood Risk Regulations 2009 place duties on the Environment Agency and local authorities to prepare flood risk assessments, flood risk maps and flood risk management plans.

13.32. Following these assessments, the authorities must identify areas which are at significant risk of flooding. The assessments and decisions of areas at significant risk must be reviewed at least every six years.

**Flood and Water Management Act (2010)**
*HM Government*

13.33. Oxfordshire County Council became the Lead Local Flood Authority under this Act and now has the duty to "develop, maintain, apply and monitor" a flood risk management strategy.

**National Planning Policy Framework (2021)**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

13.34. The NPPF provides national policy on flooding from all sources, including coastal, fluvial (river) and groundwater. The policies relating to flooding are closely linked with policies relating to climate change.

13.35. The NPPF states that (para 159) inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. It also explains that strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources. They should consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, and take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards (para 160).

13.36. The NPPF sets out the requirement to apply the sequential test and where necessary the exceptions test when planning for development, so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property.

**National Planning Practice Guidance**
*Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities*

13.37. The PPG provides guidance on how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in the planning process. It

provides further guidance on how to apply the sequential test and exception test that are required by national policy (NPPF).

13.38. The PPG sets out the main steps that local authorities should follow in relation to development and flood risk:

- **Assess flood risk** – by carrying out a strategic flood risk assessment (SFRA) to fully understand flood risk from all sources in the area and inform local plan preparation.

- **Avoid flood risk** - by applying the sequential approach to site selection.

- **Manage and mitigate flood risk** – by ensuring developments are flood resistant and resilient, and by incorporating flood risk management opportunities.

**Local Flood Risk Management Strategy**
*Oxfordshire County Council*

13.39. Oxfordshire County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for the county. They are required to create a strategy to tackle local flood risks, involving flooding from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater.

13.40. In carrying out this role the county council have a number of key responsibilities that include developing, maintaining and putting in place a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for Oxfordshire which will include risks from surface water run-off, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. A comprehensive update of the strategy is likely in 2022.

13.41. The Flood Risk Management Strategy sets out a series of principles for understanding and managing flood risk

- Promote the use of more sustainable drainage systems to reduce flood risk and impact on the sewer system and to improve water quality.

- Require better management of surface water through increasing above ground storage and reuse, ground absorption, more storage above ground, and routing away from foul sewers.

- Increase public awareness of the causes and consequences of surface water run-off and what can be done to minimise the risks of flooding.

- Promote and insist on sustainable solutions that enhance the environment where possible on new developments/redevelopments.

- Encourage new development only where flood risk is low and away from flood risk areas.

- Take a holistic approach to the assessment of risk and identify measures that provide multiple benefits.

- Oxfordshire County Council will lead on application, monitoring and maintenance of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

- Oxfordshire County Council will lead on managing flood risk and flood events at strategic, tactical and operational levels.

- Encourage self-help and ensure that people have appropriate and timely information.

- Improve understanding by Riparian land owners of their responsibilities.

**Baseline information**

13.42. As one of the largest catchments in the UK, the River Thames dominates the area of South Oxfordshire and has a well-documented history of flooding along its length. The Thames enters the district south of Oxford at Sandford on Thames, and forms the district boundary as it flows south to Abingdon. Several settlements lie within the flood plain of the Thames between Abingdon and Wallingford; Culham, Clifton Hampden, Long Wittenham, Burcot, Dorchester, Benson and Shillingford. From Wallingford, the Thames flows to Reading where it once again forms the district boundary. On this stretch the settlements of North and South Stoke, Moulsford, Goring and Whitchurch on Thames are all on or adjacent to the floodplain. Before leaving the district at Henley on Thames, the flood plain takes in the settlements of Playhatch, Sonning Eye, Lower Shiplake and Shiplake.

13.43. Within the Vale of White Horse district there are of a number of rivers including the River Thames, River Cole, River Ock, Letcombe Brook and Hinksey Stream. The River Thames borders about half of the district, and the river catchment does spread into the district. The River Ock is a tributary to the River Thames. Its catchment is in the Vale of White Horse and joins the River Thames near Abingdon. The river appears in the village of Little Coxwell within the district.

13.44. Letcombe Brook originates in Letcombe Basset at the base of the Berkshire Downs, and flows for 7.5 miles until it joins Childrey Brook. Childrey Brook is a tributary to the River Ock. Letcombe Brook is one of the 210 remaining chalk streams in the world, 160 of which are in the United Kingdom.

13.45. A number of towns and villages are at risk from fluvial flooding within the Vale district, including: Shrivenham, Upper Inglesham, Buscot, Hinton Waldrist, Toll, Abindgdon-onThames, Drayton, Sutton Courtney, Marcham, Garford and Charney Basset.

13.46. In the area covered by South and Vale councils, Abingdon has the largest area of floodplain, from the river Ock and Thames.

**Figure 34: Water network and flood risk in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse**
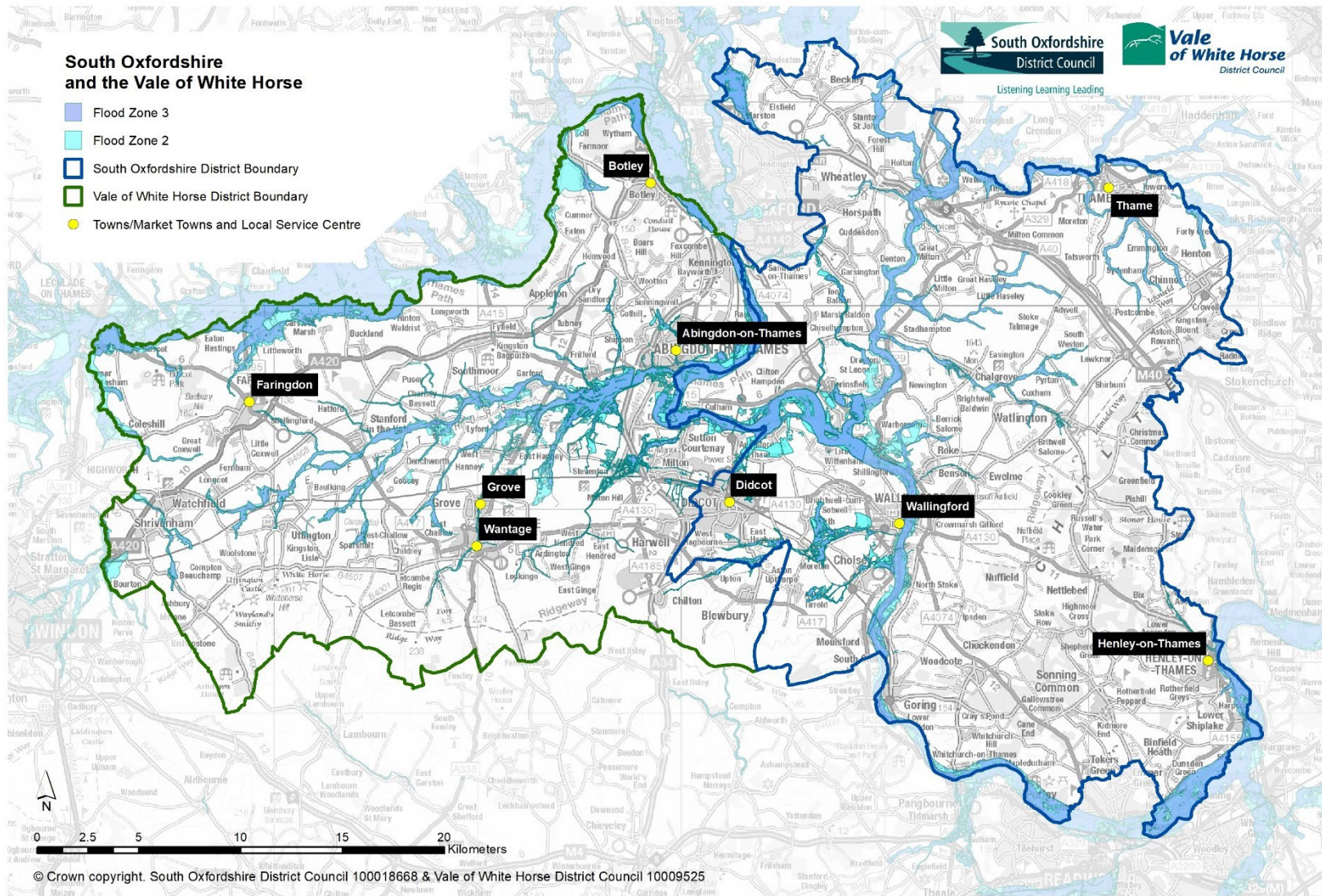
13.47. The above assessment has informed the following sustainability objectives that will be used to test the emerging proposals of the Joint Local Plan:

- **Objective One:** To reduce pollution of kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality

- **Objective Eighteen**: To maximise the efficient use of water, with an aspiration for achieving water neutrality

- **Objective Nineteen**: To reduce the risk of, and damage from flooding, and to improve resistance and resilience to flooding

# 14. Sustainability appraisal framework

## Sustainability objectives

14.1. The previous chapters have identified the sustainability objectives across each of the sustainability themes. In total this creates 20 different objectives as shown on table 26 overleaf.

14.2. The Council will need to take objectives listed on table 26 below Council into account when preparing the Joint Local Plan. This chapter sets out how we will integrate the sustainability objectives into the plan making process. In government guidance, this is referred to as the sustainability appraisal framework.

14.3. Our sustainability appraisal framework will be a tool that planning policy officers use to identify:

a) options for each of the challenges / opportunities that the Local Plan will need to address,

b) how each of these options performs against the 20 sustainability objectives,

c) the potential measures that are needed to either mitigate the impact of harmful performance against an objective, or the measures needed to secure positive performance against an objective, and

d) potential monitoring indicators that could be used to measure the performance of the preferred policy.

14.4. Each time we consult on the Joint Local Plan, we will publish a sustainability appraisal report that will demonstrate the above. For each topic or policy area, we will produce a **sustainability appraisal framework** as shown in figure 35 below. The table may vary slightly for each topic area or option as each will be different in terms of their content and detail.

**Table 26: Sustainability Objectives**

| Objective number | Objective text |
|---|---|
| 1 | To reduce pollution of kinds and meet environmental targets for air, water and soil quality. |
| 2 | To safeguard the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring new developments plan for "healthy places", with sufficient social, physical and health infrastructure in place. |
| 3 | To reduce the need to travel by car, and improve access to services, facilities, and publicly accessible open space by active modes of travel. |
| 4 | To achieve net gains in biodiversity across the districts, with new developments expected to secure at least 10% net gain. |
| 5 | To protect, and where possible, enhance the status of designated assets, including SACs and SSSIs. |
| 6 | To make a significant contribution to achieving net zero carbon emissions in both districts to meet the Councils' carbon reduction targets, specifically focussing on domestic and transportation emissions. |
| 7 | To ensure new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change, and that proposals do not weaken existing communities' and businesses' resilience to climate change. |
| 8 | To conserve, and where possible, enhance, all heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and their settings in the districts. |
| 9 | To improve pockets of income, education, skills and training across the plan area, while also improving access to services and facilities in remote areas. |
| 10 | To create safe places that are free from crime and free from the fear of crime, and protected from acts of terror. |
| 11 | To protect and manage the character and appearance of the landscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place, the countryside, Greenbelt and landscape quality. |
| 12 | To ensure great weight is given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty including development within their setting, which should be sensitively located and designed. |
| 13 | Ensure that extraction of resources takes place prior to any development in Mineral Resource Areas, Mineral Safeguarding Areas, Mineral Consultation Areas, and avoid development in Mineral Infrastructure Zones. |
| 14 | To minimise the use of new materials and prioritise the reuse and recycle of existing materials and aggregate. |
| 15 | To plan for enough housing to meet the needs of our residents, including the provision of affordable housing. |
| 16 | To maintain, and where possible, increase job opportunities across the districts. |
| 17 | To support the sustainable management of land for multiple benefits. |
| 18 | To maximise the efficient use of water, with an aspiration for achieving water neutrality. |

| 19 | To reduce the risk of, and damage from flooding, and to improve resistance and resilience to flooding from all sources. |
| 20 | To support the development of appropriately scaled, and well designed renewable energy schemes |

**Figure 35: Sustainability Appraisal Framework**

| Sustainability Objectives | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |

**Policy or topic option**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| − | ✖ ? | ✖ | ✔ ? | ✖ | ✔ | ✖ | ✔ ? | − ? | ✖ | ✔ | ✔ | − | ✔ ? | ✔ | ✔ ? | ✔ | ✖ ? | − | ✔ |

| Summary of the policy or topic option |
|---|
|  |

| Description of key adverse effects that require mitigation |
|---|
|  |

| Description of key positive effects that require a policy safeguard |
|---|
|  |

| Potential monitoring indicators |
|---|
|  |

| Key | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Will help achieve this objective | Will help achieve this objective with mitigation | Neutral effect on this objective | Neutral effect on this objective with mitigation | Will prevent the delivery of this objective but mitigation measures can reduce the harm | Will prevent the delivery of this objective and no mitigation measures will offset the harm |
| ✔ | ✔ ? | − | − ? | ✖ ? | ✖ |

# 15.    Conclusions and next steps

15.1.    Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to carry out a sustainability appraisal of each of the proposals in a plan during its preparation.

15.2.    This screening and scoping report has concluded that the joint local plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, and should therefore be subject to a sustainability appraisal.

15.3.    The report has undertaken a scoping exercise to understand the key sustainability issues affecting the districts, across ten themed chapters. resulting in 20 sustainability objectives for the local plan.  These are shown on table 26 in the previous chapter.

15.4.    The report has then identified how these objectives will be used by the councils to develop the options in the emerging joint local plan.

15.5.    This is a consultation version of the screening and scoping report.  We are inviting comments on this document between 12 May and 23 June 2022.  You can provide comments by using the survey form on either of our websites:

http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

15.6.    You can find further information and other consultation documents on the links above.

15.7.    Please contact us on 01235 422425 or email haveyoursay@southandvale.gov.uk for support to access the consultation materials.

# Appendices

# Appendix 1 - Scheduled Monuments

## *Scheduled Monuments in the Vale of White Horse*

| Parish | Scheduled Monument | Date First Scheduled | Date Amended | Grid Ref |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abingdon | Ock Bridge | n/a | n/a | SU 488 969 |
| Abingdon | Settlement Sites N of Wick Hall | n/a | n/a | SU 483 958 |
| Abingdon | Abingdon Bridge including Maud Hale's Bridge | n/a | n/a | SU 500 969 |
| Abingdon | Abingdon Abbey (remains of) | n/a | n/a | SU 498 971 |
| Abingdon | Barton (remains of) | n/a | n/a | SU 504 974 |
| Abingdon | Castle Mound at Fitzharris | n/a | n/a | SU 497 976 |
| Appleford-on Thames | Settlement Site SE of Church | n/a | n/a | SU 533 934 |
| Ardington | Grims Ditch; Section 200yds (180m) long W of Scotch Fir Belt | n/a | n/a | SU 435 849 |
| Ashbury | Fognam Clump field system | n/a | n/a | SU 289 807 |
| Ashbury | Fognam Clump and adjacent field system | n/a | n/a | SU 289 807 |
| Ashbury | Wayland's Smithy chambered long barrow, including earlier barrow and Iron Age and Roman boundary ditches | 18 August 1882 | 31 October 1995 | SU 281 854 |
| Ashbury | Bowl Barrow 350m south-west of Harley Bushes, Bishopstone Downs | 11 November 1992 | n/a | SU 273 811 |
| Ashbury | Alfred's Castle univallate hillfort | 11 February 1958 | 04 March 1997 | SU 277 822 |
| Ashbury | Three round barrows forming the core of a dispersed barrow cemetery on Idstone Down | 03 January 1963 | 16 November 1998 | SU 275 810 |
| Blewbury | Blewburton Hill | n/a | n/a | SU 547 862 |
| Blewbury | Grim's Ditch; Section on Aston Upthorpe Down | n/a | n/a | SU 539 833 |
| Blewbury | Bowl Barrow 500m west of Churn Park Cottage | 29 June 1960 | 30 August 1990 | SU 507 830 |
| Blewbury | Two bowl barrows and a pair of confluent barrows 270 north east of Churn Farm | 26 October 1934 | 04 February 1999 | SU 516 837 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Blewbury | Churn Knob bell barrow and adjacent bowl barrow on Churn Hill | 26 October 1934 | 04 February 1999 | SU 522 847 |
| Blewbury | Two round barrows 520m and 550m north of Lower Chance Farm | 26 October 1934 | 02 December 1998 | SU 520 833 |
| Blewbury | Bowl barrow 310m south east of Lower Chance Farm | 26 October 1934 | 02 December 1998 | SU 523 826 |
| Blewbury | Bowl barrow 700m north west of Churn Farm | 04 February 1999 | n/a | SU 507 840 |
| Bourton | Bourton Village Cross | 04 December 1956 | 24 December 1996 | |
| Buckland | Burroway enclosure | 05 January 1990 | SP 309 004 | |
| Buckland | Causewayed enclosure and associated features on the south bank of the River Thames, immediately west of Rushey Weir | 26 November 2004 | n/a | SU 321 000 |
| Buckland | Long mortuary enclosure and associated barrow 120m south of Rushey Weir | 26 November 2004 | n/a | SU 323 999 |
| Childrey | Bowl barrow 850m south west of Sincombe Farm | 01 January 1971 | 02 December 1998 | SU 344 852 |
| Childrey | Hackpen Hill bowl barrow 525m south of Sincombe Farm | 08 January 1971 | 02 December 1998 | SU 351 851 |
| Chilton | Grim's Ditch; Section W of Chilton Plantation | n/a | n/a | SU 469 847 |
| Chilton | Grim's Ditch; Section 1200yds (1100m) long from Chilton Plantation to Ridge Hill | n/a | n/a | SU 477 845 |
| Compton Beauchamp | Hardwell Camp Promontory Fort | 18 August 1958 | 04 March 1997 | SU 288 867 |
| Cumnor | Swinford Bridge | n/a | n/a | SP 443 086 |
| Drayton | Sutton Wick Settlement Site | n/a | n/a | SU 486 936 |
| Drayton | Settlement Site | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| East Hendred | Grim's Ditch; Section S of Tile Barn | n/a | n/a | SU 456 856 |
| East Hendred | Scutchamore Knob | n/a | n/a | SU 456 850 |
| East Hendred | East Hendred Down bowl Barrow | 13 November 1969 | 02 December 1998 | SU 464 850 |
| Great Coxwell | Badbury Camp | n/a | n/a | SU 261 947 |
| Great Coxwell | Tithe Barn | n/a | n/a | SU 269 940 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Great Faringdon | Radcot Bridge | n/a | n/a | SU 286 944 |
| Great Faringdon | Wyke monastic grange and section of 18th century turnpike road, 780m south of Tudor Farm | 16 July 2003 | n/a | SU 289 966 |
| Hatford | Earthwork in Ewedown Copse | n/a | n/a | SU 319 958 |
| Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor | New Bridge | n/a | n/a | SP 404 014 |
| Kingston Lisle | Long Barrow 400m north west of Sevenbarrows House | 20 August 1936 | 08 December 1995 | SU 323 834 |
| Letcombe Bassett | Mere End Down Disc Barrow | n/a | n/a | SU 367 821 |
| Letcombe Bassett | Two bowl barrows 500m north-east of Stancombe Farm | 23 October 1970 | 02 August 1991 | SU 357 825 |
| Letcombe Bassett | Mere End Down Romano-British field system | 19 February 2014 | n/a | SU 366 982 |
| Letcombe Regis | Segsbury Camp or Letcombe Castle Hillfort | 09 May 1935 | 24 September 1997 | SU 385 845 |
| Little Coxwell | Little Coxwell Camp | n/a | n/a | SU 288 928 |
| Lockinge | Grim's Ditch; Section 650 yds (590m) Long NW of Betterton Down | n/a | n/a | SU 423 845 |
| Lockinge | Yew Down round Barrow 950 m south west of Butterbush reservoir | 26 October 1970 | 02 December 1998 | SU 421 843 |
| Longworth | Barn at Longworth House (Hospital) | n/a | n/a | SU 387 982 |
| Marcham | Settlement site N of Cow Lane | n/a | SU 463 978 | |
| Marcham | Site SE of Noah's Ark Inn, Frilford | n/a | n/a | SU 439 962 |
| Milton | Settlement Site | n/a | n/a | SU 497 924 |
| North Hinksey | North Hinksey conduit House | 12 November 1962 | 19 September 1996 | SP 495 050 |
| Pusey | Cherbury Camp | n/a | n/a | SU 374 963 |
| Radley | Settlement Sites N of Wick Hall | n/a | n/a | SU 514 981 |
| Radley | Settlement Site E of Goose Acre Farm | n/a | n/a | SU 524 984 |
| Sparsholt | Disc Barrow 700m north-east of Sevenbarrows | 21 March 1938 | 10 July 1991 | SU 328 835 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | House: Part of the Seven Barrows Cemetery | | | |
| Sparsholt | Bowl barrow 390m N of Sevenbarrows House: part of the Seven Barrows Cemetery | 21 March 1938 | 10 July 1991 | SU 328 835 |
| Sparsholt | Two Bowl barrows 300m north-east of Sevenbarrows House: Part of the Seven Barrows cemetery | 27 June 1991 | n/a | SU 327 832 |
| Sparsholt | Sparsholt Down round barrow, 900m of north of Seven Barrows round barrow cemetery | 23 February 1971 | 02 December 1998 | SU 328 838 |
| Sparsholt | Long barrow 400m north west of Sevenbarrows House | 20 August 1936 | 08 December 1995 | SU 323 834 |
| Uffington | Neolithic Long barrow and Romano-British inhumation cemetery 70m north of Uffington Castle on Whitehorse Hill | 30 November 1995 | n/a | SU 300 865 |
| Uffington | Bronze Age bowl barrow and a pair of Anglo-Saxon burial mounds 70m south of White Horse on Whitehorse Hill | 30 November 1995 | n/a | SU 301 865 |
| Uffington | Uffington Castle: a univallate hillfort immediately north of the Ridgeway on Whitehorse Hill | 03 March 1922 | 14 December 1995 | SU 299 863 |
| Uffington | The White Horse Hill figure 170m NNE of Uffington Castle on Whitehorse Hill | 13 December 1929 | 05 December 1995 | SU 301 866 |
| Watchfield | Watchfield Anglo-Saxon cemetery | 16 July 1992 | n/a | SU 249 908 |
| West Challow | Roman Villa E of Cornhill Farm | n/a | n/a | SU 375 879 |
| West Hendred | Grim's Ditch; Section 600 yds (550m) long on East Ginge Down | n/a | n/a | SU 447 854 |
| West Hendred | Goldbury Hill Anglo-Saxon cemetery | 13 July 1992 | n/a | SU 448 880 |
| Woolstone | Dragon Hill | n/a | n/a | SU 301 869 |
| Wytham | Seacourt medieval settlement 760m west of Manor Farm | 18 August 1954 | 16 July 2003 | SU 485 074 |

## Scheduled Monuments in South Oxfordshire

| Parish | Scheduled Monument | Grid Ref |
|---|---|---|
| Aston Upthorpe | Lowbury Hill Camp | SU540823 |
| Aston Upthorpe | Blewburton Hill | SU547862 |
| Aston Upthorpe | Grim's Ditch - section on Aston Upthorpe Down | SU535833 SU543830 |
| Aston Upthorpe | Bell Barrow NE of Oven Bottom | SU542838 |
| Beckley Stowood | Two sections of a Roman road on Otmoor | SP572144 SP572139 SP572138 SP570126 |
| Bix & Assendon | Bix old church | SU726870 |
| Brightwell-cum-Sotwell | Brightwell barrow | SU577919 |
| Checkendon | Castle Grove camp | SU683809 |
| Chinnor | Three bowl barrows on Chinnor Hill | SP765002 SP767006 |
| Clifton Hampden | Round Barrow Cemetery at Fullamoor Plantation | SU531944 |
| Crowmarsh Ipsden Nuffield) | Grim's Ditch - portion from Mongewell Park Lodge to S of Nuffield Church | SU617879 SU657872 SU658872 SU 666871 |
| Crowmarsh South Stoke | North Stoke henge and ring ditch site | SU611857 |
| Culham | Culham Bridge | SU501958 |
| Culham | Settlement site N of Thames | SU523945 |
| Culham | Abingdon Bridge including Maud Hale's Bridge | SU498969 SU500967 |
| Culham | ovecote at Culham Manor | SU500948 |
| Dorchester | Dyke Hills | SU570938 SU578932 |
| Dorchester | Roman town | SU577941 SU576940 SU578942 SU579943 SU578943 |
| Dorchester Warborough | Ring ditches, cursus, enclosures and settlement site | SU590940 |
| East Hagbourne | Coscote village cross | SU515884 |
| East Hagbourne | Village cross | SU526883 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ewelme | Site of manor house and royal palace | SU64915 |
| Garsington | Garsington Cross | SP580023 |
| Goring Heath | Earthworks in Friarhampstead Wood | SU645807 |
| Great Haseley | Rycote Chapel | SP667046 |
| Harpsden | Highlands Farm palaeolithic site | SU744813 |
| Holton | Moated site of Holton | SP600063 |
| Holton | Moated site south west of Church Farm | SP598065 |
| Ipsden<br><br>Nuffield<br><br>Crowmarsh | Grim's Ditch - portion from Mongewell<br><br>Park Lodge to S of Nuffield Church | SU617879<br>SU657872<br>SU658872<br>SU666871 |
| Little Wittenham | Sinodun Hill camp | SU569924 |
| Long Wittenham | Settlement site at Northfield Farm | SU558947 |
| Long Wittenham | Settlement site south east of church | SU53321<br>SU93386 |
| Marsh Baldon | Site of Roman kilns | SU562977 |
| Nuneham<br>Courtenay | Carfax conduit | SU537977 |
| Rotherfield Greys | Greys Court - castle wall, towers and well-house | SU725834<br>SU726835 |
| South Moreton | Mound west of church | SU557880 |
| South Stoke | Dovecote at Manor Farm | SU599836 |
| South Stoke | North Stoke henge and ring (Crowmarsh ditch site | SU611857 |
| Stadhampton | Chiselhampton Bridge | SU594987 |
| Stadhampton | Ice house at Ascott House north west of Ascott Farm | SU61220<br>SU98214 |
| Thame | Moated site east of Moorend Lane | SP710062 |
| Wallingford | Wallingford Castle | SU609897 |
| Wallingford | Saxon town | SU606897<br>SU605893 |
| Wallingford | Town walls | SU604894<br>SU604891<br>SU606891<br>SU607898<br>SU604898<br>SU604895 |
| Wallingford | Wallingford Bridge | SU610895 |
| Warborough<br>Dorchester | Ring ditches, cursuses, enclosures and settlement site | SU590940 |
| Warborough | Church Piece cemetery site | SU589945 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Warborough | Long barrow 140m north west of Cookes Cottage | SU606923 |
| Warborough | Romano-British settlement 520m north west of Cookes Cottage | SU605926 |
| Warborough | Long barrow 340m north west of Cookes Cottage | SU606925 |
| Waterperry with Thomley | Thomley deserted medieval village | SP630091 |
| Waterstock | Ickford Bridge | SU649065 |
| Whitchurch | Camp on Bozedown | SU643782 |
| Woodeaton | Village Cross | SP535119 |

Appendix 2 - Registered Parks and Gardens

## Registered Parks and Gardens in the Vale of White Horse

Historic England has recognised eight parks and gardens in the Vale of White Horse District that are registered under the Historic Building and Ancient Monuments Act 1953. These are as follows:

1. Ashdown House (Grade II*)

2. Buckland House (Grade II*)

3. Buscot (Grade II*)

4. Compton Beauchamp (Grade II)

5. Hinton Manor (Grade II)

6. Pusey House (Grade II)

7. Sutton Courtenay Manor (Grade II)

8. Albert Park, Abingdon (Grade II)

## Registered Parks and Gardens in South Oxfordshire

Historic England has recognised twelve parks and gardens and South Oxfordshire that are registered under the Historic Building and Ancient Monuments Act 1953.
South Oxfordshire also has one entry on the Register of Historic Battlefields. These are as follows:

1. Ascott, Stadhampton (Grade II)

2. Beckley Park (Grade II*)

3. Fair Mile Hospital (Grade II)

4. Fawley Court (part near Henley) (Grade II*)

5. Friar Park, Henley-on-Thames (Grade II)

6. Garsington Manor (Grade II*)

7. Greys Court, Rotherfield Greys (Grade II)

8. Nuneham Courtenay (Grade I)

9. Shirburn Castle (Grade II)

10. Shotover, near Oxford (Grade I)

11. Stonor (Grade II*)

12. Thame Park (Grade II*)

Appendix 3 - Historic Battlefields:

**English Heritage Register of Historic Battlefields in South Oxfordshire:**

1. Chalgrove Field

*(Please note: there are no historic battlefields registered in the Vale of White Horse).*

Appendix 4 - Conservation Areas:

## Conservation Areas in the Vale of White Horse

| | Date of Designation | Date of Amendment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Abingdon Town Centre | December 1968 | 14 March 1973<br>31 July 1974<br>25 October 1976<br>13 June 1977 |
| 2. Abingdon, Albert Park | 24 February 1975 | |
| 3. Abingdon, Northcourt | 27 February 1978 | 16 July 2008 |
| 4. Appleton | 09 July 1969 | 18 December 1990 |
| 5. Ardington and East Lockinge | 22 July 1970 | |
| 6. Ashbury | 03 February 1970 | |
| 7. Baulking | 03 February 1971 | |
| 8. Blewbury | 22 July 1970 | 18 December 1990 |
| 9. Bourton | 03 February 1971 | 07 January 2011 |
| 10. Buckland | 03 February 1971 | |
| 11. Buscot | 03 February 1971 | |
| 12. Charney Bassett | 27 February 1978 | |
| 13. Childrey | 22 July 1970 | 18 December 1990 |
| 14. Coleshill | 03 February 1971 | |
| 15. Cumnor | 09 July 1969 | 07 January 2011 |
| 16. Denchworth | 22 July 1970 | |
| 17. Drayton | 09 July 1969 | |
| 18. East Hanney | 27 February 1978 | 18 December 1990 |
| 19. East Hendred | September 1968 | 16 July 2008 |
| 20. Faringdon | 17 September 1969 | 02 May 1982 |
| 21. Fyfield & Netherton | 09 July 1969 | |
| 22. Goosey | 09 July 1990 | |
| 23. Great Coxwell | 03 February 1971 | |
| 24. Grove | 28 February 1984 | |
| 25. Harwell | 22 July 1970 | |
| 26. Hatford | 03 February 1971 | |
| 27. Hinton Waldrist | 03 February 1971 | |
| 28. Idstone | 03 February 1970 | |
| 29. Kingston Bagpuize | 18 March 1970 | 18 December 1990 |
| 30. Kingston Lisle | 18 December 1990 | |
| 31. Letcombe Bassett/ Letcombe Regis | 22 July 1970 | |
| 32. Little Coxwell | 03 February 1971 | |
| 33. Littleworth | 26 February 1991 | |
| 34. Longworth | 03 February 1971 | |
| 35. Marcham | 09 July 1969 | |
| 36. Milton | 09 July 1969 | December 2016 |
| 37. North Hinksey | 09 July 1969 | |
| 38. Pusey | 03 February 1971 | 14 May 1991 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 39. Shellingford | 03 February 1971 | |
| 40. Shrivenham | 03 February 1971 | |
| 41. Sparsholt | 09 July 1969 | |
| 42. Stanford in the Vale | 17 March 1971 | |
| 43. Steventon | 09 July 1969 | |
| 44. Sutton Courtenay | 09 July 1969 | |
| 45. Uffington | 03 February 1970 | |
| 46. Wantage Town Centre | 18 March 1970 | 26 February 1985 |
| 47. Wantage – Charlton | 28 February 1984 | |
| 48. West Hanney | 22 July 1970 | 24 July 1990 |
| 49. West Hendred | 22 July 1970 | |
| 50. Woolstone | 03 February 1971 | |
| 51. Wytham | 18 March 1970 | 16 July 2008 |

## *Conservation Areas in South Oxfordshire*

1. Aston Rowant
2. Aston Tirrold/Upthorpe
3. Beckley
4. Benson
5. Berrick Salome
6. Brightwell Baldwin
7. Brightwell cum Sotwell
8. Britwell Salome
9. Chalgrove
10. Checkendon
11. Chinnor
12. Cholsey
13. Clifton Hampden
14. Culham
15. Cuxham
16. Didcot Old Area
17. Didcot Northbourne Area
18. Didcot Station Road
19. Dorchester
20. East Hagbourne
21. Elsfield
22. Ewelme
23. Forest Hill
24. Garsington
25. Gatehampton
26. Goring
27. Great Haseley
28. Great Milton
29. Grey's Green
30. Henley-on-Thames
31. Henley St Marks Road
32. Henley Reading Road
33. Kingston Blount
34. Lewknor
35. Little Haseley
36. Little Milton
37. Little Wittenham
38. Long Wittenham
39. Mackney
40. Mapledurham
41. Marsh Baldon
42. Moreton
43. Nettlebed
44. North Moreton
45. North Stoke
46. Nuneham Courtenay
47. Oakley
48. Overy
49. Preston Crowmarsh
50. Pyrton
51. Rotherfield Peppard
52. Shepherd's Green
53. Shillingford
54. Shirburn
55. Sonning Eye
56. South Moreton
57. Stanton St John
58. Stoke Row
59. Stonor
60. Sydenham
61. Thame
62. Toot Baldon
63. Towersey
64. Wallingford
65. Warborough
66. Waterstock
67. Watlington
68. West Hagbourne
69. Wheatley
70. Whitchurch
71. Winterbrook
72. Woodeaton

Appendix Five: Heritage at Risk Register for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse

| Entry Name | Summary | Designated Site Name | Heritage Category | List Entry Number | Local Planning Authority |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Church of All Saints, Church Street, North Moreton | Church, mainly flint and sandstone, with tiled nave and chancel, and sheet roof to south aisle. Mostly mid C13/C14, but altered in C15 and restored in C19. The tower and chantry chapel have had works carried out to them. Two National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England Repair Grants for Places of Worship projects have been completed. Works are still needed to the South Aisle roof. The outstanding important early C14 St Nicholas stained glass window within the chantry chapel is also in urgent need of repair to the glazing and stonework and funds need to be raised for this work. | CHURCH OF ALL SAINTS | Listed Building grade I | 1181258 | South Oxfordshire |
| Fawley Court and Temple Island, Fawley / Henley-on-Thames / Remenham / Bix and Assendon | Early C18 garden and pleasure grounds surrounding a 1680s house set within a park landscaped by Lancelot Brown. Interacting with the adjacent River Thames, an eyecatcher stands on Temple Island downstream in Brown's principal vista. The gardens and wooded pleasure grounds have a number of parkland architectural elements linked by paths. Most of the estate and park are in separate ownership with previous development and inappropriate planting also impacting on the parkland structure and designed views There is a need to identify a partnership approach to deliver conservation management. | Fawley Court and Temple Island | Registered Park and Garden grade II* | 1000390 | South Oxfordshire |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Camp on Bozedown, Whitchurch-on-Thames / Goring Heath | | Camp on Bozedown | Scheduled Monument | 1003704 | South Oxfordshire |
| Romano-British settlement 520m north west of Cooks Cottages, Warborough | | Romano-British settlement 520m north west of Cooks Cottages | Scheduled Monument | 1016630 | South Oxfordshire |
| Defences to the Saxon town [within Bull and Kine Croft], Wallingford | | Saxon town | Scheduled Monument | 1006329 | South Oxfordshire |
| Motte of Wallingford Castle, Wallingford | | Wallingford Castle | Scheduled Monument | 1006324 | South Oxfordshire |
| Settlement site at Northfield Farm, Long Wittenham / Little Wittenham | | Settlement site at Northfield Farm | Scheduled Monument | 1002925 | South Oxfordshire |
| Long barrow 340m north west of Cooks Cottages, Warborough | | Long barrow 340m north west of Cooks Cottages | Scheduled Monument | 1016632 | South Oxfordshire |
| Dike Hills, Dorchester | | Dike Hills | Scheduled Monument | 1006364 | South Oxfordshire |
| North Stoke henge and ring ditch site, Crowmarsh / South Stoke | | North Stoke henge and ring ditch site | Scheduled Monument | 1006335 | South Oxfordshire |
| Fernhouse, archway, gateway and walls, Mapledurham | Fern house, archway, gateway and walls of the walled garden to Mapledurham House. C17 and C18. The Fern house is roofless and in need of repair. The condition of the walls and gateway varies. There have been discussions regarding possible appropriate use and repair, including a proposal for | GARDEN WALL FERNHOUSE ARCHWAY AND GATEWAY APPROXIMATELY 20 METRES NORTH EAST OF | Listed Building grade II* | 1059520 | South Oxfordshire |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | reuse with heat provided by bio-mass heating. No works have physically been undertaken. | MAPLEDURHAM HOUSE | | | |
| Walled garden approximately 30 metres west of Manor Farmhouse, North Weston, Great Haseley | Walled garden with loggia, dating from early C18. Built of brick with limestone ashlar details and a plain tile roof to the loggia. The wall has a moulded brick coping. It was formerly part of the North Weston Manor which was largely demolished in early C19. The wall tops are disintegrating; there are structural cracks and the loggia is propped to prevent collapse. A project to address the issues needs to be agreed. | Walled Garden Approximately 30 metres west of Manor Farmhouse | Listed Building grade II* | 1369269 | South Oxfordshire |
| Well house, Wick Farmhouse, Barton, Beckley and Stowood | Well house associated with Wick Farmhouse, late C17, in poor condition and not in use. Square plan ashlar structure in Baroque style with stone benches lining walls. Well now filled in. Historic England has been in discussion with the owner regarding maintenance and conservation repairs. We understand that quotations for the work were obtained. The structure sits within a larger unused farmyard which forms part of larger planning discussions. | Wick Farmhouse, Well House Approximately 30 metres to north | Listed Building grade II* | 1047637 | South Oxfordshire |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Remains of St Nicholas's College, Wallingford Castle, Wallingford | Remains of C13 St Nicholas's College, the King's Chapel built within the Castle, with C15 and C16 additions. The site has suffered from heritage crime and part is fenced off.  Structures also in need of consolidation and a sustainable management plan. Historic England is working with the owners to see the site conserved, explained and maintained. Owners have commissioned survey work and have formed a heritage action group, with whom HE meet as required. | Wallingford Castle | Scheduled Monument | 1006324 | South Oxfordshire |
| Church of St Margaret, Hinton Waldrist | Constructed of rubble limestone with stone slate roofs. Dating from the mid C13, late C13 remodelling added the south transept. An 1880 restoration replaced the roof structures and added the porch. Repairs to the nave and transept roofs have been completed. Works are still required to the chancel and funds need to be found for this work. | Church of St Margaret | Listed Building grade II* | 1048641 | Vale of White Horse |
| Church of St Mary, Buckland | Cruciform plan with west tower. Early C12 nave, Early English (c.1240) transepts, tower and chancel; church rebuilt with late C18 windows. Coursed limestone rubble, limestone ashlar walling; stone slate roofs, except to nave and chancel; limestone ashlar flue. The limestone stone slate roofs to the north and south transept have been repaired. Stonework repairs are required at high level on the tower. | Church of St Mary | Listed Building grade I | 1181905 | Vale of White Horse |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Settlement site south east of church, Appleford-on-Thames / Long Wittenham | | Settlement site SE of church | Scheduled Monument | 1004849 | Vale of White Horse |
| Yew Down round barrow 950m south west of Butterbush Reservoir, Lockinge | | Yew Down round barrow 950m south west of Butterbush Reservoir | Scheduled Monument | 1018719 | Vale of White Horse |
| Two round barrows 520m and 550m north of Lower Chance Farm, Blewbury | | Two round barrows 520m and 550m north of Lower Chance Farm | Scheduled Monument | 1018716 | Vale of White Horse |
| Castle mound at Fitzharris, Abingdon | | Castle mound at Fitzharris | Scheduled Monument | 1006311 | Vale of White Horse |
| Milton Manor House, High Street, Milton | Manor house built circa 1670 in classical style with later attached flanking wings, (one of which includes a chapel), kitchen and brewhouse range added circa 1776. North and south wings, and stable and carriage house roofs in poor condition and cornice to main block in very poor condition. The condition of the timberwork to the windows is also cause for great concern. Discussions between Historic England and the owners led to a grant being offered to prioritise and cost the repairs need but this was not enacted. | MILTON MANOR COTTAGE AND MILTON MANOR HOUSE | Listed Building grade I | 1048220 | Vale of White Horse |

Appendix 6: Public Health Summary for South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, and England

| | Time period | South Oxfordshire | Change from previous | Vale of White Horse | Change from previous | England |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| **Life expectancy and causes of death** | | | | | | |
| Life expectancy at birth (male) | 2016-18 | 82.2 | Up | 82.6 | Up | 79.6 |
| Life expectancy at birth (female) | 2016-18 | 85.5 | Down | 85.4 | Up | 83.2 |
| Under 75 mortality rate from all causes | 2016-18 | 227.3 | Up | 236.2 | Up | 330.5 |
| Mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases | 2016-18 | 44.3 | Up | 46.4 | Down | 71.7 |
| Mortality rate from cancer | 2016-18 | 98.6 | Down | 105.1 | Up | 132.3 |
| Suicide rate | 2016-18 | 8.01 | Up | 9.08 | Up | 9.64 |
| **Injuries and ill health** | | | | | | |
| Killed and seriously injured rate on England's roads | 2016-18 | 43.6 | No change | 45.5 | No change | 42.6 |
| Emergency hospital admission rate for intentional self harm | 2018/19 | 183.8 | Up | 191.2 | Up | 193.4 |
| Emergency hospital admission rate for hip fractures | 2018/19 | 551.1 | Down | 470.1 | Down | 558.4 |
| Percentage of cancer diagnosed at an early stage | 2017 | 55.4 | Down | 56.1 | Up | 52.2 |
| Estimated diabetes diagnosis rate | 2018 | 64.1 | Up | 68.2 | Up | 78 |
| Estimated dementia diagnosis rate | 2019 | 68 | Down | 65.7 | Up | 68.7 |
| **Behavioural risk factors** | | | | | | |
| Hospital admission rate for alcohol specific conditions | 2016/17 - 2018/19 | 33.4 | Down | 29.5 | Down | 31.6 |
| Hospital admission rate for alcohol related conditions | 2018/19 | 479.2 | Up | 442.9 | Up | 663.7 |
| Smoking prevalence in adults | 2018 | 13.4 | Up | 6.82 | Down | 14.4 |
| Percentage of physically active adults | 2017/18 | 77.3 | Up | 72 | Down | 66.3 |
| Percentage of adults classified as overweight or obese | 2017/18 | 58.6 | Up | 59.6 | Up | 62 |

| | Time period | South Oxfordshire | Change from previous | Vale of White Horse | Change from previous | England |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| **Child health** | | | | | | |
| Teenage conception rate | 2017 | 13.5 | Up | 8.49 | Down | 17.8 |
| Percentage of smoking during pregnancy | 2018/19 | 7.48 | Down | 7.69 | Down | 10.6 |
| Percentage of breastfeeding initiation | 2016/17 | 85.9 | Up | 83.5 | Up | 74.5 |
| Infant mortality rate | 2016-18 | 2.47 | Up | 2.54 | Down | 3.93 |
| Year 6: Prevalence of obesity | 2018/19 | 13 | Down | 15.7 | Up | 20.2 |
| **Inequalities** | | | | | | |
| Deprivation score (IMD 2015) | 2015 | 8.56 | No change | 8.46 | No change | 21.8 |
| Smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations | 2018 | 12.2 | Down | 12.5 | Down | 25.4 |
| **Wider determinants of health** | | | | | | |
| Percentage of children in low income families | 2016 | 7.9 | Up | 8.5 | Up | 17 |
| Average GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score) | 2018/19 | 50.3 | Up | 47.8 | Down | 46.9 |
| Percentage of people in employment | 2018/19 | 82.1 | Up | 73.4 | Down | 75.6 |
| Statutory homelessness rate - eligible homes people not in priority need | 2017/18 | N/A | No change | 0.17 | No change | 0.79 |
| Violent crime - hospital admission rate for violence (including sexual violence) | 2016/17-2018/19 | 11.7 | Up | 10.5 | Up | 44.9 |
| **Health protection** | | | | | | |
| Excess winter deaths index | Aug 2017 to July 2018 | 29.4 | Up | 31.8 | Up | 30.1 |
| New STI diagnoses rate (exc chlamydia age <25) | 2018 | 479.4 | Up | 451.5 | Down | 850.6 |
| TB incidence rate | 2016-2018 | 1.91 | Up | 2.03 | Down | 9.19 |

Appendix Seven: The ten most deprived lower super output areas in the Joint Local Plan area

| LSOA Ward Name | Index of Multiple Deprivation | Barriers to Housing and Services | Crime | Education, skills and training | Employment | Health deprivation and disability | Income deprivation affecting children | Income deprivation affecting older people |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abingdon Caldecott 08C | 2 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Berinsfield 06B | 4 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 7 |
| Didcot West 10A | 4 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 6 |
| Berinsfield 06A | 5 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 6 |
| Didcot South 13C | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Didcot South 13D | 5 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 7 |
| Didcot South 14B | 5 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 6 |
| Didcot South 14C | 5 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| Faringdon 09C | 5 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| Haseley Brook 04A | 5 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 6 |

| | Income | Living environment | Adult skills | Children and young people | Geographical barriers | Indoors | Outdoors | Wider barriers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abingdon Caldecott 08C | 2 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| Berinsfield 06B | 4 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 6 |
| Didcot West 10A | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| Berinsfield 06A | 4 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 6 |
| Didcot South 13C | 5 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| Didcot South 13D | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| Didcot South 14B | 5 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 7 |
| Didcot South 14C | 4 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 10 | 5 | 5 |
| Faringdon 09C | 4 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| Haseley Brook 04A | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7 |

# Appendix Eight: Oxford Green Belt extent in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse



South and Vale GIS

Printed on 28 April 2022

at a scale of 1:162,357

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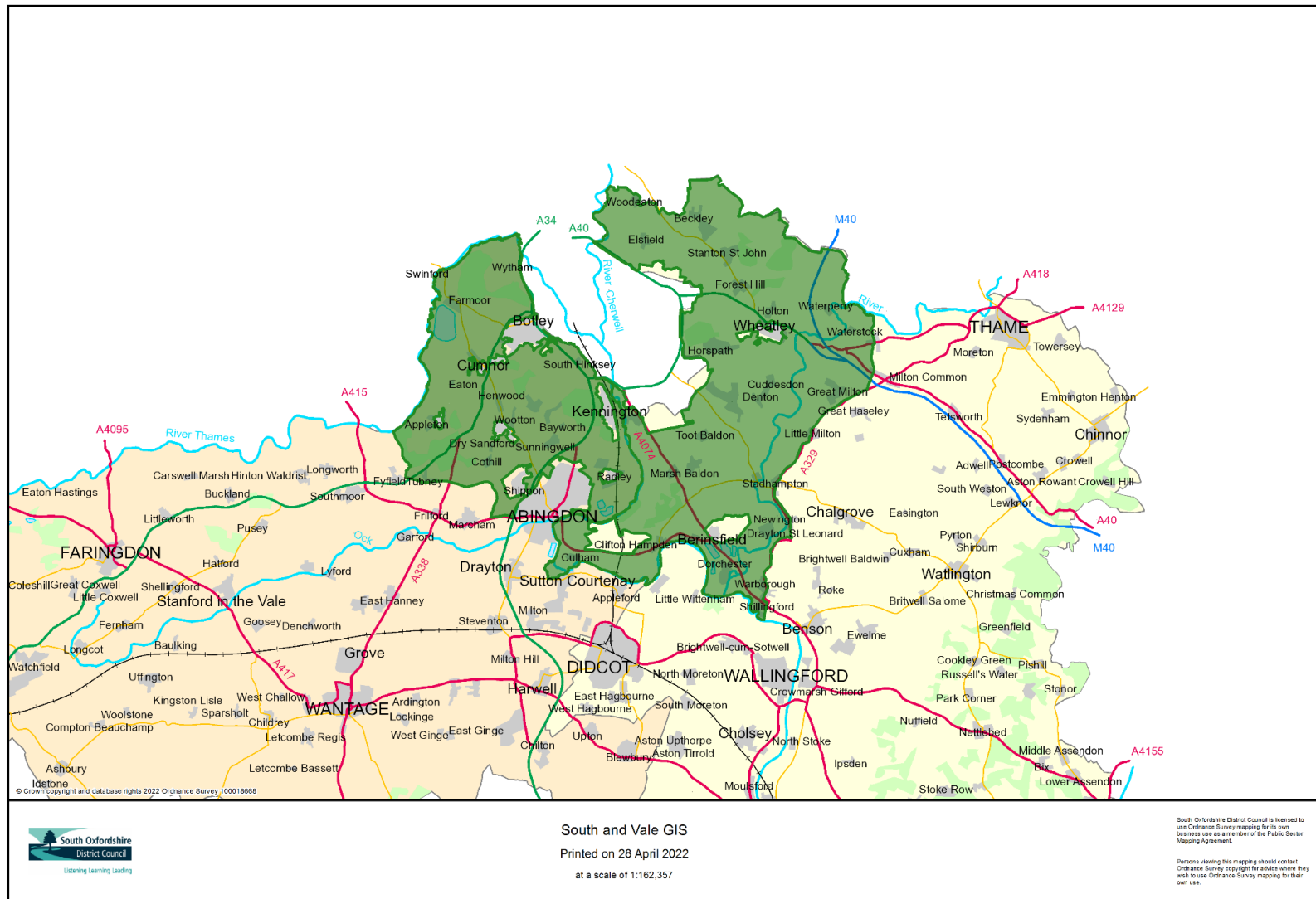
## Appendix Nine: Pupil forecasts by area

| Abingdon | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 677 | 694 | 684 | 726 | 744 | 746 |
| 1 | 685 | 663 | 684 | 679 | 721 | 735 |
| 2 | 669 | 678 | 662 | 683 | 681 | 718 |
| 3 | 644 | 653 | 664 | 652 | 672 | 668 |
| 4 | 672 | 645 | 655 | 669 | 659 | 675 |
| 5 | 709 | 658 | 636 | 647 | 661 | 650 |
| 6 | 596 | 708 | 662 | 643 | 654 | 667 |
| 7 | 475 | 472 | 544 | 527 | 507 | 519 |
| 8 | 535 | 479 | 479 | 550 | 535 | 513 |
| 9 | 502 | 540 | 489 | 491 | 561 | 545 |
| 10 | 455 | 472 | 510 | 463 | 469 | 533 |
| 11 | 453 | 444 | 463 | 502 | 458 | 462 |
| 12 | 257 | 224 | 224 | 232 | 249 | 230 |
| 13 | 204 | 229 | 201 | 202 | 208 | 222 |

| Didcot | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 590 | 602 | 581 | 564 | 551 | 583 |
| 1 | 566 | 606 | 602 | 583 | 566 | 561 |
| 2 | 557 | 570 | 601 | 596 | 578 | 568 |
| 3 | 563 | 566 | 570 | 601 | 594 | 583 |
| 4 | 573 | 569 | 562 | 566 | 596 | 595 |
| 5 | 527 | 580 | 570 | 564 | 568 | 603 |
| 6 | 460 | 539 | 579 | 570 | 561 | 571 |
| 7 | 541 | 581 | 685 | 696 | 700 | 689 |
| 8 | 615 | 561 | 592 | 695 | 703 | 713 |
| 9 | 614 | 630 | 574 | 601 | 701 | 714 |
| 10 | 578 | 668 | 683 | 625 | 653 | 762 |
| 11 | 522 | 582 | 663 | 678 | 522 | 652 |
| 12 | 252 | 253 | 279 | 315 | 322 | 298 |
| 13 | 199 | 227 | 228 | 251 | 282 | 288 |

| Faringdon | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 289 | 266 | 285 | 280 | 286 | 285 |
| 1 | 258 | 283 | 271 | 288 | 283 | 285 |
| 2 | 265 | 262 | 294 | 276 | 289 | 283 |
| 3 | 263 | 263 | 265 | 288 | 276 | 285 |
| 4 | 253 | 265 | 268 | 271 | 291 | 277 |
| 5 | 247 | 239 | 255 | 259 | 261 | 276 |
| 6 | 263 | 249 | 240 | 258 | 262 | 260 |
| 7 | 253 | 280 | 275 | 267 | 282 | 289 |
| 8 | 262 | 253 | 280 | 277 | 268 | 280 |
| 9 | 232 | 263 | 260 | 288 | 284 | 273 |
| 10 | 209 | 224 | 258 | 252 | 278 | 247 |
| 11 | 230 | 206 | 220 | 254 | 248 | 271 |
| 12 | 85 | 99 | 89 | 97 | 110 | 107 |
| 13 | 80 | 82 | 96 | 98 | 94 | 105 |

| Henley | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 117 | 145 | 121 | 108 | 104 | 105 |
| 1 | 135 | 124 | 149 | 128 | 114 | 108 |
| 2 | 110 | 137 | 126 | 151 | 129 | 115 |
| 3 | 125 | 117 | 140 | 131 | 155 | 135 |
| 4 | 134 | 128 | 120 | 142 | 132 | 155 |
| 5 | 137 | 134 | 127 | 122 | 141 | 130 |
| 6 | 143 | 140 | 135 | 130 | 124 | 140 |
| 7 | 177 | 194 | 191 | 179 | 174 | 169 |
| 8 | 200 | 183 | 199 | 197 | 182 | 176 |
| 9 | 177 | 198 | 181 | 198 | 194 | 177 |
| 10 | 175 | 179 | 1944 | 182 | 197 | 192 |
| 11 | 164 | 180 | 182 | 202 | 184 | 199 |

| Thame | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 273 | 290 | 288 | 259 | 251 | 257 |
| 1 | 270 | 292 | 303 | 298 | 271 | 263 |
| 2 | 266 | 284 | 299 | 307 | 305 | 278 |
| 3 | 253 | 282 | 293 | 306 | 315 | 313 |
| 4 | 246 | 264 | 288 | 296 | 311 | 319 |
| 5 | 286 | 269 | 271 | 293 | 303 | 316 |
| 6 | 261 | 297 | 275 | 274 | 299 | 307 |
| 7 | 333 | 334 | 363 | 342 | 341 | 365 |
| 8 | 321 | 339 | 341 | 366 | 346 | 344 |
| 9 | 326 | 325 | 338 | 338 | 364 | 344 |
| 10 | 351 | 329 | 325 | 336 | 336 | 362 |
| 11 | 319 | 356 | 330 | 325 | 337 | 337 |
| 12 | 282 | 264 | 288 | 268 | 267 | 274 |
| 13 | 245 | 257 | 238 | 260 | 243 | 342 |

| Wallingford | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 252 | 227 | 258 | 242 | 245 | 256 |
| 1 | 235 | 261 | 233 | 266 | 253 | 254 |
| 2 | 226 | 236 | 258 | 233 | 267 | 253 |
| 3 | 224 | 228 | 236 | 259 | 236 | 268 |
| 4 | 206 | 223 | 225 | 235 | 258 | 236 |
| 5 | 193 | 208 | 222 | 226 | 238 | 259 |
| 6 | 189 | 199 | 211 | 226 | 231 | 244 |
| 7 | 218 | 201 | 212 | 222 | 235 | 237 |
| 8 | 226 | 223 | 206 | 219 | 230 | 241 |
| 9 | 195 | 231 | 226 | 211 | 225 | 237 |
| 10 | 205 | 194 | 227 | 223 | 212 | 225 |
| 11 | 193 | 212 | 199 | 235 | 230 | 221 |
| 12 | 150 | 144 | 157 | 149 | 173 | 167 |
| 13 | 122 | 139 | 133 | 147 | 139 | 161 |

| Wantage | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 376 | 387 | 378 | 384 | 400 | 422 |
| 1 | 368 | 401 | 399 | 394 | 400 | 415 |
| 2 | 371 | 396 | 421 | 422 | 418 | 423 |
| 3 | 377 | 365 | 403 | 429 | 431 | 425 |
| 4 | 344 | 397 | 396 | 415 | 443 | 444 |
| 5 | 401 | 356 | 400 | 401 | 421 | 449 |
| 6 | 342 | 419 | 368 | 414 | 412 | 430 |
| 7 | 239 | 282 | 337 | 300 | 338 | 332 |
| 8 | 260 | 246 | 286 | 341 | 306 | 342 |
| 9 | 249 | 277 | 255 | 297 | 354 | 315 |
| 10 | 261 | 235 | 256 | 236 | 277 | 329 |
| 11 | 283 | 264 | 235 | 257 | 237 | 277 |
| 12 | 197 | 180 | 166 | 151 | 164 | 152 |
| 13 | 152 | 181 | 162 | 150 | 138 | 150 |

| Watlington | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 125 | 107 | 146 | 143 | 145 | 157 |
| 1 | 117 | 130 | 113 | 151 | 147 | 150 |
| 2 | 131 | 119 | 130 | 117 | 152 | 149 |
| 3 | 114 | 132 | 120 | 132 | 120 | 154 |
| 4 | 125 | 112 | 128 | 120 | 130 | 120 |
| 5 | 121 | 118 | 106 | 124 | 116 | 126 |
| 6 | 116 | 120 | 116 | 105 | 123 | 116 |
| 7 | 142 | 146 | 150 | 148 | 139 | 154 |
| 8 | 151 | 146 | 150 | 156 | 153 | 146 |
| 9 | 138 | 150 | 144 | 150 | 156 | 154 |
| 10 | 158 | 138 | 148 | 144 | 150 | 157 |
| 11 | 137 | 156 | 136 | 147 | 143 | 151 |

| Wheatley | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 174 | 173 | 153 | 150 | 147 | 153 |
| 1 | 168 | 173 | 174 | 152 | 150 | 149 |
| 2 | 182 | 166 | 172 | 172 | 151 | 152 |
| 3 | 176 | 171 | 159 | 160 | 162 | 145 |
| 4 | 179 | 175 | 170 | 156 | 158 | 162 |
| 5 | 209 | 170 | 166 | 160 | 147 | 151 |
| 6 | 159 | 209 | 167 | 162 | 157 | 145 |
| 7 | 179 | 162 | 196 | 167 | 162 | 159 |
| 8 | 181 | 180 | 165 | 195 | 168 | 165 |
| 9 | 181 | 179 | 178 | 162 | 192 | 169 |
| 10 | 183 | 177 | 176 | 173 | 159 | 190 |
| 11 | 163 | 181 | 176 | 174 | 172 | 160 |
| 12 | 122 | 88 | 98 | 95 | 94 | 94 |
| 13 | 83 | 106 | 77 | 85 | 82 | 82 |

| Woodcote | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Actual | Forecast | | | | |
| Year | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
| R | 103 | 114 | 113 | 93 | 91 | 95 |
| 1 | 117 | 109 | 117 | 117 | 94 | 96 |
| 2 | 108 | 119 | 109 | 117 | 118 | 99 |
| 3 | 112 | 106 | 115 | 107 | 114 | 115 |
| 4 | 120 | 114 | 108 | 116 | 109 | 116 |
| 5 | 123 | 119 | 111 | 106 | 113 | 109 |
| 6 | 115 | 124 | 120 | 111 | 106 | 113 |
| 7 | 120 | 118 | 120 | 121 | 112 | 110 |
| 8 | 144 | 123 | 120 | 123 | 123 | 1144 |
| 9 | 118 | 145 | 124 | 122 | 124 | 125 |
| 10 | 119 | 119 | 144 | 124 | 122 | 124 |
| 11 | 120 | 124 | 122 | 148 | 127 | 126 |

**Vale of White Horse** District Council

**South Oxfordshire** District Council
Listening Learning Leading

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