



## West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan 2012

### Equalities Analysis

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## Section I. Introduction

- 1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced by the Equality Act 2010 came into force on 6th April 2011. The duty, which replaces separate duties on race, disability and gender inequality, requires local authorities to analyse the effects of new and existing policies on people with protected characteristics, otherwise known as protected groups. It is intended that effects on equality are assessed as part of the policy making process, (before policy decisions are made) to ensure that any detrimental impacts of the policy can be mitigated.
- 1.2 For new and existing policies, public authorities are required to analyse the effect on equality for all protected groups. These are:
- Age
  - Disability
  - Gender reassignment
  - Marriage and civil partnership
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Race (Including gypsies and travellers)
  - Religion and Belief
  - Sex
  - Sexual Orientation
- 1.3 The assessment of policies is designed to ensure that they take account of the different needs of protected groups either by removing or minimising any disadvantage, or by providing services and facilities aimed at particular groups.
- 1.4 The key legislation is set out in the Equalities Act, 2010.

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to-

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act,
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to-

- (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it.
- (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

## **Section 2. Planning Policy & Equalities Analysis**

### **The West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan**

- 2.1 The Local Plan is the primary policy document in the West Oxfordshire Local Development Framework (LDF). It sets out the vision for the area up until 2029 as well as a series of objectives, both to deliver the vision and to address a range of social, environmental and economic issues facing the District.
- 2.2 The aim of the Local Plan is to deliver sustainable development across West Oxfordshire and contains a series of broad, far reaching policies that could potentially have both positive and negative equality impacts on the protected groups in the area.
- 2.3 It is essential that an equalities analysis of the Local Plan is undertaken, to ensure that the needs of protected groups have been taken into account in the preparation of policies, particularly as many of the policies within the Local Plan deal with access to services and facilities, the provision of housing and the well being of communities. These are key issues that the local authority should have close regard to as they could potentially bring differential impacts in terms of causing potential disadvantage to protected groups and in terms of meeting the needs of all sectors of the community.
- 2.4 This document provides details on the equality assessment of the West Oxfordshire Draft Local Plan (October 2012) and an analysis of the potential effects of the plan on protected groups in the District.

### **West Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)**

- 2.5 An important consideration in the preparation of the Draft Local Plan to date has been the West Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy – ‘Shaping Futures’. This 10 year strategy has been prepared in consultation with local stakeholders, and seeks to address a series of priorities and concerns expressed by local people.
- 2.6 Central to the strategy are eight priorities for action which are set out below:
  - To keep towns and villages economically prosperous and vibrant
  - To tackle the specific challenges of accessing services and facilities
  - To help young people move from childhood to adulthood
  - To support individuals and young families who want to stay in the area where they grew up
  - To support older people to maintain their independence and health
  - To maintain and improve the health and well being of all residents in West Oxfordshire
  - To reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime across the District to improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods

- To keep West Oxfordshire clean and beautiful while protecting the environment and trying to reduce the causes and effects of climate change
- 2.7 The priorities set out in the Community Strategy were prepared by the West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership. At the time these priorities were set out, the partnership was comprised of representatives from the District Council, as well as major agencies and sectors in the community. It is considered therefore that these priorities are broadly representative of the community as a whole.
- 2.8 Although the West Oxfordshire Strategic Partnership was disbanded in June 2012, many of the relevant organisations continue to work in close conjunction with the District Council through the West Oxfordshire Community Forum. The priorities of the West Oxfordshire SCS still however remain relevant to local planning.
- 2.9 These priorities have been a key consideration in the preparation of the vision and objectives of West Oxfordshire Local Plan which are set out in Section 3 below.

### **Section 3. Aims and Objectives of the Draft Local Plan**

3.1 The Draft Local Plan vision for West Oxfordshire up to 2029 is set out below:

Our vision for the future....

....is to meet the needs of West Oxfordshire's communities without significant change to the intrinsic character of the District. We want this area to continue to be one of the best places in which to live, work, play and visit.

There will be a network of safe, inclusive, vibrant, well-connected and prosperous market towns and villages within a healthy and attractive environment where new development respects and complements the distinctive character of the area whilst managing the impacts of climate change.

Witney will provide an enhanced range of services and facilities with improved transport infrastructure, whilst maintaining its character and vibrancy as a market town. The town will offer a choice of well-designed housing which meets lifetime needs and benefits from a network of green spaces linking with the surrounding countryside. There will be a diverse range of local employment opportunities to foster innovation and enterprise and reduce the necessity for commuting to nearby cities. The town centre will be vibrant, attractive, convenient and safe for all users with a wide range of retail and leisure activities on offer and will be well served by parking facilities and frequent bus services.

Carterton will strengthen its role as a service centre meeting the daily needs of its residents and work force, including personnel at the country's premier military transport airbase, RAF Brize Norton. A choice of well-designed housing which meets lifetime needs will be provided and benefit from a network of green spaces linking with the surrounding countryside and continuing to provide a green buffer

between Carterton and nearby villages. Much of the older MOD housing will be replaced with new urban development which will complement Carterton's enhanced role. The range of services and facilities in the town centre will expand, alongside further improvements in the quality of the built environment. Local employment opportunities will promote greater levels of inward investment and enterprise.

Chipping Norton will strengthen its role as a centre of enterprise in the northern part of the District. It will continue to be an economically and socially strong market town serving the needs of a large rural area. Its distinctive historic character and fine setting will be conserved and enhanced at the same time as accommodating new development to meet identified needs.

Elsewhere the distinctive qualities of the District's other towns and villages will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. They will not however be left untouched and the larger towns and villages in particular will be expected to accommodate growth of an appropriate scale and type to help ensure their future prosperity and that of the rural areas around them. New affordable housing for local families and development specifically to meet the needs of older people will be delivered to help maintain the vibrancy of rural communities.

3.2 In order to achieve this vision, the Local Plan also sets out a range of strategic objectives. These objectives have evolved through extensive consultation with local communities and partner organisations with particular regard to the West Oxfordshire Sustainable Community Strategy.

<b>1. Strong market towns and villages</b>
CO1 Provide new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type in locations which will help improve the quality of life of local communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car, can be minimised.
CO2 Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet local housing needs.
<b>2. Meeting the specific housing needs of our communities</b>
CO3 Ensure the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.
CO4 Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build, as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, newly forming households and travelling communities.
<b>3. Sustainable communities with access to services and facilities</b>
CO5 Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.

- CO6 Ensure that land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.
- CO7 Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of public transport.
- CO8 Achieve sustainable economic growth which improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities, removes potential barriers to investment and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.
- CO9 Achieve a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy.
- CO10 Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve the centres.
- CO11 Maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.
- CO12 Improve access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

#### **4. Protecting and enhancing our environment and reducing the impact from climate change**

- CO13 Conserve and enhance the high environmental quality of West Oxfordshire with protection and promotion of its diverse landscape, biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and its local cultural, heritage and environmental assets.
- CO14 Reduce the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.
- CO15 Achieve improvements in water and air quality.
- CO16 Minimise use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.
- CO17 Improve the sustainable design and construction of new development, including improving energy, water efficiency and water management.
- CO18 Ensure that new developments are suitably located and well designed to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of our towns and villages as well as contributing to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.

## **Beneficiaries of the Draft Local Plan and Expected Outcomes**

- 3.3 The Draft Local Plan addresses a broad range of locally significant issues and will therefore have an impact on all those living in, working in and visiting the District.
- 3.4 As the vision and objectives of the Draft Local Plan have been prepared with the priorities of the community strategy in mind, it is considered that they will largely deliver positive outcomes for all of the protected groups. The strategy is based on a broad range of evidence, which has included extensive consultation, allowing communities to ensure that their needs and aspirations have been reflected in the overall strategy for the area.
- 3.5 It is necessary however, to consider whether the Draft Local Plan may have a differential impact on any of the protected groups in the area, so that these may be mitigated where necessary. In order to do this, the draft policies contained in the plan have to be checked for their relevance to equality issues.

## **Evidence Gathering**

- 3.6 In order to examine the effect of the Draft Local Plan on the protected groups in the District, it is important to consider the common issues faced by each of the groups that may be affected.
- 3.7 A wide range of studies and associated literature, relating to the experiences of protected groups and the places in which they live have been reviewed, in order to tease out the common relevant issues that may be affected by spatial planning.
- 3.8 In order to understand how prevalent each of these key issues might be in West Oxfordshire, a review of demographic information has also been undertaken, to better understand how acute such issues might be in certain parts of the District and to determine whether the Draft Local Plan is likely to have a negative differential impact on any of the protected groups.
- 3.9 The Oxfordshire Data Observatory provides an overview of equality and diversity in West Oxfordshire through the publication of the 'Equality and Diversity Data Pack'.
- 3.10 The data pack provides a broad range of information on each of the protected groups in the district including the proportion of the local population with protected characteristics including disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation as well as demographic information such as the age and gender profile of the district. This information has been taken into account along with data provided by the Office of National Statistics (ONS).
- 3.11 A list of studies and reports used as in the evidence gathering section of this report is included in the bibliography.

## **Section 4. Evidence Summary**

### **Ethnicity / Gypsies and Travellers**

- 4.1 Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are legally recognised as ethnic groups, and protected from discrimination by the Race Relations Act (1976, amended 2000) and the Human Rights Act (1998). In terms of health and education, they are one of the most deprived groups in the Britain.
- 4.2 There are a number of characteristics evident amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities that may be affected by the objectives and policies of the Local Plan.

### **Housing**

- 4.3 Accommodation is the most fundamental issue affecting Gypsies and Travellers as it has implications for other inequalities and barriers to services that Gypsies and Travellers experience. Those that do not have a legal place to park their home are in law, homeless and may find themselves pushed further into social exclusion through lack of access to health care and education. The provision of suitable sites will enable Gypsies and Travellers to access clean water, sanitation and health care while at the same time being able to pursue traditional nomadic lifestyles.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- 4.4 The life expectancy for Gypsy and Traveller men and women is lower than the national average and there are large scale health inequalities between traveller communities and the general population. This may be a reflection of their lifestyles with a culture of self reliance and reluctance amongst communities to access health care provision while other socio economic factors such as poor educational attainment, poor diet and limited exercise may be an influence.

### **Employment**

- 4.5 Gypsies and Travellers experience discrimination and inequalities in terms of economic inclusion and access to employment which may be a result of low levels of academic attainment, skills education and training as well as a lack of appropriate business support. It is apparent that Gypsy and Traveller communities are more likely to be self employed or operate in family businesses undertaking a wide range of manual and seasonal work. Problems with undertaking such work may arise through restrictions placed on traveller sites which prevent business operations and storage of materials from taking place. Difficulties in accessing paid work may also be the result of racial discrimination amongst employers or members of the local community.

### **Social Integration**

- 4.6 Gypsies and Travellers face a range of barriers to social inclusion. Much of the conflict that exists between Gypsies and Travellers and the wider community arise due to the establishment of unauthorised encampments before

retrospectively applying for planning approval. The presence of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller camps may lead to high levels of friction between different segments of the community and increased racist and discriminatory behaviour from settled communities.

### Ethnic Diversity in West Oxfordshire

4.7 Data on ethnic diversity in West Oxfordshire illustrates that approximately 6% of the West Oxfordshire population was born outside of the UK compared to almost 10% across the rest of the County. Over 95% of the district's population is classified as 'White British' which indicates that issues relating to ethnic diversity are not particularly prevalent in West Oxfordshire. The figures illustrated in Table 1 give a basic indication of how ethnic diversity varies between districts in Oxfordshire. West Oxfordshire has the highest proportion of 'White British' residents of any district in the county. Main issues of ethnicity in West Oxfordshire relate to the location of Gypsy and Traveller communities within the District.

4.8 There has been a recent increase in economic migrants (people leaving their home country to seek work here) but overall there are still comparatively low levels of people moving into the District from overseas.

	West Oxon	Cherwell	Oxford	South	Vale
Total Population	95643	132000	135500	128300	115800
Total White British	91442	122000	104000	120300	107900
Proportion of population white British	95.6%	92.4%	76.8%	93.8%	93.2%

**Table 1: Ethnic diversity in Oxfordshire**

4.9 The figures in Table 2 and 3 illustrate how prevalent Gypsy and Traveller communities are in West Oxfordshire compared with neighbouring authorities and also the need for additional provision to be made, to meet their housing needs. A more up to date study of Gypsy and Travellers housing needs is currently underway and will feed into the local plan process next year.

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social rented	Total private		
July 2010				
Cherwell	0	88	0	88
Oxford	0	0	0	0
South Oxon	56	0	7	63
Vale of White Horse	40	0	0	40

Count	Authorised sites with planning permission		Unauthorised sites without planning permission	Total
	Social rented	Total private		
West Oxon	28	120	16	164
Jan 2011				
Cherwell	0	98	0	98
Oxford	0	0	0	0
South Oxon	53	0	7	60
Vale of White Horse	41	0	0	41
West Oxon	26	155	0	181
July 2011				
Cherwell	0	108	2	110
Oxford	0	0	0	0
South Oxon	53	0	8	61
Vale of White Horse	50	0	0	50
West Oxon	26	144	15	185
Jan 2012				
Cherwell	0	100	9	109
Oxford	0	0	1	1
South Oxon	54	0	8	62
Vale of White Horse	56	0	0	56
West Oxon	23	160	20	203
July 2012				
Cherwell	0	104	0	104
Oxford	0	0	0	0
South Oxon	52	0	8	60
Vale of White Horse	62	0	0	62
West Oxon	25	165	0	190

**Table 2 – Communities and Local Government Count of Gypsy and Traveller caravans, 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 (Oxfordshire Authorities- last 5 counts**

	<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>		<b>Travelling Showpeople</b>	
	<b>2006 Baseline</b>	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>2006 Baseline</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
<b>Cherwell</b>	48	15	14	11
<b>Oxford</b>	0	9	1	3
<b>South Oxfordshire</b>	37	12	22	7
<b>Vale of White Horse</b>	37	12	3	4
<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	80	14	18	12

**Table 2 - Extract from the Partial Review of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (June 2009). Permanent residential pitch baseline and net additional pitch provision requirements 2006-201**

## **Disability**

- 4.10 Disability and long term health issues can have a number of social exclusion implications, people with long term illness and disability can face exclusion from the labour market and may require significant support to meet their social care needs.
- 4.11 There are a range of issues faced by disabled people through the formation of social and environmental barriers. The creation of such barriers may result from the implementation of policies within the Draft Local Plan and as a result, it is important to ensure that where barriers exist, they do not present a negative differential impact on disabled people in the District.
- 4.12 A review of case studies and national reports completed by disability groups and representatives has enabled the identification of a number of themes relating to disability that may be affected by spatial planning in the District.

## **Transport**

- 4.13 Accessible transport better enables disabled people to live independent lives, enabling people to access education and employment, retail and healthcare. Transport disability arises where disabled people are unnecessarily excluded from current forms of transport. A lack of accessible transport may create issues of social exclusion for disabled people.

## **Employment**

- 4.14 The provision of good quality access and facilities for disabled people within employment premises is important in enabling disabled people to work.

## **Housing**

- 4.15 The provision of appropriate housing is key to independent living for disabled people. Access to housing may be restricted by inappropriate design features such as stepped entrances, narrow doorways and upstairs wc facilities. The supply of accessible housing is limited, particularly in areas of historic housing and demand for such housing is increasing with an ageing population.

## **Access to social and leisure facilities**

- 4.16 Physical barriers may restrict people with disabilities from accessing leisure and recreation activities.

## **Disability in West Oxfordshire**

- 4.17 Many of the issues surrounding disability and spatial planning are related to the creation of inclusive environments and the ability of all people to participate equally, confidently and independently in mainstream activities with choice and dignity (Inclusive design).

4.18 The table below shows three key disability indicators for the local area and comparative figures for the rest of the County. Figures are shown as a percentage of the total population (2011 census estimate)

<b>Key Disability Indicators</b>	<b>West Oxfordshire</b>	<b>Oxfordshire</b>
People with long term limiting illness (%) <sup>1</sup>	13.15	13.18
Incapacity Benefit / Severe Disablement Allowance claimants	1.07	1.28
Disability Living Allowance Claimants (%)	2.85	3.02

**Table 3 - Key disability indicators**

- 4.19 Although disability rates in the district are lower than the wider county average, the figures demonstrate that a significant proportion of the working age population suffer from long term limiting illnesses and may therefore experience some of the difficulties and challenges outlined above.
- 4.20 With an ageing population in the District, there is further potential for the proportion of people with disability and long term limiting illnesses to increase over time.
- 4.21 A further disability issue in West Oxfordshire relates to the concentration of military families in the District associated with RAF Brize Norton in Carterton. There is potential for military personnel to experience physical disablement as a result of the services they perform on active duty, many of whom will wish to continue living in the District following active service due to ties with family, friends and support networks in the area.

## **Age**

- 4.22 There are a wide range of issues experienced by different age groups which may be affected by the policies in the Local Plan. Some of these are relevant to all age groups while others may be experienced by the young and old separately.

## **Older People**

### **Housing**

- 4.23 The need for appropriate housing is a particular issue faced by an ageing population and one that must be addressed to ensure that housing is suitable or can be adapted to meet future needs, particularly in terms of accessibility. As age increases, the need for space within housing may also increase (e.g.

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<sup>1</sup> Figures derived from census 2001

wider doorways) in order to enable better access of the main household facilities.

- 4.24 The housing needs of older people are diverse however and housing needs of older people are likely to be influenced by lifestyle choices rather than frailty. Whilst some people will require institutional care in later life, others will want to remain in the community, if adaptations or lifetime homes are available.
- 4.25 An improved supply of housing types and tenures is therefore required to meet the needs of older people.

### **Services and Facilities**

- 4.26 Older people generally require better access to services and facilities such as post offices and doctors surgeries than the rest of the population. Health care services are of particular importance as people require different types of medical care and treatment as they get older. The provision of education and training facilities is also an important factor in ensuring that older people can pursue lifelong learning and skills development and help reduce the chances of social exclusion and isolation.

### **Transport**

- 4.27 As older people often live alone in the community and are less likely to have access to private transport, the provision and design of living space and transport is essential to enable social inclusion and mobility. Opportunities for physical activity are also important so the provision of safe walking and cycling access may deliver multiple benefits for older people.

### **Crime and Fear of Crime**

- 4.28 Feeling safe as they move about their environment is especially important for older people. Although fear of crime might exceed the actual incidence of crime within the District, design of development and civic space may effectively address both incidents of crime and fear of it.

### **Young People**

- 4.29 Children and young people have specific needs relating to how they use their environments. There are a range of social and environmental qualities that young people value highly in the places where they live, which should be considered in the creation of child friendly places.

### **Social Integration**

- 4.30 Social exclusion occurs when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown. Such problems are linked and are likely to be mutually reinforcing. Where such problems exist, young people are at particular risk of social exclusion.

## Safety and freedom of movement

- 4.31 Feelings of safety are important to all protected groups but particularly so for young people. Real and perceived risks limit opportunities for children and young people to explore, understand risks and to learn skills that are vital for their development. Run down areas and antisocial behaviour are particular concerns amongst young people.

## Quality recreation spaces

- 4.32 High quality, well maintained parks and green spaces make an important contribution to the integration of young people in society. Such spaces provide opportunities for play and social interaction and will engender a sense of pride and belonging in local areas. They may also divert young people from antisocial behaviour by providing opportunities for sports and active lifestyles and venues for youth clubs and other club based activities.

## Health

- 4.33 Levels of obesity in young people have increased both nationally and locally over the past 10 years. The 2011 health profile for West Oxfordshire indicates that over 13% of year 6 pupils in the district are classed as obese. Obesity in young people can lead to a wide variety of complex health issues in later life. Poor health amongst young people is often the result of low levels of physical activity and therefore linked to feelings of safety and quality of public spaces.
- 4.34 These key issues which have been identified through a review of national and international studies relating to young people's participation in planning and regeneration highlight the similarities and differences between the differing issues faced by young and old.

## West Oxfordshire age profile

	2001 estimate	2011 census	change	% change
Aged 0 to 9	12,000	12,200	200	2%
aged 10 to 19	11,600	12,100	500	4%
aged 20 to 29	9,700	11,300	1,600	16%
aged 30 to 59	42,200	43,100	900	2%
aged 60+	20,100	26,300	6,200	31%
all people	95,700	104,800	9,100	10%

**Table 4 - Changing age structure in West Oxfordshire 2001-2011**

- 4.35 The figures in table 4 are derived from ONS statistics and indicate that the 30 to 59 year age group form the largest proportion of the district's population.

Although this age group has increased between the 2001 and 2011 census, an increase of only 2% is the lowest proportionate increase for all age groups. The oldest age group (65 years +) saw the largest overall proportionate increase. The population of the District is forecast to age further over the duration of the Local Plan and as a result, the issues faced by an older population are likely to become more prevalent in the future. An increase of over 70% in the number of people aged 75 and over is predicted by 2026.

- 4.36 Figure 1 below illustrates the mean age distribution across West Oxfordshire. Most areas have a mean age of 39-43 years of age although it is greater than 43 in Woodstock and Bladon, Burford and Milton-under-Wychwood. The Ward with the lowest mean age is Carterton North East at 27.86 years. This can be accounted for by the high concentration of military personnel in this area who tend to be younger.

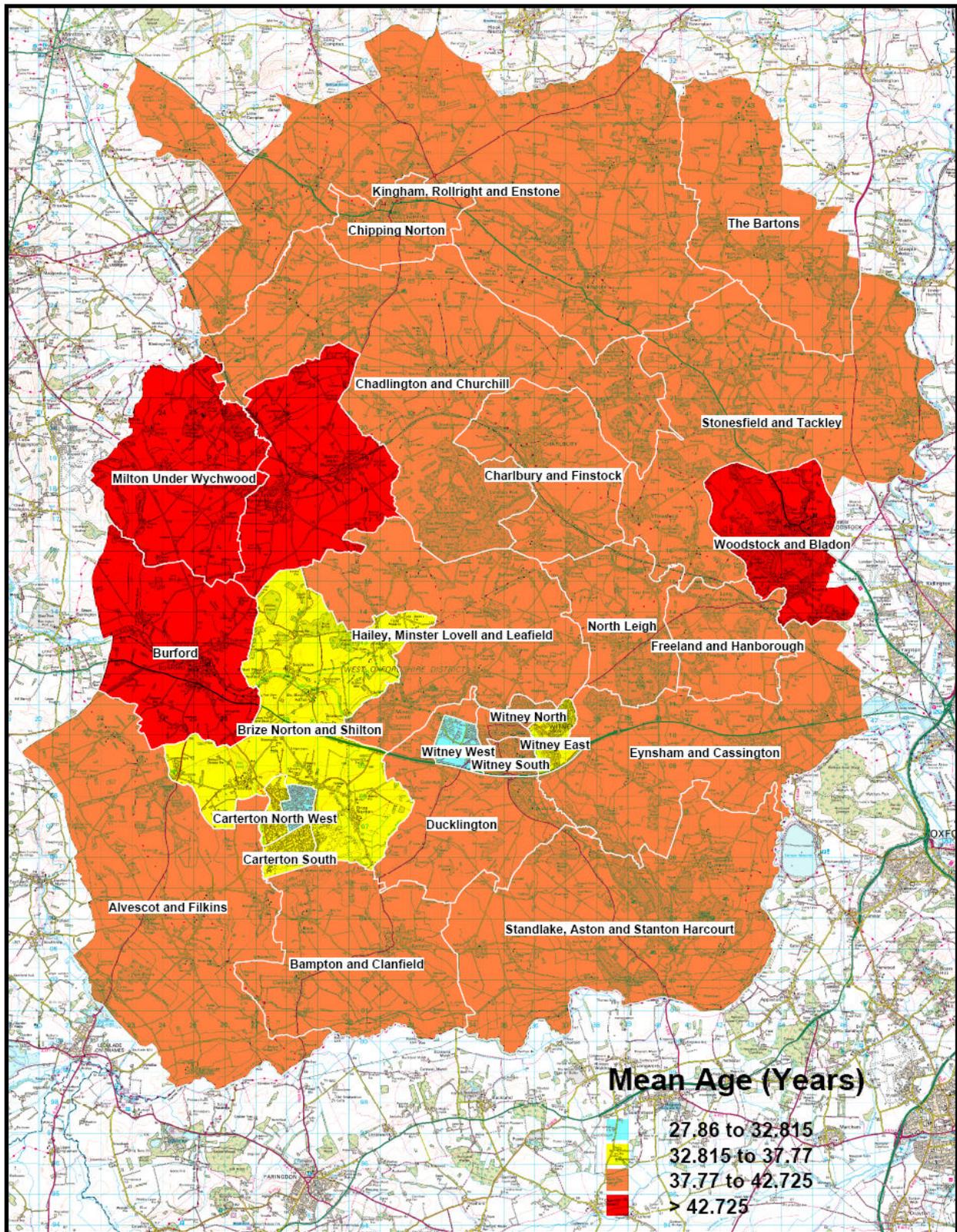


Figure I - Mean age distribution in West Oxfordshire

## **Gender**

- 4.37 Males and females have different needs, aspirations, perceptions and priorities. Gender equality ensures that these differences are valued equally although gender inequalities continue to persist in society, in terms of the labour market, housing market, living conditions and health, access to facilities and transport. Planning makes an important contribution to gender equality by determining and influencing the location of activities, the interrelationship of activities, the way in which activities are connected, the condition and quality of places and the delivery of sustainable development.
- 4.38 Places shape the way in which people live their lives, the opportunities for work, the ease of access to community services and facilities and opportunities for social integration. Planning policies influence the lives of women and men in different ways and as a result, the impact of the Local Plan on men and women in West Oxfordshire should be assessed to ensure that it does not result in a differential negative impact on males or females.
- 4.39 Gender inequalities are complex and cut across other kinds of differences including ethnicity, disability and age. A summary of the key issues relating to gender inequality that may be affected by the Local Plan are laid out below.

## **Employment**

- 4.40 Gender inequality in terms of employment may arise for a number of reasons but in terms of spatial planning, the main issue is access. Access to employment opportunities and the ability to access care and shopping facilities conveniently from the workplace are key factors that influence mobility, particularly that of women, who generally speaking, have a more complex range of responsibilities relating to work and child care. Ensuring that residential areas are located in close proximity to employment locations is key to ensuring that males and females are not isolated from employment opportunities.

## **Transport and access to services and facilities**

- 4.41 The transport needs of men and women also differ. Women are more likely to utilise public transport than men due to limited access to private modes of transport during the day time. Generally speaking, women are required to make more complex journeys than men by having to take account of childcare, the school run, work and shopping. The responsibility for escorting children to school is predominantly undertaken by women and as a result, the provision of safe and accessible public transport that links residential development with community services and facilities, as well as employment opportunities is important. Safe and convenient access to community services and facilities is a key element of reducing social isolation and exclusion.

## **Crime and Fear of Crime**

- 4.42 Women generally feel less safe than men being out alone after dark and are more likely to alter their behaviour due to a fear of crime. This will have implications for the way in which public spaces are designed.

## West Oxfordshire Demographic profile

4.43 The population of West Oxfordshire is approximately 51% female and 49% male. The population pyramid demonstrates that there are more males in younger age groups (0-29 years) but beyond the age of 29, there are more females in each of the age groups. The shape of the pyramid with the largest proportion of the population in the 35-49 age groups suggests slow growth and illustrates how the population is ageing, as this section of the population continues to climb up the pyramid over time.

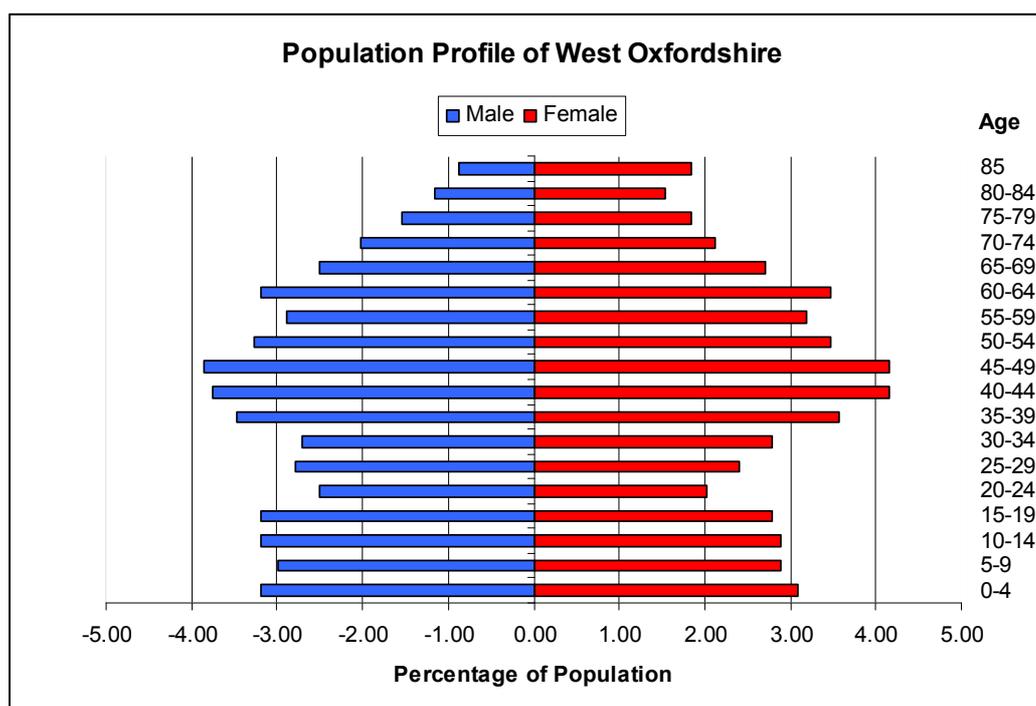


Figure 2 - West Oxfordshire demographic profile

## Other Protected Groups in West Oxfordshire

4.44 Although issues such as access to community services and facilities, crime and fear of crime and social integration will affect all of the protected groups, there is limited evidence to suggest that the Local Plan will have a negative differential impact on the following protected groups;

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Transgender

## Section 5. Summary of Key Issues

- 5.1 From the review of evidence described throughout Section 4, it has been possible to identify a number of key issues and themes that are experienced by all of the protected groups, where there is potential for a differential negative impact to arise through the implementation of the Local Plan.
- 5.2 It is important therefore to examine how the Local Plan is able to mitigate these potential negative impacts and where policies have been included to specifically address these key issues.
- 5.3 The key issues to be examined further are;
- Transport and Access
  - Health and Well Being
  - Housing
  - Employment and Economic Well Being
  - Social Inclusion
- 5.4 To determine whether the Local Plan will present a differential negative impact against any of the protected groups in the West Oxfordshire, the objectives of the Local Plan have been scored in relation to the key themes derived from the evidence base.
- 5.5 A simple scoring system has been devised, to illustrate graphically whether each of the objectives has a positive, neutral or negative impact against each of the key issues and is illustrated below.

Impact	Score
Positive	++
Neutral	+/-
Negative	--

Local Plan Objectives		Key Issues				
		Transport & Access	Housing	Health & Well Being	Economic Well Being	Social Inclusion
CO1	Provide new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type in locations which will help improve the quality of life of local communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car, can be minimised.	++	++	++	++	++
CO2	Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet local housing needs.	++	++	++	++	++
CO3	Ensure the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.	+/-	++	+/-	++	++
CO4	Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build, as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, newly forming households and travelling communities.	+/-	++	++	++	++
CO5	Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.	+/-	++	++	+/-	++
CO6	Ensure that land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.	++	+/-	++	+/-	++
CO7	Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of public transport.	++	+/-	++	+/-	++
CO8	Achieve sustainable economic growth which improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities, removes potential barriers to investment and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.	++	++	++	++	++
CO9	Achieve a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy.	+/-	+/-	++	++	++
CO10	Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve the centres.	++	+/-	++	++	++

Local Plan Objectives	Key Issues				
	Transport & Access	Housing	Health & Well Being	Economic Well Being	Social Inclusion
CO11 Maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	++
CO12 Improve access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.	++	+/-	++	+/-	++
CO13 Conserve and enhance the high environmental quality of West Oxfordshire with protection and promotion of its diverse landscape, biodiversity and geological conservation interests, and its local cultural, heritage and environmental assets.	+/-	+/-	++	++	++
CO14 Reduce the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.	+/-	++	++	++	++
CO15 Achieve improvements in water and air quality	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	+/-
CO16 Minimise use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	+/-
CO17 Improve the sustainable design and construction of new development, including improving energy, water efficiency and water management.	+/-	++	++	+/-	++
CO18 Ensure that new developments are suitably located and well designed to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of our towns and villages as well as contributing to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.	++	++	++	++	++

**Table 5 - Scoring of key equalities issues against Local Plan objectives**

- 5.6 Table 5 illustrates how the objectives of the Local Plan score in relation to each of the key issues faced by the protected groups.
- 5.7 The results indicate that the effects of the Strategy are likely to be generally positive with a number of neutral impacts and no negative impacts recorded. This is because of the strategic nature of the Local Plan and the fact that objectives have been designed to address specific social, environmental and economic issues facing the District both now and in the future.
- 5.8 The objectives and policies of the Local Plan have been based on a robust evidence base which has included the collection of demographic information and analysis of local housing needs and economic circumstances. The understanding of these local issues has resulted in a strategy that affects all people in the district positively without resulting in any differential negative impacts on the protected groups in the district.
- 5.9 Specific policies have also been incorporated into the Local Plan to address the needs of protected groups. These are;
- Policy CP7 - Type and mix of new homes
- Policy CP10 - Travelling Communities
- 5.10 These policies relate to housing which is one of the key themes identified through the literature review.

**Policy CP7** - sets out the type and mix of new homes to be delivered through the Local Plan to meet the needs of all sectors of the community. Particular emphasis is placed on the provision of extra care housing to meet the needs of older people, in recognition of the fact that there is an ageing population in the district.

**Policy CP10** - specifically aims to meet the needs of Travelling communities through the provision of new and protection of existing plots, pitches and sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The provision of appropriate authorised sites in sustainable locations will address a range of issues faced by travelling communities including social integration, economic well being and access to community services and facilities.

- 5.11 Other policies in the Local Plan, although dealing with specific topics, do not focus on any one of the protected groups in particular. Each of the themes identified as particular concerns for the protected groups are covered by the policies in the Local Plan and none of these are likely to result in a negative differential impact on any of the protected groups. Examples include:

**Policy CP4 – High Quality Design**

**Policy CP8 – Affordable Housing**

**Policy CP15 – Local Services and Community Facilities**

## Section 6. Equalities Analysis Consultation

- 6.1 A wide range of organisations representing each of the protected groups have been contacted, to determine whether the vision, objectives and policies within the plan effectively address the needs of protected groups in the area and also to identify any areas where discrimination against protected groups might arise.
- 6.2 A limited response from these groups has been received to date, although the aim at this stage of the Equalities Assessment process is to spell out the key issues faced by the protected groups and illustrate how the Local Plan will address these issues. Further consultation with representative groups will take place in due course, to ensure that the main issues have been reflected accurately in this assessment. The representative groups that have been contacted so far are listed in table 6 along with key issues that were highlighted by the representative groups in relation to past consultation documents.

Organisation	Documents Consulted on	Comments received	Key Issues Raised
Age Concern	Issues & Options Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a
Base 33	Issues & Options Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a
Citizens Advice Bureau	Issues & Options Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a
Oxfordshire County Council	Draft Local Plan	Various responses focussed on transport	N/a
Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance	LDF Update Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a
Oxfordshire Mind	Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Preferred Approach Draft Local Plan	Comments received on Preferred Approach	Housing should be delivered to meet local needs. Recognition that rural deprivation and access to services is a key issue in the District The housing needs of elderly people and their carers in rural areas need to be addressed Welcome the commitment to resisting the loss of viable community facilities Welcome the support for home working and opportunities for farm diversification
Witney Youth Council	Draft Local Plan	No Comments	N/a

**Table 6 - Representative groups consulted to date**

- 6.3 A database of relevant consultees has been compiled to test the findings of this Equalities Analysis. A copy of this assessment has been sent to all organisations to determine whether the issues identified in this report are accurate and to identify any further amendments that need to be made to the Local Plan to avoid discrimination. The list of relevant organisations is outlined in table 7 below;

Organisation	Representative Protected Group
Age Concern	Age (Elderly)
Age UK	Age (Elderly)
Base 33	Age (Young)
Carers Oxfordshire	Age (Elderly)
Carterton Community Champions	Age (Young)
Churches Together	Religion / All
Citizens Advice Bureau	All
Disability Rights Commission	Disability
Eynsham Youth Centre	Age (Young)
Guidepost trust	Age / Disability
Job Centre Plus	All?
Oxfordshire County Council	Gypsies and Travellers
Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance	Religion / All
Oxfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes	Sex / Pregnancy and Maternity
Oxfordshire Mind	Disability (Mental Health)
Oxfordshire Physical Disability Housing Group	
Oxfordshire Racial Equality Council	Race
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Rural Isolation / All
St Mungos	Age (Young)
West Oxon early intervention hub	Age (Young)
Witney Youth Council	Age (Young)
Young Mums	Age (Young) / Maternity

**Table 7 - List of representative groups consulted at this stage**

## **Section 7. Conclusion**

- 7.1 The implementation of the objectives and policies within the Local Plan will have a positive impact on the whole community, by delivering sustainable development to the right locations, at the right time and contributing to the creation of mixed, well integrated communities in West Oxfordshire.
- 7.2 The Local Plan has been built upon a sound evidence base and an in-depth understanding of the needs of local communities in the District. The equalities analysis further reinforces this by identifying a range of positive outcomes for protected groups in the District.

## Bibliography

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