



Oxfordshire

Community Profile 2024

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1. Introduction

Summary

Demographically, the Citizens Advice Oxfordshire (CAOx) area¹ is largely defined by the divide between Oxford city and its surrounding districts. The population of Oxford city is younger, more ethnically diverse and more densely populated than national averages, whilst surrounding regions are correspondingly older, less ethnically diverse and less densely populated than the rest of the country. While the city of Oxford receives significant international migration, surrounding areas receive almost none. Whilst the rest of Oxfordshire is defined by high levels of homeownership, Oxford has the lowest rate of home ownership of any district in England. This regional divide also affects economic, health and poverty outcomes. Though still normally below the national average, Oxford experiences higher rates of unemployment, indebtedness and child poverty than its surrounding districts.

When considered as a whole the CAOx area is a picture of comfort. Compared to the rest of the UK, incomes are higher, unemployment is lower, and the population is significantly better educated. The region is served well by its health and transport services, and this is evidenced by its highly positive health outcomes. Oxfordshire was ranked the 10th least deprived region in the country in 2019, an improvement from 2015, and the region continues to see lower rates of child poverty, fuel poverty and debt than national averages.

Yet beneath this picture, stark inequalities can be observed. In particular, 9 wards in the CAOx area are in the 20% most deprived areas in the country, and 1 is in the bottom 10%. These areas, mainly concentrated in the city of Oxford, experience significantly negative health outcomes and starkly high rates of child poverty. Their geographical proximity to some of the least deprived areas in the country only serves to exacerbate this inequality.

Yet even in relatively less deprived areas residents are struggling. All wards in the CAOx area contain households which are deprived in at least 3 dimensions². Almost half of households in the CAOx area are deprived in at least one dimension. 6.6% of residents live in severe income deprivation³. Prohibitively expensive housing across the county and high rents within Oxford city continue to exacerbate housing insecurity, induce overcrowding, and become barriers to employment. The cost of living crisis only exacerbates this deprivation, with fuel poverty rising in Oxford since 2019, and at a 6 year high in surrounding districts. Anxiety or depression affects 10%⁴ of the population, with depression rates in Oxfordshire outstripping the national average.

The comfortable position of the CAOx area should, then, not be overstated. A combination of existing inequalities, inaccessible housing, and trends in the cost of living will lead to significant difficulties for a significant number of residents in years to come.

¹ See 'Administrative Overview' below for details on the geographical boundaries of the CAOx area.

²<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/household-deprivation/hh-deprivation/household-is-deprived-in-three-dimensions>

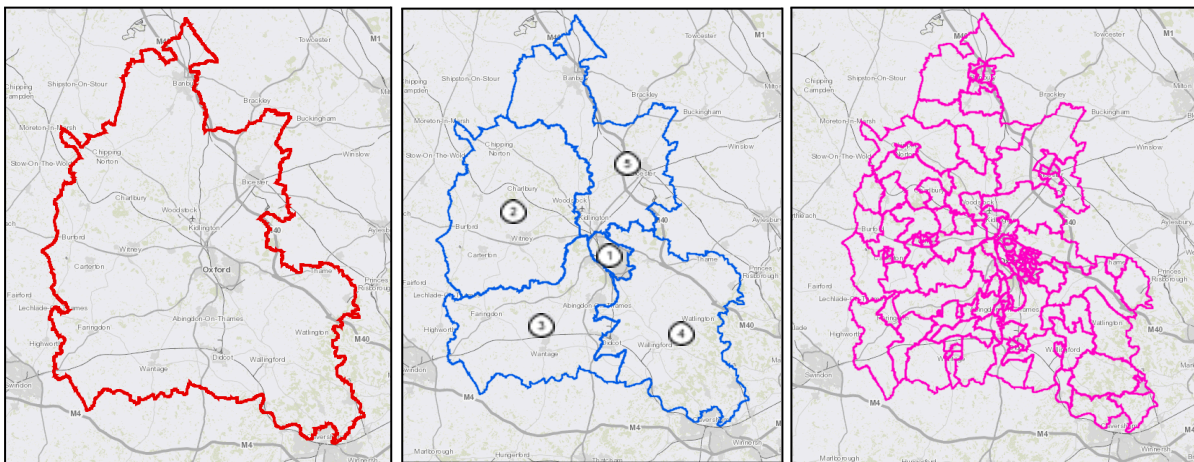
³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc1371/#/E07000180>

⁴ https://www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/08/OM_Annual_Report_digital.pdf

Administrative Overview

This profile is being conducted in anticipation of a merger of three Citizen's Advice charities: Citizens Advice Oxford, Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire, and Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale. These offices serve separate three local authority districts and Oxford city, which are marked below in Figure 1. It is important to note that Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale serves both the Vale of White Horse (3) and South Oxfordshire (4), and that Cherwell (5) is already served by Citizens Advice West Northamptonshire and Cherwell. The new Charity will therefore serve only local authority areas 1 to 4 in the diagram below.

Fig. 1 - Administrative boundaries of Oxfordshire. The Oxfordshire county boundary is marked in red, local authority area (LAA) boundaries are marked in blue, and ward boundaries are marked in magenta. LAAs are named as follows: 1. Oxford, 2. West Oxfordshire, 3. Vale of White Horse, 4. South Oxfordshire, and 5. Cherwell.⁵



This means that this community profile does not cover the whole of Oxfordshire, but only areas 1 to 4 in the figure below. All subsequent analysis, unless otherwise specified, is therefore limited to the local authority districts: Oxford, West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire. This report will refer to this collection of districts as the CAOx area, reserving the term 'Oxfordshire' for the whole county.

2. Demographics

Population and Growth Trends

In the 2021 Census the CAOx area had a recorded population of 564,500 people^{6 7}, and a population density of 280 people per square kilometre⁸. This is similar to the UK average but masks the fact that the region's population is highly concentrated in Oxford, with a density almost 15 times higher than the surrounding regions⁹.

⁵<https://oxfordshire.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=242cf7dfe3164d358a5429832fdf27b3>

⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

⁷ Of which 162,000 people lived in Oxford, 114,200 in West Oxfordshire, 138,900 in Vale of White Horse, and 149,100 in South Oxfordshire.

⁸ <https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=a488cb8fc9a74ac63cb52961e456ef>

⁹ The population density of Oxford is 3,553 persons per square kilometre.

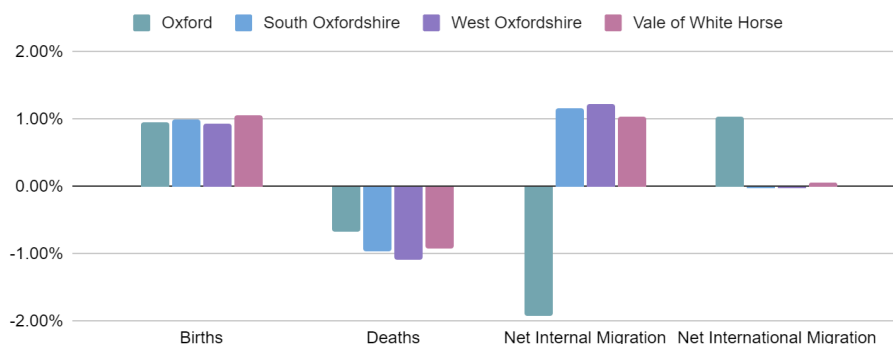
<https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=a488cb8fc9a74ac63cb52961e456ef>

The latest ONS mid year estimates for 2023 suggest that the population of the CAOx area is growing steadily, though Oxford has grown more slowly, and even experienced a population decrease of 0.8% between 2018 and 2020¹⁰. Nonetheless, population projections undertaken by the county council expect the population of Oxfordshire to increase by 52,000 individuals by 2030¹¹.

The reasons behind Oxford’s particular trend are made clear by the drivers of population change below. For Districts surrounding Oxford internal migration (migration from within the UK) was the biggest driver of population growth, however in Oxford there is a significant outflow of residents to other areas of the UK. This is significant, and is not countered by Oxford’s net positive population increase of young, international migrants¹². One potential reason for this is the temporary nature of Oxford’s international migration. Data on migrant age reveals that net international migration is positive in the early 20s age group, then negative from age 25 onwards. This is consistent with the experiences of student migrants, who are resident in Oxford for their period of study and then leave the UK soon after, making little difference to the population rate over time.

Another notable source of international migration to Oxfordshire has been the Ukrainian-Russian conflict. The Government’s Homes for Ukraine scheme allows for refugees from the country to be sponsored by a household who agree to house the refugee for at least 6 months, and as of August 2024, 2219 Ukrainian refugees have arrived.¹³ Other refugee resettlement schemes ran by the British Government have successfully relocated 247 asylum seekers in the CAOx area between 2014 and 2023¹⁴.

Fig. 2 - Components of population change for CAOx areas in 2020. Data: ONS¹⁵.



In 2021 there were 222,200 households in the CAOx area, with an average household size of 2.30¹⁶, which was slightly above the national average of 2.25. The majority of households

¹⁰<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieYmZkZjIwMWItNmFmMy00MDk1LWlZy2ItNzZwZTY5NDkxNDM2IiwidCI6ImYwNWQzOWRhLTl2ZWMtNGVIYS1iOGViLTImZjFhNjgyZDVINSJ9>

¹¹<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoieYmZkZjIwMWItNmFmMy00MDk1LWlZy2ItNzZwZTY5NDkxNDM2IiwidCI6ImYwNWQzOWRhLTl2ZWMtNGVIYS1iOGViLTImZjFhNjgyZDVINSJ9>

¹²<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualmidyearpopulationestimates/mid2020>

¹³<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-visa-data-by-country-upper-and-lower-tier-local-authority>.

¹⁴<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-applications-decisions-and-resettlement>

¹⁵<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

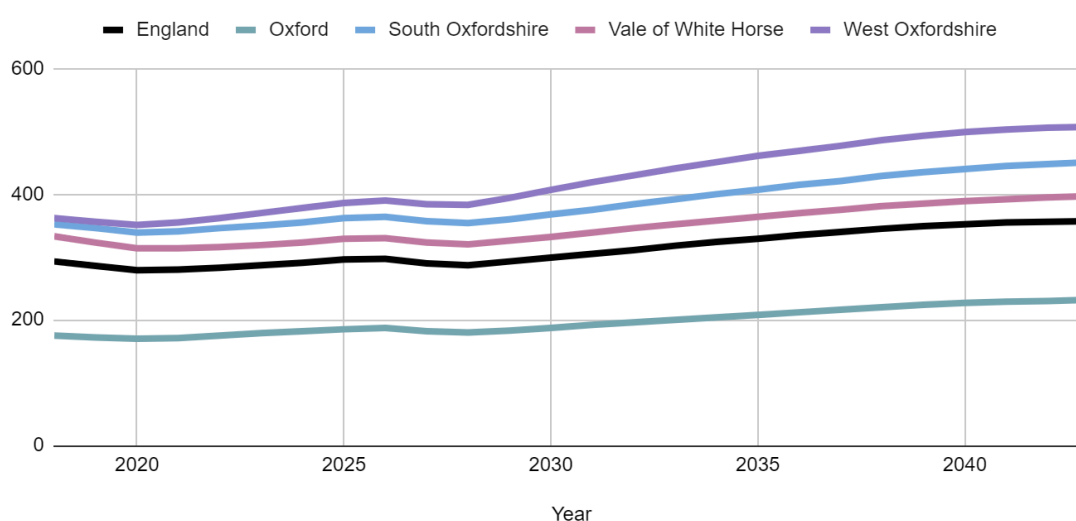
¹⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

(65%) were single family households, compared to only 27% one person households¹⁷. 38% of residents were single, and 46% were married or in a registered civil partnership, one percentage point above the national average of 45%.

Age and Sex Distribution

The CAOx area is defined by the contrast between urban and rural, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the age and gender distributions of its respective LAAs. The areas surrounding Oxford all display fairly similar characteristics. Their median ages are above the UK average of 40¹⁸, they have lower proportions of working age residents than the UK average (see fig. 3), and they all display a distinctive lack of residents in their early 20s (see fig. 4). In contrast, Oxford has a significantly higher proportion of working age residents, and exhibits a huge spike in residents aged 20 to 25. This is undeniably due to the huge student population in Oxford, however it's important to note that even disregarding the student age population, Oxford has a significantly lower proportion of pension age residents compared to the UK average, and surrounding areas. It is undeniably a young city. These demographics present contrasting challenges for Oxfordshires' urban and rural areas. Rural areas will continue to struggle with an increasingly ageing population, whilst urban areas, immune to this problem, will instead continue to manage the transitory presence of students in Oxford.

Fig. 3 - Old age dependency ratio by district, predicted until 2050. An area's old age dependency ratio is defined as the number of people of state pension age per 1000 people of working age. Data: ONS¹⁹



Proportions of men and women in the CAOx area are largely consistent with the national average²⁰, which reports slightly more women living in the UK than men^{21 22}. In line with

¹⁷ *ibid.*

¹⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/median-age/median-age/median-age>

¹⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/ageing-population-projections/editions/time-series/versions>

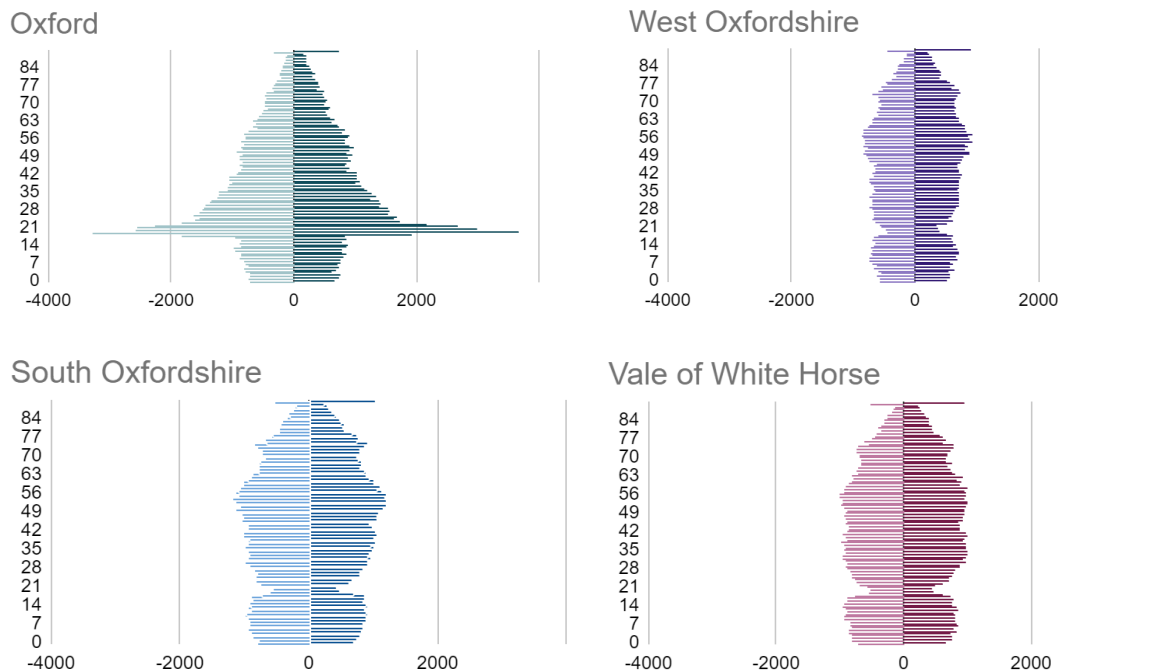
²⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/sex/sex/female>

²¹ The national percentages are 51.0% women to 49.0% men.

²² [https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/male-and-female-populations/latest/#:~:text=data%20shows%20that:-,according%20to%20the%202021%20Census%2C%20women%20and%20girls%20made%20up%2029.2%20million%20\(49.0%25\)](https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/demographics/male-and-female-populations/latest/#:~:text=data%20shows%20that:-,according%20to%20the%202021%20Census%2C%20women%20and%20girls%20made%20up%2029.2%20million%20(49.0%25))

proportions nationally, women tend to live longer in the CAOx area, and therefore dominate the upper ages in figure 4. In addition, in line with university statistics²³, it can be seen that there are more female students (those aged 20-25) than male students in the Oxford age profile.²⁴

Fig. 4 - Age and sex profiles by district, as of the 2021 census. The lighter shade (left) represents male residents, and the darker shade (right) represents female residents. Data: ONS²⁵.



Ethnic and Religious Distribution

When considered as a whole, the CAOx area appears to be less ethnically diverse than the rest of the UK, with 86.5% of the population identifying as ‘white’ compared to the national average of 81.0%²⁶, however this conceals another significant urban-rural divide. When broken down into districts (fig. 5) we can see clearly that Oxford residents are significantly more likely to identify as non-white than both the national average and surrounding regions. The white population also exhibits a degree of diversity, with the top ethnicities within ‘white’ being: ‘English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British’ (76.4%), ‘European, Mixed’ (4.3%), ‘Irish’ (2.1%), and ‘Polish’ (2.0%)²⁷. Detailed breakdowns of the CAOx area by ethnicity can be found in appendix 1.

²³ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/student-numbers>

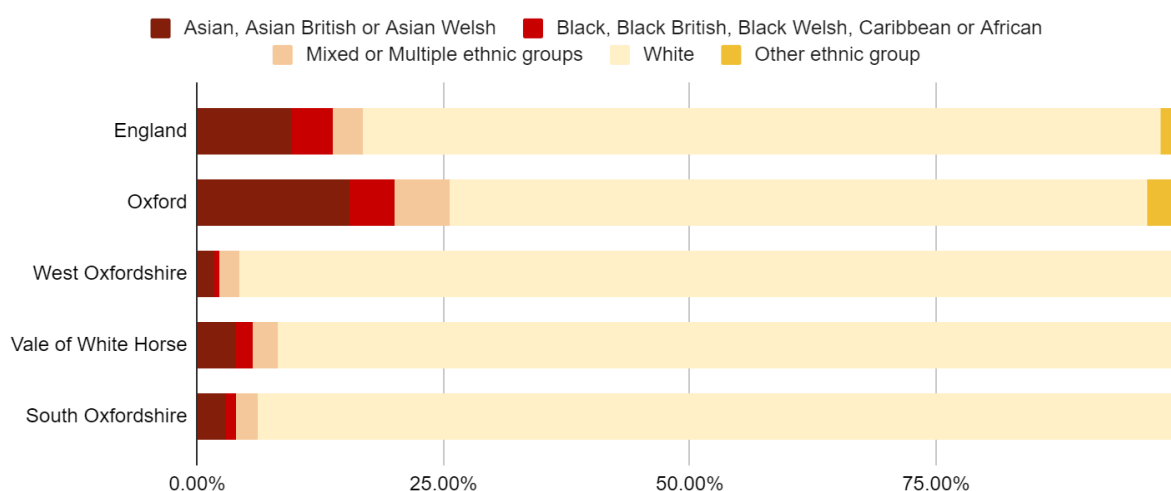
²⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/identity/gender-identity/gender-identity-4a/gender-identity-the-same-as-sex-registered-at-birth>

²⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

²⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

²⁷ Figures are illustrative, and only refer to the Oxford LAD.

Fig. 5 - Ethnic composition by local authority area. As of the 2021 Census. Data: ONS²⁸.



The travelling community constitutes another group which experiences relatively high rates of deprivation²⁹. There are two distinct ethnic groups within the travelling community: Roma Gypsies and Irish Travellers.³⁰ Within Oxfordshire there are 6 council-run Traveller sites, and 21 privately-run sites³¹, with 680 residents in total.

The CAOx region is less religious than the national average, with 40.6% of census respondents reporting that they were not a member of any religion, in contrast with the national average of 36.7%³². Of those who are religious, the vast majority are Christian (46.5%), and the second most common religion is Islam (3.2%), though the proportion of muslims is below the national average of 6.7%³³.

Disability

The CAOx area experiences lower disability rates than the UK average (14.5% of individuals are disabled under the equality act, as opposed to 17.3% nationally³⁴). Oxford has a percentage point more cases of disability than the surrounding areas³⁵.

Despite its standing nationally, disability, when tracked by benefits cases, is on the rise in the CAOx area. Personal independence payment (PIP) entitlement has continued to rise since it was introduced to the CAOx area in 2013. This increase became gradually steeper in 2022 after the COVID-19 pandemic. Of those entitled to PIP, 42.8% were entitled on the basis of a psychiatric disorder, 15.2% on the basis of a musculoskeletal disease, and 14.6% on the

²⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

²⁹ <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/summaries/gypsy-roma-irish-traveller#population-data>.

³⁰ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/land-and-premises/gypsies-and-travellers/authorised-sites>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

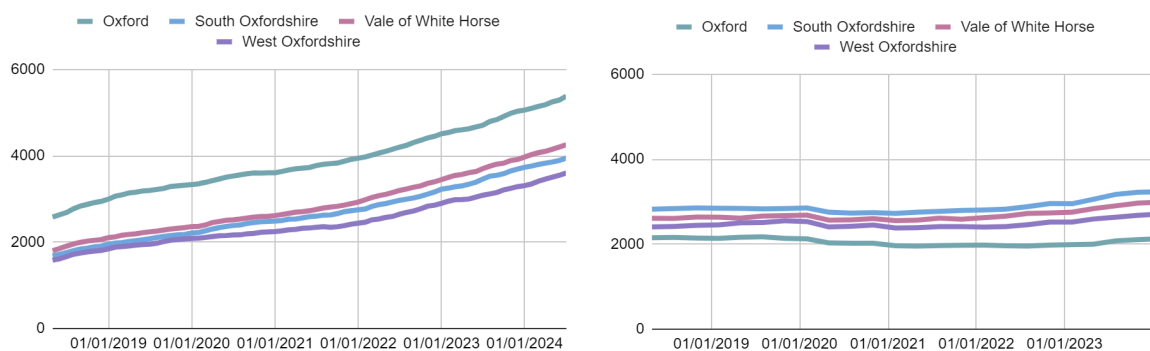
³³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

³⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

³⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/health/disability-age-standardised/disability-4a/disabled-under-the-equality-act-day-to-day-activities-limited-a-lot?lad=E07000178>

basis of a neurological disease³⁶. These were the largest three proportions of cases. This demonstrates the rising prevalence of mental health issues as community needs in the CAOx area. Attendance allowance payments have also increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, rising by over 300 cases in some districts between 2020 and 2024.

Fig. 6 - Personal Independence Payments (left) and Attendance Allowance (right) cases with entitlement over time. Personal independence payments are made to those aged over 16 and below the state pension age. Attendance allowance payments are made to those above the state pension age. Data: Stat-Xplore³⁷.



3. Economic Characteristics

Employment rates and trends

At the time of the 2021 census the CAOx area enjoyed a relatively high rate of employment (60.2%) among those aged 16 or over compared to the national average (57.4)³⁸. This rate of employment would be higher were it not for Oxford city, with a rate of employment of 53.6%³⁹ which drags down the area average. The disparity between Oxford and the surrounding districts is made clearer if we observe unemployment over time, as in figure 6. Though the CAOx area generally observes significantly lower levels of unemployment than Great Britain, Oxford has reliably higher rates than West Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, and Vale of White Horse. Unemployment rates in Oxford sometimes even overtake the national average, as can be seen in 2020 during the first COVID-19 lockdown. As of the latest regional record, in April 2023, the rate of unemployment in Oxford was 4.4%, higher than the national rate of 3.9%. This is an increase after the post pandemic economic recovery in 2022, and has been attributed in part to long term sickness and caring responsibilities⁴⁰. Of those who were unemployed in the CAOx area in 2021, 61.1% were in long term unemployment (had not been employed for the last 12 months)⁴¹

³⁶ <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml>

³⁷ <https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/jsf/dataCatalogueExplorer.xhtml>

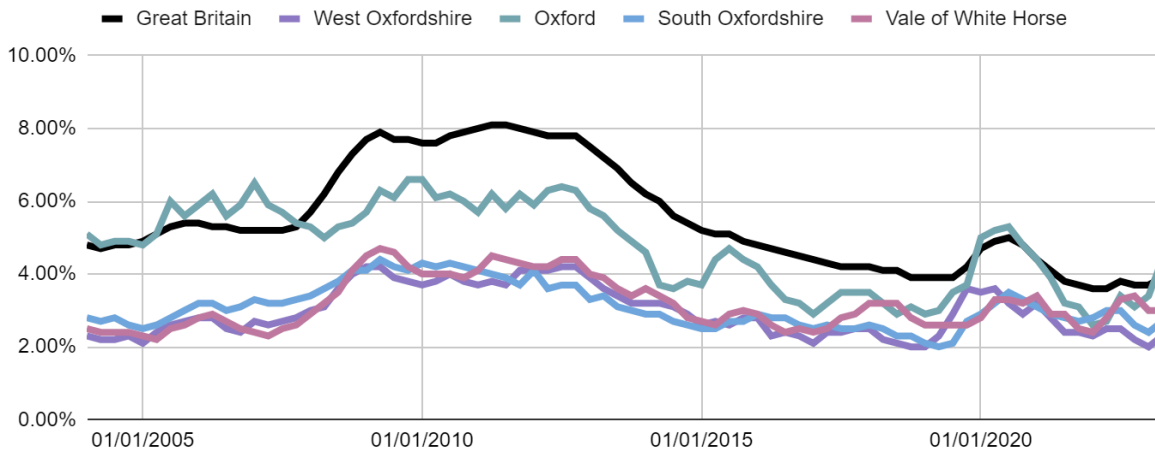
³⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

³⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/work/economic-activity-status/economic-activity-status-4a/economically-active-in-employment-including-full-time-students>

⁴⁰ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52660591#:~:text=As%20the%20chart%20below%20shows,would%20like%20a%20paid%20job.&text=The%20number%20of%20people%20not,those%20who%20are%20job%20hunting.>

⁴¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

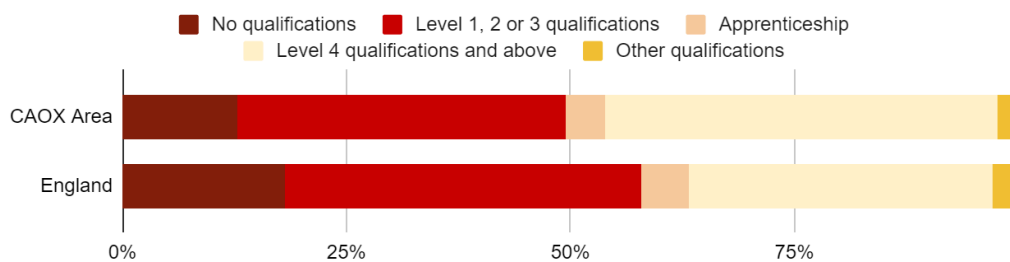
Fig. 7 - Model-based unemployment rates by district. Rates are provided as a percentage of the population aged 16 or over. Data: NOMIS⁴².



Workforce characterization

The CAOx region is exceptionally highly skilled compared to the national average, with those with level 4 qualifications (degree-level education) exceeding the proportion in England by 10 percentage points (43.9% to 33.9%). In addition, the proportion of those with no qualifications in the CAOx area (12.8%) was 5% lower than in England (18.1%). The presence of the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University is certainly a significant reason for this high educational attainment. It should also be noted that Oxfordshire has an unusually higher proportion of students with special educational needs support, with the number of children looked after in key stage 2 with Special Educational Needs support of Autistic Spectrum Disorder sitting 9% above the percentage for England⁴³.

Fig. 8 - Highest level of qualification. Level 1 and 2 qualifications are equivalent to GCSEs at lower and higher grade boundaries. Level 3 qualifications are equivalent to A-levels. Level 4 qualifications are equivalent to any certificate of higher education, for example a bachelor's degree⁴⁴. Data: ONS⁴⁵.



This highly skilled workforce is also reflected in the careers of those who live in the CAOx region. Occupational distribution in the CAOx area is notable for its high proportion of students (11.2%), and higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations (19.2%), both of which are far higher than the national average while occupational groups from L7 to L14 are all represented less than in England generally.

⁴² <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/contents.aspx>

⁴³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2022>

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>

⁴⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

Table 1 - Proportions of socio-economic groups by percentage for the CAOx area and England.

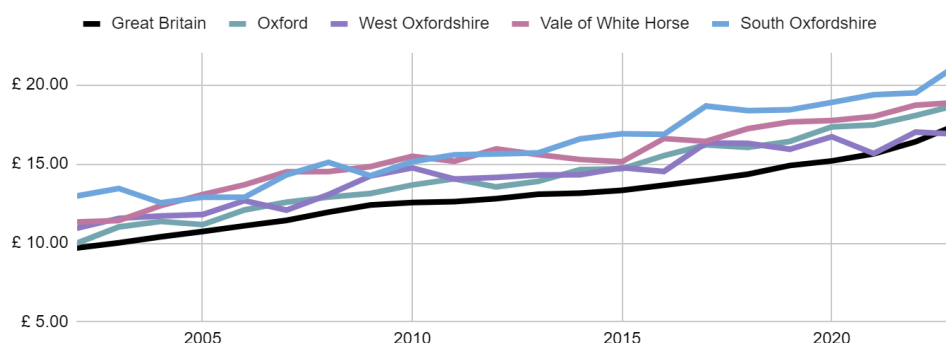
Data: ONS⁴⁶.

Socio-economic Classification (NS-SeC)	CAOx Area	England
L1, L2 and L3: Higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations	19.4	13.2
L4, L5 and L6: Lower managerial, administrative and professional occupations	21.5	19.9
L7: Intermediate occupations	10.5	11.4
L8 and L9: Small employers and own account workers	10	10.6
L10 and L11: Lower supervisory and technical occupations	4.7	5.3
L12: Semi-routine occupations	8.8	11.3
L13: Routine occupations	8.9	12
L14.1 and L14.2: Never worked and long-term unemployed	4.9	8.5
L15: Full-time students	11.2	7.7

Income

Considering the notable skew toward higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations it is not surprising that average pay in the CAOx area is higher than average in Great Britain. As is evident below, the hourly wage for full-time employees in the CAOx area is reliably higher than the average for Great Britain. South Oxfordshire are the best paid, in April 2023 its residents received an average hourly pay of £21.27. This was 22% more than the average wage for Great Britain. In contrast, residents of both Oxford and particularly West Oxfordshire experienced hourly pay more in keeping with national standards, and West Oxfordshire has even experienced a recent dip below the national average, with a recorded average hourly wage in April of 2023 of £16.88. This example should not, however, detract from the generally relative high pay of those living in the CAOx area.

Fig. 9 - Hourly earnings by district. Data includes only those individuals who live in a district, not necessarily all who work in it. Earnings information relates to gross pay before tax, national insurance and other deductions. Data does not cover the self-employed, or take into account overtime. Data is not adjusted for inflation. Data: NOMIS⁴⁷.



⁴⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

⁴⁷ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157324/report.aspx?town=oxford#tabeinaact>

Major employers

Oxfordshire is home to 31,000 VAT registered businesses in a diverse range of sectors⁴⁸, and the following is a summary of some major employers. Within the city of Oxford, higher education is a dominant sector accounting for approximately 19.6% of total employment, split between the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University⁴⁹. Affiliated companies such as Oxford University Press form part of Oxford's extensive publishing industry, the largest in the UK outside London, employing over 3,500 people. Healthcare research undertaken at both universities contributes to Oxford's significant health and bio-technology industries. Oxfordshire county is a major centre for health and bio-technology, containing a cluster of teaching hospitals and specialist medical organisations such as Oxford University Hospital NHS Trust. Key biotech companies include Oxford Nanopore and Genzyme. Oxfordshire also plays host to a large vehicle manufacturing industry, in particular Plant Oxford - a BMW assembly facility where Mini cars are built. Key employers in other urban centres of the CAOx area include Miele and GKN Driveline in Abingdon, Milton Park and Culham Science Centre in Didcot, the Royal Air Force in Carterton, Invesco and Pitney Bowes in Henley on Thames, and JSP Safety in Whitney⁵⁰. In addition to these businesses, other major industries in Oxfordshire are social care, predominantly employed by the county council⁵¹, and agriculture⁵².

4. Housing Characteristics

Housing conditions and tenure

In general, the CAOx area has more houses, with more rooms, and particularly more *spare* rooms, than the national average. 82.5% of households lived in houses, 5% more than the national average, with the remaining 16.7% living in flats. 42.0% of houses in the CAOx area had an occupancy rating^{53 54} of two or more which indicates that they were under-occupied, compared to an average of 35.6% in England, and the proportion of households with 4 or more bedrooms outstripped the national average by 8.7%⁵⁵.

When considering home ownership, a significant divide is observed between Oxford City and the surrounding districts. As of the 2021 census, Oxford had the lowest rate of home ownership for any English district, and had a notably high rate of rented accommodation, at 32.3% of the population (compared to 20.6% of the English population). In contrast, the

⁴⁸ <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/about/about-oxfordshire>

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/sites/default/files/uploads/OxLEP%20Living%20in%20Oxfordshire%20190620FINAL.pdf>

⁵¹ <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care>

⁵² <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/OEA%20Part%20Two%20vs5%20FINAL.pdf>

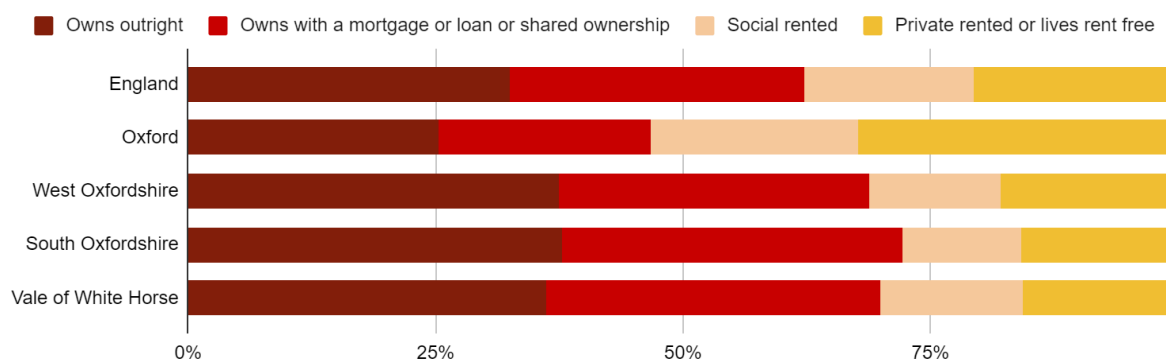
⁵³ An occupancy rating is obtained by subtracting a hypothetical number of rooms (or bedrooms) recommended for a household from the actual number of rooms (or bedrooms) it has available.

⁵⁴ [https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/questiondevelopment/housingcommunalestablishmentsandvisitors/estimatingthenumberofroomsincensus2021anupdateon derivinganoccupancyratingfromvaluationofficeagency numberofrooms#:~:text=Measuring%20overcrowding%20using%20room%20occupancy%20rating&text=Overcrowding%20is%20often%20measured%20using,or%20bedrooms\)%20it%20has%20available](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/questiondevelopment/housingcommunalestablishmentsandvisitors/estimatingthenumberofroomsincensus2021anupdateon derivinganoccupancyratingfromvaluationofficeagency numberofrooms#:~:text=Measuring%20overcrowding%20using%20room%20occupancy%20rating&text=Overcrowding%20is%20often%20measured%20using,or%20bedrooms)%20it%20has%20available)

⁵⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

districts of West Oxfordshire, South Oxfordshire, and the Vale of White Horse all displayed rates of home ownership above the national average of 62.3% (this includes owning outright and with a mortgage, loan, or shared ownership)⁵⁶.

Fig. 10 - Housing tenure by district. As of the 2021 census. Social rented properties are those with a rent that is subsidised by the government and set by a formula based on local incomes. Data: ONS⁵⁷.



Extent and availability of affordable housing

In keeping with the size and occupancy of houses in the CAOx area, house prices are significantly higher than the national average across the entire region, though there are large discrepancies between different wards. For example, the average house price in Oxford City in June 2024 was £470,000⁵⁸, compared to a UK mean house price of £291,000⁵⁹. Nonetheless, within the CAOx area there was notable variability in median house prices between areas, ranging from median house prices of £985,000 in North Oxford and £943,000 in Summertown to £270,000 in Carterton (see fig. 11).

There is significant evidence that the CAOx area, and Oxford in particular, are among the most unaffordable places to live in the country. In 2023 the median house price in Oxford was more than 12 times the median gross annual earnings for the district, ranking it the 34th most unaffordable district in the country. Districts surrounding Oxford have more similarly extreme median affordability ratios of 10.46 for West Oxfordshire, 10.81 for South Oxfordshire, and 10.18 for Vale of White Horse, all above the UK mean of 9. For those renting, over 30% of Oxford's population, average monthly rent is also £397 higher than the UK average, sitting at £1,676 in July 2024.

Housing insecurity, overcrowding and homelessness are undoubtedly products of these conditions. In 2023 the Department for Levelling up, Housing, and Communities estimated that around 53 people could be found sleeping rough in the CAOx area on a given night⁶⁰, the highest number observed in five years. According to these statistics rough sleeping is concentrated in the city of Oxford. Other estimates are far higher, putting the number at 227

⁵⁶ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/housingpriceslocal/E07000178/>

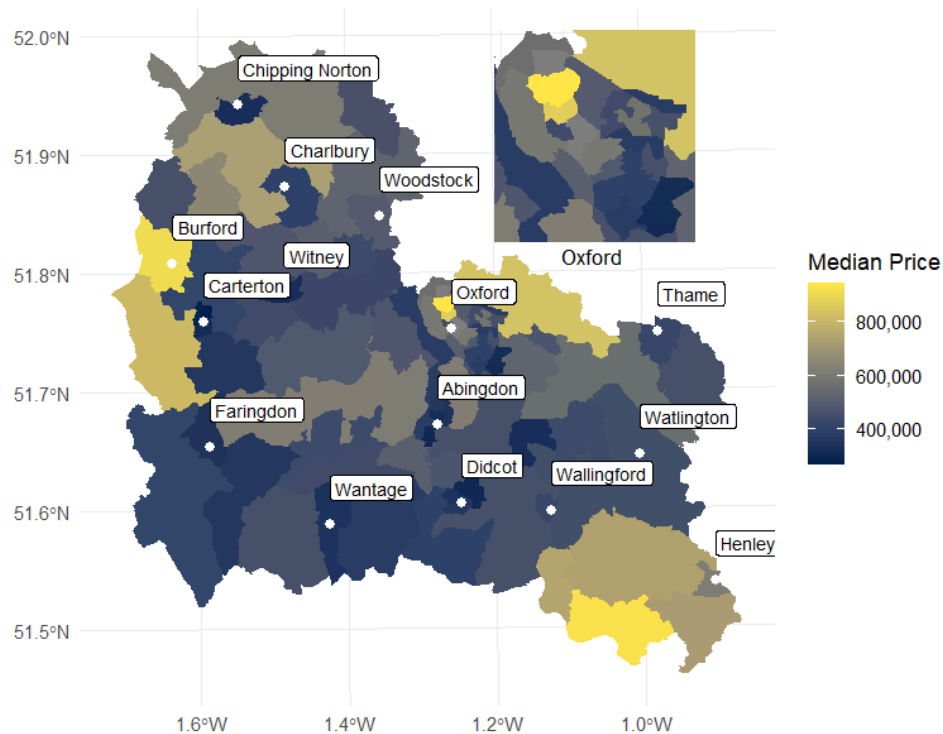
⁵⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-house-price-index-for-january-2024#:~:text=The%20UK%20HPI%20shows%20house,Scotland%2C%20Wales%20and%20Northern%20Ireland.&text=The%20J%20anuary%202024%20data%20shows,UK%20valued%20at%20%C2%A3282%2C000>

⁶⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2024>

in 2022⁶¹ and are likely to be under reported. Beyond those sleeping rough recorded in these statistics are those experiencing hidden homelessness, who may be sofa surfing, living in overcrowded accommodation or squatting. This is extremely difficult to measure, but statutory homelessness measures indicate that between January and March 2024 587 households were owed either a homeless relief or prevention duty by the local council⁶². Difficulties in securing assessments mean these figures could be far higher.

There are efforts being made on the part of the local councils to address these issues. As part of Oxford City Council's new housing, homelessness, and rough sleeping strategy for 2023-28 it aims to build 1,600 new affordable homes, with at least 850 of those let at social rent⁶³. In addition, the local authorities of West Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and South Oxfordshire have pledged to set aside a total of 4,950 affordable homes over the next 10 years.

Fig. 11 - Median House Price by Ward. Prices as of March 2023. For context, as of June 2024 the mean house price in the UK was £291,000⁶⁴. Data: ONS⁶⁵.



⁶¹<https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/23256207.oxfordshire-homelessness-outlined-new-shelter-figure-s/>

⁶²<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2024/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2024>

⁶³ <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/housing/housing-homelessness-rough-sleeping-strategy/2>

⁶⁴ibid.

⁶⁵<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/medianpricepaidbywardhpsadatataset37>

5. Health Characteristics

Service Providers

The CAOx area is served by the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care System⁶⁶. A system involving 20 primary Care Networks (PCNs) consisting of 54 GP practices⁶⁷. Oxford city is also home to the Oxford University Foundation trust, one of the largest teaching hospitals in the UK. This is made up of 4 hospitals across the region, which all serve local communities in addition to teaching. General performance across the integrated care system is positive, with 75% of patients reporting an overall positive experience of their GP practice in 2024, similar to the national average⁶⁸. Care quality in hospitals is ranked similarly highly by the care quality commission⁶⁹.

Health Outcomes

The CAOx area, in general, remains a relatively healthy district in comparison to both national and regional averages. Oxfordshire has notably high life expectancies, early cancer diagnoses, and low admissions for alcohol-related conditions, to pick only a few indicators⁷⁰. However regional inequalities in health outcomes are nonetheless present, and are particularly notable in Oxford. These can be seen starkly in figure 10 as vertical strips of red and orange tiles. Areas in Oxford with particularly poor health outcomes are Barton, Littlemore & Rose Hill, Greater Leys and Blackbird Leys. In districts surrounding Oxford these health inequalities are most noticeable in urban centres such as Didcot South East, Abingdon South, Chipping Norton and Witney Central. These health inequalities are stark. Depending on the area someone lives in, their life expectancy could vary by 14 years if they're a man, and 12 years if they're a woman⁷¹. Indicators which exhibited particular inequality included emergency hospital admissions for injury (age range: 15-24), self-harm, and alcohol related hospital admissions.

The health conditions with the greatest number of GP registered patients in Oxfordshire in 2023 were hypertension (99,710 patients), depression (80,720 patients), asthma (45,841 patients), and obesity (54,169 patients)⁷². In 2019 to 2021, Cancer was the leading cause of death in Oxfordshire, followed by heart disease for males and dementia & alzheimer diseases for females⁷³.

⁶⁶ <https://www.bucksoxonberksw.icb.nhs.uk/about-us/what-is-the-integrated-care-system/>

⁶⁷ <https://www.bucksoxonberksw.icb.nhs.uk/our-places/oxfordshire/>

⁶⁸ <https://gp-patient.co.uk/surveysandreports>

⁶⁹ <https://www.cqc.org.uk/search/all?filters%5B%5D=services%3Ahospital&location-query=oxford&radius=15>

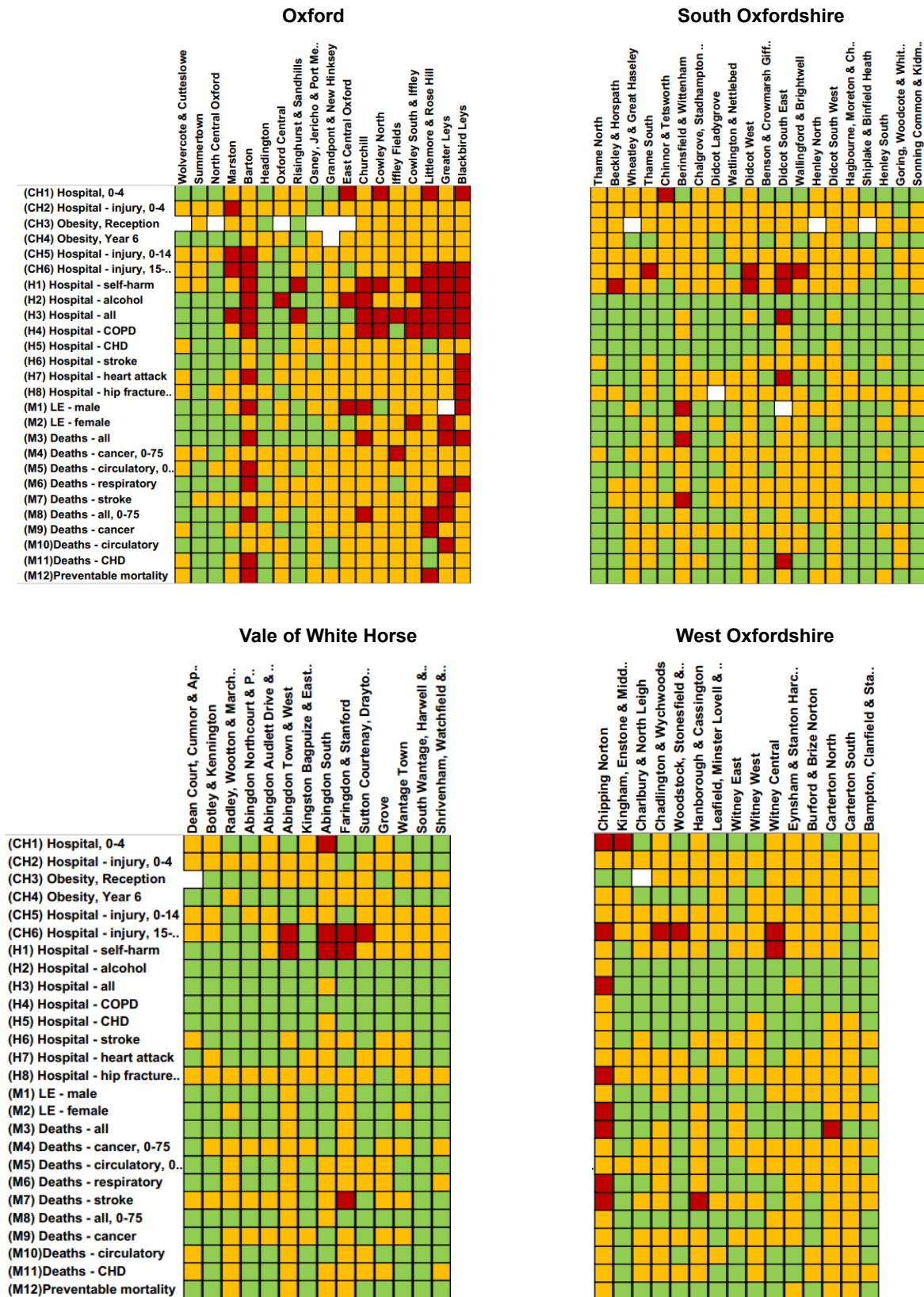
⁷⁰ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132701/pat/6/par/E12000008/ati/502/are/E10000025/iid/90366/age/1/sex/1/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/3/cid/4/tbm/1/page-options/car-do-0>

⁷¹ https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireLocalAreaInequalitiesDashboard/Areaprofiles?embed=y%3A&display_count%3AshowVizHome=no

⁷² https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/oxfordshireinsight/files/documents/JSNA2023_FINAL.pdf

⁷³ *ibid.*

Fig. 12 - Health indicators by middle layer super output area. Tiles are coded according to whether they perform better (green), similar (yellow), or worse (red) than the national average. Health indicators are grouped into child health indicators (CH), health indicators (H), or causes of mortality (M). Results and data can be explored further in the [oxfordshire local area inequalities dashboard](#).



Mental Health

As established in section 2 above, disability benefits cases are rising, and nearly half of PIP cases are made on the basis of psychiatric disorders. However the scale of mental health issues in the CAOx area is not fully reflected in the health indicator data.. Oxford mind estimated that 60,401 residents of the CAOx area had anxiety or depression in 2023⁷⁴, and recorded 143 suicides in the area between 2019 and 2021⁷⁵. The prevalence of depression in Oxfordshire in 2023 was above the national average⁷⁶. In Oxfordshire rates of self-harm hospital admissions in children and young people (aged 15-24 years) were similar to England for 2021/22, standing at 545. This is equivalent to a rate of 402 per 100,000 population⁷⁷.

6. Poverty and Household Deprivation

Debt

The money and pensions service produces regional measures of ‘over-indebtedness’, the proportion of people who find keeping up with bills a heavy burden and/or who regularly fall into arrears⁷⁸. Within the CAOx region it estimates that rates for districts are as follows: Oxford: 15.7%, West Oxfordshire: 12.7%, South Oxfordshire: 11.8%, and Vale of White Horse 12.4%. Regionally, Oxford has a notably high rate, above the average for the South East (14.0%), however in a national context the CAOx area performs better than the average (England: 16.1%)⁷⁹.

Fuel Poverty

The CAOx area experiences less fuel poverty⁸⁰ compared to the national average of 13.2% of the population. In England, a household is classed as experiencing fuel poverty if their home has a Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Rating (FPEER) of band D or below and if, after subtracting their modelled energy costs and housing costs, their residual income is below the poverty line⁸¹. Fuel poverty by district in Oxfordshire is as follows: Oxford: 11.0%, South Oxfordshire: 7.0%, West Oxfordshire: 7.3%, Vale of White Horse: 7.1%. Oxford’s relatively high count of fuel poverty can partly be attributed to the high rates of private rented accommodation in the city. Privately rented homes, many rented by those on low income, are more likely to be less energy efficient, and , exacerbating fuel poverty within the city. Since 2019 fuel poverty has been rising in all districts, and though Oxford is yet to reach its

⁷⁴ https://www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/08/OM_Annual_Report_digital.pdf

⁷⁵ https://www.oxfordshiremind.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/08/OM_Annual_Report_digital.pdf

⁷⁶ https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/oxfordshireinsight/files/documents/JSNA2023_FINAL.pdf

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ More rigorously defined as the proportion of individuals who find keeping up with bills and/or credit payments a heavy burden, or who have fallen behind on such payments in 3 or more months out of the last 6.

⁷⁹ [https://www.fincap.org.uk/en/insights/a-picture-of-over-indebtedness#:~:text=The%20study%20estimates%20that%208.2.%25\)%20and%20Scotland%20\(13.2%25\).](https://www.fincap.org.uk/en/insights/a-picture-of-over-indebtedness#:~:text=The%20study%20estimates%20that%208.2.%25)%20and%20Scotland%20(13.2%25).)

⁸⁰ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/howfuelpovertyismeasuredintheuk/march2023#:~:text=2..energy%20prices>

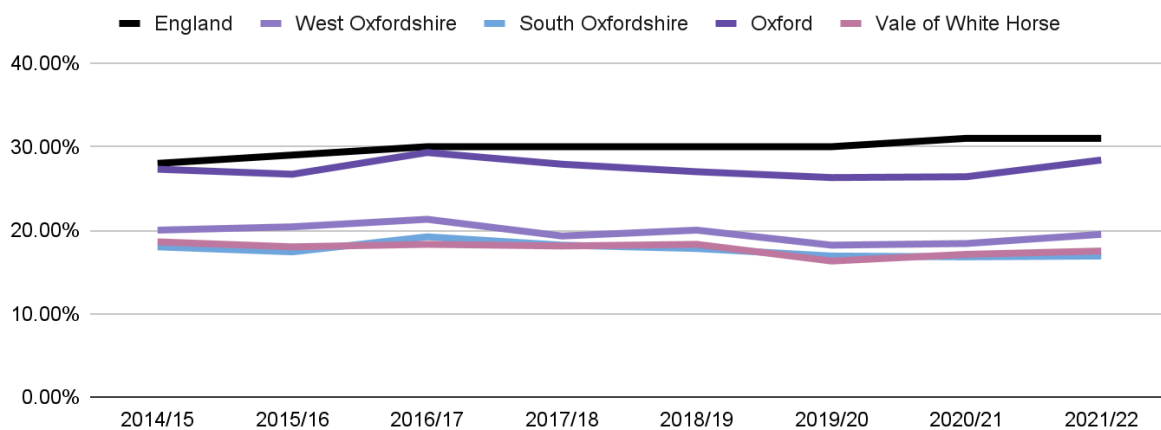
⁸¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/articles/howfuelpovertyismeasuredintheuk/march2023#:~:text=2..energy%20prices>

pre-2016 levels of fuel poverty, rates of fuel poverty in surrounding districts are the highest they have been for 6 years.

Child Poverty

As can be seen below, child poverty in the CAOx area has remained largely stable, and below the average for England in the last 10 years. In fact, in contrast to the increase in child poverty nationally (an increase of 2%), child poverty in the districts surrounding Oxford have decreased by around a percentage point. Child poverty is defined as the percentage of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with below 60% median income before housing costs.

Fig. 13 - Child Poverty by Region. Child poverty is defined as the percentage of children aged 0-15 years who are living in households with below 60% median income before housing costs. Data: End Child Poverty⁸²



Within the CAOx area, however, there is significant variation in rates of child poverty between wards. As of 2023, particularly deprived areas included Littlemore and Rose Hill (86.7%), and Greater Leys (85.0%)⁸³.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

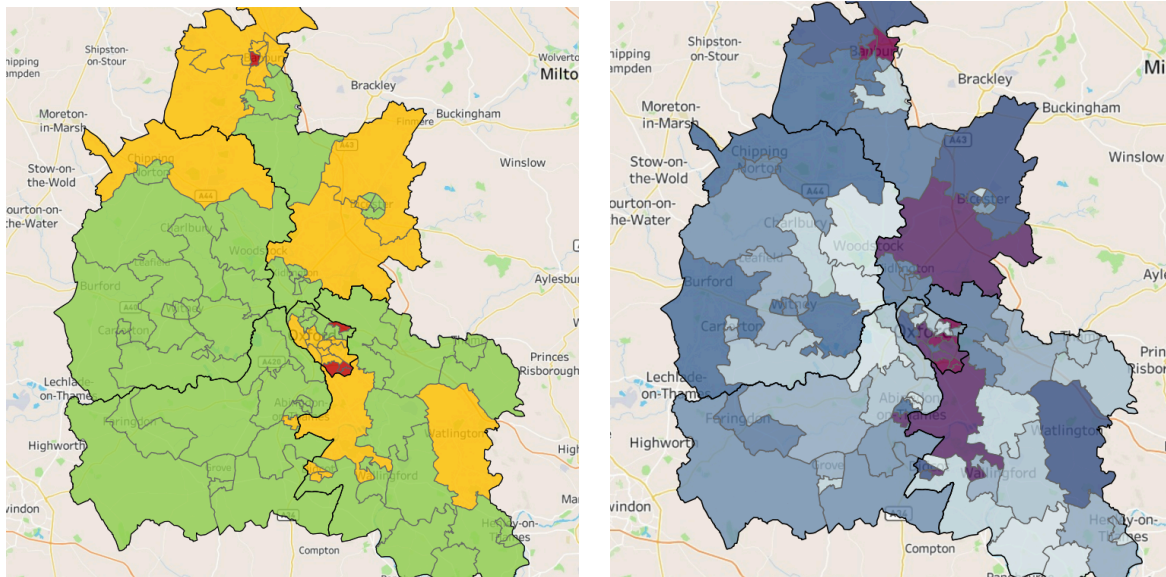
The index of multiple deprivation (IMD) is an official measure of relative deprivation in England, combining 39 indicators structured under 7 distinct domains of deprivation: income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education and skills training, crime, barriers to housing and services and living environment. Measures of deprivation are calculated for each 'Lower-layer Super Output Area' (LSOA). These are areas smaller than wards, designed to be of similar population size with around 1,500 residents. Areas are then ranked against all other LSOAs in England, and divided into deciles. It's important to note that this means that the MID is a *relative*, not *absolute* measure of deprivation. It can be used to compare areas, establish inequalities in deprivation, and look at trends in deprivation over time, but cannot of itself quantify how deprived a particular area is⁸⁴.

⁸² <https://endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty-2023/>

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d8e26f6ed915d5570c6cc55/loD2019_Statistical_Release.pdf

Fig. 14 - Index of multiple deprivation aggregated by ward. In the map to the left, wards are coded according to whether they perform better (green), similar (yellow), or worse (red) than the national average. In the map to the right wards are coloured on a gradient from better (lighter) to worse (darker). Data records multiple deprivation as of 2019. Maps include Cherwell, which is not part of the CAOx area. Data: Oxfordshire JSNA⁸⁵



If assessed generally, the IMD paints a positive picture of the CAOx area, as Oxfordshire was ranked the 10th least deprived 151 upper tier local authorities in England^{86 87}. In particular areas, however the IMD highlights particular deprivation. Oxfordshire had 1 out of 407 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) ranked within the 10% most deprived areas nationally, part of Northfield Brook ward, south east Oxford⁸⁸. A further 10 LSOAs in the CAOx area were ranked in the 20% most deprived areas nationally, 9 in Oxford City and 1 in Abingdon⁸⁹. It should be noted that these statistics are not exceptional nationally: 61% of local authorities have at least one neighbourhood in the most deprived decile. However they do reveal serious inequalities in the city of Oxford. The city is not only home to 10 seriously deprived LSOAs, but also 12 areas in North Oxford which are among the top 10% *least* deprived areas in the country⁹⁰. The small size of the city and geographical proximity of these areas makes for especially stark inequality.

The Oxfordshire county councils 'Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2023' has used IMD data to identify Oxfordshires 10 most deprived wards, of which 7 are contained within the CAOx area, 6 of these in Oxford and 1 in Abingdon⁹¹. These wards, and their respective scores on IMDs domains of deprivation are displayed below.

⁸⁵https://public.tableau.com/views/OxfordshireLocalAreaInequalitiesDashboard/Home?embed=y%3A&display_count%3AshowVizHome=no

⁸⁶ This ranking is from the 2019 IMD: up from 11th in 2015.

⁸⁷ https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/oxfordshireinsight/files/documents/JSNA2023_FINAL.pdf

⁸⁸ *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ <https://data.cdrc.ac.uk/dataset/index-multiple-deprivation-imd>

⁹¹ https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/202301_Bitesize_Oxon_10_most_deprived_wards.pdf

Table 2 - Index of multiple deprivation breakdown for 7 priority wards in CAOx area. Each number represents the decile in which the LSOA falls within England. Higher numbers correspond to less deprived deciles. Data: JSNA⁹².

LSOA (Ward name and final 3 digits of LSOA name)	IMD	Income	Employment	Education	Health	Crime	Barriers to Housing & Services	Living Environment
<i>Average of LSOAs in Oxfordshire</i>	8	8	8	7	8	8	5	6
Barton and Sandhills 05B	2	2	3	1	3	4	5	6
Blackbird Leys 17A	2	3	3	1	3	3	1	7
Blackbird Leys 17B	2	2	2	1	2	4	4	7
Blackbird Leys 18A	2	2	3	1	3	2	4	7
Osney & St Thomas 08B	2	5	4	3	1	3	2	1
Littlemore 16A	2	2	3	2	3	2	4	6
Northfield Brook 17D	2	3	3	2	3	1	3	4
Northfield Brook 18B	1	2	2	1	2	2	4	8
Northfield Brook 18C	2	2	2	1	2	5	2	9
Rose Hill & Iffley 16E	2	2	2	1	2	4	2	4
Abingdon Caldecott 08C	2	2	3	1	4	7	9	8

In addition to these priority wards, it is important to remember that all wards in the CAOx area contain households which are deprived in at least 3 dimensions⁹³. In fact, 43.5% of households in the CAOx area are deprived in at least one dimension. Whilst Oxfordshire is relatively less deprived than the rest of the country, its residents are by no means exempt from deprivation.

⁹²https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/202301_Bitesize_Oxon_10_most_deprived_wards.pdf

⁹³<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/population/household-deprivation/hh-deprivation/household-is-deprived-in-three-dimensions>

Appendix 1 Ethnic Groups with CA Oxfordshire area

TS022 - Ethnic group (detailed)	ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 1 November 2024]			
population	All usual residents			
units	Persons %			
date	2021			
Ethnic group (detailed)	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Afghan	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi, British Bangladeshi	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	2.8	0.5	0.9	0.4
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Filipino	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian or British Indian	3.7	1.1	1.1	0.4
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indonesian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Iranian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Japanese	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Korean	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Malaysian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Nepali (includes Gurkha)	0.4	0.1	0.4	0.1
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian, Asian unspecified	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other East Asian/ East Asian unspecified	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani or British Pakistani	4.1	0.3	0.5	0.1
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Sri Lankan	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Thai	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Vietnamese	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Any other ethnic group	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: African unspecified	1.6	0.3	0.5	0.2
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Black British	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Ghanaian	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Kenyan	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Nigerian	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.1
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Somali	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Sudanese	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Ugandan	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Zimbabwean	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh of African background: Any other ethnic group	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: African unspecified	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: Black British	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.0
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: Caribbean	1.0	0.2	0.4	0.1
Black, Black British, Black Welsh or Caribbean background: Other Black, Black unspecified	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Black and White (unspecified)	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: European Mixed, European unspecified, other European	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Hispanic or Latin American	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Arab	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian (unspecified)	2.0	0.9	0.9	0.7
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.3
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.4
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and North African or Middle Eastern	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Any other ethnic group	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: Albanian	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Australian/New Zealander	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2
White: Austrian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Brazilian	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: Bulgarian	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1

White: Croatian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Cypriot (part not stated)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Czech	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
White: Danish	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Dutch	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	53.5	85.8	83.1	89.0
White: European Mixed	3.0	1.3	1.5	1.0
White: Finnish	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: French	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.1
White: German	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.1
White: Greek	0.4	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: Hispanic or Latin American	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
White: Hungarian	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1
White: Irish	1.5	0.9	0.8	0.7
White: Italian	0.9	0.2	0.3	0.1
White: Jewish	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Latvian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Lithuanian	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Mixed Irish	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
White: North American	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.3
White: North Macedonian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Norwegian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Other Eastern European	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
White: Other Mixed	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Other White, White unspecified	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.3
White: Polish	1.4	1.0	0.7	0.8
White: Portuguese	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2
White: Roma	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: Romanian	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.4
White: Russian	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Serbian	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Slovakian	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: South African	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2
White: Spanish	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.1
White: Swedish	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
White: Swiss	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
White: Turkish	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
White: White African	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
White: Any other ethnic group	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Afghan	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Arab	0.9	0.1	0.3	0.1
Other ethnic group: East Asian/ East Asian unspecified	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: European Mixed, European unspecified, other European	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0
Other ethnic group: Hispanic or Latin American	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other ethnic group: Iranian	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0
Other ethnic group: Jewish	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Kurdish	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Nepali (includes Gurkha)	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: North African	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Other Asian, Asian unspecified	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Other Mixed	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Polynesia/Micronesia/Melanesia	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Other ethnic group: Turkish	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Total per LA Area	98.2	98.7	98.3	98.4