

First Update on the Equality Policy 2012-2017

Introduction

This report sets out the Council's progress in the first year of its [Equality Policy 2012-2017](#), and towards meeting the aims of the Equality Act 2010 and the obligations the Act places on public bodies.

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to making Oxfordshire a fair and equal place in which to live, work and visit. We aim to ensure that our staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the diverse needs of customers, that our services are accessible and to encourage supportive and cohesive communities through our service delivery.

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics which, taken together, include everybody in the country. We all share some or all of these characteristics and it is an offence to use any of them as an excuse to treat people unfairly. These protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, including ethnic or national origins, colour, or nationality
- Religion or belief, including the lack thereof.
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Act places specific obligations on public bodies. Section 149 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty. Under this duty, all public bodies, including Oxfordshire County Council must have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate** unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- **Advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- **Foster** good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to consider how the decisions that they make, and the services they deliver, affect people who share different protected characteristics and publish information to demonstrate that they have done this.

The Council is also required to publish information to demonstrate it has considered how its activities as an employer affect people who share different protected characteristics. This will be available at:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/fairness-and-equality-work>

With the release of the 2011 Census results, we have also taken the opportunity to update our overview of Oxfordshire's population, which can be found in Appendix 1.

In addition, the Council is also required to set specific, measurable equality objectives and publish these, along with an equality policy. We have to report at least annually on our progress, and we have to revise our objectives every four years.

This report demonstrates our progress during the first year of our Equality Policy. In order to keep the Equality Policy in line with our reporting schedule, we will be publishing an interim update in April, setting our new actions for the forthcoming year.

Our Objectives

Last year, we set out four key equality objectives which we can use to guide our approach during the four years of our Equality Policy. These objectives are:

1. Understanding the needs of individuals and communities
2. Providing accessible, local and personalised services
3. Supporting thriving and cohesive communities
4. Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

These key equality objectives align closely with the Council's overall strategic objectives, as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan. This helps to ensure that our work on equality and diversity is embedded within service planning delivery rather than being seen as separate, and supports our commitment to making equalities integral to everything we do.

Objective 1: Understanding the needs of individuals and communities

This objective is focused on how we understand the needs of the people and communities of Oxfordshire, including the wide range of consultation and engagement activities we already have in place. Our actions for the year focused on how we can use this better understanding of need to plan services in response to the needs we have identified.

1a) Investigate why levels of satisfaction with services that are generally high are variable between different groups, for example by running focus groups with adult social care service users.

In 2011 the council took part in a national survey of people who used social care. The survey asked how people felt they were able to cope after receiving social care across eight key themes:

- Increasing the level of control people have in their lives
- Ensuring people are able to keep themselves clean and presentable
- Ensuring people get enough to eat and drink
- Ensuring people's homes are as clean as they would want
- Ensuring people feel safe
- Ensuring people have as much social contact as they want
- Ensuring people spend their time as much as they want
- Ensuring people are treated with dignity.

The results of the survey showed that for all these areas people who used social care in Oxfordshire were happier than those nationally, with the exception of feeling safe. Oxfordshire County Council decided to run a series of focus groups to investigate why people did not feel safe. The participants identified the key issues for them around feeling unsafe. In 2012 the council re-ran the survey and added a local question which included the list of reasons for people feeling unsafe to identify the type and extent of the problem and allow us to address these issues. The number of people feeling safe has increased significantly. The small number of people who did not feel safe at all has dropped from 8% to 3%. This result has moved Oxfordshire from the lowest quartile nationally to the top quartile.

1b) Ensure that Oxfordshire Voice Citizens' Panel, our resident's panel, is broadly representative of the makeup of the county by increasing the number of people who share some of the protected characteristics to ensure it is balanced to reflect age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

Oxfordshire Voice is a citizens' panel made up of over 3,000 Oxfordshire residents who have volunteered to give up some of their time to answer surveys on a wide variety of issues. Panel members are invited to take part in three questionnaires a year. We either send these in the post or by email depending on the members' preference. Members could be also asked to take part in other activities such as online surveys or group discussions.

Panel members are carefully recruited to be representative of the population of Oxfordshire and are invited to stay on the panel for around three years. We continue to encourage people from under-represented groups to join the panel and participate in our surveys.

1c) Implement our new Strategy for Education to improve educational outcomes for all young people. In particular, we will take action to close unacceptable gaps in attainment levels between children from different backgrounds and who share protected characteristics (for example looked after children, some black and minority ethnic groups, and some children with special educational needs).

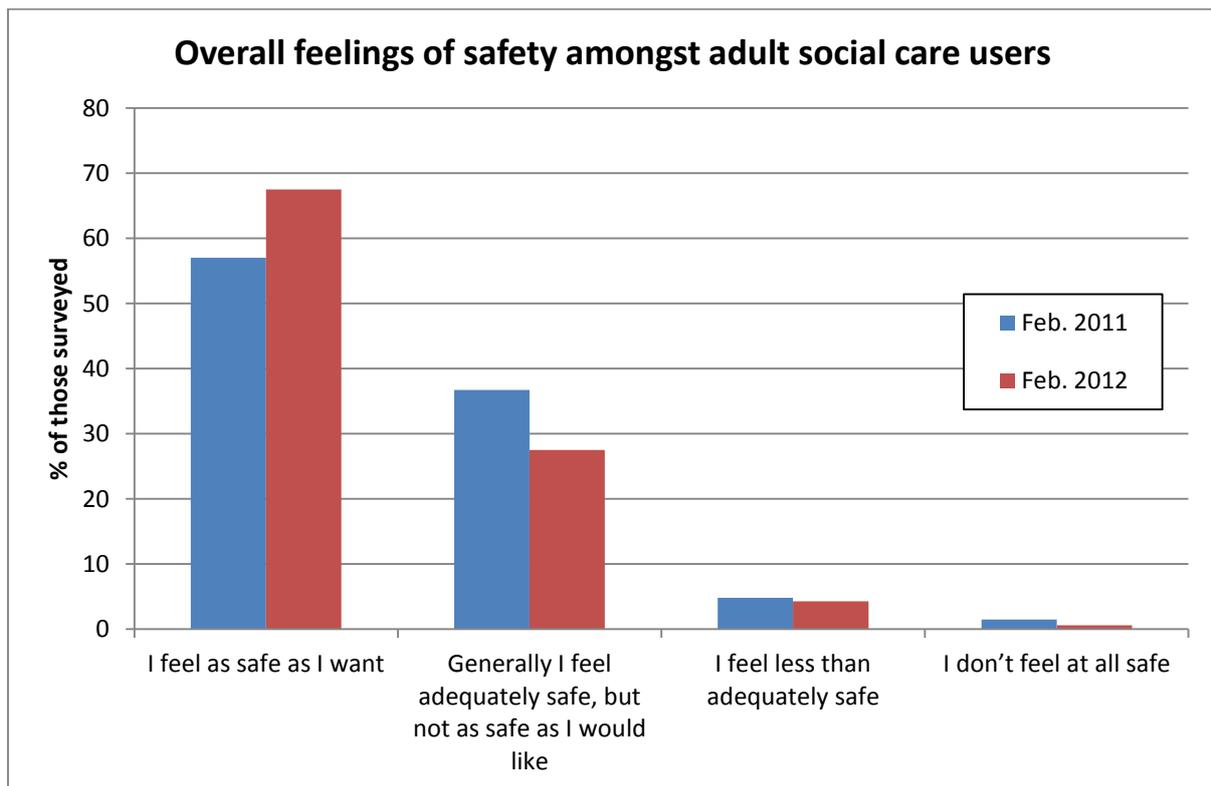
The Strategy for Education was approved by the Cabinet in July 2012. The projects within the Education Strategy have all commenced and are already showing

promising signs of progress towards its aims. Recent meetings of the parent/carer and young people’s sounding boards have focused on the Education Strategy, asking the boards to provide input and potential solutions for a set of questions relating to the strategy. Discussion is now planned on how to harness the strength and depth of the feedback in ways that support parental engagement and helps young people make educational improvements.

Over the lifetime of the Strategy, we will be monitoring its success in raising standards for every child in the county and closing unacceptable gaps in attainment between children from different backgrounds and those who share protected characteristics

1d) Provide information and support to vulnerable adults so that more people who use services report that they feel safer each year.

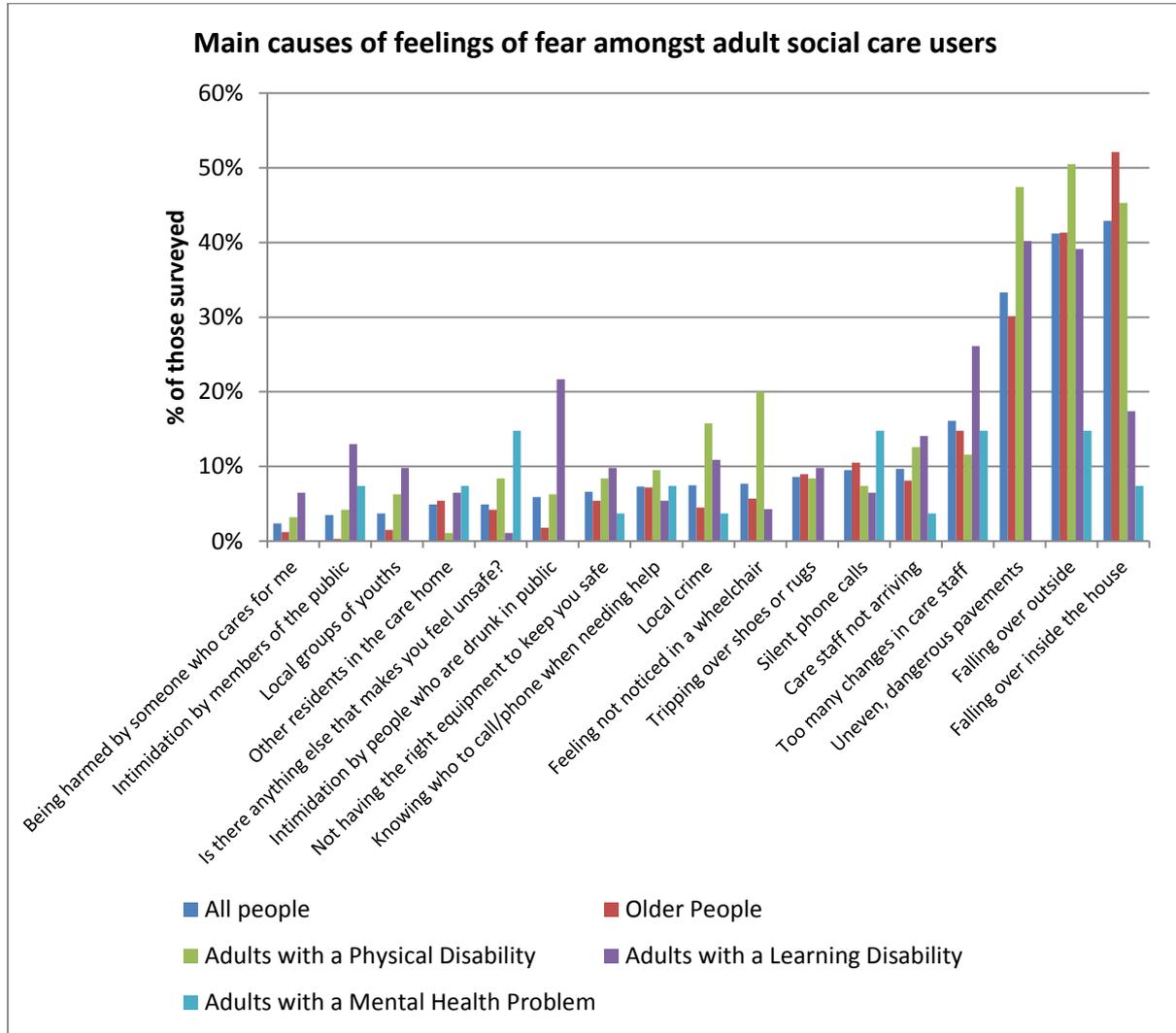
In 2012, as in 2011, we ran a survey of people who used social care. The number of people feeling safe has increased significantly. The main movement has been between people feeling adequately safe to feeling as safe as they want. The small number of people who did not feel safe at all has dropped from 8% to 3%. This result has moved Oxfordshire from the lowest quartile nationally to the top quartile.



Fear of falling over, either in the home or elsewhere, was the main reason people gave for not feeling safe. We have shared this information with the community safety partnership and the adult safeguarding board.

Issues were also raised about the quality of care staff. Improving the quality of care is a major priority for social care this year.

Being intimidated in public was an issue for just over one in five people with learning disabilities. In November 2012 a dedicated helpline was set up in Oxfordshire to raise awareness and reporting of hate crime, as outlined below.



1e) Ask older people and people with a disability who we work with if we can pass on their details to other services and organisations, including the Fire and Rescue Service who will be able to undertake Fire Risk Assessments in their homes.

We are sending a letter to everybody known to Social and Community Services explaining that, unless they choose to opt-out, we will be passing their details to the Fire and Rescue Service. To date, the Fire and Rescue service have received around 1,800 names and addresses in this way. They are using these lists to identify the most vulnerable people and are contacting them to offer a Home Fire Risk Check.

Objective 2: Providing accessible, local, and personalised services

This objective, and the priority actions we set out of the year, is focussed on how the Council responds to the needs of the people and communities of Oxfordshire.

2a) Maintain our focus on preventing the need for more specialist services through early identification of problems and early intervention in adult and children's services.

Our seven Early Intervention Hubs work with children, young people, and their families across the county to provide intensive support designed to meet their individual needs. Although the usual age range is from birth to 19, we can extend this up to 25 if users have special educational needs.

Over the past year (September 2011- September 2012), around 2,300 children and young people were referred to the Early Intervention Service, of whom 41% were of secondary school age. 57% of these were male and 43% were female. 81% were from white British backgrounds. This was also the major ethnic background of the young people referred in all 7 hubs.

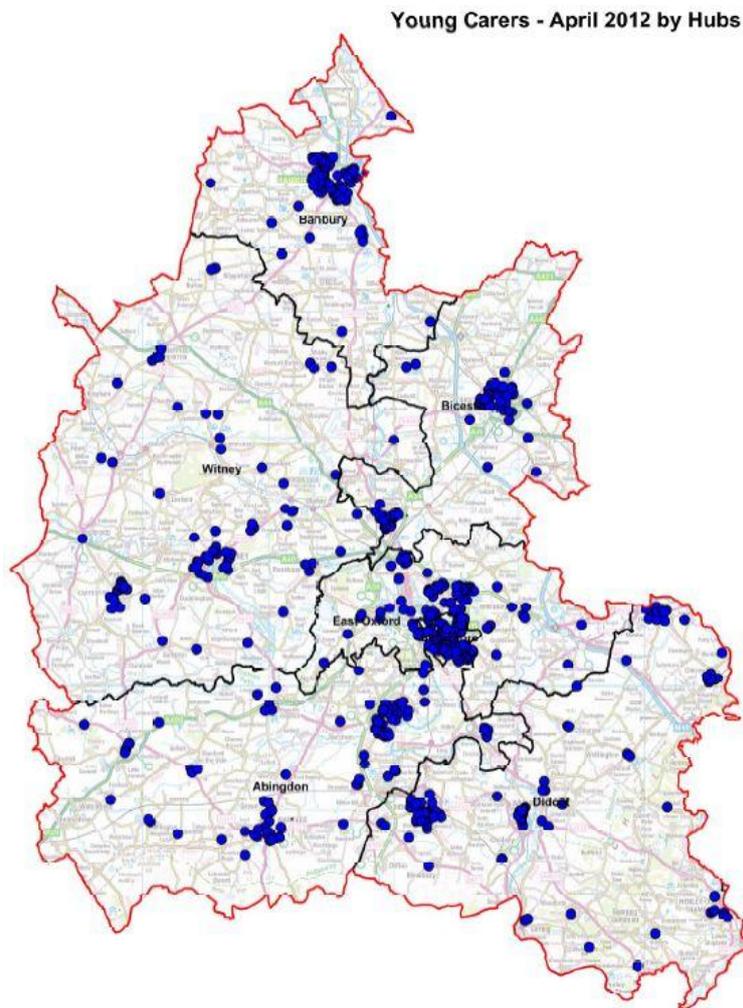
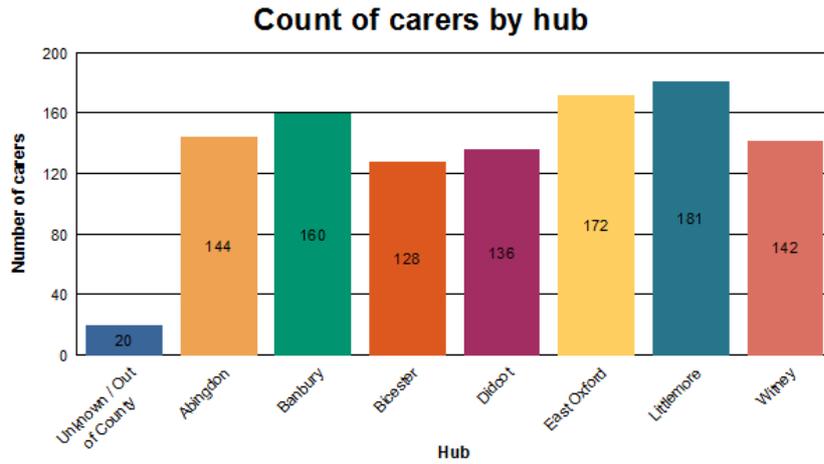
Almost two-thirds of the children and young people referred since September 2011 have special educational needs, of which 31% of those referred had particular behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties.

2b) Analyse the number of children from minority ethnic backgrounds on child protection plans. The findings will be used to develop plans to address any over representation identified, and to learn from where the number of young people from certain groups on child protection plans is lower than might be expected.

We monitor the ethnic backgrounds of people on child protection plans and the Quality Assurance and Audit subgroup of the Safeguarding Board receives regular updates. To date, no issues have been identified, but we will continue to examine the data we hold to identify any potential areas to address.

2c) Map the dispersal of young carers around the County to see if there are any geographical clusters or patterns, with a view to understanding why this occurs and what action is needed to address issues that cause it.

Our new database system makes it easy to analyse and to map the data we hold on our clients to see if there are any geographical clusters or other patterns. The young carers we have identified are reasonably evenly distributed according to hubs, with the largest number, as might be expected, in the major population areas.



2d) Change the way day services for older people are provided, maintaining services in major towns, but focusing on community initiatives and local decision-making about how best to support older people in their community.

In 2011 the council agreed to move away from traditional day services for older people to a concept of offering a range of support and services accessible seven

days a week during both daytime and in the evenings. Ideally these services will be run from different venues across the county with the aim of maximising independence, reducing isolation, and integrating older people within their communities by offering activities tailored to meet the needs of individuals.

Our new model is based on three tiers reflecting the range of universal services, specific support, and specialist social and health care provided to individuals and their carers:

Tier 1: Community Engagement

Tier 2: Community and Low-Level Support

Tier 3: Health and Wellbeing Resource Centres

In order to support the delivery of innovative day services that remain open to people who are not eligible for social care (meaning that they do not currently meet criteria for services under the Fair Access to Care Services guidelines), we are considering an increased charge both for attendance at the centre and for the provision of transport to and from the venue. An 11-week consultation was held, and the proposals were considered by the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee in December.

2e) Focus on giving people choice in the way they lead their lives and how they secure the services they need to support them. We will increase each year the proportion of people who receive a direct payment which allows them to secure the services they need to support them.

At the end of October 2012, just over 2,500 Adult Social Clients were on a personal budget, representing 69% all eligible people. Over 1,200 people (about 34% of all those eligible) were receiving a direct payment. In all, by the end of October 2012 £18.67m had been allocated to personal budgets for all client groups, and a further £5.3m was set aside for direct payments.

The Department of Health publishes annual performance statistics on the Adult Social Care Outcome Framework showing how authorities are performing against a set of key measures. Three relate directly to personal budgets, two measure clients' activity levels, and one relates to client feedback on the level of care. On all of these measures Oxfordshire is the top quartile nationally

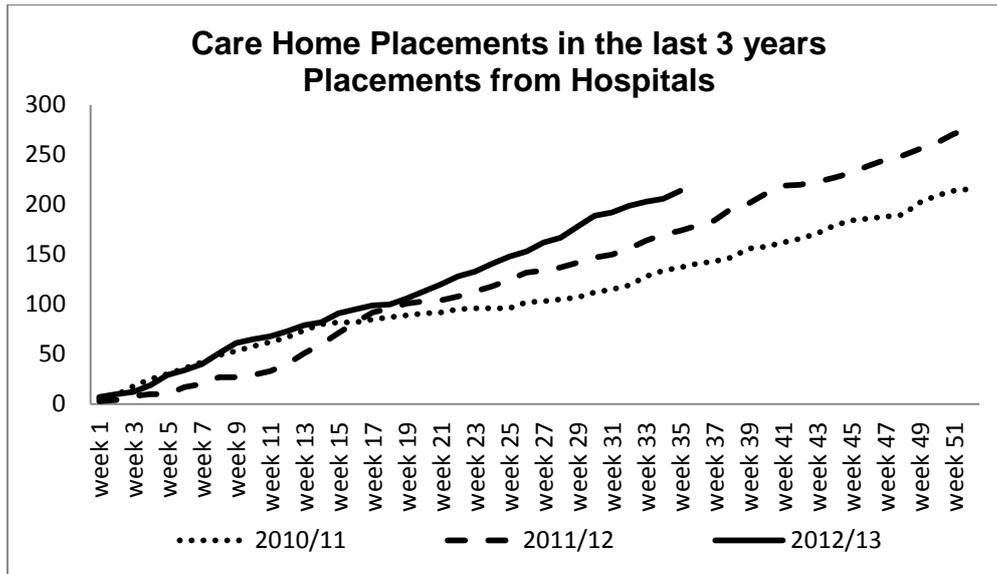
2f) Support older people and people with a disability to live in their own home for longer by:

- i. Providing more support to help older people increase their ability to cope so that more of them can return home and stay there after hospital discharge*

In 2011/12 in Oxfordshire there were more people (per head of population) who were medically fit enough to be discharged from hospital but were unable to leave because onward services had not been arranged than anywhere else in the country.

At the end of March 2012 this figure stood at 182 people. By the end of October this had dropped to 108 people.

An audit commission report 'Joining Up Health and Social Care'¹ published in December 2011 showed that the number of people in Oxfordshire who left hospital and went into a care home bed was more than the national average (and was in fact in the top quartile). Some of these people would be people who paid for their own care and some would be people placed by the council. The council was aware that it was placing an increasing number of people in care homes from hospital (see graph below)



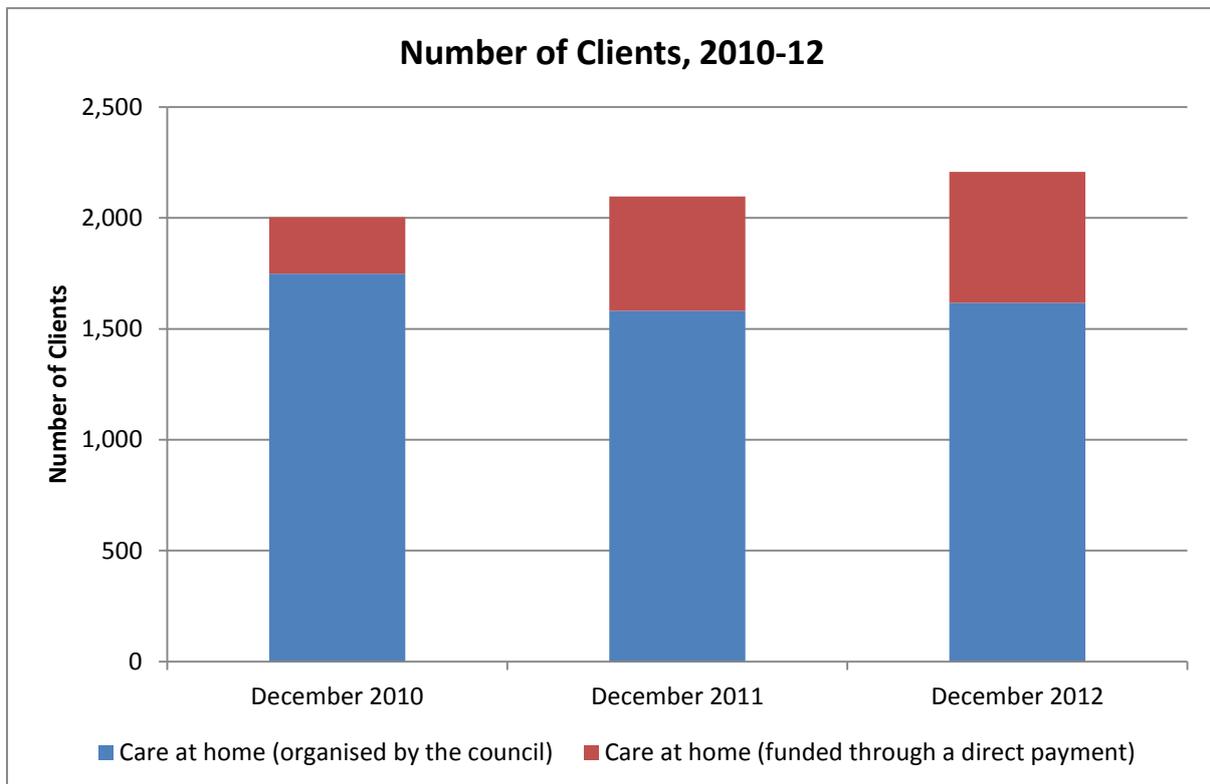
The council and its health partners have changed the way in which they support for people who will need further care when they leave hospital. People who need on going care now leave hospital via one of three pathways:

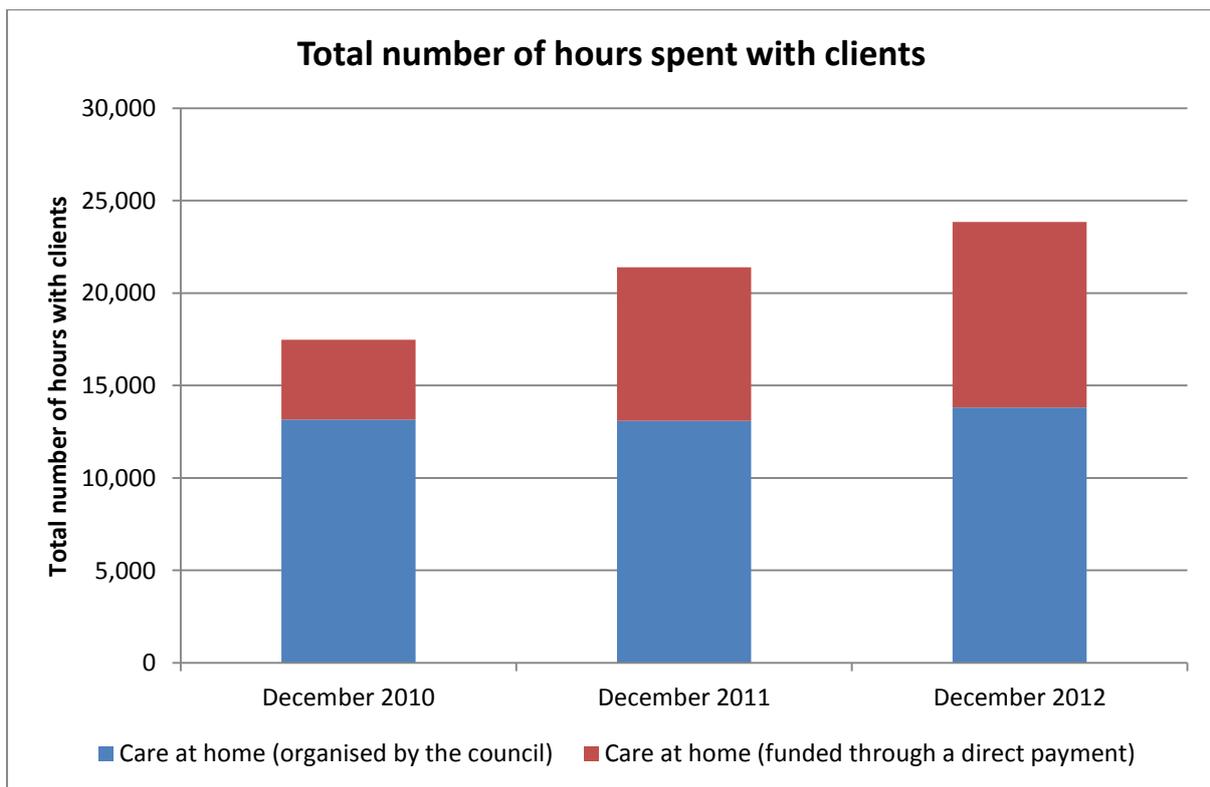
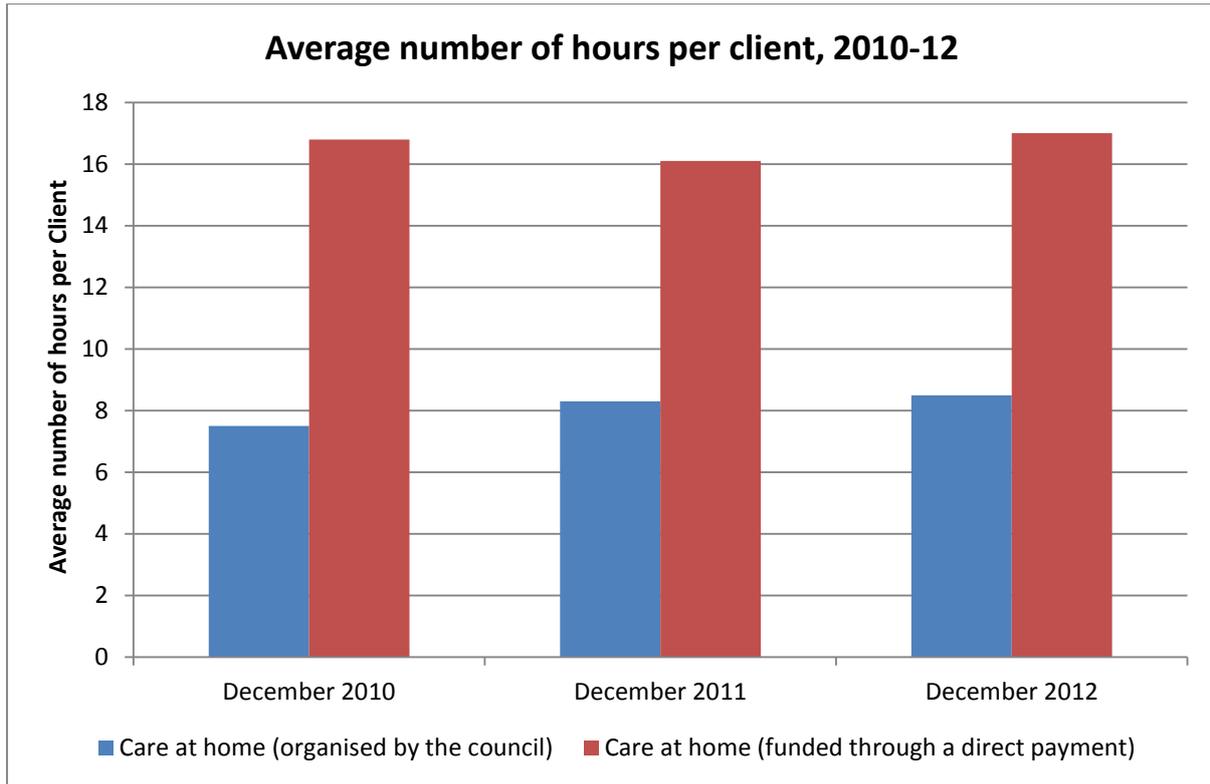
- A restart of any existing care package they had before entering hospital.
- A reablement service. This is a short term service for up to six weeks which supports people to return to their level of independence they had before their illness.
- Discharge to assess. People return home with support (which could be 24 hour live in support). The social worker will then assess their long term needs, while they are in their own home. This should reduce the number of people who are placed in care homes because assessments for long term future care will be carried out in the person's home and not when they are ill or at a point of crisis. Additionally there is evidence that longer than necessary stay in hospital institutionalises people and this service will give people the opportunity to return home with an intensive package of care rather than be admitted directly into a care home

¹ <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/Pages/joininguphealthandsocialcare.aspx>

ii. *Increasing the number of hours of long term support made available to clients*

We are working to ensure that people have the option to stay at home for as long as possible. As the charts below show, not only has the number of clients risen but so has the amount of care we provide for them. Over the last two years we have increased the amount of care provided to support people to live at home by 37%, from 17,468 hours to 23,849 hours. This has supported an additional 10% more older people. People are also getting much more support when they are supported.





iii. Devolving budgets to local area managers so that they are specifically able to address the needs of their locality

Just over £10 million has been devolved to locality teams for older people to spend either on care homes or home support depending on local

pressures. A further £837,000 has been allocated to local physical disability teams to spend on home support.

iv. Increasing the availability of extra care housing and assistive technology

Extra care housing offers older people the combination of living independently in their own home with access to on-site support and services they might need. It is an increasingly popular alternative to residential care. In 2009, there were only 20 extra care housing units in Oxfordshire. This had increased to 276 last year and will rise to over 400 by March 2013. By March 2015, we expected the number of units to increase even higher to over 900.

We are investing additional money has been invested in assistive technology and are now supporting almost 300 people more than our original targets.

v. Continuing to provide information and support to carers.

We continue to offer information and support to carers. We have a dedicated website for carers (<http://www.carersoxfordshire.org.uk/>), and produce publications offering advice and information for everyone who cares for others. We also offer grants to give carers the help or breaks they need.

2g) Work with business network providers to develop and implement a strategy for the roll out of super-fast broadband across the county, to improve access to online services.

Led by the council but in partnership with dozens of stakeholders, we are on track to deliver superfast broadband across the county, ensuring that no part of the county is denied the benefits of a speedy Internet connection. The total public sector capital investment for Oxfordshire is £13.86million, of which the Council is providing £10 million and the remainder from the Government, through its Broadband UK (BDUK) programme. We also expect a matching contribution from the private sector.

The contracting process to select an operator to partner with began in August. Negotiations are expected to result in a signed contract in the spring of 2013, with countywide roll out completed no later than 2015. More information about broadband in Oxfordshire can be found at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/broadband> .

2h) Enable all Adult Learning tutors to integrate equality and diversity into their teaching – content and classroom management – in order to ensure inclusivity for all learners

Adult Learning ran a training session for tutors in September 2012 to remind staff of our equality and diversity priorities and to share examples of good practice, helping tutors better understand their responsibility in relation to inclusivity and the content

and classroom practices required to meet it. We are monitoring how tutors apply this knowledge during the observation process.

To help raise awareness about the diverse nature of the county's residents, the Adult Learning service has also introduced a poster scheme highlighting festivals and celebrations from around the world that are displayed in all learning centres.

2i) Continue to develop improved accessibility routes on the public rights of way network.

Our Transport Strategy commits us to improving accessibility on routes across the county. In close consultation with representative individuals, groups, and disability advisers, we aim to ensure that footway provision, parking, bus stops and other highway measures take full account of the needs of all people irrespective of movement or sensory ability. We work closely with bus and rail operators and assist taxi operators to encourage the best and most integrated provision of public transport services and infrastructure. For example, working with councillors, local people, and organisations, we have conducted audits of pedestrian routes in Wallingford and Didcot to improve accessibility in the built environment for elderly and disabled people.

2j) Provide training to Highways & Transport staff involved in policy and design to ensure they understand the constraints faced by customers with a disability using our services, and have regard to these constraints in service design and delivery.

With the help of Oxfordshire Unlimited, a local disability action group, and the Westgate Shopmobility Unit, we run regular training sessions for transport staff to make them aware of the needs of disabled users and to experience for themselves the difficulties the disabled face in poorly-designed environments. Over 60 members of staff have so far completed the half-day course.

Objective 3: Supporting thriving and cohesive communities

The County Council is committed to working closer to the communities we serve, to understand the challenges they face, and to make sure our services are working together as effectively as possible. We are also committed to empowering communities to do things for themselves, including identifying and/or responding when the public sector might not be able to continue to provide a service.

3a) Continue to work in partnership to improve the quality of life in the most deprived areas of the county. This will include promoting better engagement in education, employment and training; supporting the vulnerable and those with multiple and enduring problems; promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing health inequalities; reducing and mitigating the effects of child poverty.

We are continuing our 'Breaking the Cycle' programme that concentrates on the most deprived wards in Oxford and Banbury, identifying families most at need of help and providing them with intensive support from all agencies able to assist.

As part of our 'Thriving Families Initiative', we are working with the districts and other agencies, especially those dealing with anti-social behaviour and community safety. We are identifying families who either receive services or are known to others agencies, and deciding which agency is best placed to work with them. We are then monitoring their success to build up a picture of what works and how to identify other families likely to require support, so future interventions can happen early and effectively.

3b) Continue to provide a Big Society Fund that will support local communities and organisations who wish to identify local priorities and do things for themselves about issues that matter to them. We will also review expressions of interest, applications and funding patterns from 2011/12 and work with community groups to raise awareness and encourage access to the Fund.

At its launch in 2011/12, we set aside a pot of £600,000 for communities to bid for start-up funding to help them take responsibility for providing services in their community and to support new forms of service provision more tailored to local needs.

In its first year, the Big Society Fund proved a great success, recognising that Oxfordshire has a wealth of active communities ready and willing to take a lead on services which matter to them. These communities are often much better placed than the public sector to develop services appropriate to their needs.

For 2012/13, each county councillor has a budget of £10,000, allowing them to support the projects that matter most to their local community. It is up to the councillors themselves to decide how to spend their budgets.

3c) Continue to work closely with our military partners to maximise the value obtained from the pupil premium by focusing on specific needs of children from armed forces families, and ensure schools have appropriate information to support these children.

We are working with our military partners to ensure that schools are providing appropriate support to children from armed forces families and to help guarantee that these pupils are not disadvantaged.

3d) Continue to work closely with military partners to ensure we maximise the support we offer to carers of vulnerable people. We will ensure that we provide more information and support to carers around military bases and ensure that we support developments such as good neighbours' schemes by military bases.

We have been working in partnership with the local military to ensure our work continually matches the needs of the military and veteran community in Oxfordshire. As such, the priorities and tasks we have set ourselves have changed over the year.

We are proud to have had a strong civilian-military partnership for a number of years and that working in partnership with the armed forces is embedded throughout the

organisation. Through productive partnership working there have been real improvements in the lives of military personnel and their families.

So far this year, we have achieved the following:

- We have established a transition protocol for personnel leaving the service who have on-going care needs.
- New initiatives have been formed following a project conducted by The Oxfordshire Health Foundation Trust to identify veterans and develop a response to their particular needs. There is a focus on:
 - identifying veterans within the patient population
 - training and awareness for staff
 - developing the capacity to manage transition for servicemen who are discharged back to Oxfordshire on medical grounds.
- Oxfordshire MIND has continued to develop their peer support group with the base families. Work with the RAF and Oxfordshire MIND around supporting families is hoped to be rolled out to the Army.
- The Armed Forces Health and Wellbeing group meeting a couple of times a year. This brings together representatives of Armed Forces Bases in Oxfordshire with commissioners from the National Health Service and Social and Community Services. This group facilitates strategic planning and problem solving which will result in better health outcomes for forces personnel, veterans and their families. The Health and Wellbeing board also has a military representative to represent the armed forces.
- There is a representative of the military on the steering group for the new Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, ensuring that the needs of the armed forces and armed forces families are identified.

3e) Raise awareness of the MANTRA (Multi-Agency Network for Tackling Racially Aggravated Harassment) service. We will also increase the number of agencies and venues people can use to report incidents of and concerns about hate crime, including in rural areas.

A review of the MANTRA service in May 2012 concluded that it was not as performing as effectively as intended and that our partners had lost confidence in it.

We have now replaced MANTRA with a free 24 hour telephone phone providing a single approach to third party reporting of hate crime across all local authorities in the Thames Valley area. The phone line is provided by Stop Hate UK, a registered charity and social enterprise based in Leeds. The service also offers users the option to use text relay services or online systems instead of the telephone.

Reports are referred on to either the Police, local Victim Support groups, or district Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) teams as appropriate. Callers can remain anonymous and can choose whether or not to report to the Police. The launch of the Stop Hate

UK service in our area received extensive and positive coverage both in the local press and on local television.

Objective 4: Promoting a culture of fairness in employment and service delivery

The county council is committed to ensuring equality of access, fairness, and consideration to all of our staff and potential future staff, and in the delivery of services to the people and communities of Oxfordshire.

4a) Ensure all managers and Councillors are aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, and encourage all employees to access learning and development opportunities to increase their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity issues.

The Cabinet and every scrutiny committee received presentations and held discussions on the Equality Act and our Equality to ensure Councillors are aware of our responsibilities. Directorates regularly run their own training and refresher sessions for staff, and revised and updated guidance on equality issues is easily found on the council's intranet.

Staff are also required to complete the online 'Respect for People' e-learning course which outlines why we should value diversity and provides essential information about the importance of fair and equal treatment for all service users and colleagues. We also encourage staff to repeat the course every two years.

We are also currently looking at commissioning refresher training for HR practitioners and managers to improve their knowledge of their employment responsibilities under the Equalities Act.

4b) Ensure equality and diversity is integrated into the culture of the Customer Service Centre by embedding it within the behaviour and attitudes of staff, as well as the routine policies, procedures and practices of the service.

The Customer Service Centre prides itself on how its culture, policies, and practices integrate and embed awareness of equality and diversity issues into its work.

All staff complete our mandatory online training in equality and diversity when they start working for us, and we ask people to repeat it on a rolling basis. We also run a series of briefings for staff and hold a bi-monthly lunchtime equality and diversity discussion forum. Internal staff satisfaction surveys always include questions about equality and diversity requirements. We are currently planning an equality and diversity awareness day to give everyone the opportunity to engage with a range of information covering the characteristics protected by the Equality Act.

As services join the Customer Service Centre we look to see whether they can be improved, and our Equality and Diversity steering group addresses any equality and diversity issues.

We regularly monitor calls to ensure people receive a quality service, including giving appropriate attention to any special requirements requested by the caller. We also offer supportive information in EasyRead format, and we now accept more on-line applications.

4c) Undertake a full review of existing equality and diversity policies to ensure they remain in line with best practice and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

In July 2012 a new 'Equality & Diversity in the Workplace Policy' was launched, dealing specifically with employment matters and underpinning the council's commitment to equality as set out in the 'Equality Policy 2012 – 2017'.

We have revised and re-launched our toolkit on 'Delivering our commitment to Equal Opportunities'. This is a toolkit designed primarily for managers providing information on a range of equality and diversity matters.

Our 'Dignity at Work' policy, dealing with bullying and harassment in the workplace, is currently under review and due to be re-launched in February 2013.

4d) Continue to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for roles at the council, and do more to increase awareness of the support available to staff and guidance for managers to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate.

We continue to encourage people from diverse backgrounds to apply for roles at the council, and are proud to have been successfully re-awarded the Disability Two Ticks Symbol for 2012/2013 following the annual review conducted by Jobcentre Plus. The review looked at the actions we take to attract and support disabled people in to council jobs.

HR are undertaking a review of the current guidance available for managers/employees and current practice in supporting employees who have a disability in terms of overcoming barriers and making reasonable adjustments

We have also updated and relaunched the information available to carers working for the council and the support that is available for them. We have also joined the 'Employers for Carers' Scheme run by Carers UK to access information on best practice in supporting carers in the workplace, and have run a number of briefing/information sessions for employees on this.

4e) Investigate the reasons for the lower levels of young workers employed by the council, and continue to expand the number of apprenticeship opportunities to create entry level posts.

We currently offer access to 12 different apprenticeship frameworks and a growing number of services and teams are taking these up. This means that our opportunities are not only open to people from a broader range of backgrounds but that where appropriate, we are also able to support the council's positive recruitment policy.

We have recruited 45 apprentices since the beginning of January 2012. 7 of these were Level 3 qualifications starting at Grade 1 SCP05. The rest of the apprentices were entry level, Level 2. The qualification level for entry to a Level 2 apprenticeship is Level 1 (GCSE Grades D-G). Of these 45 apprentices, 4 were care leavers. More information about the schemes and how representative our apprentices are of the wider community can be found in our latest 'Equality in Employment Report'.

The Council is tackling under-representation of young people in our workforce under section 159 of the Equality Act 2010 and for this reason a number of our apprenticeship vacancies are only open to individuals aged between 16 and 24 years old. Over the last 5 quarters (Q2 2011/12 – Q2 2012/13) our workforce has decreased by 15%, however, this figure for people under the age 25 is only 9% and we attribute that a large proportion of this is down to the success of the apprenticeship programme and other initiatives supporting young people into employment.

In Autumn 2011 a piece of research was carried out on young people (defined as those aged between 20 and 31) to understand more about their experience of working for the Council and identify any areas for improvement. Key findings were:

- 90% of respondents were happy or very happy with their relationships with colleagues and their teams
- 77% were happy or very happy with the relationship with their manager
- 62% feel they are making a difference to the people of Oxfordshire
- 25% were unhappy or very unhappy about the extent to which they feel appreciated and valued for the work they do

The things which were most important to this age group were having interesting and challenging work and having opportunities to develop. 78% said they were happy or very happy to be doing interesting or challenging work and 54% were happy or very happy with the training and development opportunities they were getting. Given the positive results and on-going organisational changes it was decided that further action was not a priority at that time.

4f) Identify opportunities to work with others to deliver services that improve outcomes for groups with protected characteristics more effectively and develop innovative approaches to common issues, whether through formal partnership arrangements or more informal collaborative arrangements.

Oxfordshire County Council proudly works in partnership with other organisations from the public, private, military, voluntary, and community sectors across the county on areas of common interest. There are several partnerships in operation, all overseen by the Oxfordshire Partnership Board. Over the past year several of the partnerships have undergone major changes due to national policy changes such as the health reforms.

We also maintain connections and informal collaborative arrangements when appropriate. For example, our Education service runs a multi-ethnic community forum where representatives of minority groups from across the county can discuss relevant educational issues. Recent meetings have considered the provision of

English as Second or Other Language (ESOL) courses in the county, the impact of academies on black or other minority ethnic communities, and how to attract members of minority groups into teaching or school governorship.

Working with councillors, local people, and organisations, we have conducted audits of pedestrian routes in Wallingford and Didcot to improve accessibility in the built environment for elderly and disabled people. As part of our current transport strategy, we are committed to consulting with local access groups to ensure all new street schemes or developments take account of the needs of these groups. We have also used our links with local bus companies to ensure that priority places for wheelchair and scooter users are clearly identified and enforced. We maintain links with local access groups and encourage them to work with us.

4g) Ensure that where services are being restructured there is a well-managed approach to diversity, including completion of Service and Community Impact Assessments to ensure that under-represented groups are not disproportionately affected in the resulting staff reductions. Statistics for redundancy will also need to be closely monitored.

Service and Community Impact Assessments (SCIAs) form an important part of how we develop policies and make decisions. They are produced for every contemplated service change, and regularly updated as proposals change and develop, ensuring that under-represented groups will not be not disproportionately affected by the changes.

The HR department monitors the characteristics of staff leaving the organisation and the reasons for their departure, and presents their findings in the annual 'Equality in the Workplace' report.

Next steps

We are proud to have completed the vast majority of the actions we set for ourselves in 2012, all of which bring us closer to achieving our equality objectives. We will be devising new priority actions for the next financial year in April 2013, and will report on our progress in the following March. This will allow us to embed our equality actions within our performance reporting cycle.

Appendix: More about Oxfordshire

Last year, we produced an overview about what we know of Oxfordshire’s population under the various protected characteristics. The release of the 2011 Census results has provided us with an opportunity to refresh this report with more up-to-date information on the populace, and provide a short overview of how diverse the county’s residents are. We will be examining how the data we hold on our service users tallies with the new census results in our April release, allowing us to keep this analysis in step with our performance reporting cycle.

More information and data on these and other themes can be found on *Oxfordshire Insight*: <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/insight> .

Population

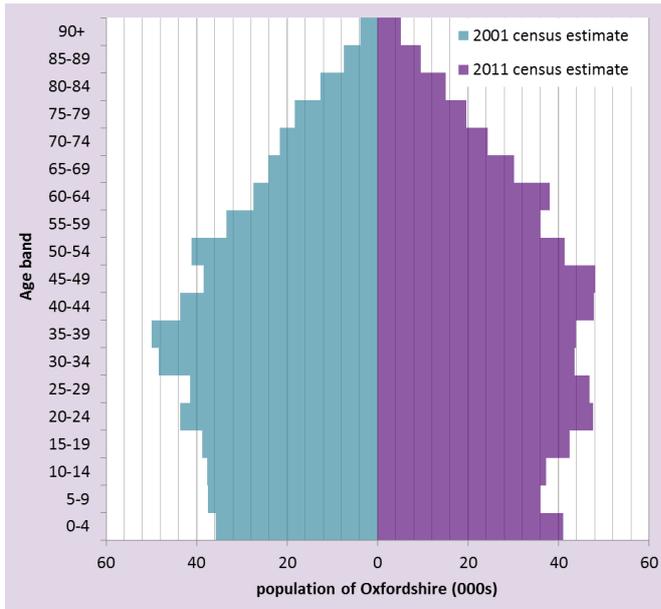
The 2011 Census showed that an estimated 653,800 people were living in Oxfordshire on 27 March 2011:

Oxfordshire	653,800
Cherwell	141,900
Oxford	151,900
South Oxfordshire	134,300
Vale of White Horse	121,000
West Oxfordshire	104,800

Oxfordshire’s population has increased by 48,500 people (8%) since the last Census estimate in 2001, when the total estimated population for the 2001 Census was 605,500. Oxford City’s population has increased the most (13%) followed by West Oxfordshire (10%). Cherwell’s population has grown by 8%, while the populations of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse have both grown by 5%.

Age

Oxfordshire’s population has aged overall, due to the older age groups experiencing greater growth than younger groups. The 65-and-over population has grown by 18% since 2001, while the number of people aged 85 and over increased by 30%. The number of people in their 30s in the County has declined by 12%. The number of children aged 4 and under has grown by 13%.



Sex

	Men		Women	
Oxfordshire	323,000	49.4%	330,800	50.6%
Cherwell	70,100	49.4%	71,700	50.6%
Oxford	75,300	49.6%	76,600	50.4%
South Oxfordshire	66,000	49.1%	68,300	50.9%
Vale of White Horse	60,100	49.7%	60,900	50.3%
West Oxfordshire	51,400	49.1%	53,300	50.9%

Women remain in the majority across the county.

Gender reassignment

Figures for the number of transgender people in the county remain unobtainable, and no relevant question was asked in the census.

Race, including ethnic or national origins, colour, or nationality

The ethnic composition of Oxfordshire has changed since the 2001 census.

All of the county's black or minority ethnic communities have grown, and now account for 9.2% of the population, just under double the 2001 figure of 4.9% .

There has been a growth in people from white backgrounds other than British or Irish, who now account for 6.3% of the population (up from 4% in 2001). This rise can be explained by the expansion of the EU. People from white gypsy or Irish Traveller backgrounds make up 0.1% of the county, and this is the same proportion

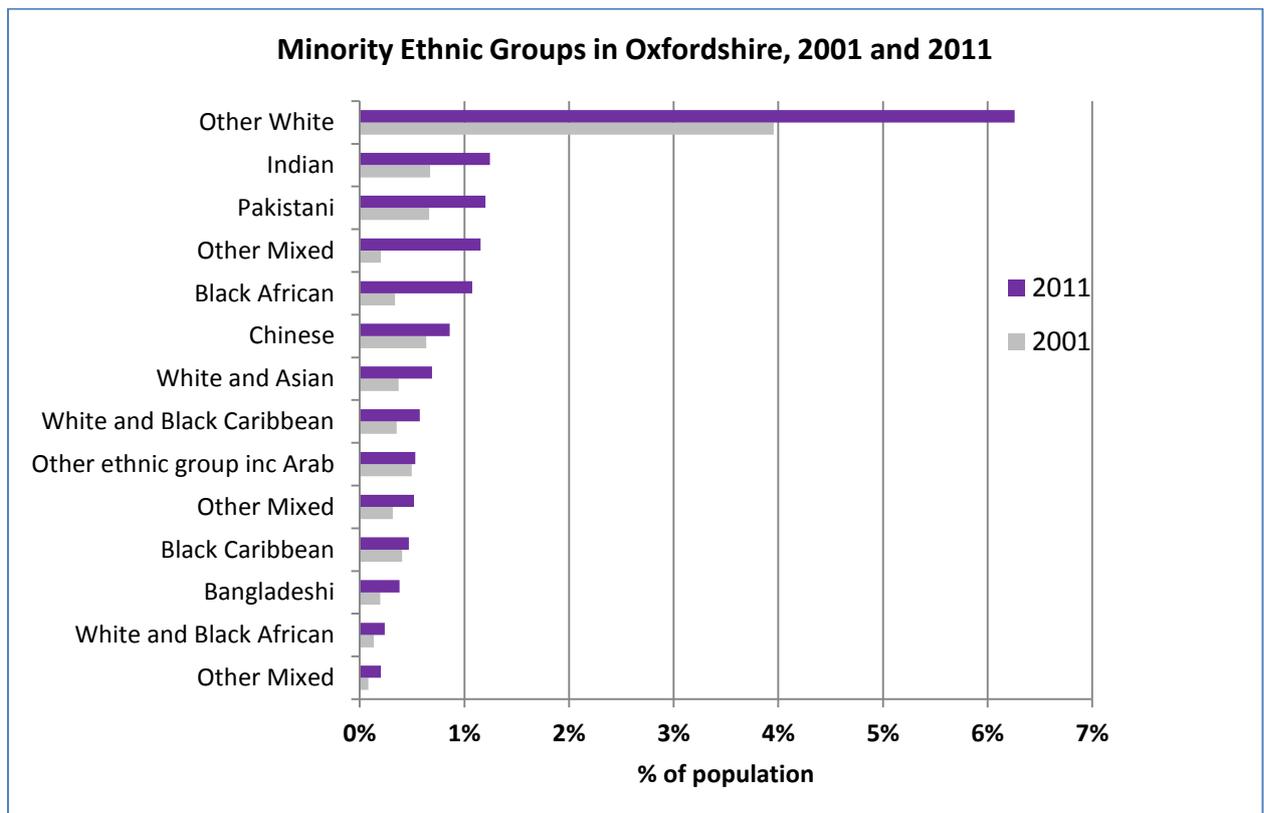
across all the districts aside from West Oxfordshire, where 0.2% of the population classify themselves as such.

4.8% of the population are from Asian backgrounds, twice the 2001 figure of 2.4%

People from Asian communities form the largest minority ethnic group in the county, and most come from Indian or Pakistani backgrounds (2.45%)

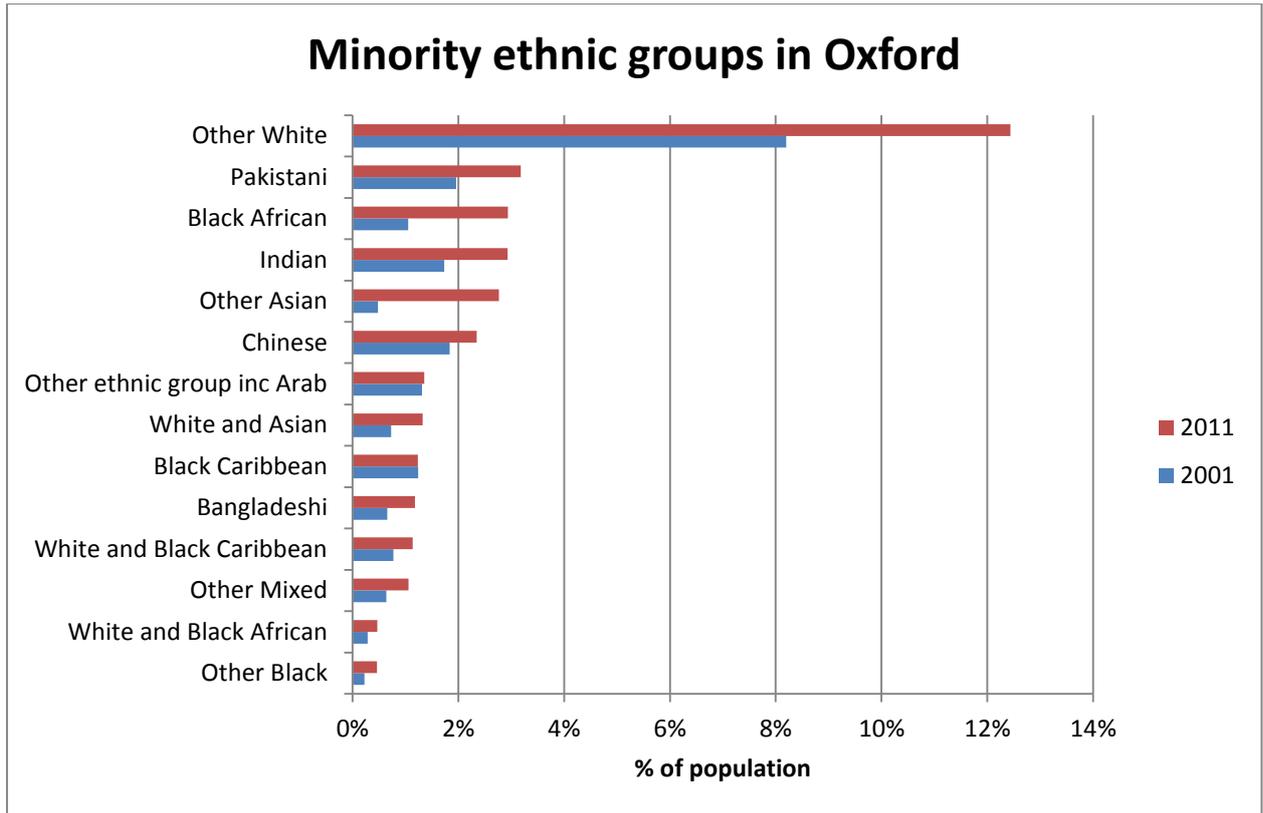
The proportion from all black backgrounds has more than doubled from 0.8% to 1.75% of the county's population.

People from mixed backgrounds account for 2% of the population (2001: 1.2%)



Source: ONS. In order to display minority groups on a chart, the categories of 'White British' and 'White Irish' are not shown.

Oxford remains the county's most diverse district. People from white British or white Irish backgrounds make up 65% of the city's population, down from 79% in 2001. Reflecting migration trends, the proportion of the city from other white backgrounds has risen to 12.4%, up from 8.2% in ten years.



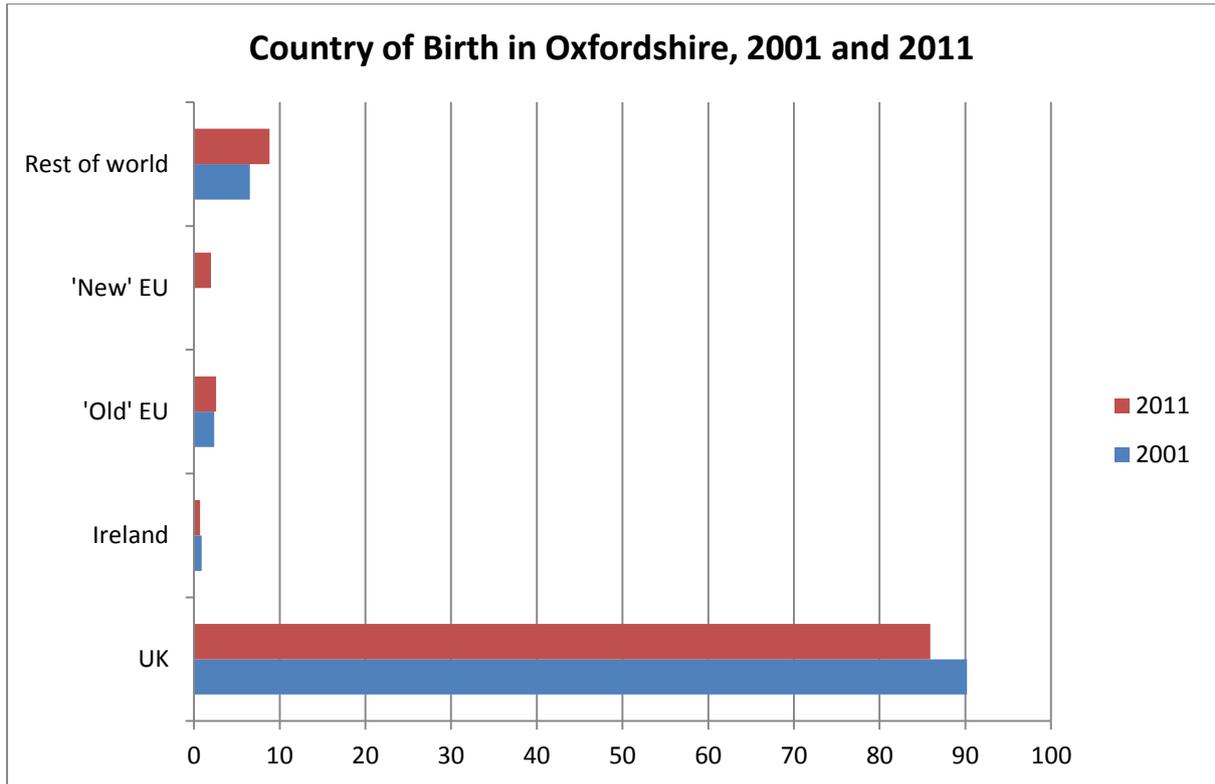
Source: ONS. In order to display minority groups on a chart, the categories of 'White British' and 'White Irish' are not shown.

Country of origin

There has been a rise in the number of people born outside the UK or Ireland since 2001. Not only has the number of people from the 'old' EU risen, but there has been a growth in people from both the new member countries and from the rest of the world.²

² 'Old' EU refers to the countries of the European Union at the time of the 2001 Census: Belgium; France; Germany; Italy; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Denmark; Greece; Portugal; Spain; Austria; Finland; Sweden

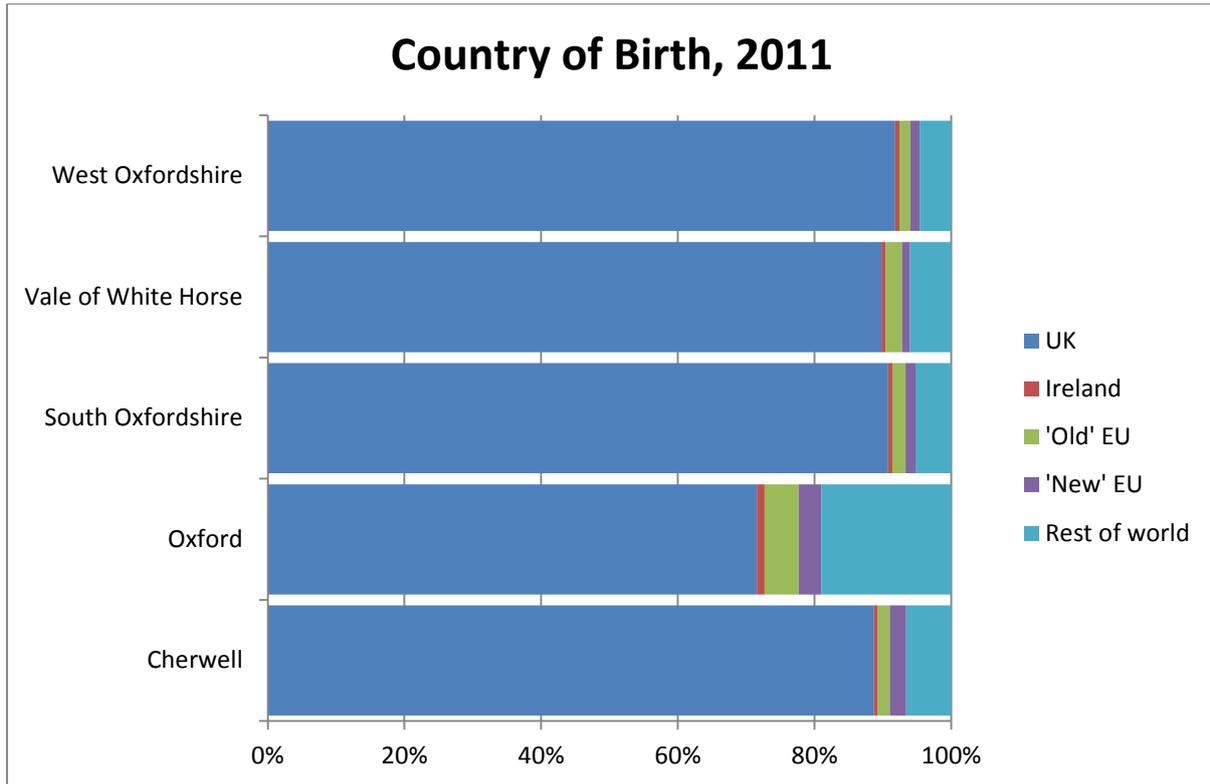
'New' EU refers to those countries joining the EU between 2001 and 2011: Cyprus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Malta; Poland; Slovakia; Slovenia; Bulgaria; Romania



Source: ONS. 'Rest of world' in 2001 would have included those countries yet to join the EU when the census was taken

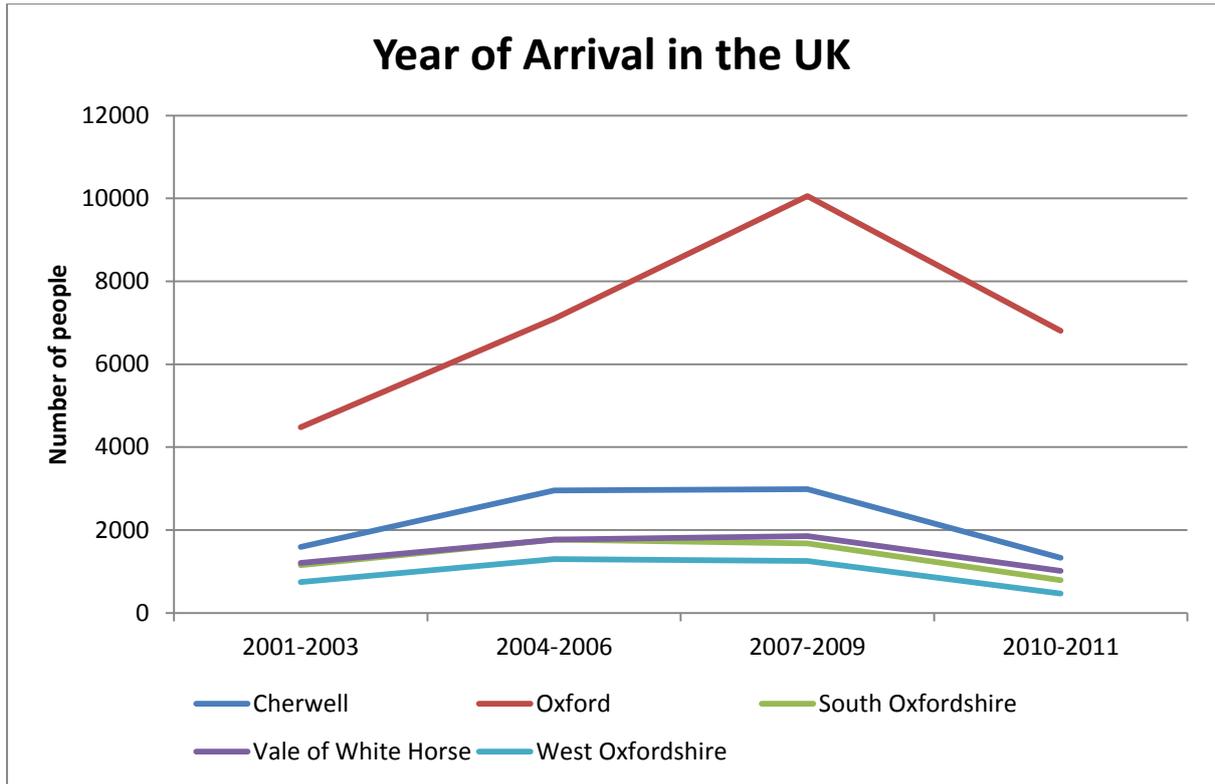
8.8% of the count's residents (about 57,500 people) were born outside the UK or the EU. 13,000 (2%) came from the new EU countries that joined after 2001.

Again, Oxford is the most diverse district. Only 72% of the population of Oxford were born in the UK, way below the proportion nationally or in Oxfordshire's other districts. It is noticeable how similar the other four districts are too each other.

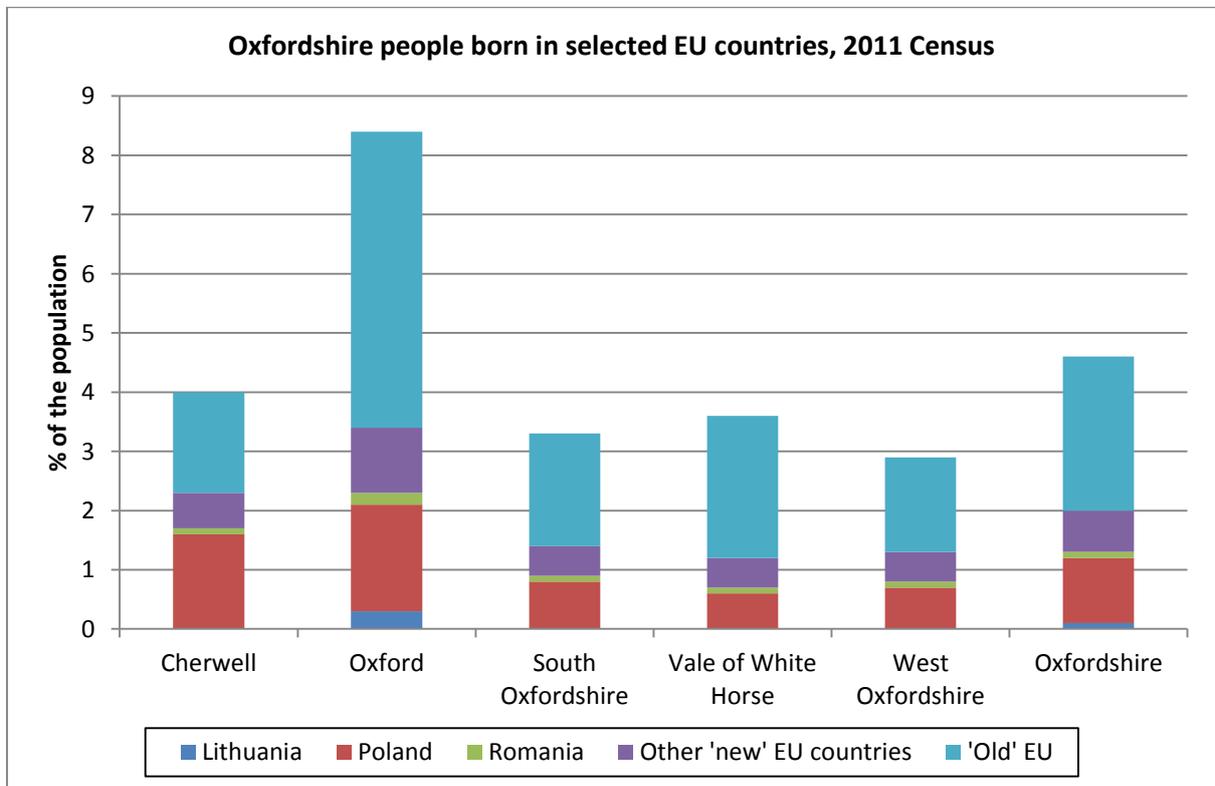


Source: ONS

The Census asked residents who were not born in the UK to give the year they arrived in the country. Over the course of the decade, the number of people rose, reaching a peak in 2007-09. The large increase after 2004 shows the impact of the eastward expansion of the European Union, especially in Oxford. 6.6% of Oxford's population arrived in the UK in 2007-09. The number of people who arrived in 2010-11 is noticeably lower, likely reflecting the economic situation.

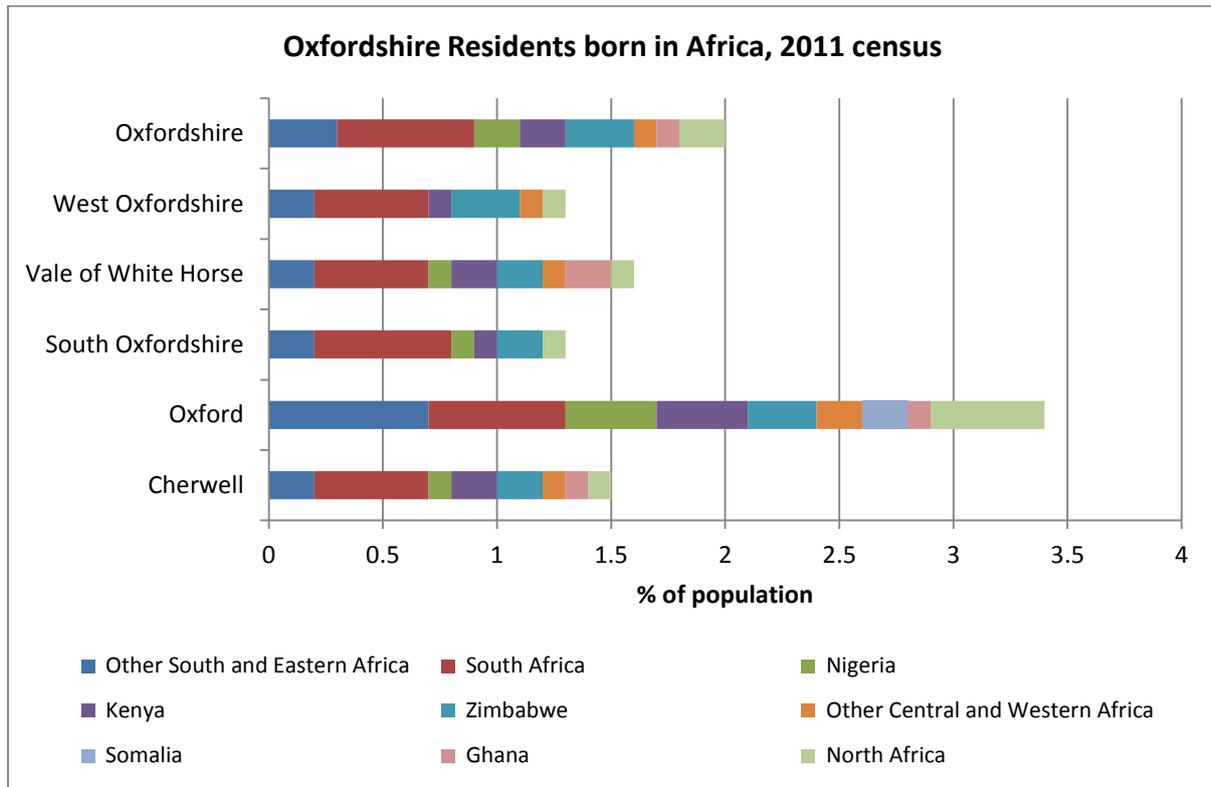


The eastward expansion of the EU during the last decade saw a rise in migration to the county, especially Oxford. The largest group in the county (1.1%) in 2011 were from Poland. Of the 7,500 people born in Poland, 2,700 live in Oxford and 2,300 live in Cherwell.



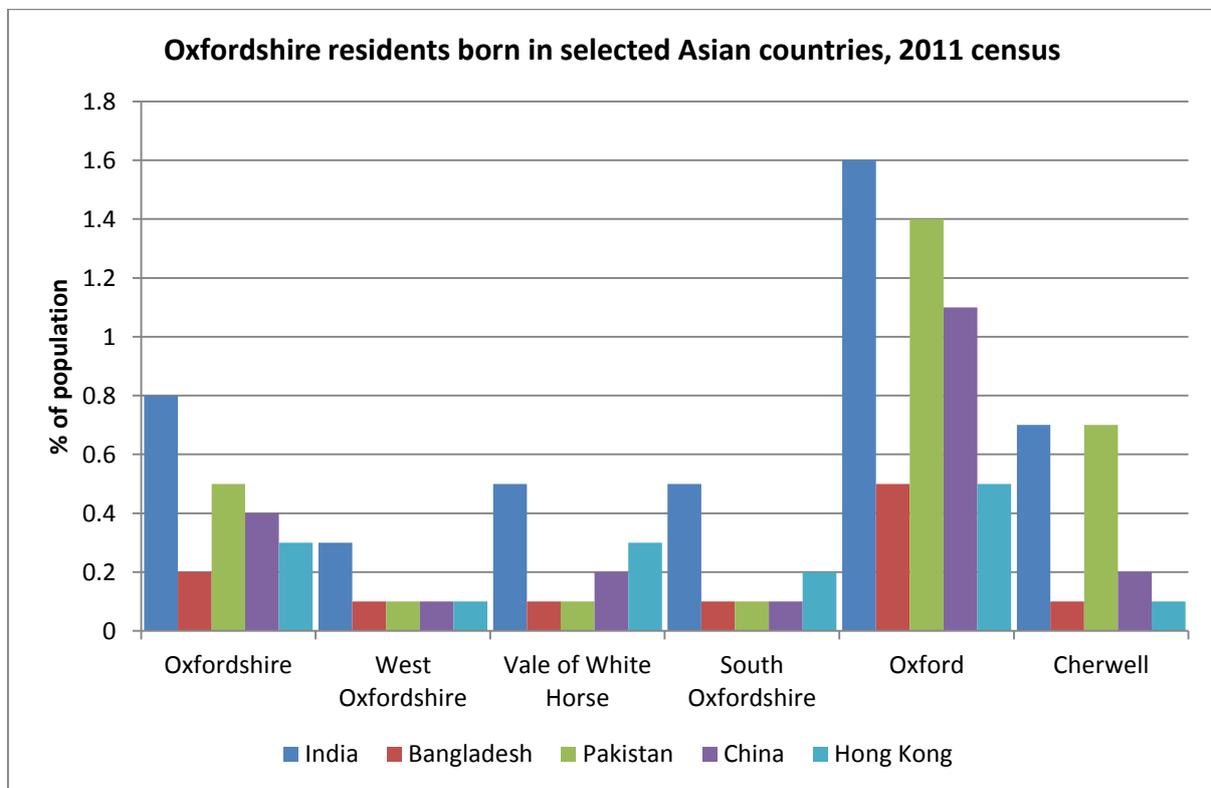
Source: ONS

Other Countries



Source: ONS

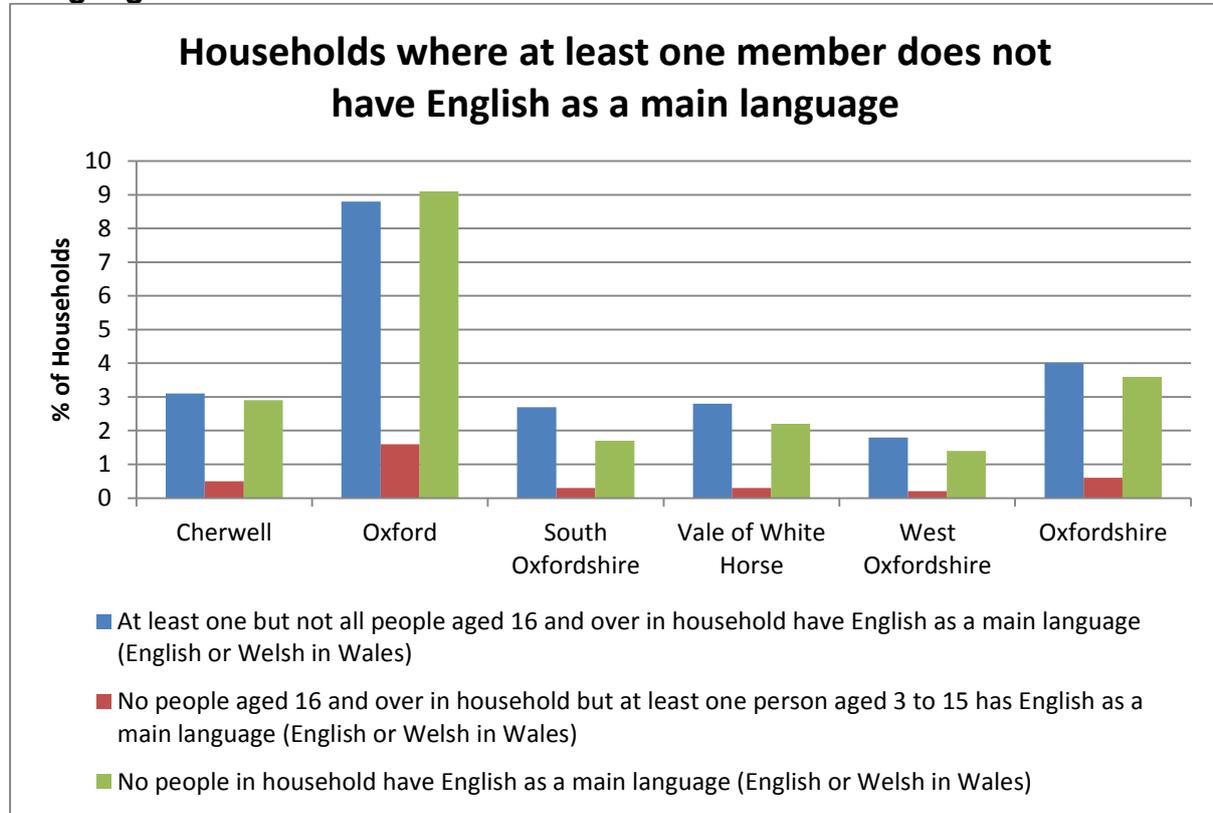
2% of the county’s population were born in African countries.



Source: ONS

The population born in India is comparatively large across all the districts. Oxford has the largest community of people born in China, although part of this figure might represent students studying in the city.

Language

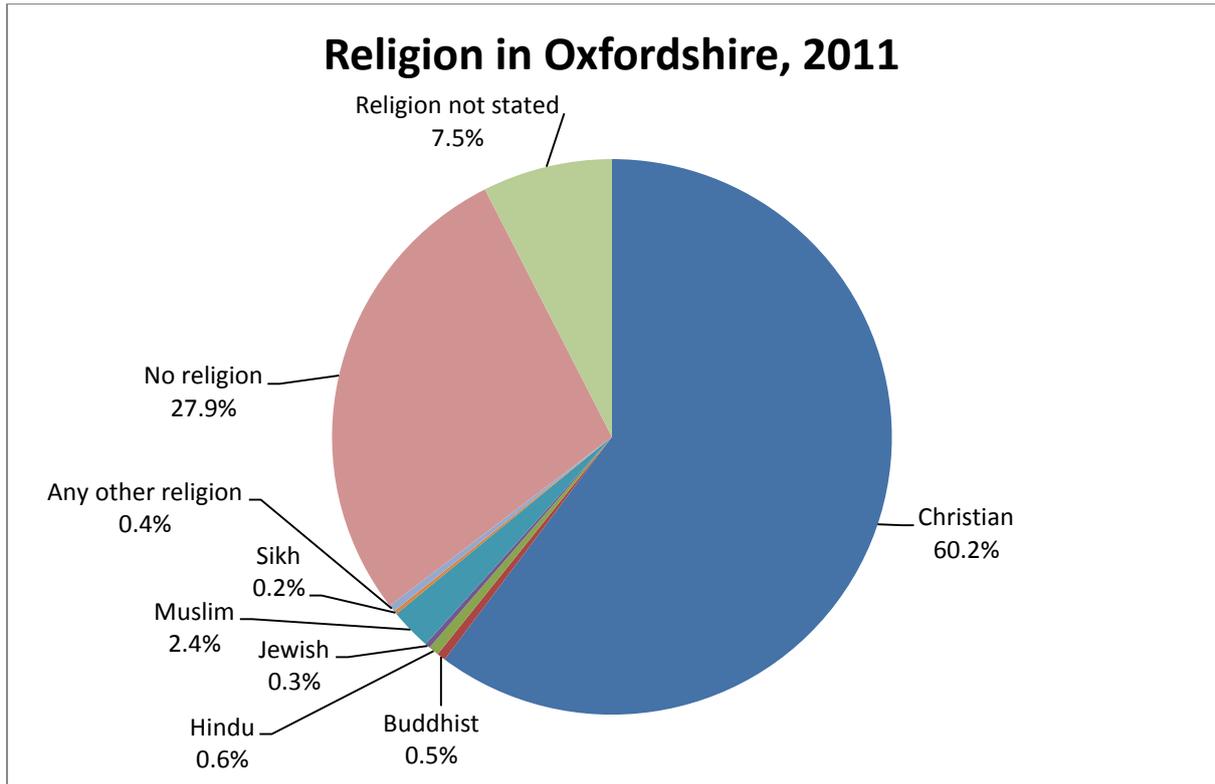


Source: ONS

Just over 9% of households in Oxford do not have anyone member who speaks English as a main language. This is over double the figure for the county as a whole.

Religion

60% of the county's population are Christian, whilst 28% do not have any religion. The county's Muslims make up 2.4% of the populace. The proportion of Hindus in Oxfordshire in 2011 was 0.6%. The size of the county's Jewish population is 0.3%. The growth and size of county's Buddhist population (0.5%) is in line with the regional and national figures.

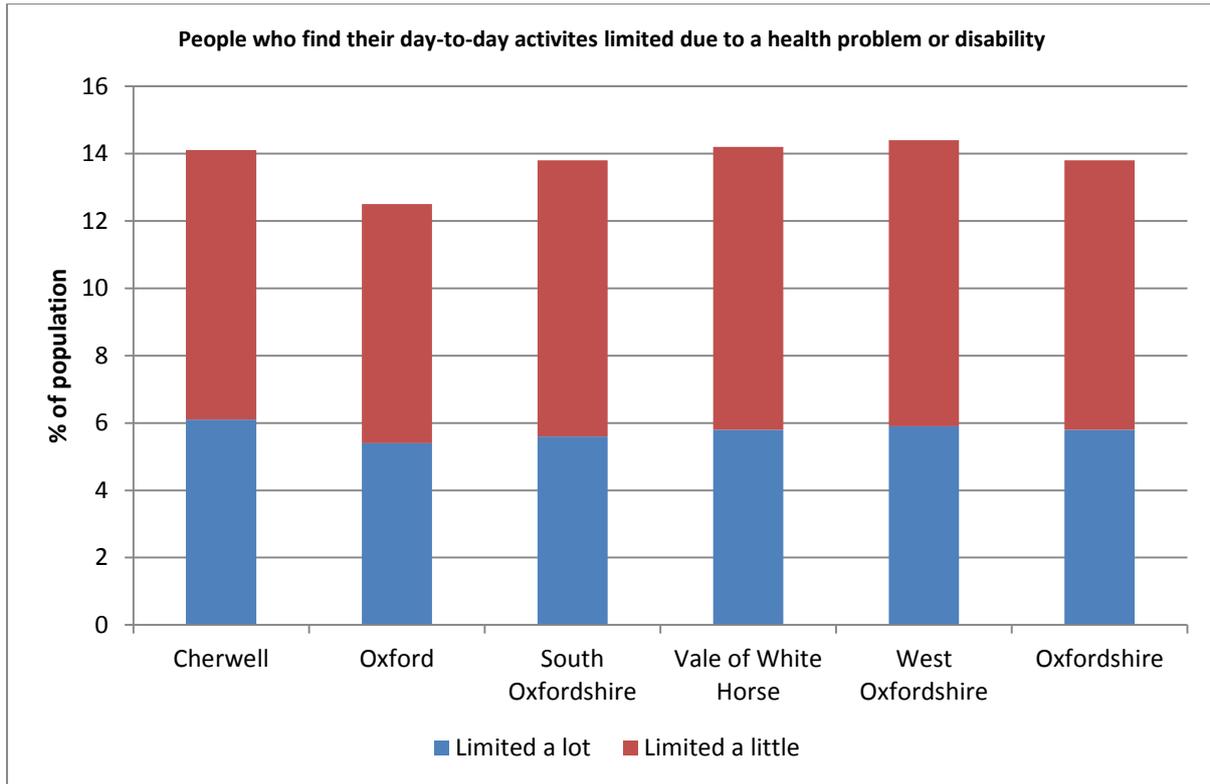


As the table below shows, Oxford remains the most diverse district in the county.

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxfordshire	Vale of White Horse	West Oxfordshire
Christian	64%	48%	64%	63%	65%
No religion	25%	33%	27%	27%	26%
Religion not stated	7%	8%	8%	7%	7%
Muslim	2.3%	6.8%	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Buddhist	0.4%	0.9%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Hindu	0.4%	1.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.2%
Any other religion	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Sikh	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Jewish	0.1%	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%

Source: ONS

Disability



Source: ONS

The proportion of residents reporting that their day-to-day activities are limited either a little or a lot due to a long-standing health problem or disability is roughly the same across the districts.

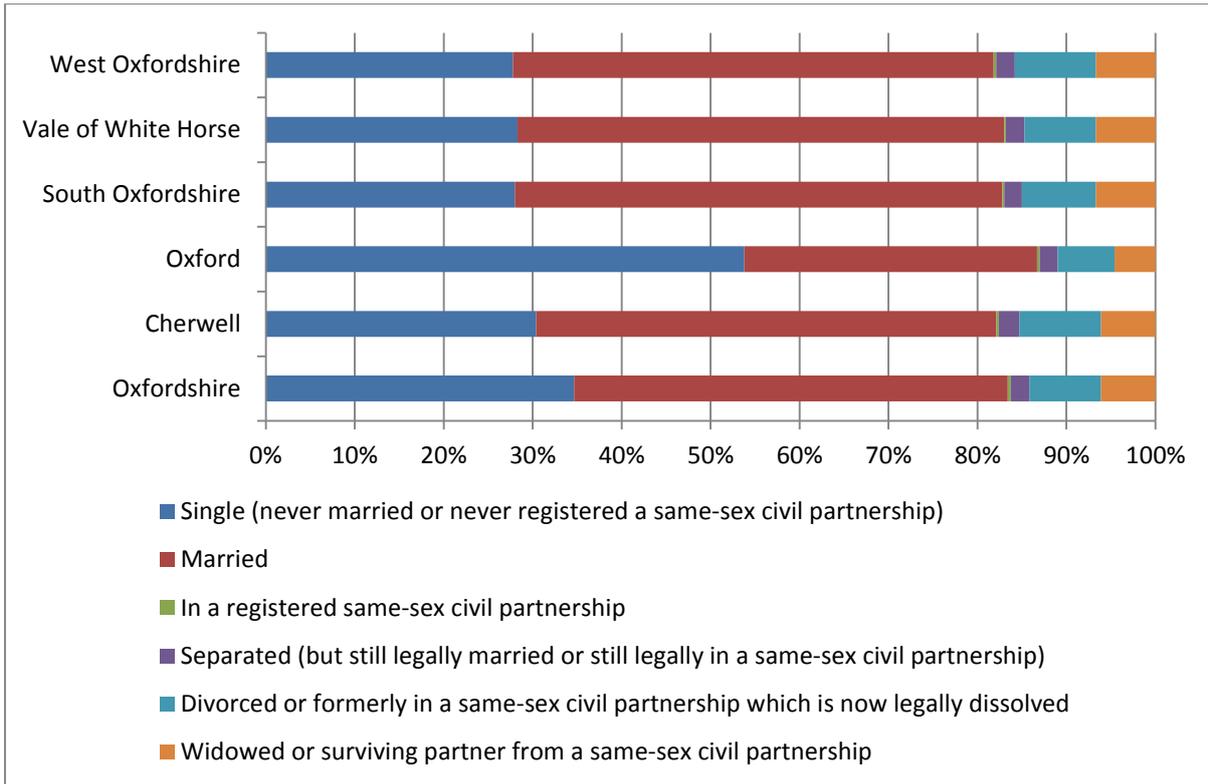
Sexual Orientation

Reliable figures on the number of lesbian, gay, or bisexual people in the county are still difficult to obtain. The Census did not include a question on sexual identity or sexual orientation, and using the number of people in a civil partnership will not capture those who are either in a relationship but are not registered or those who are single.

Experimental statistics from the ONS’s 2011 ‘Integrated Household Survey’ suggested that the proportion of people identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or other was 1.6% in the South East, against a figure for England of 1.9%.

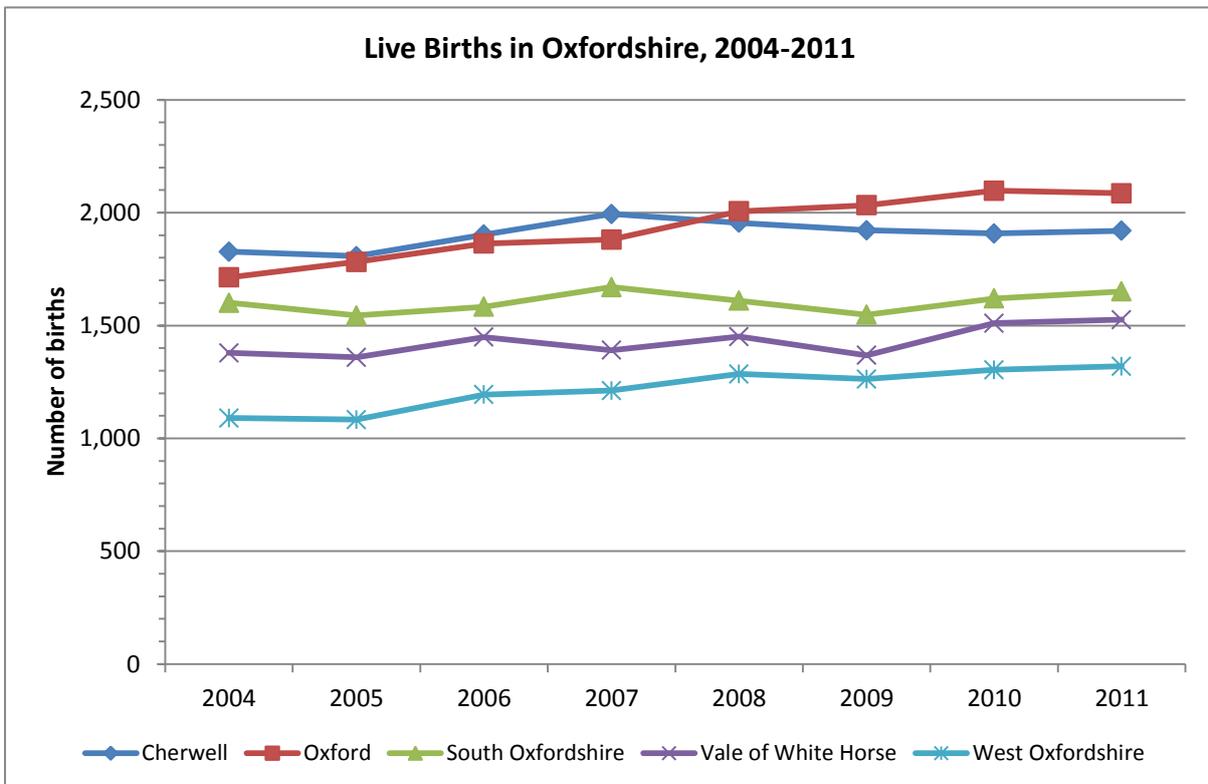
Marriage and civil partnership

259,252 people (48.8%) in the county said they were married in the 2011 Census. A further 1,393 people (0.3%) were in a registered civil partnership.



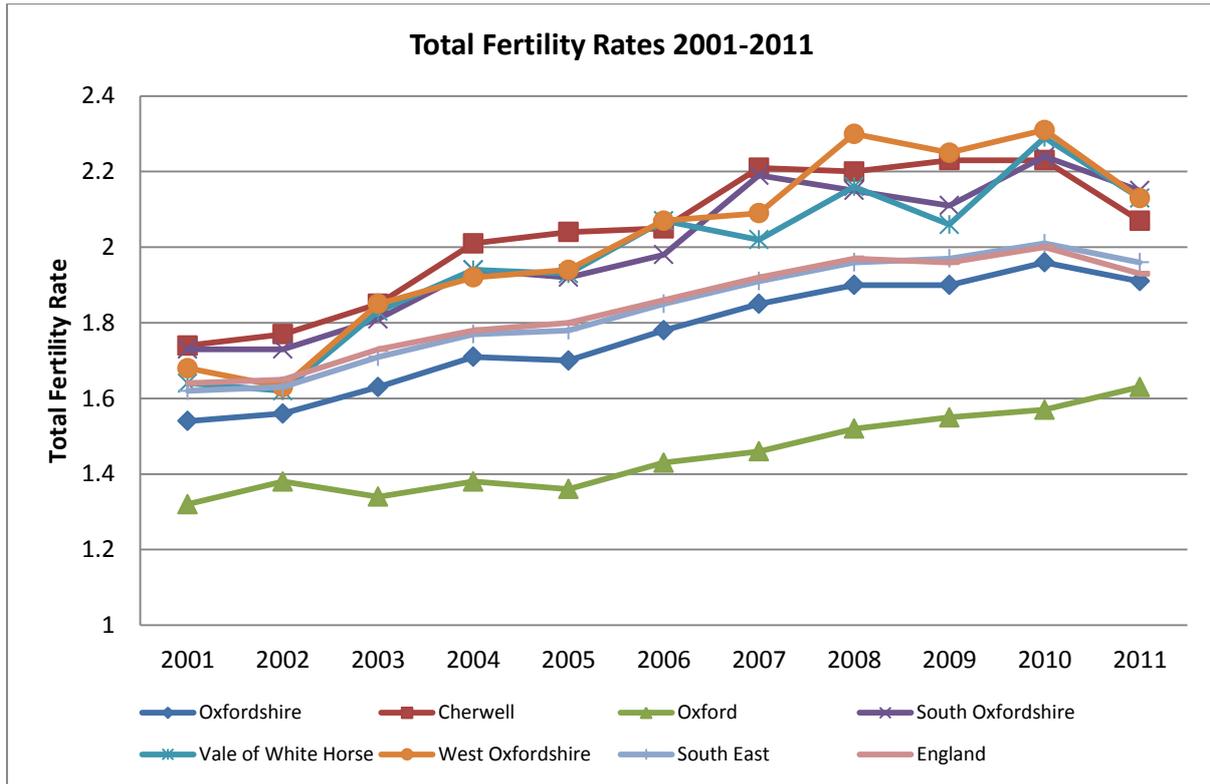
Source: ONS

Pregnancy and maternity



Source: ONS

The number of live births in each district is slowly, but steadily, rising.



Source: ONS

The Total Fertility Rate indicates the average number of children per woman. Whilst the fertility rate has been rising steadily, Oxford is noticeably behind the rest of the county and the regional and national figures. This is probably representative of its large student population.

As more census information becomes available, reports and briefings will be placed on the [Oxfordshire Insight](#) website.