November 2024

Residents' Survey 2024

Report prepared by Oxford City Council

Sally Hicks and Laura Marshall-Ravanal, Business Intelligence Unit

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Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and objectives

The purpose of this report is to detail the findings of the 2024 Oxford Residents' Survey. The Residents' Survey is now in its second year after relaunching in July 2023. Most questions in the survey remain the same as last year allowing for direct comparisons to be made between 2023 and 2024.

The aim of this survey is to give people who live in Oxford the opportunity to let us know how we are doing as a council, how satisfied they are with the services we are delivering, what services are most important to them, perceptions of their local area, community safety, the local economy as well as their health and wellbeing.

Conducting the survey annually enables us to track satisfaction levels and public perceptions on a variety of issues over time. It also helps us to identify trends and to understand how residents respond to the changes and improvements we implement in our service delivery and policies.

The findings of this survey are being used to help develop Council services and data from it informs two of our Corporate Level Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) namely, 'How well the Council is run' and 'Satisfaction with Parks and Open spaces'.

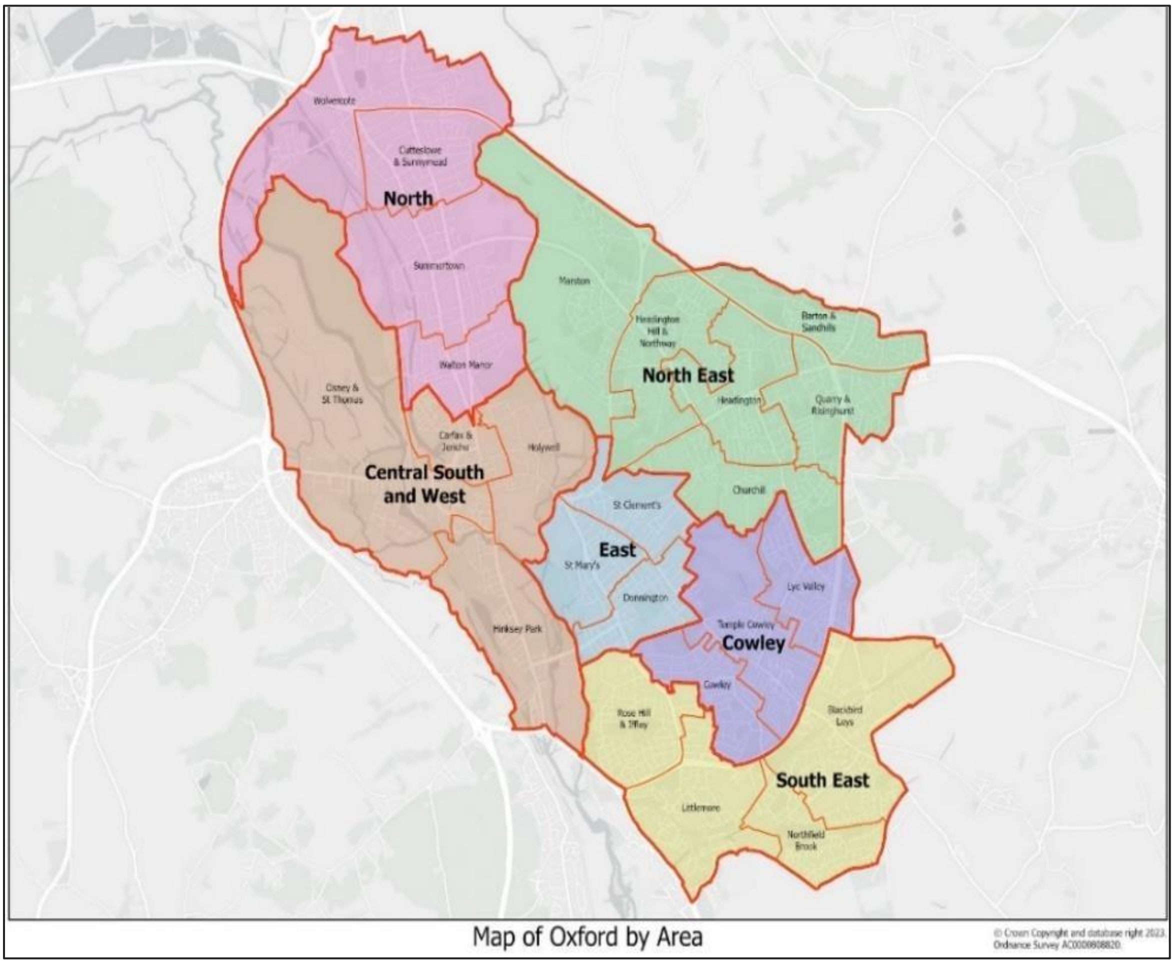
Oxford City Council is a tier 2 or lower tier English local authority, and as such is accorded powers and responsibilities like that of other district councils, e.g. Cherwell District Council or South & Vale District Councils. These are different to those accorded to tier 1 or upper tier councils such as Oxfordshire County Council.

Oxford City Council is responsible for services such as planning, housing, Council Tax collection, housing benefits, business rates, environmental health, licensing, refuse and recycling collection, leisure services and parks, tourism, and cemeteries, whereas services such as schools, safeguarding children, social care for the elderly, the fire service, roads, libraries and the museums service, trading standards, land use, transport planning and waste management are the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council.

Whilst the Residents' Survey focuses mostly on issues relating to Oxford City Council, it does also include questions relating to services provided or supported by Oxfordshire County Council. Where Oxfordshire County Council has responsibility for a service this was made clear to those who completed the survey. We appreciate that residents rarely make the distinction between the two service providers, and it is important in any such survey to address issues which have the greatest impact.

Findings from the Resident's Survey are looked at by area. The local areas in Oxford City Council, along with the wards they comprise are defined below:

Figure 1.1: Map of Oxford by Area



North: Cutteslowe and Sunnymead, Summertown, Walton Manor, Wolvercote.
Northeast: Marston, Headington Hill and Northway, Headington, Barton and Sandhills, Quarry and Risinghurst, Churchill.
East: Donnington, St Clements, St Mary's.
Central South & West: Osney and St Thomas, Carfax and Jericho, Holywell, Hinksey Park.
Cowley: Temple Cowley, Cowley, Lye Valley.
South East: Blackbird Leys, Littlemore, Northfield Brook, Rose Hill and Iffley.

1.2 The approach

The survey was conducted online and was distributed to the Oxford Residents' Panel. This is an online group of Oxford residents which is broadly representative of the Oxford population.

899 members of the Oxford Residents' Panel were invited to take part in the survey and there were 363 valid responses in total which allows us to undertake analysis at sub-group level. With an achieved sample of this size the response rate is 40.4%.

The online survey contains 31 questions and fieldwork ran from 8th July to 15th September 2024. An independent polling company, Beehive Research oversees both the administration of the Residents' Panel as well as the application of appropriate weightings to the survey findings. Beehive Research has confirmed the survey results are robust.

Data was weighted by age, gender, area, and ethnicity to counteract non-response bias. The weighting profile was based on 2021 Census data for the population of Oxford, further details of which can be found at the end of this report in section 9.

As most of the questionnaire design as well as ward boundaries (which make up the six areas reported), remains the same as last year, direct comparisons between the findings of the 2023 and 2024 Residents' Surveys can be made.

Throughout this report the word 'Council' relates to Oxford City Council unless specifically stated otherwise.

1.3 Benchmarking

LG Inform is a benchmarking tool provided by the Local Government Association (LGA), which conducts regular national telephone polling of residents' satisfaction with local government, three times a year. In addition, regional level results are available on a yearly basis. The LGA outlines a set of resident satisfaction questions that councils can use in their local surveys and provides results that can be benchmarked against national and regional results.

The LGA's national and regional figures are obtained using a telephone poll. As the mode of data collection can have a marked impact on results, it is important to note that intra–mode comparisons are not desirable. The LGA therefore recommends that only councils using a telephone survey method should benchmark against the LGA figures and as such, since our Residents' Survey was conducted online, we will not use LGA's data for the purposes of direct benchmarking, though it provides useful trend data for comparison.

As we will be conducting our survey on an annual basis, we will be able to establish a baseline as well as track findings over time thus allowing us to understand any changes in residents' perceptions and levels of satisfaction as we make improvements to our services.

1.4 Statistical reliability and margins of error

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population", so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have, if everybody had been surveyed. We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from knowing the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given.

It is important to note that margins of error relate only to samples that have been selected using strict random probability sampling methods. However, in practice it is reasonable to assume that these calculations provide a good indication of the confidence intervals relating to this survey and the sampling approach used.

Based on the total sample achieved (363 responses) the survey is accurate within +/-5% at the 95% confidence level. This is considered within an acceptable range for margin of error.

If a finding is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, this will be explicitly stated. Please note that for the data to remain statistically robust, in some instances it cannot be broken down further into sub-groups, for example to smaller geographic areas and specific ethnic groups. The data is therefore not reported at ward level (groupings of which make up the six areas across Oxford – see above) or individual ethnic group level but rather is reported by area and for ethnic group as either the 'all white group' (which comprises all white ethnic groups) or the 'Ethnic Minority group', which comprises all Ethnic Minority groups other than white ethnic groups.

Please see the technical report at the end of this document for more details on statistical reliability.

1.5 Acknowledgements

Oxford City Council would like to thank Beehive Research for their assistance throughout this project. We would also like to give our sincere thanks the 363 residents who took the time to participate in the survey.

Summary of key findings

2. Summary of key findings

2.1 Performance indicators

Overall, 70% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, compared to 66% in 2023. This difference is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. As was the case last year, residents living in North and East are most satisfied with their local area (92% and 81% levels of satisfaction respectively). In 2024, residents in Cowley and North East have the lowest levels of satisfaction, whereas in 2023 this was Central South & West and South East.

Council performance has improved slightly since last year across all key areas namely how we run things, engaging residents in policy making and keeping residents informed although these increases are not yet significant.

- 54% of residents are satisfied with way the Council runs things, up from 52% in 2023.
- 55% feel well informed about services and benefits, up from 48% in 2023.
- Engagement in policy making is up from 41% in 2023 to 45% in 2024.

2.2 Economic outlook

About a third of respondents in Oxford are optimistic about the economy in Oxford with 35% believing it is 'really thriving' or 'on the way up' , while just under half (47%) are pessimistic - believing it is struggling or not performing well. This compares to 36% and 52% respectively in 2023. It is worth noting that whilst the survey asked respondents specifically about the economy in Oxford, it is likely that perceptions of the wider UK economy or their own economic situation will have influenced how they answered this question.

Respondents from the ethnic minority group are significantly more likely to think the economy is 'really struggling' than the all white group (24% vs 10%). Those residents who are highly satisfied with their local areas as place to live and those who own their home outright are also more positive about the economy.

Residents of Cowley, the South East and North East, are the most pessimistic about the economy, with 74%, 57%, and 54% respectively believing that the Oxford economy is either not performing well or is really struggling. These sentiments mirror findings from 2023, when Cowley and the South East also exhibited the highest levels of pessimism, with 65% and 67% respectively expressing concerns about the state of the Oxford economy.

Over half of residents (59%) report being affected by the current economic climate with more than a quarter of residents (27%) reporting impact on their ability to buy a home or relocate, 22% concerned about affording holidays, and 20% facing difficulties paying energy and fuel bills.

Ethnic minority respondents are also more likely to be adversely affected by the current economic climate, and face greater economic hardships than the 'all white' group. They are more likely to report that they have been unable to move, have faced difficulties buying food, paying bills, affording a holiday and job insecurity than the all white group. This is consistent with findings from 2023.

2.3 Relevance of services

Although 'affordable and decent housing' remains a key issue in Oxford and has been identified by residents as one of the top three most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live, this year other services have taken precedence in terms of importance.

'Parks and open spaces' and 'public transport' now appear as the top priorities, ranked first and second respectively, shifting affordable and decent housing from the top position in 2023 to third place in 2024.

This shift in priorities is driven largely by residents in the North and North East areas, while Central, South & West, and Cowley continue to view affordable housing as the highest priority. Women also maintain affordable housing as a top priority, whereas for men it is not in the top 3 of priorities.

Residents not only feel that parks and open spaces contribute to a good quality of life, but they also agree that these spaces are essential for fostering community cohesion, even more so than community centres, leisure facilities, or cultural events.

Furthermore, most residents express satisfaction with the cleanliness of parks, with 70% stating they are satisfied - consistent with last year's findings.

2.4 Diversity in Local Experiences

Last year, data from the Residents' survey indicated that people living in the South East had a more negative outlook than residents living elsewhere. While this trend continues for some questions, there is also a noticeable increase in negative feedback from residents in the Cowley area.

Residents living in Cowley have the lowest levels of satisfaction with their local area as a place to live of all the Oxford areas. This is down from 68% in 2023 to 55% this year, although this decrease is not significant. They are significantly less likely to think that the Council engages them well in policy making or service design compared to the average (21% vs 45% avg.) which is down from 33% last year.

Cowley residents are more pessimistic about the Oxford economy than any other area, with a significantly higher proportion than the average who believe it is not doing well or really struggling (74% vs 47% avg.). This is up from 65% in 2023. Cowley residents are also more likely to have been negatively impacted by the economic situation than residents in other areas with significantly fewer Cowley residents stating they had not been affected by the current economic situation in the last 12 months compared to the average (18% vs 36% avg.). It is worth noting however that a higher than average proportion of Cowley residents (19% vs 5% avg.) say that they 'don't know' if they have been affected.

Whilst residents in Cowley are no less likely to think that residents get on well regardless of background than the average, residents in Cowley are significantly more likely than the average to see 'people being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation', as a problem (30% vs 14%). They are also more likely to believe this has got worse over the last year (18% vs 8% avg).

A significantly larger proportion of Cowley than the average express concerns about vandalism to properties (41% vs 22%), fly tipping (73% vs 46%), and speeding vehicles and dangerous driving (77% vs 62%).

Residents in the South East are significantly more likely than the average to think there is a problem with the following anti-social behaviours in their area: vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to vehicles, people using or dealing drugs, groups hanging around the streets, abandoned or burned-out vehicles, conflicts or disputes between neighbours, scam/nuisance selling on doorstops and in the case of drug dealing and use, abandoned and burnt out vehicles and scam/nuisance selling and residents and are more likely than the average to think these issues have got worse in the last 12 months.

2.5 Social Renters

Social renters also express more negative views across a range of subjects which is consistent with findings from 2023. They are significantly less satisfied with their local area as a place to live, (46% vs 70% avg.) and are more likely to feel unsafe there during the day and at night. They have higher levels of disagreement that the police and Council are dealing effectively with the antisocial behaviour and crime issues in their area (63% vs 43% avg.) and are more likely than the average to think that anti-social behaviours are a problem in their area.

They are also significantly less satisfied with how the Council is running things (34% vs 54% avg). These residents are significantly less positive about the local economy, with nearly a third (30%) reporting that they think the economy is 'really struggling', compared to 13% overall and they are significantly more likely to have been affected by economic hardship with 89% reporting negative economic impact compared to 59% overall.

Social renters are more likely to report bad health (29% vs 9% average), and this group has the largest proportion who provide unpaid help/care to someone else (39% vs 21% average).

2.6 Ethnic Group

Survey feedback has been analysed according to two broad ethnic group categories: the "all white group" and the "Ethnic Minority" group. It is acknowledged that these classifications are broad, however they ensure statistical robustness in the findings.

When examining significant differences between the Ethnic Minority group and the all white group, some notable differences emerge. The Ethnic Minority group tends to report lower satisfaction levels and have been more negatively impacted by the economic situation than the all white group.

Residents from the Ethnic Minority group show significantly lower levels of satisfaction than the all white group with their local area as a place to live (52% vs 74%). In 2023, there were no significant differences between the two groups on this measure. This group also reports significantly lower levels of agreement that people from different backgrounds get along well in their area than the 'all white' ethnic group (66% vs 81%) and that residents pull together to improve their local area (22% vs 50%).

Some significance differences also appear between the two groups with regards to what is important for making somewhere a good place to live. The Ethnic Minority group places more importance on clean streets and park areas (44% vs 26%), community activities and events (22% vs 8%) and job prospects (20% vs 6%) than the all white group and puts significantly less importance on infrastructures to enable people to walk or cycle around the city (20% vs 39%) and levels of pollution (4% vs 24%) than the all white group.

Residents from the Ethnic Minority group are significantly more likely to see certain types of anti-social behaviour as a problem. Notably, a greater proportion of this group believes that 'people being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion, or sexual orientation' is an issue (34%) than the all white group (9%).

The Ethnic Minority group is more likely to believe that the economy is really struggling (24% vs 10% in the all white group) and is significantly more likely to have been affected by the following economic factors than the all white group: not being able to buy a home or move home, difficulties paying fuel and energy bills, job insecurity or increased risk of losing their job, loss of job/redundancy, difficulties affording to buy food, not being able to afford to go on holiday and difficulties caused by reduced benefits payments.

Living in Oxford

3. Living in Oxford

Summary

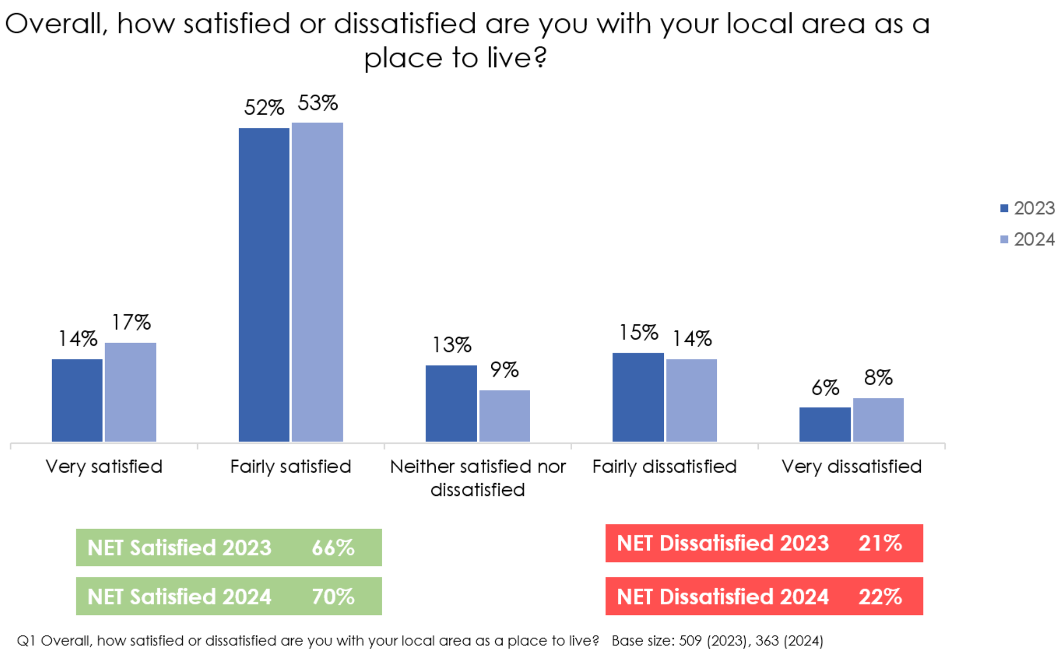
- Most residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (70%), with just over a fifth dissatisfied (22%) and satisfaction has increased slightly from 66% in 2023.
- Residents in the North and East areas are the most satisfied with their local area, whereas those in Cowley and North East have the lowest levels of satisfaction. This has shifted since last year when South East and Central South & West saw the lowest levels of satisfaction.
- Parks & open spaces, public transport and affordable decent housing are seen as the most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live.
- When asked about various aspects of transport (such as journey time into and within Oxford by bus or car) more people think that things have got worse rather than better over the past year. This was also the case in 2023.
- Residents in the East area have the highest levels of dissatisfaction with the cleanliness of their residential streets

This section of the report examines overall attitudes towards the local area and residents' priorities for their area.

3.1 General satisfaction with the area

Residents were asked to think about 'your local area', being the area within 15-20 minutes of walking distance from their home. They were asked, 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?'

Figure 3.1: Satisfaction with the local area



Most residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (70%), with just over a fifth dissatisfied (22%). This compares to 66% and 21% respectively in 2023. These differences are not significant.

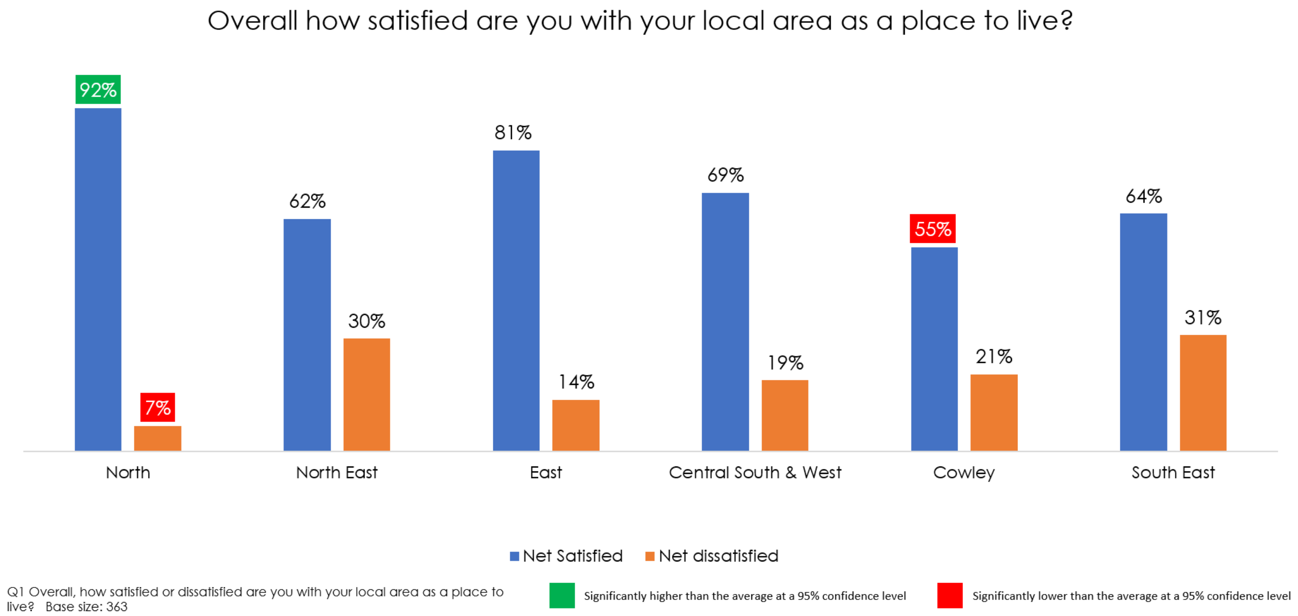
Some significant differences, however, are seen in satisfaction levels compared to the average (70%) for certain groups. The following groups report significantly lower levels of satisfaction with their local area than the average:

social renters (46%), the ethnic minority group (52%) and carers (53%). Conversely, older residents (aged 65 or more) are more satisfied than the average (79%).

A common finding of residents' surveys is that satisfaction with the local area is closely linked to perceptions of the Council and indeed this was found to be the case in last year's survey as well as this year's. For those residents satisfied with their local area as a place to live, 89% of them are also satisfied with the way the Council runs things. Among those residents who are not satisfied with their local area as a place to live only 34% are satisfied with the way the Council runs things.

Looking at net satisfaction (very satisfied or fairly satisfied) with your local area, we found the following:

Figure 3.2: Satisfaction with the local area by Oxford Area



Residents in the North and East areas are the most satisfied with their local areas, which was also the case in 2023. The rate of satisfaction for the North area (92%) is significantly higher than the average of 70%. Residents in Cowley and North East show lowest levels of satisfaction with their area (Cowley being significantly lower than the average) with satisfaction levels of 55% and 62%, respectively. This is a different pattern to the one seen last year when residents in Central South & West and South East had the lowest levels of satisfaction with their local areas.

3.2 Key drivers of satisfaction

Residents were asked to select up to five of the most important things in making somewhere a good place to live and findings are detailed in figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Top 5 most important things in making somewhere a good place to live

Overall

1	Parks and open spaces	43%
2	Public transport	41%
3	Affordable decent housing	37%
4	The level of crime	35%
4	Infrastructures to enable walking & cycling around the city	35%

Those who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

1	Parks and open spaces	44%
2	Infrastructures to enable people to walk & cycle around the city	43%
3	Public transport	39%
4	The level of crime	36%
5	Affordable decent housing	35%

Those who are dissatisfied with their local area as a place to live

1	Affordable decent housing	44%
2	Public transport	44%
3	Parks and open spaces	42%
4	The level of traffic congestion	39%
5	Wage levels and the cost of living	38%

Q2 Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? (Tick up to five boxes that you think are the most important). Base size 363

'Parks and Open Spaces', 'Public Transport' and 'Affordable decent housing' are seen as most important in making somewhere a good place to live. Although the order has changed, these are the same top three as 2023 when they were ranked 1. affordable decent housing, 2. public transport and 3. parks & open spaces.

Differences are seen in what is considered important by residents aged 65 plus who place more importance than the average on hospital services, GP services (31% and 50% vs 16% and 23% respectively), public transport (57% vs 41%), shopping facilities (24% vs 14%) and community activities and events (24% vs 11%).

Residents from the ethnic minority group do not place as much importance on infrastructures to enable people to walk and cycle around the city (35% vs 56%) or levels of pollution (4% vs 20%) compared to the average. They do, however, place a higher-than-average importance on community activities and events (22% vs 11% avg), and job prospects (20% v 9% avg).

Women place more importance on affordable, decent housing (48% vs 37%) and wage levels and the cost of living (29% vs 20%) than the average, whereas men are more concerned with infrastructures to enable people to walk and cycle around the city than the average (48% vs 35%).

Residents were given the option to list any other things they value in making somewhere a good place to live that were not included in the main list. There were a variety of responses, with the most common themes relating to transport; including access for cars, getting rid of LTNS and free or cheaper parking.

Illustrated below are the top 3 most important things by local area. Percentages shown are area percentage vs average and as the table below shows, differences are seen by area.

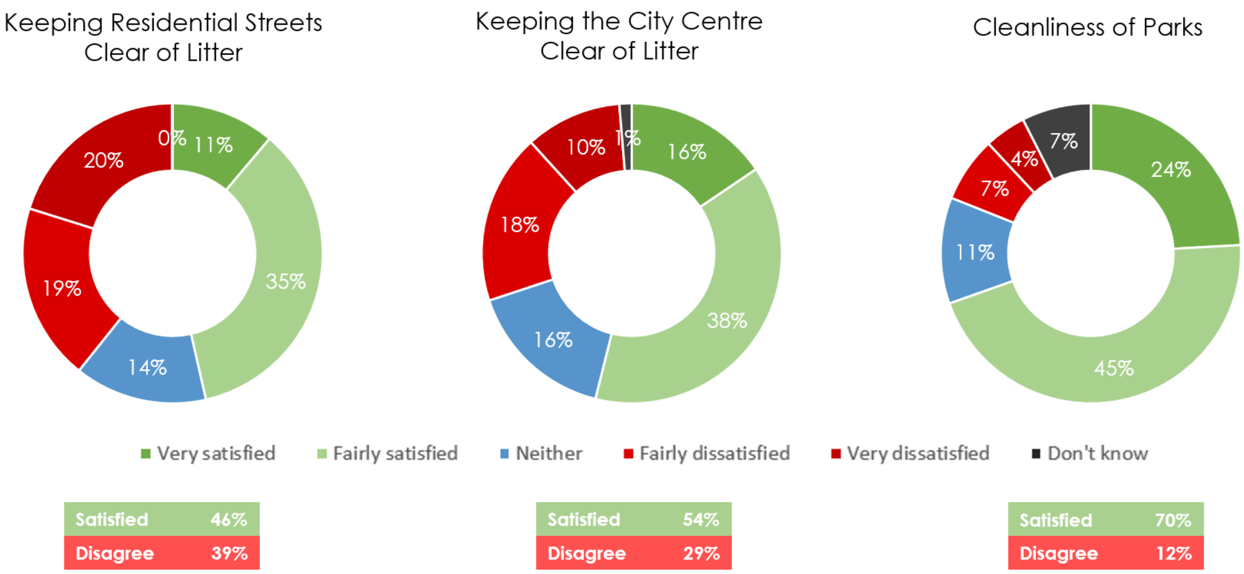
Figure 3.4: The top 3 most important things that make somewhere a good place to live by area

North	North East	East	Central South & West	Cowley	South East
Parks and open spaces (51% vs 43%)	Parks and open spaces (51% vs 43%)	Infrastructures to enable walking & cycling in the city (55% vs 35%) (*)	Affordable decent housing (63% vs 37%) (*)	Affordable decent housing (57% vs 37%) (*)	Access to nature (43% vs 23%) (*)
Public transport (42% vs 41%)	Public transport (37% vs 41%)	The level of crime (51% vs 35%) (*)	Public transport (53% vs 41%)	Infrastructures to enable walking & cycling in the city (45% vs 35%)	Public transport (43% vs 41%)
The level of crime (42% vs 35%)	The level of crime (34% vs 35%)	Levels of pollution (45% vs 20%) (*)	Infrastructures to enable walking & cycling in the city (47% vs 35%)	People of different backgrounds getting on well together (41% vs 26%) (*)	Parks and open spaces (40% vs 43%

(*) shows statistical significance compared to the average proportion.
Q2 which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

3.3 Cleanliness in Oxford

Figure 3.5: Cleanliness in Oxford across three categories



Q6 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the cleanliness of the following? Keeping residential streets clear of litter, Keeping the city centre clear of litter, Parks (e.g. Cutteslowe & Sunnymead Park, Hinksey Park, Florence Park, South Park, Bury Knowle Park, Blackbird Leys Park). Base size: 363

Just under half of the residents (46%) are satisfied that residential streets are kept clear of litter (46%). A slightly higher proportion (54%) are satisfied with keeping the city centre clear of litter. Residents were most satisfied with the cleanliness of parks (70%)[1].

[1] The parks include: Cutteslowe & Sunnymead Park, Hinksey Park, Florence Park, South Park, Bury Knowle Park, and Blackbird Leys Park.

In 2023, all satisfaction levels for cleanliness were marginally higher than in 2024 although not significantly so. Respectively, the levels of agreement were 54%, 59% and 72% in 2023. As was the case in 2023, the cleanliness of parks has the highest satisfaction levels (70% in 2024 and 72% in 2023).

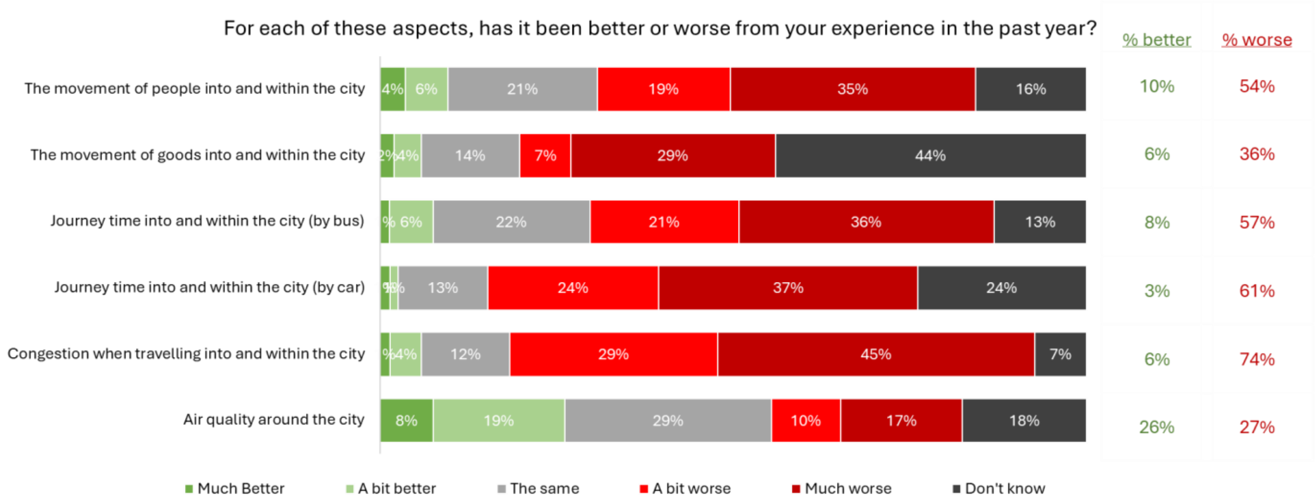
Levels of satisfaction with cleanliness on residential streets is significantly lower than the average in the East (17%) and North East (34%) areas.

Residents who have lived in Oxford for over 10 years are the most dissatisfied with litter and have significantly lower levels of satisfaction than the average with cleanliness in residential streets (38% vs 46% overall), the city centre (44% vs 54% overall) and parks (57% vs 70%).

3.4 Transport

Respondents were informed that while Oxfordshire County Council has responsibility for transport in the city and for overseeing bus services, Oxford City Council is interested in knowing how transport in Oxford has impacted daily life. Residents were asked if each aspect has got better or worse, in their experience, in the past year.

Figure 3.6: How transport has changed in the past year



Q31 While Oxfordshire County Council takes the leading responsibility for transport in the city and for oversight of bus services, Oxford City Council is interested in knowing how the transport in Oxford has impacted your daily life. Please tell us for each of the aspects, has it been better or worse from your experience in the past year. Base size: 363

Consistent with last year, aspects of transport with the highest percentage of 'worse' in the past year are 'congestion when travelling into and within the city' (74%) and 'journey times into and within the city by car' (61%). As was also the case last year, more residents feel that all aspects of transport have got worse rather than better.

About three-fifths of residents also provided further comments on transport needs and provision in Oxford. Main themes are included below and are very similar to last year's comments:

Figure 3.7: Key themes from residents' comments on transport

Traffic Management and Congestion

- Concerns and comments about traffic congeston
- Some believe this is particulary bad in Oxford and is getting worse
- Some believe this has been made worse as a result of LTNs
- A couple of comments related to the Botley Road and the traffic situation there

Public transport inc. buses

- Frustration with the bus service
- Some believe that buses need to be cheaper, cleaner and more reliable
- Calls by some for more frequent buses and some suggestions for additional routes

Active travel inc. cycling infrastructure

- Calls for better cycling infrastructure in the city - including cycle lanes and racks
- Some commenting on the need to get bicyles and scooters off pavements
- Some concerned about the safety of cyclists
- Some believe there is a need to encourage cycling and walking

LTNs and bus gates

- More negative comments about LTNs and bus gates than positive
- Some believe that LTNs have made traffic and conjestion worse
- Some calls to remove them

Parking issues

- Comments about how difficult parking can be in Oxford
- A few believe there are issues with cars parking on pavements
- One comment about parking difficulties at the Westgate and how this contributes to congestion

Community Engagement and Consultation

- Calls to improve the public consultation processes and consider resident feedback
- Involve residents in discussions about transport policies, infrastructure improvements
- Mixed feelings about changes, with some satisfied and others feeling neglected
- Calls for more public engagement and consideration of local opinions in planning
- Expressions of frustration over the perceived negative impacts of current policies

Accessibility and inclusion

- Calls to consider those with mobility issues as well as older residents in transport policies
- Concerns about the impact of changes to community life and businesses
- Discussion needed about individuals who cannot cycle or walk far due to age or disability
- Suggestions for improving accessibility for pedestrians, especially those with disabilities

Q32, do you have any further comments on transport needs and provision in Oxford? Base 254

Community life

4. Community Life

Summary

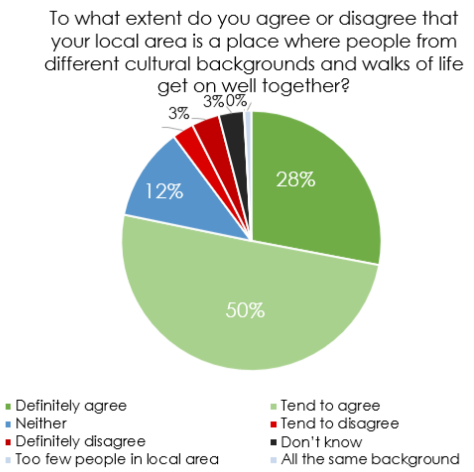
- Over three quarters of residents (78%) agree that their local area is a place where people from different cultures and backgrounds get along well. Agreement is significantly higher among the all white group (81%) than the ethnic minority group (66%).
- Perceptions of community cohesions vary by area: residents in the East are the most likely to agree that people from different backgrounds get along (88%), whilst those in Cowley, North and the North East are the least likely to agree (75%).
- 44% overall feel that people in their local area come together to improve their community. This perception is significantly higher among the all white group (50%) than the ethnic minority group (22%) which is an inverse to last year's findings.
- Consistent with last year's findings, parks and public spaces are seen as more effective in fostering good relations in the community that other means (66% agree).
- Residents from the ethnic minority group are significantly more likely than the all white group to think that community centres help to foster good relations in their local area (47% vs 29%).

This section examines different aspects of community life in Oxford, such as the extent to which people from different cultural backgrounds and walks of life get on well together, whether people pull together to improve their local area, and whether community assets and facilities help with social cohesion.

4.1 Community cohesion

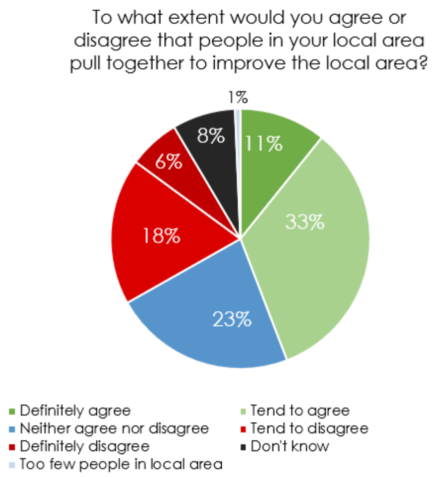
Residents were asked if their local area is a place where people from 'difference cultural backgrounds and walks of life get on well together'. This question has changed since last year when respondents were asked if their local area is a place where 'people from different ethnic and national backgrounds get on well together'. 'Getting on well together' was defined as treating each other with respect and neighbourliness (welcoming and friendly) and inclusivity (feeling included). Residents were also asked if people in their local area pull together to improve the local area.

Figure 4.1: Community cohesion



	Total	All White groups	Ethnic Minority
Agree	78%	81%	66%
Disagree	6%	5%	11%

Q19 To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different cultural backgrounds and walks of life get on well together? By getting on well together, we mean treating each other with respect, neighbourliness (welcoming and friendly), and inclusivity (feeling included). Base size 363



	Total	All White groups	Ethnic Minority
Agree	44%	50%	22%
Disagree	25%	21%	37%

Q20 To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in your local area pull together to improve the local area? Base size 363

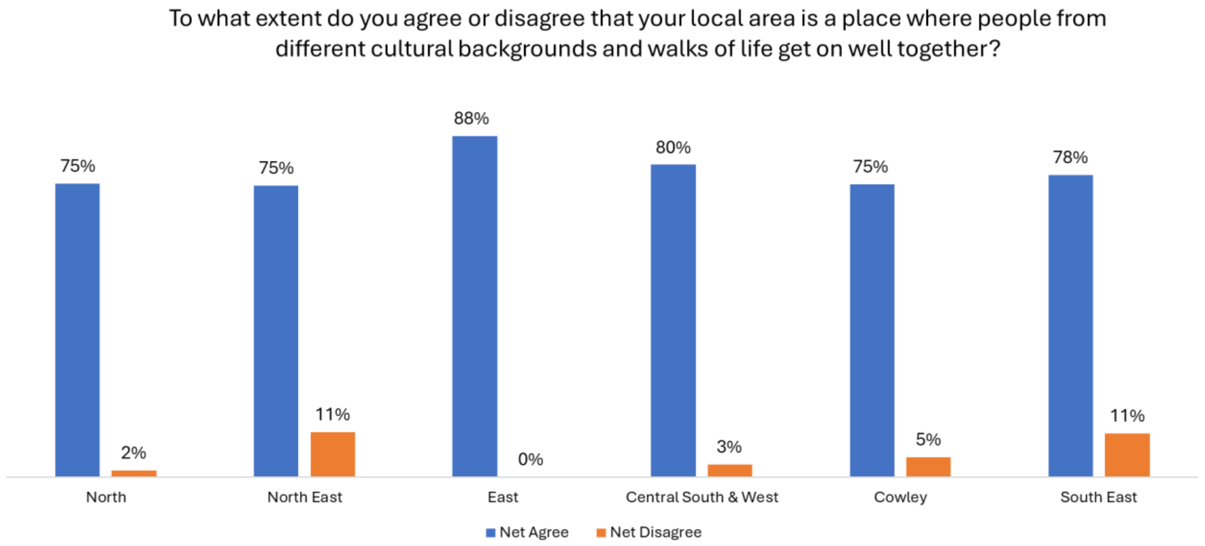
Over three quarters of residents (78%) agree that their local area is a place where people from difference cultural backgrounds and walks of life get on well together.

Levels of agreement are significantly higher for the all white group (81%) than the Ethnic Minority group (66%).

Just under half of respondents agree that people in their local area pull together to improve their local area (44%). This is significantly higher among the all white group (50%) than the Ethnic Minority group (22%).

Agreement levels were also looked at by area.

Figure 4.2: Community cohesion based on local area.



Q19 To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different cultural backgrounds and walks of life get on well together? By getting on well together, we mean treating each other with respect, neighbourliness (welcoming and friendly), and inclusivity (feeling included). Base size 363

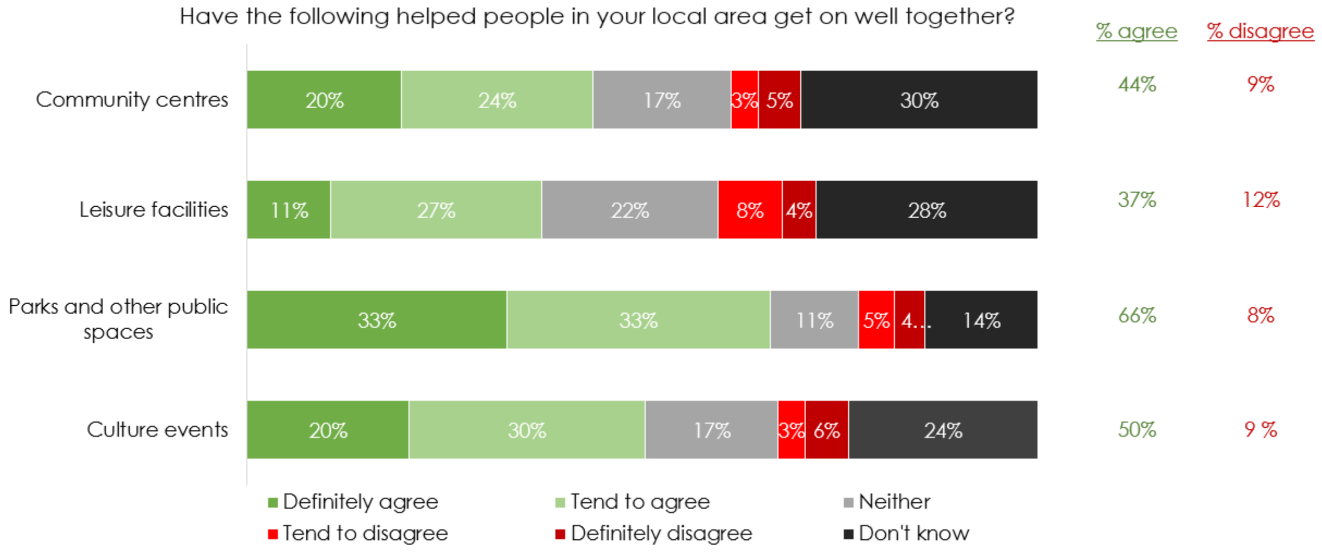
No significant differences are seen in perceptions of community cohesion by area compared to the average. Highest level of agreement seen in the East area and lowest levels of agreement seen in the North, North East and Cowley.

Residents in the North area are significantly most likely to agree that people in their local area pull together to improve their local area (66% vs 44% avg) whereas residents in Cowley are least likely to agree with this statement although this is not significantly lower than the average (37% vs 44% avg).

4.2 Community assets and facilities

Residents were asked for their opinion on whether community centres, leisure facilities, parks & other public spaces, and culture events help people in their local area to get on well together.

Figure 4.3: Community cohesion based on assets and facilities



Q21 Have the following helped people in your local area get on well together? Base size: 363

**Please note that where the % agree and % disagree score appears to not equal the totals, this is as a result of rounding.*

As was the case last year, parks and other public spaces are considered more effective than other methods in fostering positive connections between people. 72% of residents agreed with this statement last year and a slightly lower proportion agreed this year (66%).

A significantly higher proportion of residents from the East and North area agree that parks and other public spaces help people in their local area to get on well together – 93% and 79% respectively compared to 66% average.

Looking at these results overall by local area, it is found that the North East residents have significantly lower levels of agreement for three out of the four than the average: leisure facilities (22% vs 37%), parks and other public spaces (48% vs 66%) and culture events (32% vs 50%).

Social renters are significantly less likely to believe that community centres, parks and other public spaces or culture events have helped people in their local area get on well together than the average (21%, 23% and 22% vs 44%, 66% and 50% average respectively).

Ethnic minority residents are also significantly less likely to agree that community centres have helped people in their local area get on well together compared to the all white group (29% vs 47%).

Feeling safe

5. Feeling safe

Summary

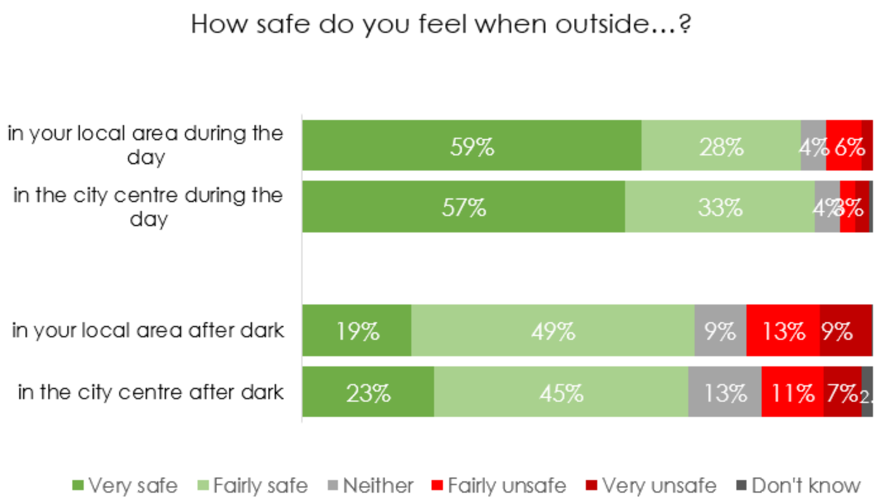
- Most Oxford residents feel safe during the day both in their local area (87%) and in the city centre (90%).
- Residents feel less safe at night with 69% feeling safe in their local area at night and 68% feeling safe in the city centre after dark. This is similar to 2023.
- Residents in the North East and Cowley are least likely to feel safe in their neighbourhoods both during the day and at night. Women are also more likely than men to feel unsafe in their local area during the day and at night.
- Over a third of residents (38%) consider alcohol related anti-social behaviour in the city a problem at night but only 15% consider it a problem during the day.
- Just over a third (35%) agree that the police and Council effectively deal with anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area. This is a significant decrease from 44% in 2023. The lowest level of agreement is seen again in the South East area (21% agreement).
- As was the case last year, 'speeding vehicles and dangerous driving', 'cars parked inconveniently, dangerously or illegally', as well as 'rubbish or litter' are seen as the biggest anti-social problems.
- Similar to 2023 more residents perceive the most types of anti-social behaviours have worsened over the past 12 months than improved. However the largest proportion of residents believe these behaviours have remained the same.

This section considers residents' perceptions of safety, crime, and anti-social behaviour issues in Oxford.

5.1 Community safety

To gain further insight into residents' views of their local area, survey respondents were asked whether they feel safe in their local area and the city centre, both during the day and at night.

Figure 5.1: How safe residents feel when outside



	Day		Night	
	Local Area	City Centre	Local Area	City Centre
Safe	87%	90%	69%	68%
Unsafe	8%	5%	22%	18%

Q14 How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside...? Base size: 363

During the day, most residents feel safe both in their local area (87%) and the city centre (90%). As expected, people feel less safe after dark than during the day, although the majority still feel safe: 69% feel safe in their local area and 68% feel safe in the city centre at night.

This trend has held steady since last year although notably, the proportion of residents who feel safe in the city centre after dark has risen from 61% in 2023 to 68% in 2024 although this difference is not significant.

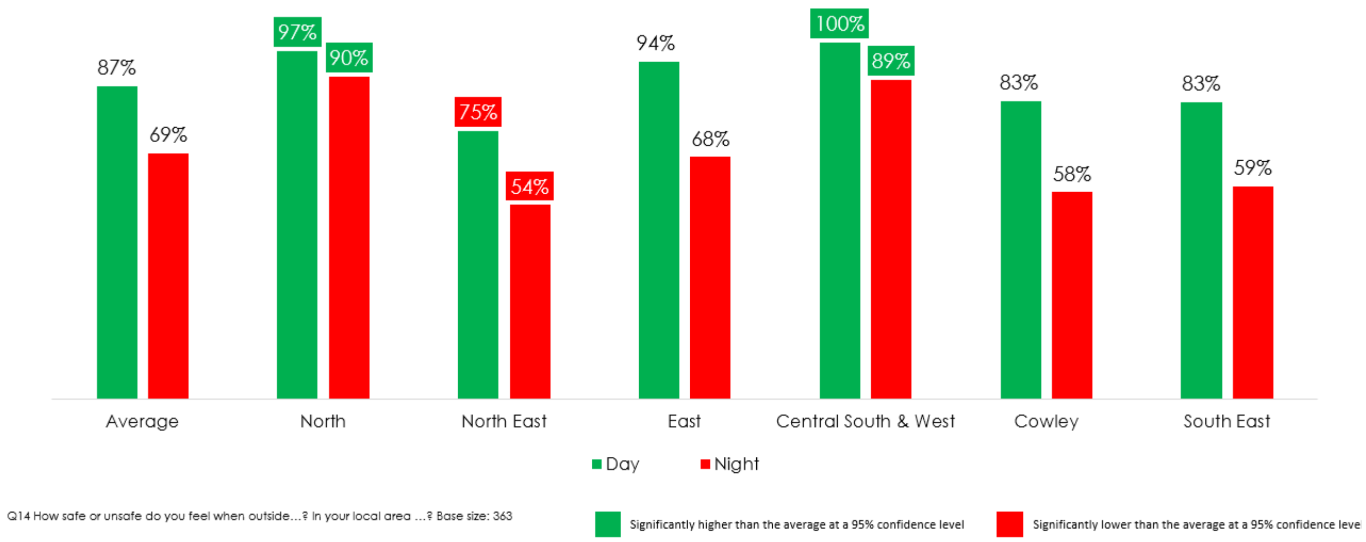
Women are significantly more likely than men to feel **unsafe,** specifically in local areas, both during day (13% vs 2%), and at night (31% vs 11%), as well as after dark in the city centre (26% vs 7%).

There is also a difference in perception by residents' age, with the over 65s feeling significantly the less safe than the average in their local area at night (59% vs 69% overall) and in the city centre both during the day (83% vs 90%) and at night (48% vs 68%).

Some differences are also seen for social renters who are significantly more likely than the average to feel **unsafe** in their local area during the day (33% vs 8%) and at night (45% vs 22%).

Perceptions of safety also differ between local areas during the day and at night:

Figure 5.2: How safe residents feel in their local areas when outside



Residents of the North and Central South & West feel the safest in their local areas; whilst the residents of the North East feel the least safe in their local area, regardless of the time of day.

Residents in the North continue to report the high levels of perceived safety (97% and 90% vs 87% and 69% average, day and night respectively), which is similar 2023. In contrast, the North East now shows the lowest proportion of residents feeling safe, particularly at night, with a decrease from 72% in 2023 to 54% in 2024. Conversely, the South East, which had the lowest safety perception last year, is now closer to the average in 2024.

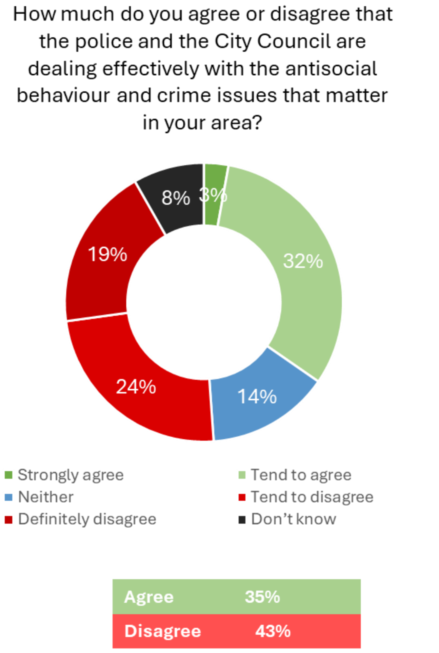
5.2 Dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour

Respondents were asked for their views on whether the Police and Oxford City Council are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime issues in their local area. Just over one in three residents (35%) believe that the Police and Council effectively deal with anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area. This measure has declined since last year when it was at 44%.

The level of agreement is highest in the North (59% vs an average of 35%), when comparing local areas.

The level of disagreement is higher for those living in Oxford for more than 10 years (52% disagreement vs 43% average) and for social renters (63% vs 43%).

Figure 5.3: Residents' perceptions on the Police and Council's dealing with antisocial behaviour and crime

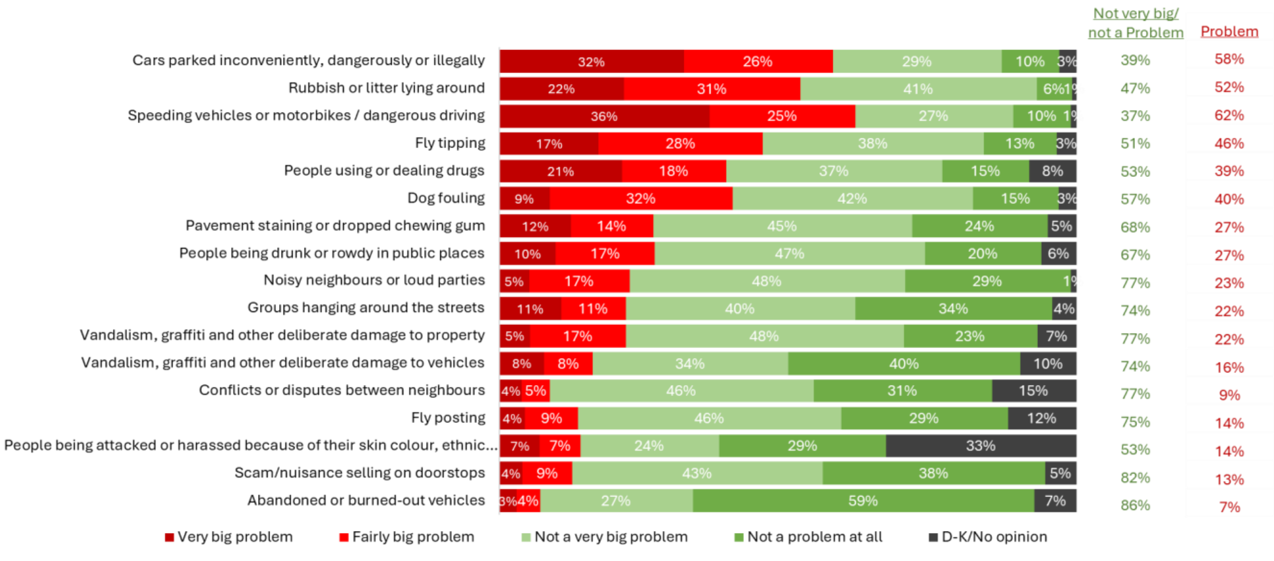


Q15 How much do you agree or disagree that the police and the City Council are dealing effectively with the antisocial behaviour and crime issues that matter in your area? Base size: 363

**Please note that where the net 'problem' and net 'not a problem' score appears to not be equal to the totals, this is a result of rounding*

Residents were asked about a broad range of types of anti-social behaviour, and whether these are a problem in their local area.

Figure 5.4: Antisocial behaviour



Q17 Below is a list of different types of antisocial behaviour. For each one, please tell us if this is a problem in your area. Base size: 363

Speeding vehicles & dangerous driving, cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally, as well as rubbish or litter are the biggest anti-social problems in local areas. This is the same as last year.

Longer term residents, i.e. those who have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years are significantly more likely to agreed that 'People using or dealing drugs' (49%), 'Groups hanging around the streets' (32%), 'People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation' (19%), and 'Conflict or disputes between neighbours' (15%) are a problem, compared to the average.

Women are more likely to feel some of the antisocial behaviours asked are a problem, than men. Specifically, 'Rubbish or litter lying around' (59% vs 44%), 'Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property' (26% vs 17%), 'People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces' (36% vs 15%), 'Groups hanging around the streets' (31% vs 11%), 'Pavement staining or dropped chewing gum' (31% vs 21%), and 'Fly tipping' (50% vs 40%).

Likewise, a higher proportion of residents from the Ethnic Minority group think a greater number of the antisocial behaviours are a problem compared to the all white group. In particular, 'Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property' (38% vs 18%), 'Vandalism, graffiti, and other deliberate damage to vehicles' (35% vs 11%), 'People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces' (39% vs 24%), 'Abandoned or burned-out vehicles' (18% vs 4%), and 'People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation' (34% vs 9%).

Similarly, social renters are more likely than to think that anti-social behaviour issues are a problem in their area, compared to residents who own outright or have bought with a mortgage. They are more likely to think that there is a problem with 'Noisy neighbours or loud parties' (39% vs 19%), 'Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property' (41% vs 18%), 'People using or dealing drugs' (67% vs 43%), 'People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces' (45% vs 23%), 'Groups hanging around the streets' (53% vs 21%), 'Pavement staining or dropped chewing gum' (51% vs 25%), 'Fly tipping' (66% vs 43%), 'People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation' (32% vs 14%), 'Conflicts or disputes between neighbours' (26% vs 9%), 'Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously or illegally' (84% vs 52%), and 'Scam/nuisance selling on doorstops' (33% vs 16%).

Looking at the top three anti-social problems for each area shows the following:

Figure 5.5: The top 3 anti-social problems by local areas (area % vs average % shown)

North	North East	East	Central South & West	Cowley	South East
Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/ dangerous driving (66% vs 62%)	Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/ dangerous driving (54% vs 62%)	Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/ dangerous driving (91% vs 62%)	Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally (69% vs 58%)	Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/ dangerous driving (77% vs 62%)	Rubbish or litter lying around (67% vs 52%)
Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally (53% vs 58%)	Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally (49% vs 58%)	Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally (75% vs 58%)	Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/ dangerous driving (43% vs 62%)	Fly tipping (73% vs 46%)	Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally (62% vs 58%)
Pavement staining or dropped chewing gum (42% vs 27%) and rubbish or litter lying around (42% vs 52%)	Rubbish or litter lying around (47% vs 52%)	Rubbish or litter lying around (74% vs 52%)	Rubbish or litter lying around (40% vs 52%)	Dog fouling (55% vs 40%)	People using or dealing drugs (57% vs 39%)

Q17 from the list of different types of antisocial behaviour, for each one, please tell us if this is a problem in your area

Across most areas, 'Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously or illegally', 'Speeding vehicles or motorbikes/dangerous driving' and/or 'Rubbish or litter lying around' appear in the top 3 problems. For the South East, people using or dealing drugs also appears and is significantly higher than the average. Cowley's residents on the other hand identify 'Fly tipping' and 'Dog fouling' in a significantly higher proportion as big problems than the average.

To gauge the direction of travel over the last twelve months, respondents were asked whether they believe anti-social behaviour issues had got better, worse or stayed the same over this time.

These findings are ordered according to 'net improvement' in the last year – that is, the proportion saying 'better' minus the proportion saying 'worse'.

Where there is a negative net improvement score, this means a higher proportion of respondents think the issue has got worse over the last 12 months than those who feel it has got better.

Table 5.6: Change in antisocial behaviours over the last 12 months

Antisocial behaviour	Better	Worse	Stayed the same	Don't know/No opinion	Net improvement
Speeding vehicles or motorbikes / dangerous driving	3%	41%	40%	15%	-38%
Cars parked inconveniently, dangerously, or illegally	1%	39%	46%	14%	-38%
Rubbish or litter lying around	2%	27%	61%	11%	-25%
Fly tipping	4%	29%	47%	21%	-25%
People using or dealing drugs	3%	21%	55%	21%	-18%
Dog fouling	5%	20%	60%	15%	-14%
Groups hanging around the streets	2%	13%	63%	22%	-10%
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to vehicles	3%	10%	58%	28%	-7%
People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation	1%	8%	44%	47%	-7%
People being drunk or rowdy in public places	5%	11%	61%	23%	-6%
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property	3%	8%	63%	27%	-5%
Conflicts or disputes between neighbours	2%	7%	56%	35%	-5%
Fly posting	3%	6%	57%	34%	-4%
Pavement staining or dropped chewing gum	4%	8%	60%	28%	-4%
Scam/nuisance selling on doorstops	4%	6%	59%	30%	-2%
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	6%	8%	65%	20%	-2%
Abandoned or burned-out vehicles	3%	3%	59%	35%	0%

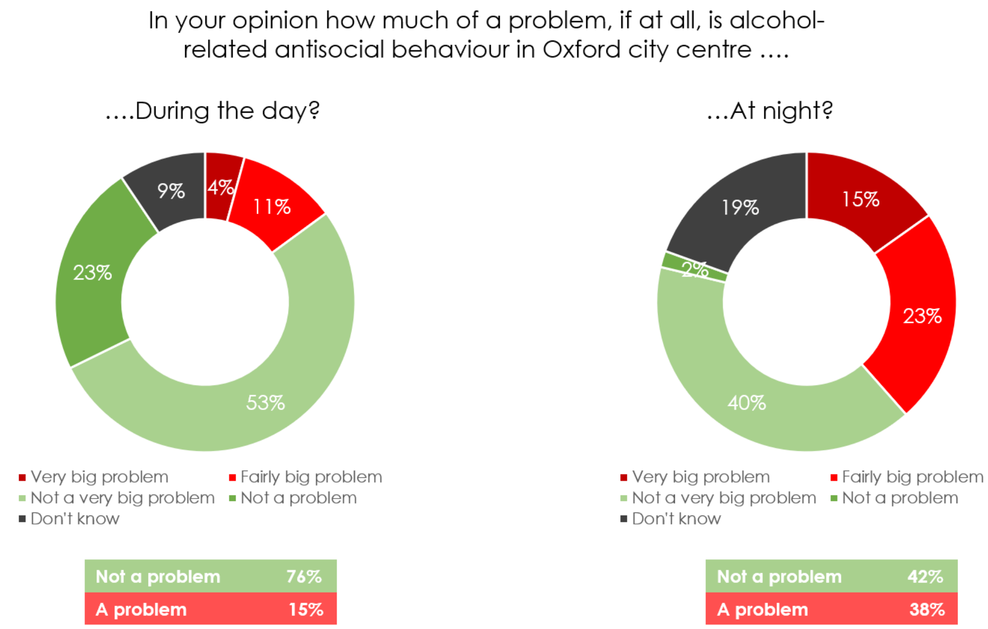
Like the 2023 residents' survey, more residents perceive that most forms of anti-social behaviour have got worse rather than better over the past 12 months. However, the largest proportion of residents believe these issues have remained the same.

Ethnic minority residents are more negative about changes in the last 12 months compared to the all white group, with perceptions that things are getting worse across several behaviours. These behaviours include: 'Rubbish or litter lying around' (39% vs 23% of the all white group), 'Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property' (18% vs 5% of the all white group), 'Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to vehicles (21% vs 8% of the all white group), 'People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces' (25% vs 8% of the all white group), 'Abandoned or burned-out vehicles' (11% vs 1% of the all white group), 'People being attacked or harassed because of their skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexual orientation' (25% vs 4% of the all white group), 'Scams/nuisance selling on doorstops' (16% vs 4% of the all white group), and 'Dog fouling' (34% vs 16% of the all white group).

5.3 Alcohol related anti-social behaviour

Residents were asked for their views on alcohol-related antisocial behaviour in Oxford city centre during the day and at night.

Figure 5.7: Alcohol related anti-social behaviour



Q16 In your opinion how much of a problem, if at all, is alcohol-related antisocial behaviour in Oxford city centre during the day? Base size: 363

Nearly two in five residents (38%) consider alcohol-related anti-social behaviour at night in the city to be a problem, a higher proportion than those who see it as an issue during the day (15%). These trends are similar to those reported in 2023.

Some groups felt alcohol-related antisocial behaviour in the city centre is a bigger problem than the average. During the day residents of the South East (27%) and Cowley (32%), residents age between 35 and 64 (23%), and residents who have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years (23%) are significantly more likely to think it is a problem than the average of 16%. At night, the groups that identify alcohol-related antisocial behaviour as a significantly bigger problem than the average are woman (53%), and residents who have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years (47%).

Health and well-being

6. Health and well-being

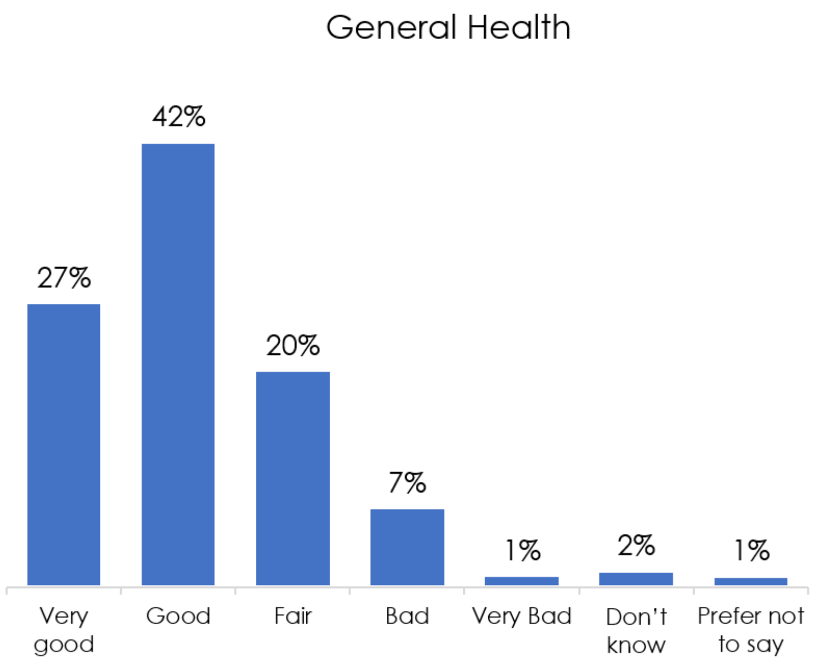
This section explores the physical health and well-being of residents.

Summary

- Most residents self-assess their health as very good or good (69%) with only 9% assessing their health as very bad or bad.
- Just one in five residents (21%) provide unpaid help or care to someone else with the majority of those who provide unpaid care, providing between 1-19 hours per week.
- Walking is the most common form of physical exercise with over nine in ten residents (93%) walking at least once a week.
- Nearly half (54%) of residents cycle at least once a week with residents in the North and the East most likely to cycle at least once a week.
- Only a small percentage of respondents use the council's leisure facilities at least once a week with most respondents having never used any of the Council's leisure facilities.

6.1 Perceived health

Figure 6.1: General health



Very good/good health	69%
Very bad/bad health	9%

Q25 How is your health in general? Base size: 363

As in 2023, most residents self-assess their health as very good or good (69%) with only 9% assessing their health as very bad or bad.

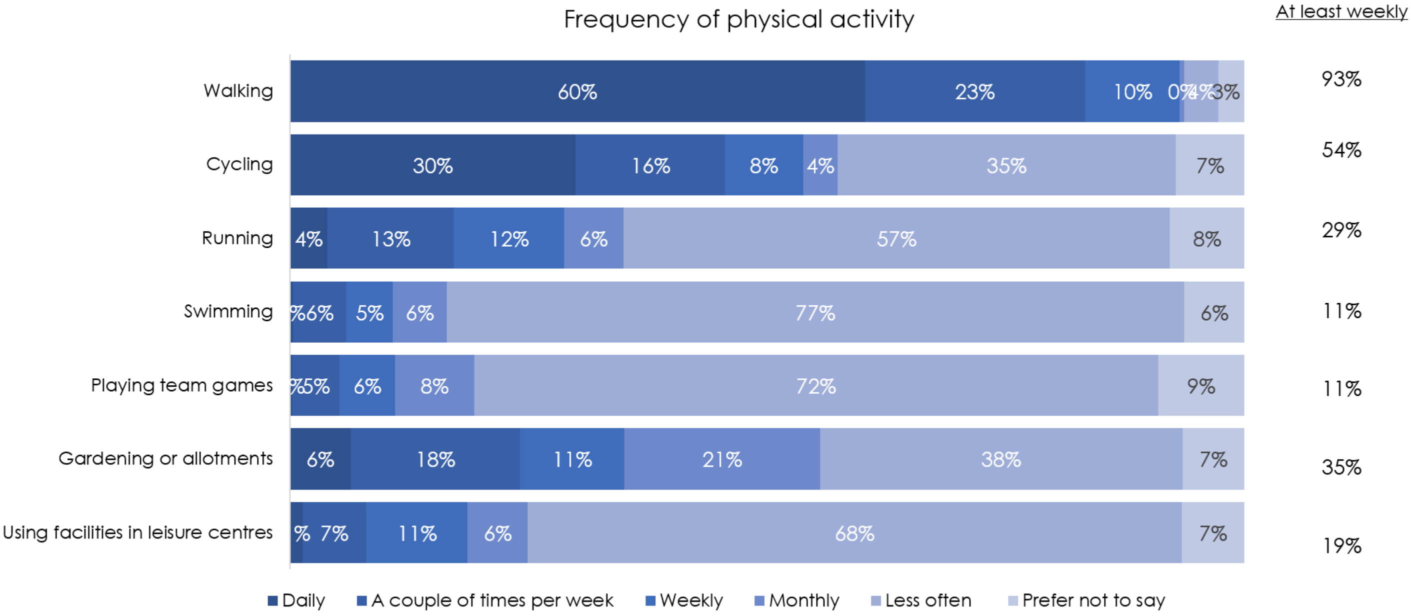
Notably, a larger proportion of residents in the East area self-assessed their health as very good or good (91%) compared to the average (69%).

On the other hand, very good or good health is less common among residents over 65s (46% vs 69% average), and residents that have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years (55% vs 69% average).

6.2 Physical Activity

Residents were provided with a list of different physical activities and were asked to select how frequently they had been doing the activity in the last year.

Figure 6.2: Frequency of physical activity



Q26 Below is a list of different types of physical activities. For each one, please tell us how often you have been doing it in the last year. Base size 363

Walking remains the most common form of physical exercise, with over nine in ten residents (93%) walking at least once a week. This is a slight increase from 2023, when 91% of residents reported walking weekly.

Over half (54%) of residents cycle once a week, compared to 48% last year (a difference that is not significant). Residents in the North (68%) and the East (69%) are most likely to cycle at least once a week.

Residents in the Central South & West area are most likely to go running at least once a week (40% vs 29% average). Whilst residents in the North are most likely to go swimming (29% vs 11% average) and play team games (24% vs 11% average) at least once a week. Gardening or allotments is most common in the East (56% vs 35% average). Lastly, the North (31%) and East (32%) vs 19% average, residents are most likely to use facilities in leisure centres to do physical activity.

Almost all residents who have lived in Oxford for 3-10 years said they walk at least once a week. This groups of residents are also most likely to run and cycle at least once a week (41% and 70% respectively vs the average of

29% and 54%).

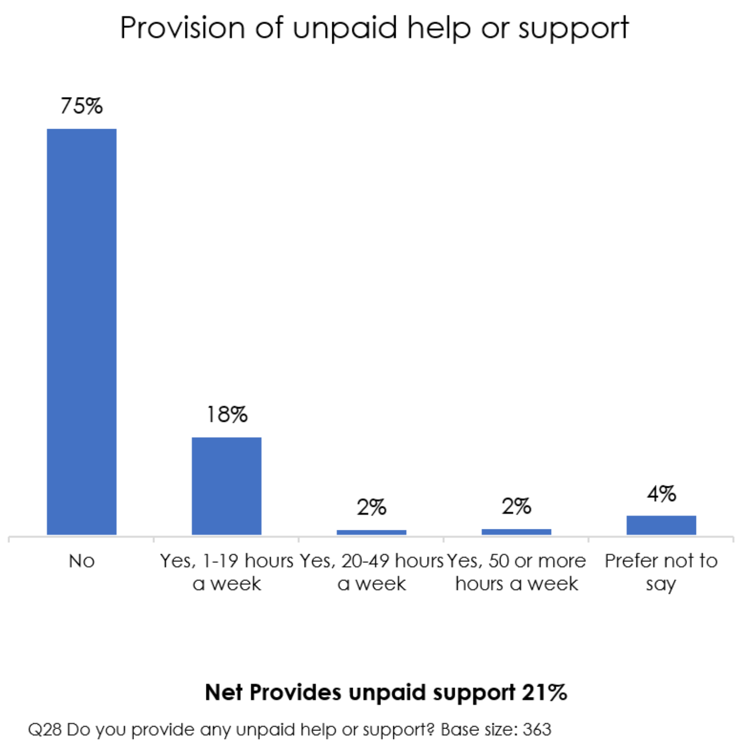
Playing team games is most popular amongst the residents of the North area (24% vs 11%).

Gardening and allotments is most popular amongst residents aged over 65 (63%), residents from the East area (56%), and homeowners (own outright or bought with a mortgage) (49% and 58% respectively), compared to the average of 35%.

Some differences are seen by ethnic group with members of the all white group significantly more likely than the ethnic minority group to cycle at least once a week (57% vs 39%), play team games at least once a week (14% vs 0%), garden or tend an allotment at least once a week (39% vs 20%) and use facilities in leisure centres at least once a week (22% vs 7%).

6.3 Care given to others

Figure 6.3: Provision of unpaid help or support



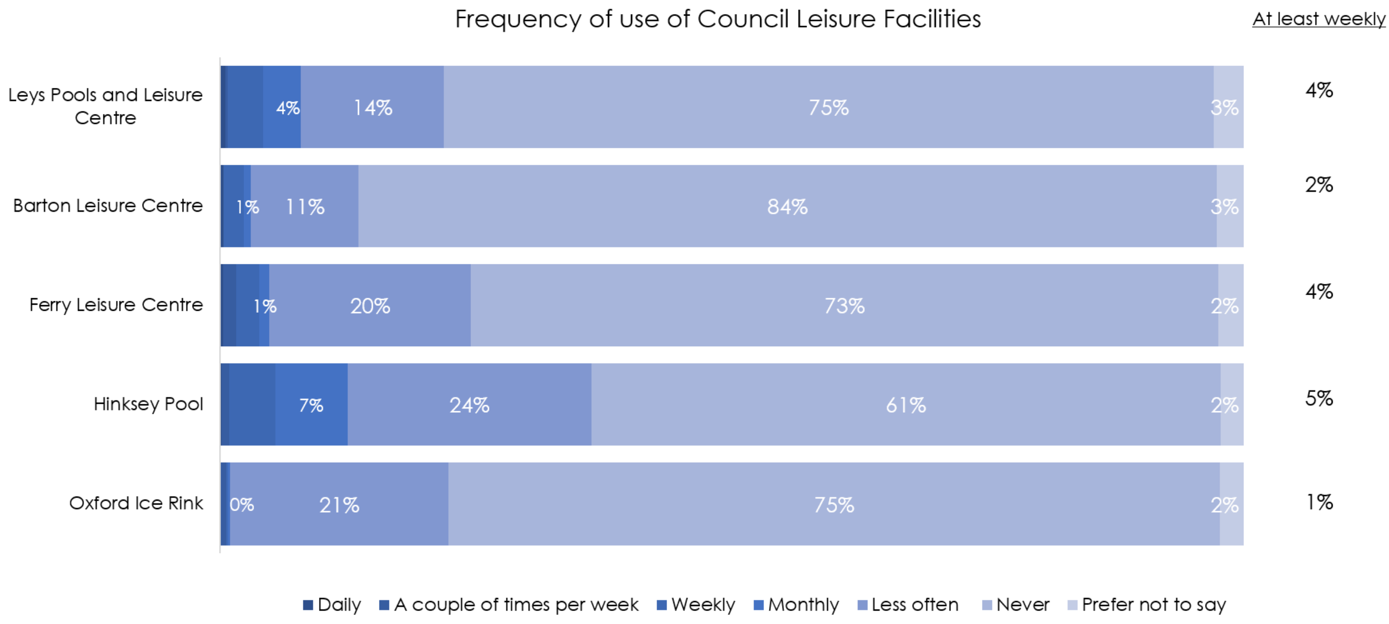
Just over one in five residents (21%) provide unpaid help or care to someone else, with most of these caregivers providing between 1 to 19 hours of care per week. This proportion remains the same as last year when it was 20%.

The provision of unpaid help/support is significantly higher among those living in the North and North East (34% and 37% respectively), social renters (39%), residents aged between 55 and 69 (32%), residents who have lived in Oxford for over 10 years (32%), and residents dissatisfied with local areas as a place to live and dissatisfied with the way the council runs things (40% and 34% respectively), when compared with the average of 21%.

Residents from the East and Central South & West are less likely to look after or provide unpaid help/support to family members, friends, neighbours, or others than other areas.

6.4 Use of Council Leisure Facilities

Figure 6.4: Use of Council Leisure Facilities



Q27 Have you ever used any of the Council's leisure facilities in the list below? If yes, how often have you been using them in the last year? Base size 363

As was the case last year, only a small percentage of respondents use the council's leisure facilities regularly (at least once a week), with most respondents having never used any of the Council's leisure facilities.

The areas whose residents are more likely to use leisure facilities than the average at least weekly are the North, the East, and the North East. North residents are more likely to use the Leys Pools and Leisure Centre (19% vs 4%) and Hinksey Pool (20% vs 5%). North East residents are more likely to use Barton leisure centre (8% vs 2%) and Ferry leisure centre (11% vs 4%) and East residents are more likely to use Hinksey pool (12% vs 5%).

Some differences are also seen by ethnic group - non-British White ethnic residents are more likely to use Hinksey Pool (14% vs 5%), and Leys Pool (12% vs 4%) than the average, at least weekly. Residents that have lived in Oxford from 3 to 10 years are more likely to use Leys Pool (9% vs 4%) and Hinksey Pool (15% vs 5%) than the average.

The economy

7. The Economy

This section looks at the perceived economic performance of Oxford and respondents' outlook on their personal finances.

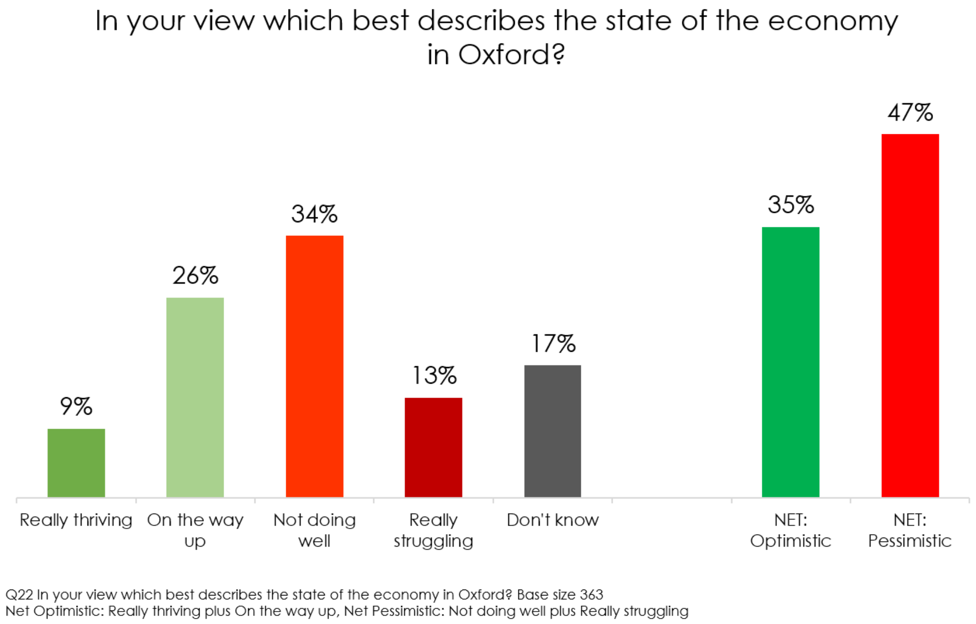
Summary

- Only about a third of respondents in Oxford are optimistic about the economy (35%), whereas almost a half (47%) are pessimistic and think it is really struggling or not doing well.
- Over half of residents (59%) have been affected by the current economic climate, with nearly a third (27%) feeling that the economic climate had affected their ability to buy a home or move, nearly a quarter (22%) not being able to afford to go on holiday and a fifth (20%) experiencing difficulties paying energy and fuel bills.
- Only 17% feel that their personal finances will improve over the next year. This compares to 31% who feel it will get worse. Most people think their financial circumstances will remain the same (46%).

7.1 The state of the economy in Oxford

Respondents were asked how they would describe the state of the economy in Oxford. It is worth noting that although this question specifically asked respondents about the economy in Oxford it is likely that broader economic factors as well as personal circumstances influence residents' perception of how the Oxford economy is performing.

Figure 7.1: State of the economy



Only about a third of respondents in Oxford are optimistic about the Oxford economy (35%), while nearly half (47%) are pessimistic, believing it is really struggling or not doing well. Although the proportion of optimistic residents remains similar to that of 2023 (36%), the percentage of pessimistic residents has decreased from 52% in 2023 to 47% in 2024.

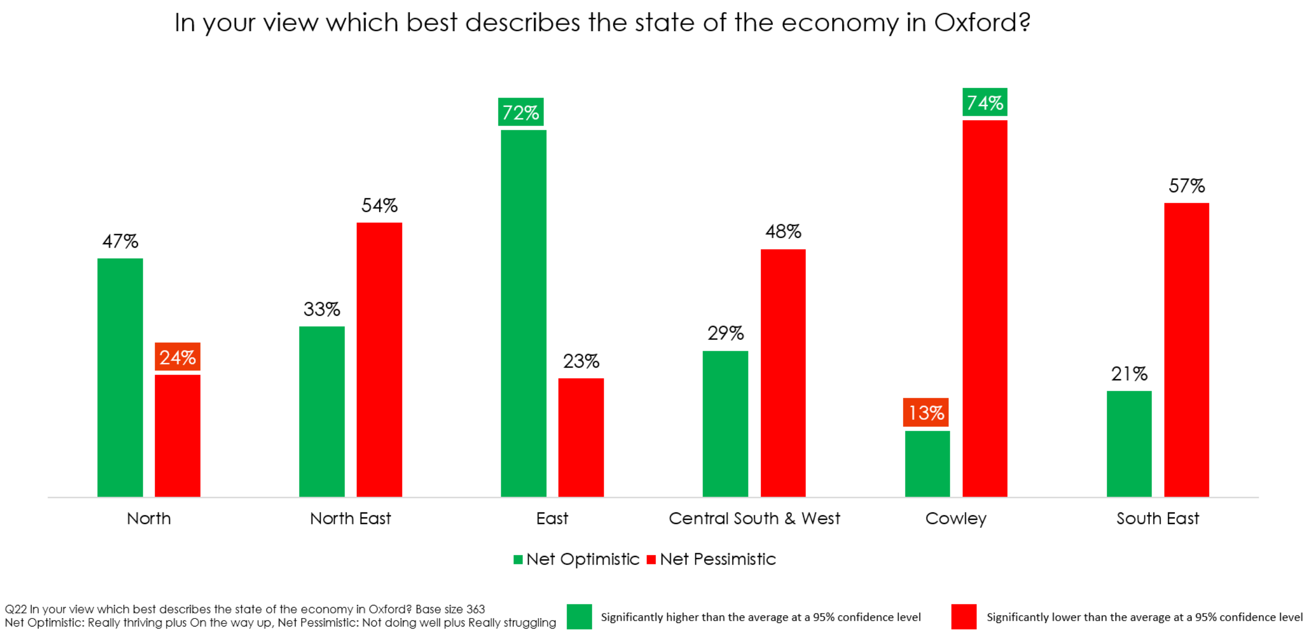
Respondents aged 35-64 are significantly more negative about the local economy (24% think the economy is really struggling vs 13% average), as are those residents from Cowley (28% vs 13%), social renters (30% vs 13%), and residents that have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years in Oxford (20% vs 13%).

There is also link between dissatisfaction with your local area and pessimism about the Oxford economy. Residents dissatisfied with their area are significantly more likely to view the Oxford economy as really struggling (34% vs 5%), and those dissatisfied with how the Council is run are also more pessimistic about the economy (59% vs 7%).

Economic optimism is greater amongst residents who own their home outright (18% think the Oxford economy is really thriving vs 9% average). Respondents from the ethnic minority group are also significantly more likely to think the economy is really struggling than the all white group (24% vs 10%).

Comparisons were made between residents' perceptions on the state of the economy by area:

Figure 7.2: State of the economy, perceptions based on local area



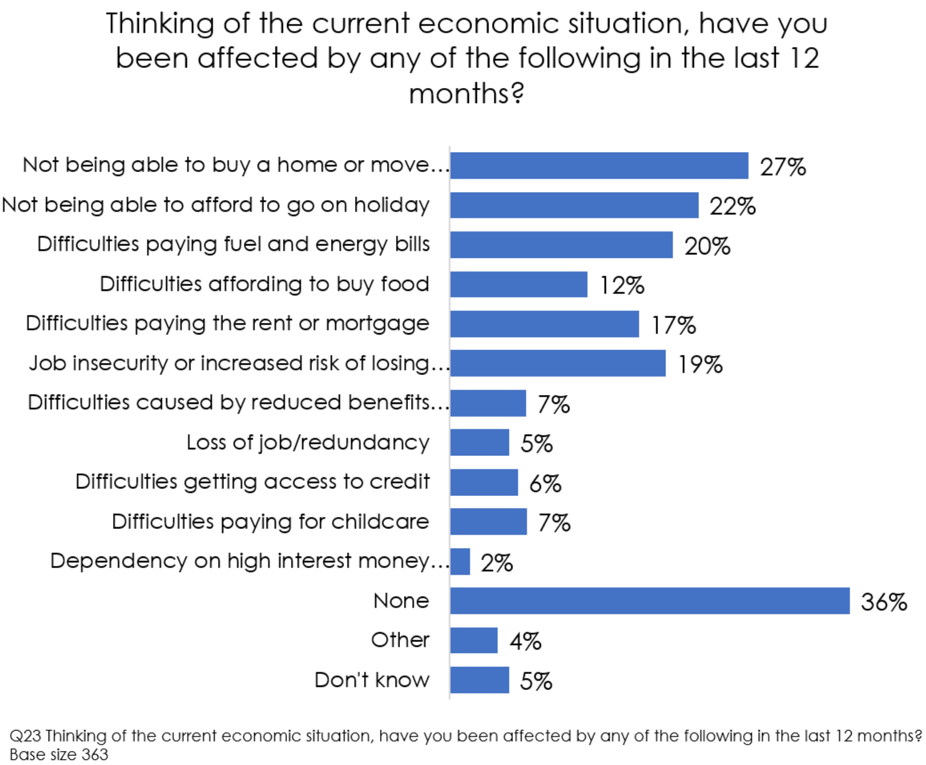
The Cowley, South East and North East, are the most pessimistic about the state of Oxford's economy, whilst the East and North areas tend to be the most optimistic. These sentiments mirror findings from 2023, when Cowley and the South East also exhibited the highest levels of pessimism, with 65% and 67%, respectively.

7.2 Residents' personal finances in the last 12 months

Residents were asked to think of the current economic situation, and if they have been affected by any difficulties in the last 12 months.

Over half of residents (59%) have been affected by the current economic climate, with nearly a third (27%) feeling that the economic climate has affected their ability to buy a home or move, nearly a quarter (22%) not being able to afford to go on holiday and a fifth (20%) experiencing difficulties paying energy and fuel bills. These findings are similar to those seen in 2023.

Figure 7.3: Residents' personal finances in the last 12 months



Residents aged 18-34 have been most affected by 'not being able to buy a home or move home' (45% vs 27% overall). Whilst residents aged 35-64 have been most affected by 'difficulties caused by reduced benefits payments' (12% vs 7%).

Social renters have been affected by more factors than those who are private renting or homeowners (both outright and with a mortgage). They are significantly more likely to experience the following in the last 12 months than the average: 'not being able to buy a home or move home' (40% vs 27%), 'difficulties paying fuel and energy bills' (61% vs 20%), 'difficulties affording food' (44% vs 12%), 'not being able to afford to go on holiday' (48% vs 22%) and 'difficulties caused by reduced benefits payments' (23% vs 7%).

Ethnic minority residents have also been significantly more affected by several economic factors in the last 12 months than the all white group. Specifically 'difficulties paying the rent or mortgage' (26% vs 17%), 'not being able to buy a home or move home' (39% vs 27%), 'difficulties paying fuel and energy bills' (48% vs 20%), 'job insecurity or increased risk of losing your job' (37% vs 19%), 'loss of job/redundancy' (16% vs 5%), 'difficulties affording to buy food' (27% vs 12%), 'not being able to afford to go on holiday' (44% vs 22%), 'difficulties caused by reduced benefits payments' (13% vs 7%).

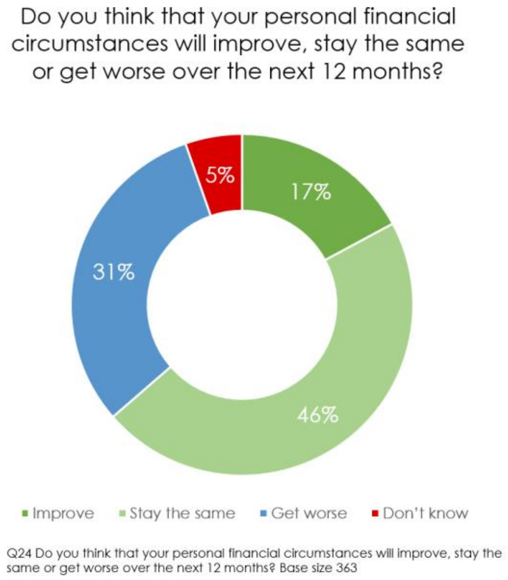
Cowley residents are more likely to have been affected by the current economic outlook than the average (62% vs 59%). A larger proportion of Cowley residents report facing difficulties in several areas compared to the average resident. These difficulties include: 'difficulties paying rent or mortgage' (27% vs 17%), 'not being able to buy or move home' (39% vs 27%), 'job insecurity or increased risk of losing a job' (35% vs 19%), 'difficulties accessing credit' (16% vs 6%), and 'dependence on high-interest money lenders' (7% vs 2%). NB: A greater proportion of Cowley residents responded 'Don't know' when asked if the current economic situation has affected them (19% vs 5% average).

7.3 Residents' personal finances in the next 12 months

Residents were asked if they thought that their personal finances will get better or worse over the next 12 months. Only 17% of residents feel that their personal finances will improve over the next year, while 31% believe they will worsen. These trends are consistent with those observed in 2023 when they were 17% and 28%, respectively.

Notably, almost half of the respondents (46%) think their personal finances circumstances will stay the same in the next 12 months.

Figure 7.4: Residents' personal finances in the next 12 months



Older residents (over 65) are significantly more likely to think their economic circumstances will remain the same in the following year (62% vs 46% average). However, only 4% of residents over 65 years old think their financial circumstances will improve in the next 12 years, compared to 17% average.

Residents who have lived in Oxford between 3 and 10 years are more optimistic about their personal financial circumstances improving than the average resident (28% think their circumstances will improve vs 17% average). Residents who are buying with a mortgage are also significantly more optimistic than the average (26% vs 17%).

Residents from the East area are notably more optimistic than other areas and 43% think their circumstances will improve vs 17% average. Cowley area residents are significantly more pessimistic than the average - 47% think their circumstances will get worse vs 31% average.

Council performance

8. Council Performance

This section of the report examines residents' overall perceptions of the Council, as well as their views on the services it provides and the value for money it represents.

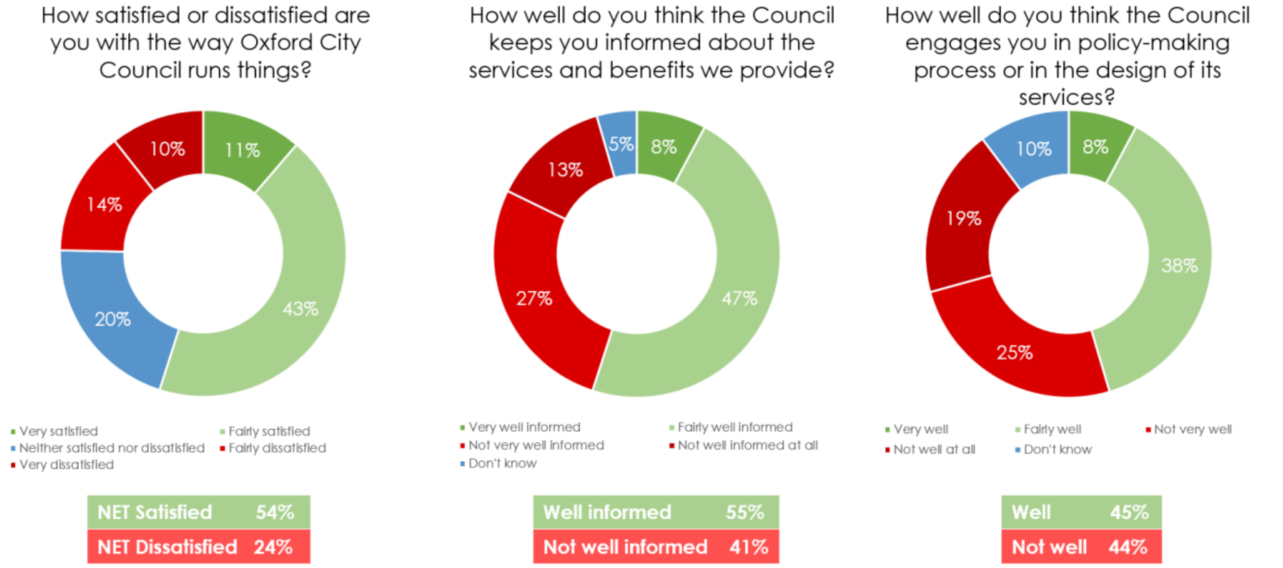
Summary

- Just over half of residents are satisfied with the way that the Council run things (54%) and a similar proportion (55%) believe the Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides.
- Just under half of residents feel that the Council engages them well in policy making process or design of services (45%).
- Residents in the East area are the most satisfied with the way that the Council runs things (80%)
- Older residents (over 65) have higher levels of dissatisfaction with the way the Council runs things compared to the average (33% vs 24%)
- Levels of dissatisfaction with Council actions to meet housing needs are higher than levels of satisfaction (except for providing homes and support for refugees) and affordable housing remains a key concern for residents.
- Satisfaction with Council services is highest for museums and parks & open spaces (both at 79%)
- Most respondents (75%) use Council Services online – up from 68% in 2023. The main reasons for not doing so are not knowing how to, did not need it or prefer to talk to a person instead
- Supporting and enabling retrofit of the housing sector and supporting and enabling zero carbon public transport are seen as the two top priorities for pursuing a net zero Council

8.1 General satisfaction with the Council

To gain insight into residents' perceptions of Oxford City Council, respondents were asked for their views on the Council's performance.

Figure 8.1: Council Performance and Engagement



Q3 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Oxford City Council runs things? Base size 363

Q5 How well do you think Oxford City Council keeps you informed about the services and benefits we provide? Base size 363

Q4 How well do you think Oxford City Council engages you in our policy-making process or in the design of services we provide? Base size 363

Just over half of residents are satisfied with the way the Council runs things (54%) and nearly half (55%) believe the Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides.

A similar proportion of residents feel that the Council does not engage them well in policy-making process or design of services (44%) compared to those who feel engaged (45%).

Similar trends were observed in 2023, but with slightly lower proportions across all categories. In 2023, 52% were satisfied with how the council operates, 48% felt the council kept them well informed, and 41% believed the council engaged effectively in the policy-making process. These differences to 2024 are not significant.

Older residents (over 65 years old) have higher levels of dissatisfaction compared to the average resident with the way the Council runs things (33% vs 24%).

Residents in the East are most satisfied with the way the Council runs things (80% vs 54%) and have the highest proportion of residents who feel that the Council engages them well in the policy making process (79% vs 45%). Residents in the North are most likely of all the areas to think that the Council keeps them informed (70% vs 55%).

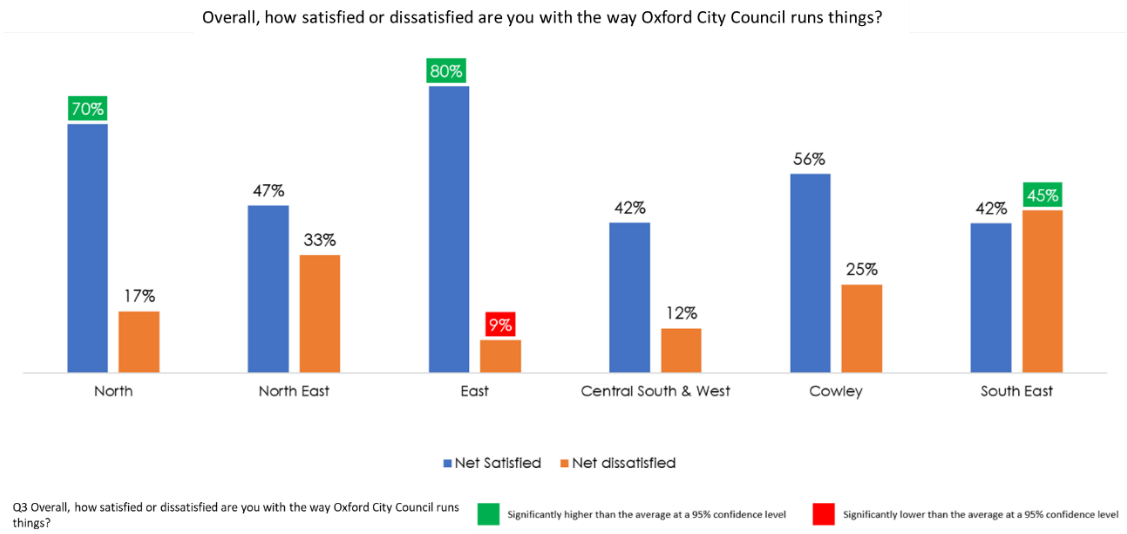
Conversely residents in the Central South & West and the South East areas have the lowest proportion of residents who are satisfied with the way the Council runs things (both 42%), Cowley has the lowest proportion of residents who think the Council is engaging well with residents in the policy-making process and the design of services (21%) and residents in the North East has the lowest percentage of residents who think the Council keeps them well informed (47%).

Social renters are significantly more dissatisfied with how well the Council runs things (61% vs 24% average) compared to the average resident and to those who are privately renting or own a property. Longer term residents have higher levels of dissatisfaction with how well they think the Council keeps them informed compared to the average (49% vs 41%), as well as higher levels of dissatisfaction with how well the Council engages residents in their policy-making process or in the design of services provided (57% vs 44%).

Ethnic minority residents have significantly lower levels of satisfaction with how well the Council keeps them engaged with policy-making process (24% vs 45% average).

Looking more specifically at how local areas perceive the Council's performance:

Figure 8.2: Council Performance based on local area



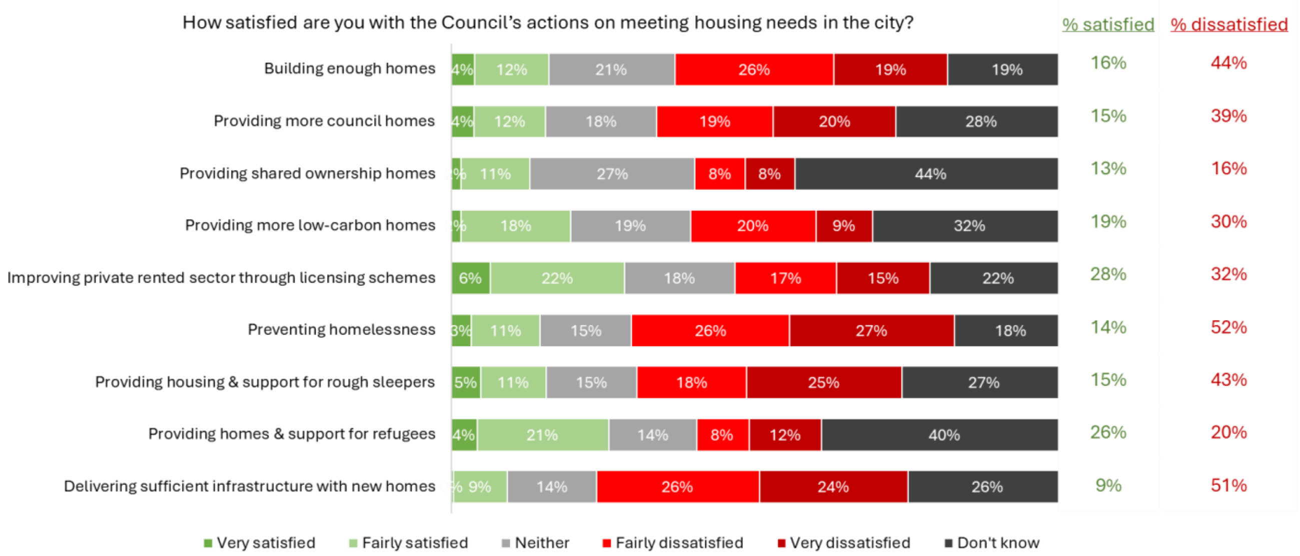
The East and North areas are the most satisfied with the way the Council are running things, with satisfaction level well above the average (80% and 70% respectively vs 54% overall). In the East area, residents’ dissatisfaction levels are also significantly below the average (9% vs 24% overall).

The South East are the most dissatisfied with the way the Council are running things, with a dissatisfaction level well above the average (45% vs 24% overall).

8.2 Satisfaction with actions to tackle housing needs in the city

Residents were asked how satisfied they are with the Council’s actions on meeting the housing needs in the city.

Figure 8.3: Satisfaction with the housing needs



Q7 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Oxford City Council’s actions on meeting the housing needs in the city? Base size: 363

Across the board, levels of dissatisfaction with Council actions to meet housing needs are higher than levels of satisfaction except for ‘providing homes and support for refugees’. Highest levels of dissatisfaction are seen for ‘preventing homelessness’ (52%), ‘delivering sufficient infrastructure with new homes’ (51%), ‘building enough homes’ (44%), and ‘providing housing & support for rough sleepers’ (43%).

A higher proportion of residents over the age of 65 are dissatisfied with the Council’s action on ‘providing more council homes’ than the average (49% vs 39%).

A higher proportion of women (54%) are dissatisfied with the Council’s action on ‘preventing homelessness’ than men (63% women vs 40% men).

Residents who have lived in Oxford for more than 10 years are particularly dissatisfied with the Council ‘providing more council homes’ (49% vs 39% avg). Conversely newer residents (those who have lived in Oxford for less than 3 years,) have higher levels of dissatisfaction than the average resident with what the Council is doing to ‘improve the private rented sector through licencing schemes’ (54% vs 32% average).

Conversely, residents who have lived in Oxford from 3 to 10 years, are more satisfied than the average resident regarding the Council’s actions to ‘provide more council homes’ (24% vs 15%) and ‘provide shared ownership homes’ (22% vs 13%)

Some significant differences are seen by area for levels of satisfaction with Council actions to address housing needs:

North:

- More satisfied than the average with what the Council is doing to 'provide more council homes' (27% vs 15%), 'prevent homelessness' (25% vs 14%) and 'provide housing and support for people experiencing rough sleeping' (27% vs 15%). Less satisfied than the average with what the Council is doing to 'provide more low-carbon homes' (9% vs 19%).

North East:

- Lower levels of satisfaction than the average for several actions seen in the North East: 'Providing more council homes' (6% vs 15%) and 'Providing more low-carbon homes' (7% vs 19%).

East:

- More satisfied with 'providing shared ownerships homes' (26% vs 13%), 'preventing homelessness' (29% vs 14%), and 'delivering sufficient infrastructure to accompany new homes' (20% vs 9%).

Central South & West:

- Residents in this area are more satisfied than the average with the action 'providing more low-carbon homes' (32% vs 19%).

Cowley:

- Residents from Cowley have much higher levels of dissatisfaction with Council action to 'build enough homes' (70% vs 44% average).
- However, a greater proportion of residents in this area are satisfied with the Council action of 'providing more council homes' (35% satisfied vs 15% average) but have lower levels of satisfaction with 'preventing homelessness' (3% vs 14%)

South East:

- Higher levels of dissatisfaction with the action to provide more low-carbon homes' (47% vs 30%) and lower levels of satisfaction with action on 'providing homes and support for refugees' (12% vs 26%).

8.3 Satisfaction with services delivered/supported by the Council

Figure 8.4: Satisfaction with services delivered/supported by the Council

Top 5 services with highest percentage of satisfaction in your area

Overall			Those who **are satisfied** with the way the Council runs things			Those who **are not satisfied** with the way the Council runs things		
1	Parks and open spaces	59%	1	Parks and open spaces	65%	1	Parks and open spaces	33%
2	Cultural facilities	39%	2	Cultural facilities	49%	2	Cultural facilities	28%
3	Access to nature	35%	3	Access to nature	41%	2	Hospital services – NHS	24%
4	Clean streets and parks	25%	4	Shopping facilities	28%	4	Access to nature	23%
5	Hospital services – provided by the NHS	23%	4	Hospital services – provided by the NHS	28%	5	Clean streets and park areas	20%

Q8 Thinking about your local area, which of the following services, delivered/supported by Oxford City Council unless otherwise stated, do you think you are most satisfied with? *(Tick up to five services that you are most satisfied with). Base size: 363*

Services that the highest proportion of residents ranked in the top five of services they are most satisfied with are parks & open spaces (59%), cultural facilities (39%) and access to nature (35%).

Women differ from men regarding public transport – overseen by Oxfordshire County Council - and a lower percentage rank public transport as a service they are most satisfied with than men (9% vs 25%).

Residents aged over 65 are more likely to rank hospital services (provided by the NHS) as one of the services they are most satisfied with (45% vs 23% overall), GP services (provided by the NHS) (26% vs 14%), public transport (overseen by Oxfordshire County Council) (27% vs 16%), roads and pavement repairs (provided by Oxfordshire County Council) (7% vs 45) and facilities and services for older people (6% vs 2%).

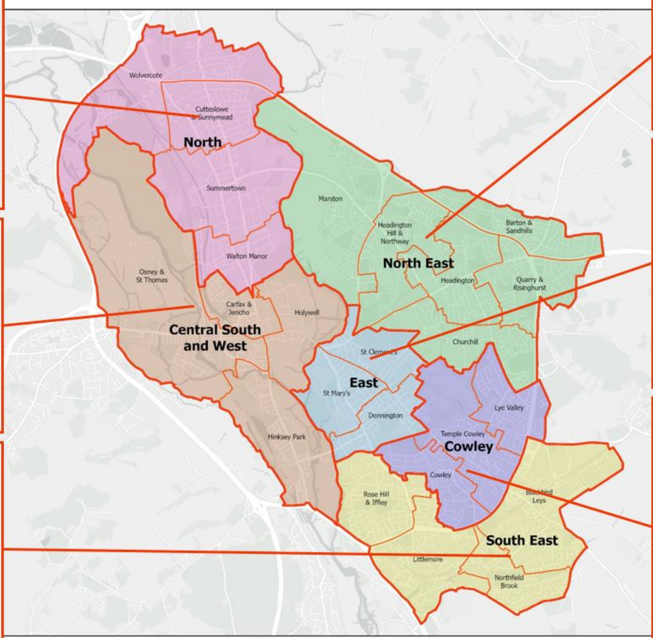
Ethnic minority residents are more likely than the average to choose traffic congestion as ones of the things they are most satisfied with (14% vs 5%) but less likely to select parks and open spaces than the average (41% vs 59%). Ethnic minority residents are also more likely than the all white group to select level of crime (overseen by the Police) in their top 5 services for satisfaction (26% ethnic minority vs 11% all white group).

Figure 8.5: Services delivered/supported by the Council that are significantly more likely than the average to be chosen as a service that residents are most satisfied with by area

North
- Access to nature (58% vs 35%)
- Cultural facilities (71% vs 39%)
- People of different backgrounds getting on well together (30% vs 19%)

Central & South West
- Level of crime (24% vs 14%)
- Level of traffic congestion (18% vs 5%)
- Infrastructure for walking and cycling around the city (37% 19%)

South East
- Community activities and events (24% vs 13%)
- Sports/leisure facilities and well-being support (25% vs 10%)
- Facilities and services for older people (9% vs 2%)



Map of Oxford by Area

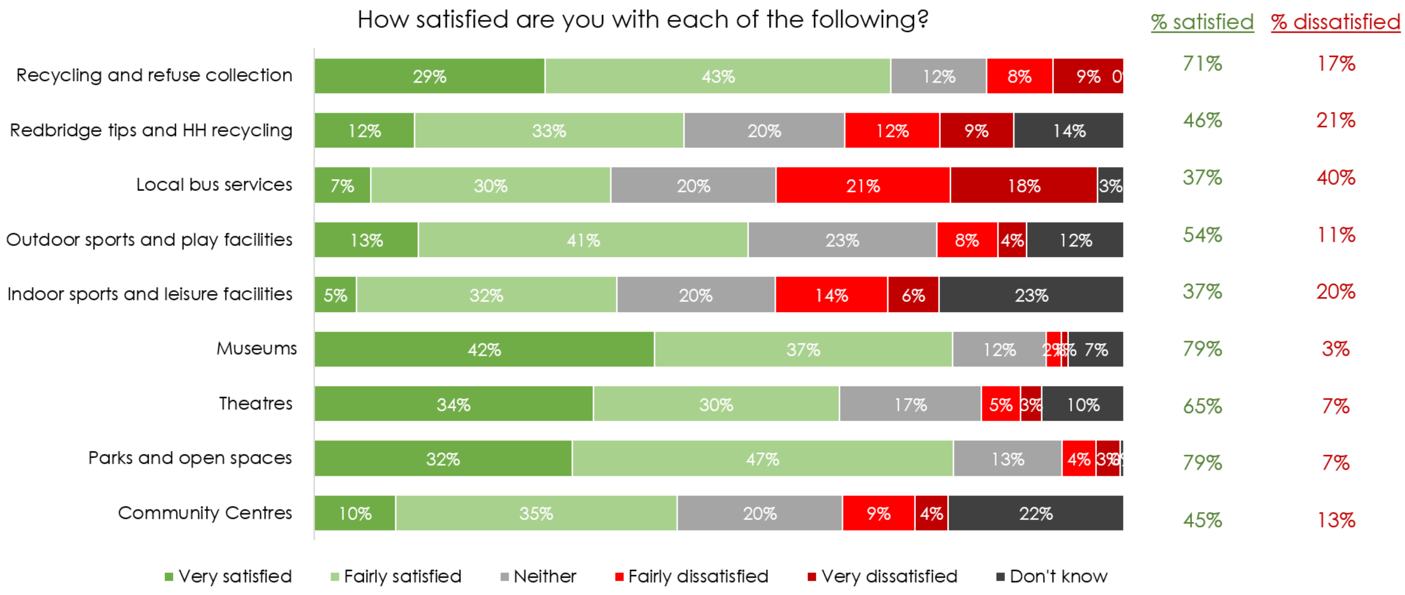
North East
- Education provision (21% vs 10%)
- Road and pavement repairs (9% vs 4%)

East
- Hospital Services (37%vs 23%)
- Level of pollution (20% vs 9%)
- Public transport (31% vs 16%)
- Shopping facilities (41% vs 21%)

Cowley
- Facilities and activities for children (17% vs 8%)
- Clean streets and park areas (37% vs 25%)
- Community activities and events (27% vs 13%)
- Level of crime (29% vs 14%)

In addition to selecting up to five services they are most satisfied with, residents were also asked to state how satisfied they are with each the following services individually (see figure 8.6). Please note that some of these services are provided by Oxfordshire County Council, which was made clear in the survey.

Figure 8.6: Satisfaction with Council provided services



Q9 Oxford City Council is interested in your views on some of the services provided or supported by the City Council and in some cases Oxfordshire County Council. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following? Base size: 363

Satisfaction with Council services is highest for museums (79%) and parks & open spaces (79%). In 2023 these services also saw the highest rates of satisfaction, although this has dropped slightly from 85% for each.

Across a number of these services, levels of dissatisfaction were significantly higher than the average for residents of Cowley; namely local bus services (54% vs 40%), museums (15% vs 3%) and theatres (29% vs 7%). Residents in the South East also have significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction than the average for outdoor sports and play facilities (22% vs 11%), theatres (17% vs 7%), parks and open spaces (18% vs 7%) and community centres (32% vs 13%).

In the North area there are higher level of dissatisfaction than the average for 'Indoor sports and facilities' (30% vs 20%).

Residents were also given the opportunity to provide further details about the services they are dissatisfied with and why. A summary of the reasons provided by 186 respondents is as below:

Public Transport and Roads

- Traffic congestion, particularly in South Oxford, Botley Road, and central areas, emerges as a persistent frustration. Perceived by some residents as being caused by LTNs (low traffic neighbourhoods).
- Residents find public transport accessibility limited, unreliable, and prices high.
- Many comments highlight that recent road, and pedestrian changes have made the city less accessible for families with young children and individuals with disabilities or health issues. The insufficient public transport for cross-city journeys and crowded or "shared" pedestrian and cycle paths in parks and residential areas create barriers.

Public and Green Spaces

- Discontent around the cleanliness and availability of public toilets is widespread, with locations like Bury Knowle and Florence Park described as unclean or even hazardous.
- Poor upkeep of parks and streets, particularly in East Oxford, has increased frustration. Overgrown shrubs

and lack of there replacement has led residents to feel their neighbourhoods are neglected.

Housing and Community well-being

- Housing affordability remains a dominant issue, affecting local key workers and essential service providers who are unable to afford housing within the city. Suggestions include reducing emphasis on commercial redevelopment in favour of affordable residential options.
- Concerns around under-supported community spaces. Residents express a need for these spaces to serve both youth and the community at large.
- The apparent increase in visible homelessness and the need for prioritising housing for newly settled refugees adds urgency to the demand for housing solutions.

Waste Management and Cleanliness

- Discrepancies in waste services and information gaps are problematic, with reports of missing information on bin collections, lack of bin liners, and insufficient recycling guidance, particularly for newer residents.
- The removal of certain recycling points is an added inconvenience for residents without cars, who now struggle to recycle as regularly as before.

Safety

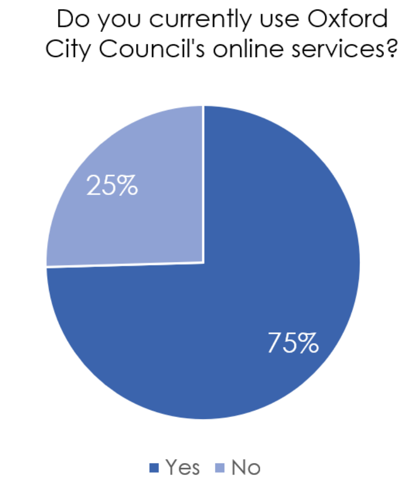
- There is strong feedback on issues related to crime (e.g., shoplifting, open drug use, rough sleeping), as well as dissatisfaction with untidy and litter-strewn streets. Residents advocate for policies focused on maintaining cleanliness and safety, rather than investing in "prestige" projects.
- Many residents feel disconnected from decision-making, perceiving the council as out of touch with the lived realities of longtime Oxford residents.

Accessibility of Services

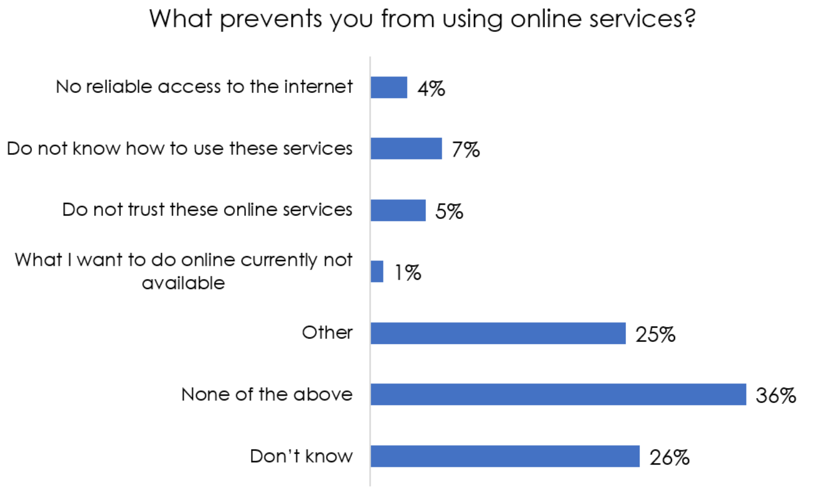
- The rising cost of services, particularly public transport, is viewed as a barrier to access.
- The decline of local shopping areas has reduced access to goods and services. There is a call for the revitalisation of these areas to prevent further decay of essential local services.

8.4 Use of Online Services

Figure 8.7: Use of online services



Q11. Do you currently use Oxford City Council's online services (e.g. website, online forms)? Base size 363



Q13. You said you currently do not use any of our online services (website, online forms). What is preventing you from doing so? Base size 363

Three in four respondents (75%) currently use Council services online. The main reason for not going online from the responses available in the survey, was not knowing how to (7%). However, most answer 'none of the above' at this question (36%).

This measure has increased since 2023, when 68% of residents used council online services. Whilst this increase is not yet significant, an additional 'yes' to using online services at this question would have meant a significant increase compared to last year. It is worth noting that the proportion of residents citing 'not knowing how to use these services' as a reason for not using them, has decreased from 31% in 2023 to just 7% in 2024.

A significantly higher proportion of the over 65s (83%) and social renters (94%) use Council services online, compared with the average. It is worth noting that this question does not ask if respondents use other means of contacting the Council and it could be that residents from these two groups have a greater need to engage with the Council than other groups, rather than being more likely than to choose online over other channels of engagement than other groups.

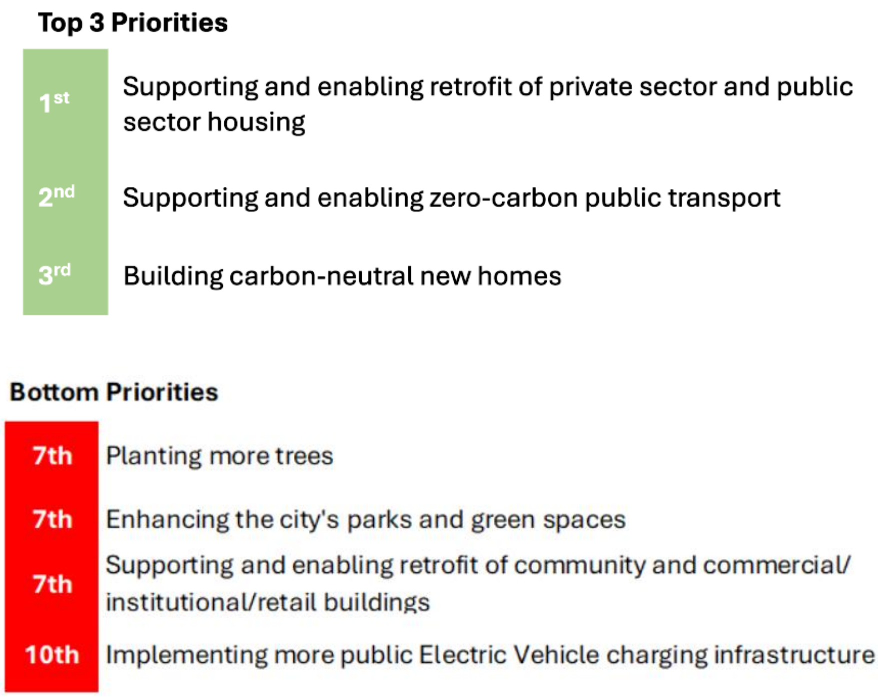
The 'other' option was selected by a quarter of the respondents (25%) as the reason for why they do not use online services. An analysis of the open-ended responses at this question found that there is a general lack of awareness or interest in using the city council's online services. Residents either don't know the services exist, have no current need for them, or prefer to speak directly to a person.

Residents who do use online services (25% of respondents) were asked to comment if they have experienced any issues. Comments were analysed and themes included difficulties with accessibility (especially when navigating from the home page), and lack of follow-up responses. Some respondents mentioned that sometimes they don't know which department they need to contact, so a general enquiry form would be helpful.

8.5 Council Actions and Policies

Residents were asked from a list of ten options what they think should be the biggest priorities for action with regards to Oxford City Council's commitment to become a net zero council by 2030 and to work with partners and residents to pursue a net zero city by 2040.

Figure 8.8: Top and Bottom priorities for pursuing net zero



Q30b Oxford City Council has committed to becoming a net zero council by 2030 and to work with partners and residents to pursue a net zero city by 2040. What do you see as the biggest priorities for action? Please select the elements below to rank them in terms of priorities with 1 being the top priority. Base size: 363

Top priorities relate to housing and transport, specifically, 'supporting and enabling retrofit of housing sector (public and private)', 'supporting and enabling zero carbon public transport' and 'building carbon-neutral new homes'. 'Public electric vehicle charging infrastructure' ranks lowest. This marks a shift from 2023, when retrofitting was among the bottom three priorities. The biggest change at this question is seen in improving flood defences, which rose by 14 percentage points to be one of the top priorities for pursuing a net zero Council.

Implementing more public electric vehicle charging infrastructure' is least likely to be prioritised by the residents and it also sat in the bottom 3 priorities in 2023.

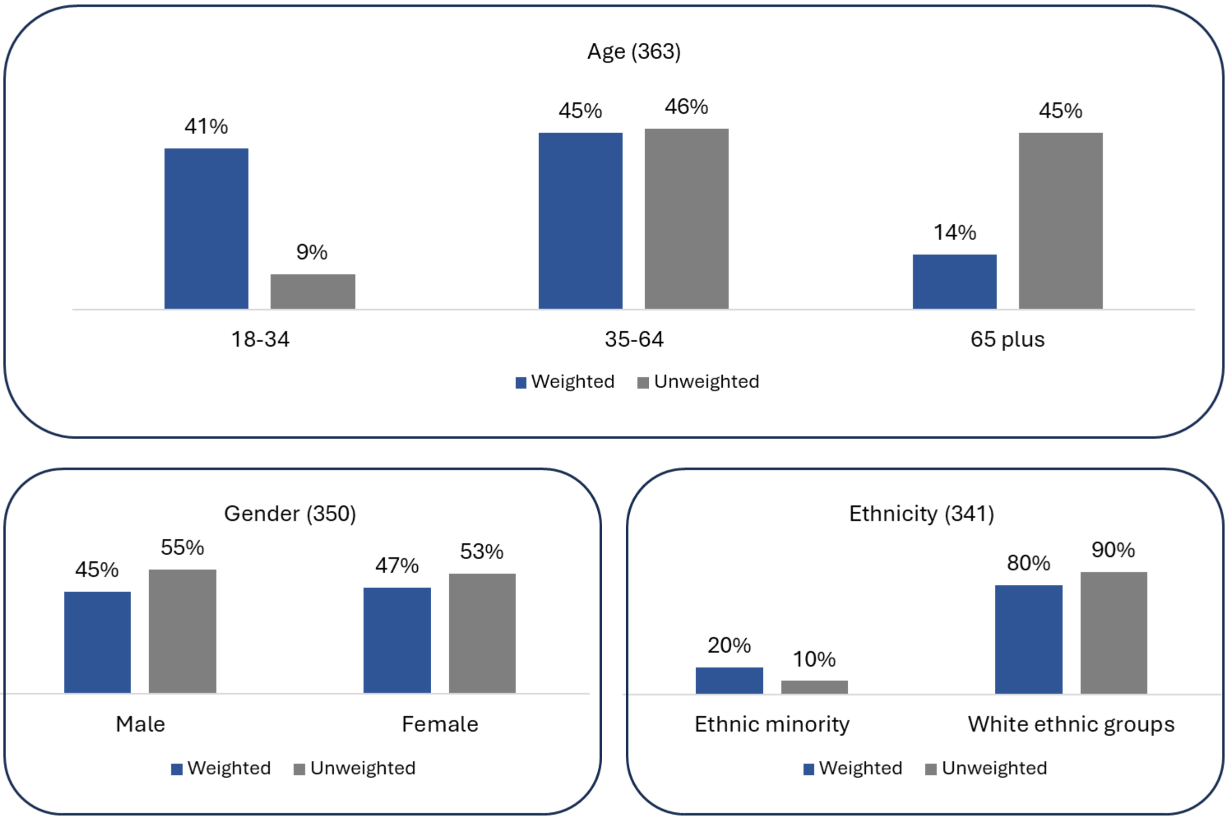
Technical report

9. Technical report

9.1 Respondent profile

The following figure shows the profile of respondents, both weighted and unweighted, and the key demographic profile of the Oxford population aged 18+, taken from Census 2021 data. The unweighted sample of respondents is fairly close to that of Oxford's population by gender. However, as with many surveys, younger people are far less likely to take part which means the sample is biased towards older people (those aged 35 and older) and therefore weightings were applied as a result.

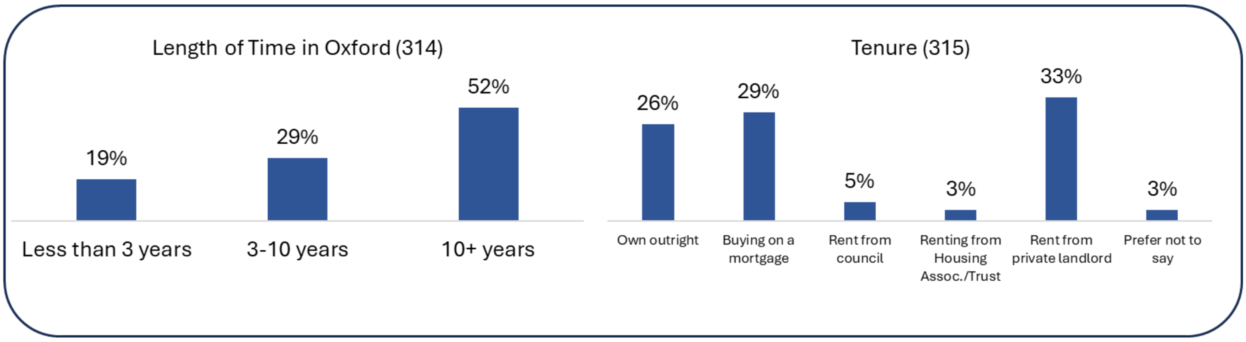
Figure 9.1: respondent profile



9.2 Demographics

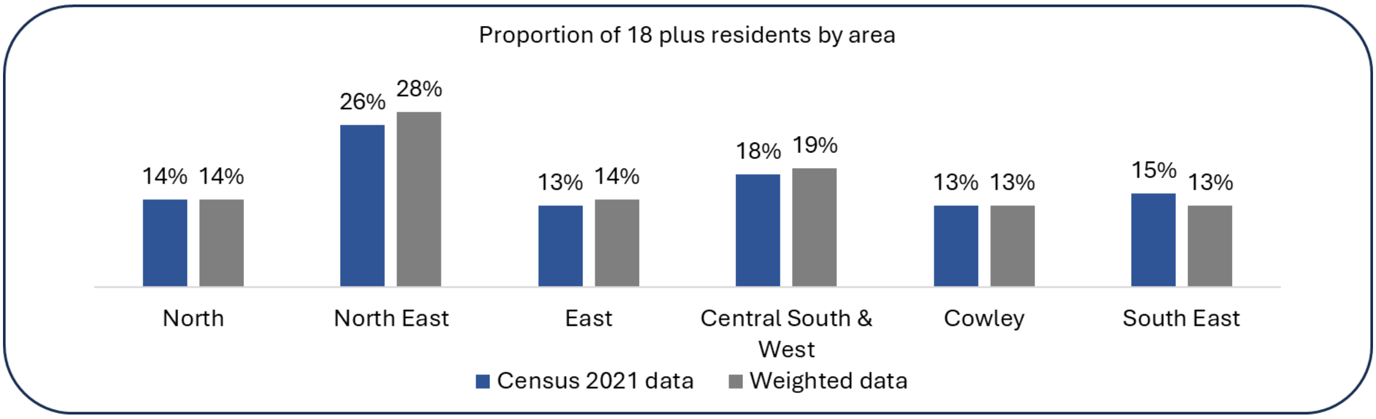
The following figures show that over half of respondents are owner occupiers, with 26% owning their property outright. A third rent (33%) from a private landlord, whilst 8% are social renters. Just over half have lived in Oxford for 10 or more years (52%) and just under a fifth are newer residents - having lived in Oxford for less than 3 years (19%).

Figure 9.2: Tenure and length of residency in Oxford



The profile of residents who responded to the survey has been weighted to match the profile of Oxford residents overall for the 18 years and over population. This can be seen in the chart below.

Figure 9.3: Profile of Oxford Residents



9.3 Sample frame and design

The Oxford Resident's Panel is a unique online research community where residents can share their views and opinions on subjects such as the future of Oxford City, the services provided by the Council, or other local organisations it links directly with, such as the local transport authority, police, or universities. It is members of this panel who responded to the Oxford Residents' Survey, and we will be able to use the same methodology on an annual basis to track findings over time.

9.4 Weighting

Data were weighted back to the known population profile of Oxford to counter-act non-response bias. Data is weighted by age, gender, ethnicity, and area. The weighting profile was based on the 2021 Census data for the over 18-year-old population.

9.5 Statistical reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population," so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been surveyed and responded. But we can predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95%

confidence interval". An indication of approximate sampling tolerances is given in the table below. Strictly speaking, the tolerances shown here apply only to random samples, so the comparison with online, panel research is indicative.

Figure 9.4: Example sample sizes and confidence intervals

Size of sample on which the survey results are based			
	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
100 surveyed	6	9	10
200 surveyed	4	6	7
500 surveyed	3	4	4

For example, with a sample of 500 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been surveyed) will fall within the range of plus or minus 4 percentage points from the sample result, which is very accurate.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real", or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been surveyed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e., if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume the "95% confidence interval", the differences between the two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Figure 9.5: Example comparisons of sample sizes

	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
100 and 100	8	13	14
200 and 200	6	9	10
200 and 400	5	8	9
500 and 500	4	6	6

For more information

Please contact Laura Marshall-Ravanal, Corporate Data Analyst at lmarshall-ravanal@oxford.gov.uk or Sally Hicks Business Intelligence Unit Lead at shicks@oxford.gov.uk