

# THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN FOR LITTLEMORE 2025-2040



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## ABOUT THE LITTLEMORE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

### Welcome to the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2040

Welcome to this revised draft of the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan. This is a planning document which seeks both to establish a vision for Littlemore and to improve the area between 2025 and 2040 by helping to meet local aspirations and needs. We hope that everyone who lives, studies, works, or socializes in Littlemore will see it as *our* Plan.

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced in the Localism Act 2011. It is intended to enable local communities to have more control over development in their community and be closely involved in decisions about new buildings and about developments that affect them.

Neighbourhood Plans can also help communities come together to prioritise changes that they hope to achieve.

Neighbourhood Plans are statutory documents incorporated into the planning framework to be in general conformity with the Local Plan (in this case for Oxford City). They can have an impact on the way development happens in the long term. This Plan refers both to the existing 2036 Local Plan and the draft 2040 plan, which is currently being examined, but since the 2036 Plan is the one currently in force this is the one with which the draft Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan needs to be formally aligned.

Neighbourhood Plans can designate particular sites for development, though this Plan does not do so. They cannot influence immediate issues before the Plan is adopted, however strongly residents feel about these. This is explained in more detail in Appendix 1.

You can find Oxford City Council's rationale for why Littlemore is considered appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area at:

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1695/littlemore-neighbourhood-area-application> .

The webpage provides information about Littlemore including the Conservation area and Listed buildings and how the Parish relates to the Electoral/Ward boundaries. A map of the Parish is on page 5 and one of the Conservation Area on page 6.

We broadly support the vision for Oxford set out in the draft 2040 Local Plan: it aims to ensure that:

*In 2040 Oxford will be a healthy and inclusive city, with strong communities that benefit from equal opportunities for everyone, not only in access to housing, but to nature, employment, social and leisure opportunities and to healthcare. Oxford will be a city with a strong cultural identity, that respects our heritage, whilst maximising opportunities to look forwards to innovate, learn and enable businesses to prosper. The vision is one which supports research and development in the life sciences and health sectors which are and will provide solutions to global challenges. The environment will be central to everything we do; it will be more biodiverse, better connected and more resilient. We will utilise resources prudently whilst mitigating our impacts on the soil, water, and air. The city will be net zero carbon, whilst our communities, buildings and infrastructure will be resilient to the impacts of climate change and other emergencies.*

However, this Neighbourhood Plan tries to address the specific needs of Littlemore to ensure that this area of the city is neither overdeveloped nor overlooked. Pages 12 and 13 set out our view of why Littlemore needs a Neighbourhood Plan.

Developing a Neighbourhood Plan is a complex and lengthy process. This is described in more detail on page 14 and 15 and in Appendix 1. Our hope is that the Plan will be adopted by a referendum of Littlemore residents in May 2025. This draft was approved by Littlemore

Parish Council in September 2024, following the public consultation in May-June 2024, prior to being submitted to Oxford City Council for consideration as to whether it is legally compliant, further consultation and independent examination, so may change before the final version is presented for the referendum.

Our approach is community-led, with the support of a consultant and Oxford City Council. The Parish Council and the Working Group have worked hard to discover the views of the community about what it values, and about what needs to be done to ensure that Littlemore will be a place where people will be happy to live in the future. We hope to ensure that whatever changes and developments there are, its essential character will not be lost.

We have tried to reflect the views of the community regarding, especially:

- the built environment;
- community assets and infrastructure;
- the natural environment;
- transport and connectivity (both within and beyond Littlemore); and
- health and well-being.

We have tried to identify aspects which we believe should be protected or improved.

Our Neighbourhood is already affected by developments that are outside our area and consequently more difficult to influence. This is likely to continue over the next 15 years. It is, however, our intention to do our best to work with other authorities and agencies to try and ensure that the interests of all residents are protected.

We would like to thank all those have been involved so far. We hope that you will support our work. We will welcome help from other people who wish to become involved in ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan is adopted and in implementing the proposals. Please send queries about the process or the content of the draft Plan to [nplan@littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:nplan@littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk)

*Peter George, Chair, Littlemore Parish Council*

*Tony Eaude, Chair, Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan Working Group*

*September 2024*

## The area covered by the Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan

Our Plan area covers the Parish of Littlemore, as shown in the map on page 5.

The hatched area is the Parish with the Parish Boundary marked by the blue line.

The Parish Boundary is not identical with the Littlemore Ward boundary. A ward is an area designated for voting purposes. Ward boundaries change with fluctuations in population, but the Parish Boundary remains the same.

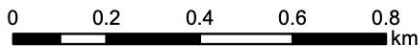
The Parish contains most but not all of Littlemore Ward and part of Cowley Ward (North of the Ring Road, A4142). Please note that the map is dated 2016 and does not include developments since then, notably those in the Armstrong Road and Mogridge Drive areas, as well as smaller developments.

This map shows that Littlemore is geographically fragmented by, for example, the railway and the ring road. Some areas are not well connected to each other and to other neighbourhoods with facilities that are important to Littlemore residents.





**Littlemore Civil Parish**



Scale: 1:12,500 (A4)

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Ordnance Survey 100019348.





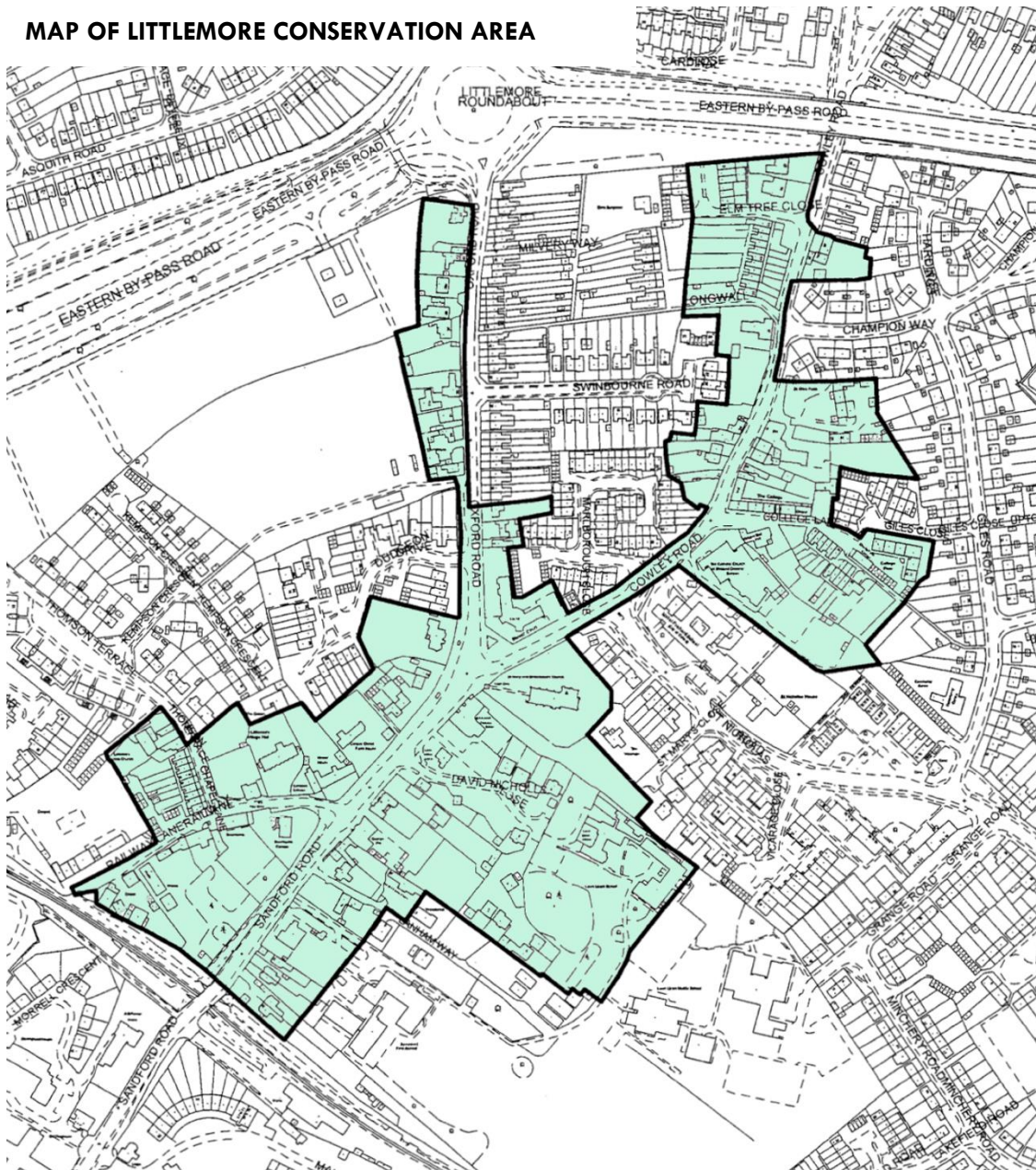
## The history, character, and identity of Littlemore

Historically, Littlemore was a small, isolated hamlet some three miles from the City of Oxford on the road to London. Its most famous resident was John Henry Newman who as Vicar of Littlemore in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was responsible for building St Mary and St Nicholas Church and the school nearby.

Newman converted to Catholicism while resident here, and later became a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church. He was canonized (made a saint) on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2019.

Littlemore still retains many beautiful buildings dating back several hundred years, including many in the Conservation Area, which is shown in the map below.

**MAP OF LITTLEMORE CONSERVATION AREA**



This area is described in detail in the Littlemore Conservation Area appraisal of April 2008, available at <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/directory-record/218/littlemore>

In Victorian times, a substantial mental hospital was built in Littlemore. Buildings were added during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and in the 1990s the Victorian hospital buildings were closed and converted to housing and employment. The modern Littlemore Mental Health Centre (LMHC) still occupies a significant site in Littlemore comprising a mixture of medium secure psychiatric and mental health inpatient facilities together with ancillary office and wellbeing facilities for staff, a step-down facility run by Response, the Trust's headquarters and an accommodation block for key workers with about 60 rooms. There are no outpatient facilities at LMHC.

Gradually as Oxford expanded in a southerly and easterly direction, Littlemore became more linked to the City. Much of the expansion was in the period just after World War 2: it consisted of relatively low-cost housing for workers in the car factories and associated industries. In 1991 Littlemore was incorporated in Oxford City, having previously been part of South Oxfordshire District, and it is now a Parish within the City. While Littlemore's expansion was primarily residential, there are a surprisingly large number of small and medium sized businesses, especially in the Nuffield Industrial Estate.

In the last thirty years, planning permission has been given for a significant expansion of leisure, business, and housing. The Kassam Stadium (currently home to Oxford United Football Club), hotel accommodation, and retail and leisure facilities, and the Oxford Science Park have all been built within the Parish boundaries. The Oxford Science Park is a major international centre for the life sciences and has brought significant new employment opportunities locally. The Ellison Institute of Technology is

building a large centre near the Victorian mental hospital site for their work to 'develop and deploy technology in pursuit of solving some of humanity's most challenging and enduring problems.' Railpen has recently submitted a planning application for a major redevelopment of Eastpoint Business Park, also for life sciences. Permissions have also been given for various controversial in-fill housing developments. These have already significantly increased the population, and altered the demographics, and when complete will affect the character and identity of Littlemore.

Though most residents continue to enjoy living here all these developments have made a significant impact on Littlemore's traditional feel of a quiet village within the City of Oxford. Many residents have lived here all their lives, but in recent years Littlemore has become a more diverse and transient community, with many residents living here for only a relatively short time. This has been partly because of social and cultural changes and partly because of the significant housing developments mentioned above.

The Parish now contains many different elements, geographically and socially. Many of these are not well connected with each other. The main parts of Littlemore are surrounded by hard geographical barriers which make Littlemore surprisingly fragmented: the bypass cuts the south of the Parish from the north; to the east the Oxford Academy site divides the bulk of Littlemore from homes in roads off Sandy Lane West; and the railway divides the main residential areas of Littlemore from the Kassam Stadium area and the Science Park. A new housing estate (Mogridge Drive and Wycombe Close) built north of the Mental Health Centre opens only on to the A4074 to the west.

As a result, Littlemore has been identified as one of only two areas in Oxford in the worst 8% in England in terms of transport-related social exclusion. Access to NHS

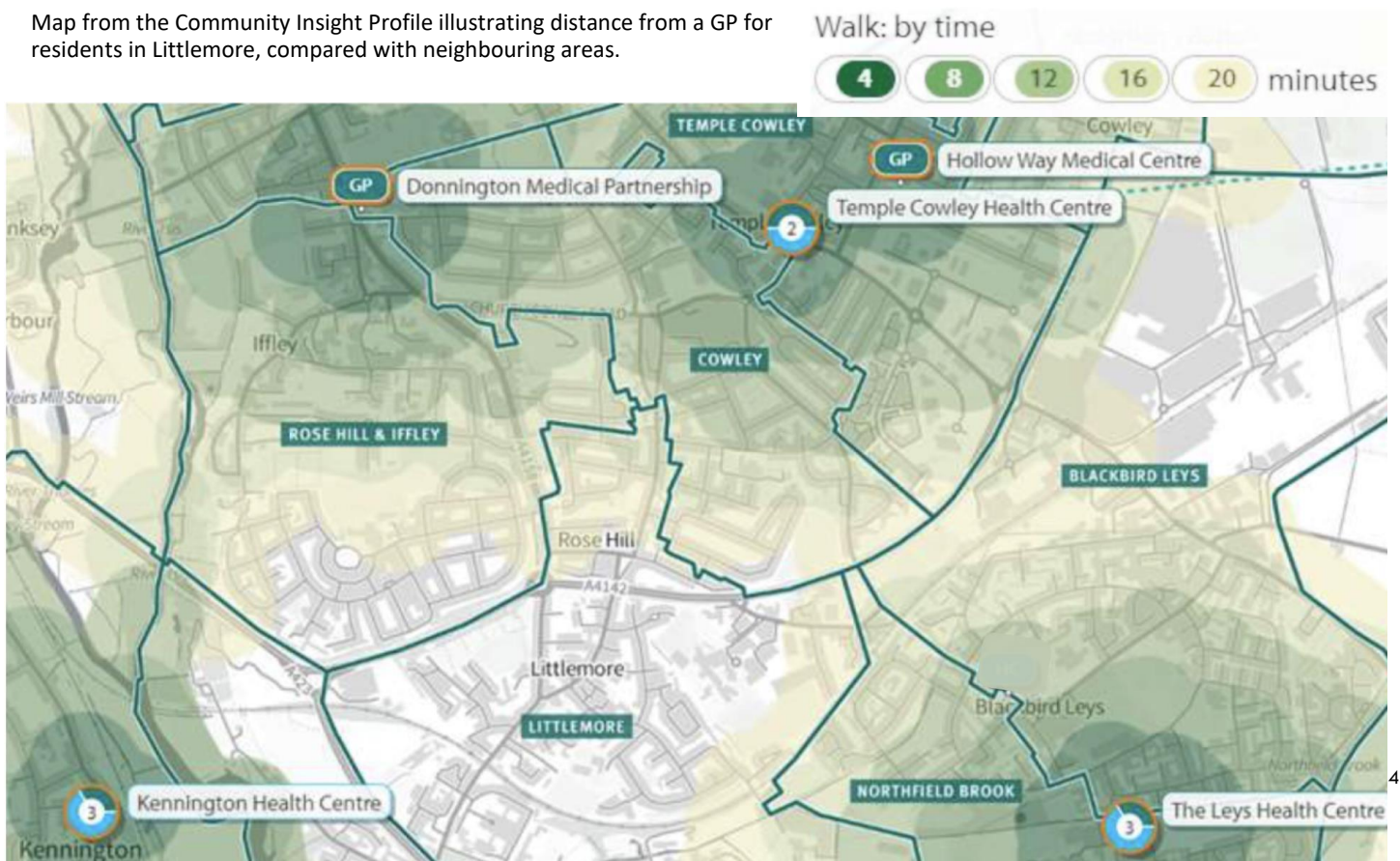


primary healthcare from Littlemore is almost certainly worse in terms of distance and accessibility than from any other part of Oxford (see map below). The need to address and mitigate this isolation seems to be poorly understood by providers.

So, connectivity between different areas of Littlemore (as well as beyond its boundaries) is one important aspect of the Plan.

It is likely that the area around the Kassam Stadium will be developed during the next few years. Plans for a very significant development, to be called the South Oxfordshire Science Village, of some 3,000 houses, on land south of Grenoble Road (in South Oxfordshire), are under discussion. If approved, these will be very substantial developments affecting Littlemore. It is planned that the Cowley Branch line will re-open to passenger traffic, subject to the necessary funding being available. It seems certain that, in the next 15 years, Littlemore and the surrounding areas will continue to change, and this Plan is intended to try and ensure that Littlemore is, and remains, a good neighbourhood to live and work in.

Map from the Community Insight Profile illustrating distance from a GP for residents in Littlemore, compared with neighbouring areas.





## What the statistics indicate about Littlemore

This section summarises some key messages about Littlemore. The statistics are drawn from publicly available reports, especially:

- **the Ward Profile** prepared by Oxford City Council, from the results of the 2021 Census:  
<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/download/381/downloads-for-local-insight-ward-profiles---pre-may-2021>.
- data collected by Community First Oxfordshire for **the 2023 Community Health Insight report** commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council:  
<https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/community-insight-profiles>.

It should be noted that the statistics do not always cover the same geographical area, as indicated on pages 4 and 5.

### Data from the Ward Profile

The Ward Profile gives the population of Littlemore Ward in the 2021 census as being 6,227 persons in 2,375 households. Since the 2021 census, permission has been granted for around 580 new homes in Littlemore: this will lead to a 20-25% increase in population (around 1,500 people) by 2030. These piecemeal developments have not been accompanied by substantial investment in the infrastructure. The infrastructure conditions attached to these permissions were limited to those absolutely necessary.

The Ward Profile indicates that:

- the largest ethnic groups were White British (57.5%), White non-British (16.5%), Asian (10.7%), Black (6.2%), Mixed (5.7%) and Other ethnic groups (3.4%); (with households with multiple ethnicities 20.5%);

- the age profile is 0-15 (20.7%), 16-64 (67.3%), 65+ (12.0%);
- 21% of children aged 0-19 are in relative low-income families (similar to the national average);
- the overall crime rate is higher than the average across England (34.8% compared to 20.4% based on the crime domain of the Index of Deprivation);
- unemployment benefit claimants (May 2023) are 5.9% compared to 3.8% across England;
- incapacity benefits claimants (November 2022) are 5.4% compared to 3.9% across England;
- 19% of people have no qualifications, slightly higher than the average across England;
- 34.8% of residents live in the most deprived areas of England (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation) compared to 20% nationally.

### Data from the 2023 Community Insight report

The data in the 2023 Community Insight report makes comparisons between Littlemore and other areas of Oxford and Oxfordshire, and indicates that:

#### Population and housing

- Compared with Oxford and Oxfordshire, Littlemore had a higher proportion of young people (aged 0 to 15 years) and those of a working age (aged 25 to 49 years).
- Over the past 10 years the population of the Littlemore area increased at above the Oxford and Oxfordshire rate. The area had a comparatively high birth rate and the growth in the number of young people was well above average.
- the proportion of social rented housing in Littlemore was above the averages for Oxford and Oxfordshire.

## Health and Wellbeing

- 14 out of 32 local health and well-being indicators for Littlemore are ranked as worse than the England average including:
  - Emergency hospital admissions for self-harm
  - Emergency hospital admissions for all causes
  - Deaths from all cancers
  - Preventable deaths.
- Only 3 out of 32 local health and wellbeing indicators are ranked as better than the England average.
- The proportion of adults receiving drug or alcohol treatment in Littlemore ward has remained above the average for Oxfordshire since 2019.
- Littlemore had the third highest proportion of Year 6 children (aged 10 to 11 years) classified as overweight (including obesity) out of all areas in Oxfordshire. The proportion of overweight children in reception (aged 4 to 5 years) was also above (worse than) the Oxfordshire average.

## Employment

- A much higher percentage of people in employment in Littlemore were in the (generally lower paid) caring, leisure, semi-skilled and unskilled occupations than the average for Oxford and Oxfordshire.
- Littlemore has a higher proportion of people looking after their home or family and a higher proportion who were long term sick or disabled than the Oxford and Oxfordshire averages.

## Poverty and deprivation

- Littlemore has a higher proportion of households classified as deprived in one or more dimensions than the Oxford and Oxfordshire averages.
- The proportion of residents claiming unemployment-related benefits in Littlemore was double that for Oxfordshire.

- A similar proportion of households in Littlemore were estimated to be in fuel poverty to that of Oxfordshire.
- Rates of child poverty and free school meals in Littlemore were well above (worse than) the average for Oxfordshire.
- The rate of older people living in poverty and claiming pension credit in Littlemore was above the average for Oxfordshire.

## Crime and community safety

- The overall rate of crime in Littlemore was well above the Oxfordshire average.

## Living environment

- Littlemore is surrounded by accessible natural green and blue spaces including woodland, allotments, water courses, playing fields and public parks. (*please see p 26 for comments on the accessibility of these*).
- There are no GPs located within Littlemore, and it is at least a 20-minute walking time from most of Littlemore to a GP practice. There are also currently no pharmacies in Littlemore, but some pharmacies are within a 20-minute walking distance from most parts of the Ward.

There is significant inequality *within* Littlemore. The Minchery Farm estate and nearby areas have substantially higher levels of deprivation than other parts of Littlemore. 39% of children in this area live below the poverty line, higher than any other area in Oxfordshire.

To summarize: in the last twenty years Littlemore has become an increasingly diverse community in socioeconomic, social, and cultural terms, with a more transient population. It appears (and is) an attractive place to live, with some historic parts and considerable recent new residential and business development. But it is the eighth most deprived ward in Oxfordshire (out of

86) and the third most deprived in Oxford (out of 24) (based on the 2019 English Indices of Deprivation).

Rather like the society described in *A Tale of Two Cities*, Littlemore is an area where considerable wealth, especially that related to recently built businesses, and severe deprivation can be found very close to each other.



## Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan for Littlemore?

We believe that Littlemore needs a Neighbourhood Plan to enable our community both to have more control over local developments, and to be more closely involved in decisions that affect Littlemore residents, and those who work or study here (as set out in the Localism Act). This is important given the considerable level of housing development planned nationally and in Oxfordshire as well as much larger issues nationally and globally, such as how to cope with the climate emergency. A Neighbourhood Plan will also enable the Parish Council to receive a higher percentage of the Community Infrastructure Levy (paid by major developers). This would fund some of the improvements which are needed.

However, the same could be said for almost any neighbourhood. Other reasons are more specific to Littlemore.

The first is that Littlemore is in an area of strategic importance for development, both of the City of Oxford and the wider surrounding region. This is evident for instance in the proposal to build more houses, given the chronic shortage of housing, especially affordable housing, in and around Oxford; and in the construction of a significant number of scientific research facilities with regional, national and global significance. Whether these are welcomed or not, such developments both in Littlemore itself and the surrounding area have had, and will continue to have, major implications for Littlemore in terms of infrastructure such as traffic, housing and facilities, and quality of life more generally. A Neighbourhood Plan which identifies areas or features of our natural environment which are priorities for local residents could help in planning ahead how to improve, create and restore green and blue spaces. This could benefit the health and wellbeing of those who live and work in Littlemore and help to reduce inequalities.

We believe that the views of Littlemore residents should be taken into account in how these developments are planned and implemented. We hope that we can work constructively with other bodies, including local authorities, health trusts, businesses, and utility companies to enhance the lives of those who live, work, study and socialize in Littlemore, and to minimize any adverse effects.

A second reason is the sense that Littlemore has been overlooked - some would say forgotten - in terms of facilities, compared to other parts of Oxford, despite significant housing development and new employment sites in the Parish. While there are differences of opinion as to the desirability and quality of each of these developments, there is a broad consensus that, taken overall, the existing infrastructure is inadequate to support the level of development and the consequent rise in population and traffic.

This sense of being overlooked is illustrated by the fact that the 2040 Plan does not include Littlemore as either a District or a Local Centre, even though Cowley Branch Line/ Littlemore is identified as an 'area of focus'. We believe that if there is to be substantial development around the Ozone Leisure Centre/Kassam Stadium and/or on land south of Grenoble Road, this area should be seen increasingly as a significant hub of activity (or as a Local Centre) (with the consequent implications in terms of the provision of facilities and public transport).

It is arguable that the neglect of the Parish by the authorities has contributed in no small measure to the high level of deprivation. Some parts of Littlemore suffer from poor quality housing and inadequate social provision, often leading to isolation, anxiety, and ill-health. A holistic approach to ensuring that Littlemore is a desirable place to live for all its residents is required to prevent certain domains of deprivation from increasing as more people move into the area.

A third reason is a very strong belief that the views of the residents of Littlemore have been ignored by those making policies which affect them. This is most evident in relation to the considerable level of opposition to the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). Several interlinked reasons for this opposition have been expressed, especially the difficulty of going to Cowley Centre and other parts of Oxford by car, increased journey times and a feeling of being 'done to.' This has contributed to a more divided, and a less harmonious, community.

While the Neighbourhood Plan cannot resolve this issue, these views which have been strongly expressed in many responses to the Issues and Options survey, have been taken into account especially in the policies related to Transport and Connectivity. We hope that the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan will enable different groups and individuals within Littlemore to work together to plan and implement improvements, in line with our Vision and Objectives set out on pages 16 and 17. Many of these improvements are relatively small, but cumulatively important. Put simply, we want our say - and hope that the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to that.

## How the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared

A general overview of how Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared is set out in Appendix 1. This section summarises how this process has been carried out in Littlemore so far and outlines the next stages.

The decision to produce a Neighbourhood Plan was taken by Littlemore Parish Council in 2017. A good deal of work was completed: the Vision and Objectives statement was drafted, and about 250 responses to an Issues and Options survey were gathered. Unfortunately, the work came to a halt with the Covid-19 pandemic. In Autumn 2022, a Neighbourhood Planning Working Group (NPWG) was established to re-start and try to take the Plan through to completion. The group met monthly and from February 2023 was advised by Adam Symons of Symons Consulting. Residents were updated and invited to be involved by means of the bi-monthly Littlemore Local Newsletter, and through collecting survey responses, attending community events, and by personal contacts.

During the first main stage we gathered the views of those who live, work or study in Littlemore through another Issues and Options survey open between May and August 2023. People were invited to respond by filling in a questionnaire either on paper or on-line. Responses were sought mainly by door knocking on houses in every area of Littlemore (though we were not able to knock on every door), by publicity in the Littlemore Local and by attendance at various events. We were pleased to receive 515 responses. This stage also enabled us to recruit several volunteers to be members of the policy groups.

During the second main stage undertaken in September/October 2023, we analysed the data especially from the Issues and Options survey, with a

view both to making the data more manageable and starting to identify key themes.

During the third main stage we drew out from the evidence five key themes, and devised policies.

The key themes were:

1. The Built Environment;
2. Community Assets and Infrastructure;
3. The Natural Environment;
4. Transport and Connectivity;
5. Health and Wellbeing.

The policies are of two types:

1. strategic policies which have legal force and affect how planning applications are determined; and
2. community policies which identify other community priorities and possible ways to achieve desired changes.

The policies have been developed by five policy groups, each convened by a facilitator and including between three and six other people, at least one of whom is a Parish Councillor.

The membership of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group and the Policy Groups is set out in Appendix 4.

A previous draft was approved by Littlemore Parish Council in February 2024. This was followed by a formal pre-submission consultation which is a legal requirement and normally lasts at least 6 weeks. This opened on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and closed on 18<sup>th</sup> June. During this stage the Plan was made available for public viewing and comment, and key statutory stakeholders were consulted. All the relevant documents (the full draft Plan, the summary and a two-page response form) were available on the Littlemore Parish Council website:

<https://littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan> Paper copies were available in several prominent places locally where people gather. Publicity for the



consultation was via noticeboards, the Littlemore Local (which along with the Parish Council website has been used to keep residents updated), social media, local groups and word of mouth. There were 'drop in' sessions especially at the Village Hall and with visits to some local groups, by invitation.

There were 39 responses to the public consultation. Almost all were supportive of the draft Plan, with many suggesting amendments. All the responses were carefully considered in July/August 2024 and several amendments to the wording were included in this draft, especially those which add specific local detail. Some were not included usually because they were deemed to add too much detail, they had already been covered or they proposed changes which were not in line with what previous evidence suggested was appropriate.

Oxford City Council carried out a Screening Assessment on the Plan. This determined that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor a Habitat Regulations Assessment is required. The Screening Statement is available on the Parish Council website [Littlemore-NP-Initial-SEA-Screening-Statement\\_May-2024.pdf](https://www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk/initial-sea-screening-statement-may-2024.pdf) ([littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk](https://www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk))

The next stages of the process are described in Appendix 1.

## Vision and Objectives

### Our Vision for Littlemore

Littlemore, with its historic village and farming origins, occupies the southernmost sector of the City of Oxford.

Our Neighbourhood Plan aims:

- to respect and reflect the views of its community;
- to influence how Littlemore evolves and expands;
- to include the provision of infrastructure;
- to meet the economic, social, and environmental requirements for an outstanding quality of life that will benefit current and future generations of residents, visitors and working people.

### Our Objectives for the 5 key themes

#### Built Environment

We aim to:

- Ensure Littlemore remains an attractive, healthy place to live, work and visit, with consideration given to the importance of its history and buildings of architectural interest.
- Ensure that new developments are of quality design and built to ambitious sustainability standards.
- Protect and enhance landscape views and skylines.
- Achieve a balance of housing suitable for single residents, older people, and both small and large families in relation to changing demographics.
- Encourage affordable housing with access, where possible, to homes for people on low incomes, key workers and families with strong local connections.
- Support the continuing development of businesses and local enterprises that will provide employment opportunities for local residents.

#### Community Assets and Infrastructure

We aim to:

- Protect and enhance community, leisure and sports facilities both for enjoyment and health and well-being.
- Improve the provision of facilities, especially local primary health care and utilities, to meet the needs of all residents, given the growth of Littlemore recently and likely development in the future.
- Encourage greater diversity of easily accessible shops and eating places.

#### Natural Environment

We aim to:

- Protect and enhance public open spaces, e.g., our parks, the village green and allotments.
- Ensure suitable provision of green space within new developments.
- Conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Minimise air and noise pollution from new and existing structures and developments.
- Encourage use of new technologies to provide low/zero carbon solutions.

#### Transport and Connectivity

We aim to:

- Review and address the problems of parking and increased volume of traffic, congestion, and journey times, taking consideration of the needs of residents, pedestrians, cyclists, and users of motorised transport.
- Provide excellent travel alternatives to reduce the need to travel by car, while ensuring necessary car journeys can be completed quickly and easily.
- Improve access to different areas within and beyond Littlemore with well-maintained footpaths, cycleways, and facilities for disabled people.

- Improve connectivity to places outside Littlemore, notably Cowley Centre.
- Improve public transport, particularly for areas which are poorly served.
- Ensure that current and potential difficulties of traffic congestion, parking and road safety are addressed.

## **Health and Well-Being**

We aim to:

- Improve the physical and mental health and well-being of residents, especially those who are most disadvantaged and so most likely to suffer from ill-health.
- Encourage preventative measures where possible, especially by encouraging healthy life-styles.
- Reduce the health inequalities both between Littlemore and elsewhere in Oxford City, and within Littlemore.
- Maintain and expand facilities for leisure, exercise and relaxation.
- Prioritise projects that enhance community cohesion, particularly those that promote healthy living and reduce loneliness and anxiety.
- Advocate for improved primary health care facilities in, or easily accessible from, all parts of Littlemore.
- Help to make Littlemore a safer and healthier place for residents, especially by enhancing a greater sense of safety and discouraging antisocial behaviour.



## Introduction to the policies

The Littlemore Neighbourhood Plan tries to set out a coherent framework of policies which, taken as a whole, can help to achieve the Vision and Objectives outlined above. It should be recognized that many important issues cover more than one policy area. For instance, Health and Well-being is closely linked to all the other policy areas. We have tried to address this by putting each policy under one main heading but incorporating considerations from other policy areas within these.

These policies and the accompanying text have been drafted to be read and implemented in conjunction with the Plan.

Consultation on these policies is taking place through the processes involved in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. However, for Community policies, whatever measures which might enable them to be achieved are likely to involve their own consultations. In particular, the need for consultation with those affected by any specific measures proposed in the future and taking account of the responses must be remembered.

Policies are set out in five areas:

1. Built Environment (BE)
2. Community Assets and Infrastructure (CI)
3. Natural Environment (NE)
4. Transport and Connectivity (TC)
5. Health and Well-being (HW)

The policies are named in three ways to show what type of policy each one is.

The first two letters (BE, CI, NE, TC or HW) identify the policy area.

The third letter (S or C) states whether it is a strategic or a community policy. Strategic policies have legal force and affect how planning applications are determined; and community policies identify projects which help the community to campaign for, or try to achieve, the desired changes.

The number indicates which policy it is in its group.

For instance, BES1 indicates that it is the first strategic policy under Built Environment and TCC2 that it is the second community policy under Transport and Connectivity.

Each policy has some supporting text to explain why it has been included, and the policy wording is in the box below the supporting text.

## LITTLEMORE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

### THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT (BE)

Littlemore's built environment comprises an ancient village core, much of it in the Conservation Area, surrounded by areas of subsequent development of significantly varying era, character, and design. This growth, and the eventual incorporation into the City of Oxford has degraded Littlemore's historic character and has not been accompanied by adequate infrastructure and facility provision.

We believe that it is essential that, while developments in the area around the Kassam Stadium (if it is redeveloped) should be mostly for residential use, these should include a range of facilities which are of benefit to the local community in Littlemore and surrounding areas. (Please see also CIS1 and the accompanying text).

Littlemore's housing stock is increasingly being taken over by Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) rather than single-family homes. This brings the problems associated with a more transient population, increased pressure on the transport network, and increased on-street parking, which is presently uncontrolled.

Some change to land use in the area is supported, particularly if it would permit more sheltered and supported housing for elderly people, more space for small businesses within existing sites (particularly those enhancing the local retail opportunities), and provision of enhanced and improved infrastructure making up for the area's historical deficit in this regard.

In view of the level of crime and anti-social behaviour, and the anxiety from some sections of the community about personal safety as expressed in the Issues and Options and Community Insight surveys, specific measures to address this will be supported both in new developments and more generally.

Since impermeable and artificial surfaces can lead to increased flooding and exacerbate the 'urban heat island' effect, we support the use of a range of innovative design solutions, including sustainable urban design systems (SUDS) and green roofs to mitigate these effects.

### BES1 Encouraging improved and new infrastructure

Littlemore has a shortage of integral infrastructure to serve the local community effectively. Development proposals that support the improvement of existing facilities or the provision of new facilities to serve the community would therefore be welcomed. There is a particular shortage of health provision, nursery and pre-school places, retail options, and community spaces that support community meetings and activities. Development proposals could include for example the provision of mixed-use facilities, incorporating an element of retail and affordable housing provision or community and health facilities. We believe that in their design new developments should be expected to help promote community safety, especially for those living nearby and all road users.

#### POLICY BES1

Development proposals that improve existing community infrastructure or provide new infrastructure to meet local community needs as identified in this Plan and future reviews will be supported. Such infrastructure includes but is not limited to: new or enhanced health facilities, nursery and preschool places, small retail units, and facilities for community meeting space and activities.

Development proposals that promote greater community safety by effective layout and lighting of the proposed development and the surrounding

area or such improvements to existing infrastructure will be supported. Proposals will only be supported where the design seeks to minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.

#### POLICY BES3

Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that there will be no likely significant additional on-street parking because of the application.

#### **BES2 Sheltered and supported housing**

It is important to provide sheltered housing for older people, and specialist and supported housing for those with disabilities, to enable them to live safe and independent lives. There is currently limited sheltered or supported housing, with Cardinal House, Alice Smith House, and Eastern House being the only large such facilities. It is important to try to ensure that there is enough sheltered and supported accommodation to provide for the changing needs of all residents of Littlemore.

#### POLICY BES2

Expansion of existing sheltered and supported housing or construction of new such facilities will be supported where need for such sheltered and/or supported housing is identified within the Oxford City area.

#### **BES4 Resisting large HMOs and avoiding family houses becoming short-term letting properties**

Policy H6 of Oxford Local Plan 2036 and Policy H8 in the Local Plan 2040 draft as of December 2023 already sets out that excessive density of HMOs should be resisted due to the adverse impact on parking pressure. In Littlemore the parking pressure created by HMOs is exacerbated by the absence of controlled parking in most of the parish. While we are broadly in agreement with Policy H8, larger HMOs produce more parking pressure. We think that the Policy should be strengthened in relation to Littlemore and that large HMOs should be counted as two dwellings for the purposes of measuring HMO density. This will affect the proportion of buildings which can be licensed as HMOs in an area.

While there are few indications at present of properties in Littlemore being used for short-term letting (i.e. for more than 90 nights per year), we believe that houses should be retained for the use of families and individuals.

#### **BES3 Parking pressure**

Most on-street parking in Littlemore is not controlled. Development can lead to pressure on on-street parking, particularly in respect of HMOs where there can be more cars per household. Therefore, taking account of Policy C8 of the draft Local Plan, development proposals will need to demonstrate that any adverse impact leading to more on-street parking is limited.

#### POLICY BES4

Development that will result in a new large House in Multiple Occupation (an HMO with 7 or more bedrooms) in an area without controlled on-street parking will only be supported when it can be shown that the expected extra parking demand



resulting from the development will not result in an unacceptable increase in on-street parking pressure.

Development that would involve the net loss of residential floor space or residential units of any family housing will be resisted.

will be supported as long as the historic fabric is preserved.

### **BES5 Enhancing historic and heritage assets and their settings**

Littlemore Priory dates back at least to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and is listed Grade II\*. It is the last remaining monastic building in the local area. The building was last used as a pub which closed in 2013 and is currently derelict. It should be developed for a use that preserves the building's historic fabric and identity. The same should apply to any of Littlemore's numerous other historic buildings should they fall into disuse or disrepair. Proposals that enhance and preserve such buildings and enable them to be used for heritage, residential or commercial purposes are desirable. All historic buildings especially those adjacent to new developments should be carefully protected before and during the construction phase.

#### **POLICY BES5**

Planning applications which preserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings (particularly those identified in the Littlemore Conservation Area Appraisal) that contribute positively to the historic character and identity of Littlemore will be supported, including those seeking a change of use where the building has been disused for more than a year. In particular, proposals to restore the derelict Littlemore Priory will be supported. Conversion to other commercial or residential uses

### **BES6 Encouraging energy efficiency retrofit**

Fitting and retrofitting of homes to encourage energy efficiency is to be encouraged to ensure that existing and proposed development minimises its environmental impact and is resilient to the consequences of climate change. With few exceptions we do not see solar, external insulation, energy-efficient glazing, or other visible green measures as being undesirable. However, such development may have a detrimental effect on the historic environment in terms of the impact on the historic asset itself, its views, or its setting. With this in mind, each application will need to be considered on its merits. In some instances, retrofitting may not be appropriate but in others some externally visible renewable energy on listed buildings or other historic assets may be welcomed.

#### **POLICY BES6**

Where possible and appropriate, existing buildings should be retrofitted with insulation, double glazing or other measures to reduce energy usage and proposals to do this will be supported. However, to ensure that historic assets, their views, and settings are conserved and enhanced, any significant adverse impacts from such development proposals would need to be mitigated, or the proposal would not be supported. This is of particular importance where the asset is an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to its significance, so it can be enjoyed for its contribution to the quality of life of Littlemore's residents and visitors of existing and future generations. These assets include:

- St Mary & St Nicholas Church
- Blessed Dominic Barberi Church
- Lawn Upton House
- Buildings with pre-1800 architecture.

### **BEC1 Parking around Houses in Multiple Occupation**

Recognizing that decisions about HMOs are constrained by national and local policies so that the first part of BES4 may be seen as not in conformity with these, we nevertheless believe that these current policies present problems related especially to parking in localities such as Littlemore and would therefore support changes to these policies.

#### **POLICY BEC1**

Changes in National and Local Planning Policy which would take account of the differing sizes of Houses in Multiple Occupation (including *sui generis* large HMOs) and distinguish their impact on parking space between areas with controlled and uncontrolled on-street parking will be supported.

## COMMUNITY ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE (CI)

We recognize that terms such as community assets, facilities and infrastructure can be interpreted in different ways and in planning terms there are specific categories of community facility. How we use these is outlined in Appendix 2. In the draft 2040 Local Plan, infrastructure includes schools, hospitals, utilities, digital communications, transport provision, and community facilities. We also include and emphasize the need for primary health care facilities, as covered by Policy HWS1, and facilities for leisure and recreation, such as cinema, swimming, and other sports.

In this section, the Littlemore Mental Health Centre has not been included, given the nature of provision there and the geographical area which it serves, although it occupies an important site in Littlemore. Neither have places of worship been included even though they play a very important role in meeting the needs both of members of their own congregations, and of the wider community. Nor have many privately owned sites which also provide benefits to the wider community. Transport provision is covered by policies in the Transport and Connectivity Section.

Improved measures to let residents and others know about available opportunities both through noticeboards and by electronic means will be welcome.

### CIS1 Replacement of community facilities

Littlemore has a limited range of public community facilities, notably the Community Centre and the Village Hall. However there are also churches and schools, notably The Oxford Academy and John Henry Newman Academy, which have rooms available for public use. The City-owned Community Centre is poorly resourced, and not as widely used as it could be. It is substantially less well-resourced than those in other, comparable areas such as Rose Hill and Blackbird Leys. The Village Hall is

well used but its structure limits the activities which can be carried out. Both the Community Centre and the Village Hall would benefit from substantial investment: the Trustees of the Village Hall are fundraising for a major refurbishment. Schemes to raise funds for these and similar schemes will be supported. Littlemore also contains the Ozone Leisure Park, where there is the Hollywood Bowl, City Mazes, Lazer Kombat, a multiplex cinema and restaurants, though the gym and swimming pool have closed. These are facilities which many residents do not see as part of Littlemore as they are used mostly by people who drive in from a much wider geographical area. The draft Oxford 2040 Local Plan suggests that this area will be redeveloped if Oxford United Football Club relocates. If so, it is important that Littlemore does not lose these facilities. Littlemore residents would benefit from their being well maintained and improved, and where possible for activities to be as affordable as possible, especially for residents with low incomes. (please see also BES1 and accompanying text).

#### POLICY CIS1

Where the loss of a community facility is unavoidable because of development, a replacement of that facility (the same size or larger, and with the same or improved facilities) should be provided as near to the facility as possible, or at a location equally or more accessible to Plan Area residents by walking, cycling, and public transport. Replacement facilities that would result in an overall improvement on the existing facility in terms of size, amenity, or enhancement to the Plan Area will be supported. Proposals to change the facilities at the Ozone Leisure Park, the Community Centre or the Village Hall will be supported only if the range and quality of facilities there is maintained or improved. In particular, proposals to improve the

facilities at and adjacent to the Community Centre and the Village Hall, and to secure the funding via Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy, or similar schemes will be supported.

## **CIS2 Improvement of existing community assets**

Recent and planned housing and business developments have increased the residential population of Littlemore and the number of people coming to Littlemore to work- and will continue to do so. Facilities for socialization, leisure and relaxation need to be maintained and expanded in line with this.

### **POLICY CIS2**

Where possible, existing sports, leisure, and recreation facilities as listed below, in addition to those mentioned in CIS1, will be safeguarded and proposals for improvement will be supported:

- Those on The Oxford Academy Campus site OX4 6JZ, including the Littlemore Library
- The Community Hub, John Henry Newman Academy, OX4 4LS
- Littlemore Rugby Club, OX4 4NH
- Oxford and District Indoor Bowls Club, OX4 6NA
- Littlemore Royal British Legion, OX4 4LZ
- The George Inn, OX4 4PU
- The Golden Ball Pub, OX4 4LZ
- Oxford Road Recreation Ground, OX4 4PF
- Herschel Crescent Recreation Ground, OX4 3QY
- Redmoor Close Recreation Ground, OX4 4PT
- Mogridge Drive Recreation Ground, OX4 4QN
- Village Green, OX4 4LG
- Little Park, OX4 4PE
- Scout Hut, Fairlie Road, OX4 3SW

- The public toilets in Cowley Road
- Thomson Terrace Allotments
- Denny Garden Allotments
- Minchery Road Allotments

Applications or developments that would result in an overall improvement to existing facilities in terms of size, amenity, or enhancement for those in the Plan Area will normally be supported.

Developments including activities, sports and leisure pursuits targeting children and young people and those with disabilities will be favoured.

Developments will not be supported that lead to an overall loss of such facilities within the Plan Area. Where the loss of any sports, leisure or recreation facility is proposed, a replacement facility (the same size or larger, with the same or improved facilities) should be provided as near the facility as possible (preferably within the Plan Area), or at a location equally, or more, accessible to residents of the Plan Area by walking, cycling or public transport. If a replacement facility is not practical or viable, a financial contribution should be provided sufficient to secure an alternative and/or improvement to an existing facility. When change of use is proposed, proposals which maintain or improve the leisure or recreation functions of the venue will be supported.

Proposals to build on parks and recreation grounds will be supported only when the buildings proposed are essential for their maintenance or for users such as sports pavilions.

Proposals for leisure and recreational developments elsewhere will be supported, particularly those that encourage people to make healthier choices about food and physical activity through an enabling environment, and those that are associated with

improved mental health, for example those with outdoor gym equipment, recreational walking routes or a community garden/orchard.

groups to discuss and pursue cooperative strategies to provide it.

Where such major development is proposed, the necessary stakeholders and infrastructure providers will need to ensure that the build of the development goes hand in hand with the improvement or addition of new infrastructure to meet the needs of that development. Where infrastructure is needed to support new development, the infrastructure must be operational no later than the appropriate phase of development for which it is needed.

### **CIS3 Infrastructure needs and co-operation**

Significant development is expected adjacent or near to the boundary of Littlemore during the Plan period. Such developments include but are not limited to those on land south of Grenoble Road, which is in South Oxfordshire District. They are likely to generate significant demands on the infrastructure in areas of Oxford City, particularly Blackbird Leys and Littlemore. There will be demand for the provision of school places, primary health care facilities, shops, community facilities, water and sewage treatment, transport, and digital connectivity (including broadband). Other developments further away in the next 15 years are harder to anticipate.

Such development is likely to put pressure on the existing infrastructure of Littlemore and give rise to the need for investment in existing infrastructure. In such instances the necessary stakeholders and infrastructure providers will need to ensure that development goes hand in hand with the improvement or addition of new infrastructure to meet the needs of that development.

### **CIC1 Improvements to the range and quality of local shops and eating places**

Although there is a large superstore at Heyford Hill, and some smaller shops, Littlemore is poorly served in terms of shops, especially those that sell fresh and healthy food. Several in the parade at St Nicholas Road are not in use as shops, and there is no provision for shops in the new developments in the Armstrong Road and Mogridge Drive areas. This situation is exacerbated by the difficulty in reaching Cowley Centre, with its much wider range of shops.

While there are various eating places in Littlemore, most tend to be used by those working or visiting there rather than by those living in Littlemore. As well as fast-food outlets, there are two public houses, but neither currently serves hot meals, and there is no café or similar establishment. There is therefore a lack of places for residents to eat and meet, especially in the central part of Littlemore.

We believe that creative solutions such as referring unused commercial buildings to Make Space Oxford (see

#### **POLICY CIS3**

Where a development proposal will create either a need to provide additional infrastructure, or improvements to existing infrastructure directly related to that development and/or directly related to the uses of infrastructure in Littlemore, Oxford City Council, neighbouring Districts, and Oxfordshire County Council are encouraged to engage with the Parish Council and other relevant Littlemore-based



[Home - \(makespaceoxford.org\)](https://makespaceoxford.org) for redevelopment and refit for local businesses and reduced rents for suitable outlets should be considered, where possible.

#### POLICY CIC1

Proposals to improve the range and quality of local shops and eating places will be supported, especially those which will provide fresh, healthy food, and places for residents to meet, such as cafes and licensed premises. In particular, proposals to bring back into use all the shops in St Nicholas Road and to provide for residents in or near Armstrong Road will be supported.

#### **CIC2 Improved range of, and access to, recreation opportunities especially for young people**

While there is a reasonable range of recreation opportunities in, or relatively easily accessible from, Littlemore, there is very limited youth club provision. Responses and informal discussions indicate that the facilities at schools especially The Oxford Academy are not used as much as they could be by the wider community outside school hours. If residents were able to access such facilities more easily, this could have a significant benefit in terms of improving physical and mental health, and potentially reducing anti-social behaviour.

#### POLICY CIC2

Proposals to improve the range of, and access to, recreation opportunities especially for young people will be supported, with a view both to promoting physical and mental health and reducing anti-social behaviour. In particular, improved provision for a youth club and more access to the facilities at The

Oxford Academy, for the wider community, and a well-designed play area in the recent Armstrong Road development will be supported.

#### **CIC3 Working with businesses and others to promote lifelong learning**

Littlemore has many residents who are significantly socially and/or educationally disadvantaged. Yet, there are many thriving businesses and world-famous educational institutions, including two universities, in or within a relatively short distance from Littlemore. This provides untapped opportunities to address social and educational inequalities and to promote lifelong learning, for all ages. However, there is a need for such provision to be inclusive and provide a variety of learning opportunities with appropriate costs or funding where required to enable all to participate.

#### POLICY CIC3

Initiatives where businesses, universities and other organisations who are keen to work with the local community in Littlemore, especially in ways which can benefit individuals or groups who are socially and/or educationally disadvantaged, will be encouraged and supported.

In particular, opportunities such as upskilling, mentoring, internships and apprenticeships for young people or adults whether in conventional educational settings, workplaces or elsewhere will be encouraged and supported, especially where these can be provided at low or no cost to participants.

## THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (NE)

The Natural Environment includes “a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees, and ‘blue infrastructure’ such as streams, ponds, canals, and other water bodies” (Description from the National Planning Guidance (NPPG) of the Green Infrastructure Network).

The importance of the natural environment for mental and physical well-being cannot be over-estimated. The aim of these policies is to conserve and protect these resources and the biodiversity associated with them. While the National Planning Policy Framework, 2036 and draft 2040 Local Plans mandate a net gain of at least 10% in terms of biodiversity, we believe that it is important to work towards a net gain of 20%. This is because we accept the argument presented in <https://www.olnp.org.uk/partnership-projects-2/advocating-for-20-biodiversity-net-gain-bng> that Oxfordshire is highly nature-depleted, with far lower proportions of priority habitats and protected areas than the average for England as a whole.

While Littlemore has a range of green and blue spaces – including parks, playing fields, allotments, water courses and woodland – these have varying levels of accessibility. Recently, Littlemore has been identified as one of the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in England in terms of accessible greenspace and one of the priority neighbourhoods (wards) to improve access for the well-being of residents. (University of Oxford, 2024 see [https://www.naturerecovery.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Oxfordshires\\_greenspace\\_deprived\\_neighbourhoods\\_print\\_version-compressed.pdf](https://www.naturerecovery.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Oxfordshires_greenspace_deprived_neighbourhoods_print_version-compressed.pdf) )

Littlemore’s parks and green spaces should be available for recreation and sporting activities, which should accommodate all age groups in safety. It is important to the community that parks and green spaces are well maintained and enhanced as they help to mitigate climate change which is a high priority, provide habitats for wildlife and increase the biodiversity of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

We support the creation of features that encourage wildlife such as bird-boxes or -bricks, bat boxes, rain butts and holes in fences/walls to allow small animals to pass through gardens without these being barriers.

Littlemore is sliced in two by the Ring Road which creates health risks caused by pollution and emissions from traffic. Increased planting, especially of trees and shrubs, is essential for the reduction of carbon emissions and will contribute to alleviating the climate emergency. The maintenance of, and enhancements to, the natural environment is necessary to help these risks to the community.

### **NES1 Protection of, and access to, green and blue spaces**

The Neighbourhood Plan area encompasses two large public parks as well as some smaller parks and green spaces and a limited amount of blue (water) spaces. It also contains a Conservation Area with historical significance and links to Saint John Henry Newman, who instigated the planting of many of Littlemore’s trees. This area with its associated green spaces should be protected, especially to ensure that there is no overall reduction in tree cover.

Areas of natural beauty which are accessible for Littlemore residents by foot, bicycle, bus, or car are to be found outside the area. Access to these green and blue spaces should be maintained and improved for instance

by improvements to surfaces and waymarking to promote physical and mental well-being.

The intention was to complete the process of designating green and blue spaces in Littlemore to be protected by now. Although this has not been possible, we plan to carry out this work as an addendum to the Plan in the near future (please see Appendix 3 for further detail).

#### POLICY NES1

Where development is planned the protection and creation of improved access to green and blue spaces will be supported. Additional local parks and spaces proposed as part of development proposals will also be supported. Such spaces include playing fields, play areas and other leisure facilities.

In particular, the green spaces in the Conservation area of Littlemore should not be adversely impacted by development projects, and the character and historic importance of the natural environment within the Conservation area must be respected and enhanced.

#### **NES2 Protection of wildlife habitats/ biodiversity**

Overall, there should be no net loss of trees as a result of development projects. In addition, with the growing threat of climate change and a global climate emergency, the necessity to preserve and enhance green spaces by trees and other planting is of paramount importance. Developmental pressures should not pose a threat to these important resources, and where development is taking place an absolute requirement to protect both them and access to high quality outdoor spaces which children and adults can access must be included.

As argued above, we believe that we should aim for a net gain in biodiversity working towards 20% and that new developments should aim for at least 15% where possible; and that any loss of biodiversity should not be allowed to be off-set by gains outside Littlemore. Large development projects, such as the proposed residential development south of Grenoble Road should include green spaces with play areas and sufficient planting of trees and other green measures both to ensure an attractive and therapeutic environment for residents to enjoy, and to increase the biodiversity of this area.

The following areas have been identified as wildlife habitats which while not of sufficient significance to be protected by national legislation need to be protected:

- The Northfield and Littlemore Brooks and surrounding land
- The two large recreational parks at Oxford Road and Herschel Crescent/Long Lane
- The Village Green at the junction of Newman Road and Cowley Road
- Graveyard and nature reserve associated with St Mary and St Nicholas Church
- Green areas associated with the surroundings of the Littlemore Mental Health Centre
- Green areas around the Kassam Stadium
- Green areas and playing fields associated with The Oxford Academy
- The nature reserve abutting Plot 27 of the Oxford Science Park (between the railway line and Grenoble Road)
- Other pocket parks, grass verges and green corridors
- Allotments.

The intention was to complete the process of designating protected wildlife habitats in Littlemore by now. Although this has not been possible, we plan to carry out this work as an addendum to the Plan in the near future (please see Appendix 3 for further detail).

## POLICY NES2

Proposals which affect the wildlife habitats identified in the accompanying text above will be supported only if these are protected and where possible enhanced. In keeping with the aspiration to achieve net gain of biodiversity greater than 10%, applicants will be expected to justify why a net gain of 15% or more is not possible when this is not proposed. Proposals which entail any loss of biodiversity will be supported only if any gains elsewhere are within Littlemore.

## POLICY NES3

Proposals will be expected to maintain and where possible increase the existing level of tree cover. Where a development requires removal of trees, these shall be replaced on or very near the site, but within the Neighbourhood Plan area, by at least the same or a higher number of a locally appropriate species that are resilient to climate change. Where proposals include planting additional trees suitable to the area this will be supported.

### NES3 Tree cover and protection

Trees are of enormous importance to the environment, to biodiversity, and to the quality of human life in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Littlemore is among the areas with the lowest level of tree cover in Oxford. Therefore, the level of tree cover (includes standing trees which are dead or dying, where it is safe and possible to do so) should be maintained and increased where possible, in line with Oxfordshire County Council's Tree Policy (see <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/energy-and-climate-change/tree-policy-oxfordshire>). Where trees must be felled for development projects, or for other reasons these should be replaced within the Plan area. While there is one 'Tiny Forest' on the Littlemore Mental Health Centre site, suitable proposals for others will be supported.

The intention was to complete the process by now of updating the list of trees with Tree Preservation Orders. Although this has not been possible, we plan to carry out this work as an addendum to the Plan in the near future (please see Appendix 3 for further detail).

### NES4 Protection of allotments

There are three allotment areas in Littlemore, and their maintenance, improvement and protection from development should be supported. The physical health benefits of gardening, and of growing fruit and vegetables has become well understood, and can be of great benefit to improving community mental health and well-being, in addition to the benefits for the individual. Plans for developing a community garden would enhance this benefit and would be supported. These green spaces are useful in supporting green corridors and biodiversity.

## POLICY NES4

Development proposals that propose the loss or significant overshadowing of existing allotments in the Neighbourhood Plan area will not be supported. Additional allotments proposed will be supported.

## **NEC1 Protecting and enhancing local parks and green spaces and increasing biodiversity and support for wildlife**

Local parks and green spaces are very important to Littlemore residents, especially as many do not have easy access to areas of natural beauty and the countryside. These parks are limited in what they offer to all age groups and need to be well maintained with improved play and exercise facilities, seating, lighting and planting. Maintenance of recreational grass areas and trees in the parks and designated public open spaces is essential to ensure suitable surfaces on which children and young people can play and exercise. Safety considerations, with adequate lighting and easy access for those with limited mobility, are critical for enjoyment of these areas.

The loss of biodiversity is a further issue in Littlemore and attention should be given to providing habitats to support wildlife by maintaining and improving trees and hedgerows. Measures that support, protect and enhance biodiversity in Littlemore also serve to support and protect the human residents. Private gardens are a great resource for this purpose. We recognize that the cutting of verges is an issue on which there are different views, but believe that considerations of safety, tidiness and biodiversity need to be balanced in plans to cut these. More trees and other planting will improve air quality and contribute to the reduction of pollution with benefits to community health.

### **POLICY NEC1**

Measures to protect and enhance existing local parks and green spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan area for people of different ages and abilities and for wildlife will be supported.

Measures to maintain, and where possible increase, the level of biodiversity and wildlife will be supported, for example:

- sensitive maintenance of grass verges and informal green areas better to conserve biodiversity, while ensuring that this does not adversely affect safety or the visual impact, for instance by encouraging increased littering and/or fly-tipping;
- maintaining existing, and introducing new, wildlife corridors wherever possible, to sustain the local natural ecosystem;
- encouraging features which support wildlife, such as bird-boxes and-bricks, rain butts and holes in fences/walls to allow small animals to pass easily through gardens;
- tree and shrub choice to reflect climate fluctuations and change, and to provide habitats for wildlife, particularly for insect species. The choice of planting shall contribute to reducing air pollution and the need for excessive water use;
- protection of the Northfield and Littlemore Brooks and their banks by keeping these areas clear of rubbish and materials which may cause pollution.

## **NEC2 Provision of, and safe access to, green spaces**

Qualitative responses made by residents in the Issues and Options Survey indicated their desire to access green spaces, and to have good signage/maps to know where to walk. Comments were frequently linked to aspects of improving health and well-being.



#### POLICY NEC2

Measures to ensure that mental and physical health and well-being are enhanced by the provision of and safe access to green spaces will be supported.

This includes the provision of improved signage, clearance of footpaths, maps, wheelchair access, benches, play and exercise equipment to aid access to, and enjoyment of, the natural environment.

- working with relevant agencies to devise methods for discouraging vandalism in Littlemore.

### **NEC3 Community support to protect the Natural Environment**

Residents have expressed concern and dissatisfaction with acts of anti-social behaviour which disfigure the natural environment. These include fly tipping, littering, and dog fouling. Activities and methods for engaging the community in caring for the natural environment should be encouraged to help residents have pride in their neighbourhood. Proposals for community growing spaces in Littlemore will be supported.

#### POLICY NEC3

Measures to encourage the Littlemore community to protect and enhance the natural environment will be supported, for example:

- setting up a community allotment/garden for all ages to use;
- community engagement in person and on social media to inspire respect and pride in the natural environment;
- campaigns involving talks and literature to motivate people to respect their environment, e.g. not to litter, or leave broken glass, and dog excrement; and

## TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY (TC)

Bisected by both the Oxford Ring Road and the Cowley Branch line, Littlemore is a parish which can sometimes feel artificially divided by geographical barriers and which would benefit from improvements to both internal and external connectivity. Residents experience heavy motor vehicle traffic on residential roads and are concerned that new developments should minimise the impact of additional journeys on existing road infrastructure. Residents are particularly poorly served by public transport links to community facilities such as hospitals and GP surgeries and efforts to improve these will be strongly supported. Improvements to public transport options are seen as a priority, particularly the introduction of additional bus services to enable travel to community facilities, to shops, and to family and friends. There is strong support for the proposed reopening of the Cowley Branch line to passenger traffic, and for improving access to Cowley Centre. These policies are broadly in line with the objectives of Oxfordshire's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) (see <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/ltcp>), the 'Implementing 'Decide and Provide' : Requirements for Transport Assessments' documentation and the Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan (see <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/central-oxon-travel-plan>).

### TCS1 Reducing additional car journeys

Increased motorised traffic because of new development is a concern to residents of Littlemore. There are currently several traffic bottlenecks within Littlemore (Newman, Cowley and Oxford Roads being the worst). It is considered that the existing road capacity is not sufficient to support any significant increase in motorised vehicle traffic. The addition of new roads is also problematic given land constraints in and around Oxford.

These issues need to be considered in highway management. Development proposals that provide for, and support, walking, cycling and public and community travel as the prime modes of transport will therefore be supported.

#### POLICY TCS1

Development proposals will need to minimise additional motorised traffic and consider measures to reduce additional car journeys caused by the development.

Development proposals that provide for and support walking, cycling and public and community travel as the prime modes of transport will therefore be supported.

Businesses seeking to introduce new parking provision for employees rather than encouraging alternative modes of transport will be expected to justify its necessity.

Proposals to reduce employee parking facilities will be welcomed, provided that this does not put additional undue pressure on the provision of residential on-street parking. Proposals will be expected to provide sufficient secure, conveniently located cycle storage.

### TCS2 Net improvements in connectivity

The Littlemore Plan area straddles both the A4142 Eastern Bypass (Ring Road) , and the Cowley Branch line, both of which often represent obstacles to safe and straightforward travel between the different areas of the parish despite their geographic proximity. Likewise, while access to other parts of the Ring Road and A34 by

motor vehicle is comparatively easy, this is more difficult by walking, cycling and public transport.

Development proposals will be viewed more favourably where they can demonstrate net improvements in relation to walking, cycling and public transport within and beyond the boundaries of Littlemore. We will support the installation of cycle or pedestrian paths, improved bus and improved passenger rail services to other areas of the City and/or to essential community facilities such as GP surgeries and hospitals. Development proposals that provide for the following will also be considered favourably:

- those that seek to ensure future connectivity improvement, especially for areas isolated by the Cowley Branch line;
- those that seek to provide for a future foot/cyclebridge access between Mogridge Drive and the former Dominion Oils site on Railway Lane; and
- measures to improve connectivity by cycle and foot from the Science Park and Armstrong Road to other parts of Littlemore.

#### POLICY TCS2

Development proposals that improve the existing connectivity and preserve opportunities for future connectivity for walking, cycling and public and community transport between major road networks and transport routes between key sites within and around the Neighbourhood Plan area will be supported.

#### TCC1 Safe Travel

Safe travel within Littlemore is a key concern for many residents. For pedestrians, there are several identified areas for improvement, notably there is a wish for new

crossings of busy roads in the Plan area, and for the installation and maintenance of adequate street and footpath lighting. Where pavements are regularly obstructed so that wheelchairs and pushchairs cannot travel safely along them, measures to ensure that they can do so and to enforce existing restrictions will be supported.

Other vulnerable road users including cyclists would benefit from access to new or improved segregated cycle lanes on key routes, including those beside the Ring Road and near the Kassam Stadium. In terms of road travel, specific junctions are highlighted for improvement, and residents express considerable frustration at the condition of road surfaces and the timeliness of repairs.

#### POLICY TCC1

Measures which improve the safety of travel within and from Littlemore, especially for children and the elderly, will be supported, for instance the slowing of traffic in high usage areas, additional pedestrian crossings (e.g. on Sandy Lane West and Sainsburys access road off the Heyford Hill roundabout), improvements to the Cottesmore bridge to Rose Hill, segregated cycle lanes, adequate and well-maintained street and footpath lighting, improvement of the junction of Newman Road and Oxford Road, and timely repairs to road and pavement surfaces.

#### TCC2 Cowley Branch Line

The proposed reopening of the Cowley Branch line to passenger traffic is strongly supported by Littlemore residents. This project, including the development of a new station in the Kassam/Science Park area, would bring greatly improved connectivity to Oxford City

centre and onward connections, and create an opportunity for a multi-modal transport/mobility hub. However, concerns about the potential impact in terms of traffic and parking mean that the implications of implementation will need to be carefully thought through. Improvements which enhance safety at the Spring Lane level crossing will be supported.

#### POLICY TCC2

Reopening of the Cowley Branch Line to passenger traffic and the creation of a multi-modal, transport/mobility hub near the proposed station will be strongly supported, subject to adequate provision for related infrastructure, facilities and onward travel, such as cycle parking, bus services and safe travel routes, especially at the Spring Lane crossing.

#### **TCC3 Access to Cowley Centre**

The introduction of a bollard on Littlemore Road has been divisive locally and has impacted very severely the ease with which Littlemore residents, whether by public transport or by private means, are able to access Cowley Centre; and has caused problems with access for emergency services and residents receiving visits from carers. The bollard has since been replaced with an ANPR camera. There is considerable support for changes to enable residents to reach Cowley Centre easily, particularly via public transport, and by other means for those not easily able to use public transport, taking into account the safety of vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and users of mopeds and similar).

#### POLICY TCC3

Measures which make access to Cowley Centre easier and quicker for Littlemore residents will be supported if they do not have a detrimental impact on the safety of vulnerable road users. Measures to improve bus services and enhance the safety of cyclists and enable better vehicular access for emergency vehicles, blue badge holders, carers and Littlemore residents along Littlemore Road will be strongly supported.

#### **TCC4 Air and Noise Pollution**

The presence of the Oxford Ring Road within Littlemore impacts residents in terms of both noise and air pollution, as does congestion in certain areas. There is broad support for measures to measure, mitigate and reduce these impacts to the benefit of the health and well-being of the local population.

#### POLICY TCC4

Proposals to measure, monitor and improve air quality and reduce excessive noise to improve the health and well-being of residents will be supported.

#### **TCC5 Improved Bus Services**

Bus services connecting Littlemore to other areas of Oxford and beyond have historically been poor, though there have been recent improvements, with others planned. A proposed 'Eastern Arc' route connecting Littlemore to the Headington hospitals would be welcomed, as would improved services to GP surgeries, Cowley Centre and North Oxford. With the potential

new rail station on the Cowley Branch Line and redevelopment of Cowley Centre, there is an opportunity to create two new transport/mobility hubs with good connections between the two running through and beyond the Littlemore Plan area.

**POLICY TCC5**

Measures to introduce new or improve existing local bus services will be strongly supported. In particular, connections from different parts of Littlemore to Cowley Centre, the Headington hospitals and other areas of Oxford will be supported. Affordable and convenient connections between new proposed transport/mobility hubs at Cowley Centre and the Cowley Branch Line station near the Kassam site will be supported.

**POLICY TCC6**

Measures to encourage through traffic to use trunk roads to circumvent Littlemore in preference to driving through the parish will be supported.

In particular, measures to reduce the amount of through traffic especially lorries over 7.5 tonnes and enforce any prohibitions on Sandford Road will be actively encouraged and supported. A proposal for Park and Ride or a similar measure which would reduce the traffic passing through Littlemore would be encouraged, subject to consultation on the detail of the scheme.

**TCC6 Discouraging through traffic**

Certain routes within Littlemore see significant amounts of motor traffic (including HGVs driving through residential areas) a situation which is likely to increase in future years unless measures are taken to restrict this. Residents would welcome reductions in vehicular traffic through residential areas except where necessary for access.

While no plans for an additional Park and Ride are currently proposed, such a scheme would be encouraged to minimize traffic passing through the residential areas of Littlemore.



## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (HW)

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO). The aim of the policies relating to Health and Well-Being is both to prevent poor health and promote healthy lifestyles, while also addressing health inequalities and poor provision of primary care facilities locally. This is in line with Oxfordshire County Council's Director of Public Health' 2020 report called 'Some are more equal than others -hidden inequalities in a prospering Oxfordshire' (see <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/public-health/PublicHealthAnnualReportMay2020.pdf> ); and his 2023/4 report 'Healthier, cleaner, faster: climate action for health in Oxfordshire' (see <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/public-health-and-wellbeing/public-health-annual-report> ).

Littlemore residents need access to primary health care, to health education and to environments that promote healthy living. They need to feel safe, and part of our community. Some require help both to overcome obstacles associated with poverty, deprivation and addiction; and to make choices where possible which will enhance their physical and mental health in aspects such as food, physical activity and social interaction. We wish to increase the opportunities for residents to grow, access and afford locally produced food of high quality. The promotion of health and well-being underlies policies in other areas of this Neighbourhood Plan, for example those related to sport and recreational facilities, those related to reducing air pollution and those related to outdoor space which encourage an active lifestyle.

### **HWS1 Primary health care facilities**

For all age groups, primary healthcare provision is essential to maintaining good physical and mental health. Littlemore lacks essential health infrastructure, and

currently has no dentist, pharmacy, or doctor's surgery, nor any outreach health clinics. Access to NHS primary healthcare from Littlemore is almost certainly worse in terms of distance and accessibility than from any other part of Oxford, as indicated in Community Insight Report and the Map on page 8. The nearest dental practices and pharmacies are in Rose Hill and Temple Cowley, each a significant distance away from most of Littlemore. Most residents in Littlemore are registered at Donnington Medical Partnership (in Cowley ward) at The Leys Health Centre (in Northfield Brook ward) or at Temple Cowley Health Centre (in Temple Cowley ward). Each is a significant distance away from most of Littlemore. Attendance at satellite clinics such as Health Visitor appointments requires patients to travel a considerable distance. In addition to the inpatient psychiatric unit the Littlemore Mental Health Centre houses some Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust community-based services, but no facilities or clinics that are targeted specifically at Littlemore residents. Working in partnership with other agencies, especially Local Authorities and those who plan NHS services, to reduce health inequalities, and improve access to primary health care provision, is therefore a significant priority, recognizing that these must be operationally and financially viable.

#### **POLICY HWS1**

Development proposals that provide for a dedicated GP surgery with a pharmacy, or a Health Hub/clinic space within another facility and a separate pharmacy will be strongly supported. Dedicated car and bicycle parking both for staff and patients should be provided and the site should be readily accessible to residents of the Plan Area by bus, foot, bicycle and car. Similarly, developments that improve availability of and access to dental facilities, especially NHS ones, will be supported.

Proposals to site community health facilities and mobile health-related clinics in Littlemore will also be supported.

groups and parenting guidance. Activities or community groups aimed at young people will be supported, for example, a youth council, youth clubs and community/street art spaces.

### **HWC1 Fostering community cohesion**

Despite having multiple potential spaces, Littlemore has no community hub or café. Many of the existing food outlets promote fast food. An inviting space with hot drinks and healthy food choices available, accessible to residents at various times of the week would provide a destination within Littlemore, put simply, somewhere to go and something to do. The same venue could be used to entertain and educate, for example using Flo's café (Florence Park), as a model.

#### **POLICY HWC1**

Projects to support healthy living and community cohesion will be supported including the development of a community hub, café and community larder. Improved access for residents to facilities (e.g. gymnasium, tennis courts, school hall) within Littlemore's schools will be supported, where this can be agreed with the appropriate body.

Investments and activities that aim to tackle loneliness, promote mental well-being and encourage community cohesion and resilience will be supported. Proposals to make activities affordable especially for residents on low incomes will be supported. Measures to attract or initiate community groups to the Plan Area aimed at people of any age/gender/ethnicity will be supported, particularly those that educate or facilitate positive health related behaviours, for example cookery classes to facilitate healthy food choices, exercise

### **HWC2 Enhancing the safety of the community**

Drug and alcohol abuse is a problem in parts of Littlemore and rates of violent crime, and sexual offences are disproportionately high compared to Oxford City. Feeling safe is an essential part of health and well-being. Being intimidated, threatened, or at risk from physical injury from broken glass or discarded needles, all contribute to a sense of anxiety. Furthermore, for those suffering from addiction (a treatable psychiatric disorder) health interventions and support may be required.

#### **POLICY HWC2**

Investments and initiatives that promote the safety of residents and discourage anti-social behaviour will be supported. This may include increased street lighting, enhanced community police presence, targeted crime reduction interventions in known drug use and drug dealing hotspots, CCTV, Neighbourhood Watch groups and support for those who are vulnerable to addiction (e.g. alcohol and narcotic support groups, needle exchanges/bins).

### **HWC3 Addressing poverty and health inequality**

Poverty can be both a cause and a consequence of poor mental and physical health. As indicated in the statistics cited on pages 9-11, indicators of poor health are significantly worse and levels of deprivation much higher in Littlemore than in most other areas of Oxford.

Littlemore is the 8<sup>th</sup> most deprived ward in Oxfordshire and the 3<sup>rd</sup> most deprived in Oxford. Both adults and children are affected, but children especially so, with 28.8% of children under 16 in Littlemore living in poverty, the highest in Oxford or Oxfordshire. The Oxford Academy has 49% of students eligible for the pupil premium, and John Henry Newman Primary Academy 43%. The national average is 23%. (We recognise that both schools, especially The Oxford Academy, draw from beyond the boundaries of Littlemore.) There is also marked inequality of income and health within Littlemore, with 39% of children living on the Minchery Farm estate below the poverty line, higher than any other area in Oxfordshire.

While this situation is worrying, we believe that there are opportunities working with businesses such as those in the Oxford Science Park, Ellison Institute of Technology and Railpen, the two universities in Oxford and other agencies to provide better educational and employment opportunities for Littlemore and in the longer-term address some other issues associated with poverty and ill-health.

The provision of adult evening courses in local schools and other community facilities will be supported to upskill local residents. Links between local schools and local major employers and universities will be encouraged, with emphasis on access to both careers advice and work experience opportunities for young people from Littlemore.

Existing Home Start/Growing Minds initiatives and local free or minimally priced 'stay and plays' together with parent education groups including cookery classes will be protected and their ongoing provision prioritised and expanded as the population of Littlemore grows.

Where needed, the provision of food banks and other similar schemes to alleviate deprivation, hunger and ill health in Littlemore will be facilitated.

#### **POLICY HWC3**

Investments and initiatives that seek to combat poverty, including child poverty, will be supported. This may include ensuring that residents have access to face-to-face advice services and support for example with navigating Universal Credit and Tax-Free Childcare applications.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 LOCALISM AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

This is a summary of key points from Neighbourhood Planning guidance to add detail to what is described on pages 14 and 15. More detailed guidance can be seen at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers for communities and individuals to enable them to get directly involved in planning for their areas.

Neighbourhood planning allows communities to come together through a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum and produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the spatial planning policies in the relevant Local Plan (in this case the Oxford City 2036 Local Plan though this is likely to be superseded by the 2040 Local Plan) which must in turn conform with the National Policy Planning Framework.

Neighbourhood Plans can provide local communities the opportunity to allocate land for development and to say where new houses, businesses, shops and so on should go and what they should look like. Once Plans are adopted, they become an important consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

A Neighbourhood Plan is also intended to provide the local community with the opportunity to identify key issues for the neighbourhood concerned and shape what future planned growth will look like. It may be used to influence where new development is located, what type it should be and what it should look like. It may also influence other matters of local interest such as open spaces and community facilities. It cannot be used to stop development already allocated or permitted; neither can it propose less development than that which has been

adopted in a Local Plan. However, it may propose more development than the Local Plan if a community requires this. Neighbourhood Plans also provide opportunities for communities to set out non-planning actions and aspirations so that the resulting document presents a holistic framework for the future of an area.

The Plan may be designed to cover a period from 5 to 20 years. The process of preparing a Plan provides an opportunity for communities to work with their local Councils on, for example, the allocation of sites, the review of Conservation areas and the protection of trees through Tree Preservation Orders. Once the Plan has been adopted it forms part of the statutory development plan framework for the area in question and carries real legal weight in decisions on planning applications and planning appeals.

One important form of engagement is through an Issues and Options consultation to find out the views of those who live work and study in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. This was conducted in Littlemore in the summer of 2023.

Those preparing a Neighbourhood Plan can also informally consult the community using a range of appropriate techniques such as:

- community profiling: creating a shared picture with the community of the physical, human, social, economic and community characteristics, assets and issues found in an area.
- organised discussion groups: such as focus groups which allow small group discussions that give in-depth consideration to relevant local issues surrounding specific topics.

Following the Issues and Options Survey, and analysis of the responses, a draft Plan with the relevant proposed policies was written. This was approved for public consultation by Littlemore Parish Council in February

2024. Oxford City Council was asked to screen the draft to assess the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HEA). They have indicated that this is not necessary and completed their formal screening statement which is available at [Littlemore-NP-Initial-SEA-Screening-Statement\\_May-2024.pdf](https://www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk/Assets/Screening-Statement_May-2024.pdf) ([littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk](https://www.littlemoreparishcouncil.gov.uk))

this depends on how quickly these processes are completed.

Consultation must include two formal legally required processes, and an ongoing informal engagement and consultation process. Additional comments and information provided by the community during these consultations are used to finalise the Draft Plan.

The first of these is the formal Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation of a set length (normally at least 6 weeks) when the Plan is made available for public viewing and comment and when key statutory stakeholders are consulted. This ran between 7<sup>th</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with the relevant documentation made available on the Littlemore Parish Council website and in various community facilities locally.

Following this consultation, the responses have to be considered carefully, so that the draft Plan can be adjusted and updated as appropriate. This process (completed in July/August 2024) has resulted in this draft Plan. Once approved by the Parish Council, the Plan is then submitted to Oxford City Council, along with the necessary supporting documentation. The City Council then check whether the Plan meets the necessary legal requirements, and then consult on the Plan themselves.

The Neighbourhood Plan will then need to be formally considered by an independent examiner. This may result in further changes to the policies in the Plan.

The final Plan is then put to residents in a referendum for adoption, hopefully in May 2025, though the timing of



## APPENDIX 2 DEFINITION OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

As outlined on page 23, it is not easy to define exactly what terms such as infrastructure and associated ones such as community facilities include. While there are specific definitions for planning purposes under the Use Classes Order (1987) as amended (see <https://www.planninggeek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Town-and-Country-Planning-Use-Classes-Order-1987.pdf>) we have adopted a very broad definition, building on that of the proposed Oxford 2040 Local Plan. This sees infrastructure as including schools, hospitals, utilities, digital communications, transport provision, and community facilities. We also include shops, eating places, parks, libraries, leisure and recreational facilities, public toilets, primary health care and other similar facilities which need to be easily accessible to residents if neighbourhoods are to thrive. As will be evident, we believe that the current infrastructure is in many cases inadequate; and that this situation is likely to worsen if the resident population and the numbers of people working in Littlemore increase.

By 'community facilities', we mean facilities which are available to members of the public, including many of those outlined in the previous paragraph, regardless of who owns or runs these. However, we specifically highlight in CIS1 and the accompanying text:

- the leisure facilities at the Ozone Leisure Park, since there is a risk that access to these may be reduced or lost especially if the site and/or surrounding area is redeveloped;
- the Community Centre which is owned by the City Council and needs substantial redevelopment or replacement; and
- the Village Hall which is run by a group of trustees but needs substantial investment.

In CIS2 we list a group of community assets of different types and ownership which are of value to residents of Littlemore and need to be protected and/or improved. Other assets could be added to this list. The Kassam Stadium could be included but is not on the grounds that it is likely to be developed. The Littlemore Priory site, currently derelict, but important historically, is discussed in BES5.

We also wish to highlight the importance of facilities such as the restaurant in the Magdalen Building of the Science Park and the café in the Littlemore Mental Health Centre which are open to the public. And facilities at the Ellison Institute of Technology and in the new development of Eastpoint Business Park by Railpen which are intended to be available to local residents and if so should be of considerable benefit to the local community.

## APPENDIX 3 DESIGNATION OF GREEN SPACES AND LOCAL WILDLIFE SITES AND UPDATING OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS

As indicated in the Natural Environment section of the Plan, our intention is to consider whether there are green spaces (p 27) and wildlife habitats/sites (p 28) which should be designated and, if so, do what is necessary; and to update the current list of trees which have Tree Preservation Orders (p 29). We shall base this on the appropriate criteria and follow the necessary process, which are briefly summarized below. We will also take account of the detailed considerations in Chapter 4 of the draft of the Oxford 2040 Plan

<https://www.oxford.gov.uk/downloads/file/2363/csd001---oxford-local-plan-2040-proposed-submission-draft>

### Green Spaces

Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The green spaces currently designated can be seen on [green-spaces-map-littlemore \(oxford.gov.uk\)](#) (for Littlemore Ward), though no map appears to be available which indicates those in the part of Littlemore Parish in Cowley Ward. A more up to date map showing green spaces is available at [Oxford Local Plan 2040 Policies Map \(arcgis.com\)](#). While no potential Green Spaces (other than possibly part of the Oxford Academy site to which the Parish Council does not object) are designated for development in the draft 2040 plan, the Parish Council intends to consider whether any other Green Spaces should be designated, as a precaution against loss of these in future.

The criteria for designating Green Spaces are set out in [Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

In brief, these are that:

- designating any Local Green Space needs to be consistent with local planning for sustainable development and designation should not be used in a way that undermines this aim of plan making;
- Local Green Spaces may be designated where those spaces are demonstrably special to the local community;
- Local Green Space designation should only be used where the Green Space is:
  - (a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  - (b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife); and
  - (c) local in character and not an extensive tract of land, with there being no lower size limit for a local Green Space.

### Wildlife sites

We recognize that there is a hierarchy in terms of wildlife sites, so that some are already designated as of more than local importance (such as National Nature Reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Local Wildlife Sites are sites identified locally for their substantive nature conservation importance, either for wildlife or geology. It is thought that only two sites in Littlemore (Littlemore and Northfield Brook and Littlemore Brook) have been designated as Local Wildlife Sites, though two others (Railway Cutting which includes a geological SSSI and Minchery Farm) were considered in 2017 but no decision was made. We intend to establish whether this is accurate and review whether there are any other suitable sites for designation as Local Wildlife Sites. We recognize the need for guidance on

identification of suitable sites and the process as outlined in [Guidance: statutory and non-statutory wildlife site designations | Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre \(tverc.org\)](#) This process will follow the criteria which are set locally, in this case by The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. Existing sites supporting wildlife and biodiversity even where these are not designated as Local Wildlife Sites will be protected and enhanced wherever possible.

### **Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)**

A list of trees currently subject to TPOs is available in <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/trees-hedges/tree-preservation-order-conservation-area-locations> .

However, the Parish Council believe that this needs to be updated. The criteria for making TPOs are in <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/tree-preservation-orders-and-trees-in-conservation-areas#what-trees-protected> .

In brief, TPOs should be used to protect trees if their removal would have a significant negative impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public, using the following criteria:

- visibility (the tree or part of it should normally be visible from a public place such as a road or footpath) or accessible to the public; and
- the importance of a tree (or group of trees) in terms of size and form, future potential as an amenity, rarity, cultural or historic value, contribution to, and relationship with the landscape and contribution to the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Where relevant, other factors such as the importance to nature conservation or response to climate change may be taken into account. As indicated in the Oxford City Council guidance, all trees with a trunk/stem diameter greater than 75 mm as measured at 1.5 metres from ground level are protected within a Conservation Area.

To issue a TPO, Oxford City Council must confirm that:

- the trees are at risk and that it is expedient to make an order; and
- there will be a reasonable degree of public benefit.

However, it is not necessary for there to be an immediate risk and it may sometimes be appropriate to make TPOs proactively.

## APPENDIX 4 MEMBERS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING WORKING GROUP AND POLICY GROUPS

The membership of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group (NPWG) changed slightly over time as new members joined and others left.

### Key:

LPC indicates Littlemore Parish Council

(R) indicates a local resident not on Littlemore Parish Council

### Members of the NPWG:

Tony Eade Chair, NPWG (R)  
Jan Pullen Councillor, LPC  
Maggie Willis Councillor and previous Chair, LPC  
Chris Smowton Councillor, LPC  
Peter George Councillor and Chair, LPC  
Lynne Davies Councillor, LPC  
Gabrielle Santi Councillor, LPC (to May 2024)  
Anna Railton Councillor, LPC (to May 2024)  
David Henwood Councillor, LPC (from May 2024)  
Trish Elphinstone County Councillor for Rose Hill  
and Littlemore  
Frank Gargent (R)  
Ruth Corrigan (R)  
Matt Elliott (R)  
Ruth McNamara (R)  
Laura Davis (R)

### Members of the Policy Groups were:

**Built Environment:** Chris Smowton (facilitator), Sue Stewart (Councillor, LPC to May 2024), Matt Elliott, Tony Eade

**Community Assets and Infrastructure:** Tony Eade (facilitator), Maggie Willis, Frank Gargent, Peter George, Katie McNeill (R), Dominic Oram (R)

**Natural Environment:** Jan Pullen (facilitator), Julia Brocklesby (R), Jenny Wheeldon (R), Laura Davis, Maggie Willis

**Transport and Connectivity:** Matt Elliott and Trish Elphinstone (co-facilitators), Chris Smowton, Gabriele Santi

**Health and Well-Being:** Ruth Corrigan (facilitator), Ruth McNamara, Sandy Douglas (Oxford City Councillor to May 2024), Lynne Davies, Sadiea Mustafa-Awan (Councillor, LPC).