

Appendix 1 – Baseline Evidence

Bletchington and Hampton Gay and Poyle Neighbourhood Development Plan

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The Parish of Bletchingdon

Location



Figure 1 - Bletchingdon parish map

Bletchingdon is a parish in the south of the Cherwell District Council (CDC) area. It has an area of 10.75km² (2654 acres) and extends approximately 5km east to west and to a maximum of 4km north to south. The parish is 12km north of the centre of Oxford and 5km north of Kidlington. To the west is Woodstock with the major centre of Bicester a 15-minute drive (13km) to the north east.

The area covered by this neighbourhood plan consists of five distinct settlements. The largest is the central area of the parish of Bletchingdon, which contains the majority of the population and communal facilities. Bletchingdon has two distinct outlier hamlets, Enslow to the west and Heathfield to the east - each about 2km from the main village.

Approximately 90% of the area of the parish is rural and mainly used for arable agriculture but with some considerable woodland to the east. Bletchingdon Park, a privately-owned country estate with a substantial Palladium mansion lies in the centre of the village.

The central portion of the village is situated on an area of relatively high ground with the fields falling away around it. All of the five roads leading into the village involve a hill with an ascent of anything up to 40m.

The 13th century church of St. Giles is at the northern end of the village area, which was once its main centre. Today, the church and its immediate environs contain about 20 residential properties and are separated from the main part of the village by fields and a small woodland. The central area of the village contains a modern school, village hall and shop together with an 18th century public house (currently closed). There is also a nursery school, housed in the original village school. There is a sports and social club to the south of the village and three designated play areas within the parish.

Heathfield at the eastern end of the parish contains a nursing home, around 20 homes and a developing static caravan site. There are also a number of small businesses. Enslow at the western edge of the parishes also has a number of homes and small businesses.

History

The origins of the original settlement are uncertain but the name Bletchingdon is likely to originate in the Anglo Saxon “Blecci’s Hill” which suggests that an important tribal leader named Blecci was once based in the area.

There is little to suggest any strong settlement in the area prior to the 11th century although there is some evidence of a Saxon settlement which has recently been found between Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay. A 6th/early 7th century brooch has also been found in the parish. The majority of the archaeological finds within the area are medieval or post medieval. There was a medieval manor, known today as Bletchingdon Park and this became a dominant influence on the community as the activities of its various owners left their mark on the village.

The first written record of the village appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 AD, known there as ‘Blicestone’. At this time, the manor was in the possession of Gilbert of Robert d’Oilly, and was an estate assessed at 8 hides (500-900 acres). The manor has links to Bucknell through the d’Amory family, who lived at both manors in the 12th century. Roger Damory, the manor’s owner in the early 14th century, was married to Elizabeth de Clare, the foundress of Clare College, Cambridge. The manor was passed to the Poure family in the late 14th century. The manor was part sold, and then repossessed to Sir John Lenthall in the 1620s, and leased to Sir Thomas Coghill in the 1630s. The Coghill family were in possession of the manor until it was sold to the Earl of Anglesey in 1716. Poure’s Manor is likely to have been on or near the site of the present Bletchingdon Park. There is little evidence of this medieval manor, which was first recorded in 1322, although it is thought to have been sited on the 19th century pleasure gardens, now the field northeast of Ledgers Spinney. During the 16th century it was described as ‘lying on the village street’, however this may refer to the extensions of the park at this time. The manor played its part in the Civil War, being fortified and garrisoned by 200 men in 1643, indicating how substantial the house was at this time. The house was surrendered to Cromwell in 1644 without putting up a fight and sustaining little significant damage. It is likely that Cromwell himself spent some time within the manor.

The Annesleys had been the chief landowners in the parish since 1666 when Arthur Annesley, the 3rd Earl of Anglesey, bought Bletchingdon House and estate from Charles, Duke of Richmond. The latter had acquired them in 1661 through a marriage settlement with his wife Margaret, the widow of William Lewes. The Annesley family was Irish in origin, and had obtained land and money through the suppression of the native Irish for Cromwell. Lord Anglesey had been created Earl in 1661 and had held many important political posts before his death in 1686. The sale of Bletchingdon Park to the Honourable William Astor in 1948 brought the inhabitation by the Annesleys to an end. The 12th Viscount Valentia died the following year and the titles passed to relatives in Ireland, where the indeed title had originated.

At the time of the Domesday book the land was primarily rough grazing and plough land cultivated by serfs and 17 peasant families. After the plague years of the mid-14th century serfdom declined and tenanted farms took over. Tax assessments in the 14th century show that the village was less prosperous than its immediate neighbours, but this changed over the next hundred years as sheep grazing took over. This increased the pressure for enclosure of the land which began in the 15th

century and was largely complete by 1622. Some of the farmers build up considerable landholdings with impressive farmhouses, five of which are still in evidence today in their original locations.

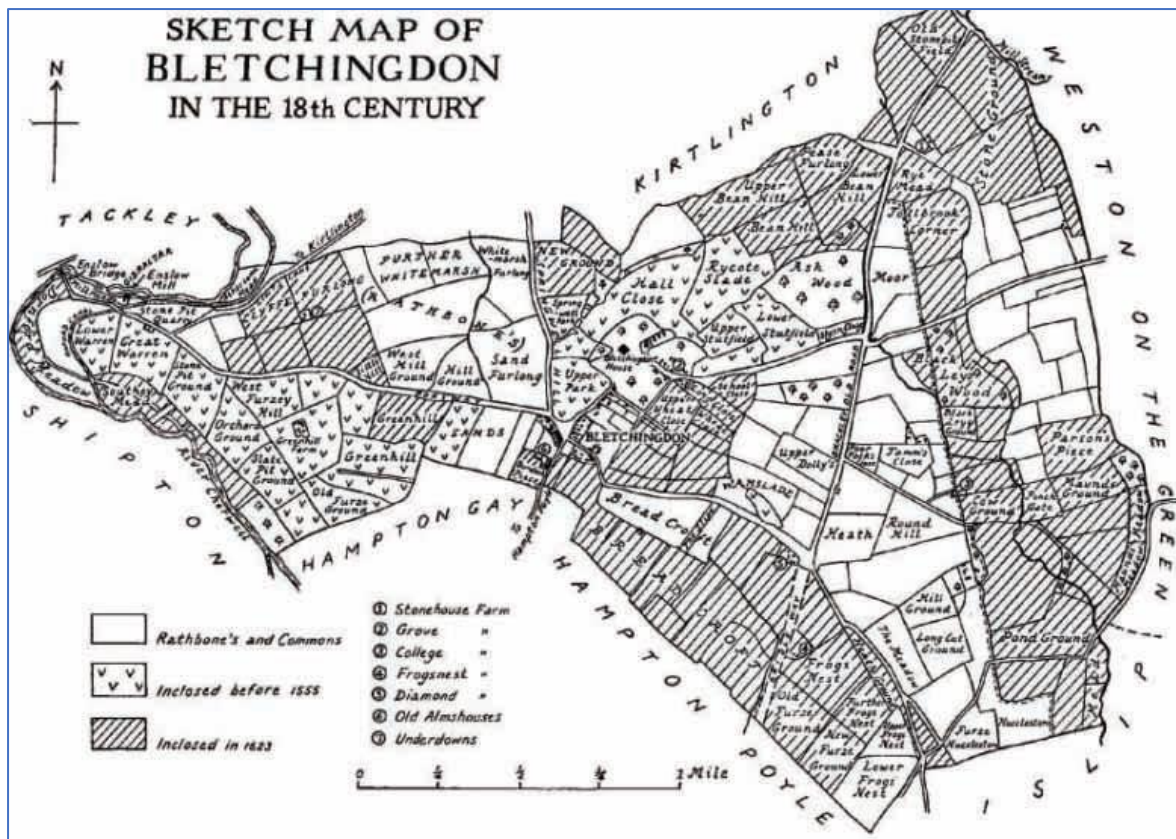


Figure 2 - Sketch map of field boundaries and the enclosures of the 16th and 17th century

With enclosure the workers were no longer tied to a manorial system and this enabled trades to develop. What is still the main road through the village (B4027) was the main route from London to Worcester and this stimulated trade with coaching inns etc. The first reference to an 'ale-house' is in 1616, and it is known that The Angel and Crown existed in the 1670s. The village had a total of three public houses at its height. The present pub, the Black's Head Inn, is an 18th century construction, however it is not named as one of three pubs in the village in 1793, which were the Red Lion, the Swan, and the Green Man. The earliest of these is likely to be the Red Lion, which is now a private dwelling.

The Oxford canal was completed in 1790 and the Oxford to Banbury railway line which runs along the Cherwell valley was completed in 1850 with a station at Enslow. Both of these developments increased the opportunity for employment and trade within the village, particularly at Enslow. Both enabled goods particularly coal to be brought into the village but also produce from the quarries at Enslow and grain and milk from the area to be exported. The station closed in 1964.

At the start of the 19th century the population were predominantly employed in agriculture and ancillary trades. There were the usual blacksmiths, bakers, shopkeepers and service trades to be found in villages at the time.

Schools in one form or another had existed since the 17th century, but the education act of 1871 prompted the building of a parochial school on land donated by Lord Valentia and money raised locally. This opened in 1876. In 1928 the school was reorganised with the senior pupils transferring to Kirtlington. This transfer ceased after WW2 and children now transfer at 11, mainly to the secondary school in Woodstock. In 2015 the school moved to new premises on Station Road and the old building is now used as a privately-run nursery school.

Population

Population figures exist for most ten-year periods starting in 1801. The current population of Bletchington is 1100, while that of Hampton Gay and Poyle is 170 (ONS: 2021).

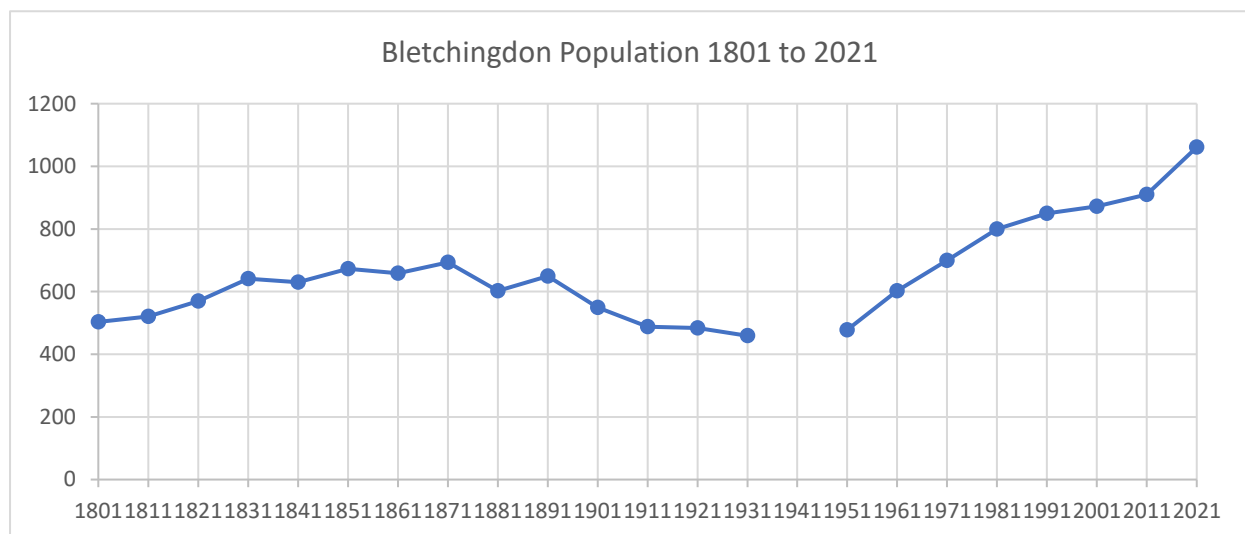


Figure 3 - Bletchington population 1801-2021 (Note: there is no data for 1941. The figures for 1971, 1981 and 1991 are approximate.)



Figure 4 - Bletchington in 1904

The population grew steadily during the 19th century reaching a maximum of over 700 by 1875 but thereafter declined with the onset of the agricultural depression. The decline continued until the Second World War and was marked by further declines in employment opportunities and by younger people leaving the area. By 1951 it was still less than it had been 150 years earlier. It was not to exceed the 1870s high point again until the 1970s.

The 1904 map of the village shows a limited amount of settlement within the central area and Enslow, but as the census returns show dwellings scattered around the area. This pattern of settlement had existed for at least 100 years and was not to change significantly until sometime after the second world war with a greater concentration in the central area.

Development context

Population growth was enabled after 1950 by housebuilding and improved communications which allowed people to easily work outside the village. Major housing developments were:

- 1930's Station Road
- 1950's Valentia Close, Oxford Road
- 1960's St. Giles, Coghill, Annesley Close, Islip Road
- 1970's Lenthall
- 2000's Springwell
- 2017-22 Duchy Field, Enslow, Heathfield

Since 2015, Bletchingdon has added a major development in the north-west quarter of the village centre between Station and Kirtlington roads. Beforehand, this area was farmland, with two small developments of social housing totalling 22 units. The new development comprises a new school, village hall, co-op store and 58 homes. The school and hall opened in 2015 with the shop following in 2019 and the housing finally completed in 2023. An additional house has been built at the junction of the two roads.

The 2015 development was generally welcomed, particularly since it provided valuable additions to the local infrastructure. It did, however, add approximately 20% to the housing stock in the village centre, together with a similar increase in population. The housing is well planned and built and the design blends in with the local, historic older housing. Concerns have been expressed, however, that the character of the village has changed and that it will take time for a new character to emerge. Concerns have also been expressed that any further housing development should be on a small scale. A major impact has been on the number of traffic movements within the village, not just from the increased population but also from traffic associated with school, hall, and shop.

The outliers of Bletchingdon, Heathfield and Enslow have also seen new developments and conversions of existing buildings. These have added some 40 units to the housing stock in the last twelve years. Because of their separation from the bulk of the village the impact of these developments has been less than the ones in the centre. These communities have no social infrastructure and are reliant upon private transport for shopping, entertainment etc. and there has therefore been an impact upon the level of traffic in the village.

Since 2019, there have been no applications for any major developments. Five single units have been given permission, only one in the main village and three have involved conversions or an annex. There has been, however, expressions of developer interest in three other sites, two of which are in the green belt. One was for 5 houses, which has since been rejected, the other on a substantial piece of agricultural land with up to 200 homes. Both have been opposed within the village. The third site of 44 homes, which is in the proposed CDC local plan, is outside of the green belt and has also faced opposition.

Further development within the main village is severely constrained by two factors. The Oxford Green Belt boundary runs along the B4027 from the western edge of the parish and then from the centre of the village along the minor road to Weston on the Green. It therefore covers land to the south of this boundary including much of Enslow and all of Heathfield. If this constraint is to be respected, the majority of the land in the parish is excluded from further development.

The second constraint is the Bletchington conservation area. This covers the central and historic central area of the village. Within this area are 32 listed buildings or structures, two of them Grade II* and one, the church Grade I. Although new building is allowed in this area, there is very little remaining space outside of the green belt where this would not have a detrimental impact on the conservation area.

Tourism has been a driver of some development. There are already two touring caravan sites in the village and a static caravan park of 144 “lodges” is being developed at Heathfield. Another is proposed on an existing caravan site to the south of Station Road. There are also a number of properties available for short term lets. Although these bring revenue and employment to the village they none the less put further strain on the road system.

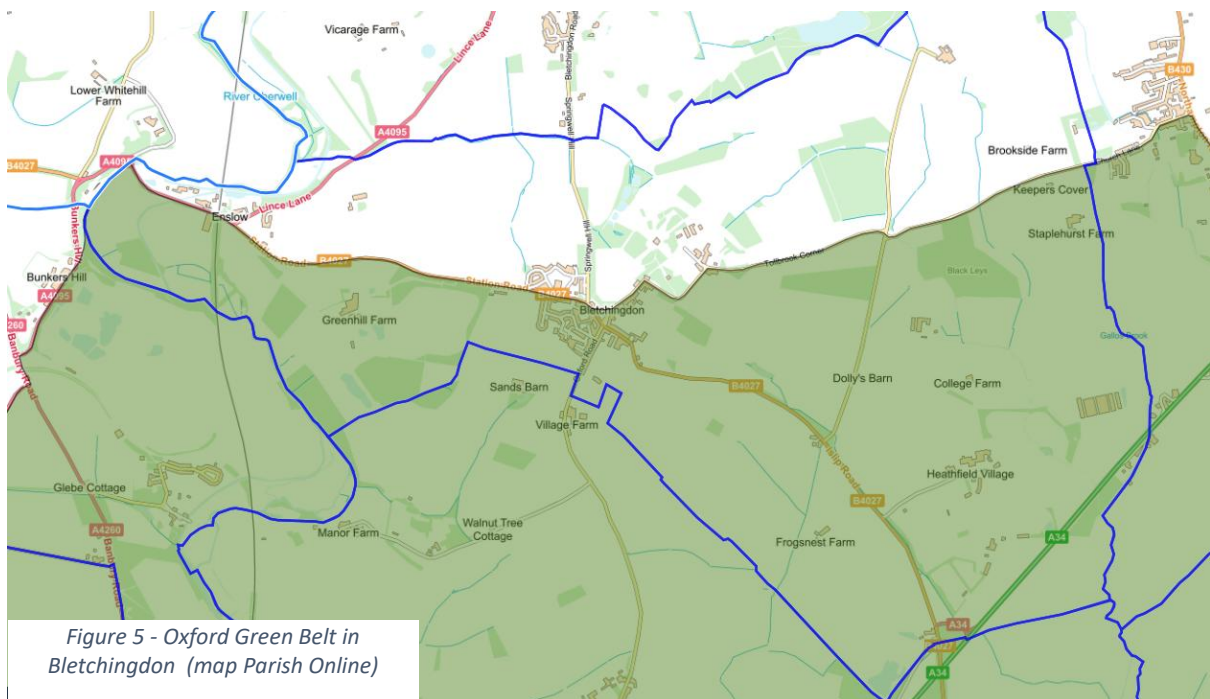


Figure 5 - Oxford Green Belt in Bletchington (map Parish Online)

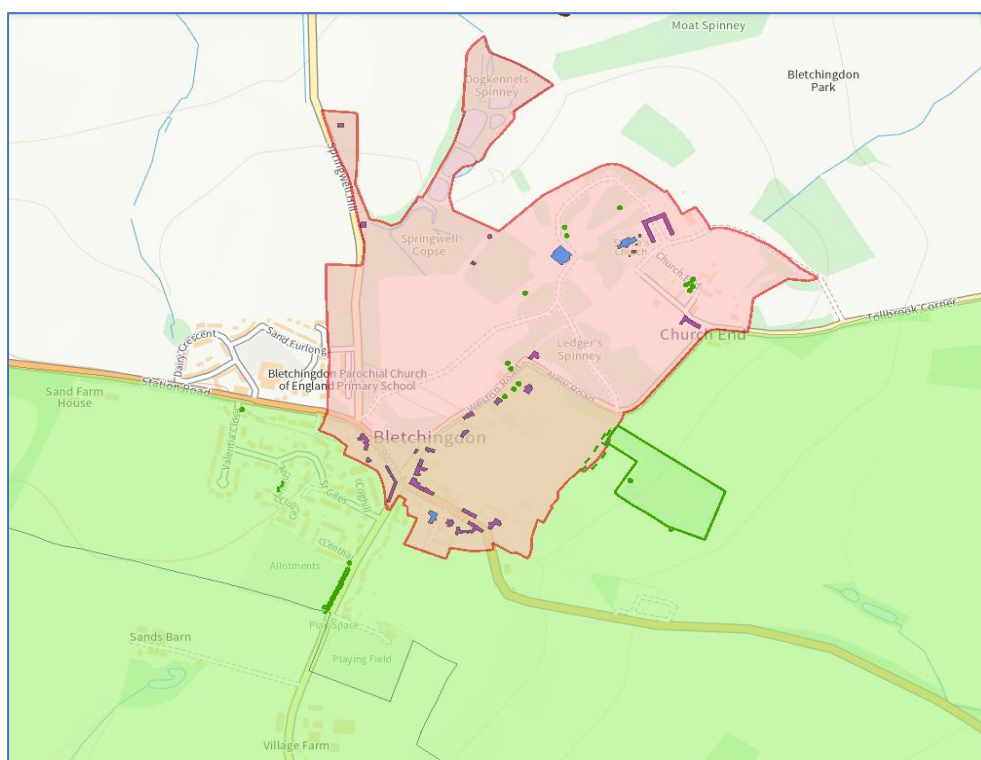


Figure 6 - Bletchingdon Conservation Area: also showing listed buildings, tree preservation orders (in green) and part of the green belt (from Cherwell District Council)

Baseline Assessment

Introduction

Members of the steering group established the baseline situation in Bletchingdon in relation to a number of sustainability indicators. The data and material gathered here has been used to guide policy development and evidencing in the NP.

Biodiversity, fauna and flora

Bletchingdon has a comprehensive Conservation Plan (2013). This Plan 'assesses the wildlife present in the parish of Bletchingdon. It is a record of each of the main habitat types and areas of particular wildlife value present in the parish. It concentrates on plant and animal wildlife and sets out some suggestions for looking after it.'

This is an important and detailed ecological record and is available as a separate document – **Bletchingdon Conservation Plan (appendix 6).**

A **Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay and Poyle Biodiversity Report** has been procured from Thames Valley Environmental Records centre. This sets out a summary table of legally protected and notable species records; a summary table of invasive and non-native species records; a map of designated wildlife sites and; descriptions/citations for designated wildlife sites. **This report is available as a separate document from Thames Valley Environmental Resource Centre - reference TVERC/24/0901). TVERC does not wish this full report to be appended to the Neighbourhood Plan. With TVERC's permission, key elements of the report have been included below and in the main NDP document.**

Local wildlife sites

Sources: <https://www.tverc.org/data-hub/local-wildlife-sites-lws-living-list-and-locations> and **Bletchingdon and Hampton Gay and Poyle Biodiversity Report (see above).**

LWSs are locally important wildlife areas. A LWS is a non-statutory designation generally administered by a local authority in partnership with conservation organisations. The designation recognises important habitats and species on sites that fall outside statutory site designations. Local government authorities have schedules of LWSs within their area and include policies in their Local Plans to safeguard these sites from inappropriate development.

There are 5 LWS and 3 proposed LWS in Bletchingdon:

Bletchingdon East Verge – Local Wildlife Site

This 3.6ha site is set on a level area of heavy Oxford Clay and is a long, narrow strip of trees and blackthorn scrub, with a road to the south, which carries an important population of the rare black hairstreak butterfly. Shelter is provided by trees along both the north side of the site and the south side of the road. These include oak, ash, field maple, crack willow and one each of sycamore and wild crab apple. As well as blackthorn, there is hawthorn, hazel, dogwood, privet and a little elder. Climbers include white bryony, dog rose and field rose. In the ground flora there is a male fern and ground ivy, as well as light requiring species such as cowslip. Along with field maple, there is also black bryony, three-nerved sandwort and wood meadow grass which are all ancient woodland indicator species.



The scrub is not continuous but is interspersed with areas of tall herb vegetation including hairy willowherb, black horehound, tufted vetch, hemp agrimony, common teasel, bramble, thistles and hogweed.

There is small pond rather shaded by grey willow, but has a few aquatic species such as duckweed, common watercress and fool's watercress, while the adjacent damp ditch has cuckooflower, marsh bedstraw, meadowsweet, water figwort, woody nightshade and hard rush.

A shaded stream runs along the northeast side of the site. The verge has a good range of wayside species such as meadow crane's-bill, everlasting pea, mugwort, common mallow, hedge parsley and rough chervil.

The site is good for birds including bullfinch which is a priority for conservation in the UK and lesser whitethroat. During field walks in 2011, two black hairstreak butterflies were seen along with orange tip, brimstone, peacock, holly blue, marbled white, ringlet, large skipper and speckled wood. In previous surveys carried out in 1991 and 2003 purple hairstreak, white letter hairstreak and Essex skipper were recorded. The site is not actively managed although the verges generally receive a cut in the late summer.

Bletchington Quarry – Local Wildlife Site



This important 6.7ha site comprises areas of pond sedge dominated fen adjacent to the river with a steep bank leading up to other areas of the site which have a mixture of grassland, tall herb, scrub and small short-lived vegetation. The site is a disused limestone quarry, part of which has been used for off-road motor sports. Much of the upper part of the site has been levelled for the scrambling tracks.

Some of the grassland habitat is species rich including ribwort plantain, creeping cinquefoil, germander speedwell, common mouse-ear, selfheal, scarlet pimpernel, parsley piert, common poppy, dove's-foot cranesbill, black medick,

smooth hawk's-beard, common bird's-foot trefoil, lady's bedstraw, common centaury, field madder and ox-eye daisy.

An excellent diversity of grass species are present, including false oat-grass, upright brome, red fescue, Yorkshire fog, creeping bent, rough meadow grass, common bent, cock's-foot, meadow barley and small cat's-tail.

Elsewhere, in wetter ground adjacent to the river, the area is dominated by lesser pond sedge with reed sweet-grass, great willowherb, cleavers, watermint and amphibious bistort. Other species include wild angelica, hedge bindweed, field horsetail, marsh woundwort, common reed, yellow flag, hemp agrimony, water figwort, gypsywort, water chickweed, skullcap, hop and the invasive species orange balsam. In addition, other typical fen and lowland meadow species include fool's watercress, branched bur-reed, reed canary grass, meadowsweet, bittersweet, marsh bedstraw, brown sedge, and rough hawkbit.

The area is important for birds with records including sedge warbler, reed warbler, grasshopper warbler, whitethroat, garden warbler, blackcap, chiffchaff, greenfinch, goldfinch, reed bunting, yellowhammer, kestrel, grey partridge, mistle thrush, dunnoek, swallow, swift, curlew, common starling, song thrush, house sparrow, mallard, greater spotted woodpecker and green woodpecker.

The hymenopteran (bees, wasps, ants & others) of the site is especially rich with 44 species recorded, and three of these are nationally rare species (*Lasioglossum* (Dialictu) *leucopus*, *Nomada lathburiana* and *Sphecodes niger*).

The site includes a local geological site, to the east, with an important section in highly fossiliferous Cornbrash.

The site appears to be managed in an ecologically sound way. According to the TVERC report the site has potential for a geological trail.

Black Leys Wood – Local Wildlife Site

This 13ha wood is a lowland mixed deciduous woodland and is considered as a prime example of this habitat type. The woodland is indicated as ancient by DEFRA and in the English Nature Woodland Inventory there are records of eighteen typical woodland species including small amounts of the rare hard shield fern.



The main canopy species in this wood include oak (some large and mature), and ash with some silver birch. There are also small amounts of wild cherry, downy birch, field maple and larch. Some woodland areas are plantation including mixes of either Norway spruce, oak, silver birch, ash and Scot's pine or oak, ash, birch and wild cherry. Shrub species include hazel, elder, blackthorn, hawthorn, holly, field maple, English elm, and Midland hawthorn.

Woodland plant species include bramble, ground ivy, pignut, bluebells, nettle, male fern, selfheal, wood millet, false brome, creeping

soft grass, lesser celandine, black bryony, foxglove, bugle, herb robert, creeping buttercup, wood sedge and sweet vernal grass. Other species present in wetter areas include branched bur-reed, hemp agrimony, lesser water parsnip, marsh thistle, common vetch, watermint, great willowherb, hard rush, meadowsweet, cuckooflower, wild angelica, greater bird's-foot trefoil and common spotted orchid.

The area is rich in invertebrates including the purple hairstreak butterfly. A good diversity of bird species are present including treecreeper, winter wren, great-spotted woodpecker, green woodpecker, pheasant, blackcap, red kite, dunnoek, redwing, siskin, long-tailed tit, blue tit, great tit, common chiffchaff, common buzzard and tawny owl. Both roe and muntjac deer are also present.

The wood is privately owned and appears to be maintained with overall ecological interest in mind.

Ash Wood – Local Wildlife Site

Ash wood is a 17.6ha lowland mixed deciduous woodland and is one of the most important wildlife habitat within the parish. The woodland is indicated as ancient in the English Nature Woodland Inventory and is an excellent example of this habitat type. It has records for 31 ancient woodland indicator species. Species include the rare hard shield fern, primrose, three-veined sandwort, wood millet, sanicle, wood anemone, broad-leaved helleborine and wood sedge. Ash Wood is largely an established broadleaved woodland of oak and ash with hazel coppice. The canopy also includes silver birch, wild cherry and beech. There are areas of young plantation, mainly of oak and ash but some areas are more mixed. There is a mature conifer plantation on the north of the main wood. The eastern edge is bounded by a well maintained and probably natural drainage ditch.

In wetter areas juvenile oak, ash and birch are present along with pendulous sedge, greater pond sedge, watermint and wild angelica. Other wetland plants include meadowsweet, marsh thistle, common marsh bedstraw, creeping jenny, common fleabane, greater bird's-foot trefoil, hemp agrimony, marsh thistle, common vetch, fool's water-cress, cuckooflower, and square-stalked St John's-wort.

The shrub layer has field maple, sycamore, hawthorn, blackthorn, dogwood, spindle, wild privet, crab apple, red currant, wild gooseberry, elder and English elm. The woodland ground flora is rich in bluebells, greater stitchwort, common dog violet, sanicle, dog's mercury, scaly male fern, barren strawberry, yellow pimpernel, goldilocks buttercup, and pignut. In some areas, however, the

vegetation is very typical of more acidic conditions and is dominated by bracken and bramble with bluebells and wood anemone.

The wood has a number of grassy rides, which encourage butterflies and other invertebrates. Of particular note are the records for the white-letter hairstreak, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and the nationally scarce Hill Cuckoo Bee.

There is a good diversity of bird species present including sparrowhawk, pheasant, dunnock, lesser whitethroat, robin, blackbird, blackcap, woodcock, red kite, tree pipit, fieldfare, nuthatch, redwing, common buzzard, green woodpecker, great spotted woodpecker, long-tailed tit, and green finch. Both roe and muntjac deer are also present.

The woodland is privately owned. Recent management of the wood has included some clearance of dead and dying timbers, clearance of shrub from part of the grassy rides and clearance of ditches along and through areas of the woodland. Overall current management maintains overall ecological interest and the site is in satisfactory ecological condition.



Enslow Marsh Sedgebed – Local Wildlife Site

The term marsh is generally used for a wetland, with a mineral soil, where the water table is at or just above ground level for much of the year. Enslow Marsh sedgebed is one of the largest areas of such habitat in Oxfordshire.

The site, situated in the hamlet of Enslow in the west of the parish, is comprised of an extensive sedge swamp, willow woodland, scrub, reed sweetgrass swamp, and areas with mixed wetland and tall herb vegetation. The flora is typically marshland species including greater pond sedge, lesser pond sedge, common meadow rue, slender tufted sedge, hemlock water dropwort, skullcap, water horsetail, yellow iris, marsh marigold, great willowherb, bulrush, common valerian and purple loosestrife. Of particular note is the occurrence of bottle sedge, a species which is rare in Oxfordshire.



thistles.

Elsewhere, the sedgebed is fringed by two areas of willow woodland. Species present include crack willow, goat willow, ash, hawthorn and field maple. Besides sedge, the flora below the willow is mainly reed sweet-grass, reed canary grass, nettles, cleavers, ivy, wood avens, hedge woundwort, giant fescue, hairy brome and hop. In addition, wetland species include water chickweed, meadowsweet, watermint, ragged robin and water forget-me-not. In areas where willow has been removed balsam is particularly abundant along with marsh bedstraw, celery leaved buttercup, groundsel, willowherb and sow

The fauna of the sedgebed is rich with at least 52 birds recorded and a further 114 different invertebrate species present. The site is of ornithological importance for both breeding and wintering birds and is also probably an important stop-over point for passage migrants. The Red Data Book birds reed bunting and song thrush both breed on the site along with bullfinches, sedge warblers and a variety of other warblers. Lying alongside the canal means that the sedgebed also hosts many of the species included water vole that occur there.

Enslow Marsh Sedgebeds are owned by British Waterways and leased by Cherwell District Council. Overall current management suggests that the site has potential for further improvement of ecological condition.

In addition to the above sites there are three further sites which have been proposed for Cherwell district wildlife citation.

Frogsnest Farm Field – proposed Local Wildlife Site

This is a 3.7 ha long narrow field on neutral loam. It is bounded by thick, species-rich hedges with ditches on two sides. The sward is grass dominated with tall oat grass and a wide range of other species are also recorded. These include broadleaved herbs such as bird's-foot trefoil, oxeye daisy, black knapweed and lesser stitchwort. The hedges have wild crab apple, dog wood and a range of willows. There are some very large hedgerow trees including oak, field maple and ash. A variety of woodland species are found beneath the hedges, and it is thought that the hedgerows are likely to be ancient. These thick hedges provide habitat for farmland birds.

Scoping from the Right of Way in 2021 noted damage to the grassland, especially to the north with dumped piles of soil and rubble. (TVERC)

Walkers Copse - proposed Local Wildlife Site

This fragment of ancient woodland and scrub is set on the level ground of the clay vale. Some areas of ash remain, along with one old wild crab apple. There is a wide grassy ride and extensive conservation planting. A scrape has been made in the central area, and at the western end there is an area of tall blackthorn, gorse, elder and hawthorn scrub with some oak. The shrub layer is mostly hazel with a little raspberry and the ground flora has abundant bluebell, frequent lesser celandine

and a little pignut and wood meadow-grass. Only seven ancient woodland indicator species were seen. These are plants which tend to be associated with woods more than 400 years old. (TVERC)

Lincelane Copse - proposed Local Wildlife Site

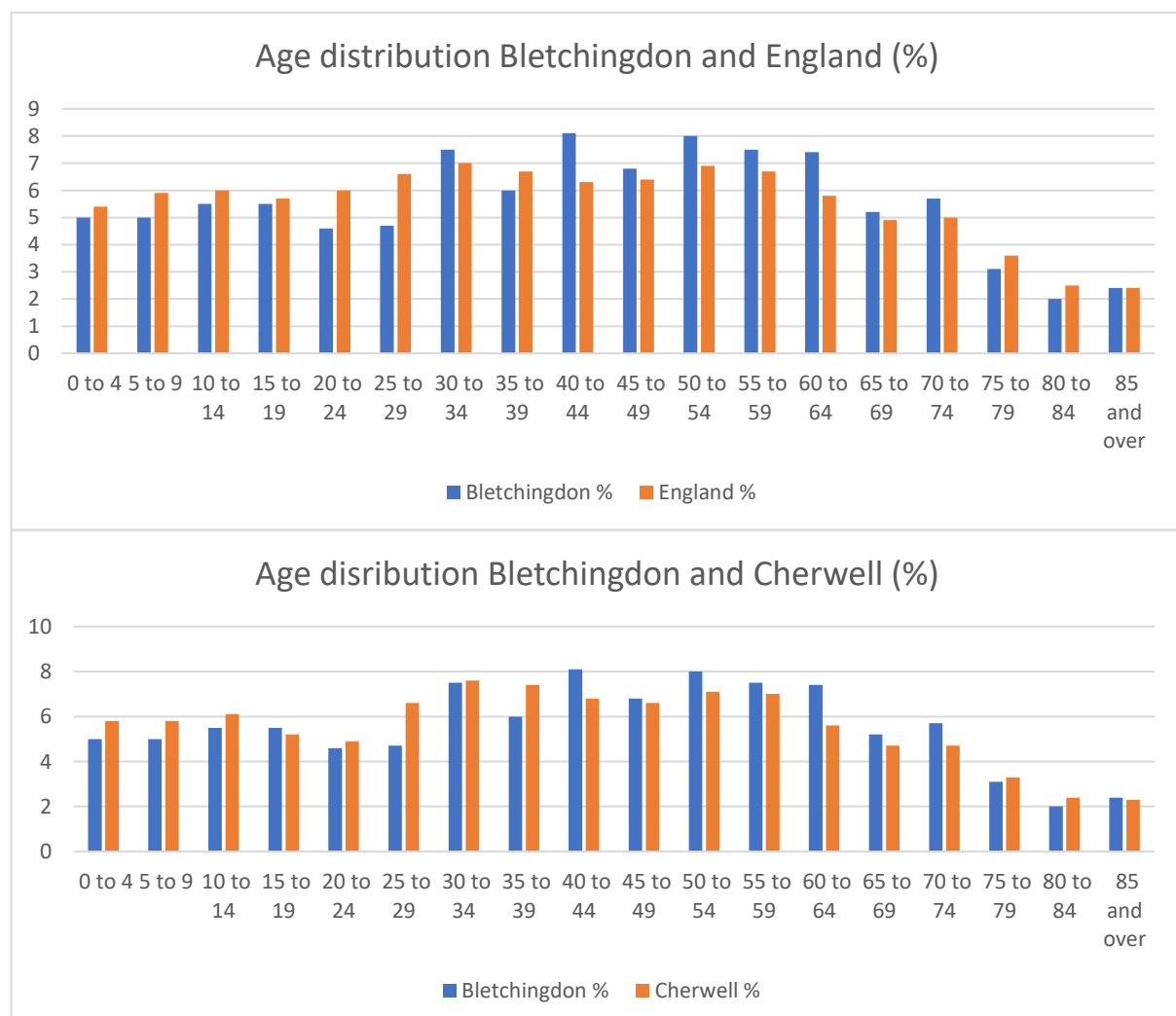
The 1.6 ha site is a narrow strip of semi-natural woodland between the Oxford Canal and Lince Lane. Enslow Marsh LWS is on the opposite bank of the canal to the north. (TVERC).

Human population

Totals and age structure

In 2021 the population of Bletchingdon was 1100 split 50:50 Female to Male. England is 51:49. (Source ONS 2021)

The charts below show the age structure of Bletchingdon compared to that of England as a whole and the Cherwell District.



Bletchingdon has a distinctly older age profile, particularly from 40 to 64, than England as a whole. The median age for Bletchingdon is 43.8 compared to 40.4 for the Cherwell District and 40.6 for England. There is probably no one single reason for this disparity although the relatively high cost of

housing, meaning that younger families are “priced out” may be a suitable explanation. There are also implications for the size of the potential school population and a lower rate of geographical mobility. In Bletchingdon there are 18.4% of the population aged 65 or over which is the same as England generally but more than Cherwell which has 17.%. At the other end of the age range of the age range Bletchingdon has 21% in the 0 to 19 year olds compared to 23% in England and 22.9% in Cherwell.

Ethnically Bletchingdon is far less mixed than England with 96.1% of the population identifying as White compared to 81% nationally. 91% of the population were born in the UK as opposed to 82.6% nationally. 93.3% of the population identified themselves as “UK only” compared to 88% nationally. 97.1% stated that their main language was English with only 0.2% saying that they could not speak English well (1.6% nationally).

It would also appear that the local population are more likely to be married and divorced than those in the rest of England. (Percentages of those aged 16 or over).

	Local	England
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	34.7	37.9
Married or in a registered civil partnership	43.7	44.7
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership	3.6	2.2
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	11.4	9.1
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	6.5	6.1

Human Health

SOURCE: ONS 2021 Census and Department of Health and Social Care.

The 2021 Census shows that 48% of the population of Bletchingdon indicated that they enjoyed very good health, 35.8% good health, 11.7% fair health and 4.5% bad or very bad health. (48.5%, 33.7%, 12.7 and 5.2% respectively for England). 16.8% are registered as disabled under the Equality Act (17.3%).

The table below summarises the health figures from the 2021 census (percentages):

	Bletchingdon	Cherwell District	England
Very good health	48	50.8	48.5
Good health	35.8	34.3	33.7
Fair health	11.7	11.2	12.7
Bad or very bad health	4.5	3.7	5.2
Registered disabled	16.8	14.5	17.3

These figures would seem to indicate that the population of Bletchingdon enjoyed marginally better health than those in England generally although compared to the Cherwell District they were

marginally less so. This may in part reflect the age distribution of the village, particularly since there is a care home located at Heathfield with 30+ residents.

Other health statistics are not available for the parish but comparative figures for the electoral ward (Launton and Otmoor) in comparison with England are (standardised ratios; England =100)

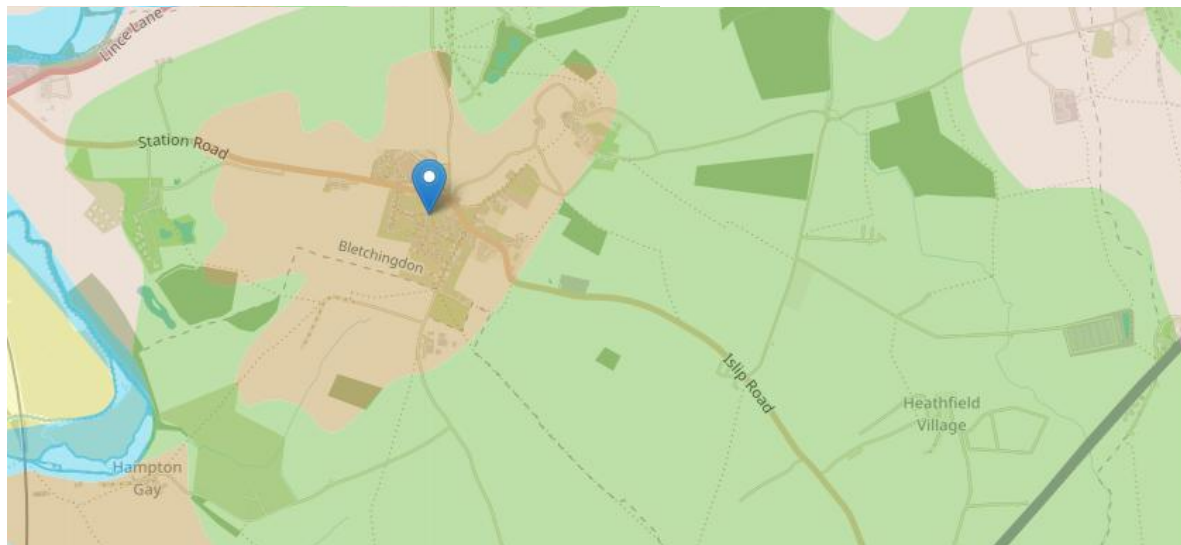
	Period	Launton & Otmoor
All emergency hospital admissions	2016/17 -20/21	103
Emergency admissions for coronary heart disease	2016/17 -20/21	67.8
Emergency admissions for stroke	2016/17 -20/21	80.3
Emergency admissions for heart attack	2016/17 -20/21	74.7
Emergency admissions for COPD	2016/17 -20/21	78.5
Incidence of all cancers	2015-19	106
Incidence of breast cancer	2015-19	94.7
Incidence of colorectal cancer	2015-19	132.8
Incidence of lung cancer	2015-19	78.8
Incidence of prostate cancer	2015-19	140.5
Hospital admissions for self-harm	2016/7-20/21	114.5
Hospital admissions for hip fracture in those aged 65 or over	2016/7-20/21	102
Hospital admissions for alcohol attributed conditions	2016/7-20/21	67.2

Figures in **red** are significantly above the normal range those in **green** significantly below. (DHSC data). Again, these figures suggest that the local population is marginally less likely to suffer from ill health compared to the population generally.

Soil and geology

SOURCE: Landis - Soil type: Bletchington and local area

The central village area of Bletchington is dominated by a light sandy soil. This is enclosed by, approximately, the 95m contour line. Underlying this is thick blue clay soil. This area drains naturally above the clay, with the result that there are a number of springs surrounding this area. The surrounding clay areas drain into local water courses which at their lower points give rise to occasional flooding.



Brown. Freely draining slightly acid but base rich. This type of soil is highly fertile.

Green. Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils. Moderately fertile.

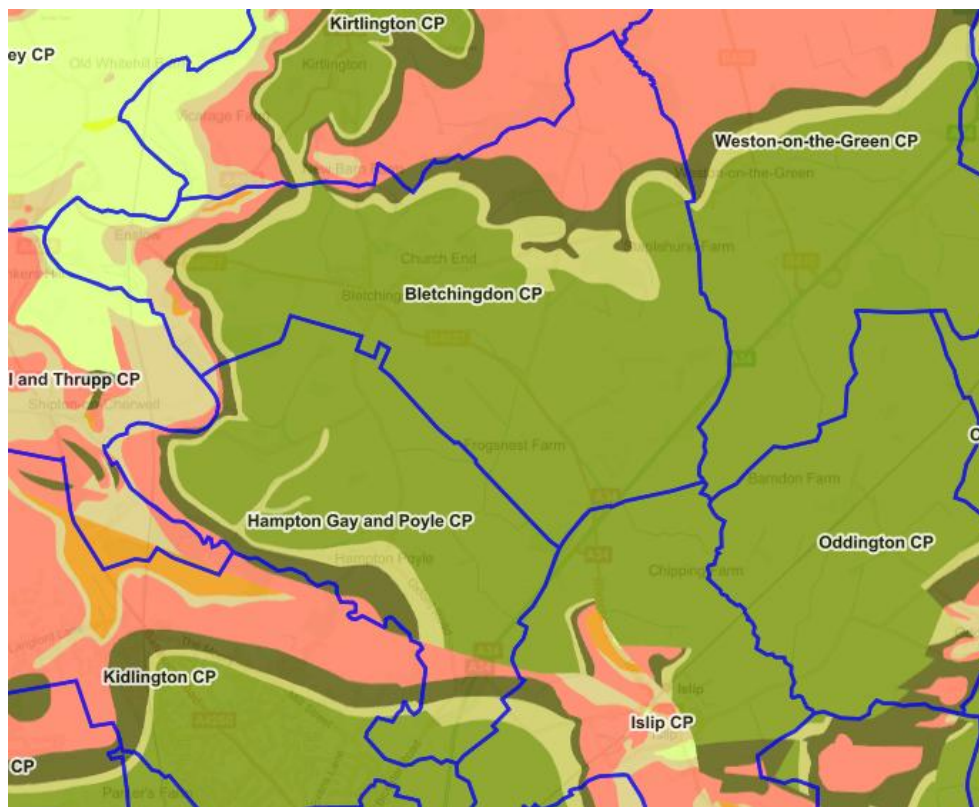
Dark Green. Woodland.

Pink. Freely draining lime-rich loamy soils. Moderately fertile.

Blue. Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater. Moderately fertile.

Purple. Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater. Low fertility.

Geology



Peterborough
area mudstone

Cornbrash
Limestone

The bulk of the bedrock of the area is mudstone which is a type of clay. Surrounding this are bands of sandstone and siltstone (lighter green) and Kallaways clay member mudstone (darkest green). To the north

and south are areas of Cornbrash limestone. It is in these areas that a number of quarries are found which traditionally supplied the characteristic stone for older buildings. Although these quarries are no longer functioning this type of stone is imported for new local buildings.

(Source British Geological Survey).

Energy and Water

Energy

Bletchington has universal electricity supply and most properties have gas. Supply is generally reliable despite occasional power cuts.

Flooding

Virtually all of the parish is in Flood Zone 1 implying no risk. The exceptions to this are:

1. a small part of Enslow, between the canal and the River Cherwell which is in flood zones 2 and 3.
2. the Heathfield area and in particular on the B4027 which is in flood zones 2 and 3. The severity can be mitigated by regular maintenance of ditches but where this has not happened (Autumn and Winter 2024) the road can become unpassable and damaged. This is not helped by occasional discharges into the local watercourse from the waste water treatment works higher up the B4027. (See below).

In the village as a whole rainwater drainage is not undertaken through the sewage system but through soakaways, both on individual properties and at street level. This has created some local flooding at times of high rainfall, but so far without any serious damage to properties. The Parish Council tries to ensure that soakaways are properly maintained.

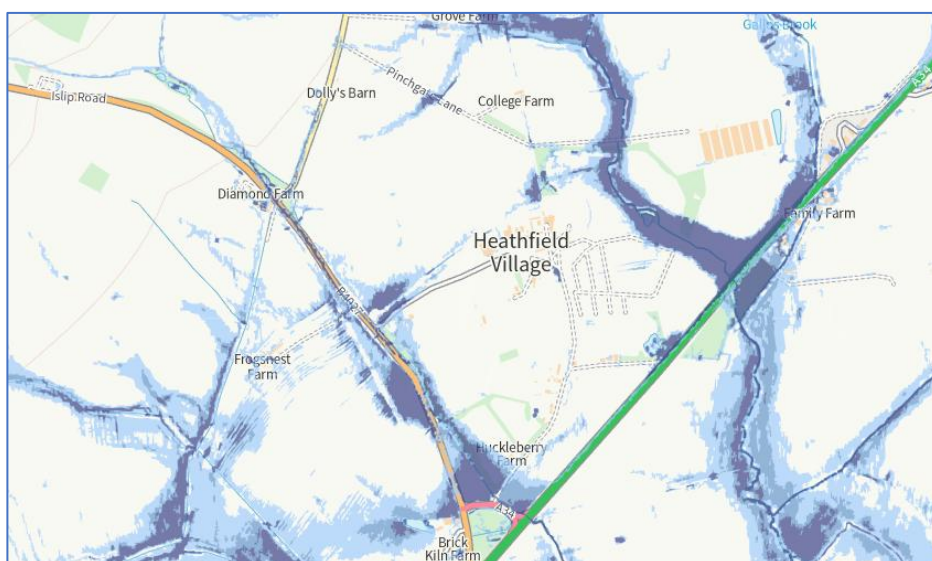


Figure 7 – Bletchingdon surface water flooding (the darker the colour the higher the risk) - Environment Agency

Water supply

Thames Water are responsible for the water supply and sewage.

Water pressure: Even before the recent developments some parts of Bletchingdon experienced problems with low water pressure and although this has been partly resolved there is concern that further development could compromise this.

Surface water: All surface water on the roads and from domestic rainwater is dealt with through soakaways. Roadside soakaways tend to get blocked in the Autumn due to leaf fall and this requires vigilance to keep them clear. There is occasional localised flooding on the roads in the event of heavy rain.

Sewage

Sewage and wastewater: The village is on mains sewage drainage although a small number of outlying properties rely upon cesspits, and there is a treatment plant located to the east of the village on the B4027 which covers the village and neighbouring Kirtlington. These are generally satisfactory, but concerns have been raised with the Parish Council over a 20 year period about smell from parts of the system in the village centre. This has been raised with Thames Water on a number of occasions. The company has taken action, and the problem has diminished but can still recur. There was a recent (2023) overflow into some gardens close to the treatment plant and Thames Water reported overflows when there is heavy rain. According to data published by the Environment Agency in 2024 there were 120 sewage discharges into Bletchingdon Brook, lasting a total of 1,554 hours. This means that treated water was being discharged into the local waterway for approximately 65 days throughout the year. Concerns have been expressed about the

plant's capacity in the event of future development and the company plan to complete an upgrade in 2026.

Air, noise, and light

Source DEFRA - <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/>

Air quality

There is no continuous air quality monitoring in Bletchingdon. The latest figure from CDRC in 2017 for nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and sulphur dioxide shows a score for parish as 13.6 compared to the figure for England of 26.8 which would suggest that the air quality is generally good. Subjective assessment however would suggest that households living alongside the B4027 are subject to higher levels of particulates.

Noise

Most of Bletchingdon is within a 4km radius, or less, of Kidlington airport and a similar distance from the Weston on the Green airfield. Most flight are of light aircraft, but they can be low and intrusive. Although generally at a low-level, noise from the B4027 can be intrusive at busy times. Similarly, noise from the A34/M40 can be intrusive for some when the wind is in an easterly direction.

Light pollution

There is a modest amount of street lighting in the main part of the village. It is not considered to be a problem. Light pollution from the A34/M40 junction and Bicester and to a lesser extent Kidlington and Oxford, mean that very little of the nighttime sky is truly dark. It is not a general concern.

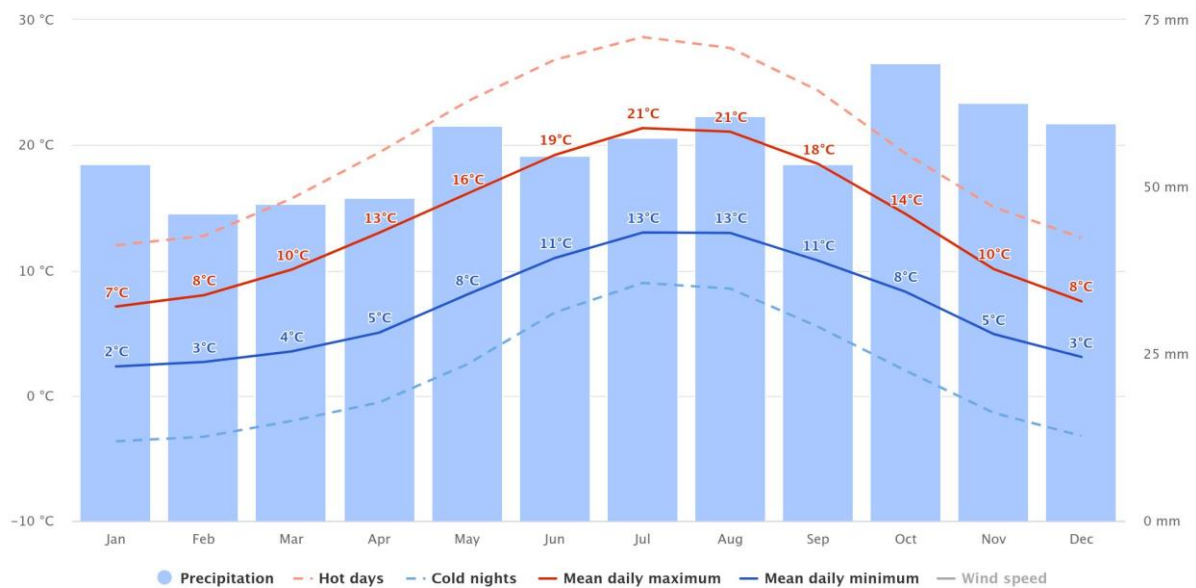
Climate and weather

The climate for Bletchington is typical of central England. A graphical representation for the last 45 years is shown below courtesy of Meteoblue: (NB. These data are modelled rather than observations taken locally).

Average temperature and precipitation 1979 -2024

Bletchington

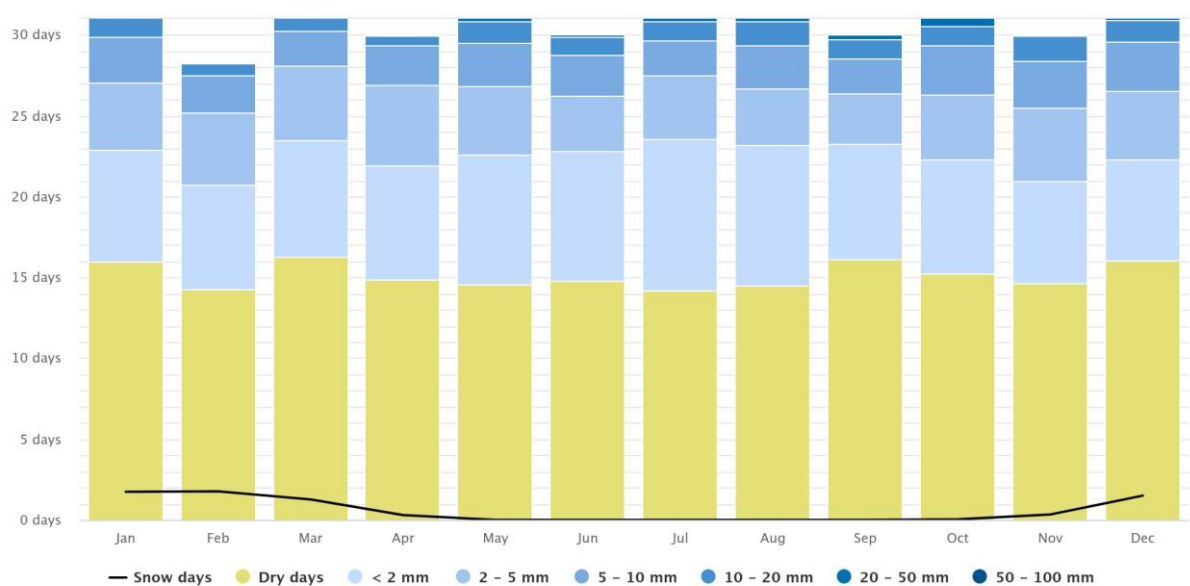
51.85°N, 1.27°W (101 m asl).
Model: ERA5T.



Precipitation amounts 1979 -2024

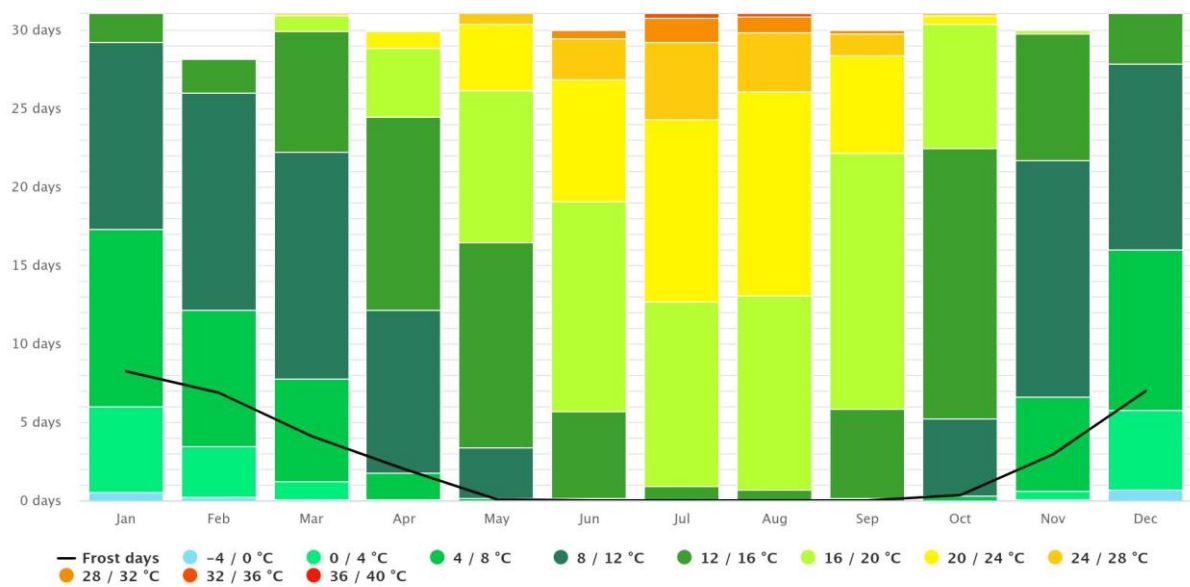
Bletchington

51.85°N, 1.27°W (101 m asl).
Model: ERA5T.



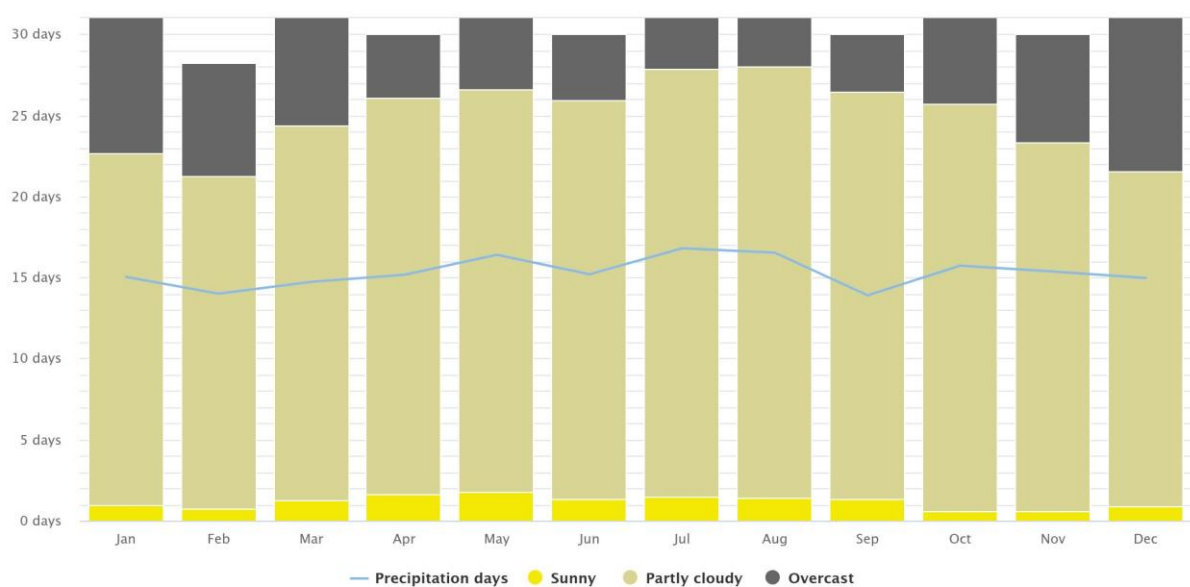
Maximum temperatures 1979 -2024

Bletchington
51.85°N, 1.27°W (101 m asl).
Model: ERA5.



Sunny days 1979 -2024

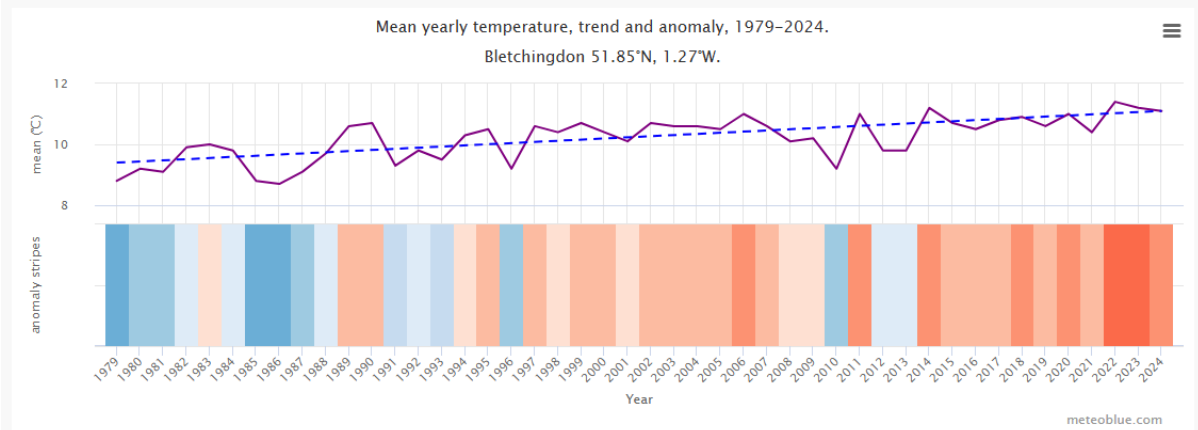
Bletchington
51.85°N, 1.27°W (101 m asl).
Model: ERA5.



The prevailing wind is from West-South-West and rarely exceeds 30 km per hour. The wind is generally higher from November through to March and calmest between June and August.

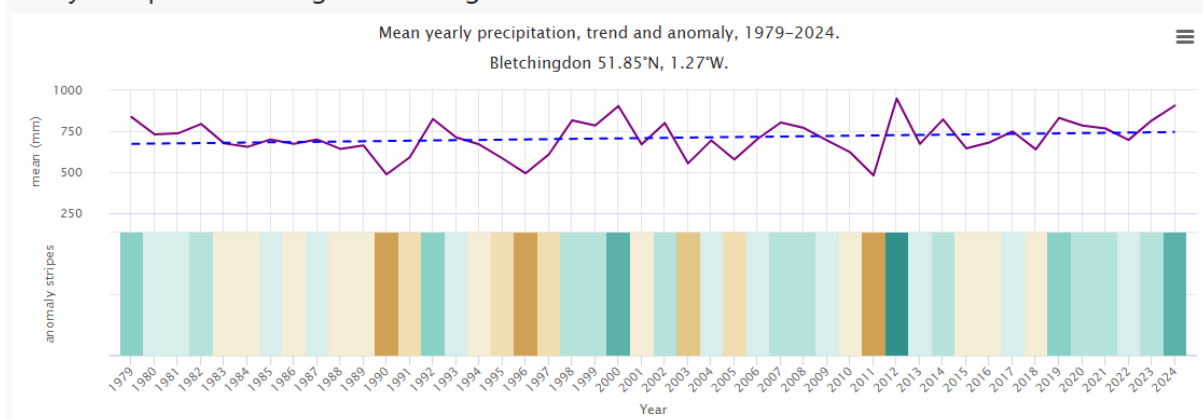
Changes in climate 1979 to 2024.

Yearly Temperature Change Bletchingdon



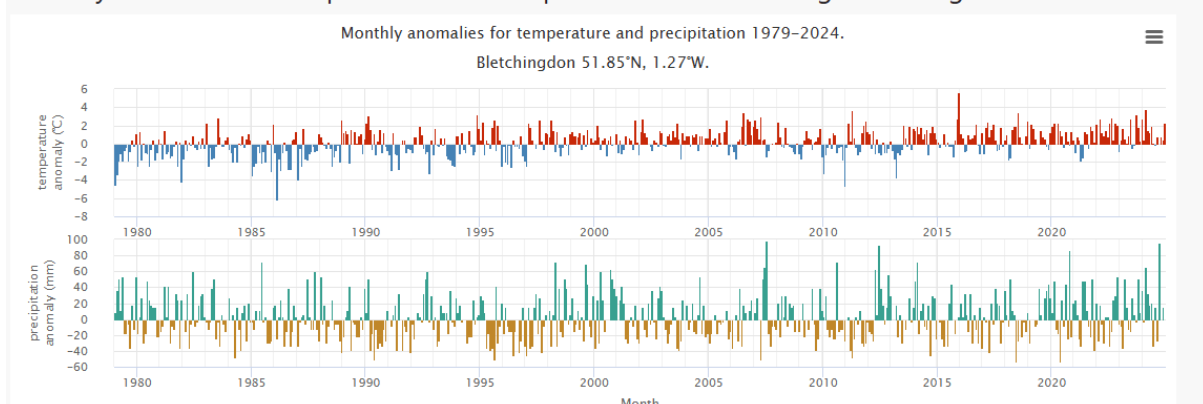
The upper part of the graph shows the linear trend for the mean annual temperature. This is clearly rising from 9.4°C in 1979 to 11°C in 2024. The lower part of the chart shows the so-called warming stripes. Blue represents colder than average temperature, red higher than average.

Yearly Precipitation Change - Bletchingdon



This graph shows that the weather is getting wetter. The trend line rises from 672.5mm to 744.5mm

Monthly Anomalies of Temperature and Precipitation - Climate Change Bletchingdon



(9.7%). Green stripes represent wetter years, brown drier ones.

Monthly anomalies over the period emphasise these trends.

Clearly the local climate is changing in line with national trends with a noticeable rise in average temperature and rainfall. Met office projections suggest that the temperature rise shown above is likely to continue with continued warming particularly in summer months, less so in the winter ones. Days of extremely high summer temperatures are likely to increase. Precipitation (rain and snow) predictions are less certain but suggest an increase in more extreme rainfall events in the summer and autumn but a decline in snow during the winter months.

(<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp>)

	Temperature (°C) rise 2000 -2039 above 1981-2000 average	
Figures based on mid-range projections	For 50 th percentile of change	For 90 th percentile of change
Mean annual temperature	0.8 to 0.9	1.6 to 1.7
Mean summer temperature	1.1	2 to 2.1
Mean winter temperature	0.7 to 0.8	1.7 to 1.8
	Increase in precipitation (mm), 2000 -2039 above 1981-2000 average	
Summer precipitation	-5.0	1.6 to 18
Winter precipitation	7.0	20 to 21

The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-2022> lists eight areas of risk from climate change that require action. Not all of these are amenable to mitigation by local action.

Risk area	Impact locally	Possible local actions
Viability and diversity of habitats	Likely to affect local biodiversity.	Protection and management of local vulnerable habitats
Risks to soil health for increased flooding and drought.	Likely to affect farm yields and incomes.	Encourage mitigation actions and diversification measures.
Risks to natural carbon stores and sequestration leading to increased carbon emissions	Probably limited to watercourses.	Encourage maintenance of watercourses and habitats.
Risk to crops, livestock and trees from	Likely to affect farm yields and incomes.	Encourage mitigation actions and diversification measures.

commercial trees from multiple hazards		
Risk of collapse of supply of goods and services due to collapse of supply and distribution change.	Major impact on health and wellbeing	None
Risk to people and economy from climate related failure of power system.	Major impact on health and wellbeing	Encourage local area energy supply
Risk to health from increased exposure to heat.	Major impact on health and wellbeing	Encourage provision of “cool places” for extreme days.
Risk from overseas climate change impacts.	Impact on supply of goods and services.	None.

Material (and community) assets

Village Hall: The hall has good, modern facilities and is reasonably well-used for social, recreational and community purposes. Part of the hall is used for daytime activities by the primary school, which shares the overall building and a well-equipped kitchen provides lunches which is also available for evening and weekend events. The large, paved area in front of the hall on the Station Road side provides an open space for casual meeting and communal activity. The village has a long-established silver band which puts on occasional concerts and plays at local events. The hall also hosts a weekly community café and a monthly “Thursday Club” aimed at older residents. Lack of car parking at the school and hall provides an occasional stress point.

Shop: The Co-op shop in the central area is well patronised, large enough to cater for most day to day needs and much appreciated by the local population. Parking, however, can be problem.

Recreation and sporting activities: The village has currently three play areas for local children and a sports and social club with playing fields that serves the needs of outdoor team activities. Concern has been expressed that there is inadequate provision for older children. The village hall provides a venue for exercise classes etc. Any other activity requires travel to Kidlington or Bicester.

Primary school: Bletchingdon primary school provides adequate space for the children from the village and also accommodates those from other parishes. Opened in 2015, it has a capacity for 120 places, is modern and well-equipped.

Public House: Bletchingdon has an old traditional pub which was well patronised until its closure in early 2023 due to financial pressures. The owner intends that it should be extended and refurbished and it is hoped to submit plans in 2025. There is also a sports and social club on the southern side of Bletchingdon. This has large cricket and football area, which is well used by local teams, including

youth teams. There is also a bar and club building which is well used. The club has its own website used to publicise its activities and events.

Play areas: there are currently three local areas of play, one at the sports and social club, a newer area on the Duchy Field estate and a much smaller one on the corner of Station and Kirtlington roads. This latter one is rarely used and the Parish Council has plans to turn this into an adult gym area.

Facilities for older children and teenagers: there is a lack of facilities for older children and teenagers. There has been recent discussion concerning the introduction of an outdoor table tennis table and a basketball hoop.

Allotments: Bletchingdon has an allotment area of approximately 2 hectares owned and operated by the local charity for the last 160 years. Although there are a number of enthusiastic 'allottees', and many plots have been subdivided it is still underutilised. However, it does remain as a valuable open space.

Cultural heritage - including architectural and archaeological heritage

There are 33 listed buildings or objections within the Bletchingdon Conservation area, all are Grade II unless otherwise stated:

1. St Giles Church (Grade I)
2. Chest tombs (3) and a headstone in the churchyard
3. Easter Cottage, Church End
4. The Row, Oxford Road
5. Home Farmhouse, Islip Road (Grade II*)
6. Laurel Farmhouse, Islip Road
7. Barleythorpe Cottage, Islip Road
8. Barleythorpe Barn, Islip Road
9. London House, Islip Road
10. Manor Farmhouse, Islip Road
11. The Old Red Lion, Islip Road
12. Quicotts, Islip Road
13. The Cottage, Islip Road
14. Briar Cottage, the Green
15. Glendale, the Green
16. The Black's Head, the Green
17. Monk's Head, Weston Road
18. Palmer's and Justice's Cottages, Weston Road
19. Park Gate House, Weston Road
20. The Old Forge, the Green
21. The Malthouse, the Green
22. The Old Rectory, Weston Road
23. The Post Office Sores, the Green
24. Village Farmhouse, the Green
25. Bletchingdon Park House (Grade II*)
26. The Icehouse, Bletchingdon Park
27. The Pump House, Bletchingdon Park
28. The Stable Block, Bletchingdon Park

29. The Ice Well, Bletchingdon Park
30. Ice House, Bletchingdon Park.

A Character Assessment, available as a separate appendix, has been developed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence-base.

Landscape

Open green spaces

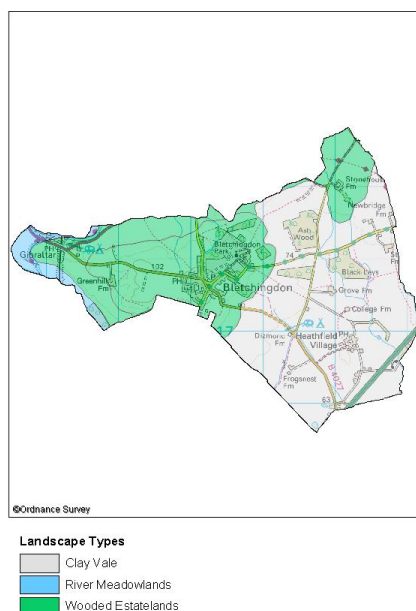
Besides the public footpaths there only three areas that are defined as open spaces in the village. These are:

- The Village Green
- The Allotments
- The Sport and Social club field which includes a children's play area

In addition, there are two other children's play areas located on Duchy Field and at the junction of Kirtington and Station roads. Furthermore, the Parish Council wishes to designate the following as a local green space: Hodgeman's spinney.

The evidence base for allocation of this location as Local Green Spaces is set out in a separate appendix.

Landscape type



The central area of Bletchingdon slopes gently away on all sides from a maximum elevation of 102m to 60 - 65m at the east, south east and west extremes of the parish. To the north the fall is to approximately 80m.

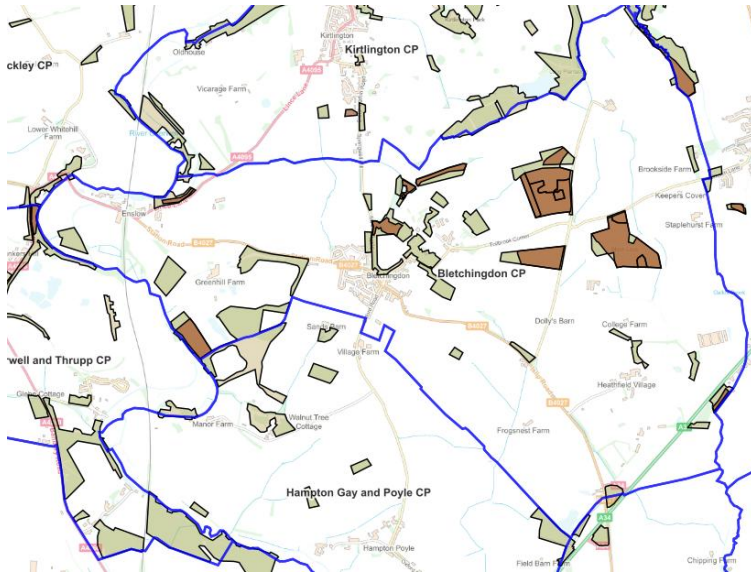
With the exception of the central built area the landscape is characterised by arable land in the "Wooded Estate Lands" to the west and more mixed arable and pastureland in the "Clay Vale" to the east.

Field sizes vary, but particularly in the arable areas they tend to be in the region of 10 to 20 hectares.

The agricultural land is generally bounded by hedgerows, some of considerable age and width. Approximately 10% of its area designated as woodland including areas designated as ancient woodland. (See below).

Source: Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study -

<https://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/Oxfordshire+Districts/Oxfordshire+Districts+-+Parishes/West+Oxfordshire+Parishes/>



Dark brown – ancient woodland.

Green – managed woodland.

SOURCE: Parish online

Education

Primary school: The school is new (2015) and has good facilities. It is currently below the maximum design capacity of 120.



School exterior



The school is a Church of England voluntary aided school and stands on land owned by a local charity. There is a covenant that it can only be used as a school.

Left. School library

The new school replaced a Victorian building dating from 1875. Although much loved it was not considered fit for purpose and the site was sold to a private nursery (see below) with the proceeds contributing to the construction and equipping costs of the new school.

In common with many small, rural primary schools Bletchingdon faces challenges from falling rolls

and the consequential pressure on finances.



Left. A typical classroom.

Secondary Education.

Since the raising of the school leaving age in 1945 children from Bletchingdon had attended either the then secondary modern, The

Marlborough School in Woodstock or Grammar schools in Bicester or Oxford. Once comprehensive education was introduced in the late 1960's they generally attended the Marlborough. Traditionally the County Council provided free transport to Woodstock. However, from September 2015 free transport to Woodstock was withdrawn and free transport was only provided to Gosford Hill school in Kidlington. Since most parents wished to continue sending their children to Woodstock they have either had to transport the children themselves or pay for a private bus service. This continues to be regarded as a problem.

Post 16 education is provided at both the Woodstock and Kidlington schools and also at colleges in Witney and Oxford.

Willow Cottage Nursery School.

This is a privately owned and run school taking children from under 1 to 5. It is based in the original local primary school in Weston Road.



Traffic and Transport

Public Transport

For many years Bletchington was served by a bus route from Bicester, via the Heyfords and Kirtlington to Oxford. This was hourly for six days per week. In 2023, this was changed for a new route but now only operates on a two-hourly basis and now takes a different route via Wendelbury and Weston on the Green but still including Kirtlington. It also connects with Oxford Parkway. The service is subsidised by Oxfordshire County Council.

It is of considerable concern that the subsidy might be withdrawn and the service cease in which case this would cause considerable inconvenience to those unable to drive. Although the bus skirts around Kidlington only the Sainsburys supermarket is really accessible. Any visit to the main part of that village requires car transport. Neither of the doctor's surgeries in Islip and Woodstock are accessible without a car.

Traffic issues

There has long been concern in Bletchington regarding traffic issues. A survey instigated by the Parish Council and undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council in 2018 and 2020 gave the following results:

VEHICLE NUMBERS	Vehicle numbers east bound (daily average)	Vehicle numbers westbound (daily average)	Total number (daily average)
Average weekday flow (24 hours)	2464	2667	5131
AM hourly peak (8am)	417	174	573
PM hourly peak (5pm)	174	438	601
Survey taken 21 to 28 November 2018			

SPEED	Maximum speed of 85% percentile	Number exceeding 85% percentile speed
Total number of vehicles	27 mph. (2831 vehicles)	523 (18%)
Survey taken 23 November 2018. Speed limit at the time was 30 mph.		

A survey was carried out in February 2020 where the survey point was at the western edge of the main village. Approximately 73% of vehicles exceeding the limit were westbound (1056) as against east bound 27% (385).

TYPE OF VEHICLE	HGV	LGV
Number	689	8570
Percent of total vehicles	3.04%	37.81%
Survey taken 15 to 22 February 2020. Figures exclude weekends. An HGV is defined as any vehicle over 3.5tonnes.		

The traffic concerns relate to three areas:

1. **The volume of traffic using the B4027:** This road passes through the centre of the parish from Heathfield, to the main village and on to Enslow. In particular these concerns relate to
 - a. Pedestrian safety. The only footpaths are within the central area of the village. There are no footpaths connected Enslow and Heatfield. There is a narrow “Z” bend at the eastern entrance to the village on Islip Road which has limited visibility and is highly dangerous to walk along.
 - b. Difficulties for pedestrians crossing from south to north particularly at busy times. There is only one Zebra crossing.
 - c. Vehicle safety at the crossroads along Station Road.
 - d. The number of HGVs using the B4027. Although there are signs advising that the road is unsuitable for HGVs these are not mandatory. The peak of HGV traffic is 7am to 9am and this gives rise to concerns about safety, air pollution and vibration damage. The “Z” bend noted above is often a site for congestion since it is too narrow for two large lorries to pass.
2. **The speed of the traffic:** At the time the surveys above were conducted the statutory limit was 30mph. In 2023 it was reduced to 20mph. Although there is no data for the effect of this, the perception is that speeding may have been reduced. Whatever the impact, concern is still registered about speeding with its effect upon the safety of, particularly children and older people, crossing the road.
3. **Congestion on the minor, narrow roads:** In particular, this relates to Weston Road where there is considerable on-street parking and a nursery school, which can lead to congestion at “drop off” and “pick up” times. On Oxford Road there is a “pinch point” where on-street parking can also lead to congestion.

Oxfordshire County Council’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (2022) aims to reduce current car trips by 25% by 2030. It is difficult to see how this could be achieved in a rural area without a considerable increase in the availability of public transport. The same policy aims to reduce the number of HGV movements and to encourage use of the most appropriate routes for these vehicles. The policy does not indicate how this to be achieved in our area. (Oxfordshire CC - <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/connecting-oxfordshire/ltcp>)

Walking and cycling

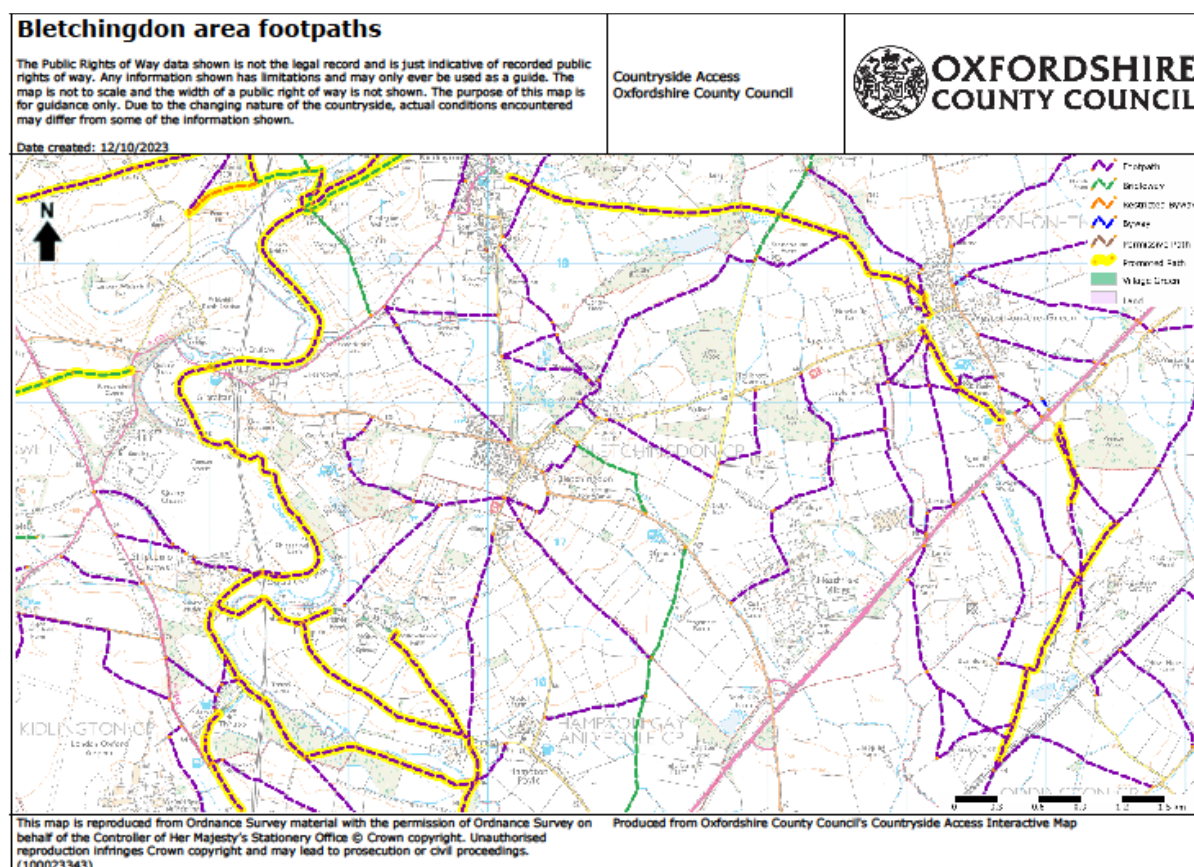


Figure 8 – Bletchington area footpaths (Oxfordshire County Council)

Although there are a number of footpaths around Bletchingdon it is notable that walking to parts of the village involves walking on roads. It is, for instance impossible to walk from either Enslow or Heathfield to the main part of Bletchingdon without going on the busy B4027. It is also impossible to undertake a circular route from Bletchingdon without going on roads.

Bletchingtondon is connected to Kirtlington and Hampton Poyle by footpaths, however, they can be difficult to use in wet weather conditions and have a number of obstructions in terms of stiles, nor do they follow a direct route.

Cycling locally could be considered hazardous if it involves the main roads. National cycle route 51 passes through Bletchington between Hampton Poyle and Weston on the Green.

Housing

Since 2014, Bletchingtondon has added a major development in the north-west quarter of the village centre between Station and Kirtlington roads. Beforehand, this area was farmland, with two small developments of social housing totalling 22 units. This recent development comprises a new school, village hall, Co-op store and 60 homes. The school and hall opened in 2015 with the shop following in 2019 and the housing finally completed in 2023. There is one more house planned for a site on the junction of the two roads.

This development was generally welcomed, particularly since it provided valuable additions to the local infrastructure. It did, however, add approximately 20% to the housing stock in the village centre, together with a similar increase in population. The housing is well planned and built and the design blends in with the local, historic older housing. Concerns have been expressed, however, that the character of the village has changed and that it will take time a new character to emerge. Concerns have also been expressed that any further housing development should be on a small scale. A major impact has been on the number of traffic movements within the village, not just from the increased population but also from traffic associated with school, hall, and shop. This is made worse when the nearby A34 is blocked and traffic seeks alternative routes to north or south.

The outliers of Bletchingdon, Heathfield and Enslow have also seen new developments and conversions of existing buildings. These have added some 40 units to the housing stock in the last ten years. Because of their separation from the bulk of the village the impact of these developments has been less than the ones in the centre. There has, however, been an impact upon the level of traffic.

The draft Cherwell District Council proposed submission plan to 2042 (published in December 2024) categorised Bletchingdon as a category A village appropriate for development. This indicated a housing allocation of 50 units. A site in the village to the north of the current Duchy Field development is included in the plan (land west of Springwell Hill) for the building of 44 homes. The remainder will come from windfall gains.

Housing stock and quality

There is considerable variety in the housing stock the parish. According to the Valuation Office Agency in 2020:

Age of property	Bletchingdon
Built before 1900	96 (24.8%)
Built 1900 - 1939	28 (7.2%)
Built 1945 - 1999	205 (53%)
Built 2000-	53 (13.7%)

(Note: the age of some properties could not be identified so percentages do not total 100)

At the time of the 2011 census the types of housing was classified as follows:

Housing type	Bletchingdon
Detached	95 (25.1%)
Semi-detached	154 (40.7%)
Terraced	91 (24.1%)
Flats (purpose built or converted)	34 (9.1%)
Caravan or temporary	4 (1.1%)

Second homes	3 (0.9%)
Total households	381

(NB. These figures are out of date for Bletchingdon, though it is likely that the proportions will not have changed significantly).

The 2021 census has changed the classifications:

Housing type	Bletchingdon
Whole house or bungalow	376 (85.5%)
Flat, maisonette or apartment	46 (10.4%)
Caravan or similar	18 (4.1%)
	440

Number of bedrooms	Bletchingdon
1 bedroom	60 (13.7%)
2 bedrooms	93 (21.2%)
3 bedrooms	180 (40.9%)
4 or more bedrooms	106 (24.2%)

Number of occupants in household	Bletchingdon
1 person	115 (26.2%)
2 people	158 (35.9%)
3 people	86 (19.5%)
4 or more people	88 (19.9%)

According to the ONS definition 70.4% of households in Bletchingdon have more bedrooms than are strictly required whereas only 1.6% (7) of households are regarded as overcrowded. 66.3% of households are single family.

In terms of tenure, in 2021, 63.9% of properties were owned occupied in Bletchingdon, 16.7% were privately rented and the remaining 19.4% were rented from housing associations or the local council. This represents a 2% increase in home ownership since 2011

Housing in the parishes is not cheap. The data for house prices are limited but according to figures from rightmove.co.uk suggest that in 2024 houses sold for an average of £470,625. The majority of these were terraced properties selling for an average of £467,600, semi-detached sold for an average of £445,000. (It should be noted however that there are only 13 houses in this sample and may be skewed by the relatively higher prices achieved on the Dutchy Field estate. One detached property

sold for £1.74m and one terraced house for £925,000). In Bletchingtondon 39.7% of houses were in bands B and C for council tax and 20.7% in bands F to H.

The gap between 4.5 average household earnings and the price of the median house is at least £150,000. The house price figures are probably skewed by the proximity to Oxford, which has very high average housing prices.

Generally, the housing stock is considered to be in very good condition. In Bletchingtondon 99.3% of households have central heating, in HGP this is 100%.

Crime

During the most recent year (2024) there was a total of 110 offences reported for the parishes of Bletchingtondon and HGP. It is not clear from the available figures which parish some of these offences were committed, in but out of the total 7 were clearly within the parish of HGP. (Source Thames Valley Police).

Crime	Total for 2024
Antisocial behaviour	2
Burglary	7 (1)
Criminal damage and arson	8
Drugs	1 (1)
Other crime	3
Other theft	15
Public order	4
Shoplifting	13
Vehicle crime	15 (1)
Violence and sexual offences	42 (4)
Total	110 (7)

Offences identifiable as being committed in HGP are shown in ()

The total represents 87 offences per 1000 of the local population. This is exactly the same as for England as a whole. Violence and sexual offences account for 33 per 1000 in the parishes and 35 nationally.

More locally these rates mirror those in Oxford City but are greater than Oxfordshire as a whole which has an offence rate of 66 per 1000 with violence and sexual offences totalling 27

per 1000. Concern has been expressed by the Parish Council and local social media about the apparent absence of local policing.

Communications

Internet access: This is good with a choice of fibre (Gigaclear) or copper (BT).

Mobile phone coverage. This is generally regarded as poor particularly indoors. Outdoors can be variable and often slow. 5G data is very limited. According to Ofcom:

Provider	Indoors		Outdoors	
	Voice	Data (4G or less)	Voice	Data (4G or less)
EE	Limited	Limited	Likely	Likely
Three	None	None	Likely	Likely
O2	Limited	None	Likely	Likely
Vodafone	Limited	None	Likely	Likely

There is no indication that this will improve in the future. An attempt to place a 5G mast in the middle of Bletchingdon in 2023 met with fierce resistance and was refused by the planners.

Social media. Bletchingdon has a long-standing printed newsletter (the Village News) which is published on alternative months. This is distributed free to all households. The Parish Council also has a website (<https://www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/>) which carries local news items and information about local organisations. More recently there has been the introduction of a village Facebook group and a WhatsApp group both of which are widely used.

Waste

Waste collection is undertaken by Cherwell District Council. Food waste is collected weekly, general waste and recyclables on alternate weeks. Garden waste is a subscription service and is also collected every other week. These collections are generally regarded as efficiently undertaken and the most recent survey by Cherwell District Council (2017) showed satisfaction rates of over 80%.

Glass is not collected but there is a bottle bank located on the boundary between Bletchingdon and HGP which is widely used. Other recycling facilities are located in Kidlington and Bicester and at the Oxfordshire site at Ardley.

Employment

Figures are from the 2021 census unless stated otherwise.

Economic Activity Status and Employment History:

Economic Activity (% of 16+ year olds)	Bletchingdon	Cherwell	England
Economically active: in employment	65.8	65.1	57.4
Economically active: unemployed	2.8	2.5	3.5
Economically inactive	31.3	32.5	39.1
Employment History (% of 16+ year olds and not in employment)			
Not in employment: Worked in the last 12 months	17.5	14.9	13.2
Not in employment: Not worked in the last 12 months	63.2	65.8	61.1
Not in employment: Never worked	19.2	19.3	25.6

Employment structure of Bletchingdon. The percentages are based on the number of economically active people over 16 in each parish. The main categories of occupation were:

Occupation (% of 16+ year olds in employment)	Bletchingdon	Cherwell	England
Managers directors and senior officials	13.8	13.7	12.9
Professional	22.7	19.4	20.3
Associate professional and technical	13.6	13.4	13.3
Administrative and secretarial	7.5	9.2	9.3

Skilled trades	12.9	10.2	10.2
Caring, leisure and other services	10.9	7.8	9.3
Sales and customer service	6.6	7.9	7.5
Process, plant and machine operatives	4.9	7.8	6.9
Elementary	7.0	10.6	10.5

A slightly different view is given by looking at the Socio-Economic classification of all people aged over 16:

Occupation (% of all 16+ year olds)	Bletchington	Cherwell	England
L1, L2 and L3: Higher managerial, administrative and professional	18.1%	15.1	13.2
L4, L5 and L6: Lower managerial, administrative and professional	22.1%	21.4	19.9
L7: Intermediate occupations	10.0%	11.9	11.4
L8 and L9: Small employers and own account workers	13.9%	10.5	10.6
L10 and L11: Lower supervisory and technical occupations	4.5%	6.1	5.3
L12: Semi-routine occupations	11.0%	12	11.3
L13 Routine occupations	10.4	13	12.0
L14.1 and L14.2: Never worked and long-term unemployed	5.5%	5.2	8.5
L15: Full-time students	4.5%	4.7	7.7

In terms of occupations based in parish, the percentages are (ONS 2019 which is the latest data broken down to parish level):

Bletchington
Health (17%)
Hotels and catering (14.9%)
Professional, scientific and technical services (10.9%)

There are a number of businesses based in Bletchington. In terms of fairly broad categories these are the percentages of the number of local businesses (ONS 2019 which is the latest data broken down to parish level):

Bletchington
Professional, scientific and technical services (16.9%)
Agriculture (13%)
Construction (11.7%)

Note: these figures are based on broad categories, show only VAT registered ones and may include business that are owned outside of the locality and maybe part of a chain.

Village Character

As mentioned in the development context section above there has been considerable concern expressed about maintaining the character of the village. A majority of the residents would express a feeling of belonging to the village and have chosen to live here because of the community and sense of place. There are various aspects to this:

- The green nature and setting of the village which provides a green and varied landscape.
- The rural outlook, location and environment within an agricultural landscape.
- The open green spaces which residents value.
- The rich local biodiversity. The village has a variety of wildlife habits, from marsh land to heathland, home to a number of locally scarce species
- The sense of community that exists and the relationships that go with it, come from the school, village hall, sports and social club, church and shop. The, hopefully temporary, loss of the village pub has highlighted this.
- The physical structure of the village with its village green, footpaths and historic buildings.

A Character Assessment, available as a separate appendix, has been developed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence-base.

The Parish of Hampton Gay and Poyle

Location

The two parishes of Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle were separate until 1932 when they were combined. They still remain as separate ecclesiastical parishes.

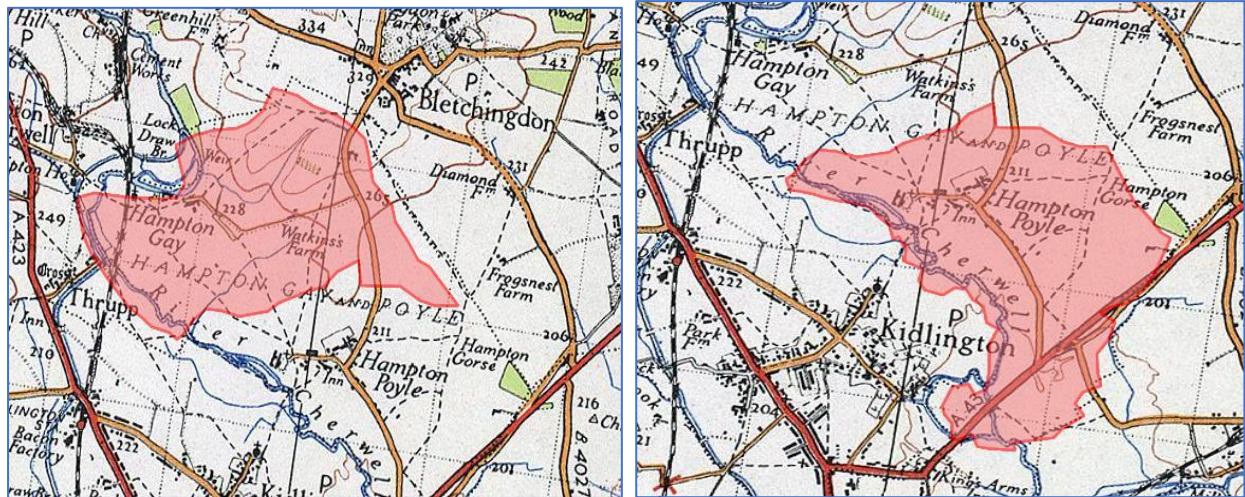


Figure 9 - the extent of Hampton Gay (left) and Hampton Poyle (right) prior to merger in 1932

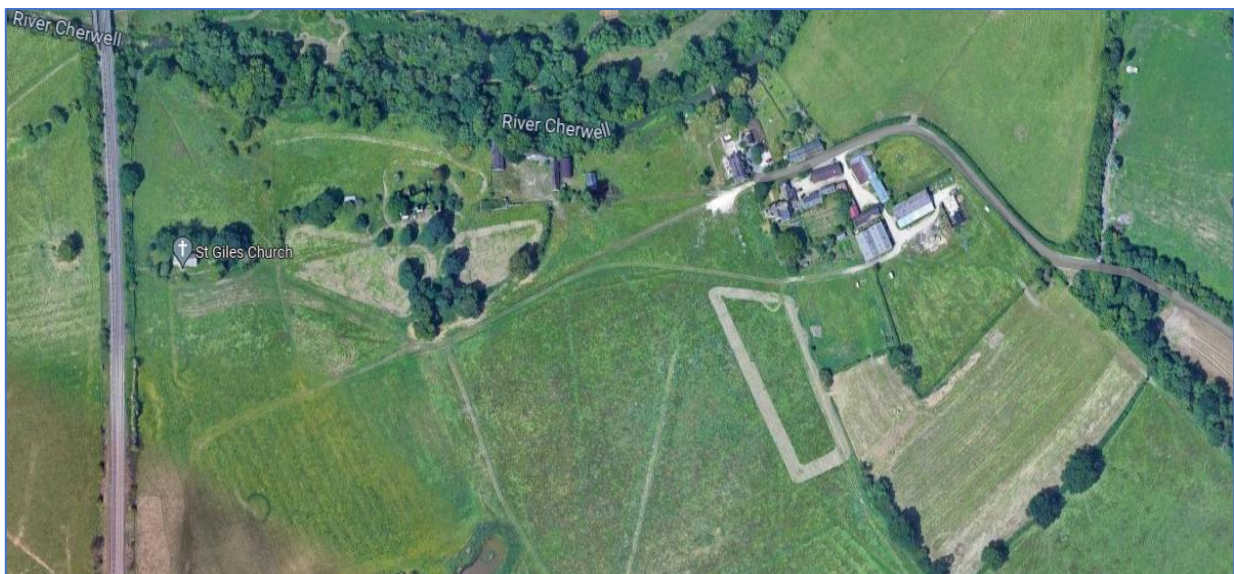


Figure 10 - the main settlement of Hampton Gay (Google Maps)

The joint parish of Hampton Gay and Poyle lies between Bletchington in the north and the river Cherwell to both the west and south. The eastern boundary is primarily the A34.

The bulk of the small population of Hampton Gay live in a cluster at the end of the side road which branches off from the Bletchington/Hampton Poyle Road. The population of Hampton Poyle live either alongside Bletchington Road, Oxford Road or in Church Lane, a side road leading towards the church. Over 90% of the parish is rural, with open fields predominating. Where the parish abuts the

river Cherwell the fields are rough grazing, the rest primarily arable. There is only a small amount of wooded area.

Hampton Gay covers 277 hectares (684 acres). The river Cherwell which is its western boundary meanders through an alluvial flood plain that is seldom less than 200m wide and in places up to twice that. The flood plain has prevented roads being built to the west and the settlement is only connected to the opposite side of the river by a footbridge. The only road leads east to join the Bletchingdon – Hampton Poyle road. The Oxford to Banbury railway line runs to the west.

The geology and relief of the parish are simple. From the flat flood plain, the land rises gently through a narrow band of Cornbrash to a wide, flat terrace, floored by gravels and Oxford Clay with occasional thin patches of downwash soils. In the north-east this undulating plateau slopes up to a higher patch of gravel. Whereas the meadows lie at about 63m above sea-level and the main terrace at 60 to 80m this higher gravel patch rises to 99m. On the hill slope near Bletchingdon lies Knapp's acre, formerly an arable strip but now grassland. It was once clearly marked by two rows of stones, which have since been mostly replaced by two lines of trees. The acre therefore remains a remarkable, if not unique, feature of the Oxfordshire landscape.



Figure 11 - the central area of Hampton Poyle – the approximate course of the river is shown by the blue line (Google Maps)

Hampton Poyle is a small parish which covers 339 hectares (837 acres). The parish is bounded, roughly, by the river Cherwell to the south and west, the A34 to the east and Bletchingdon to the north. The main geological feature of the southern portion of the parish is the wide flood plain of the Cherwell and all but the northern 20% of the area is floored by fine alluvium, unlike most of the villages of the Cherwell valley which are floored by gravel.

The land rises from 62m in the centre of the village to 95m in the far north. The main inhabited area of the village is however a flat plain varying very little from 62m. The majority of the land around the flood plain is used for cattle and sheep grazing although various drainage schemes have enabled at least one of the fields to be used for arable. Away from the flood plain nearly all the agriculture is arable.

The defining features are the river and the A34. The only vehicular access is the minor road that runs from the A34 slip road through the village and up to Bletchingtondon.

History – Hampton Gay

The name Hampton is Old English for village or farm. Gay refers to the de Gay family who were lords of the manor in the 12th century. In the Domesday Book it was called Hantune.

Hampton Gay is an ancient settlement with some evidence of Neolithic and Saxon occupation. In 1086 (the Domesday book) there were two estates one of about 300 acres the other of 200. In 1137 these two estates were united and the whole manor was held by the De Gay family. In 1220 the Manor was given to Osney Abbey for a nominal rent. After the dissolution of the monasteries in 1542 the land was returned to the Crown and subsequently sold to Leonard Chamberlayne and remained under the control of a single family until 1862 when debt forced a sale to Wadham College.

The manor house was constructed in the Elizabethan era on the classic E shaped plan with gabled wings and a crenelated central porch. The vertical line of the E was the main hall and the horizontal end lines the kitchen and living rooms. As late as 1870 the building was still largely in its original state including much oak panelling but generally neglected. In the 1880's it was divided into two tenements. In 1887 it was gutted by fire and has never been restored. Only the exterior walls now remain.

Also, in the Domesday Book is a record of a mill located on the banks of the Cherwell close to the Manor house. Until 1681 it was a grain mill but was then converted to paper mill and in 1812 continuous paper making equipment was installed. The mill turned the village economy from a pastoral one to a much more industrial one. It also employed people from Bletchingtondon and Hampton Poyle. It prospered until 1887 when the mill was sold by the now destroyed Manor to pay rent. The village returned to an agricultural economy, but since this was also in decline, Hampton Gays population fell to an even lower level.

The church of St. Giles, which is situated between the old Manor and the River Cherwell, dates back to at least 1074. The present church was built between 1767 and 1772. It is one of the smaller churches in the area and is distinguished by its lack of power or water. It is still used, but only rarely.

The late Elizabethan period saw the local land enclosed in both Hampton Gay and Poyle as well as in Bletchingtondon. In 1596, this led to a revolt, in part led by a Richard Bagshaw of Hampton Gay, by many of the labourers of the parishes. The aim was to destroy the enclosures, to murder the people who had undertaken them and to return the land to the poor. They planned to meet in Enslow (Bletchingtondon) with the aim of marching on London. However, Vincent Barry, the enclosing landlord in Hampton Gay was warned of the plot and in the end only ten men met at Enslow. They were arrested and sent to London to be tried. Five were hanged. The revolt was not entirely futile, since the Tillage Act passed the following year required land in Oxfordshire that had been changed to pasture to revert to tillage.

The peak population was reached in 1821 when there were 87 people in 13 houses. Thereafter, the population steadily declined to reach a low of 14 inhabitants in 1955, which was probably the lowest point since Anglo-Saxon times. Today there are 6 houses.



Figure 12 - left to right: Hampton Gay Manor in 1822 (Victoria County History); the ruins of the manor house today (own photograph) – the manor was gutted by fire in 1887 and only the shell remains.

History - Hampton Poyle

Like Hampton Gay, Hampton means village and the Poyle from its 13th century landlord. There were various earlier names all variations on Hantone.

Hampton Poyle developed near a river crossing and this generated wealth in the form of fishing, mills and rich pastureland for cows and sheep. These features would have encouraged early settlement in the area. Various archaeological finds enable a picture of early development to be built up. Either in the village or nearby are signs of bronze age settlement followed later by clear signs of Roman occupation. Development from the Neolithic period up to more modern times was centred at the western end of the village around the church and manor house and this whole area is designated as an “Archaeological Constraint Priority Area”.

Before 1066 there were five manors, each held by a Saxon nobleman. In 1166 the manor passed to Philip de Hanton (Hampton) and then handed down to four generations of the de la Poyle family. It remained in the family until the 15th Century and then passed through various hands until it was sold to Arthur Annesley, of Bletchington in 1795. After the death of another Arthur Annesley, the 11th Earl of Valentia, the estate was broken up and sold to its tenants in 1929. The original manor house was located to the south of the church but was demolished around 1625.

Documentation relating to Osney Abbey in the early 13th century indicate that there were two mills and a fishery. Most of the area was cultivated on the Medieval strip system. In the later part of the 16th century much of the land had been enclosed and Hampton Poyle men were part of the discontent and plot that erupted in 1596. The land enclosure meant that the village was divided up into individual farms, 10 of which were recorded in 1625. Several of the farmhouses still exist in the village. Manor Farm is one and this succeeded the old manor which had been known as Hampton Poyle Place. Poyle Court, the Old Manor house and Knapps Farmhouse all date from this period. Although much of the village was worked by these farmers there also remained areas of the traditional open field system. This came to an end with the 1796 Inclosure Act the main beneficiary being Arthur Annesley. By 1850 a number of the farms had been amalgamated and at this point there were four large farms.

The 1796 enclosures and the introduction of more modern farming techniques had a beneficial effect in allowing the population to grow. A census in 1676 recorded 63 adults but this figure fell over the next hundred or so years. In 1759 there were 19 families. In 1801 there were 100 inhabitants recorded, by 1821 this had risen to 24 families and 128 persons. This rose to a peak of 156 in 1831 falling back thereafter to 80 in 1931. According to the latest estimates the figure is now 170 (ONS 2021) and therefore only slightly above 1831

Prior to the 20th century there was very little development along the eastern side of Bletchingdon Road nor along the north of Oxford Road. However, The Bell public house was clearly in evidence before then together with Church Day School which had opened in 1833, with the driving force apparently being Arthur Annesley, but this closed in 1882. The majority of the ribbon development along Oxford Road dates from the post WW2 period.

Throughout most of its history the population of the village were primarily employed in agriculture. They would have been tenant farmers or farm labourers. In 1811 only one family was not employed in agriculture. Ancillary trades also developed and included a blacksmith, a carpenter and by 1901 a butcher and an ironmonger. Interestingly, looking through the census records from 1851 onwards it is clear that the majority of the population were not born in the village, a clear indication that that the village was very open in nature and the population transient. This gradually diminished during the 19th century and by the 21st agriculture employment was only a small part of the total.

Population

The population of the two parishes grew in the early part of the 19th century reaching a maximum of about 240 by 1831. It is not clear if the figures are comparable, but they seem to show a decline thereafter, probably due largely to the agricultural depression. The decline continued until the Second World War, probably due to the same factors as were noted for Bletchingdon. Overall, the population has been roughly stable for the last 150 years, up or down around a total of 150 for both villages.

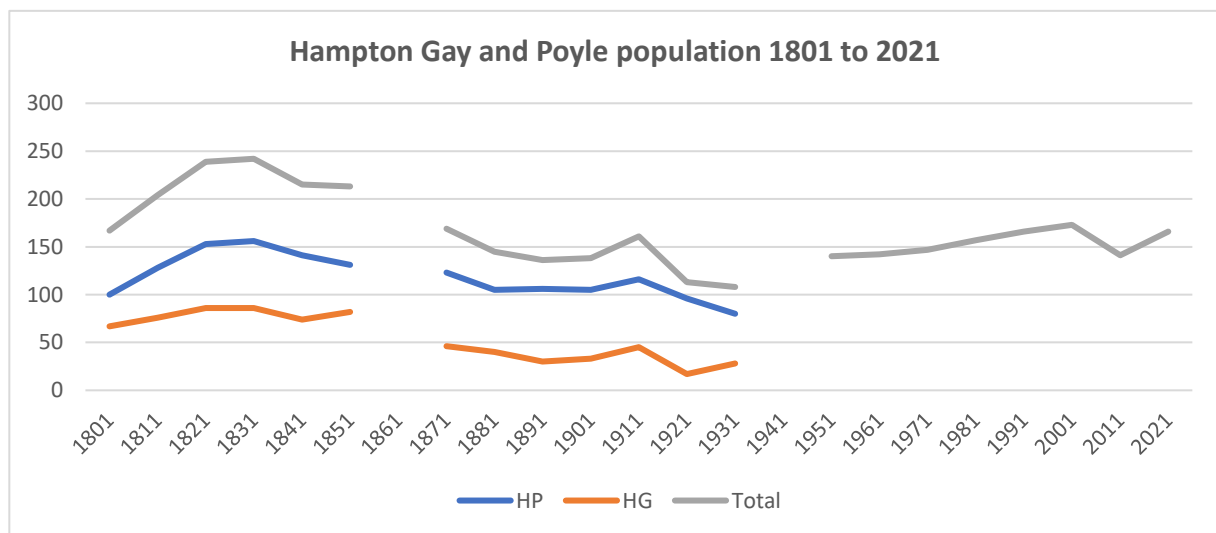


Figure 13 - Hampton Gay and Poyle population – note: there are no data for 1861, 1841, 1971, 1981 and 1991. Estimates are used for 1971-1991. (Source ONS and Vision of Britain)

Population growth in Hampton Poyle was enabled by housebuilding along the Oxford and Bletchingdon roads and improved communications which allowed people to easily work outside the village; the remaining houses along Oxford and Bletchingdon Roads date from around the mid-20th

century. Population growth in Hampton Gay has arisen more recently from extensions and a new farm development.

The population in both villages had been, until relatively recent times, mainly agriculturally based but the decline in agricultural employment from the 1870's onwards has meant that the population makeup has changed dramatically and now would be mainly be characterised as professional.

Development Context

Both of Hampton Gay and Hampton Poyle lie wholly within the Oxford Green belt (see page 8 above). They also both have designated conservation areas. In the case of Hampton Gay, it is part of a conservation area that also covers Thrupp and Shipton-on-Cherwell.

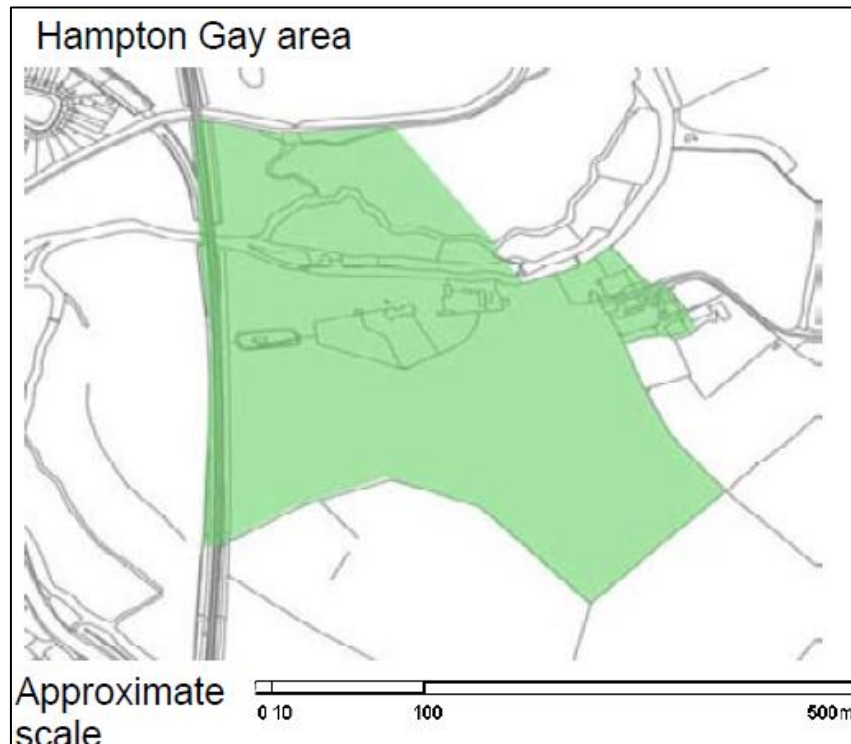


Figure 14 - Hampton Gay Conservation Area (Cherwell DC)

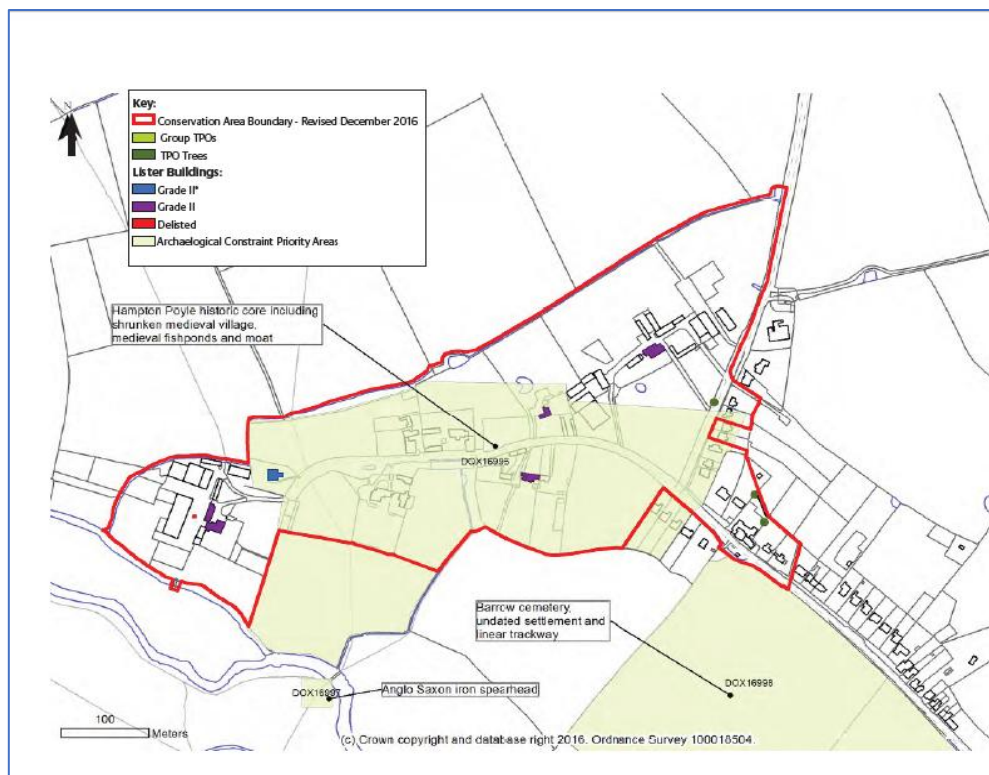


Figure 15 - Hampton Poyle Conservation Area (Cherwell DC).

Hampton Poyle is also covered by an Archaeological Constraint Priority Area. The Cherwell valley which exists in both areas is designated as an area of high landscape value. The effect of these constraints has meant that apart from minor extensions, conversions and agricultural buildings there has been no permitted development within the parishes for many years.

Flood risk provides an additional constraint to development (*see below*).

Baseline Assessment

Introduction

Members of the steering group established the baseline situation in Bletchingdon in relation to a number of sustainability indicators. The data and material gathered here has been used to guide policy development and evidencing in the NP.

Biodiversity, fauna and flora

Source: Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) - <https://www.tverc.org/cms/>

Unfortunately, there has not been a comprehensive study of the Hampton Gay and Poyle of the type that was undertaken in Bletchingdon. To a large extent however the habitat types found in Bletchingdon also exist in HGP and have the same type of flora and fauna.

Habitat Types:

1. Lowland mixed deciduous woodland.
Tree cover is notably less in HGP and none is designated as ancient woodland
2. Plantations.
These are not noticeably present
3. Agricultural grasslands
Grazing land is the dominant type of farming along the Cherwell Valley and its flood plain particularly around Hampton Gay. Much of this is natural meadowland rather than sown pasture and shows a considerable variety of native plant life.
4. Arable fields
Arable farming is predominant in most of the parish but more so in the north and east of the parish.
5. Arable field margins
These are of the same type as Bletchingdon but possibly less extensive.
6. Churchyard
St Mary's Church and graveyard are smaller than Bletchingdon but remains a valuable habitat.
7. Hedgerows
Most of the arable fields are bounded by hedgerows, some of which are clearly of considerable age.
8. Drystone walls.
These are an unusual feature in the parish reflecting the nature of the soil and lack of rocky material.
9. Ditches
10. Grassland verges

11. River Cherwell



The Cherwell, though not the Oxford Canal, forms both the Western and Southern boundaries of the parish.

The water meadows adjoining the river are wide and open. The river itself is a rich habitat with some reed beds.

This is part of the Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area.

12. Ponds

13. Gardens

14. Open spaces.

Local Designated Sites

Hampton Gay and Poyle have 2 designated sites:

Bletchington Road Verge South – Local Wildlife Site

This site lies to the north-east of the Bletchington, Hampton Poyle road, just south of the Hampton Gay turn.

Shelter is provided both by trees on the site and along the south side of the road. These include oak, ash, field maple, crack willow and wild crab apple. As well as blackthorn, there is hawthorn, privet and a little elder. Climbers include black bryony, white bryony, dog rose and field rose. The ground flora includes ground ivy, spear thistle, woody nightshade and hogweed. A seasonally dry ditch runs along the north side of the site. The verge has a range of wayside species.

Notable species include the Black Hairstreak butterfly and the ancient woodland indicator species: field maple, crab apple and black bryony.

Thrupp Community Woodland – District Wildlife Site

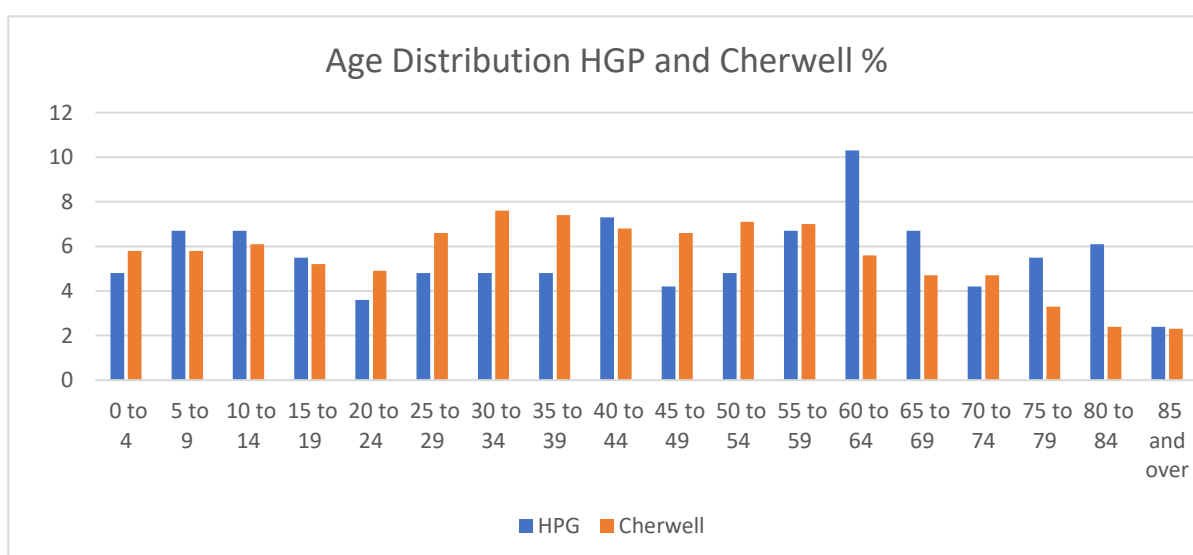
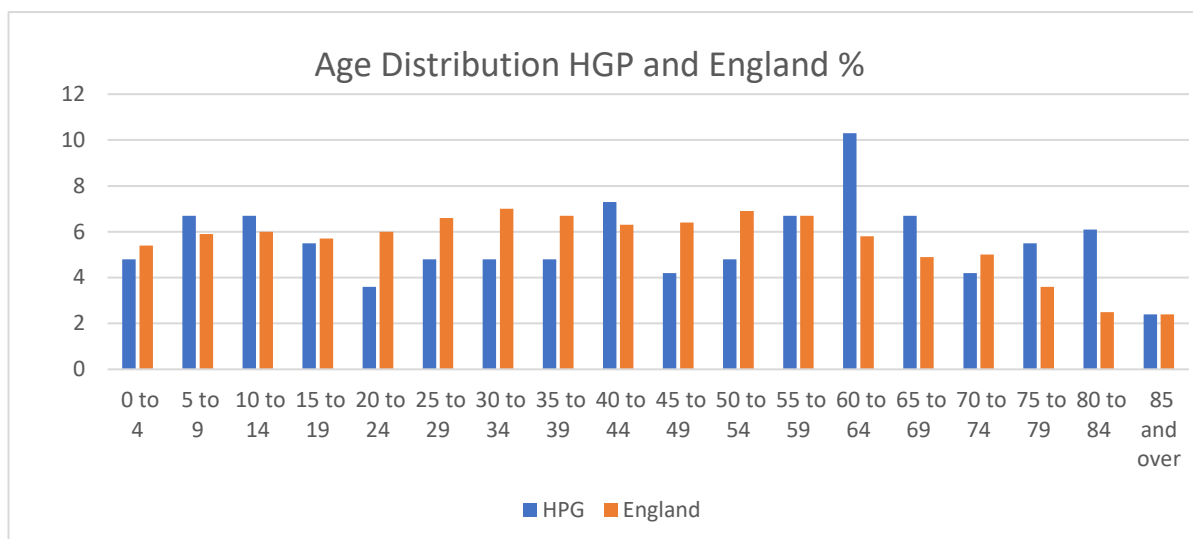
Although mostly within the parish of Thrupp, some of this area to the north of the River Cherwell lies within Hampton Gay and Poyle.

Thrupp Community woodland is broadleaved plantation woodland. It is dominated by ash and hazel with crack willow, oak and smaller amounts of silver birch and wild cherry. There is an area of alder and some scrubby areas with hornbeam and dogwood. The tree planting is quite dense and the shrub layer is largely open with smaller denser patches. It includes crab apple, buckthorn, elder and field maple. In some areas much of the planting is failing with numerous dead and dying trees. A range of bird species have been recorded here including mallard, long-tailed tit, willow warbler, starling and chiffchaff. There are previous reports of breeding kingfisher, grey wagtail, willow tit, marsh tit, blackcap, garden warbler, whitethroat, sedge warbler, tree creeper, song thrush, green woodpecker, cuckoo, bullfinch and dunnock. (TVERC)

Human population

Totals and age structure

In 2021 the population of HGP was 1700 split 51.2:48.8 Female to Male. England is 51:49. (Source ONS 2021)



The charts above show the age structure of Hampton Gay and Poyle compared to that of England as a whole and the Cherwell District.

The population of 170 makes it difficult to draw any firm conclusions but it is quite clear that the population is markedly skewed towards the upper age ranges but with distinct “bulges” from 5 to 19 and 40 to 44.

Ethnically HGP is far less mixed than England with 95.8% of the population identifying as White compared to 81% nationally. 86.1% of the population were born in the UK as opposed to 82.6% nationally. 95.8% of the population identified themselves as “UK only” compared to 88% nationally. 98.1% stated that their main language was English with only 1.3% saying that they could not speak English well (1.6% nationally).

It would also appear that the local population are much more likely to be married and less likely to be divorced than those in the rest of England. (Percentages of those aged 16 or over).

	HGP	England
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	24.1	37.9
Married or in a registered civil partnership	65.4	44.7
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership	0	2.2
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	4.5	9.1
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	6.0	6.1

Human Health

SOURCE: ONS 2021 Census and Department of Health and Social Care.

The 2021 Census shows that 59.6% of the population of HGP indicated that they enjoyed very good health, 30.7% good health, 6% fair health and 3.6% bad or very bad health. (48.5%, 33.7%, 12.7 and 5.2% respectively for England). 9.2% are registered as disabled under the Equality Act (17.3%).

The table below summarises the health figures from the 2021 census (percentages):

	HGP	Cherwell District	England
Very good health	59.6	50.8	48.5
Good health	30.7	34.3	33.7
Fair health	6.0	11.2	12.7
Bad or very bad health	3.6	3.7	5.2
Registered disabled	9.2	14.5	17.3

These figures would seem to indicate that the population of HGP enjoyed better health than those in both Cherwell and England generally. With a sample size of only 170 it is difficult to draw firm conclusions but the relative prosperity on the parish maybe the reason.

Other health statistics are not available for the parish but comparative figures for the electoral ward (Launton and Otmoor) in comparison with England are (standardised ratios; England =100)

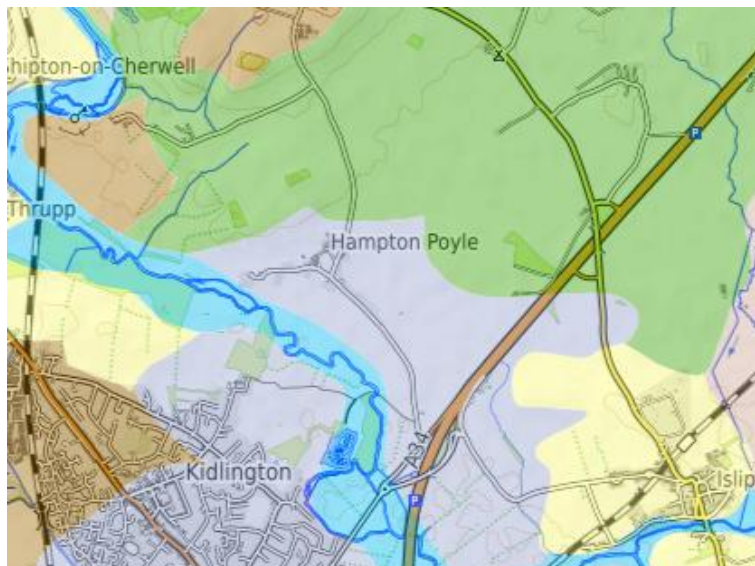
	Period	Launton & Otmoor
All emergency hospital admissions	2016/17 -20/21	103
Emergency admissions for coronary heart disease	2016/17 -20/21	67.8
Emergency admissions for stroke	2016/17 -20/21	80.3
Emergency admissions for heart attack	2016/17 -20/21	74.7
Emergency admissions for COPD	2016/17 -20/21	78.5

Incidence of all cancers	2015-19	106
Incidence of breast cancer	2015-19	94.7
Incidence of colorectal cancer	2015-19	132.8
Incidence of lung cancer	2015-19	78.8
Incidence of prostate cancer	2015-19	140.5
Hospital admissions for self-harm	2016/7-20/21	114.5
Hospital admissions for hip fracture in those aged 65 or over	2016/7-20/21	102
Hospital admissions for alcohol attributed conditions	2016/7-20/21	67.2

Figures in **red** are significantly above the normal range those in **green** significantly below. (DHSC data). Again, these figures suggest that the local population is marginally less likely to suffer from ill health compared to the population generally. NB These figures are the same as those given for Bletchington.

Soil and geology

SOURCE: <https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/>



Brown. Freely draining slightly acid but base rich. This type of soil is highly fertile.

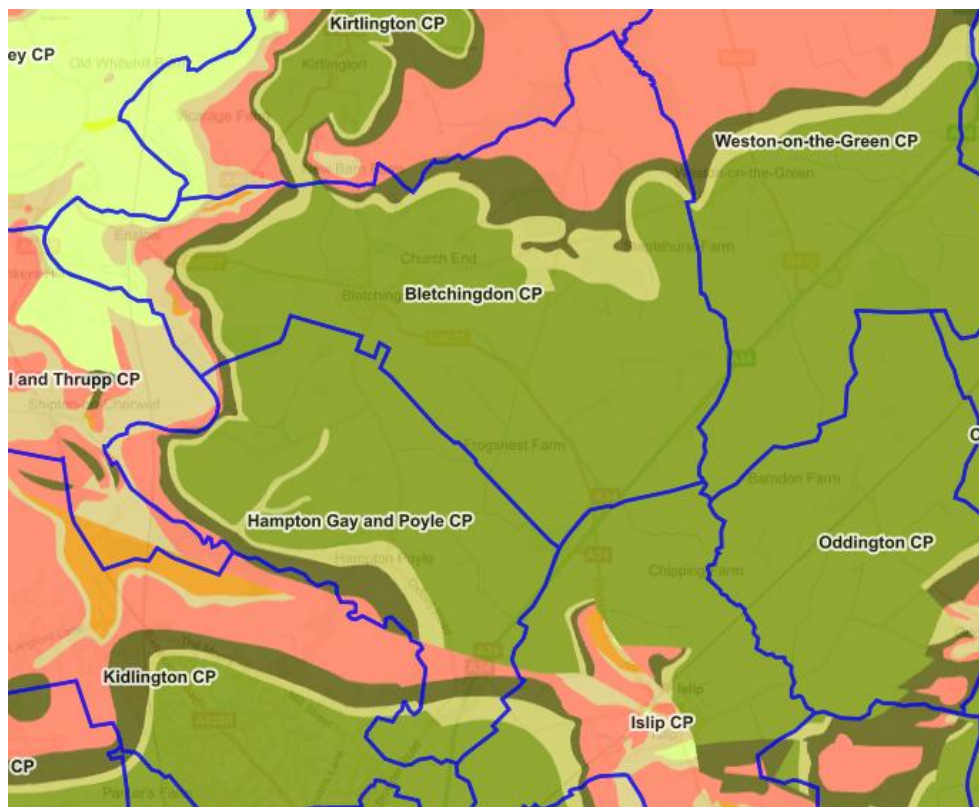
Green. Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils. Moderately fertile.

Purple. Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater. Low fertility.

Blue. Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater. Moderately fertile.

The northern western part of HGP together with the south western part adjoining the Cherwell has the light soil that also characterises Bletchington. Rest of the northern part has rich loamy and clayey soil. The built area of Hampton Poyle lies on the flood plain with high groundwater and low fertility. The floodplain bordering the river is moderately fertile but with a high ground water level.

Geology



Peterborough
area mudstone

Cornbrash
Limestone

The bulk of the bedrock of the area is mudstone which is a type of clay. Surrounding this are bands of sandstone and siltstone (lighter green) and Kallaways clay member mudstone (darkest green). To the north

and south are areas of Cornbrash limestone. It is in these areas that a number of quarries are found which traditionally supplied the characteristic stone for older buildings. Although these quarries are no longer functioning this type of stone is imported for new local buildings.

(Source British Geological Survey).

Energy and water

Energy

Hampton Gay has electricity but no piped gas, so heating is largely electric, including heat pumps, or oil. Hampton Poyle however has both electricity and gas.

Water

Hampton Gay has no mains water apart from one property, the remainder relying on wells. There is no mains drainage, septic tanks being used instead. Hampton Poyle has mains water.

Flooding

Hampton Poyle is subject to a flood risk. Although this has been reduced in recent years, the historic part of the village still lies in the zone of greatest risk as can be seen from the map below. Although not shown, flood zone 3 extends east to the A34. The populated part of Hampton Gay does not lie in flood zones 2 or 3.

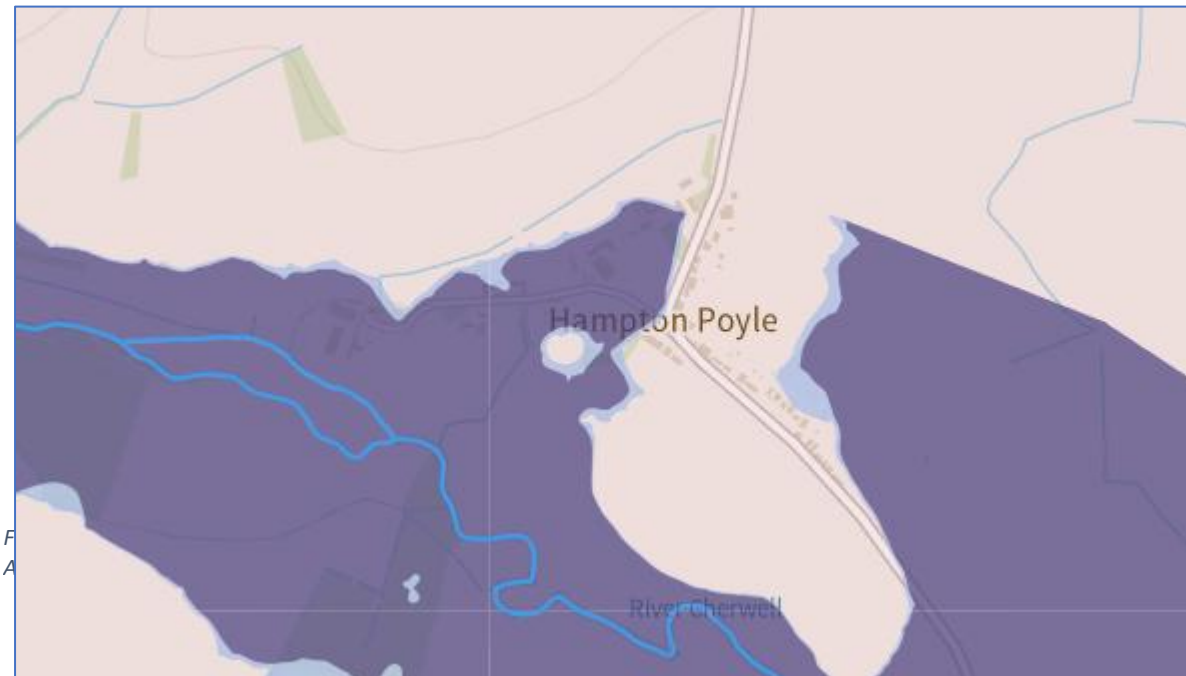


Figure 16 - flood risk from surface water, Hampton Poyle - the darker the colour the greater the risk (Environment Agency).

There has also been a high risk of surface water flooding, although this has also been mitigated somewhat in recent years.



Sewage

Hampton Poyle has mains sewage drainage.

Air, noise, and light

Air quality

There is no continuous air quality monitoring in HGP.

The latest figure from CDRC in 2017 for nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and sulphur dioxide shows a score for parish as 13.6 compared to the figure for England of 26.8 which would suggest that the air quality is generally good. Subjective assessment however would suggest that households living near the A34 are subject to a higher level of pollution particularly when the wind is from the East.

SOURCE: DEFRA - <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/>

Noise

Most of Hampton Gay and Poyle are within a 4km radius, or less, of Kidlington airport. Although most flights are of light aircraft they can be low and intrusive. Similarly, noise from the A34/M40 can be intrusive for some when the wind is in an easterly direction.

Light pollution

Light pollution is not considered a problem.

Climate and weather

Climate and weather are the same as those in Bletchington. (See pages 19 to 23 above). As far as a risk assessment goes these risks are also the same with the exception of flood risk which is clearly higher and likely to have any impact on human health.

Material (and community) assets

Being much smaller than Bletchington, neither Hampton Gay nor Hampton Poyle has much in the way of village facilities, although there is a small village green in Hampton Poyle. In both villages, local farmers from time to time make facilities available to host events.

In Hampton Poyle there is a well-used pub, The Bell, which is popular in the locality, partly because it has a bar area as well as a restaurant.

Cultural heritage - including architectural and archaeological heritage

There are 6 listed buildings in Hampton Poyle, all are Grade II with the exception of the church which is Grade II*:

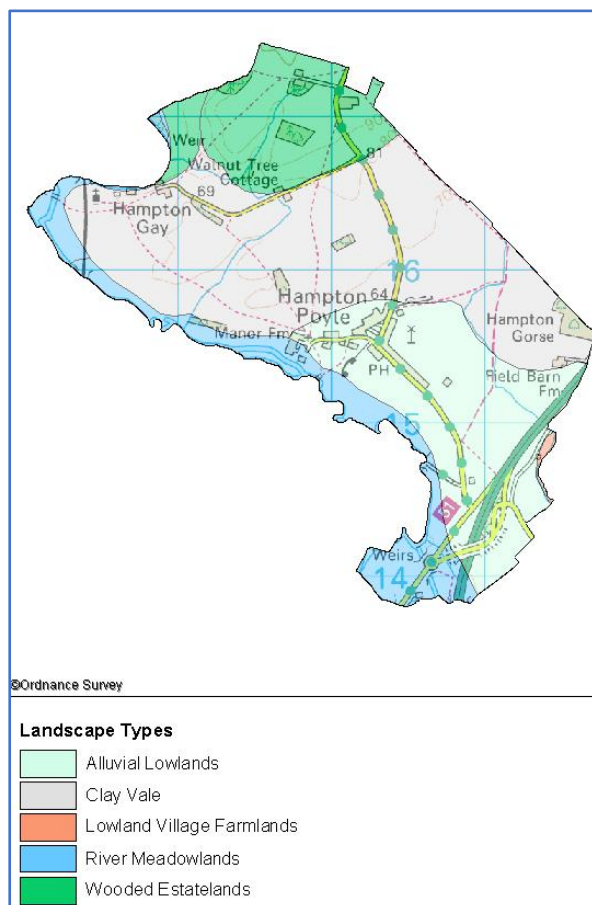
1. The Church of St Mary
2. Manor Farmhouse
3. An outbuilding of Manor Farmhouse
4. Poyle Court
5. The old Manor House
6. Model Farmhouse.

There are four listed buildings in Hampton Gay all Grade II:

1. St Giles Church
2. The Manor House
3. The Manor House Barn
4. The ruins of Hampton Gay Manor

A Character Assessment, available as a separate appendix, has been developed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence-base.

Landscape



Despite the different landscape types the majority of HGP is given over to agriculture with a mixture of arable and grazing land.

There is little woodland except on upward slopes to the north west. None of it is regarded as ancient woodland.

SOURCE:

<https://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/Oxfordshire+Districts/Oxfordshire+Districts+-+Parishes/West+Oxfordshire+Parishes/>

Education

The nearest primary school is in Bletchingdon, although an unknown number attend the schools in Kidlington or private schools in Oxford.

The nearest secondary school is Gosford Hill in Kidlington where a number of children attend with an unknown number attending private schools in Oxford.

Traffic and Transport

The road to Hampton Gay is a single-track road, branching off the Hampton Poyle to Bletchingdon road. There are limited areas for passing and two blind bends, so this road, like the B4027, is unsuitable for heavy traffic. The lane literally ends in a field, which can cause further problems for heavy vehicles wishing to turn around.

The minor road which runs through Hampton Poyle from the A34 to Bletchingdon is generally quiet. It does however serve as a “rat run” at peak times and also when there is congestion on the A34. It is however a narrow road and not suitable for a large volume of traffic or heavy vehicles.

Parking around the Bell public house has also caused issues, making that part of the road difficult to navigate at times.

Walking and cycling

There are a number of footpaths from the villages providing connections to Bletchingdon and Kidlington.

Hampton Poyle lies on National Cycle route 51 which diverts off the road to the south-east of the village and passes across meadow land to Kidlington.

Like all the minor roads in the area, the Hampton Poyle/Bletchingdon route can be busy and dangerous for both cyclists and walkers.

Public transport

For many years Hampton Poyle was served by a bus route from Bicester, via the Heyfords and Kirtlington to Oxford. This was hourly for six days per week. In 2023, this was changed for a new route but now only operates on a two-hourly basis and now takes a different route via Wendelbury and Weston on the Green but still including Kirtlington. It also connects with Oxford Parkway.

There is a stop on the Bletchingdon/Hampton Poyle road for people in Hampton Gay although this entails a considerable walk and there are also two stops in Hampton Poyle. The service is subsidised by Oxfordshire County Council. It is of considerable concern that the subsidy might be withdrawn and the service cease in which case this would cause considerable inconvenience to those unable to

drive. Although the bus skirts around Kidlington only the Sainsburys supermarket is really accessible. Any visit to the main part of that village requires car transport. None of the GP surgeries in Islip, Kidlington and Woodstock are accessible without a car.

Housing

Hampton Gay and Poyle have seen little development in recent years, typically single dwelling additions.

Housing stock and quality

There is considerable variety in the housing stock in HGP. According to the Valuation Office Agency in 2020:

Age of property	HGP
Built before 1900	11 (19%)
Built 1900 - 1939	6 (10.3%)
Built 1945 - 1999	33 (56.9%)
Built 2000-	9 (15.5%)

(Note: the age of some properties could not be identified so percentages do not total 100)

At the time of the 2011 census the types of housing was classified as follows:

Housing type	HGP
Detached	42 (72.4%)
Semi-detached	9 (15.5%)
Terraced	5 (8.6%)
Flats (purpose built or converted)	2 (3.4%)
Caravan or temporary	0
Second homes	3 (4.8%)
Total households	61

The 2021 census has changed the classifications:

Housing type	HGP
Whole house or bungalow	56 (93.5%)
Flat, maisonette or apartment	0

Caravan or similar	4 (6.5%)
	60

Number of bedrooms	HGP
1 bedroom	2 (3.2%)
2 bedrooms	1 (1.6%)
3 bedrooms	21 (35.5%)
4 or more bedrooms	36 (59.7%)

Number of occupants in household	HGP
1 person	12 (19.4%)
2 people	22 (37.1%)
3 people	9 (14.5%)
4 or more people	17 (29%)

According to the ONS definition 85.5% of households in HGP have more bedrooms than are strictly required whereas no households are regarded as overcrowded. 66.3% of households are single family. 75% of the households are single family.

In terms of tenure, in 2021, 85.5% of properties were owned occupied in HGP, 8.1% were privately rented and the remaining 6.5% were rented from housing associations or the local council.

Housing in HGP is not cheap. However, there is insufficient data to give any accurate figure.

The gap between 4.5 average household earnings and the price of the median house is at least £150,000. The house price figures are probably skewed by the proximity to Oxford, which has very high average housing prices.

Generally, the housing stock is considered to be in very good condition. In HGP all households were reported as having central heating.

Crime

During the most recent year (2024) there was a total of 110 offences reported for the parishes of Bletchington and HGP. It is not clear from the available figures which parish some of these offences were committed, in but out of the total 7 were clearly within the parish of HGP. (Source Thames Valley Police).

Crime	Total for 2024
Antisocial behaviour	2
Burglary	7 (1)
Criminal damage and arson	8
Drugs	1 (1)
Other crime	3
Other theft	15
Public order	4
Shoplifting	13
Vehicle crime	15 (1)
Violence and sexual offences	42 (4)
Total	110 (7)

Offences identifiable as being committed in HGP are shown in ()

The total represents 87 offences per 1000 of the local population. This is exactly the same as for England as a whole. Violence and sexual offences account for 33 per 1000 in the parishes and 35 nationally.

More locally these rates mirror those in Oxford City but are greater than Oxfordshire as a whole which has an offence rate of 66 per 1000 with violence and sexual offences totalling 27 per 1000.

Communications

Internet access: the villages lack fibre broadband and so is reliant upon landline connections.

Mobile phone coverage. This is generally regarded as limited particularly indoors. Outdoors can be variable and often slow. 5G data is very limited. Indoor reception for older houses is variable. According to Ofcom:

Provider	Indoors		Outdoors	
	Voice	Data (4G or less)	Voice	Data (4G or less)
EE	Limited	Limited	Likely	Likely
Three	Limited	Limited	Likely	Likely
O2	Limited	Limited	Likely	Likely
Vodafone	Limited	Limited	Likely	Likely

Waste

Waste collection is undertaken by Cherwell District Council. Food waste is collected weekly, general waste and recyclables on alternate weeks. Garden waste is a subscription service and is also collected every other week. These collections are generally regarded as efficiently undertaken and the most recent survey by Cherwell District Council (2017) showed satisfaction rates of over 80%.

Glass is not collected but there is a bottle bank located on the boundary between Bletchington and HGP which is widely used. Other recycling facilities are located in Kidlington and Bicester and at the Oxfordshire site at Ardley.

Employment

Figures are from the 2021 Census unless stated otherwise.

Economic Activity Status and Employment History:

Economic Activity (% of 16+ year olds)	HPG	Cherwell	England
Economically active: in employment	60.3	65.1	57.4
Economically active: unemployed	1.5	2.5	3.5
Economically inactive	38.2	32.5	39.1
Employment History (% of 16+ year olds and not in employment)			
Not in employment: Worked in the last 12 months	11.1	14.9	13.2
Not in employment: Not worked in the last 12 months	66.7	65.8	61.1
Not in employment: Never worked	22.2	19.3	25.6

Employment structure of HGP. The percentages are based on the number of economically active people over 16 in each parish. The main categories of occupation were:

Occupation (% of 16+ year olds in employment)	HPG	Cherwell	England
Managers directors and senior officials	25.6	13.7	12.9
Professional	20.7	19.4	20.3
Associate professional and technical	8.5	13.4	13.3
Administrative and secretarial	7.3	9.2	9.3
Skilled trades	17.1	10.2	10.2
Caring, leisure and other services	7.3	7.8	9.3
Sales and customer service	2.4	7.9	7.5
Process, plant and machine operatives	2.4	7.8	6.9
Elementary	8.5	10.6	10.5

A slightly different view is given by looking at the Socio-Economic classification of all people aged over 16:

Occupation (% of all 16+ year olds)	HPG	Cherwell	England
L1, L2 and L3: Higher managerial, administrative and professional	17.2	15.1	13.2
L4, L5 and L6: Lower managerial, administrative and professional	24.6	21.4	19.9
L7: Intermediate occupations	14.2	11.9	11.4
L8 and L9: Small employers and own account workers	16.4	10.5	10.6
L10 and L11: Lower supervisory and technical occupations	0.7	6.1	5.3
L12: Semi-routine occupations	9	12	11.3
L13: Routine occupations	6.7	13	12.0
L14.1 and L14.2: Never worked and long-term unemployed	6.7	5.2	8.5

L15: Full-time students	4.5	4.7	7.7

In terms of occupations based in the village the percentages are (ONS 2019 which is the latest data broken down to parish level):

HGP
Health (30.2%)
Mining and quarrying (20.9%)
Hotels and catering (14%)

There are a number of businesses based in the village. In terms of fairly broad categories these are percentages are of the number of local businesses (ONS 2019 which is the latest data broken down to parish level):

:

HGP
Agriculture (16.7%)
Professional, scientific and technical services (16.7%)
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services (8.3%)

Note: these figures are based on broad categories, show only VAT registered ones and may include business that are owned outside of the locality and maybe part of a chain.

Village character

A majority of the residents would express a feeling of belonging to the village and have chosen to live here because of the community and sense of place. There are various aspects to this:

- The green nature and setting of the village which provides a green and varied landscape.
- The rural outlook, location and environment within an agricultural landscape.
- The rich local biodiversity. The village is home to a variety of wildlife habits, from riverine and marsh land to heathland.
- The physical structure of the village with its footpaths and historic buildings.

A Character Assessment, available as a separate appendix, has been developed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence-base.