

Household survey in Shilton Park (Carterton), Madley Park (Witney) and Blissfield Gardens (Chipping Norton) 2009

Background

One way of gauging the effectiveness of local planning policies is to seek the views of the residents whose environment has been shaped by those policies. Over a period of several years, a number of household surveys have been carried out across the District and these have provided valuable information relating to our locational policy approach. Questionnaire surveys of specific housing areas, over an extended period, can be particularly useful as they track the changes in a developing community.

During 2002, questionnaire surveys were delivered to households on the two large urban extensions at Shilton Park and Madley Park in Carterton and Witney, respectively. Further surveys of these areas were carried out, again, in 2006 and in August 2009. A survey was also undertaken in March 2008, but this was particularly concerned with waste and parking provision, rather than general household and occupant details. This report focuses on the 2009 survey, which also included housing on the new Blissfield Gardens estate, at Chipping Norton.

Methodology

At the time of the survey, the two larger developments of Shilton Park and Madley Park were nearing completion and about 1,420 and 1,130 homes had been built, respectively. The Blissfield Gardens development had just been completed and contains just over 130 homes. In order to obtain a significant sample of householders' views, questionnaires were delivered to about 1 in 3 of the homes in Shilton and Madley Parks, and all of the homes at Blissfield Gardens. The questionnaires were delivered by hand at the beginning of August and included pre-paid envelopes for their return.

Although the questionnaires allowed occupants to respond anonymously, they were delivered to selected households to ensure that a balance of house and tenure types was covered. *Table 1*, below, shows the numbers of questionnaires delivered to particular house types.

Dwelling type	Shilton Park		Madley Park	
	No. built	Deliver	No. built	Deliver
Flat/maisonette	388	129	215	72
Mid-terrace	298	99	217	72
End of terrace	228	76	220	73
Semi-detached	214	71	182	61
Detached	291	97	296	99
Totals	1419	472	1130	377

Table 1 – Questionnaire deliveries to house types at Shilton and Madley Parks

A total of 380 completed questionnaires were returned – a 39% response rate.

Shilton Park - Carterton

- Response rate = 36% (39% in 2006 and 31% in 2002) – this represents the views of 1 in 8 households on the estate.

Previous location

- The 2006 survey showed that nearly two thirds of Shilton Park’s residents had moved there from elsewhere in West Oxfordshire. This survey shows that a similar proportion has moved from within the District, but with a higher percentage from previous addresses in Carterton itself – 39% of all residents, compared to 30% in 2006.
- 43% of the households living in rented housing association and leasehold homes had moved from elsewhere in Carterton and a further 30% from other addresses within West Oxfordshire. Of the remaining households, 17% had previously been living elsewhere in Oxfordshire.

Occupancy

- The 2006 survey returned an average household occupancy rating of 2.5 persons per household. In 2009 this has increased to 2.7. The proportions of responses in relation to numbers of bedrooms has remained very similar as *Table 2* shows:

Number of beds	2009 returned questionnaires		2006 returned questionnaires	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	5	3%	9	6%
2	48	29%	45	28%
3	53	31%	48	30%
4 or more	62	37%	58	36%

Table 2 – Questionnaire responses from Shilton Park households by number of bedrooms

- The 2009 population forecasts for West Oxfordshire (source Oxfordshire Data Observatory) show about 20% of the residents being under 18 years of age and those over 64 years old making up nearly a fifth of the Districts population. The returned 2009 questionnaires for Shilton Park show a different pattern, with about 30% being less than 18 years old and only about 2% being over 65. *Chart 1* shows that although the forecast District split is around 50% under 45 years old and about 50% over this age, the responses from Shilton Park indicate that, at this local level, only about 16% are above 45, with a large majority being younger.

Ages of residents in Shilton Park compared to the average for West Oxfordshire 2009

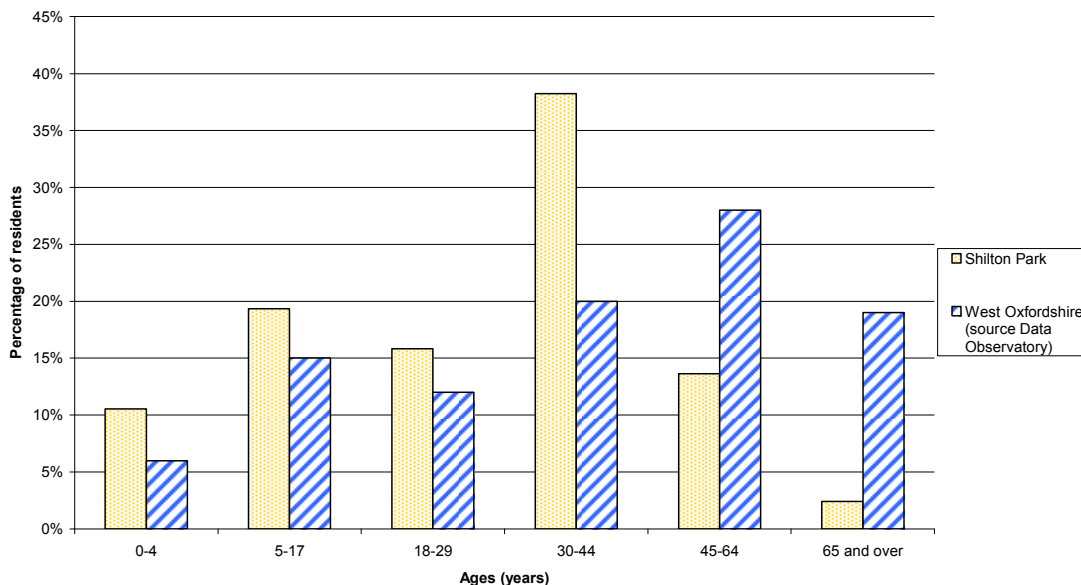


Chart 1 - Comparative age structures in West Oxfordshire and Shilton Park (2009)

Travel to work patterns

- The households responding to the survey included 192 full-time workers, 50 part-time and 20 workers who did not specify whether or not they worked full-time or part-time. The proportion of workers employed within West Oxfordshire has changed little since 2006 (54% in 2006 and 53% in 2009) with 22% of all workers being employed within Carterton (21% in 2006). The percentage travelling to Oxford City is slightly higher than the 2006 figure (21% compared to 17%) but the proportion travelling outside of the County has dropped from the 2006 figure of 18% to 15% in 2009.
- The percentage of workers travelling to their place of employment using more sustainable means of transport has risen slightly with 10% of all workers walking or cycling and 5% using public transport. This compares with 9% and 3% (respectively) in 2006. The favoured mode of transport is still the motor car or motorcycle (80% driving and 5% as passengers). This is despite the fact that over a fifth of all workers (22%) travel less than 5km to their place of work.

Car ownership and parking

- *Availability:* The average level of car/van availability is 1.65 vehicles per household (vph). Although this is higher than the 2001 Census rate for the whole District (1.45), it is unchanged from the 2006 survey. The 2002 household vehicle availability rate was very close to that shown on the Census tables, at 1.47 vph. West Oxfordshire is one of the most rural districts in the South East region and for some residents, even within the District’s larger towns, public transport is not always a viable option.

- *Tenure and dwelling type:* Although the number of vehicles available to households with particular tenures follows a similar pattern to the 2006 survey, there has been a rise in the average for each type, apart from the privately rented properties. Owner-occupied homes still have the highest average availability, at 1.78 vph (this compares with 1.71 in 2006). Housing association rented and leasehold homes had 1.0 and 1.25 vph respectively (0.9 and 1.0 in 2006), whilst the average for other rented properties had fallen from 1.6 vph, in 2006, to 1.41 this year. The availability rate for houses is higher than it was in 2006 – 1.74 vph compared to 1.70 – but is much lower for flats and maisonettes, which had an average 1.40 vph in 2006 but showed an average of only 1.17 vph in this 2009 survey.
- *Number of bedrooms:* As expected, the average household vehicle availability rises with the number of bedrooms in the home. However, it is interesting to note that the average availability rate for one and two bed properties is much lower than it was in 2006 (0.8 vph for one-bed compared to 1.33 in 2006 and 1.31 for two-bed compared to 1.44 in 2006). Conversely, the rates for larger properties have risen with the average 1.65 vph for three-bed homes rising to 1.75 in 2009 and the 1.84 vph for four or more bed properties, in 2006, climbing to 1.92. Well over half (58%) of all properties had 2 cars or vans available whilst less than 4% had no vehicles.
- *Parking:* 58% of the households with cars or vans available had the use of a garage. However, nearly three quarters (73%) of these respondents did not park their vehicle in the garage and 86%, overall, considered that there was sufficient parking for their everyday needs. Of the households with some car availability, but no garage, 72% thought that there was adequate parking for their needs.
- *Comments:* 79 of the households responding to the survey included a total of 150 comments relating to the Shilton Park development and Carterton. Despite the high percentage of residents who thought that the parking provision was adequate for their needs (see above), nearly a third of the respondents making additional comments (30%) thought that on-street parking was a real problem, with 14 of the 79 households suggesting that additional traffic restrictions should be introduced (e.g. double yellow lines). There were also a number of criticisms relating to inadequate parking provision (both on-street and off-street), roads being too narrow, garages being too small for modern cars and residents not using the off-street spaces that were provided with their properties.

The questionnaire for Shilton Park also asked for residents' views on the possible introduction of a traffic order, to restrict parking during refuse collection periods. Nearly three quarters (73%) of all respondents were in favour of this proposal. However, there were a number of requests for clarification on how such an approach might operate and where the displaced vehicles would park, as well as suggestions such as carrying out the collections at a later hour, when the majority of residents' vehicles would have left the estate.

Shopping

- Over two thirds (67%) of responding households carried out their main food shopping in Witney, with around a quarter (24%) shopping in Carterton. Around 8% did their main food shopping in Swindon. However, the pattern for 'top-up' shopping was quite different with 94% of respondents favouring Carterton. For non-food shopping, responding households preferred Oxford as a location, with 36% shopping here. Swindon was the second favourite (32%) followed by Witney* (21%)

Kilkenny Lane Country Park

- Residents were asked how often they made use of this facility, which was developed as part of the Shilton Park estate. Of the 168 households that responded to this question, 35% used the Country Park weekly, or more often, with 6% using it on a daily basis. However, well over a quarter (28%) never used the facility and one respondent said that they had never heard of it. The remaining 37% said that they used the Park occasionally. A number of additional comments were also received relating to the Park. Along with descriptions of 'beautiful', 'wonderful' and 'fantastic' were criticisms concerning litter, vandalism, broken glass and bottles in the sand pit, access to the Park and lack of awareness of consultation on the siting of the car park.

* This survey was carried out prior to the opening of Marriotts Walk in Witney town centre.

Madley Park - Witney

- Response rate = 41% (44% in 2006 and 46% in 2002) – represents the views of about 1 in 7 households on the estate.

Previous location

- Just over a third (35%) of the residents responding to this 2009 survey had moved from previous addresses in Witney – similar to the 36% shown in the 2006 survey. However, fewer residents had relocated from elsewhere in West Oxfordshire (14% of respondents, compared to 19% in 2006) or from within Oxfordshire County (17% compared to 23% in 2006). A correspondingly higher proportion had come from outside of Oxfordshire (26% in 2009 and 22% in 2006).
- Over half (54%) of the households renting from housing associations or in leasehold homes had previously lived at addresses in Witney and a further 29% had relocated from elsewhere in the District. None had come from outside of Oxfordshire.

Occupancy

- This 2009 survey shows a slightly lower occupancy rating with an average of 2.6 persons per home. This compares with a rate of 2.7 in 2006. The proportion of questionnaires returned by two-bed households is considerably higher than in 2006, whilst that for one, three and four or more bed houses has fallen (see *Table 3*)

Number of beds	2009 returned questionnaires		2006 returned questionnaires	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
1	5	3%	6	4%
2	38	25%	23	14%
3	66	43%	77	47%
4 or more	43	28%	56	35%

Table 3 – Questionnaire responses from Madley Park households by number of bedrooms

- Like the responses from Shilton Park, the returned Madley Park questionnaires show an age structure markedly different from the average population forecast for West Oxfordshire as a whole. This anticipates a 2009 population where roughly half (47%) are 45 years or older, with about a fifth (19%) being 65 or over. As *Chart 2* shows, only about a quarter (24%) of the responding residents in Madley Park are over 44 years of age, with only 8% (rather than the District-wide forecast 19%) being 65 or older.

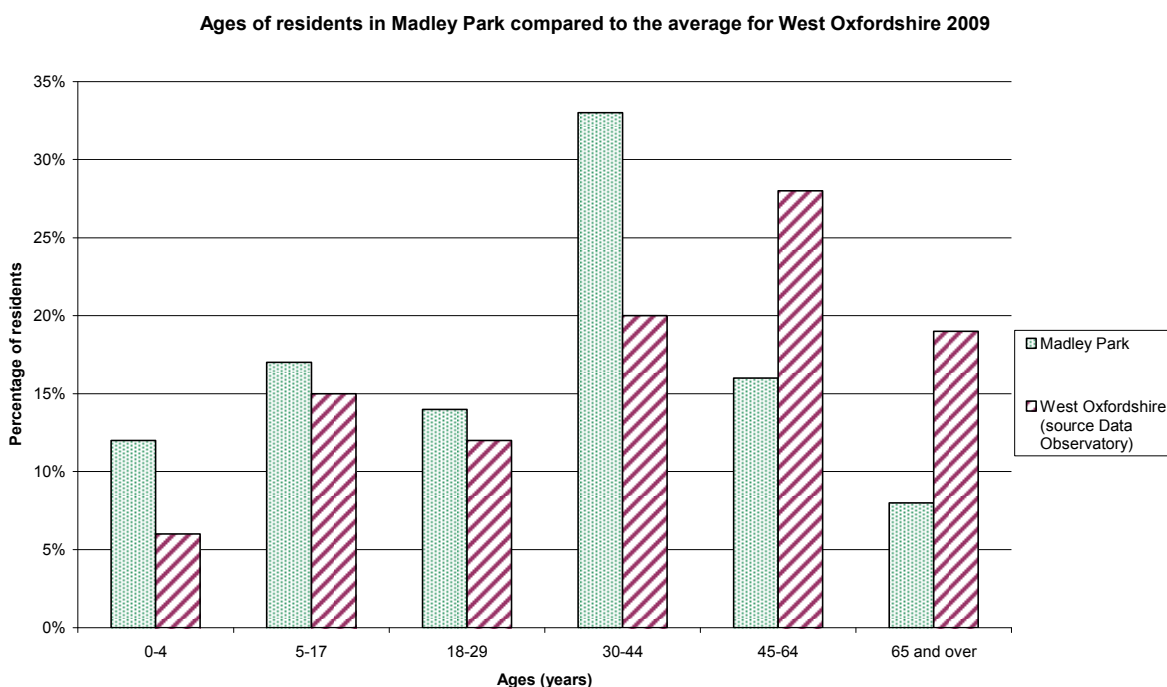


Chart 2 – Comparative age structures in West Oxfordshire and Madley Park (2009)

Travel to work patterns

- Households returning the questionnaires from Madley Park included 225 workers (170 full-time, 38 part-time and 17 who did not specify either). At around 29%, the proportion of workers employed in Witney is the same as in 2006. A further 15% work at other locations within West Oxfordshire (14% in 2006) with 18% travelling outside of Oxfordshire (15% in 2006). The proportion of workers travelling to Oxford City continues to fall slowly – 24% in 2002, 23% in 2006 and 22% in 2009.
- There has been an encouraging drop in the number of workers travelling to work by car (76% compared to 82% in 2006) and a significant increase in journeys made by more sustainable means. In 2006 just under 10% of trips to work were made by foot or by bicycle. This has risen to 17% in 2009. The use of public transport appears to have decreased slightly from 6% of all journeys to work, in 2006, to 4% in 2009. This may be linked to the fact that there were several comments received with returned questionnaires, relating to the lack of timely and efficient bus services at Madley Park.

Car ownership and parking

- Availability:** The average number of vehicles available to households has shown a significant drop since the 2006 survey. On average, Madley Park households now have 1.52 vph, compared to 1.69 in 2006 and 1.65 in 2002. This reduction may be linked to the changes in modes of transport indicated by the 2009 responses (see *Travel to Work Patterns* above).
- Tenure and dwelling type:** Whilst the average vehicle availability for leasehold properties has risen since the 2006 survey (1.50 vph compared to

1.25 vph), it is lower for all other tenures – owner-occupied average down from the 2006 figure of 1.78 vph to 1.65 vph, rented housing association down from 0.71 vph to 0.67 vph and privately rented down from 1.45 vph to 1.29 vph. Although the average availability for houses has fallen in line with this trend, it has risen by over 25% for flats and maisonettes, from 1.07 vph in 2006 to 1.36 vph in 2009.

- *Number of bedrooms:* The average vehicle availability rate is lower for single bed, three-bed and four or more bed properties than it was in 2006 (0.80, 1.48 and 1.84 respectively) but the rate for two-bed homes has risen from 1.26 vph to 1.33 vph.
- *Parking:* Just over half (51%) of the households that had vehicles available, had the use of a garage and 85% of these households considered the parking provision to be adequate for their everyday needs. However, only 48% of these households actually used the garage to park their vehicle in. Even the households without the use of a garage (but with at least one vehicle) generally thought that the parking spaces provided were sufficient for their needs (81% of these households).
- *Comments:* A third of the additional comments received from 63 households, related to vehicle parking within the development. The majority of these comments concerned inconsiderate and dangerous parking, along with suggested means of addressing the problem, such as providing additional parking spaces or introducing yellow lines in problem areas. Some respondents noted that many of the garages were too small to accommodate normal cars or that driveways were either too narrow or too short.

Shopping (*This survey was conducted prior to the opening of Marriotts Walk in Witney town centre*)

- Witney figured very strongly in terms of respondents shopping habits. 85% of residents used Witney for their main food shopping and a further 6% used the Internet for this purpose. Only one household purchased their main food items outside of Oxfordshire. Virtually all (99%) of the Madley Park residents use Witney for their 'top-up' shopping. Although the favoured location for non-food shopping is Oxford (just over 45%), over 25% of the responding households carry out their non-food shopping in Witney. A further 9% split this activity between Oxford and Witney.

Blissfield Gardens – Chipping Norton

- Response rate = 42%.

Previous location

- 42% of the respondents had moved to Blissfield Gardens from other addresses within Chipping Norton with a further 11% relocating from other parts of West Oxfordshire. Over a third (34%) moved from addresses outside of Oxfordshire.
- None of the households living in rented housing association or leasehold properties had come from outside of the County. 79% were from Chipping Norton itself and 7% from other West Oxfordshire locations.

Occupancy

- The returned questionnaires indicate an average household occupancy rating, at Blissfield Gardens, of 2.8 persons per household. Like the other two housing areas surveyed (Shilton Park and Madley Park), Blissfield Gardens does not mirror the age structure forecast for the District as a whole. Only 17% of the occupants in the households who returned completed questionnaires are over the age of 44 (the forecast for the District as a whole in 2009 is 47%) and just 3% are over the age of 64 (19% in the forecast). At the other end of the scale, the 32% under the age of 18 is about a third higher than the forecast 21%. See *Chart 3*, below.

Ages of residents in Blissfield Gardens compared to the average for West Oxfordshire 2009

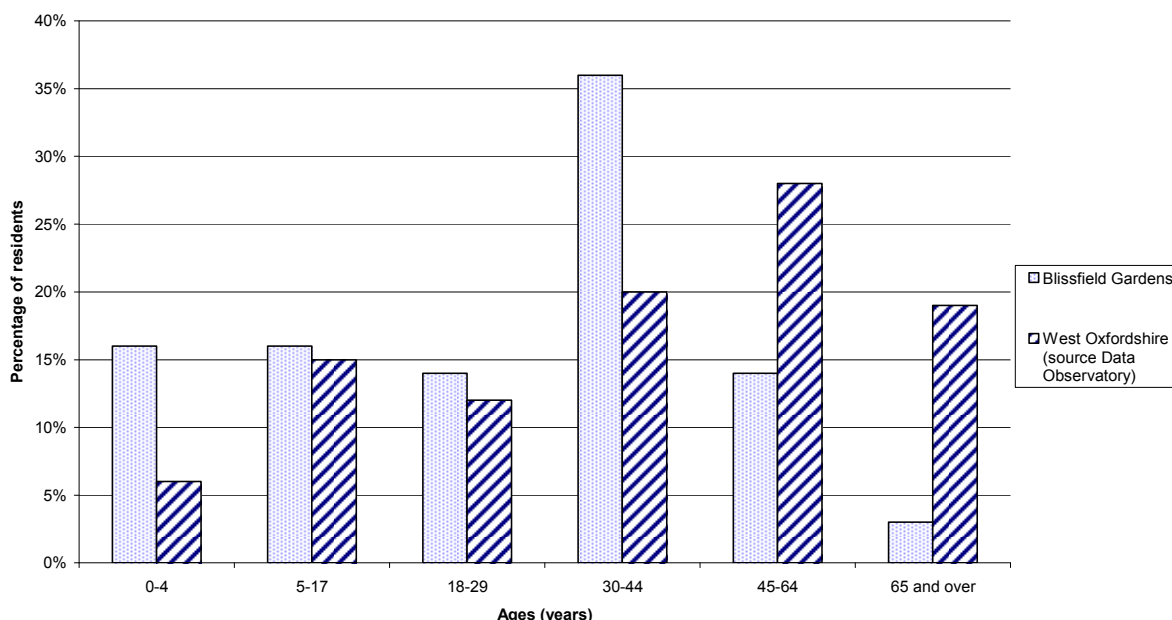


Chart 3 – Comparative age structures in West Oxfordshire and Blissfield Gardens (2009)

Travel to work patterns

- Responding households included 66 full-time workers, 11 part-time and 1 who did not specify their employment type. 59% of those who specified a work location were employed within West Oxfordshire, with a third of all workers being employed in Chipping Norton itself. Another 11% travelled to Oxford City to work and 17% worked outside of Oxfordshire.
- A lower proportion used the car to access their place of work than on either Shilton Park or Madley Park estates (73% compared to 85% and 76%, respectively) and a relatively strong 13% travelled to work by foot.

Car ownership and parking

- *Availability:* On average, households have 1.71 vehicles available. This is much higher than the rate, as recorded by the 2001 Census, which was 1.45 vph for West Oxfordshire, 1.3 vph for the South East Region and 1.1 vph for England. To some extent, this may reflect Chipping Norton's relatively remote location within the District and the fact that it is less well served by buses than Witney or Carterton.
- *Tenure and dwelling type:* The average number of vehicles available to residents of rented housing association or leasehold properties (1.43 vph in both cases) is higher at Blissfield Gardens than it is at Shilton Park (1.0 for rented housing association properties and 1.25 for leasehold). Madley Park has a much lower rate for rented housing association properties (0.67) but a higher rate for leasehold homes (1.50). The availability rate for privately-rented properties (1.90 vph) is much higher than either Shilton Park or Madley Park (1.41 and 1.29, respectively). On average, houses have more vehicles available than flats and maisonettes (1.79 compared to 1.25 vph).
- *Number of bedrooms:* Although the average number of cars available tends to rise in line with the number of bedrooms in a home, in Blissfield Gardens, there is a higher average vehicle rate in three-bed properties (2.08 vph) than there is in four-bed homes (1.91 vph). Whilst over 90% of the four-bed properties here have just two vehicles, the only properties that have more than two vehicles are three-bed properties.
- *Parking:* 70% of the households with vehicles available to them had the use of a garage, although around two thirds (65%) of those households did not use those garages to park their cars in. Three quarters of all households with vehicles thought that there was sufficient parking for their everyday needs. However, occupants of semi-detached properties were the least satisfied, with only 67% thinking that their allocation was adequate. Residents of flats were more satisfied and 88% thought that there was sufficient parking available.
- *Comments:* In terms of additional comments, car parking at Blissfield seemed to be less of an issue than it is at Shilton and Madley Parks. Nevertheless, around a quarter of the comments received related to inconsiderate parking, inadequate garages and the fact that many residents did not use their allocated spaces, preferring to park on the street outside of their homes.

Shopping

- Only just over a quarter (27%) of responding households carried out their main food shopping in Chipping Norton, although a further 13% split their shopping between Chipping Norton and another town and around 4% used the Internet for this purpose. No other towns were used for 'top-up' shopping, however, with all households using the local shops in Chipping Norton. Banbury is the favoured location for non-food shopping with 56% of households shopping there and another 18% sharing their favours with Banbury and another centre. 13% of the respondents did their non-food shopping in Oxford.

Note: The 60-bed and 68-bed residential care homes at Madley Park and Shilton Park, respectively, were not included in these surveys.