

# **Fundraising strategy: Thame Community and Youth Centre, October 2024**

## **CYP Evidence Needs Assessment**

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## **Appendix 1: Review of National Lottery projects for Youth and Community Centres.**

The largest single grant funding opportunity for the project is the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund. The process for application involves a Stage 1 Expression of Interest (EOI) which has a 12-week decision turnaround. If agreement is secured, the Lottery team will provide advice and mentoring for a full application, which would need to include extensive evidence of need and co-production with the community, e.g. with young people and key community groups. Reaching Communities large grants typically range to around £500k, with larger grants rarely exceeding £1m unless with a city or regional remit.

The fund is highly competitive and prioritises disadvantage and community co-developed projects. NL areas have a limited funding allocation and seek to achieve a spread across their priorities. For example, if they are already funding multiple youth project in the county and SE region, they may be less able to support additional.

Typical examples of Lottery funded capital projects awarded from 2018-2024 are below. These are mapped across the past 6 years as funding awarded has tightened since Covid and increased cost of living, resulting in fewer large grant awards.

The examples reviewed have the following in common:

- Generally, charity led (CIO/ CIC), although there are some parish or county Council applicants. In many cases, a new not-for-profit entity has been created to manage the building.
- Disadvantage levels of recipient communities is prioritised. The need must be clear and marked.
- Most of the large capital projects are for multi-issue/ cross-community centres, some just for one age group, although often all-ages.
- Other funding is secured alongside it, e.g. the Council, Garfield Weston and other national and local funders.
- Funds are often spread over more than one year, even if for capital works.
- Most applications are at around the £500k level, especially for local projects. Funding above this is unlikely.
- Lottery (and indeed any grant) funding will not be awarded for anything that should be provided by the local or county council.

## Examples of Lottery funded capital projects awarded in England from 2018-2024

Project	Amount	Lottery Fund	Date	Location	Details
Williton Village Hall	£949,087	NL Community Fund	2017	W Somerset	Funded in the largest village in West Somerset, but one lacking significant community buildings for social, recreational or training activities. Benefits the 3,600 residents of Williton and neighbouring villages St Audries and Sampford Brett, with a specific focus on older and younger people.
Highbury Roundhouse Youth and Community Centre	£917,116	Reaching Communities	2016	Islington, London	ROUNDHOUSE A new community centre provided much needed space for local people of all ages to access services, support and social events and provide an outreach hub. The project was led by local people including trustees, staff and volunteers to create a facility that the community need. The original building had been demolished due to unexpected subsidence.
Grangetown United	£883,191	Community Fund	2017	Middlesborough	GRANGETOWN UNITED The project created a multi-purpose community hub to address the social and economic challenges experienced by local people. A community café and an indoor adventure play area for young children were provided as well as a meeting hall for social, recreational and healthy activities. This aimed to reduce social isolation and bring the community together. The project also focused on improving and building individual skills through informal/formal learning, volunteering and employment opportunities. Other funding came from the Council, trusts and foundations including Virgin Active, Mercers, Co-op Foundation and local housing and community funds.
Grange Park Centre	£500,000		2018		GRANGE PARK CENTRE CIO This organisation will build a new community centre in Charnwood, EMids, providing local people with a safe space to come together and enjoy. A range of activities will be held at the centre including a youth club, toddler group, dance and yoga classes, as well as life skill sessions such as money management, cooking and IT. Around 7,500 local residents are expected to benefit from the new centre, increasing community networks and reducing social isolation and loneliness.
Chinley Centre Rebuild	£490,000	Reaching Communities	2023	Derbyshire	This funding enabled the local Parish Council (CHINLEY BUXWORTH AND BROWNSIDE PARISH COUNCIL) to demolish the old Community Centre and replace it with a new modern energy efficient building. The new Centre is the hub at the heart of the community providing a welcome and warm space for residents and local groups, activities and community events, ranging from yoga to a youth club to

					dementia friendly cinema and over 60's lunches. Alongside Lottery award, they secured £100k from Derbyshire CC, and another £350k to raise. They secured £40k from Garfield Weston, with more bids in the pipeline.
Flag Lane Baths Rejuvenation	£450,000	Communities Fund	2023	Crewe	ALWAYS AHEAD funded to refurbish and renovate the abandoned Crewe Swimming Baths (known here on as Flag Lane Baths) into a state-of-the-art community hub with services for youth homeless people the unemployed and broader community of Crewe receiving £450000 over 2 years. Flag Lane Baths hosts a range of services that aim to improve community cohesion social inclusion mental health and wellbeing youth engagement employment and training prospects and supporting people experiencing deep poverty and homelessness.
Positive Youth Community Project	£426,714	Reaching Communities	2019	South Tyneside	CLEGWELL AND HARTLEYBURN COMMUNITY HUB (CIO). The funding was to establish and staff a new youth centre, which included activity and kitchen facilities for local young people ' many of whom are from deprived neighbourhoods. The new centre provided young people with a safe space in which they could take part in positive activities and sessions about issues such as healthy relationships, employment skills, and awareness of sexual exploitation. The idea and demand for a youth centre came from local young people themselves, who were closely consulted.

## Appendix 2: Evidence and needs assessment – Thame and South Oxfordshire

NB All data from Oxfordshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) unless otherwise stated.

Overview – description		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South- East region.</p> <p>The Council’s mission is to become a “greener, fairer and healthier county”</p> <p>It is also one of the most expensive places to live in the country, with a shortage of affordable and social housing. The county includes 10 neighbourhoods in the 20% most deprived in England. (OCC Strategic plan 2023-25).</p>	<p>The district of South Oxfordshire covers nearly 260 square miles. Its boundary reaches from the edge of the City of Oxford in the north-west along the borders of Buckinghamshire and Berkshire to the outskirts of Reading in the south. It has four main towns: Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford, with Didcot becoming increasingly dominant as the main urban centre<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire is a largely rural district, including parts of two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the Oxford Green Belt, as well as a long stretch of the River Thames.</p>	<p>Thame is a civil Parish located in the county of Oxfordshire and in the northeast of the district of South Oxfordshire. Within the District, Thame is a key local centre for nearby villages both in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and significant growth in South Oxfordshire has been largely focused upon Thame, alongside Didcot, Wallingford and Henley on-Thames<sup>2</sup>.</p> <p>Thame has its origins in Anglo Saxon England, and the current town centre layout and the town’s 200+ listed buildings date from the late 13<sup>th</sup> century.</p>

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/08/South-and-Vale-Community-Safety-Partnership-Plan-2022-2025\\_V2.pdf](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/08/South-and-Vale-Community-Safety-Partnership-Plan-2022-2025_V2.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Thame | Neighbourhood Plan Master planning Report, April 2024, AECOM. [TNP2\\_Supporting\\_Masterplans\\_LR.pdf \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](#)

**Population totals and breakdown<sup>3</sup>**

<b>County level - Oxon</b>	<b>District level - South Oxon</b>	<b>Local level – Thame and surrounds</b>
<p>The population of Oxfordshire is estimated at 740,300 (ONS update, June 2022).</p> <p>The Oxon population is expected to rise to 853,500 by 2030<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>Between 2011 and 2021, Oxfordshire saw significant <b>increases in the resident population</b>, up 11% to 149,100 in 2021 [2021 census – ONS.gov.uk]<sup>5</sup>. This is higher than the overall (6.6%) England increase in population, with a resident population increase from 2011-21 of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Young people aged 5- 14 (+15%)</li> <li>-Working aged people in their 30s (+15%), and 50s (+27%)</li> <li>-Older people aged 65+ (+25%)</li> </ul> <p>40% live in small towns and villages<sup>6</sup>.</p>	<p>Population is 151,800 in South Oxfordshire (ONS update, June 2022). The highest proportion of South Oxfordshire residents are aged 45 – 60 years old (28,400).</p> <p>There has been an increase of 25.1 per cent in people aged 65+, an increase of 7.9 per cent in people aged 15-64 years, and an increase of 6.7 per cent in children aged under 15 years<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p>In all districts apart from Oxford City, the youth population (0-15) has remained relatively unchanged, at 132,549 in 2021.</p>	<p>The population of Thame is 13,268 (census 2021). This rises to an estimated 36,000 with visitors to the town to attend school, to shop and to work (from Marks and Spencer retail study in c2020).</p> <p>The catchment population for the proposed Thame Community and Youth Centre is roughly 5 miles round, with a focus on the young people and communities of Thame and surrounding villages (includes Chinnor, Long Crendon, Tetsworth, Moreton).</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 23.4% of the population are aged 19 or less, 55.1% are in the working age groups (ages 20-64), with 21.5% in the older age groups (over 64).</p> <p><b>Country of Birth:</b> 91.0% of residents were born in the UK; 9.0% were born in other countries.</p> <p><b>Ethnic group:</b> 94.4% of residents are White; 2.4% of residents are Mixed/multiple ethnic groups; 2.0% are Asian/Asian British; 0.6% are Black, African, Caribbean or Black British; and 0.6% are of another ethnic group. (ONS – 2021 Census).</p> <p>The youth population in Thame is growing. 2009 and 2019, the population of Thame aged 0-9 increased by 16.7% and those aged 50+ increased by 28.6%<sup>8</sup>. The main secondary school for the area, Lord Williams’s has 2286 students (@ Dec 23)<sup>9</sup>. Anecdotally, it is <b>the largest secondary school in the county</b>.</p>

<sup>3</sup> [Oxfordshire JSNA 2023, Oxfordshire insight](#)

<sup>4</sup> Oxfordshire County Council Strategic Plan, 2023-25. <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/about-council/OCCStrategicPlan2022.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [South Oxfordshire population change, Census 2021 – ONS](#), Oxfordshire Insight JSNA 2022.

<sup>6</sup> [Oxfordshire JSNA 2023, Oxfordshire insight](#)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/08/South-and-Vale-Community-Safety-Partnership-Plan-2022-2025\\_V2.pdf](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/08/South-and-Vale-Community-Safety-Partnership-Plan-2022-2025_V2.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Thame Community Profile of health and wellbeing evidence, March 2023, Oxfordshire JSNA.

[https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame\\_profile\\_March21.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame_profile_March21.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Lord William’s Secondary School Pupil Premium Strategy, Dec 2023

Deprivation		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>One of OCC’s Strategic Priorities is ‘tackling inequalities’, in relation to digital inclusion, health, poverty etc. Plan is to tackle with improved signposting to information, early intervention and accessible local services, <i>all of which the proposed Thame Community and Youth Centre supports.</i></p> <p>Oxfordshire has relatively low levels of deprivation: it is the 10th least deprived of 151 upper-tier local authorities in England (up from 11th in 2015). That puts the county well within the top 10% least deprived. 1:9 children in Oxon live in poverty. Families on low incomes are going hungry as the general cost of food and energy coupled with exceptionally high cost of housing leads to economic instability for many. 8% of Oxon households live in fuel poverty<sup>10</sup>. This creates increased uptake of foodbanks (Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p>	<p>South Oxfordshire (37.4%) has the lowest percentage of children (eligible for FSMs) who have had a good level of development compared to the other Oxfordshire districts<sup>13</sup>.</p> <p>In 2019, South Oxfordshire ranked 302 out of 317 local authorities in terms of deprivation – i.e. very low deprivation<sup>14</sup>.</p>	<p>Thame is relatively un-deprived with all areas of the town within the 30% least deprived nationally (2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation). According to DWP/HMRC estimates for 2018/19, 10% of children live in low-income families (before housing costs).</p> <p>13.4% of the secondary school Lord Williams’s students (years 7-13) are on Pupil Premium (@ Dec 23)<sup>15</sup>. This fell to 12.3% in 2023<sup>16</sup>.</p> <p>Local Thame charity <b>Sharing Life Trust</b> set up a foodbank. In the year 2022/23, their uptake increased dramatically by 33%, with 914 food parcels delivered to local addresses, providing for 685 adults and 549 children in 191 households<sup>17</sup>.</p> <p>13.27% of <b>Red Kite Family Centre’s</b> 437 registered families are in receipt of benefits. Combined with young parents not receiving benefits this increases to 16.47% (72 families). Twelve families are receiving specialist 1-2-1 support, particularly involving statutory services such as Social Services, LCSS or Early Help. Two more tailored support groups are continuing well after the summer</p>

<sup>10</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

<sup>13</sup> <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s66347/HWB23062907%20Joint%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf> Oxfordshire JSNA 2023 Health Needs Assessment

<sup>14</sup> Joint Local Plan Issues Consultation Results – Summary, 2041. [Joint Local Plan Issues Consultation Results - Summary \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com)

<sup>15</sup> Lord William’s Secondary School Pupil Premium Strategy, Dec 2023

<sup>16</sup> Gov.uk Compare school and college performance data, 2022/23 Lord Williams’s School <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/138667/lord-williams's-school/absence-and-pupil-population>

<sup>17</sup> Sharing Life Trust Charity Commission accounts, 2022/23.

<p>1,800 people in Oxon are made homeless every year<sup>11</sup>. People who are homeless die on average 30 years younger<sup>12</sup>.</p> <p>Oxon faces amongst the worst <b>housing crises</b> in the country with unaffordable, precarious housing, which can lead to behavioural problems, poor educational attainment, mental health conditions, substance abuse and criminality. Underlying reasons for homelessness like relationship breakdown, losing a job, leaving care or the army can force people into homelessness. (Oxfordshire Uncovered report, CAF 2023).</p>		<p>break with 6 families attending Sensory Explorers, and 5 families attending Lunch Club (Sept 2024).</p> <p>Local secondary school Lord Williams’s states that with the effect of COVID and cost-of-living crisis “our Pupil Premium students and their families have never faced a more difficult time”<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, ‘More than 10%’ of Lord Williams’s Students are classed as ‘in danger of becoming persistent absentees’<sup>19</sup>. Thame has insufficient affordable housing for the population. Thame scores well below the UK average (44% compared to 55% UK average) for ‘housing, space and environment in the Co-op Community Wellbeing Index’<sup>20</sup>. “In our rural market towns and villages where you might find multi-generational living with 3-4 generations in the same house. They are effectively locked into the house because they can’t afford to buy another house in the area, and they want to live close to their family. That creates pressure within a household when the house isn’t suitable for that many people to dwell in it.” (Superintendent Lewis Prescott-Mayling, Thames Valley Police)<sup>21</sup>.</p> <p>Between 2015 to 2020, median prices for semi-detached housing in Thame ward increased at a slightly higher rate than South Oxfordshire district and a significantly higher rate than England<sup>22</sup>.</p>
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<sup>11</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/jsna-2023-full-report>

<sup>12</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/jsna-2023-full-report>

<sup>18</sup> Lord William’s Secondary School Pupil Premium Strategy, Dec 2023

<sup>19</sup> Lord William’s Secondary School Pupil Premium Strategy, Dec 2023

<sup>20</sup> [Community Wellbeing Score | Wellbeing Index \(coop.co.uk\)](https://www.coop.co.uk/wellbeing)

<sup>21</sup> Oxford Uncovered report, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Oxfordshire Community Foundation report. 2023.

<sup>22</sup> [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame\\_profile\\_March21.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame_profile_March21.pdf)



## Education

County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>Despite Oxon being home to one of the world’s leading institutions and research centres, too many children face challenges that limit their academic and career opportunities. This starts before school, with measures already showing poor outcomes at age 2 for the most income-deprived (Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p> <p>14% of 2-year-olds in Oxon do not reach a good level of development. Furthermore, 35% of Oxon primary age children do not reach the required standard in reading, writing and maths. (Oxfordshire JSNA, 2021).</p> <p>NEET levels of 16-17s @July2024 were 2.2%, lower than the region (3.2%) and England (3.6%) rate<sup>23</sup>.</p>	<p>A high level of residents hold degree-level qualifications, at a higher rate than the regional and national averages<sup>24</sup>.</p>	<p>In July 2023, Thame catchment schools had a roll of 5255 students age 4-18 year (see <b>Appendix 6</b>).</p> <p>Pupil absence from Lord Williams’s is 10.2% overall, higher than the authority average (9.7%) and national average (9%). Persistent absence is at 28.4% (above local authority (26.9%) and national (26.5%) average<sup>25</sup>.</p> <p>3.2% of Lord Williams’s students have an EHCP (above the 2.4% national average), and 9.1% of pupils receive SEN support, which is below the 12.4% national average<sup>26</sup>.</p>

## Local democracy, voice and co-production

County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>One of OCC’s Strategic Priorities is “Fairness” - to “play our part in a vibrant and participatory local democracy”. The Council aims to involve residents in shaping policy and decision-making.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans and participation are an SODC priority (Corporate Plan 2020-24), especially given that infrastructure (schools, GP surgeries, etc) have not kept pace with housing developments.</p>	<p>Thame scores below average (44% compared to 49% UK average) in The Co-op Community Wellbeing Index data review<sup>1</sup>.</p>

<sup>23</sup> Oxfordshire County Council Oxme.info Education, Employment and Training Service Support for Young People report, Sept 2024.

<sup>24</sup> South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Employment and Needs Assessment, SODC and WHDC, January 2024, AECOM.

<sup>25</sup> Gov.uk Compare school and college performance data, 2022/23 Lord Williams’s School <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/138667/lord-williams's-school/absence-and-pupil-population>

<sup>26</sup> Gov.uk Compare school and college performance data, 2022/23 Lord Williams’s School <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/138667/lord-williams's-school/absence-and-pupil-population>

## Employment and skills

County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>Oxfordshire has “one of the strongest economies in the UK, with over 400,000 jobs and 30,000 businesses” (OCC Strategic Plan).</p> <p>9% of working age people have no qualifications. (Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p> <p>Only 9% of learning-disabled adults in Oxon are in employment<sup>27</sup>.</p> <p><b>Digital exclusion:</b> 24,000 people aged 75+ have never used the Internet<sup>28</sup> and an estimated 40,000 are not online<sup>29</sup>. Poverty is the most reliable predictor of digital exclusion, with families, the elderly and asylum seekers especially affected. Nationally 15% of disabled people have never been online, compared to 3% of non-disabled people<sup>30</sup>.</p>	<p>¼ (8,210) of the county’s enterprises are based in South Oxfordshire, with 72,000 jobs.</p>	<p>SODC’s Active Communities strategy includes a commitment (Theme 4) to ‘build the skills base of our communities’<sup>31</sup> with a coach development programme and more opportunities to train and offer employment/enterprise opportunities for local people. The proposed Centre creates a new space where self-employed coaches can grow their customer base e.g. running fitness or wellbeing classes.</p>

<sup>27</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

<sup>28</sup> Age UK (2023) Facts and figures about digital inclusion and older people. <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/activecommunities/policy-briefing---facts-and-figures-about-digital-inclusion-and-older-people.pdf> (Accessed: 01 November 2023). Quoted in Oxfordshire Uncovered, CAF, 2023).

<sup>29</sup> England and Wales Census 2021 (2022) Census - Office for National Statistics. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2020>

<sup>30</sup> England and Wales Census 2021 (2022) Census - Office for National Statistics. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2020>

<sup>31</sup> SODC Active Communities Strategy, <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/10/Active-Communities-Strategy-Final.pdf>

Crime		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame area
<p>There has been a 1.5% increase in valid crime (almost in-line with population growth) from 2022 to 2023, although there was a 17% increase from 2018-23<sup>32</sup>.</p> <p>Younger working age people and post-retirement age groups are most likely to be victims of domestic abuse. 88% of Oxon’s victims of rogue traders are vulnerable older people<sup>33</sup>. The number of recorded domestic crimes involving children has increased in all areas of Oxon.</p> <p>Two in ten cyber-related offences were linked to domestic abuse. In Oxfordshire, there were 273 domestic related cyber occurrences in year ending December 2022 (58 South Oxfordshire, 54 Vale of White Horse).</p> <p>Reports of child abuse and exploitation continue to be a significant concern. In 2022 (Jan-Dec) Thames Valley Police recorded a total of 72 victims of Child Sexual Exploitation in Oxfordshire.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police have 3 priorities: serious violence, modern slavery &amp; exploitation, domestic abuse. Their plans include working with young people to identify safe spaces (TC&amp;YC could be one), working with local partners on preventive confidence, communication, and self-esteem initiatives<sup>34</sup>.</p>	<p>Crime in South and Vale of the White Horse has decreased by 0.1 per cent, a decrease of 18 crimes. The total number of recorded crimes for 2022-23 is 13,881. A total of 13,899 crimes were recorded in 2021-22 and 12,590 crimes in 2020- 21<sup>35</sup>.</p> <p>Domestic crimes greatest change in 2022 was in South Oxfordshire – from 591 to 739 (25%). The community safety team have implemented a sanctuary scheme to support families in their own homes. 99 ‘Safe Places’ have been established for victims of domestic violence to go to in the district, including in Thame<sup>36</sup>.</p> <p>Victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (16 South Oxfordshire, 16 Vale of White Horse). This was 11 per cent below the three-year average for the years 2019 to 2021.</p> <p>In 23/24, 125 Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) cases were reported across the district (up from 122 in the previous year. Highest were related to public nuisance, followed by neighbour disputes, harassment, drug use/ dealing.</p>	<p>Thame is noted as an area of high acquisitive crime<sup>37</sup>.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police crime data for Thame, Watlington and Chinnor area, shows that in 2023/24: Of a total 1,177 reported crimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 67% (788) of all crimes were in Thame itself</li> <li>- 41% (486) were for sexual or violent offences</li> <li>- 12% (141) were for antisocial behaviour<sup>38</sup></li> </ul>

<sup>32</sup> <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Oxfordshire%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment%202024.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Oxfordshire Strategic Intelligence Assessment 2022. | Oxfordshire Insight. P.35, available at: <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/2022-oxfordshire-strategic-intelligence-assessment> (Accessed: 01 November 2023)

<sup>34</sup> [South and Vale Community Safety Partnership Plan 2022-2025 \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://southoxon.gov.uk/south-and-vale-community-safety-partnership-plan-2022-2025)

<sup>35</sup> [South and Vale Community Safety Partnership Plan 2022-2025 \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://southoxon.gov.uk/south-and-vale-community-safety-partnership-plan-2022-2025)

<sup>36</sup> Joint Scrutiny Committee South and Vale Community Safety Partnership performance report, 16 Sept 2024.

<sup>37</sup> <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Oxfordshire%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment%202024.pdf>

<sup>38</sup> [Thame, Watlington and Chinnor | Your area | Thames Valley Police | Thames Valley Police](#), data for 2023/24, at 4/6/24

Disabilities		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6,582 pupils with Learning Difficulties in state primary, secondary and special schools (DfE, Jan 2023).</li> <li>• 2,600 pupils with Autism in state primary, secondary and special schools (DfE, Jan 2023) Of these, 995 were in state-funded primary schools, 1,151 were in state-funded secondary schools and 454 were in special schools, an increase of 9% from 2021/22.</li> <li>• SEND young people and those with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) are more likely to be NEET<sup>39</sup>.</li> </ul>		

<sup>39</sup> Oxfordshire County Council Oxme.info Education, Employment and Training Service Support for Young People report, Sept 2024.

**Physical Health**

County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>OCC has a Strategic Priority to “prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents”. 22% of the population are disabled or have a long-term health condition.</p> <p><u>Older people:</u> The estimated dementia diagnosis rate (aged 65 and over) in Oxfordshire (60.7%) is significantly worse than the England (62%) average. The higher the percentage the better<sup>40</sup>.</p> <p>Oxfordshire has a worsening rate of obesity<sup>41</sup>. 20% of reception children, 34% of Year 6s, and 58% of adults are overweight or obese (Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p> <p><u>Young people:</u> The 2023 OxWell Survey of 7133 Oxfordshire students<sup>42</sup> revealed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 80% of Yrs 5-6 and 71% of Yrs 7-13 would like to do more physical exercise.</li> <li>- More young people are vaping frequently, and from an earlier age.</li> </ul>	<p>SODC launched an Active Communities Strategy in 2022. To encourage more people to ‘take part in sport, health and recreational activities that improve their physical and mental wellbeing, while forging stronger social links within their local communities’. This includes a commitment to ‘Enabling everyone to be active’, by offering ‘programmes and initiatives that focus on target groups, including children, older people, disabled people, those with long-term health conditions, people with mental health issues and those for whom cost may be restrictive’<sup>43</sup>. Thame’s proposed new Centre will support this.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire has lower levels of physically active children (39.7%) than the England average (44.6%).</p>	<p>Thame scores at the same or above the county and England average in all NHS health indicators.</p> <p>According to Sport England’s small area estimates, the proportion of people aged 16+ in Thame South and Thame North MSOAs who were physically active at least 150 minutes a week were each 72%, above the district (69%), county (70%) and national rates (63%)<sup>44</sup>.</p> <p>Reception children’s obesity levels equate to the district and national averages in Thame North and Thame South. Year 6 children in Thame North mirrors district and national averages, whereas Thame South performs better than the national average.</p> <p>SODC Leisure Facilities Assessment Strategy (2024) notes Thame needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Activity halls for dance and other activity as existing facilities are poor</li> <li>- Serviceable MUGA as the Elms Park MUGA is poor.</li> <li>- Health and Fitness suites – Thame’s gym is ‘uncomfortably busy’<sup>45</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>The 2024 South Oxfordshire Pitch Playing Strategy notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The Southern Road 3 football pitches are infrequently used. Demand for junior play could improve with the addition of a café and toilet facilities. The changing rooms are unusable in their current state.</li> <li>- Grass is over-used and could grow in community use.</li> <li>- There is demand for women and girls’ cricket, although Southern Road could not offer a full pitch.</li> </ul>

<sup>40</sup> <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s66347/HWB23062907%20Joint%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf> Oxfordshire JSNA 2023 Health Needs Assessment

<sup>41</sup> OCC Strategic Plan 2023-25, pg11.

<sup>42</sup> Oxwell Oxfordshire 2023 mental health survey, [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/OxWell\\_summary\\_2023\\_Final.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/OxWell_summary_2023_Final.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/10/Active-Communities-Strategy-Final.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame\\_profile\\_March21.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/Thame_profile_March21.pdf)

<sup>45</sup> Draft South Oxfordshire Leisure Facilities Assessment & Strategy 2024, Stuart Tood Assoc.(Feb 2024). [South-Oxfordshire-Leisure-Facilities-Strategy-and-Action-Plan.pdf](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/South-Oxfordshire-Leisure-Facilities-Strategy-and-Action-Plan.pdf) (southoxon.gov.uk)

- 9% of Yrs 7-13 have taken something to get high or self-medicated with unprescribed drugs (once or more), an increase from 1.3% in Y7 to 25% in Yr13.	However South Oxfordshire has a (52.1%) lower than England average (62.3%) of overweight or obese adults.	- The demand for hockey could also not be met at Southern Road due to the need for sand pitches <sup>46</sup> .
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Mental health and wellbeing		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame area
<p>Children and young people is one of OCC’s Strategic Priorities to “create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential”. This includes a commitment to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘increase the number of interventions in schools and places which young people frequent’, and</li> <li>- ‘increase early help, so that children’s needs are met earlier’.</li> </ul> <p>Also, support families to care for their children at home, and increase support in the community to prevent children needing to come into the care system.</p> <p><b>Loneliness - Oxfordshire was ranked the loneliest county compared with its statistical neighbours<sup>47</sup>.</b></p> <p>24% of adults in Oxfordshire say they always or often feel lonely<sup>48</sup> (Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p> <p>Oxon’s rural makeup and higher than average elderly households make loneliness a distressing fact for many. Loneliness increases ill health, creates greater reliance on statutory services and reduces resilience to other life challenges. The effects of loneliness, research suggests, are as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Oxford Uncovered).</p>	<p>SODC’s Corporate Plan includes a priority for “Improve economic and community wellbeing”.</p> <p>It describes that there are “areas of isolation and deprivation in our district and the benefits of access to culture, leisure and community for all...[are] clear”.</p>	<p>The Co-op Community Wellbeing Index, which uses a complex data mapping to measure community wellbeing in relation to education, health, employment, facilities and issues that matter to communities. Thame’s score is 66% (above the 52% average). Thame scores above average in almost all areas<sup>57</sup>.</p> <p>Thame’s Business Forum has noted that staff need more support for their mental health. Activities and wellbeing mentoring support Centre could help with this.</p> <p>The proposed Community and Youth Centre will be a place where <b>preventive and early intervention</b></p>

<sup>46</sup> SODC Pitch Playing Strategy 2023-41. Stuart Todd Associates. <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2024/03/South-Oxfordshire-Playing-Pitch-Strategy.pdf>

<sup>47</sup> <https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s66347/HWB23062907%20Joint%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf> Oxfordshire JSNA 2023 Health Needs Assessment

<sup>48</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

<sup>57</sup> [Community Wellbeing Score | Wellbeing Index \(coop.co.uk\)](https://www.coop.co.uk/community-wellbeing-score)

<p>Despite the idea that Oxon conjures up of picture-perfect villages, towering spires and rural boltholes for the rich and famous, it is a county of divides. 48,000 people in Oxfordshire say they often or always feel lonely. People in the most deprived areas of the county tend to die 12 years earlier than those in affluent areas<sup>49</sup>. One in 6 children live in poverty<sup>50</sup>.</p> <p>81,177 adults were diagnosed with depression in 2021-22, with 181 suicides. 545 children and young people were admitted to hospital for self-harm in 2022<sup>51</sup>.</p> <p><b>The 2023 OxWell Survey of 7133 Oxfordshire students<sup>52</sup> revealed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 25% of Yrs 5-6 and 34% of Yrs 7-13 said that worries about eating, what, where or how much, really interfered with their life.</li> <li>- 22% of Yrs 5-6 and 33% of Yrs 7-13 worry about going to school</li> <li>- 42% of Yrs 5-6 and of Yrs 7-13 would speak to another adult they trust to get mental health support (4<sup>th</sup> after parent, friend, family member &amp; school)</li> <li>- 19% of Yrs 7-13 often felt lonely (rising to 22% by Yr 13)</li> <li>- 32% of Y11, 12 &amp; 13s have had a mental health issue that affected their daily life</li> <li>- Serious thoughts about taking an overdose or trying to harm oneself rose from 27% in Y7 to 41% in Y13, with the average being 33%.</li> <li>- 21% of Yrs 7-13 have found it difficult to access mental health support.</li> </ul> <p><b>A 2022 survey of 1,500 Oxfordshire young people</b> commissioned by Oxford Health NHS Trust &amp; Unloc found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-55.4% reported having experienced difficulties with their mental health</li> <li>-Negative thoughts, exam and study stresses, and relationship issues were the top three concerns</li> <li>-40% said they spoke to someone about their mental health less than once a month or never</li> </ul>		<p><b>activity</b> with families and children can happen in a single holistic space. It will also be a place where community members can meet, reducing loneliness and isolation in younger and elderly people.</p>
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<sup>49</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

<sup>50</sup> Children in low income families: Local Area Statistics, financial year ending 2022 (2022) Gov.uk [Children in low income families: local area statistics, financial year ending 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-financial-year-ending-2022)

<sup>51</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

<sup>52</sup> Oxwell Oxfordshire 2023 mental health survey, [https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/OxWell\\_summary\\_2023\\_Final.pdf](https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/system/files/documents/OxWell_summary_2023_Final.pdf)

<p>-One in four young people felt confident in asking for help<sup>53</sup>  Of the total 10–19-year-olds in Oxfordshire, (88,000), 11% (9,584) were referred to Oxford Health mental health services (Oxford Health NHS estimates 2022/23). Average wait time for CAMHS Neuro developmental assessment service is 3.5years. Whilst current waiting times are not available, the mean monthly caseloads have doubled in 5 years and gone up 120% in 8 years from 2016/17 to 23/24 <sup>54</sup>. Of those seen by Oxford NHS, 38% in 2022-23 met the threshold for autistic characteristics.</p> <p>-One in four young people felt confident in asking for help<sup>55</sup>  Of the total 10–19-year-olds in Oxfordshire, (88,000), 11% (9,584) were referred to Oxford Health mental health services (Oxford Health NHS estimates 2022/23). Average wait time for CAMHS Neuro developmental assessment service is 3.5years. Whilst current waiting times are not available, the mean monthly caseloads have doubled in 5 years and gone up 120% in 8 years from 2016/17 to 23/24 <sup>56</sup>. Of those seen by Oxford NHS, 38% in 2022-23 met the threshold for autistic characteristics.</p>		
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<sup>53</sup> <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/oxford-health-creates-first-youth-board-after-1500-oxfordshire-young-people-share-views-in-survey/> survey Feb 2022, Oxford Health NHS Foundation

<sup>54</sup> [Oxfordshire CAMHS NDC Update February 2024 \(oxpcf.org.uk\)](https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/oxford-health-creates-first-youth-board-after-1500-oxfordshire-young-people-share-views-in-survey/)

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/oxford-health-creates-first-youth-board-after-1500-oxfordshire-young-people-share-views-in-survey/> survey Feb 2022, Oxford Health NHS Foundation

<sup>56</sup> [Oxfordshire CAMHS NDC Update February 2024 \(oxpcf.org.uk\)](https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/news/oxford-health-creates-first-youth-board-after-1500-oxfordshire-young-people-share-views-in-survey/)



**Carers and in Care**

<b>County level - Oxon</b>	<b>District level - South Oxon</b>	<b>Local level – Thame and surrounds</b>
<p><b>Overall carers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1,735 carers registered by 67 GP practices in Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (March 22).</li> </ul> <p><b>Young carers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 983 young people aged under 16 providing unpaid care in Oxfordshire.</li> <li>- 774 young carers receiving support. Of these, children’s services are supporting 254 young carers (OCC Commissioning Group, March 2022).</li> </ul> <p>332 care leavers in Oxon in 2022<sup>58</sup>, of whom 45% were not in education, employment or training (NEET). The number of cared-for children in Oxon has been rising for over a decade, at a much faster rate than nationally. As care leavers transition to independence, they face a lack of opportunity in affordable housing, employment, emotional support. They are at greater risk of social exclusion, health problems and offending (quoted in Oxfordshire Uncovered).</p>	<p>189 young carers in South Oxon (Census)</p>	<p>10% of pupils at Lord Williams’s secondary school are young carers (data source – TTC committee mtg 5/24).</p>

<sup>58</sup> Oxfordshire Insight (2023) JSNA 2023 Full Report

Environment and physical location		
County level - Oxon	District level - South Oxon	Local level – Thame and surrounds
<p>“Tackling climate change underpins all we do. The climate emergency is the biggest challenge the planet faces, and we are committed to not only reaching our own net zero target as a council by 2030 but to enabling Oxfordshire to be carbon neutral by 2050 at the latest.” (OCC Strategic Plan 2023-25)</p> <p>OCC’s 9 Strategic Priorities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Putting the climate emergency at the heart of their work. Objectives to achieve this include making buildings net-zero by 2030.</li> <li>2) Preserving and improving access to nature and green spaces. Objectives include tree planting (as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy programme) and making green spaces safer and more accessible.</li> </ol>	<p>SODC’s Corporate Plan aims to achieve a district net zero target by 2030. SODC, along with most other authorities across the country, has declared a ‘Climate and Ecological Emergency’.</p> <p>SODC has the ambition of increasing ‘Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points installed/expressed as a proportion of the number of homes delivered on a development’<sup>59</sup>.</p>	<p>In Thame, in response to the SODC declaration of a Climate Emergency, has adopted the country’s first community-led ‘Green Living Plan’. This establishes objectives and actions intended to help shape a ‘greener’ future<sup>60</sup>.</p> <p>The planned Community and Youth Centre location sits at the centre of several school journey routes, with high footfall before/ after school, and proximity to the park, nature reserve and town. These make it a good location for school students.</p> <p>The Centre will include EV charging stations, helping to meet SODC and local targets.</p>

<sup>59</sup> South Oxfordshire District Plan 2020-24, [SODC-Corporate-Plan-2020-2024.pdf \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/SODC-Corporate-Plan-2020-2024.pdf)

<sup>60</sup> Thame Neighbourhood Plan, April 2024 [TNP2\\_SubmissionVersion\\_LR-1.pdf \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-04/TNP2_SubmissionVersion_LR-1.pdf)

## Appendix 3: National context

### 1. Deprivation

Poverty and deprivation affect childhood wellbeing, educational attainment, risk of disease, obesity levels, mental health, likelihood of drug misuse and imprisonment, exposure to violence and overall social mobility<sup>61</sup>.

Whilst Thame is on the surface an affluent area, there is hidden disadvantage, and disparity between the 'haves' and 'have nots'. The local catchment secondary school Lord Williams's records show that 12.3% (at June 23) of their students are on Pupil Premium. Over 10% are at risk of absenteeism, and 10% are known to be young carers. The school notes in their 2023/24 priorities that "Our assessments, observations and discussions with students and families suggest that the education and wellbeing of many of our disadvantaged students have been impacted more by the COVID pandemic than their peers"<sup>62</sup>.

### 2. Mental health and wellbeing, including loneliness

In an Office for National Statistics survey released in 2018, 11.3% of 10-15-year-olds in the UK reported often feeling lonely, rising to 19.5% of children living in a city and 27.5% of children on free school meals. Loneliness was also more common among younger children aged 10 to 12 years (14.0%) than among those aged 13 to 15 years (8.6%) and those aged 16 to 24 (9.8%). Nearly twice as many adolescents in 2018 (vs. 2012) had elevated levels of school loneliness, a 2021 study found<sup>63</sup>.

One in six children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2021, a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom<sup>64</sup>.

A recent Prince's Trust report highlighted that 59% of young people in the UK describe their generational outlook as "frightening"<sup>65</sup>.

In 2018-19, 24% of 17-year-olds reported having self-harmed in the previous year, and seven per cent reported having self-harmed with suicidal intent at some point in their lives. 16% reported high levels of psychological distress<sup>66</sup>.

One-third of mental health problems in adulthood are directly connected to an adverse childhood experience (ACE)<sup>67</sup>. In a Young Minds commissioned survey by Censuswide, two-thirds (67%) of young people said they would prefer to be able to access mental health support without going to see their GP, but half (53%) said they didn't know how else to access this help<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> Wilkinson, R.G. and Pickett, K.G. (2010) *The spirit level: Why equality is better for everyone*. London: Penguin Books.

<sup>62</sup> Lord Williams's Pupil Premium Strategy Statement 2024.

<sup>63</sup> [inact@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:inact@ucl.ac.uk) UCL News, Accessed 29.5.24

<sup>64</sup> [NHS Digital \(2021\): 'Mental Health of Children and Young People in England 2021'](#).

<sup>65</sup> Princes Trust. (2022, October). *Class of COVID report 2022*.

[https://documents.princestrust.org.uk/Document\\_TheClassofCovid\\_Report.pdf](https://documents.princestrust.org.uk/Document_TheClassofCovid_Report.pdf) . Accessed 6/9/24.

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.ncb.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/news-opinion/one-six-report-severe-mental-health-difficulties-age-17>

<sup>67</sup> Kessler, R. (2010) 'Childhood adversities and adult psychopathology in the WHO World Mental Health Surveys' *British Journal of Psychiatry* 197(5): 378–385.

<sup>68</sup> [YoungMinds \(2020\), First port of call: the role of GPs in early support for young people's mental health.](#)

### 3 Impact of youth services

The DCMS Youth Review (2022) set out how Youth Services provide young people with somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to in the estimated 86%<sup>69</sup> of a young person's waking hours when they are not at school - after school, at weekends and during school holidays. During this time, youth services provide a safe space for young people and the opportunity to build a relationship with a trusted adult. Youth services play a significant role in safeguarding young people and supporting their development, particularly for those who are at risk but not yet known to statutory services (estimated at around 450,000 young people)<sup>70</sup>. Regardless of a young person's background, youth services can help them harness skills to do better in education, improve mental wellbeing, and develop life skills to help them get the job they want, and make a positive contribution in their communities. Crucially, these services help young people to build a life-long belief in themselves<sup>71</sup>.

The review surveyed over 6,000 young people, who asked for:

- regular activities, (e.g. uniformed youth, youth clubs)
- volunteering opportunities to give back to the community
- activities that support mental and physical wellbeing and skills development
- to be a part of decision making and help build back better.

It is difficult to show the causal link between informal youth provision and positive outcomes. The opportunity to participate in a diverse range of activities is vital for young people's physical and mental wellbeing, and skills for life and work. Arts, digital, heritage, sport and civil society, in addition to youth services, bind communities together and enrich lives.

### 4 Physical health

With the number of UK over-50s standing at 21 million people and set to grow dramatically over the next few years, our society and policies need to change now to keep up with this radical shift. Local councils can help in many ways, especially as increasing physical activity is key, with the World Health Organisation estimating around 3 million deaths across the globe can be attributed to inactivity<sup>72</sup>.

### 5 The Labour Party Manifesto: Change (2024)

Published prior to the new administration coming in, the Labour Manifesto noted that one in eight young people are not in education, employment, or training, with those lacking good qualifications and with poor mental health facing particular disadvantages. Drawing together existing funding and entitlements, Labour pledged:

- Youth guarantee of access to training, an apprenticeship, or support to find work for all 18- to 21-year-olds.
- Two weeks' worth of work experience for every young person and improve careers advice in schools and colleges.
- Youth Hubs - intervening earlier to stop young people being drawn into crime, creating a new Young Futures programme with a network of hubs reaching every community. These hubs will have youth workers, mental health support workers, and

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<sup>69</sup> <https://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/resources/2/Principal/2004/S-Op6.pdf>

<sup>70</sup> Between the Lines, National Youth Agency report, 2021. <https://nya.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Between-the-lines-final-version.pdf>

<sup>71</sup> DCMS Youth Review Summary of findings, Feb 2022 [www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response)

<sup>72</sup> Quoted from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Chief Executive's Bulletin 2 May 2024. Thame Youth and Community Centre Fundraising Strategy Appendices - October 2024. Claire Styles Consulting

careers advisers on hand to support young people's mental health and avoid them being drawn into crime. This will support a 'crack-down on antisocial behaviour'<sup>73</sup>.

Everyone needs help at some point in their lives. For some, this help can be transformational and can mean the difference between just surviving or getting by and thriving. We want to help all people in Thame lead fulfilling lives, not just those who are affluent or well connected. Thame's Community and Youth Centre addresses the importance of investing in preventive measures and resilience for communities that are vulnerable to loneliness and poor mental wellbeing.

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<sup>73</sup> Labour Party Manifesto: Change (2024). <https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Change-Labour-manifesto-2024-screen-reader.pdf>

## Appendix 4: Stakeholder interviews

### 1 Claire Keogh – Police Community Support Officer, Thames Valley Police (June 2024)

*“An additional resource for the youth of Thame certainly would not be a bad thing”.*

*“Unfortunately, the youths that we do deal with that state that they are either bored or state that there is nothing to do, are the ones that are normally up to no good”.*

She cited other places that young people hang out in include Lord Williams’s Gym, Burger King, Youth Café, Cadets, Brownies, Guides, parks and the skate park.

### 2 Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer, Thame Town Council (May 2024)

- Anecdotally, young people from Thame are having to travel to Chinnor to access youth activities as free youth work sessions are limited in Thame.
- Whilst there is affluence in Thame, for those who are struggling financially, Thame can be isolating due to infrequent late bus services and the cost of food in the town, with few budget options. Young people must pay to go on the school bus.
- There is limited safe space for young people to hang out after school in Thame.
- There have been reports of youth suicide attempts.
- The Thame Young Carers Support Group meets weekly in the town, supporting young people by helping to wash clothes and other essentials.
- Whilst there are 39 new affordable homes planned by the Community Land Trust, realistically, rent tends to be affordable for couples rather than single occupants or single parents.
- There is a shortage of private ‘neutral’ space in the town for SODC social workers, CAMHS, youth justice and other support services to meet clients 1:1. They currently meet in the Town Hall, although some clients are sensitive to the risk of being seen by people they know or judged.
- Several community groups lack sufficiently large, well-equipped meeting space in the town above 100 people capacity.
- Employability support skills (CV writing, work experience, interview skills, resilience and self-esteem building and mentoring) needed for older young people.
- There is a need for improved access space for older people to meet (U3A and Senior Friendship Centre. The Dementia Café is also looking for a new home.

### 3 Hannah Kape (Youth Worker) and Linda Newton (Trustee and volunteer manager) Thame Youth Projects Group (May 2024)

Thame Youth Projects Group works with Years 7-9 (Youth Café) and Years 10-13 (Youth Zone) after school and in the holidays, run by an employed youth worker and team of volunteers trained in trauma-informed support, safeguarding and first aid.

It provides a safe space to hang out, take part in positive activities, develop life skills and access support. Existing rented space has limited storage and must be deconstructed at the end of every session.

Young people have no dedicated youth club space, which means they struggle to claim ownership. There is often a waiting list for excursions and activities (laser tag, cooking sessions), which increased capacity and space in a new Community and Youth Centre would address. They would also like to support transition ages (Years 5-6) which isn’t possible presently due to both capacity and limited space (as they would want to run concurrent

junior/ senior sessions in an expanded vision). Teen parenting support is also needed in the town.

Young people who don't come are at risk of antisocial behaviour. A lot of this happens around Morrisons and Sainsburys in Thame, and in the park.

#### **4 Interview with Joanna Hoskins, Targeted Youth Worker, South Oxon (May 2024)**

The Targeted Youth Team (TYT) is relatively new, funded by OCC. Joanna and her team cover 3 areas of the county: South Oxon and Vale of White Horse, city and central, North and West.

The TYT deal with issues in very rural spaces where there is no provision, with hard-to-reach young people and high anti-social behaviour. Many of these young people go to school in Thame. "It is hard for the team to be everywhere", and limited capacity means often their work is reactive.

The TYT would like to address this with **more Preventive work in Thame**. Very few of the young people they work with have EHCPs (given high threshold for these) although **"nearly all" have SEND**.

**There is also need for more LGBTQ+ and trans-specific support in Thame**. Existing support is largely through the school, which does not reach young people who do not want to engage through statutory services.

In South Oxon, **50% of referrals are from Thame**. Main issues addressed in Thame are:

- low level anxiety,
- well-being,
- young people wanting to get out more.

Young people typically have nothing to do in Thame. They need a wider circle of support especially if they're out of school and suffer from **increased social isolation**. While they have the world at their fingertips on their phone, **many lack meaningful positive adult relationships**.

**County lines** – the limited availability of support leads some young people to seek excitement outside Thame, going to Aylesbury or London. Anecdotally we know that there's an issue with county lines. This is also linked to an observed increase with drug and alcohol issues, exploitation, and risky behaviour.

Recently the Targeted Youth Team worked with Thame Youth Project to address the issue of a **suicide pact** between young people. The Targeted Team and Thame Youth Projects (TYP) worked together to address this with the young people who were identified as being involved.

Rural isolation is also problematic, with antisocial behaviour and criminal damage elevated because young people often have nowhere to go for positive diversionary activities, or anyone to turn to for signposting or early intervention if they don't engage with/ are outside school support networks.

Existing Thame support for young people by the Targeted Team is largely reactive when something happens. We would like to have a more solid, regular presence.

#### **How the Targeted Team operates**

1:1 targeted short term sessions last for over 2 to 8 weeks. The main issue being addressed in the area is poor school attendance. Sessions support young people to reintegrate, with

reduced timetables and additional pastoral care. School avoidance which is somewhat related to a combination of parental influence and high Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Many parents don't trust school. The influence of COVID lockdown and teacher strikes has meant that many parents now prefer to keep their child at home and don't see the importance of school.

Group sessions in schools take place over 6 weeks, covering social media, community safety, relationships, friendships etc.

**Other preventive services:**

The Targeted team run Holiday activities and Food (HAF) in the main school holidays, and FAF (Council funded Food and Fun) in half terms.

**Venue needs:**

*"Finding suitable venues is a challenge. A dedicated community and youth centre is much needed. I can't think of a reason why a new Centre wouldn't be beneficial to the young people of Thame".*

Other organisations and schemes like Talking Teens and Here4Youth Oxfordshire (drug and alcohol addiction support) could all operate from a new Centre.

When referrals come in, it would be better to have somewhere youth-friendly to meet – not in a church, school or Council office. This inevitably alienates some young people and families. Having a separate space and time is important too – older young people will be put off from going if younger ones are in the same session. It just doesn't work. We've seen this in sessions in Farringdon for Years 5-8 – in reality there are no Year 8s coming.

***"The venue is key. It needs to be purpose built with a sense of identity. Their identity".***



## Appendix 5: Summary of consultation

### 1 Thame Cattle Market Action Group Consultation, 2015

This report, commissioned by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Thame, noted the Thame Neighbourhood Plan 2013 ambition to use developer contributions from new housing to allocate to a new community facility. This included mention of 'youth and community provision to support education and training, health care, community, leisure and recreation' as a combined facility.

The feasibility, proposing the Cattle Market area (later ruled out in favour of Southern Road) sets out the ambition to "*Provide the vision for a vibrant, mixed-use scheme (with appropriate car parking) that "establishes community", provides visitor attraction and a presence within the heart of the town centre*".

It pro

### 2 Thame Community Master Plan Consultation on a new Youth and Community Centre, November 2017, carried out by Leap Design Group.

Of 103 responses:

75% strongly agreed or agreed that Thame needs a new community facility.

Asked what facilities should be prioritised:

75% said health and wellbeing

70% learning

64% arts and leisure, 64% charities and social concerns

### 3 Thame Residents web-based feedback survey, April 2021. Thame Youth Projects.

Of 208 responses:

191 were residents, 23 were workers, 10 were frequent visitors, 4 others.

92% said young people need a safe place

89% said Thame needs a youth centre

88% believe it is important to have an environmentally friendly building

95% think young people need a place to socialise

79% think young people need a place to get help

68% think young people need fun workshops e.g. sports

57% think young people need ICT and work skills support

53% think young people need shelter for a rainy day

Comments on the youth centre proposal included:

*Youth centres provide so much support and opportunities for young people to socialise, develop new skills and feel part of the local community.*

*"We have a very large comprehensive school so there is an obvious need for a building where young people can socialise or just hang out".*

*"I think young people's services have been woefully provisioned in general in the last 20 or so years and a youth centre is an essential part of providing community care. Youth engagement leads directly to reduced crime and antisocial behaviours, as well as providing a safe place for those who don't have a safe or stable home life".*

When asked how they think the community space should be used:

Thame Youth and Community Centre Fundraising Strategy Appendices - October 2024. Claire Styles Consulting

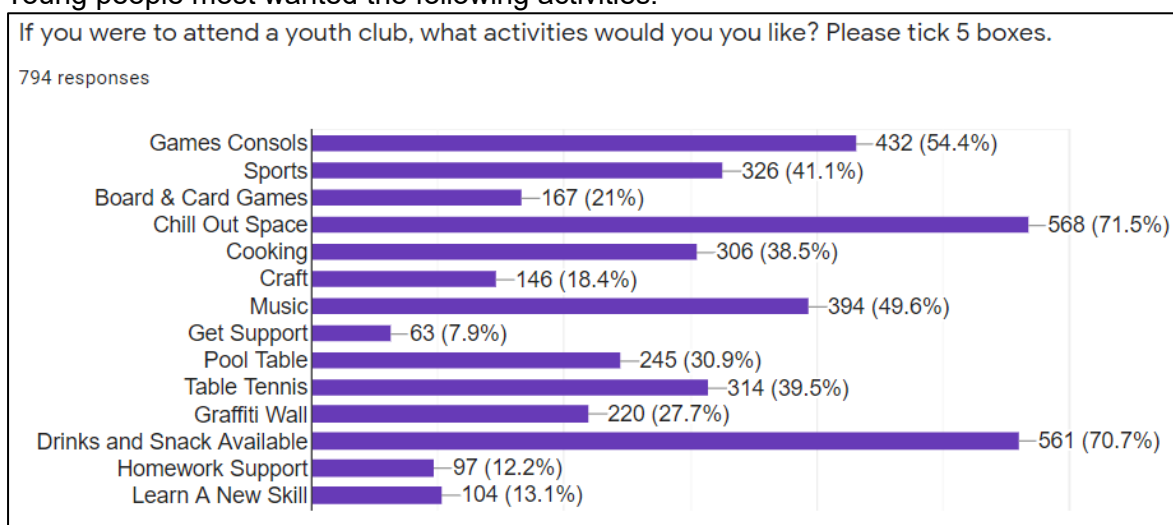
- 71% said multi-use hall to hire out
- 60% said adult learning classes
- 53% said community kitchen
- 38% said small meeting rooms
- 10% said Other.

'Other' suggestions included arts and movie room, boxing club, day care centre, dementia café, for businesses.

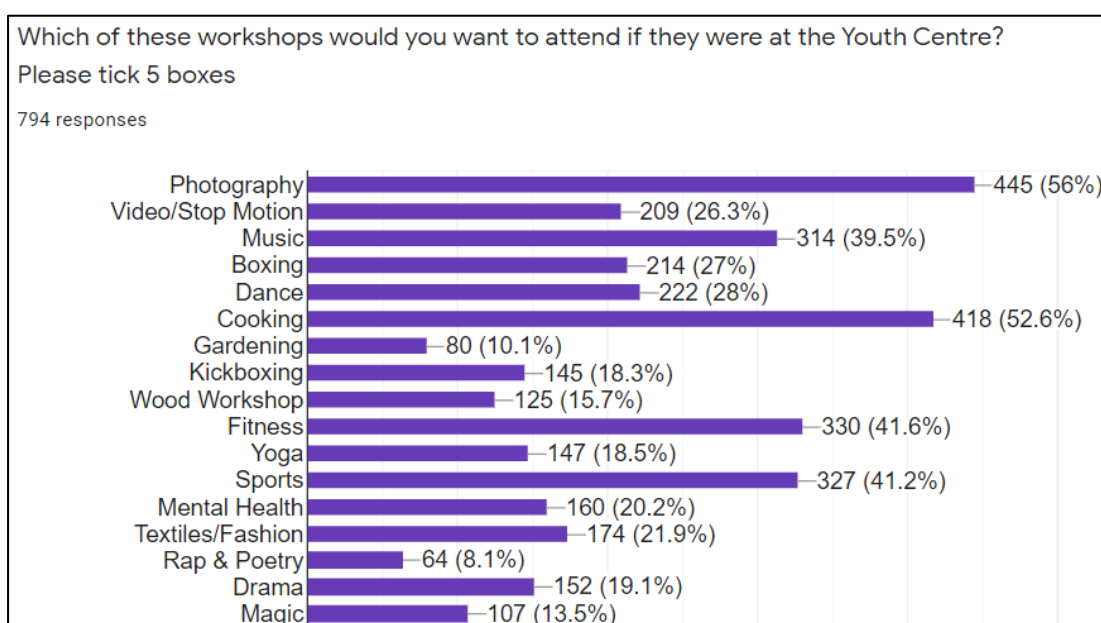
#### 4 Young People's school survey, April 2021

Of 794 responses from young people aged 11-18 at the secondary school:  
58% live in Thame, while 42% live outside.

Young people most wanted the following activities:



If workshops were run, young people were most drawn to the idea of:



#### 5 Acanthus Clews Feasibility Consultation, September 2021

Their report starts with an assessment of need: 'Since the closure of the Youth Centre positioned outside the Lower Lord Williams's School, there has been no provision of a building for the young people of Thame and the surrounding villages. The addition of 926 homes and the proposed additional 403 in the second phase of the Local Plan has placed additional emphasis on the growing need for provision of dedicated facilities for the young people of Thame. Lord Williams's School now has 2,250 + young people from Thame and the surrounding district. Such is the pressure on the school they are now adding an additional class to each year from 2020 and are no longer taking young people from areas of Bucks. These young people between the ages of 11 – 18 will continue to have an increasing impact on the local areas of Thame and the town centre'.

## **6 Organisations consultation survey July 2024. Cooperative People.**

See Cooperative People for a detailed breakdown of venue needs.

Quotes include:

*"I think there is a strong need for a community facility in Thame, all the villages surrounding Thame have bigger halls and stage, back room, facilities, car parking, than any on offer in Thame. It needs to be multi use, so no fixed chairs, a good stage, backstage area, bar and catering facilities, something that can be used for a rock concert, a jazz night, a pantomime, dance display, theatre and plays. Would be great to have regular arts programmes featured in Thame".* The First Thursday Music Club

*"Definitely would be beneficial to local groups".* Thame Concert Band

*"Thame has such an active community. Not until I began to look for a venue, did I realise just how much is going on for all ages. Much to be proud of, but we can do even more with improved facilities. If a new space was built, I would book it!"* Creation Station

*"A new community facility in the centre of Thame is much needed. There are many people and small organizations in the town that could make use of such a facility. It would be accessible for older and vulnerable people- an important consideration given the ageing population".* Pole Attack

*"The population of Thame is growing fast and as commented previously all present community facility is fully booked. Health and educational facilities are also needed.... urgently. However, places where people can meet socially and support each other are not just a 'desirable extra' but essential for a viable lively community... and also proved to promote physical and mental wellbeing".* Thame and District U3A

*"Yes, it would be nice to have a community cafe with availability of work or training for people with special needs. It would be lovely to have a space specifically allocated to people in Thame with special needs somewhere they could drop in find information and have a coffee or chat with like-minded people".* Safari

## Appendix 6: Data on local catchment schools (at June2024) <sup>74</sup>

The table below, compiled from multiple data sets for individual schools, shows an analysis of need across Thame's catchment schools. Thame primary and secondary schools have on average, a higher percentage of students with an Education Health Care Plan. Most students have English as their first language. There is a lower percentage of children on pupil premium (just 6%), suggesting relative affluence. Thame schools' absence rates are on a par with the rest of the county, and just below the national average, although the secondary school absence rate is way above the county and national average, indicating mental health or other complex issues not being addressed.

### State schools:

Ofsted Rating	School name (state school) – Lord Williams's & catchment schools	Type	Pupils	Pupils with/ SEN EHCP	Pupils with SEN Support	Pupils whose first language is not English	Pupil free school meals (past 6 yrs)	Overall absence	Persistent absence
	<b>National average</b>			<b>2.5%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>25.9%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
	<b>Oxon average</b>							<b>5.7%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>
	<b>Thame average</b>			<b>2.79%</b>	<b>13.33%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>5.75%</b>	<b>12.98%</b>
2	Barley Hill	Primary	518	2.9%	18.7%	6%	15%	6.5%	17.4%
2	St Josephs	Primary	196	1.5%	12.8%	10.7%	7.1%	7.1%	18%
2	John Hampden	Primary	457	2.4%	13.3%	3.5%	15%	4.3%	8.5%
3	Long Crendon	Primary	209	1.9%	12.4%	6.2%	4.3%	4.1%	7.7%
2	Haddenham St Marys	Primary	180	2.8%	6.7%	5.6%	11.1%	4.1%	7.4%
2	Haddenham Community Juniors	Primary	368	3%	16%	8.4%	13.9%	6.3%	16.3%
2	Tetsworth	Primary	75	1.3%	18.7%	5.3%	15.6%	5%	5.3%
2	Brill	Primary	188	2.1%	9.6%	9.6%	6.4%	4.1%	5.9%
1	St Andrews (Chinnor)	Primary	415	4.3%	9.9%	3.1%	8%	5.7%	12.7%
2	Mill Lane	Primary	231	1.7%	16%	3%	10.7%	6.8%	15.2%
2	Aston Rowant (Watlington)	Primary	78	6.4%	16.7%	3.8%	14.1%	4.8%	12.9%
2	Lord Williams's School (Thame Academy Trust)	Secondary	2229	3.2%	9.1%	5.5%	12.3%	10.2%	28.4%

### Special schools:

	<b>National average</b>			<b>99.2%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>34%</b>
	Chilworth House (primary)	Special	36	100%	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables> at 16 July 2024