

Chipping Norton area

Engagement plan 2022-2024

Chipping Norton, Churchill, Lyneham (Oxfordshire), Over Norton,
Great Rollright, Salford, Milton under Wychwood

Welcome

At Cottsway we are proud to build new homes, but we are also committed to making sure our existing customers' homes are kept to a good standard.

We put our customers at the heart of everything we do, with a dedicated team of housing, neighbourhood, financial and tenancy support officers to provide support where needed. We also like to be active in, and bring social value to, our local communities.

This plan has taken on board feedback we have received from customers and Cottsway staff who work in Chipping Norton and the surrounding villages. We are also looking at the bigger picture and accessing key data regarding important issues such as employment, health and wellbeing, family support and access to local services.

We will use all this information to help identify the main challenges in your neighbourhood and how we can work with local partnership organisations to make improvements and bring people closer together.

Chipping Norton and the surrounding villages are tucked high up in Oxfordshire's portion of the Cotswolds. Affectionately known as 'Chippy', the town is a bustling hub of the local area.

A regular market is held every Wednesday, and there is a range of independent retailers and antique shops. The town also has a good number of pubs, restaurants and cafés, and a thriving theatre.



Neighbourhood performance

Know your neighbourhood

Here are some statistics on the people and homes in the Chipping Norton area.

Number of Cottsway properties on the patch	
Chipping Norton	439
Churchill	10
Great Rollright	30
Lyneham	Fewer than 10
Milton-under-Wychwood	102
Over Norton	33
Salford	25

Neighbourhood experience

Generally Chipping Norton is a great place to live with a good range of shops, local services and community groups. However, access to recycling facilities are limited and this can lead to fly-tipping and the costs for clearances often have to be recharged back to customers when they occur on Cottsway's land. To see where you can recycle, reuse, repair or dispose of an item, visit:

- West Oxfordshire District Council:
www.westoxon.gov.uk/bins
- Oxfordshire County Council:
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard

Money management

The cost of living is increasing, and we are aware this is felt by many of our customers. This can lead to rent arrears and customers are strongly encouraged to speak to Cottsway if they are experiencing any difficulty. There are support agencies, including the Citizens Advice (see page 5), who offer help to get you back on track.

Community insight

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the south east of England. An estimated 39% of its' population live in rural areas, with 4% in isolated hamlets and villages - higher than the national average. Although incomes are also higher than the national average, so are house prices, and more than half the county's neighbourhoods are in the worst 30% in England for access to housing and services.

Despite the stereotype of prosperous country living, physical barriers to accessing what many take for granted eg, healthcare, jobs, training and transport are significant in rural areas across both Oxfordshire generally, and in West Oxfordshire in particular.

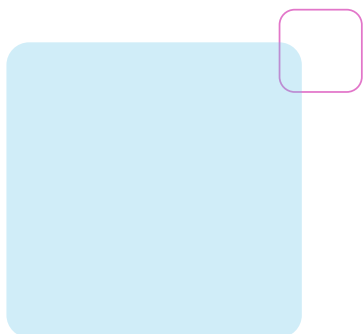
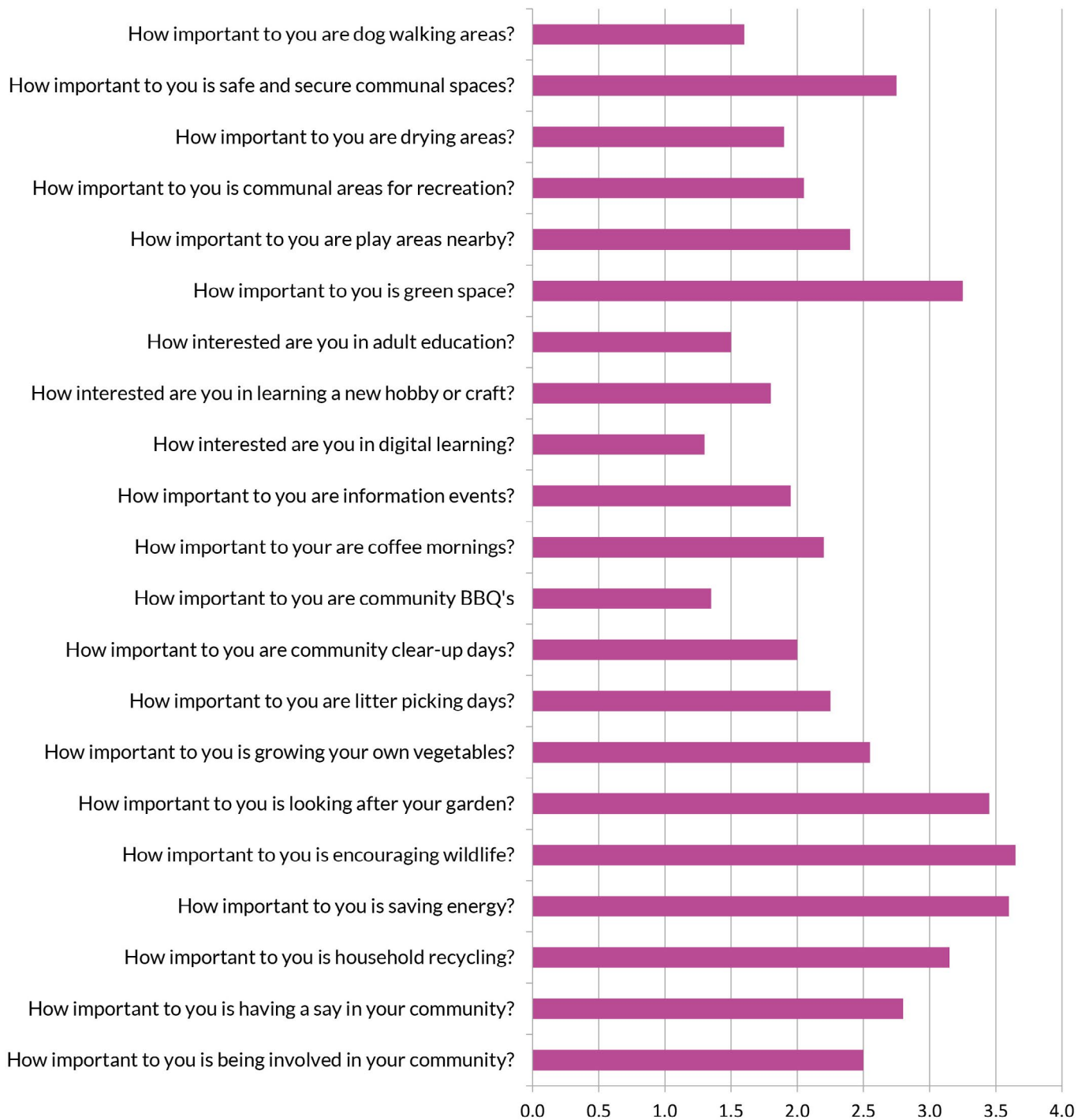
In terms of certain socio-economic factors relating to health, employment and fuel poverty, the Chipping Norton area faces more challenges than other areas of West Oxfordshire. Experiencing these barriers can leave people at risk of exclusion, isolation and loneliness.



■ Young helpers at one of our clear-up days in Chipping Norton

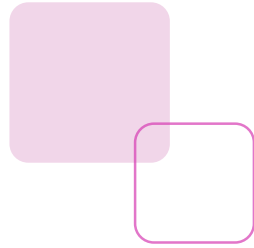
Moving forward

Thank you to those customers who completed our short survey to capture your views on how important certain aspects of your community are to you. We asked about some key areas that affect your community, environment, learning and neighbourhoods. We asked customers to allocate points relating to how important they felt - with 4 being the most important, and 0 being the least important. These are the results:



Local offers

These results have helped us to better understand your priorities and how we can support our customers and the wider community to live in a thriving neighbourhood.



Priority	How we will help
Keeping communal areas clean and free from fly-tipping for residents, children and pets to enjoy.	The Communities team will host two clear up / litter picking days a year in the Chipping Norton area. Customers can also request these online at: www.cottsway.co.uk/cleanup
Offering customers' the opportunity to update their employability and wellbeing skills.	A number of organisations offer free online training courses. We publicise some of these on our website: www.cottsway.co.uk/training
Offering customers' the opportunity to update their digital skills and borrow a device to get online.	We have a limited number of laptops, tablets and dongles to loan as well as free one-to-one IT training: www.cottsway.co.uk/getonline
Keeping connected with events and activities in the local area.	Our staff will continue to attend meetings of local community groups and promote opportunities to our customers through social media and local partners.
Saving energy in your home and reducing costs.	If you are concerned about bills and paying your rent, it's important you contact us – we are here to help: www.cottsway.co.uk/energyhelp
Maintaining green space and encouraging wildlife.	We have recently appointed a new grounds maintenance contractor (John O'Conner GM Ltd) and will engage with them on any community clear-up days and increasing wildlife habitats on our land.
Maintain our strong relationship with Chipping Norton School.	We will continue to fund the Children's Safety Education Foundation 'Money Wise' resources for students.
Continue to offer opportunities for customers to have their say with Cottsway.	We regularly hold customer surveys and consultations seeking your views on our services. Alternatively, you can give us your feedback at any time by phone, online or via email or social media. www.cottsway.co.uk/getinvolved
Your health and wellbeing is important to us. Together we can look after your home and improve your safety.	Find out your responsibilities, how we can help you and how to report safety concerns at: www.cottsway.co.uk/homesafety



What's on locally

The Chippy Larder

The Chippy Larder is a community food hub, located in The Guildhall, Chipping Norton. Part of the SOFEA network, the shop provides produce donated by supermarkets and local farms - food that would otherwise go to waste.

Search 'The Chippy Larder' on Facebook.

The Theatre Chipping Norton

The Theatre Chipping Norton offers lots of opportunities for Cottsway customers of all ages to join in with, not just at the Theatre but also online.

www.chippingnortontheatre.com

Remix Youth Group

Held every Friday from 3.15 - 4.45pm (term-time only), this community youth club at Glyme Hall offers games, sport, a cafe and a chance to chat.

Search @RemixChippy on Instagram

Email youth@stmaryscnorton.com

Got2be CIC Youth Club

Youth club drop-in sessions from 3.30 - 5.30pm every Tuesday. Games and sports at the rec or out and about in the community.

www.got2b.org.uk

Search @got2bcic on Facebook or Twitter

or @got2be-youthwork on Instagram or Tik Tok

Useful contacts

Oxfordshire County Council

Highways, street lighting, schools

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

West Oxfordshire District Council

Bins and recycling, Council tax and housing benefit

www.westoxon.gov.uk

Chipping Norton Town Council

www.chippingnortontowncouncil.co.uk

Help and support

Community Fund

Our Community Fund is accessible to both individuals and new and existing local groups and projects.

Our funding can be used to help with:

- Items of equipment
- Local events and one-off projects
- Training to improve your group / project's effectiveness, eg. management, budgeting etc
- Printing and publicity
- Course costs, books and equipment

There are four different levels of funding available:

- Individual learning (up to £250)
- Neighbourhood activities (up to £500)
- Community projects (up to £2,500)
- Environmental projects (up to £5,000)

All applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be reviewed and assessed by our customers. This ensures that funding is used to support the projects our customers value the most.

www.cottsway.co.uk/fund

As one of our customers you also get a say on which projects should get funding, if you join our customer-only Facebook group (see overleaf).

Money matters

We are here to help! Please get in touch as soon as possible if you're struggling to cope financially or worried about paying your rent. You'll find lots of information on our website and you can use this to chat to our advisors during office hours too.

www.cottsway.co.uk/help

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice offer free, independent and confidential advice on all sorts of issues including debt, understanding benefits, employment issues, consumer rights and relationship problems.

We provide funding to Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire to support our customers, so no matter where you live, you can contact this branch for help and advice.

citizensadvicewestoxon.org
0808 2787908 (freephone)

Get involved

Scrutiny Group

Made up of Cottsway customers, the group meet regularly to scrutinise our work and provide feedback and suggestions to help us make improvements.

They would love to hear from you if you are interested in joining the Group, or you would like to be contacted occasionally to give your views:

www.cottsway.co.uk/scrutinygroup



Customer procurement group

We also encourage our customers to be involved in hiring the contractors for key services we provide through our Customer Procurement Group.

The group currently has five members who have worked closely with us to select our new grounds maintenance and cleaning contractors.

By having customers involved it helps ensure we get the cost/quality balance right and provide all our customers with good quality but affordable services.

If you would like to join the group, please get in touch, training is provided:

communities@cottsway.co.uk



■ Bulb planting on Withers Way, Chipping Norton

Customer-only Facebook group

Why not join our closed Facebook group for Cottsway customers only? Here you can find out what's going on locally, how you can get involved and vote on our Community Fund applications!

Simply request to join the group, and confirm your Cottsway address at:

www.facebook.com/groups/cottswaycommunities

TPAS

As a Cottsway customer you are able to join TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service). They have lots of resources, workshops, webinars and courses that are available to you, including running a community event, community fundraising, holding your landlord to account, chairing skills and community engagement.

Most courses are free, but if there are any with a cost, you can talk to us about funding.

www.tpas.org.uk



Cottsway House
Heynes Place
Avenue Two
Witney
Oxfordshire OX28 4YG

www.cottsway.co.uk

E: contact@cottsway.co.uk

T: 01993 890000

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