

Oxfordshire Growth Board

Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment

Phase 1 Report



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Contents

	Page
1 Introduction and Purpose	7
1.1 Context and nature of the Assessment	7
1.2 This report	8
1.3 Report structure	9
Part A: Oxfordshire Today	10
2 Strategic Policy Environment	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 National Planning Policies and guidance	11
2.3 National Infrastructure Commission: Partnering for Prosperity	15
2.4 Government's response to the NIC report	16
2.5 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal	17
2.6 Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF)	18
2.7 Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)	18
2.8 Conclusions	19
3 Demographic Trends	21
3.1 Introduction	21
3.2 Age structure	21
3.3 Past population growth	24
3.4 Comparing estimates of population growth	27
3.5 Components of population change	28
3.6 Relationship between housing and migration	33
3.7 Official population projections	34
3.8 Developing an adjusted baseline	36
3.9 Age structure changes	38
3.10 Household formation	40
3.11 Household growth and housing need	43
3.12 Conclusions	44
4 Oxfordshire's Housing Market	46
4.1 Introduction	46

4.2	Trends in house prices and sales	46
4.3	Trends in the affordability of home ownership	54
4.4	Trends in the private rental market	61
4.5	Conclusions	63
5	Recent Economic Performance	65
5.1	Introduction	65
5.2	Overview of Recent Growth and its Drivers	65
5.3	Productivity in Oxfordshire	70
5.4	Oxfordshire's labour market	72
5.5	Oxfordshire's working age population	75
5.6	Conclusions	76
6	Commercial Market Dynamics	77
6.1	Introduction	77
6.2	Stock of commercial property	77
6.3	Oxfordshire's office market	79
6.4	Oxfordshire's industrial market	85
6.5	Conclusions	88
	Part B: Exploring Oxfordshire's Future Growth Needs	89
7	Oxfordshire's Housing Need Using the Standard Method	90
7.1	Introduction	90
7.2	Standard Method minimum local housing need	90
7.3	Implications of the adjusted demographic baseline projections	93
7.4	The demographic implications of the standard method	93
7.5	Conclusions	97
8	Oxfordshire's Economic Trajectories	98
8.1	Introduction	98
8.2	The Oxfordshire LIS and its sectoral vision	98
8.3	Approaches to modelling economic growth	100
8.4	Oxfordshire's past growth projections	102
8.5	Oxfordshire's economic trajectories	103
8.6	What the trajectories mean for employment in Oxfordshire	108
8.7	Conclusions	109
9	Economic-led Scenarios for Housing Need	111
9.1	Introduction	111

9.2 Economic participation assumptions	112
9.3 Linking employment growth and changes to the resident labour force	113
9.4 Required change to resident labour supply	116
9.5 Housing need linked to Oxfordshire's economic trajectories	117
9.6 Conclusions	119
10 Affordable Housing Need	120
10.1 Introduction	120
10.2 Stock of affordable housing	121
10.3 Housing waiting lists	121
10.4 Need for affordable housing	123
10.5 Interpreting the affordable housing need	123
10.6 Conclusions	126
11 Employment Land Requirements	128
11.1 Introduction	128
11.2 Labour demand modelling approach	128
11.3 Labour demand forecasts for employment land	130
11.4 Past completions projections	133
11.5 Drawing the evidence together	134
11.6 Conclusions	135
12 Commuting and Affordability Implications	136
12.1 Introduction	136
12.2 The relationship between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire	136
12.3 Implications of the growth trajectories for commuting	137
12.4 Affordability implications: summary of approach	139
12.5 Designing a methodology for Oxfordshire	140
12.6 Implications of the growth trajectories for affordability	142
12.7 Conclusions	145
Part C: Conclusions and Appendices	146
13 Conclusions	147
14 References	157
Appendix A: Components of Population Change by Local Authority	159
Appendix B: Oxfordshire's Sector Growth Trajectories	162

Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix	172
Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications	184
Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix	198

1 Introduction and Purpose

The Oxfordshire Councils¹ are working together to prepare the Oxfordshire Plan which will set out a development strategy for Oxfordshire to 2050.

To support the preparation of the Plan, the Oxfordshire Councils have commissioned Cambridge Econometrics and Icen Projects to prepare the Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA). The OGNA is intended to provide an integrated evidence base to help the Oxfordshire Councils identify the appropriate level and distributions of housing and employment over the period to 2050. The core objectives of the OGNA are:

- To identify a strategic level, long-term, robust and transparent methodology for assessing Oxfordshire's housing needs over the period to 2050
- To provide a detailed commentary (including the baseline position) on Oxfordshire's housing and employment market, including demographic and economic dynamics and any other key drivers of housing need and how this may change in the period to 2050.
- To identify a range of credible and robust housing need scenarios for Oxfordshire.
- To establish an informed understanding of the implications for sustainable housing growth in Oxfordshire, of the Oxford-Cambridge Arc and of any other strategically significant infrastructure and growth strategies, including proposals for strategic growth in other areas which are likely to have a significant impact in Oxfordshire.
- To identify an appropriate functional economic market area and provide an assessment of employment land requirements.
- To advise on how the Oxfordshire Plan should respond to the uncertainty associated with long-term planning for strategic housing and employment provision.

The methodology adopted, which considers scenarios for future growth in Oxfordshire, responds to this and in particular the strategic and long-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan.

1.1 Context and nature of the Assessment

The Oxfordshire Plan will be a joint statutory spatial plan which covers a 30-year plan period from 2020 to 2050. The Plan is intended to be strategic, focusing on matters such as an overall spatial strategy for development, the integration of new development and investment in infrastructure, and how these can help to improve the quality of life for everyone.

¹ The commissioning authorities comprise Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

The Plan differs from those being prepared in many other areas across England, in particular:

- The Oxfordshire Plan is a strategic plan which is being prepared on a cross-boundary basis spanning the county of Oxfordshire;
- It is looking at a much longer timeframe – a 30-year period to 2050 - than many Local Plans which typically look 15-20 years into the future. This raises issues regarding the reliability of traditional approaches to assessing development needs in some instances;
- It considers the inter-relationship between the economy and spatial planning activities;
- Oxfordshire falls within the Oxford-Milton-Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been identified by the National Infrastructure Commission and supported by Government. There is a need for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider the strategic context provided by this, including the emerging spatial framework for the Arc, along with other Government growth initiatives and policy. Preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan also provides the opportunity to influence the Arc and shape the future strategy for this strategic corridor.

In addition, one of the major advantages of looking long-term and strategically at the strategy for development and growth is the ability to properly coordinate new development and infrastructure investment and consider what strategic infrastructure might be needed to support growth in the long-term.

These particular circumstances provide a background to the OGNA to which the Assessment seeks to respond. These are explored in more detail in the following chapter (*Chapter 2*).

1.2 This report

To ensure the preparation and analysis of an integrated evidence base that effectively addresses the core objectives of the OGNA, the Assessment has been divided into three complementary reports, broadly corresponding to three phases of work.

The **Phase 1 Report**, presented here, provides overall growth need figures for housing and employment in Oxfordshire to 2050. It profiles local housing market, demographic, economic and commercial property market dynamics, all within the strategic policy environment. These factors are then brought together to provide trajectories for future housing and employment land needs, and resultant high-level implications for commuting and affordability.

Following on from this, the **Phase 2 Report** considers a range of high-level scenarios for the distribution of housing and employment across Oxfordshire. The purpose of this is to aid decision-makers in understanding of the implications of alternative spatial choices. It does not seek to identify specific options or priorities for development, but rather explores the potential scale and implications of different approaches.

Finally, to reflect the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic during the development of the OGNA, a **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** has been produced. The Addendum gauges the probable impact and legacy of the

pandemic on Oxfordshire, and the resultant implications for the evidence and observations presented in the OGNA (which largely predate the pandemic).

Therefore, it is recommended that the analysis presented in this report is read alongside the other supporting documentation of the OGNA, given their complementary coverage and interconnectedness.

In addition, a stand-alone **Executive Summary**, which highlights and brings together the key observations and messages from the three respective reports, has also been produced.

1.3 Report structure

The remainder of this report is structured as follows.

Part A: Oxfordshire Today, looking at;

- Oxfordshire's current strategic policy environment
- demographic trends
- the housing market, including a consideration of affordability and other key issues
- economic characteristics and commercial market dynamics

Part B: Exploring Oxfordshire's Future Growth Needs, which builds on this initial analysis and considers;

- the application of the Standard Method of local housing need
- analysis of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, and development of associated economic trajectories
- commercial space analysis and implied employment space under the economic trajectories
- implied housing need under the economic trajectories and comparison with results of the Standard Method
- consideration of affordable housing needs and the influence of different levels of growth on affordable housing delivery.
- the potential high-level commuting and affordability implications of the economic trajectories and implied housing need

Part C: Conclusions and Appendices, which includes;

- concluding remarks, and a summary of the key issues and options for housing and employment needs
- a full list of referenced resources, and associated report appendices

Part A: Oxfordshire Today

2 Strategic Policy Environment

2.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses some of the strategic policy influences on planning for housing and economic development needs. This includes national planning policies and guidance, the area's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc and economic policy documents.

Oxfordshire is located in the South East region of the UK. It sits between the UK's two largest cities – London and Birmingham – and is linked to them by both road and rail. The M4 and M40 and A40, together with the rail network, connects Oxford to London, Birmingham and Bristol and through the Cotswolds to Cheltenham, Gloucester and Worcester. The A34 runs north/south through the county linking the Midlands to the Port of Southampton. Oxfordshire is also in relatively close proximity to the UK's largest airport, Heathrow.

2.2 National Planning Policies and guidance

Government has set out national planning policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The latest version of the NPPF was published on 19th February 2019 and is relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan as one of the 'soundness' tests against which the Plan in due course will be assessed is one of the consistency with policies in the Framework.²

The NPPF is clear that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development (Para 7) within which there are economic, social and environmental components. It sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development which, for plan making, means that plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their areas and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change; and should include strategic policies which – as a minimum – provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless the application of policies that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a strong reason for restricting the scale, type or distribution of development³; or the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (Para 11).

The NPPF is clear that the planning system is intended to be 'plan-led' with plans providing the basis for the determination of planning applications. It expects plans to set out strategic policies which articulate the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for housing, employment and other forms of commercial

² NPPF Paragraph 35.

³ Areas or assets of particular importance within this context in Oxfordshire include the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, SSSI, SACs, local green space, Green Belt, areas at risk of flooding, irreplaceable habitats and designated heritage assets including Oxfordshire's only World Heritage Site at Blenheim Palace.

development, infrastructure, community facilities and the enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment.

The OGNA seeks to consider the need for housing and employment development in Oxfordshire. In developing the Plan, the Councils will draw this together with consideration of wider sustainability issues including the need to conserve and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, and ensure that new development is supported by necessary infrastructure.

Assessing housing needs

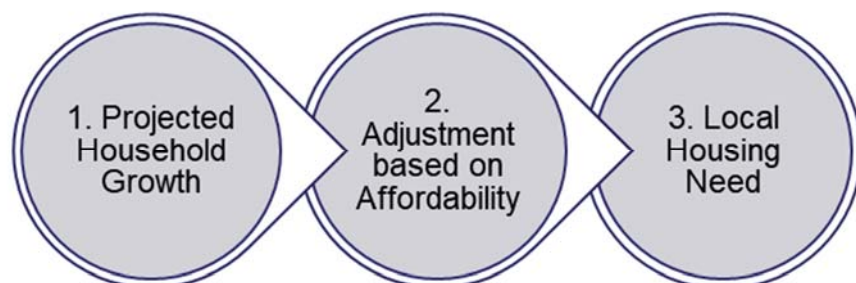
The 2019 NPPF sets out that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing needs assessment, conducted using the 'Standard Method' in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals (Para 60).

The 'Standard Method' was introduced by Government in 2018 and uses a formulaic approach to calculate a minimum level of housing need.

Government's Planning Practice Guidance sets out that housing need is an **unconstrained** assessment of the number of homes needed in an area, and is the first step in the process of deciding how many homes to be planned for. It should be assessed separately from assessing land availability, establishing a housing requirement figure (i.e. how many homes to plan for) and preparing policies to address this.⁴ In this context, this report considers unconstrained 'housing need' – it does not consider what level of homes should be planned for.

The Standard Method uses Government's 2014-based Household Projections to calculate the average annual household growth over the next 10 years, then applies a percentage uplift to this based on the extent to which an area's median house price-to-earnings ratio is above 4 to calculate a minimum annual housing need figure. A cap is applied to the affordability uplift in generating the minimum figure in some circumstances to ensure the figures derived are deliverable. For some cities and larger urban centres, a further uplift is now applied – but this does not affect authorities in Oxfordshire. The methodology is considered in greater detail in *Chapter 7*.

Figure 2.2.1: Overview of the Standard Method for calculating local housing need



Source: Icenii Projects.

⁴ Planning Practice Guidance Para ID: 2a-001-20190220

The Planning Practice Guidance is clear that where plans cover more than one area, as is the case for the Oxfordshire Plan, housing need for the defined area should be at least the sum of the local housing need for each Local Planning authority within the area. It will be for the Councils to distribute the total housing requirement which is then arrived at across the plan area.⁵

The Standard Method provides a minimum starting point for assessing housing need. As explained in *Chapter 7* in this report, Para 60 in the NPPF and the associated Planning Practice Guidance⁶ indicate that use of the Standard Method is not mandatory, however exceptional circumstances must be demonstrated to justify a housing need figure *lower* than that identified using the Standard Method, and such figures must be based on realistic assumptions on demographic growth and market signals. The Planning Practice Guidance outlines that more recent household projections (such as the 2016- and 2018-based projections) do not provide an appropriate basis for use in the Standard Method.⁷

In contrast, where planning authorities can show that an alternative approach identifies a need *higher* than using the Standard Method, and that it adequately reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals, the Planning Practice Guidance outlines that the approach can be considered sound as it will have exceeded the minimum starting point.

Planning Practice Guidance in Para 2a-010⁸ sets out that there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates:

“The government is committed to ensuring that more homes are built and supports ambitious authorities who want to plan for growth. The Standard Method for assessing local housing need provides a minimum starting point in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the Standard Method indicates.

This will need to be assessed prior to, and separate from, considering how much of the overall need can be accommodated (and then translated into a housing requirement figure for the strategic policies in the plan). Circumstances where this may be appropriate include, but are not limited to situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends because of:

- *growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);*
- *strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or*

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance ID 2a-013-20190220

⁶ Planning Practice Guidance Para ID 2a-015-20190220

⁷ Planning Practice Guidance Para ID 2a-015-20190220

⁸ Planning Practice Guidance, Para ID: 2a-010-20190220

- *an authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground.*

There may, occasionally, also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of need (such as a recently produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the Standard Method. Authorities will need to take this into account when considering whether it is appropriate to plan for a higher level of need than the Standard Method suggests.”

As addressed further in this report, many of the circumstances identified in this part of the PPG are applicable in Oxfordshire, in that there is a Housing and Growth Deal in place providing funding to facilitate growth to 2031 (which covers the initial part of the period of the Oxfordshire Plan); Oxfordshire sits within a wider Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc which has been designated by Government effectively as a growth area; and major new strategic infrastructure is being considered including East-West Rail and proposals for an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway (currently on hold).

Recent Local Plans in Oxfordshire, including those in Oxford City and South Oxfordshire, which have assessed housing need as being above the Standard Method have been found to be sound at independent examination.

The Standard Method thus provides an important starting point in establishing the minimum level of housing need. The Growth Needs Assessment however then considers whether there is robust evidence to suggest that housing need could be higher or lower than the Standard Method suggests; and address the points in the box above.

This report takes account of evidence and Government policy/guidance available at the time of its preparation. Further evidence may however need to be prepared prior to submission of the Plan to take account of updated data, or changes in methodology or Government policy. The Government’s recent consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System⁹ and the Planning White Paper may for instance in due course lead to revisions to legislation, policy and guidance influencing plan-making which the Councils would need to have regard to.

Assessing economic development needs

The NPPF is clear that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt; and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs and wider opportunities for development (Para 80). It is clear that this is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation and in areas with high levels of productivity, which would include Oxfordshire.

Planning policies are expected to set out an economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies; which identifies strategic sites for local and inward investment; addresses barriers to investment and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan (Para 81).

⁹ MHCLG (Aug 2020) *Changes to the Current Planning System*

Planning Practice Guidance sets out that assessments of employment land needs may need to be undertaken on a cross-boundary basis where functional economic market areas cross administrative boundaries, as this Growth Needs Assessment shows is the case in Oxfordshire.

The Guidance sets out that considerations in assessing business needs include the existing stock of land in employment use, the pattern of employment land supply and loss, market evidence and consultation with relevant organisations. It outlines a range of data that needs to be brought together to assess future needs including employment forecasts/projections, assessments of future labour supply, projections of past take-up of employment space and other studies addressing changing business trend/models.¹⁰ It also advises that the specific locational requirements of specialist or new sectors may need to be considered. This report provides a quantitative assessment and forecasts of future employment land needs across Oxfordshire.

The Cambridge-Oxford Arc

There is an important strategic context to the consideration of growth needs in Oxfordshire, which is influenced by policies and strategies at national, regional and sub-regional levels. This includes Oxfordshire's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc.

The National Infrastructure Commission's Partnering for Prosperity Report set out the case for strategic growth and infrastructure investment across the Cambridge-Oxford-Milton Keynes Arc. This is explored further below.

2.3 National Infrastructure Commission: Partnering for Prosperity

The National Infrastructure Commission's ('the NIC Report'), titled 'Partnering for Prosperity – A New Deal for the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc'¹¹ argued that the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc must be a national priority.

Underpinned by a range of detailed research, it outlined how the Arc is home to some of the country's strongest economies, that this has fuelled demand for homes, but that this has not been matched by housing supply.

It found the Arc is at the heart of the UK's knowledge economy, which reflects the concentration of world-leading universities and research facilities, internationally significant business clusters, a track record in innovation and entrepreneurship and the skills of its workforce. In Oxfordshire, this reflects the presence of Oxford University which is one of the top four in the world; the John Radcliffe and Churchill teaching hospitals, which drive internationally-significant clinical and medical developments; and the broader clustering in the area known as Science Vale (in and around Oxford, Didcot and Abingdon) of bioscience and medical technologies; physical sciences; telecommunications, computer hardware and software; and engineering and electronics.

This area is the location of long-established companies such as Oxford Instruments (founded in 1959), high profile companies such as Williams F1;

¹⁰ Planning Practice Guidance ID 2a-027-20190220

¹¹ Published in November 2017.

relatively new companies experiencing very rapid growth (e.g. Immunocore) and developing technologies which could have global impact. Oxfordshire, and in particular the 'knowledge spine' which runs north-south through the centre of the county – is thus host to substantive high-tech science and innovation cluster.

The NIC report sets out that the number of patent applications in 2015 in Oxford was four times greater than the UK average; and the City is one of only two UK cities in the European top 20 for innovation. A strong enterprise culture together with the track record of the universities supports research and innovation, and the commercialisation of this.

The report outlines that fundamental to this success has been the skills of the workforce; describing Oxford for instance as having the most highly qualified workforces in the country with more than 60% of workers qualified to degree level or higher. Indeed, Centre for Cities has identified Oxford as having one of the highest concentration of highly skilled residents in Europe.¹²

The combination of innovation, enterprise and a highly-skilled workforce has supported Oxford (as well as Cambridge and Milton Keynes) to be amongst the most productive and fastest growing of main towns and cities across the UK. The NIC found, based on Centre for Cities research, that the contribution of places such as Oxford to UK economic performance, trading accounts and tax revenues is both significant and increasing.

The NIC stated strong economic assets and enterprise culture have supported strong economic performance, fuelling a demand for homes across the Arc which has not been matched by supply.

These issues underpinned the conclusion reached in the NIC report that rates of housebuilding across the Arc as a whole would need to double if the Arc is to achieve its economic potential. It sets out that this needs to form part of a package of investment – including in infrastructure; skills development; science, research and innovation; business infrastructure and the continued development of the Arc's world-leading sectors.

The report goes on to state a clear spatial vision for the Arc over the next 50 years should be articulated. This should be jointly owned and led by local stakeholders, and by Government. It should provide an expression of the Arc's long-term economic, physical and social development, as well as identify locations for growth and investment and enabling strategic infrastructure.

2.4 Government's response to the NIC report

Following the publication of the NIC's report in November 2017, the Government issued a detailed response to the NIC's recommendations in October 2018. This is relevant to the preparation of Local Plans across the Arc, as the NPPF in Paragraph 6 is clear that endorsed recommendations of the NIC may be material when preparing plans or deciding applications.

In responding to the NIC report, the Government welcomed it and its recommendations; recognising that:

¹² Centre for Cities (2016), *Competing with the Continent*.

*“With the right interventions and investment, we believe there is a transformational opportunity to amplify the Arc’s position as a world-leading economic place and support the government’s Industrial Strategy aim to boost the productivity and earning power of people across the UK”.*¹³

The Government acknowledged that the Arc is a globally significant place and has the potential to become even greater. In order to achieve this, the Government has designated the Arc as a key economic priority and recognised that a step change in housing delivery would be required to support this.

Since 2018, Government has been considering the delivery of transformational infrastructure projects to improve east-west connectivity across the Arc, most notably by completing the £1bn East West Rail scheme as well as potential road infrastructure projects. Proposals for an Oxford-Cambridge Expressway are however currently on hold.

The Government also recognised in its response that to build the one million new homes between 2016-2050 – what the NIC identified as the potential of the Arc - and deliver its full economic potential of the Arc, the planning and delivery of business, housing and infrastructure should be coordinated across the Arc.

In its 2020 budget, the Government announced plans to develop a long-term Spatial Framework to support strategic planning in the OxCam Arc, setting out that this would support the area’s future economic success and the delivery of the new homes required by this growth up to 2050 and beyond. There is clear potential for the Oxfordshire Plan to influence the development of the Spatial Framework (and vice-versa).

In the context of Oxfordshire’s location within the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc and the Government’s ambitions for the Arc, it is reasonable for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider and test the inter-relationship between economic growth and housing need.

The Ox-Cam Arc reports do not however provide any specific guidance on how to calculate what level of housing provision should be planned for, or what share of the 1 million homes ambition might be delivered in Oxfordshire. This is for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

2.5 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

The six Oxfordshire councils (Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire county Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council) and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership announced a Housing and Growth Deal with Government on 22nd November 2017.

The deal is relevant in establishing a joint commitment to:

- The preparation, submission and adoption, subject to the examination process, of a joint statutory spatial plan covering all six local authorities in Oxfordshire (‘the Oxfordshire Plan’);

¹³ HM Treasury (2018) Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc Study: government response, p. 1

- Planning for and supporting the delivery of 100,000 new homes between 2011 and 2031 – backed up with a credible plan for delivery, outlining interim milestones and targets as agreed with the HCA and Government.
- Funding of up to £215m funding from Government to support growth, which comprises £60m for affordable housing, £150m for infrastructure improvements and £5m resource funding to get a joint plan in place and support housing delivery.

The commitment to deliver 100,000 homes to 2031 has informed the preparation of the current round of Local Plans across the 5 Oxfordshire authorities, which collectively plan to meet this.¹⁴

The Oxfordshire Plan, which this report has been prepared to inform, is principally looking at longer-term strategic development beyond these timeframes to 2050; not least as major strategic growth which is being considered now through the Oxfordshire Plan is unlikely to deliver significant new development on the ground by 2031.

The Growth Deal does not specify what rate of development should be planned for in Oxfordshire beyond 2031. This will be for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

2.6 Housing and Infrastructure Fund (HIF)

Linked to the Housing and Growth Deal, Oxfordshire county Council has secured £218 million of funding from the Housing and Infrastructure Fund to support the delivery of the Didcot Garden Town. This will contribute to the delivery of:

- A4130 widening from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot;
- A new “*Science Bridge*” over the A4130, Great Western Railway Line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site;
- A new Culham to Didcot river crossing between the A415 and A413; and
- A Clifton Hampden Bypass.

In November 2019, £102 million of Housing Infrastructure Funding was also secured to make major improvements to the A40 and ease congestion including the dualling of the A40 between Witney and the proposed Eynsham Park and Ryde; and delivery of a westbound bus lane from Oxford to Eynsham.

This infrastructure investment is intended to support the delivery of housing and employment development schemes in the existing round of Local Plans (either adopted or emerging).

2.7 Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS)

The Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) was published by the Government in July 2019, responding to the UK Industrial Strategy. The NPPF

¹⁴ South Oxfordshire's Local Plan and the Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan are at Examination at the time of writing. Plans in Oxford, Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire have been adopted.

states in Para 81 that plan-making should have regard to local industrial strategies in setting out an economic vision and strategy for the area.

The LIS builds upon the significant business investment over recent years through the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. Over £600m worth of government and European funds have been secured through Growth Deals, a City Deal, European Structural Investment Funds and Infrastructure Funds – all part of an overall investment programme in Oxfordshire worth £2.2bn.

The LIS sets out an ambitious economic strategy up to 2040 with the aim of positioning Oxfordshire as one of the top three innovation ecosystems in the world and as a leading science and technology cluster. The important economic sectors, assets and growth opportunities identified in the strategy are spread across the whole of Oxfordshire with the main towns forming important parts of the economy. These include motorsport technologies around Banbury, Bicester and Grove; life sciences and creative industries around Milton Park and Didcot; and smart living technologies at the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village.

The Oxfordshire LIS presents a long-term framework against which private and public sector investment decisions can be assessed, grouped around the five foundations of productivity:

- Places - Develop Oxfordshire as a living laboratory to help solve the UK's grand challenges
- Business environment - Become a powerhouse for commercialising transformative technologies
- Infrastructure - Enable greater connectivity and accessibility especially across key growth locations
- Ideas - Establish a globally connected innovation economy
- People - Develop a more responsive skill system creating better opportunities for all

The Oxfordshire LIS will also partly inform future local authority-level industrial strategies, such as the Cherwell Industrial Strategy which is currently being prepared as a 10-year strategy to facilitate a supportive business environment, help encourage enterprise and continued economic prosperity.

A detailed review of the Oxfordshire LIS and associated sector growth trajectories is provided later in this report in *Chapter 8*.

2.8 Conclusions

There are important national and sub-regional policy influences which are relevant in considering housing and economic development needs in Oxfordshire.

National policy sets out that the Standard Method set out in Planning Practice Guidance is the starting point for considering housing needs. The Housing and Growth Deal agreed between the Oxfordshire Councils and Government sets out that higher levels of growth will be planned for to 2031; but does not address the period beyond 2031 – this will be for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider.

Wider influences on considering the need for housing and employment land include Oxfordshire's economic dynamics, potential strategic infrastructure investment, and the county's location within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc.

The National Infrastructure Commission has recognised Oxfordshire's economic dynamism and growth potential, and provision of sufficient housing and employment land are relevant considerations if its growth potential is to be realised. There is an opportunity for the Oxfordshire Plan to influence and shape the forthcoming Spatial Framework for the Arc.

3 Demographic Trends

3.1 Introduction

This chapter considers recent demographic trends in Oxfordshire, in particular focussing on population size and age structure, as well as an understanding of how this has changed over time. Demographic dynamics are an input to the consideration of overall housing need within the Standard Method and the analysis in this chapter therefore informs the assessment of housing need in *Chapter 7*.

The latest official data about population change in Oxfordshire is contained within ONS mid-year population estimates (MYE) up to mid-2018 (published in 2019). The 2018 Mid-Year Population Estimates were the latest available at the time when this report was drafted.

Table 3.1.1 below shows the estimated population in each local authority and the proportion of the Oxfordshire total this amounts to. As of mid-2018, the population of Oxfordshire was estimated to be 687,500, with Oxford and Cherwell being the largest local authorities (and West Oxfordshire the smallest).

Table 3.1.1: Estimated population by local authority, 2018

	Estimated population, 2018	% of population, 2018
Cherwell	149,161	21.7%
Oxford	154,327	22.4%
South Oxfordshire	140,504	20.4%
Vale of White Horse	133,732	19.5%
West Oxfordshire	109,800	16.0%
Oxfordshire	687,524	-

Source: ONS.

3.2 Age structure

Table 3.2.1 below shows Oxfordshire's population age structure in five-year age bands compared to the regional and national profile. The data shows a similar age structure in Oxfordshire to the South East and to England, although there is a particular spike in the 20-24 age group which is likely to be related to the student population of Oxford.

Table 3.2.1: Population profile in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018

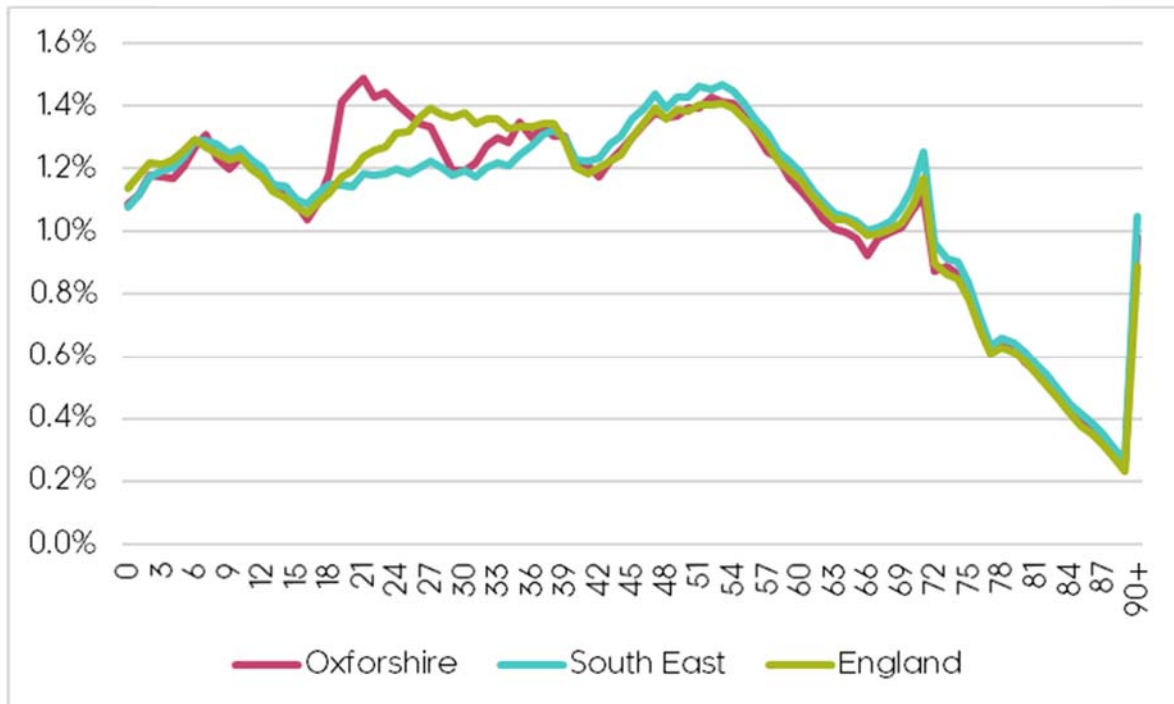
	Oxfordshire		South East	England
	Population	% of population	% of population	% of population
0-4	39,398	5.7%	5.8%	6.0%
5-9	42,783	6.2%	6.3%	6.3%
10-14	40,453	5.9%	6.0%	5.8%
15-19	40,021	5.8%	5.6%	5.5%
20-24	49,678	7.2%	5.9%	6.3%
25-29	44,772	6.5%	6.0%	6.8%
30-34	43,131	6.3%	6.0%	6.8%
35-39	45,310	6.6%	6.4%	6.6%

40-44	41,766	6.1%	6.3%	6.1%
45-49	46,432	6.8%	7.0%	6.8%
50-54	48,411	7.0%	7.3%	7.0%
55-59	43,672	6.4%	6.6%	6.4%
60-64	36,270	5.3%	5.5%	5.4%
65-69	33,692	4.9%	5.2%	5.0%
70-74	33,070	4.8%	5.2%	4.9%
75-79	23,221	3.4%	3.5%	3.3%
80-84	17,597	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%
85+	17,847	2.6%	2.8%	2.4%
All Ages	687,524	-	-	-

Source: ONS.

The differences between Oxfordshire and other areas can more clearly be seen in Figure 3.2.1 below which considers the age structure by single year of age. This shows for ages up to about 15 and from about 40 onwards that the profile of the county is relatively similar to that seen in the South East and England as a whole. A higher proportion of Oxfordshire’s population is however aged between 18-25 than is the case nationally; and there are more people in the late 20s and early 30s relative to the profile across the South East region. This influences the effects of affordability pressures within the county, which particularly affect younger households who are less likely to own a home.

Figure 3.2.1: Population profile in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018



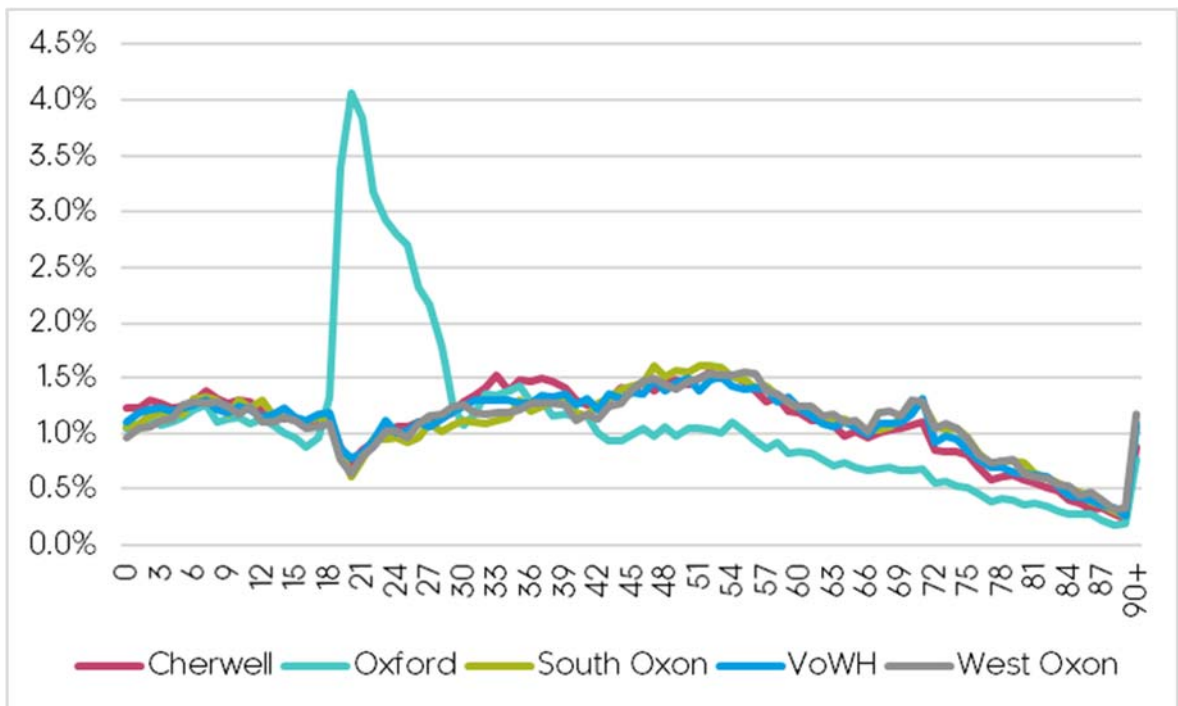
Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The spike for student age groups can more clearly be seen when looking at individual local authorities (Figure 3.2.2. Note: South and West Oxfordshire abbreviated to South and West Oxon. Vale of White Horse abbreviated to VoWH). Oxford has a notably higher population in all age groups from about 18/19 up to 28/29. Outside of Oxford, the four authorities show a slight dip in

population around age 20 which will be related to people in these areas leaving to go to university in other areas.

The five local authorities have very similar population structure, with Oxford having a notably lower proportion of people aged over about 40, due to higher numbers in key student age groups. Cherwell has slightly higher numbers of people aged 29-39 but aside from this, the population structure in these four authorities is relatively similar.

Figure 3.2.2: Population profile of local authorities in Oxfordshire, 2018



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The analysis in Table 3.2.2 summarises the above information by assigning population to three broad age groups: a) children (0-16), b) working-age (16-65) and c) pensionable age (65+). This analysis shows that, compared with the region and national position, Oxfordshire has a broadly similar age structure.

Table 3.2.2: Summary age bands in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 2018

	Oxfordshire		South East	England
	Population	% of population	% of population	% of population
Under 16	130,136	18.9%	19.2%	19.2%
16-64	431,961	62.8%	61.5%	62.6%
65+	125,427	18.2%	19.3%	18.2%
All Ages	687,524	-	-	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

However, if this analysis is repeated for individual authorities it is again clear that the age profile in Oxford is somewhat different (Table 3.2.3). In particular, the proportion of people aged 65 and over is only 12%, compared with 18% across the county and up to 22% in West Oxfordshire. With Oxford also having a slightly lower proportion of people aged under 16, it is the case that a high proportion of the population age within the 16-64 age band (70% of Oxford's population, compared with 63% across the county).

Table 3.2.3: Summary age bands of local authorities in Oxfordshire, 2018

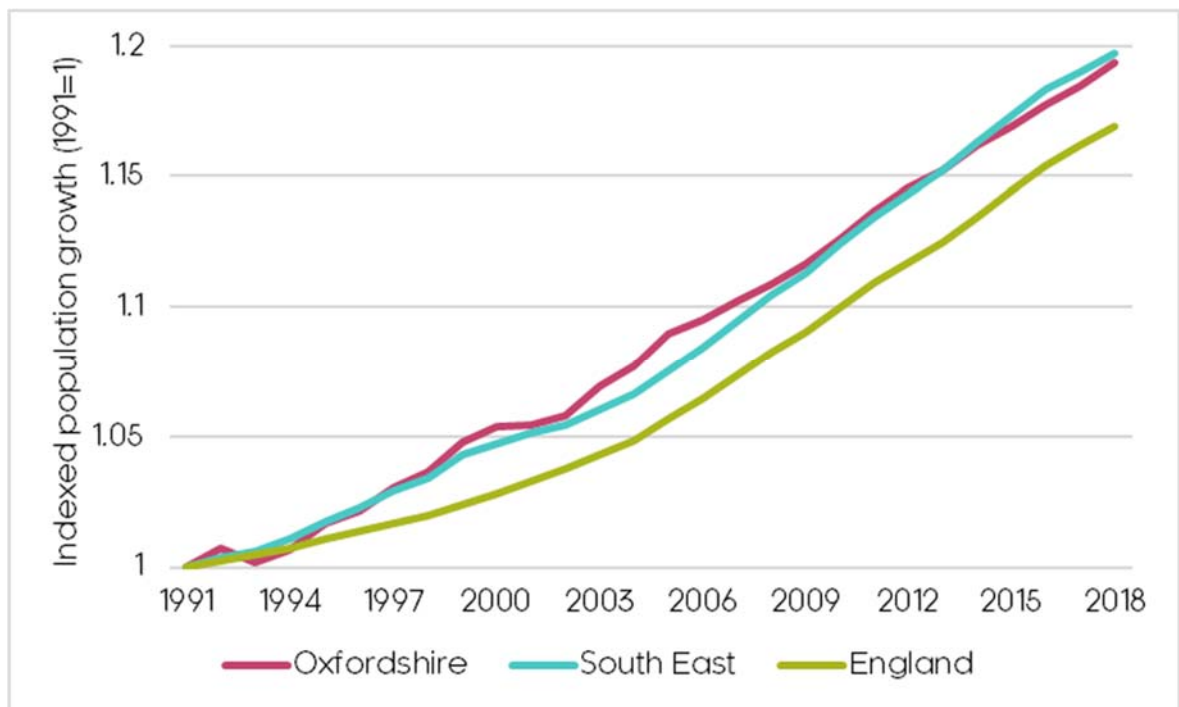
	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Under 16	20.0%	17.7%	19.2%	19.3%	18.5%
16-64	62.0%	70.2%	59.9%	60.7%	59.9%
65+	18.1%	12.2%	20.9%	20.0%	21.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.3 Past population growth

Figure 3.3.1 below appraises population growth in the period from 1991 to 2018. Over this period the population of Oxfordshire has been rising, broadly tracking changes seen regionally. Population growth has however been above that seen for England as a whole. It is estimated that the population of the county had risen by 19% from 1991 levels, which compares to a 20% rise across the region and a 17% increase nationally.

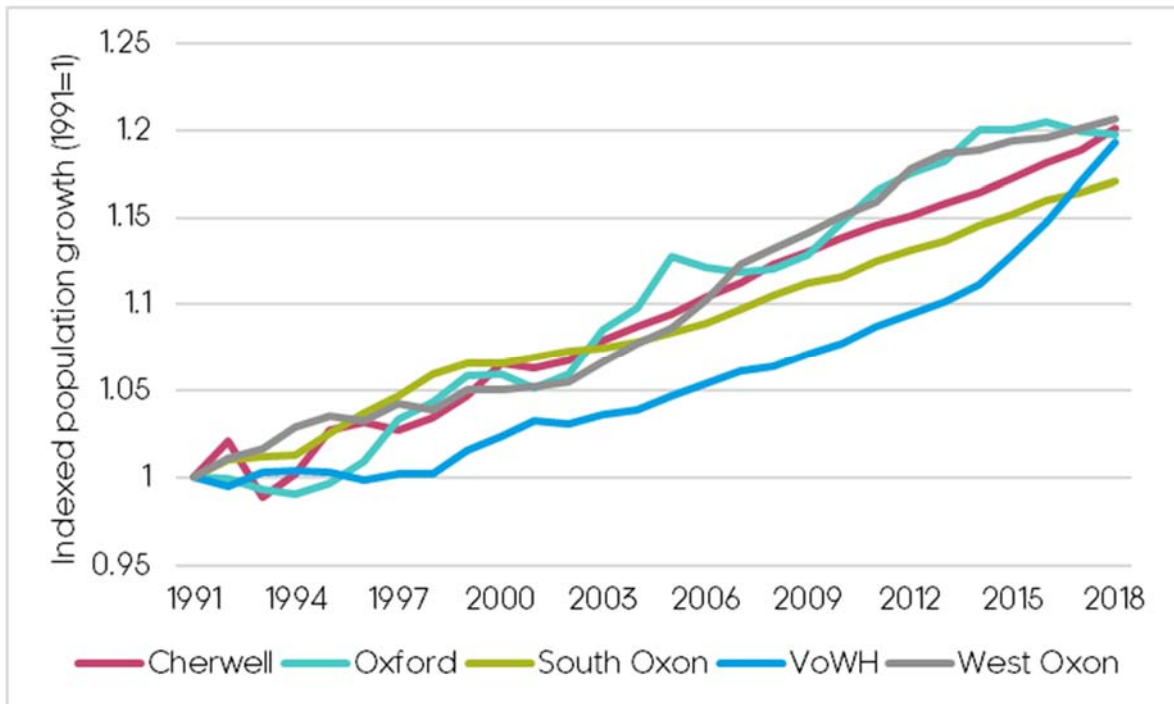
Figure 3.3.1: Indexed population change in Oxfordshire, the South East and England, 1991-2018



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

When looking at individual local authorities a slightly different picture emerges. As shown in Figure 3.3.2, population growth varies modestly from 17% in South Oxfordshire up to 21% in West Oxfordshire over the 1991-2018 period. However, the changes to population have been far from uniform. Of particular note are the strong growth seen in Vale of White Horse over the past few years along with little change observed in Oxford City (based on published ONS data)¹⁵. These differentials are influenced in part by planning policies and capacity for new housing, with the recent upturn in housing delivery in Vale of the White Horse for instance influenced by its adoption of a new Local Plan planning for higher housing growth in December 2016.

¹⁵ Alternative measure of population in Oxford are considered later in this section.

Figure 3.3.2: Indexed population change for local authorities in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

This analysis is taken forward by looking at population changes in more recent years over the 2011-18 period (Table 3.3.1). The starting point being chosen as it is the last date from which population data has been consolidated with a 'known' source (i.e. the 2011 Census). The 2011-18 period also allows for comparison with Patient Register data, which provides an alternative source for considering changes to the size and structure of the population.

Over the 7-year period (2011-18), the MYE data suggests that the population of the county has risen by 5%. Within this there is an increase of 10% in Vale of White Horse and a much smaller increase for Oxford (less than 3%).

Table 3.3.1: Population change for local authorities in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change	% change
Cherwell	142,252	149,161	6,909	4.9%
Oxford	150,245	154,327	4,082	2.7%
South Oxon	134,961	140,504	5,543	4.1%
VoWH	121,891	133,732	11,841	9.7%
West Oxon	105,442	109,800	4,358	4.1%
Oxfordshire	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%
South East	8,652,784	9,133,625	480,841	5.6%
England	53,107,169	55,977,178	2,870,009	5.4%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.3.2 below shows population change by age (again for the 2011-18 period). This generally identifies the greatest increases to be in older age groups (aged 65 and over) along with some notable population increases in the 50-54 and 55-59 age groups. The county also saw some population declines, particularly those aged 40-44.

Table 3.3.2: Population change by 5-year age bands in Oxfordshire, 1991-2018

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change (2011- 18)	% change (2011-18)
0-4	41,150	39,398	-1,752	-4.3%
5-9	36,257	42,783	6,526	18.0%
10-14	37,303	40,453	3,150	8.4%
15-19	41,788	40,021	-1,767	-4.2%
20-24	47,641	49,678	2,037	4.3%
25-29	46,654	44,772	-1,882	-4.0%
30-34	43,991	43,131	-860	-2.0%
35-39	43,545	45,310	1,765	4.1%
40-44	47,869	41,766	-6,103	-12.7%
45-49	48,424	46,432	-1,992	-4.1%
50-54	41,605	48,411	6,806	16.4%
55-59	35,992	43,672	7,680	21.3%
60-64	37,933	36,270	-1,663	-4.4%
65-69	30,761	33,692	2,931	9.5%
70-74	24,163	33,070	8,907	36.9%
75-79	19,828	23,221	3,393	17.1%
80-84	15,021	17,597	2,576	17.1%
85+	14,866	17,847	2,981	20.1%
All Ages	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

This information has been summarised into three broad age bands in Table 3.3.3 to ease comparison between areas. Table 3.3.3 is for the whole county. This shows an increase in the number of children living in the county (increasing by about 6%) along with a small increase in the 'working-age' population (1%). The key driver of population growth has therefore been in the 65 and over age group, which between 2011 and 2018 saw a population increase of about 20,800 people: this age group increasing in size by 20% over the 7-year period. The modest growth in the core working-age population is a potential constraint on economic performance.

Table 3.3.3: Population change by broad age group in Oxfordshire, 2011-18

	Population (2011)	Population (2018)	Change (2011- 18)	% change (2011-18)
Under 16	122,334	130,136	7,802	6.4%
16-64	427,818	431,961	4,143	1.0%
65+	104,639	125,427	20,788	19.9%
All ages	654,791	687,524	32,733	5.0%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.3.4 below shows the same information for each local authority. All areas have seen a notable increase in the population aged 65 and over, most notably in Cherwell (23% increase). Vale of White Horse saw the largest increases in the number of people aged under 16 and also in the 16-64 age group – this will be linked to this area seeing the highest overall increase in housing delivery and associated population since 2011. In contrast, both Oxford and West Oxfordshire saw small declines in the number of people

aged 16-64 although the data does suggest a notable increase (of about 9%) in the population aged under 16 in the City.

Table 3.3.4: Population change by broad age group for local authorities, 2011-18

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Under 16	4.7%	8.6%	3.3%	11.3%	4.3%
16-64	0.6%	-0.1%	0.0%	5.7%	-1.0%
65+	22.9%	12.4%	19.1%	22.0%	21.4%
All ages	4.9%	2.7%	4.1%	9.7%	4.1%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.4 Comparing estimates of population growth

The analysis above has focussed on using data from the ONS mid-year population estimates. It is worthwhile comparing estimates of population change with those from an alternative source (the Patient Register (PR)). The PR data is provided by ONS with their MYE releases by way of a comparator tool spreadsheet.

It should be noted that it is not recommended to use the PR data to establish the size of the population at a point in time: this is because this source does tend to overstate population as some people may be registered with a GP in more than one location – this tends to particularly impact on areas with larger numbers of younger people and student populations. However, the PR data can be a useful cross-checking tool in looking at the likely accuracy of population change as shown in the MYE. Table 3.4.1 shows estimated population change from each of these sources over the 2011-18 period.

Table 3.4.1: Comparison of ONS MYE with population estimates from the Patient Register

		2011	2018	Change	% change
Cherwell	MYE	142,270	149,150	6,880	4.8%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	146,750	160,410	13,660	9.3%
Oxford	MYE	150,300	154,340	4,040	2.7%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	173,730	198,220	24,490	14.1%
South Oxon	MYE	134,970	140,540	5,570	4.1%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	138,630	147,620	8,990	6.5%
VoWH	MYE	121,890	133,740	11,850	9.7%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	125,250	137,950	12,700	10.1%
West Oxon	MYE	105,460	109,770	4,310	4.1%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	105,900	111,660	5,760	5.4%
Oxfordshire	MYE	654,890	687,540	32,650	5.0%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	690,260	755,860	65,600	9.5%
South East	MYE	8,652,820	9,133,630	480,810	5.6%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	8,937,030	9,602,900	665,870	7.5%
England	MYE	53,107,200	55,977,180	2,869,980	5.4%
	<i>Patient Register</i>	55,312,750	59,456,460	4,143,710	7.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Initially focussing on Oxfordshire, the MYE data has estimated a population growth of 5%, however the PR data puts this at closer to 10%, this may suggest that the MYE data has underestimated past population growth to some extent. It does however need to be noted for both the South East and nationally that the PR data does suggest a much higher level of population

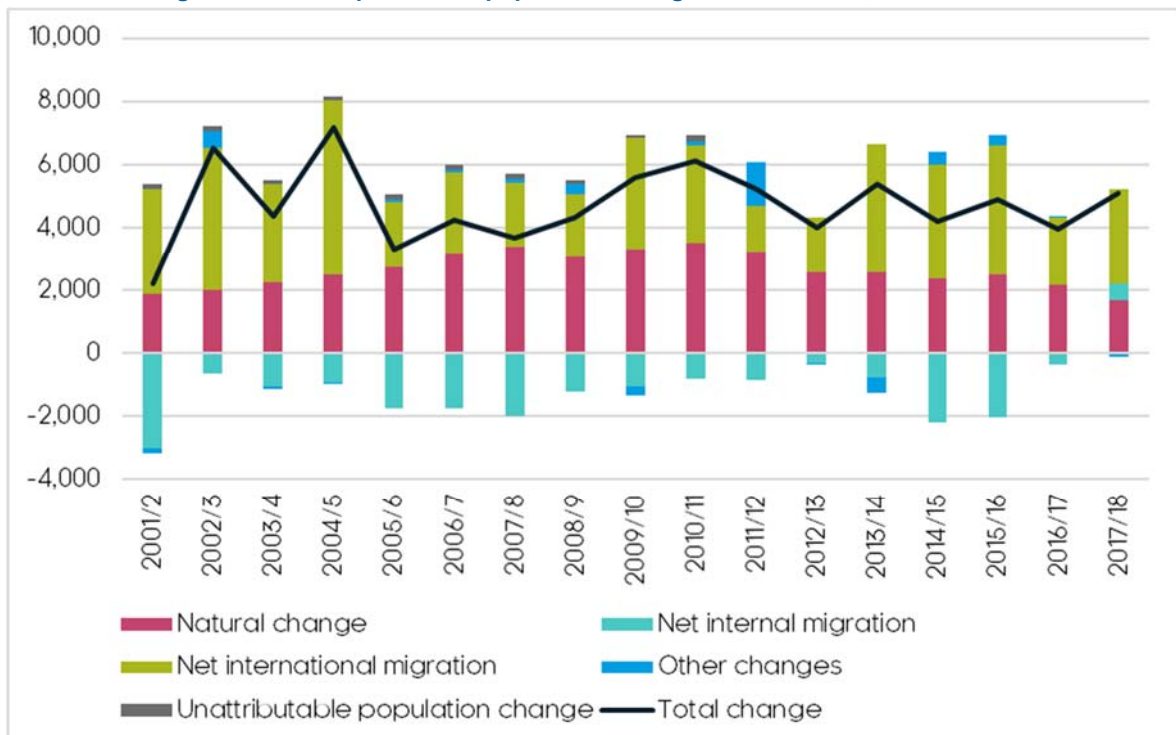
growth (albeit a lower difference between sources than shown in Oxfordshire) meaning that the patient register data is likely to over-estimate overall population growth (as some people move away from the area and do not re-register doctors).

When looking at individual local authorities, the differences between the sources are more notable. In particular, it can be observed that whilst the MYE showed population growth of 3% in Oxford (the lowest in the county) the PR data shows an increase of 14% (the highest in the county). In Vale of White Horse, which had the highest population increase in the MYEs, the difference between MYE and PR changes is relatively small. The high degree of difference in Oxford in particular suggests that Oxford’s population growth could have been under-estimated in the MYEs.

3.5 Components of population change

Population change is largely driven by natural change (births minus deaths) and migration, although within ONS data there is also a small ‘other changes’ category (mainly related to armed forces and prison populations) and an ‘unattributable population change’ (UPC) category. UPC is an adjustment made by ONS to mid-year population estimates where Census data suggests that population growth had either been over- or under-estimated in the period between the 2001 and 2011 Census. Because UPC links back to Census data, a figure is only provided for 2001 to 2011.

Figure 3.5.1: Components of population change in Oxfordshire, 2001-18



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

As shown in Figure 3.5.1 above and Table 3.5.1 below, natural change has been positive in Oxfordshire throughout the period, averaging a positive growth of around 2,400 people over the past 7-years. However, natural change has been falling over this period, due to a combination of both a

reduction in the number of births and an increase in deaths. This is influenced by changes in the population age structure.

International migration is positive for all years studied and can be quite variable over time. For the past 7-years net international migration has averaged 2,900 people per year. In contrast, internal (domestic) migration has generally been negative, in other words more people move from Oxfordshire to other parts of the Country than move to Oxfordshire. It is notable that the last year for which data exists (2017-18) is the only year to show a positive net domestic migration.

Table 3.5.1: Components of population change in Oxfordshire, 2001-18

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total population change
2001/2	1,895	-3,016	3,338	-163	160	2,214
2002/3	1,981	-659	4,543	530	145	6,540
2003/4	2,249	-1,056	3,117	-66	137	4,381
2004/5	2,496	-926	5,517	-54	123	7,156
2005/6	2,715	-1,730	2,091	96	133	3,305
2006/7	3,142	-1,758	2,608	87	142	4,221
2007/8	3,397	-2,004	2,038	99	160	3,690
2008/9	3,058	-1,208	2,014	307	140	4,311
2009/10	3,297	-1,052	3,564	-288	72	5,593
2010/11	3,513	-807	3,088	125	184	6,103
2011/12	3,223	-851	1,467	1,379	0	5,218
2012/13	2,566	-318	1,756	-15	0	3,989
2013/14	2,567	-753	4,071	-506	0	5,379
2014/15	2,366	-2,189	3,644	392	0	4,213
2015/16	2,507	-2,018	4,075	330	0	4,894
2016/17	2,157	-374	2,176	1	0	3,960
2017/18	1,673	544	2,985	-122	0	5,080

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Other changes are quite small and variable over time, whilst the data shows a modest (and positive) level of UPC. The positive UPC suggests that previous ONS components of change data may have under-estimated population growth in the county between 2001-11, although the numbers involved are not substantial (and they are also now somewhat historic). Similar tables have been produced for the individual local authorities in Oxfordshire. These can be found in *Appendix A: Components of Population Change by Local Authority*.

As noted above, there was also a considerable amount of movement within Oxfordshire. Table 3.5.2 shows a matrix of moves between the different local authorities in the county (on a per annum basis for the 5-year period to mid-2018), while Table 3.5.3 summarises this into overall in- and out-flows for each local authority. Table 3.5.2 shows for example that an average of 1,168 people moved from Oxford to Cherwell in the period, with 493 moving in the other direction (net migration to Cherwell of 675 people).

When the matrix data is summarised (Table 3.5.3), it can be seen that there is a substantial net out-migration from Oxford to other parts of the county (also a

more modest net out-migration from South Oxfordshire). Net migration was strongest to Vale of White Horse and Cherwell.

Table 3.5.2: Origin and destination of population moving local authority within Oxfordshire, 2013-18

		Origin				
		Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Destination	Cherwell	-	1,168	290	278	503
	Oxford	493	-	557	778	314
	South Oxon	207	939	-	790	124
	VoWH	261	1,641	1,109	-	361
	West Oxon	566	647	160	433	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.5.3: Moves to and from each local authority in Oxfordshire (moves within Oxfordshire only), 2018

	Origin	Destination	Net moves to LA
Cherwell	1,527	2,239	712
Oxford	4,394	2,141	-2,253
South Oxon	2,116	2,060	-56
VoWH	2,279	3,371	1,092
West Oxon	1,301	1,806	504

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

A similar analysis can be carried out using 2011 Census data. This has the advantage of being a more complete data set, but the disadvantage that the information is more dated. Generally, the patterns of migration are the same, with net movements from Oxford and South Oxfordshire, along with net moves to the other three local authority areas. The volume of moves shown in the Census is slightly somewhat lower than recorded by ONS in the 2013-18 period.

Table 3.5.4: Origin and destination of population moving local authority within Oxfordshire, 2011

		Origin				
		Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon
Destination	Cherwell	-	959	232	263	464
	Oxford	614	-	706	950	372
	South Oxon	215	667	-	612	161
	VoWH	185	1,078	841	-	370
	West Oxon	443	556	199	422	-

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.5.5: Moves to and from each local authority in Oxfordshire (moves within Oxfordshire only) 2011

	Origin	Destination	Net moves to LA
Cherwell	1,457	1,918	461
Oxford	3,260	2,642	-618
South Oxon	1,978	1,655	-323
VoWH	2,247	2,474	227
West Oxon	1,367	1,620	253

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Using the Census source, it is also possible to look at the origins and destinations of migrants to and from Oxfordshire. Table 3.5.6 below shows moves to/from the county from neighbouring authorities plus details for all regions in the United Kingdom. In the period considered in the Census (2010-11) it can be seen that migration was virtually in balance (30,081 people moved to Oxfordshire and 30,082 moved out).

Table 3.5.6: Locations of migrants moving to and from Oxfordshire, 2011

Local authorities	Moved from Oxfordshire to...	Moved to Oxfordshire from...	Net migration to Oxfordshire
Cotswold	430	369	-61
Swindon	712	410	-302
Stratford-on-Avon	334	340	6
South Northamptonshire	561	497	-64
Aylesbury Vale	846	843	-3
Reading	689	656	-33
West Berkshire	558	566	8
Wokingham	284	351	67
Wycombe	479	693	214
Regions and other	Moved from Oxfordshire to...	Moved to Oxfordshire from...	Net migration to Oxfordshire
East	1,934	2,609	675
Rest of East Midlands	1,911	1,718	-193
London	5,709	5,301	-408
North East	482	479	-3
North West	1,278	1,407	129
Northern Ireland	156	217	61
Scotland	736	955	219
Rest of South East	4,214	4,977	763
Rest of South West	4,374	3,522	-852
Wales	1,024	897	-127
Rest of West Midlands	2,199	2,068	-131
Yorkshire and The Humber	1,172	1,206	34
Total UK moves	30,082	30,081	-1
Moved from abroad	N/A	11,537	N/A

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Looking locally, the data suggests a relatively strong move of people to Swindon and stronger net in-migration from Wycombe. The analysis tends to show an east/west population movement – i.e. people generally moving from authorities to the east and moving out to the west. Looking more widely, the analysis shows quite a strong net migration from the East of England region and also the rest of the South East (i.e. excluding neighbouring authorities). The main net out migration is to the rest of the South West region, and there was also a modest level of net migration to London.

Analysis of the Census data also show (as per earlier components of change data) that the vast majority of international migrants move to Oxford City (58% of all in-migrants). Generally, the profile of the countries people come from is similar in different locations although the data does show a number of trends:

- A high proportion of Polish and American (USA) migrants to Cherwell

- A high level of international migrants to Oxford, from a range of international locations
- A high proportion of German migrants to Vale of White Horse

In interpreting this data it does need to be remembered that the information is from 2011 and could well have changed slightly in more recent years, it is also possible that there could be further changes impacting on the study area such as Global Talent Research Visas. Levels of international migration should therefore be monitored, including through any new releases of data from ONS.

Table 3.5.7: Previous location of international migrants to Oxfordshire, 2011

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Ireland	35	151	36	35	17	274
France	45	416	71	117	63	712
Germany	110	443	58	304	38	953
Italy	26	172	32	16	12	258
Spain	70	281	65	49	60	525
Poland	172	199	71	25	41	508
Other EU	200	857	210	227	151	1,645
Other Europe	39	394	48	50	23	554
Africa	85	334	62	96	39	616
Middle East	38	226	50	54	37	405
China	28	324	14	13	16	395
Other Eastern Asia	33	325	29	38	20	445
India	75	262	29	29	6	401
Other Southern Asia	35	231	24	44	14	348
South-East Asia	49	404	54	58	41	606
USA	259	840	114	112	57	1,382
Canada	16	252	21	42	30	361
Other North/Central/South America/Caribbean	20	223	34	39	15	331
Australia	65	295	70	102	68	600
New Zealand	25	105	26	27	19	202
Other Australasian/Oceania	6	5	0	4	1	16
Total	1,431	6,739	1,118	1,481	768	11,537

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.5.8: Previous location of international migrants to Oxfordshire (% of total), 2011

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Ireland	2.4%	2.2%	3.2%	2.4%	2.2%	2.4%
France	3.1%	6.2%	6.4%	7.9%	8.2%	6.2%
Germany	7.7%	6.6%	5.2%	20.5%	4.9%	8.3%
Italy	1.8%	2.6%	2.9%	1.1%	1.6%	2.2%
Spain	4.9%	4.2%	5.8%	3.3%	7.8%	4.6%
Poland	12.0%	3.0%	6.4%	1.7%	5.3%	4.4%
Other EU	14.0%	12.7%	18.8%	15.3%	19.7%	14.3%
Other Europe	2.7%	5.8%	4.3%	3.4%	3.0%	4.8%

Africa	5.9%	5.0%	5.5%	6.5%	5.1%	5.3%
Middle East	2.7%	3.4%	4.5%	3.6%	4.8%	3.5%
China	2.0%	4.8%	1.3%	0.9%	2.1%	3.4%
Other Eastern Asia	2.3%	4.8%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	3.9%
India	5.2%	3.9%	2.6%	2.0%	0.8%	3.5%
Other Southern Asia	2.4%	3.4%	2.1%	3.0%	1.8%	3.0%
South-East Asia	3.4%	6.0%	4.8%	3.9%	5.3%	5.3%
USA	18.1%	12.5%	10.2%	7.6%	7.4%	12.0%
Canada	1.1%	3.7%	1.9%	2.8%	3.9%	3.1%
Other North/Central/South America/Caribbean	1.4%	3.3%	3.0%	2.6%	2.0%	2.9%
Australia	4.5%	4.4%	6.3%	6.9%	8.9%	5.2%
New Zealand	1.7%	1.6%	2.3%	1.8%	2.5%	1.8%
Other Australasian/Oceania	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.6 Relationship between housing and migration

The final analysis in this chapter considers the relationship between housing completions and net migration. Logically, additional homes would enable increased migration into an area and so there might be expected to be some relationship between the two. Table 3.6.1 and Table 3.6.2 below look at completions and migration over the 7-year period 2011-18.

They show the number of completions in each area and net migration (as recorded by MYE and to include both internal and international migration) respectively. Overall, it can be seen that net additions to the stock are definitely in an upward direction, with net migration also being generally upward (although with some year-on-year variation).

Table 3.6.1: Housing completions (net additions to dwelling stock) 2011-18

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Cherwell	356	340	410	946	1,425	1,102	1,387
Oxford	228	213	215	332	440	435	373
South Oxon	508	475	484	600	608	722	936
VoWH	346	268	578	740	1,133	1,615	1,573
West Oxon	359	278	186	395	246	518	556
Oxfordshire	1,797	1,574	1,873	3,013	3,852	4,392	4,825

Source: Oxfordshire councils, Justin Gardner Consulting.

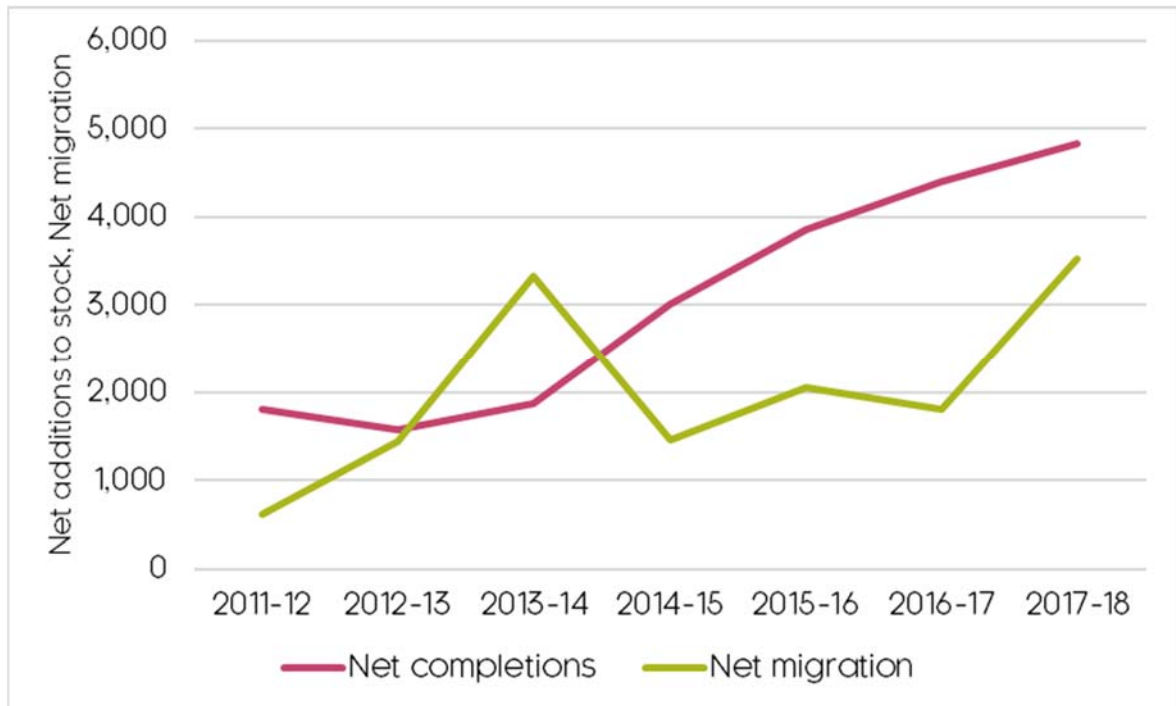
Table 3.6.2: Net migration by local authority, 2011-18

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Cherwell	-141	57	409	182	271	402	1,039
Oxford	96	-45	1,180	-853	-401	-1,492	-936
South Oxon	247	377	648	455	507	303	630
VoWH	5	633	892	1,505	1,695	2,101	2,190
West Oxon	409	416	189	166	-15	488	606
Oxfordshire	616	1,438	3,318	1,455	2,057	1,802	3,529

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Figure 3.6.1 shows the same data in graphical form (for the whole of the county). Whilst the relationship between completions and migration is far from perfect, it is clear that both are generally in an upwards trend. Were the local authorities continue to provide additional dwellings at the higher levels seen recently, then migration could also be expected to run at a higher level than typically seen in the past. This could be expected to support resident workforce growth (i.e. residents in employment).

Figure 3.6.1: Housing completions and net migration in Oxfordshire, 2011-18



Source: Oxfordshire Councils, ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.7 Official population projections

Having studied a range of data about past trends, the next stage is to consider future projections. The latest (2018-based) set of subnational population projections (SNPP) were published by ONS in March 2020. The projections provide estimates of the future population of local authorities, assuming a continuation of recent local trends in fertility, mortality and migration which are constrained to the assumptions made in the ONS 2018-based national population projections.

The 2018-based SNPP contain a number of assumptions that have been changed from the 2016-based version, these assumptions essentially filter down from changes made at a national level. The key differences are:

- ONS' long-term international migration assumptions have been revised upwards to 190,000 per annum compared to 165,000 in the 2016-based projections. This is based on a 25-year average;
- The latest projections assume that women will have fewer children, with the average number of children per woman expected to be 1.78 compared to 1.84 in the 2016-based projections; and

- Life expectancy increases are less than in the 2016-based projections as a consequence of the continued limited growth in life expectancy over the last two years.

Table 3.7.1 below shows projected population growth from 2018 to 2043¹⁶ in Oxfordshire and a range of comparator areas. The data shows that the population of the county is projected to increase by around 9%; this is slightly higher than projected across the South East but below the national average growth (10%) – this is despite past trends typically showing similar patterns across these three areas. The average level of population growth in the projections is an increase of about 2,500 people per annum; substantially lower than seen over the past 7-years (average growth recorded by MYE of 4,700 people per annum).

Table 3.7.1: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-43 (2018-based SNPP)

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Oxfordshire	687,524	750,634	63,110	9.2%
South East	9,133,625	9,933,760	800,135	8.8%
England	55,977,178	61,744,108	5,766,930	10.3%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The equivalent figures for individual Oxfordshire authorities are shown in Table 3.7.2 below. This also shows the projected population growth to 2050.

Table 3.7.2: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-50 (2018-based SNPP)

	2018	2020	2043	2050	% change, 2018-43	% change, 2020-50
Cherwell	149,161	150,862	162,278	165,325	8.8%	9.6%
Oxford	154,327	153,580	147,326	147,005	-4.5%	-4.3%
South Oxon	140,504	141,840	149,938	152,581	6.7%	7.6%
VoWH	133,732	137,175	156,825	160,545	17.3%	17.0%
West Oxon	109,800	110,391	114,068	115,483	3.9%	4.6%
Oxfordshire	687,524	693,848	730,435	740,939	6.2%	6.8%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

As well as providing a principal projection, ONS has developed a number of variants. In all cases the projections use the same fertility and mortality rates with differences being applied in relation to migration. The key variants in terms of this assessment can be described as:

- principal projection
- an alternative internal migration variant
- a 10-year migration variant

In the principal projection, data about internal (domestic) migration uses data for the past 2-years and data about international migration from the past 5-years. The use of 2-years data for internal migration has been driven by ONS changing their methodology for recording internal moves, with this data being available from 2016 only. In particular the change in methodology seeks to

¹⁶ The ONS 2018-based SNPP run to 2043.

better account for the moves of graduates when they finish studying at university.

The alternative internal migration variant uses data about migration from the last 5-years (2013-18), as well as also using 5-years of data for international migration. This variant is closest to replicating the methodology used in the 2016-based SNPP although it does mean for internal migration that data used is collected on a slightly different basis.

The 10-year migration variant (as the name implies) uses data about trends in migration over the past decade (2008-18). This time period is used for both internal and international migration.

Table 3.7.3 below shows a comparison of the projected levels of population growth in each of these variants. For comparison data has also been provided from the last SNPP (2016-based). The data looks at a 23-year period from 2018-41 as this is the longest period for which data is available from both projections. This shows that there is a notable difference in the projected level of growth depending on the variant studied; the principal projection showing the highest projected growth. The 2016-based SNPP also showed a lower level of projected growth than the principal variant, but a level in line with the 2018-based alternatives.

Table 3.7.3: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire, 2018-41

	Population, 2018	Population, 2041	Change in population, 2018-41	% change in population, 2018-41
2016-based	684,300	728,100	43,800	6.4%
2018 (principal)	687,524	746,578	59,054	8.6%
2018 (alternative internal)	687,524	727,497	39,973	5.8%
2018 (10-year trend)	687,524	732,058	44,534	6.5%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.8 Developing an adjusted baseline

An adjusted baseline projection has been developed by JGC taking account of the demographic analysis above. In particular this recognises the analysis from the Patient Register that suggests the population of Oxford may have been substantially underestimated over the past 7-years (2011-18). Given the potential under-estimation, this would imply that there has been an underestimate of the level of migration to the City (and to a lesser extent other areas).

To develop an adjusted baseline the following key assumptions have been made.

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant. This has been chosen as it is considered that the principal SNPP has too short a data period when looking at internal migration whilst the 10-year alternative is not thought likely to reflect recent changes seen in Oxfordshire such as a general uplift in housebuilding;
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050 to align with the timeframes of the Oxfordshire Plan;

- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data. Given previous analysis, both the MYE and PR are taken into account with population levels essentially assumed to be around the average growth in these two sources applied to 2011 MYE data (which was informed by the 2011 Census);
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20);
- Fertility and mortality rates (by age and sex) as per the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP;
- The migration profile (by age and sex) in the same proportions as the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP; and
- Future migration is estimated based on the likely uplift in migration needed to achieve the level of population estimated for 2018.

Table 3.8.1 below shows the estimated level of population growth with this adjusted baseline and how it compares with the last official projections (2018-43) – this period being used as 2043 is the latest date for which SNPP data is available to allow the results to be compared with the published SNPP data.

This shows that the adjusted baseline projection has population growth which is some way above any of the variants, showing a population growth over the 2018-43 period of 15%. The resultant Oxfordshire population grows to 796,400 in 2043 compared to 750,600 in the 2018-based SNPP. It will also be noted that the adjustments to the base population for 2018 increases the estimated number of people by around 5,600.

Table 3.8.1: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire – adjusted baseline, 2018-2043

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
2018 (principal)	687,524	750,633	63,109	9.2%
2018 (alternative internal)	687,524	730,436	42,912	6.2%
2018 (10-year trend)	687,524	735,435	47,911	7.0%
Adjusted baseline total	693,082	796,380	103,299	14.9%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

The resultant population growth in Oxfordshire, and its constituent local authority areas, to 2043 and 2050 in the adjusted baseline projections are shown in Table 3.8.2 below.

Table 3.8.2: Projected population growth in Oxfordshire – adjusted baseline, 2018-2050

	2018	2020	2043	2050	% change, 2018-43	% change, 2020-50
Cherwell	150,263	156,459	175,226	180,217	16.6%	15.2%
Oxford	160,483	163,856	189,401	199,061	18.0%	21.5%
South Oxon	140,752	147,161	159,186	162,471	13.1%	10.4%
VoWH	132,048	138,745	153,570	155,100	16.3%	11.8%
West Oxon	109,535	114,339	118,997	120,171	8.6%	5.1%
Oxfordshire	693,082	720,560	796,380	817,020	14.9%	13.4%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.9 Age structure changes

With the overall change in the population will also come changes to the age profile. The tables below summarise findings for key (5 year) age groups with the 2018-based SNPP (principal projection) and also the adjusted baseline.

Looking at the SNPP it is clear that the largest growth will be in people aged 65 and over; in 2043 it is projected that there will be 189,800 people aged 65 and over, this is an increase of 64,400 from 2018, representing growth of 51%. The population aged 85 and over is projected to increase by an even greater proportion, 109%. Looking at the other end of the age spectrum the data shows that there is projected to be a reduction in the number of children (those aged Under 15), with increases or decreases shown for other age groups.

Table 3.9.1: Population change 2018-2043 by five-year age bands in Oxfordshire (2018-based SNPP)

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Under 5	39,398	38,927	-471	-1.2%
5-9	42,783	38,634	-4,149	-9.7%
10-14	40,453	39,049	-1,404	-3.5%
15-19	40,021	42,984	2,963	7.4%
20-24	49,678	50,579	901	1.8%
25-29	44,772	47,044	2,272	5.1%
30-34	43,131	45,953	2,822	6.5%
35-39	45,310	42,745	-2,565	-5.7%
40-44	41,766	39,916	-1,850	-4.4%
45-49	46,432	42,886	-3,546	-7.6%
50-54	48,411	44,309	-4,102	-8.5%
55-59	43,672	44,008	336	0.8%
60-64	36,270	43,798	7,528	20.8%
65-69	33,692	39,114	5,422	16.1%
70-74	33,070	41,252	8,182	24.7%
75-79	23,221	39,893	16,672	71.8%
80-84	17,597	32,277	14,680	83.4%
85+	17,847	37,260	19,413	108.8%
Total	687,524	750,634	63,110	9.2%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Using the adjusted baseline, there is still a significant ageing of the population but the increase in the population aged under 65 is more notable. The change in the under 65 age group relative to older groups reflects the migration assumptions, migration being largely concentrated in typical working-age groups (and their associated children).

Table 3.9.2: Population change 2018-2043 by five-year age bands in Oxfordshire (adjusted baseline)

	Population, 2018	Population, 2043	Change in population, 2018-43	% change in population, 2018-43
Under 5	39,670	41,173	1,503	3.8%
5-9	41,428	41,257	-171	-0.4%

10-14	40,220	42,482	2,262	5.6%
15-19	41,442	47,175	5,733	13.8%
20-24	50,025	56,350	6,325	12.6%
25-29	48,427	50,805	2,379	4.9%
30-34	46,135	47,551	1,416	3.1%
35-39	45,990	45,062	-928	-2.0%
40-44	43,130	44,941	1,811	4.2%
45-49	47,163	46,132	-1,031	-2.2%
50-54	47,762	49,220	1,458	3.1%
55-59	42,693	47,657	4,964	11.6%
60-64	36,832	44,803	7,971	21.6%
65-69	33,567	40,674	7,107	21.2%
70-74	31,458	42,255	10,797	34.3%
75-79	22,702	39,653	16,952	74.7%
80-84	17,137	31,656	14,519	84.7%
85+	17,302	37,535	20,234	116.9%
Total	693,082	796,380	103,299	14.9%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.9.3 below compares population change in each of the 2018-based SNPP and the adjusted baseline. This confirms that the key differences between the projections are higher numbers of younger people in the adjusted baseline – notably in the 30-44 age groups.

Table 3.9.3: Population change 2018 to 2043 by five-year age bands, Oxfordshire (2018-based SNPP and adjusted baseline)

	2018-based SNPP (principal) population change, 2018-43	Adjusted baseline population change, 2018-43	Difference in population change, 2018-43
Under 5	-471	1,503	1,974
5-9	-4,149	-171	3,978
10-14	-1,404	2,262	3,666
15-19	2,963	5,733	2,770
20-24	901	6,325	5,424
25-29	2,272	2,379	107
30-34	2,822	1,416	-1,406
35-39	-2,565	-928	1,637
40-44	-1,850	1,811	3,661
45-49	-3,546	-1,031	2,515
50-54	-4,102	1,458	5,560
55-59	336	4,964	4,628
60-64	7,528	7,971	443
65-69	5,422	7,107	1,685
70-74	8,182	10,797	2,615
75-79	16,672	16,952	280
80-84	14,680	14,519	-161
85+	19,413	20,234	821
Total	63,110	103,299	40,189

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

3.10 Household formation

Household projections are developed by applying age/ sex specific household representative rates (HRRs) to the projected growth in population. HRRs can be described in their most simple terms as the number of people who are counted as heads of households (or in this case the more widely used Household Reference Person, HRP).

The latest HRRs are as contained in the ONS 2016-based Subnational Household Projections (SNHP) which were published in September 2018. In these latest projections, the HRR is projected for different age/sex cohorts based on trends seen between 2001 and 2011. Trends over this period are projected forwards to 2021, with the HRR then held constant at the 2021 level thereafter.

The methodology used is different to that in previous sets of household projections, which had projected trends in household formation (by age/sex) based on trends arising since the 1971 Census. ONS have set out that the change of HRP definition means it is no longer possible to use the 1971, 1981 and 1991 Census data used in the previous methodology in the production of the 2016-based household projections. Household data from these previous censuses used the eldest male definition of HRP, therefore, to include data from them in the methodology would require complex adjustments to be made to derive projections.

It would be fair to say that the 2016-based SNHP have come under some criticism, largely because they are based only on data in the 2001-11 Census period, using just two data points, and they arguably build in the suppression of household formation experienced in that time being based on a period in which housing affordability deteriorated relatively rapidly restricting in particular the ability of younger households to form.

Because of the criticisms of the 2016-based SNHP, and the fact that these have driven the Government to consult on reviewing their use in Standard Method, it is considered prudent in this report to look at both the 2016-based and 2014-based figures (the 2014-based figures being of the set of projections which the Government advises should be used in the Standard Method).

Figure 3.10.1 below compares HRRs in the 2014-based and 2016-based SNHP. The trends show essentially the proportion of a particular age group that is considered to be the 'head of household' (HRP as described above). The analysis shows that for many age groups the two projections are really quite different. When looking at some of the younger age groups (particularly 25-34) it is notable that the HRRs in the 2014-based projections are somewhat higher. This does suggest in Oxfordshire (as nationally) that there may be some degree of suppression being built into the 2016-based projections, or certainly not a positive improvement in the formation rates of younger people.

The Government's advice that the 2014-based Household Projections should be used in the Standard Method takes this into account; the Government having set out¹⁷ that the lower household formation in more recent projections has been influenced by housing supply constraints which have inhibited households from forming and there is a case for public policy to support

¹⁷ MHCLG (2018) *Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance*

housing delivery in excess of the household projections, with the ONS itself indicating that if more homes are built, the increased availability of homes may result in more household forming.¹⁸

The 2016-based projections are also notable for showing an increasing formation rate in the 75-84 age group, and also for people aged 85+. Given improvements to life expectancy, it might be expected in reality that these rates would go down (as people live together as couples for longer). A decreasing rate was projected in the 2014-based projections and this is a further reason why the 2014-based figures might be considered as more robust.

Figure 3.10.1 below also shows the same information from the 2008-based SNHP. Generally, for younger age groups these older projections show a more positive level of household formation and whilst they are quite dated, they are a source that is regularly used to develop scenarios with a more positive view about household formation of younger people.

¹⁸ ONS (2018) *What our household projections really show*

Figure 3.10.1: Projected Household Representative Rates by age of head of household in Oxfordshire, 2001-2041



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Taking into consideration the significant difference between the household formation assumptions in the 2014- and 2018-based SNHP, the reports has modelled scenarios which examine the implications of both sets of assumptions.

3.11 Household growth and housing need

Table 3.11.1 and Table 3.11.2 below show estimates of household growth with each of the HRR scenarios, as well as the estimate of the number of additional dwellings expected to be needed. The figures firstly link to population growth in the 2018-based SNPP (alternative internal migration variant) and then using the adjusted baseline.

To convert households into dwellings the analysis includes an uplift to take account of vacant homes. For the purposes of analysis, it has been assumed that the number of vacant homes in new stock would be 3% higher than the number of occupied homes (which is taken as a proxy for households) and hence household growth figures are uplifted by 3% to provide an estimate of housing need. This figure is a fairly standard assumption when looking at vacancy rates in new stock and will allow for movement within the housing stock.

When linked to the 2018-based SNPP, the analysis shows an overall housing need for 1,453 dwellings per annum across the county when using the 2016-based SNHP as the underlying household projection. This figure increases to 1,552 dwellings per annum with the previous (2014-based) HRR figures.

Linked to the adjusted baseline the figures are somewhat higher with a need for 2,522 dwellings per annum based on the 2014-based household representative rates.

Table 3.11.1: Projected housing need for Oxfordshire associated with 2018-based SNPP with alternative Household Representative Rate assumptions

	Households, 2018	Households, 2043	Change in households, 2018-43	Change in households p.a., 2018-43	Dwellings needed p.a., 2018-43
2016-SNHP HRRs	272,301	307,565	35,264	1,411	1,453
2014-SNHP HRRs	276,216	313,887	37,670	1,507	1,552

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 3.11.2: Projected housing need for Oxfordshire associated with adjusted population baseline with alternative Household Representative Rate assumptions

	Households, 2018	Households, 2043	Change in households, 2018-43	Change in households p.a., 2018-43	Dwellings needed p.a., 2018-43
2016-SNHP HRRs	273,752	332,100	58,348	2,334	2,404
2014-SNHP HRRs	277,537	338,754	61,217	2,449	2,522

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Iceni has taken into account that the Government has expressed significant reservations regarding the 2016-based Household Projections in its Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance (MHCLG, Oct 2018) and the Statement released from ONS on these projections which outlined that:

“They [the 2016-based Household Projections] do not take account of how many people may want to form new households, but for whatever reason aren’t able to, such as young adults wanting to move out of their parents’ house, or people wanting to live on their own instead of in a house share. Therefore, household projections are not a measure of how many houses would need to be built to meet housing demand; they show what would happen if past trends in actual household formation continue.”

“Although the latest household projections are lower than the previously published projections, this does not directly mean that fewer houses are needed in the future than thought. This is because the projections are based on recent actual numbers of households and are not adjusted to take account of where homes have been needed in recent years but have not been available. Therefore, if more homes are built, the increased availability of homes may result in more households forming. The opposite is also true – if fewer homes are built then fewer households are able to form.”

The 2018-based SNHP adopt a consistent methodology to household formation as the 2016-based set of projections.

ONS similarly state alongside the release of the 2018-based Household Projections that:

“Household projections are not a prediction or forecast of how many houses should be built in the future. Instead, they show how many additional households would form if assumptions based on previous demographic trends in population growth and household formation were to be realised.”

Given these criticisms of the methodology used in the 2016- and 2018-based SNHP it is considered that drawing conclusions about the level of housing need linked to official population projections are more robustly based on looking at the previous (2014-based) set of SNHP. These earlier projections looked at longer term trends in household formation and are therefore less likely to build in any of the suppression/constraints faced by households since the early 1990s. This is consistent with the approach recommended by the Government in its Planning Practice Guidance which specifically advocates the use of the 2014-based projections in the Standard Method.

When considering alternative scenarios for housing need based on economic trends, there is a case for adjusting household formation amongst younger households to ensure that Government’s ambitions to improve affordability are realised. This is considered further later in the report in modelling the demographic implications of alternative scenarios for housing need.

3.12 Conclusions

Oxfordshire has a population of 687,500 in 2018 and has a higher proportion of young people than wider benchmarks. It has seen population growth over the 2011-18 period which has been below the regional and national average; and has resulted in a virtually unchanged position in terms of the core working age population aged 16-64 which has grown by just 1% over this period.

The latest official projections, which are 2018-based, project substantially lower population growth than has been seen in Oxfordshire in recent years.

The review of demographic data undertaken indicates that it is likely that Oxford's population has been under-estimated. This has been recognised in previous evidence base documents in Oxfordshire which have considered housing need.

To address these issues, revised demographic projections have been developed to provide a revised baseline assessment of the demographic need for housing informed by past population trends. These show population growth of 14.9% between 2018-43 compared to 9.2% in the ONS 2018-based SNPP, with the county's population growing to 817,000 in 2050.

The analysis shows that to ensure the calculations are not projecting forward suppressed formation of households seen in recent years, the headship rates from the 2014-based Household Projections should be applied to this in projecting household growth. These revised projections feed into the analysis of the starting point Local Housing Need in *Chapter 7*, the economic implications of which are also considered in *Chapter 8*.

4 Oxfordshire's Housing Market

4.1 Introduction

Oxfordshire's housing market is dynamic and complex. This chapter explores housing market dynamics and affordability in Oxfordshire, with a view to understanding key drivers of the housing market. It considers dynamics in the sales market, private renting and the affordable housing sector. This understanding of market dynamics and affordability pressures provides an important grounding for considering future housing need.

Housing demand over the plan period is likely to be influenced particularly by population and economic trends: changes in the size and structure of the population directly influence the need for housing; whilst factors such as how Oxfordshire's economy performs and the growth in its universities can be expected to influence the movement of people in and out of the county.

At a more local level, the relative demand and pricing of homes in different places will be influenced by factors such as the existing housing stock, quality of place and accessibility to employment centres. Places with concentrations of higher paid jobs – such as Oxford City – typically have higher house prices, as both demand for housing is stronger, and earnings influence what people can afford.

Changes in housing costs over time tell us about the supply/demand balance for housing. When supply is not keeping pace with effective demand, prices rise (and visa-versa). Demand is influenced by both macro-economic factors such as the wider economic outlook (which influences buyers' investment decisions) and interest rates (which affect the affordability of mortgage repayments), but also by local factors including the levels of employment growth in an area.

Oxfordshire constitutes a single functional housing market area.¹⁹ As such there are inter-relationships between dynamics in different parts of the county and people move home across administrative boundaries within Oxfordshire. This chapter thus seeks to understand dynamics across Oxfordshire, but also in different parts of the county.

4.2 Trends in house prices and sales

Trends in house prices

As of June 2019, the median house price in Oxfordshire was £350,000. This is 9% higher than South East England (£322,000) and 46% higher than across England (£240,000).²⁰

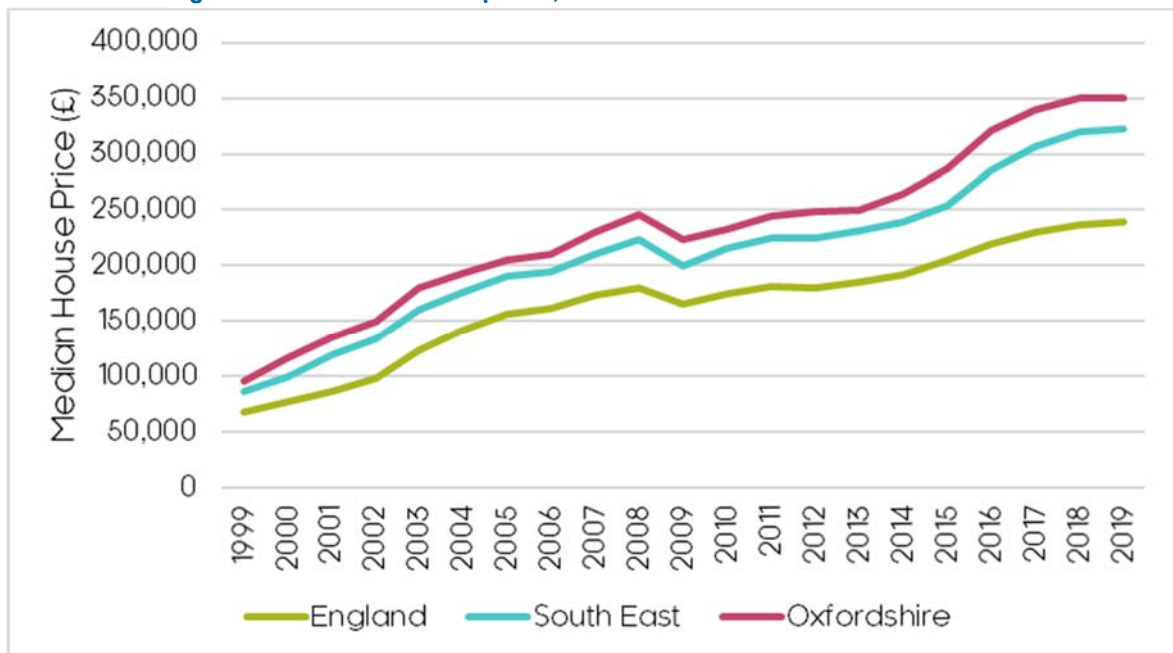
As Figure 4.2.1 shows, although house prices in Oxfordshire have been above the regional and national average, there has been a relative increase in the house price differential over recent years. This is indicative of stronger comparative demand and a more substantive supply/demand imbalance than is the case nationally. Icení's analysis indicates that:

¹⁹ The evidence base for this is set out in the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment

²⁰ ONS (2019) – HPSSA Dataset 9.

- Median house prices in Oxfordshire have grown by a substantial £126,000 over the last decade (2009-2019).
- This has substantially outstripped house price growth over this period at a national level (£75,000) and indeed is slightly above the growth seen across the SE region (£122,000);
- Median house prices in Oxfordshire at £350,000 are now £250,000 (249%) above where they were in 1999 with the growth in prices driving a notable deterioration in the affordability of market housing;
- There has been particularly sharp recent house price growth, with the median house price increasing by £86,000 over just a five year period between 2014-19, influenced by an upturn in demand. The evidence suggests that strong economic performance plus Government support for the housing market have driven demand in this period, and what whilst supply has increased over this period it did not fully meet demand at an Oxfordshire level.

Figure 4.2.1: Median house prices, 1999-2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

As identified in the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) Baseline Economic Review²¹, price dynamics can be segmented into three phases: the first from 2000 to early 2007 when prices grew rapidly fuelled by a strong national economy, high levels of real wage growth, strong mortgage finance availability and a growing population.

Between early 2008 and late 2013 the market was generally flat influenced by the global financial crisis and weakened mortgage finance availability. Between 2013-19 the market picked up, but it is notable that price performance in Oxfordshire has diverged notably from the national average over this period.

²¹ Section 3.7.

This aligns with strong economic performance in Oxfordshire, which the evidence suggests has driven the divergence from wider trends at a regional/national level, together with a period of increased mortgage availability and Government support for the market through the Help-to-Buy Scheme. Uncertainties associated with Brexit and affordability issues led to some weakening of house price growth in 2018-19.

The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to impact further on market housing demand in the short-medium term, particularly with the emergence of increasing unemployment, some reduction in the range and choice of mortgage deals and weakening market sentiment. Further consideration to the impacts of the pandemic are addressed in the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum*.

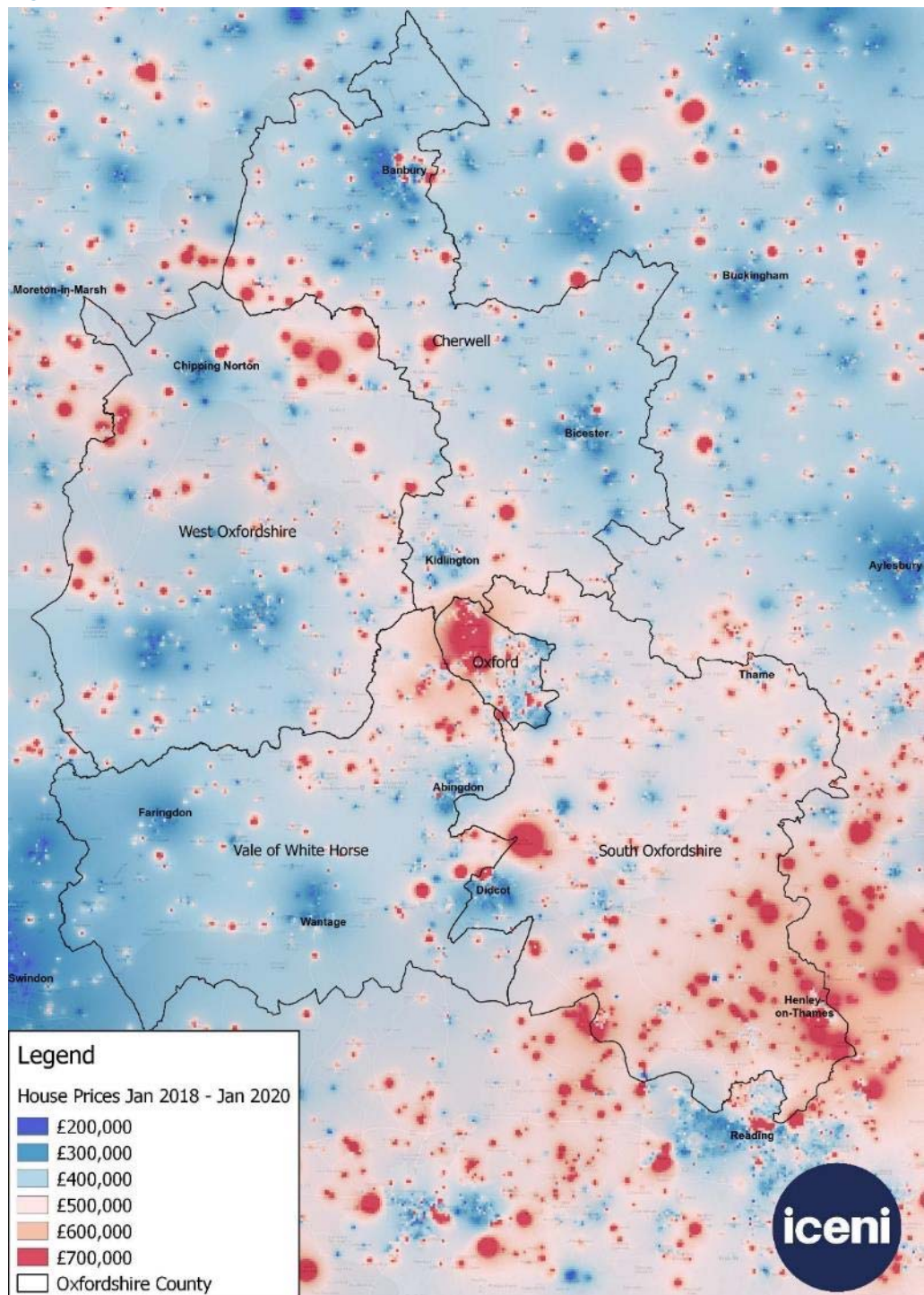
Table 4.2.1: Median house price changes, 1999-2019

	1999	2004	2009	2014	2019
Oxfordshire	£96,000	£193,000	£224,000	£264,000	£350,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£97,000	£31,000	£40,000	£86,000
South East	£86,000	£176,000	£200,000	£240,000	£322,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£90,000	£24,000	£40,000	£82,000
England	£68,750	£142,000	£165,000	£191,995	£240,000
<i>Growth in Previous 5 Years</i>		£73,250	£23,000	£26,995	£48,005

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Figure 4.2.2 plots the house price geography across Oxfordshire. It shows there are variations across the county and within local authority areas, with a concentration of higher values in Oxford, in areas close to the A34 “*Knowledge Spine*” running through the centre of the county, and in the southern part of South Oxfordshire including within settlements located in the North Wessex Downs and Chiltern Hills AONBs. This is influenced by the geography of and accessibility to employment opportunities; and also by differences in the profile of sales (with higher sales of larger and more expensive homes in rural areas).

Figure 4.2.2: Oxfordshire median house price heat map, 2018-20



Source: ONS, IcenI Projects.

As the composition and mix of sales is an influence on average prices, consideration is given to the prices for similar products. This provides a clearer view of house price differentials between areas. HM Land Registry data on average prices and sales volumes across Oxfordshire in 2019 are shown in Table 4.2.2. It shows that the greatest proportion of all sales of homes in local authorities outside of Oxford City was of detached houses.

- For houses (as opposed to flats), sales values are highest in Oxford itself by some margin. Beyond Oxford, South Oxfordshire has relatively

high values, followed by West Oxfordshire then Vale of White Horse; with the lowest values for houses in Cherwell.

- For flats, the highest values achieved are in South Oxfordshire and Oxford (over £315,000); with values of between £200,000 - £230,000 in West Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse; and of nearing £170,000 in Cherwell.

Table 4.2.2: Mean sale price and volume of sales in Oxfordshire, 2019

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire Total
Detached	£457,029	£831,369	£689,509	£503,146	£532,381	£550,617
<i>No. of sales</i>	681	89	618	801	497	2,686
Semi-det	£307,734	£521,208	£391,985	£332,395	£355,757	£370,983
<i>No. of sales</i>	533	336	516	561	391	2,337
Terraced	£274,382	£486,222	£352,640	£288,436	£317,905	£337,489
<i>No. of sales</i>	486	315	361	318	309	1,789
Flat/Mais	£168,978	£316,467	£345,444	£229,831	£201,585	£257,457
<i>No. of sales</i>	161	225	187	241	158	972
Total average	£341,652	£490,656	£487,682	£383,449	£393,932	£411,095
<i>Total sales</i>	1,861	965	1,682	1,921	1,355	7,784

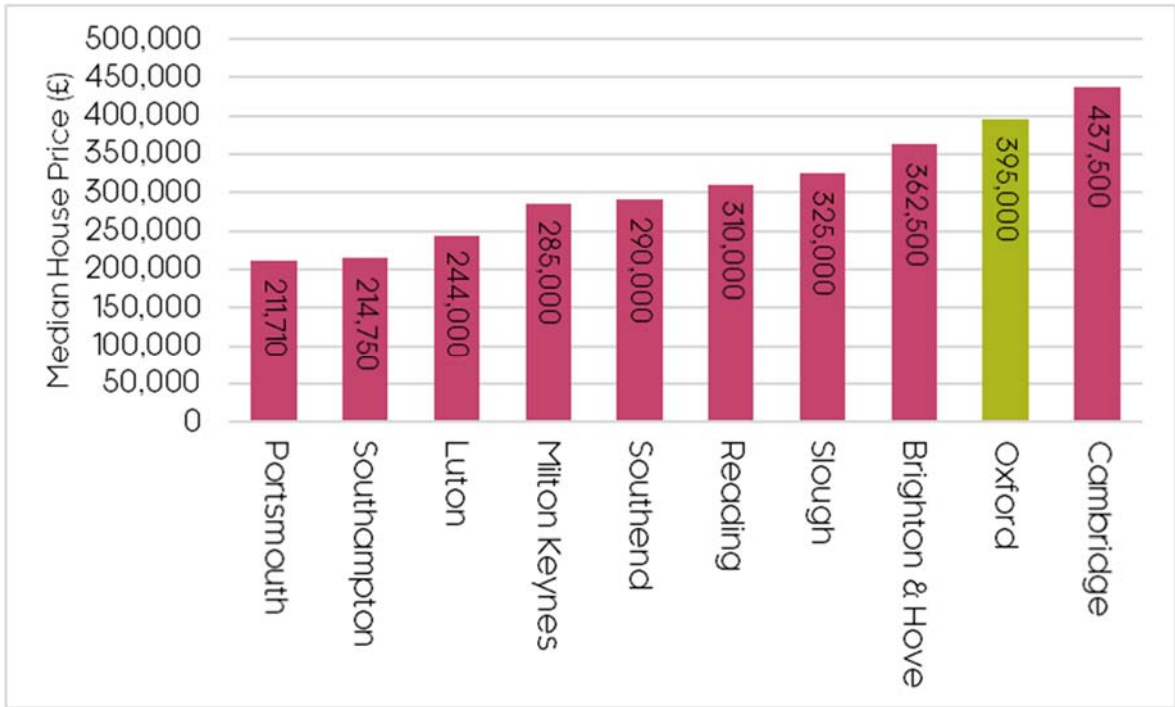
Source: HM Land Registry, Icenis Projects.

The premium in Oxford compared to Oxfordshire is 51% for detached houses, 40% for semi-detached, 44% for terraced and 23% for flats/maisonettes. This contrasts with Cherwell where house prices are between 17-19% below the Oxfordshire average for houses and 34% lower for flats/maisonettes.

Median house prices in Oxford compared to other towns in the Greater South East are set out in Figure 4.2.3 below benchmarks median house prices in Oxford City compared to other large towns and cities across the Greater South East with a population of over c. 150,000. Cambridge and Oxford have the highest median house prices.

Over the last 20 years, house price growth has been strongest in absolute terms in Oxford and South Oxfordshire, with values increasing by over £280,000 (Figure 4.2.4). In the other Oxfordshire authorities, values have increased by between £230,000 - £240,000. Growth in values was strongest over the 1999-2004 period, supported by economic stability and increased availability of mortgage finance; and in the more recent 5 year period from 2014-19.

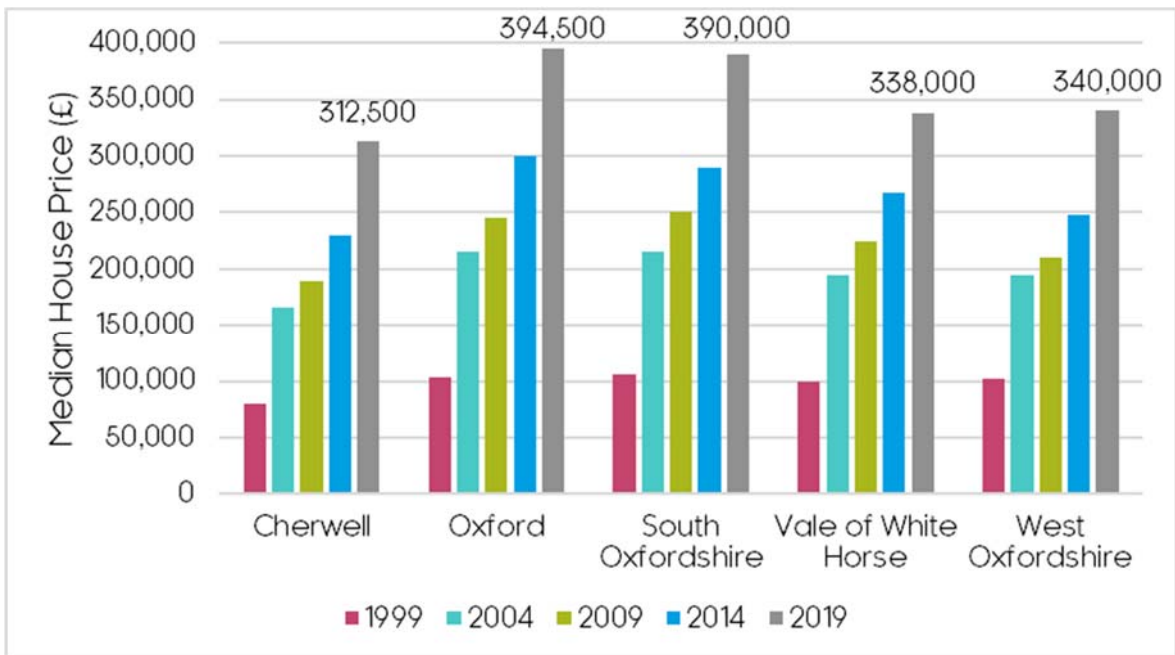
Figure 4.2.3: Median house prices in Oxford compared to other towns in the Greater South East, 2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Growth in this more recent period has been supported by an improvement in the availability of mortgage finance following the credit crunch, low interest rates, and the Government’s Help-to-Buy scheme together with the strong performance of the Oxfordshire economy (as considered in *Chapter 5*). The impact of Covid-19, both directly on the housing market and on the wider economy, is likely to influence price dynamics in the short-term moving forwards.

Figure 4.2.4: 5-yearly house price change by local authority in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Table 4.2.3: Median house prices by local authority in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019

	1999-2004	2004-2009	2009-2014	2014-2019	Total increase 1999-2019
Cherwell	+£87,000 (+109%)	+£22,500 (+14%)	+£41,125 (+22%)	+£82,375 (+36%)	+£233,000 (+293%)
Oxford	+£112,000 (+109%)	+£30,000 (+14%)	+£54,999 (+22%)	+£94,501 (+32%)	+£291,500 (+283%)
South Oxfordshire	+£109,000 (+103%)	+£35,000 (+16%)	+£40,000 (+16%)	+£100,000 (+34%)	+£284,000 (+268%)
Vale of White Horse	+£95,050 (+95%)	+£30,000 (+15%)	+£42,000 (+19%)	+£71,000 (+27%)	+£238,050 (+238%)
West Oxfordshire	+£93,000 (+91%)	+£15,000 (+8%)	+£37,950 (+18%)	+£92,050 (+37%)	+£238,000 (+233%)
Oxfordshire	+£97,000 (+101%)	+£31,000 (+16%)	+£40,000 (+18%)	+£86,000 (+33%)	+£254,000 (+265%)
South East England	+£90,000 (+104%)	+£24,000 (14%)	+£40,000 (+20%)	+£82,000 (+34%)	+£236,000 (+274%)

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

If a comparison is undertaken of changes in median house prices since the 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was prepared, a growth in house prices across Oxfordshire of £100,000 (28.5%) is evident over a period of 6-7 years.

The strongest total house price growth has been in Oxford (+£104,500) closely followed by South Oxfordshire (+£103,025), with notably weaker growth seen in Vale of White Horse (+£68,000). When compared with new housing delivery over this period, it is notable that there have been stronger levels of housing delivery in Vale of White Horse, with lower relative housing delivery in Oxford.

Table 4.2.4: Changes in median house prices since the 2014 SHMA, 2012-19

	Year to June 2019	Year to Sept 2012 (SHMA Table 7)	Absolute difference, 2012-19
Cherwell	£312,500	£216,500	£96,000
Oxford	£394,500	£290,000	£104,500
South Oxfordshire	£390,000	£286,975	£103,025
Vale of White Horse	£338,000	£270,000	£68,000
West Oxfordshire	£340,000	£245,000	£95,000
Oxfordshire	£350,000	£250,000	£100,000

Source: ONS, 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA, Icen Projects.

The absolute growth in house prices in this period has been similar to that seen across the South East region (where the median price has increased by £97,000 over the period June 2012 - June 2019) and much higher than the price growth seen nationally (which have increased by £60,000 over the period June 2012 - June 2019).

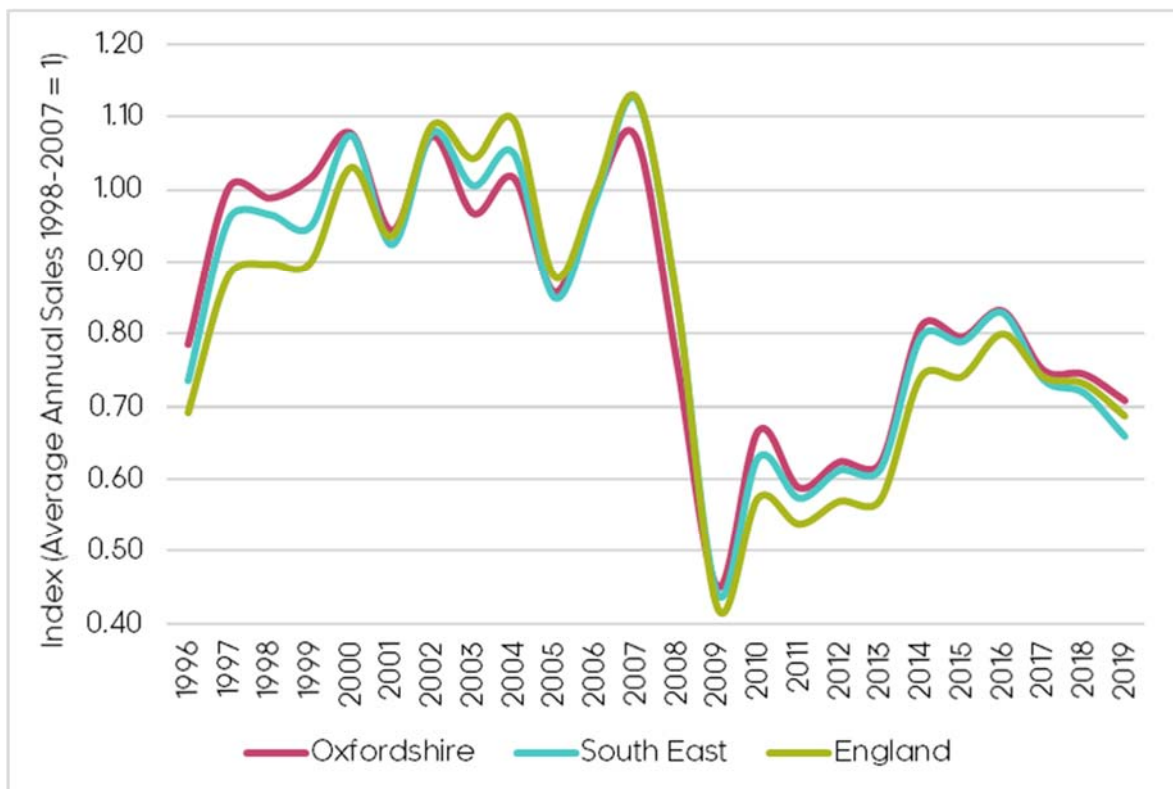
Trends in house sales

Icen has analysed sales trends over time in the Oxfordshire local authorities and compared these to trends over the pre-recession decade (1998-2007) to understand the timing and pace of market recovery from the last recession (Figure 4.2.5).

The analysis highlights the impact of macro-economic factors on the housing market. It indicates how an increase in interest rates dampened demand in 2005. In 2008-9 it shows the very substantial impact of the credit crunch and subsequent recession on demand, which resulted in a fall of sales volumes to 45% of the pre-recession average in 2009.

A substantive recovery in sales did not really kick-in until late 2013, with sales in Oxfordshire recovering to almost 80% of the pre-recession average by 2016. However since 2016 housing market activity has been affected by economic uncertainties associated with the nature of future relationship with the EU as the UK's largest existing trading partner.

Figure 4.2.5: Indexed analysis of sales trend, 1996-2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

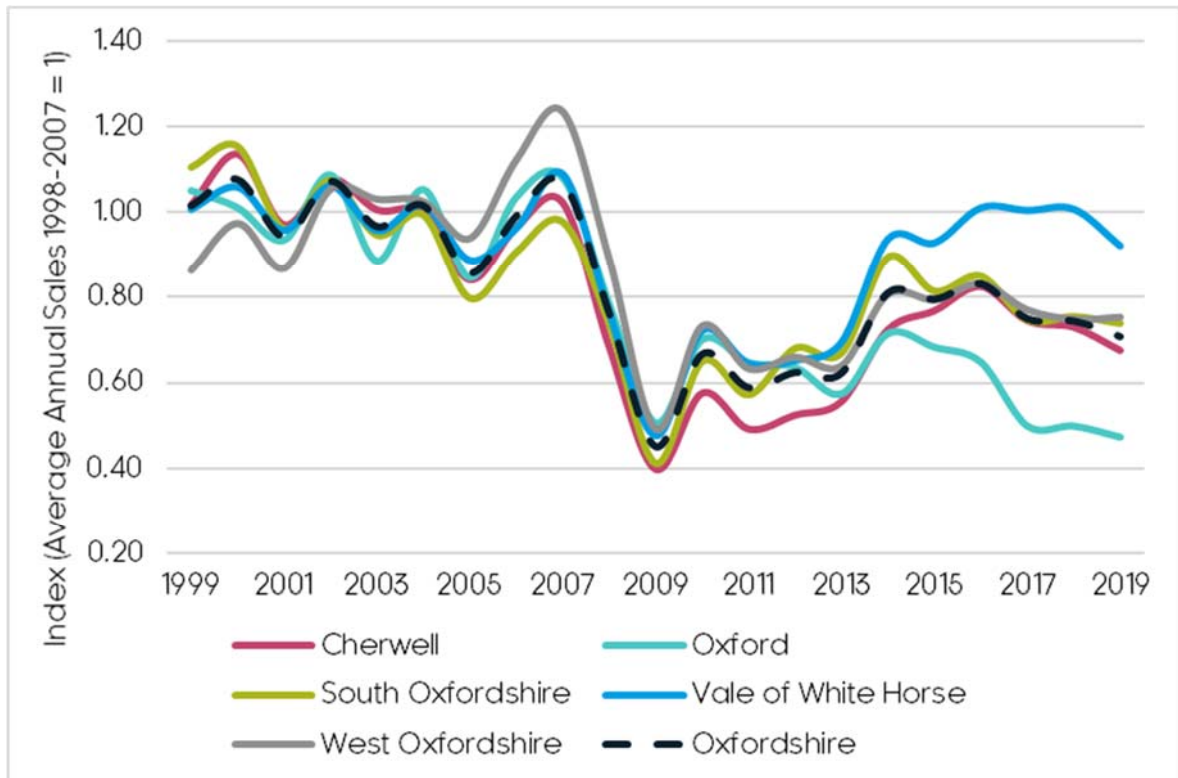
The data points to sales volumes in Oxfordshire over the year to June 2019 of 71% of the pre-recession average; a level of performance which exceeds that at a regional (66%) or national (69%) level.

Undertaking a similar analysis for the individual Oxfordshire authorities (Figure 4.2.6) shows an interesting pattern whereby a recent divergence from wider trends is observed in Vale of White Horse and Oxford in particular. Sales volumes in Oxford did not recover as strongly as other areas between 2012-14 with sales volumes remaining well below (47%) the pre-recession trend. This is likely to have been influenced in part by the higher relative affordability pressures.

Sales volumes in the Vale of White Horse are notable in having been affected to a lesser degree than other areas – this correlates with lower average sales values and higher new-build supply. Sales volumes over the year to June 2019 were 92% of the pre-recession average, substantially out-performing

other areas. The evidence shows that strong levels of new-build development in the Vale have contributed to this.

Figure 4.2.6: Indexed analysis of sales trends in Oxfordshire, 1999-2019



Source: ONS, Icenii Projects.

The subdued housing market activity over much of the last decade is notable. There are a complex set of factors which appear to have contributed to this, including: a low inflation environment such that inflation is not reducing the value of debt in real terms as it did in previous decades (pre-2000); longer mortgage terms; an ageing population who typically move infrequently; and a policy focus on caring for older persons in their home (resulting in fewer moves).

Added to this have been increasing transactional costs of moving, particularly associated with the costs of Stamp Duty, which have affected both home owners and investors (with 3% additional Stamp Duty applicable to investment purchases from April 2016). These transactional costs have affected higher value markets to a greater degree and act as disincentive for households to move. They have influenced sales trends in Oxford to a greater extent than other areas. These are structural issues with the market which mean that it is unlikely there will be a return to sales volumes achieved in the 1998-2007 decade in the short-term.

4.3 Trends in the affordability of home ownership

The Government has clearly articulated its view that housing supply needs to increase in order to improve housing affordability. There is clear evidence that rising house prices have contributed to declining home ownership –

particularly amongst younger households – and Government has set out its ambition to address this.²²

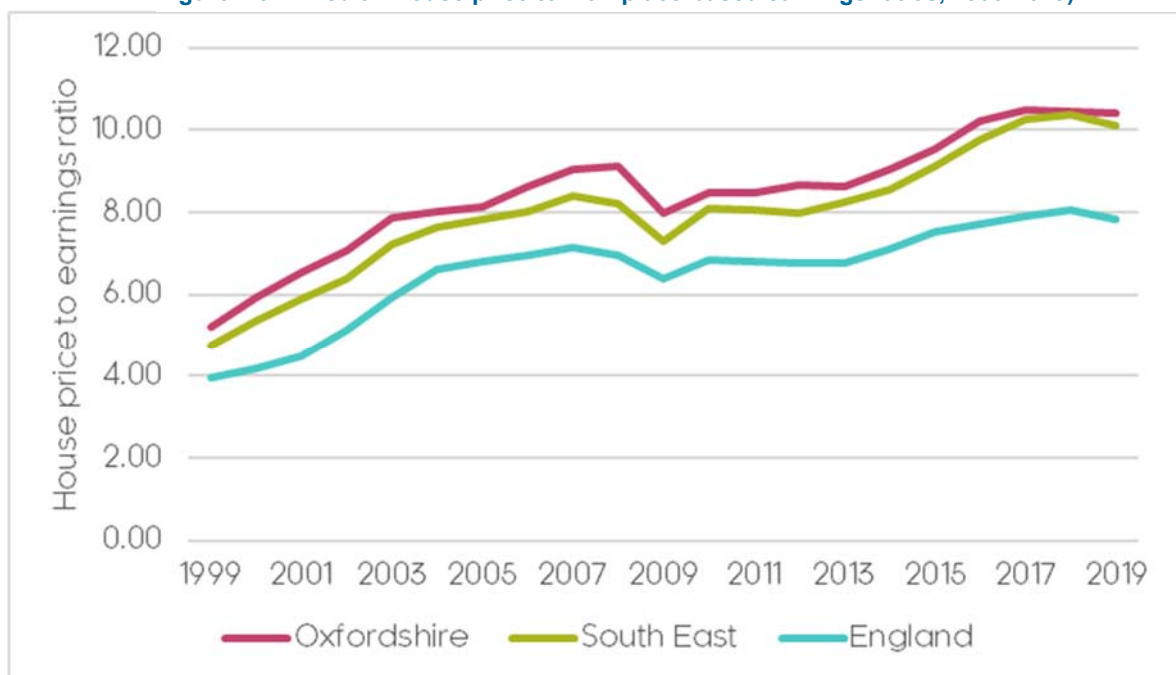
The most common measure of affordability issues is house price to earnings ratios. These ratios form an input to the Standard Method for calculating local housing need, with the theory behind this being that new housing provision should be responsive to ‘market signals’ of which relative affordability is a key indicator.

Affordability ratios are calculated by dividing house prices by the annual workplace-based earnings. Lower ratios indicate greater affordability with higher ratios indicating lower affordability.

Figure 4.3.1 below shows that median affordability ratios stood at 10.42 times workplace-based earnings in Oxfordshire in 2019²³, compared with 10.12 in South East England and 7.83 times in England.²⁴ Although Oxfordshire has both above average prices and above average earnings, this points to significant affordability pressures across the county. Oxfordshire is the 6th worst county in England for affordability and 5th worst affordability ratio in the region behind Surrey (12.43), Buckinghamshire (11.73), West Sussex (11.27) and East Sussex (10.49).

Research undertaken by Centre for Cities indicates that as of 2019, the housing affordability ratio for the Oxford Principal Urban Area (which extends beyond Oxford’s administrative boundary) is significantly worse at 17.23.²⁵

Figure 4.3.1: Median house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, 1999-2019)



Source: ONS, IcenI Projects.

²² HM Government (2017) *Housing White Paper* and HM Government (2020) *Planning for the Future*

²³ These were the latest available figures at the time of writing. Figures for 2020 (released March 2021) are provided in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*.

²⁴ ONS (2019) House price to workplace-based earnings ratio.

²⁵ Available at <https://www.centreforcities.org/city/oxford/>. This uses the HM Land Registry mean house prices for Jan-Nov 2019 and ASHE workplace-based earnings for individuals

There is a clear correlation between trends in affordability in Oxfordshire and those across the wider South East region. Affordability deteriorated rapidly over the decade to 2008, improved over the subsequent recession and was relatively stable over the period to 2013. It then deteriorated over the period from 2013-17 and has remained relatively stable from 2017-19. Over the 2013-17 period, affordability in Oxfordshire and the South East more widely has deteriorated to a greater degree than nationally.

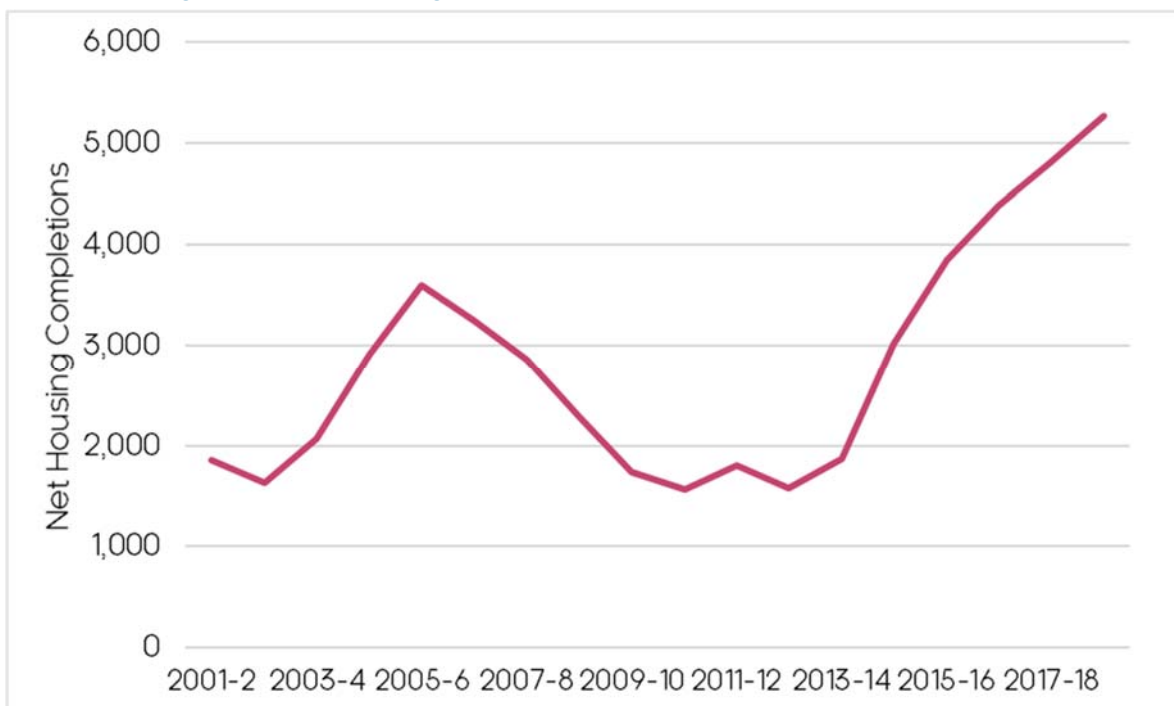
The deterioration in affordability over the 2013-17 period has been driven by growth in house prices relative to wages. Price growth over this period has been influenced by improved availability of mortgage finance, low interest rates, and Government support for the housing market through the Help-to-Buy Scheme. These factors helped to stimulate demand; with a time-lag before housing supply could respond which has driven house price growth over this period.

The evidence, in respect of the similarity between price trends in Oxfordshire and the wider South East region, indicates that housing costs are influenced by wider regional housing market dynamics.

Figure 4.3.2 below shows, net housing completions in Oxfordshire have increased rapidly over the period since 2017. However the 2014 SHMA identified a need for 5,000 homes per annum across Oxfordshire to meet demand and the evidence in *Chapter 5* indicates that the period between 2013-16 saw particularly strong growth in employment in Oxfordshire.

It is only in 2018/19 that this level of housing provision has been achieved; and set against this it is quite reasonable to have seen affordability deteriorate over the 2014-17 period as both the SHMA and house price trend point to a supply/demand imbalance over this period.

Figure 4.3.2: Net housing completions in Oxfordshire, 2001-18



Source: LPA Completions Data, Icen Projects.

As Table 4.3.1 shows, out of the five Oxfordshire local authorities, South Oxfordshire had the highest median affordability ratio at 12.36 times workplace-based earnings in 2018. Cherwell had the lowest lower quartile affordability ratio standing at 9.73.

The largest deterioration in affordability (i.e. increase in affordability ratio) over the 15 years up to 2018 has been in South Oxfordshire where the ratio increased from 7.82 in 2003 to 12.36 in 2018.

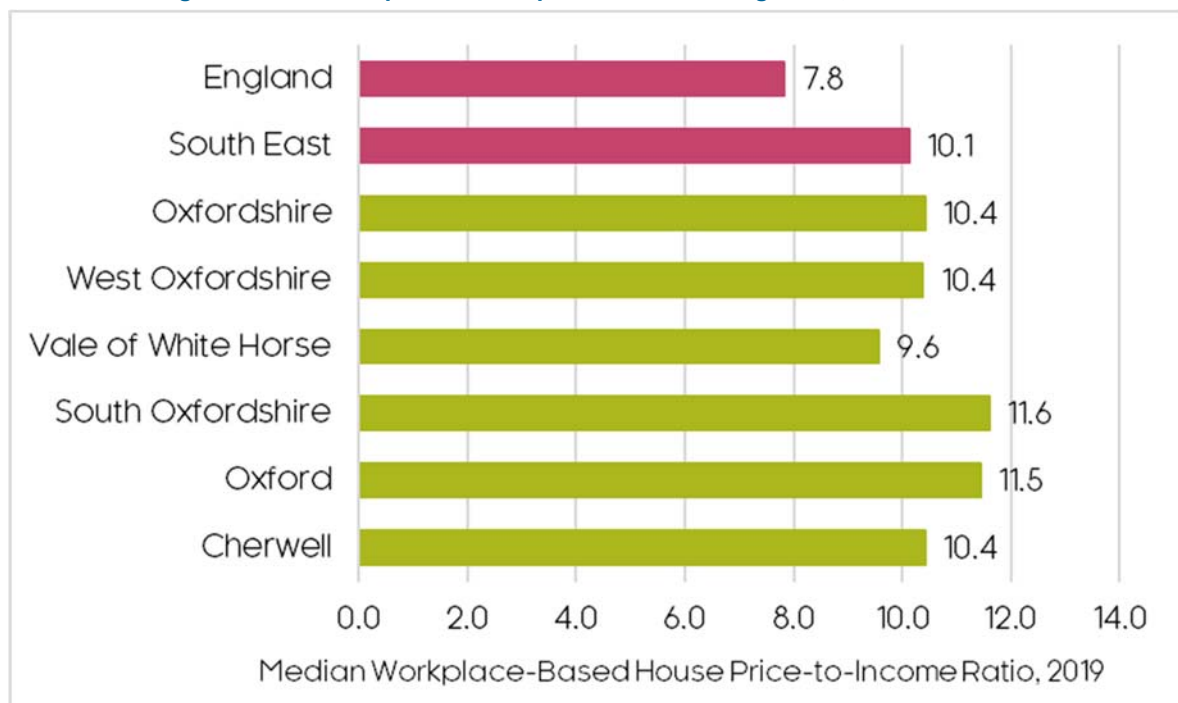
Table 4.3.1: Median affordability ratios, 2003-18

	2003	2008	2013	2018	Increase, 2003-2018
England	5.91	6.96	6.76	8.00	+2.09
South East	7.22	8.22	8.26	10.38	+3.16
Oxfordshire	7.85	9.10	8.61	10.44	+2.59
<i>Cherwell</i>	7.06	8.54	8.46	9.73	+2.67
<i>Oxford</i>	8.84	9.69	9.69	11.12	+2.28
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	7.82	9.71	10.49	12.36	+4.54
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	7.49	8.35	7.50	9.85	+2.36
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	8.48	9.35	9.36	11.56	+3.08

Source: ONS house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, Icen Projects.

Data for 2019 was released in March 2020 and shows a modest improvement with the median affordability ratio across Oxfordshire between 2018-19, with the median house price-to-income ratio declining slightly to 10.42. The 2019 data is shown in Figure 4.3.3.

Figure 4.3.3: House price-to-workplace-based earnings ratio, 2019



Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

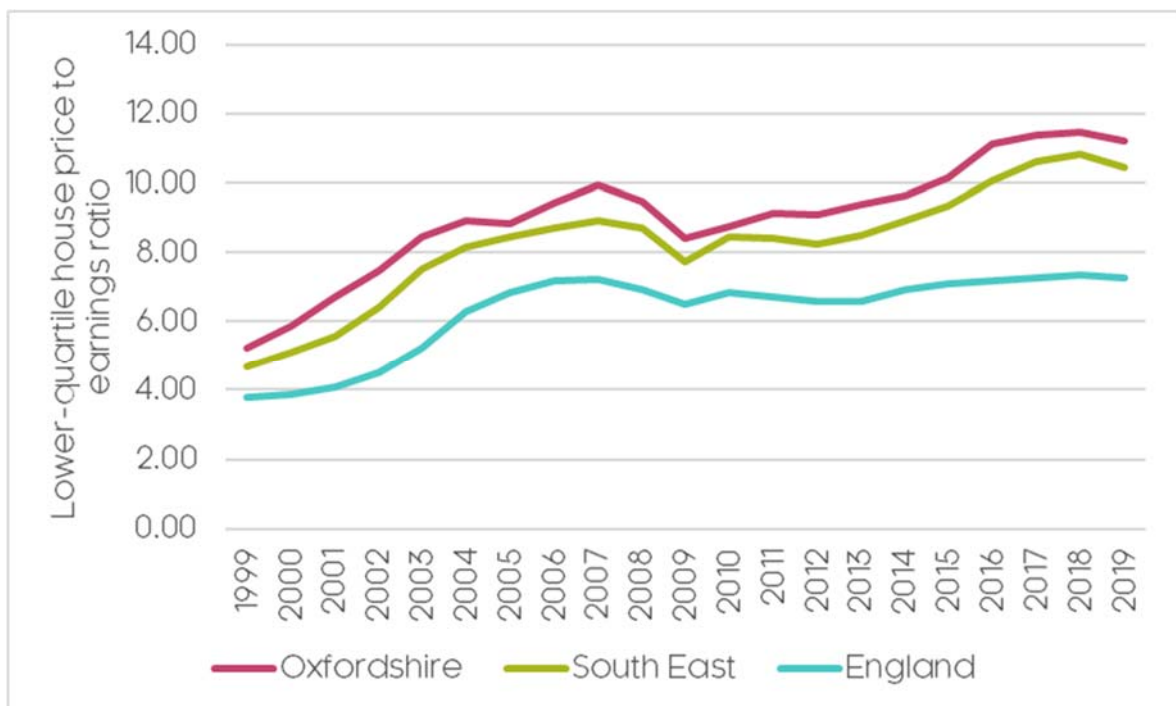
Affordability on this metric is similar to those in other similar locations in the Greater South East, but is below those in Inner Home Counties areas such as Surrey, Hertfordshire or Buckinghamshire which are closer to London.

Other data sources highlight particular affordability issues in Oxford. Research by Lloyds Banking Group identifies average house prices of £460,000 in Oxford in 2018 based on the Halifax House Price database which was 12.6 times average annual earnings, making Oxford the UK's least affordable city. This compares to an average ratio of 10.3 in Greater London. The difference between this and the ONS data above is the source of the house price data.

Iceni has also considered ONS data on lower quartile affordability ratios (illustrated in Figure 4.3.4), which appraise the cost of entry-level housing relative to earnings of younger households. Lower quartile affordability ratios are now 11.47 times workplace-based earnings in Oxfordshire, compared with 10.81 in South East England and 7.29 times in England. Out of the local authorities, South Oxfordshire again has the highest lower quartile affordability ratio, standing at 13.93 times workplace-based earnings. Cherwell has the lowest lower quartile affordability ratio standing at 11.14.

The lower quartile affordability ratio of 11.2 in 2019 represents a notable further worsening of the position relative to when the SHMA was prepared, which recorded a figure of 9.0 for 2012. This is as a result of house prices growing more strongly than earnings for the reasons explained above. There has been a modest improvement between 2018-19.

Figure 4.3.4: Lower quartile house price to workplace-based earnings ratios, 1999-2019



Source: ONS, Iceni Projects.

The workplace-based house price to income ratio is the preferred metric considered in this report as it considers affordability for people working within an area. In Oxfordshire, the affordability of housing for residents is generally better than that for workers (as some higher paid residents commute out of the area to work).

As shown in Table 4.3.2, Oxford is the exception where the median residence-based affordability ratio is higher than the median workplace-based affordability ratio, albeit the difference is not substantive. South Oxfordshire

has the greatest difference between the two ratios (likely influenced by its stronger accessibility to the M4 Corridor and London). The residence-based measure reflects earnings of those living in Oxfordshire rather than those working within it.

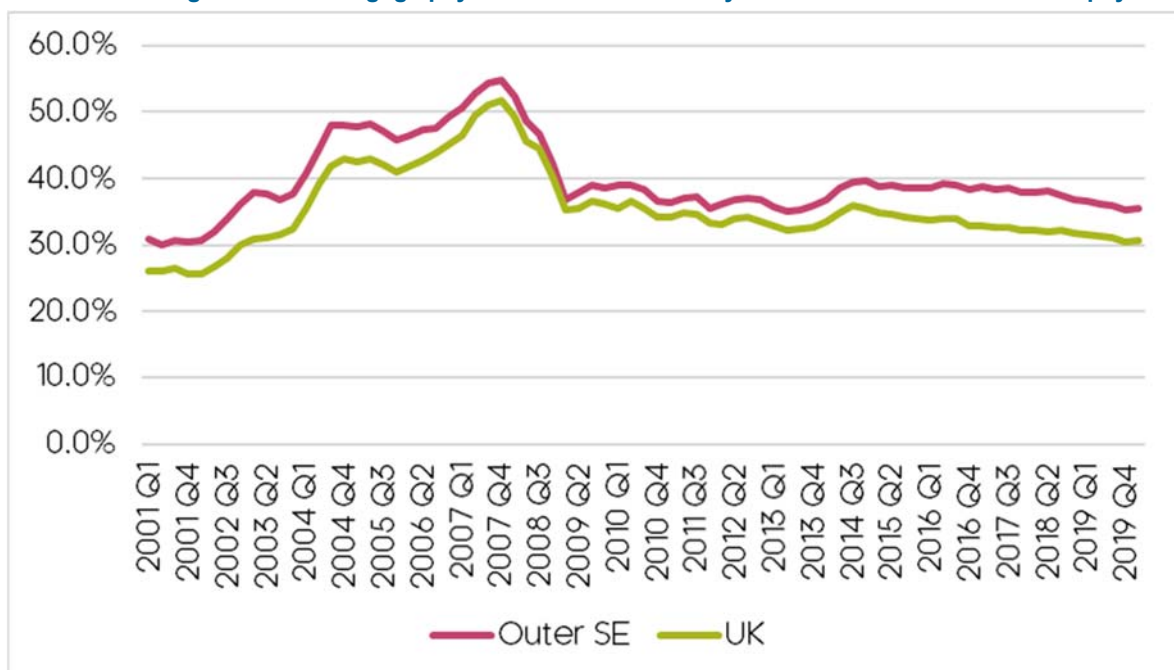
Table 4.3.2: Difference between median workplace-based and residence-based affordability ratios, 2019²⁶

	Workplace-based ratio ²⁷	Residence-based ratio ²⁸	Absolute difference
England	7.83	7.70	0.13
South East England	10.12	9.74	0.38
Oxfordshire	10.42	10.11	0.31
<i>Cherwell</i>	10.43	10.16	0.27
<i>Oxford</i>	11.45	12.55	1.19
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	11.60	10.16	1.44
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	9.57	9.06	0.51
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	10.38	9.75	0.63

Source: ONS, Icen Projects.

Affordability ratios provide an indication of the affordability of market housing to buy. However households ability to buy is also influenced by their savings/equity, interest rates and the ability to access mortgage finance. Nationwide publishes data first-time buyer affordability, considering the cost of mortgage payments as a percentage of mean take home pay. In 2019 the average first time buyer was spending 36% of take-home pay on mortgage costs in the Outer South East. Whilst this is below towards the peak of the last market cycle, it is notably above the England average of 31%.

Figure 4.3.5: Mortgage payments for first-time buyers as a % of mean take-home pay



Source: Nationwide, Icen Projects.

²⁶ Workplace-based earnings refer to the earnings recorded for the area in which the employee works, whereas the residence-based earnings refer to the area in which the employee lives.

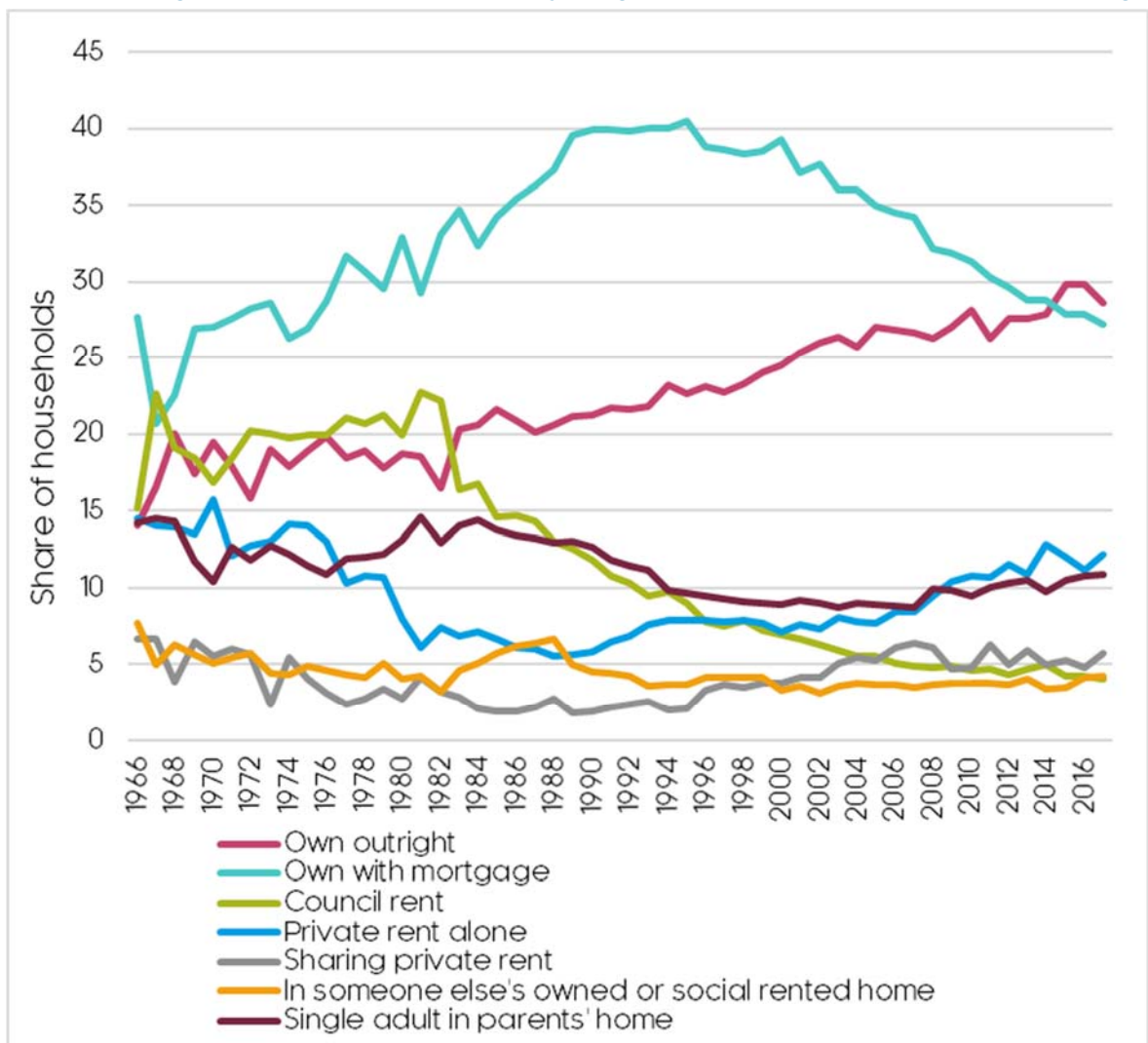
²⁷ ONS (2020) House price to workplace-based earnings ratio.

²⁸ ONS (2020) House price to residence-based earnings ratio.

Many younger households who may be able to afford mortgage repayments however find that that the ‘stress testing’ now undertaken in applying for mortgages; and the deposit requirements necessary to secure a home are particular barriers. With lower quartile house prices in Oxfordshire standing at £275,000 in 2019, households would need savings of £27,500 to put down a 10% deposit. Many younger households do not have this level of savings.

The effects of affordability pressures are real and significant. Research by the Resolution Foundation has tracked trends in households living arrangements by region, shown in Figure 4.3.6. Home ownership in the South East region peaked at 64% in 2003 but has since fallen to a figure of 56% in 2017 (an 8-percentage point drop).

Figure 4.3.6: Share of households by living circumstances (1966-2017) – South East England



Source: Resolution Foundation.

The number of households living alone in the Private Rented Sector has increased over this period by 5 percentage points, as has those sharing homes in the sector (up from 4.1% to 5.7% over this period). 10.9% of households now comprise single adults living within their parents’ home. Whilst comparable data is not available at an Oxfordshire level, given the similarity in price and affordability trends, a similar picture is likely.

Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, and the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions including in high-tech and innovative business sectors. This was identified as a particular issue in the LIS Economic Review which identified that it could weaken Oxfordshire's competitiveness.

The results of the stakeholder engagement undertaken as part of the Economic Review are summarised in appendices of that report, and state that:

“Stakeholders are confident that Oxfordshire’s attractiveness as a place to work (and for postgraduate research) has been constrained by the high cost of living.

The evidence around Oxfordshire’s cost of living challenge is well documented in this review and other local reports. Oxfordshire now has an unwanted reputation as being one of the most expensive places to live in the UK. Stakeholders have clearly voiced that they felt this is a factor which is having a material impact on their research and business activities in Oxfordshire. Stakeholders have suggested that this is deterring individuals from considering local roles – and in turn in impacting innovation, research and productivity levels (and therefore, ultimately Oxfordshire’s GVA and future growth potential. Individual organisations, such as the University of Oxford, are now seeking to explore putting in place their own measures which help to address this challenge for their key personnel (in this case, postgraduate researchers).

Stakeholders have also suggested that this problem (to date) has not been taken seriously enough in planning and policy discussions at a local and national level.”²⁹

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community; and unaddressed this could hold back future economic growth potential.

4.4 Trends in the private rental market

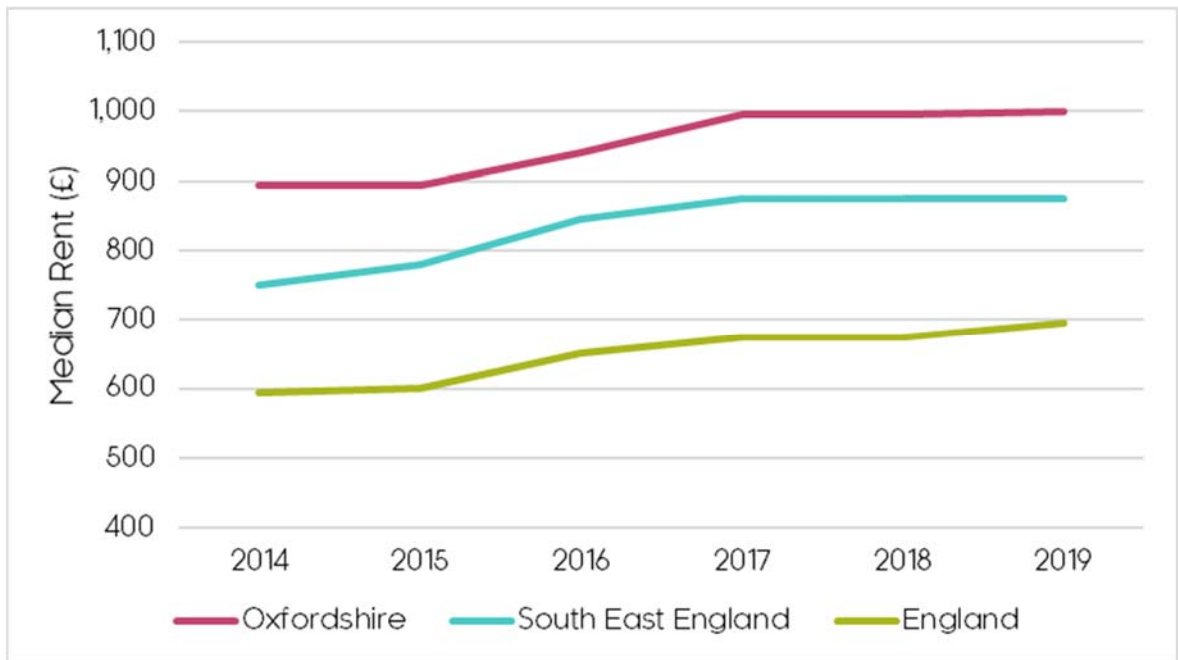
For the year to 31 March 2019, the overall median rent across Oxfordshire was £1,000 per calendar month (PCM)³⁰. This is 44% higher than the median rent in England (£695) and 14% higher than the median rent in the South East of England (£875). This points to strong relative rental demand and suggests particular affordability pressures within both the sales and rental markets.

Since 2014, median rents have increased by £105 PCM or 12% in Oxfordshire (Figure 4.4.1). This growth rate is lower than the regional and national averages which have both grown by 17% over the same period, but rents remain above wider benchmarks.

²⁹ LIS 2018 Economic Review: Baseline, p. 63

³⁰ VOA (2019) - Private rental market summary statistics: April 2018 to March 2019

Figure 4.4.1: Median rental costs, 2014-19



Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

Table 4.4.1 compares rental costs by property size at the local authority, county, regional and national levels and Figure 4.4.2 shows the average rent for all property types. Monthly rents at an Oxfordshire level are on average 14% above the South East average. Indicatively based on current rental costs, households would need to earn over £32,000 annually to afford the average 2-bed property in Oxfordshire without financial support.

Oxford City has significantly higher rental costs than the other local authorities, with Cherwell having the lowest in Oxfordshire. Rental costs in each of the local authorities for all property sizes are higher than the national averages, and mostly higher than the regional averages. Oxford, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse are the authorities with rents much higher than the regional average – in Oxford’s case the average rent is a substantial 42% above the South East average. Rents in West Oxfordshire are also above the regional average.

Table 4.4.1: Median rental cost by property size, 2019

	Room	Studio	One-Bed	Two-Bed	Three-Bed	Four+ Bed	All
England	£390	£575	£615	£675	£760	£1,320	£695
South East England	£412	£570	£700	£875	£1,095	£1,650	£875
Oxfordshire	£550	£606	£800	£953	£1,225	£1,950	£1,000
<i>Cherwell</i>	£450	-	£725	£875	£1,000	£1,395	£875
<i>Oxford</i>	£600	£765	£950	£1,200	£1,400	£2,250	£1,250
<i>South Oxfordshire</i>	-	£600	£750	£925	£1,250	£1,750	£935
<i>Vale of White Horse</i>	£625	-	£790	£900	£1,175	£1,800	£925
<i>West Oxfordshire</i>	£430	£595	£748	£875	£1,098	£1,575	£895

Source: VOA Private Rental Market Statistics, Icen Projects.

Figure 4.4.2: Median rental cost (all property types), 2019



Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

4.5 Conclusions

Oxfordshire, like many parts of the greater South East, is characterised by high housing costs and particular affordability pressures. Median house prices have risen from £100,000 to £350,000 in the county over the last 20 years. Affordability issues appear particularly acute in Oxford, followed by South Oxfordshire. Whilst current low interest rates means that mortgage finance is currently relatively cheap, lenders undertake stress testing and the absolute cost of homes to buy means that there are households need significant savings to be able to buy a home. These affordability issues have influenced levels of first-time buyers.

More broadly, transactions volumes have been affected by the high levels of Stamp Duty payable on many transactions in Oxfordshire; wider demographic issues with a growing older population which is less likely to move and more likely to receive care – if they need it – at home; and the additional Stamp Duty applicable to investment purchases from April 2016. High Stamp Duty costs appear to have particularly affected the Oxford market.

Against this context, the Government's Help-to-Buy Scheme has been important in helping to support the market in recent years; and the short-term Stamp Duty holiday introduced by Government in July 2020 will help to support the market.

The long-term structural issue is however of a need to improve affordability, both to address the Government's ambitions to support homeownership and to increase fluidity in the wider market enabling households to move home to a property that better suits their needs. Additional housing supply will be important to enabling this.

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community. If left unaddressed

this could hold back future economic growth potential. Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, which affects the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions, including in high-tech and innovative business sectors which are significant in the Oxfordshire economy. The effect of these issues on development needs are explored in *Part B* of this report.

5 Recent Economic Performance

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a concise overview of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance. It considers the headline economic trends that are shaping the Oxfordshire economy, and how local performance compares to comparator areas and the national average.

This provides a foundation for Part B's *Chapter 8*, which explores Oxfordshire's potential growth trajectories and implications for economic development and housing need. The below summary supplements the extensive evidence reviewed for the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), which goes into much greater detail on the Oxfordshire economy.

5.2 Overview of Recent Growth and its Drivers

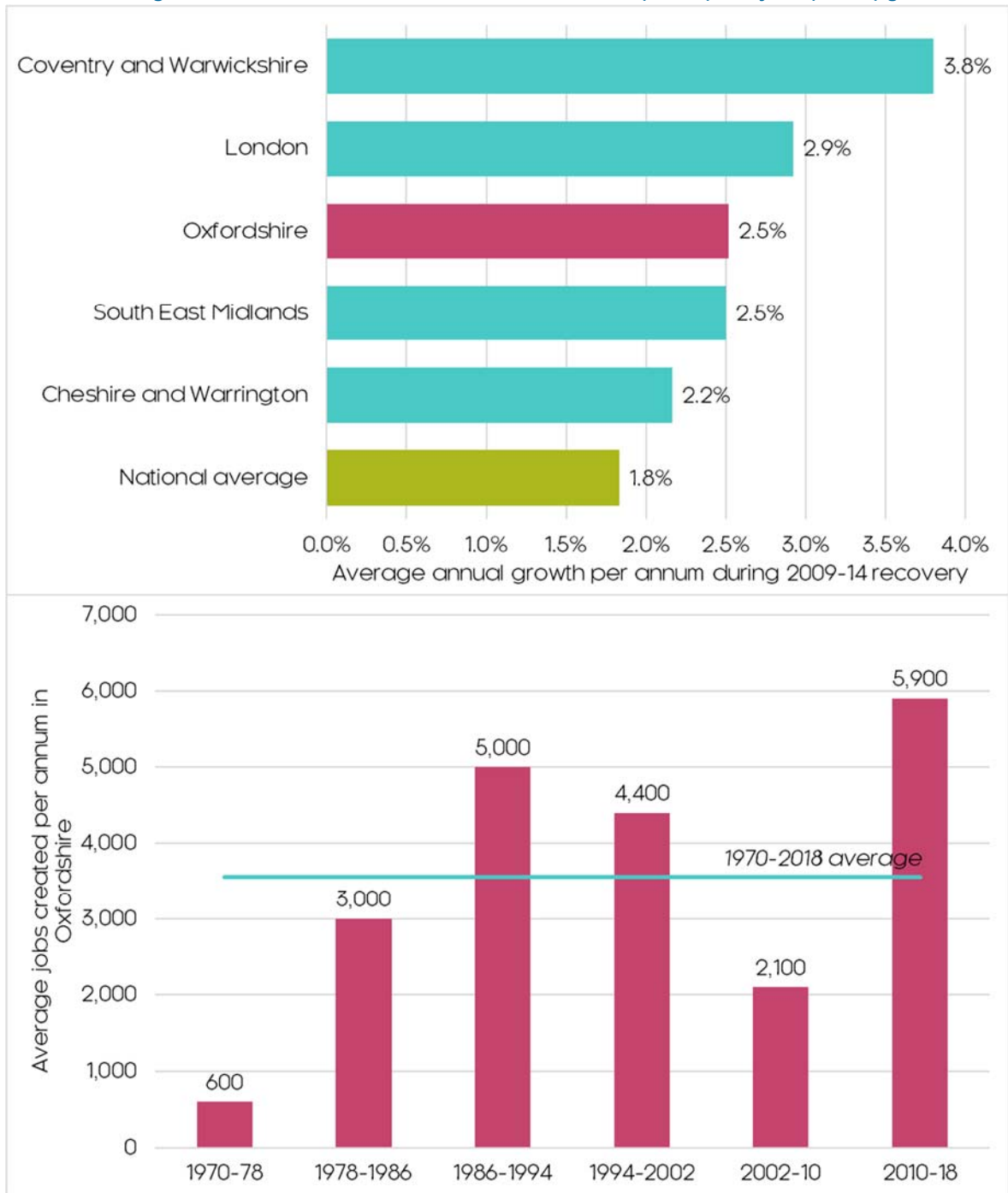
The Oxfordshire LIS emphasises Oxfordshire's status as *"a trailblazer for the UK economy"* and *"one of the strongest economies"* in the country. This is largely reinforced by the data, as Figure 5.2.1 shows; nationally, Oxfordshire's economy was one of the fastest growing (3rd, of 38 Local Enterprise Partnership, LEP, areas) during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.³¹

Alongside this, Oxfordshire's robust labour market has been creating jobs at an unprecedented pace; since 2010, on average more jobs had been created in Oxfordshire than any other equivalent period in the last 50 years (approximately 6,000 per annum). As of 2018, the Oxfordshire economy contributes an estimated £21.2 billion to UK plc, and supports some 410,000 jobs and 37,000 businesses.

According to the LIS, Oxfordshire's growth performance has been driven by its *"significant assets in research and development ('R&D') being home to the top performing university in the world, the University of Oxford, as well as Oxford Brookes, a leading university in the UK for teaching and research. These anchor institutions support an international brand that draws talent and investment."*

³¹ As measured by balanced Gross Valued Added, GVA(b), in real terms (2016 prices)

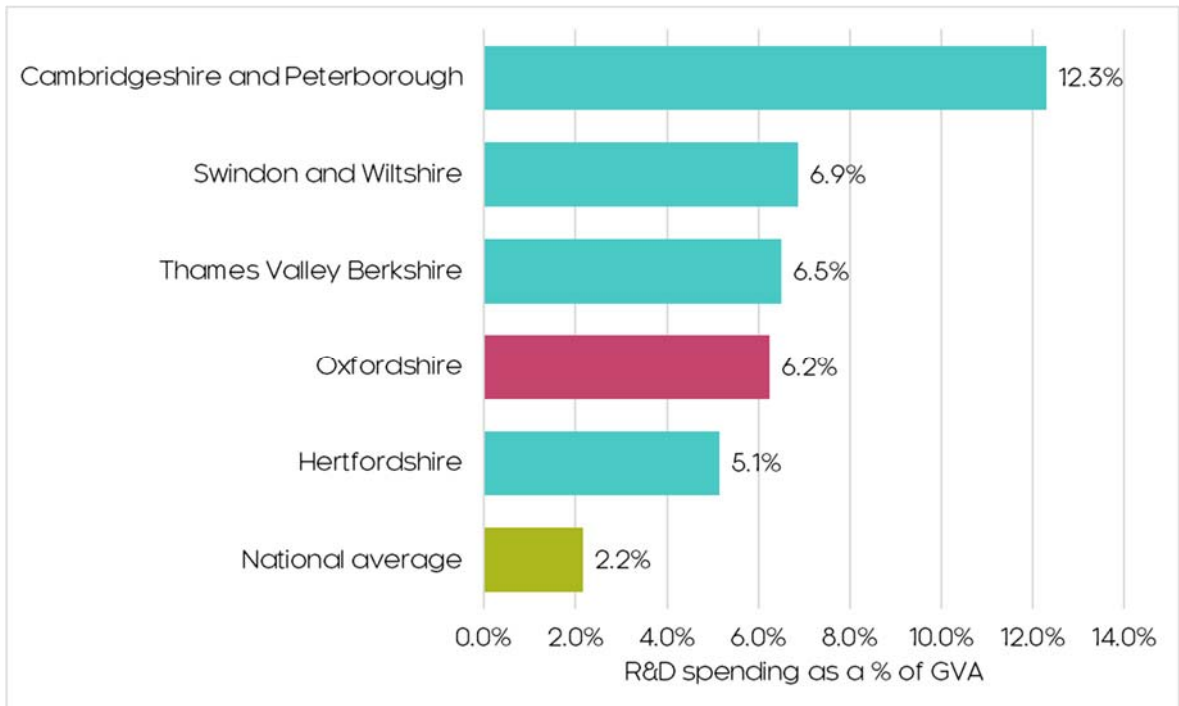
Figure 5.2.1: Overview of Oxfordshire’s recent GVA (above) and jobs (below) growth



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.2.2 highlights Oxfordshire’s knowledge-intensive economy, with its research capacity – measured by R&D spend as a proportion of GVA - amongst the highest (4th, of 38 LEP areas) in the country, and indeed within Europe.

Figure 5.2.2: Oxfordshire’s research intensity compared to peers, 2017

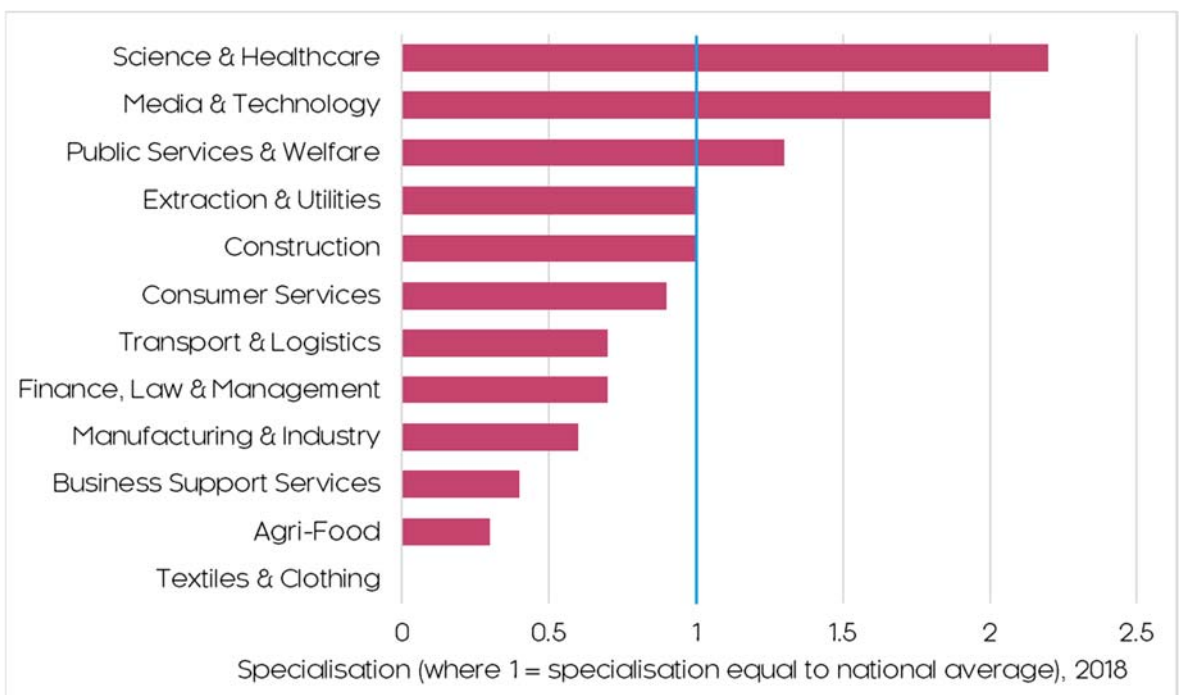


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

It also refers to the role played by Oxfordshire’s “vibrant sectoral mix” and the “dynamic nature of companies” in the county. Figure 5.2.3 Oxfordshire’s current sub-sectoral specialisations relative to the national average; notable strengths and concentrations are evident within media & technology, science & healthcare and public services & welfare.

When looking only at research-intensive industries, Oxfordshire has the 5th highest sectoral specialised diversity in the country. This diverse but research-

Figure 5.2.3: Oxfordshire’s sub-sectoral specialisations (relative to the national average), 2018

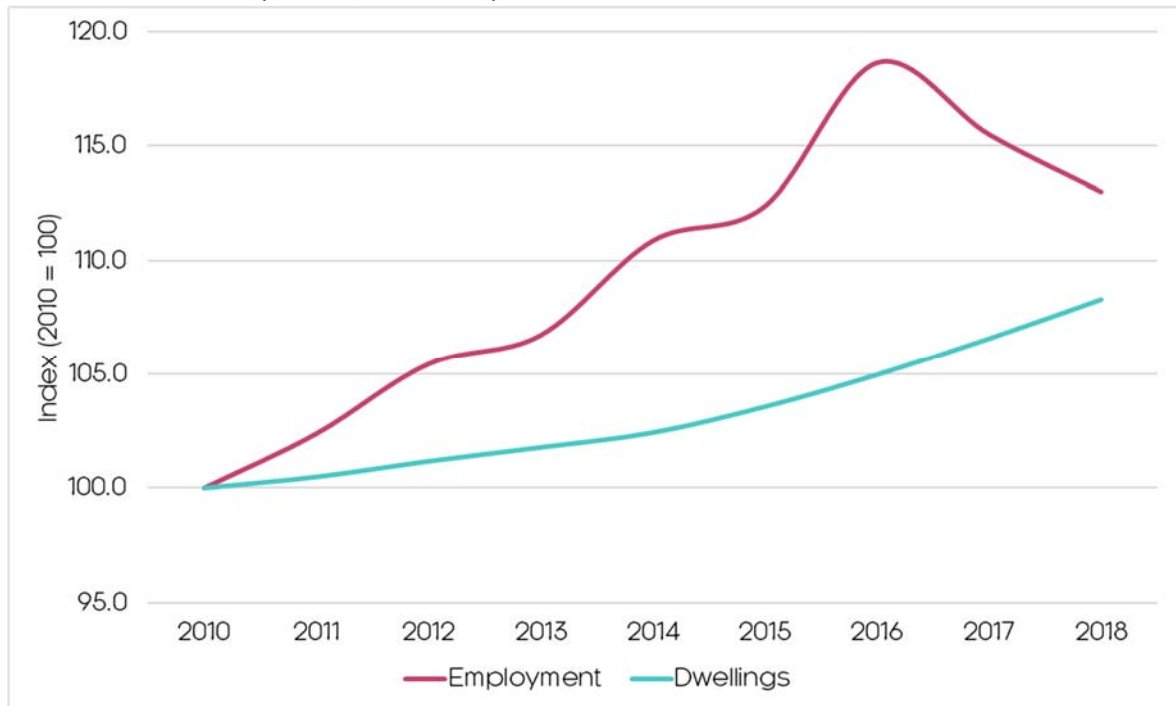


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

focused sectoral mix has underpinned Oxfordshire’s research-driven growth performance.

Yet the LIS also acknowledges “*despite Oxfordshire’s many strength’s*” it does have some recognised weaknesses, such as “*low productivity relative to many peers*”, and an increasing “*strain on the county’s infrastructure. Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable and rail, road and energy infrastructure are not sufficient to meet rising demand.*”

Figure 5.2.4: Oxfordshire’s employment growth relative to net dwelling completions, 2010-18 (indexed, 2010 = 100)



Source: MHCLG, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

For instance, Figure 5.2.4 shows Oxfordshire’s dwelling stock has not necessarily kept pace with economic growth over recent years. Pre-recession, the growth in Oxfordshire’s dwelling stock rarely diverged by more than 1.5x the growth in employment; since 2010, the average divergence has been 6.5x – that is, employment growth has on average been 6.5x the growth in dwellings.

Also notable from Figure 5.2.4 is a pronounced easing in Oxfordshire’s employment growth, from 2016 onwards. Some of this will be attributable to the UK’s decision to leave the European Union (‘Brexit’), though it is unlikely to be exclusively responsible as a trend of such magnitude has not been observed in other EU-dependent areas.

Rather, the fact local (i.e. sub-regional) employment trends, based on survey-derived data (from the ONS³²), can be volatile and noisy, means this dip is likely being overestimated, if being estimated correctly at all. In fact, when accounting for the relative confidence intervals, it could be that pre-2016 growth was being overestimated, whilst post-2016 has been underestimated.

³² Specifically, [ONS Business Register and Employment Survey \(BRES\)](#)

And when scrutinizing the ‘dip’ further, it is apparent that it is being driven by notoriously volatile and hard to measure parts of local economies, with notable falls in the self-employed and double-jobbers in Oxfordshire over this time. By taking a longer-term perspective (such as decade averages shown in Figure 5.2.1) a more reflective and informative trend of employment growth be inferred, rather than volatile year to year movements.

And to help explain what has driven Oxfordshire’s longer-term growth performance, the change in an areas GVA – when adjusted for population i.e. GVA per capita/head - can be broken down into drivers of interest to help articulate the longer run determinants and drivers of growth within an area. Specifically, it can be decomposed using the following identity:

$$\frac{GVA_{wp}}{Population_{res}} = \frac{GVA_{wp}}{Jobs_{wp}} \times \frac{Workers_{res}}{WAP_{res}} \times \frac{Jobs_{wp}}{Workers_{res}} \times \frac{WAP_{res}}{Population_{res}}$$

GVA per capita = Labour Productivity x Employment Rate x Jobs per Worker x Working-Age Share

Table 5.2.1: Composition of GVA per capita growth, 1992-2018

	Oxfordshire	UK
GVA per capita, 2018 (£2016 prices)	£29,800	£27,500
GVA per capita growth pa, 1992-2018, of which attributable to:	1.4%	1.8%
<i>Labour Productivity</i>	58.5%	79.3%
<i>Jobs per Worker</i>	9.8%	7.8%
<i>Employment Rate</i>	44.6%	16.4%
<i>Working-Age Share</i>	-12.9%	-3.6%

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Table 5.2.1 applies this analysis and shows the change in GVA per capita and its drivers between 1992-2018 in Oxfordshire and the UK (i.e. the national average). As the data shows, GVA per capita – which is regarded as a broad indicator of an areas prosperity and living standards – is much higher (some 8%) in Oxfordshire than the national average, though growth has been marginally slower over recent years.

For Oxfordshire, productivity growth has accounted for the majority (two-thirds) of growth in its GVA per capita. This share however is much lower than the national average, where over three-quarters of growth in GVA per capita has been driven by productivity improvements. This reflects, as the LIS identified, Oxfordshire’s comparatively weaker productivity performance.

Instead, Oxfordshire has been much more dependent on wider labour market improvements to support its growth, especially in terms of residents entering and staying in employment. In fact, the share of growth attributable to jobs per worker and the employment rate in Oxfordshire has been almost twice that of the national average, reflecting the robustness of the local labour market.

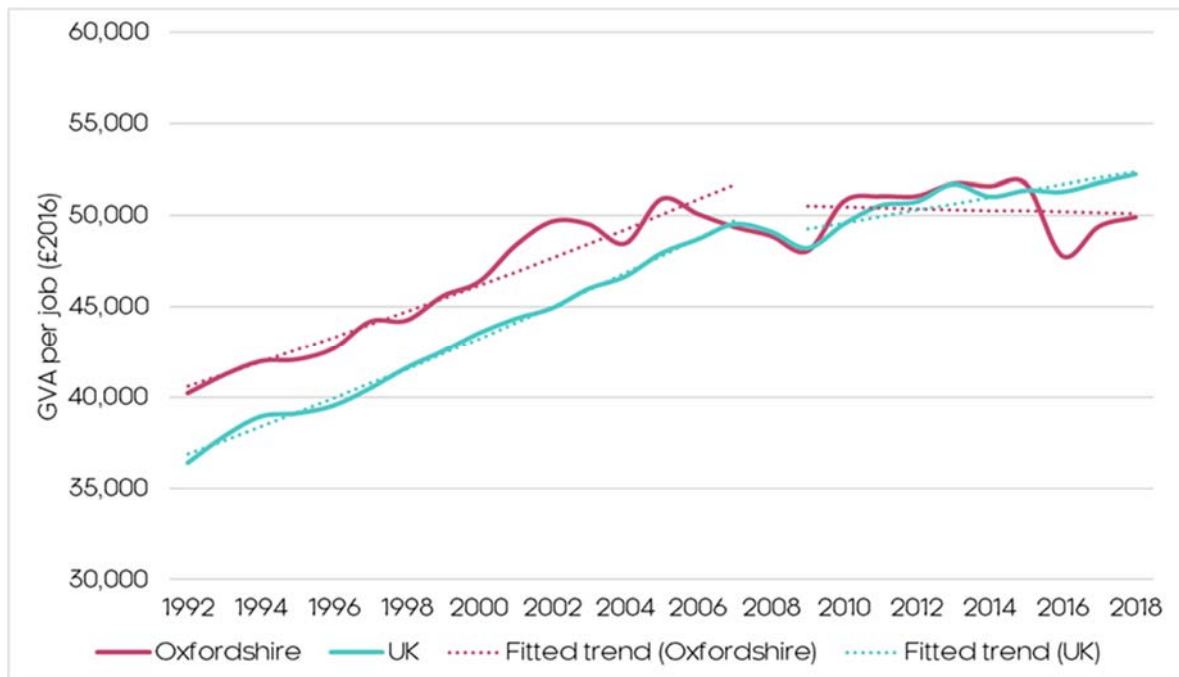
Both Oxfordshire and the rest of the country have failed to benefit from a ‘demographic dividend’, as reflected in growth attributable to its working age population. Given the potentially negative fiscal, labour market and consumer effects of a declining working age population, such factors appear to be acting as a stronger drag on growth in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country.

The rest of this chapter looks in more detail at some of these factors and what may be driving their higher-level trends.

5.3 Productivity in Oxfordshire

Analysis in Table 5.2.1 showed productivity (specifically in this case labour productivity, represented by; GVA / Jobs) is an important determinant of longer-term growth, yet according to the LIS Oxfordshire’s “workers are not particularly productive. Output is high, but so are the number of hours worked.”

Figure 5.3.1: Productivity (GVA per job) trends in Oxfordshire and the UK, 1992-2018



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

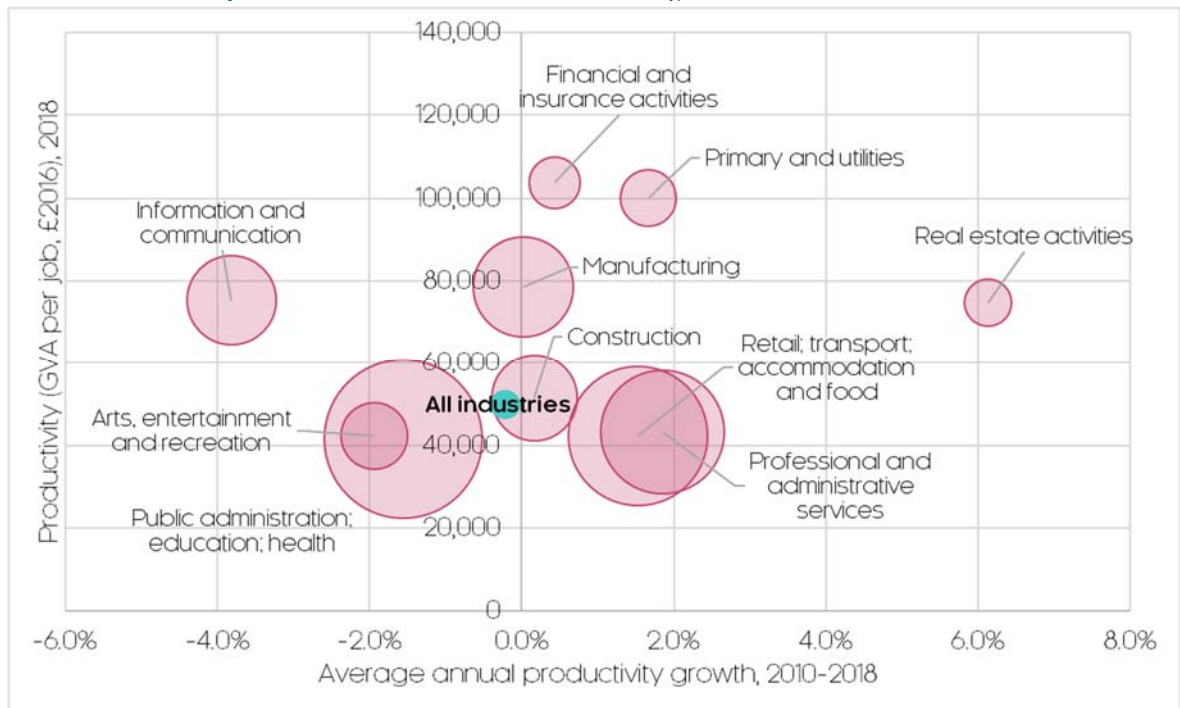
As Figure 5.3.1 shows, this is a relatively new phenomena, having only really been an occurrence following the 2008/09 recession, where productivity growth in Oxfordshire has slowed and since stalled in comparison to the national average and historic trends.

This wider slowdown in productivity has been popularly referred to as a ‘productivity puzzle’, and though affecting many advanced economies across the world – including that of the UK - it is evidently being more keenly felt within Oxfordshire.

The cost of this ‘puzzle’ is significant and increasing; if the average Oxfordshire worker had followed their pre-recession trend rate of productivity growth, productivity would be almost 18% higher than what it is now, increasing GVA by an additional £3.7 billion.

Figure 5.3.2 shows the broad impact of the ‘puzzle’ at the headline sectoral level. As with the rest of the UK, there is no clear or overriding factor behind Oxfordshire’s productivity slowdown, although service-based sectors appear to be the most affected.

Figure 5.3.2: Headline sectoral productivity trends in Oxfordshire (note: size of bubble corresponds to sectors current share of GVA), 2010-18



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxfordshire's LIS analysis of the five foundations of productivity reveals its comparative strengths and weaknesses in a productivity context though. The five foundations are the thematic areas of the UK economy that underpin the Government's ambition to boost productivity through its National and Local Industrial Strategies:

1. **Ideas:** the world's most innovative economy
2. **People:** good jobs and greater earning power for all
3. **Infrastructure:** a major upgrade to the UK's infrastructure
4. **Business Environment:** the best place to start and grow a business
5. **Places:** prosperous communities across the UK

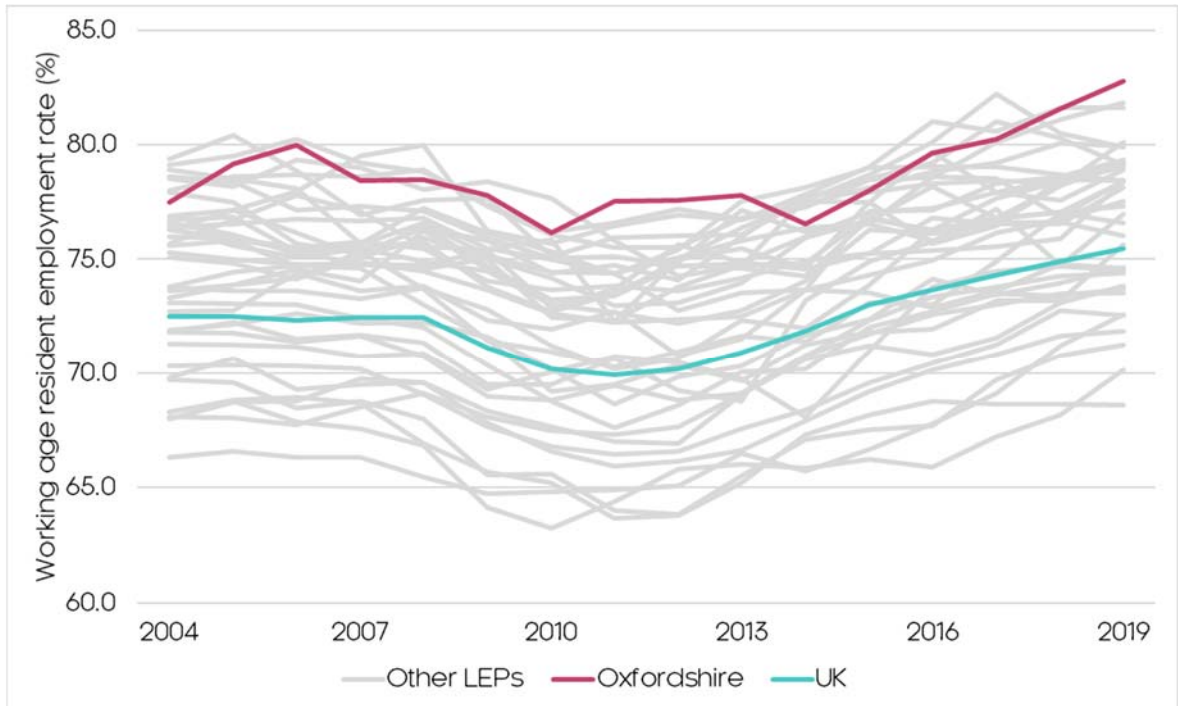
LIS analysis showed Oxfordshire performed strongly and had recognised assets across most of the foundations, particularly Ideas, Business Environment and People. Infrastructure and Places had a more mixed performance though (the latter, particularly in terms of housing affordability), which may be impacting on productivity, whilst even Oxfordshire's more positive foundations may not be representative of the whole theme or area e.g. pockets of deprivation and wage disparity.

Recognising Oxfordshire's poor recent productivity performance, the LIS acknowledges that *"the ultimate objective of this Local Industrial Strategy is to raise productivity."*

5.4 Oxfordshire's labour market

Oxfordshire has one of the strongest labour markets in the country; according to the most recent data (2019), Oxfordshire currently has the highest employment rate out of 38 LEP areas (see Figure 5.4.1), with some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment, comfortably eclipsing the national average of 75.5%.

Figure 5.4.1: Working age employment rate across 38 LEP areas, 2004-19



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Oxfordshire's unemployment rate meanwhile is estimated to be as low as 1.6%, compared to the national average of 4.1%. Since 2010, an additional 32,900 residents have entered work, whilst some 26,500 residents have moved out of unemployment or economic inactivity.

Though a high and increasing share of those in employment are in full-time work (78.1% in Oxfordshire, national average 75.3%), Oxfordshire does have a slightly higher incidence of residents in non-permanent (including 'zero hours') employment than the national average (6.2% in Oxfordshire, national average 4.5%).

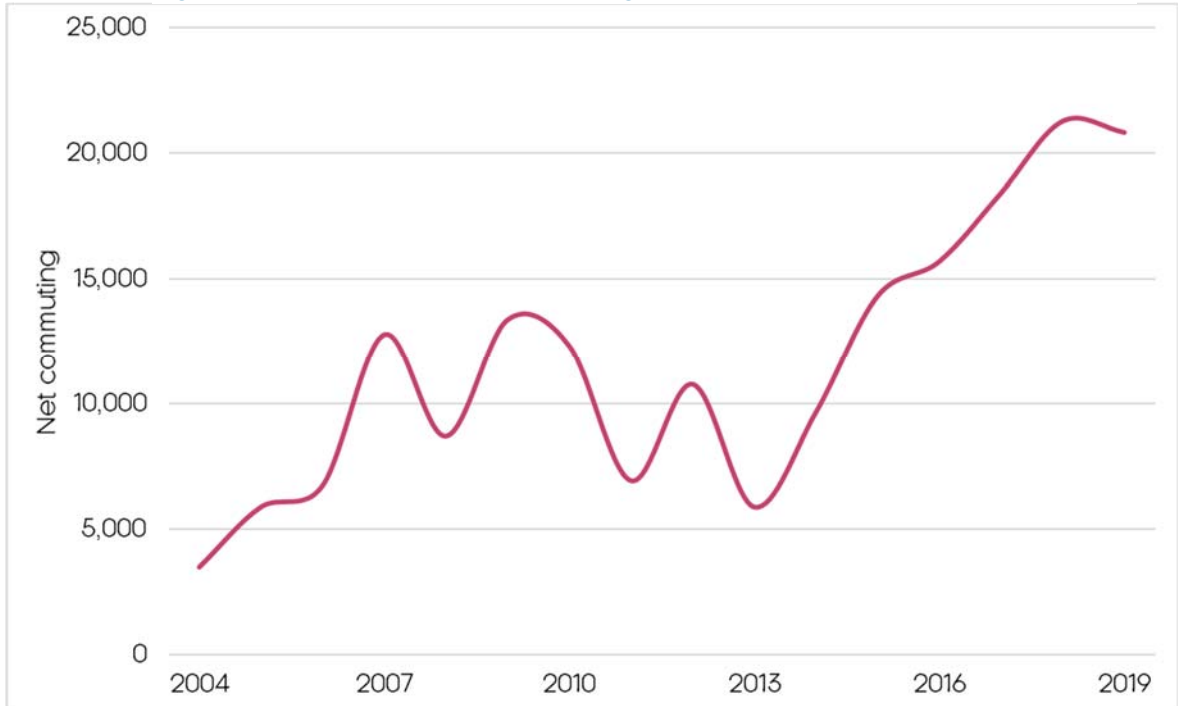
Census data shows most residents (85%) work in the county, though this may now be higher given the tightness of the local labour market, which has also seen an increase in people commuting into Oxfordshire.

Figure 5.4.2 shows Oxfordshire's net commuting has rapidly increased over recent years (its highest since records began in 1981) as people working in the county exceeds residents in employment; since 2010, the number of people working in Oxfordshire has increased by 41,400, whilst the number of residents in work has increased by only 32,900.

This is a factor which is likely to have influenced house price growth; the relationship between commuting and affordability is explored in greater detail in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*. Likewise, with more

people travelling into Oxfordshire, and travelling further, this has likely had implications for journey times, congestion and emissions in Oxfordshire.

Figure 5.4.2: Oxfordshire's net commuting flows, 2004-19



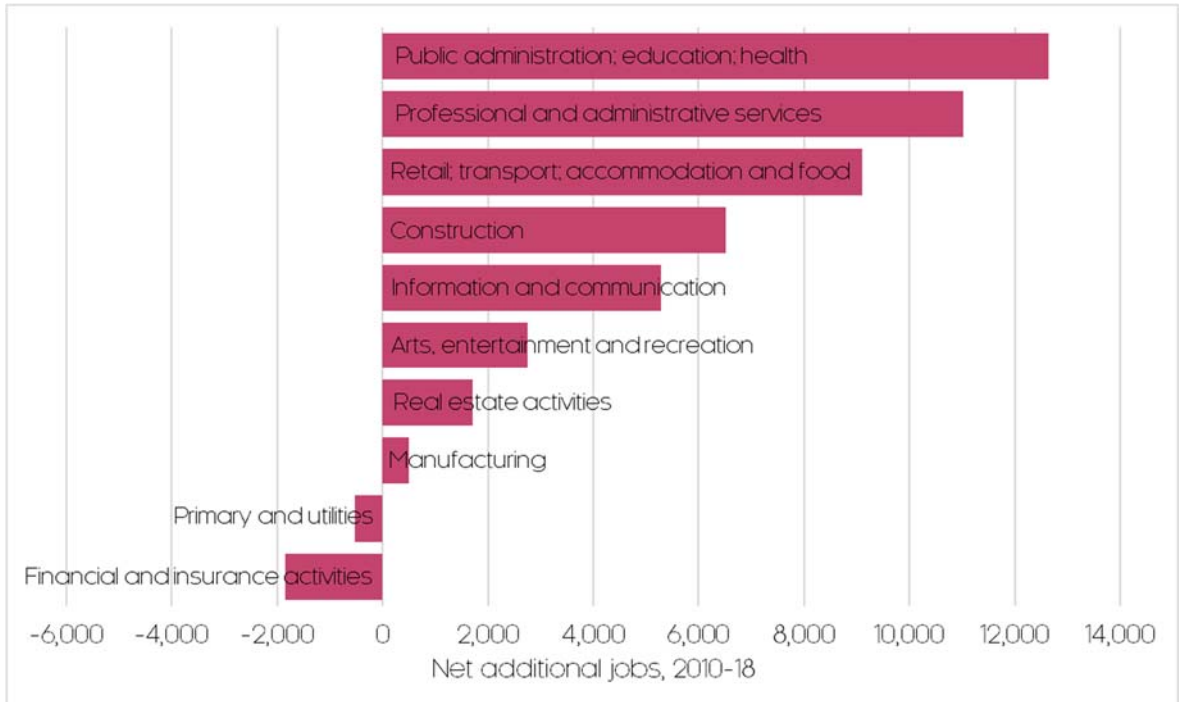
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

This trend has been driven by the high and unprecedented rates of job creation as highlighted previously in Figure 5.2.1. Since 2010, an estimated 47,200 additional jobs have been created by employers in Oxfordshire.³³ As Figure 5.4.3 shows, at the headline sectoral level growth has been dominated by business and consumer services, which have accounted for around 86% of all additional jobs.

Only a handful of sectors have failed to show positive headline jobs growth over this time; the cyclical agriculture and primary industries, and the recession-impacted finance and insurance sectors. In contrast to many areas in the South East, Oxfordshire's manufacturing workforce has marginally grown.

³³ The number of jobs exceeds to the number of people working in Oxfordshire because a person can have more than one job ("double-jobbers")

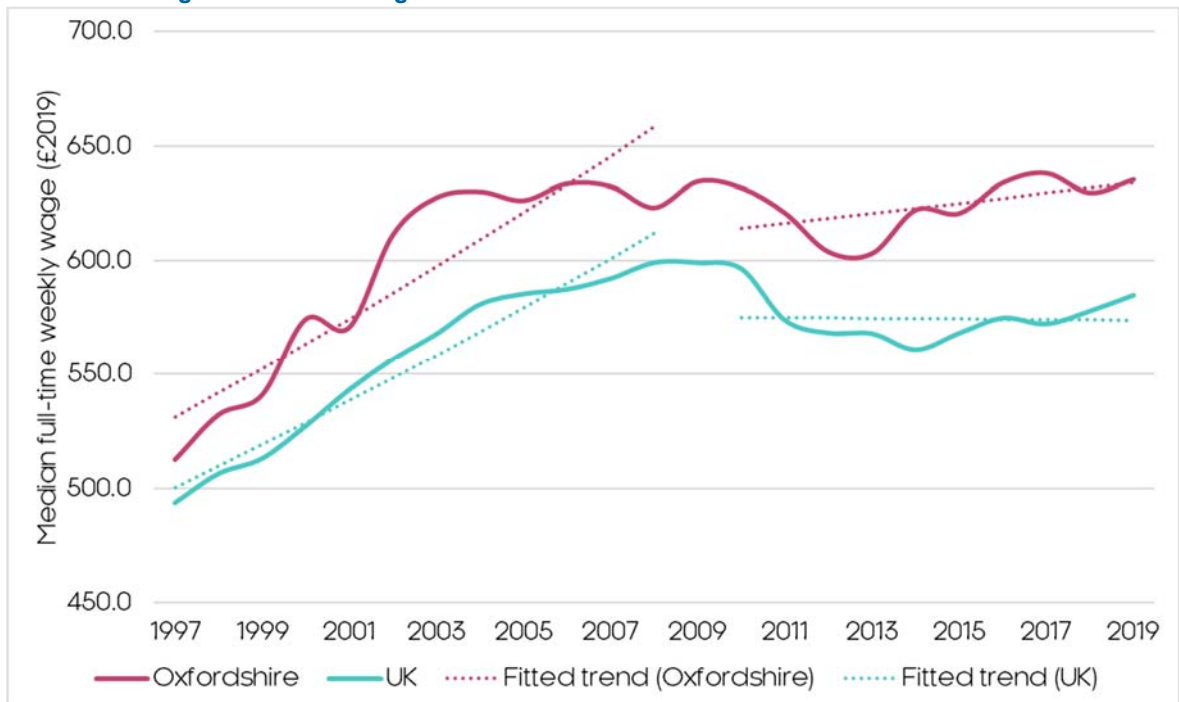
Figure 5.4.3: Sectoral composition of jobs growth in Oxfordshire 2010-2018



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

This buoyant labour market performance has however been against a backdrop of subdued wage growth. As Figure 5.4.4 shows, after peaking in 2006 median full-time wages in Oxfordshire had contracted by 4.8% in real terms by 2013. Positively wage growth has since started to accelerate, averaging 0.9% since 2013, almost double the national average of 0.5%, though it took almost a decade for the median wage to pass its pre-recession peak.

Figure 5.4.4: Real wage trends for full-time workers in Oxfordshire and the UK



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

When looking at the distribution of earnings, the gap between the highest and lowest-earners in Oxfordshire is marginally lower than the national average, though since 2013 low earners in Oxfordshire have seen slower real wage growth than equivalents elsewhere (4.7% in Oxfordshire, 6.4% national average), and the median for the county.

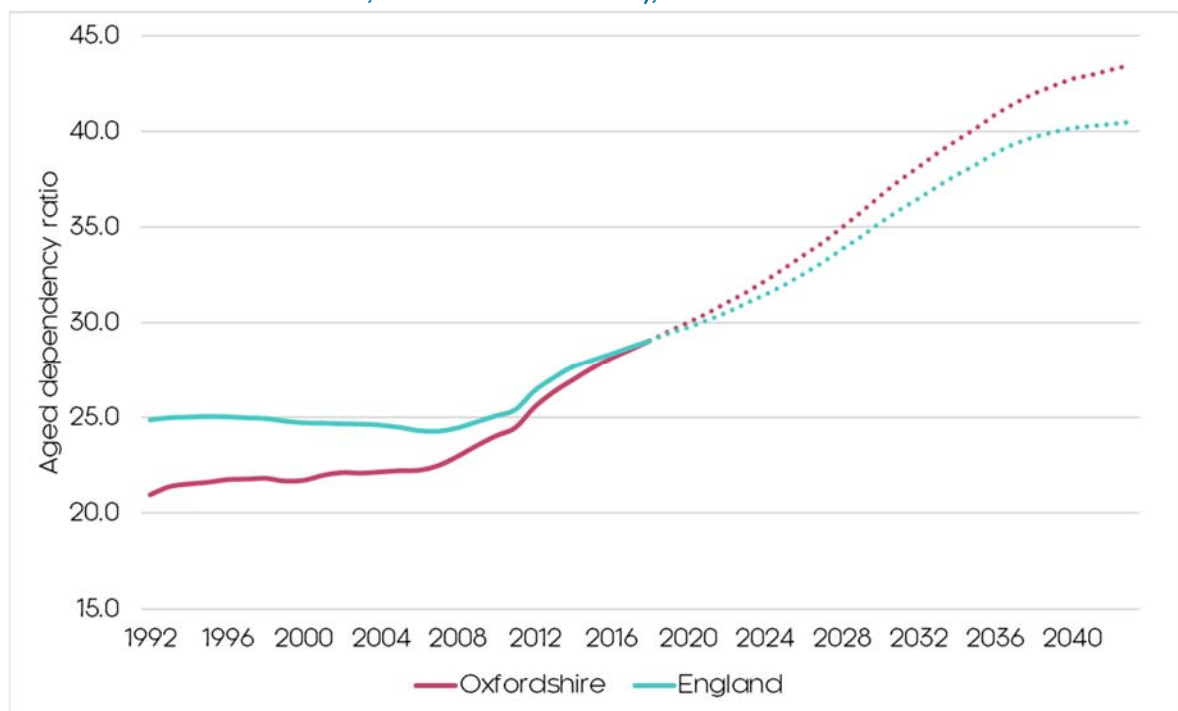
As explored in *Chapter 4*, this challenging environment for wage growth post-recession has been against a backdrop of a resurgent housing market, adding to affordability pressures in Oxfordshire.

5.5 Oxfordshire’s working age population

Since 2008, Oxfordshire’s working age population share (currently 62.8%, compared to a national average of 62.6%) has decreased by 3.5 percentage points (p.p.), and is expected to decrease further to 58.5% by 2050. The aged dependency ratio³⁴ highlights the scale of such trends and their potential impact on the local economy.

As the ratio narrows, it “places increasing pressure on those of working age to provide for those not in work – whether directly or through taxes.”³⁵ It can also restrict labour supply and exacerbate skills gaps and shortages,³⁶ not least in an already tight labour market like Oxfordshire’s.

Figure 5.5.1: Aged dependency trends in Oxfordshire and the UK (note: dotted line denotes forecasts, from 2018-based SNPP), 1992-2040



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 5.5.1 shows the aged dependency ratio in Oxfordshire and England overtime. Though the current ratio of 29 dependents per 100 working age

³⁴ The ratio of aged dependents (those aged 65+) for every 100 working age persons (those aged 16-64)

³⁵ World Economic Forum (2015), What are the economic implications of ageing populations?

³⁶ CIPD (2015), Labour supply and the ageing workforce

residents is the 14th lowest of 38 LEP areas, it is rising quickly and diverging from the national average.

In fact, by 2040 the ratio is expected to increase at an unbridled pace to 43 dependents per 100 working age residents, higher than the national average of 40. At this point, it is expected 1 in 4 of Oxfordshire's residents will be of retirement age. This clearly has implications for the sustainability of local government finances.

5.6 Conclusions

Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of some 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. It has notable strengths in research-intensive activities including media and technology, science and healthcare, and public services. Whilst employment growth has been strong, productivity improvements have however stalled in recent years.

The evidence suggests that jobs growth over the 2010-18 period has outpaced growth in housing in Oxfordshire, and set against strong levels of economic participation, in-commuting to the county has therefore increased. Drawing together the analysis in *Chapters 4 and 5*, it is clear that Oxfordshire's strong economic performance has led to a supply/demand imbalance which has supported a further deterioration in housing affordability.

6 Commercial Market Dynamics

6.1 Introduction

This chapter gives consideration to commercial property market dynamics in Oxfordshire, focusing on dynamics for the types of uses – offices, research and development, industrial and warehouse/distribution development – and related employment activities which typically take place on ‘employment sites’.

By reviewing recent trends in floorspace, rents and take-up changes, it provides greater understanding of supply and demand issues specific to Oxfordshire. This chapter also summarises views of commercial agents regarding the local commercial property market. The analysis then informs the consideration of future employment land needs which is addressed in *Chapter 11*.

However, it is important to note that there is significant employment in Oxfordshire, which would ordinarily fall within use class E(g)(i) Office or E(g)(ii) Research but where associated planning permissions are for use class D1 Non-Residential Institutions. This is particularly the case with the economy of Oxford, where there has been significant jobs growth in hospitals and universities.

6.2 Stock of commercial property

There is a total of 6.5 million sq.m of commercial floorspace in Oxfordshire as at March 2019 (Table 6.2.1). Industrial floorspace makes up 54% of the total, retail and office each make up 17% whilst 11% is accounted for by other commercial floorspace (which includes amongst others education, health and utilities).

Table 6.2.1: Stock of commercial floorspace (sq.m), 2019

	Retail	Office	Industrial	Other	Total
Oxfordshire	1,134,000	1,134,000	3,532,000	700,000	6,500,000
% of total stock	17%	17%	54%	11%	100%
Cherwell	338,000	192,000	1,215,000	172,000	1,917,000
<i>% county total</i>	<i>30%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>29%</i>
Oxford	360,000	370,000	317,000	168,000	1,215,000
<i>% county total</i>	<i>32%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>19%</i>
South Oxfordshire	160,000	192,000	589,000	124,000	1,065,000
<i>% county total</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>16%</i>
Vale of White Horse	144,000	274,000	850,000	127,000	1,395,000
<i>% county total</i>	<i>13%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>21%</i>
West Oxfordshire	132,000	106,000	560,000	110,000	908,000
<i>% county total</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>16%</i>	<i>14%</i>

Source: VOA, Iceni Projects.

Oxford has almost a third of retail and office floorspace in the county. Vale of White Horse also stands out as having a larger concentration of office floorspace than other areas at 274,000 sq.m likely influenced by the significant concentration at Milton Park, Didcot. The proportion of office and retail floorspace in West Oxfordshire is comparatively modest.

Of the total 3.5 million sq.m of industrial floorspace, the largest concentration is in Cherwell (34%) influenced by the location of its main towns close to the M40. This is followed by Vale of White Horse; with Oxford having a notably low level of industrial floorspace. The level of industrial floorspace in Cherwell is more than twice that in South Oxfordshire or West Oxfordshire.

The stock of commercial floorspace in Oxfordshire has grown by 339,000 sq.m over the last 15 years, as shown in Table 6.2.2. However, there has been relatively modest growth in both industrial floorspace (+ 51,000 sq.m) and office floorspace (+ 63,000 sq.m) over this time.

Over the last five years, industrial floorspace has grown by 63,000 sq.m and office floorspace by a modest 3,000 sq.m influenced by losses through Permitted Development Rights (PDR) changes of use to residential.

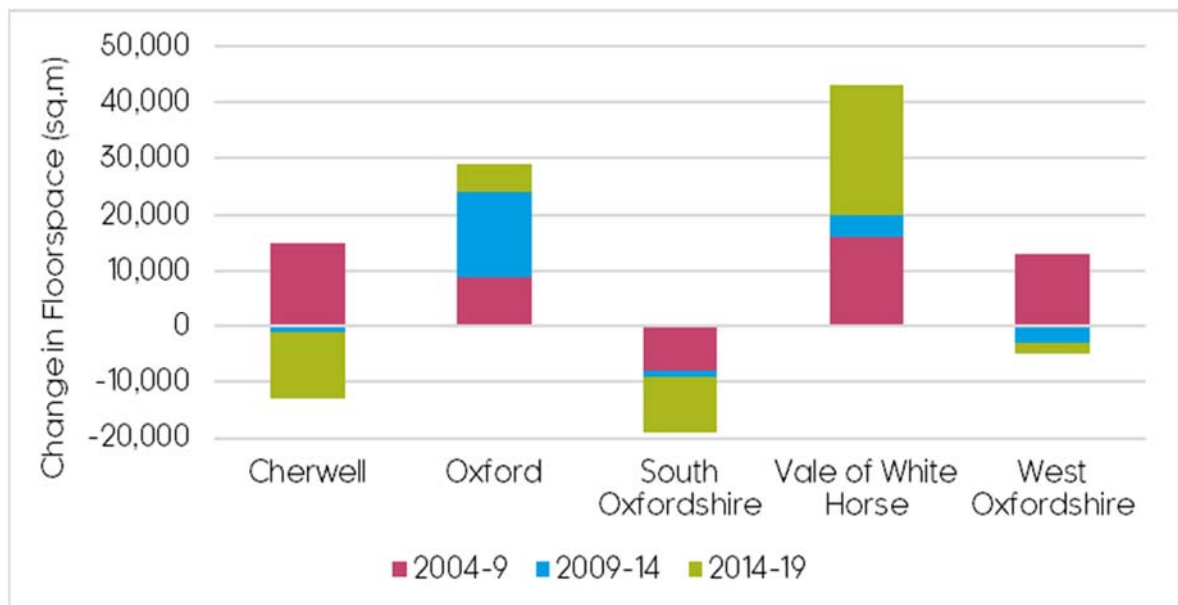
Table 6.2.2: Net change in commercial floorspace (sq.m) in Oxfordshire, 2004-19

	2004-09	2009-14	2014-19	Total	% Change, 2004-19	% Change, 2014-19
Industrial	-26,000	14,000	63,000	51,000	1.5%	1.8%
Office	45,000	15,000	3,000	63,000	5.9%	0.3%
Retail	21,000	22,000	58,000	101,000	9.8%	5.4%
Other	66,000	12,000	46,000	124,000	21.5%	7.0%

Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

Vale of White Horse and Oxford have seen the strongest growth in office floorspace, as illustrated in Figure 6.2.1. In contrast, the recent trend over the last decade has been of a decline in net terms in office floorspace in the other Oxfordshire local authorities.

Figure 6.2.1: Changes in office floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2004-2019

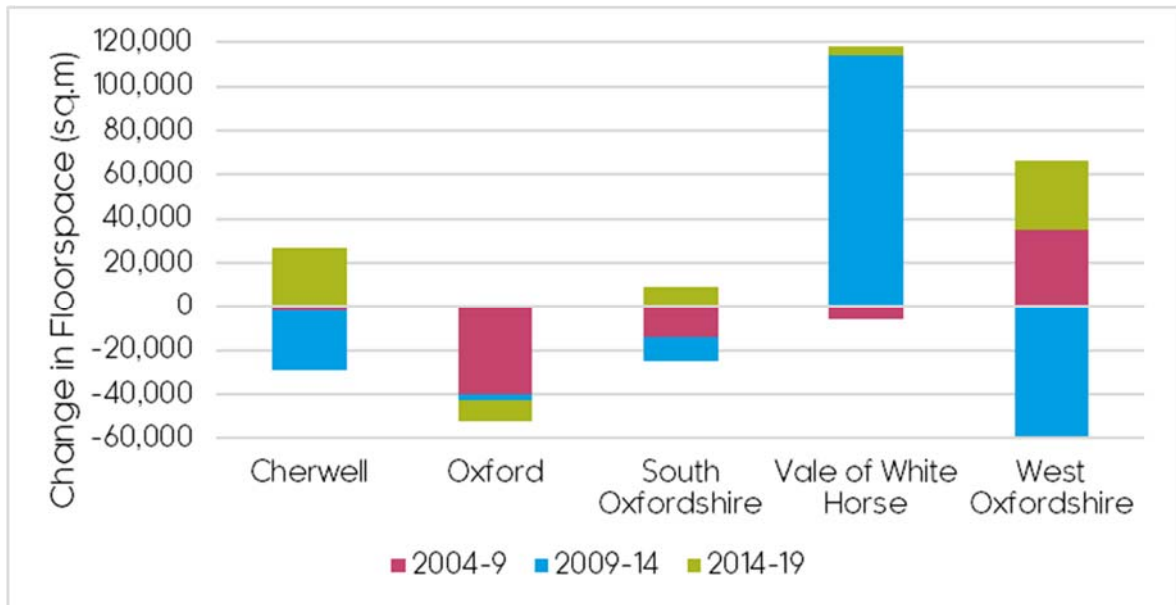


Source: VOA, Icen Projects.

A similar analysis for industrial floorspace, presented in Figure 6.2.2, points to the strongest overall growth of 112,000 sq.m (2004-19) being in Vale of White Horse. West Oxfordshire has seen modest growth over the 15-year period (7,000 sq.m) whilst in the other authorities, the quantum of industrial floorspace has fallen in net terms.

The more recent trend (2014-19) has seen of growth in industrial floorspace in West Oxfordshire and Cherwell in particular, the floorspace quantum increasing by 31,000 sq.m and 27,000 sq.m respectively. Modest growth of 9,000 sq.m has been seen in Vale of White Horse and 4,000 sq.m in South Oxfordshire; with a decline of -9,000 sq.m seen in Oxford.

Figure 6.2.2: Changes in industrial floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2004-19



Source: VOA NDR Business Floorspace Tables, IcenI Projects.

6.3 Oxfordshire's office market

IcenI has reviewed office market dynamics in Oxfordshire, taking account of published research by local and national surveys; together with additional analysis of take-up and availability based on Estates Gazette data (EGi) and CoStar.

Oxfordshire has been highly resilient to wider economic uncertainty in recent years, in part due to the county's focus on the knowledge sectors which have been driving demand for commercial property. Analysis by Carter Jonas suggests the main constraints on recent take-up have been on the supply side rather than demand³⁷, which have adversely impacted on transaction levels in the office and research & development (R&D) sector.

The latest commercial property market updated by VSL³⁸ indicates that transactions across Oxfordshire in the office and industrial market have fallen significantly from the high levels recorded in 2017 (Figure 6.3.1). A total of 28 office transactions were recorded in 2019 compared with 52 in 2017.

Reflecting a shortage of supply, headline rents across the county have increased. Prime office rents have reached highs of £40 per sq.ft in central Oxford and £35 per sq.ft around the Oxford Ring Road. Rents have also increased over the last 5 years in Milton Park and Abingdon (as shown below)

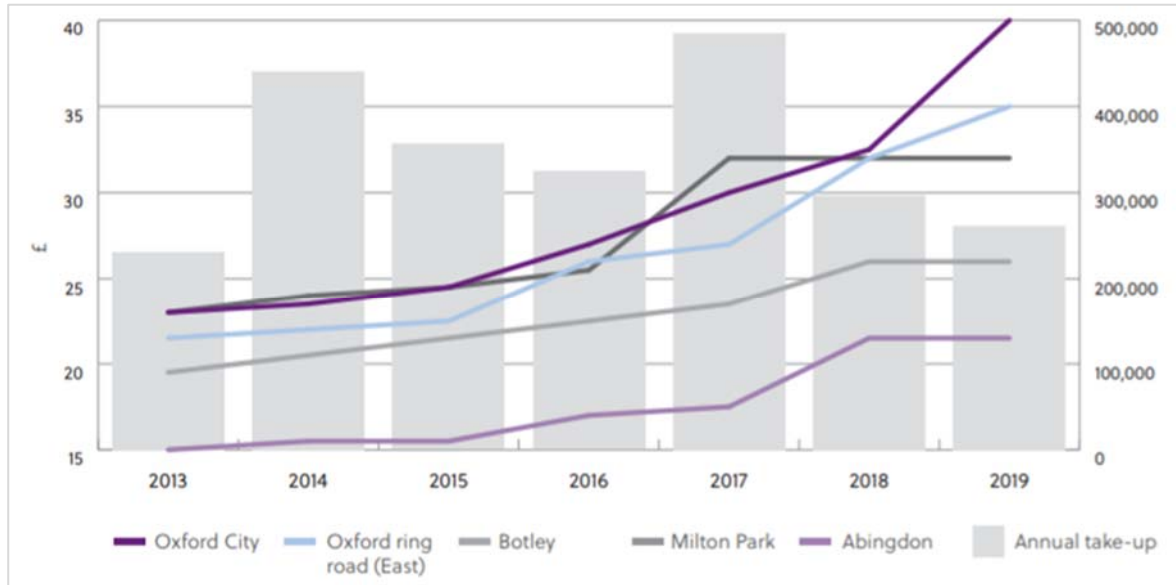
³⁷ Carter Jonas (2019) Commercial Edge Oxfordshire

³⁸ VSL (2019) Oxfordshire A34 Commercial Property Market Update 2019

but fall below those in Oxford. Rising rents are indicative of a supply/demand imbalance.

VSL predict that rental levels will rise further as the availability of the best office space continues to shrink.

Figure 6.3.1: Headline office rents and office floorspace take-up in Oxfordshire, 2013-19



Source: VSL.

VSL's Market Update indicates that the supply of office space has remained static and there is little speculative development expected to come forwards in 2020. As a result, existing refurbished office stock will continue to support the market.

Notwithstanding this, the office market sentiment in Oxfordshire is relatively strong, evidenced for instance by Legal & General's £4 billion investment with the University of Oxford to deliver a series of science & innovation districts with modern workspace and research facilities over the next decade.

In December 2019 Oxford City Council also approved the Oxford North planning application for the Northern Gateway area around the intersection of the A40 and A34, which is set to provide up to 87,300 sq.m of B1 floorspace providing 4,500 new jobs (including high quality workspace for start-ups), 480 new homes as well as shops, bars and restaurants.

An optimistic office market outlook was shared by Savills in Autumn 2019.³⁹ Their 2019 research cites expected growth of 8-9% growth in 'professional, scientific & tech' employment over the next 5 years. The top three office sectors in Oxford are identified as Technology, Media & Telecoms (28% of floorspace take-up), Energy & Utilities (18%), Biosciences (18%). Savills suggest that Oxford is poised to deliver significant new commercial floorspace in the coming years, which will drive prosperity.

However, the challenge will be accommodating companies in buildings they aspire to be in. As such, the City will need to provide the best quality and quantum of commercial floorspace. They cite that availability of office-type

³⁹ Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices - https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/288957-0

space (including laboratories) has been on a downward trend for the past decade. As the market had moved towards a (pre-Covid) 'new normal' of 500,000 sq.ft take-up pa in the past few years, the current supply level of around 900,000 sq.ft shows less than two years of supply in the market.

Savills Oxford Offices Spotlight, prepared in September 2020⁴⁰, indicates that despite lower take-up in the 1st half of 2020 and the effects of a shift towards home-working driven by the Covid-19 pandemic, there is a good pipeline of supply under offer in Q3, particularly of laboratory space, and a continuing contraction in the level of available space. They expect prime office rents in Oxford to rise to £45 per sq.ft in 2020 commenting:

“Occupier appetite is strong and will continue to strengthen. If the supply was available, particularly in the city centre, take-up would be much higher. The resulting effect has been a doubling of rents in the past six years and they are expected to top £45 this year and grow going forward. Tenant incentives have also come under downward pressure.”

As a result take-up in the Oxford market in 2020 is forecast at 380,000 sq.ft, similar to the 2019 outturn. Take-up continues to be dominated by science- and technology-related occupiers. Set against this, the availability of space has continued to contract and stood at 65,000 sq.ft in Q2 2020 equating to less than 1.5 years' supply based on recent trends. This can be expected to provide further rental growth.

Whilst Covid-19 has had notable effects on office markets in other areas, the science and R&D focus in Oxfordshire has had different effects. Oxfordshire has been at the forefront of work to find a vaccine for Covid-19, both in terms of research and manufacturing, with plans for a 7,500 sq.m footprint Vaccines Manufacturing and Innovation Centre (VMIC) at Harwell Campus fast-tracked to help deliver this.

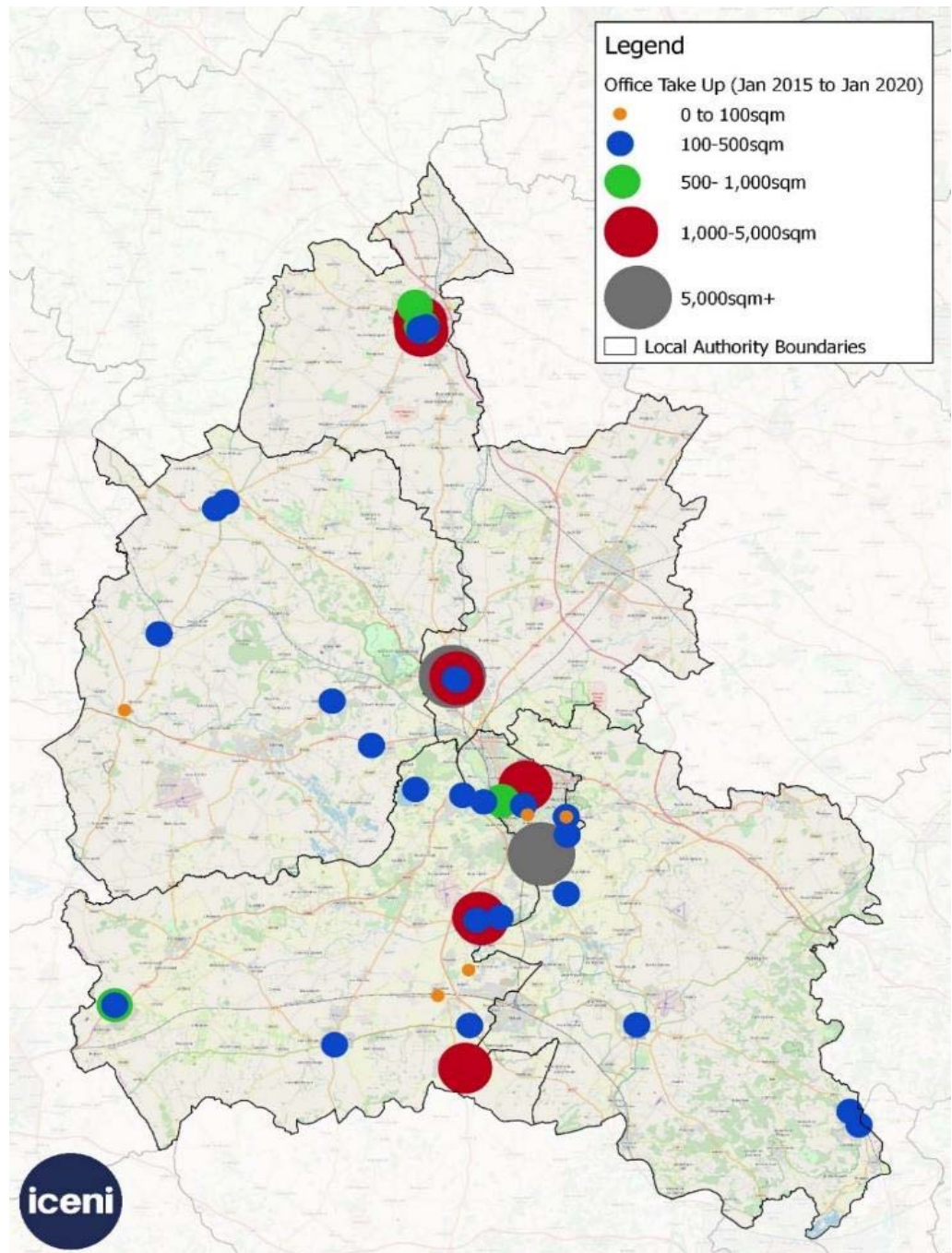
Iceni has undertaken its own analysis of office floorspace take-up and availability based on Estates Gazette (EGi) data on recorded deals and available space which is currently being marketed.

Figure 6.3.2 below shows the spatial distribution of office take-up across Oxfordshire based on the occupational deals available through EGi for January 2015 to January 2020.⁴¹ It shows a strong concentration of office and R&D market activity in/around Oxford, and along the “*Knowledge Spine*” stretching from Banbury in the north to Didcot/Milton Park in South Oxfordshire. There is a notable lack of office take-up in Bicester and Witney.

⁴⁰ Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices. Available at https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/304865-0

⁴¹ Egi - Radius Data Exchange

Figure 6.3.2: Office take-up across Oxfordshire, 2015-20



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

Turning to availability, as of January 2020, there were 541 available office premises as recorded by EGi Radius within Oxfordshire.⁴² The size and spatial distribution of these premises are illustrated on Figure 6.3.3 below. It is notable that the spatial distribution shows a strong level of supply around Oxford and in the southern parts of Oxfordshire. However, it is worth noting there is limited supply of Grade A office space in Oxford⁴³.

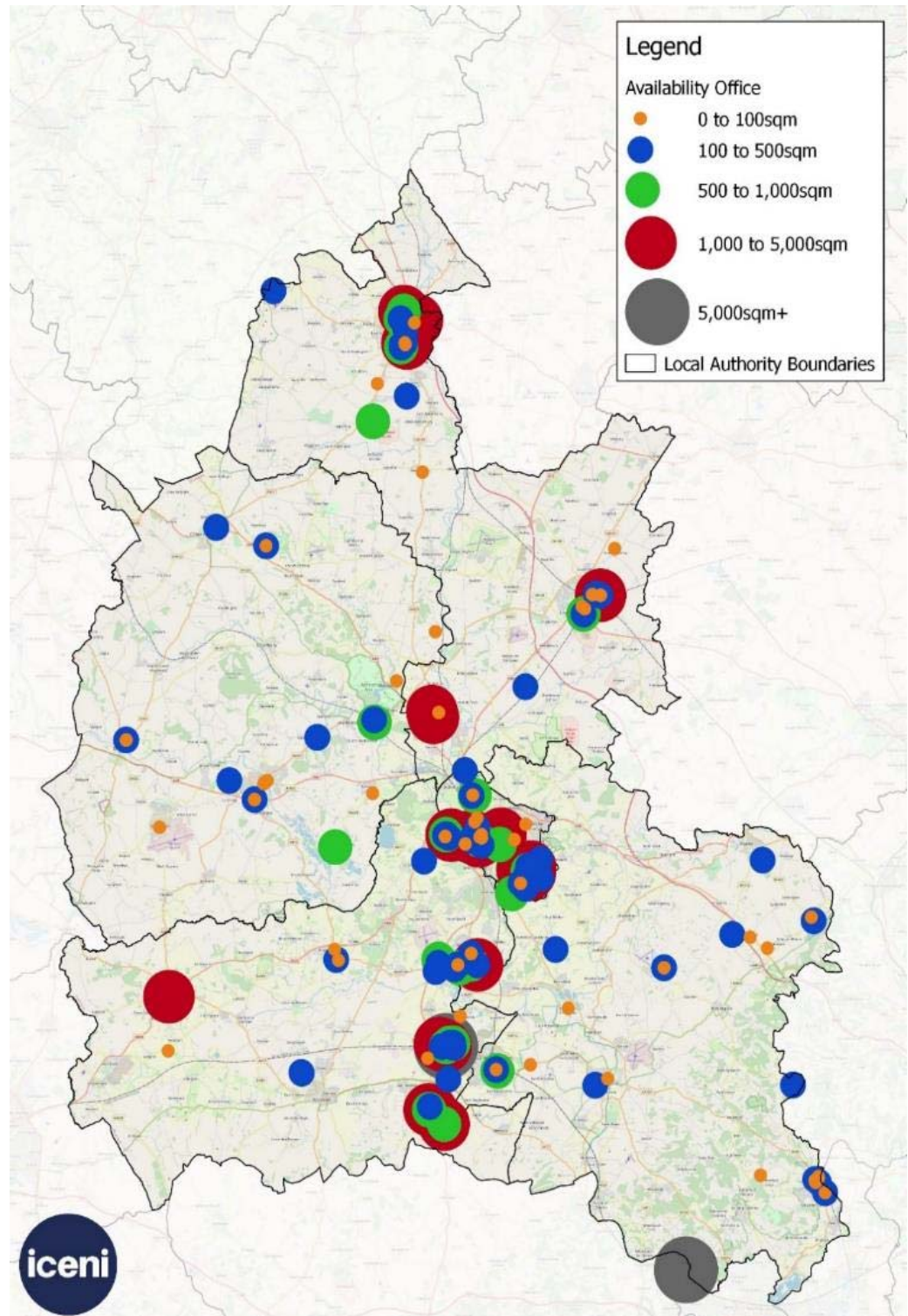
Larger office premises of over 1,000sqm are available in both town centres and along the A34 corridor (broadly corresponding to the 'Knowledge Spine'

⁴² EGi, Radius Data Exchange

⁴³ Savills (2019) Spotlight: Oxford Offices - https://www.savills.co.uk/research_articles/229130/288957-0

outlined in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy), with numerous smaller office premises below 500sqm spread across the county.

Figure 6.3.3: Office availability across Oxfordshire, January 2020



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

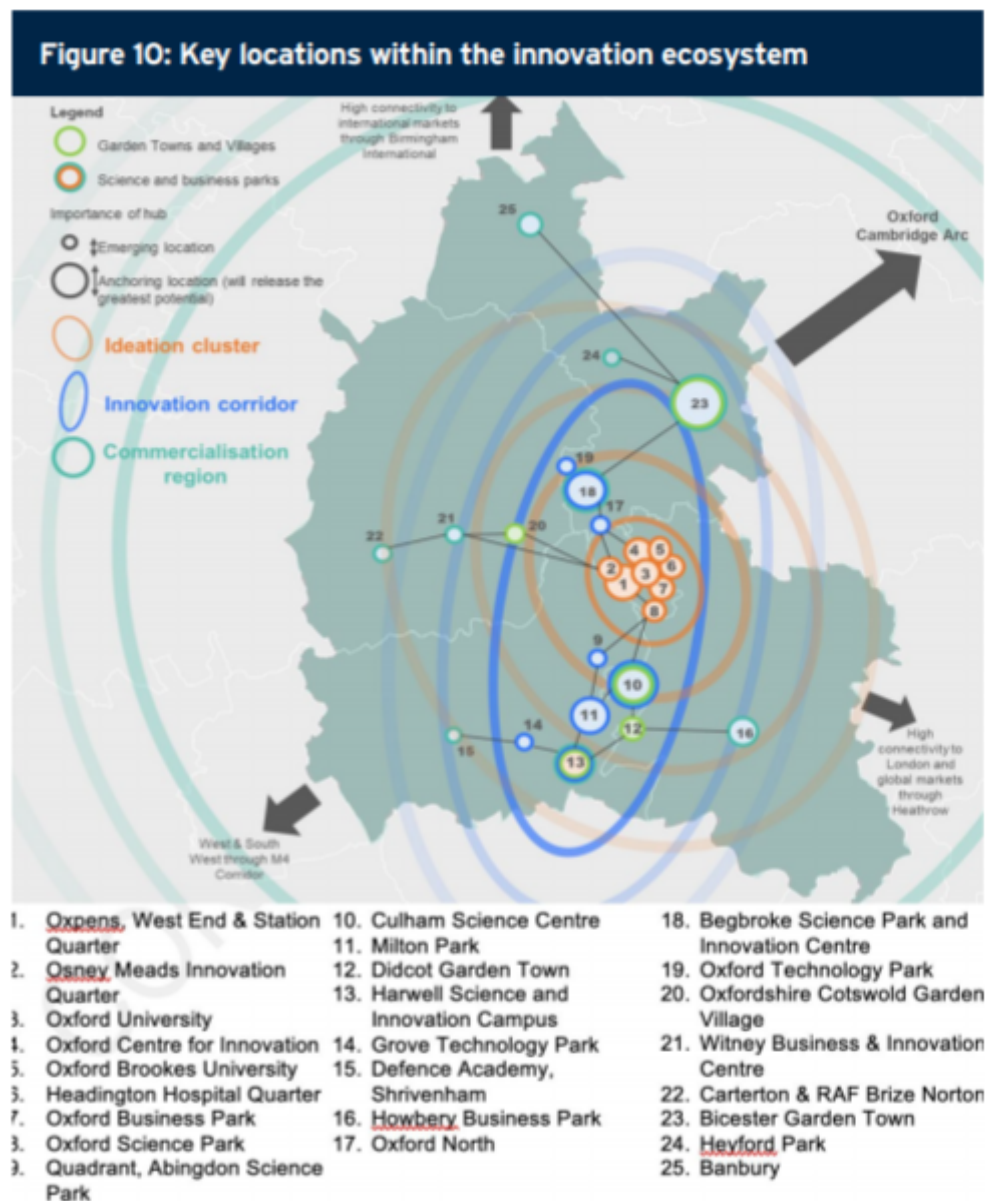
Figure 6.2.2 shows office take-up in both town/ city centre and business park locations. Demographics, working practices and staff preferences pre-Covid were reinforcing the appeal of town and city centres as locations which were amenity rich and supported social activity. However business parks have continued to play an important role, and research by Knight Frank has shown

that they have accounted for three quarters of space acquired by pharmaceutical, manufacturing and technology firms across the South East since 2000. These are important sectors to Oxfordshire’s economy.

The business park model has also been changing, with newer schemes seeking to design places which enable social and creative interactions through provision of amenities and investment in creating business eco-systems.

As the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy⁴⁴ highlights, the county has one of the highest concentrations of innovation assets in the World with a strong concentration of science, technology and business parks. The majority of knowledge intensive economic activity is clustered in/ around Oxford and along the Knowledge Spine. Key existing science and business park locations are provided in Figure 6.3.4 below.

Figure 6.3.4: Key science and business parks in Oxfordshire



Source: Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

⁴⁴Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (2019) Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Despite this strong existing stock of science and business parks, Oxfordshire faces a challenge with constraints on innovation space. Many of the science and business parks across the region are at capacity, particularly new laboratory facilities, clean rooms and flexible science working spaces.

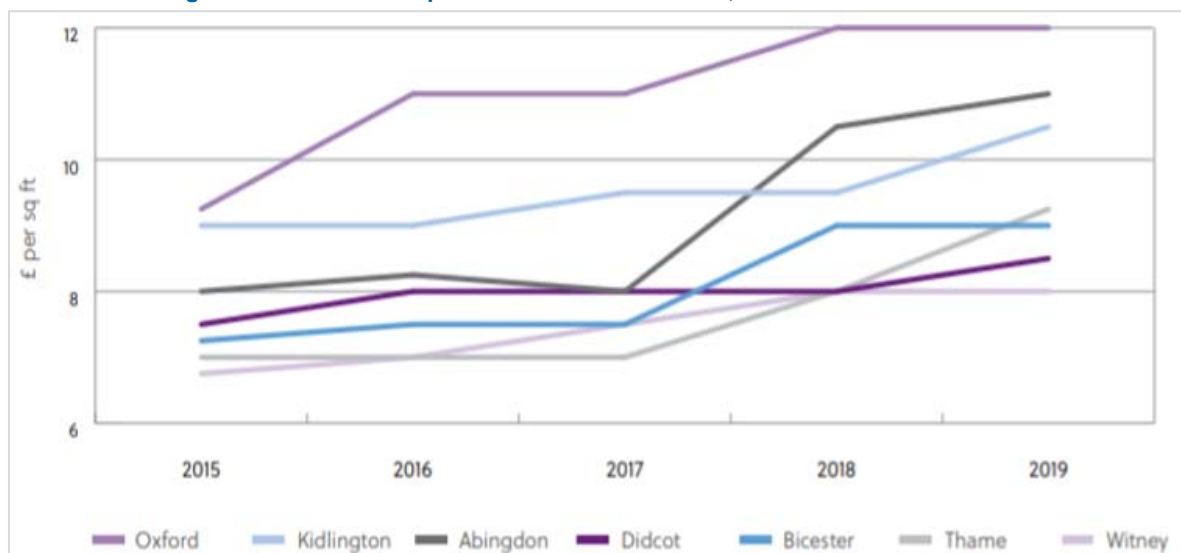
6.4 Oxfordshire's industrial market

The industrial market geography within Oxfordshire differs from that for office/R&D space, with Bicester and Banbury sitting within an M40 market (and Banbury relating in part towards the South Midlands); alongside an Oxford market which includes major manufacturers such as BMW Mini's Cowley plant. There are also local concentrations of activity elsewhere, including in Witney.

Prime industrial rents in Oxfordshire have remained on an upwards trajectory albeit at more subdued levels than in recent years, as shown in Figure 6.4.1. A lack of development opportunities and supply shortages have partly driven rents, with activity now increasingly focused on the second-hand market⁴⁵. 2019 saw a lower volume of industrial transactions at 35 relative to the 49 deals in 2017.

Bicester has recorded sustained rents over £8 per sq.ft for the first time with the letting of 120,000 sq.ft to Arrival Ltd, whilst prime science and technology industrial rents generally remaining between £15 and £16 per sq.ft. VSL's statistics for industrial prime rents across Oxfordshire are replicated below⁴⁶. Oxford sees the strongest rents (followed by Abingdon) indicative of stronger comparative demand.

Figure 6.4.1: Industrial prime rents in Oxfordshire, 2015-19



Source: VSL.

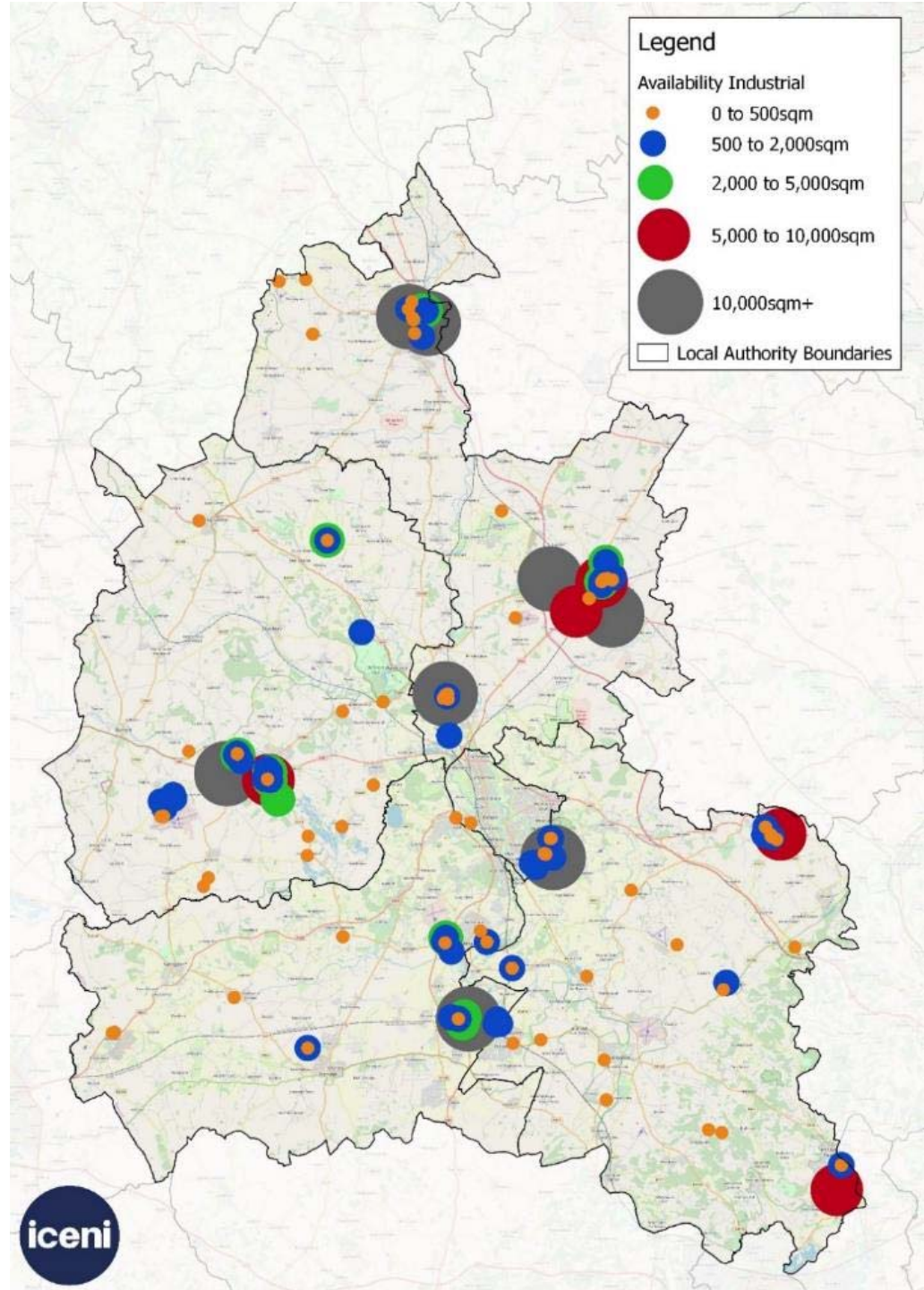
VSL's market update states industrial supply has increased by 64% with speculative development set to accelerate in 2020 which will further add to the available industrial supply.

⁴⁵ Carter Jonas (2019) Commercial Edge Oxfordshire

⁴⁶ VSL (2019) Oxfordshire A34 Commercial Property Market Update 2019

In terms of industrial premises, the occupational deals available through EGi for January 2015 to January 2020⁴⁷ are shown in Figure 6.4.3 below. The take-up of larger premises (5,000sqm+) were focussed on Didcot, Bicester and Banbury which are located closer to the M40 and M4 motorways. There is a noticeable lack of larger industrial take-up around Oxford, with smaller premises occupied in the surrounding towns across the centre of Oxfordshire.

Figure 6.4.2: Availability of industrial floorspace across Oxfordshire, 2015-20

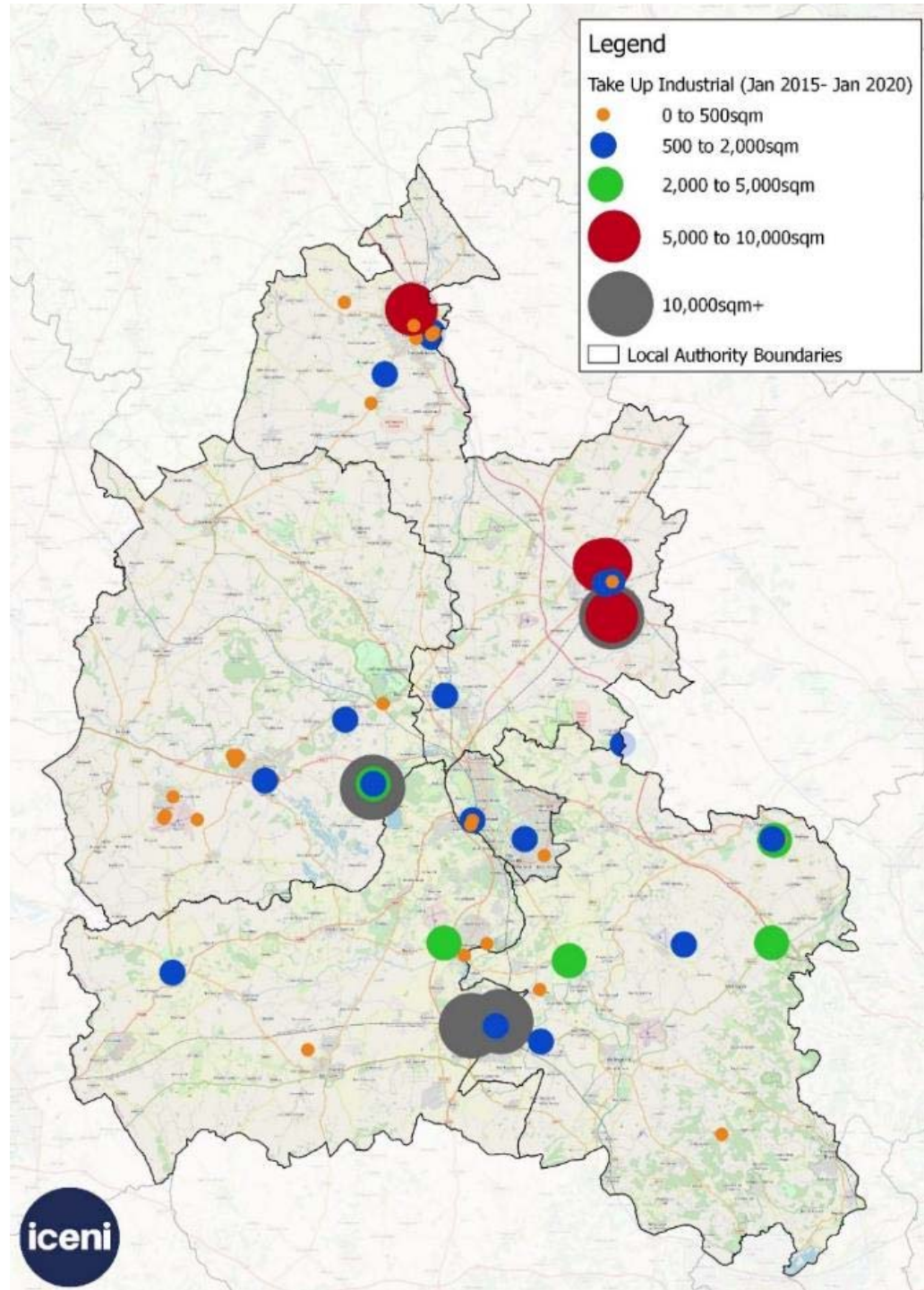


Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

⁴⁷ EGi, Radius Data Exchange

The spatial distribution of identified industrial supply (Figure 6.4.2) is not too dissimilar to the geography of past take-up. However, it is notable that larger industrial units are available towards the eastern boundary of Oxfordshire in Henley-on-Thames and Thame, as well as Witney. Also noticeable is the large amount of industrial speculative development taking place due to the release of land in Bicester.

Figure 6.4.3: Industrial floorspace take-up across Oxfordshire, 2015-20



Source: EGi, Icen Projects.

6.5 Conclusions

Analysis in this chapter has shown office take-up and availability is generally concentrated in Oxford and southwards along the 'Knowledge Spine', including Milton Park. Take-up and availability of industrial floorspace is more spread out across Oxfordshire, with noticeable amounts of speculative developments to the northeast of the county where there is good access to the M40.

Looking forwards, commercial agents are generally optimistic about the future of the local commercial property market. It is evident that there are short-term supply constraints in the office market, particularly in the Oxford area and for Grade A space, which is likely to drive further rental growth. Many of the area's science and business parks are at capacity. The evidence also points to a healthy market for industrial space.

The demand analysis forms part of the evidence base which should be used to develop the strategy for employment land provision in the Oxfordshire Plan. This includes in *Chapter 11*, which provides a forward-looking overview of the quantitative scale of employment land needs in Oxfordshire.

Part B: Exploring Oxfordshire's Future Growth Needs

7 Oxfordshire's Housing Need Using the Standard Method

7.1 Introduction

Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a "*Standard Method*" for calculating the minimum local housing need for a local authority.

This is intended to provide a minimum local housing need figure ("*a minimum baseline*") using an approach which is simpler, quicker and more transparent than previous methods; and in doing so has removed much of the scope for professional judgement or debate about the minimum level for future housing provision.

In this chapter, IcenI has set out the current Standard Method calculations for Oxfordshire.

Note that the calculations presented here were estimated utilising affordability data for 2019 (released March 2020). Consideration of more recent affordability data (for 2020, released March 2021) is provided in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*.

7.2 Standard Method minimum local housing need

The Standard Method is structured around three core stages, as illustrated in Figure 7.2.1:

Figure 7.2.1: Overview of the Standard Method (2018) for calculating local housing need



Source: IcenI Projects.

The first step in the Standard Method takes the projected household growth from trend-based household projections over the next 10 years. Given the Oxfordshire Plan period begins in 2020, household growth over the period from 2020-2030 has been used. For Oxfordshire the Government's official (2014-based) household projections show growth of 2,387 households per year, adding together the figures for the five local authorities.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The Standard Method was designed around the use of 2014-based Household Projections. Whilst a 2016-based set of household projections were published in 2018 and a 2018-based set in 2020, these adopt a different methodology and show a notably lower level of housing need across England. Government

The second stage applies an uplift to this to take account of affordability based on the latest house price to income ratio figure. The detailed calculations are set out in Figure 7.1.2, with the adjustments applied to the household growth separately for each local authority based on its affordability position as published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).⁴⁹ The combined effect of this across Oxfordshire is to increase the housing need by 42% relative to the household projections, generating an (uncapped) need for 3,383 homes a year across Oxfordshire.

In the third step in the Standard Method the affordability uplift is capped in some circumstances which reduces the minimum number generated by the method, but does not reduce housing need itself. The cap was designed to ensure that the method produces figures which were ‘as deliverable as possible.’ Where a plan has been adopted or reviewed in the last five years, the cap is set at 40% above the relevant housing requirement figure set out in existing policies. Where there is not an up-to-date plan, the cap is set at either 40% above the household growth projected, or 40% above the housing requirement, whichever is the higher.

Of the Oxfordshire authorities, it is only Oxford’s figures which are affected by the cap which is set at 40% above the projected household growth. The effect of this is to reduce the minimum figure for local housing need which might be applied in the short-term (to 3,348 homes a year).

Planning Practice Guidance however sets out that the cap does not affect the underlying level of housing need and areas which progress plans based on the cap would need to be reviewed in the short-term “*to ensure that any housing need above the capped level is planned for as soon as is reasonably possible.*” Given that the Oxfordshire Plan is looking to 2050, Icenic consider that the cap has a limited bearing on considering how many homes to plan for on this basis.

The fourth step in the methodology, introduced in late 2020, applies a cities and urban centres uplift to the top 20 local authorities (ranked by population size) across England. This does not include Oxford or any other Oxfordshire authorities and therefore does not affect figures for Oxfordshire.

Planning Practice Guidance⁵⁰ states that the Standard Method generates an annual number, based on a 10-year baseline, which can be applied to the whole plan period. Table 7.2.1 below shows the implications of doing this. The Standard Method generates a minimum local housing need for 33,350 homes over the 2020-2030 period.

The uncapped need would be slightly higher at 33,830 homes to 2030. If notionally the Standard Method was applied to the whole plan period to 2050, it would generate a need for 101,490 homes; however most plans do not have a 30 year timeframe instead looking 15-20 years into the future.

has indicated that the use of the 2016-based Household Projections in the Standard Method is not consistent with its aims to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s and revised Planning Practice Guidance in February 2019 to indicate that the 2014-based Household Projections should be used in the Standard Method. The same position would apply to the 2018-based Household Projections.

⁴⁹ ONS house price to workplace-based earnings ratio data, published March 2020

⁵⁰ ID: 2a-012-20190220

Table 7.2.1: Standard Method local housing need for Oxfordshire

	2020-30	2030-40	2040-50	2020-50
Local housing need (uncapped)	33,830			
Minimum uncapped need (capped)	33,350	33,830	33,830	101,490

Source: Icen Projects.

The detailed calculations are shown in the Table 7.2.2 below. Local authority level figures are used as building blocks to generate the baseline housing need at an Oxfordshire level. It is for the Oxfordshire Plan to consider how housing provision is distributed within the county.

Table 7.2.2: Standard Method local housing need for Oxfordshire (2014 Household Projections)

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	Vale of White Horse	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Step 1: Setting the Baseline						
Households 2020	62,135	61,621	58,246	54,642	47,462	284,106
Households 2030	67,526	67,046	62,369	59,545	51,489	307,975
Change in households	5,391	5,425	4,123	4,903	4,027	23,869
Per annum change	539	543	412	490	403	2,387
Step 2: Affordability Adjustment						
Affordability ratio, 2019	10.43	11.45	11.6	9.57	10.38	-
Adjustment factor	40%	47%	48%	35%	40%	-
Step 2 housing need figure (dwellings per annum)	756	795	608	661	563	3,383
Step 3: Capping						
40% above household growth	755	760	577	686	564	3,342
40% above plan requirement	1,142	762	766	1,439	924	-
Cap figure to be applied	1,599	762	766	1,439	924	-
Cap applicable	No	Yes	No	No	No	-
Minimum local housing need (dwellings per annum)	756	762	608	661	563	3,350

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

The Standard Method is sensitive to both the household projections and annual changes in affordability. Plan-making authorities are expected to review the figures on the release of new data; and thus the figures generated by the Standard Method may well change between now and the point of submission of the Oxfordshire Plan. Planning Practice Guidance states that

the figures are then fixed and can be relied upon for a period of 2 years from the submission of the Plan.⁵¹

7.3 Implications of the adjusted demographic baseline projections

The Standard Method figures set out above, which use the 2014-based Household Projections, form a starting point for considering housing need. The analysis undertaken in *Chapter 2* of this report however indicated that there are notable issues with the demographic data for Oxford in particular, where past population growth appears to have been under-estimated.

It is reasonable that these revised demographic projections which are based on a more detailed interrogation of demographic trends in Oxfordshire and have been prepared to provide a more reasonable trend-based analysis of demographic growth should be used as a baseline in the Standard Method.

If these 'adjusted baseline' demographic projections are fed into the Standard Method, the resultant local housing need rises slightly to 3,386 dwellings per annum. The calculations for individual authorities are set out in Table 7.3.1 below. The district-level breakdown is set out for illustrative purposes only to show how the Oxfordshire total is derived.

Table 7.3.1: Standard Method local housing need in Oxfordshire (adjusted demographic baseline projections)

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Oxon	VoWH	West Oxon	Oxfordshire
Households 2020	64,191	59,992	60,150	56,834	47,832	288,999
Households 2030	70,227	64,969	64,554	62,668	50,506	312,923
Change 2020-30	6,036	4,976	4,404	5,834	2,674	23,924
Change 2030-30 per annum	604	498	440	583	267	2,392
Affordability ratio (2019)	10.43	11.45	11.6	9.57	10.38	-
Affordability Uplift	40%	47%	48%	35%	40%	-
Local Housing Need	846	729	650	786	374	3,386

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

Applied over a 30-year period (2020-50), these would show these would show a notional need for 101,580 homes.

7.4 The demographic implications of the standard method

Having established the projected household growth from the Standard Method, a projection has been developed by JGC and Icen where the population and number of households increases such that these dwellings would be filled. The purpose of this is to consider with this level of housing provision, what level of workforce and economic growth would be supported. It uses the figures set out in Table 7.4.2 above based on the 'adjusted baseline' demographic projections.

⁵¹ ID: 2a-008-20190220

The methodology adopted essentially takes the latest 2018-based subnational population projections ('SNPP') as a start point along with data about household formation from the 2014-based subnational household projections ('SNHP') – this latter source is used as it is considered that the 2016-based SNHP may include an increased degree of suppressed household formation, something the Standard Method is specifically designed to address.

Adjustments are also made to the 2014-based SNHP data to reflect any suppression within that source through modelling a 'part return to trend' towards those in the (pre-recession) 2008-based Household Projections for those aged 25-34 and 35-44. This approach was widely used prior to the publication of the ONS 2016-based Household Projections and was recommended by the Local Plans Expert Group to Government in its 2016 Report.⁵²

The method used is considered to be consistent with suggestions in the PPG which is clear that the increase in household growth implied by the Standard Method will arise due to both a) increases in household formation (where this is constrained by supply) and b) the possibility that people are not able to live in a particular area due to a lack of housing. The wording of the PPG (2a-006) is as follows:

“An affordability adjustment is applied as household growth on its own is insufficient as an indicator of future housing need because:

- *household formation is constrained to the supply of available properties – new households cannot form if there is nowhere for them to live; and*
- *people may want to live in an area in which they do not reside currently, for example to be near to work, but be unable to find appropriate accommodation that they can afford.*

The affordability adjustment is applied in order to ensure that the Standard Method for assessing local housing need responds to price signals and is consistent with the policy objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The specific adjustment in this guidance is set at a level to ensure that minimum annual housing need starts to address the affordability of homes.”

Within the modelling, migration assumptions have been changed so that across the county (and individual local authorities) the increase in households matches the Standard Method local housing need (including a 3% vacancy allowance). Household formation assumptions have also been raised to support improved household formation as affordability improves.

The changes to migration have been applied on a proportionate basis; the methodology assumes that the age/sex profile of both in- and out-migrants is the same as underpins the 2018-based SNPP (alternative internal migration assumptions) with adjustments being consistently applied to both internal

⁵²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508345/Local-plans-report-to-governement.pdf

(domestic) and international migration. Adjustments are made to both in- and out-migration (e.g. if in-migration is increased by 1% then out-migration is reduced by 1%). In summary the method includes the following assumptions:

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050
- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20)
- The migration profile (by age and sex) in the same proportions as the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP
- Fertility and mortality rates (by age and sex) as per the 2018-based SNPP – where rolled forward from 2043 to 2050 this assumes a continuation of any trends identified in the SNPP
- Household Representative Rates (HRRs) from the 2014-based subnational household projections (SNHP) and a part-return to trend method for the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups
- Vacancy rate of 3% to convert households into dwellings

Table 7.4.1 below shows how the population might be expected to change under this scenario (for the whole of the county). This shows particularly strong changes in older age groups and more modest increases for younger groups. However, when compared with the 2018-based SNPP as published (and rolled forward to 2050) there is projected to be notably higher growth in younger age groups (see further analysis below). Overall, it is projected that the population would grow by around 25% in the 30-year period (an additional 183,000 people in total).

Table 7.4.1: Population change in Oxfordshire, by five-year age bands under the Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50

	Population, 2020	Population, 2050	Change in population, 2020-50	% change in population, 2020-50
Under 5	40,380	49,394	9,014	22.3%
5-9	42,576	49,462	6,886	16.2%
10-14	42,281	49,069	6,788	16.1%
15-19	42,962	52,258	9,296	21.6%
20-24	53,436	62,246	8,810	16.5%
25-29	50,449	56,950	6,501	12.9%
30-34	47,097	54,747	7,650	16.2%
35-39	48,447	56,046	7,599	15.7%
40-44	44,329	53,804	9,474	21.4%
45-49	46,513	50,010	3,498	7.5%
50-54	48,298	52,300	4,001	8.3%
55-59	45,919	52,647	6,727	14.7%
60-64	38,988	50,052	11,064	28.4%

65-69	33,591	47,391	13,801	41.1%
70-74	33,453	42,152	8,699	26.0%
75-79	24,871	40,815	15,943	64.1%
80-84	18,386	37,131	18,746	102.0%
85+	18,583	47,086	28,503	153.4%
Total	720,560	903,558	182,998	25.4%

Source: Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 7.3.1 below compares the projected population growth in the 2018-based SNPP (as rolled forward to 2050) with the data above. It can be seen that by linking to the Standard Method there is a much higher level of population growth projected and that this additional growth is within some of the younger age groups.

Table 7.4.2: Population change in Oxfordshire, by five-year age bands, comparing the 2018-based SNPP with the Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50

	2018-based SNPP	Standard Method (adjusted baseline)	Absolute difference
Under 5	337	9,014	8,677
5-9	-3,322	6,886	10,208
10-14	-3,153	6,788	9,942
15-19	999	9,296	8,297
20-24	1,140	8,810	7,669
25-29	-1,279	6,501	7,780
30-34	668	7,650	6,982
35-39	46	7,599	7,553
40-44	791	9,474	8,684
45-49	-6,217	3,498	9,715
50-54	-7,359	4,001	11,360
55-59	-4,263	6,727	10,990
60-64	2,647	11,064	8,416
65-69	8,023	13,801	5,778
70-74	3,743	8,699	4,956
75-79	11,750	15,943	4,193
80-84	16,266	18,746	2,480
85+	26,276	28,503	2,226
Total	47,093	182,998	135,905

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

For individual local authorities, Table 7.4.3 below shows the overall population growth projected in each of the 2018-based SNPP and when linking delivery to the Standard Method. This shows in all cases that there is a substantial difference between the two figures. This is particularly the case for Oxford where the difference in population growth over the 30-year period is approaching 50,000 people.

Of particular significance to considering the inter-relationship between housing and economic growth is what level of economic growth these levels of housing provision might support. These issues are considered further in *Chapter 10*.

Table 7.4.3: Population change in Oxfordshire, comparing the 2018-based SNPP with the Standard Method and Standard Method (adjusted baseline), 2020-50

		Population, 2020	Population, 2050	Change in population, 2020-50	% change in population, 2020-50
Cherwell	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	150,862	165,325	14,463	9.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	156,459	194,088	37,629	24.1%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	156,459	200,694	44,235	28.3%
Oxford	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	153,580	147,005	-6,575	-4.3%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	163,856	206,811	42,954	26.2%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	163,856	204,506	40,649	24.8%
South Oxon	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	141,840	152,581	10,741	7.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	147,161	179,394	32,233	21.9%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	147,161	182,666	35,505	24.1%
VoWH	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	137,175	160,545	23,371	17.0%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	138,745	173,336	34,591	24.9%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	138,745	183,421	44,675	32.2%
West Oxon	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	110,391	115,483	5,093	4.6%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	114,339	146,795	32,455	28.4%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	114,339	132,272	17,933	15.7%
Oxfordshire	<i>2018-SNPP</i>	693,847	740,940	47,093	6.8%
	<i>Standard Method</i>	720,560	900,423	179,863	25.0%
	<i>Standard Method (adjusted)</i>	720,560	903,558	182,998	25.4%

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting

7.5 Conclusions

The Government's Standard Method provides a minimum assessment of an area's local housing need. The minimum local housing need generated applying Government Planning Practice Guidance is for 3,350 dwellings per annum in Oxfordshire. The figures for Oxford are however subject to a cap. The uncapped need is for 3,383 dwellings per annum which notionally equates to 101,490 dwellings if applied over the 30-year plan period for the Oxfordshire Plan (2020-50).

The demographic analysis in this report identified issues with an under-counting of historical population growth, particularly in Oxford. An 'adjusted baseline' demographic projection was this developed which if used within the Standard Method formula generates a moderately higher need for 3,386 dwellings per annum. Icenii would advise that the minimum or baseline level of provision to be considered for the Oxfordshire Plan would be the 'uncapped need' for 3,386 dwellings per annum or notionally 101,580 homes over the plan period to 2050.

8 Oxfordshire's Economic Trajectories

8.1 Introduction

As noted in previous chapters, there is evidence to suggest that the particular economic characteristics and wider strategic context of Oxfordshire are such that additional consideration is required to assess the compatibility of the Standard Method of housing need assessment with wider growth ambitions for the sub-region, or whether significant differences exist.

This chapter therefore identifies the economic ambition for Oxfordshire, as laid out in Oxfordshire's Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), updated for 2020 with CE's own local sectoral modelling, using additional years of data and updated assumptions about UK national and regional growth potential.

This then provides the basis for an appraisal of a realistic economic ambition for Oxfordshire, its implications for employment demand, and the subsequent level of commercial space and residential property development that would be required to facilitate such growth.

This chapter is not intended to judge the desirability of any particular growth path, but simply quantify these differences between different visions for the county in a robust and transparent manner.

Starting with an overview and interrogation of the LIS and its sectoral vision, the chapter outlines CE's modelling assumptions and approach, before presenting three potential economic trajectories for Oxfordshire.

8.2 The Oxfordshire LIS and its sectoral vision

Oxfordshire's LIS sets out an ambitious economic strategy for the county up to 2040. Innovation-led and sector driven, it outlines how and where Oxfordshire LEP's (OxLEP's) sectoral ambitions and growth aspirations will be delivered.

To inform and enable robust, policy-aligned projections up to 2050, CE has scrutinised and interrogated the information presented in the LIS and its supporting evidence base, specifically sector-based projections of employment, output and productivity.

One of the recurring themes of the Oxfordshire LIS is to *"position Oxfordshire as one of the top three global innovation ecosystems by 2040"*. This has driven the adoption of eight **"breakthrough sectors"** in the LIS, adapted from activities previously outlined in the Oxfordshire Science and Innovation Audit. The eight sectors are:

- Quantum computing
- Life sciences and digital health
- Space-led data applications
- Robotics and Autonomous Systems
- Automotive and motorsport
- Creative and digital
- Cryogenics
- Energy

According to the LIS, these breakthrough sectors are currently “*shaping the twenty first century and expect rapid growth in the coming decades*” and will “*provide jobs for generations, providing a sustainable economic base for Oxfordshire and the country*”.

The use of “*breakthrough*” terminology to define these sectors reflects analysis from the LIS evidence base, which utilised detailed business analytics to segment Oxfordshire businesses into two distinct but interrelated groups:

- Cornerstone businesses “*are the backbone of the economy and provide the platform for economic growth*” (e.g. public administration, education, construction)
- Breakthrough businesses “*are riskier, operate in markets where innovation is critical for survival and have the potential to become world leaders in their industry*” (e.g. those activities outlined in the LIS)

Table 8.2.1: Employment (jobs) in LIS sectors within Oxfordshire, 2018

	Employee jobs ⁵³ , 2018	% of total Oxfordshire employee jobs	Employee jobs growth, 2009-2018	Employee jobs % growth, 2009-2018	Location quotient (LQ), 2018	aGVA ⁵⁴ (2016, £m), 2018
Robotics and Autonomous Systems	17,050	4.7%	5,600	48.9%	3.1	£1,000
Life sciences and digital health	11,700	3.2%	5,900	101.7%	1.5	£245
Space-led data applications	825	0.2%	695	534.6%	0.6	£27
Quantum computing	8,095	2.2%	1,685	26.3%	4.4	£251
Automotive and motorsport	10,125	2.8%	1,855	22.4%	1.5	£635
Creative and digital	26,420	7.2%	2,370	9.9%	1.2	£1,822
Energy	3,700	1.0%	660	21.7%	0.9	£321
<i>Total 'breakthrough sectors'⁵⁵</i>	<i>60,070</i>	<i>16.5%</i>	<i>12,860</i>	<i>27.2%</i>	<i>1.4</i>	<i>£3,305</i>
<i>Total 'cornerstone sectors'</i>	<i>304,485</i>	<i>83.5%</i>	<i>35,360</i>	<i>13.1%</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>-</i>
Total Oxfordshire economy	364,555	-	48,220	15.2%	-	-

Source: Source: Oxfordshire LIS, ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

As Table 8.2.1 shows, the sectoral narrative within the LIS is well-founded; across almost all breakthrough sectors⁵⁶ Oxfordshire displays high degrees of specialisation and growth potential. Currently, the activity of breakthrough businesses in Oxfordshire supports some 60,100 highly skilled jobs and £3.5bn of approximate GVA (aGVA). This equates to 17% of all jobs within Oxfordshire, significantly higher than the 12% average elsewhere in the country.

This breakthrough business base is also more vibrant in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country; its jobs growth of 27% since 2009 (equating to some 12,900 additional jobs) eclipses the national average of 20%. It is also double

⁵³ Employee jobs exclude the self-employed, armed forces personnel and government supported trainees

⁵⁴ Approximate GVA. It is a measure of the income generated by businesses less their expenditure. Data for Oxfordshire is available [here](#).

⁵⁵ Not a sum of totals as excludes the double-counting of activities included in more than one sector

⁵⁶ Data for cryogenics cannot be estimated using currently available data. At a nationwide level, the sector supports some £324 of GVA, whilst cryogenic technologies underpin around 17% of the UK economy (Source: Oxfordshire LIS)

the growth (13%) of the “cornerstone” business sector in Oxfordshire, with a quarter of all additional jobs in Oxfordshire since 2009 being within breakthrough sectors.

Drawing on this baseline evidence, the LIS goes on to present two sector-led, spatially considerate growth trajectories for the county, relating to contrasting scenarios for the Oxfordshire economy:

- **A “do nothing” scenario**, which *“outlines key outcomes in a future where the economy continues on its baseline trajectory without the implementation of the Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy or other initiatives to manage the growth trajectory”.*
- **A “go for growth” scenario**, that *“assess[es] the impact of future policy interventions in Oxfordshire’s economy from now until 2040 to identify what Oxfordshire’s economy might look like in the future. This highlights the potential for Oxfordshire to double its GVA by 2040 to be worth £46 billion”.*

The scenarios, and associated projections were prepared independently for the LIS by external consultants PwC utilising a Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model. Importantly, PwC’s assumptions for the “go for growth” scenario *“incorporate the planned interventions outlined in the final Oxfordshire Industrial Strategy document which are expected to bring about a step-change in economic growth”.* This includes interventions and longer-term trends related to infrastructure, connectivity, housing, labour markets and innovation, as presented in the final LIS document.

Under this scenario, PwC outlines that the Oxfordshire economy could grow at an average annual rate of 2.9% in real terms until 2040, some 0.9p.p. higher than its baseline trajectory (what PwC calls its ‘do nothing’ scenario), equivalent to Oxfordshire’s economy doubling in size (+£23 billion). This growth will be innovation-led, driven by a 2% increase in productivity per annum as well as 108,000 new jobs.

The LIS expects businesses within both categories to drive this “go for growth”, *“growth will be driven by innovation and higher productivity – both in those emerging sectors which will harness transformative technologies, and in sectors that have historically driven the economy”.* Spatially, the vision emphasises a *“polycentric network of innovation clusters”* (as highlighted in Figure 6.3.4/Figure 10 in the LIS) that *“illustrates the preferred spatial pattern of growth that should take place over the next decades.”*

The evidence and ambitions presented in the LIS, which have been agreed by key stakeholders and endorsed by Government, should be a central consideration of any spatial vision for Oxfordshire. In the following chapters, this is taken one step further with the evidence and accompanying methodology – specifically PwC’s sectoral trajectories of jobs, GVA and employment – scrutinized to ensure robustness and alignment with policy expectations and CE’s understanding of Oxfordshire’s economic drivers.

8.3 Approaches to modelling economic growth

CE utilised its bespoke Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM) component of its MDM-E3 model to provide sector-led baseline and aspirational projections of employment, GVA and productivity for Oxfordshire. In terms of

basic structure, purpose and coverage, there are broad similarities between PwC’s CGE model and CE’s equivalent MDM-E3 model.

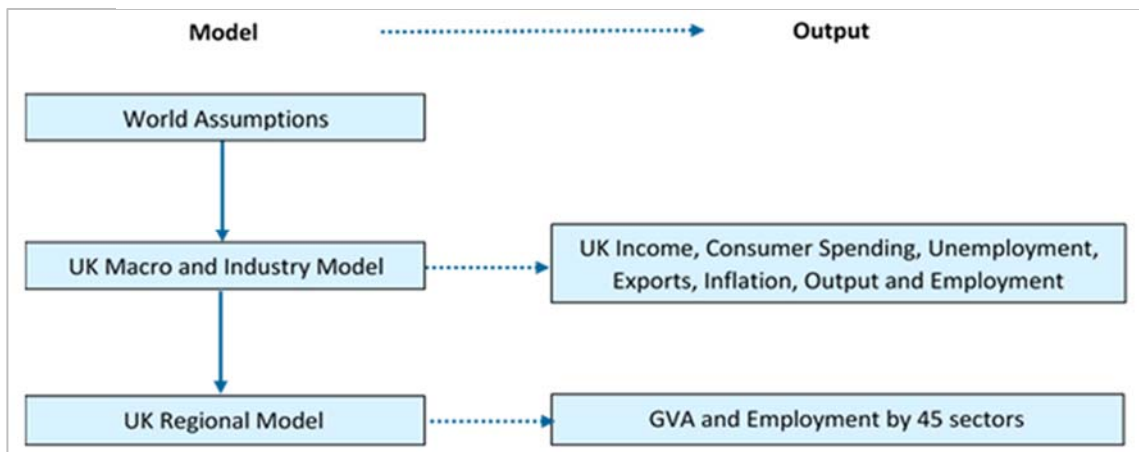
For instance, both are based on a consistent national accounting framework and make use of similar data sources and structure. However, beneath the surface there are substantial differences in modelling approach, and it is important to be aware of this when interpreting model results.

The two types of model come from distinct economic backgrounds; while generally consistent in their accounting, identity balances, they differ substantially in their treatment of behavioural relationships. Ultimately this comes down to assumptions about optimisation. The CGE model favours fixing behaviour in line with economic theory, by assuming that individuals act instantaneously and rationally in their own self-interest, allowing markets to clear; in this way demand automatically adjusts to meet potential supply.

Within the LIS, PwC acknowledges that this is an issue with the CGE approach to modelling; *“in the Oxfordshire housing market we know that this [supply meeting demand] is not true. In fact, it is not true in any of the key markets in Oxfordshire.”* In contrast, models such as CE’s MDM-E3 interrogate historical data sets to try to determine behavioural factors on an empirical basis.

This means CE’s MDM-E3 can fully assess both short and long-term impacts and is not limited by many of the restrictive assumptions common to CGE models, allowing for more robust and integrated projections. For instance, CE’s MDM-E3 does not assume optimising behaviour and full utilisation of resources. It therefore includes real-world features such as involuntary unemployment, ‘endogenous money’, and the adoption of new technologies. This has important practical implications for scenario analysis.

Figure 8.3.1: Links between Cambridge Econometrics’ suite of models



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

Another important feature of this modelling approach is the link to CE’s wider modelling suite, ensuring any local area forecasts are consistent with CE’s world, UK national and UK regional forecasts and assumptions, as Figure 8.3.1 shows. This modelling suite is typically updated twice annually; the most recent update available for the OGNA, in July 2019, incorporates the impact of the UK’s decision to leave the European single market (‘Brexit’).

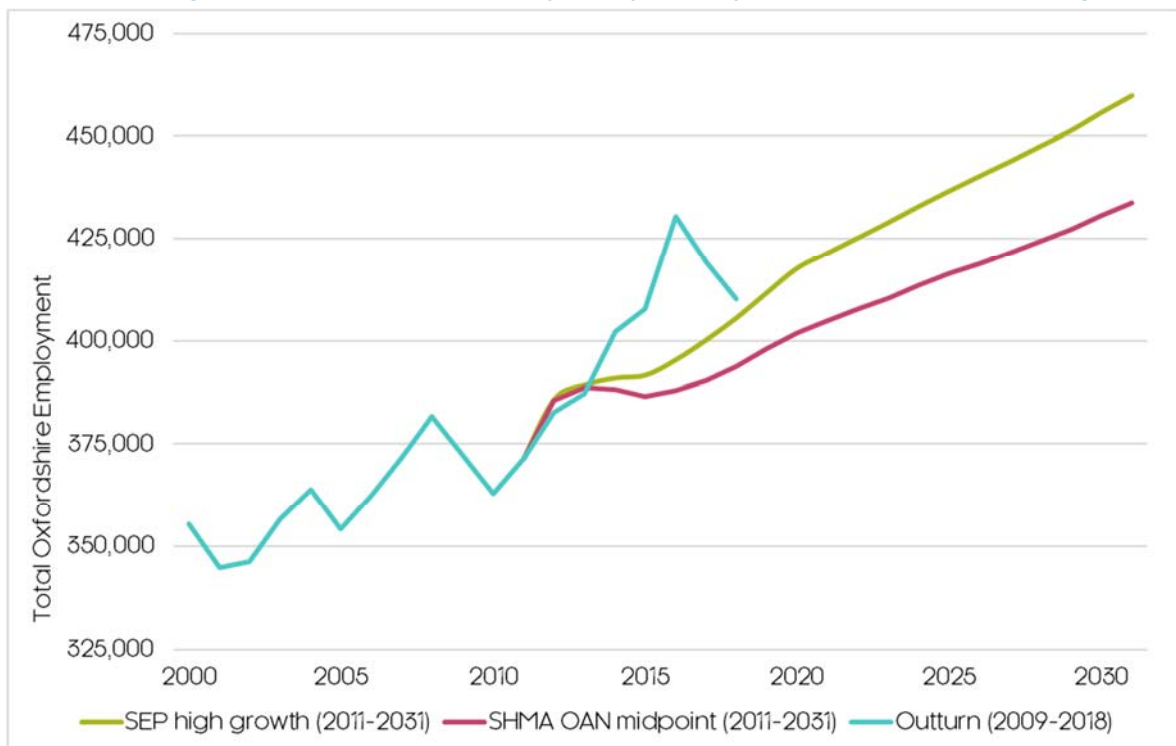
Therefore, CE's headline UK forecasts are developed within the context of the changing nature of the UK's trading relationship with the European Union. These national level impacts are then systematically distributed to regions and local areas, based on historic sectoral relationships. Resultantly, the forecasts that have been developed for the OGNA account for the potential impact of Brexit on Oxfordshire's sectors and economy.

8.4 Oxfordshire's past growth projections

In developing its projections, CE also interrogated Oxfordshire's performance against previous growth projections, such as those presented in its 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and 2014/16 Strategic Economic Plan (SEP, also prepared by OxLEP). This has enabled CE to produce empirically sound trajectories for the area, by gauging Oxfordshire's ability to deliver against – and in some cases go beyond - previous policy aspirations and baseline projections.

Figure 8.4.1 depicts the SHMA Committed Economic Growth Scenario employment projection produced by CE in 2014 (pink line) on which the conclusions on objectively assessed housing need were primarily based. The out-turn (i.e. actual data) is shown in light blue.

Figure 8.4.1: Oxfordshire's employment (jobs) projections under previous strategies



Source: Oxfordshire strategic documents, Cambridge Econometrics.

As of the most recent year of data in 2018, the outturn exceeds the SHMA Committed Economic Growth Scenario from 2014 (by around 16,200 additional jobs), and in fact more closely aligns with the SEP's higher growth scenario. As such, Oxfordshire's economy has demonstrated an ability to generate employment at an accelerated rate, and this performance could provide a suitable indication of the Oxfordshire's central trajectory for future employment growth.

8.5 Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

CE has prepared three sector-led growth trajectories for the Oxfordshire economy (set within its MDM-E3 macroeconomic model). One of these trajectories, the **business as usual** trajectory, is the extension of Oxfordshire's recent trend of accelerated growth, as observed in Figure 8.4.1.

The **Standard Method (adjusted)** trajectory presents an estimate of the level of employment growth enabled by the level of housing growth calculated using the Standard Method, adjusted for the revised demographic baseline explored in *Chapter 3 Demographic Trends*.

The **transformational** trajectory is a straightforward update to the LIS "go-for-growth" trajectory. The latter two projections sit either side of the **business as usual** trajectory, representing relatively more constrained or unconstrained versions of future growth prospects.

The three trajectories, and the broad assumptions underpinning them (a detailed modelling methodology is provided in 8.3), are as follows:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for the revised demographic baseline. The Standard Method calculation of future housing need has been converted to the level of employment facilitated (backwards calculated), by making a number of assumptions relating to economic activity rates, commuting, double jobbing and unemployment. The detailed modelling assumptions are explained in *Chapter 9*.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance, taking particular account of the growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession (see Figure 8.4.1). It represents a best approximation as to the future rate at which Oxfordshire will be able to deliver employment growth based on the latest trend data.
- **Transformational trajectory:** this trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the LIS "go for growth" scenario, but updated and adjusted for 2020. Certain targeted sectors are assumed to see strong growth, others grow as a result of anticipated corresponding population growth and increased economic activity.

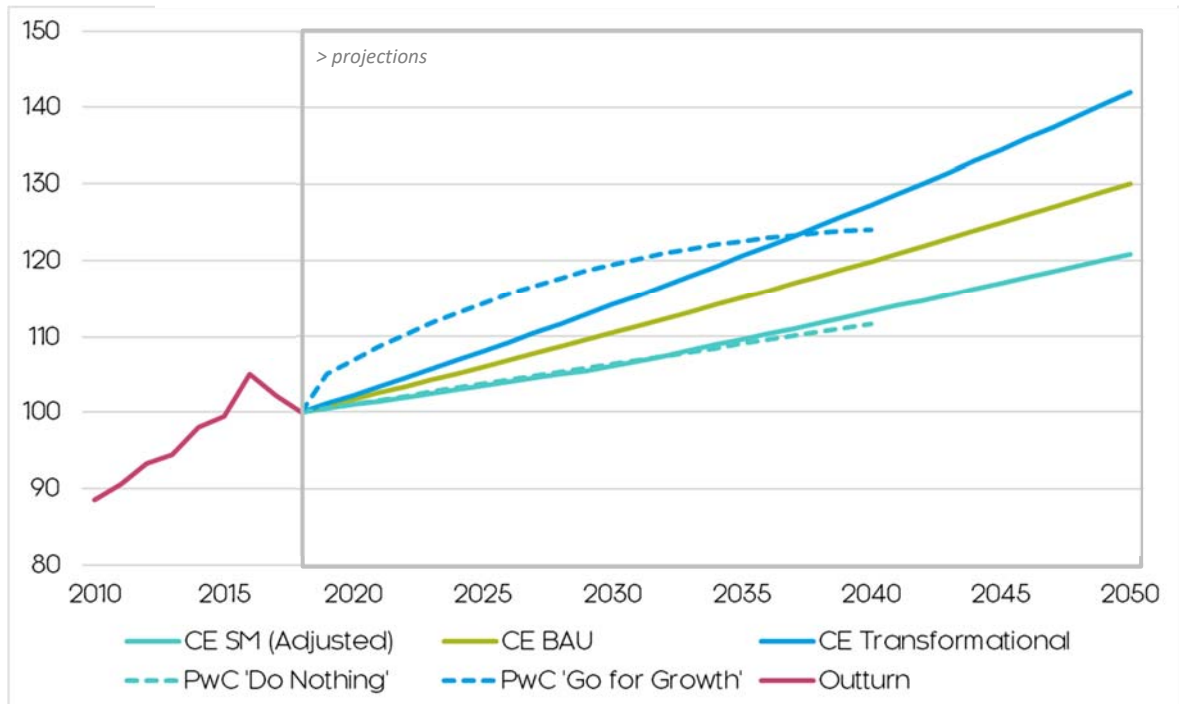
Employment

Figure 8.5.1 shows the headline employment (jobs) projections produced by CE (derived from the June 2019 run of MDM-E3) and PwC (as utilised in the LIS, published in July 2019). To allow for convenient comparisons across the two projections, the employment level is indexed to the base year of 2018, which is also the baseline for PwC's projections. It should be noted that CE's projections extend to 2050 to cover the Oxfordshire Plan period, beyond PwC's 2040 forecast horizon.

At this headline level CE's and PwC's baseline employment projections share an almost identical trajectory to 2040. This shows both models broadly agree on Oxfordshire's fundamental characteristics, and its likely trajectory under a 'baseline' context. Likewise, the additional growth in PwC's "go for growth" scenario does not look unrealistic and again aligns reasonably well with CE's

aspirational trajectories. The unusual shape of this growth curve, however, is difficult to explain, even when reconciled with LIS aspirations.

Figure 8.5.1: Employment (jobs) projections for Oxfordshire (2010=100)



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

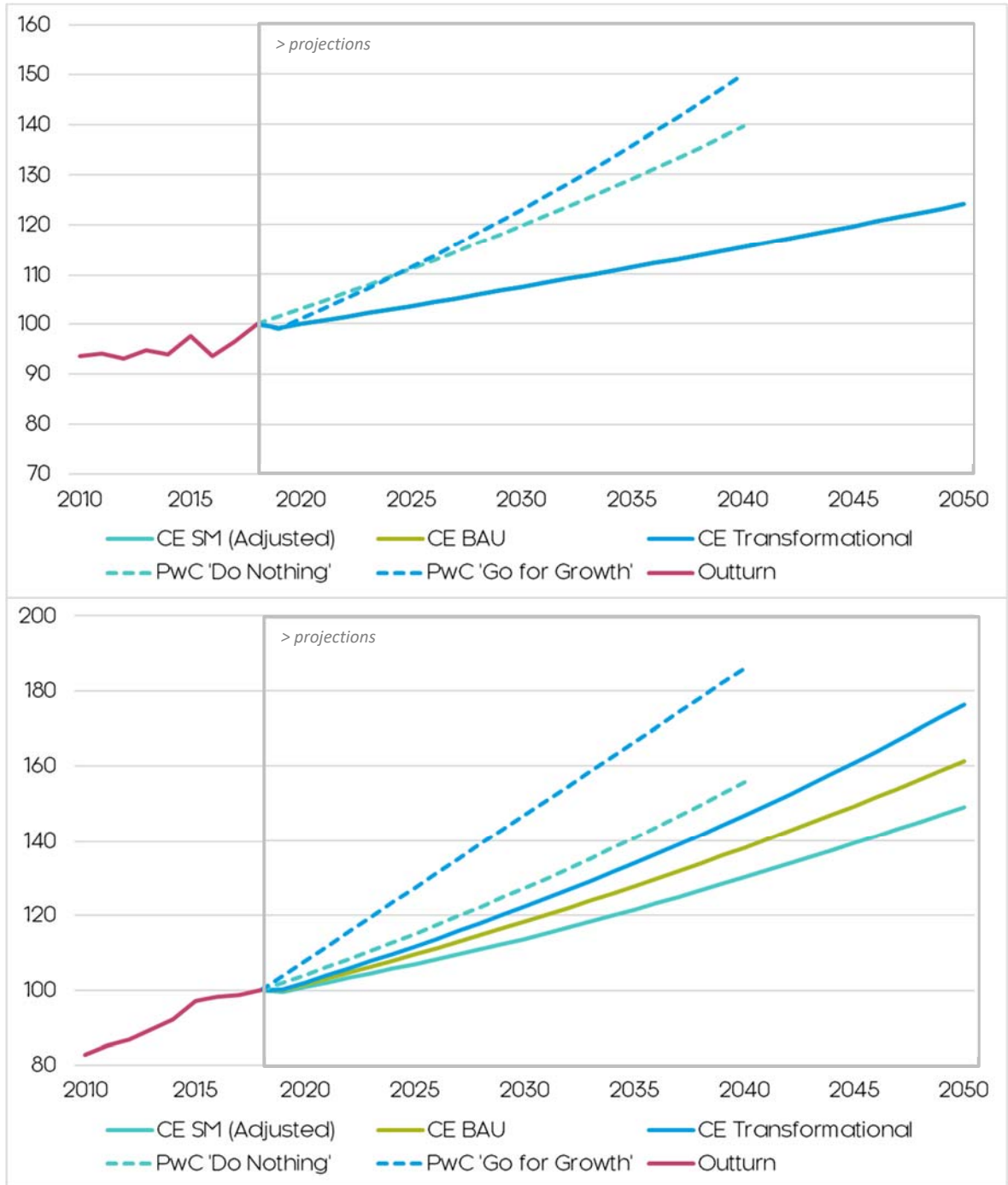
In particular, the expected sudden and rapid acceleration away from recent trends over the next five years (at a time of anticipated uncertainty in the national economy and an already tight and easing labour market in Oxfordshire), followed by a levelling off over the period 2030-2040 appears unlikely and is not necessarily reflective of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance and short-term policy landscape.

Instead, an initially slow divergence from the baseline scenario may be anticipated – as Oxfordshire's labour market continues to grow, albeit slowly due to its relative tightness (Figure 5.4.1 showed Oxfordshire currently has the highest employment rate in the country) - followed by greater divergence in the 2030s - as local, regional and national policy interventions (including those outlined in the LIS and other strategic policy documents e.g. East-West Rail, Garden Towns) begin to take effect. This is the approach that CE has taken to develop its above-baseline trajectories, utilising the LIS and its associated evidence base as a foundation.

As observed and interrogated in *Chapter 5*, the outturn in Figure 8.5.1 shows a decline in Oxfordshire's employment between 2016-18. Though partially attributable to Brexit, the analysis in *Chapter 5* concluded the volatile nature of survey-derived employment estimates means this drop has probably been overestimated. CE does not regard this as a longer-term trend, though easing labour market performance is likely over the latter part of the 2010's/early 2020's. This raises further questions over the anticipated quick ascent in employment under the PwC "go for growth" scenario.

subsequently GVA (in real terms, £2016 prices). These are shown in Figure 8.5.2.

Figure 8.5.2: Productivity (above) and GVA (below) projections for Oxfordshire (2010=100)



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

The left-hand chart shows how CE’s projection for productivity is significantly below that of both trajectories from the LIS, which emphasise unprecedented levels of productivity growth in Oxfordshire. Due to the so-called “*productivity puzzle*”, bullish projections of upswings in productivity growth made over the past decade have repeatedly proven to be inaccurate, to the extent that both ONS and the Bank of England now consider a national productivity baseline growth rate of 0.7% p.a. to be a realistic guide.

Although Oxfordshire has the potential to outperform the national productivity growth rate, this is unlikely to be maintained at a greater than standard deviation rate above national performance, not least given the greater incidence of the “*productivity puzzle*” locally, as seen in the *Chapter 5 Recent Economic Performance*.

For these reasons, and for wider ease of interpretation, CE has adopted only one productivity trajectory across the three trajectories. Even then, this expectation remains optimistic, and is reliant on the productivity-boosting realisation of LIS-related initiatives.

For GVA, CE’s relative downgrading of productivity growth potential over the time period leads to some quite pronounced differences between the trajectories, as shown in Figure 8.5.2. For instance, even PwC’s “*Do Nothing*” GVA trajectory exceeds CE’s higher trajectories.

CE anticipates a gentler upward trend to both productivity and GVA, but with stronger growth built into the higher trajectories. This stronger growth reflects the potential delivery of LIS related ambitions, particularly those related to innovation, which typically have a longer-term effect and realisation on productivity and growth.

Sector growth trajectories

CE’s trajectories for employment, productivity and GVA have all been prepared on an individual sector-by-sector basis, to best capture the sectoral ambitions of the LIS and reflect the sectoral impact of current and projected macroeconomic trends, such as automation, demographic pressures and environmental change.⁵⁷

At the sectoral level, the differences between the shape of CE’s and PwC’s trajectories become increasingly noticeable, largely due to the different assumptions and modelling approaches (particularly relating to individual sectors).

One-page summaries of these sector trajectories are provided in *Appendix B: Oxfordshire’s Sector Growth Trajectories*, which include a detailed overview of CE’s results along with an interrogation and comparison with PwC’s scenarios. A brief overview is provided for each sector below (note that these overviews include interactive links to the detailed one-page summaries in the Appendix):

1. **Employment in primary and utilities:** Oxfordshire’s long-term decline in primary sector employment is set to ease and totals will remain roughly constant moving forward, though automation may result in lower-skilled employment losses. GVA growth is to be driven by improvements to productivity and the adoption of innovative technologies, supporting higher-skilled employment growth.
2. **Employment in manufacturing:** automation, digitisation and outsourcing will likely continue the decline in Oxfordshire’s manufacturing workforce, particularly for lower and mid-skilled workers, though new technologies and innovations could fuel growth in the

⁵⁷ CE’s detailed sectoral modelling assumptions and results for the UK are presented and summarised in *Working Futures 2017-2027: Long-run labour market and skills*, which provides detailed overview of such factors individual sector impacts;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/863886/Working_Futures_Headline_Report.pdf

higher trajectories. GVA growth will be driven by productivity improvements, underpinned by the adoption of frontier technologies.

3. **Employment in construction:** continued economic growth alongside ambitious policy aspirations around housing delivery, infrastructure and commercial space will see Oxfordshire's construction workforce grow strongly over coming decades. Though this may be tempered by skills-shortages, an aging workforce and migration pressures. Productivity growth will remain stable given the sectors SME-dominated business population.
4. **Employment in retail; transport; accommodation and food:** given strong projected economic and household growth in Oxfordshire, the demand for consumer services is expected to increase, and as such employment and GVA will continue to grow strongly. Productivity growth will be driven by automation and digitisation, though consequently this may cause some employment losses and shifting.
5. **Employment in information and communication:** underpinned by a strong research base and skilled workforce, this sector has been an engine for employment growth and this is expected to continue. Though at the forefront of the "*productivity puzzle*", productivity growth is expected to rebound with the development and adoption of new technologies (which will also diffuse through the wider economy).
6. **Employment in financial and insurance activities:** the ongoing contraction in the sectors workforce, driven largely by automation, digitisation and out-sourcing, is anticipated to continue over both the short and long term. High productivity will continue to improve, driven by fintech innovations, supporting wider GVA growth.
7. **Employment in real estate activities:** the sector's workforce has grown strongly over the past decade, partly reflecting Oxfordshire active resident and commercial property markets. This rate of growth should continue given the need to expand to manage and oversee an expected increase in residential and commercial property demand.
8. **Employment in professional and administrative services:** Oxfordshire has shaped a strong comparative advantage in this sector, particularly around science and R&D, and there is an expectation of further growth. Accounting for a quarter of all "*breakthrough*" jobs, strong employment growth is expected, especially in the higher trajectories. This will drive strong GVA growth, whilst productivity should also improve after subdued growth.
9. **Employment in public administration, education and health:** amongst Oxfordshire's most resilient sectors, demand and thus employment is anticipated to rise further over the next few decades, particularly in the health (aging population) and education sector (demand for high-level and technical skills). Opportunities for health-related innovation and a higher-value education offer could drive much needed productivity growth.
10. **Employment in arts, entertainment and recreation:** the sector largely depends on activity in the wider economy, particularly that related to households and incomes. Relatively strong employment

growth is therefore expected, with the sectors labour-intensive nature and consumer dependency making it more resilient to automation and associated changes.

8.6 What the trajectories mean for employment in Oxfordshire

Table 8.6.1 and Figure 8.6.1 outline the potential impact on total employment (jobs) in Oxfordshire under CE's three respective trajectories.

Figure 8.6.1: Employment (jobs) projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories

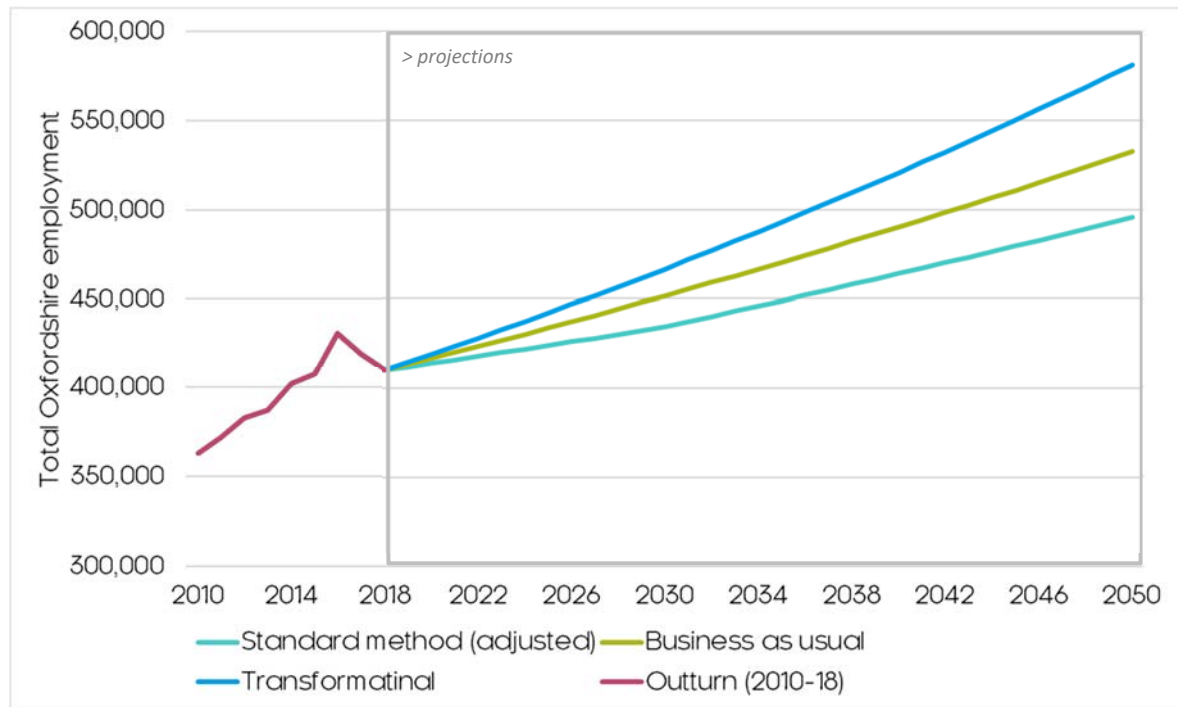


Table 8.6.1: Employment (job) projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories

	Employment at 2018 (baseline)	2030	2040	2050	Change in employment, 2018-50	Change in employment p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted)	410,066	434,538	464,179	495,555	85,489	2,672
Business as usual	410,066	451,742	490,234	532,517	122,451	3,827
Transformational	410,066	466,804	520,636	581,254	171,188	5,350

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Under the adjusted Standard Method approach, CE expects just over 85,400 net additional jobs to be created in Oxfordshire between 2018 and 2050, equating to an average increase of 2,700 per annum. This would result in a total of 495,600 jobs in the county by 2050. This could be regarded the 'minimum' level of growth Oxfordshire should aspire to under current conditions.

At the business as usual level, the rate of delivery increases to 122,500 additional jobs by 2050, an increase of some 3,800 per annum. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire will have continued along its past high-growth trajectory, as outlined in its 2014 SHMA and SEP, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

And at the transformational level, delivery accelerates to over double that of the Standard Method (adjusted), with a potential 171,200 additional jobs to be

created between 2018 and 2050, equating to an average increase of 5,400 per annum. This transformational level of growth assumes many of the aspirations outlined in the LIS are achieved and have their desired effect.

Figure 8.6.2 provides an overview of the sectoral composition of the projections. Rather than being constant and scaled to the trajectory total, they vary across the respective trajectories, largely reflecting the realisation of LIS-related ambitions in the higher trajectories.

Figure 8.6.2: Sectoral composition of employment projections for Oxfordshire under the different trajectories



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

For instance, under baseline (standard method adjusted) projections, manufacturing employment is expected to decline, yet under the transformational trajectory - dependent on the realisation of LIS aspirations and interventions - manufacturing employment has the potential to grow.

A more detailed interrogation of sector trajectories (covering employment, GVA and productivity) and accompanying assumptions are provided in *Appendix B: Oxfordshire's Sector Growth Trajectories*.

The following chapters proceed with these employment figures and consider the potential county-wide implications for commercial space and housing if the prospective employment trajectory were achieved. This will help to inform and calculate the commercial space requirements and local housing need for Oxfordshire's growth ambitions, including those outlined and presented in the LIS.

8.7 Conclusions

The Oxfordshire LIS has set out a vision for Oxfordshire to be one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040, to be driven by Oxfordshire's "breakthrough" sectors and assets. This chapter has scrutinized and explored

a range of supporting economic trajectories for growth of the Oxfordshire economy.

The Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory shows the potential for 85,400 additional jobs between 2018-50, modelling the employment growth that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual trajectory models a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent economic performance over the robust growth period of the past decade. This would support 122,500 additional jobs over the period to 2050.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, models the equivalent of the achieving many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, and would see 171,200 additional jobs over the period to 2050.

The three scenarios present alternative visions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform. In all scenarios, employment growth is expected to be concentrated in service-based activities, but with the potential for more sectorally diverse growth under the higher trajectories.

9 Economic-led Scenarios for Housing Need

9.1 Introduction

The following analysis takes the employment-led growth trajectories prepared by Cambridge Econometrics in the preceding *Chapter 8* and seeks to test what level of population and housing growth might be needed so that the resident labour-supply increases sufficiently for the employment (jobs) figures to be met.

The analysis also considers what change to the resident labour-supply (economically active population) might be expected under different demographic scenarios, this can then be compared with changes need to meet economic (jobs) growth.

The analysis aims to calculate projected housing need based on the various employment-led growth trajectories. This can then be compared to the need shown by the Standard Method.

The inter-relationship between economic growth and housing need is influenced by a number of factors including:

- The scale of economic growth envisaged, and growth in productivity which will influence the relationship between growth in GVA and jobs;
- The relationship between jobs and people, taking into account that some people have more than one job;
- What proportion of people are in employment, including growth in women in the workforce and increases in older persons in employment taking account of improved health and changes to State Pension age; and
- The spatial relationship between where people live and work, as borne out in commuting dynamics.

The economic trajectories set out in *Chapter 8* already build in assumptions that productivity improvements are achieved moving forwards. Productivity improvements, which moderate the need for workers, are thus built into each of the trajectories considered.

The analysis in this chapter then models improvements in economic participation; albeit it is notable that economic participation in Oxfordshire was already relatively strong at the base point of the modelling in 2018.

The modelling in this chapter also seeks to achieve a balanced position between those living and working in Oxfordshire to limit the need to travel, consistent with wider planning policy objectives, modelling commuting to return to the balance in Oxfordshire in 2011.

Whilst there is potential for commuting to flex (as it has done in Oxfordshire recently, as seen in Figure 5.4.2), given changing working patterns and the inter-relationship between where people live and work is unclear, in preparing the Oxfordshire Plan the Councils need to plan for an approach which facilitates a balance between jobs and homes. Any assumption of increased

in-commuting to Oxfordshire in relative terms would impact the housing need in surrounding areas and would therefore need to be agreed with them.

9.2 Economic participation assumptions

The first principal consideration is how economic participation is likely to change amongst people in different age groups.

The approach taken in this report is to derive a series of age and sex specific economic activity rates and use these to estimate how many people in the population will be economically active as projections develop. This is a fairly typical approach with data being drawn in this instance from the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) July 2018 Fiscal Sustainability Report.

Figure 9.2.1 and Table 9.2.1 below illustrate the assumptions made. The analysis shows that the main changes to economic activity rates are projected to be in the 60-69 age groups – this will to a considerable degree link to changes to State Pension age, as well as general trends in the number of older people working for longer (which in itself is linked to general reductions in pension provision). Growth in women in work is also assumed.

Figure 9.2.1: Projected changes to economic activity rates (2020 and 2050) in Oxfordshire



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting (based on OBR and Census (2011) data).

Table 9.2.1: Projected changes to economic activity rates in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Male economic activity rate			Female economic activity rate		
	2020	2050	Change	2020	2050	Change
16-19	41.6%	40.9%	-0.7%	43.6%	43.0%	-0.5%
20-24	67.9%	68.6%	0.7%	65.6%	66.3%	0.8%
25-29	87.3%	87.3%	0.0%	83.9%	84.0%	0.0%
30-34	92.1%	91.9%	-0.2%	85.7%	86.2%	0.4%
35-39	94.5%	93.8%	-0.6%	85.2%	87.5%	2.3%
40-44	95.3%	94.0%	-1.3%	86.4%	89.8%	3.4%
45-49	94.2%	93.6%	-0.6%	86.8%	91.5%	4.7%
50-54	94.0%	92.6%	-1.4%	85.2%	88.6%	3.4%
55-59	90.9%	89.9%	-1.0%	83.7%	86.9%	3.2%
60-64	76.1%	84.2%	8.1%	68.1%	80.7%	12.6%

65-69	40.1%	54.9%	14.8%	27.6%	47.4%	19.8%
70-74	21.4%	25.8%	4.4%	12.8%	21.4%	8.6%
75-89	5.5%	6.7%	1.2%	2.4%	5.9%	3.5%

Source: OBR, ONS, Justin Garden Consulting.

9.3 Linking employment growth and changes to the resident labour force

The number of resident and non-resident workers required to support the change in employment (jobs) will differ depending on three main factors:

- Commuting patterns – where an area sees more people out-commute for work than in-commute it may be the case that a higher level of increase in the economically active population would be required to provide a sufficient workforce for a given number of jobs (and vice versa where there is net in-commuting);
- Double jobbing – some people hold down more than one job and therefore the number of workers required will be slightly lower than the number of jobs; and
- Unemployment – if unemployment were to fall then the growth in the economically active population would not need to be as large as the growth in jobs (and vice versa).

Commuting patterns

Table 9.3.1 below shows summary data about commuting to and from Oxfordshire from the 2011 Census. Overall, the data shows that the county sees a small level of out-commuting for work with the number of people resident in the area who are working being about 3% higher than the total number who work in the area. This number is shown as the commuting rate in the final row of the table and is calculated as the number of people living in an area (and working) divided by the number of people working in the area (regardless of where they live).

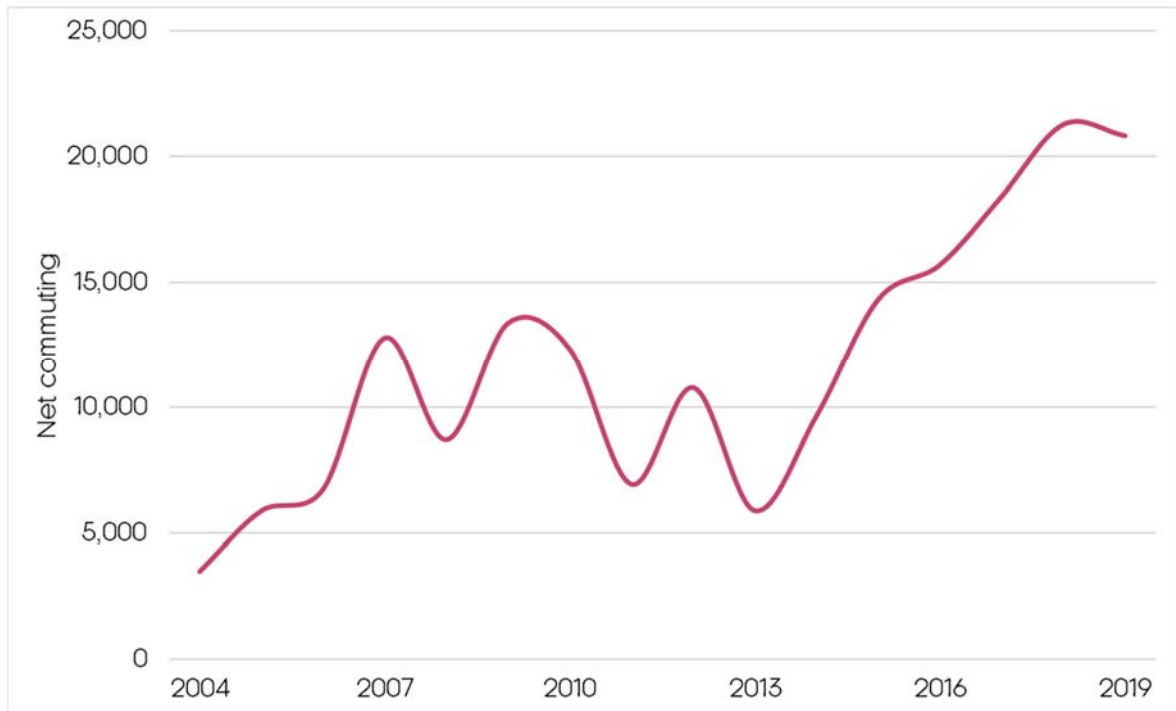
Table 9.3.1: Commuting patterns in Oxfordshire, 2011

	Number of people
Live and work in county	221,160
Home workers	42,738
No fixed workplace	24,862
In-commute	57,447
Out-commute	48,170
Total working in county	346,207
Total living in county (and working)	336,930
Commuting rate	1.03

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

More recent data drawn from the Annual Population Survey (APS, as seen in Figure 9.3.1) does however suggest that this commuting rate may have increase slightly (up to about 1.06). This means that more people (in net terms) are now commuting into Oxfordshire for work. Whilst the APS data should be treated with some degree of caution due to error margins, a consistent upward trend in net commuting into Oxfordshire is quite apparent.

Figure 9.3.1: Oxfordshire's net commuting flows, 2004-19



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

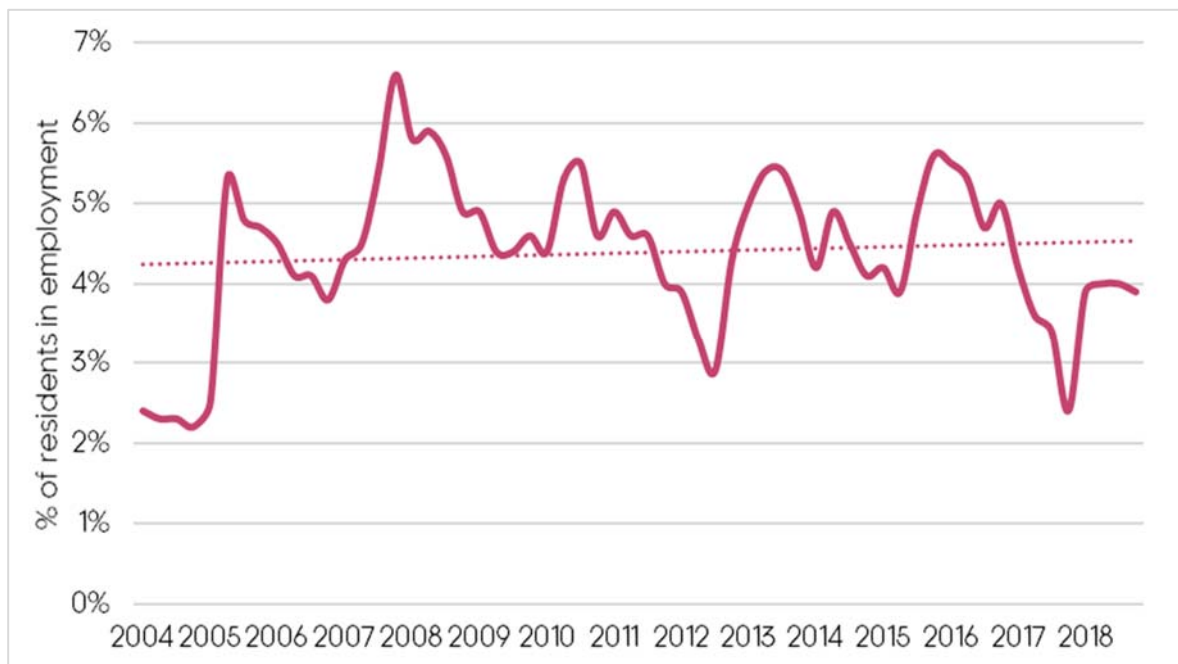
The evidence presented thus far in the Growth Needs Assessment indicates that there has been an imbalance between economic growth and housing delivery in recent years, influenced by the very strong economic growth which has been seen in Oxfordshire. The commuting data indicates that this has led to a growth in net-commuting into Oxfordshire. This relationship between commuting and housing is explored in greater detail in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*.

It is appropriate however to look to address the imbalance which has arisen. The modelling therefore assumes that that the commuting rate starts at 1.06 (the current estimate) before falling back to 1.03 (the Census figure) by 2030. After 2030, it has been assumed that the ratio remains at 'normal levels' of 1.03. Returning the rate back to the Census figure will essentially reduce net commuting and bring back a greater degree of balance between where people work and where they live.

Double-jobbing

The analysis also considers that a number of people may have more than one job (double-jobbing). This can be calculated as the number of people working in an area divided by the number of jobs in that area. Data from the APS (Figure 9.3.2) suggests across the county typically between about 4.5% of workers have a second job – levels of double jobbing have been variable over time (mainly due to the accuracy and volatility of data at a local level) although the data does appear to point in a very slightly upward direction.

Figure 9.3.2: Percentage of all Oxfordshire residents in employment who have a second job, 2004-18



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

For the purposes of this assessment it has been assumed that around 4.5% of people will have more than one job moving forward. A double jobbing figure of 4.5% gives rise to a ratio of 0.955 (i.e. the number of jobs supported by the workforce will be around 4.5% higher than workforce growth). It has been assumed in the analysis that the level of double jobbing will remain constant over time, although the apparent upward slight trend should be noted.

Unemployment

The final element of the analysis is to consider whether there is potential to reduce unemployment from the position in the base year, and for this to contribute to accommodating employment growth. Essentially, this is considering if there is any latent labour force that could move back into employment to take up new jobs.

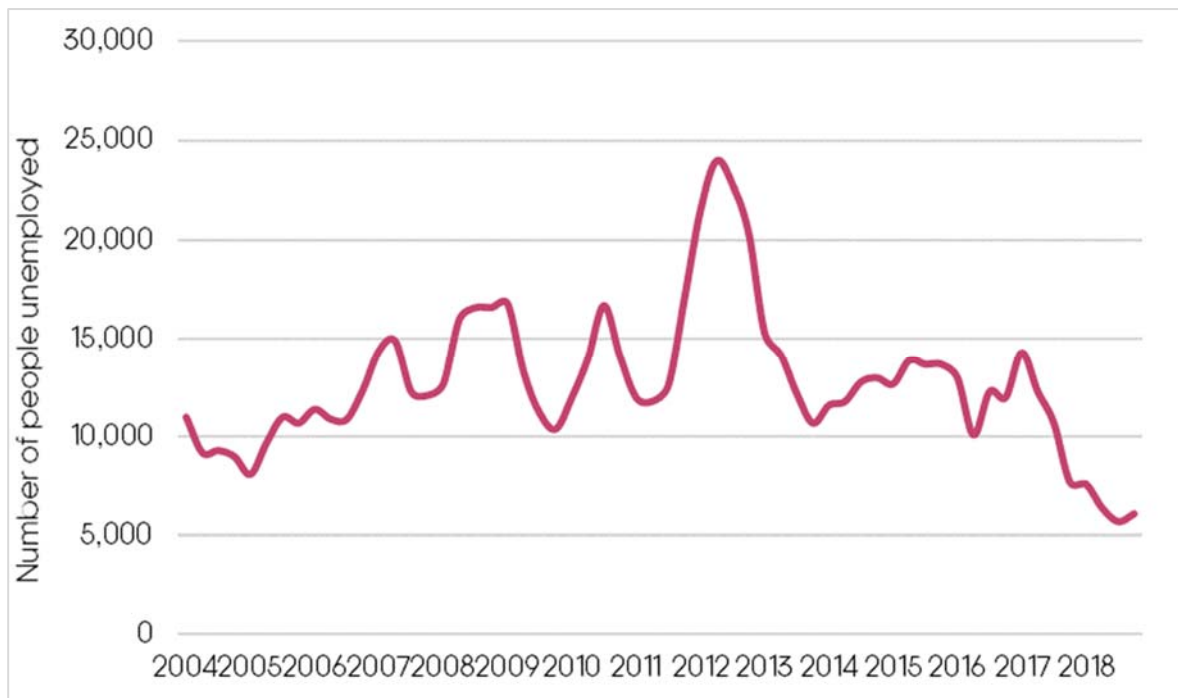
Figure 9.3.3 below shows the number of people who are unemployed and how this has changed since 2004. The analysis shows a clear increase in unemployment from 2004 to 2012 and that since 2012, the number of people unemployed has dropped notably – by 2018, the number of unemployed people was lower than the level observed in 2004.

Unemployment clearly changes throughout an economic cycle. The analysis would indicate that there may be limited scope for further improvements in unemployment relative to the base position in 2018 and for the purposes of analysis in this report it has been assumed that there are no changes to the number of people who are unemployed moving forward from 2020 to 2050.

While unemployment may rise in the short-term over the projection period as a result of the economic shock provided by the Covid-19 pandemic, considered over the period modelled the key issue is whether there is scope for a reduction in unemployment at the base point in 2018 to reduce and for unemployed persons to therefore contribute to addressing the net jobs growth

over the period modelled. The tight labour market conditions and low unemployment in 2018 suggest little potential for this.

Figure 9.3.3: Number of people unemployed in Oxfordshire, 2004-18



Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

9.4 Required change to resident labour supply

Bringing together the assumptions on jobs growth, the proportion of people with more than one job and commuting, Table 9.4.1 to Table 9.4.3 below set out what growth in resident labour supply would be needed to support each of the economic trajectories set out in *Chapter 8*.

Taking the first table as an example, it can be seen that the number of jobs is forecast to increase by 81,600. Given that some people will have more than one job the labour supply needed reduces this number to around 77,900.

However, because it is assumed that commuting will return to 2011 (Census) levels the resident labour supply needed is higher than this (at around 86,500 people). Therefore, to meet jobs growth of 81,600, the modelling assumes that the number of economically active residents needs to increase by 86,500 people.

Table 9.4.1: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, 2020-50

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	413,970	434,538	464,179	495,555	81,585
Double-jobbing adjustment	395,341	414,984	443,291	473,255	77,913
Commuting adjustment	372,964	402,897	430,379	459,471	86,507

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 9.4.2: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the business as usual trajectory, 2020-50

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	416,872	452,633	491,462	533,622	116,751
Double-jobbing adjustment	398,113	432,265	469,347	509,609	111,497
Commuting adjustment	375,578	419,674	455,676	494,766	119,188

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 9.4.3: Estimated jobs and economically active residents under the transformational trajectory, 2020-50

	2020	2030	2040	2050	Change, 2020-50
Jobs	419,162	467,762	521,997	582,520	163,358
Double-jobbing adjustment	400,300	446,713	498,507	556,307	156,007
Commuting adjustment	377,642	433,702	483,988	540,104	162,462

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Justin Gardner Consulting.

9.5 Housing need linked to Oxfordshire's economic trajectories

Table 9.5.1 and Figure 9.5.1 below show the estimates of implied housing need set against the employment (job) trajectories presented in *Chapter 8*. For clarity, the key assumptions used in modelling are as follows:

- Base population from the 2018-based subnational population projections (SNPP) – the alternative internal migration variant
- Projections run from 2020 to 2050
- Population data for 2018 fixed by reference to estimates made from mid-year population estimates (MYE) and Patient Register (PR) data
- Population to 2020 derived from estimating potential population change given the number of net housing completions (2018-20)
- Household Representative Rates (HRRs) from the 2014-based subnational household projections (SNHP) and a part-return to trend method for the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups
- Vacancy rate of 3% to convert households into dwellings
- Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) economic activity rates (adjusted for local situation in Oxfordshire (from 2011 Census data) – July 2018 Fiscal Sustainability Report figures
- Commuting rate from Annual Population Survey analysis and the 2011 Census. The modelling assumes a commuting rate of 1.06 in 2020, returning to 1.03 by 2030 and remaining at 1.03 thereafter;
- Double jobbing ratio from the Annual Population Survey (APS) – ratio of 0.955 used
- Assume no changes to unemployment from 2020 onwards

The demographic model is re-run with these assumptions. It includes upward adjustments to household formation amongst those aged 25-44 on the assumption that affordability improves; and adjustment to net migration to Oxfordshire to support the trajectories for economic growth.

Figure 9.5.1: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50

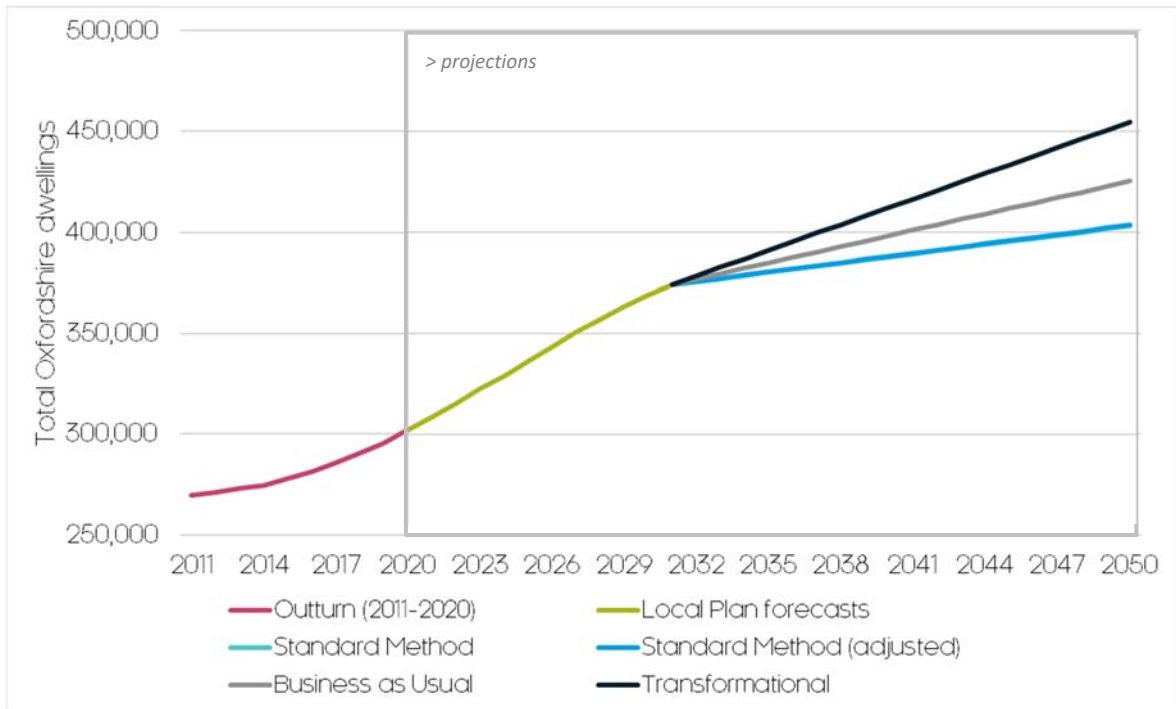


Table 9.5.1: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50

	Households, 2020	Households, 2050	Change in households, 2020-50	Change in households p.a., 2020-50	Dwellings required p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted)	288,999	387,591	98,592	3,286	3,386
Business as usual	288,999	408,806	119,807	3,994	4,113
Transformational	288,999	437,328	148,329	4,944	5,093

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting

The analysis shows that to support the Standard Method (with the adjusted demographic baseline) trajectory, a total housing provision of 101,580 dwellings (3,386 dwellings per annum) would be required between 2020-50.

The business as usual trajectory would require housing provision of 123,390 dwellings (4,113 dwellings per annum) between 2020-50, whilst to support the higher transformational trajectory housing provision of 152,790 dwellings (5,093 dwellings per annum) would be required between 2020-50.

Note that until 2031, the modelling assumes the same path of housing need (regardless of the trajectory). This ensures alignment with the forecast net completions outlined in Oxfordshire local authorities’ Local Plans. These forecasts are available for all local authorities in a consistent format and

approach for the 2020-31 period, and have been aggregated to a county-wide level.⁵⁸

After 2031, the projections follow the modelled rate of remaining forecast need, according to the respective economic trajectory. The modelling assumes an even path of housing delivery throughout the period 2031-50, and does not specifically take account of the phasing of housing delivery or other constraints.

The modelling undertaken focuses on C3 housing needs. It does not assume any growth in absolute terms in the population aged under 75 living in institutions, but assumes that the proportion of those aged over 75 living in institutions remains stable (but allows for growth in the absolute numbers) consistent with the approach in MHCLG's 2014-based Household Projections.

9.6 Conclusions

This chapter of the report has appraised the implications of Oxfordshire's potential trajectories for employment growth on housing need. The baseline position (from the Standard Method, adjusted, trajectory) is of a need for 101,580 homes over the plan period (3,386 dwellings per annum). The modelling indicates that could be expected to support employment growth of around 81,600 (0.6% pa CAGR) over the 30-year plan period.

The business as usual trajectory, which would see employment grow by 116,800 over the plan period, would require provision of 123,390 homes (4,113 dwellings per annum). This is around 21% higher than the Standard Method figures.

And under a transformational trajectory of the Oxfordshire's economy, which is aligned to the Local Industrial Strategy, higher housing provision of 152,790 homes would be required over the 2020-50 plan period (5,093 dwellings per annum). This is around 50% greater than the Standard Method minimum housing need, but is relatively similar to the 20 year requirement of 100,000 homes (equivalent to 5,000 dwellings per annum) which underpins the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and currently adopted Local Plans in Oxfordshire.

Despite the application of a robust methodology and evidence base, there are clearly uncertainties associated with predicting the future economic performance of a local area, which heightens as the forecasts look further into the future.

However, the growth trajectories considered are reasonable parameters for growth when set against Oxfordshire's historic economic performance and employment growth trends over previous economic cycles, with Oxfordshire displaying particularly robust growth over the most recent economic cycle.

⁵⁸ Local authorities in Oxfordshire forecast 72,100 net additions to the dwelling stock over 2020-31 (6,600 net additions p.a.) Source: Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council

10 Affordable Housing Need

10.1 Introduction

This chapter proceeds to consider the scale of need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire.

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF as housing for sale or rent, for those who need are not met by the market, including housing which provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers. It includes affordable housing for rent, including at both social rents and affordable rents, discounted market sale homes – which would include First Homes – as well as other forms of low cost market housing, including shared ownership housing and affordable private rented housing.

Both the Standard Method and (economic-led) trajectories for housing need presented in *Chapter 9* relate to the need for all types of homes including both market and affordable housing.

These show that housing need could vary from between 123,390 homes, based on the (adjusted) Standard Method, and 152,790 homes to 2050 if the authorities plan to deliver the transformational level of growth. A consideration for the Councils in appraising what level of housing provision to plan for within this spectrum is how different levels of housing provision will contribute to the delivery of affordable housing.

Affordable housing delivery is influenced by both public funding available to support delivery, including through both the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal and the Government's Affordable Homes Programme; and the level of overall housing development in a context in which much affordable housing is secured through Chapter 106 Agreements on mixed-tenure development sites. Taking account of the latter, the Planning Practice Guidance outlines that:

“ The total affordable housing need can then be considered in the context of its likely delivery as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, taking into account the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by eligible market housing led developments. An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.”⁵⁹

In these terms, the effect on the delivery of affordable housing is a consideration for the Oxfordshire authorities in deciding whether to plan for higher housing provision than the minimum level indicated by the Standard Method.

In this chapter, Iceni therefore consider what scale of affordable housing need there is in Oxfordshire; and what impact different scenarios for overall housing provision might have on affordable housing delivery.

The analysis herein should be read alongside *Chapter 12* which considers the implications of different potential scenarios for housing provision on the

⁵⁹ Reference ID: 2a-024-20190220

affordability of market housing in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. As the affordability of market housing influences the scale of affordable housing need, it is important that these are considered together.

10.2 Stock of affordable housing

The evidence suggests that despite worsening affordability of market housing (as shown in *Chapter 4*), the stock of affordable housing (comprising local authority owned, registered providers and other public sector housing) has been declining in absolute terms across Oxfordshire over the last decade (2009-2018), with a net growth in stock seen only in Cherwell District (Figure 10.2.1 and Table 10.2.1).

Figure 10.2.1: Trends in social housing stock in Oxfordshire, 2009-18

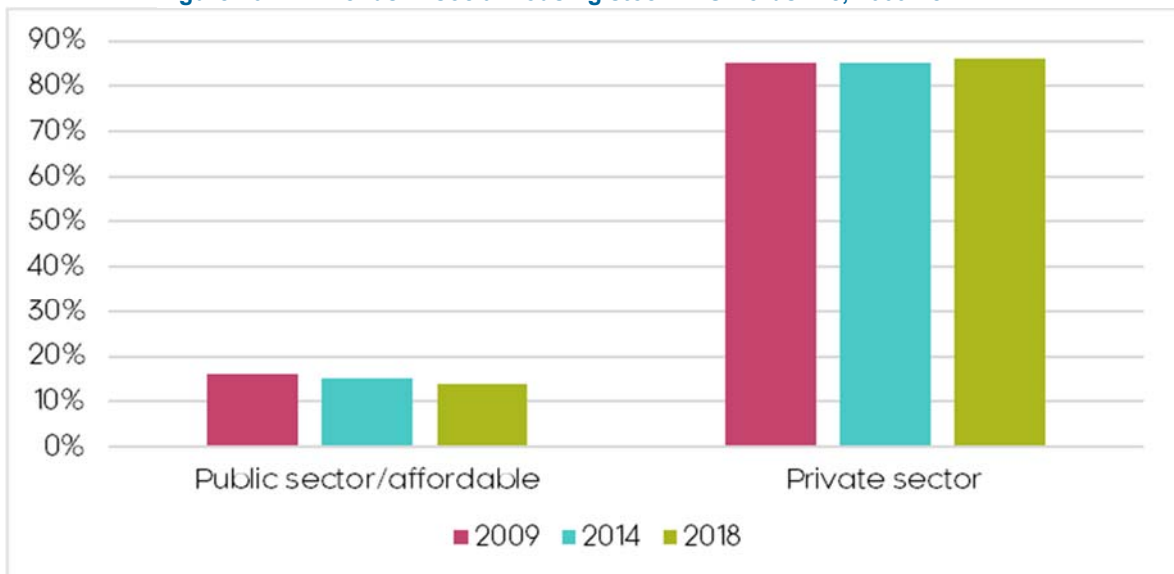


Table 10.2.1: Trends in social housing stock in Oxfordshire, 2009-18

	2009	2014	2018	Change, 2009-18	% change, 2009-18
Cherwell	7,457	7,840	8,520	1,063	14%
Oxford	13,737	13,240	12,750	-987	-7%
South Oxfordshire	7,036	7,300	7,020	-16	0%
Vale of White Horse	7,675	6,590	7,420	-255	-3%
West Oxfordshire	6,426	6,440	5,870	-556	-9%
Oxfordshire	42,331	41,400	41,570	-761	-2%
England	4,088,589	4,140,000	4,174,000	85,411	2%

Source: MHCLG, IcenI Projects.

10.3 Housing waiting lists

The limited available affordable housing stock has resulted in a significant build-up of those with an affordable housing need, as shown in Table 10.3.1. There are substantial numbers of households (almost 9,600) on Council housing waiting lists across Oxfordshire as of April 2019. This potentially under-estimates the affordable housing need as households do not register for housing where there is limited prospect of them being allocated a home. The

housing registers are also focused on those seeking rented affordable housing, and there will be additional households who have an affordable housing need who aspire to home ownership but require support to do so.⁶⁰

As of March 2019, West Oxfordshire has the highest total number of households on the housing waiting list with 2,684, whilst Cherwell has the lowest with 1,179. These differences may however reflect differences in how waiting lists are managed as opposed to the true underlying relative need.

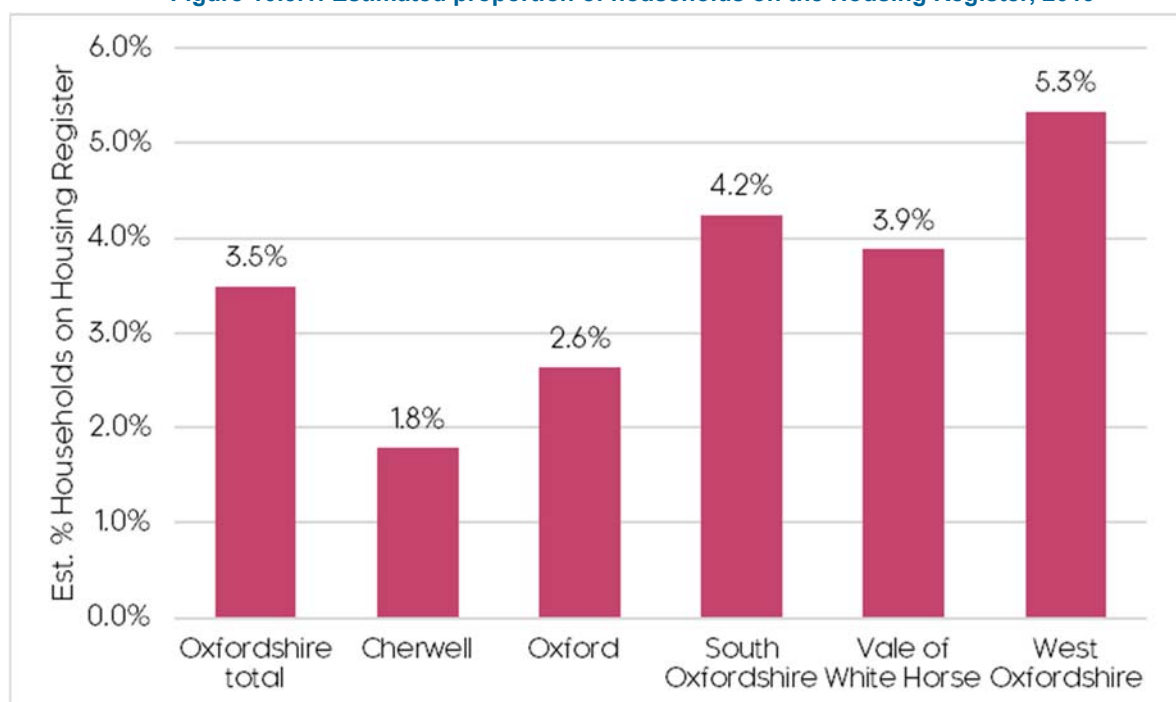
Table 10.3.1: Housing waiting lists in Oxfordshire, April 2019

	Total households on the housing waiting list	How many bedrooms did these households require?					Unspecified or those on the register more than once
		1 bedroom	2 bedrooms	3 bedrooms	3+ bedrooms		
Oxfordshire	9,589	4,991	2,888	1,238	469	3	
Cherwell	1,084	550	315	165	54	0	
Oxford	1,421	648	441	249	80	3	
South Oxfordshire	2,421	1,303	708	307	103	0	
Vale of White Horse	2,175	1,178	630	248	119	0	
West Oxfordshire	2,488	1,312	794	269	113	0	

Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS), Icen Projects.

Figure 10.3.1 below provides an estimate of the proportion of households in each Oxfordshire local authority on the Housing Register. It is lowest in relative terms in Cherwell and highest in West Oxfordshire; but the differentials potentially highlight differences in how the housing register is managed in each authority rather than the underlying needs position.

Figure 10.3.1: Estimated proportion of households on the Housing Register, 2019



Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS), Icen Projects.

⁶⁰ MHCLG (2019) Local authority housing data

10.4 Need for affordable housing

Households have traditionally been identified as having an affordable housing need where they cannot afford to rent *or* buy housing without support – this has been termed here as a ‘narrow’ definition of the need for affordable housing. This would align with the approach used in the 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA.

The 2019 NPPF has widened the definition of affordable housing need, essentially to include households who can afford to rent a home but aspire to buy, and need support to do so. The analysis here therefore assesses the wider need for affordable housing responding to the 2019 NPPF definition, which includes households who for instance might be able to rent privately without financial support, but aspire to buy a home and need support to do so. This widened definition thus fully captures the need for affordable home ownership products.

Iceni’s analysis shows a need for 3,200 affordable homes per year across Oxfordshire over the period to 2030 adopting this wider definition to align with the 2019 NPPF.

The method for assessing affordable housing need, as set out in Planning Practice Guidance, is a point-in-time assessment which is influenced by the relationship between housing costs and incomes at the point of the assessment and the available supply of affordable housing. The assessment uses a 2018 baseline, as it takes account of the current need and the relationship between housing costs and incomes at that point. Needs have been considered over the period to 2030, as shown in Table 10.4.1.

Table 10.4.1: Affordable housing need in Oxfordshire, 2018-30

	Per Annum	Total, 2018-30
Narrow definition	1,714	22,269
NPPF-19 definition	3,198	41,574

Source: Iceni Projects.

The detailed analysis used to build up the assessment of the need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire is set out in *Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix*. This follows the methodology set out in Planning Practice Guidance.

10.5 Interpreting the affordable housing need

The evidence within this Growth Needs Assessment has pointed to particular issues with the affordability of market housing in Oxfordshire; and a situation in which this has deteriorated in recent years as housing demand – influenced by strong employment growth - have exceeded housing supply. This deterioration in market housing costs will have contributed to a growing number of households in need of affordable housing.

The need is also influenced by the existing supply of affordable housing, which in turn has been influenced by the availability of funding for affordable housing provision in recent decades together with losses, such as through right-to-buy sales.

These factors together have led to a situation where a significant affordable housing need exists. It is clear that the scale of affordable housing need is

significant, with the total need shown notionally equating to 94% of the overall housing need identified in the Standard Method or 63% of the overall need shown in the transformational trajectory.

To deliver the annualised affordable housing need in full assuming 40% affordable housing provision would notionally require total housing provision of 7,995 homes a year in Oxfordshire; whilst at 50% affordable housing provision, it would require almost 6,400 homes a year to meet the affordable housing need in full.

It is clear therefore that the extent to which affordable housing need will be met will be sensitive to both the proportion of homes delivered as affordable housing, which is influenced by funding availability and what level of provision is viable on mixed tenure schemes; together with what overall housing requirement is set and the ability of the market to deliver this.

Over the past 15 years, affordable housing delivery in the county has fluctuated greatly (Table 10.5.1).⁶¹ On average, the lowest rates of affordable housing delivery as a proportion of total dwellings has been in Vale of White Horse and West Oxfordshire with an average of 23% over the past 15 years. The highest average rates were in South Oxfordshire with 27% of all dwellings delivered as affordable, whilst the greatest affordable housing delivery in absolute terms has been in Cherwell with 2,937 affordable homes delivered between 2003-19.

Table 10.5.1 below however shows the total number of affordable housing completions have increased in recent years, particularly in Cherwell, Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire. This demonstrates how higher housing requirements can positively influence the delivery of affordable housing.

Table 10.5.1 Affordable housing delivery in Oxfordshire, 2003-19

	Oxford		Cherwell		Vale of White Horse		South Oxfordshire		West Oxfordshire	
	Affordable completions	% of total delivery	Affordable completions	% of total delivery	Affordable completions	% of total delivery	Affordable completions	% of total delivery	Affordable completions	% of total delivery
2003/04	141	26	84	21	50	17	80	41	75	13
2004/05	186	28	32	5	20	3	40	21	53	8
2005/06	167	18	61	6	90	14	30	14	218	30
2006/07	267	33	166	19	30	6	30	18	113	14
2007/08	73	14	133	29	100	22	150	29	186	22
2008/09	231	35	87	20	10	3	40	16	94	16
2009/10	192	75	97	22	N/A	N/A	70	37	22	6
2010/11	105	53	96	26	198	59	40	19	163	38
2011/12	18	8	204	57	63	18	194	38	181	50
2012/13	90	42	113	33	143	53	143	30	28	10
2013/14	0	0	140	34	67	12	187	39	41	22
2014/15	17	5	191	20	250	34	114	19	103	26
2015/16	164	37	322	23	326	29	180	30	75	37
2016/17	20	5	278	25	336	21	172	24	123	24
2017/18	27	7	426	31	311	19	259	28	158	28
2018/19	105	30	507	34	392	31	382	28	N/A	N/A
Total	1803	26	2937	25	2386	23	2111	27	1633	23

⁶¹ Annual Monitoring Reports (where available), MHCLG (2019) Housing supply: net additional dwellings.

Source: Annual Monitoring Reports, MHCLG.

In deciding on what level of housing provision should be planned for in the Oxfordshire Plan, the contribution to the delivery of affordable housing is clearly therefore a relevant consideration.

As the affordable housing needs model, as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance, is very sensitive to the relationship between housing costs and incomes, and to what supply of affordable housing is available to meet needs, it is not really suitable for considering affordable housing needs in the longer-term beyond 2030.

Furthermore the affordable housing needs evidence considers not just the needs arising from overall growth in households, but also the needs of existing households in unsuitable housing, such as current households who require an alternative size or tenure of home (such as overcrowded households or those in the private rented sector who are identified as having an affordable housing need). Such households do not need additional housing per se. Instead the modelling thus partly indicates an imbalance between the current tenure profile and that needed (see *Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix*).

Given the length of the plan period, Icen consider that it is important that the inter-relationship between affordable need and overall housing delivery is therefore not looked at solely in a mechanistic or numerical way. The affordable housing need figures are sensitive to changes in the relationship between housing costs and incomes over time. The evidence in this report has shown that market housing affordability has worsened in recent years as demand (driven by economic growth) exceeded housing delivery.

However housing delivery performance has been increasing rapidly in recent years, and as Local Plans have progressed in recent years, there are strong prospects for significant levels of housing delivery – amongst some of the highest in the South East region - to be sustained in the short- and medium-term through to 2031. This could in time affect housing affordability.

For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision provides greater potential both to deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050. This is considered further as part of the analysis in *Chapter 12*. The solution to increasing affordable housing delivery is however not just about overall housing numbers.

Within Oxfordshire, the Housing and Growth Deal includes funding elements specifically to increase affordable housing delivery, including £60 million funding from the Government for affordable homes. The Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme is to deliver a programme that, over time, will make a significant contribution and the initial programme aims to deliver at least 1,320 affordable units by March 2021.

There are also other initiatives which could be considered to boost affordable housing delivery. A research paper published by the Association for Public Service Excellence⁶² discusses how the government must help councils return to their historic role as a provider of homes, recognising that the private sector alone cannot meet the shortfall of housing supply. The report outlines 10

⁶² APSE (2018) Delivering affordable homes in a changing world

recommendations for unlocking the potential of local authority house building and partnership delivery, which include redirecting existing subsidies for private market housing towards supply-side measures, enabling councils to retain 100% of their Right to Buy receipts to reinvest into building new affordable housing and ensuring *“councils have the confidence, backed by a comprehensive package of tools, in order to deliver that step change in the provision of social and affordable housing”*.

A 2016 report by the Local Government Association⁶³ sets out recommendations for how local and national government can work together to build more homes and includes many similar themes. Some of the recommendations include developing routes for councils to *“directly deliver new homes of all tenures through innovative delivery vehicles, including joint delivery vehicles across areas”*, using surplus public land strategically and provide additional powers to speed up land assembly.

Oxford City Council’s wholly owned delivery vehicle Oxford City Housing Limited, plans to provide 530 affordable homes between 2019 and 2023. Similarly, Build! was created by Cherwell District Council in 2012 to look at alternative ways for delivering affordable homes. To date Build! has provided over 260 homes across Cherwell and more homes are in the pipeline. This shows the impacts which specific Council initiatives can have. Vale of White Horse District Council has set out an ambition to explore a council-owned holding company/vehicle in its Corporate Plan 2020-24.

It is however clear that a concerted effort is needed both to improve both affordable housing delivery and affordability of market housing (which in turn will reduce the affordable need). These are relevant considerations, alongside capacity and environmental impacts of different levels of development, in determining what level of housing provision should be planned for.

10.6 Conclusions

The evidence points to a very significant scale of need for affordable housing in Oxfordshire whereby almost 3,200 affordable homes would be required each year to 2030 to meet affordable housing needs in full. This includes needs arising from both additional households and from existing households who require a different size or tenure of accommodation.

The scale of affordable housing need has built up over time and is sensitive to the market housing costs and the available supply of affordable housing. The scale of need shown points to a need to significantly boost the delivery of affordable housing. For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision than the Standard Method provides greater potential both to deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050. This is considered further as part of *Chapter 12*.

The solution to increasing affordable housing delivery is however not just about overall housing numbers and the creation of public sector delivery vehicles, use of public sector land can also contribute to supporting delivery

⁶³ LGA (2016) Building our homes, communities and future

and funding support from Central Government can also contribute to boosting affordable housing supply.

11 Employment Land Requirements

11.1 Introduction

In this chapter the report moves on to consider future employment land needs across Oxfordshire over the period from 2020-2050, using an approach which responds to the Planning Practice Guidance in considering different modelling techniques to consider future employment land needs, including past development trends and modelling of what the economic trajectories (as set out in *Chapter 8*) would imply regarding the need for employment land.

There are relative benefits and disbenefits of different forecasting approaches which need to be understood in interpreting modelling results. For example, economic forecasts are based on predictions of trends in jobs, but do not take account of the need for better quality floorspace or replacement of out-dated stock. Past take-up trends tell us about the actual delivery of employment development in the past, but do not tell us whether these trends have been constrained by supply (for instance acknowledging Green Belt constraints around Oxford) or tell us about the implications of future economic dynamics.

Productivity improvements may also change the relationship between floorspace needs and job numbers in a way which is difficult to accurately predict. For some sectors this may mean that forecasts can over-state future needs; whilst for others it may under-estimate them. For office floorspace in particular, changing working patterns and growth in home-based working, a trend which has been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, may also influence the demand for office space but it is difficult to precisely quantify the impacts at the current time. Additional consideration has been given to this question in the *Covid-19 Impacts Addendum*.

It is thus important to consider different forecasting approaches, to consider forecasts alongside 'market signals' as explored earlier in this report, and to ensure that there is a clear framework for the ongoing monitoring and review of market dynamics and employment land policies.

11.2 Labour demand modelling approach

The labour demand modelling considers the employment land implications of the business as usual and transformational economic trajectories. The Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory is a labour-demand scenario and does not have a specific profile of employment growth by sector associated with it.

The economic trajectories developed provide forecasts for growth in employment at a 10-sector level across Oxfordshire to 2050. The following key steps have been used to calculate employment land needs:

1. Forecasting growth in full-time equivalents

The first stage involves converting forecasts for total jobs into numbers for 'full-time equivalent' employment as standard employment densities are based on this metric. To estimate FTE employment, Icenis has examined the split between full-time and part-time employment in Oxfordshire using 2018 BRES data at a 3-digit SIC level and then aggregated this to the 10 sectors used in the forecasts. This generates a ratio of full-time to total employment which varies from 80% for distribution, transport, accommodation and food to 98%

for construction. This is then applied to the forecasts for total employment to generate FTE figures.

2. Relating economic sectors to use classes

The second stage in the modelling involves estimating the proportion of employment in each sector which is likely to take place on employment land. Icenis's modelling looks at the following different use classes:

- Office and R&D (Classes E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii))
- F1a Education
- Industrial (Class EG(iiii) light industrial and B2 General Industrial)
- Warehousing (Class B8 Storage and Distribution)
- Other Industrial Activities

The inclusion of the F1 sector takes into account the specific potential in Oxfordshire for employment growth in research and development activities associated with the universities and science sector.

Other industrial activities include utilities, waste and recycling, trade counter uses, motor vehicle sale and repair, which typically take place on employment sites but may fall outside of the B-class uses.

Icenis has calibrated its employment land model to reflect the specific nature of the Oxfordshire economy. For each of the 10 sectors the proportion of jobs which are likely to take place in each of the above use class categories has been estimated. This is informed by consideration of baseline employment at a 3-digit SIC level using 2018 BRES employment data. By applying the ratios of the estimated proportion of jobs by use class in each sector to the sectoral forecasts, forecast of jobs by use to 2050 has been calculated.

3. Applying employment densities

The next stage of the modelling is to apply employment densities to estimate the net change in floorspace by use class for each of the economic trajectories. Employment densities describe the typical level of floorspace per FTE employee. The following employment density assumptions have been applied:

- Office: 12 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Education/Training: 40 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Industrial: 40 sqm GEA per FTE job
- Warehouse: 74 sqm GEA per FTE job

These are blended figures derived from the HCA Employment Densities Guide (3rd Edition, Nov 2015). They include conversion, where appropriate, of densities for net internal areas to Gross External Area (GEA) figures.

The employment densities are average figures, and there will clearly be instances where the density of use of space is both above and below the average.

By applying the density assumptions to the forecasts of employment by use class, the modelling generates estimates of the net change in floorspace to 2050.

4. Adjustments for losses of employment land

The data provided by Oxfordshire local authorities indicates that there have been losses on average of 26,900 sq.m of employment space per annum over the 2011-18 period. Part of this will be due to redevelopment of vacant employment space; but there will also be some businesses which are displaced through redevelopment of employment space.

It is assumed that it is appropriate to replace 50% of the space lost and use this to model future gross requirements for new employment floorspace. There is some potential for changes made by Government to what constitutes permitted development to influence future losses. Trends in losses (and committed losses) will need to be monitored over time and this may require reconsideration of what replacement provision is necessary if there is a significant variance from the past trends shown herein.

5. Margin to provide flexible supply of land

The final stage of the modelling has been to include a margin to ensure that a flexible supply of employment land is maintained. The inclusion of this takes into account:

- The potential error margin associated with the forecasting process. Econometric forecasting is not an 'exact science';
- The need to provide a choice of sites both to take into account that business needs are not homogenous (i.e. different businesses have different requirements in terms of location and site characteristics) and to facilitate competition between developers in a healthy functioning property market;
- The need to ensure flexibility in land of allow for delays in individual sites coming forward; and
- The need to facilitate movement within the property market including the replacement of aged property through development of existing employment premises to provide more modern commercial floorspace. Net forecasts for employment to not take account of this ongoing level of property market churn.

Iceni consider that it is normally reasonable to make provision for a 5-year margin based on past (gross) employment land take-up over a typical 20-year plan period. The longer-term nature of the Oxfordshire Plan would justify a higher margin, and have therefore made provision for a margin of 7.5 years.

11.3 Labour demand forecasts for employment land

The level of FTE employment expected in different use class activities is shown in Table 11.3.1 below. Around 41% of employment growth is expected to occur in activities which typically take place on employment land under the Standard Method trajectory, rising to 48% in business as usual and transformational trajectories.

In all cases, a significant proportion of employment growth is expected to occur in other parts of the economy, such as in education, health, accommodation and food, and other service activities.

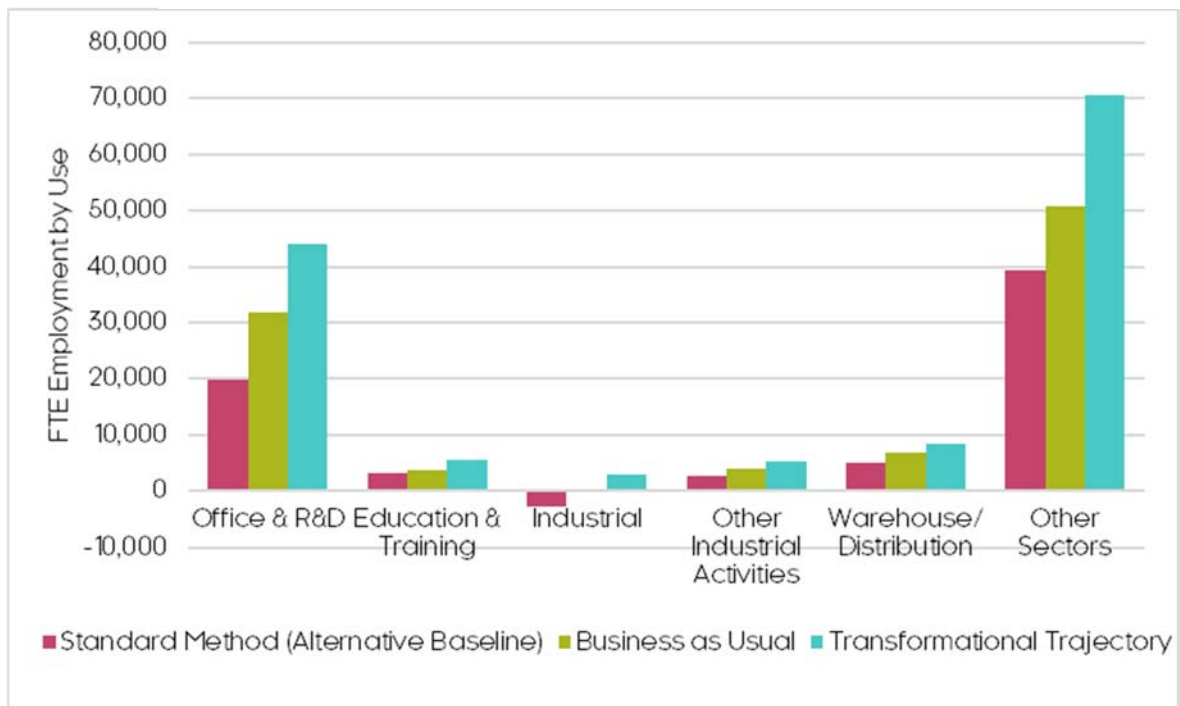
Table 11.3.1: Forecast FTE employment (jobs) by use class in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Office	D1 Education & Training	B1c/B2 Industrial	Other Industrial Activities	B8 Warehouse	Other Sectors	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	19769	3090	-2709	2710	5056	39526	67442
Business as usual	31,960	3,626	188	3,848	6,646	50,802	97,070
Transformational	44,013	5,433	2,746	5,161	8,412	70,675	136,440

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

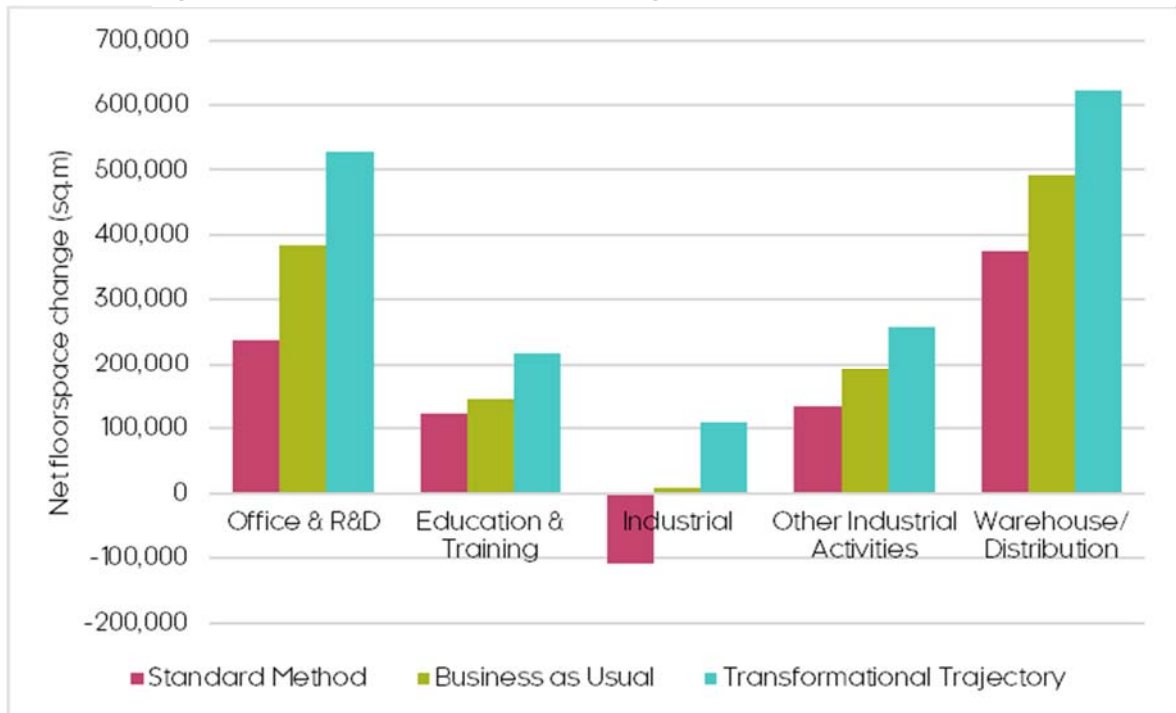
As can be seen from Figure 11.3.1 below, the strongest growth is expected to be in office-based activities. A decline in industrial employment is forecast in the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, but employment is expected to grow under the business as usual and transformational trajectories.

Figure 11.3.1: Forecast change in FTE employment by use class in Oxfordshire, 2020-50



Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

Applying employment density assumptions to this (Figure 11.3.2 and Table 11.3.2), IcenI forecasts a net change in employment floorspace of 1.22 million sq.m in the business as usual trajectory and 1.74 million sq.m in the transformational trajectory. Reflecting relatively high employment densities, the greatest need shown is for B8 warehousing floorspace, followed by office and R&D floorspace.

Figure 11.3.2: Forecast net floorspace change in floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**Table 11.3.2: Forecast net floorspace change in floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2020-50**

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial (B1c/B2)	Other Industrial Activities	Warehouse	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	237,231	123,598	108,366	135,476	374,137	762,076
Business as usual	383,522	145,047	7,502	192,401	491,772	1,220,244
Transformational	528,154	217,315	109,820	258,069	622,501	1,735,859

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, IcenI Projects.

To these figures, IcenI consider that it would be appropriate to add an allowance for losses. As set out previously, this is based on an expectation of losses in line with recent trend data (2011-18) and a replacement rate of 50%. Also included is a margin for choice and flexibility of supply, based on 7.5 years' gross take-up, again based on trends seen over the 2011-18 period.

The resultant levels of gross employment land arising are shown in Table 11.3.3 to Table 11.3.5 below. This assumes a 0.4 plot ratio for industrial and warehouse development. For office and R&D floorspace, it assumes 40% of space is delivered at town centre development densities at a plot ratio of 2; with 60% delivered on business and science parks with a plot ratio of 0.4. It stands at almost 780 ha in the business as usual trajectory and just over 1,000 ha in the transformational trajectory.

Table 11.3.3: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory, 2020-50

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	237,231	123,598	-108,366	135,476	374,137	762,076

Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	492,668	182,631	141,855	395,234	648,876	1,861,262
Land Requirement (ha)	108	40	35	99	162	445

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Icen Projects.

Table 11.3.4: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – business as usual trajectory, 2020-50

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	383,522	145,047	7,502	192,401	491,772	1,220,244
Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	638,959	204,079	257,723	452,159	766,511	2,319,431
Land Requirement (ha)	141	45	64	113	192	555

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Icen Projects.

Table 11.3.5: Gross employment floorspace and land needs in Oxfordshire – transformational trajectory, 2020-50

	Office & R&D	Education & Training	Industrial	Other Industrial Activities/ Mixed B-Class	Warehouse/ Distribution	Total
Net employment floorspace growth	528,154	217,315	109,820	258,069	622,501	1,735,859
Replacement of losses (sq.m)	92,008	42,711	104,297	8,892	155,391	403,299
Margin for Choice & Flexibility (sq.m)	163,429	16,321	145,923	250,866	119,349	695,888
Gross Floorspace Requirement (sq.m)	783,591	276,347	360,041	517,827	897,240	2,835,046
Land Requirement (ha)	172	61	90	129	224	677

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, Icen Projects.

11.4 Past completions projections

Icen has also modelled a projection of past gross completions of employment floorspace. Oxfordshire local authorities have provided data on gross employment floorspace completions seen by local authority over the 2011-18 period. This is shown in Table 11.4.1 below.

Table 11.4.1: Gross completions of employment floorspace in Oxfordshire, 2011-18

	Business B1	offices B1a	B1b R&D	B1c Light Industrial	Industrial B2	Storage & Distribution B8	Mixed B-Class	D1	Total
West Oxon.	10,546	3,389	117	7,626	749	3,478	111	-	26,016

South Oxon	-	3,779	9,999	8,508	8,188	34,095	13,100	-	77,669
VoWH	0	32,320	31,011	6,040	12,777	26,536	32,823	-	141,507
Oxford	7,755	13,136	3,928	1,356	544	2,851	-	15,233	44,803
Cherwell	6,025	28,652	1,877	21,304	69,103	167,181	65,358	-	359,500
Oxfordshire	24,326	81,276	46,932	44,834	91,361	234,141	111,392	15,233	649,495

Source: Oxfordshire local authorities, IcenI Projects.

For the purposes of developing a projection, B1 and B1a categories have been joined together to provide figures for Offices; B1b and D1 figures to provide figures for R&D and education floorspace, and B1c and B2 figures which relate to industrial floorspace (Table 11.4.2). Also included is a consistent margin to the labour demand scenarios to provide flexibility of supply.

Table 11.4.2: Trend-based assessment of gross employment floorspace & land needs in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Office	R&D & Education	Industrial	B8 Storage and Distribution	Mixed B-Class	Total
Gross completions p.a.	15,086	8,881	19,456	33,449	15,913	92,785
Floorspace Projection 2020-50 (sq.m)	452,579	266,421	583,693	1,003,463	477,394	2,783,551
Floorspace Projection with 7.5yr Margin	565,724	333,027	729,616	1,254,329	596,743	3,479,438
Land Requirement (ha)	102	60	182	314	149	807

Source: IcenI Projects.

11.5 Drawing the evidence together

For the purposes of considering what volume of land to allocate for employment uses, IcenI consider that it is sensible to group together Office and R&D Uses (Classes E(g)(i) and E(g)(ii) and R&D activities associated with education which might fall within Use Class F1a. These types of activities typically take place in town and city centres, and on business and science parks within Oxfordshire.

Equally it is sensible to group together more general industrial land which can cater for both light and heavy industrial uses (Classes EG(iii) and B2) as well as storage and distribution (Use Class B8). Table 11.5.1 below brings together the results of the labour demand modelling and the projections of gross floorspace completions on this basis.

Table 11.5.1: Comparison of land requirements (total hectares, ha) in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Office, R&D and Education	Industrial, Warehousing & Other	Total
Standard Method (adjusted)	149	296	445
Business as usual	185	369	555
Transformational	233	444	677
Completions projection	162	645	807

Source: Icení Projects.

Icení consider that for office, R&D and education uses the labour demand trajectories provide an appropriate basis for considering the level of employment land provision which should be made within the Oxfordshire Plan.

However for the broad industrial use category, there is a weaker relationship between jobs and floorspace or land requirements. This reflects a range of factors including productivity improvements and the need for additional floorspace to replaced out-dated existing premises. Put simply, whilst a manufacturing business could grow and require additional space but driven by productivity improvements, its employee headcount could be falling.

Equally for warehousing and distribution, a significant proportion of the gross need is likely to arise from replacement of older dated warehousing stock together with changes in the size of units required (with a shift towards larger units which can provide greater economies of scale). Icení consider that greater weight should therefore be afforded to the completions projection scenario which suggests a need for almost 650 ha of industrial land for the 30-year plan period.

11.6 Conclusions

Icení has considered the implications of different forecasting techniques on the demand for employment space. In drawing conclusions, Icení consider that greater weight should be given to the labour demand modelling for office and R&D activities, and that greater weight should be given to past completions trends in considering future requirements for industrial land.

On this basis, the modelling indicates a need for between 149 – 233 ha of land for office and R&D floorspace to 2050, but that provision should be made for almost 650ha of industrial land.

12 Commuting and Affordability Implications

12.1 Introduction

Having explored the potential scale of economic growth (*Chapter 8*) and housing delivery (*Chapter 9*) in Oxfordshire, this chapter brings the two together to consider the resultant implications for both commuting and housing affordability in the county.

Given the externalities related to the increasing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network, and growing affordability pressures in local markets, it is increasingly important that local policymakers are able to understand the potential payoffs and implications of particular development paths and growth trajectories.

The following analysis begins with an overview of the interaction between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire, and how this could change over the trajectories. It then takes a nationwide analysis of local affordability and its drivers, before scrutinizing and applying an approach to appraise the affordability implications of Oxfordshire's growth trajectories.

12.2 The relationship between employment, housing and commuting in Oxfordshire

Employment (i.e. jobs) and housing growth can act as relative push and pull factors for commuting by facilitating potential change in the number of employed persons working (workplace employed) and living (employed residents) in an area. Within commuting analysis, it is important to distinguish the difference between these employment identities:

- *Workplace employed*: refers to employed persons by the location of their workplace, regardless of the location of their residence (e.g. someone working in Oxford but living in Reading). This measure is closely related to the number of jobs in an area, but is typically lower because a person can have more than one job (“*double-jobbing*”).
- *Employed residents*: refers to employed persons by the location of their residence, regardless of the location of their work (e.g. someone living in Bicester but working in London). When reflected as the proportion of the population, this is known as the employment rate.

Generally, the number of workplace employed in an area is informed by the amount and concentration of economic activity in that area (which will correspond to the number of businesses and jobs in an area). The number of employed residents meanwhile will be shaped by the availability of housing and other labour market and demographic factors (e.g. labour market activity/inactivity rates).

At the intersection of these two variables is the concept of net commuting, which is simply:

$$\text{net commuting} = \text{workplace employed} - \text{employed residents}$$

Therefore, areas with a higher number of workplace employed relative to employed residents will experience net in-commuting (i.e. a positive net commuting value); consider for instance areas with town/city centres, business parks and other large employment sites.

Meanwhile, areas with a higher number of employed residents relative to workplace employed will experience net out-commuting (i.e. a negative net commuting value); consider for instance suburban estates, villages/dormitory settlements and other housing-led settlements.

12.3 Implications of the growth trajectories for commuting

As Table 12.3.1 shows, Oxfordshire currently has a net commuting inflow of 20,500 people (that is, 20,500 additional people commute into Oxfordshire for work relative to residents that commute out of Oxfordshire for work). This reflects the strength and attractiveness of Oxfordshire's labour market and its high employment density.

As noted in *Chapter 5*, this number has rapidly increased over recent years as people reporting to work in the county continues to exceed the number of employed residents. With more people commuting into the county, and commuting a further distance, this has had implications for journey times, congestion and emissions in Oxfordshire.

Between 2011 and 2018, the number of people working in Oxfordshire is estimated to have increased by 36,100, whilst the number of employed residents increased by only 25,200. With some 82.8% of working age residents in active employment (the highest employment rate in the country), Oxfordshire's already tight labour market has been reliant on workers residing outside the county to sustain its economic growth.

Resultantly, net commuting has more than doubled over this timeframe, from 9,000 to 20,500 daily inward commuters.

Table 12.3.1: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire

		<i>Employed residents (linked to housing growth)</i>					
			2011	2018	2050 - SMa	2050 - BAU	2050 - Trans
<i>Workplace employed (linked to employment growth)</i>		-	336,900	361,700	449,600	483,700	527,900
	2011	345,900	9,000	-	-	-	-
	2018	382,200	-	20,500	-	-	-
	2050 - SMa	461,600	-	-	12,000	-22,100	-66,300*
	2050 - BAU	496,600	-	-	47,000	12,900	-31,300
	2050 - Trans	541,900	-	-	92,300*	58,300	14,100

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: * denotes unlikely combinations.

As discussed in *Chapter 9*, the calculation of housing demand across the three trajectories ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans') includes an assumption that the housing provision should be sufficient that the proportion of Oxfordshire workers living outside the county returns to previous levels.

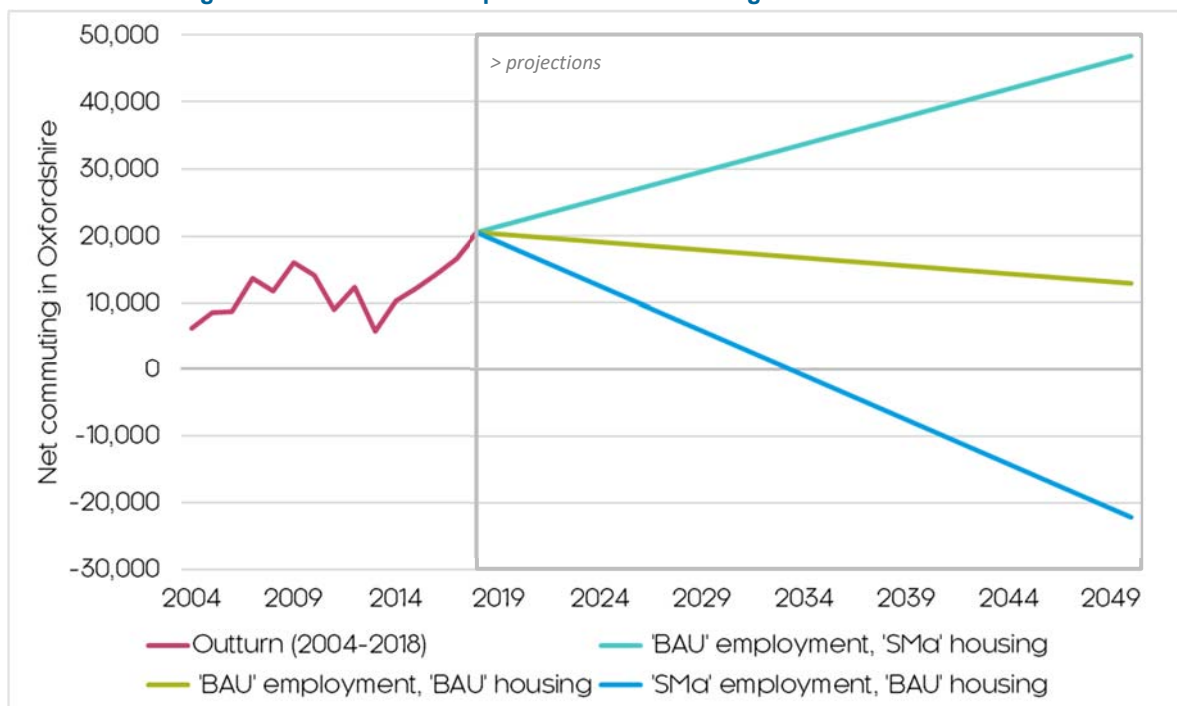
Therefore, under each of the matched projections (highlighted in bold in Table 12.3.1) there is a notable reduction in the number of net in-commuters by 2050, despite growing employment, fulfilling the realisation of this assumption. For instance, even the transformational level of employment growth, if matched with the accompanying transformational housing delivery, could see net commuting decline to approximately 14,100 by 2050.

Although employment growth is strongly linked to housing delivery – whereby housing delivery both facilitates and encourages employment growth – this relationship is not exact. The off-diagonal elements explore the net-commuting implications of a ‘mis-match’ between housing delivery and employment growth, including some less likely combinations of employment and housing.

For instance, the results show that if housing supply remains constrained whilst employment growth continues to grow at pace, then rather than shrinking, net in-commuting to the county will continue to grow, with the possibility of net inward commuting figures doubling or even tripling from current levels. These numbers are shown in red. These projections would broadly be a continuation of Oxfordshire’s recent trends.

Conversely, if growth in employment is lower than anticipated and housing supply grows strongly, then net commuting may fall further, and even turn negative – meaning Oxfordshire becomes a net exporter of workers to neighbouring regions. Historic data (the 1981 and 1991 Census) shows this was a position Oxfordshire once fulfilled. These numbers are shown in blue. In reality, it is unlikely many of the additional dwellings under such a trajectory would be built, given the comparatively low employment growth.

Figure 12.3.1: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.3.1 further illustrates some of the hypothetical commuting scenarios to 2050 suggested in Table 12.3.1, given the associated trajectory-mix, and how this relates to Oxfordshire’s recent net commuting trajectory. For instance:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) could see a reduction in Oxfordshire's net commuting, potentially below historic (pre-1991) levels. This would mean there are more residents than jobs in the county, so residents commute out for work.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) could see an increase in Oxfordshire's net commuting, above current record-highs. This would mean there are more jobs than residents in the county, so out of county residents commute in for work.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would see a steady decline in Oxfordshire's net commuting as it returns to 'normal' levels. The number of jobs is still marginally higher than the number of residents in the county, reflecting the built-in assumptions explored in *Chapter 9*.

12.4 Affordability implications: summary of approach

As with net commuting levels and directions, a 'mis-match' between housing delivery and employment growth also has implications for changes to house prices and housing affordability. This is consistent with the analysis in *Chapter 4* and the exploration of affordable housing need in *Chapter 10*.

As part of its approach to appraise the affordability implications of Oxfordshire's economic trajectories and implied housing need, CE has undertaken a detailed, nationwide analysis of local house price and affordability dynamics to inform and build a robust methodology and accompanying model.

This approach has been scrutinized and developed as part of CE's national research agenda into housebuilding and affordability, utilising CE's novel long-run series which contains more than 50 years' worth of local housing market related data.

The main methodology has been built around the identification of a statistically and economically significant relationship between the ratio of employment growth to housing delivery at a functional spatial level, and the subsequent impact the interaction of these variables has on house prices and affordability. In summary, it finds that:

- housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an improvement in housing affordability.
- housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a deterioration in housing affordability.

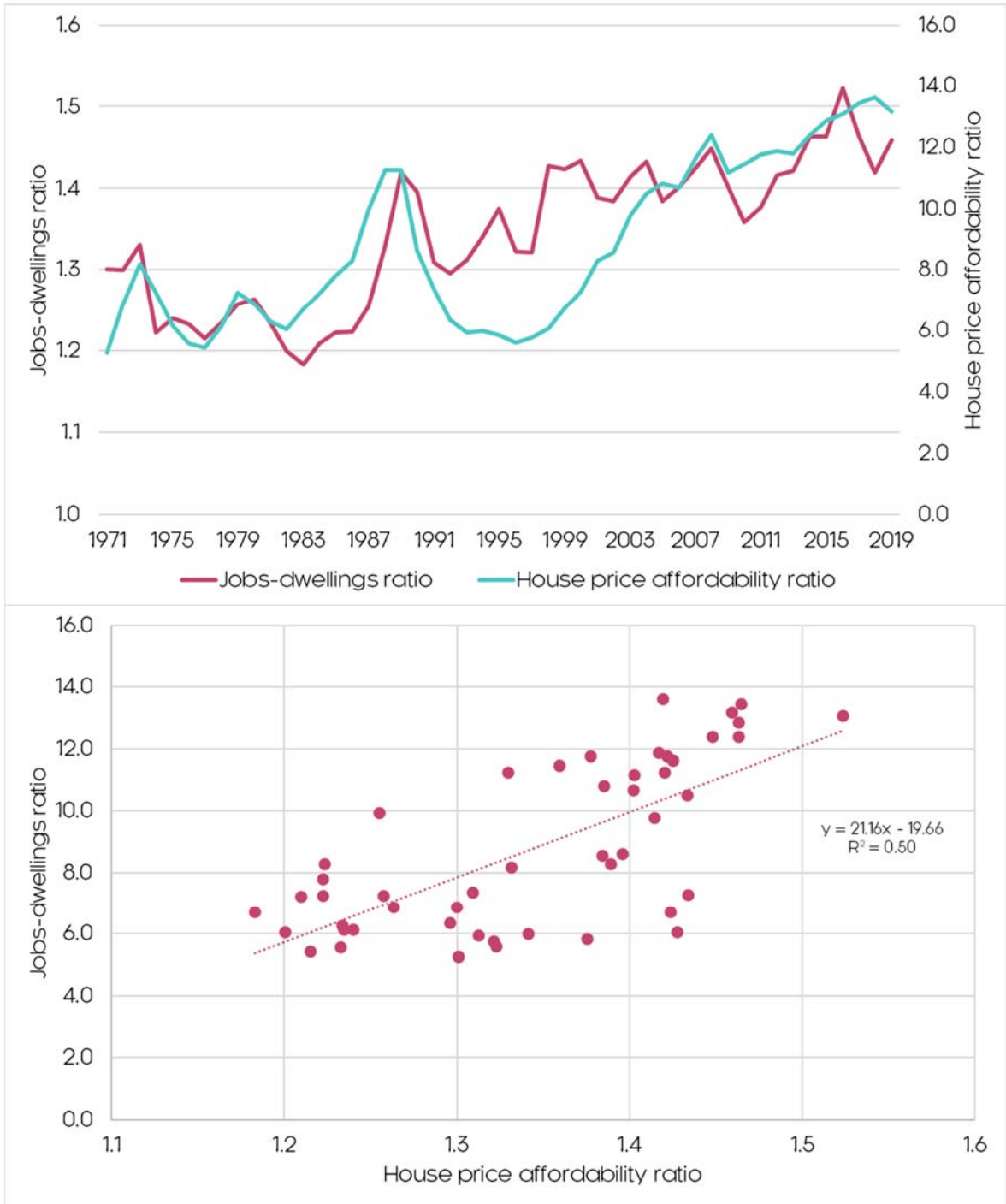
A detailed summary of the methodology and supporting analysis is provided in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications*, which should be read alongside this analysis.

The rest of this analysis scrutinizes and applies this approach for Oxfordshire to gauge the potential affordability implications of its growth trajectories and the accompanying housing need.

12.5 Designing a methodology for Oxfordshire

The analysis in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications* – having reviewed almost 50 years of local housing market data - identified a clear and significant causal relationship between the interaction of local employment growth and housing delivery in contributing to the affordability of local housing markets.

Figure 12.5.1: Jobs-dwellings ratio and house price affordability ratio in Oxfordshire, 1971-2019



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

This chapter aims to build on this evidence and the identified relationship to articulate and refine an empirically-sound methodology that can be applied for Oxfordshire.

As Figure 12.5.1 above shows, within Oxfordshire the relationship between the interaction of employment growth and housing delivery (the jobs-dwellings ratio; that is the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings) in contributing to affordability in the county is highly significant.

And this relationship holds overtime; as the scatter plot shows (where each plot equates to a year), between 1971 and 2019, in years when Oxfordshire had a higher job to dwellings ratio, its housing affordability ratio was resultantly higher (i.e. housing was less affordable). This relationship can be captured using the following identity:

$$Y = f(L/K)$$

Where:

- Y = local housing affordability
- L = local employment growth
- K = local housing delivery

As the above equation simplifies, housing affordability in Oxfordshire can therefore be broadly defined and modelled as a function of the interaction between local housing growth and employment growth (i.e. its jobs-dwellings ratio). Of course, this is a conscious oversimplification – as observed in *Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications* previously other local and non-local factors can impact an areas affordability.

Amenity values, for instance – capturing locally-specific factors such as school quality, transport, air quality, natural landscape etc. - may not always be represented in the aforementioned variables, but are acknowledged as significant house price, and thus affordability, determinants. Likewise, exogenous factors, such as interest rates, will also determine current and future prices.

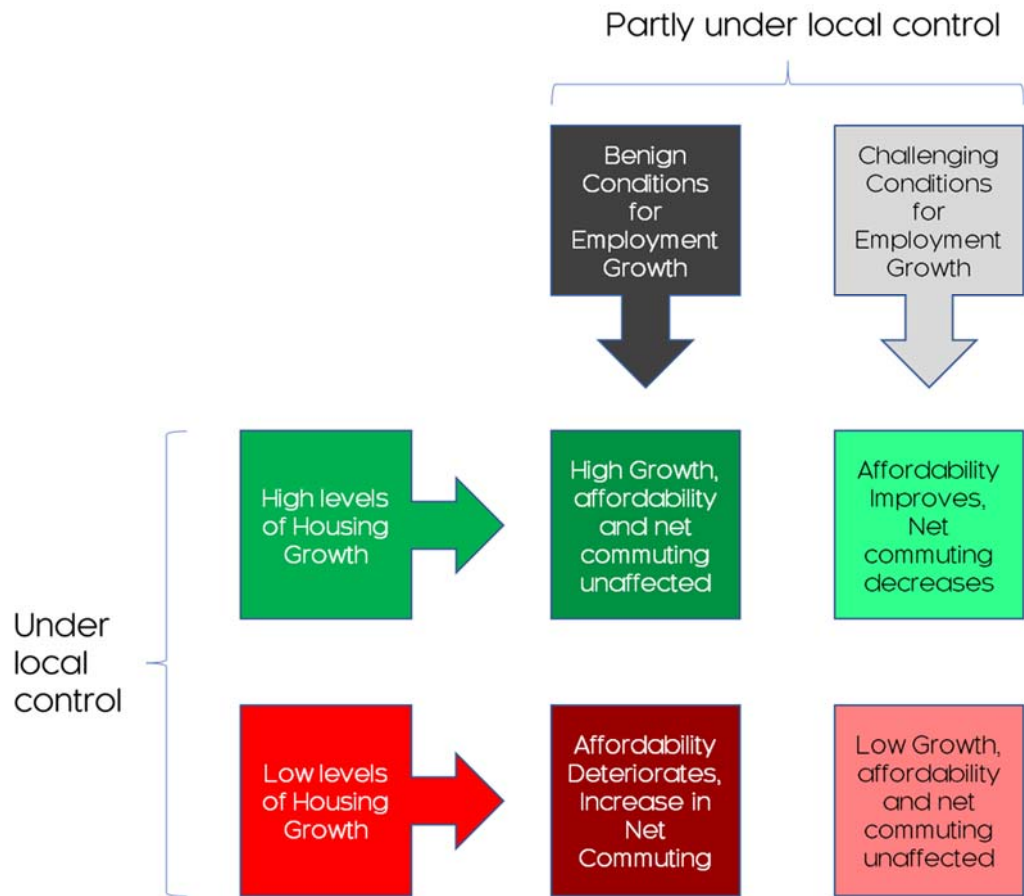
However, it is prudent to consider such factors are already captured in local prices and their share can be assumed to hold constant over a longer timeframe. Likewise employment growth, already included in the methodology, is often highly correlated with both amenity values and interest rates.

To help consider the impact of this relationship, Figure 12.5.2 presents a simplified framework for addressing affordability and housing need in local areas. It reiterates the importance of considering both the role of housing and economic development in addressing local affordability, but also the relatively limited control local policymakers may have over the economic drivers. This emphasises the importance of a sound evidence and understanding of local economic conditions to inform effective housing delivery.

It also notes the relationship between local affordability and net commuting, which implicitly arises through the interaction of the jobs-dwellings ratio; for instance, areas with a higher jobs-dwelling ratio (and thus lower affordability) typically experience high net commuting, as an increasing number of workers have to live further from their place of work. Additional research on this subject has also highlighted the relationship between house prices and the quality and

cost of (particularly public) transport infrastructure; for some high performing areas, house prices have continued to rise despite transport costs not falling.⁶⁴

Figure 12.5.2: Illustrative housing delivery and affordability framework



Source: Cambridge Econometrics.

12.6 Implications of the growth trajectories for affordability

Having reviewed the evidence and prepared a concise and empirically-sound methodology for appraising local affordability, this chapter aims to apply this approach to Oxfordshire’s economic trajectories.

Table 12.6.1: Current and potential jobs-dwelling ratios in Oxfordshire

	Employment (columns)	2019 - baseline	2050 -SMA	2050 -BAU	2050 -Trans
Dwellings (rows)	-	429,100	495,600	532,500	581,300
2019 - baseline	295,500	1.45	-	-	-
2050 - SMA	403,600	-	1.23	1.32	1.44*
2050 - BAU	425,400	-	1.16	1.25	1.37
2050 -Trans	454,800	-	1.09*	1.17	1.28

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Icen Projects, Justin Gardner Consulting, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: * denotes unlikely combination.

Table 12.6.1 provides a recap of the potential mix of employment and dwelling trajectories for Oxfordshire to 2050, and the resulting implications for jobs-

⁶⁴ See research by Miles (2018) for instance

dwelling ratios. Notably, across the three matched trajectories for employment and housing growth ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans'), there is expected to be a moderate decline in Oxfordshire's jobs-dwelling ratio.

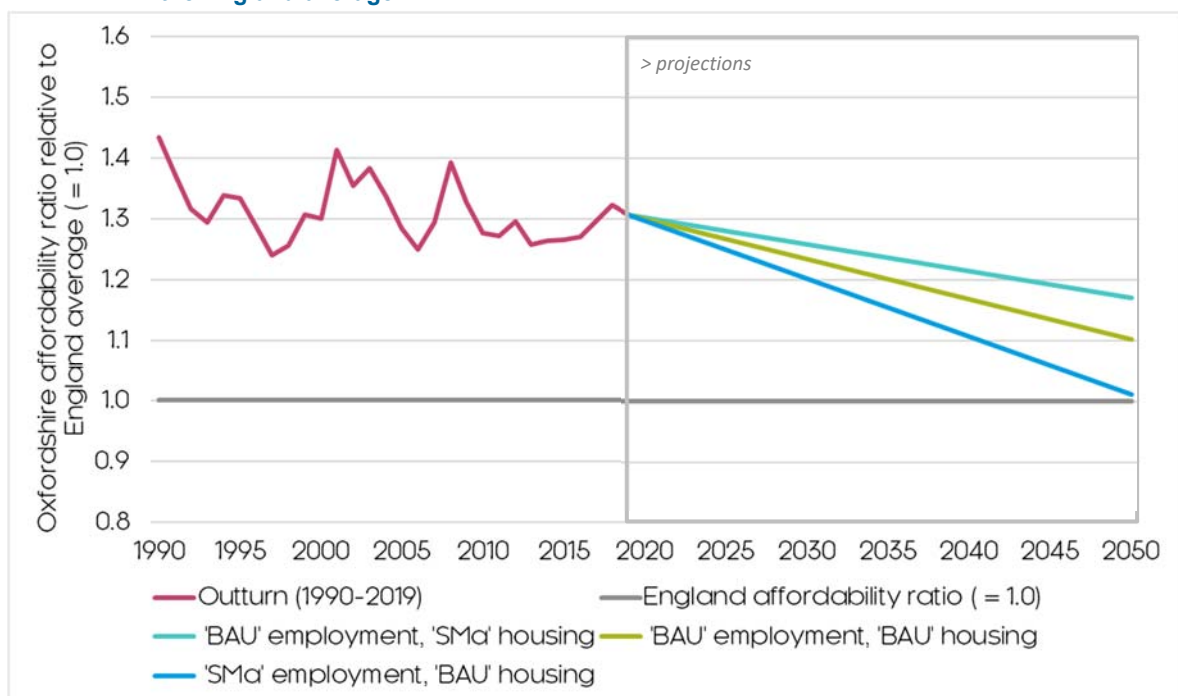
In these 'matched' outcomes (highlighted in bold), Oxfordshire's jobs-dwelling ratio could decline from its current near-record high of 1.45 to a more sustainable value of around 1.23 -1.28 by 2050 – a level last consistently maintained in the 1970's and 1980's. This is a result of the deliberate decisions taken in *Chapter 9* to provide sufficient housing delivery to accompany each employment growth trajectory to reduce the necessity of wide-scale net in-commuting into the county.

Of course, this varies given the potential outcome-mix, but in all but one of the combinations is Oxfordshire expected to see a significant decline in its jobs-dwellings ratio relative to current totals. The off-diagonal elements explore the implications of a 'mis-match' between housing delivery and employment growth, including some less likely combinations of employment and housing.

For instance, the results show that if housing supply remains constrained whilst employment growth continues to grow at pace, then the jobs-dwellings ratio will decrease (shown in red, i.e. there will be fewer jobs relative to housing). Conversely, if growth in employment is lower than anticipated and housing supply grows strongly, then the jobs-dwellings ratio will increase (shown in blue i.e. there will be more jobs relative to housing).

Taking this analysis, Figure 12.6.1 and Table 12.6.2 present estimates of Oxfordshire's house price affordability ratio (relative to the England average⁶⁵) to 2050 given the potential mix of employment and dwelling trajectories for the

Figure 12.6.1: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average



⁶⁵ Where the England average = 1.0. Currently (2019), affordability in Oxfordshire relative to the England average is 1.31; that is, Oxfordshire's affordability ratio (13.2) is .31x higher than the England average (10.1).

Table 12.6.2: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average

	<i>Employment (columns)</i>	2019 - baseline	2050 -SMa	2050 -BAU	2050 -Trans
<i>Dwellings (rows)</i>	-	429,100	495,600	532,500	581,300
2019 - baseline	295,500	1.31	-	-	-
2050 - SMa	403,600	-	1.08	1.17	1.29*
2050 - BAU	425,400	-	1.01	1.10	1.22
2050 -Trans	454,800	-	0.93*	1.02	1.13

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: * denotes unlikely combination.

county. These estimates of affordability have been calculated using the methodology and approach outlined in *12.5 Designing a methodology for Oxfordshire*.

Utilizing this approach, it is expected that across the three matched trajectories for employment and housing growth ('Standard Method adjusted' – 'SMa', 'business as usual' – 'BAU', and 'transformational' – 'Trans') Oxfordshire could become notably more affordable relative to the national average.

Currently, Oxfordshire's house price affordability ratio is 1.3x the national average, yet under each of the 'matched' outcomes (highlighted in bold) this is expected to decline to an average of approximately 1.1x by 2050. For instance, even the transformational level of employment growth, if matched with the accompanying transformational housing delivery, could see Oxfordshire's relative affordability ratio decline to approximately 1.13x by 2050.

Though this means housing in Oxfordshire will remain less affordable than the national average (though the last time housing affordability was less than 1.2x the national average in Oxfordshire was the early 1970's) there is the potential for this gap to close given the right policy combination. Under a hypothetical mix of high ('transformational') housing growth and comparatively lower ('business as usual') employment growth, affordability could almost match the national average in Oxfordshire.

Conversely, current affordability pressures could be maintained, but this is only evident under one policy combination; a hypothetical mix of high ('transformational') employment growth and comparatively lower ('Standard Method adjusted') housing growth. Positively, none of the policy-combinations point towards a further deterioration in affordability in Oxfordshire. To summarise, the results show that:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line in Figure 12.6.1) would see a significant reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being as affordable as elsewhere in the country.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) would see a steadier reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. Housing would still be around 1.2x less affordable in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country though.

- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would still see a notable reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being marginally less affordable than elsewhere in the country.

It should be emphasised that these indicative affordability distributions are intended to be high-level only and are effectively 'policy neutral' because the analysis does not take into account specific constraints, policy interventions or development sites related to affordable development in Oxfordshire.

12.7 Conclusions

As observed in previous chapters, over the past decade, relative to the supply of housing, employment growth has accelerated in Oxfordshire. This has had implications for both net commuting and housing affordability. Analysis presented in this chapter has identified a statistically significant relationship between the balance of housing and employment growth in local areas, and the implications for commuting levels and affordability.

The analysis shows housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a reduction of net commuting and an improvement in housing affordability within Oxfordshire. Yet housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an increase in net commuting and a deterioration in housing affordability.

The intention of the three economic and housing trajectories is to ensure the delivery of employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will become more aligned. The trajectories address this by incorporating a lowering of the ratio between the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings in Oxfordshire, demonstrating how a balance of future housing and economic growth can stabilise and lower affordability and commuting pressures.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the high welfare and inequality costs of unaffordable housing, and the growing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network from increased commuting (and associated externalities, notably, environmental and emissions effects, particularly in light of the desire to attain net zero).

Part C: Conclusions and Appendices

13 Conclusions

This conclusions chapter seeks to highlight and draw out the key findings and observations presented in the Phase 1 Report, particularly those regarding housing need, economic growth and employment land requirements, alongside accompanying high-level commuting and affordability implications.

Oxfordshire today

Oxfordshire, like many parts of the greater South East, is characterised by high housing costs and particular affordability pressures. Median house prices have risen from £100,000 to £350,000 in the county over the last 20 years. Whilst current low interest rates mean that mortgage finance is currently relatively cheap, lenders undertake stress testing and the absolute cost of homes to buy means that there are households that need significant savings to be able to buy a home.

Across Oxfordshire the median cost of a home was 10.4 times income in 2019, and Oxford has been ranked as one of the UK's least affordable cities. Influenced by the high cost of homes to buy and rent, there is a very significant need for affordable housing which has been estimated here as being almost 3,200 affordable homes per year across Oxfordshire to 2030.

It is clear that affordability issues are having a real impact not just on young people in Oxfordshire, but also its business community. If left unaddressed this could hold back future economic growth potential. Poor housing affordability can provide a deterrent to young professionals hoping to live and work in Oxfordshire, which affects the ability of businesses to recruit staff to fill positions, including in high-tech and innovative business sectors.

These issues are partly a function of Oxfordshire's economic success. Oxfordshire has been one of the country's fastest growing economies in recent years, and sustained jobs growth of around 6,000 per year over the 2010-18 period. It has notable strengths in research-intensive activities including media and technology, science and healthcare, and public services. Whilst employment growth has been strong, productivity improvements have however stalled in recent years. The ability of companies to recruit and retain skilled staff is one component of this.

The evidence suggests that whilst rates of housing delivery have been rising, jobs growth over the 2010-18 period outpaced growth in housing and labour supply in Oxfordshire. Between 2011-18 the working-age population age 16-64 increased by just 1% (7,800 persons). A supply-demand imbalance for housing has resulted, contributing to both house price growth and growth in net in-commuting into Oxfordshire.

The minimum local housing need

Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out a "*Standard Method*" for calculating the minimum local housing need taking projected household growth and then applying an upward adjustment to improve affordability based on the median house price-to-income ratio.

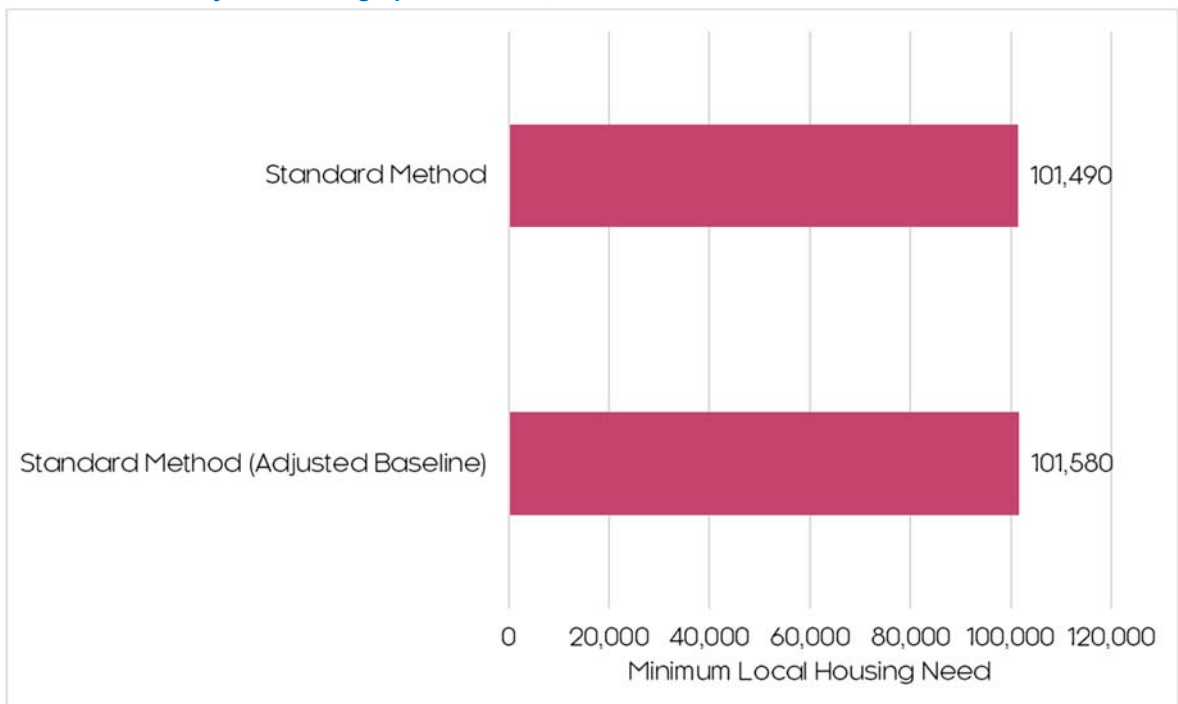
The Standard Method calculation, following the Planning Practice Guidance at the time of preparation of this report, indicated a minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire of 3,383 dwellings per annum which would equate to a

baseline level of provision of 101,490 homes over the 2020-50 plan period. This is based on 2014-based Household Projections.

The review of demographic data undertaken as part of this report indicates that it is likely that Oxford’s population has been under-estimated. To address these issues, revised demographic projections have been developed to provide a revised baseline assessment of the demographic need for housing informed by past population trends.

With appropriate assumptions on household formation, the revised demographic projections presented in the report result in a marginally higher need for 3,386 dwellings per annum equivalent to 101,580 homes over the plan period (as shown in Figure 12.7.1 below).

Figure 12.7.1: Standard Method minimum local housing need for Oxfordshire, and with an adjusted demographic baseline, 2020-50



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

This level of housing provision would support population growth of 25.4% across Oxfordshire over the 30-year plan period (equivalent to an additional 183,000 persons).

The Standard Method local housing need changes over time, and the latest data for 2021 (as explored in *Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix*) shows a slightly lower need for 3,358 dwellings per annum (using the 2014-based Household Projections) and 3,291 dwellings per annum (using the adjusted projections). The latter would equate to a need for 98,730 homes over the period to 2050.

Oxfordshire’s economic trajectories

Government policy sets out that the conditions where other growth levels should be considered, and which are relevant to the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan. Extensive evidence considered in this report in particular demonstrates an important inter-relationship between economic performance and growth potential and housing need.

Resultantly, the report has modelled three alternative economic trajectories to 2050 to consider potential housing and employment land need:

- **Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory:** backwards calculated from the Standard Method calculation of housing need, with an adjustment for the revised demographic baseline.
- **Business as usual trajectory:** this trajectory represents a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) economic performance, taking particular account of the robust growth delivered during the recovery from the 2008-09 recession.
- **Transformational trajectory:** this trajectory is broadly the equivalent of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy's (LIS) aspirational "*go for growth*" scenario, but updated and adjusted to 2020.

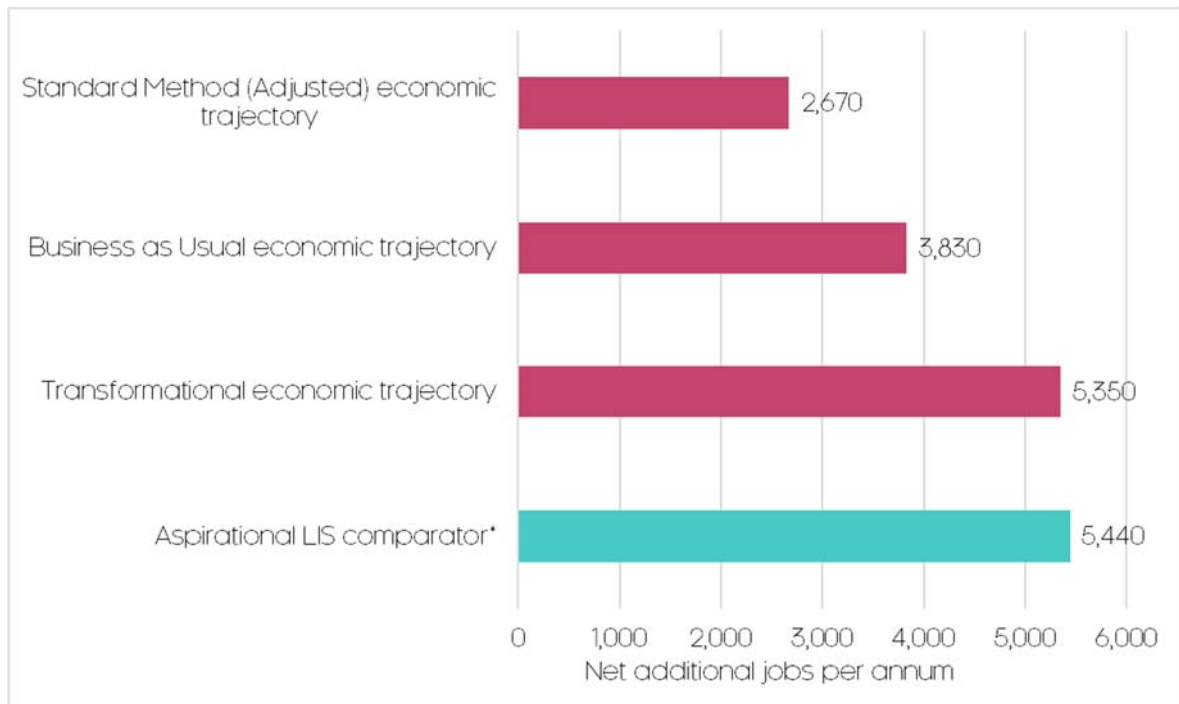
All of the trajectories have a baseline of 2018, the latest available year of data at the time of writing.

From this baseline, the Standard Method (adjusted) trajectory shows 85,400 additional jobs in Oxfordshire by 2050, modelling the level of economic activity that could be expected to be supported by delivery of housing in line with the Standard Method calculations (using the adjusted baseline demographic assumptions).

The business as usual projection models a continuation of Oxfordshire's recent (pre-Covid) robust growth. This shows 122,500 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. At this pace of growth, Oxfordshire is expected to have continued along its recent growth trajectory, and achieved some of its LIS-related ambitions.

The highest scenario, the transformational trajectory, models the equivalent of delivering many of the aspirations set out in the Oxfordshire LIS, and results in 171,200 additional jobs in Oxfordshire over the period to 2050. The Oxfordshire LIS sets out an ambitious vision for Oxfordshire to be one of the top three global innovation systems by 2040.

The results of the three economic trajectories, shown in terms of employment, are presented in Table 12.7.1 and Figure 12.7.2 below (the latter of which includes the Oxfordshire LIS' jobs aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise). They present alternative assumptions of how Oxfordshire's economy might perform.

Figure 12.7.2: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire, 2018-50

Source: Cambridge Econometrics, PwC. Note: * LIS comparator corresponds to 2017-40 only.

Table 12.7.1: Employment (jobs) trajectories for Oxfordshire

	Employment (jobs) at 2018 (baseline)	2030	2040	2050	Net additional employment (jobs), 2018-50	Net additional employment (jobs) p.a., 2018-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	410,066	434,538	464,179	495,555	85,489	2,672
Business as usual economic trajectory	410,066	451,742	490,234	532,517	122,451	3,827
Transformational economic trajectory	410,066	466,804	520,636	581,254	171,188	5,350

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Despite the application of a robust methodology and evidence base, there are clearly uncertainties associated with predicting the future economic performance of a local area, which heightens as the forecasts look further into the future.

However, the growth trajectories considered are reasonable parameters for growth when set against Oxfordshire's historic economic performance and employment growth trends over previous economic cycles, with Oxfordshire displaying particularly robust growth over the most recent economic cycle.

The report has then proceeded to model what level of housing provision might be needed to accommodate these levels of growth, taking into account factors such as the changes in the age structure of the population and the proportion of people of different ages in work.

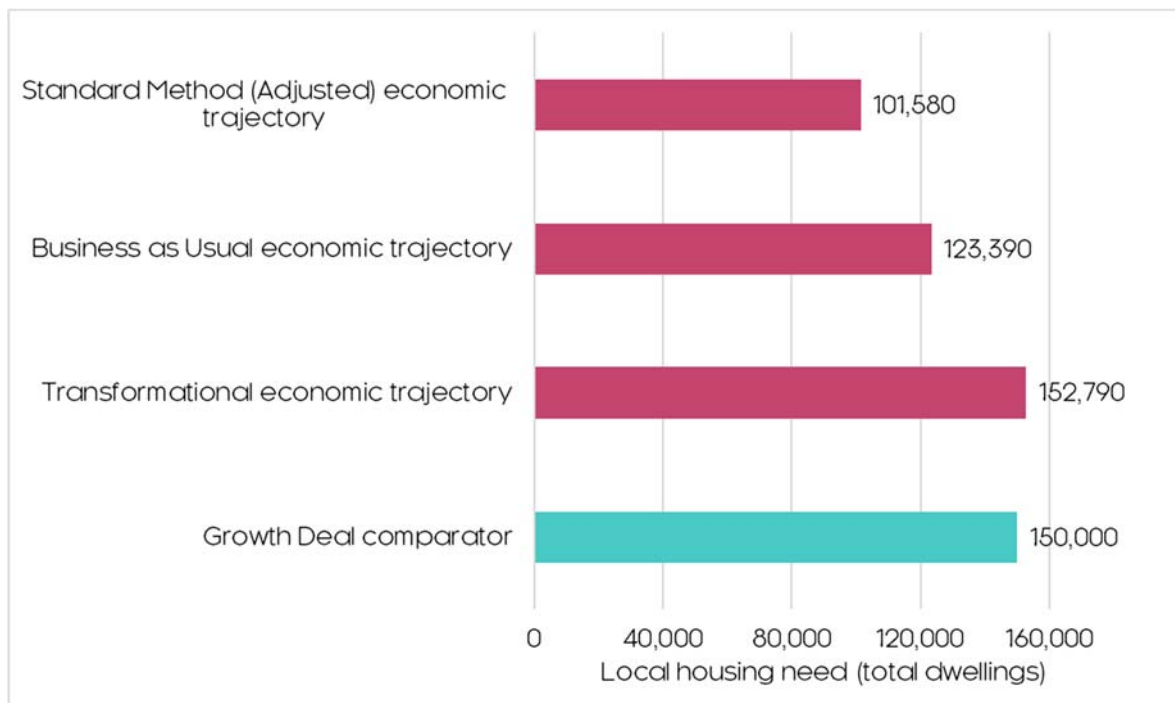
The results of the housing need accompanying the economic trajectories are shown in Table 12.7.2 and Figure 12.7.3 below (the latter of which includes

the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal housing aspiration as a comparator, shaded in turquoise. The Deal provides funding for affordable housing and infrastructure improvements to support the ambition of building 100,000 homes between 2011-31 to address the county's severe housing shortage and support economic growth).

The analysis shows that to meet the Standard Method (adjusted) level of need over 2020-50, Oxfordshire would require around 3,400 dwellings each year; with the business as usual level of growth this increases to 4,100 dwellings per annum, with a transformational figure approaching 5,100 dwellings per annum, dependent on the realisation of LIS-related ambitions.

These figures can be compared with the Standard Method housing need (unadjusted, across the whole of Oxfordshire) of 3,400 dwellings per annum over the period 2020-50.

Figure 12.7.3: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50



Source: Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects. Note: the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal however only runs to 2031 however, and has been extrapolated using per annum rates of delivery.

Table 12.7.2: Projected housing need in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories, 2020-50

	Households at 2020	Households at 2050	Change in households, 2020-50	Change in households p.a., 2020-50	Local housing need (dwellings) p.a., 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	288,999	387,591	98,592	3,286	3,386
Business as usual economic trajectory	288,999	408,806	119,807	3,994	4,113
Transformational economic trajectory	288,999	437,328	148,329	4,944	5,093

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting, Icen Projects.

For the purposes of the Oxfordshire Plan, planning for higher levels of housing provision than the Standard Method provides greater potential both to support economic growth and deliver affordable housing; and a greater likelihood of improving the affordability of market housing over the plan period to 2050.

This report however does not however recommend one trajectory over another but provides a set of parameters for growth. In determining the appropriate strategy and how much development to plan for, the evidence in the assessment needs to be brought together with broader factors including the capacity to accommodate growth and environmental consequences of different levels of growth.

Employment land provision

There is a healthy market for commercial property in Oxfordshire. Office take-up and availability is generally concentrated in Oxford and southwards along the 'Knowledge Spine', including Milton Park and Harwell Campus. Take-up and availability of industrial floorspace is more spread out across Oxfordshire, with noticeable amounts of speculative developments to the northeast of the county where there is good access to the M40.

It is evident that there are short-term supply constraints in the office market, particularly in the Oxford area and for Grade A space. Many of the area's science and business parks are at capacity. The evidence also points to a healthy market for industrial space.

The report has modelled the implications of the jobs growth arising in each of the employment projections for employment land and floorspace. This has been compared to projections of past employment floorspace completions based on trends over the 2011-18 period.

For the purposes of considering the amount of land to allocate for employment uses, it is sensible to group together Office and Research and Development uses. These types of activities typically take place on business and science parks within Oxfordshire and can also take place in central parts of towns and cities including town and city centres.

Equally it is sensible to group together more general industrial land which can cater for both light and heavy industrial uses (Classes EG(iii) and B2) as well as storage and distribution (Use Class B8) which are less likely to take place in central areas.

Table 12.7.1 below brings together the results of the labour demand modelling and the projections of gross floorspace completions on this basis. This includes an allowance for replacement of losses and some supply-side flexibility.

Table 12.7.3: Gross additional employment land needs (total hectares, ha) in Oxfordshire, 2020-50

	Office, R&D and Education need (ha), 2020-50	Industrial, Warehousing & Other need (ha), 2020-50	Total employment land (ha) needed, 2020-50
Standard Method (adjusted) economic trajectory	149	296	445
Business as usual economic trajectory	185	369	555

Transformational economic trajectory	233	444	677
Completions projection	162	645	807

Source: Icenii Projects.

For office, R&D and education uses the report concludes labour demand trajectories provide an appropriate basis for considering the level of employment land provision which should be made within the Oxfordshire Plan. This demonstrates a need for provision of between 149-233 ha of land for these uses to 2050 (depending on the growth trajectory taken forwards).

However, for the broad industrial use category, there is a weaker relationship between jobs and floorspace or land requirements given productivity improvements and demand arising for replacement of older dated stock.

The report therefore considers that greater weight should therefore be afforded to the completions projection scenario for industrial land (which is based on past gross development trends) which suggests a need for almost 650 ha of industrial land for the 30 year plan period.

Overall, the evidence suggests that the scale of employment land needed across Oxfordshire could be up to 807 ha. The precise scale will be influenced by decisions on what growth scenario to take forward in the Plan.

Commuting and affordability implications

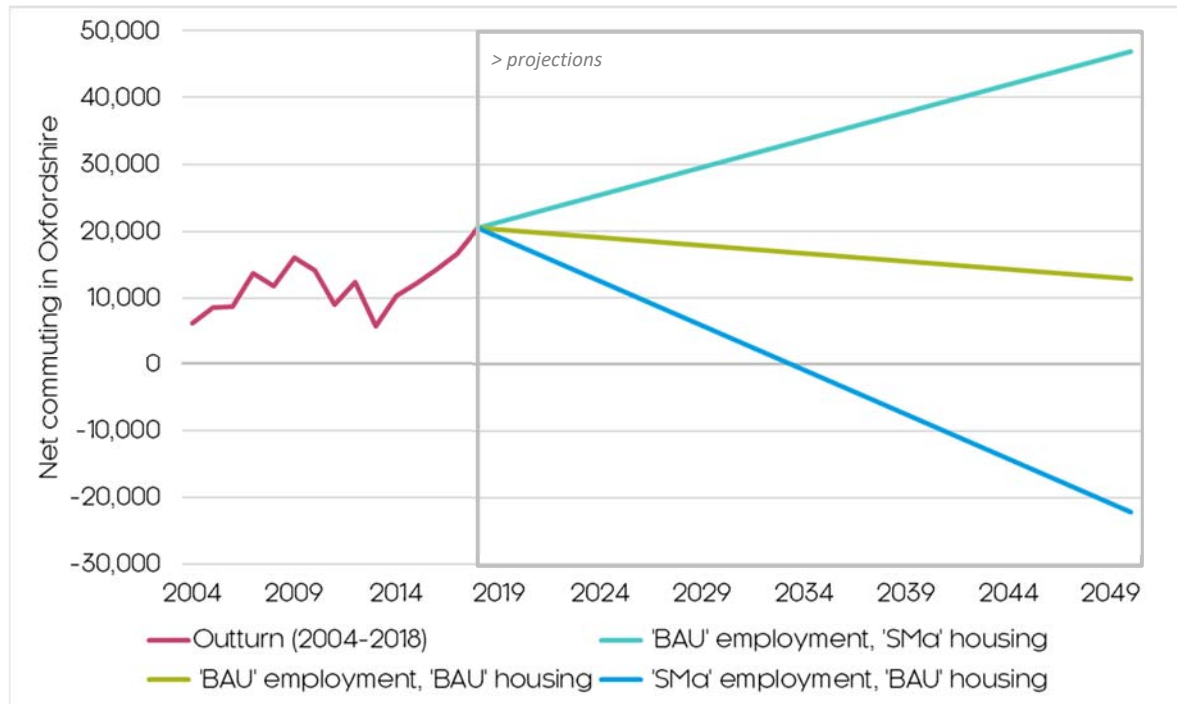
Over the past decade, relative to the supply of housing, employment growth has accelerated in Oxfordshire. This has had implications for both net commuting and housing affordability, which have both increased significantly in the county over this time. Analysis presented in this report has identified a statistically significant relationship between the balance of housing and employment growth in local areas, and the implications for commuting levels and affordability.

The analysis shows housing delivery above that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in a reduction of net commuting and an improvement in housing affordability within Oxfordshire. Yet housing delivery below that required to sustain the associated level of employment growth will likely result in an increase in net commuting and a deterioration in housing affordability.

The intention of the three economic and housing trajectories is to ensure the delivery of employment and housing growth in Oxfordshire will become more aligned. The trajectories address this by incorporating a lowering of the ratio between the number of jobs relative to the number of dwellings in Oxfordshire, demonstrating how a balance of future housing and economic growth can stabilise and lower affordability and commuting pressures.

Such outcomes are increasingly desirable given the high welfare and inequality costs of unaffordable housing, and the growing strain on Oxfordshire's transport network from increased commuting (and associated externalities, notably, environmental and emissions effects, particularly in light of the desire to attain net zero).

Figure 12.7.4: Current and potential net commuting flows in Oxfordshire

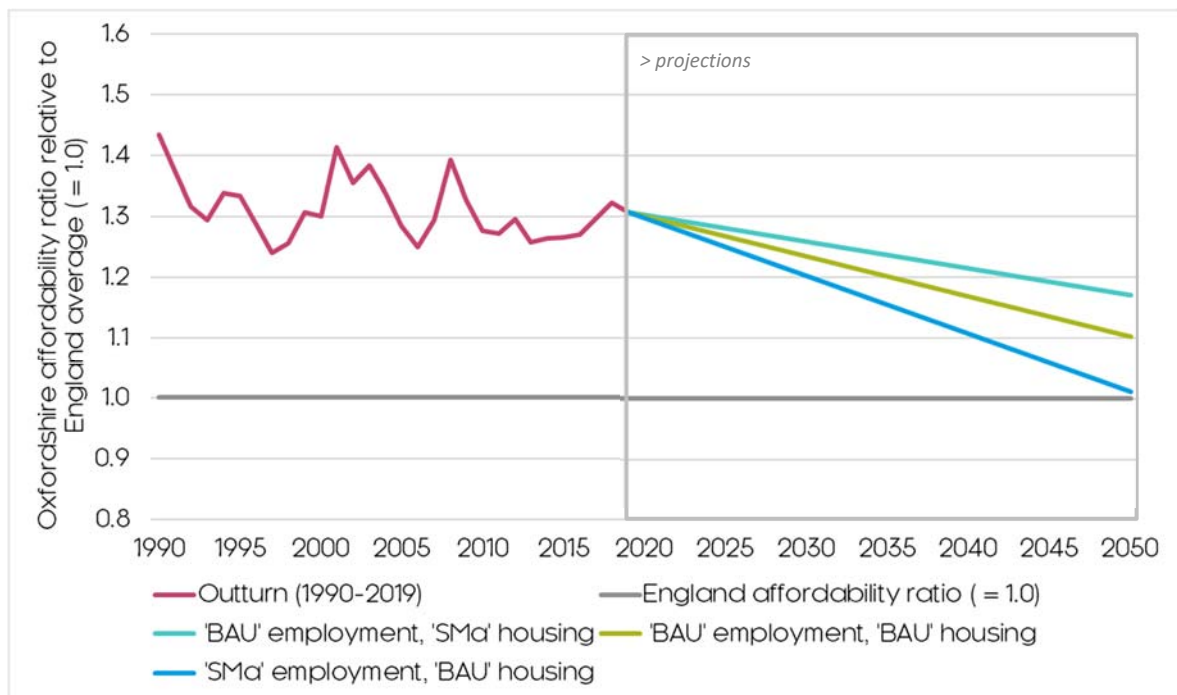


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.4 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon net commuting in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) could see a reduction in Oxfordshire's net commuting, potentially below historic (pre-1991) levels. This would mean there are more residents than jobs in the county, so residents commute out for work.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) could see an increase in Oxfordshire's net commuting, above current record-highs. This would mean there are more jobs than residents in the county, so out of county residents commute in for work.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would see a steady decline in Oxfordshire's net commuting as it returns to 'normal' levels. The number of jobs is still marginally higher than the number of residents in the county, reflecting Oxfordshire's historically higher commuting ratio.

Figure 12.7.5: Current and potential house price affordability in Oxfordshire, relative to the England average



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics. Note: a ratio of 1.0 would equate to an affordability ratio exactly the same as the England average.

Figure 12.7.5 above demonstrates how the balance of future housing and economic growth can impact upon affordability (relative to the England average) in Oxfordshire:

- A lower employment growth trajectory relative to higher housing growth (the blue line) would see a significant reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being as affordable as elsewhere in the country.
- A higher employment growth trajectory relative to lower housing growth (the turquoise line) would see a steadier reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. Housing would still be around 1.2x less affordable in Oxfordshire than elsewhere in the country though.
- A similar employment and housing growth trajectory (the green line) would still see a notable reduction in Oxfordshire's affordability ratio relative to the England average. This could result in housing in Oxfordshire being marginally less affordable than elsewhere in the country.

Links to other OGNA work

Following on from the analysis and evidence presented in this report, the **Phase 2 Report** proceeds with the next stage of the OGNA. The second phase of the OGNA broadly comprises three stages of work:

- The first involves identifying and assessing the Oxfordshire Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA), including the definition of functionally meaningful sub-areas. This will allow for more precise, in-depth

exploration and illustration of employment and housing distributions to accompany the *Phase 1 Report* trajectories.

- The second stage seeks to provide this analysis, distributing the Oxfordshire-wide employment projections (derived and presented here in the *Phase 1 Report*) by functional sub-area to 2050. For housing, five theoretical spatial scenarios, informed by the functional sub-areas, have also been developed and tested to distribute the housing need presented here in the *Phase 1 Report*.
- Finally, the third stage, bringing together the evidence and analysis of the previous stages, considers the implications for commuting and transport use (including differences in modal share and private vehicle trips) of the employment and housing distribution scenarios.

The period of the construction of this report has also coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It is clear that the pandemic and some of its long-lasting effects have the potential to impact upon the findings of this report, and as such additional consideration has been given to this question. This analysis can be found in the **Covid-19 Impacts Addendum** that accompanies this report.

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Appendix A: Components of Population Change by Local Authority

The tables below provide data on international migration trends for individual local authorities, as referenced in *Chapter 3 Demographic Trends*.

Of note is the observation that the four authorities excluding the City tend to see a level of net domestic in-migration, whereas the City constantly sees notable levels of net out-migration.

However, the City does see substantial international in-migration when compared with any of the other locations. This pattern is characteristic of cities and larger urban areas with a younger population structure.

Table 12.7.1: Components of population change (2001-18) – Cherwell

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	569	-110	427	-40	-248	598
2002/3	642	152	447	390	-240	1,391
2003/4	612	279	264	69	-254	970
2004/5	805	-58	443	-16	-245	929
2005/6	875	-83	762	-17	-254	1,283
2006/7	871	-422	771	-32	-227	961
2007/8	951	-97	665	27	-226	1,320
2008/9	767	-354	526	116	-194	861
2009/10	804	-68	502	-8	-194	1,036
2010/11	950	-316	430	-17	-132	915
2011/12	829	-263	122	-4	0	684
2012/13	702	-145	202	127	0	886
2013/14	511	-5	414	-222	0	698
2014/15	583	-245	427	269	0	1,034
2015/16	690	-292	563	120	0	1,081
2016/17	512	284	118	53	0	967
2017/18	560	766	273	-40	0	1,559

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 12.7.2: Components of population change (2001-18) – Oxford

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	436	-1,966	2,313	-12	345	1,116
2002/3	568	-1,218	3,557	52	333	3,292
2003/4	578	-1,653	2,468	-51	334	1,676
2004/5	750	-1,340	4,038	-10	352	3,790
2005/6	855	-1,951	-128	-7	361	-870
2006/7	851	-1,991	455	-10	370	-325
2007/8	1,051	-1,830	662	-7	369	245
2008/9	1,116	-1,650	1,216	7	356	1,045
2009/10	1,069	-1,547	2,590	-22	339	2,429
2010/11	1,195	-1,316	2,102	17	340	2,338
2011/12	1,136	-1,123	1,219	0	0	1,232
2012/13	963	-1,544	1,499	11	0	929
2013/14	1,067	-1,570	2,750	11	0	2,258
2014/15	897	-3,075	2,222	8	0	52
2015/16	971	-2,765	2,364	6	0	576
2016/17	821	-2,827	1,335	-39	0	-710
2017/18	681	-3,082	2,146	0	0	-255

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 12.7.3: Components of population change (2001-18) – South Oxfordshire

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	387	-205	106	-27	186	447
2002/3	415	-410	-13	-10	184	166
2003/4	457	-186	-2	-17	187	439
2004/5	398	-240	365	10	158	691
2005/6	497	-530	499	-1	161	626
2006/7	493	-299	563	29	164	950
2007/8	605	51	177	-10	162	985
2008/9	420	244	-26	52	165	855
2009/10	520	-235	117	-119	166	449
2010/11	530	141	-58	255	178	1,046
2011/12	431	212	35	83	0	761
2012/13	306	397	-20	-77	0	606
2013/14	408	418	230	93	0	1,149
2014/15	322	218	237	-77	0	700
2015/16	369	170	337	103	0	979
2016/17	330	121	182	-22	0	611
2017/18	180	472	158	-73	0	737

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 12.7.4: Components of population change (2001-18) – Vale of White Horse

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	346	-807	392	-34	-104	-207
2002/3	220	8	429	12	-100	569
2003/4	359	-189	310	-33	-106	341
2004/5	426	52	537	1	-101	915
2005/6	326	-123	643	63	-90	819
2006/7	555	-366	633	62	-99	785
2007/8	454	-464	362	25	-87	290
2008/9	450	145	192	54	-99	742
2009/10	527	191	283	-62	-142	797
2010/11	516	163	529	-36	-104	1,068
2011/12	439	-58	63	375	0	819
2012/13	304	528	105	-150	0	787
2013/14	405	429	463	-173	0	1,124
2014/15	350	985	520	58	0	1,913
2015/16	406	1,187	508	18	0	2,119
2016/17	460	1,725	376	13	0	2,574
2017/18	299	1,895	295	16	0	2,505

Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Table 12.7.5: Components of population change (2001-18) – West Oxfordshire

Year	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (un-attributable)	Total change
2001/2	157	72	100	-50	-19	260
2002/3	136	809	123	86	-32	1,122
2003/4	243	693	77	-34	-24	955
2004/5	117	660	134	-39	-41	831
2005/6	162	957	315	58	-45	1,447
2006/7	372	1,320	186	38	-66	1,850
2007/8	336	336	172	64	-58	850
2008/9	305	407	106	78	-88	808
2009/10	377	607	72	-77	-97	882
2010/11	322	521	85	-94	-98	736
2011/12	388	381	28	925	0	1,722
2012/13	291	446	-30	74	0	781
2013/14	176	-25	214	-215	0	150
2014/15	214	-72	238	134	0	514
2015/16	71	-318	303	83	0	139
2016/17	34	323	165	-4	0	518
2017/18	-47	493	113	-25	0	534

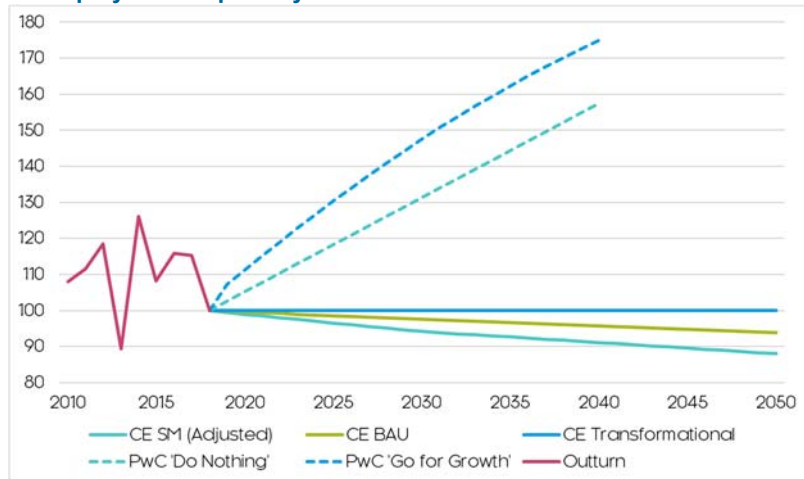
Source: ONS, Justin Gardner Consulting.

Appendix B: Oxfordshire’s Sector Growth Trajectories

Primary and utilities

Employment in agriculture, mining, and utilities has been on a downward trend in Oxfordshire over the past decade, and at the national level this is expected to continue in light of consumer, environmental and economic pressures, with the sector also having significant potential for future automation.

Figure 12.7.1: Employment in primary and utilities

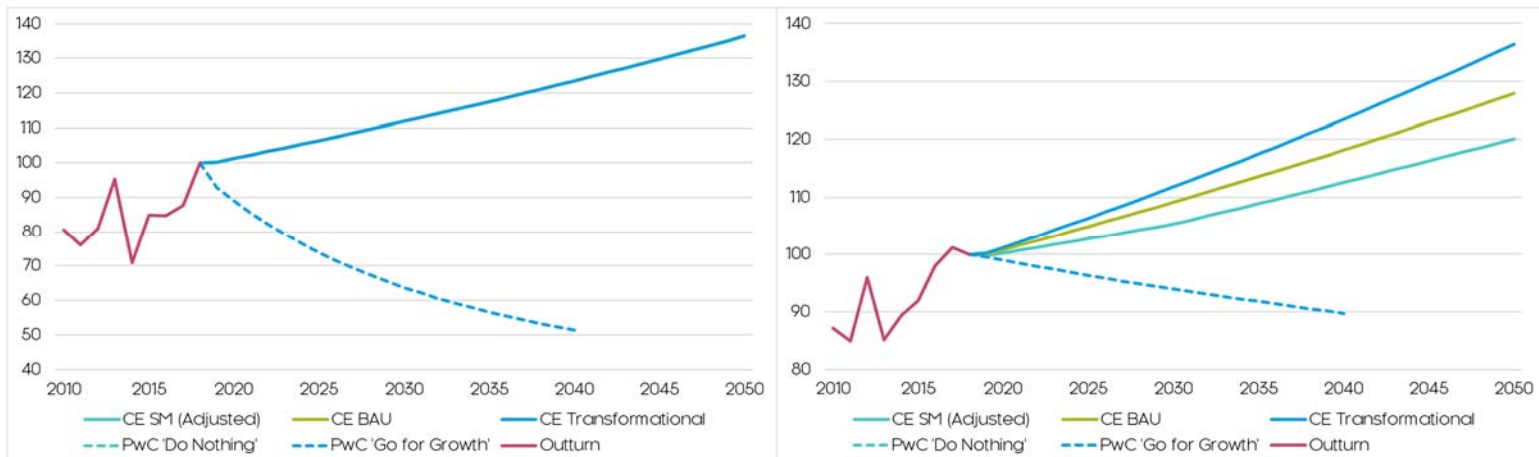


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

It is unlikely Oxfordshire would reverse this trend, yet both PwC’s projections point towards robust growth for the sector. Though Energy is a “breakthrough sector”, the LIS notes Oxfordshire’s greatest strengths/assets are in energy-related research, ideation and consultancy, rather than the front-end generation/distribution captured here. Therefore, CE expects employment in the sector to either decline or remain roughly constant over the long term.

For productivity, PwC assumes a dramatic and sudden decline, in contrast to CE’s upward trajectory. Combined with easing employment, CE therefore expects a steady increase in GVA at the baseline but accelerating growth in other trajectories, driven by improved productivity and innovation take-up.

Figure 12.7.2: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in primary and utilities

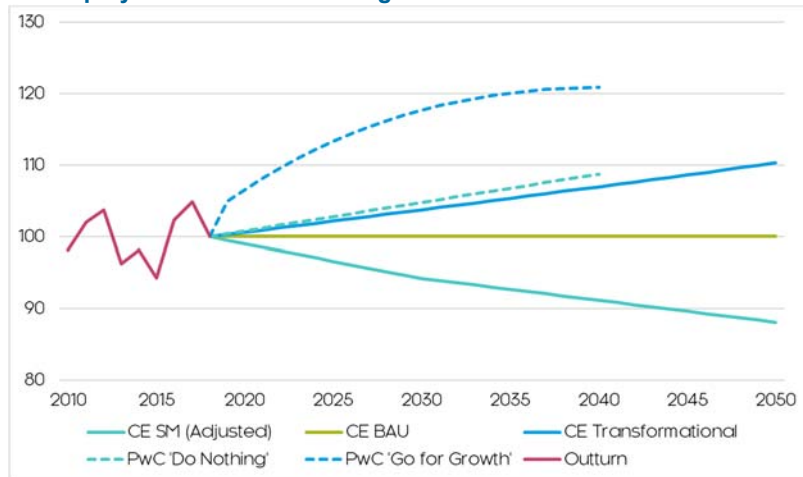


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Manufacturing

With the ongoing expansion of globalisation, automation and digitisation, the manufacturing workforce in the UK is expected to continue to decline in the long term, even as GVA and productivity increase. It is likely that the sector in Oxfordshire either follows this trend, or otherwise remains at current levels. However, if aspirations outlined in the LIS are realised, then positive employment growth could be seen. Both PwC’s baseline and “go for growth” scenarios outline strong employment growth for the sector.

Figure 12.7.3: Employment in manufacturing

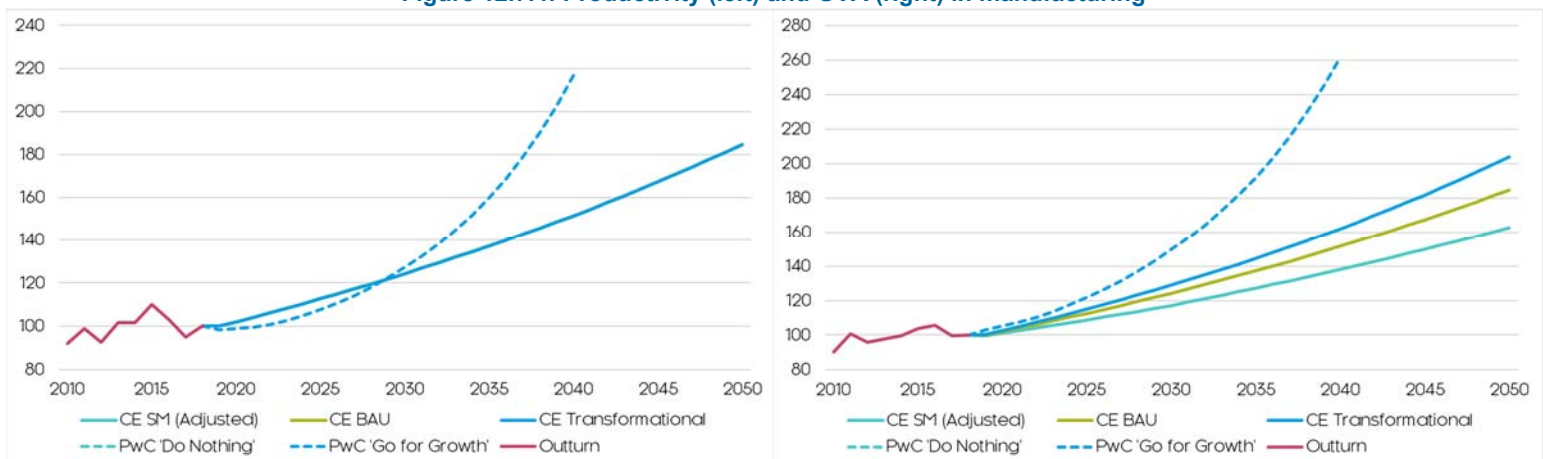


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Though the LIS correctly emphasises Oxfordshire’s manufacturing specialisms - such as robotics, automotive and quantum computing - and their growth potential, CE’s view is that even with ambitious growth in such sub-sectors, manufacturing as a whole is unlikely to grow its workforce with such rapidity (in fact, “breakthrough sectors” currently account for only a quarter of the manufacturing workforce).

However, as such activities form a central and justified part of the LIS, we build in moderate employment growth into the higher trajectories. Productivity growth, underpinned by the adoption of frontier technologies (e.g. 3D printing, plastic electronics) will continue to be robust and drive GVA, though not as rapid as PwC’s, which expects productivity to more than double by 2040.

Figure 12.7.4: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in manufacturing

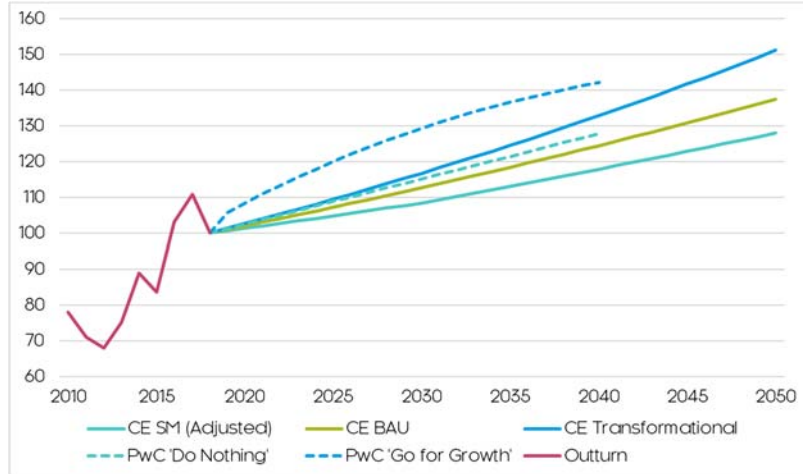


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Construction

The performance of the construction sector is largely dependent on the amount of activity in the wider economy. When combined with ambitious policy aspirations around housing delivery (e.g. Garden Towns) infrastructure (e.g. East-West rail) and commercial space (e.g. Culham Science Centre, Milton Park, Oxford North and Oxford Science Park etc.), it is likely demand for construction workers in Oxfordshire’s will continue to grow strongly over the coming decades.

Figure 12.7.5: Employment in construction

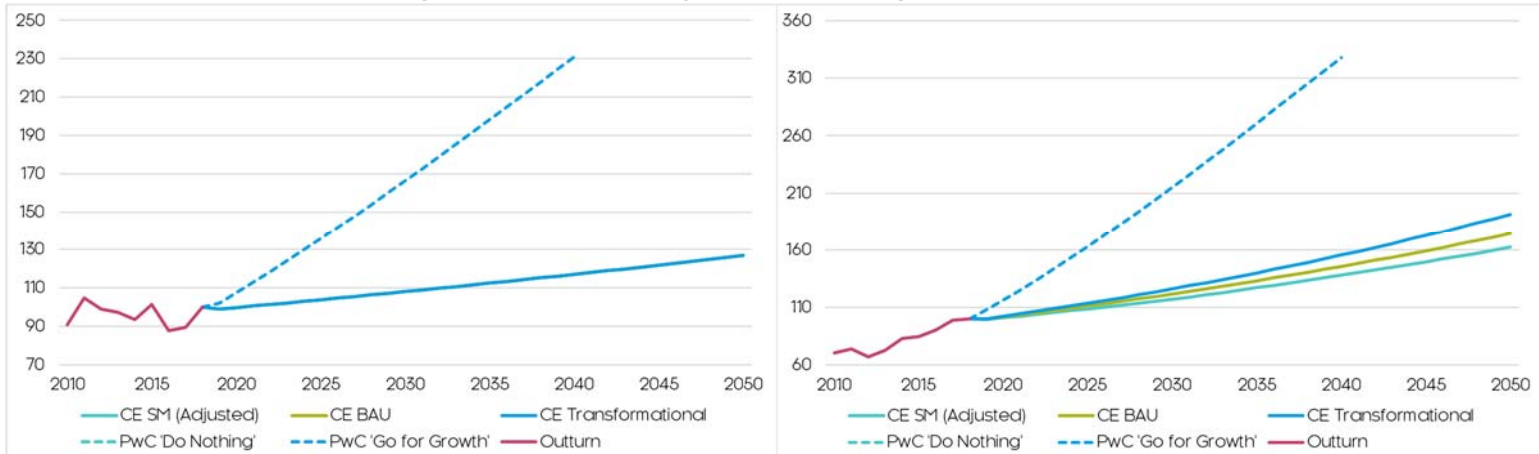


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There are however some potential restraints to this growth, which has been factored into CE’s slightly more modest projection. For instance, skills shortages are prevalent and could be exacerbated by an aging workforce and restrictions on migration. Alongside employment, PwC also expects sector productivity to surge, doubling by 2040, which is ambitious given its sluggish performance over the past decade due to low levels of investment and skills shortages.

Although it is possible that offsite manufacturing methods will significantly improve the productivity of new build construction, a significant component of this sector will remain small firms and self-employed contractors. CE therefore expects more stable productivity, and thus GVA, growth in the long term, but with the potential for faster growth in the higher trajectories.

Figure 12.7.6: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in construction

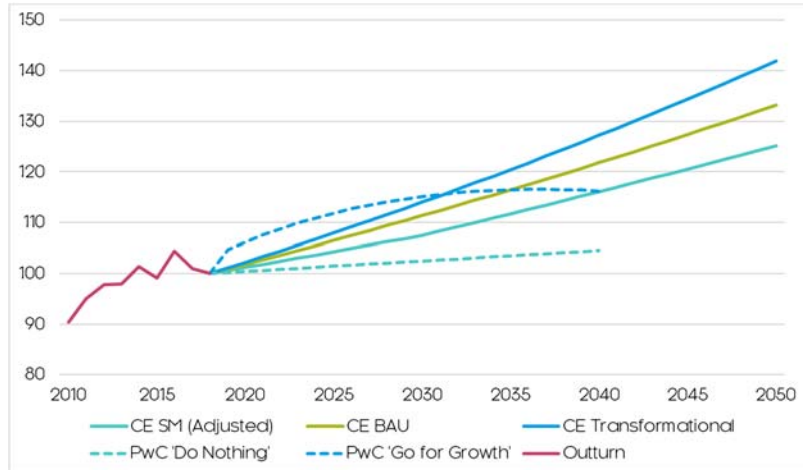


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Retail; transport; accommodation and food

Although diverse in composition, the demand for consumer services (i.e. retail; transport; accommodation and food) is largely dependent on the amount of activity in the wider economy. Given strong projected economic and household growth in Oxfordshire, the demand for consumer services, and therefore employment, is expected to increase.

Figure 12.7.7: Employment in retail; transport; accommodation and food

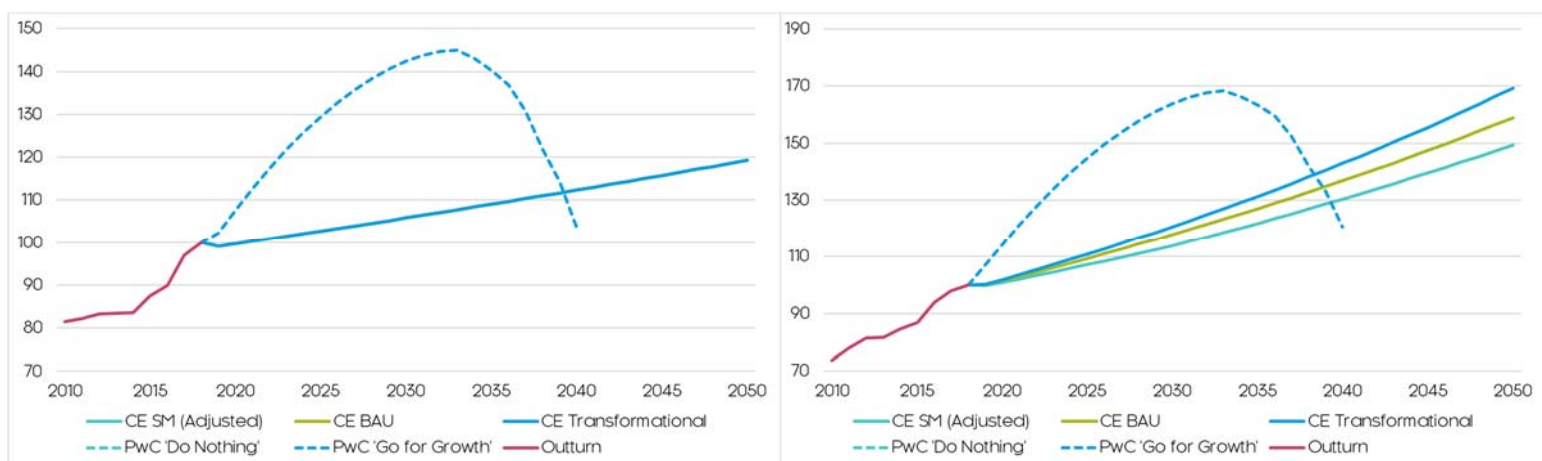


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There is significant uncertainty as to the extent automation will impact on labour demand, which may be reflected in PwC’s slightly less-optimistic employment projections, particularly at the baseline. Likewise, changing consumer patterns (e.g. online shopping) will cause some employment displacement and shifting within the sector.

CE expects sector productivity to grow at a constant increasing trend overtime, as it has done over the past decade. In contrast, PwC emphasises very strong (potentially automation-led) productivity growth over the next decade, before a surprising levelling off and then decline in the mid-2030’s. This is also reflected in the overall GVA projection, which in contrast CE expects to maintain a steady upward trend.

Figure 12.7.8: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in retail; transport; accommodation and food

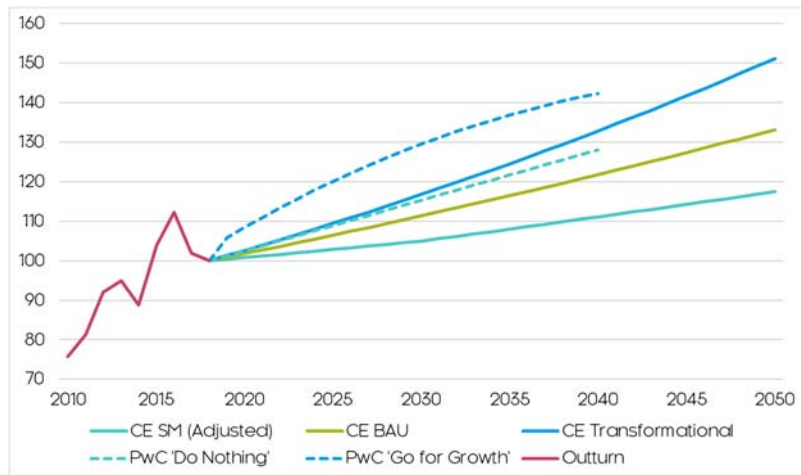


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Information and communication

As outlined in the LIS, Oxfordshire has a clear comparative advantage within information and communications, particularly relating to Digital and Creative, which accounts for almost half of all “breakthrough” activity in Oxfordshire. Underpinned by a strong research base and a skilled workforce, the sector has been an engine for employment growth over recent decades and is expected to continue creating highly-value employment opportunities.

Figure 12.7.9: Employment in information and communication

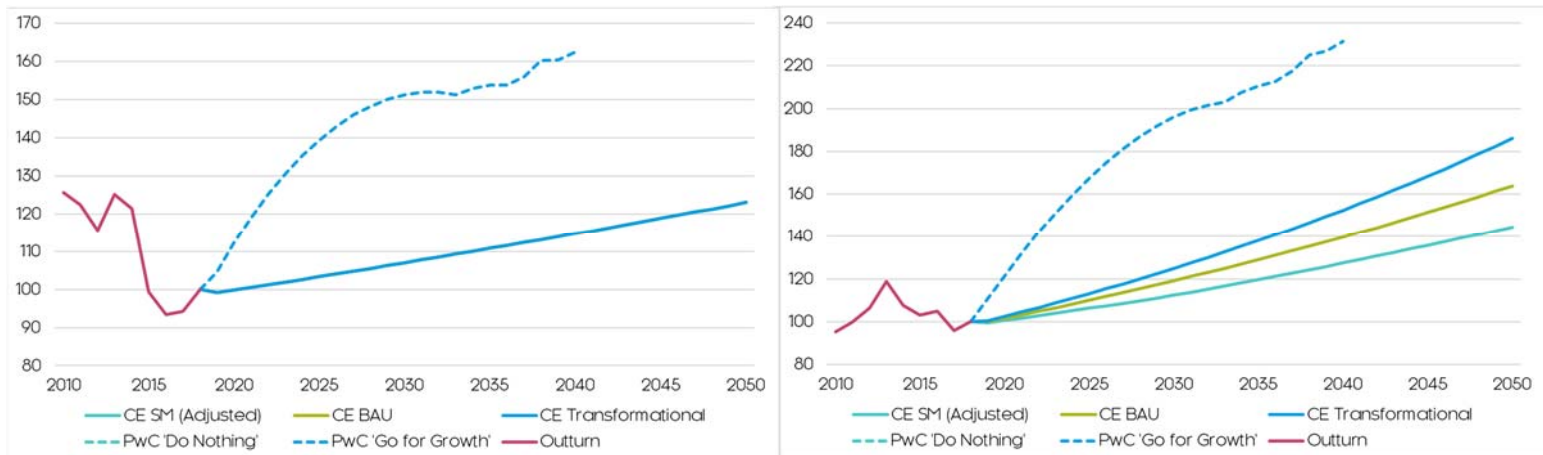


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

There are however potential restraints to growth, including skills shortages, labour supply pressures (especially relating to migration), and investment uncertainty. Because of this, CE’s baseline projection for employment is somewhat lower than PwC’s, but with the potential for faster growth in the higher trajectories.

Though sectoral productivity growth has been disappointing over the past decade, CE does expect this to rebound with the development and adoption of new technologies (which will also diffuse throughout the wider economy). Though this growth is not to the extent envisaged by PwC, which expects a doubling of GVA by 2040.

Figure 12.7.10: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in information and communication

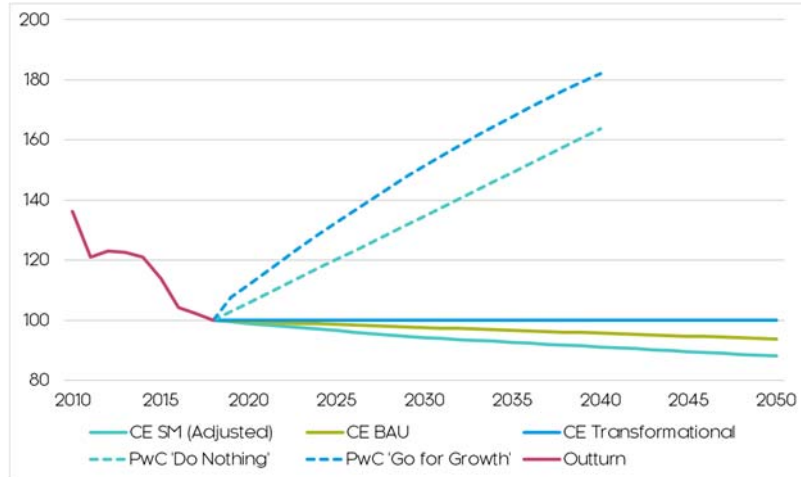


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Financial and insurance activities

The finance and insurance sector has experienced an ongoing contraction in its workforce both nationally and locally over the past decade, driven largely by automation, digitisation and out-sourcing, which accelerated given pressures post-2008/09 recession. This trend is anticipated to continue over both the short and long term.

Figure 12.7.11: Employment in financial and insurance activities

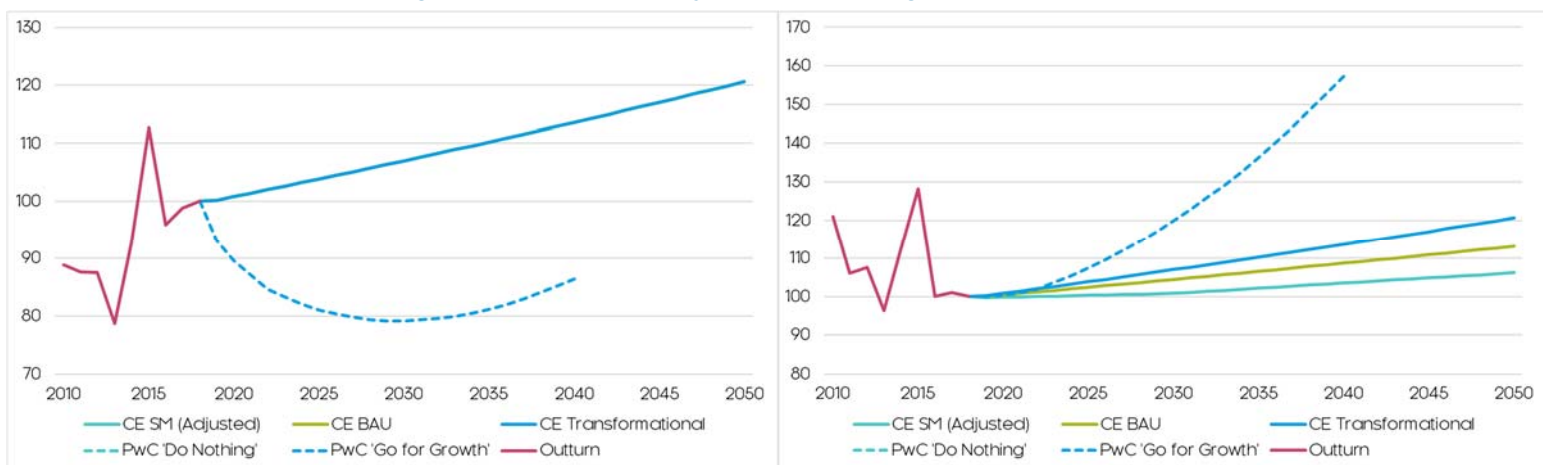


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Alongside these pressures, uncertainty surrounding the position of the financial services and investment banking sector post-Brexit makes it difficult to predict a sudden upsurge in employment, either locally or nationally, as suggested by PwC, even under its baseline.

Despite this decline in employment, already high sector productivity is expected to grow strongly in future, driven by fintech and associated technological innovations. This contributes to relatively robust GVA growth. Though this aligns with PwC’s projections for GVA, they place the emphasis on employment-led growth due to declining productivity, which is largely counter to trends of the past decade.

Figure 12.7.12: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in financial and insurance activities

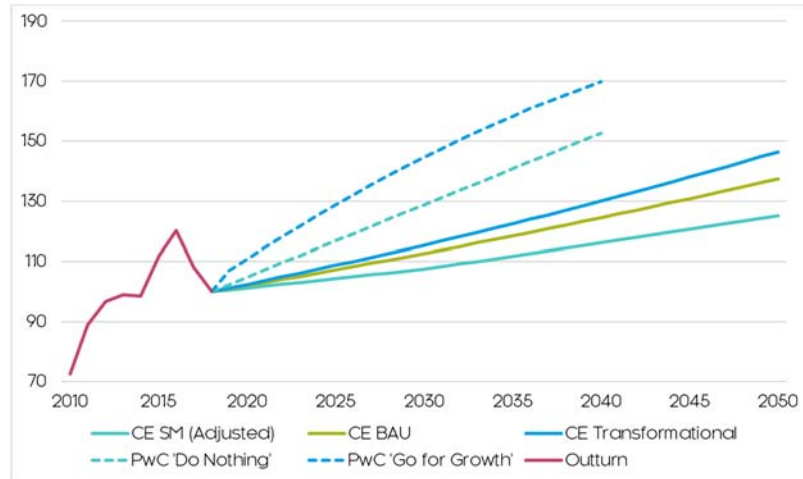


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Real estate activities

The demand for real estate services is closely related to the activity of the construction sector as well as the health of the broader financial and insurance markets. Given both are expected to grow output strongly, it is likely the real estate workforce in Oxfordshire will need to expand to manage and oversee such an increase in demand.

Figure 12.7.13: Employment in real estate activities

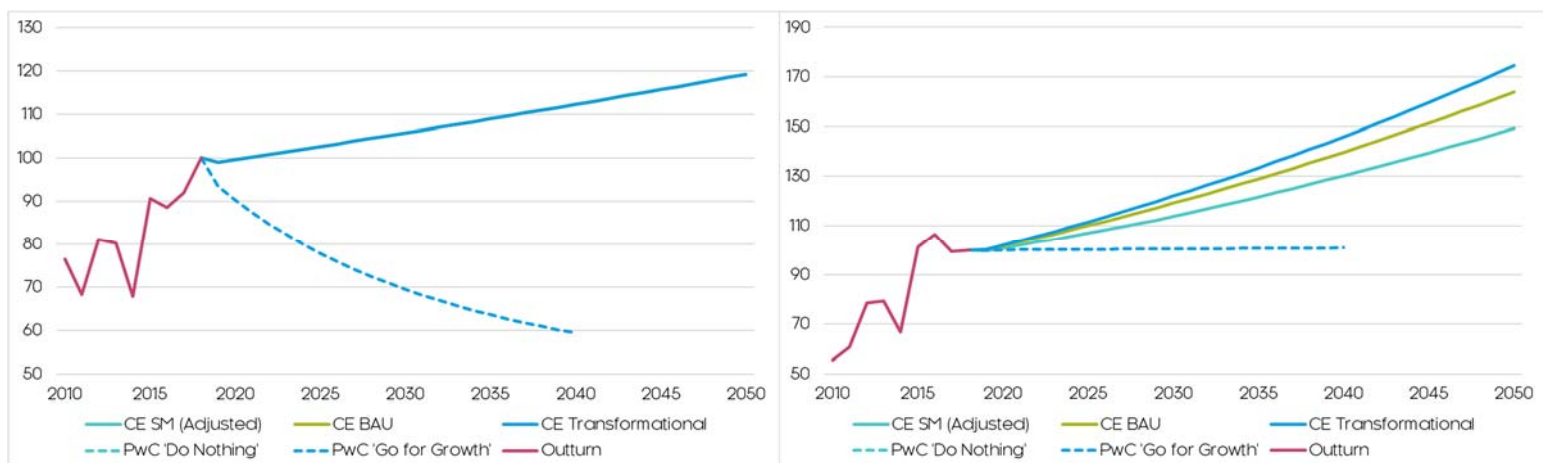


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

The sector’s workforce has grown strongly over the past decade, partly reflecting Oxfordshire active resident and commercial property markets, and PwC expects this rate of growth to continue even under its baseline scenario. CE meanwhile expects a slightly lower pace of growth, but with the potential for accelerating growth under the higher trajectories.

The sector’s productivity growth has been robust over the past decade, and CE expects this to continue moving forward, as its workforce becomes increasingly high-skilled, and the process of real estate marketing and selling becomes increasingly digitised. PwC however expects a pronounced contraction in sectoral productivity, contributing to a flatlining of GVA to 2040.

Figure 12.7.14: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in real estate activities

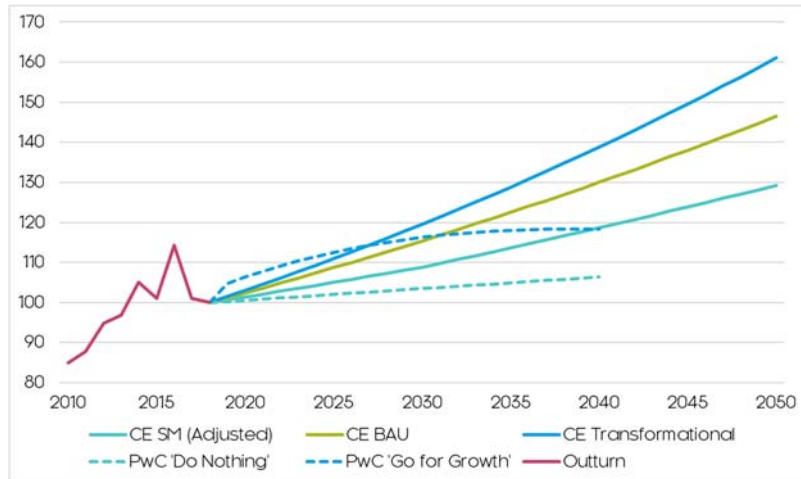


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Professional and administrative services

Professional and administrative services cover a wide range of activities, from lawyers, engineers and research scientists, to cleaners and security guards. Over the past decade, there has been significant growth in the sector, with the UK and indeed Oxfordshire shaping a strong comparative advantage, and there is an expectation of further growth to come.

Figure 12.7.15: Employment in professional and administrative services

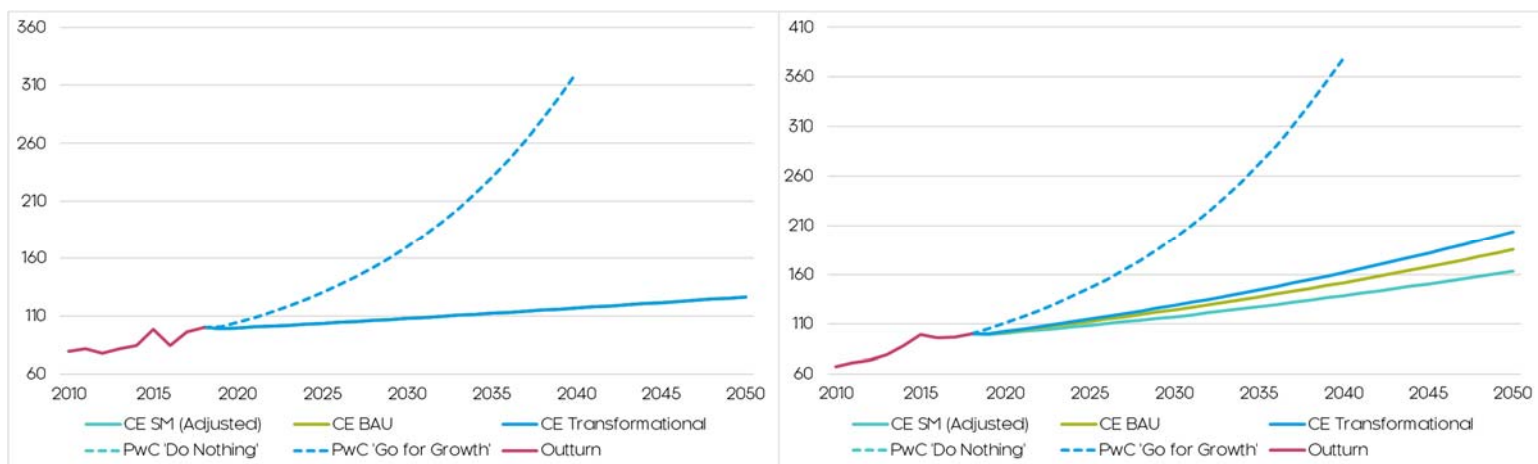


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Some of these activities correspond to or closely compliment LIS “breakthrough” specialisms, which account for a quarter of all jobs in the sector. Likewise, the sector is an important enabler of growth, representing valued “cornerstone” activities. As such, we anticipate strong growth in employment demand in high trajectories.

In contrast, PwC expects lower employment growth, but productivity to treble by 2040, which is ambitious compared to historic trends and CE’s outlook. In fact, CE expects more stable productivity growth, which given strong employment growth, results in robust (rather than PwC’s exponential) GVA growth.

Figure 12.7.16: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in professional and administrative services

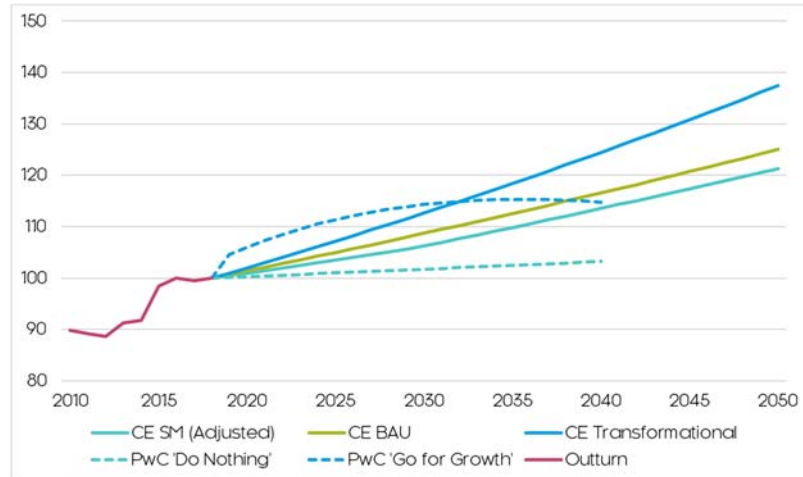


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Public administration, education and health

Public administration, education, and health are amongst Oxfordshire’s most resilient sectors, and demand is anticipated to rise further over the next few decades, particularly in the health (aging population) and education sector (demand for high-level and technical skills).

Figure 12.7.17: Employment in public administration, education and health

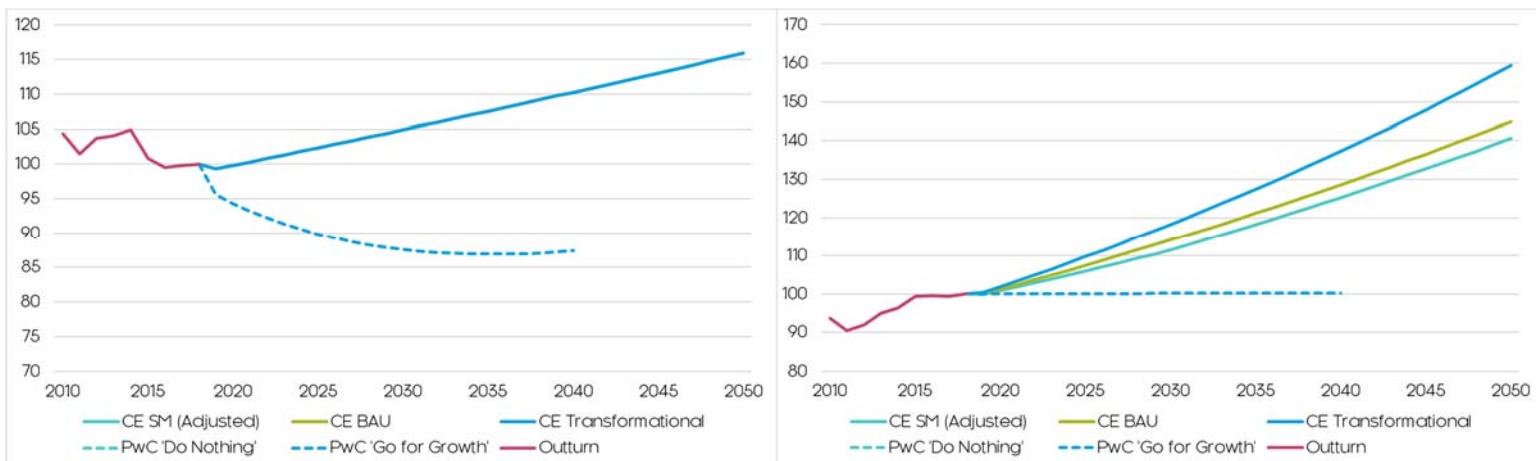


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

CE therefore expects a slightly higher baseline rate of employment growth than that suggested by PwC, which remains low given historic trends (even when accounting for fiscal austerity post-2010). And even a potential decline in public administration will likely be offset by growth in Oxfordshire’s education (given its two universities’ growth plans) and health sectors.

Alongside sluggish employment growth, PwC also expects declining productivity in the sector, resulting in a near flatting of GVA. Though this reflects the poor productivity growth in the sector over the past decade, given the opportunities for health-related innovation and a higher-value education offer, we believe there is potential for moderate productivity growth in this sector.

Figure 12.7.18: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in public administration, education and health

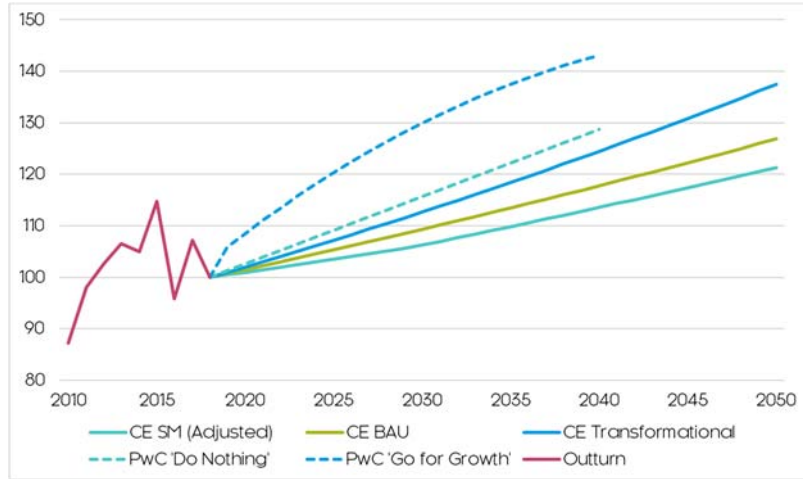


Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Arts, entertainment and recreation

The recreation and other services sector accounts for a diverse range of activities, from tourism and culture to hairdressing and funeral parlours. Like consumer services, the sector largely depends on the amount of activity in the wider economy, particularly that related to households and their incomes. Relatively strong employment growth is therefore expected over the coming decades, with the sectors labour-intensive nature and consumer dependency making it more resilient to automation and associated changes.

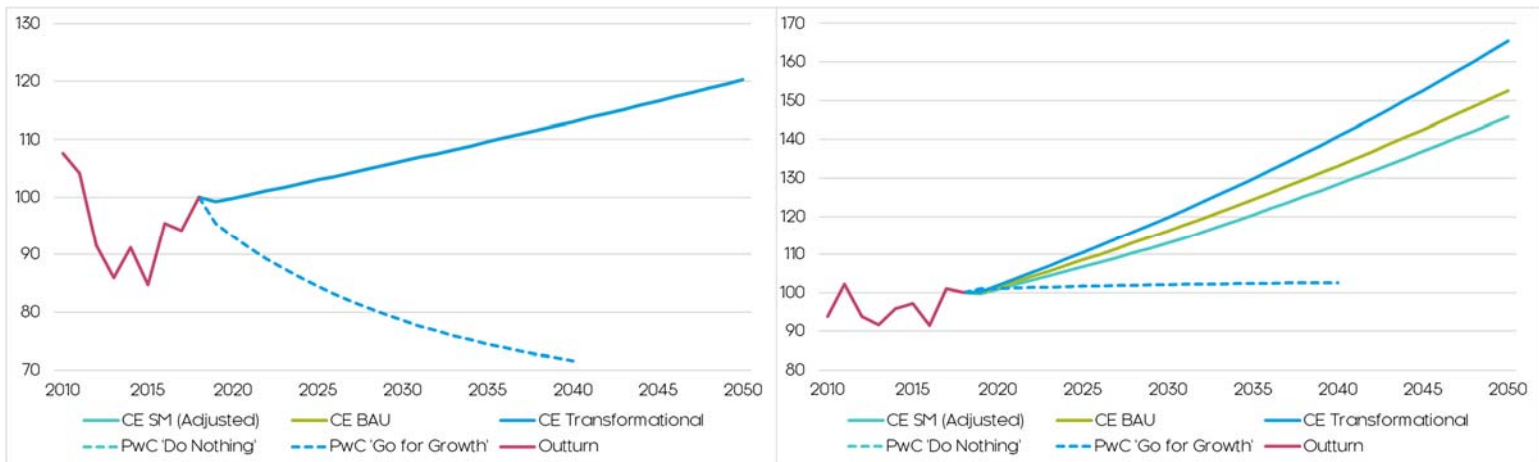
Figure 12.7.19: Employment in arts, entertainment and recreation



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

CE expects a gentler pace of growth at its baseline, but with capacity for faster growth in higher trajectories. Productivity growth in the sector has been subdued of late, but CE expects this to return to trend over the long term, contributing to strong overall GVA growth. This is in contrast to PwC, who predict a continued, long-term decline in productivity, stunting overall GVA growth.

Figure 12.7.20: Productivity (left) and GVA (right) in arts, entertainment and recreation



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics, PwC.

Appendix C: Affordable Housing Need Appendix

Provided below is a copy of the Affordable Housing Need Appendix produced by Icen Projects Limited on behalf of the Oxfordshire Growth Board in July 2019, referenced in *Chapter 10 Affordable Housing Need*.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEED

Affordable housing is defined in Annex 2 of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The revised NPPF definition is slightly wider than the previous NPPF definition; in particular a series of 'affordable home ownership' options are considered to be affordable housing together with discounted private rents.

A methodology is set out in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) to look at affordable need. In the analysis herein we have considered the needs of households who require support to meet their basic housing needs; and the needs of households who require support in accessing home ownership.

1. Approach and Data Sources

The method for studying the need for affordable housing has been enshrined in Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Practice Guidance for many years, with an established approach to look at the number of households who are unable to afford market housing (to either rent or buy).

The analysis below follows the methodology and key data sources in the Planning Practice Guidance and can be summarised as:

- Current need (an estimate of the number of households who have a need now and based on a range of data modelled from local information);
- Projected newly forming households in need (based on projections developed for this project along with an affordability test to estimate numbers unable to afford the market);
- Existing households falling into need (based on studying the types of households who have needed to access social/affordable rented housing and based on study past lettings data);
- These three bullet points added together provide an indication of the gross need (the current need is divided by 13 so as to meet the need over the 2018-31 period);
- Supply of affordable housing (an estimate of the likely number of letting that will become available from the existing social housing stock – drawing on data from CoRe⁶⁶ and the Council); and
- Subtracting the supply from the gross need provides an estimate of the overall (annual) need for affordable housing

Each of these stages is described below. In addition, much of the analysis requires a view about affordability to be developed. This includes looking at house prices and private rents along with

⁶⁶ The continuous recording of lettings and sales in social housing in England (referred to as CoRe) is a national information source that records information on the characteristics of both private registered providers and local authority new social housing tenants and the homes they rent

estimates of local household incomes. The following chapters therefore look at different aspects of the analysis.

2. Local Prices and Rents

An important part of the affordable needs model is to establish the entry-level costs of housing to buy and rent. The affordable housing needs assessment compares prices and rents with the incomes of households to establish what proportion of households can meet their needs in the market, and what proportion require support and are thus defined as having an 'affordable housing need'.

The analysis below considers the entry-level costs of housing to both buy and rent across the county. The approach has been to analyse Land Registry and Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data to establish lower quartile prices and rents – using a lower quartile figure is consistent with the PPG and reflects the entry-level point into the market.

Data from the Land Registry for the year to September 2018 (i.e. Q4 of 2017 and Q1-Q3 of 2018) shows estimated lower quartile property prices in the county by dwelling type. The data shows that entry-level costs to buy are estimated to start from about £176,000 for a flat and rising to £380,000 for a detached home. Looking at the lower quartile price across all dwelling types, the analysis shows a lower quartile 'average' price of £270,000.

2.1. Lower Quartile Cost of Housing to Buy – year to September 2018 – Oxfordshire

	Lower quartile price
Flat/maisonette	£176,000
Terraced	£250,000
Semi-detached	£285,000
Detached	£380,000
All dwellings	£270,000

Source: Land Registry

A similar analysis has been carried out for private rents using Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data – this covers a 12-month period to September 2018. For the rental data, information about dwelling sizes is provided (rather than types); the analysis shows an average lower quartile cost (across all dwelling sizes) of £810 per month.

2.2. Lower Quartile Market Rents, year to September 2018 – Oxfordshire

	Lower Quartile rent, PCM
Room only	£468
Studio	£578

1-bedroom	£695
2-bedrooms	£850
3-bedrooms	£995
4-bedrooms	£1,510
All properties	£810

Source: Valuation Office Agency

A household is considered able to afford market rented housing in cases where the rent payable would constitute no more than a particular percentage of gross income. Rent levels in Oxfordshire are relatively high in comparison to those seen nationally (a lower quartile rent of £525 per month across England). Taking account of likely residual income and to reflect that the cost of living in Oxfordshire is likely to be higher than nationally, it has been estimated that a threshold of 35% would be appropriate – this is consistent with the assumption made in the Oxfordshire SHMA. This is used in assessing the ability of households to afford private rented housing.

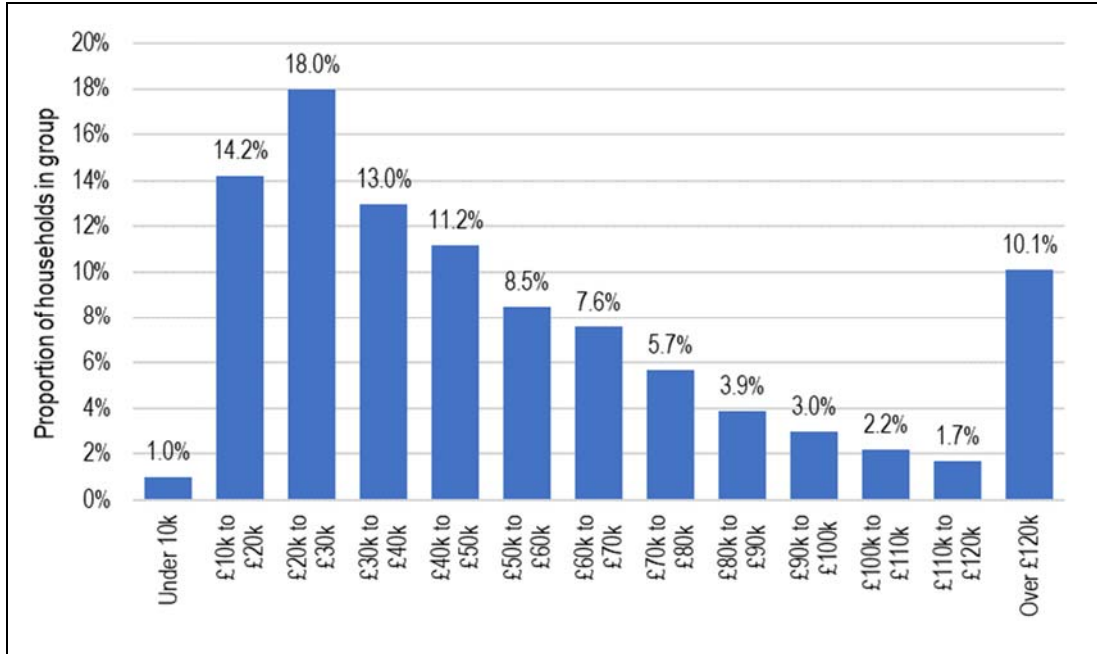
3. Income Levels and Affordability

Household incomes have been based on ONS modelled income estimates, with additional data from the English Housing Survey (EHS) being used to provide information about the distribution of incomes. The analysis indicates that around a sixth (15%) of households in Oxfordshire have incomes below £20,000 with a further third in the range of £20,000 to £40,000. Overall the average (mean) income is estimated to be around £56,800, with a median income of £43,200; the lower quartile income of all households is estimated to be £25,000.

To assess affordability in the initial analysis, a household's ability to afford private rented housing without financial support has been studied. The distribution of household incomes is then used to estimate the likely proportion of households who are unable to afford to meet their needs in the private sector without support, on the basis of existing incomes. This analysis brings together the data on household incomes with the estimated incomes required to access private sector housing.

Different affordability tests are applied to different parts of the analysis depending on the group being studied (e.g. recognising that newly forming households are likely on average to have lower incomes than existing households (this has consistently been shown to be the case in the English Housing Survey and the Survey of English Housing)). Assumptions about income levels for specific elements of the modelling are the same as in previous assessments of affordable need.

Figure A3.1 Distribution of Household Incomes in Oxfordshire, mid-2018



Source: Derived from EHS and ONS data

4. Need for Social Rented and Affordable Rented Housing

An initial assessment of affordable housing need has been undertaken, considering the needs from households who require financial support to access housing to buy or rent in the market. This uses a narrow definition of affordable housing, consistent with that in the 2012 NPPF and 2014 Oxfordshire SHMA.

Current Affordable Housing Need

In line with Paragraph 2a-023 in the PPG, the current need for affordable housing has been based on considering the likely number of households with one or more housing problems. The table below sets out the categories in the PPG and the sources of data being used to establish numbers. The PPG also includes a category where households cannot afford to own despite it bring their aspiration – this category is considered separately later in this chapter.

It should be noted that there may be some overlap between categories (such as overcrowding and concealed households, whereby the overcrowding would be remedied if the concealed household moved). The data available does not enable analysis to be undertaken to study the impact of this and so it is possible that the figures presented include a small element of double counting. Additionally, some of the concealed households may be older people who have moved back in with their families and might not be considered as in need.

4.1. Main Sources for Assessing Current Unmet Need for Affordable Housing

	Source	Notes
Homeless households (and those in temporary accommodation)	CLG Live Table 784	Total where a duty is owed but no accommodation has been secured PLUS the total in temporary accommodation
Households in overcrowded housing	Census table LC4108EW	Analysis undertaken by tenure and updated by reference to national changes (from the English Housing Survey (EHS))
Concealed households	Census table LC1110EW	Number of concealed families (with dependent or non-dependent children)
Existing affordable housing tenants in need	Modelled data linking to past survey analysis	Excludes overcrowded households – tenure estimates updated by reference to the EHS
Households from other tenures in need	Modelled data linking to past survey analysis	

Source: PPG Para 2a-023

The table below shows the initial estimate of the number of households within the county living in unsuitable housing. These figures are before any consideration of affordability has been made. The analysis suggests that there are currently some 19,300 households living in unsuitable housing (or without housing).

4.2. Estimated Households living in Unsuitable Housing – Oxfordshire

Category of 'need'	Households
Homeless households	177
Households in overcrowded housing	8,630
Concealed households	2,871
Existing affordable housing tenants in need	827
Households from other tenures in need	6,841
Total	19,346

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and data modelling

From the overall number in unsuitable housing, households living in affordable housing are excluded (as these households would release a dwelling on moving and so no net need for affordable housing will arise). The analysis also excludes 90% of owner-occupiers under the assumption (which is supported by analysis of survey data) that the vast majority will be able to afford housing once savings and equity are taken into account. A final adjustment is to slightly reduce the unsuitability figures in the private rented sector to take account of student-only households – such households could technically be overcrowded/living in unsuitable housing but would be unlikely to be considered

as being in affordable housing need (student households rarely qualify for affordable housing). This results in a revised estimate of households living in unsuitable housing, which is shown in Table A3.5 below.

4.3. Revised Assessment of Households in Unsuitable Housing by Tenure, Oxfordshire

	In unsuitable housing	Number to take forward for affordability testing
Owner-occupied	4,585	459
Affordable housing	3,505	0
Private rented	8,208	7,882
No housing (homeless/concealed)	3,048	3,048
Total	19,346	11,388

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011) and data modelling

However, a number of these households might be able to afford market housing without the need for subsidy. An affordability test has therefore been applied. The income data has been used, with the distribution adjusted to reflect a lower average income amongst households living in unsuitable housing – for the purposes of the modelling an income distribution that reduces the level of income to 88% of the figure for all households has been used to identify the proportion of households whose needs could not be met within the market (for households currently living in housing). A lower figure of 42% has been used to apply an affordability test for the concealed/homeless households who do not currently occupy housing. These two percentage figures have been based on a consideration of typical income levels of households who are in unsuitable housing (based mainly on estimates in the private rented sector) along with typical income levels of households accessing social rented housing (for those without accommodation). These figures are considered to be best estimates, and likely to approximately reflect the differing income levels of different groups with a current housing problem.

Overall, just under half of households with a current need are estimated to be likely to have insufficient income to afford market housing and so the estimate of the total current need is of 5,100 households across the county.

4.4. Estimated Current Affordable Housing Need

	In unsuitable housing (taken forward for affordability test)	% Unable to Afford Market Housing (without subsidy)	Revised Gross Need (including Affordability)
Oxfordshire	11,388	44.8%	5,107

Source: CLG Live Tables, Census (2011), data modelling and affordability analysis

Newly-Forming Households

The number of newly-forming households has been estimated through demographic modelling with an affordability test also being applied. This has been undertaken by considering the changes in households in specific 5-year age bands relative to numbers in the age band below, 5 years previously, to provide an estimate of gross household formation.

In assessing the availability of newly-forming households to access market housing, data has been drawn from a range of survey data including the English Housing Survey at a national level. This establishes that the average income of newly-forming households is around 84% of the figure for all households. The analysis has therefore adjusted the overall household income data to reflect the lower average income for newly-forming households. The adjustments have been made by changing the distribution of income by bands such that average income level is 84% of the all household average. In doing this it is possible to calculate the proportion of households unable to afford market housing without any form of subsidy (such as LHA/HB).

The assessment suggests that overall around two-fifths of newly-forming households will be unable to afford market housing (to rent) and that a total of 1,881 new households will have a need on average in each year to 2031.

4.5. Estimated Annual Affordable Housing Need from Newly-forming Households

	No. of new households	% unable to afford	Total in need
Oxfordshire	5,016	37.5%	1,881

Source: Projection Modelling and Affordability Analysis

Existing Households Falling into Affordable Housing Need

The second element of newly arising need is existing households falling into need. To assess this, information from CoRe has been used. This looked at households who have been housed over the past three years. This group will represent the flow of households onto the Housing Register over this period. From this newly forming households (e.g. those currently living with family) have been discounted as well as households who have transferred from another social/affordable rented property. An affordability test has also been applied. This method for assessing existing households falling into need is consistent with the 2007 SHMA Guidance.

The analysis through suggests a need arising from 840 existing households each year from 2018 to 2031.

Supply of Affordable Housing

The future supply of affordable housing is the flow of affordable housing arising from the existing stock that is available to meet future need. Our initial analysis focusses on the annual supply of social/affordable rent relets.

The Practice Guidance suggests that the estimate of likely future relets from the social rented stock should be based on past trend data which can be taken as a prediction for the future. Information from the CoRe system has been used to establish past patterns of social housing turnover, along with data from the Council about past lettings (to provide sub-area estimates). The figures include general needs and supported lettings but exclude lettings of new properties and exclude an estimate of the number of transfers from other social rented homes. These exclusions are made to ensure that the figures presented reflect relets from the existing stock. We have based estimates on supply data over the last three years (2015-18).

On the basis of past trend data it has been estimated that 1,401 units of social/affordable rented housing are likely to become available each year moving forward in Oxfordshire.

4.6. Estimated Supply of Social/ Affordable Rented Housing per Annum

	General needs	Supported housing	Total
Total lettings	2,149	852	3,001
% as non-new build	69.5%	93.7%	76.4%
Lettings in existing stock	1,494	798	2,293
% non-transfers	60.7%	61.9%	61.1%
Total lettings to new tenants	907	494	1,401

Source: CoRe

The PPG model also includes the bringing back of vacant homes into use and the pipeline of affordable housing as part of the supply calculation. These have however not been included within the modelling in this report. Firstly, there is no evidence of any substantial stock of vacant homes (over and above a level that might be expected to allow movement in the stock). As of 2017, CLG data shows 238 vacant general needs homes in the county. Secondly, with the pipeline supply, it is not considered appropriate to include this as to net off new housing would be to fail to show the full extent of the need, although in monitoring it will be important to net off these dwellings as they are completed.

Net Need for Social and Affordable Rented Housing

The table below shows the overall calculation of affordable housing need. This excludes supply arising from sites with planning consent (the 'development pipeline'). The analysis shows that there is a need for 1,700 dwellings per annum to be provided – a total of 22,300 over the 13-year period (2018-31). The net need is calculated as follows:

$$\text{Net Need} = \text{Current Need} + \text{Need from Newly-Forming Households} + \text{Existing Households falling into Need} - \text{Supply of Affordable Housing}$$

4.7. Estimated Net Annual Need for Social/ Affordable Rented Housing in Oxfordshire

	Per annum	2018-31
Current need	393	5,107
Newly forming households	1,881	24,453
Existing households falling into need	840	10,925
Total Gross Need	3,114	40,486
Re-let Supply	1,401	18,217
Net Need	1,713	22,269

5. Need for Affordable Home Ownership Housing

The above analysis points to a net need for around 1,700 homes per annum from households requiring social or affordable rented housing from households who cannot meet their own needs in the housing market. This represents the need for subsidised housing at a cost below that to access the private rented sector (i.e. for households unable to access any form of market housing without some form of subsidy).

The revised NPPF introduces a new category of household in affordable housing need and widens the definition of affordable housing (see Annex 2) to include a range of types of affordable housing which support households into home ownership. This includes shared ownership, discounted market sale housing and starter homes. This chapter considers the level of need for these types of dwellings in Oxfordshire.

The NPPF states “Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups.” (NPPF2, para 64).

The Planning Policy Guidance of September 2018 confirms a widening definition of those to be considered as in affordable need; now also including *'households which can afford to rent in the private rental market, but cannot afford to buy despite a preference for owning their own home'*. However, at the time of writing, there is no guidance about how the number of such households should be measured.

The methodology used in this report therefore draws on the current method, and includes an assessment of current needs, projected need (newly forming and existing households) and an estimate of the supply of housing. The key difference is that in looking at affordability an estimate of the number of households in the 'gap' between buying and renting is used. To study current need, an estimate of the number of household living in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) has been established, along with the same (rent/buy gap) affordability test.

For the supply of affordable home ownership, analysis of Land Registry has been undertaken with the supply figure taken to be the number of homes sold at below lower quartile prices. However, it is the case that market housing is not allocated in the same way as social/affordable rented homes (i.e. anyone is able to buy a home as long as they can afford it and it is possible that a number of lower quartile homes would be sold to households able to afford more, or potentially to investment buyers). A broad further assumption has been used that around half of the lower quartile homes would be available to meet the needs of households with an income in the gap between buying and renting.

In looking at current need, the start point is the number of households living in private rented accommodation. As of the 2011 Census there were some 45,207 households living in the sector. Data from the Survey of English Housing (EHS) suggests that since 2011, the number of households in the PRS has risen by about 26% - if the same proportion is relevant to Oxfordshire then the number of households in the sector would now be around 56,960. Additional data from the EHS suggests that 60% of all PRS households expect to become an owner at some point (34,176 households if applied to Oxfordshire) and of these some 25% (8,544 households) would expect this to happen in the next 2-years. The figure of 8,544 is therefore taken as the number of households potentially with a need for affordable home ownership before any affordability testing. The remaining households who expect to buy, but in a period of more than 2-years are picked up in the modelling as existing households falling into need (again with an affordability test applied).

The table below shows that following the stages of analysis there is an estimated need for around 1,500 units of affordable home ownership per annum. This figure should be seen as indicating the potential demand for such accommodation, as it should be remembered that all of the households picked up in this analysis will be able to afford market housing in the Private Rented Sector without subsidy.

5.1. Estimated Need for Affordable Home Ownership Homes – Oxfordshire

	Per annum	2018-31
Current need	233	3,025
Newly forming households	1,881	24,453
Existing households falling into need	735	9,561
Total Gross Need	2,849	37,039
Re-let Supply	1,364	17,734
Net Need	1,485	19,305

Source: Range of data sources as described

It should be noted that the finding of a 'need' for affordable home ownership does not have a specific direct impact on the overall need for housing. As is clear from both the NPPF and PPG, the additional group of households in need is simply a case of seeking to move households from one tenure to another (in this case from private renting to owner-occupation); there is therefore no specific net change in the total number of households or the number of homes required. However, Planning Practice Guidance does require consideration of an increase in housing provision where it will help to deliver the affordable housing needed.

Appendix D: Approach to Understanding Affordability Implications

This Appendix provides the supporting methodology and outline for the analysis in *Chapter 12 Commuting and Affordability Implications*.

As part of its approach to understanding the implications for housing affordability in Oxfordshire from the economic trajectories and spatial scenarios, CE has undertaken a detailed, nationwide analysis of local house price and affordability dynamics to inform and build a robust methodology and accompanying model. This is summarised below.

Ultimately, by refining and applying this approach for Oxfordshire, CE will be able to clearly assess and test the potential affordability implications of the three economic and fifteen housing (three trajectories, each with an additional five contrasting spatial scenarios) projections.

Understanding the national affordability context

Before proceeding with the local analysis, it is beneficial to explore the national context around house prices and affordability, highlighting some its perceived determinants and drivers whilst considering the associated policy challenges and opportunities. This is increasingly important given the policy context around housing, with the UK's housing market having been referred to as “*broken*” in recent years facilitated by a “*housing crisis*” which has stymied housing delivery in many local markets.⁶⁷

Figure 12.7.1: Population, employment and dwellings trends in England, 1971-2019

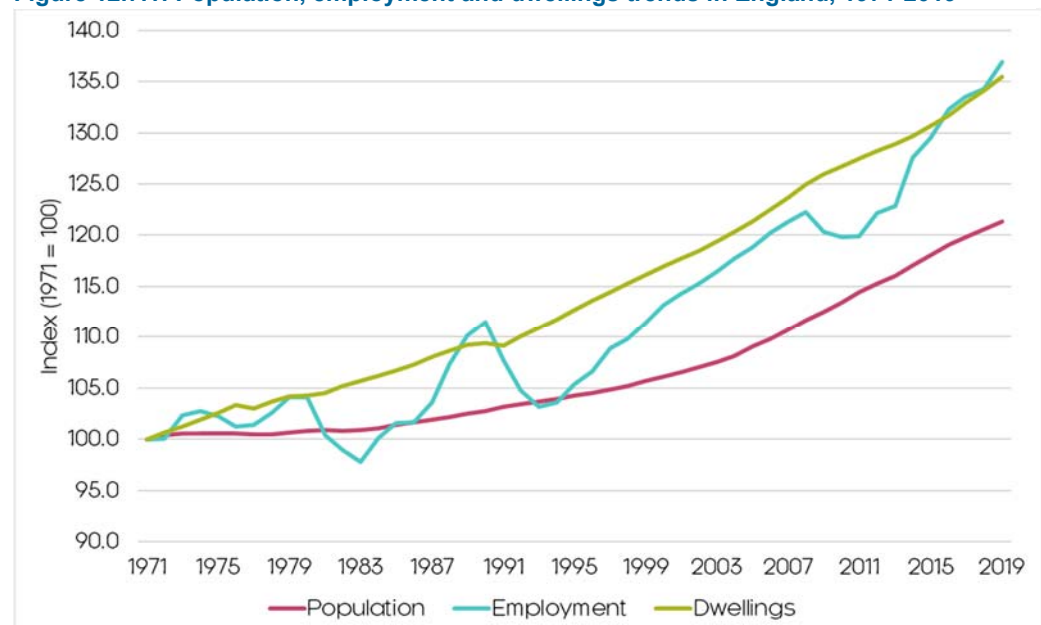


Table 12.7.1: Population, employment and dwellings trends in England, 1971-2019

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Population	46,412,100	56,309,300	9,897,200	21.3%

⁶⁷ See for instance the Governments housing white paper ‘[Fixing our broken housing market](#)’ (2017)

Employment	22,237,400	30,438,700	8,201,300	36.9%
Dwellings	18,018,000	24,412,100	6,394,100	35.5%

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.1 and Table 12.7.1 highlight the long run trends around three key housing market inputs: the total population, total employment (or 'jobs') and total stock of dwellings (or 'housing'). Since 1971, housing delivery⁶⁸ in England has actually grown consistently faster than its population since 1971, whilst employment – which understandably is much more sensitive to the economic cycle – has also outpaced population growth and has grown marginally faster than housing delivery.

Figure 12.7.2: Jobs per head and dwellings per head ratios in England, 1971-2019

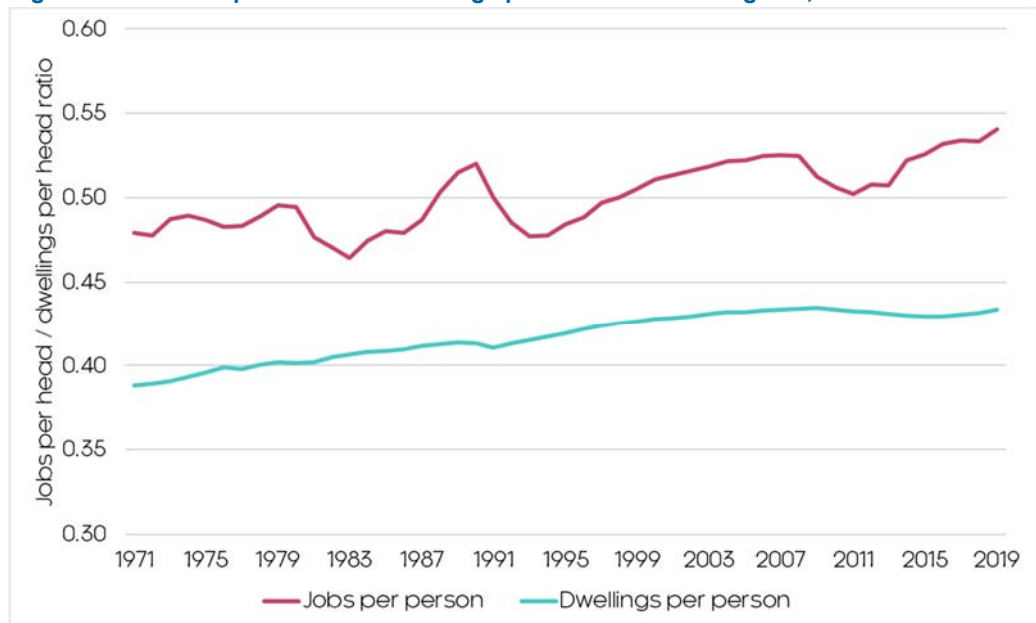


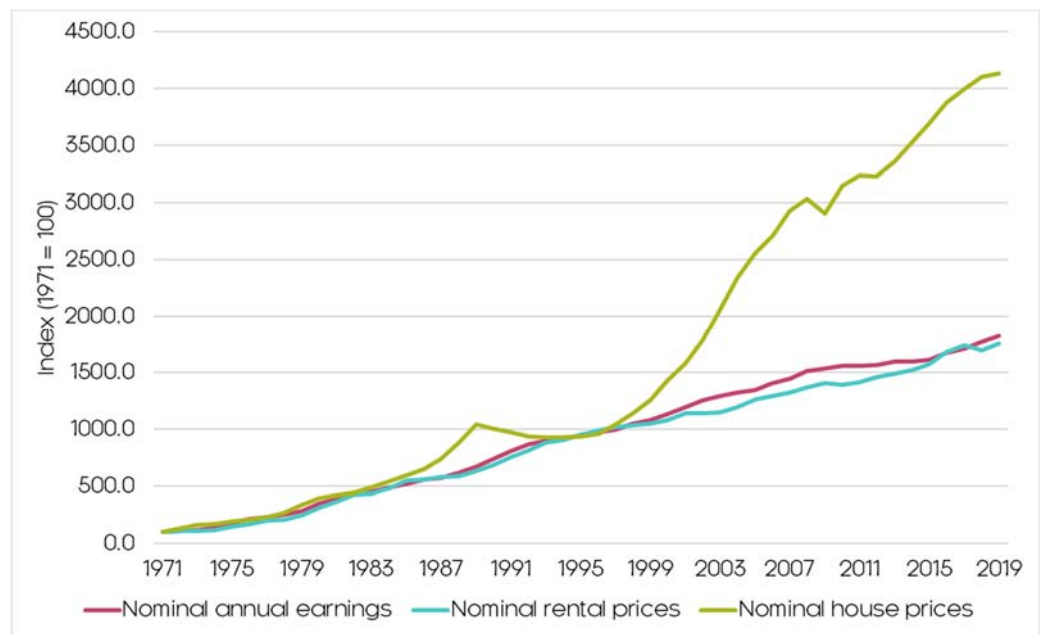
Table 12.7.2: Jobs per head and dwellings per head ratios in England, 1971-2019

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Jobs per head	0.48	0.54	0.06	12.8%
Dwellings per head	0.39	0.43	0.05	11.7%

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics.

The result of this is that there are now both more homes and more jobs per person in England than ever before, as Figure 12.7.2 and Table 12.7.2 show. Again, whilst employment has trended upwards it has followed a more volatile path in line with the economic cycle. Dwellings per person has trended upwards much more smoothly, though with somewhat limited change since 2000 alongside a notable slowdown after the 2008 financial crisis.

⁶⁸ Note this particular definition refers to net additional dwellings, rather than the narrower housebuilding definition; unlike the former, the latter only considers gross dwelling additions and excludes demolitions, change of use, extensions/additions etc.

Figure 12.7.3: Earnings, rental prices and house prices in England, 1971-2019**Table 12.7.3: Earnings, rental prices and house prices in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Nominal average (annual) earnings	£1,700	£30,200	£28,500	1717.5%
Nominal average (annual) rental prices	£50	£860	£810	1651.0%
Nominal average house prices	£7,400	£304,500	£297,100	4026.7%

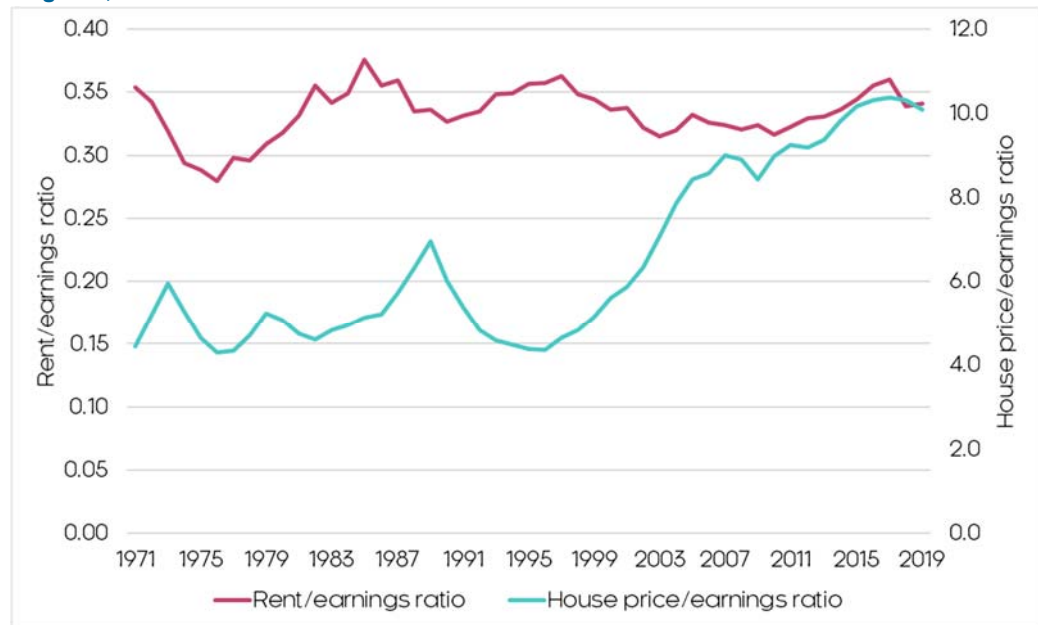
Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics.

Figure 12.7.3 and Table 12.7.3 consider the long run trends around the two alternative costs of housing – the cost of buying a home (house prices) and the cost of renting a home (rental prices)⁶⁹ – alongside average annual earnings. Since 1971, (nominal) house price growth has significantly outstripped (nominal) growth in rental prices. After being reasonably well aligned up to the late 1990's, the two have decoupled drastically; since 1971, the average house price has increased a substantial 40x over, more than twice the increase of the average rental price.

Wage growth and rental price growth (in nominal terms) meanwhile have been highly correlated, both increasing 17x over since 1971. The only notable decoupling of this relationship was a period during the late 1990's-2000's, where growth in wages actually eclipsed that of rental prices up until the 2008-09 recession, where it has since returned to trend. Understanding rental prices is important within housing affordability analysis, as economic theory suggests that they represent the 'true cost' of housing for consumers - and are therefore the most sensitive to changes in demand and supply.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Note that these particular measures of house and rental prices are not hedonically priced, in that they do not account for changes in housing quality or composition over the time series

⁷⁰ For a summary overview of this theory and relationship see [Wren-Lewis \(2018\)](#). For more detailed explanations and additional references, see [UK Centre for Collaborative Housing Evidence \(2018\) p.p. 14-18](#) and [Oxford Economics p.p. 16-18 \(2016\)](#)

Figure 12.7.4: Rental affordability (left axis) and house price affordability (right axis) in England, 1971-2019**Table 12.7.4 Rental price affordability and house price affordability in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Rent/earnings ratio; 'rental affordability' ⁷¹	0.35	0.34	-0.01	-3.7%
Price/earnings ratio; 'house price affordability' ⁷²	4.44	10.08	5.64	127.1%

Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

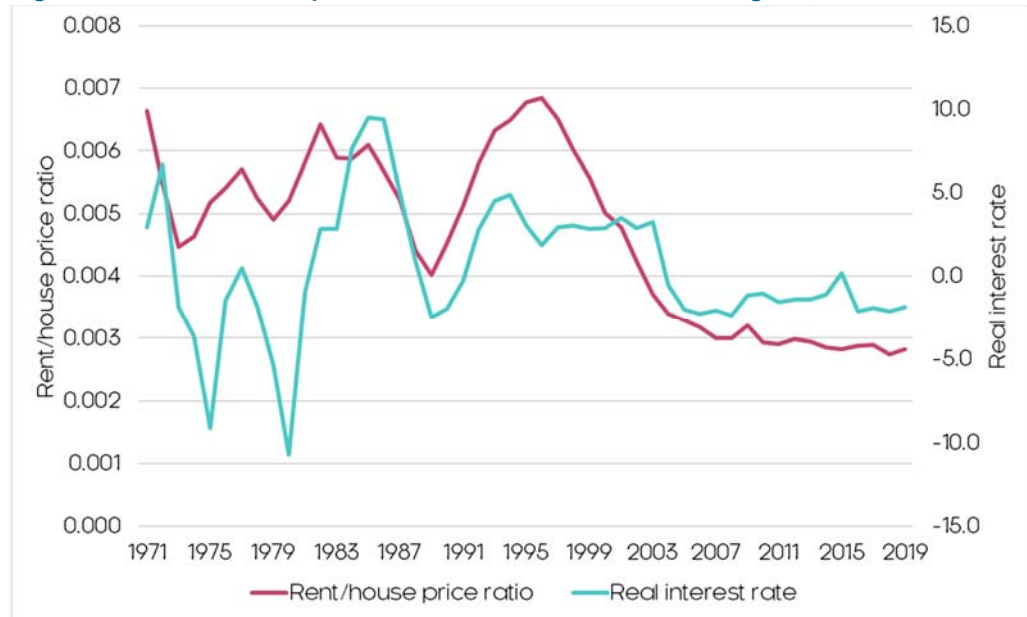
Bringing these three variables together, Figure 12.7.4 and Table 12.7.4 present the relative affordability ratios (price relative to earnings) for house and rental prices. Since 1971, rental affordability has stayed relatively constant at around a third of annual earnings, with few significant deviations, though it had been trending upwards for the decade after the financial crisis. Housing affordability meanwhile was relatively stable from the 1970's to 1990's at around 4x annual earnings before accelerating sharply in the 2000's to an unprecedented 10x annual earnings.

Clearly the relative growth in house prices over the past 20 years has presented a significant challenge to aspiring homeowners, and is widely considered as a candidate example of the UK's 'broken' housing market. However, when both the ratio of dwellings per person and rental affordability has stayed so consistent over this timeframe, it is hard to justify calling this a housing 'crisis' – at least at the aggregate, national level.

So what is driving the divergence in house prices and rental costs, especially considering the latter is supposed to represent the 'true cost' of housing?

⁷¹ In line with ONS guidance, rental affordability has been calculated as; annualized average rental price / annualized average workplace earnings. Average here refers to the mean. The median is typically preferred, but data is unavailable over the timeframe required.

⁷² In line with ONS guidance, house price affordability has been calculated as; average house sale price / annualized average workplace earnings. Average here refers to the mean. The median is typically preferred, but data is unavailable over the timeframe required.

Figure 12.7.5: Rent-house price ratio and real interest rates in England, 1971-2019**Table 12.7.5: Rent-house price ratio and real interest rates in England, 1971-2019**

	At 1971	At 2019	Change, 1971-2019	% change, 1971-2019
Rent/house price ratio	0.01	0.00	0.00	-57.6%
Real interest rate	2.96	-1.86	-4.82	-162.7%

Source: ONS, Bank of England, Cambridge Econometrics

As highlighted in Figure 12.7.5 and Table 12.7.5, one candidate explanation⁷³ is that the persistent decline in interest rates (in both nominal and real terms) during the 1990's and early 2000's, and sharply accelerated following the 2008-09 recession, has contributed and since maintained inflated house prices whilst subduing rental prices. In theory, this can happen for a variety of reasons; in a low interest rate environment:

- Landlords have to charge less to cover their mortgage costs, **reducing rental prices**
- It is easier and more affordable for potential house buyers to get a mortgage, hence the demand for renting decreases, **reducing rental prices and increasing house prices**
- Housing becomes a better and more attractive investment option, for both consumers and investors (both domestic and international), **increasing house prices**

Of course, this has implications for price/affordability-focused housebuilding strategies; with house prices increasingly sensitive to and determined by a centralised monetary system, even the most substantial and well targeted strategies may not deliver the desired change in prices/increase in affordability. However, this also means that the correct and effective targeting of independent, locally-specific factors becomes ever more important for local policymakers – which are considered in the next chapter.

⁷³ For instance, as observed by the [OECD \(2011\)](#) and [Oxford Economics \(2016\)](#)

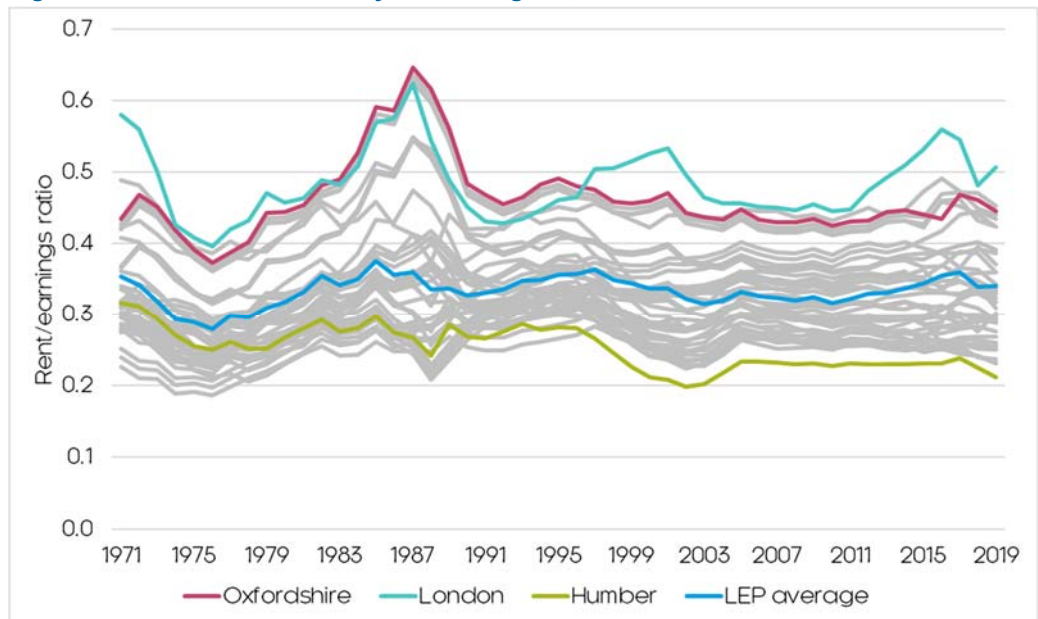
Building the local evidence

Having considered the national context and established some of the key drivers and determinants of house prices and affordability, it is important to consider how these correspond at the subnational level, and what role local effects play in determining local prices and affordability. Notably, at this level much greater variability and functionality can be seen in some of the aforementioned variables, reflecting independent, locally-specific characteristics and factors driving and determining local markets.

Though housing market data is available for regional markets (e.g. the South East NUTS1 Region), which are relatively functional and widely reported in subnational analysis, these geographies often fail to capture the unique and localised markets – and thus affordability challenges - within them; for instance, though both within the North West region, Manchester’s housing market and affordability challenge is markedly different from Cumbria’s.

Therefore, the following analysis considers the evidence at the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) level⁷⁴, which comprises 38 intra-regional areas broadly analogous to functional economic areas (which often overlay with functional housing market areas). Though more detailed geographies are available (e.g. Unitary and Local Authority areas), these often map poorly to functional housing market areas, and decrease data quality and availability.

Figure 12.7.6: Rental affordability across England, 1971-2019



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

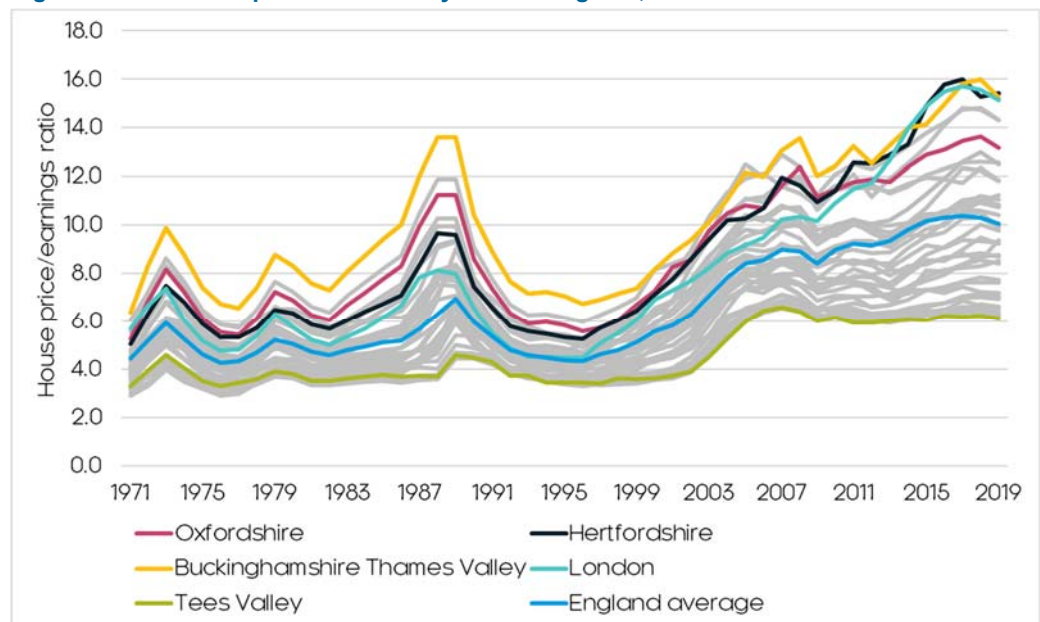
To begin with, Figure 12.7.6 considers the rental affordability ratios of the 38 LEP areas. Unsurprisingly, London is a relative outlier, with the highest rental affordability ratio (least affordable for renting) in the country; the average London worker can expect to spend at least half their gross earnings on rent. This is underscored by the Humber, which has the lowest rental affordability ratio (most affordable for renting) in the country; the average Humber worker could expect to spend only a fifth of their earnings on rent.

⁷⁴ Defined here as excluding overlap areas

However, what is most notable from the data is that for most if not all LEP areas, current rental affordability ratios are not unusually high or trending notably upwards when compared across the whole period – even London for instance had lower rental affordability in the early 1970s and mid-1980s than what it does today. Again, when considering rental costs are supposed to represent the ‘true cost’ of housing for consumers, it is hard to justify the current prescription of a “housing crisis”, even in less affordable parts of the country such as London and the South East.

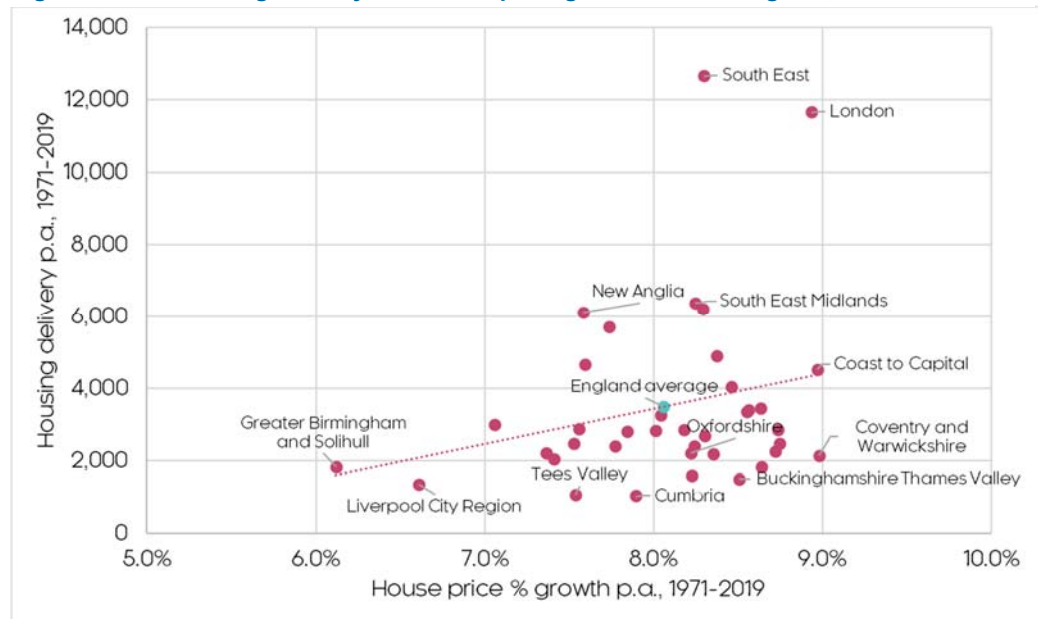
Figure 12.7.7 replicates this analysis but for housing affordability. Here we see much greater regional variance and dispersion in affordability ratios; the average worker in London, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire for instance can expect to spend 15x their annual earnings on purchasing a home. For the average worker in the Tees Valley, this more than halves to 6x times annual earnings. As with rental affordability though, what is of particular interest is the movement in these ratios over time.

Figure 12.7.7: House price affordability across England, 1971-2019



Source: ONS, Cambridge Econometrics

Whereas a number of ‘Home County’ LEP areas have had persistently high housing affordability ratios, London was only mid-ranking until the early 2000’s. Many areas saw their fastest increase in housing affordability ratios (i.e. a decrease in affordability) over the late 1990’s to early 2000’s, but since the 2008-09 financial crisis, affordability ratios have stayed stubbornly high for almost all areas (even those weaker performing economically), which is in contrast to previous recession and recoveries e.g. early 1990’s recession, early 1980’s recession and mid-1970’s recession.

Figure 12.7.8: Housing delivery and house price growth across England, 1971-2019

Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

One frequently proposed solution to counteract or at least subdue rapid local house price growth and decreasing affordability is to increase local housing delivery. However, as Figure 12.7.8 shows, it should be emphasised that there is actually a positive correlation between housing delivery and house price growth: the LEP areas that have built the most houses are also amongst those to have experienced the fastest growth in house prices.

Of course, this doesn't mean that building more homes will increase the rate of house price growth and further decrease affordability - high house prices likely attract and incentivise further housing growth, though the relationship is probably bi-directional. But this doesn't help the argument that increased local housing delivery it is an effective method of reversing or even slowing it – as with many things, it is much more complicated than that.

Figure 12.7.10: Housing delivery and employment growth across England, 1971-2019

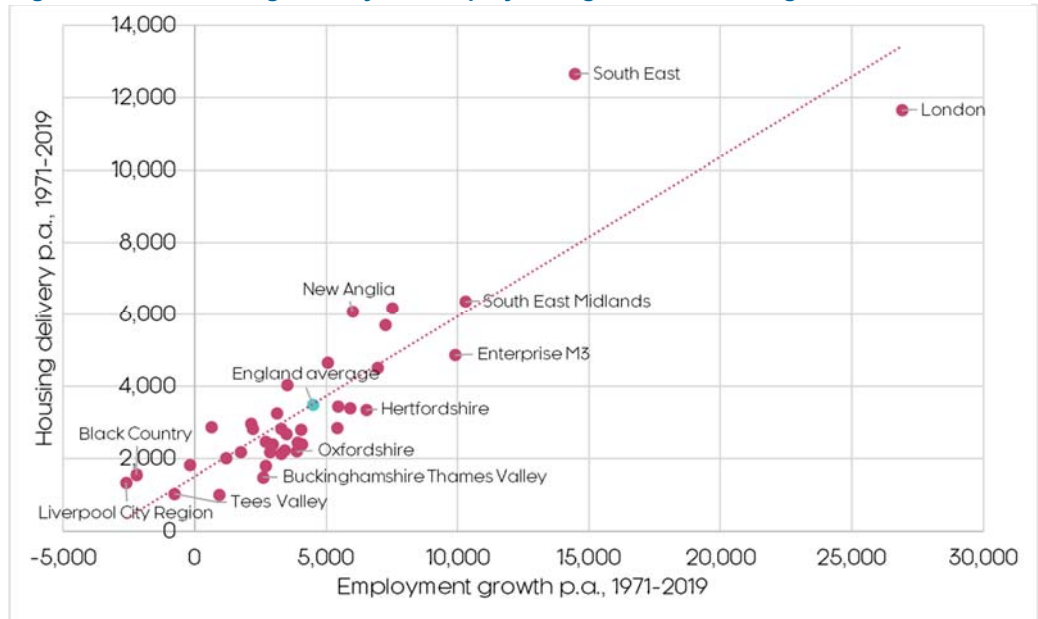
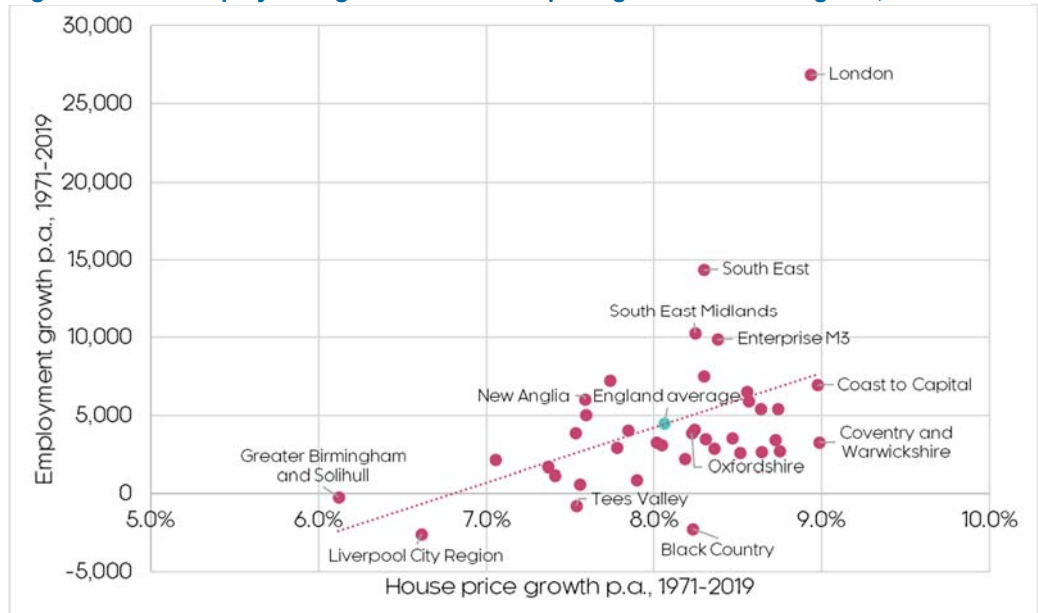


Figure 12.7.10: Employment growth and house price growth across England, 1971-2019

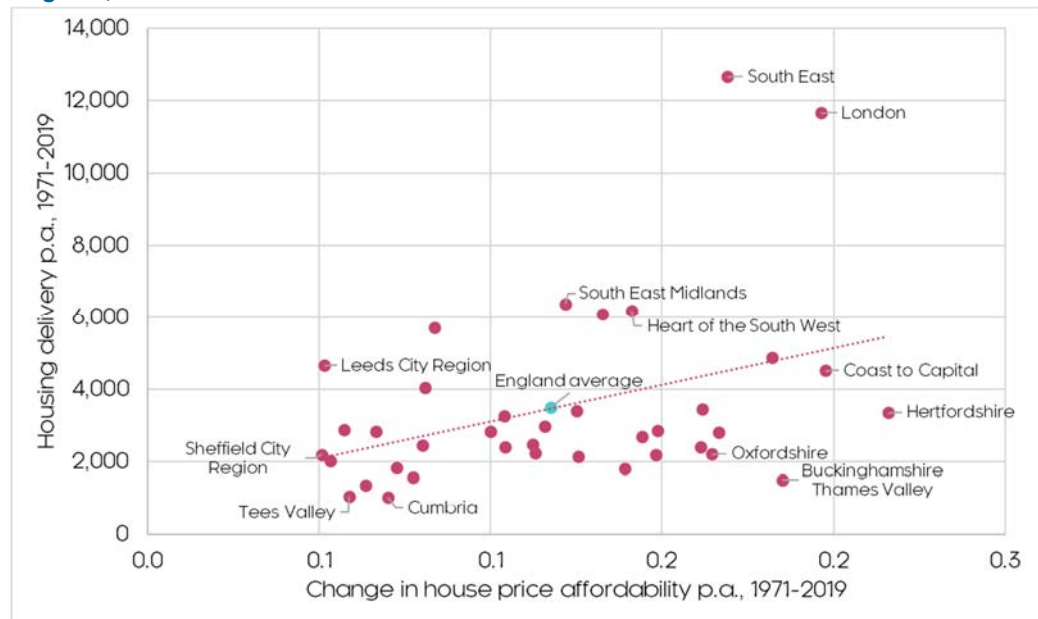


Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

One of the reasons for this is because housing delivery tends to correlate with employment growth (as shown in Figure 12.7.10), and employment growth correlates strongly with house price growth (as shown in Figure 12.7.10). Broadly speaking, more housing means more people, leading to a growth in both labour supply and demand for local services. Both of these are then likely to stimulate additional employment growth.

For instance, when looking at the relationship between employment growth and house price growth (Figure 12.7.10) it is likely that additional employment growth drives additional demand for housing in the area, putting upward pressure on house prices. Thus the downward pressure created by additional supply coming onto market, is likely to be partly, or maybe even wholly, cancelled out by this upward pressure.

Figure 12.7.11: Housing delivery and changes in house price affordability across England, 1971-2019



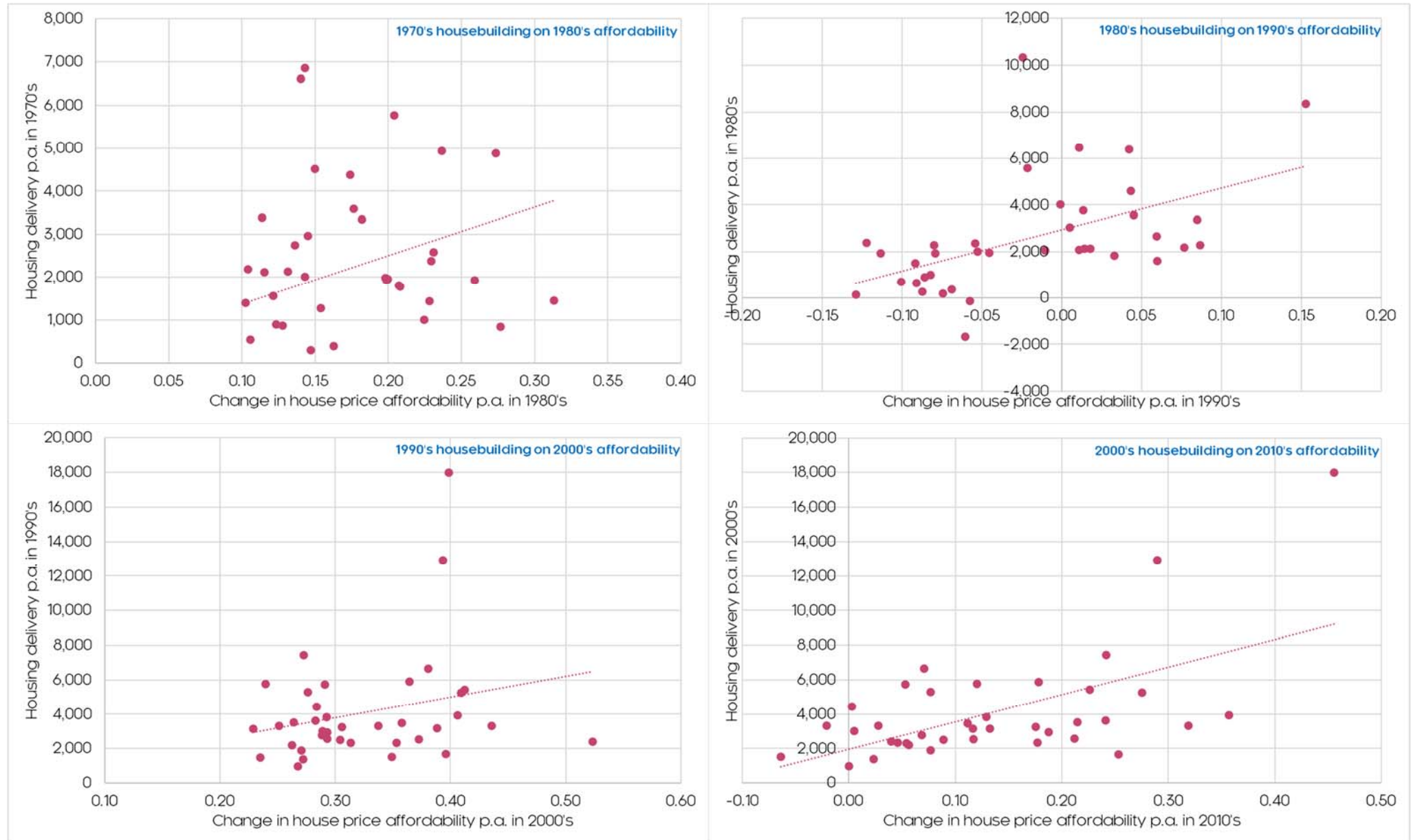
Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

As Figure 12.7.11 shows, the same positive correlation that is seen between an areas housing delivery and house price growth is also seen between an areas housing delivery and its change in affordability (ratios); LEP areas that have built more homes have typically seen a greater increase in affordability ratios (decrease in affordability). Again, this shows us that within local areas, housebuilding alone will not be sufficient to tackle affordability pressures.

Of course, housebuilding at time t is not an immediate input into house prices at time t – there is often a lagged effect. To try and better understand potential causality of this relationship, Figure 12.7.12 (presented over the following page; 194) considers the lagged relationship between housing delivery and affordability changes a decade later – do the LEP areas that build the most houses see affordability ratios deteriorate (i.e. the area becomes more affordable) the following decade?

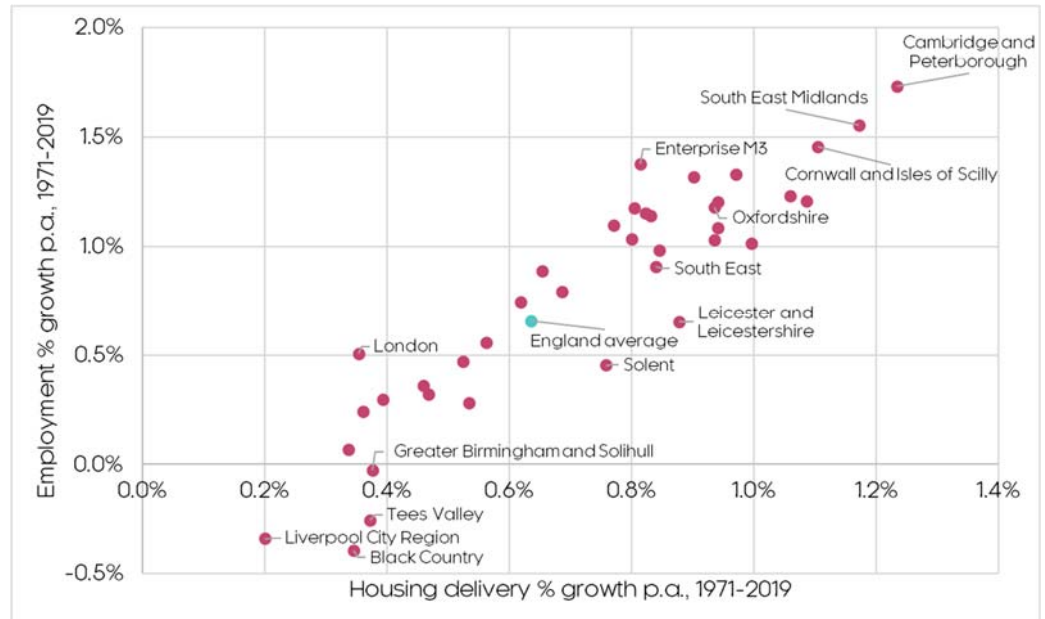
Across the time series, we continue to see a clear and positive relationship between higher housing delivery in an area and an increase in housing affordability ratios (a decrease in affordability). Generally, this relationship has also become more significant over time, though this has not been a continuous process, with the relationship weakening slightly in the 1990's and 2000's – a time where many areas saw rapid increases in their affordability ratios, as housing and financial markets became increasingly liberalised.

Figure 12.7.12: The lagged relationship between housing delivery and changes in house price affordability across England, 1970's-2010's



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

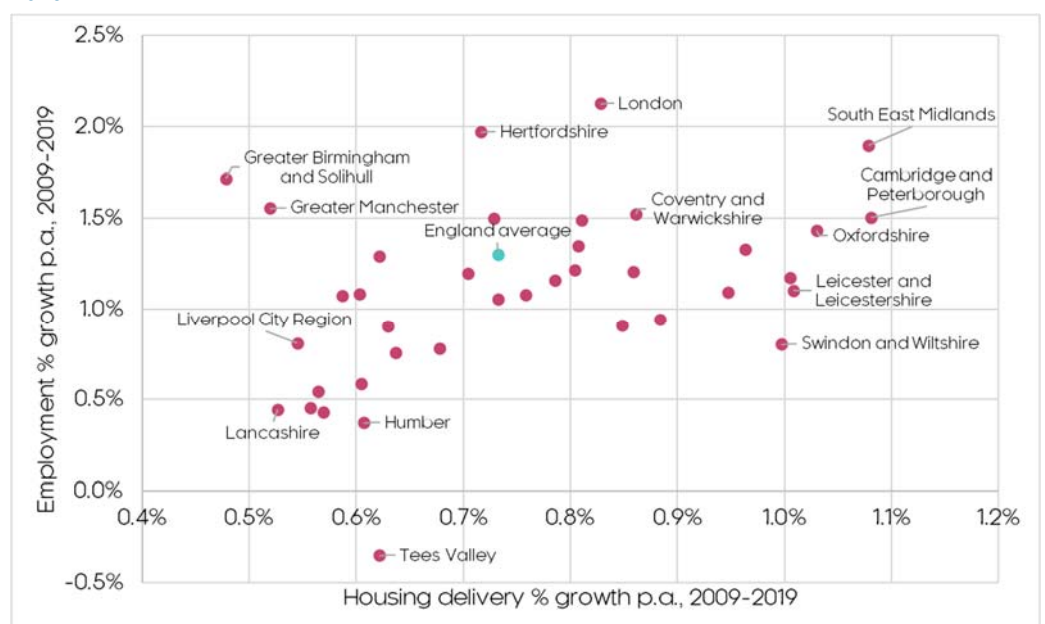
Figure 12.7.13: Employment growth and housing delivery growth across England, 1971-2019



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

As we have seen previously, there is a strong correlation between housing growth and employment growth. So what areas have grown the fastest since 1971, and how might this have impacted on affordability? As Figure 12.7.13 shows, Cambridge and Peterborough and neighbouring South East Midlands have emerged as the two fastest growing areas. Notably, Southern or rural LEP areas have seen faster growth than Northern or urban LEP areas, whilst London has actually grown comparatively slowly over this time period.

Figure 12.7.14: Employment growth and housing delivery growth across England, 2009-2019



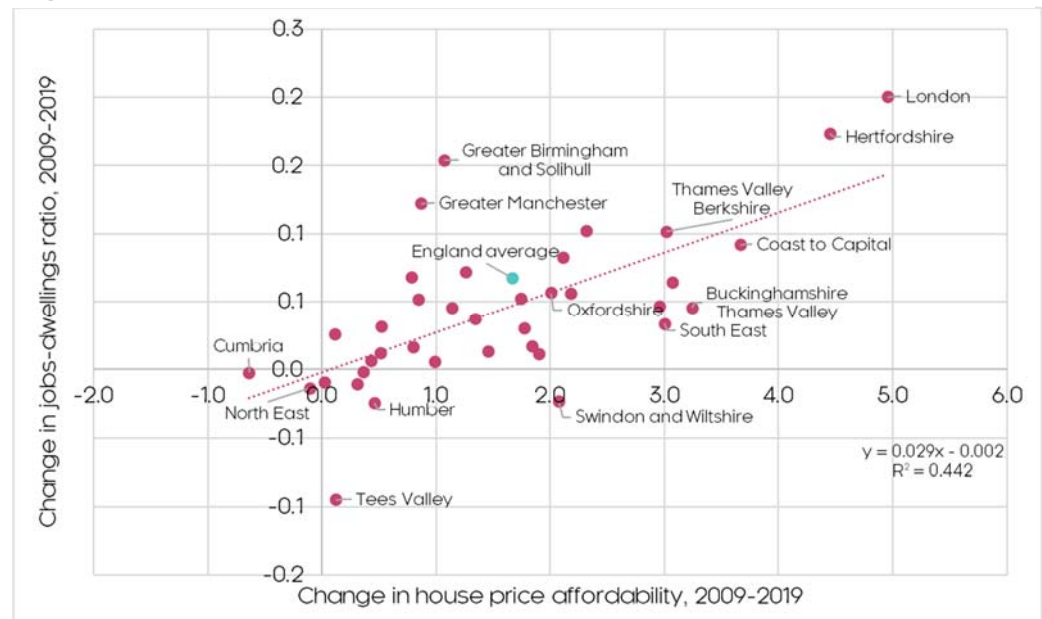
Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Most of these trends still hold even when looking at just look at the last decade, as shown in Figure 12.7.14. Now Cambridge and Peterborough and the South East Midlands are joined by Oxfordshire as the fastest growing LEP

areas in England. Southern and rural LEP areas are still typically growing faster than Northern and urban LEP areas. Growth in London has also accelerated, particularly in employment. Some Midland and Northern LEP areas have also seen robust employment growth, but slower housing growth.

However, this scatter plot is notably less tightly bound over the shorter time period, raising the question of whether differences in the ratio of housing delivery to job creation affect affordability?

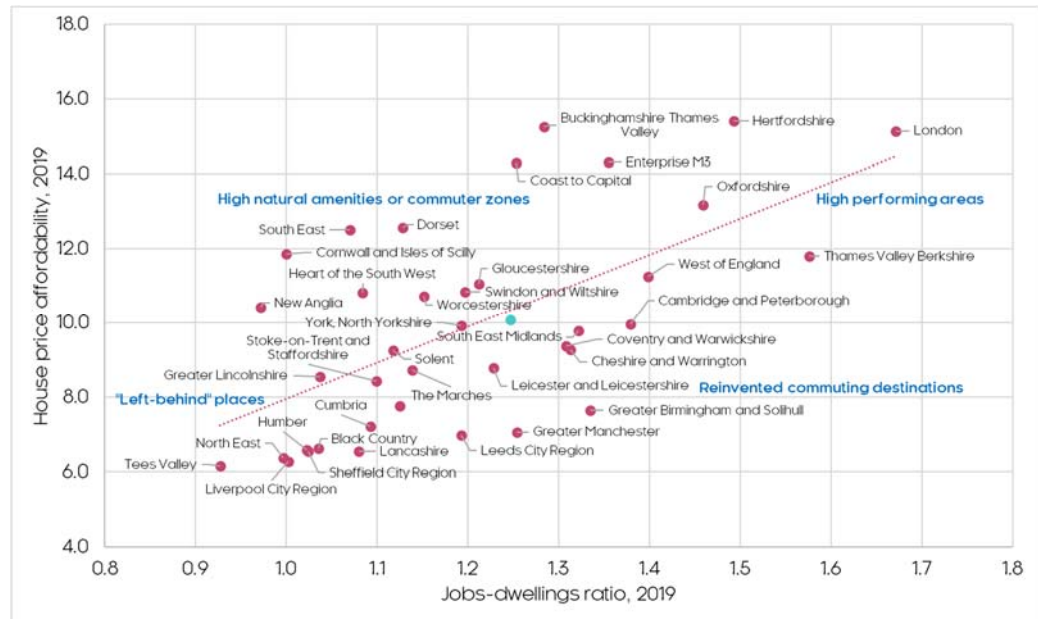
Figure 12.7.15: Changes to jobs-dwellings ratios and house price affordability across England, 2009-2019



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Indeed, as shown in Figure 12.7.15, LEP areas that have created jobs faster than they have built houses over the past decade have on average seen an increase their affordability ratio (that is, a decrease in affordability). Therefore, when considering the role of local effects in determining prices, it is the interaction between employment growth and housing delivery that can contribute to determining the affordability of an area. Therefore, even given the trends identified at the national level, local economic context still matters for affordability.

Figure 12.7.16: Jobs-dwellings ratios and house price affordability across England, 2019



Source: ONS, MHCLG, Cambridge Econometrics

Reflecting the strength of this relationship, areas with similar characteristics and fundamentals also largely cluster together – as shown in Figure 12.7.16 – enabling thematic groupings to be identified:

- **'Left-behind' places:** areas experiencing long-term economic underperformance (low-growth, high unemployment, low skills), driving down prices (relative to wages) and jobs densities. Dwelling totals can appear inflated due to a higher proportion of vacant dwellings. Examples include Tees Valley, Liverpool City Region, and Humber.
- **High natural amenities or commuter zones:** typically rural and/or coastal areas with relatively low jobs densities but higher than expected prices. The latter is driven by higher local amenity values in these areas (often proxied by high tourism activity) and/or commuting proximity to major urban centres. Examples include Dorset, South East, and New Anglia.
- **Reinvented commuting destinations:** a diverse grouping of areas, historically stable or underperforming, now reinvented as leading regional economic centres with high rates of in-commuting. This results in higher jobs densities but comparatively lower – but often increasing – prices (relative to wages). Examples include Greater Manchester, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, and South East Midlands.
- **High performing areas:** areas with highly successfully and competitive economies, typically regional commuting centres, resulting in very high jobs densities. This drives substantial demand for dwellings, which alongside typically high local amenity values, results in higher prices (relative to wages). Largely found in the South, examples include London, Oxfordshire, and Hertfordshire.

Such categorisations can be beneficial for understanding local housing markets, and resultantly the effective shaping of local housing strategies.

Appendix E: Standard Method Appendix

Provided below is a copy of the Standard Method Appendix produced by Icen Projects Limited in March 2021, referenced in *Chapter 7 Oxfordshire's Housing Need Using the Standard Method*.

OXFORDSHIRE'S MINIMUM LOCAL HOUSING NEED

The Oxfordshire Growth Needs Assessment (OGNA) has been principally prepared in 2020 and early 2021. On 25th March 2021, updated affordability ratios for 2020 were published by the Office for National Statistics. This short note explores the implications of these affordability ratios on the standard method local housing need in Oxfordshire, and the constituent authorities within it, updating the standard method calculations in the OGNA to take account of the latest data

The OGNA Phase 1 Report sets out in Section 7 that the standard method generated a minimum housing need for 3,350 dwellings per annum across Oxfordshire, and an uncapped need for 3,350 dwellings per annum (Table 7.2.2). It however identifies some issues with the input demographic projections, which result in a slight adjustment to this. It concludes on this basis by identifying a minimum need for 3,386 dwellings per annum using the adjusted baseline demographic projections in the standard method calculation (Table 7.3.1). The report then goes on to overlay scenarios for economic growth.

The local housing need figure derived from the standard method changes annually in accordance with the first two steps of the standard method calculation including (1) the 10 year period over which to assess household growth and (2) the median workplace-based affordability ratio, which is published in or around March each year. This note addresses the implications of these factors and in particular considers the effect of using the latest affordability ratio data.

The Table below sets out the latest local housing need figure for Oxfordshire using the current year to calculate the projected average annual household growth over a 10 year period - in line with step one of the standard method – and then applying the latest median workplace-based affordability ratios which were published on 25th March 2021 in line with step two.

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Ox	White Horse	West Ox	County
Step One: Setting the Baseline						
Household Growth (avg., p.a.), 2021-2031 (2014-based)	537	556	412	486	402	2,393
Step Two: Affordability Adjustment						
Median Workplace-Based Affordability Ratio, 2020	9.3	11.42	12.07	8.94	10.81	
Adjustment Factor	133%	146%	150%	131%	143%	
Minimum Local Housing Need (uncapped)	715	814	620	636	573	3,358

The standard method (using the 2014-based Household Projections) now generates a lower baseline need than that shown in the OGNA. However given the OGNA's conclusions regarding the demographic projections, greater emphasis should be given to the calculations using the adjusted baseline demographic projections. These are set out in the table below.

	Cherwell	Oxford	South Ox	White Horse	West Ox	County
Step One: Setting the Baseline						
Household Growth (avg., p.a.), 2021-2031 (Adjusted Baseline)	589	526	424	557	261	2356
Step Two: Affordability Adjustment						
Median Workplace-Based Affordability Ratio, 2020	9.3	11.42	12.07	8.94	10.81	
Adjustment Factor	133%	146%	150%	131%	143%	
Minimum Local Housing Need (uncapped)	784	769	637	729	372	3291

The OGNA Phase 1 Report treats the calculation using the adjusted demographic projections as the core standard method scenario in drawing conclusions. The updated data points to a very modest difference in the scale of need in this scenario – 3291 dwellings per annum compared to 3386 dwellings per annum, a difference of 3% - representing a scale of difference which does not represent a meaningful or statistically significant change. Icen consider on this basis that there is no substantive impact of the latest data on the OGNA's findings.