Milton-under-Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3
The Parish of Milton-under-Wychwood: Baseline Evidencing

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Glossary of Abbreviations

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AuW	Ascott-under-Wychwood
CCB	Cotswolds Conservation Board
HACT	Housing Association Charitable Trust
LCT	Landscape Character Type
MuW	Milton-under-Wychwood
MuWAGA	Milton-under-Wychwood Allotments and Gardens Association
MuWNP	Milton-under-Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPSG	Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
NPCQR	Neighbourhood Plan Community Questionnaire Report
NPCQ	Neighbourhood Plan Community Questionnaire
OCSI	Oxfordshire Consultants for Social Inclusion
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PROW	Public Rights of Way
SuW	Shipton-under-Wychwood
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre
WOD	West Oxfordshire District
WODC	West Oxfordshire District Council



Our highly valued rural setting

1. Introduction and Overview

The information presented here provides a robust baseline of supporting evidence for the Milton-under-Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan (MuWNP). This Appendix 3 contains background information considered too voluminous to be included within the main NP document but vital to supporting the justification for proposed policies set forth in the NP. Where relevant some of the material set out here is presented in support of Plan policies.

The history and evolution of the built settlement of MuW is presented, including identification of the location of historically important architecture, and the landscape and natural environment are summarised, drawing on assessments and classifications carried out recently by the Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board and, in significant detail, by consultants to West Oxfordshire District Council in 1998. Special habitats as defined by public bodies and land managed under Countryside Stewardship are mapped. Green spaces accessible to the public according to the Local Insight classification are presented. The evolution of the human population and current categorisations according to age, employment, mobility and other factors are presented in significant detail followed by a section describing housing development, and numbers and types of housing currently occupied and reported housing demand. An overview of the local economy and services is presented, followed by a section describing available public transport. This document concludes with summaries describing the social and community infrastructure and health and wellbeing of the community and the respective support services.

2. History and Built Environment

Milton-under-Wychwood (MuW) can be broadly described as a small to medium Cotswold settlement with agricultural origins, a description that is in common with many other villages in the area. However, the village history differs from its neighbours in a number of distinctive ways, and this history is reflected in the built environment. A summary of village history and character is presented here, however The **Character Assessment (Appendix 1**) provides a fuller account of some of the key characteristics of the village, including those features that give MuW its specific identity.

MuW is mentioned in the Domesday Book, but scant evidence of that period is now visible. In the early medieval period MuW probably existed as a series of small farmsteads sited on the periphery of the once-extensive Wychwood Forest. It probably came under the administrative sphere of the nearby Bruern Abbey. This former Cistercian Abbey was once sited just a thirty-minute walk to the north of the main village of MuW, adjacent to the River Evenlode but just outside the current parish boundary.

From the late middle-ages up to the mid-19th century, MuW was a part of the much larger ecclesiastical parish administered from Shipton-under-Wychwood (SuW). However, MuW has a history and character somewhat distinctive from its sisters Shipton and Ascott. The growth of MuW into an identifiable village would have been a slow process, but by the 18th century the village had something of its present outline, as evidenced in maps of the village dating from the later 18th Century.



Figure 1: Detail from Richard Davis's map of Oxfordshire 1797, showing the distinct settlements of Upper Milton and the main village of MuW, identified as Upper End and Lower End respectively

In distinction from many neighbouring villages, MuW is not centred on a parish church or manorial residence. MuW's parish church, SS Simon and Jude was only built in 1853. Whilst originally formed of a loose cluster of farmsteads (Upper Milton still has this character) MuW also became the home to a significant stone masonry, quarrying and building concern which later became known as Alfred Groves and Son. This business was critical to the village's economy from the 18th Century onwards, reaching its heyday in the second half of the 19th Century and first half of the 20th Century. The continued presence of this enterprise has been influential on the growth of MuW and on some aspects of the built environment.



Figure 2: Aerial view of Alfred Groves and Sons Estate circa 1970

There are several surviving farmhouses and farm buildings from the 18th century scattered throughout the Village, plus a few significant independent dwellings from the same period; indicative of the growing prosperity of the village.

Examples of a familiar type of 18th Century Farmhouse with symmetrical frontage, central doorway topped by open pedimented canopy on scroll brackets, two ground floor windows matched by first floor windows and usually enhanced by dressed stone facades can be seen below:



Sunnyside, Shipton Road (note: dormers were added in 2012)



23 High Street, 1723



Heath Farm House, Green Lane



Lovegrove, Upper Milton

Figure 3: Examples of a familiar type of 18th Century Farmhouse

The first half of the 19th century saw gradual growth in the village in line with the increasing rise in population throughout England, driven by the agrarian and industrial revolutions. At first this resulted in a much higher population density and more modest artisanal dwellings must have proliferated; some pockets remain on The Square and Fettiplace off Shipton Road and The Terrace off the High Street.



Figure 4: A view of The Terrace in a photograph circa 1930

In short, MuW was slowly transformed from a loose conglomeration of farmsteads with a handful of larger residences, to a more self-contained parish in its own right. Enclosure occurred relatively late in 1849 and finally, Independent Parish status was achieved in 1854 with the provision of a brand new parish church provided for by James Haughton Langston (a wealthy local landowner who lived at Sarsden Manor). Following on from this a certain amount of Victorian gentrification took place; particularly along Shipton Road, the High Street and Jubilee Lane.

The 19th century also saw the growth of non-conformist religion in the village. Being geographically separated from the mother parish of SuW, such groups found an easy foothold amongst the agricultural labourers, masons, slaters and quarry men of MuW. The Baptist and its offshoot the Strict Baptists took root along with the Primitive Methodists and the Wesleyan Methodists.

These sects all eventually built their own chapels in the heart of the village, and their buildings still survive. The Baptists were particularly important being patronised by the Groves family, with many members of this important village family buried in the Baptist church yard.

The chapels are generally modest four-square buildings with pitched roofs, not too far removed from the vernacular style of local barns and other utilitarian farm buildings. These chapels are now converted to residential use, with the exception of the Baptist Chapel on the High Street which is still in use as a place of worship and community resource.



Baptist Chapel on the High Street of 1839



Primitive Methodist Chapel off Shipton Road (Residential)

Figure 5: Architecture of Chapels

The presence of Groves' builders and stonemasons in the village almost certainly had an influence on the diversity of housing that sprang up around the village in the second half of the 19th Century. The stylistic variety of these properties is a significant feature of the village's urban variety. A selection of these diverse buildings is illustrated below.



Figure 6: Stone Porch, 18th Century cottage with 19th Century porch



Figure 7: Grove House, High Street, late 19th Century house



Figure 8: 25 High Street, late 19th Century House



Figure 9: Bleak House, Jubilee Lane, late 19th Century house



Figure 10: Fairhaven, Jubilee Lane, late 19 Century House



Figure 11: Forest Gate (formerly Frogmore House), Frog Lane, Detached villa, circa 1890

In the early decades of the 20th century small scale development and replacement continued and some of the older hovels were slowly removed or replaced. The slow drift of agricultural workers from villages like MuW to the bigger towns and cities continued, but the population in MuW was held stable by the continued success and therefore employment opportunities provided by Alfred Groves and Sons

The most significant new development was the introduction of a small group of Council Houses in the 1920s. These were built along Shipton Road and the South Side of Green Lane. They were generously sized semi-detached houses clad in Cotswold stone (some with slate tile hanging) with generous front and back gardens.

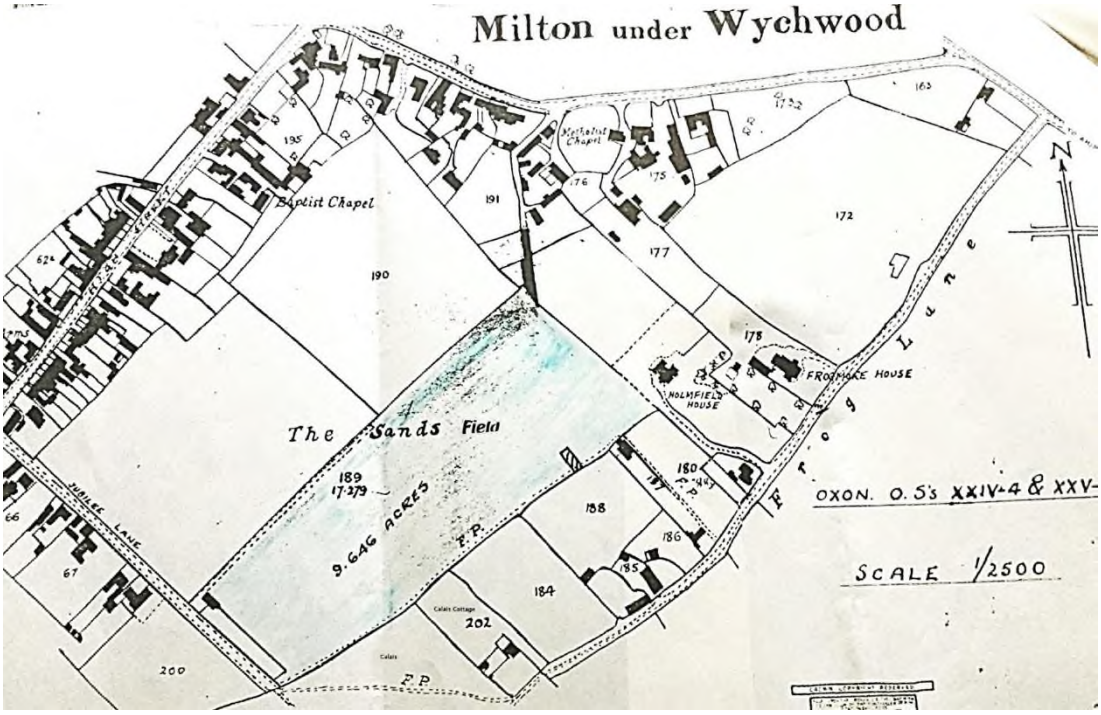


Figure 12: Old survey sketch map showing the Sands Field circa 1920

The most significant public housing development came during the interwar period with the building of The Sands (now 70 dwellings and the largest single development in the village). The name comes from the fact that the area had once been an important sand and gravel pit (as shown in the above survey sketch map). The Sands was utilised by local builders and entrepreneurs - Groves - as a source for useful building material and ballast.

Once The Sands was completed it linked Jubilee Lane to Frog Lane, and thus the area now framed by the High Street, Jubilee Lane, The Sands, Frog Lane and Shipton Road became ripe for further development. The area framed by these streets has been developed in a rather piece-meal fashion and consists of a number of developments from the 1960s to the early 21st Century. During this period a total of over 170 new homes were built within this area.

Smaller housing estates were built from the 1960s onwards, the more significant of these being Church Meadow (**Figure 13**) and Brookfield Close off Church Road, Poplar Farm Close off the High Street and Elm Grove estate (**Figure 14),** off the Shipton Road, the latter built on a major part of the land that was once integral to Alfred Groves' extensive works. The Paddocks Extra Care facility containing 44 apartments was completed in 2015 (**Figure 15**).

The past three years up to 2022 have seen completion of the St Jude's Meadow development of 62 homes (**Figure 16)** including 31 affordable homes and the smaller development of nine executive homes in Wildbourne Close off Jubilee Lane. **Figure 17** shows these two developments under construction on the southern fringe of the main village.



Figure 13: Church Meadow



Figure 14: Elm Grove



Figure 15: The Paddocks Extra Care housing comprising 44-homes



Figure 16: St Jude's Meadow

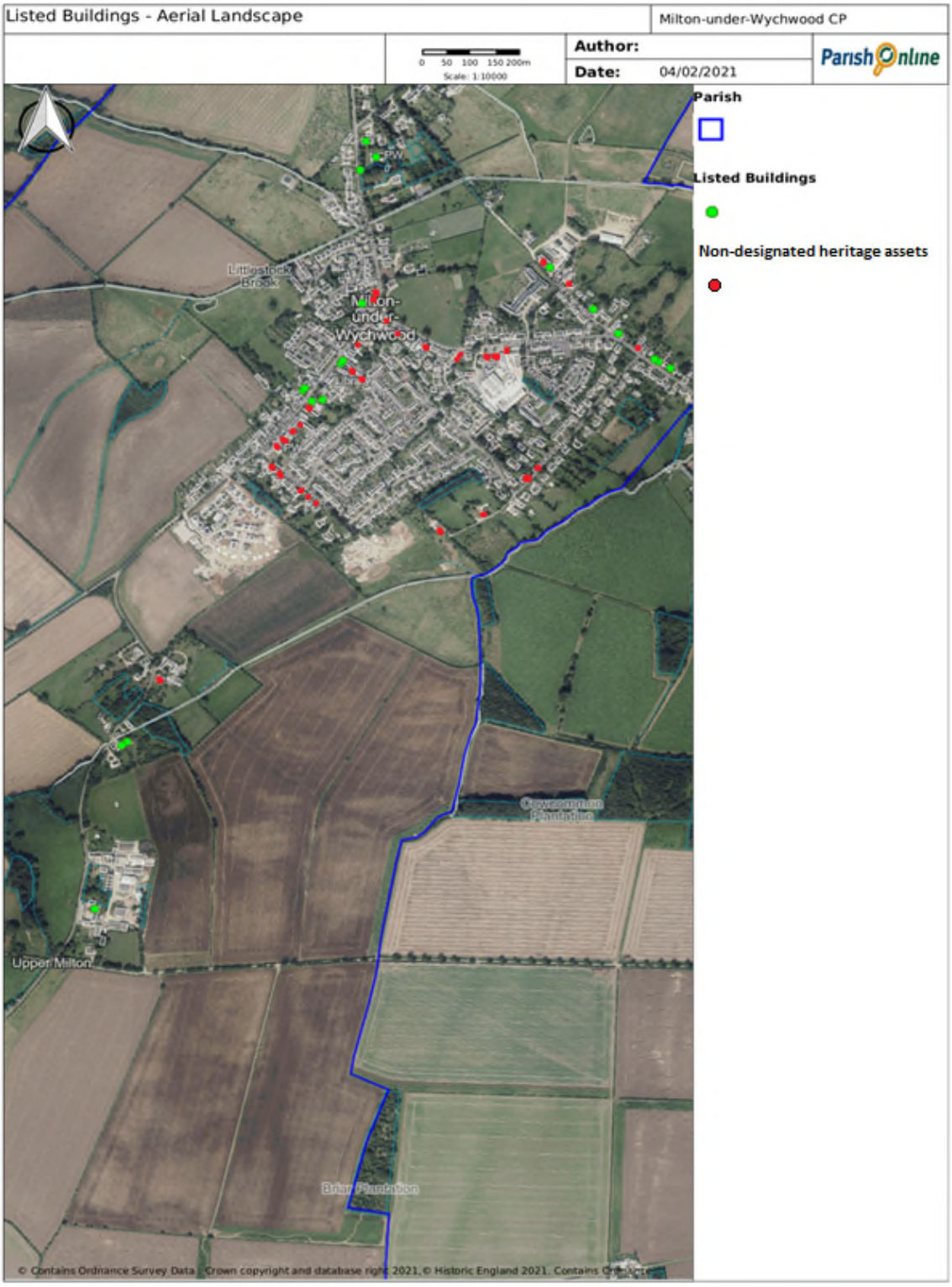


Figure 17: Map showing location of Listed Buildings

Historic England has currently listed under its **Grade 2** 18 buildings and other structures in MuW as identified on the map in **Figure 17** above. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) has also identified over thirty non-designated heritage assets (buildings and structures) that it believes to have significant architectural or historical significance for the village and wider area. The respective locations of these assets are plotted on **Figure 17**. It should be noted that non-designated heritage

assets beyond the perimeter of this particular map include some of the buildings of High Lodge and Spring Hill Farms to the South West of Upper Milton and Heath Farmhouse on Lyneham Road.

The full list of designated (i.e. listed) and non-designated assets is presented in **Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets (Appendix 2)**. This document adds further detail at the local level to specific features of our built environment of architectural and historic significance. This document also provides evidence relevant to the WODC Local Plan; Policy EH9 that states that in determining planning applications:

> *"Significant weight will also be given to the local and regional value of non-designated heritage assets, including non-listed vernacular buildings (such as traditional agricultural buildings, chapels and mills), together with archaeological monuments that make a significant contribution to the District's historic environment."*

A characteristic feature of the village worthy of comment is the fact that most street frontages are generously provided with front gardens. The building line is set back from the street line, giving an open aspect to these streets and allowing a certain greening of the street scene through shrub and hedge boundary plantings and the cultivation of front gardens. There has, however, been some depletion of these gardens for the purpose of car-parking. The centrally placed Village Green/Recreation Ground also contributes greatly to the verdant and open aspect of the village and this is an important and cherished aspect of the village's make-up.



Figure 18: Street view looking along High Street

3. Landscape and Natural Environment

The main village of MuW and the adjacent hamlet of Upper Milton form a diverse pair of Cotswold settlements within the Parish. The fringes of the parish contain a further scattering of small clusters, farmsteads and occasional individual houses, but otherwise the village and hamlet nestle within an agricultural hinterland which provides a distinctly rural setting of meadows, arable farmland, hedgerows, small woodlands and copses.

A short section of the parish's Northern boundary is defined by the meanders of the River Evenlode. Its main tributary in the parish is the Littlestock Brook which in turn is fed by Simmonds Brook in the South from Upper Milton and by minor streams in the North from Bruern. As presented in the **TVERC Biodiversity report (Appendix 9)**, the parish abuts the Local Wildlife Sites (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) 2022) of the Upper Windrush's Taynton Bushes valley (also Biodiversity Conservation Target Area) to the West and Bruern Woods to the North, as shown in **Figure 19**.

Relevant to the setting of the parish within the landscape, the Cotswold AONB Management Plan's Executive Summary identifies the special qualities of the Cotswold AONB as follows:

> "*The special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB are the key attributes for which the AONB is considered to be important. Perhaps the special quality that is most unique to the Cotswolds AONB is the unifying character of the limestone geology, including its visible presence in the landscape and its use as a building material. Other special qualities of the AONB include its internationally important, flower-rich grasslands and ancient, broadleaved woodlands; escarpment; dry stone walls; river valleys; high wolds; tranquillity and dark skies; vernacular architecture and distinctive settlements; accessible landscape offering quiet recreation; and significant archaeological, prehistoric, historic and cultural associations*."

The Plan also includes a vision for the Cotswold AONB by 2043 as follows:

> "*By 2043, the Cotswolds AONB will be a distinctive, unique, accessible living landscape treasured for its diversity which is recognised by all for its wide open views, dry stone walls, intimate valleys, flower rich grasslands, ancient woodlands, dark skies, tranquillity, archaeology, historic and cultural heritage and distinctive Cotswold stone architecture*."

The current Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board's (CCB) Landscape Character Assessment and accompanying Strategy and Guidelines has assisted the NPSG in the provision of a description of our baseline landscape. It has also helped with the identification of the key features that contribute to local distinctiveness and how to consider strengthening distinctive character through the design and management of new and existing landscapes. This includes engaging with landowners and managers to inform decisions on land management issues and long-term planning.

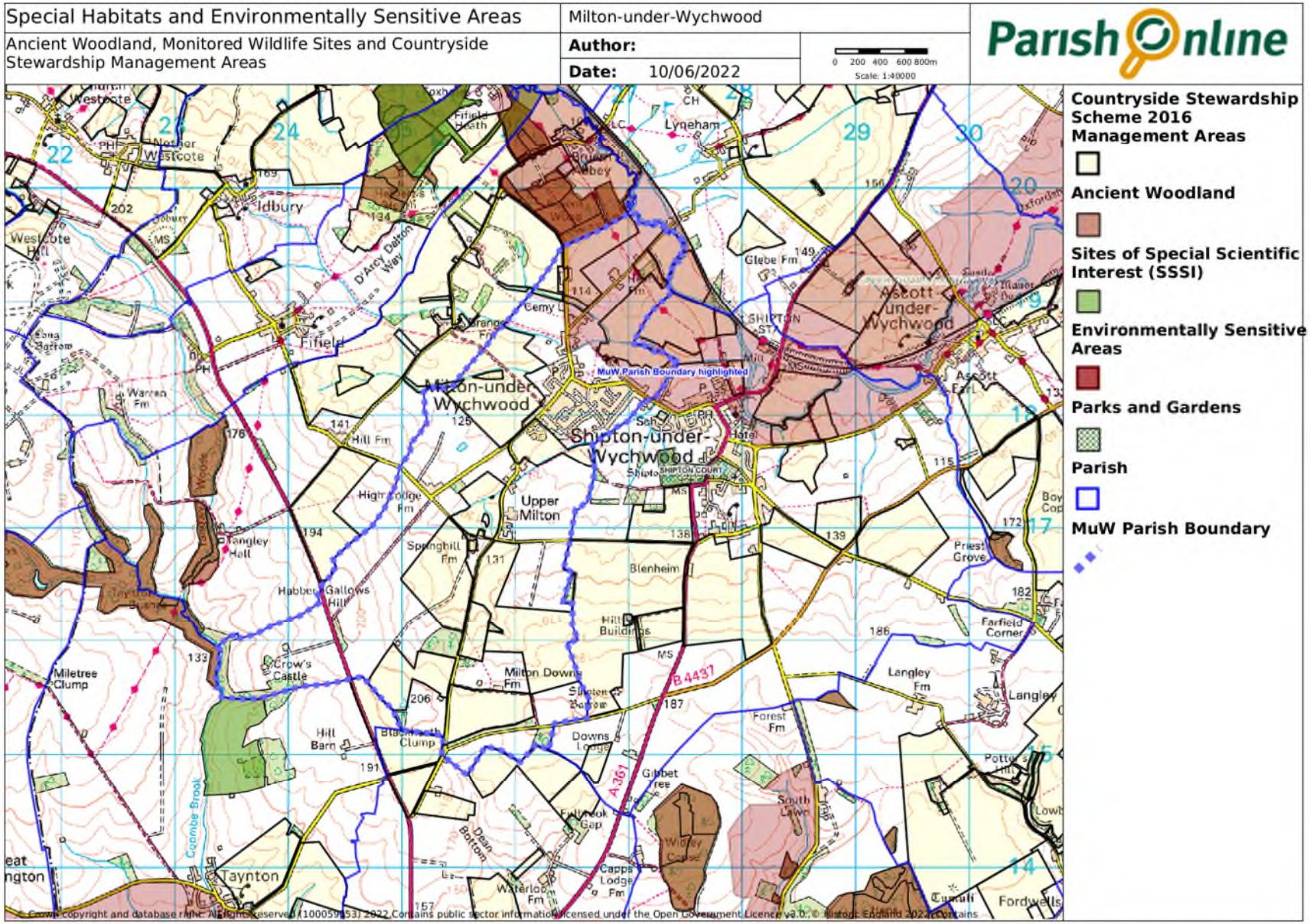


Figure 19: Map showing Special Habitats

The aim during the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan has been to help ensure that change and development respect landscape character, and that key features are conserved and enhanced. With the parish lying a short way upstream of the Lower Evenlode Valley the upstream continuation of the valley in MuW was identified from the Board's Landscape Character Assessment as Landscape Character Type (LCT) 16 for 'Broad Floodplain Valley' mostly cultivated for arable crops but with very few areas exhibiting the character of LCT 17 for 'Pastoral Lowland Vale'. The respective pastoral areas are the meadows fringing the MuW Sewage Treatment Works on the boundary with SuW parish and the relatively small hedgerow-bounded rough permanent pastures extending up the sub-catchment of the Littlestock Brook and its tributaries. Much of the parish is categorised principally as LCT 18 for 'Settled Unwooded Vale' but on both flanks of the valley this gives way to LCT 15 for 'Farmed Slopes' and LCT 3 'Rolling Hills and Valleys'. The plateau of highest land above 190 metres elevation and at the top of the MuW Downs and adjacent to the A424 highway exhibits some of the character of LCT7 'High Wold', comprising mostly arable land, small areas of planted coniferous woods and mixed deciduous woodland including roadside strips/windbreaks dominated by beech.

The 1998 West Oxfordshire Landscape Assessment identified MuW as a Key Settlement within the AONB with the Evenlode Valley forming part of the Upper Thames Tributaries Environmentally Sensitive Area that was designated in 1993 in the Ministry of Agriculture fourth wave of regions given special farming incentives to protect landscape and wildlife. These designations confirmed the outstanding quality and national significance of the Upper Evenlode Valley landscape.

This 1998 Assessment remains in a greater level of detail than offered in the current AONB documents. It showed the northern and central parts of the parish constituting a predominant and distinctive area of rolling Lower Lias clayland of semi-enclosed clay wolds (large-scale) forming a broad, shallow basin around the upper reaches of the River Evenlode. The northern and central parish area is characterised by heavy clay soils and a strong landscape structure of thick hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees with farmland in the valley floors. In marked contrast the rising southern portion of the parish in the 'Wychwood Uplands' was described as a sparsely settled high limestone plateau area of (mostly) large-scale arable agriculture with some 'minor valleys'.

The Assessment drew attention to development sensitivities including: unspoilt valley floor farmland and that the minor valleys are of particularly high quality and sensitive to development; open valley-sides are visually sensitive and development would be highly prominent and exposed. Enclosed valley-sides are also highly visible but may offer limited opportunities to absorb small-scale development within a strong structure of trees and woodland or with other buildings; all valley landscape types would be particularly sensitive to the introduction of tall or large-scale structures. It additionally asserted for the parish some important landscape features.

The parish comprises a total area of 841 hectares of which 6.2 hectares (0.74%) were recorded as 'Green Space' in 2021 by Local Insight. Green spaces are *categorised* by Local Insight as allotments or community growing spaces, bowling greens, cemeteries, religious grounds, golf courses, other sports facilities, play spaces, playing fields, public parks or gardens and tennis courts.

As a percentage of the total area of the parish, the 6.2 hectares of green space categorised by Local Insight was incorrectly calculated by Local Insight to be 0.2%. It compared this figure with the West Oxfordshire average of 0.7% and England average of 2.22%. (**source**: Local Insight profile for 'Milton-under-Wychwood' area, Oxfordshire Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) and Housing Association Charitable Trust (HACT): 2021).



Figure 20: Minor Valley of Upper Milton with Clay Wold Uplands to South

Work undertaken by the NPSG during development of this plan has provided a factual assessment of green spaces available for public enjoyment. Following the creation of a Woodland Walk in 2019 and other adjustments taken into account since 2018, the main green spaces (*according to Local Insight categorisation*) - excluding minor verges and private farmland traversed by Public Rights of Way (PROW) - now occupy some 10.19 hectares (1.2%) of the parish) as detailed in **Table 1** below:

Green Space Name	Area (hectares)
Calais Field	2.16
St Jude's Meadow Green Space and Footpath	1.19
Village Recreation Ground	2.45
Allotments: Milton Allotments and Recreation Charity (30) and Milton Welfare Trust (30) = (60 total)	1.60
Parish Council Woodland and Walk	1.03
Parish Council Cemetery	0.50
Community Orchard	0.24
St Jude's Churchyard	0.46
Elm Grove Green	0.28
Fettiplace-Ansell Way Green	0.07
Ansell Way Verge	0.06
Elm Grove Play Green	0.05
Church Meadow - Brookfield Close Green	0.10
Total	**10.19**

Table 1: Green spaces available for public enjoyment (*as in Local Insight categorisation*)

Two village charities share ownership of the Parish Field which is let partially for allotments, but taken up mainly as a letting for agriculture with the remainder being community orchard, woodland walk and cemetery. The aerial view of the Parish Field and its parts is presented below.

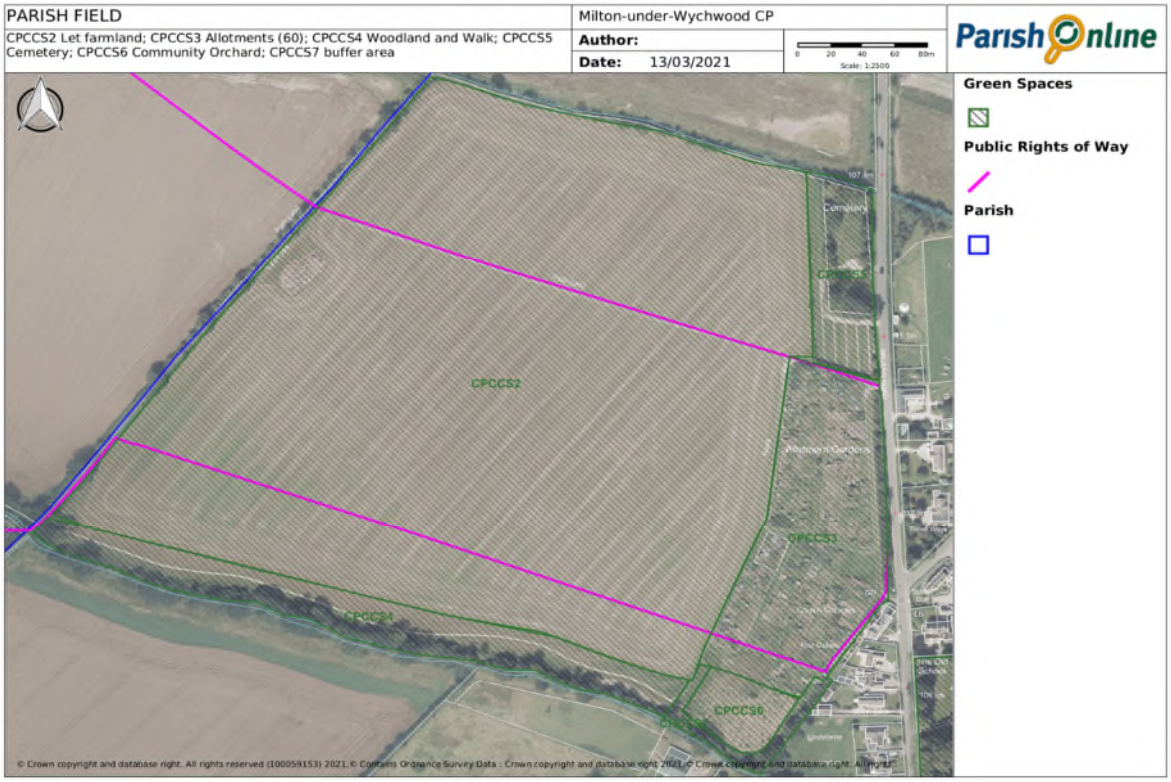


Figure 21: Map showing Parish Field

Residents and visitors also enjoy access to an extensive network of Public Rights of Way (PROW), mostly footpaths, connecting with neighbouring parishes, including the Oxfordshire Way. Many of the footpaths and bridleways offer circular connections into neighbouring parishes as shown in **Figure 8** of the **Neighbourhood Plan** and described in more detail in the Plan's **Appendix 11**.

4. Population and Demographics

Compared with many other Cotswold villages, the population of the parish of MuW includes a wide range of different age groups from a healthy cross section of different socio-economic groups.

In 2021, Local Insight reported that the total population of MuW was 2,068 representing growth of 25.5% on the 2011 Census population of 1,648.

Based on the 2011 Census, when characterising neighbourhoods in the parish, Local Insight reported that in 2021 84.4% of the parish population was classified as Rural Residents, i.e. *"Rural areas, sparsely populated, above average employment in agriculture, higher number owning multiple cars, an older married population, a high provision of unpaid care and an above average number of people living in communal establishments"* and 15.6% as Urbanites, i.e. *"Predominantly in urban areas with high concentrations in southern England. More likely to live in either flats or terraces that are privately*

rented." The parish was not given any of the other six classifications that are available such as *suburbanite, constrained, hard-pressed, multicultural* or *cosmopolitan living.*

In 2021, of the total MuW population, Local Insight reported that 27.0% of the parish population were aged 65+, which exceeded both the 21.8% ratio for 65+ reported for West Oxfordshire District (WOD) as a whole and the all-England average of 18.4%. However, this proportion was significantly lower than in the nearby parishes of Ascott-under-Wychwood (AuW) and SuW (combined 29.2%) and Burford (33.3%) and comparable with Charlbury and Finstock at 27.16%.

Also, the proportion of 0-15 year olds, although lower than the all-England average of 19.2%, was much higher than in adjacent parishes i.e. 18.5% in MuW compared with 16.3% in AuW and SuW and 15.2% in Burford and still slightly more than in Charlbury and Finstock at 18.0%.

54.4% of the MuW population was of working age (16 to 65 years) (WOD: 59.7%; England: 62.4%). For comparison with the selected nearby villages, only Burford had a lower ratio of working age population at 51.44% while the others essentially matched MuW.

Within the selected cluster of parishes, MuW provides a slightly younger mix in terms of age of our population.

6.3% of MuW residents were born outside the UK which is low compared with an all-England proportion of 13.8%.

Mobility of the population is also low i.e. at 7.9% who have moved house in the last 12 months compared with 12.3% in England as a whole.

Reporting 2011 Census data, 19.9% of working age people (age 16 -74) had no qualifications (England: 22.5%) while 35.2% were qualified to degree level or higher (England: 27.4%). These patterns may have changed over the last ten years. The 2011 Census revealed that 73.4% of working age adults were economically active (England: 69.9%).

For 2019, the number of jobs within the parish was 38.4% of the working age population against 72.8% for WOD and 76.3% for England. This suggests that about half of the work undertaken by residents of the parish is based outside the parish.

At December 2020, unemployment was reported at a low 3.6% compared with England's average of 6.4%.

29.2% of households are pensioners against 20.7% for England as a whole. In May 2020 12.9% of the population drew Attendance Allowance (for infirmity, etc), i.e. little more than the 12.5% for England. (*source: Local Insight profile for 'MuW-under-Wychwood' area, OCSI and HACT: 2021, based on ONS mid-year estimates 2019*).

6.9% of the parish population is age 85+, i.e. 143 residents, which resembles analysis for West Oxfordshire as a whole which forecast that by 2039, the number of people aged 85+ would reach 8,300 or some 7% of the population (source: West Oxfordshire Data Pack, District Data Service: 2017) against the England figure of 5%.

5. Housing

The 2011 Census identified 712 resident households and 777 dwellings (Community Insight, 2018) in MuW, of which the largest proportion of dwellings were detached houses (39.8%, compared to an England average of 22.3%). The February 2021 Local Insight profile for 'Milton-under-Wychwood' area, *utilising 2019 mid-year estimates from the ONS,* reported a total of 823 resident households for the population of 2,068.

As discussed later in this section, empirical investigation by the NPSG suggests that the population has not yet reached the indicated figure of 2,068, although the number of dwellings now exceeds 823.
At the time of the 2011 Census, 73.7% of housing in MuW was owner occupied (compared to a West Oxfordshire average of 71.0%). 7.7% was rented from a Housing Association or social landlord (compared to a West Oxfordshire average of 10.8%).

Since the 2011 Census, there have been a number of new housing developments and it is clear that now, compared with many other Cotswold villages, this has increased the healthy mix of different types of housing in MuW. This variety of housing types, as discussed in the **Character Assessment (Appendix 1),** reflects the eclectic mix of the parish's population and the fact that it comprises a broad cross section of different ages and people from different socio-economic groups. This is also reflected in the average house price in MuW.

The average house price (all types of housing, as recorded in the Land Registry) from December 2019 – November 2020 was £477,069 (**source**: Local Insight profile for 'Milton-under-Wychwood' area, OCSI and HACT: 2021) which, although high compared with £311,439 for all-England, was approximately in line with the WOD average of £434,188. Moreover, it was appreciably lower than house prices reported by Local Insight for Burford, AuW and SuW which were £788,000 or more and approximately in line with the £451,065 reported for Charlbury and Finstock. Widening comparison, the MuW average price was much lower than in Chadlington and Churchill (£589,364) and Kingham, Rollright and Enstone (£714,037).

In order to identify the true characteristics of recent housing growth, the NPSG carried out a housing survey in late 2019. This empirical investigation identified 876 dwellings visible from the roads, including known construction of sheltered apartments/flats, and from study of mapping it included 100% of committed developments under construction. The survey identified a total of 706 (81%) dwellings as medium or small and 170 (19%) as large. The survey results are tabulated below:

2019 - NPSG HOUSING SURVEY									
Census	SIZE			CATEGORY			STYLE		
	Large *	Medium **	Small ***	Detached	Semi	Terrace (incl. flats)	House	Bungalow	Flat
2011				306	287	171	751	See house	26
2019	170	481	225	388	273	215	640	157	79
Total	**876**			**876**			**876**		

KEY
*Four or more bedrooms
**Three bedrooms
***One or two bedrooms

Table 2: 2019 Housing Survey Results

The survey revealed a strong area of growth. The number of flats had tripled since 2011 to some 79 (9% of dwellings) – an increase of some 53 (+204%). This was mainly due to construction of an Extra Care accommodation complex of 44 dwellings called The Paddocks (**Figure 16**), principally for the elderly, together with some of the 62 new homes at St Jude's Meadow (50% built for social housing). At a count of 388, the number of detached houses (44% of dwellings) had increased by 27% since 2011. Since 2011 at least 53 dwellings have been constructed for social housing.

Extrapolation using the Census 2011 average of 2.31 persons/household for the parish, and assuming occupancy of at least 876 dwellings, the projected population could be expected to be 2,024 residents at present, although the figure might be slightly less due to single occupancy of some of the new sheltered accommodation.

In the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Community Questionnaire Report (NPCQR), 116 respondents stated that they required a new home (i.e. replacement, alternative or new) in MuW within the next 5 years (52 whole households and 64 individuals within a household). The top two reasons for wishing to move but not being able to, for both whole households and individuals, were:
(1) unable to afford to buy new home, and
(2) lack of suitable housing to meet my needs.

6. Local Economy and Services

The largest employment sector is retail (19% of 805 people in employment), followed by health and social work (11%) and manufacturing (11%). For jobs based in MuW construction is the largest sector (16.8% of all people in employment), followed by hotels and catering (11%) and Business administration/ support services/ health professional, scientific and technical services (9%) (**source**: Census 2011 and Business Register and Employment Survey: 2016).

The 2018 NPCQR showed that 25% of respondents work or study from home. Working locally is also facilitated by the availability of premises suitable for small businesses and shared workspaces. In particular, Groves Timber Yard industrial site hosts some 25 employment units (as of January 2021). Analysis undertaken by the PC (see **Appendix 4**) shows that there are 105 retail and local services and other businesses based in the parish.

The village supports a number of retail and local services. These include a Cooperative supermarket, a part-time Post Office, Groves DIY shop, a beauty therapist, two hairdressers, a garage at the interface with the adjacent parish of SuW, a branch of a veterinary practice, a café and a public house (The Hare). There is a private dental practice in the village, with the nearest medical practice in nearby SuW.



Figure 24: Dental Practice



Figure 22: Antiques Store at Groves Business Park

7. Public Transport

The Cotswold railway main line to London runs through the Evenlode Valley. Although there are limited daily services from nearby Shipton train station, there are regular services in the nearby villages of Kingham and Charlbury, both of which are a 20-minute commute from the village.

The long running Number 233 public transport bus service operated by Stagecoach ended in 2014 following the reduction of government subsidies to the County. This meant that the Wychwoods (MuW, SuW and AuW) were left without bus services.

To replace this bus service, there are now two options for local transport:

1. The Villager service commenced in 2015, and
2. The West Oxfordshire Community Transport Limited (WOCT) service, which is a not-for-profit organization commenced in 2017.

The Villager bus relies on drivers that are unpaid volunteers, and it provides a much-needed service to Chipping Norton (once a day) and to Witney (3 days a week).

WOCT received a capital donation from the Parish Council, and neighbouring parish councils, shortly after start-up in 2017 and was further supported by the parish councils in 2022. It commenced with round trips to Chipping Norton and Witney. Unfortunately the Chipping Norton route was discontinued due to insufficient passengers. Meanwhile, the Witney passenger numbers had risen 20% by 2019 so the schedule increased to five times per day (Monday to Friday). This service allowed people to use the bus to and from work or college. The frequency also allowed people to shop and attend medical appointments in Witney. The earlier bus also allowed onward connection with the Oxford buses from Witney.

WOCT also began a Saturday service which had started to attract a good number of passengers. Unfortunately, the impact of the pandemic and low passenger numbers resulted in a temporary reduction in services. However, it is intended to gradually increase services to pre pandemic levels as the effects of COVID-19 ease. The 2018 NPCQR indicated that around 70 people use the bus regularly i.e. at least once a week.

8. Social and Community Infrastructure

There are several indoor and outdoor venues and facilities available for community use, including the Village Green, the greens in Elm Grove, the library, the children's play area, the village hall, the allotments, the Woodland Walk, the churches and the all-weather tennis court.

The village offers a range of well-supported clubs and societies for 'Recreation and Play' as indicated in the responses to the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Community Questionnaire (NPCQ). For example, the following percentages of people said they used the listed facilities daily, weekly or monthly as follows:

Village green- 58%; library- 37%; pub- 32%; post office- 29%; children's play area- 26%; village hall- 22%.

The Wychwood Library is based in MuW High St and it is an important village facility, hosting various clubs and activities. The MuW Sports Association situated on the village green hosts many recreational activities. In addition, there are more than 35 active clubs and societies in the village, with MuW Allotments and Gardens Association (MuWAGA) and the Women's Institute enjoying great support according to the NPCQ results. The results also showed that many members of the village community also play sport regularly, either in the village where facilities are available or in nearby places.

Other volunteer supported activities include: The Milton Volunteers, a group who help with the annual fete and other general tasks to maintain the general village environment; The Craft Café (established 2019), a popular weekly club for residents of all ages, which operates craft sessions in the Village Hall with refreshments; and the Scout Troop, Guides, Cubs and Beavers.

In addition to clubs and societies, there are several regular community events, including the annual Village Fete, Christmas Eve Carols around the village Christmas tree and the MuWAGA Annual Flower & Produce Show.

The **Business Services and Social and Community Infrastructure** is fully detailed in **Appendix 4**.

9. Health and Wellbeing

The nearest General Practice surgery is in Shipton-under-Wychwood, with the nearest Accident and Emergency units at the Horton hospital, Banbury (20 miles) and the John Radcliffe hospital, Oxford (24 miles). There is also a Minor Injuries Unit in Witney (12 miles). Of these three destinations, only Witney is served by public transport (WOCT). MuW hosts a private physiotherapy practice and a private dental practice. The Parish Council operates a comprehensive Emergency Plan which identifies community health resources including a certified resuscitation practitioner; there are six defibrillators in the village.

296 local residents (14.3%) have a limiting long-term illness. This compares to 17.6% in England as a whole (Local Insight 2021; source: Census 2011). There are no local residents living in a health deprivation 'hotspot'.