Closing the Gap

Oxford City Council
Social Inclusion Strategy 2006

DRAFT v5

Foreword

Oxford is experienced by many of its residents as a thriving and affluent City with excellent opportunities for work and leisure. However not all the residents of Oxford have the same opportunities – the City hides large inequalities in people's life chances which we have a moral obligation to address.

The City is rightly famous for its historic centre and two universities. But in the same City there is four times the rate of homeless people than the national average. Almost one in four children are growing up in poverty, and many will leave school with few if any qualifications. This Strategy is about identifying what Oxford City Council can do to close the gap in life opportunities so that everyone has the chance to live free from poverty and social exclusion.

We have identified a number of priorities in this Strategy. The alleviation of child poverty and homelessness have already been highlighted, as has the poor educational attainment of some children. There are some areas of the City which suffer multiple deprivation, with much higher incidence of low skills, worklessness and low incomes. Many areas experience high levels of crime. Oxford is an ethnically diverse City, with a larger than average black and minority ethnic population – but people from some of these groups are at greater risk of social exclusion than others. We wish Oxford to be a cohesive community where those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.

This Strategy sets out principles which underpin our work to promote social inclusion. In order to use our resources effectively all initiatives will be evidence-based and provide value for money. We will ensure that all our 'front-line' services can effectively address the needs of our most vulnerable residents. We will work both strategically with partner agencies and at a local level with people who are themselves socially excluded to develop the most effective ways of promoting social inclusion. And wherever possible we must prevent people becoming socially excluded in the first place.

The City Council, alone and in conjunction with its partners, is already undertaking a large amount of work to promote social inclusion. This commitment continues – from 2006 the Council has undertaken to provide free swimming to all under 16 year olds and extend access to holiday play schemes in deprived areas of the City.

The important next step is to ensure that all our existing work reflects the priorities and principles outlined in this Strategy. In the next year we will: conduct a comprehensive audit of our current activity; work with our partners to secure agreement on the importance of reducing inequalities; explore involving local people in social inclusion work through Area Committees; and ensure we can monitor our progress in promoting social inclusion.

Success in reducing inequalities and promoting social inclusion will only come through sustained effort over a long period. This Strategy sets out how, working together with partner agencies and local residents, the City Council will seek to close the gap in life chances and ensure that more of its residents can live as part of a socially inclusive city.

Councillor Dan Paskins
Social Inclusion Portfolio Holder
Oxford City Council

1. Introduction

Promoting social inclusion is about improving the lives of the most vulnerable members of our society. It is a long-term goal influenced by many factors, from the behaviour of individuals to national and international policy. As achieving the goal of promoting social inclusion requires a long-term view of the role of many different actors, a strategic view is vital.

This strategy:
- Defines **'social inclusion'**;
- Identifies **Oxford City Council's role** in promoting social inclusion;
- Justifies the need for an **overarching strategy**;
- Summarises the **current evidence** about social inclusion in Oxford;
- Sets out key **principles** that Oxford City Council will apply in order to promote social inclusion;
- Discusses the **current activity** related to social inclusion; and
- Recommends an **action plan** to cover the period 2006-07.

2. What is social inclusion?

In the Oxford Plan 2006-09 Oxford City Council has adopted a priority of '*reducing inequalities through social inclusion*'; this is a positive statement of what it wishes to achieve in tackling 'social exclusion'. The Council uses the Social Exclusion Unit's definition of social exclusion as:

> *'A short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown.'*

> (Social Exclusion Unit, 2004)

Social exclusion is therefore about more than income poverty. Socially excluded people experience multiple disadvantages which can mutually reinforce each other. These disadvantages combine to hinder their ability to participate fully in society.

Social exclusion is at the extreme end of a continuum of inequality. It is difficult to identify a group of individuals who are 'socially excluded', but we can identify people who suffer the deprivations that are associated with it. Therefore it is proposed that the Council adopts an approach of tackling the causes and risk factors associated with social exclusion, thereby enabling excluded individuals to become included in society and preventing those at risk from social exclusion becoming so.

The concept of social inclusion links closely with that of '*cohesive communities*' in which people from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.

3. What is Oxford City Council's role in promoting social inclusion?

As already noted, social inclusion has been identified by the Council as a local priority. The Oxford Plan 2006-09 identifies that to '*reduce inequalities through social inclusion*' is a priority, stating that:

> *'We believe that building social inclusion is fundamental to local government work. We want to support the development of strong, cohesive communities where diversity is valued and where opportunities to engage with the community and with the Council are inclusive.'*

There are two clear ways in which the Council can seek to promote social inclusion: (i) through inclusive provision of statutory and/or mainstream services; and (ii) working with its partners to deliver non-statutory targeted initiatives which address local priorities.

Oxford City Council has statutory responsibility for running a number of services. Those which impact directly on social inclusion include benefits administration, housing and environmental health. In addition it runs mainstream provision such as leisure and cultural services which although not statutory seek to serve the whole of the City. These services need to be delivered in a way which does not exclude the most vulnerable residents from benefiting, and which positively promotes their inclusion in society.

Additionally the City Council has a power under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 to do anything which it considers is likely to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the City. It can be used to implement and deliver the objectives of Community Strategy as prepared by the Oxford Strategic Partnership, and the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement. Thus the Council should consider how it can use this power to work with other partners to address those aspects of social exclusion which fall outside its statutory duties.

4. What is the purpose of this strategy?

The Council already has a large number of plans and strategies in place which directly and indirectly impact upon the social inclusion agenda. Flowing from these are a large number of initiatives which are already delivering services to promote social inclusion. Against this context, why does the Council need to adopt a social inclusion strategy?

Social exclusion is a complex problem which is influenced by many different factors, from individual behaviours to national and international policy. Many different agencies have a role to play in promoting social inclusion, and it is not in the power of Oxford City Council alone to address the problem. Therefore the Council must be able to:
- Define its core responsibilities in relation to social inclusion; and
- Identify what it should seek to achieve in partnership with other agencies.

As part of this the Council must ensure that work to promote social inclusion operates at both a strategic level, with partner agencies, and at a neighbourhood level, involving local people in deprived neighbourhoods.

The Council delivers many services which impact directly upon social inclusion, which are largely planned and implemented in separate Business Units. In order to tackle social exclusion in a coherent, effective fashion the Council must ensure that:
- Social inclusion initiatives reflect Council-wide priorities and principles for action; and
- Each relevant Business Unit addresses social inclusion issues in its annual planning process.

Furthermore progress in tackling social exclusion will only come in the long-term, which requires an ability to learn from and build upon past successes. In order to do this the Council needs to be able to answer the questions:
- What has been done?
- What has this achieved?
- Therefore, what needs to be done next?

Without a strategic overview this clarity of purpose cannot be achieved.

5. Who is this strategy for?

This strategy has a number of audiences:
- **Oxford City Council Officers** will use the principles outlined in this strategy to effectively address the needs of those City residents most excluded from society.
- It informs our **strategic partners** of the Council's approach to social inclusion and the priority needs identified in the City.
- **Voluntary and community organisations** applying for City Council funding will need to demonstrate how projects promoting social inclusion are consistent with this strategy.
- It informs **members of the public** about the Council's proposed approach to promoting social inclusion, and will be used as a basis for consultation.

6. Social inclusion priorities in Oxford City

Oxford taken as a whole is a relatively affluent city but there are large inequalities between its residents. For example, people living in Northfield Brook ward can expect on average to live six years less than people living in North ward. In promoting social inclusion the Council is seeking to reduce these inequalities in people's life chances.

A review of the available evidence (see Appendix 1) indicates the following as priorities for action in Oxford City:
- 17 Super Output Areas which are in the 30% most deprived areas nationally. The priorities for action in these areas are education and skills, low income and child poverty.
- Crime: over one third of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on crime.
- Children and young people's education & skills: over one quarter of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on this measure.
- Child poverty: Oxford City has a higher rate than the national average, and over one quarter of the City population lives in areas which are in the 10% most deprived in the South East on this measure.

- Black and minority ethnic groups: Oxford City has a larger than average BME population, and evidence shows they are at greater risk of social exclusion than other residents.
- Homelessness: Oxford has almost four times the national rate of homeless households in temporary accommodation. There is also a concern that rough sleeping is on the increase.

The identification of these priorities does not mean that Oxford City Council is unconcerned with the needs of other 'at risk' groups such as elderly people on low incomes (see Appendix 1). As already stated, it is vital that the Council's mainstream and statutory services are accessible to all, especially those vulnerable people who rely most heavily upon them. However these priorities indicate where the Council should target most of its resource when working with partners to tackle social exclusion outside its statutory remit.

7. Underpinning principles

The Council will apply the following principles in promoting social inclusion.

(i) All social inclusion initiatives must be evidence-based and provide value for money

Oxford City Council believes that the most effective way to tackle social exclusion is by systematically using the available evidence to develop services. Not using an evidence base risks wasting public money on low priorities and services which cannot deliver the desired outcomes. This means that the Council will use available sources of evidence to:
- Establish the level of need for a service, using administrative and survey data;
- Design a service model which is likely to prove effective, using research evidence and good practice guidance; and
- Monitor implementation of the service and evaluate the resulting impact, using a robust monitoring framework.

The Council must use its finite resources as effectively as possible to maximise the support given to our most vulnerable residents. Therefore all social inclusion initiatives must show value for money. Just as with the rest of its services, the Council will be robust in ensuring that the benefits resulting from these initiatives justify the costs of carrying them out.

Allied to this, in conjunction with its partners the Council will develop a local evidence base in order to enhance knowledge of what works over time and learn from past experience.

(ii) All Council services must be inclusive and there must be a corporate approach to social inclusion

The Council delivers many 'front-line' services – including environmental health, housing and benefits – which can impact directly upon an individual's experience of social exclusion. The Council must ensure that its services can address the needs of those vulnerable residents who rely most heavily upon them. This links closely with the Customer Care and Contact Strategy which states that 'we will ensure that our customers can access our services easily and on equal terms'.

Most of the Council's services overlap in the extent to which they impact upon social inclusion. As such, it is important to develop a corporate response, which means:

- Having high level political and corporate commitment to promoting social inclusion;
- Business Plans of relevant Units must reflect the corporate commitment to social inclusion; and
- Ensuring that Officers work across Business Units on initiatives of common relevance.

The first of these is already achieved in the priority aim set out in the Oxford Plan 2006-09.

(iii) The Council will work with partner agencies and involve local people in decision-making

Social exclusion is a problem which overlaps the responsibilities of many different agencies. Therefore Oxford City Council will seek wherever possible to work with other statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations and the private sector on shared strategic projects to maximise the impact upon social exclusion. This links to the statements on working with partners set out in the Procurement Strategy.

Local people must be involved in making decisions about supporting them and improving their neighbourhoods. This is an important aspect of inclusion itself, but also a key part of designing effective solutions to the problems associated with social exclusion. It is important that the Council works hard to ascertain the views of those 'hard to reach' groups most likely to be socially excluded.

(iv) Mainstream services and targeted initiatives can both promote social inclusion

The Council recognises that it is not just targeted initiatives that will impact upon social inclusion, but that mainstream services are a key support to the most vulnerable members of the community and must be delivered according to their needs. In addition, whilst area-based initiatives can be a useful way to support socially excluded people it is recognised that not all vulnerable people live in deprived areas.

(v) As well as tackling social exclusion, the Council will work to prevent people from becoming socially excluded

As well as improving the lives of those individuals already socially excluded, it is important to work to prevent social exclusion where possible. In particular it is known that children growing up in low-income households are at risk of become socially excluded in adulthood. It must therefore be a priority to address the needs of children in socially excluded households to prevent another generation of socially excluded adults in Oxford.

8. Current social inclusion-related activity

Attached to this report (see Appendix 2) is a document which maps out the social inclusion-related services that the Council currently funds, works in partnership on or directly delivers. It is organised under a broad model to characterise social inclusion initiatives (adapted from the Audit Commission's model for area profiles). In addition to a section on overarching social inclusion work, it includes seven areas:
1. Making communities safer
2. Improving access to services
3. Tackling health inequality
4. Education and lifelong learning
5. Promoting economic well-being
6. Improving housing availability and quality
7. Supporting families, communities and individuals

This mapping exercise, carried out as part of a workshop with Council Officers from across the organisation, identified over 70 services and initiatives related to social inclusion. The initial rationale for this mapping exercise was to identify gaps in current services to inform forward planning. The exercise made clear that there is a large amount of activity in the area of social inclusion, and presumably therefore a large amount of expended resource. However there is not equal clarity about:
- The inclusivity of mainstream services;
- Possible overlaps between initiatives;
- How they link to existing Council strategies;
- The relationship to provision by other agencies;
- The outputs they are delivering; and
- The extent to which they are consistent with the principles outlined in this strategy.

9. Recommended action plan for 2006-07

It is recommended that the following four strands of work form the initial actions flowing from this strategy:
- Audit of current activity
- Strategic work with partners
- Utilising Area Committees to involve local people in targeted neighbourhood projects
- Outcome-based monitoring of social inclusion

9.1 Audit of current activity

An audit of current social inclusion-related activity funded by the City Council is a vital step in applying the principles of this strategy to both targeted and mainstream services. This audit will support the Council in providing more efficient and improved services which serve identified priorities and link better to existing provision.

The audit will measure each relevant service or initiative against principles contained in this strategy and in the Procurement Strategy 2004-07. It will seek to answer the following questions:
- Who delivers the service?
- What is its target population?
- How effective is it in reaching this target population?
- What are the costs of the service?

- Where is the funding stream from?
- What outputs is it delivering?
- What objectives does it seek to achieve?
- What is the evidence base for the service?
- How does it link to City Council plans and strategies?
- How does it link to other provision by the Council and other agencies?

In order to support this a mapping exercise of provision by other agencies in the City will also be undertaken (see also 9.2 below). A cross-Council working group will be established to oversee the social inclusion audit.

The audit will identify:
- Services which are consistent with the principles of this strategy
- Services which overlap with other provision
- Services with little evidence of need and/or effectiveness

The principles of the Procurement Strategy will then be applied to identify options for service delivery, including withdrawal from the service, improved in-house provision and joint commissioning. The audit will also identify gaps in existing provision that ought to be a priority for addressing. If the above exercise frees up existing resources these can be reallocated to addressing priority areas without additional expenditure (though some funding streams may not permit such reallocation).

Implications for service redesign and resource allocation will feed into the next business planning cycle due to commence in April 2006. This will result in measurable outputs to support the social inclusion priority being documented in the Oxford Plan 2007-10. Any justification for additional resources will be put as part of the 2007-08 budget round.

Actions	Deadline
Social Inclusion Strategy adopted by Council	3rd April 2006
Social inclusion audit: initial findings reported to cross-party group	1st August 2006
Social inclusion audit: public consultation on findings	1st September 2006
Social inclusion audit: recommendations to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1st October 2006
Measurable outputs to be included as part of 2007-10 business planning cycle	31st March 2007

9.2 Strategic work with partners

A key part of this strategy is to work with key partners to promote social inclusion in Oxford. Therefore the Council will seek in the next year to gain agreement with its partners on the importance of reducing inequality in Oxford and on the approach outlined in this strategy. Such an approach has already begun through the Healthier Communities Partnership between the Council and Oxford City PCT. This will be progressed through the Oxford Strategic Partnership, which has already endorsed undertaking an audit as described above on a cross-agency basis.

9.3 Utilising Area Committees

This strategy endorses an evidence-based approach to promoting social inclusion, and identifies priority areas of the City for action. It also notes the importance of involving local people in the design and implementation of social inclusion initiatives. Area Committees provide an existing structure to facilitate the process of promoting social inclusion at a neighbourhood level. Effective methods of achieving this involvement will be explored through the Social Inclusion Team, Strategy & Review Unit and Area Coordinators.

9.4 Outcome-based monitoring of social inclusion

Alongside the work to assess the current social inclusion-related outputs, a framework to monitor the associated outcomes across the City needs to be developed. This will be progressed in parallel with the audit work, with a view to producing periodic reports monitoring trends in social inclusion. Links will be made with the proposed Oxford Strategic Partnership Quality of Life Indicators work and the Oxfordshire Data Observatory.

10. References

- Social Exclusion Unit (2004) Breaking the Cycle: Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future
- 'Closing the Gap': Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 22nd March 2005
- 'Social Inclusion – Closing the Gap': Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 5th July 2005
- OCSI Data Tools for Social Inclusion Version 2.0
- Oxford Plan 2006-09
- Oxford City Council Procurement Strategy 2004-07

APPENDIX 1:
Social exclusion in Oxford City

Oxford City Council
Social Inclusion Strategy 2006

The following summary uses small area and city-wide indicators of social exclusion to identify priorities in Oxford. The area deprivation measures are used as an indicator of where many people experiencing social exclusion are resident. However it is recognised that not all socially excluded people will live in deprived areas, hence the use of city-wide measures in addition.

Area-based social exclusion

Oxford is a relatively affluent city but there are large inequalities between its residents. For example, people living in Northfield Brook ward can expect on average to live six years less than people living in North ward. The Indices of Deprivation 2004 (ID 2004) are used here as an indicator of area-level multiple deprivation and therefore where many people experiencing social exclusion are resident.

The ID 2004 employs data on income, employment, health, education and skills, housing, service access, crime and living environment to measure the level of deprivation in an area known as a 'Super Output Area' (SOA). SOAs are smaller than wards, containing an average of 1500 people, and are therefore small enough to identify 'pockets of deprivation' which would not be highlighted by ward-level data. There are 85 SOAs in Oxford City.

On the basis of the total ID 2004 score, there are a number of priority SOAs in Oxford City that can be identified:
- 10 SOAs are in the top 20% most deprived in England (this criteria is used for funding under the SEEDA Area Investment Programme)
- 17 SOAs are in the top 30% most deprived in England (this criteria is used for 'full service' Children's Centres and the Social Inclusion Team focuses its work in these areas)

By contrast, the inequality across the City is illustrated by the fact that there are 18 SOAs in the 30% *least* deprived in England.

The 17 SOAs are located in (see Map 1 below):
- The Leys area (7)
- Rose Hill (2)
- Barton (2)
- Littlemore (2)
- Wood Farm (2)
- Donnington Bridge (1)
- City Centre (1)

Analysis of the individual sub-domains which make up the total ID 2004 score reveals that the priorities in these areas are education and skills, low income and child poverty. An exception to this is the City Centre SOA where the priorities are health, crime and housing. This presumably relates to the large number of single homelessness services in the area.

Analysing the City SOAs by scores on the ID 2004 sub-domains identifies some other priorities for action across the City. There are a number of sub-domains where more than a quarter of City residents live in SOAs which are in the top 10% most deprived in the South East region.
- Crime sub-domain: 31 SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived in the region

- Income deprivation affecting children sub-domain: 23 SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived in the region
- Children and young people, education and skills sub-domain: 23 SOAs are in the top 10% most deprived in the region

Map 1   Location of 17 SOAs in top 30% most deprived in England
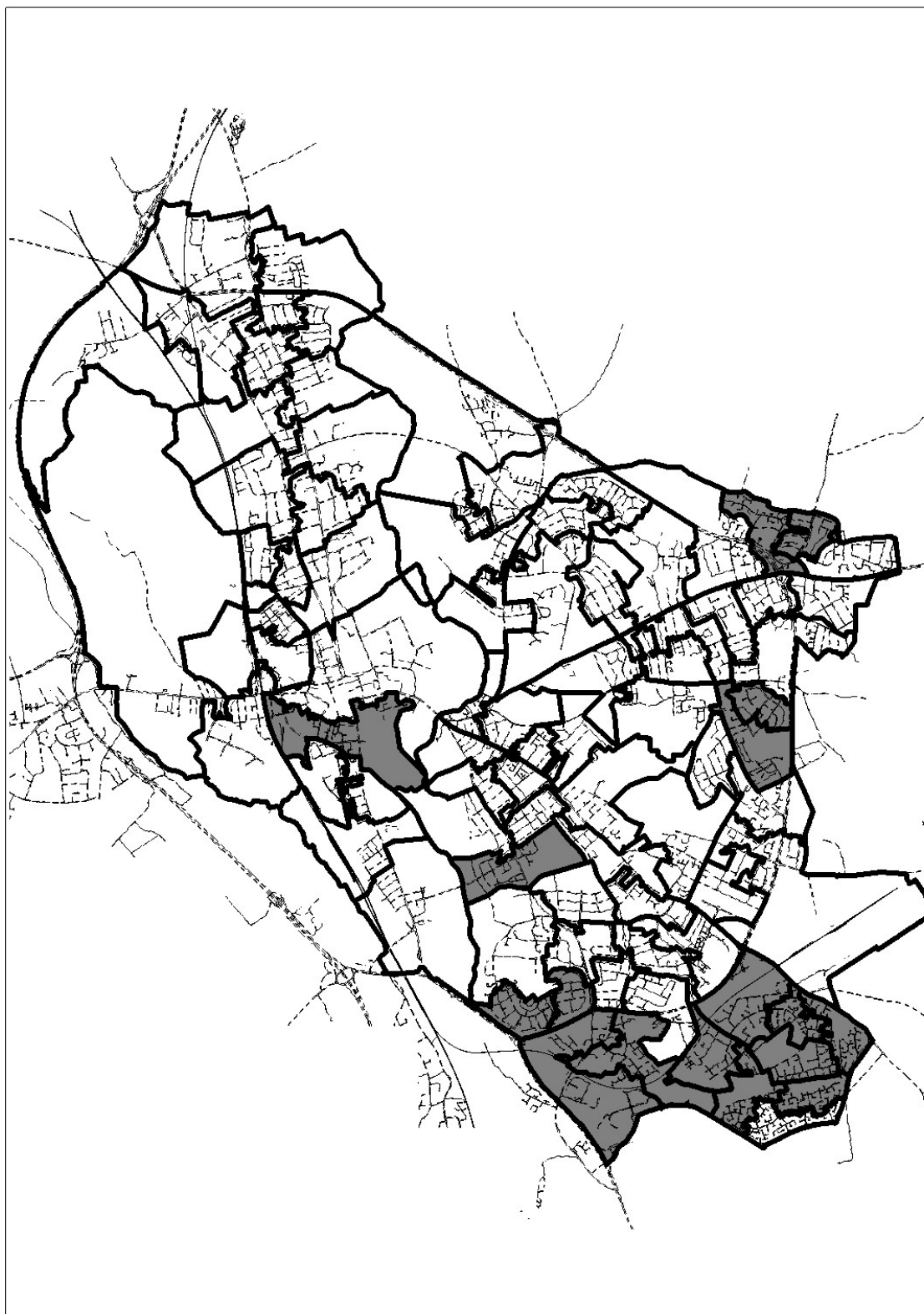
Other groups at risk of social exclusion

From research into social exclusion it is known that certain groups are at greater risk than others. Table 1 below lists a number of groups who are known to be at greater risk of social exclusion than the general population. It shows that the population in Oxford has a lower rate of many of the risk factors associated with social exclusion than the national average – including people with no qualifications, adults with limiting long-term illness, unpaid carers and pensioners on low incomes. As noted above however, some small areas have high concentrations of people experiencing these problems.

There are three particular groups at risk of social exclusion which are more prominent in Oxford than the national average:
- 22.7% of children live in low income households compared with a national average of 18.3%. There is also a higher rate of children leaving school with no qualifications and teenaged parents
- 4.9% of the population is of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African or Black Caribbean origin, compared with a national average of 4.1%
- Oxford has almost four times the national rate of homeless households in temporary accommodation

The statistics also indicate that Oxford has a higher than average number of asylum seekers and long-term unemployed adults. However the numbers concerned are much smaller than the priority groups identified above (95 and 250 respectively).

Data about the population in Oxford indicates that people of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin are at much greater risk of unemployment, having no formal qualifications or working in low skill occupations. In addition, black and minority ethnic groups are overrepresented amongst homeless households in Oxford. This priority links strongly with national community cohesion policy which states that a cohesive community is one where those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities.

In addition to the elevated rate of homeless households in temporary accommodation, there is a concern that rough sleeping is on the increase. In 2002 an average of 8 rough sleepers were observed on rough sleeping hotspot counts but this rose to an average of 11 in counts during 2005.

References

Social Exclusion Unit (2004) *Breaking the Cycle: Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future*
'*Closing the Gap*': Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 22nd March 2005
'*Social Inclusion – Closing the Gap*': Report to Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 5th July 2005

Table 1   City-wide statistics on groups at risk of social exclusion

		Oxford	England	Year	Source	Other notes
Children	**Children who leave school with no qualifications**	8.4%	5.2%	2003	NeSS	Percentage of all school leavers
	Children in low income households	22.6%	18.9%	2002	OCSI	Percentage of children aged 0-5 years dependent on income support
	Teenaged parents	57.2	42.4	2001-03	FTI	Rate per thousand females aged 15-17 yrs
Working age adults	**Homeless households in temporary accommodation (rate per thousand households)**	19.7	5.2	2004	NeSS	Derived from NeSS statistics (NB 2001 denominator as annual household estimates not available at local authority level)
	Long-term unemployed adults	16.3%	13.9%	2006	Nomis	Percentage of JSA claimants out of work for more than one year
	People with limiting long-term illness	13.8%	17.9%	2001	OCSI	
	Lone parents	6.2%	6.4%	2001	NeSS	Derived from NeSS statistics
	Parents with four or more children	6.1%	4.4%	2004	NeSS	Derived; child benefit claimants
	People providing unpaid care	7.8%	9.9%	2001	OCSI	
	Adults of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black African or Black Caribbean origin	4.9%	4.1%	2001	OCSI	Figures here are for whole population
	People with no qualifications	9.5%	15.1%	2003-04	Nomis	Comparator is for Great Britain
	Asylum seekers	0.7	0.4	2004	HO	Asylum seekers per thousand population
Adults of pensionable age	**Pensioners on low incomes**	13.2%	13.9%	2004	AC	Percentage of 60+ population
	Lone pensioners	14.3%	14.6%	2001	AC	Percentage of all households
	Pensioners with limiting long-term illness	13.8%	14.0%	2003	OCSI	Attendance allowance claimants, percentage of 65+ popn

List of at risk groups adapted from Social Exclusion Unit (2004) *Breaking the Cycle: Taking stock of progress and priorities for the future*

Data not presented for the following groups: children not in education, training or employment; young carers; children in local authority care for more than 12 months; children of parents in prison or who misuse drugs; children with special educational needs; rough sleepers; prisoners; problematic drug users; travellers and gypsies.

Key to data sources: AC   Audit Commission Area Profiles http://www.areaprofiles.audit-commission.gov.uk/
                        FTI   ODPM Floor Targets Interactive http://www.fti.neighbourhood.gov.uk/
                        HO   Home Office Asylum Statistics UK 2004 http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/
                        NeSS   Neighbourhood Statistics http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/
                        Nomis   Nomis official labour market statistics http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

OCSI   Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion Data Tools for Social Inclusion v2.0

APPENDIX 2:
Current social inclusion activity
(delivered directly or funded by Oxford City Council)

Oxford City Council
Social Inclusion Strategy 2006

Social inclusion overview

Headline statistics (source: Indices of Deprivation 2004)	10 City SOAs in the top 20% most deprived in England 17 City SOAs in the top 10% most deprived in South East England
National policy context	Breaking the Cycle (Social Exclusion Unit) Sustainable Communities: Building for the future (ODPM)
Local strategies	Oxford Plan Improvement Plan Oxford Community Strategy Local Area Agreement Oxfordshire Children & Young People's Plan Oxford City Council Children & Young People's Plan Oxfordshire Area Investment Programme Performance Plan OCC Unit Business Plans Area Plans
Partnership bodies	Oxford Strategic Partnership Oxfordshire Community Partnership RegenArc Area Programme Board Area Committees
Oxford City Council services	All
Current initiatives	'Closing the Gap' project Grants programme Equalities Steering Group

Improving housing availability and quality
This section includes measures to address rough sleeping, single homelessness, vulnerably housed children and families, housing quality and availability, and fuel poverty.

Headline statistics (sources: Housing Strategy 2005-08, Homelessness Strategy)	960 households in Council temporary accommodation 580 people in emergency accommodation 382 households accepted as homeless in 2003/04 (a high rate compared to other similar towns) Oxford has a lower proportion of owner-occupiers (54%) than the national average (70%) 30% of vulnerable households are living in non-decent homes 27% of the population suffers fuel poverty 35% of homeless households are from BME groups
National policy context	Homelessness Act 2002 Homelessness Order 2002 Housing Act 2004 ODPM PSA 7: target for decent homes Homes for All (ODPM)
Local strategies	Housing strategy 2006-08 Homelessness strategy Private sector housing strategy (in development)
Partnership bodies	Strategic Housing in Oxford Partnership Landlords' Forum
Oxford City Council services	Housing Services (Tenancy Services Team, Housing Needs Team, Furnished Tenancy Service) Housing Regeneration Team, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit Environmental Health Unit Housing Benefit Service
Current initiatives	Grants to homelessness agencies Supporting People Programme Furnished tenancy scheme Equity release scheme through Houseproud Rent deposit guarantee scheme Home Choice scheme Indefinite Leave to Remain Integration Project Housing Advice Service (delivered by TMH) Choice-based lettings implementation Community Energy Programme

Promoting economic well-being
This section includes measures to address benefit take up, social enterprise development, social welfare advice, local economic development, employment and financial inclusion.

Headline statistics (source: Indices of Deprivation 2004)	23 City SOAs in the top 10% regionally for income deprivation affecting children 14 SOAs in the top 10% regionally for income deprivation 14 SOAs in the top 10% regionally for income deprivation affecting older people 12 SOAs in the top 10% regionally for employment deprivation
National policy context	Tackling Poverty and Extending Opportunity (HM Treasury) Productivity in the UK: The Local Dimension (HM Treasury)
Local strategies	Regional Economic Strategy Area Investment Programme Performance Plan Local Area Agreement (Economic Development & Enterprise Block) OCC Economic Development Strategy Social Inclusion Delivery Plan Advice Strategy Report Grants Review (in development) Procurement Strategy
Partnership bodies	Oxfordshire Social Enterprise Forum Oxfordshire Economic Partnership Area Programme Board
Oxford City Council services	Social Inclusion Team, Neighbourhood Renewal Revenues and Benefits Unit Customer Services Unit
Current initiatives	Grants to social welfare advice agencies Local economic development strategies Social enterprise development Oxford Credit Union Procurement and tender simplification Skills register Benefits in Practice Oxfordshire Business Enterprises Ltd.

Education and lifelong learning

Headline statistics (Source: Indices of Deprivation 2004)	9 SOAs in the top 10% regionally for education and skills deprivation
National policy context	Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work (DfES)
Local strategies	Leys Learning Network Delivery Plan Local Area Agreement (Economic Development & Enterprise Block)
Partnership bodies	Oxfordshire Learning Partnership Oxon County Council Community Learning Support Unit (delivery-level work) Leys Learning Network (provider network)
Oxford City Council services	Social Inclusion Team, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit Human Resources (basic skills work)
Current initiatives	Learning Communities project Oxford Means Business

Tackling health inequality

This section includes measures to address access to health services, smoking, substance use, physical activity, sexual health and breastfeeding.

Headline statistics	6 year life expectancy gap between Northfield Brook and North wards
National policy context	Choosing Health
Local strategies	Health Improvement Plan (PCT) Healthy Living Strategy Local Area Agreement (Healthier Communities & Older People Block) DAAT Treatment Plan
Partnership bodies	Oxford Healthier Communities Partnership Board LIFT Board Oxfordshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)
Oxford City Council services	Health Promotion Officer, Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
Current initiatives	Health Trainers Healthy Living Initiative Substance Misuse Project Active England project Local Improvement Finance Trust

Improving access to services
This section relates to transport access, leisure and culture opportunities, food access, access for disabled people, cultural needs and joined up delivery of services.

Headline statistics (Source: ODPM, Best Value General Survey)	83.5% of Oxford residents believe that public transport has improved or stayed the same over the past three years
National policy context	Improving Services, Improving Lives (Social Exclusion Unit)
Local strategies	Customer Care and Contact Strategy Leisure Strategy Arts Strategy Cultural Strategy Equality Strategy Transport Strategy Community Centre Strategy (in development)
Partnership bodies	Oxford Inspires
Oxford City Council services	Local Services Shops Local Housing Shops Community Centres Customer Services Telephone Contact Centre
Current initiatives	Active England Project Active Communities Sports Positive Holiday Play Schemes Neighbourhood Working pilot (Blackbird Leys) Benefits in Practice Slice Card Participatory Arts Network Arts on Estates programme Shopmobility DDA work Concessionary travel Free swimming for under 16 year-olds (from 2006)

Making communities safer

Headline statistics (Source: Community Safety Audit for Oxford 2004)	Recorded crime in Oxford fell 3% between 2001-02 and 2003-04
National policy context	Crime and Disorder Act 1998 TOGETHER Respect Action Plan
Local strategies	Community Safety Strategy for Oxford 2005-08 Prolific and Priority Offender Strategy Drug House Protocol DAAT Young People's Substance Misuse Plan Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for Oxfordshire
Partnership bodies	Oxford Safer Communities Partnership
Oxford City Council services	Crime and Nuisance Action Team, NR Unit Street Wardens, NR Unit Community Safety Team, Strategy & Review
Current initiatives	NightSafe City Centre CCTV Youth diversion activities Drugs education programmes Neighbourhood Watch Home security scheme Neighbourhood security improvement Alcohol Free Zones Oxfordshire Needle Exchange Scheme TOGETHER Oxford IRIS team Positive Futures Neighbourhood Policing Pilot

Supporting communities, families and individuals
This section relates to cultural development, community cohesion, parenting and family support, life skills and community engagement.

Headline statistics (Source: ODPM, Best Value General Survey)	31.1% of Oxford residents think that people being attacked because of their skin colour, ethnic origin or religion is a very big or fairly big problem in their local area
National policy context	Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society (Home Office)
Local strategies	Consultation Strategy
Partnership bodies	
Oxford City Council services	Consultation Officer, Strategy & Review Community Cohesion Officer, Neighbourhood Renewal
Current initiatives	Talkback Citizens Panel Youth Council Sure Start Children's Centres (in development) Floating support schemes Day centres for homeless people

Document Control

Document	Closing the Gap: Oxford City Council Social Inclusion Strategy 2006
Owner	Jan Banfield
Author	Mark Fransham
Date	14/03/06
Review due	Annually
Version	5
Notes	Final version for Executive Board

Version No.	Date	Notes
1	30/01/06	First version in advance of Officers' workshop.
2	03/02/06	Action plan added proposing audit of current activity. Evidence on social exclusion moved to appendix and summary included in main body.
3	14/02/06	'Underpinning principles' section restructured. Additional actions included in recommended action plan. Additional statistics on city-wide indicators of social inclusion added to appendix. Document Control page added.
4	21/02/06	Minor editorial changes.
5	14/03/06	Added clarification to sections 3 & 6. Foreword added. Appendix 1 updated with SOA map and additional data. Edited Appendix 2 tables.