



Campaign to Protect  
Rural England

## Green Belts: a greener future A joint report by CPRE and Natural England

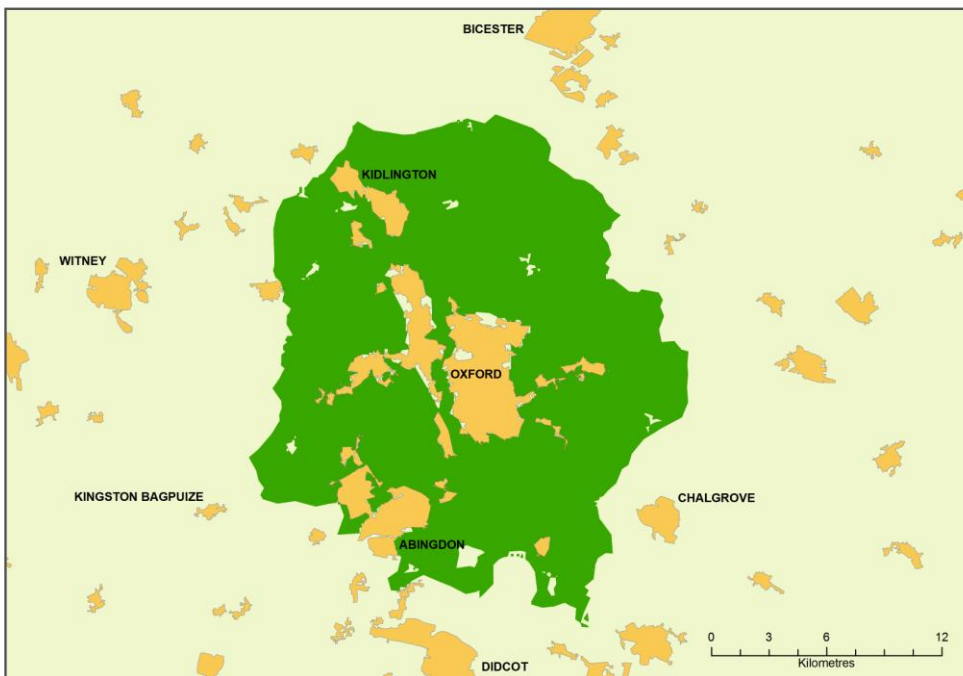


# Oxford Green Belt

## Land Area

Land Area: 66,868 hectares (0.5% of the total land area of England, 13,050,388 ha).

Total area of all Green Belts in England: 1.6 million hectares (13% of England's total land area).



## What kind of place is the Oxford Green Belt?

- Agriculture is an important aspect of this Green Belt, with a relatively high proportion being 'Best and Most Versatile' (Grade 1 or 2) quality land. The proportions of land registered as being in agricultural use, and taken up by Agri-Environment schemes aimed at promoting more environmentally sustainable land management, are also higher than the national average.
- Landscape quality is being 'maintained' in virtually all (99%) of this Green Belt.
- There are important resources in terms of a dense public rights of way network, and a high proportion of broadleaf and ancient woodland.
- This Green Belt has proportionally more land at risk of flooding than any other Green Belt (6920 hectares or 20% of the land area).

## Key Facts

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Green Belt fact sheets  
covered in this series:

London (Metropolitan)  
Avon  
Burton/Swadlincote  
Cambridge  
Gloucester/Cheltenham  
North West  
Nottingham/Derby  
**Oxford**  
Hampshire/Dorset  
South & West Yorkshire  
Stoke-on-Trent  
Tyne & Wear  
West Midlands  
York

These fact sheets support the report 'Green Belts: a greener future' available to download from: [www.cpre.org.uk](http://www.cpre.org.uk)  
[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

## Agriculture

19% (compared with 17% of land nationally) is Grade 1 or Grade 2, or the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land.

76% (compared with 71% of land nationally), or 24,253 ha, is currently in agricultural use.

70% (17,810 ha) of the total agricultural land<sup>1</sup> is subject to Natural England funding supporting environmentally sensitive farming ('agri-environment schemes'. 67% of agricultural land nationally, and 53% of all Green Belt agricultural land, is subject to agri-environment schemes).

## Landscape Quality

99% of the Oxford Green Belt is being 'maintained' in terms of landscape character. This is largely due to the maintenance of patterns of agriculture as well as land management for wildlife. Only 1 hectare of the Oxford Green Belt coincides with land designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

## Nature Conservation

1,754 ha are registered as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This represents 5% of the Oxford Green Belt, and 0.5% of the national total of SSSI land.

## Public Access and Recreation

There are 17 metres of public rights of way for every hectare of land (nationally there are 14 metres per ha) and 241 ha of open access land. The Oxford Green Belt Way, set up by a local CPRE volunteer, provides a 50 mile circular route well linked to public transport. For more details go to: [www.greenbeltway.org.uk](http://www.greenbeltway.org.uk).

113 ha of Country Parks (0.3% of overall Oxford Green Belt area. 0.3%, or 42,135 ha of land nationally is Country Park).

639 ha is Registered (historic) Park and Garden (1.9% of overall Oxford Green Belt area; the national total is 170,734 ha or 1.3% of the total land area).

## Broad-Leaf and Mixed Woodland

13% (compared to 8% of land nationally), or 4,304 hectares of the land area is broadleaf and mixed woodland. 5% (compared with 3% of land nationally) or 1,520 hectares is in the national inventory of ancient woodland.

## Public Aspirations

Asked what Green Belt activities they would like to undertake in the next twelve month, the public in the wider South East region (of which Oxford is part) most commonly chose

- Visiting Green Belt land on a day out with friends/family
- Visiting Green Belt land to get peace and quiet
- Buying food grown or produced in the Green Belt

When asked what they would like to see more of in the Green Belt, the public in the South East were keen to see

- Nature reserves
- Woodland walks
- New Parks

88% of the public in the South East agreed that they would buy food known to have been grown or produced by farmers in the Green Belt local to them rather than buy food produced elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the total for agricultural land on which the percentage covered by agri-environment schemes is based is higher than the total for agricultural land currently in use. This is because a small area of land classed as 'agricultural' is not currently in use.