

CPRE Oxfordshire  
Survey on attitudes towards  
Green Belts  
March 2015  
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Summary Report

Prepared for:



CPRE Oxfordshire

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## **Background**

This report highlights the key findings of a survey of Oxfordshire residents conducted by Alpha Research Ltd on behalf of the Oxfordshire branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) in March 2015. Full tabulations of the survey results have been provided under separate cover.

A sample of 400 Oxfordshire residents took part in the survey; 205 residents were interviewed in person in the centres of Abingdon, Botley, Kidlington, Oxford (Summertown) and Thame, while a further 195 residents from across Oxfordshire responded to the survey online.

The survey asked three questions about residents' knowledge of and attitudes towards Green Belts. These questions broadly replicated those posed in a national survey conducted in 2005 by the national office of the CPRE.

More details on the method, questionnaire, respondents and analysis are appended.

## Management Summary

- More than three quarters of Oxfordshire residents surveyed claimed to know at least ‘a little’ about Green Belts, while one in three said that they knew ‘a fair amount’ or ‘a great deal’ about them.
- About three quarters believed that the Green Belt around Oxford should remain open and undeveloped, and that building should not be allowed on it. One in eight respondents disagreed.
- House building, road building and other types of development such as factories, offices, warehouses and out of town shopping centres were regarded as the most serious threats to Green Belt land today.

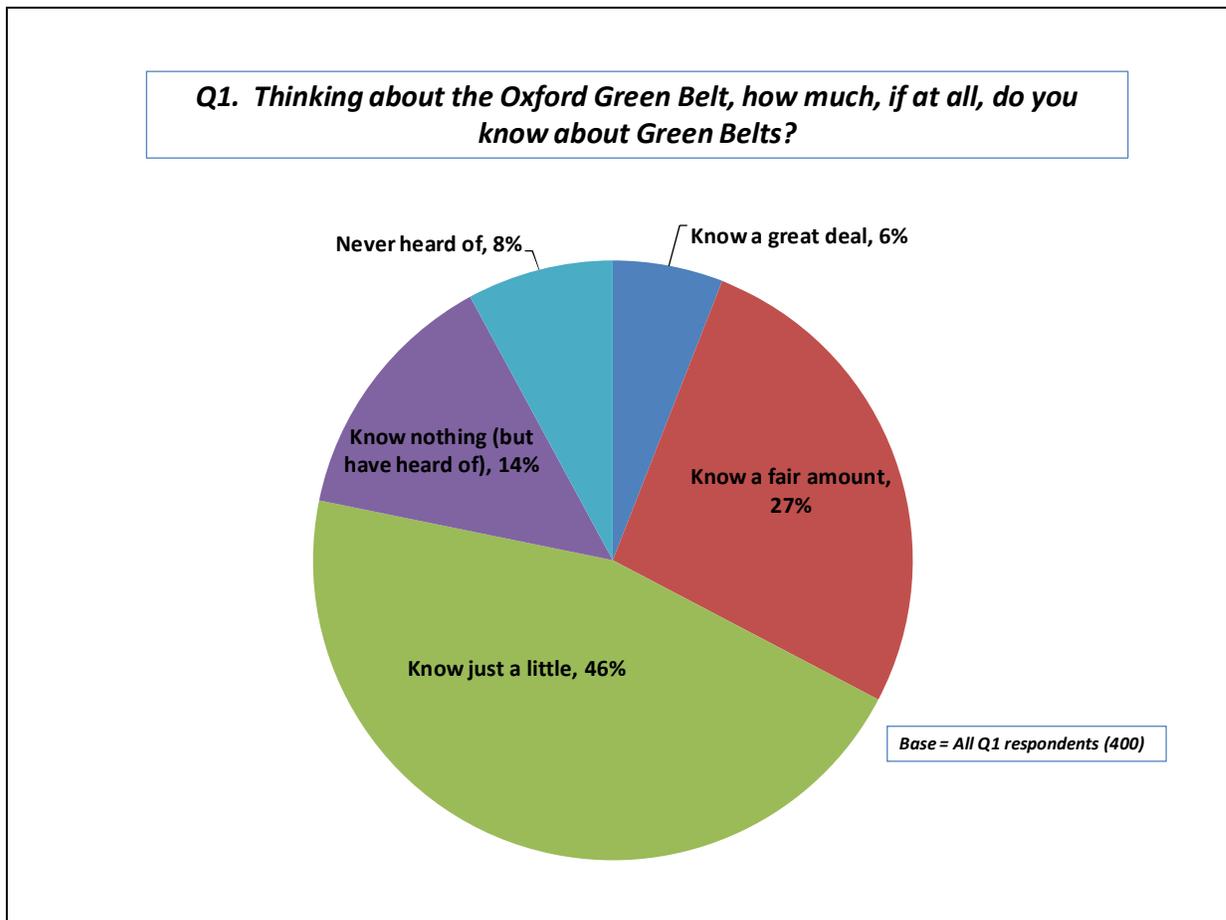
## Key Findings

*Results are shown in the form of a percentage and a fraction (e.g. 85%, 17/20) for sample sizes up to 99 or just a percentage if the sample size is 100 or more.*

*Results for subgroups within the sample have been highlighted in the report where there was a clear degree of statistically significant difference (at 99% level of confidence) between categories, as well as sufficient (25+) responses. Slightly less statistically significant differences (at 95% level) are also generally reported. Findings referred to as 'significant' in the body of the report are statistically significant to at least the 95% level.*

## Awareness of Green Belts

Respondents were first asked how much they knew about Green Belts, choosing from a list of five options.



Most (73%) felt that they knew either ‘a little’ or ‘a fair amount’ about Green Belts, but few (6%) claimed to know ‘a great deal’. One in five respondents surveyed either had not heard of Green Belts (8%) or had heard of them but knew nothing about them (14%).

Younger respondents (aged under 35 years) were significantly more likely than those in older age groups to claim to know nothing about Green Belts (43%). Females were also significantly more likely than males to say that they knew nothing about Green Belts (26% and 17% respectively).

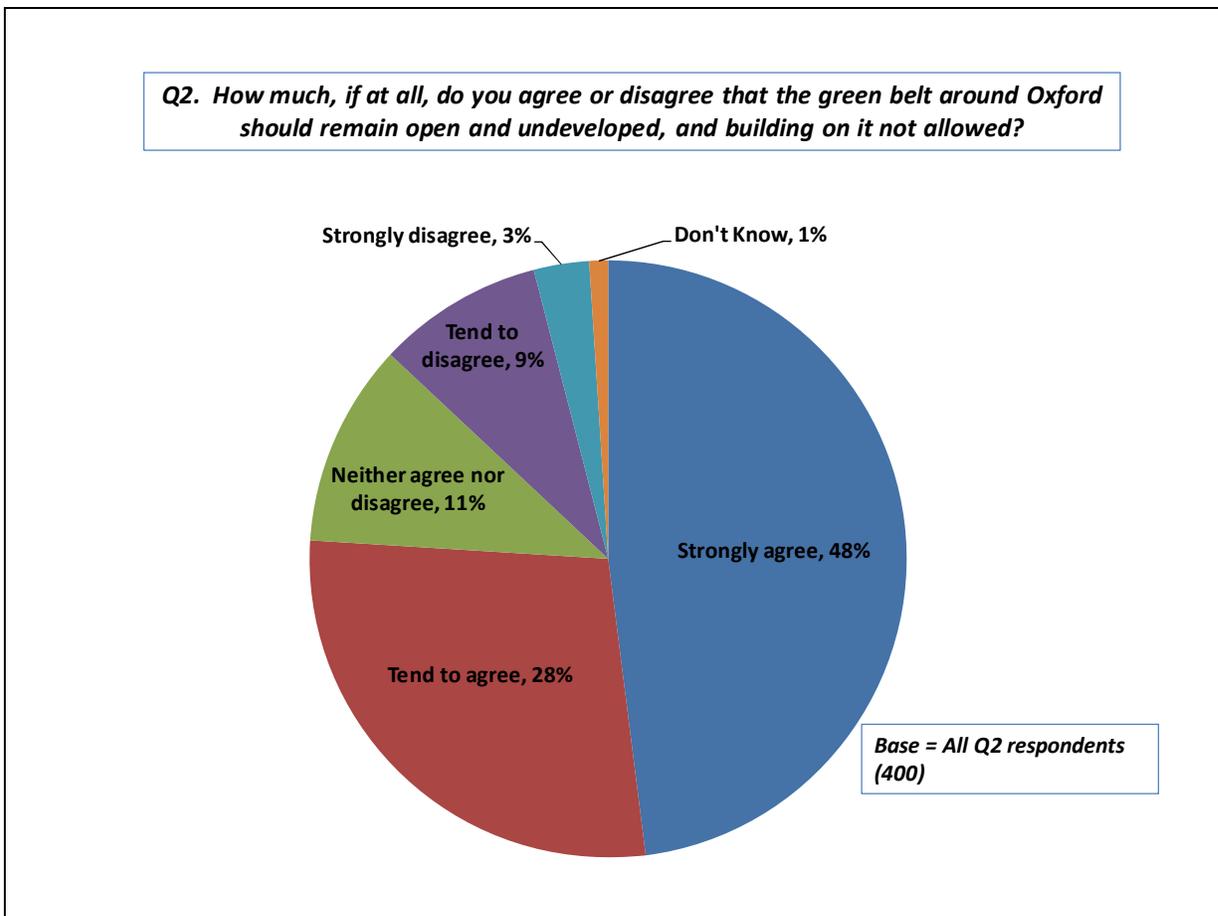
Knowledge of Green Belts was significantly higher amongst home owners (89% of whom claimed to know at least a little) than non-home owners (64%).

## Development on Green Belt land

Respondents were then given the following description of Green Belts:

*Green belts are defined areas of countryside surrounding our largest towns and cities including Oxford where building of houses, out-of-town shopping centres, offices, warehouses and other kinds of development is usually not allowed. According to legislation the key reason green belts exist is to prevent urban areas spreading out across the countryside and eventually joining up. But some would argue that Green Belts are preventing necessary development from happening in the best place.*

They were asked if they agreed or disagreed with development on the Oxford Green Belt.

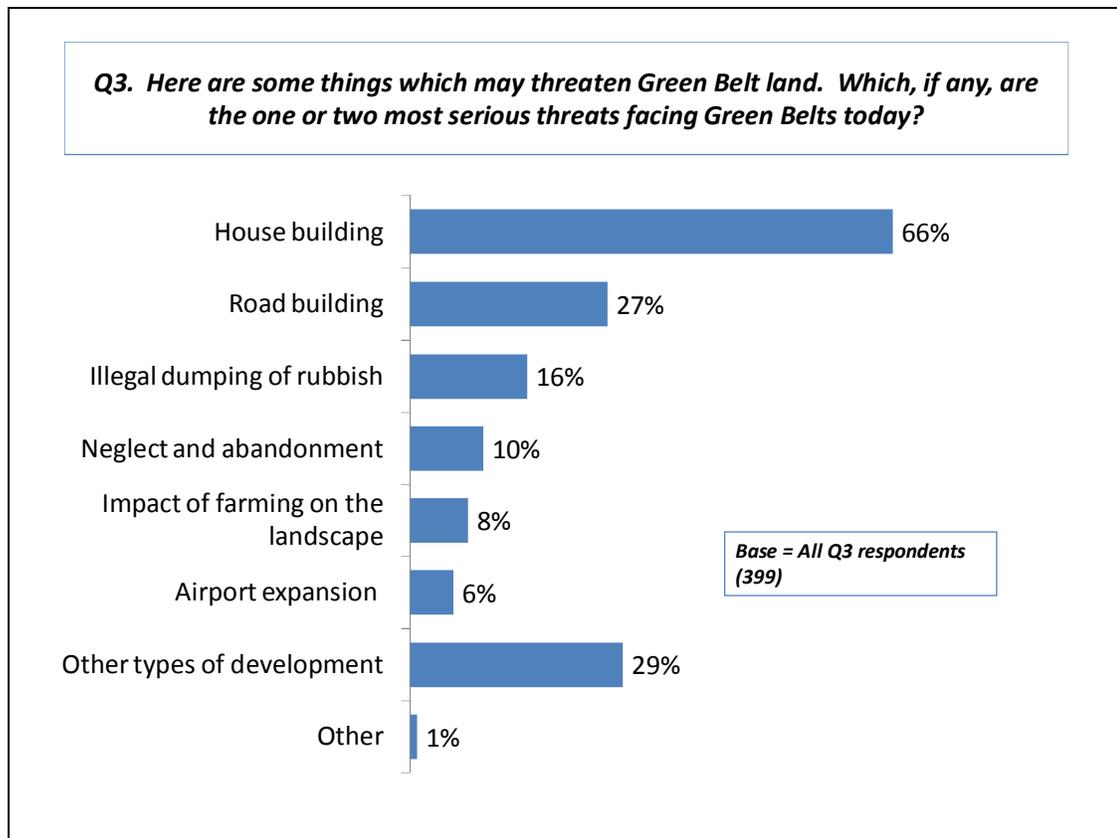


About three quarters (76%) agreed that the Green Belt around Oxford should remain open and undeveloped, while around one in eight tended to disagree (9%) or strongly disagreed (3%) with this.

The only subgroup significantly more likely to disagree here were males (16%), compared to females (8%). Otherwise, there were no significant differences in opinion amongst different demographic groups (social grade, age, area of residence).

## Threats to Green Belts

Respondents were shown a list of possible threats to Green Belt land and asked to select up to two which they regarded as the most serious threats facing Green Belts today.



House building on Green Belt land was the most commonly recognised threat, with two thirds of respondents (66%) identifying this. Road building and ‘other types of development’ (prompted as ‘...e.g. factories, offices, warehouses and out of town centres’) were the next most commonly identified threats. The latter was particularly in evidence amongst those in the north east of the county (41%).

Those who were more open to development on Green Belt land were more likely to believe that Green Belts were threatened by neglect (16%) or flytipping (23%).

## **Appendices**

*Methodology*

*Sample*

*Analysis*

*Questionnaire*

## **Methodology**

The questions about the Green Belt broadly replicated the 2005 national CPRE survey. Classification data was also gathered on age, sex, social grade, urban versus rural habitation, postcode and home ownership.

205 face to face interviews were conducted in March 2015 in and around Oxford. 40 or more interviews were conducted on a single day in each of five locations: Abingdon (40), Botley (40), Kidlington (45), Oxford (Summertown) (40) and Thame (40).

The online survey was completed by panel members in March 2015.

## **Sample**

There were 400 responses to the survey: 195 from the online panel and 205 from the face to face survey. The profile of the achieved sample was broadly in line with Oxfordshire population profiles on dimensions such as age, sex and social grade.

	Percentage in final sample
Male	45%
Female	55%
Aged 16-34y.	29%
Aged 35-54y.	36%
Aged 55y. +	34%
Lives in an urban area [self-defined]	16%
Lives in a suburban area [self-defined]	20%
Lives in a town [self-defined]	31%
Lives in a village or predominantly rural area [self-defined]	34%
Owns own home	59%
ABC1	68%
C2DE	32%
Lives in Oxford (OX1-4)	30%
Lives in postcodes adjacent to Oxford (OX5,13,14, 29, 33,44)	30%
Lives further out (other OX postcodes, RG9, SN7)	41%

## **Analysis**

All the data was fully verified and analysed in the statistical program SNAP.

Results for the subgroups above have been highlighted in the report where there is a clear degree of statistically significant difference (at 99% level of confidence) between categories and sufficient (25+) responses. Slightly less statistically significant differences (at 95% level) have also been reported where these were of particular interest.

Face to face interviewing targets were set to match the age and sex profile of Oxfordshire, but the final sample (including the online responses) had a slight over-representation of certain groups. Consequently, corrective weighting was applied using the weights detailed below prior to analysis.

Group	Achieved response	Target response*	Weight applied
Males 15-34y.	54	68	1.25926
Males 35-54y.	51	68	1.33333
Males 55y.+	74	61	0.82432
Females 15-34y.	63	65	1.03175
Females 35-54y.	93	67	0.72043
Females 55y.+	63	69	1.09524

\*Based on latest population data from Oxfordshire Insights <http://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/>

**Questionnaire**

INTRODUCTION: Hello. I'm working for an independent research company, Alpha Research Ltd. We're doing a survey to find out what people know about Green Belt land.

**QA. Screening question:**

**Can I just check, do you live in Oxfordshire?** YES/ NO [IF NO, THANK AND CLOSE]

**Q1. Thinking about the Oxford Green Belt, how much, if at all, do you know about Green Belts?**

SHOWCARD – SINGLE CODE ONLY

- Know a great deal.....?
- Know a fair amount.....?
- Know just a little.....?
- Know nothing (but have heard of).....?
- Never heard of.....?

**Q2. SHOWCARD – HAND TO RESPONDENT AND READ OUT:**

***Green belts are defined areas of countryside surrounding our largest towns and cities including Oxford where building of houses, out-of-town shopping centres, offices, warehouses and other kinds of development is usually not allowed. According to legislation the key reason green belts exist is to prevent urban areas spreading out across the countryside and eventually joining up. But some would argue that Green Belts are preventing necessary development from happening in the best place.***

**How much, if at all, do you agree or disagree that the green belt around Oxford should remain open and undeveloped, and building on it not allowed?**

SHOWCARD – SINGLE CODE ONLY

- Strongly agree.....?
- Tend to agree.....?
- Neither agree nor disagree.....?
- Tend to disagree.....?
- Strongly disagree.....?
- Don't know.....?

**Q3. Here are some things which may threaten Green Belt land. Which, if any, are the one or two most serious threats facing Green Belts today?**

SHOWCARD – MULTICODING POSSIBLE

- Impact of farming on the landscape.....?
- Neglect and abandonment.....?
- House building.....?
- Road building.....?
- Airport expansion.....?
- Other types of development (e.g. factories, offices, warehouses, and out of town shopping centres).....?
- Illegal dumping of rubbish.....?
- Other (please specify).....?

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- (Don't know).....?
- (No, Green Belts are not under threat).....?

**CLASSIFICATION**

Finally I'd like to ask a few questions about you.

**QA. RECORD GENDER**

- Male.....?
- Female.....?

**QB. What was your age last birthday?**

- 16-24.....?
- 25-34.....?
- 35-44.....?
- 45-54.....?
- 55-64.....?
- 65-74.....?
- 75+.....?
- Refused... ..?

**QC. How would you describe the area where you live? Would you say it was....READ OUT**  
SINGLE CODE ONLY

- In an urban area.....?
- In a suburban area.....?
- In a town.....?
- In a village or predominantly rural area.....?
- (Don't know/refused) .....

**QD. Do you own your own home (either outright or with a mortgage)?**

- Yes.....?
- No.....?
- Refused.....?

**QEI. SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP [STREET INTERVIEWS]**

INTERVIEWER - FOR CLASSIFICATION, PLEASE COLLECT

- i. Occupation of Chief Income Earner: \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Industry: \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Responsible for: \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. Qualifications: \_\_\_\_\_

AND CODE ACCORDINGLY BELOW

- A.....?
- B.....?
- C1.....?
- C2.....?
- D.....?
- E.....?
- Refused.....?

**QEii. SOCIO ECONOMIC GROUP [ONLINE SELF-COMPLETION]**

<b>Question text:</b>	<b>For classification purposes, could you tell us what the profession of the chief income earner in your household is?</b>
<i>Respondent instruction:</i>	<i>(That's the person with the highest income, whether that be from employment, pensions, state benefits, investment or other sources)</i>
<b>CODE</b>	
1	Higher managerial/ professional/ administrative (e.g. Established doctor, Solicitor, Board Director in a large organisation (200+ employees, top level civil servant/public service employee)
2	Intermediate managerial/ professional/ administrative (e.g. Newly qualified (under 3 years) doctor, Solicitor, Board director small organisation, middle manager in large organisation, principal officer in civil service/local government)
3	Supervisory or clerical/ junior managerial/ professional/ administrative (e.g. Office worker, Student Doctor, Foreman with 25+ employees, salesperson, etc)
4	Student
5	Skilled manual worker (e.g. Skilled Bricklayer, Carpenter, Plumber, Painter, Bus/ Ambulance Driver, HGV driver, pub/bar worker, etc)
6	Semi or unskilled manual work (e.g. Manual workers, all apprentices to be skilled trades, Caretaker, Park keeper, non-HGV driver, shop assistant)
7	Casual worker – not in permanent employment
8	Housewife/ Homemaker
9	Retired and living on state pension
10	Unemployed or not working due to long-term sickness
11	Full-time carer of other household member

**QF. Respondent's postcode (write in):** \_\_\_\_\_

**QG. Respondent's name and telephone number (for quality control only)**  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**QH. Record interview location:**

- Oxford (Summertown) .....?
- Abingdon.....?
- Kidlington.....?
- Thame.....?
- Botley.....?

**THANK AND CLOSE.**