

Carterton area

Engagement Plan 2023-2025

Alvescot, Black Bourton, Brize Norton, Carterton,
Filkins, Kelmscott, Kencot, Shilton

Welcome

At Cottsway we are proud to create new homes, but we are also committed to ensuring our existing homes are kept in great shape.

We put our customers at the heart of everything we do, with a dedicated team of housing, neighbourhood, financial and tenancy support officers to provide support where needed. We also like to be active in, and bring social value to, our local communities.

Cottsway has a long history of providing much needed housing in Carterton and the surrounding villages and over recent years have delivered a significant number of new developments, bringing our homes in the area to almost 600 properties.

Working in partnership with local organisations to build connections across the community, we also provide grant funding to local projects and activities such as the May Day Fair and Carterton Carnival. We also offer community clear-up days to our customers and are working on delivering more wildlife planting to increase biodiversity in the area.

This plan has taken on board feedback we have received so far from Cottsway customers, and staff members who work in Carterton and the surrounding areas. We are also looking at the bigger picture and accessing key data on important issues like employment, health and wellbeing, family support and access to local services.

We will use all this information to help identify the main challenges in your neighbourhood and how we can work with local partnership organisations to make improvements and bring people closer together.

Carterton and the surrounding area

Lying on the edge of the Thames Valley, Carterton is close to the Cotswold area of outstanding natural beauty and is the second largest town in West Oxfordshire. Situated two miles south of the A40 and to the south-west of Witney, Carterton's population has more than trebled in size during the last 30 years, to a present total of about 16,000 people.

Much of the high development rate for the town has been due to the presence of the adjoining Royal Air Force - Brize Norton Air Base, which is the largest employer in the area.

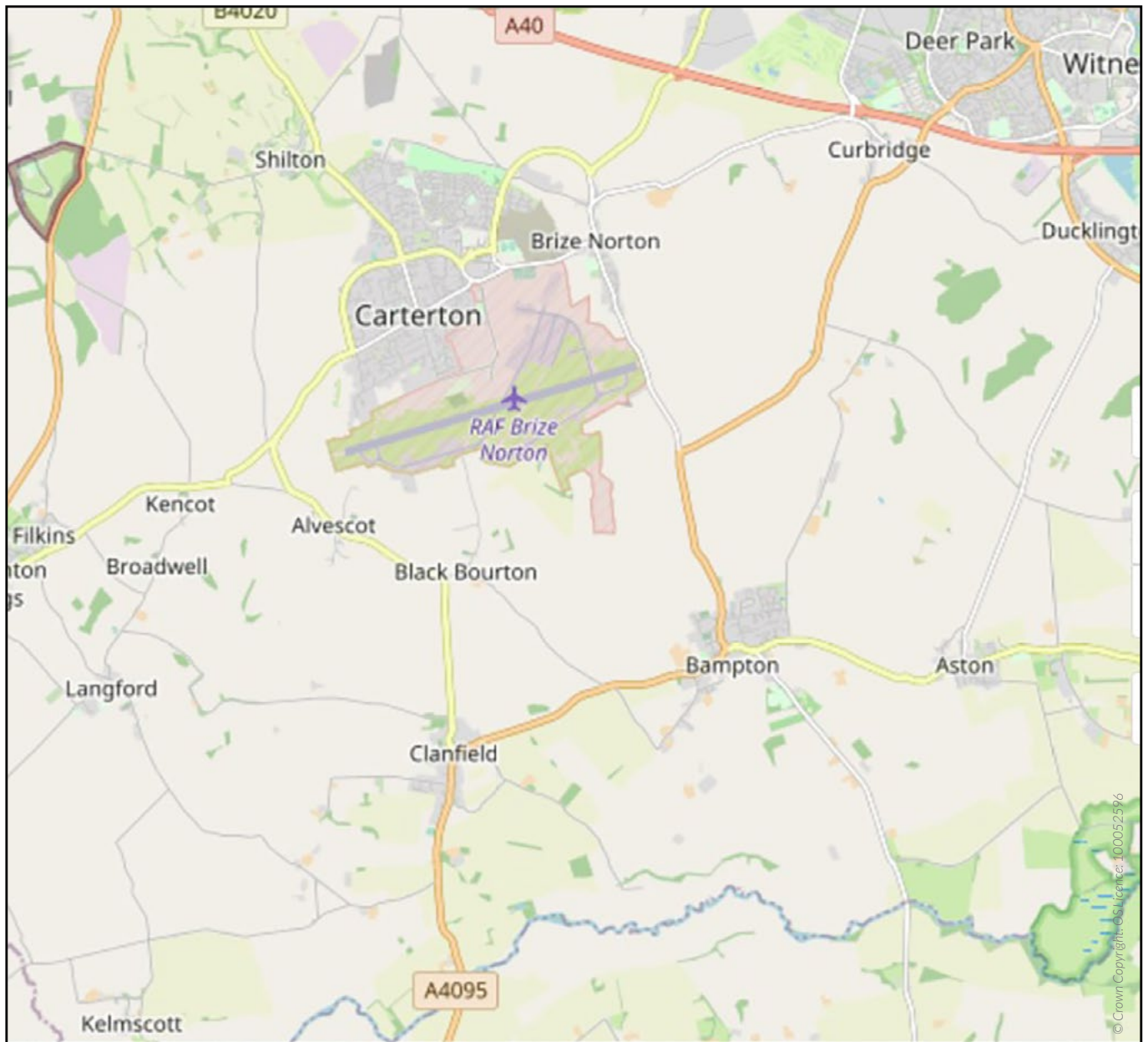
The weekly Carterton Market takes place outside the Town Hall and currently operates every Thursday offering a wide variety of stalls. Since 2017, the Lloyds Bank mobile banking unit has attended the market, following the closure of its Carterton branch.



■ Solar panels on one of our older properties, Carterton

Bronze age flint tools have been found in the area of Carterton and a round barrow, found near the crossroads and now levelled, suggests that there may have been an Iron Age settlement. Roman settlements have also been found at Alvescot and Kencot.

The surrounding villages (Alvescot, Black Bourton, Filkins, Kelmscott, Kencot and Shilton) are shown on map:



Number of Cottsway properties in and around Carterton

Alvescot	17
Black Bourton	5
Brize Norton	124
Carterton	416
Filkins	21
Kelmscott	5 or less
Kencot	5 or less
Shilton	5 or less



■ New Cottsway homes in Carterton

Community insight

We sent a survey to 231 Cottsway customers who are signed up to our mailing list to find out their views of living in Carterton and the surrounding villages. We received 54 replies giving us a respectable response rate of 23%.



54 responses received



87% felt well connected with their local community

In general, most people are satisfied with the provision of local services such as healthcare, community transport, community centres and access to food banks and debt advice.



22% sometimes feel lonely or isolated

Residents do want more information on social events and activities such as fun days and coffee mornings, especially for children and young people, and for older people too. Some residents also want more information on cost-of-living events, how to get online and support to return to work, education or training.



24% are interested in setting up a residents' association or action group

We can offer both practical and financial support with this.



23% are struggling to maintain their gardens

If you have a disability or are aged over 70 and are in receipt of certain benefits we may be able to help through our assisted gardening scheme.

We can also help make shared green spaces more biodiverse by planting wildflowers, bulbs and putting up bird and bat boxes.

If you want to hold a community clean-up day and litter pick we can provide a skip and all the equipment too.



Small areas flagged anti-social behaviour (ASB) is a concern

If this is a problem for you, please do report it to us and have a look at the information on our website.

You can also download our ASB app which you can use to share information and evidence with us or call our 24 hour ASB hotline where you can get help and advice at any time of day or night.

We have passed all comments received in the survey about the park and play areas to the Town Council, and comments regarding healthcare and dentistry onto local health care providers, all anonymised of course.



■ At one of our recent clear-up days in Carterton

How we can help

These results have helped us to better understand your priorities and how we can support our customers to live in a thriving community. Here's a summary of how we can help address the issues raised in the survey.

Priority	How we will help
Customers in blocks of flats would like noticeboards installed in communal areas	We will arrange for notice boards to be fitted in communal areas of blocks of flats.
Customers in blocks of flats would like more washing lines in drying areas	Where there is space for new or additional washing lines, we will fit them.
Food bank referrals	Food banks provide emergency help to people in need. Cottsway's Communities Team can make referrals to Trussell Trust and other food banks in your area.
Support and advice on anti-social behaviour (ASB)	We take reports of ASB seriously and will do our best to help. For advice and more information see our website: www.cottsway.co.uk/asb
Respect ASB hotline	You can report ASB at any time of day or night simply by calling 01993 890000.
Keeping neighbourhoods clean and tidy	The Communities Team will host at least one clear-up / litter picking day a year in Carterton and / or surrounding villages to enable customers to get rid of rubbish and unwanted items. Customers can find out more, and request a clear-up, at: www.cottsway.co.uk/cleanup
Supporting and promoting events and activities in the local area We also sponsor events and activities in and around Carterton for example, the Coronation street party, the May Day Fair and the Carterton Carnival.	Cottsway staff will continue to attend meetings of local community groups and promote opportunities to our customers. To sign up to our quarterly ezine for updates on local activities and engagement opportunities, please email: communities@cottsway.co.uk
Maintaining green space and encouraging wildlife	If you'd like to increase biodiversity in your area, please complete our online form to suggest a wildlife improvement: www.cottsway.co.uk/groundsmaintenance
Assisted gardening scheme	We may be able to help look after your garden if you are aged over 70 or have a disability. You must be in receipt of housing or disability benefit and restrictions apply. Contact us for more information or see our website: www.cottsway.co.uk/welfare
Setting up a Residents' Association or action group	If you want to set up a Residents' Association, we can help with funding and support, contact our Communities Team.
Online resources for employment and wellbeing	A number of organisations offer free online learning and development courses: www.cottsway.co.uk/training
Coaching and mentoring	For more on free coaching and mentoring, see our website: www.cottsway.co.uk/coaching
Borrow a laptop or tablet and access free IT skills support	We have some laptops, tablets and dongles to loan and can offer one-on-one IT training. Contact us for more information or see our website: www.cottsway.co.uk/tabletloan

What's on locally

Please check the [Carterton Town Council](#) and [Carterton Community Facebook](#) pages for regular updates on information and events for Carterton and surrounding areas.

Airplay

Airplay – hosted at the Allendale Centre – Carterton's youth club is open to all young people in the town. For more information contact: ayleila.parry@oneymca.org

APCAM (Assisting Parents of Children Affected by Mental Health)

A mental health charity supporting parents with children who need mental health help. No diagnosis required to receive support. Running a parents drop in on Thursdays 9.30am - 4pm and a Young Persons drop in (11+) 4 - 6pm also on Thursdays.

Carterton Community Food Bank

Empowering and supporting the community of Carterton with the Food Bank, Community Fridge and Lunch Club. For more information:

hello@cartertonfoodbank.co.uk
07915 301842

Carterton Library

Based in the town centre, Carterton Library offers a space to come together – there are free Rhyme Time sessions every Tuesday during school term time for little ones at 10.30am, Stay and Play every Tuesday 3.30pm and Lego Club for children over 5 every Thursday 3.30pm during school term time.

Oxfordshire Age UK run a social Film Club for people over 50 at 2pm on the fourth Wednesday of each month, and Bereavement Support at 10am on the second Wednesday of each month (out of usual library opening hours).

Other regular free events in the library include Camera Club, last Friday each month, Family History Research, first and third Tuesday each month and coffee mornings (usually monthly on a Friday morning, but not every month), offering tea, coffee and homemade cakes raising funds for many different charities.

Carterton Library also runs other events throughout the year including author talks, children's story time, adult and children's craft, and themed workshops or talks by experts in their field.

Carterton Community Centre

Based on Marigold Square in Shilton Park, various groups meet regularly here, including sports and fitness classes, baby and toddler groups, University of the Third Age (U3A), sewing classes, Turning Point, youth group (YoCo), counselling, music and dance, children's cycling classes and community church.

On Wednesday's 2 - 5pm the Centre works with Carterton Food Angels to provide a safe space where you can enjoy a meal. This is a free event although donations are greatly appreciated.

Room hire is also available and the Community Room is offered free of charge to local neighbourhood watch schemes or other similar community groups.

cartertoncommunitycentre@btconnect.com
01993 842807

Carterton Family Centre at the Allendale

A community hub set in the heart of Carterton, providing a safe place where all members of the community can seek support. Groups offered include support to military families, new parent and baby groups, drop-in play sessions, life skill courses, community safe space, community hub and signposting. Hall hire is also available at the centre.

www.cartertonfamilycentre.com
info@cartertonfamilycentre.com

CCA - Carterton & Brize Coronavirus community assistance group

CCA Supply Bank: a food bank taking official and self-referrals. Serving Carterton and surrounding villages.

CCA Help Hotline - 01993 402119:

A free service offering shopping, prescription deliveries, dog walking and a gateway to many other CCA services including their daily hot meals service.

CCA Mental health support team: a team of qualified volunteers available for free help and referral advice. Email:

cartertonmentalhealth@gmail.com

Guideposts

A social club for people with dementia in Carterton. Held at Carterton Town Hall every third Monday of the month from 2 - 4pm. No need to book, just come along.

RAF Brize Norton HIVE Information Centre

Located within the Community Support Centre at RAF Brize Norton. A tri-service network available to all members of the Service community, together with their families and dependants as well as civilians employed by the Services.

HIVE Information Centres offer an extensive range of information on the availability of unit and civilian facilities, local schools and further education, housing, healthcare facilities, employment and training opportunities, relocation and local interest.

The Vault - home to 'Carterton Gymnastic Club' and 'Attitude Dance Academy'

A purpose-built sports facility that offers activities for every member of the community, including gymnastics, dance, cheerleading and exercise classes. The facility offers a space for private hire and birthday parties. Offering year-round drop-in sessions for pre-school, youth, disabilities and adults. All community groups can access the facility that has ample parking and offers a friendly café that can be used by members of the public.

Help and support

Money matters

The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has led to higher levels of rent arrears for some of our customers. Rent arrears are 'priority debts' which means the consequences of not dealing with them are serious – there is the risk of eviction.

We are committed to supporting you to take control of your finances and keep on top of your rent. We can make referrals to other agencies such as Citizens Advice, to help you deal with debt and keep your tenancy if you do find yourself in a difficult situation.

To work towards resolving rent arrears, we'd encourage customers to speak to their Neighbourhood Housing Officer or their Income Officer if they have concerns or call our Customer Services Team. You can also find help and information online:

www.cottsway.co.uk
01993 890000

Community Fund

We offer funding for community projects and personal development through the Cottsway Community Fund. We are proud to be making a difference in our community and welcome applications. Each year we have £30,000 available which is accessible to individual customers as well as new and existing groups and projects.

There are four different levels of funding available:

- Individual learning (up to £250)
- Neighbourhood activities (up to £500)
- Community projects (up to £2,500)
- Environmental projects on Cottsway land (up to £5,000)

All applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be reviewed and assessed by our customers. This ensures that funding is used to support worthy projects.

www.cottsway.co.uk/fund

As one of our customers you also get a say on which projects should get funding, if you join our customer-only Facebook group (see overleaf).

Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire

Cottsway work in partnership with Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire and you can contact them for free, independent and confidential advice on a wide range of issues such as debt, welfare benefits, housing matters, consumer rights, court proceedings, child support maintenance, pension guidance if you're over 50 and employment.

citizensadvicewestoxon.org
0300 303 8616

Coaching and mentoring

If you're dealing with a change in work circumstances, you could benefit from coaching and mentoring to help you learn new skills, build confidence and get back on track. The sessions are led by an independent consultant specialising in employment support and mental health issues.

www.cottsway.co.uk/coaching

Get involved

Customer-only Facebook group

You are welcome to join our closed facebook group for Cottsway customers. You can find out what's going on locally, ways you can be involved as well as the chance to vote on our community fund applications!

Simply request to join the group, and confirm your Cottsway address at:

www.facebook.com/groups/cottswaycommunities

Scrutiny Group

If you live in a Cottsway home and are interested in working with us to make a real difference, you might want to consider joining our customer scrutiny group. As a scrutiny group member, you would be part of a team of customers who monitor performance, identify improvements and bring about change:

www.cottsway.co.uk/scrutinygroup

TPAS

As a Cottsway customer you are able to join TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) and they have loads of great resources, workshops, webinars and courses that are available to you as a resident of social housing.

The types of courses they run include volunteering, building safety, hosting resident association groups and lots more.

Most courses are free, but if you are interested in any with a cost, please let the Communities Team know and we may be able to help with funding.

www.tpas.org.uk



■ Carterton town centre

Useful contacts

Oxfordshire County Council

Highways, street lighting, schools

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

West Oxfordshire District Council

Bins and recycling, Council tax and housing benefit

www.westoxon.gov.uk

Carterton Town Council

www.carterton-tc.gov.uk

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