

Maternity Provision in Oxfordshire



White Horse Medical Practice

Patient Participation Group

Introduction

The Faringdon White Horse Medical Practice, Patient Participation Group (FWHMPPPG) is drawing attention to our belief that Oxfordshire has an inadequate number of midwives in post, to cope with the rapidly growing population. Our brief paper highlights the position in Faringdon, but we believe that our experience locally is reflected across Oxfordshire.

We request that the OCCG respond to the Faringdon WHMPPPG about our concerns expressed in the report below. Thank you.

Maternity Provision

During 2012 The National Federation of Women's Institute conducted research that indicated serious shortfalls in maternity provision across the UK. They produced a report entitled, '*Support overdue – Women's experiences of maternity services*' which was published in 2013 and launched a UK campaign entitled 'More Midwives'.

Key findings included the following points:

- The England and Wales midwifery workforce has grown by about 16% over the last decade, but the birth-rate has climbed by over 21%. This means that there is a shortfall of 5,000 midwives
- The 'WI' survey of Primary Care Trusts revealed that 79% of Trusts did not have the recommended number of midwives!
- It is clear that the fact too few midwives are in post, is affecting all parts of the maternity system

The 'WI' Executive Summary can be accessed at:

www.thewi.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/49857/support-overdue-final-15-may-2013.pdf

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Population growth in Faringdon*

The White Horse Medical Practice Patient Participation Group in Faringdon has consulted with the Women's Institute, both nationally and locally about their research. As there has been significant population growth in Faringdon, the WHMPPPG are concerned that there is an inadequate number of midwives in Faringdon to cope with this and future growth. Whilst we have concentrated upon our own locality the rapid population growth is mirrored across Oxfordshire.

As of late 2013, an estimated additional 393 dwellings have been occupied in Faringdon since the 2011 census. Using as lower and upper bounds, respectively, the occupancy rate of 2.28 (based on the data from the 2011 census and probably an underestimate given the proportion of young families who have moved into Faringdon), or 2.55 (as a typical mid value for the proposed Fernham Fields estate) the population of the town is between 8,016 and 8,123¹ (end 2013).

Applications have been approved, for a further 700 dwellings, comprising 120 on smaller sites, 380 on a strategic site within the town (Sandshill) and 200 for a non-strategic site in Great Coxwell, but considered to be Faringdon (Fernham Fields); when completed these developments will most likely see the housing stock rise to 4220 with a population of around 9,600-9,900 by 2016,

These figures represent an increase in population compared to the 2011 census of 35%-39%, or 55%-61% compared to the 2001 census. The predicted growth from 2013 to, say, 2016 (assuming completion of building by then) will require some intervention as, for example, the existing schools are full, and the larger of the GP practices is nearing its limit; hence, there is a need for improvements in infrastructure.

In 2013 applications were received for four estates on non-strategic sites outside the development boundary totalling 570 dwellings; of these one has already been approved (Fernham Fields). Table 5 shows the situation if the remaining three estates, totalling 370 houses, were granted planning permission; they would result in a population of between 10,450 to 10,850, representing an increase over the 2011 census of between 47% to 52% (or 69% to 75% over the 2001 census figure). If granted, these estates will result in a population that already exceeds the 'realistic' estimate of population growth of 10,500 well within the lifetime of the Local Plan.

¹ Population estimate M L H Wise for FTC Appendix C and Faringdon Folly, October 2013, p 3.

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Further sites to be occupied	Number of dwellings	Estimated additional population @2.28	Estimated additional population @2.55
Park Rd	18 approved	41	46
Bloor Homes Sands Hill	380 homes outline permission	866	969
Winslow House, Coxwell Rd	36 under construction	82	92
Folly Park View	28 under construction	64	71
Haynes Close	10 (completed) not yet fully occupied	23	26
Tetronics site, 5 Lechlade Rd	16 applied for	36	41
Tennis Club, Southampton St.	11 approved	25	28
Fernham Fields (SGR)	200 approved	456	510
Total	699	1593	1782

Population

Estimated 2013 population	8016	8123
Increase over 2011 census	12.6%	14.1%
Estimated 2016 population from approved sites	9,609	9,905
Increase over 2011 census	34.9%	39.1%
Increase over 2001 census	55.3%	60.1%

Table 5. Population predictions for 2016 from developments planned or under construction.

Non strategic Housing proposals	Number of dwellings	Estimated additional population @2.28	Estimated additional population @2.55
<i>Humpty Hill (Gladman)</i>	94	214	240
Highworth Rd. (Drivewalk)	126	287	321
Steeds Farm (Welbeck)	150	342	383
Total	370	843	944

Consequences

Potential housing stock/population	4,588	10,452	10,849
Increase over 2011 census	46.8%	46.8%	52.4%
Increase over 2001 census	68.9%	68.9%	75.4%

*Sourced from: FARINGDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – Produced March 2013, updated January 2014

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Birth rate survey?

The WHMPPPG would like to know if the Commissioners, (PCT or OCCG) have commissioned a 'Birth-rate+' survey in the last 3 years? 'Birth-rate+' is an accepted workforce planning/workforce measurement tool used for some years now in maternity services nationally and generally repeated on a regular cycle to ensure maternity staffing levels reflect workload volume and acuity. More details can be accessed here: www.birthrateplus.co.uk

- If the maternity services provider has undertaken 'Birth Rate+', what ratio of midwives to women does it recommend for that service and what ratio of midwives to women does the provider actually have? The difference should show how many more midwives would be needed to meet the ratio and the provider can advise how it plans to bridge any shortfall
- Does Oxfordshire meet the midwife to birth ratio of 1:28 per year as recommended by four Royal Colleges?
- How many women birthed in the presence of a midwife they had met before? How are commissioners making the government's vision of a named midwife for every woman for the whole maternity care pathway a *reality* for all women?
- What percentage of Oxfordshire women get one-to-one care in labour, the "gold" standard of care?
- What percentage of Oxfordshire women are booked for antenatal care by 10 weeks as evidence shows a strong link between early booking and better outcomes?
- What proportions of babies are still born or die shortly after birth?
- What actions will OCCG be taking in view of the report 'Listening to Parents' published in April 2014 by the University of Oxford National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit? The report can be accessed here: www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/listeningtoparents

Conclusion

We request that the OCCG take note of our concerns and ask that a considered response to the points raised above in connection with the 'Birth Rate' survey is made to the Faringdon WHMPPPG. Thank you.

Acknowledgements

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The National Federation of Women's Institutes
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