



Let's do business – Faringdon

Great business offer

Faringdon has a very active business community supported by the Faringdon Chamber of Commerce and the Faringdon retail group. Most of the business activity is located in the town centre, Park Road Industrial Estate, Wicklesham Business Centre and Faringdon Business Centre.

Wicklesham Commercial Properties offers character offices converted from 13th century barns ranging in size from a single desk to 415 sqm and is well suited to small and medium sized businesses. Faringdon Business Centre caters for start-up businesses. There is also employment land available at the junction between Park Road and the A420, also known as the 4&20 Business Park.

The largest businesses in the town include Signal Ambitech, Sudbury House Hotel, and the Bray Group (Solport). Businesses with their headquarters in Faringdon include Bordengate Insurance, WCA Environment Group and Rogers Gardenstone. Most businesses in the town are small, employing less than ten people.

There is a strong retail offer, with around 40 retailers in the town, mainly independents, including a florist, coffee shops, a piano shop, a bridal shop, gift shops, hairdressers and a sweetshop. There is one supermarket, Budgens, which is also one of the largest employers in the town, and weekly farmers markets. Recorded retail vacancy rates in 2011 were lower than the national average¹. For more information on the existing retail offer visit www.finditinfaringdon.co.uk. Businesses are supported by the Chamber of Commerce and town and district councils who are introducing schemes such as the Faringdon loyalty card. There is free car parking for two hours in all of the district council's car parks.

Great services and amenities

Faringdon is a beautiful historic market town located on a limestone ridge between the River Ock and the River Thames. Its prominent position, at the junctions of ancient roads, has made it an historic centre for trade and travellers for many years. It acts as a service centre for a number of surrounding villages, including Great Coxwell, Littleworth, Buscot, Shellingford and Fernham. Faringdon is one of a small number of settlements in the Vale to have access to high speed broadband.

Faringdon offers easy access to many walking and cycling routes. Folly Park is an area of natural open space with a small fishing lake. Folly Hill and Woodlands offer panoramic views of the nearby counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. The town is within easy reach of the Thames Path (three miles) and Ridgeway (six miles). Faringdon Community College hosts a fully equipped leisure centre. For more information on what is going on in Faringdon you can also visit www.faringdon.org

Faringdon is one of four key sites identified in the Vale of White Horse draft core strategy for significant new housing development, and around 400 homes are currently proposed to be built south of Park Road.

In April 2011 www.home.co.uk recorded that the average house price in Faringdon was £238,556, an increase of 18 per cent from the previous year. The average house price for Oxfordshire was £312,313 for the same period, up by 10 percent from the previous year.

Great location

- only 11 miles from the M4 and Swindon, which is also the nearest railway station
- less than 20 miles from Oxford, Didcot (which both provide access to trains to London) and the A34
- 63 miles from Bristol airport and 77 miles from London Heathrow.
- within easy access of Science Vale UK, 16 miles from Harwell Oxford and Milton Park
- buses every 30 minutes to Oxford and Swindon.

¹ Vale of White Horse District Council retail survey, September 2011. The survey is available from www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk



The resident population estimates in 2009 for Faringdon and the Coxwells was 7,839 and expected to increase by 15 per cent by 2016. Eighty per cent of the working age population is economically active, with 79.1 per cent in full-time employment. In July 2011, only 2.3 per cent of the working age population were claiming job seeker's allowance². Levels of education are high, with over a quarter of the population educated to degree level or higher³.

Faringdon's population is highly skilled and the Census 2001 reports the majority of local residents are employed as managers and senior officials, professionals and associate professional and technical, as shown in the table below. Median annual earnings in the area are around £26,000⁴, one of the highest in the South East and £4,500 more than the rest of England.

Faringdon key statistics	Faringdon	Oxfordshire
Population (2009) ⁵	7,839	630,430
Population (2016) ⁶	8,910	663,620
Economically active % (2001)	79.9%	78.7%
Economically inactive % (2001)	18.2%	21.3%
Employment by occupation (2001)		
Managers / senior officials	19.9%	18.2%
Professionals	13.8%	22.8%
Associate professional and technical	13.7%	14%
Administrative and secretarial	10.2%	8.4%
Skilled trades	11.7%	9.2%
Personal services	6.8%	9.4%
Sales and customer services	4.7%	7.5%
Process plant and machine operatives	7.1%	3.4%
Elementary occupations	12.1%	7.1%

Source: Nomis labour market profile, 2011

The professional, scientific and IT sector is the biggest employment sector in Faringdon, accounting for 27.5 per cent of all jobs, reflecting the high skilled nature of the workforce. This sector also registers the greatest number of workplaces (76) alongside health businesses (54) and construction firms (49)⁷. There is a very strong skilled construction and engineering base and also quarrying. This is supported by Faringdon Community College's specialist status in engineering and applied learning and the links it has developed with the Faringdon and District Chamber of Commerce.

Employment by sector	Number of employees in Faringdon	Sector split within Faringdon	Number of employees in Oxfordshire	Faringdon share of local employment
Manufacturing	206	8.6%	23,425	0.88%
Construction	211	8.8%	14,321	1.47%
Services	1,950	81.1%	268,268	0.73%
Retail	207	8.6%	29,411	0.70%
Transport and communications	92	3.8%	25,052	0.37%
Professional, scientific, IT, business	660	27.5%	60,222	1.10%
Public admin, education and health	417	17.3%	101,455	0.41%
Other services	374	15.6%	52,128	0.72%
Total jobs	2,404		306,014	0.79%

Source: ONS business register and employment survey, 2009

Can we help?

If you are thinking of locating your business in the Vale of White Horse district and would like some further information please, contact the economic development team via email: economic.development@southandvale.gov.uk or call: 01235 540346.

²Ward Labour Market Profile, Nomis 2011

³ONS Qualifications (UV24), April 2001

⁴ONS Home Parliamentary Constituency Annual Pay – Gross 2010, Wantage Constituency

⁵Resident Population Estimates, Neighbourhood Statistics June 2009

⁶Based on levels of housing growth recommended in the South East Plan (published by the previous government in June 2009)

⁷Annual Business Inquiry, Workplace Analysis (2007) Faringdon and the Coxwells

