Oxford Strategic Partnership
www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk

Oxford: A World Class City for Everyone

Vision Statement, Aims, Challenges and Priorities 2013

1. Introduction

The Oxford Strategic Partnership was founded in 2003 to promote joined-up approaches for improving quality of life in the city. The Partnership helps to provide direction for the city's future, respond to local priorities, and engage more effectively with local concerns.

The aims of this Partnership are:

- To provide a clear and ambitious vision for the future of Oxford, developing its environmental, economic and social life in a positive and sustainable way;
- To improve the quality of life of all sections of the community, to reduce inequalities, and support the needs and aspirations of citizens in their local areas;
- To foster and promote closer working between local agencies to deliver responsive and high quality services across the city.

The partnership published its first Community Strategy in 2004 and adopted a new Sustainable Community Strategy in 2008 Oxford: A world-class city for everyone.

The Partnership has a Steering Group and the current membership of the Steering Group is listed in section six. The group has adopted a set of guiding principles to promote openness, transparency, and accountability. The guiding principles and the Partnership's Terms of Reference and other information about the Partnership can be found at www.oxfordpartnership.org.uk

This report outlines the new vision statement, aims, priorities and structure of the Oxford Strategic Partnership. It also reports on the state of Oxford and the key challenges facing Oxford in 2013 and beyond.

For further information about the Partnership contact Sebastian Johnson, Manager of the Partnership at info@oxfordpartnership.org.uk or call on 01865 252317

2. Ten things you need to know about Oxford

Oxford's population has grown rapidly in the last decade to around 152,000 in 2011.[1]

In the UK, Oxford is the place with the highest proportion of full-time students in its population (24% of adult residents). 32,000 students studied full time at the two universities in 2009/10.[2]

As a result, one in five residents is aged between 18 and 24 years, and every year one-quarter of the city's residents moves house[3].

Over one-fifth of the population is of non-white ethnic origin. There is also a large number of people of white but non-British backgrounds. Nearly one-third of residents were born outside the UK[4].

Around 50,000 of the city's 107,000 jobs are in the universities, NHS, councils and other public sector bodies[5].

The city receives lots of visitors. 40,000 people commute into the city for work,[6] and an estimated nine million visit each year for tourism.[7]

Oxford is a world-renowned education brand and over one-third of its residents have a university degree[8]. At school, children are underperforming compared with children in the rest of England[9].

There is huge demand for housing in Oxford, meaning prices are high. Even at the lower end of the market, house prices are ten times average earnings[10].

Although Oxford is prosperous in many ways, 12 of its 85 'Super Output Areas' are among the 20% most deprived areas in England.[11] Nearly one-quarter of Oxford's children – 5,000 – live in poverty.[12]

There is a gap in life expectancy of around 10 years between the north and south of the city.[13]

[1] 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
[2] Higher Education Statistics Agency
[3] 2001 Census, Office for National Statistics
[4] 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
[5] 2010 Business Register and Employment Survey, Office for National Statistics
[6] 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
[7] Economic Impact of Tourism in Oxford 2008, Tourism South East
[8] 2011 Census, Office for National Statistics
[9] As measured by the percentage of 16 year olds achieving 5+ GCSEs grades A*-C (including English &Maths) 2009/10, Department for Education
[10] Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings by district, Department for Communities and Local Government
[11] Indices of Deprivation 2010, Department for Communities and Local Government
[12] Child poverty statistics 2008, HM Revenue & Customs
[13] Ward-based estimates for 2007–11, Decision Support Team, Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust

3. The Partnership's Vision for Oxford

Oxford: a world-class city for everyone

Vision statement

The ambition of our partnership is that Oxford should be a city in which all our citizens feel happy to live and experience a high quality of life. We want Oxford to be a world-class city for everyone.

What does world class mean to us?

Oxford will be at the centre of a thriving Oxfordshire economy, building on its global reputation as a city of learning and research, manufacturing, health services, medical sciences, publishing and innovation. The people of the city will have good quality housing at a price they can afford within easy reach by public transport, on foot or by bicycle of places of employment. New and established businesses will have space in which to start up and expand, and Oxford will have a transport infrastructure which meets its needs. Oxford will be a low carbon city. The historic environment will be adapted to serve modern needs but its heritage will be preserved and enhanced for current and future generations, and for the many visitors to the city.

Oxford will be a diverse, well integrated city with active communities. Its place as a world-class centre of education and research will be strengthened, and its children will have excellent educational opportunities in our schools. Oxford will be a great place in which to grow up, live, work and grow old, and its residents will feel safe. People will enjoy stable employment, a good urban environment with extensive green spaces, and high quality retail and leisure provision. Oxford will be a city in which all its residents can feel they belong and take pride.

Aims

The Oxford Strategic Partnership will seek to realise this vision by:

- Promoting economic vitality and renewal:
    - Agreeing with partners a vision for the Oxford city region's economic future and measures that can realise that vision;
    - Providing more and better housing at rents and prices that allow a balanced community to be maintained
    - Preserving and enhancing the natural environment and bio-diversity alongside the city centre heritage and good urban design
- Developing the Low Carbon Oxford partnership to create a low carbon urban environment with extensive involvement from residents, businesses and community organisations
- Working through the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership to tackle people's concerns about crime, and to reduce crime and prevent people becoming victims of crime
- Developing strong communities:
    - Building on existing partnerships to break the cycle of deprivation which causes some families and communities to suffer poverty, poor education and reduced life expectancy
    - Raising levels of educational attainment for both young people and adults in partnership with schools, colleges and universities

- Developing our communities so that they can organise themselves in ways which respond to their needs, improve the quality of life locally, and develop the potential of local people.

4. The State of Oxford – An outline of some of our key challenges

4.1 Economic Growth

- One third of the county's jobs and seven of the ten largest Oxfordshire employers are within Oxford
- Land in Oxford is scarce. Residential developers find it difficult to secure sites for new projects, and it is thought that some companies have found it difficult to expand
- The labour market appears to have begun a recovery, indicated by a fall in the number of people claiming unemployment benefit over the last six months

Oxford is a global brand for education, health, bioscience, information technology, publishing, the motor industry and tourism. The University of Oxford and its colleges are the largest employers in Oxford, supporting 18,000 jobs. Around 4,500 businesses provide 107,000 jobs, and seven of the ten largest employers in the Oxfordshire sub-region are within Oxford. The University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University between them inject an estimated £800 million annually into the regional economy. Other key sectors include: retail; the creative & cultural industry; the voluntary sector and social enterprise; and professional services.

Land in Oxford is scarce, caused by a combination of geography, economic activity, rising population and public policy. Planning controls have restricted development for most of the past sixty years. By contrast with most UK cities outside London, residential developers find it extremely difficult to secure sites for new projects, and it is thought that some companies have found it difficult to expand. Moreover, the success of Oxford has resulted in increasing house prices, leading to transfers of land from employment to residential use and exacerbating the lack of commercial space. That which is available is restricted to a few key locations and tends to be relatively high cost. Office space in the city centre tends to be older and of lower quality, and in comparison to other locations industrial space is relatively limited.

During the banking crisis and subsequent recession the buoyant Oxford city-region economy has undoubtedly suffered less than other parts of the UK and Europe, but has suffered nonetheless. The recently-drafted Economic Growth Strategy notes that, although Oxford's economy is successful in many ways, its performance:

> *"is constrained by inadequate infrastructure and below-average performance in many schools. Traffic congestion, housing shortages and consequent high prices, and (in due course) the limited availability of employment sites are barriers to growth and create environmental and social pressures."*
>
> *"…there is a need to support the continued growth of Oxford's knowledge economy; to ensure that new and existing companies are able to establish, develop and expand within the city and the county; to address disparities in educational attaining and raise workforce skills; to respond to the environmental challenges and opportunities; and to address the infrastructural constraints that are holding back growth."*

There have been recent success stories in the city economy. The city has welcomed the arrival of large world-class businesses including Centrica and SAE. BMW have also committed substantial new investment into the MINI plant in Cowley in readiness for a new generation of the iconic vehicle. The University of Oxford and the Oxford Radcliffe have created a new University Hospitals NHS Trust that provides a formal structure and governance for the close relationship between the two organisations, enhancing their ability to pursue excellence in patient care, research and education as a joint venture.

Measuring whether a local economy is growing is not straightforward. The commonly-quoted figure is 'Gross Value Added' – a measure of the total value of a local economy which has significant drawbacks[14]. The latest estimates show that Oxfordshire's GVA declined from £14.4bn to £14.2bn between 2008 and 2009, reflecting the recession[15]. The city economy is estimated to be worth around £4.7bn a year[16] of this. Oxford's GVA per capita is estimated to be the fifth highest of any UK city[17].

Our most timely indicator of the health of the economy is the number of people claiming out of work benefits, in particular unemployment benefit (Jobseeker's Allowance or JSA). The recession caused the number of Oxford residents claiming JSA to rise to 2,900, but this has fallen in recent months to 2,300 – still above the pre-recession average of 1,600. This suggests some revival in the labour market, but there is concern about people who may be unemployed but not claiming JSA, and people who may be 'under-employed'.

4.2 Housing

- Average Oxford house prices are now more than nine times higher than annual incomes
- There are very high private-sector rents, which are the least affordable outside London
- The Core Strategy sets a target of building 400 homes per year on average between 2006 and 2026. This target is on course to be met; many of the new homes will be built in the West Barton development
- The 2007 Housing Market Assessment showed that for demand to be met 1,700 new homes would have to be built in the city each year

There has been a long-term housing shortage in Oxford. In housing terms, Oxford is the least affordable area in the country apart from some areas of London. The population of the city has been growing as has the number of people requiring housing. Oxford's population reached 152,000 in 2011 and is projected to reach 161,000 by 2021.

Housing demand is high and availability is scarce, as a result of the city's constrained boundaries, the risk of flooding and other issues as outlined above. This results in very high house prices. Average house prices have more than doubled in the last ten years and owner-occupied housing is increasingly out of the reach of people on lower incomes.

[14] It takes two years to produce an annual GVA estimate, they can be subject to substantial revision and are not adjusted to account for regional price differences. GVA estimates are published at county, not district level. not adjusted to account for regional price differences. GVA estimates are published at county, not district level.

[15] Sub-regional GVA (December 2011 release), Office for National Statistics

[16] Oxford Economic Narrative (2012), Oxford City Council

[17] Centre for Cities, Cities Outlook 2010

Average house prices are much higher in Oxford (£260,000 in 2010) than nationally (£185,000 in 2010). Average Oxford house prices are now more than nine times higher than annual incomes. Wages in Oxford are comparable with those in Glasgow, but our average house prices are over double those of Glasgow. The high price of housing leads also to very high private-sector rents, which are also the least affordable outside London. Conditions in some private sector housing is very poor, particularly some houses in multiple occupation.

This low level of affordability puts severe strain on social housing provision, with over 6,000 households in need on the housing register, and homelessness – though much improved – is over twice the national average. There is concern that changes to the benefit system may increase the number of people at risk of homelessness over the next five years.

The Housing Market Assessment in 2007 showed that 1,700 new homes per year would have to be built in the city if demand is to be met. Our Core Strategy set a more modest target of 8,000 dwellings over the 20 years from 2006. Despite a reduction in housebuilding following the recession, we are currently on course to meet this target. A large portion of the homes built in the next five years are expected to come as a result of the West Barton development.

4.3 Transport

- Oxford is an important centre of economic activity, but this creates a high level of in-commuting and therefore congestion at peak times
- The city's and county's populations will continue to grow, both within existing settlements but also at new development sites
- The transport network is highly constrained, with very limited potential to increase space on roads in particulars

Oxford is a compact city with a medieval network of streets at its core and historic buildings, conservation areas and green spaces that make it very sensitive to traffic pressures. In recognition of these physical constraints and sensitivities Oxford has a well-developed public transport system, including a comprehensive park and ride network. Compared to most cities, it has particularly high proportions of people travelling by bus and by bicycle. Oxford is a regional hub, with an important role in regional transport networks.

Despite this, the transport network is highly constrained, with very limited potential to increase space on roads in particular. Operational capacity has already been reached or exceeded on much of the road network, resulting in frequent congestion and delays. The limited platform and line capacity of Oxford's railway station results in a significant bottleneck on the rail network. The recent announcement of a green light for the Oxford-Marylebone link should improve this.

Against this challenging background there are a number of future pressures to consider. The city's population will continue to grow, both within existing settlements but also at new developments such as West Barton. The role of Oxford as a workplace – one-third of the county's jobs are in the city – is important in supporting economic growth, but leads to a high level of in-commuting and therefore congestion at peak times. And there is a need to reduce the environmental impact of travel and to promote health and safety.

4.4 Skills and Recruitment

- A very high proportion of Oxford residents hold a degree, yet educational attainment in Oxford's state schools is lower than the regional and national averages
- Employers have expressed concern about the difficulty of recruiting people with the right skills from the local workforce, or school-leavers who are 'work-ready' for entry-level jobs

Oxford has a highly skilled workforce, in that a very high proportion of residents hold degrees. However a significant proportion of residents have no qualifications and average educational attainment in Oxford's school system is lower than the regional and national averages. Anecdotally there are concerns from employers about being able to recruit people with the right skills from the local workforce; or indeed school-leavers who are 'work-ready' for entry-level jobs.

Since the recession there has been concern about youth unemployment, in particular the corrosive impact on young people of leaving education only to enter worklessness. Fortunately it appears that the rise in youth unemployment has not been as severe in Oxford as in the rest of the country. That said, around 250 of Oxford's 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training at any one time, which is around double the county average.

The 2011 Oxfordshire Skills Needs Analysis identified a number of issues for Oxfordshire, which are just as pertinent to the city. The report identified four sectors most likely to present skills gaps among local people: business administration and technology; engineering & manufacturing; retail; and care.

Despite Oxfordshire residents being very well qualified Oxfordshire employers report a shortage in high level skills, particularly in the science, technology and engineering and manufacturing sectors. In other sectors people with the right skills are available, but there is intense competition to recruit them.

The report found evidence to suggest that a lack of qualifications and 'employability' skills prevent a significant number of Oxfordshire's young people from entering employment. This includes those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those leaving care.

5. Structure of the Oxford Strategic Partnership

Oxford Strategic Partnership – Leadership Group

Meets annually

Oxford Strategic Partnership – Steering Group

Meets up to six times a year

Stronger communities

Breaking the cycle of deprivation

Building on existing partnerships to break the cycle of deprivation which causes some families and communities to suffer poverty, poor education and reduced life expectancy

Delivery group: Existing Oxford City Social Regeneration Steering Group

Educational attainment

Raising levels of educational attainment for both young people and adults in partnership with schools, colleges and universities

Delivery group: Oxford City Educational Attainment Steering Group

Participation and engagement

Developing our communities so that they can organise themselves in ways which respond to their needs, improve the quality of life locally, and develop the potential of local people

Delivery group: Partnership of key stakeholders

Economic development, growth and regeneration

Promoting economic vitality and renewal:
- Vision for the Oxford city region's economic future
- More and better housing
- Preserving & enhancing the natural environment and bio-diversity alongside the city centre heritage and good urban design

Delivery Groups:
- Business & Partnership Grps
- Town Team
- Regeneration Steering Grps (e.g. West End, Barton)

Low carbon city

Developing the Low Carbon Oxford partnership to create a low carbon urban environment

Low Carbon Oxford Programme Board

Safer communities

Working through the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership to tackle people's concerns about crime, and to reduce crime and prevent people becoming victims of crime

Oxford Safer Communities Partnership

6. How will we measure delivery against our priorities?

We will use the following measures and report on progress as part of an Annual Review Report

Economy
- % people claiming JSA (by length of time claiming) / % unemployment
- Number of jobs in the city (by sector)
- Number of businesses by size / sector
- Gross Value Added (GVA) for Oxford (is it increasing?)
- Number of tourists (and overnight stays)

Housing
- House prices and affordability ratios
- Private sector rents
- Number of dwellings built (by type?)

Natural environment & biodiversity, heritage & urban design
- Change in areas of biodiversity importance (existing AMR indicator)
- Change in area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat (existing AMR indicator)
- Number of listed buildings and conservation areas (Benchmark at 2011 =1580 listed building and 17 conservation areas covering 20% of the city area)

Low carbon
- Reduction in CO_2 emissions across the city (LCO measure)

Safer communities
- Five major crime types (anti-social behaviour, domestic burglary, theft from a vehicle, violence against the person, criminal damage)

Breaking the cycle of deprivation
- Male and female life expectancy based on mortality data, by ward (current BTC indicator)
- Claimants of working age, housing and council tax benefits (current BTC indicator)
- Number of young people NEET (not in education, employment or training) in the city
- Older people – fear of crime / going out (from Crime Survey)

Educational attainment (city education project measures)
- Attainment of Level 2 reading at Key Stage 1 in the ten primary schools with the most challenging circumstances (target is 95% by 2016; 2011 baseline was 69%)
- Attainment of Level 4 English and Maths at Key Stage 2 in the ten primary schools with the most challenging circumstances (target is 84% by 2016; 2011 baseline was 54%)

Participation and engagement
- Numbers of people volunteering
- Perception measures (e.g. ‘people from different backgrounds get on well together’), taken from a (probable) LGA co-ordinated annual survey

7. Oxford Strategic Partnership Steering Group Membership

Jackie Wilderspin	Assistant Director of Public Health, NHS Oxfordshire and Chair of the Oxford Strategic Partnership
Alison Baxter	Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Community for Voluntary Action and Vice Chair of the Oxford Strategic Partnership
Debbie Dance	Director, Oxford Preservation Trust
Sally Dicketts	Principal, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
Susi Golding	Project Director, Visit Oxfordshire
Anne Gwinnett	Director of Corporate Affairs, Oxford Brookes University
Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Leader of Oxfordshire County Council
Robert Kirtland	Managing Partner, Critchleys and Chairman of ProOxford Group
Cllr Bob Price	Leader of Oxford City Council
Chris Sharp	Area Commander, Oxford Area, Thames Valley Police
Michael Sibly	Deputy Registrar, University of Oxford
Peter Sloman	Chief Executive, Oxford City Council
Cllr John Tanner	Board Member, Cleaner, Greener Oxford, Oxford City Council
Sebastian Johnson	Partnership Manager, Oxford Strategic Partnership