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Oxford Heritage Plan
Scoping Report

Sept 2012

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0. Contents

1. Introduction

The adopted Core Strategy for Oxford's Local Development Framework states that the City Council will prepare a Heritage Plan "… as a basis for decision- making and initiatives that will help ensure that development in Oxford sustains and enhances the archaeological, architectural and landscape resource in a manner compatible with its status as a historic city of international renown."

This Scoping Document is a starting point for preparing the Oxford Heritage Plan. Oxford City Council and Oxford Preservation Trust have prepared it in partnership to begin a process of discussion between the many organisations and communities who share responsibility for managing the city's heritage. It provides a vision of what a heritage plan for Oxford should aim to achieve and a description of the scope of the resources that make up the city's heritage.

This is complemented by a review of activity and strategies in other sectors of planning for the city, using the priority areas set out in the Oxford Sustainable Communities Strategy as a guide. As the Heritage Plan develops we expect to define and promote the potential positive contributions that heritage should make to the initiatives achieving the key objectives for these priority areas. This will guide priorities and principles for the future management of heritage. We also expect to identify potential challenges for the management of heritage in achieving these objectives and agree and promote suitable measures for sustaining the value of the heritage.

The final part of this Scoping Report provides a brief review of the information sources that we currently use in managing the Oxford's Heritage resources. In future stages of developing the heritage plan we will consider how these information sources can be better integrated and made available and accessible as a basis for decision-making, as well as identifying deficiencies in the evidence base that should be filled through further evidence gathering.

In writing this scoping report we have attempted to present a series of facts about the heritage resource, existing policy framework, activity in other sectors and the existing evidence base without making judgements about the value of particular resources or providing suggestions about the potential opportunities or challenges for heritage in the city. We want those judgements to be made through our collaborations with the city's key stakeholders and communities as the Heritage Plan develops.

2. A Vision for the Heritage Plan

A Heritage Plan for Oxford will raise the profile of the city's heritage as a world class resource to guide decision-makers, strategy planners and property owners to act as its guardians, getting the greatest sustainable benefit from the city's heritage for its citizens.

The Heritage Plan will provide an overarching strategy for the future management of the city's heritage, including clear aims for its use in improving the quality of life and prosperity of the city's population.

It will involve local communities in identifying the value of their heritage and provide clear channels of communication for them to both engage in decision-making and to appreciate how their views have influenced the decisions that are made.

The heritage plan will establish clear relationships between the information sources used to manage the heritage, identifying the information that should be taken into consideration at various levels of decision-making. It will bring together existing evidence sources and make them accessible, as well as ensuring that future evidence gathering and reporting is compatible and complementary to the evidence base.

The Heritage Plan will establish a framework for monitoring the heritage resource, not only in terms of the condition of physical resources, but also in terms of its contribution to enhancing the quality of life and prosperity of Oxford's citizens.

3. The Scope of Oxford's Heritage

The scope of Oxford's heritage has been reviewed in The Oxford Heritage Statement.

The Oxford Heritage Statement was compiled by Julian Munby of Oxford Archaeology and was consulted on by the Heritage Plan Steering Group on 28th March 2011. The individuals and organisations included in this steering Group were chosen for their local knowledge and their understanding of Oxford's Heritage (Appendix A).

A draft Oxford Heritage Statement, compiled by Julian Munby, provided a framework around which discussion and debate about how to define Oxford's heritage. The final report from this consultation workshop is available online.

4. The Existing Policy Framework

Policy Framework

Production of the Heritage Plan has been instigated through the City Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy. The Core Strategy describes in the broadest terms the importance of Oxford's heritage to its landscape and townscape and the need for new development to respect and enhance the city's historic character. It states that the city council will draw up a heritage plan "…as a basis for decision- making and initiatives that will help ensure that development in Oxford sustains and enhances the archaeological, architectural and landscape resource in a manner compatible with its status as a historic city of international renown". The need for a heritage plan is further supported by a framework of policy that cascade through international agreements to which the United Kingdom is a signatory, to national policy statements and regional and local planning policy. These are briefly described below with regard to their influence on heritage management.

International

The Venice Charter of 1964 was the first international charter with significance for heritage planning. This sought to define aspects of the historic environment beyond individual buildings. The Burra Charter of 1979 and reviewed in 1988 introduced the concept of the cultural significance of a place. Key international statements on the heritage include:

Document Name	UK Status	Date from which active
UNESCO World Heritage Convention	Signed and Ratified	In force in UK since 1984
Grenada Convention (for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe)	Signed and Ratified	In force in UK since 1988
Valetta Convention (for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage of Europe)	Signed and Ratified	In force in UK since 2001
Florence Convention (European Landscape Convention)	Signed and Ratified	In force in UK since 2007
Faro Convention (on the value of Cultural Heritage for Society)	Not signed by the UK	
ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) X'ian declaration		2005

National

Primary and Secondary Legislation directly relevant to heritage planning:
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- National Planning Policy Framework

The historic environment has value for the contribution it makes to our cultural, social and economic life and has an important role to play in shaping sustainable communities. The government's aims are to ensure:

- that the historic environment is an integral part of place making and the delivery of sustainable development;
- that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
- that evidence is gathered that contributes to our knowledge and understanding and made accessible to all.

The publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 has re-affirmed the government's overarching aim that the historic environment and its heritage

assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations.

The Government sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of this. For development to be sustainable it must, amongst other things, perform an environmental role contributing to the protection and enhancement of our natural, built and historic environment.

Regional Planning Policy
The South East Plan, which provides the regional strategy for development and managing heritage assets is due to be deleted. It recognises the international significance of Oxford and its past and identifies the challenges faced in maintaining Oxford's relevance in the 21st century without depleting its resources or economic role.

Local Planning Policy
In due course the existing Oxford Local plan will be replaced by a suite of local plan documents that comprise the Local Development Framework. For the time, being the Core Strategy and the Local Plan provide the policy framework, supported by a suite of topic specific supplementary policy documents, to guide development within Oxford.

Core Strategy Policy CS18 and the accompanying explanation discuss the issues associated with sustaining Oxford's historic and built environment identifying the need to gather evidence to contribute to our understanding of the place and in turn to ensure that decisions about change sustain that significance.

The inspector's report on the core strategy gave a high priority to developing strategic thinking about the management of the historic environment giving weight to the production of the heritage plan and the importance of evidence based decisions.

Key policies include:
Core Strategy
- Previously developed land and greenfield land, Policy CS2
- Urban design, Townscape Character and the Historic Environment, Policy CS18
- Cultural and Community development, Policy CS20
- Green Spaces, leisure and sport, Policy CS21
- Mix of housing, Policy CS23
- Affordable Housing, Policy CS24
- Student Accommodation, Policy CS25
- Employment Sites, Policy CS28
- The Universities, Policy CS29
- Retail, CS31
- Sustainable Tourism, Policy CS32

Oxford Local Plan 2001-2016
- Core Policies CP.1, CP.8, CP.11, CP.24, CP.25,
- Natural Environment, Policies NE.5, NE.6, NE.11, NE.15, NE.16
- Historic Environment, Policies HE.1 – HE.11
- Housing Provision, Policy HS. 3, HS.17, HS.19?, HS.20, HS.22
- Economy, Policy EC.9
- Health and Hospitals, Policy HH.2,
- Education, Policy ED.9
- Sport Outdoor Recreation and Community Facilities, Policies SR.5, SR.13, SR.14,
- Retail and Commercial Leisure, RC.2, RC.4, RC11, RC13, RC.14, RC.15,
- Tourism and the Arts, Policies TA.3, TA.7, TA.8

West End Area Action Plan
- Policy WE 10: Historic environment

The policies are traditional in their approach, based on the government's stated objectives and broadly seek to preserve or enhance those aspects of the historic environment that have been identified as holding significance. The policies do not explain how decisions should be

made and can lead to conflict where there are competing views. They do not easily cater for instances where the significance of a place is not understood or not known. The focus on designated assets makes it more difficult to effectively manage other aspects of the historic environment that are valued but for which there is an inadequate mechanism for sustaining that significance through change.

5. Other Sectors and Strategies in Oxford

Oxford's heritage can be influenced by activities in many sectors of city life and these present various opportunities and challenges for its management. This part of the scoping report reviews current activities in a number of key sectors and associated policies and strategies which may represent opportunities or challenges for the management of the city's heritage.

Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan identifies 5 strategic priorities for the City:
* Vibrant, sustainable economy
* Meeting housing needs
* Strong active communities
* Cleaner, greener Oxford
* Efficient and effective Council

These priorities are similarly reflected in the six priorities identified by Oxford Strategic Partnership's **Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012** to tackle inequalities and to develop better lives for Oxford's citizens. These comprise:

* strengthening the local economy (a cross cutting theme);
* tackling the need for more affordable housing;
* improving health and social welfare;
* tackling climate change;
* improving the public realm for residents and visitors;
* building a safer, stronger and more equal city.

We have examined these themes to identify the strategies and policies that are most relevant to their achievement so that later stages of the heritage plan's production can take these into account and identify both how heritage can better contribute to achieving the goals set out and how potential challenges to heritage management can be resolved.

Strengthening the Local Economy

The **Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership** (LEP) is the business-led organisation established and funded by Government to promote enterprise and economic growth across the region, and administer the Growing Places Fund and the business rates remitted in the Science Vale Enterprise Zone. It has identified three centres of focus for growth and investment: Oxford, Science Vale and Bicester.

The broad policy approach in the **South East Plan** considered that Oxford should be allowed to grow physically and economically in order to accommodate its own needs, contribute to those in the wider-region and help maintain its world-class status. Although the SEP is being revoked this strategic approach has been retained and the underlying analysis and rationale has been taken forward in the adopted Core Strategy and Oxford Economic Growth Strategy.

The emerging **Oxford Economic Growth Strategy** 2012 to 2022 has an economic vision for Oxford which recognises its key strengths and its future direction as follows:
* is the City which offers the UK's most prosperous, resilient, diverse, globally competitive knowledge-based economy;
* is home to two universities, strong multi-national companies, and a wide range of small companies known for their world leadership in research, development and innovation and these are prime drivers of future economic growth;
* seeks and welcomes global investors and businesses serving global markets – who provide real economic benefits for the City's and County's residents and businesses;
* enables and supports the growth of new start-up/spin-out ventures;
* continues to be Oxfordshire's primary retail centre and very strong international tourist destination;
* ensures that young people gain the skills needed access to jobs in the city through their enrolment in the City's high performance schools;

- offers a readily available supply of homes fro sale, and for rent, at prices which those working in Oxford can afford; and
- is demonstrating, in practise, how best to promote economic growth and establish Oxford as a truly sustainable City.

The strategy highlights Oxford's world class 'knowledge' offer which includes:
- two universities have a significant economic impact – 21,800 jobs (19.6% of employment)…visitors support a further 13,700 jobs;
- successful spin-outs and KTP's and strong prospects for growth particularly in health & clinical research;
- acute and specialist medical organisations employ 14,000 jobs (13% of workforce) and support 2,700 further jobs; and
- important biotechnology strengths with 49 companies located in Oxford.

Other key sector strengths are in the automotive industry; publishing; tourism; retail; creative and cultural industries; and professional services.

The strategy identifies 11 key strategic priorities which are to:
- expand the knowledge economy;
- support growth of existing companies;
- ensure sufficient employment land;
- strengthen City's retail offer;
- increase value of Oxford's tourism to the region;
- strengthen skills and educational attainment;
- increase the supply of housing;
- secure investment in broadband;
- address environmental challenges from growth;
- invest in transport; and
- create single delivery team.

The **Core Strategy** recognises the city's high quality environment and 'brand' amongst Oxford's key economic strengths, alongside the world-class entrepreneurial universities and hospitals, internationally known research base and highly skilled workforce. It highlights three sectors of the economy that are considered to be of crucial importance to Oxford's future economic development: the universities and hospitals, retail and tourism.

The Core Strategy proposes an approach to managed growth of employment in the city, including provision of one major employment site at the 'Northern Gateway', as well as land in the West End. Other key employment sites will be protected and modernised. It also recognises the stratified landscape of small to large employment sites and businesses across the city as important to supporting an efficient economy. Policies are provided to guide the modernising of key employment sites and to guide decisions over change of use from employment at others.

To promote the universities' and hospitals' contribution to Oxford's economic growth and competitiveness, the Core Strategy includes policies to guide development of sites around the City Centre, as well as the Headington Hill, Gipsy Lane and Marston Road campuses of Oxford Brookes University, for academic uses. The Core Strategy recognises that many city centre sites lie within the Oxford Central Conservation Area. Medical research facilities will be developed near to the existing hospitals in Headington and Marston.

The Core Strategy recognises Oxford's role as both a regional and district centre for retail, which provides some 9,800 jobs directly (10% of Oxford's workforce), and indirectly supports a further 1,350. It attracts some £820 million of retail expenditure annually, which is forecast to grow considerably. Four further district centres are located at Headington, Summertown, Cowley centre (both of which are expected to grow through redevelopment opportunities) and Cowley Road, whilst a fifth is proposed at Blackbird Leys. Provision of additional retail floor space in the city centre will be delivered through the West Gate and St Aldates/Queen Street redevelopments and within the West End through the **West End Area Action Plan**.

Oxford attracted some 9.3 million visitors in 2006 and accounts for approximately £740 million in annual turnover for the local economy. The Core Strategy proposes that growth of tourism should be balanced against other uses needed in the city, through a process of '*sustainable tourism growth*', aimed at encouraging tourists to '*stay longer and spend more'* by increasing longer stay visits. This will be delivered by providing up to 15 sites for hotel, hostel and serviced-apartment developments in Oxford up to 2026 and by providing new tourist attractions. Some of this will be achieved by modernising existing sites as well as providing new facilities. New hotel sites will be focused in the city centre, the West End and along the city's arterial routes.

Health, Well-being and Social inclusion

A key objective of the **Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012** is to
" *… improve health and social inclusion in Oxford City by providing opportunities and improving services for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable.*"

The Indices of Deprivation 2007 placed Oxford in the top half of most deprived local authority areas in England. Eighteen of 85 areas in Oxford are among the 30% most deprived in England. These areas suffer multiple levels of deprivation – low skills, low incomes, and high levels of crime. Twelve areas in our city are among the 10% most deprived areas in England in terms of education and skills. Pupils at schools in Oxford have consistently attained lower results at GCSE than their counterparts attending schools in Oxfordshire. Health is a key problem for our citizens who live in deprived areas. The city's most deprived areas have lower life expectancy, with much higher death rates for people under 75, than other parts of the city or county.

Oxford Strategic Partnership's **Health and Social Inclusion Partnership Group** work on addressing these issues and have adopted the principle that building capacity and self-esteem in the community will enable people to enjoy better outcomes. The group has agreed key outcomes it wishes to achieve, including:

1. People will live longer and the gap in premature death rates will be reduced. Fewer people will die from preventable diseases and more people will choose healthier lifestyles.
2. Child poverty will be reduced, pre-school children and their families will get a better start in life, and school-age children will live healthier lives.
3. Enable improved access to training opportunities at all levels, especially in the more deprived areas where income levels are low. A culture of learning will be fostered. More businesses will be set up and people will receive support to set up businesses. (Source: **Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012**)

The **Oxford Regeneration Framework** identifies numerous partners who share responsibility for ensuring the health and well-being of Oxford's population. These include:

- Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (to be replaced by Oxfordshire GP Consortium by April 2013);
- Oxfordshire County Council;
- Oxford City Council;
- The private sector;
(Source: A Regeneration Framework for Oxford to 2026)
- Voluntary and community sector;
- Government agencies;
- Universities and further education colleges;
- Jobcentre plus;
- Registered social landlords.

Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust's role is currently under review, and replacement of its commissioning function by a general practitioner consortium is expected by 2013. The public health aspects of the PCT will be taken on by local councils.

The Regeneration Framework identifies strong links between poor health, low educational achievement and unemployment. It identifies particular groups within the population who are most likely to suffer from deprivation and areas within the city where deprivation is most

acute. It sets out a series of strategy points and actions to reduce deprivation, some of which include:

- improve community engagement in regeneration and increase the number of people who are satisfied with their local area and able/willing to participate in local planning and projects
- increase engagement of black and minority ethnic communities;
- focus on area and estate regeneration,
- guarantee the quality of community facilities and encourage community activities such as local festivals, events, street sport and public art;
- improve availability and frequency of bus services to deprived communities;
- reduce income poverty, improve health outcomes and narrow the inequalities gap across the range of indicators;
- support organisations offering education development skills for parents in deprived communities who have missed out on learning;
- improve performance of worst performing schools in the city and increase the attainment of black and minority ethnic groups and low-performing groups;
- provide access to learning for people with few or no qualifications and other excluded groups, such as offenders and homeless people.

Other initiatives will be implemented through the **West End** and **Barton Area Action Plans**.

NHS Oxfordshire's Strategic Plan 2008-2013 sets out strategic goals for the PCT, which are summarised as: improved health outcomes for particular groups; access to health services as whole care pathways with a proportionate shift from hospital to primary and community care settings; helping local people to make sustainable healthy lifestyle choices; and focus on improving health outcomes for people living in wards with the highest mortality rates to reduce health inequalities in Oxfordshire.

Oxford has a strong history of community and voluntary organisations, which make significant contributions to meeting these social objectives. These are brought together under the umbrella of the **Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action** group (the OCVA), which provides support and resources for community and voluntary groups.

Affordable Housing

The city is suffering from an acute shortage of housing. Oxford's house prices are higher than the national average and the city's population grew by 12% between 2001 and 2011 and is expected to continue to grow. Providing good quality, affordable and environmentally sustainable housing is key to supporting Oxford's economic growth and is one of the priorities identified in the City Council's **Regeneration Framework for Oxford to 2026**.

The **Core Strategy** reflects the South East Plan's requirement to provide 8,000 new homes within the city by 2026. **The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** (SHLAA) demonstrated that 6,352 of these could be provided on identified sites within the plan period but that the remainder (just over 20%) would have to be provided on windfall sites (Policy CS22).

The Core Strategy identifies opportunities for regeneration at Barton, Blackbird Leys, Northway, Rose Hill and Wood Farm. It ensures that large parts of new housing provision will be on previously developed land and indicates that higher density development will be encouraged in and around the city and district centres (subject to complying with other planning policies).

Between 700 and 800 dwellings will be provided during regeneration of the West End through the **West End Area Action Plan**. Up to 200 dwellings are proposed at the Northern Gateway as complementary to proposed employment uses. Development of a greenfield site at Barton is proposed to provide another 800 – 1,200 homes through the **Barton Area Action Plan**. Another potential housing site at Summertown is identified as a contingency, in case of a shortfall of development, to provide between 200 and 500 dwelling.

The Core Strategy recognises a need to provide a mixture of types and sizes of dwellings reflecting the city's current and future population structure. Details of the right mixture of properties are set out in the **Balance of Dwellings SPD**, which identifies the need to protect the supply of family dwelling houses. It notes that the best mixture of housing is currently represented in the north west of the city and the greatest imbalance in the south east. The Core Strategy also highlights the need to provide appropriate housing for key workers.

The city has a major need for supply of additional affordable housing and, as such new developments (within certain qualifications) are expected to provide 50% of new residential properties as affordable dwellings. The **Affordable Housing SPD** sets a threshold for developments that must include affordable housing and the proportion of units provided that must be affordable dwellings. It requires affordable housing to meet the same standards for design, siting and materials as other housing, including efficient use of land and natural resources

The large resident population of students in Oxford creates pressure on the availability of private housing. The Core Strategy includes policy requirements to prevent increased competition for student residential accommodation resulting from increase in the floorspace of either of the city's universities. The Core Strategy also recognises a need to identify sites to be used for pitches by the travelling communities. It sets out policies to determine the suitability of land for such uses.

The **Oxford Housing Strategy 2012-15**, produced by the City Council in 2012, identifies local housing issues and the action plan sets out actions to help address them. The Housing Strategy aims to provide more affordable housing in the city; to prevent homelessness; to address the needs of vulnerable people and communities; to improve housing conditions; and to improve the quality, cost effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. It includes a headline target of delivering 372 affordable dwellings by 2015. More specific actions to tackle homelessness are set out in the **Oxford Homelessness Strategy.**

The City Council has prepared the **Sites and Housing Plan** which allocates sites for development for housing, employment and other uses as well as setting out detailed planning policies that planning applications for housing development will be judged against. It is anticipated that the Sites and Housing Plan will be adopted in spring 2013.

Tackling Climate Change

> *"It is now widely understood that human activities (predominantly the burning of fossil fuels) are accelerating rates of climate change beyond those of the norm due to the accumulation of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere"* (**Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012**).

The possible impact of climate change has been experienced in the city through repeated severe flooding events in 2001, 2003 and 2007. The sudden and prolonged heavy downpours that cause this flooding are predicted to become more common as a result of a generally warming climate.

In October 2010 the Environment Agency adopted the **Oxford Flood Risk Management Strategy**. In Oxford this includes measures such as adaptation of individual buildings to resist floodwater damage, construction of bunds to protect areas such as Wolvercote from floodwater and even excavation of a new river course to relieve floodwater or even a floodwater storage facility further upriver. The strategy also acknowledges the importance of the city's historic floodwater management systems, including the chains of meadows within the floodplain that accept floodwater, reducing the pressure on the city.

Unsurprisingly, the potential to reduce the city's contribution to green house gas emissions has been taken very seriously. The **Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012** includes the Key Objective:

> *'To work towards Oxford City becoming a carbon-neutral city and a
> centre of excellence for climate change adaptation and mitigation'.*

The vision of Oxford as a carbon neutral city is paralleled in the policies of the City Council's **Core Strategy**, which guides new development to achieving high standards for energy efficiency and on-site energy generation from renewable sources.

An **Oxford Climate Change Action Plan** was adopted by the Council in 2005, which included targets for reduction of fossil fuel usage particularly in domestic properties and the introduction of micro-generation to provide renewable energy sources. A pilot study examining the fossil fuel usage of the housing stock in North Oxford suggested that buildings constructed before 1900 performed at a comparable level in terms of energy usage for lighting and space heating to those built after 1969 and up to the present, although buildings constructed during the early and mid 20th century were generally less energy efficient. The action plan also sets targets for reduction of emissions of CO2 from road transport by encouraging home working, reducing opportunities for workplace car parking, encouraging other modes of transport and increasing the number of fuel efficient vehicles.

A **City Council Carbon Management Strategy and Implementation Programme** was introduced in 2008 including targets for reduction of carbon emissions across the City Council's estates and activities. **Oxford's Regeneration Strategy** has a target of a 30% reduction in the Council's carbon footprint by 2026. It suggests that some Council owned buildings will be adapted to reduce their carbon emissions or to include micro-generation from renewable sources. The Council have also taken a lead in reducing carbon emissions from transport by providing low carbon vehicles for the use of staff in performing their duties. The city's Park and Ride bus services also helps to reduce reliance on car transport, reducing congestion and carbon dioxide emissions in the city. Oxford has a long-standing image as a city of cyclists.

In 2010 the Oxford Strategic Partnership launched **Low Carbon Oxford**, a pioneering city-wide programme of collaboration between private, public and non-profit organisations with the aim of ensuring Oxford's future as a sustainable and low carbon city.

The objectives of the Low Carbon Oxford programme are:
- to reduce the overall carbon emissions of the city by 3% year on year,
- achieving an 80% reduction by 2050
- the creation of more 'green jobs' and a sustainable economy
- for Oxford to become an exemplar low carbon city for the UK.

We believe that these common goals can only be achieved by working together and drawing on the strengths of different sector organisations. The programme currently includes 23 pathfinder organisations committed to the upholding a charter which states that they are committed to working together to create a low carbon, sustainable Oxford, reduce carbon emissions and help tackle climate.

Another important contribution to reducing the City's carbon footprint will be reduction of waste. The Oxfordshire Waste Partnership's **Oxfordshire Joint Municipal Waste Strategy** sets out measures to reduce landfill of municipal waste by 60% by 2020.

Several successful **Low Carbon Community Enterprises** have been established within the city. These encourage low carbon living within the community but are also involved in supplying renewable energy through organisations such as **West Oxford Community Renewables.**

Quality of the Public Realm for Residents and Visitors

For Oxford's residents and visitors, the majority of the city's environment is experienced from the public spaces of streets, squares, parks, churchyards and footpaths owned either by the public or by organisations that permit public access. The quality of the design, construction

and maintenance of this public realm is essential to sustaining Oxford's appeal as a place to live, work and visit.

The **Oxfordshire Economic Development Strategy 2006 – 2016** identifies the difficulty of co-ordinating maintenance of the street-scene as a key challenge for sustaining a high quality urban environment. It is a key objective of the **Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2012** to work in partnership to improve the public realm in all areas of the city.

Oxfordshire County and City Councils carry the main responsibilities for ensuring that Oxford's public realm is looked after, by keeping the streets clean and safe, maintaining roads and surfaces, providing signage and looking after public amenities like benches, bins, signage and toilets. However, keeping the public spaces clean, tidy and safe is only part of the task. The Sustainable Communities Strategy states that the public realm must "… introduce a 'wow' factor that showcases the best in new urban design while also being compatible with our heritage"

The **Oxford Regeneration Framework** identifies improvements to city centre management, including improving cleanliness, and the appearance of the streetscene as an element of the strategy to enhance Oxford's 'visitor experience'.

The City Council's **Core Strategy** recognises that the city's special places are very sensitive to traffic pressures and that the traffic bearing capacity of many of the city's roads has already been reached or, indeed, exceeded. A focus of the transport policy set out in the Core Strategy is to ensure new development provides excellent opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport. Oxford already has one of the largest park-and-ride schemes in Britain, managed in partnership by Oxfordshire County Council and the Oxford Bus Company and this has contributed substantially to making the city a more pedestrian-friendly place, which allows a better experience of it's environment, yet without stifling the city's potential for economic growth.

Several phases of public realm enhancements have been completed in the city centre, including the Gloucester Green redevelopment completed in 1990, repaving of Cornmarket Street in 2003 (including the provision of the controversial benches and bins) repaving of Queens Street as a shared-surface street for buses and pedestrians, the enhancement of Bonn Square in 2008 and the recently completed repaving of London Road in Headington. The recent regeneration of Oxford Castle provides an exemplary project to create a new area of public realm in the city centre which both benefits from and complements surrounding heritage resources.

The **West End Area Action Plan** sets out a framework to create an attractive network of streets and spaces with prioritised access for cyclists and pedestrians and co-ordinated traffic management systems between the areas around the city centre and principle junctions, including Frideswide Square. This is seen as being an important element of the 'renaissance' of the West End's environment and part of its contribution to the environment of the city centre. Similarly, development of the **Northern Gateway AAP** will both aim to avoid creating traffic congestion as a result of new development and will ensure reliable and attractive public transport access to new employment sites and housing.

Providing a high quality public realm includes not only investment in good quality design and materials and maintenance but also enforcement of controls on activities that can reduce the quality of the environment. The Oxford Sustainable Communities Strategy points out the City Council's ongoing work to remove abandoned vehicles and shopping trolleys and to rapidly respond to incidents of fly tipping, which has made a positive contribution to the quality of the city's environment.

Oxford's public realm also encompasses its many significant and highly valued green spaces, like South Park, the University Parks, Bury Knowle Park and the Oxford Canal Towpath, which has recently received investment from **British Waterways**. The City Council has developed its own **Green Spaces Strategy 2006-2011**, which outlines how the Council

intends to deliver and maintain high quality green spaces with equality of access and opportunity, as well as protecting and enhancing the local environment.

They are also highly valued as Oxford's 'lungs' – providing essential space for residents and visitors to exercise, keep healthy and enjoy the outdoors. This is currently the subject of a long-term project of studies and promotion by Oxford district branch of by CPRE as their '**Green Lungs**' project.

Building a safer, stronger and more equal city

As expressed within the **Oxford Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-2012**, the key to developing a safer and more equal city is to develop well-integrated 'local' communities with a shared sense of responsibility to others and an acceptance of both settled community members and new arrivals. It is expected that this will have involved the communities' participation in regeneration and the enhancement of their shared spaces, as well as bringing together young people in community activities.

Oxford has the highest percentage ethnic minority population in the South East of England (12.9% in 2001), and can boast a long tradition of diversity and acceptance of new communities. However, there is a direct correlation between areas of the city with concentrations of ethnic minorities and the areas of deprivation.

The Sustainable Communities Strategy identifies actions to build a more cohesive city which include:
- creating opportunities for people to learn about each other and join together in neighbourhood and cultural activities;
- promoting openness, trust and dialogue to encourage positive connections and build respect between people and communities;
- reduce inequalities in health, education and economic activity between and within communities;
- enable citizens and communities to participate in community life and generate confidence and trust in local engagement opportunities; Promoting an environment in which violent extremism is challenged and not tolerated.

The City Council's **Culture Strategy & Delivery Plan for 2008-2012** identified three core priorities for developing culture in the city, which comprised:

- Promote involvement by all in a diverse range of cultural opportunities.
- Harness the potential of the creative and leisure industries as central to a vibrant city with a high quality of life.
- Support the development of a successful and sustainable cultural sector in Oxford.

This has informed an **Arts Strategic Plan** which identifies primary aims to enable a well-resourced, vibrant arts community to flourish, widen engagement in arts and use the arts to transform lives and build communities.

Following the bid for European Capital of Culture in for 2008 **Oxford Inspires** has developed a co-ordinating role as the county's cultural development agency, with a broad definition of culture.

A shortage of creative and performance space within the city was identified in the Arts Strategy in 2005. The redevelopment of the Old Fire Station will provide some opportunity to increase the amount of performance space available in the city centre.

Oxford also has challenges of crime and anti-social behaviour including high numbers of domestic burglaries, car crimes, robberies and chaotic drug misuse. Oxford Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP) was established in 1998 and uses a rolling three-year **Safer Communities Plan** (currently 2008-2011). Despite falling crime rates the Safer Communities Plan identifies priority areas to continue improvements, which include:

- alcohol-related disorder,
- anti-social behaviour,
- community cohesion,
- domestic and sexual violence,
- drug misuse,
- fear of crime,
- organised crime groups,
- serious acquisitive crime,
- vulnerable young people,
- community engagement.

Some of these priority areas are the subject of separate strategies, which include the **Oxfordshire Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy** (along with the **Nightsafe** scheme, which has operated since 2005), the **Oxfordshire Drug Misuse Strategy** and **Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Delivery Plans**. These are complemented by a **Neighbourhood Policing Programme**, which is supported by a number of **Neighbourhood Action Groups**.

The City Council has also prepared a **Children and Young People's Plan** with a code of good practice set out in the **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.**

6. Review of the Evidence Base

To manage Oxford's heritage we need to maintain a data-set of evidence concerning the resource for reference when making decisions or planning future initiatives. Evidence on the state of the resource is required to monitor its changing condition and the influence of measures for its management. To be complete this evidence base needs to cover many aspects of the heritage resource. Ideally, the evidence base should include an assessment of the significance of different elements of the resource, including an identification of the communities to which they are likely to be most significant. The evidence base should provide clarity to existing policy but should also be broad enough in scope to help in the development of policy in future. It should be readily available and accessible to a wide range of users so that it can be used to guide decision making and planning in a timely fashion by all relevant stakeholders.

To be useful the evidence base need to fulfil requirements of completeness, be up-to-date and include evidence of the condition, as well as the nature and significance of the resource. Whilst a part of this evidence base is managed by the City Council other parts are held in the libraries and archives of other institutions. For example, Oxfordshire County Council have maintained the county's Historic Environment Record (a database of archaeological information), in addition to the County Records Office and the County Local Studies Library collection now held at the Oxfordshire History Centre. Oxford University and each of the colleges have maintained archives relating to their estates, which provide invaluable documentation of the development of the city from medieval times to the present, whilst the universities' libraries contain a resource of literature that is probably unmatched in any other city in Britain. Art galleries, and specifically the Ashmolean provide collections that include paintings documenting the development of the city, whilst the city's amenity, conservation and civic societies have also amassed an array of information and documentation concerning the city's heritage.

This section of the scoping report provides a brief review of the most commonly consulted elements of the current evidence base, including brief description of their contents, intended use and availability. Many of these resources have been developed for the purpose of informing town and country planning and are related to the legal regimes of planning and management of designated heritage assets. However, they may be put to other uses, whilst other resources, such as the various libraries and archives documenting the heritage of the city, are suitable for many purposes.

One source not reviewed here is the contribution to heritage management of the expertise of local people in the value of the heritage resource to their quality of life and sense of ownership and well-being. This information is perhaps the most difficult to capture and quantify. It will be an important element of the quality assessment stage of the Heritage Plan to engage with the community to begin to capture this information.

The Statutory Lists

Schedule of Ancient Monuments:

Scheduled Monuments are protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Archaeological sites and monuments are assessed for addition to the schedule by English Heritage on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and are considered to be of national significance. At present nine monuments within the city are scheduled, although, given its historic interest and the potential for archaeological remains of national significance, there is potential for others to be designated in future.

The schedule provides details of each monument as 'scheduling descriptions'. Some descriptions were updated in the early 1990s, including an assessment of each monument's importance and relatively detailed descriptions of its historical development and present condition. The scheduling descriptions vary considerably in the level of detail provided with older descriptions typically providing less detail.

The monument descriptions may be used to inform decision making, although when considering changes to management, additional information through desk-based study and archaeological fieldwork may be sought to inform decisions. They are available to examine by appointment from the County Historic Environment Record, the City Urban Archaeological Database and English Heritage's National Monuments Record (see below). Some monument descriptions are also available via the internet through the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website, although this requires a little technical knowledge to use.

Listed Buildings:

The City Council is required to maintain a list of buildings of special historic and architectural interest under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which are otherwise referred to as 'Listed Buildings'. At present 1551 buildings in the city are included on the list, although many include additional subsidiary buildings and structures within their curtilage. Addition of buildings to this list is determined by the Secretary of State who is advised by English Heritage.

The listing descriptions are often cursory and were originally intended only to provide sufficient detail to identify the building. Except for the most recently compiled descriptions, they do not set out the significance of the building. Many older descriptions, compiled during surveys in the 1950s and 1970s may now be out of date following alterations to buildings. They do not include photographic evidence or building plans to assist in management of buildings and they do not include references to other sources of relevant information.

The City Council makes the list available to the public on request and keeps files relating to some of the buildings included, which include historic photographs and documentation used in their management, which may be available for consultation by appointment. The statutory list can also be consulted online via English Heritage's Heritage Gateway and Images of England websites.

Conservation Areas:

Conservation Areas are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 but, unlike Listed Buildings, they are designated directly by the City Council. The city currently contains seventeen Conservation Areas, which cover approximately 20 % of the city's area.

Each of these (except Jericho, which was designated in February 2011) was described in a brief report during the 1990s, providing a summary description of their character, historical

development and features of note. Since 2007 the Council have been preparing much more detailed appraisals for each of the conservation areas with the objective of providing complete coverage by 2012/13. These appraisals provide a robust and relatively comprehensive evidence base for each conservation area and have been prepared following the guidelines provided by English Heritage and in consultation with the community. The conservation area appraisals are resource intensive to produce but provide an important opportunity for Council officers to work with the community to build a consensus about the significance of the resource and the issues affecting it.

The appraisals, including finalised versions adopted by the Council and drafts for consultation, are available from the Council's website along with further information about conservation area designation, planning status and management.

Records of non-statutory designated heritage assets

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic and Horticultural Interest

Registered Parks and Gardens are not protected by law but are identified as a material consideration in town and country planning by PPS5 as designated heritage assets. They are designated by English Heritage subject to meeting a number of criteria and are graded according to their importance between II, II* and I. The city contains thirteen Registered Parks and Gardens of which four are designated Grade I and one is Grade II*.

Descriptions of each Registered Park or Garden have been prepared by English Heritage, which provide details of their origin and development although some of these are relatively brief. They do not necessarily provide an assessment of the significance of each park or garden but do provide references for sources of further information.

The Register descriptions for each park or garden are available through the MAGIC website, as well as from English Heritage's NMR by appointment.

Registered Battlefields and Wrecks:

Registered battlefields and wreck sites are both identified as designated heritage assets in PPS5 and would be a material consideration in town and country planning. Both are designated by English Heritage subject to meeting a number of criteria. No Registered Battlefields or Wreck Sites are currently designated within the city. It is possible that the evidence of the sieges of Oxford during the periods of the Anarchy (mid 12th century) and the Civil Wars (AD 1638 – 49) might merit the designation of a registered battlefield in future.

List of Buildings and Sites of Local Historic Interest:

For several years the Council has maintained an informal list of Buildings of Local Interest, which is largely made up of buildings within Conservation Areas that are not Listed Buildings but are considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area. These have not been subject to assessment against any specified criteria and have not been formally adopted by the Council. As such, they are not currently considered to merit as a material consideration in planning decisions, although Policy HE.6 of the saved policies from the Council's Local Plan would provide a policy basis for managing Buildings of Local Interest.

The list does not contain any details about the buildings other than their address.

PPS 5 suggests that other features, including sites, monuments and landscapes might be designated locally as heritage assets in order to identify them as priorities for management.

Other sources of information on the historic environment

The Oxfordshire History Centre

The Oxfordshire History Centre is due to open in May 2011 and will combine the resources of a County Record Office and Local Studies Library. This includes both primary and secondary records for the study of the history of the city and the wider county.

Primary sources include historic mapping, such as estates, tithes and inclosure maps, historic records of public institutions and organisations, collections of historic photographs, various electronic resources and oral history recordings and transcripts. It also includes a substantial library of published local history studies covering many aspects of the city's history

Oxford Landscape Character Assessment

An assessment of the character of Oxford's landscape was commissioned by the City Council in 2002, resulting in the production of a comprehensive study that formed one element of the Core Strategy's evidence base.

The study provides an overview of Oxford's landscape considering many aspects of the setting of the city and formative influences on the city's development such as geological conditions, climate and human history, as well as considering cultural perceptions of the city that have made it distinct, before defining areas of distinctive character across the city. These are assessed in a variety of ways, including the density of development, predominance of particular uses, integrity according to particular character types and sensitivity to change. The study is intended to be used to inform decision-making in land use planning but may have other potential uses in managing the city's heritage resource. The study does not aim to define areas with an identity defined by local communities, but many of the character areas are recognised areas such as the Victorian suburb of North Oxford or the villages of Old Headington, Old Marston, and Iffley.

It is available to view via the Council's Planning Reception on request, whilst a number of organisations were issued with digital copies of the study.

Historic Environment Record (HER) and Urban Archaeological Database (UAD):

Both the County Council and the City Council maintain databases of information concerning the archaeological finds and resources of their areas.

The County Council have maintained the HER, formerly known as the Sites and Monuments Record, which covers the whole of the city area. The City Council's Urban Archaeological Database contains records of archaeological remains in the city centre as well as reports of archaeological research and investigations from across the city. The City These range from complex archaeological sites providing evidence of millennia of human occupation to single artefacts reported by members of the public. It even includes records of archaeological investigations where no remains of significance were found in order to provide a record of areas of, potentially, lower sensitivity. All of this information is valuable in understanding both the past development of the city and the potential nature, extent and significance of as yet undiscovered archaeological remains. This is essential for managing the city's archaeological remains as a finite and fragile resource.

The HER is available to the public by appointment although its use may require some expert knowledge. It is also available online via English Heritage's *Heritage Gateway* website. The HER requires continuous updating to remain of value.

Published Works and Libraries

Oxford's libraries should be the envy of any British city and provide an unrivalled resource for the study of local history. The County Library service provides collections of local studies in its main libraries across the city. The university libraries, including the Bodleian, Sackler and Oxford Brookes University Library, as well as the many college libraries provide further collections with a wealth of source material, much of which can be searched using online library catalogues.

The city is very well provided by research and local studies resulting from both the activity of academics in the two universities and colleges as well as the enthusiasm and dedication of local people. A small selection illustrating the variety of such works might include the RCHME's Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of Oxford (1939), J. I. Cattos two volumes of the history of Oxford University (published 1984 and 1992), Geoffrey Tyack's architectural guide to Oxford (1998), The Victoria County History's Volumes I, II, II I, IV and V, as well as area specific studies such as Tannis Hinchcliffe's North Oxford (1992), Graeme Salmon's Oxford Beyond Magdalene Bridge (2010) or Old Headington: A village within a City (published by Friends of old Headington in 1987), as well as shorter articles on local history published in journals such as Oxoniensia. This body of material is continuing to develop. There is currently no comprehensive catalogue or bibliography available to search this material although a number of partial catalogues exist, such as the online Index to Oxoniensia, British History online's search facility or the bibliography provided by the Headington.org.uk website.

The County Council's libraries are freely available to the public although funding requirements may necessitate some changes to opening times in future. The university and private college libraries may require special permission for access to their collections.

The Oxford Archaeological Plan

The Oxford Archaeological Plan is being produced to document and characterise the known archaeological resources of the city. It will set an agenda for future research to guide curatorial decision making, and both commercial and academic investigations. A large number of individual archaeological resources will be provided with a statement of archaeological interest, whilst the historic landscape characterisation process will be applied to document the development of the city and quantify the varying degree of change and the survival of significant assets. The information gathered will inform an Urban Archaeological Strategy.

The programme to produce the Oxford Archaeological Plan is due to be completed in 2012.

The means of disseminating the urban archaeological strategy generating by the archaeological plan have not yet been established but will be determined by the Oxford Heritage Plan.

The West Oxford Historical Context Study

The West End Historic Context Study is an historic area assessment being prepared by Oxford Archaeology as a partnership between Oxford Preservation Trust and Oxford City Council. It will be used as evidence to support the implementation of the spatial vision set out in the Area Action Plan and relates to several of the policies that will guide the realisation of new development including Policy WE10 Historic environment, which is part of providing a high quality built environment. It provides an evidence base to inform the design of new development that will be delivered through the City Council's West End Area Action Plan, as well as other local planning documents. It will provide a clear understanding of the historic qualities of the west end area of Oxford, and the opportunities which new development can afford for fostering a sense of continuity and identification. It will also help to define the character of the area in a wide context and the influence of the long process of the areas

development on this character. The findings of this study have the potential to inform areas of heritage management for the area covered outside the remit of the Area Action Plan.

The West Oxford Historical Context Study is due to be completed in 2012. It will be disseminated through the West End Partnerships website. Other publication and integration of the Historical Context Study within the heritage evidence base will be determined within the Heritage Plan.

Heritage Counts/at Risk

English Heritage has produced annual reports documenting the management of the heritage resource since 2002. These include statistics concerning a variety of subjects with an annual theme. Reports from previous years have included the state of the historic environment, communities and heritage, heritage and education and heritage and climate change among others. Other parts of each annual report provide an update concerning developments in national policy and a review of indicators relating to the regimes of designation and management of heritage assets, assets identified as 'at risk', the measure used to manage these and the capacity to manage the heritage resource available in the public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as the availability of skills, use of heritage including its public benefits (such as contribution to well being) and public attitudes to the historic environment. The national report is supplemented by shorter regional reports with the data for the national indicators provided at regional level.

The information provided is intended for use across a wide range of areas of heritage management, and provides very useful comparative data.

The Heritage Counts and At Risk reports are available from English Heritage's website and can be supplied as printed documents on request via English Heritage's customer services department.

Grey literature

The term grey literature has been adopted to describe reports and studies produced as part of the planning process to provide documentation of historic sites, areas and buildings that are not generally published. These documents provide a very significant body of research, and analysis that has been produced with the purpose of informing the management of heritage resources. Most reports are produced specifically to inform a particular proposal and they may not be transferable to other projects, although they may contain valuable data that should be captured for future management.

Grey literature relating to archaeological investigations and fieldwork is held within the Urban Archaeological Database and the Historic Environment Record and can be accessed by the public by appointment at the City Council offices or Offices of the Oxfordshire Archaeological Service. An increasing proportion of this data is provided digitally and is being made available through the online Archaeological Data Service, whilst some archaeological contractors make their reports available via their own websites. The OASIS project has provided a relatively complete online catalogue of archaeological investigations that can be used to search for potential source material

Reports submitted in support of applications for planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent are held within planning files by the City Council. Files dating from before 2005 are available to view on request but may take some time to retrieve from storage. Files dating from after 2005 are more readily available although minor or householder applications will only be held as a paper copy for a limited period. Since 2005 the Council have made documents submitted in support of planning applications available via the internet through their planning website and they are currently undertaking a programme of

scanning and online publication of older documents. There is currently no catalogue or index of these reports, which might facilitate their use.

Other literature

In addition to these sources the city has a great body of information regarding the heritage provided by its many community groups and societies that have been produced for a variety of purposes which range from self-guided walking tour maps and leaflets, local history or conservation society websites and newsletters, to the reports of research projects undertaken by local societies to inform the development of programmes and policies within the city. These resources are widely dispersed, although many are likely to be held within collections such as the County Libraries' local studies collections and within each organisations archives or on their websites. The detail and function of each is likely to be variable and will affect their potential uses in heritage management.

7. Contact Us

If you have comments about this document or the Oxford Heritage Plan please contact Jacquie Martinez (jmartinez@oxford.gov.uk).