Stargazing and spin-outs
The stone heads around the Sheldonian Theatre now number thirteen (there were originally fourteen, but one was removed to make way for the adjoining Clarendon Building.) It is not known what they were intended to represent – they might be gods, wise men, emperors or just boundary markers. The original heads were made by William Byrd and put up in 1669. Replacements put up in 1868 were made in poor stone, which crumbled away; in 1972 the current set, carved by Michael Black of Oxford, were erected.

**St Giles’ Fair** began as the parish feast of St Giles, first recorded in 1624. From the 1780s it became a toy fair, with general amusements for children. In the next century its focus shifted towards adults, with entertainment, rides and stalls. In the late 1800s there were calls for the fair to be stopped on the grounds that it encouraged rowdy behaviour. During Victorian times engineering advances brought the forerunners of today’s rides. Today the huge pieces of machinery fill St Giles’ with sparkling lights for a few days each year, and whizz within feet of ancient college buildings.
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I am delighted to have this early opportunity to address all members of our richly diverse local community. The University has been part of the city for at least 800 years and is both an integral part of its fabric and the beneficiary of its support. While spires and towers, libraries and laboratories, and museums and gardens shape the look and life of the city, they could not exist in isolation from Oxford itself.

The University’s impact on the region is far greater than its dominance of the skyline. As the largest employer in the county the collegiate University is responsible for 17,000 jobs. In 2014 the University brought £478 million-worth of research contracts into the area and had more individual patents – and generated more income from intellectual property – than any other UK university, with business spin-outs alone generating £7 million.

There are, of course, many further examples of the economic and social impact of the University. The University partnership with the local NHS, from October 2015 as a Foundation Trust, enables us to lead research into some of the most challenging health problems of our time, such as heart disease, dementia and cancer. Over the course of a year in excess of 2 million people attended free events organised by the wonderfully creative staff at the University museums, libraries and collections. There are countless examples to be found, some evident, some hidden, of the University working with the city. This report tries to capture just some of them.

I have always believed that, in addition to its research and teaching, a university has a responsibility to be both a force for good in the world, and a good neighbour locally. Our community grant scheme is one way the University contributes to the life of the city. On an individual level, University staff work with and support the decision-making processes of the city and county on a daily basis. Our students volunteer for local organisations and enthusiastically go into schools to support education. We come together to strengthen an existing complex fabric of interwoven interests, from Low Carbon Oxford to cultural partnerships, from business and planning to the Playhouse and open spaces.

While still new to Oxford I am acutely conscious of the tensions occasioned by the presence of the University. We all know, only too well, the intense pressure on affordable housing in our city. That is why we do our best to house students where we can, thereby trying to minimise the additional strain on the private rental sector. Through our ongoing support of local projects and active engagement with local concerns we will continue to work with – and in support of – the wider community.

I hope you will find this report both informative and stimulating. Please keep it for reference and do use the final section on contacts as a starting point for a conversation with the University. We look forward to hearing from you.

Professor Louise Richardson
Vice-Chancellor
Foreword from the Chair of the Community Engagement Group

As Chair of the University’s Community Engagement Group I see first-hand the many ways in which we at the University are working with, and participating in, activities within the city and region. I know how important that engagement and communication are if we are to be an effective partner in the community. Some of that is about letting you know what we do in our daily interactions with the city and the region, which is what this brochure is about. But a great deal of it, and I would say the most important part, is about having the ability to discuss ideas and issues and listening to people from the diverse communities in Oxford. To permit such a dialogue the people of Oxford need to know where to go, and who to speak to when they want to raise something with us. That is why we have included the contact page at the end of this report. All this information is online, of course, but so many people said that they appreciated the previous publication, A Vital Partnership, that we decided to produce this report. I do hope you will find it informative and useful.

Professor Anne Trefethen
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services and University Collections)
Chief Information Officer, Fellow of St Cross College
Did you know?

Great Tom is the name of the bell in Tom Tower, Christ Church. Said to be the loudest bell in Oxford, it rings 101 times every night at 9.05. The 101 peals represent the 101 scholars originally at the college, who had to be back within its gates at 9pm. It rings at 9.05 because Oxford local time is five minutes behind Greenwich Mean Time!

Carfax is the ancient heart of Oxford, where the roads from the north, south, west and east gates met. It was the centre of the medieval shopping area, and the place where cattle were slaughtered. In 1610 a large stone water conduit, the Carfax Conduit, was built at the centre of the crossroads to bring in piped spring water from a cistern on Hinksey Hill. The upper part supplied water to some of the colleges, and the lower part to the city – on special occasions the conduit is said to have spouted wine! The elaborately carved structure was removed for street widening in 1789.

The Bodleian Library has underground rooms full of books, known as ‘stacks’, excavated beneath the cobbles of Radcliffe Square. A tunnel under Broad Street links what is now the Weston Library with the main Bodleian on the other side of the road; it used to contain a mechanical conveyor to take books from the stacks to readers all over the library, and a pneumatic system to convey book request forms.

To see inside the library itself, you can take one of the regular tours of the reading rooms by purchasing a ticket at the Bodleian’s Great Gate on Catte Street. Or just walk right into the new Weston Library, on the corner of Broad Street and Parks Road; it hosts free exhibitions as well as a cafe and a shop.

Did you know?

More on page 16
The University and the city have grown together over the centuries to become, architecturally at least, part of an almost indistinguishable whole.
Visitors to Oxford often ask where the University is. This is not always an easy question to answer; some parts of it are landmarks, while others seem to be hiding in plain sight.

In the heart of the city is the Sheldonian Theatre, where students are officially enrolled and receive their final degrees. It was at the University Church of St Mary the Virgin nearby that the bells were rung to call students to arms during the murderous city riots of the 14th century; the townsmen did the same for their side at Carfax, where now only the bell tower remains.

Oxford, and its university, have witnessed plague, the violent destruction of centuries-old abbeys and monasteries by the crown, the public execution of bishops by fire, the cannonballs of civil war – and, much more recently, the creation of the modern motor industry, which changed both the city and the world for ever.

Today, as the Minis roll out from Cowley to new owners around the globe, the University too has modernised its practices and outlook.
How it all began

In the 8th century the first abbey was built in Oxford: St Frideswide's. So began a long tradition of religious scholarship in the city – and St Frideswide, whose name means ‘bond of peace’, is still Oxford’s patron saint.

Pottery, weaving and tanning were the original trades of early Oxford. As the scholars gathered, however, so did landlords, stonemasons, paper makers, bookbinders, scribes, printers, tailors and shoemakers.

In the 12th century Henry II and his court regularly came to his palace at Beaumont, just outside the city wall. The court needed scholars trained in law to cope with the complexities of administration. Unable to travel to Paris while relations between England and France were strained, more scholars began to join them in Oxford. Education was often confined to the seven liberal arts; three of them taught together, Logic, Rhetoric and Grammar, were known as the trivium.

‘A horrible outcry in the town’

The scholars and the townsfolk did not always cohabit peacefully. Throughout the 1200s there were repeated outbreaks of violence, in which citizens and students maimed and killed one another. At one point many scholars fled the town, to join others at Cambridge. The violence reached a peak on St Scholastica’s Day – 10 February – 1355, when fighting went on for several days and many lives were lost on both sides.

Religious upheaval and civil war

Oxford’s abbeys and convents were destroyed during Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries in the 1530s. He respected the University, however, establishing five Regius, or King’s, professorships – today’s postholders are still appointed by the Queen.

In 1542 Oxford officially became a city, with the right to control markets and theatrical performances, and in 1586 the University was granted the privilege of printing books. Oxford University Press is now the largest university press in the world.

During the Civil War the University supported Charles I. He moved his base to the city and melted down the colleges’ silver plate to buy weaponry. Cannonballs from this era are still kept as souvenirs in some colleges.

From the 17th century to the 21st

17th-century Oxford was home to scholars such as physicist Robert Hooke and Christopher Wren, who was a professor of astronomy when he designed the Sheldonian Theatre.

In the 1800s reforms brought in the teaching of the natural sciences, and bursaries for those who could not otherwise have afforded to study. University fellows were first allowed to marry in 1877, prompting the building of large family houses in north Oxford. In 1878 Oxford University Extension Committee gave students access to degree courses regardless of their financial status.

In the 1930s Oxford’s numbers were added to by an influx of Jewish intellectuals escaping the Nazis. In 1945 state funding through the University Grants Committee gave students access to degree courses regardless of their financial status.

There are now 38 colleges and 6 permanent private halls in the University, all open to men and women. While each college is independent and self-governing, they are all part of the University as a wider whole. In recent years the student body has become much more international; today the University hosts students from more than 150 different countries, with the USA and China the most popular sources after the UK.

Interactions between the University and the community are now more diverse than ever. Academic disciplines reflect much more of the problems of our modern world, and a commitment to make that knowledge available to all. In addition to their academic studies, students today are involved in a range of volunteering initiatives and support.
The University of Oxford, including the colleges and Oxford University Press, is the county’s largest employer. It is responsible for 17,000 jobs and injects £750 million annually into the local economy.

In December 2014 the UK government confirmed that the University was responsible for the largest volume of world-leading research in the UK. In October 2015 *The Times Higher Education* world university rankings rated Oxford second both overall and in research. Much of this research is built on locally in spin-out companies.

The University of Oxford was one of the pioneers of university spin-outs. Its very first, Oxford Instruments, was established in 1959 and is now a global leader, employing 1,900 people in 13 different countries.

In May 2015 the University launched a partnership with the newly created Oxford Sciences Innovation plc. With £320 million in funding provided by six investors including the Wellcome Trust and Lansdowne Partners, the aim is to turn cutting-edge research from the Medical Sciences and Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Divisions into successful applications.

Commercialisation activities by Isis Innovation (the University’s wholly owned research and technology commercialisation organisation) support 1,600 jobs in Oxfordshire. In 2014 Isis Innovation filed 23 patents based on research undertaken within the Department of Engineering Science alone. Isis manages a total of 2,490 patents in all and generated £24.6 million revenue in 2015 (£14.5 million in 2014).

Through the City Deal (which provides £750,000 for University start-ups and spin-outs) the University has leveraged a further £10 million of private sector investment, to generate 90 jobs by March 2017.

The University is an active member of the Oxford Local Economic Partnership (OxLep) and works with it to ensure the maximum of investment in the region, along with appropriate planning for infrastructure development and growth.

The colleges, parks, museums and collections, and libraries of the University are part of the unique draw of the city which brings 6.6 million tourists to the area annually, spending £574 million and supporting 12,000 jobs in the region.
Begbroke Science Park

Opened in 2000 by Lord Sainsbury, then Minister for Science and Innovation, Begbroke Science Park is owned and managed by Oxford University. It is home to numerous research groups as well as many successful science-based businesses like Oxford Photovoltaics and Oxford Gene Technology, and new spin-outs like Bodle Technologies, Oxford Genetics and Animal Dynamics. Begbroke currently employs over 500 people although this is set to grow as the Begbroke Innovation Accelerator, a project announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, opens in summer 2016 adding 5400m² of new flexible laboratory and office space. Begbroke Science Park works closely with the local community providing a programme of school events, functioning as a conference venue and supporting numerous local activities.

For more information go to: www.begbroke.ox.ac.uk

Oxford Science Park

Covering 50,000m² of office and laboratory space, the Oxford Science Park is jointly owned by Magdalen College and the Prudential. It employs more than 2,000 people and has been operating since 1990. Over 40% of the business is in the pharmaceutical and biomedical sphere, and includes successful spin-outs such as OrganOx and Oxford Nanopore.

For more information go to: www.oxfordsp.com

Much of this research is built on locally in spin-out companies

Begbroke Science Park

Oxford Science Park

STARGAZING AND SPIN-OUTS PAGE 9
The Saïd Business School is the University of Oxford’s department for studies in business, management and finance.

It aims to translate high-level academic research into global change, creating a network between the University’s academics and dynamic, experienced businesspeople.

Every year, groups of MBA students from Oxford undertake projects in which they offer free consultancy services to businesses.

In 2015 a team worked with local company Adlens. First established in 2005 with the aim of providing much-needed corrective vision solutions to the developing world, Adlens is now a global enterprise leading the development and sale of variable-focus glasses. Oxford’s MBA students helped the company to analyse the market and the effectiveness of its business model.

Using entrepreneurship to create social benefits

The Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship is part of the Saïd Business School. It supports entrepreneurial activity that aims to tackle social inequalities and environmental challenges across the world by transforming unjust or unsatisfactory systems and practices.

It does this by training talented individuals, producing research and linking up a global community of social entrepreneurs, influential thinkers and key players in business, government and philanthropy. Leading for Impact is a programme offered in partnership by the Skoll Centre and the Berlin-based DO School for Oxford University students who want to pursue social benefit through their careers.

Adlens also participated in this programme; the students were challenged to create a business model for bringing adjustable glasses to a section of the Indian market. They learned how adjustable-focus eyewear can be combined with smartphone diagnosis methods to provide low-cost, effective eye care to 90% of all people with sight problems.

The Skoll Centre also offers a scholarship programme for Oxford MBA students. Skoll Scholars are proven entrepreneurial leaders who have worked to tackle global issues such as water, health and improving access to energy and financial services.

They are an ever-growing group of talented people who, in the words of one of their number, ‘are working super-hard to change the world’.

For more information about the Said Business School go to:
www.sbs.ox.ac.uk
Oxford University Press

Oxford University Press (OUP) is one of the biggest employers in Oxford, with approximately 2,000 people working in its city offices every day.

The press also contributes funds and books to local charities that share the University’s mission in the area of education.

**Assisted Reading for Children in Oxfordshire (ARCh)** recruits, trains and supports volunteers to help primary school children across Oxfordshire to improve their literacy skills.

Since 2012 44 OUP employees have volunteered with the ARCh programme and helped 44 children to develop their reading ability. OUP also supports the programme financially, to train its volunteers, as well as through book donations.

**Crisis** is the national charity for homeless people. It offers education, employment and housing and wellbeing services to transform lives and end homelessness.

Crisis Skylight Oxford opened in 2011 and is located in central Oxford. In 2011 OUP committed to supporting Crisis Skylight Oxford’s work with homeless and vulnerably housed people in the city. OUP’s support helps Crisis Skylight offer courses in literacy, mathematics, IT, carpentry and gardening, to enable people to return to work.

OUP also donates books to Crisis Skylight centres throughout the UK. These enable Crisis tutors to run courses and give users access to valuable reading material.

**First Story** empowers secondary school students by working with them to nurture creativity and communication skills through creative writing. First Story pays for professional writers to go into schools and provide workshops, culminating in an anthology of the students’ work.

Six schools participate in the programme in Oxford. OUP helps the students design the covers for these anthologies and provides advice about the production process. Some of the students have also had access to work experience at OUP.

For more information about OUP and its community projects go to: [www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)

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For more information about OUP and its community projects go to: [www.oup.com](http://www.oup.com)
Oxford University Estates Services

The built environment

The University of Oxford’s estate comprises 235 buildings, providing more than 600,000m² of space – equivalent to more than 80 football pitches.

Its buildings include the historic Divinity School, completed in 1488, and a significant portfolio of state-of-the-art architecture such as the Andrew Wiles Building (the Mathematical Institute) and the Blavatnik School of Government within the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter.

A further 153 properties in and around Oxford are managed commercially, including accommodation for graduate students, offices and warehouses, as well as land such as the 1,000 acres of Wytham Woods.

Strategy and investment

The University’s Estate Strategy is a progressive vision which takes a modern approach to multi-disciplinary thinking and working. Around £100 million per year is spent on capital projects and £2 billion will be invested in the estate over the next ten years so that the University can continue to deliver its core aim of offering world-leading teaching and research in world-class buildings and facilities.

Community consultation

The University is mindful of its responsibility towards the local community in ensuring the community is informed, consulted and involved where buildings and planning are concerned.

A strategy to deliver a best-practice approach has been developed, comprising briefings and public consultation events so that neighbours, community leaders and interest groups have the opportunity, at an early stage, to view proposals and speak to the design team, consultants and University representatives. Their feedback is then taken into account before any planning application is submitted.

Recently the University has been invited to become a Client Partner of the prestigious Considerate Constructors’ Scheme. As a member, the University must abide by the Code of Considerate Practice covering five key areas, including respect for the local community.

For more information about the estates provisions go to: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates
Reducing carbon emissions

The University has committed to delivering a 33% carbon emission reduction against a 2005/6 baseline. It has also signed up to the Low Carbon Oxford charter as a Pathfinder member, committing to work towards a 3% annual emission reduction over the next ten years.

Approximately £2 million is being invested annually in existing University estate in order to achieve this reduction. Projects have been implemented or identified to deliver 50% of the reduction so far.

Sustainability

The University strives for high levels of sustainability in its construction programme. Since 2009 it has exceeded already stringent local planning requirements by targeting the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology ‘Excellent’ rating for all major projects. This is the most widely internationally recognised construction assessment methodology. Recent ‘Excellent’ projects include the Mathematical Institute and the Blavatnik School of Government on the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter.

The University is also supporting local efforts to develop the deployment of lower-carbon heating. With Oxford City Council it has co-funded a Building Research Establishment study into the feasibility of district heating across the city. The University already runs extensive district heating systems (where heat is distributed from a centralised location, using a network of highly insulated underground pipes) serving many of the buildings in its Science Area on South Parks Road.

The University and colleges buy electricity collectively and this has been principally (99%) derived from renewable sources since 2009.

Transport strategy

The University is the largest employer in the county and therefore has a significant stake in the transport infrastructure, both in terms of commuting and business travel within the city.

Its transport strategy includes a number of infrastructure improvements that aim to reduce the number of vehicles in the city and support walking, cycling and public transport.

The University is also working on the number of freight deliveries it stimulates in the congested city centre. It is developing measures with Oxford City Council to reduce this in order to improve air quality, reduce congestion and enable safer cycling.

Biodiversity

The University owns and manages sites with some of the highest biodiversity in the city, including not only its green spaces but also a nationally important population of swifts in the tower of the Museum of Natural History. A strategy is being developed to connect the management of these, with a view to developing additional higher-value habitats and the wildlife corridor connections between them.

For more information about the University’s environmental impact policies go to: www.ox.ac.uk/local-community/our-impact/Environmental-impact
The University of Oxford touches on the day-to-day lives of many people in the city, in many different ways.

It is represented at a host of partnership working groups, which collectively help to ensure that the University can work, co-operate and communicate with a range of other stakeholders across the city.

The Oxford Strategic Partnership is convened by Oxford City Council and includes representatives of the county, the voluntary sector, businesses and public services. Currently it is working on a programme to improve the economic, environmental and social conditions in Oxford.

The Local Economic Partnership (OxLep) is a wider strategic body which works towards supporting the business and economic development of the city and the county. The Oxfordshire Partnership also co-ordinates links with the local councils throughout the county.

The Oxford Cultural Partnership, again convened by the city, puts arts and performing groups in touch with each other and helps them to support and co-ordinate activities, events and fundraising.

There are also other mechanisms such as the Broad Street Group, which enables the domestic bursars of the colleges along Broad Street to work closely with the city to ensure co-ordination on major events in the city centre.

At an informal level there are constant conversations with voluntary groups, the police, the health service, local MPs, councillors, social services, local schools and community groups about issues of mutual concern, but lines of communication can always be improved. If you would like to tell the University about something, the directory at the back of this publication will direct you to the right person.
Every year OUSU fundraises over £80,000 for charity, half of which is donated to local charities. To find out more go to: www.ousu.org

Oxford University Student Union (OUSU)

OUSU is dedicated to enabling students to make a positive impact on the community, with a full-time elected officer for Charities and Community. Every year OUSU fundraises over £80,000 for charity, half of which is donated to local charities. OUSU runs regular collections for the Community Emergency Foodbank, encourages blood donation and last year led students to donate 10.8 tonnes of second-hand items for the British Heart Foundation. OUSU runs housing campaigns targeting rogue landlords and the lack of affordable housing. Its homelessness campaign works closely with a wide network of local charities and lobbies the collegiate University to employ those who have previously been homeless, helping them get back into work.

Student Community Wardens

OUSU manages two warden teams, one in east Oxford and one in Jericho: the areas with the highest concentrations of students. They aim to improve communication between students and residents, and develop co-operative relationships.

The wardens work primarily by door-knocking to share information about community issues and neighbourliness, waste and recycling, landlords and letting agencies, and safety. They can act as mediators and more recently have also started running community events, which have been widely attended by both students and other local residents.

The wardens also act as student ambassadors at local meetings (including Neighbourhood Action Groups, Community Associations, Oxford Brookes Wardens, Thames Valley Police and Oxford City Council’s Waste and Recycling Team).

Such has been their success that there were no formal complaints to the University about students from local residents in 2014–15.

The Oxford Hub

Oxford Hub is a branch of Student Hubs and supports student volunteering in Oxford. Oxford Hub supports 49 student-led volunteering projects. In the 2014–15 academic year 597 students volunteered, reaching 1,080 people in the community. These projects added capacity to over 30 local community partners, such as schools, residential homes for older people and service providers for the homeless. They also helped students to engage and inspire their peers by organising events ranging from small workshops to large conferences with 300 delegates. In total, students organised 112 events with 3,249 attendees in the last year with Oxford Hub support.
Did you know?

**The Sheldonian Theatre** is regularly open to visitors. It was designed by Christopher Wren – his first public building, at a time when he was actually a professor of astronomy. It represents a Roman theatre, with the ceiling as the sky and a canvas ‘awning’ visible around the edge. It is under this ceiling that University students are formally enrolled on their courses and later receive their degrees. If you go up to the cupola (added in 1838), you will find beautiful views of Oxford’s picturesque rooftops (and it’s an easier climb than Oxford’s church towers!).

**Broad Street** was known in the 13th century as Horsemonger Street, being the place where horses were traded. A cross in the road surface marks the place where Archbishop Cranmer and Bishops Latimer and Ridley were burned at the stake in the 1550s under Catholic monarch Mary I. They were taken there from Bocardo Prison at the nearby north gate of the city; the adjoining tower of St Michael’s still stands today, and contains the door from Archbishop Cranmer’s cell.

**Rowing** races have been happening at the University since the early 1800s. At certain times of year the river by Folly Bridge is crowded with rowing eights and their supporters. The races held in the spring are known as Torpids, with Eights held in the summer. They are ‘bumping’ races, where the boats begin one in front of another, with each trying to catch up, or ‘bump’, the one in front. If successful, a boat moves up the rankings for the next race.

The boats do not actually bump into one another. The cox of a boat being caught will raise his or her arm to concede defeat when the pursuer comes close enough – unless of course it rows straight past…
Enhancing the life of the city

PART 2

A complex fabric of interwoven interests and concerns
Oxford University’s museums and collections

Inspiration for all ages

Through the display and interpretation of the University’s fascinating and diverse collections, the work of Oxford researchers and academics is able to reach a much wider audience.

Many people will be familiar with the dinosaurs at the Museum of Natural History, or perhaps they have seen the unique remains of the dodo which inspired the work of Lewis Carroll.

They may have enjoyed picking up and examining museum objects at the Pitt Rivers Museum, which holds free object-handling sessions on Saturday mornings.

Others may have seen Egyptian mummies, Guy Fawkes’ lantern and Japanese paintings of ghosts at the Ashmolean Museum. Or perhaps they have heard about the birth of radio, or learned to navigate by the stars, at the Museum of the History of Science.

The Botanic Garden on the High Street showcases over 5,000 plant species, representing habitats ranging from tropical rainforests to the slopes of the Alps; further afield, in Nuneham Courtney, visitors can go exploring among giant, cathedral-like trees at Harcourt Arboretum.

The Bate Collection of Musical Instruments gives visitors the opportunity to play something unusual from its handling collection. Where else could you try out a crumhorn, serpent or wailing electronic theremin?

The University is committed to ensuring that its museums and collections are places that spark inspiration, passion and enthusiasm for learning.

Their wonderful displays and exhibitions are brought to life through tours, talks, live performances, film screenings, art and photography classes and exciting after-hours events where visitors can meet friends, enjoy live music and explore the collections in a different light.

Attracting 2.25 million people through their doors each year, the Ashmolean, Museum of the History of Science, Museum of Natural History and Pitt Rivers Museum are some of the most-visited museums in the UK outside London and are among the greatest university museums in the world.
**The Joint Museums Outreach Service**

For some, visiting the University’s museums is something they might not consider or which might not be possible – so the Joint Museums Outreach Service takes the collections out to them.

It delivers talks, object handling sessions, craft activities and short courses in venues throughout Oxfordshire, ranging from children’s centres and care homes to prisons and refugee centres.

The programme includes supported visits to the museums, where a member of staff familiar from previous sessions will welcome groups and help members enjoy the exhibits. The aim is to help new visitors feel comfortable going into a museum, and give them the confidence to come back and enjoy the fascinating artefacts inside.

In a recent survey asking participants what they valued from their outreach experiences, respondents said that they appreciated the informal, friendly atmosphere, which helped them to learn better than being in a classroom.

The fun, inspiration and creativity of the sessions made them feel happy and more self-confident – and those bringing in their groups enjoyed it as much as the participants themselves.

**Count Me In!**

In 2014 the Oxford University Museums Volunteer Service worked with the Museum of Natural History to set up the Count Me In project. Running over a ten-week period, it was aimed at people who would not normally have considered volunteering, and who could gain particular benefit from the training involved.

Groups that were not well represented among existing volunteers were contacted through job centres, sheltered housing, children’s centres, Oxfordshire Learning Network, MIND and refugee and probation services.

Part of the training involved taking a customer service course accredited by Oxfordshire County Council. There were also talks by expert speakers, training sessions, museum visits and advice on career development. For those who took part it was a great opportunity to learn something new which they could use in their everyday lives.

In addition they experienced different volunteer roles within the Museum of Natural History: helping with object handling sessions, joining in with office work behind the scenes or meeting the public as part of front-of-house staff.

Both staff and volunteers found the project valuable and enjoyable. Through the support of those running the programme, and by encouraging one another, participants learned to overcome difficulties such as a fear of interacting with others. This gave them an enormous boost in confidence, and new skills they could apply to finding work.

By highlighting its success, this project aims to encourage other museums to run similar schemes.

For more information about the University’s museums and collections go to: www.museums.ox.ac.uk

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**A Community Engagement Officer working with adults with learning difficulties at the Museum of the History of Science**

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**The museums are increasingly embedded within the local landscape of services and support networks**

Oxford Aspire
Performing arts

The University is home to a huge range of performing groups, from the chapel choirs to a cappella singers, orchestras, ensemble groups, dance and drama. Consequently there is an enormous variety of events, workshops and performances open to the public, and many of them are free.

Some examples of the resources on offer include:

**The Oxford Playhouse**

The Oxford Playhouse is a leading regional theatre and a favourite of the city’s theatregoers. The 600-seat theatre presents a wide range of work from experimental drama to pantomime, opera, comedy, dance and music. Performers on the Playhouse stage have included John Gielgud, Sean Connery, Judi Dench, Bob Hoskins and, perhaps most famously, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor.

The Playhouse, built in 1938, was a department of the University until closure for renovation in 1985. Since then it has been managed by the independent Oxford Playhouse Trust. The University is one of three core funders of the theatre, along with Arts Council England and the City Council, and contributes an annual grant supporting up to six student productions on the main stage per year, as well as the weekly programme of small-scale student shows in the Burton Taylor Studio Theatre. Oxford student drama enthusiasts enjoy unique access to the professional stage, mentored and supported by the Playhouse staff.

In recent years the theatre has greatly increased the work produced in house, presenting and touring shows in Oxfordshire, nationally and internationally. The Playhouse Plays Out programme presents exciting theatre in unusual places – often housed on University sites. Off-stage, the theatre nurtures emerging artists through the Evolve Artists in Residence Programme and the Playhouse Playmakers Writers’ Attachment Scheme. The Learning team works with over 14,000 people each year through post-show discussions, workshops, work experience and young people’s theatre.

Oxford Playhouse 16–25 scheme (OPT in!) allows young people to enjoy theatre free or at discounted prices. There are also special rates for NHS staff and local businesses (so ask your head of department to get in touch if you work in Oxfordshire). Current students, Oxford alumni, under 18s and over 60s all enjoy discounted rates for most shows.
The Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra

The Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra is the University’s professional symphony orchestra in residence and has been working closely with the University since 2002, although the orchestra has been going since 1998. Part of its core mission is education and community work. This ranges from taking music into areas of economic and social deprivation and introducing concert-quality music to young people who will not have had an opportunity to participate before, to encouraging the most talented musicians in the county to develop their skills through tuition and masterclasses via the University and the Oxfordshire Music Service. For many this is a valuable opportunity to play alongside professional musicians.

Their work in schools is concentrated on special schools, such as the Mulberry Bush School and Northern House School where the children are severely emotionally and educationally challenged. Teachers and carers always comment on the tremendous benefit that the children derive from participating in workshops led by these musicians who are trained and experienced in this demanding, specialist work. They also work with many local primary schools in Oxford and have enjoyed a relationship over many years with the Pegasus School on the Blackbird Leys estate.

Hospitals are another area where the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra has established a regular presence. In order to ensure continuity and a close relationship, they concentrate their activities on a small number of units. They have visited the Centre for Enablement at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, a unit that caters for clients who have severe physical conditions. They also work regularly with patients who have age-related conditions at the Fulbrook Centre, and at the City Community Hospital of the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

For a listing of public events, go to: www.ox.ac.uk/whatson
The University is committed to improving educational outcomes for young people across the city.

The University has a long-standing partnership programme of initial teacher education, from which almost a third of the student teachers each year take up posts in local state-funded schools.

The Oxford Education Deanery was opened in 2013 to support teachers’ continued professional learning and to help them engage with relevant research.

Support for teachers is offered in a variety of ways

It may mean helping them develop their own subject knowledge by putting them in touch with University specialists, or helping them to access recent research on teaching methods.

The Deanery’s programme includes induction for newly qualified teachers, and an ‘enhanced’ part-time Master’s in Learning and Teaching.

These different projects are underpinned by a network of Research Champions – one nominated teacher from each secondary school in Oxford, supported by the Deanery – who can advise their colleagues engaged in implementing and evaluating initiatives in school.

The two latest research projects (supported by the University’s John Fell Fund) are focused on developing assessment tools for those pupils learning English as an additional language, particularly to smooth the transition from primary to secondary school, and on the ways in which teachers can collaborate most effectively to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable learners.

For more information:
www.education.ox.ac.uk/about-us/the-oxford-education-deanery
The Department for Continuing Education

Extending education to adults

Oxford University was a pioneer in making university education available to working adults. In 1878 Oxford University Extension started as a programme of lectures delivered around the country. Women formed a high proportion of those attending. In 1888 the first summer meeting brought 900 of these ‘extension’ students to Oxford for a week of intensive study.

**Continuing Education today**

This initiative grew into today’s Department for Continuing Education, now based at Rewley House in Wellington Square. Approximately 14,000 students enrol annually; the courses are designed specifically for those who are 18+ and want to study part time while maintaining a career or family.

More than 1,000 courses are taught each year, from one-day events through weekly evening classes to full degree programmes. They can consist of anything from a weekly French class to a master’s degree in sustainable urban development, an online course in mathematics or continuing professional development in telecommunications.

Most of the longer courses lead to a University award or other forms of credit. For those who wish to learn without the objective of gaining further qualifications a large number of short courses is on offer, lasting from one day to several weeks.

The majority of face-to-face courses are held in Oxford, and the department also has several other centres offering part-time courses. There is an extensive programme at the University of Reading, and smaller programmes in places such as Maidenhead, Newbury and Milton Keynes.

For those who require distance learning, online courses now make Oxford’s teaching available at a time and place to suit the student.

For more information about the work of the Department for Continuing Education go to: www.conted.ox.ac.uk
Community grants

In September 2013 the University introduced a small community grants scheme. This put on a regular footing the financial support that the University had already been giving to major cultural and other initiatives in the city. The University puts aside a funding pot of £50,000 a year to support projects and events which celebrate the heritage of Oxford, enhance the experience of its communities and support educational achievement. At the time of writing over 50 local projects have been supported with grants ranging from £500 to £15,000.

Some of the exciting bids that have been successful in 2014–15 include:

**Oxford’s Christmas Light Festival**
This has become the focus of Oxford’s Christmas, with the children’s lantern parade, choirs and live dance events in Broad Street and St Giles’, as well as a host of events at University venues such as the Ashmolean, the Pitt Rivers Museum, the Museum of Natural History, the Bodleian and the Museum of the History of Science. The University has provided a grant for the last three years.

**Oxford Open Doors**
Every year buildings and spaces across the city, normally private, open their doors for one weekend to the wider public. Established in 2008 by the Oxford Preservation Trust, the event is now one of the largest of its kind in the country, with over 20,000 individuals taking part over the weekend in 2015. The 2015 event was on the theme of books and printing and featured the newly opened Weston Library.
The Story Museum

A magical centre for children of all ages to wander among stories, meet some of their favourite characters and explore writing for its own sake. The annual Alice’s Day has become a fixture in Oxford’s calendar, and the University has supported it over several years.

Yellow Submarine

An award-winning local charity which provides a range of support for children and adults with learning disabilities. The University provided funding for the training of four drivers to set up a community transport hub.

Cowley Road Carnival

From small beginnings the Cowley Road Carnival has become a major summer event on the streets of east Oxford, with music, stalls, food and fancy dress. The University supplies a regular funding stream which helps to make the event such a success.

66 Men of Grandpont

Marking the anniversary of the First World War, a local group traced the history of the 66 men listed on the Grandpont war memorial and the stories behind them. This led to an exhibition and learning trail, which the University helped to fund.

Oxford is a city full of creativity, with a vibrant voluntary sector. The community grants are always oversubscribed, but help the University to play its part in supporting the life of the city. To find out more go to: www.ox.ac.uk/local-community/small-community-grants
Community education projects

Using college space

A new scheme makes University venues and practice rooms available to city arts groups.

The city of Oxford is blessed with a particularly lively arts and cultural scene, while the colleges and buildings have some of the most beautiful spaces in the country. Although these spaces are in regular use, they are sometimes available for short periods. These two factors led in February 2015 to a pilot project, the College Space Agreement.

As a result of this project, music, dance and theatre groups have all been able to make use of some of these wonderful spaces for rehearsals and performances under arrangements brokered at short notice by Oxford City Council.

In return the colleges in the pilot project have asked only for opportunities such as reduced-price tickets or access to workshops for their students.

As of November 2015 the plan is to roll the pilot out beyond its first few colleges (many thanks to St Peter’s, St Hugh’s, St Antony’s, Wolfson, St Stephen’s House, Lincoln and Hertford, as well as the Humanities Division and the Careers Service) to a wider pool of premises across the University, so that community groups and students can all benefit from the facilities that the University has to offer.

If you think that you can benefit from this scheme contact:
cthompson@oxford.gov.uk
Outreach and widening participation

Enabling city children to aim high

IntoUniversity Oxford South East, a collaboration between the education charity IntoUniversity, Christ Church and Oxford University, opened its doors in Blackbird Leys in autumn 2014.

IntoUniversity is a leading education charity, operating 18 centres in 6 cities. Its aim is to open up a world of new possibilities and careers to young people who might otherwise never have these opportunities. In 2013 82% of IntoUniversity school leavers attained a university place.

Working in partnership with local schools and teachers, the Oxford South East centre offers young people the long-term support required to achieve a university place or other education pathway. This includes after-school academic support, mentoring and a FOCUS programme designed to help young people to realise their aspirations.

IntoUniversity staff are supported by volunteers from Christ Church and the University as a whole, who act as mentors, tutors and role models. The centre also works with community organisations to achieve the aims of the programme.

Volunteers work alongside the trained, permanent staff at IntoUniversity to develop the confidence of the students through a popular small prize reward scheme and buddy trips to Christ Church.

For more information go to:
http://intouniversity.org/intouniversity-oxford-south-east

IntoUniversity has played a key role in helping young people in clarifying, supporting and strengthening their aspirations and achieving their goals

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)
Connecting researchers with local people

The agile-ox project

The University has an extensive programme of public engagement with its research. This is one example.

Oxfordshire has more than 150 environmental community groups, probably the highest concentration in the UK. The University has several hundred environmental researchers, most living in proximity to one of those community groups.

There are many environmental challenges today, both locally and at a global level. The wealth of cutting-edge work being done across the academic, professional and community sectors in Oxfordshire gives good reason for optimism.

Stimulating environmental innovation

The agile-ox project is joining the dots between University research insights and enthusiastic entrepreneurs, innovators and co-ordinators in business, local government, the NGO sector, schools and myriad community groups in towns and villages. It is focused particularly on the areas of climate, biodiversity, food, water and energy.

A range of different engagement activities helps to facilitate agile-ox’s work. Whether it is hosting the annual skill-sharing day for Oxfordshire community action groups, bringing together air pollution and low-carbon researchers with local councils, co-ordinating a cycling hackathon or organising high-profile speakers for the local Green Business Breakfasts, agile-ox is catalysing ‘bring and share’.

The purpose is to help stimulate environmental innovation of economic and social worth, from the research bench to the village hall – and places in between. agile-ox is co-ordinated by the University’s Environmental Change Institute, home to the world’s largest climate-change citizen-science experiment and committed to connecting global science with local people.

Want to get involved? For more information, including snapshots of interesting research, news of upcoming events and opportunities, and to find out how you can be part of the action, go to:

www.agileox.org
The University’s Medical Sciences Division spans a wide range of biomedical and clinical sciences. It generates scientific research of the highest quality and makes sure that this knowledge is translated into improved medical care for patients.

Approximately 1,100 staff from the Medical Sciences Division work within the NHS as doctors or nurses. The University’s clinical departments and the local health service are so intertwined that most patients in Oxfordshire will have come into contact with a University medic or benefited from the work of its scientists at some time.

A bench to bedside approach means that the results of experiments conducted in University biomedical research labs are used directly to improve the care of patients, both nationally and internationally.

**Volunteers are vital**

Local volunteers for clinical trials have been extremely important to the success of this work. For example, Oxford Vaccine Group (OVG), part of the University’s Department of Paediatrics, specialises in the development of vaccines for children.

The OVG team has conducted extensive research on meningococcal disease, which can cause meningitis and blood poisoning and is the leading infectious cause of death in children in the UK. Since 2001 more than 11,000 members of the public in the Thames Valley area, mainly children, have taken part in a wide range of OVG clinical trials.

The results have had a direct impact on national and international immunisation policies: two new vaccines have been licensed, and UK teenagers now receive a MenC booster dose (given as part of another vaccine) to ensure continued protection.

**Big data across the disciplines**

The University’s links with the NHS are long established. Now other disciplines such as physics, chemistry and maths are becoming involved as approaches to medicine develop.

The Big Data Institute is bringing together statisticians, clinicians and computer scientists to work on vast sets of data, such as records from 500,000 NHS patient volunteers in the UK Biobank project. The numbers involved will enable new observations and discoveries with the power to make huge and positive impacts on the way public healthcare is delivered in the future.

For more information about the Medical Sciences Division go to www.medsci.ox.ac.uk

**Local, national and international collaborations are key to the success of Oxford Medical Sciences and are essential in taking new discoveries out of the lab and into patient care**

Professor Alastair Buchan
Head of the Medical Sciences Division

Medical Sciences Division

Contributing to healthcare

![Ebola trial volunteer, Oxford](image)

Medical staff talking to a patient at the Churchill Hospital

![Medical staff talking to a patient at the Churchill Hospital](image)
The University owns and manages a huge variety of green spaces in and around the city of Oxford, from college grounds to the Botanic Garden. Resources such as Harcourt Arboretum, Christ Church Meadow and the University Parks are peaceful havens for city residents and tourists alike. What many do not realise is that they are often also centres for serious study. Wytham Woods is one example.

**Birds, badgers and bats**

Wytham Woods are a 1,000-acre woodland, lying three miles to the west of the city. Parts of them date back over 7,000 years; a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest, they also include wetlands and meadows.

The name Wytham, pronounced ‘white-am’, comes from the Old English wiht, meaning ‘bend’, and ham, a village or estate; Wytham lies near a sharp bend in the Thames. The woods were bequeathed to the University in 1942 by the ffennel family after the death of their only daughter, Hazel. The University undertook to maintain the natural beauty of the woods, to allow their continued use for education and research, and to give the inhabitants of Oxford the opportunity to enjoy them.

The woods are open throughout the year except for occasional closures for management purposes. There are more than 20 miles of paths; to use them, members of the public can apply for a walking permit. Wytham is one of the most researched areas of woodland in the world. So as not to disturb the habitat or the observations of researchers, no dogs or cycles are allowed. Public events, guided walks and talks take place in all seasons.

**Education**

The University has formed partnership arrangements at Wytham with local artists and potters as well as bushcraft experts. Open days and training events take place regularly. Local primary schools have permanent Forest School sites, and Wytham staff assist with educational visits. Groups range from nursery children all the way through to MSc students. Hill End, run by Oxfordshire County Council, offers residential accommodation for visiting schools.

The Sawmill Yard and its main barn are also available for hire. Wytham has hosted numerous local charities for fundraising events; the RSPB Big Sleep Out is based there, as is a local Forest Church. The Woodcutter’s Hut houses Wytham’s Artists in Residence and acts as a base for art-related activities.

For more information go to:
www.wytham.ox.ac.uk

For information about the University’s other green spaces go to:
www.harcourt-arboretum.ox.ac.uk
www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
www.parks.ox.ac.uk/contacts

Information about access to college grounds can be found at:
www.ox.ac.uk/visitors/visiting-oxford/visiting-the-colleges
Community education projects

The University is full of enthusiastic experts, eager to share their passion for learning with the wider public. Here are just two current projects.

**Stargazing Oxford: a festival of space science**

The University’s Physics Department hosted its first Stargazing Oxford event in January 2012 – open to everyone, with free admission. Picking up on public interest following the BBC’s *Stargazing Live* programmes, it included rooftop observing sessions, an inflatable planetarium and hands-on ‘astrocrafts’ sessions for ages six and above.

The aim was to reach out to people in the local community who might not have been to a University event before, but who were interested in astronomy and keen to know more. Oxford researchers from the Departments of Physics and Earth Sciences were there to meet the public and answer their questions.

Running every January, Stargazing Oxford typically attracts over 1,000 visitors, with around 80 University volunteers helping out. Physicists from the University also go out and about to other local science festivals, working with Science Oxford and local astronomy societies to bring the latest in space science to the people of Oxfordshire.

*For more information go to: [www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/about-us/outreach/public/stargazing-oxford-and-telescope-evenings](http://www2.physics.ox.ac.uk/about-us/outreach/public/stargazing-oxford-and-telescope-evenings)*

**A chance to learn Latin**

Latin is a fascinating subject for anyone interested in words, ideas, history and culture. The University’s Faculty of Classics is helping a local education charity to make it more widely available within the city.

Latin, with the wide array of topics it covers, has virtually disappeared from state schools in Oxfordshire. Dr Lorna Robinson, who studied Classics at Oxford, is determined to change this.

In 2013 she set up the East Oxford Community Classics Centre, run through her educational charity the Iris Project (founded in 2006) and hosted by Cheney School. The centre runs public courses, special events and workshops for all ages.

The University’s Classics Outreach Officer works closely with the Iris Project, supplying many willing volunteers from among the faculty’s undergraduates, postgraduates and academics.

As well as helping with special events and public courses, they support the project’s Literacy Through Latin scheme which has been teaching city primary school children aged 9–10 since 2006 using engaging activities, games, storytelling and drama to introduce Latin and classical culture. The programme has been shown to improve literacy as well promoting confidence and communication skills amongst pupils.

*For more information go to: [http://irisproject.org.uk](http://irisproject.org.uk)*

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**Stargazing Oxford was incredibly exciting: the public’s delighted fascination with space science made a big impression on us all!**

Dr Phil Marshall
University Research Fellow 2010–13

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Children explore electromagnetic fields and plasma at Stargazing Oxford
Useful contacts

Directory of useful contacts: This list is up to date as of January 2016. A current version can always be found at: www.ox.ac.uk/local-community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Job title</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begbroke Science Park</td>
<td>Dr Caroline Livingstone, Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:caroline.livingstone@begbroke.ox.ac.uk">caroline.livingstone@begbroke.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodleian Libraries</td>
<td>Suzanne de la Rosa, Head of Communications</td>
<td><a href="mailto:suzanne.delarosa@bodleian.ox.ac.uk">suzanne.delarosa@bodleian.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botanic Garden</td>
<td>Kate Castleden, Emma Williams, Education Officers</td>
<td><a href="mailto:education@obg.ox.ac.uk">education@obg.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference of Colleges Secretariat</td>
<td>Judith Finch, Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:judith.finch@admin.ox.ac.uk">judith.finch@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department for Continuing Education</td>
<td>Gail Anderson, Head of Communications and Marketing</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gail.anderson@conted.ox.ac.uk">gail.anderson@conted.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Oxford Community Classics Centre (Iris Project)</td>
<td>Dr Lorna Robinson, Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorna@irisproject.org.uk">lorna@irisproject.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Sustainability</td>
<td>Jennie Jack, Projects Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sustainability@ox.ac.uk">sustainability@ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estates Services</td>
<td>Rebecca Baxter, Capital Projects Communications Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rebecca.baxter@admin.ox.ac.uk">rebecca.baxter@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isis Innovation</td>
<td>Simon Gray, Head of Marketing</td>
<td><a href="mailto:simon.gray@isis.ox.ac.uk">simon.gray@isis.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences Division</td>
<td>Alison Brindle, Divisional Communications Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alison.brindle@medsci.ox.ac.uk">alison.brindle@medsci.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, Outreach</td>
<td>Lucinda Shaw, Head</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lucy.shaw@museums.ox.ac.uk">lucy.shaw@museums.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, Volunteering</td>
<td>Dr Lorna Robinson, Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorna@irisproject.org.uk">lorna@irisproject.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Education Deanery</td>
<td>Dr Katharine Burn, Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:katharine.burn@education.ox.ac.uk">katharine.burn@education.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Science Park</td>
<td>Ian Macpherson, Business Development Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ian.macpherson@oxfordsp.com">ian.macpherson@oxfordsp.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford University Press (OUP)</td>
<td>Emma Duke, Senior Group Communications Manager</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emma.duke@oup.com">emma.duke@oup.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford University Student Union (OUSU)</td>
<td>Emily Silcock, Vice-President, Charities and Community</td>
<td><a href="mailto:vpcandc@ousu.ox.ac.uk">vpcandc@ousu.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Affairs Directorate</td>
<td>Margaret Ounsley, Head of Government and Community Relations</td>
<td><a href="mailto:margaret.ounsley@admin.ox.ac.uk">margaret.ounsley@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Services</td>
<td>Anthony Mtitimila, Regional Projects Officer</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anthony.mtitimila@admin.ox.ac.uk">anthony.mtitimila@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Services</td>
<td>Dr Lesley Paterson, Senior Facilitator &amp; Coordinator, Public Engagement with Research</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lesley.paterson@admin.ox.ac.uk">lesley.paterson@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Said Business School</td>
<td>Catherine Quinn, Associate Dean (Administration)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:catherine.quinn@sbs.ox.ac.uk">catherine.quinn@sbs.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stargazing, Department of Physics</td>
<td>Dr Joanna Barstow, Postdoctoral Researcher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jo.barstow@physics.ox.ac.uk">jo.barstow@physics.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Administration &amp; Services</td>
<td>Emma Potts, Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:emma.potts@admin.ox.ac.uk">emma.potts@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach</td>
<td>James Slattery, Head of Widening Access &amp; Participation</td>
<td><a href="mailto:james.slattery@admin.ox.ac.uk">james.slattery@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University News &amp; Information Office</td>
<td>Clare Woodcock, Deputy Head</td>
<td><a href="mailto:information.office@admin.ox.ac.uk">information.office@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Parks</td>
<td>Walter Sawyer, Superintendent</td>
<td><a href="mailto:walter.sawyer@admin.ox.ac.uk">walter.sawyer@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wytham Woods</td>
<td>Nigel Fisher, Conservator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nigel.fisher@admin.ox.ac.uk">nigel.fisher@admin.ox.ac.uk</a></td>
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Did you know?

The Radcliffe Observatory, just off the Banbury Road, is now part of Green Templeton College. Originally a working observatory, it was completed in 1794. The top of it is based on the Tower of the Winds in Athens, with reliefs of the four winds and the signs of the zodiac; the large windows could be opened and telescopes rolled out on to the roof outside. On top of the tower is a sculpture group of Atlas, who in ancient mythology carried the world on his back, and Hercules, who was given the task of taking its weight. The observatory went out of astronomical use in 1935; it now sits next to the University’s new Radcliffe Observatory Quarter.

The Covered Market first opened in 1774. It was the work of a combined city and University committee, set up to rationalise the unruly medieval street markets of what are now St Aldate’s and Queen Street. It was originally a market only for meat, fish, poultry, vegetables and herbs.

By the end of the 18th century the sale of other wares was allowed, including butter, which had previously been traded from the Butter Bench at Carfax. Later the market was expanded and improved, and the variety of stalls and shops extended to finally become the mix we find there today.
More information about the University’s community work can be found at:

www.ox.ac.uk/local-community