

*Reference*

*Extent of repeal or revocation*

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Oxford Police Act 1868  
(31 & 32 Vict. c.lix)

The whole Act.

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*Oxford Police Act 1868*

1. According to its long title, the Oxford Police Act 1868 ("the 1868 Act") was passed "for the Establishment of a united Constabulary Force in and for the University and City of Oxford". *A copy of the 1868 Act accompanies this note.*

2. Before 1868 there were two police forces operating in the city of Oxford. One was the University police force who, operating under the direction of the proctors, policed the city by night. The other was the municipal police force, formed in 1836, who policed from 4am until 9pm.

3. This division of policing encouraged inefficient practices, whilst the cost of night policing imposed an increasing and unwelcome financial burden on the University. The 1868 Act improved efficiency and cut costs by uniting the two forces. Policing powers were vested in a newly constituted police committee which comprised both University and city corporation representation. The 1868 Act provided for the powers of the police committee and for its funding.

4. Section 25 of the 1868 Act provided that it should cease to have effect after 1 January 1882 unless Parliament had in the meantime provided otherwise. In the event, Parliament did not provide otherwise. Instead the 1868 Act was superseded by the Oxford Police Act 1881 ("the 1881 Act")<sup>12</sup> which provided that, as from 31 December 1881, the united police force should be continued and maintained as hitherto but with a new police committee given new powers. The

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<sup>12</sup> 44 & 45 Vict. c.xxxix.

city corporation's representation on the committee was increased, as was its financial contribution.

5. The dual control approach was ended in 1889 when the city corporation was given full control over policing in Oxford. An order was made in that year<sup>13</sup> which repealed substantially the whole of the 1881 Act<sup>14</sup> and extended the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act 1882, as they related to police in boroughs and county boroughs, to the city of Oxford. In 1968 the Oxford city police force was amalgamated with other police forces<sup>15</sup> to form the Thames Valley police force.

6. Although the 1868 Act expired on 1 January 1882, it has remained on the statute book in the absence of an express repeal. Such a repeal is now proposed.

#### *Extent*

7. The 1868 Act extended only to the city of Oxford.

#### *Consultation*

8. The Home Office, the University of Oxford, Oxford City Council and the Thames Valley Police have been consulted about this repeal proposal.

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<sup>13</sup> See Local Government Board's Provisional Order Confirmation Act 1889 (52 & 53 Vict. c.xv), City of Oxford Order, art.28(1)

<sup>14</sup> The remainder of the 1881 Act was repealed by the Oxfordshire Act 1985 (c.xxxiv), s.49(2), Sch.3, Pt.1.

<sup>15</sup> Reading, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. See Thames Valley Police (Amalgamation) Order 1968, SI 1968/496.