

Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Tourism Review Group Recommendations Update

Recommendation	Update as of September 2020 / June 2021
<p>Recommendation 1: That the Council convenes with key partners (e.g. the universities and Experience Oxfordshire) to develop a shared vision for tourism in Oxford. This should also recognise the needs and wishes of residents, and be made public and promoted through the Council's media channels.</p> <p>Key principles of the vision should situate Oxford as a city that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) welcomes all visitors (local, national and international) b) Aspires to have high-quality, low carbon, transport facilities c) Is best experienced through an overnight stay d) A gateway to other tourism destinations in the region 	<p>It was agreed that this would be pursued as part of the Economic Strategy and City Centre Action Plan, and that consideration was needed regarding locally available resources to deliver on the vision. Consultation drafts are now planned for consultation later in 2021, anticipating this will be best after the worst economic restrictions have eased. Throughout this last 18 months have also had regular consultation with partners on what action is needed, through the Economic Growth Board and City Centre Task Force, also actively engaging in Economic Recovery Planning and delivery. Experience Oxfordshire, OxLEP, and other key partners are part of this. Efforts have been focused on supporting business survival and reopening at this time, but will shift again to the vision.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: That the Council, through its membership on the Boards of Experience Oxfordshire and OxLEP, actively supports local efforts to prepare for the Tourism Sector Deal (such as bidding to become an official Tourism Zone), which would lever in investment to extend the tourism season and improve transport access for visitors to the City.</p>	<p>Government published the Tourism Sector Deal in June 2019. An Oxfordshire working group was set-up to explore Oxford's needs for potential Tourism Zone (5 were mooted as part of the deal). This included the LEP, Experience Oxfordshire and The City Council. A discussion paper on the options for such as zone in Oxfordshire was prepared.</p> <p>However, there has since been no clarity from government on whether a Tourism Zone policy will be pursued. Officers are still monitoring this for any new announcements or similar initiatives.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: That the Cabinet reviews the process and</p>	<p>In part agreed. This was a budget decision made February 2019</p>

<p>assessment undertaken which led to the proposal to phase out funding to Experience Oxfordshire, and undertakes to work with partners to jointly ensure there is a suitable and sustainable funding model for destination management in the future.. Recommendation</p>	<p>in accordance with the council's procedures. Councillors then assessed this alongside all other budget reductions and proposals. It was agreed it is important we engage in conversations with all relevant stakeholders on finding the most appropriate funding model to permit a sustainable approach to tourism promotion and destination management. We have since commissioned various services from Experience Oxfordshire and are an Ambassador partner of EO until March 2023. The City Council co-funded the England Originals campaign as a way to attract domestic visitor markets post COVID. Another is annual procurement of the data on the volume, value and employment benefits of tourism. We are also working on Welcome Back Fund proposals with Experience Oxfordshire that will meet local needs.</p> <p>The City Council provided £50,000 of new funding to Experience Oxfordshire, to help support the visitor economy in Oxford over the period to March 2023. Experience Oxfordshire will use the funding to signpost and help businesses access grants and wider support, promote Oxford to UK and international visitors, and help the City and County Councils shape longer-term issues around destination management, including tourist coach drop-off and layover.</p> <p>We responded to the DMO review (review to be published Sept 2021) to highlight the need for centrally funded Local DMOs.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: That the Board member for Culture and City Centre becomes the Council's representative on the Board of Experience Oxfordshire, and consideration is given to how their portfolio title can better reflect their remit for tourism matters.</p>	<p>Not agreed. It was agreed that a senior officer, in this case, the Director of Development takes up the position on the board.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: That the Council has a named officer or</p>	<p>Yes. Director of Development with support from a range of</p>

team to be recognised as the lead on tourism matters.	officers from the Regeneration and Economy Service.
<p>Recommendation 6: That the Council continues to encourage employers within the hospitality and tourism sectors in Oxford to pay the Oxford Living Wage, including the universities and colleges. Further, that the Council's promotional activity around the Oxford Living Wage incorporates customer facing marketing, which encourages conscience driven spending with Oxford Living Wage accredited shops and services.</p>	<p>This is already resourced in line with previous recommendations. Around 36 businesses have self-certified as OLW employers since the October Visitor economy update. It must be said that only a few of these new sign-ups have been visitor economy related businesses. Under the COVID-19 Discretionary Grant Scheme, officers sought information from applicants as to whether they paid the Real Living Wage of more than £9.30 per hour as part of the evaluation process. 245 of the applicants stated they did pay at least £9.30 per hour, many of these Retail, hospitality and leisure businesses. Officers will further encourage those that received grants to accredit formally on either or both schemes (RLW or OLW).</p> <p>Aside from the above, given the sector is struggling due to ongoing restrictions, the future focus is best applied to encouraging enterprises creating new jobs to pay OLW, particularly where they receive business support of any kind. The OLW remains a top priority in the Draft Economic Strategy.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: That the Council, having secured support from the County Council, develops an action plan to become a 'Coach Friendly' city, with key performance indicators and milestones, in accordance with the seven criteria set out by the Confederation of Passenger Transport. This should incorporate short, medium and long term strategic infrastructure plans for improving drop off and layover facilities in the City, linking with key wayfinding routes and providing sufficient facilities for passengers and coach drivers. Key stakeholders including the bus companies and the DMO should be engaged with through this process.</p>	<p>In part. <i>Both Councils are committed to improving the coach operation for the benefit of residents and visitors. We recognise that effective management of coaches can assist in reducing congestion, improving air quality and safety. There are number of challenges that need to be addressed before the Council could meet the seven objectives set by the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT). However, we would be happy to engage the CPT in this process. It will probably require a joint city and county resource to be employed/identified for a defined period to be effective.</i></p> <p>Since the review, officers have since engaged with the Confederation of Passenger Transport to understand what is required to become a 'Coach friendly city'. The requirements</p>

	<p>were not immediately achievable without improvement to coach drop off and layover facilities. Following this, County council colleagues have been engaged at length to discuss and agree potential new drop off locations that can be clearly signposted to the industry. Funding was allocated in this year's budget to conduct a feasibility study jointly with the County Council on potential new locations. A survey of coach drivers and passengers was also prepared prior to the COVID pandemic, drawing on lessons from Cambridge. Due to the COVID response and recovery, this has not been advanced as yet, given the lack of coaches in the city.</p> <p>Plans to communicate the information required to drivers and coach firms were also being prepared for City, county and Experience Oxfordshire websites, but have been paused at present due to uncertain demand for future visitor coaches. Surveys would not be appropriate when future business survival is so uncertain for so many operators. We also need to consider links with the wider ZEZ being developed at present.</p> <p>City and county officers have continued to work on the coach drop off / layover issue since the last update and an additional temporary stop off point is being drawn up and consulted on with key stakeholders as a trial step towards reducing the pressure on traditional drop off points. Further updates on this work will be shared with this group as finalised. Officer resource is stretched across a range of economic recovery priorities and this would need to be managed as part of a work programme.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: That the Council makes representations to Oxfordshire County Council concerning the need to distinguish standalone transport and infrastructure plans for tourist coach access in future strategies and policy documents. Further, the Council takes an active role in raising the profile of the tourism sector within key strategic documents, such as the emerging</p>	<p>Yes. See above. Also This is being done as part of the usual policy consultation process, with the County Council preparing a new Transport and Movement Strategy for Oxford, which is intended to align with the Connecting Oxford proposals, which will prioritise public transport.</p>

Economic Growth Strategy and Local Transport Plan 5.	The Economic Development and City Centre strategies place clear priority on sustainable movement and connectivity for the long-term needs for the city's economy as well as a strategic priority to rebuild the visitor economy.
Recommendation 9: That the Council reviews and updates the current drop-off and layover advice for coach operators, as set out on the Council's website, and commits to more frequent engagement with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and the Coach Tourism Association.	Yes – See point 7, which covers this. The website has been reviewed and updated in the interim. See the link .
Recommendation 10: That the Council issues and resources a survey to tourist coach companies, in partnership with Experience Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council, to better understand; the number of coaches that enter the City, their movements, and barriers to making best use of existing facilities. This should broadly reflect the research approach taken in Cambridge	Yes – see point 7, which covers this. The survey has been drafted. The timing of publication needs to be agreed with our partners. The draft will need to be reviewed given the changes in operation brought about by COVID. For reasons outlined above, this will not take place in 2021 either because of the dramatic drop-off in visitor numbers and the change in type / country or area of origin of those who have been or are expected to visit Oxford this year.
Recommendation 11: That the Council remains involved in discussions with similar cities about the introduction of an overnight tourism levy, and supports national efforts to lobby for the ability to introduce such a levy. Any plan must capture all providers of commercial paid accommodation, not just hotels, and assurances are needed that the revenue generated will go towards improving the visitor experience. Consideration should be given to the Local Government Association's role in supporting this effort.	In part. We continue to monitor the situation. Whilst this is not high up the policy agenda for government at present, an LGA survey published in September 2020 suggested 53% of 2,023 UK residents polled for the Local Government Association (LGA) want their local authority to be able to charge a small fee to help support tourism in their area. We will see what opportunities may come forward as Devolution and Local Recovery Policies evolve in the coming months. Local tourism business needs will have to be carefully considered alongside this. The LGA also pushed for piloting of Levies in any Tourism Zones agreed. We continue to monitor the opportunity.
Recommendation 12: That the Council takes an active role in promoting and supporting digital innovations and tourism	In part. The City Council offered promotional or sales support to Experience Oxfordshire, who piloted the Oxford Pass, during the

<p>products that benefit the City and its residents. For example, the Oxford Pass, Wayfinding apps, the Sociability App and Refill Oxford. Official partner status should be sought if considered appropriate.</p>	<p>early phases with the Oxford Bus Company and Blenheim Palace. This offer of support was not required until after the pilot phase was complete, and it might have been expected to be scaled-up. The Oxford Sociability App developers were supported through the Smart Oxford Programme.</p> <p>Through 2020 and 2021, Oxford City Council, the Oxford Mail and others partnered to boost city centre businesses and cultural attractions by encouraging people to 'Rediscover Oxford'. The campaigns aimed to encourage local residents to visit their home city for day trips, and those from further afield within the UK to visit for staycations. The campaign also encouraged local residents to reengage with their city through cultural activities.</p> <p>The recent allocation of 'Welcome Back Fund' (WBF) to Oxford City Council will allow the city council to continue to work closely with partners on some of the interventions outlined in the recommendation. We also helped fund Modern Art Oxford to work with EO to fund 'Inspirational Oxfordshire' a campaign to promote the cultural sector locally.</p>
<p>Recommendation 13: That the Council writes to local Members of Parliament, inviting the support of Experience Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council, to make the case for the Discover England Fund to continue beyond 2019. Consideration should be given to whether this action is time appropriate in light of any parallel bid to become an official Tourism Zone as part of the UK Tourism Yes This will be coordinated with partners.</p>	<p>Yes. The Discover England Fund was already likely to be continued at the time this was first agreed. It has since benefitted Oxford directly. 'England's Historic Cities' consortium year 5 Discover England Fund (DEF) bid was successful with project top up/enhancement/development of nearly £200k. This is a project that enables Oxford to be promoted via VisitEngland with Experience Oxfordshire as the delivery partner on the ground. To date, this project has attracted investment of £1.5million and a link to the website can be found here https://www.englandoriginals.com</p> <p>Since this recommendation was made the government focus has been on recovery and restart, so other funds have been</p>

	<p>able to be used to continue support across Reopening High Streets Safely, Additional Restrictions Grants and WBF. For example, Oxford City Council used Reopening High Streets safely Fund to help match fund the project with £5,000, leveraging in significantly greater funds to promote Oxford. The focus of the project is as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance existing web platform, app and trade engagement • Pivot the project to promote the cities to the domestic markets (previously a USA only campaign) to ensure destinations benefit in the autumn/winter months • Target market is the millennials as the ones that have the most confidence to travel • Continued engagement with USA trade operators to attract return international businesses from spring 2021 • Add to existing product offer • Provide new video and photography assets. <p>We are also working with Experience Oxfordshire on best use of the recently announced Welcome Back Fund worth £134,950 to support local recovery activity, possibly including a significant domestic tourism campaign.</p>
<p>Recommendation 14: That the Council reviews its current role in the administration and development of an annual events calendar, and seeks opportunities to be proactive and strategic in shaping a calendar that will increase the City's appeal to regional domestic visitors.</p>	<p>Not agreed at the time of the review.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15: That the Council undertakes to revive the Community Toilet Scheme with local businesses, and that it is explicitly within the remit of the Council's new City Centre</p>	<p>In Part. Experience suggests that this was a challenging ask given the potential for ASB issues. The City Centre Manager (CCM) has considered the options available on the scheme and</p>

<p>Management function.</p>	<p>has fed this into the City Centre Action Plan work. If there is business interest and support as part of the strategy consultation, it will be pursued as a project for the action plan. The CCM has had initial conversations with businesses regarding the scheme. Again, officer resource will need to be prioritised accordingly given constraints. Finally external funding is being sought for additional officer resource to enable events programming with partners in the city.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16: That the Cabinet commissions an Option report concerning the long term future provision of adequate public conveniences in the City Centre. This should be produced in consultation with Oxford Direct Services.</p>	<p>In part. A members Briefing was provided in October 2019 with a range of options reviewed. Whilst desirable, any new investment in this area will be paused due to budgetary constraints and lack of officer resource. Officers will look at where opportunities for provision can be aligned with future developments across the city centre.</p>
<p>Recommendation 17: That provision is made in the Cabinet's draft budget proposals for 2020/21 to include an allocation for updating and/or upgrading the current static maps and signage in the city centre. This should specifically include creative signage between the Westgate Centre, the Covered Market and Cornmarket Street. An ongoing revenue allocation should be provided for their maintenance and review.</p>	<p>It was agreed by Cabinet in June 2019, that this recommendation will be explored with the proviso that consideration is given to options that use existing space / street furniture / buildings, that anything done on this is future-proofed and that the emphasis is on innovation and takes into account the need to limit 'street clutter'. This project is identified a priority action in the Draft City centre Action Plan, assuming resource can be identified for delivery.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18: That the Council considers the potential of the City's waterways as a visitor attraction and leisure asset in future policy making (e.g. planning and licensing) and investment decisions, and works to support the Oxford Waterways Project to create new tourism opportunities through regenerating and improving facilities (e.g. in particular, boating facilities).</p>	<p>Notable improvements include major towpath resurfacing works to improve cycle/walking and general leisure use of the waterways, new signage and some facilities improvement. Working closely with volunteers, a wide range of environmental improvements include habitat creation and tree planting. Working with the Environment Agency wrecked/abandoned boats have been disposed of to remove hazards and improve the public realm. Investment was made in delivering a tourism promotion campaign in partnership with Experience Oxfordshire over 2020. Work is ongoing to try and implement new visitor</p>

	<p>moorings at Folly Bridge.</p> <p>Safety and maintenance issues have taken priority in the intervening period. Addressing the health and safety concerns around our own waterway assets has been set as the number one priority for the new waterways officer. Finally, Waterways will be a proposed theme in the emerging City Centre Strategy under the overarching aim of Visitor Economy Recovery.</p>
<p>Recommendation 19: That the Council reviews to what extent codes of conduct exist for managing the behaviour of students at language schools (including the management of large groups in public spaces), and seeks to ensure they are being used to safeguard visitors, and satisfy the behaviour expectations of residents.</p>	<p>In part, noting significant resource challenges. Language school managers, police and Safer Oxford colleagues were involved with CCM in an initial meeting in Autumn 2019 with a view to scoping how this type of policy could work. Plans for twice yearly forums with follow up individual meetings were proposed. The COVID19 Pandemic has meant this work is currently paused as Language Schools face significant ongoing financial challenges. When it is appropriate to plan for the management the impact of the sector as the recommendation outlined in 2019, officers will pick this back up. We continue to monitor this.</p>
<p>Recommendation 20: That the Council makes representations to Oxford University, welcoming greater publicity concerning public opening hours for the colleges, and other practical steps to improve awareness of, and access to, the colleges.</p>	<p>Yes. Experience Oxfordshire provides details of the Opening Hours of Oxford's Colleges as does the University of Oxford.</p>

<p>Recommendation 21: That where business led opportunities arise; the Council should take a full and active role in leveraging in the influence of the business sector to improve the public realm and wider visitor offer.</p>	<p>Yes. We are pursuing this on an ongoing basis as part of developments coming forward e.g. Northgate Development, Oxpens and Station Masterplan, for example. Moreover, the City Centre COVID19 Recovery Plan, Reopening High Streets Safely Fund and its successors are being used to enable greater resting, active travel, and outdoor seating space to support people and businesses to return to visiting and trading in the city. The requirement for investment in public realm, has been supported in the OxLEP Economic Recovery Plan and draft City Centre Action Plan. In the pandemic response, we have also put in place outside dining and public spaces including Broad St Meadow, George St, St Michaels St, Cornmarket and many others.</p>
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