



UNIVERSITY OF  
**OXFORD**

# Parliamentary Briefing

## Working with the local community

- In 2011-12 the Oxford Hub placed 610 students in local voluntary projects.
- In 2011-12 200 students provided support in local schools.
- In 2011-12 15,000 continuing education students, most of whom live within a 60-mile radius of Oxford, studied on 600 courses
- Over 2 million people visit the University's museums and collections every year, including over 112,000 children on school visits, many from the surrounding area, and almost 33,000 adults taking part in adult education activities.

Oxford University has been a central part of the city of Oxford and the surrounding region for 900 years. Although in the early years that relationship was not always harmonious, Oxford University now sits as a major economic, cultural, and social hub for the area.

### The Hub

The Oxford Hub is one of the largest student volunteering bodies in the country. Established in 2007 by four students, it has since been rolled out to five other universities, is a registered charity, and in 2011-12 moved into its own premises. It employs three full-time members of staff. Today it reaches 5,500 students on a weekly basis, and supports 22 projects across the town, ranging from visiting elderly people to sustainable food sourcing.

### The Oxford Playhouse

The Oxford Playhouse is part-funded by Oxford University, and works closely with it to provide opportunities for student drama as well as major outreach to the community of Oxford. The Playhouse team works with the University widening participation team and individual colleges to run workshops, tours and subsidised or free trips to the theatre for schoolchildren visiting Oxford. The theatre also provides training opportunities and work placements to students through the University Careers Service and various student groups.

### Sport

The CommUniSports scheme runs coaching and other sports projects in the local community, mainly with schools. More than 1,500 local children have taken part since it began in 2003, and the scheme has also worked with community groups such as the Oxford Crime Reduction Initiative.

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Many University sports facilities are also accessible to Oxford residents. Around 400 local residents as well as University members use the University's new gym, PULSE, and 350 Oxford residents with no University connections use the Rosenblatt Swimming Pool, the University's high-specification 25-metre pool. Local state schools have swimming lessons here free of charge during the school term.

The London Olympic Games Organising Committee included the University as an approved training centre in the run-up to the 2012 Games. The University was the training base for the New Zealand triathlon team and the Chilean track and field team, and hosted a community event when the Olympic torch came to the University running track.

### **Archeox**

Archeox (the Archaeology of East Oxford Community Project) is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in-kind and volunteer work from the University. Four part- and full-time archaeologists from the University oversee the project. It currently has 550 volunteers, and reaches a great deal more local people through a range of excavations and community events across East Oxford, engaging with the general public, schools, mental health charities, over-60s groups and local historical groups.

The project was nominated for 'Best Community Archaeology Project 2012' in the British Archaeological Awards.

### **Cultural**

The collegiate University provides an enormous range of public activities, many of them free, from performances by its many choirs and musical ensembles to lectures, guided tours, and art exhibitions. In addition there are the year-round activities and exhibitions provided by University facilities such as the Ashmolean, Pitt Rivers, Natural History and History of Science museums. The University works with other key stakeholders in the city to ensure an excellent and varied programme, accessible to all.

### **Continuing Education**

The Department for Continuing Education, which has existed in some form since the 19th century, provides for many who have not been to university before. It now has outreach centres across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire to provide courses from modern languages to conservation.

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