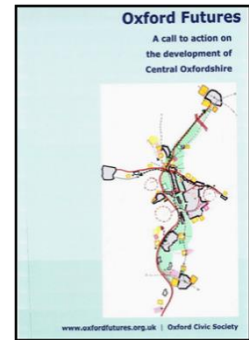
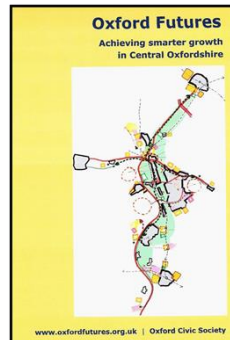


Oxfordshire Futures Group

Purpose

The Oxford Futures Group was launched in 2015 to implement the recommendations of the Society's 2014 Oxford Futures Report.

This report noted that whilst the Oxford city-region has the potential to become a key driver of the regional and national economy in the 21st century, based primarily on the strength of its science-based industries, the city and surrounding district councils and the county council are struggling to support the knowledge economy. Inefficient transport and housing provision are the key problems.



Membership

As the geographic focus of this group is the city-region and the county, the group has been re-named the Oxfordshire Futures Group. Membership of the group has been opened up to amenity groups of various kinds from Oxfordshire. Ian Green (OCS Chairman) is the Coordinator

The Group's work

Current priorities include:

- **The Oxford Local Plan 2016-2036**

The immediate priority is to participate fully in the Oxford Local Plan consultations, this year and next. The Local Plan to 2036 is wide ranging with a number of major policy shifts. The Society plans to hold a number of meetings to discuss the plan with members. The Society facilitated a kick-off meeting of the Local Plan consultation.

- **Oxfordshire local government reorganisation**

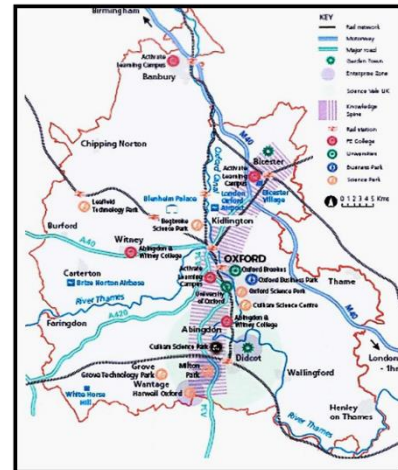
Another priority is wholehearted continued participation in the debate on Oxfordshire local government re-organisation and/or devolution.

We were disappointed that a proposal for a Unitary County Council (the 'Better Oxfordshire' proposal which abolishes the District and City Councils) was submitted to the Secretary of State, Department of Communities and Local Government by only three of the local authorities in Oxfordshire. We believe much more thought is needed on this proposal and on the recently submitted counter-proposal of the other three local authorities of Oxfordshire. In our view consensus across the County is essential before the Secretary of State is involved.

- **Joint spatial plan for Oxfordshire**

We are delighted that the Oxfordshire Growth Board has decided to prepare a Joint Spatial Plan for the County. This will help to achieve another kind of consensus – this time on how far the contentious county-wide economic growth targets and the county-wide housing growth targets can be accommodated without damaging our world famous heritage, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt and rural villages that have no wish to grow.

Such a spatial plan was one of the Society's recommendations in its 2014 report *Oxford Futures*. Our priority is constructive collaboration in the preparation of the plan perhaps by organising public meetings on agreed topics.

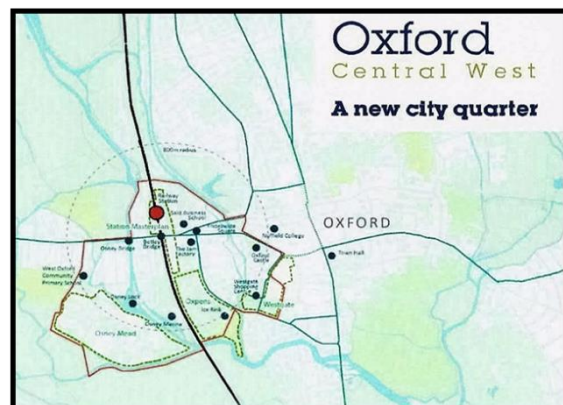


- **Development in the West End of Oxford City Centre**

The Westgate redevelopment was completed in October 2017 and the developer is linking the retail and entertainment uses of the Westgate with the Castle. The City Council is ready to finalise the revised Master Plan for the Oxpens development site, a new draft Supplementary Planning Document for the station area has been prepared, Nuffield College is preparing plans for Hythe Bridge Street and Park End Street and the University will be developing the area it owns in the Osney Mead Industrial Estate.

An overall transport plan which integrates these various developments and which integrates the new west end with the city centre is essential. Nearly 50 years on from the founding of the Society to ensure a sensible city centre transport strategy we are still lobbying for this!

As the Society is a member of the West End Area Steering Group we are in a good position to work with key stakeholders. Our Centre-west Group focuses on this.



Contacts

For more information, please contact **Ian Green** (OCS Chairman and Oxfordshire Futures Group Coordinator) on chairman@oxcivicsoc.org.uk