

Experience OXFORDSHIRE

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2016/17



**WORKING WITH BUSINESSES TO GROW AND
DEVELOP THE VISITOR ECONOMY**

www.experienceoxfordshire.org

AN INTRODUCTION TO EXPERIENCE OXFORDSHIRE

Experience Oxfordshire is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Oxfordshire. We are a not-for-profit partnership organisation committed to the promotion, management and development of Oxfordshire as a great destination to live, work, visit and do business.

We have a growing Partnership network of businesses spanning all parts of the visitor economy. Through effective collaboration we are all working to ensure Oxfordshire becomes a leading destination for tourism, culture and business.



The past year has seen the continuing development of Experience Oxfordshire as the lead organisation for tourism and the development of the visitor economy in the City and the County. I have been very proud to be part of Experience Oxfordshire for the past five years and we continue to work hard to ensure that it becomes a sustainable Destination Management Organisation (DMO).

We have a great staff team and a committed Board of Directors who give up their time to help drive the organisation forward.

—Professor Graham Upton, Chairman, Experience Oxfordshire



This has been another extremely busy year for Experience Oxfordshire and we have achieved a great deal. We have continued to work with businesses to grow and develop the visitor economy. Both our Partnership and Ambassador programmes have continued to grow with more businesses across Oxfordshire wanting to engage with us and support us.

This year we have used more digital technology than ever before to promote our great County. We have invested a suite of new websites which covers B2C, B2B and MICE and our social media presence and following has grown. We were also delighted to launch an augmented reality (AR) app to help promote the destination and we have more technological developments planned.

Our events programme has continued to thrive with networking events, training, and our first annual conference which welcomed 'Insights from the Experts' and saw key national figures address our Partnership network.

We have also improved our data collation and research through the introduction of T Stats – a FREE partner benefit – and are also now using a new improved Economic Impact Model from Destination Research. Tourism continues to be a major contributor to the local economy with Oxfordshire welcoming 26.5 million visitors a year to the County who spend £1.96 billion in the local economy. One in every eleven jobs in Oxfordshire is in tourism and it is an extremely important industry that we continue to invest in.

We have been successful in securing funding from the Discover England Fund, the former UKTI (now DIT) and the European Travel Commission which has enabled us to be more proactive in the International markets. This year also saw success for our Visitor Information Centre in Oxford who were finalists in the VisitEngland Awards for Excellence, something we are very proud of.

We are passionate about ensuring Oxfordshire is promoted as a world-class visitor destination and that we encourage more visitors to stay longer and spend more in this great County. Partnership is at the essence of all that we do and we would like to thank all our Partners for their support, we couldn't do it without you.

All the team here at Experience Oxfordshire look forward to continuing to work with our Partners to ensure that Oxfordshire is a great destination to live, work, visit and do businesses.

—Hayley Beer-Gamage, Chief Executive, Experience Oxfordshire

A THRIVING OXFORDSHIRE VISITOR ECONOMY



Oxfordshire welcomes **26.5 million** visitors a year



The total value of the visitor economy to Oxfordshire increased by 5% to **£1.96 billion**



The total number of jobs in the visitor economy increased by 4% to **33,447**



2.6 million visitors stayed overnight in Oxfordshire



Spending a total of **9.5 million** nights in the County



A **5% increase** in the number of nights spent in Oxfordshire



And a **4% increase** in the trip value of overnight stays



23.9 million visitors spent the day in Oxfordshire



And they spent **£931.1 million**



An increase of **3%**

Data based on 2015 Economic Impact of Tourism Study by Destination Research. Increases calculated in comparison with the 2014 Economic Impact Study data.

PROMOTING OXFORDSHIRE TO A LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

DIGITAL MARKETING

The past year has seen a transformation in Experience Oxfordshire's digital marketing as we invest to keep pace with the ever changing digital world.

New Conference website

The new conferencing website was launched in June 2016. The website was developed by the Experience Oxfordshire team and features improved design and user experience which has resulted in an increase in website traffic and enquiries. The website aims to inspire individuals and businesses to use Oxfordshire as the location for their conference, meeting, event or wedding.

New Visitor and Partner websites

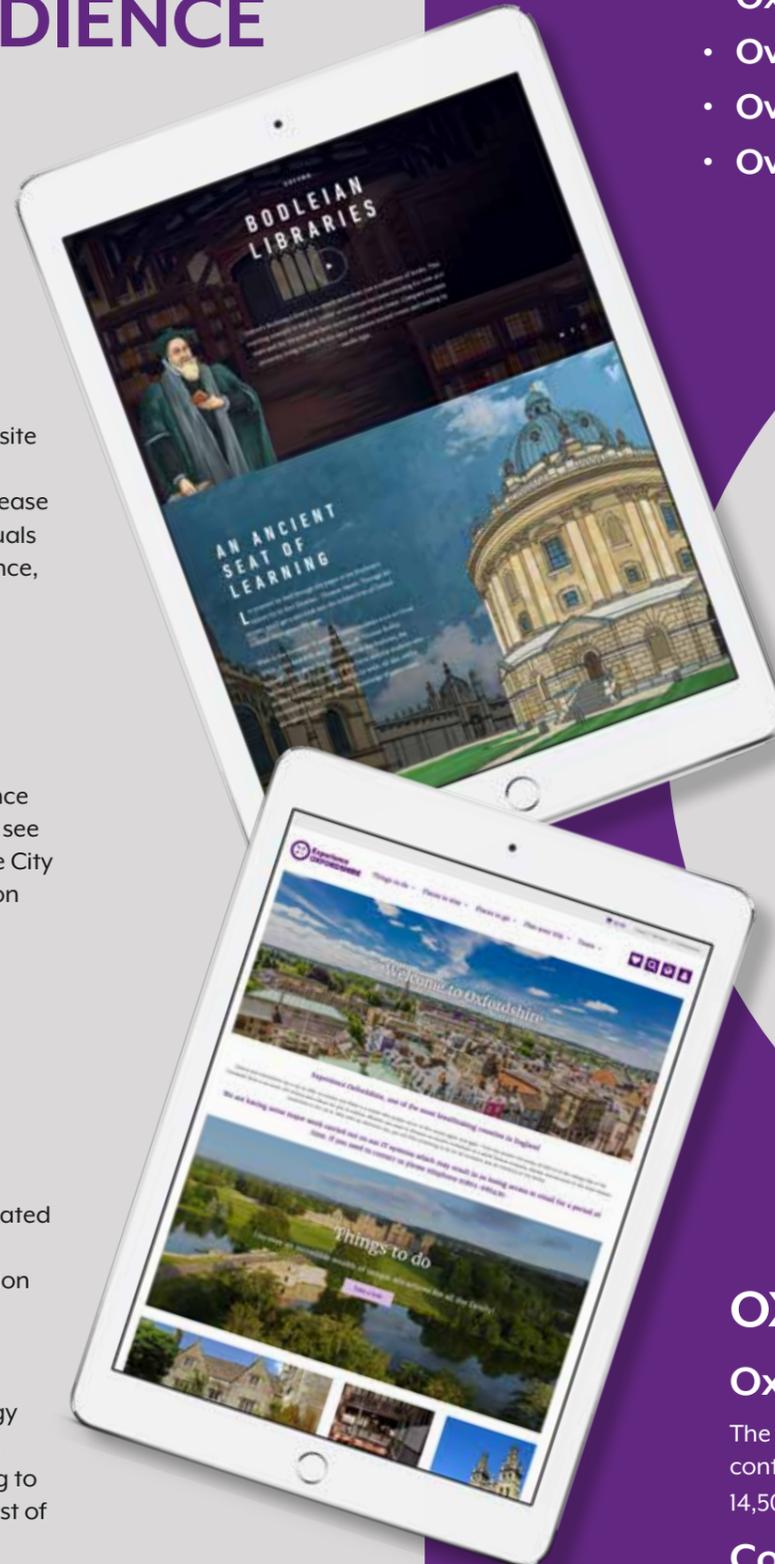
The new Visitor and Partner websites were launched in March 2017.

The new visitor website has undergone a complete redesign with new content and improved user experience to ensure that Experience Oxfordshire remains the primary source of information for what to see and do in the County. The website will inspire visitors to explore the City of Oxford and County of Oxfordshire and is packed with information from across the County and our partner network.

The new Partner website now clearly communicates the benefits of Partnership and the work we are doing on behalf of our Partner network including international trade missions, group travel and marketing campaigns. It highlights events, opportunities, media, industry news and much more.

Successful Discover England project

As a member of the English Heritage Cities consortium we collaborated on a successful joint funding bid to the first round of the Discover England fund. Our project was to use augmented reality to reposition Oxford's heritage to both the under 35 year olds in the US, and domestic audiences. We were delighted that the Bodleian Library was our Heritage Partner on this project and we launched the new app during English Tourism Week in March 2017. The new technology enables people to use their smartphones to see inside the Bodleian Library, learn more about its eventful history whilst also signposting to the Experience Oxfordshire site to ensure that visitors make the most of their time in the City and County.



Consumer E-newsletter

The monthly e-newsletter has been re-invigorated with the introduction of monthly themes including Father's Day and the Christmas holiday period.

- 25,000 database of locals and visitors to Oxfordshire
- Over 300,000 emails sent
- Over 100,000 opened emails
- Over 10,000 click throughs

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK

- 600 more Likes
- 4,666 in total



TWITTER

- Over 700 followers @ExperienceOxBiz
- 1,000 more followers @ExperienceOx 12,000 in total
- 3,300 followers @ExperienceOxConf



MEDIA COVERAGE

- 200 Press Enquiries
- Over 60 articles published in the local, national and international media
- 55 press passes issued to visiting journalists
- 45 hosted visits for bloggers, journalists and media



INSTAGRAM

- 700 more followers on Instagram
- A 116% increase and now 1,300 in total

OXFORDSHIRE IN PRINT

Oxfordshire Visitor Guide 2017

The Oxfordshire Visitor Guide 2017 features improved design, more content and an increased print run of 40,000 copies and received 14,500 downloads from our website.

Country House and Garden Guide 2017

The guide showcases eight of Oxfordshire's best country houses and gardens with 25,000 leaflets distributed through the Visitor Information Centre, at 100 locations across the County and as a download on our website.

COUNTRY HOUSES & GARDENS GUIDE 2017
Your guide to 8 of the most beautiful historic houses and gardens



GROWING THE PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

New Partnership Brochure

Experience Oxfordshire produced a professional Partnership brochure in June 2016 that clearly communicates the importance of the visitor economy to Oxfordshire. The brochure also details the Partnership packages available to prospective Partners and has been a useful sales tool in growing the Partnership network.

Monthly Partner E-newsletter

The monthly Partner newsletters continue to be well received. They are a one-stop shop advising Partners in a single newsletter all of our activities for that month and detailing up and coming meetings and promotions.

New Partnership Benefit

We have added the benchmarking platform T-stats to our list of Partner benefits. T-stats brings all the visitor economy data together in one database. Partners enter their data such as room occupancy, footfall and visitor numbers. Collectively this builds a very useful database on the Oxfordshire Visitor Economy.

Expanding the Partnership Network

Over the past year, we have welcomed 40 new Partners to the network including 5 new Ambassadors and 8 new Conference Partners.



EXPERIENCE OXFORDSHIRE AMBASSADORS



"Experience Oxfordshire delivers many opportunities for us as a local and intercity bus and coach operator and as the city grows and builds on its strengths we are looking forward to welcoming more visitors and local residents to experience the delights that our City and County have to offer."

—Martin Sutton, Managing Director, Stagecoach

"We're proud to have been a founding Ambassador Partner of Experience Oxfordshire. We've been a part of Oxford for over 135 years so it's only fitting that we play a leading role in promoting everything our beautiful county has to offer."

—Phil Southall, Managing Director, Oxford Bus Company



"With our strong and historic links throughout Oxfordshire, personal, professional and commercial, the collaboration makes perfect sense and is one that we feel will give great support to Experience Oxfordshire and its partners."

—Nicola Poole, Managing Director, Hedges Law



"Experience Oxfordshire plays a central role in the city's rapidly growing tourism and hospitality economy. Facilitating networking and coordination across the many different components of the sector makes a vital contribution to the Oxford brand across the globe."

—Councillor Bob Price, Leader of Oxford City Council



EXPERIENCE OXFORDSHIRE EVENTS

Partner networking events are a key component of a strong Partnership network and are a significant Partner benefit. This year saw over 500 delegates attending the following events.

Networking Event at Oxford Brookes University

Speakers on the evening included Experience Oxfordshire Chairman, Graham Upton, Chief Executive, Hayley Beer-Gamage, and Chris Blackburn, Pro-Vice Chancellor at Oxford Brookes University.

'Christmas Open House' at the Oxford Visitor Information Centre

The Visitor Information Centre opened its doors in December 2016 for a pre-Christmas networking event that also let Partners know the opportunities available for promotion at the VIC.

Cultural Platform at the Blatvatnik School of Government

Robert Peston, ITV's Political Editor, spoke at the Experience Oxfordshire Cultural Platform alongside Tim Harford, Financial Times journalist, and Ngaire Woods, Dean of the Blatvatnik School of Government. The Cultural Platform was attended by over 100 people representing Partners and arts and cultural organisations from across the County.

Insights from the Experts at Jurys Inn Oxford

Nine experts from the travel and tourism industry were brought together by Experience Oxfordshire to share their insight with over 140 Partners and stakeholders. Speakers included representatives from VisitEngland, VisitBritain, UKinbound, Arts Council England, Tourism Alliance, Destination Research, Travel GBI, Stephen Spencer Associates and Ginger Juice.

VisitEngland Awards Training at the De Vere Oxford Thames Hotel

Hosted by Experience Oxfordshire and VisitEngland, this workshop gave Partners an insight into the VisitEngland awards process and offered practical advice on how to meet the judging criteria.

Ambassador Dinner at the Macdonald Randolph Hotel

The annual Experience Oxfordshire Ambassador dinner brings together our Ambassador Partners for business updates and networking.

Partner & Sales Managers' Meetings

Over 150 Partners attended at 4 different venues and featured 5 guest speakers.

#ExOxEvents

PROMOTING OXFORDSHIRE TO A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

Experience Oxfordshire has promoted the County to a national and international audience and over the course of the year has met with over 1500 travel trade buyers.

VisitBritain Travel Trade Mission to Australia

The first VisitBritain travel trade mission to Australia for more than a decade, Experience Oxfordshire was the only UK destination to attend the roadshow.

Experience Oxfordshire met with:

- 500 Australian travel agents, buyers and media
- VisitBritain representatives in Australia
- Collaborated with 20 UK suppliers

VisitBritain China Sales Mission

This was an excellent opportunity to promote Oxfordshire to the growing and increasingly lucrative Chinese market.

Experience Oxfordshire met with:

- Buyers and media representatives from 14 cities across China
- 80 UK suppliers

VisitBritain International Business Exchange (VIBE)

This one day event is a great opportunity to meet VisitBritain's representatives from around the world.

Experience Oxfordshire met with:

- 34 VisitBritain representatives
- 22 international markets

VisitBritain Explore GB

ExploreGB is VisitBritain's flagship event providing Great British and Irish tourism suppliers and destinations the opportunity to meet with international travel buyers.

- 300 buyers
- 40 countries
- 58 appointments

Group Leisure and Travel Show at the Birmingham NEC & Excursions 2017 at Alexandra Palace

The 2 key Group travel buyer events in the UK.

Experience Oxfordshire met with:

- 150 Group travel buyers

International Confex at Olympia

One of the key dates in the Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events calendar.

- 7,500 UK MICE professionals
- 70 enquiries



#ExOxEvents

OXFORD VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

A very successful year for the Oxford Visitor Information Centre with the following highlights;

- Welcomed almost 500,000 people to the Oxford Visitor Information Centre
- Beautiful South Awards Bronze award for Information Provider of the Year 2016
- VisitEngland Awards for Excellence Finalist for Information Provider of the Year 2017
- Host to 6 Work Experience Placements over the year
- Industry Partner in a marketing project for tourism students at the City of Oxford College
- 10 new ticket suppliers for VIC sales, including tickets for train and coach travel, tours in Oxford and the Cotswolds, festival and events
- New edition of A Quick Guide to Oxford, adding a section on Food & Drink, and available in 7 languages
- Introduced more product bundles and multi-buy discounts online for Groups
- Provided training to other tourism businesses in the County
- Supported many local events and initiatives

OXFORD OFFICIAL WALKING TOURS

Experience Oxfordshire operates Oxford Official Walking Tours in partnership with the Oxford Guild of Guides. We have re-positioned the offer by reducing the special interest tours and focusing on the core Oxford product: University of Oxford, Harry Potter, Inspector Morse, and JRR Tolkien and CS Lewis, along with private tours in the County.

We also introduced a new 1 hour Oxford Highlights tour to target the day trip market.

In 2016 / 17, Oxford Official Walking Tours;

- Sold 18,000 daily walking tour tickets
- Organised 685 private walking tours
- Printed 65,000 walking tour leaflets
- And distributed them in 150 locations in Oxford



Experience OXFORDSHIRE

BUILDING STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY

Experience Oxfordshire works with key stakeholders and agencies to position Experience Oxfordshire as an effective DMO.

At a local level we work with the public, private and voluntary sectors including Local Authorities, OxLEP, Oxford Strategic Partnership (OSP) and private sector businesses that represent culture, attractions and the MICE market.

We are the Network Navigator for the visitor economy and are helping to support the work of the Creative Industries, Culture, Heritage and Tourism Investment Plan (CCHTIP). We are the 'go to' for any local business wanting to work in the visitor economy sector.

At a national level, Experience Oxfordshire works with VisitBritain and VisitEngland, Government including the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Department of International Trade (DIT), UKInbound, Tourism Society, Tourism Alliance, Arts Council England, ETOA and European Travel Commission.

We are the 'go to' at a national level for all things tourism and the visitor economy and are actively engaging at the most senior level. This year representation has included attending a Ministerial Round Table on the impact of Brexit on Tourism and being invited by Government to attend the exclusive Chinese New Years event at the House of Commons to celebrate our work in the China market. We regularly speak at Partner and national conferences on Experience Oxfordshire's work, key industry issues and the importance of the visitor economy.

'I am delighted that Experience Oxfordshire have joined UKInbound. This beautiful part of the English countryside is a huge draw for our inbound visitors - combining iconic heritage, stunning countryside and excellent hospitality - and I know that Hayley and her team have some really exciting and innovative plans to maximise this important sector of the tourism market. We look forward to collaborating over the next year to grow this valuable business even further.'

—Deirdre Wells, Chief Executive UKInbound



TourismAlliance

THE
TOURISM
SOCIETY

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

'Destination Management Organisations play a vital role in British tourism, ensuring that our destinations provide a quality experience for visitors. We fully support Experience Oxfordshire's aims - as the official DMO for the area - in developing and investing in improving the Oxfordshire experience. Collectively we work with them and the wider tourism industry to inspire more international visitors to Oxfordshire and beyond.'

—Sally Balcombe, Chief Executive, VisitEngland and VisitBritain



Experience Oxfordshire
www.experienceoxfordshire.org

Experience Oxfordshire Conferencing
www.experienceoxfordshire.org/conferencing

Experience Oxfordshire Partnership
www.experienceoxfordshire.org/partner

Oxford Visitor Information Centre
www.experienceoxfordshire.org

Oxford Official Walking Tours
www.experienceoxfordshire.org



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