



Economic and Social Impact of Oxford United FC

A report to Oxford United FC
25th August 2021





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1.

Executive Summary

Oxford United FC generates more than £10 million for the Oxfordshire economy each year and supports 274 jobs in the County, as well as delivering a range of positive social and cultural outcomes.

Since its foundation as Headington United in 1893, Oxford United FC has represented Oxford on football grounds across England. The football club competes on behalf of the city across the country and fosters a sense of belonging to the city of Oxford and its community among its supporters.

Alongside its civic role for the city, Oxford United FC generates economic impact through its activities and the employment it supports. Through their spending home and away fans coming to Oxford to support their teams also contribute to the club's economic footprint. It was estimated that Oxford United FC has an annual economic impact of:

- **£9.0 million Gross Value Added (GVA)** and supports **251 jobs** in **Oxford**;
- **£10.3 million GVA** and **274 jobs** in **Oxfordshire** (including Oxford); and
- **£20.3 million GVA** and **493 jobs** across **England** (including Oxfordshire).

In addition to creating short-term impacts through its construction, a new stadium for Oxford United FC would be expected to increase the football club's economic impact in Oxford. The larger expected capacity will allow for more fans to support the team at home games, whereas the stadium will also deliver economic impacts by providing space for sporting and non-sporting business activities.

The contribution made by Oxford United FC to Oxford and Oxfordshire goes beyond the economic value the football club generates. Through its foundation – Oxford United in the Community (OUitC) – the club carries out impactful work in the community. In particular, the foundation's activities contribute to fostering inclusivity in the city, allowing everyone to participate in the city's life, and promoting equality.

Oxford United FC and OUitC also contribute to the fabric of Oxford and Oxfordshire through their engagement with young offenders and young people, helping them to achieve positive outcomes through education. The football club also promotes physical and mental health, and works in partnership with innovators in the field of emissions' reductions.



2.

Introduction and Context

In summer 2021, BiGGAR Economics was commissioned by Oxford United Football Club to assess its current economic and social impact.

2.1 Oxford United FC

Oxford United FC was first founded as Headington United in 1893, and officially became Oxford United in 1960. The club joined the Football League in 1962 after winning the Southern Football League, then reaching the second division in 1968. Between 1984 and 1986 the club earned two promotions to the first division, also winning the league cup in 1986. After relegation in 1988 Oxford United FC started an 18-year decline down the English Football League tiers, including being relegated to the Conference in 2006. The club returned to the Football League in 2010 and currently plays in the third tier of English football, League One.

Since its opening in 2001, Oxford United FC has played at Kassam Stadium on Grenoble Road, which has a capacity of 12,400.

In 2020/21, the total forecasted income of the club was around £6.5 million, and Oxford United FC employed 176 members of staff, including administrative staff, playing staff and match day staff.

2.2 Strategic Context

Adopted in 2020, Oxford City Council's strategy¹ for the period 2020-2024 set four priorities:

- **pursue a zero carbon Oxford:** taking a lead in the reduction of carbon emissions and improvement of biodiversity, acting on the inputs from the Oxford's Citizens Assembly on Climate Change;
- **enable an inclusive economy:** ensure that everyone benefits from growth and that wealth is spread across communities;
- **support thriving communities:** allow everyone to contribute to the city's life; and
- **deliver more affordable housing:** address the lack of supply of affordable and good quality housing.

To implement this strategy, Oxford City Council produces annual business plans that specify milestones and actions to be achieved each year. The strategy is part of a

¹ Oxford City Council (2020), Oxford City Council, Our Strategy 2020-24.



broader policy framework that considers the long-term future of the city, including Oxford 2050 Vision and the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Oxford United FC and its Oxford United in the Community foundation have a role to play in fostering inclusion in the city. In addition, as a business, the club can contribute to emissions' reduction by reducing its carbon footprint.

2.3 Oxford and Oxfordshire Economy

Oxford and Oxfordshire are relatively affluent areas when compared to the rest of England. However, this prosperity is not widely shared and Oxford has relatively high levels of income inequality.

In 2020 Oxford had a population of 151,584, equivalent to around 22% of the total population of Oxfordshire². The age structure of Oxfordshire is similar to England as a whole, but Oxford itself has a larger proportion of its population in the 16-64 year old group, as a result of its student population.

In 2020 the economic activity rate of people over 16 years old was 72.9% in Oxford, lower than across Oxfordshire (82.3%) and England as a whole (79.5%)³. The lower rate in Oxford will be due to the presence of students in the city.

While Oxford had a larger unemployment rate (5.2%) than Oxfordshire and England, it has a higher workplace annual income. The median annual income of full-time workers living in Oxford was £34,124, which was smaller than that of residents in Oxfordshire, though around £2,500 larger than for England⁴. Data on workplace earnings suggest that the higher earnings of residents in Oxfordshire are partly driven by commuting to Oxford.

In 2018, a Centre for Cities report⁵ on income inequality found that Oxford was the second most unequal city in the UK, after Cambridge. A more recent study by academics at the University of Sheffield, on behalf of the Nuffield Foundation, found that Oxford was the 14th most unequal travel to work area in England based on the ratio of small areas in the 20% poorest local areas nationally (the 20:20 Index)⁶. High levels of income inequality constitute a challenge identified in the Council's strategy.

² ONS (2021), Population Estimates Local-Authority Based by Single Year of Age, 2020

³ ONS (2021), Annual Population Survey, 2020

⁴ ONS (2021), Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2020, Resident Analysis

⁵ Centre for Cities (2018), Cities Outlook 2018.

⁶ Rae, A. and Nyanzu, E. (2019), An English Atlas of Inequality.



3.

Economic Analysis

This section considers the economic impact of Oxford United FC.

3.1 Economic Impact Approach

The sources of economic impact are considered in the analysis includes core impacts (direct, supply chain and staff spending impacts) and supporter impacts (home supporter, away supporter and non-football visitor impacts).

The analysis of economic impacts focuses on annual impacts by using the latest available financial data (2021/22) and evidence on supporters' impacts pre-Covid. The study covers impacts occurring in:

- Oxford;
- Oxfordshire (including Oxford); and
- England (including Oxfordshire).

In line with a methodology used in assessing the economic contribution of other football clubs, economic impacts generated by Oxford United FC are quantified in terms of two widely accepted measures:

- Gross Value Added (GVA): this is a measure of the value than an organisation, company or industry adds to the economy through its operation and is generally defined as turnover less expenditure on supplies; and
- employment: this is measured in terms of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs unless stated otherwise.

In addition, a series of economic ratios have been used to estimate the economic impact of a given expenditure:

- turnover/GVA ratio: this is used to estimate the direct GVA impact of a given level of spend in a given industry and is obtained from the UK Annual Business Survey (ABS)⁷;
- turnover/employee ratio: this is used to estimate the direct employment impact of the spend in each study area. This is also obtained from the ABS; and
- GVA and employment multipliers: these are used to estimate the indirect impacts (those from spending in the supply chain) and induced impacts (activity associated with employee spend). Multipliers are sourced from the UK Input-Output Tables⁸.

⁷ ONS (2021), UK Annual Business Survey 2020 Provisional Results

⁸ UK Government (2021), Input-Output Tables 2017. These are the most recently published tables.



3.2 Core Impact

3.2.1 Direct Impact

The projected revenue inclusive of transfer fees of Oxford United FC for 2021/22 is £8.6 million, while its operational costs (staff spending and non-staff operational spend inclusive of transfer fees) are estimated at £12.2 million.

To estimate the direct GVA from the club's activities, staff costs of £7.9 million were added to the gross operational surplus (income minus expenditure), with amortisation and depreciation subtracted afterwards. In this way, it was estimated that Oxford United FC generates a direct GVA of £4.2 million.

At the same time, based on 2020/21 data, Oxford United FC directly employs 176 people. Since part of this staff works part-time or is employed during match days, it was estimated that the football club supports 109 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

Table 3.1 Direct Impact

	Annual Direct Economic Impact
GVA (£m)	4.2
Employment	109

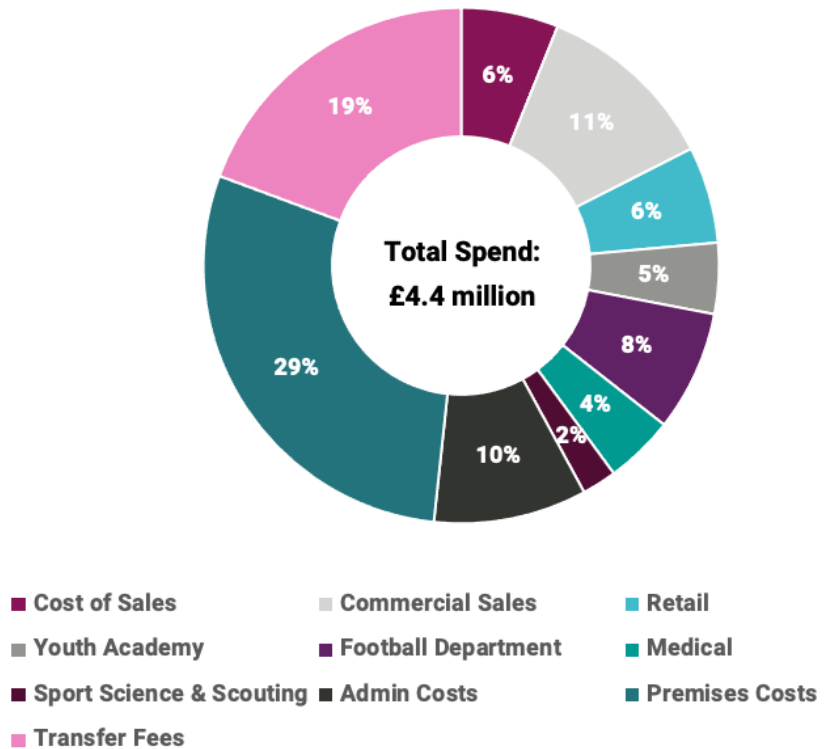
Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

3.2.2 Supplier Impact

Oxford United FC has also an economic impact through its spending on goods and services including expenditure on football costs, ground-related expenses, administrative costs, cost of sales and transfer fees. Over the 2021/22 season, the club is projected to spend around £4.4 million in non-staff operational costs. As shown in Figure 3-1, the single largest category of spending is spending on premises, including Kassam Stadium and the training ground.



Figure 3-1 Supply Chain Spend



Source: BIGGAR Economics analysis of data from Oxford United FC

To estimate economic impacts, spend was allocated to the economic sectors where it takes place, based on the ONS Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes⁹ and assumptions were also made on the location of spending. It was assumed that 35% of spending occurred within Oxford, 36% across Oxfordshire and 98% across England. The difference between spend in Oxford and England is mostly linked to the rent of the stadium, EFL rates, service charges, spend in financial services and player transfer fees.

It was then possible to estimate direct GVA and employment by dividing spending in each sector by the relevant turnover per GVA and turnover per job ratios. Type 1 and Type 2 UK GVA and employment multipliers were then applied to estimate indirect and induced impacts.

In this way, it was estimated that through its spending on supplies Oxford United FC generates £1.0 million GVA and supports 28 jobs in Oxford, £1.1 million GVA and 30 jobs in Oxfordshire and £4.7 million GVA and 127 jobs across England.

⁹ Office for National Statistics (2009), UK Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities 2007



Table 3.2 Supply Spending Impact

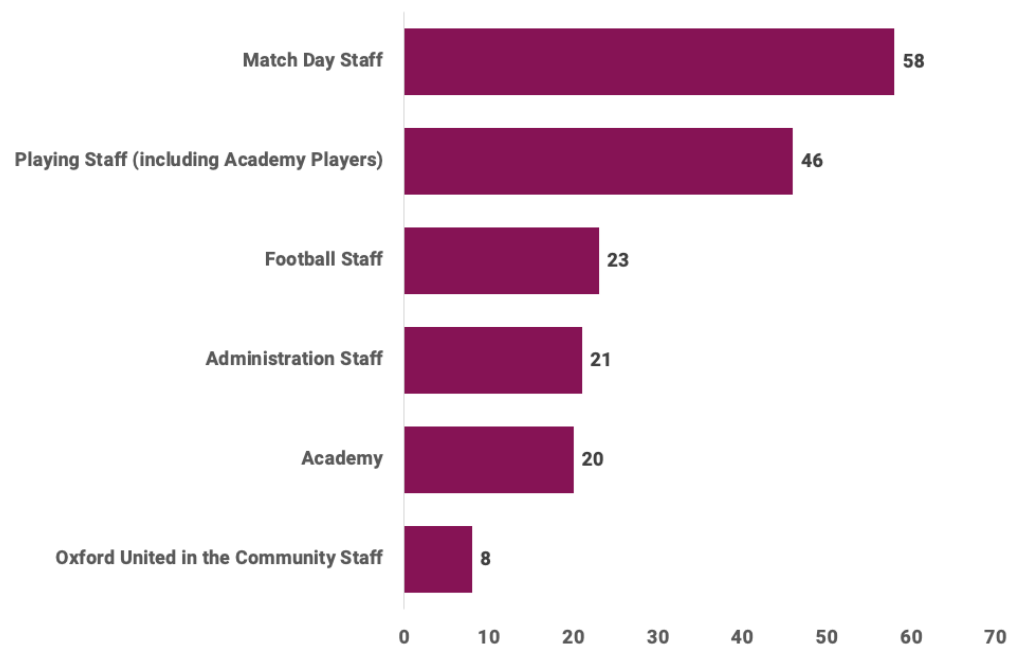
	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)	1.0	1.1	4.7
Employment	28	30	127

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis

3.2.3 Staff Spending Impact

Oxford United FC contributes to economic activity through the spending of its staff, including its players, management, administrative staff, football staff, match-day staff and the foundation’s staff. The club employs 176 people, equivalent to 109 FTEs. In 2021/22 Oxford United FC is expected to spend almost £7.9 million in salaries and wages.

Figure 3-2 Oxford United FC, Headcount Staff



Source: Oxford United FC

To estimate the economic impact from this spending, it was assumed that all the staff employed by the club live in Oxford and spends 45% of its salaries and wages in Oxford, 55% in Oxfordshire and 90% elsewhere in England. This spending was then discounted by 8%, the share of expenditure that households devote to VAT¹⁰.

Adopting a similar methodology as for supply chain impacts, it was estimated that through staff spending, Oxford United FC generates £1.3 million GVA and supports 28 jobs in Oxford, £1.7 million GVA and 36 jobs in Oxfordshire and £4.3 million GVA and 92 jobs in England.

¹⁰ European Commission (2013), A study on the economic effects of the current VAT rates structure.



Table 3.3 Staff Spending Impact

	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)	1.3	1.7	4.3
Employment	28	36	92

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

3.3 Supporter Impact

On match days Oxford United FC generates economic impact through supporters' spending linked to their trip to the Kassam Stadium. This section considers the economic impact associated with the spending of home supporters, away supporters, and their friends and family coming into Oxford, but not watching the game.

Oxford United FC currently competes across four competitions:

- League One;
- FA Cup;
- EFL Cup; and
- EFL Trophy.

The number of supporters attracted each year depends on the number of home games played, which varies based on the club's performance and cups draws. The analysis assumes 26 home games played across the four competitions¹¹.

3.3.1 Home Supporters Impact

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions on gatherings, football was not played in front of live audiences from March 2020 to the end of the season 2020/21. Over the 2018/19 season, the latest to be played fully in front of live audiences, an average of 8,068 home supporters went to Oxford United's home games. Over a 26-game season, this equates to a total 209,758 home supporters.

To estimate the economic activity associated with home supporters, it was necessary to consider their origin and what they buy during a match day. These assumptions were based on BiGGAR Economics' experience with League One football clubs.

It was estimated that 50% of home supporters are from Oxford, 25% from Oxfordshire and 25% from the rest of England. Supporters' spending varies depending on their origin, with transport costs accounting for most of the difference. The analysis also considered food and drink outside the stadium, spend on accommodation and other items. Spend on food and drinks inside the stadium and

¹¹ This assumes 23 League One home games per season and three home games across the three cups where Oxford United FC plays. This is a conservative estimate, with the actual number of games depending on draws and club performance.

on tickets was not considered here, as it was already included as part of the club's direct impact.

On average supporters from Oxford were assumed to spend £24 per game, whereas those from Oxfordshire and elsewhere in England £39. Once VAT was discounted and spend inside the stadium excluded, it was estimated that, during a football season, home supporters spend £4.3 million when going to Oxford United FC home games.

The spending was then divided by the relevant turnover per GVA and turnover per job ratios, and multiplier impacts were estimated. On this basis, home supporters contribute a total £1.8 million GVA and support 62 jobs in Oxford, £2.6 million GVA and 71 jobs in Oxfordshire and £5.2 million GVA and 117 jobs across England.

Table 3.4 Home Supporters Impact

	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)	1.8	2.6	5.2
Employment	62	71	117

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

3.3.2 Away Supporters Impact

Over the football season 2018/19, an average of 755 away supporters were present at each Oxford United game at the Kassam Stadium. Over a 26-home games season, this is equivalent to 19,637 away supporters. These visitors were assumed to spend on average £67 per game (including spend on food in the stadium).

Applying the same methodology as above, it was estimated that away supporters through their spending generate £0.3 million GVA and support 13 jobs in Oxford, £0.3 million GVA and 14 jobs in Oxfordshire and £1.3 million GVA and 27 jobs in England.

Table 3.5 Away Supporters Impact

	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)	0.3	0.3	1.3
Employment	13	14	27

Source: BiGGAR Economics Analysis

3.3.3 Supporters Friends and Family

Some of the home and away supporters will be accompanied by family and friends who, however, do not watch the game. They still spend money in Oxford, including on food and transport, and this spend would not occur if their family members or friends had not gone to the game. Based on evidence from supporters of comparable clubs, it was estimated that each person accompanying a supporter spends on average £11.



It was assumed that 25% of home fans and 10% of away fans would come to Oxford accompanied by someone not watching the game. This is equivalent to 54,403 visits over a football season.

Based on their spending, it was estimated that supporters' friends and family generate £0.3 million GVA and support 13 jobs in Oxford, £0.3 million GVA and 14 jobs in Oxfordshire and £0.5 million GVA and 21 jobs in England.

Table 3.6 Supporters Friends and Family Impact

	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)	0.3	0.3	0.5
Employment	13	14	21

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis

3.4 Summary of Quantifiable Impacts

It was estimated that the total economic impact generated by Oxford United FC was:

- £9.0 million GVA and 251 jobs in Oxford;
- £10.3 million GVA and 274 jobs in Oxfordshire; and
- £20.3 million GVA and 493 jobs in England.

A breakdown of impacts by source is provided in Table 3.7 below.



Table 3.7 Summary of Impacts

	Oxford	Oxfordshire	England
GVA (£m)			
Direct Impact	4.2	4.2	4.2
Supplier Impact	1.0	1.1	4.7
Staff Spending Impact	1.3	1.7	4.3
Core Impact	5.6	6.1	12.3
Home Supporters	1.8	2.6	5.2
Away Supporters	0.3	0.3	1.3
Friends and Family	0.3	0.3	0.5
Supporter Impact	2.5	3.2	7.1
Total	9.0	10.3	20.3
Employment			
Direct Impact	109	109	109
Supplier Impact	28	30	127
Staff Spending Impact	28	36	92
Core Impact	164	176	328
Home Supporters	62	71	117
Away Supporters	13	14	27
Friends and Family	13	14	21
Supporter Impact	87	98	165
Total	251	274	493

Source: BIGGAR Economics Analysis. *Totals may not add up due to rounding.

3.5 Economic Impact of a New Stadium

Stadium ownership has the potential to expand the economic footprint of Oxford United FC.

Current spending on Kassam Stadium will be retained within the club and fund its activities, helping to secure its long term financial sustainability. At the same time, the larger capacity may lead to higher match day revenue and higher impacts associated with supporters spending within Oxford.

Through stadium ownership Oxford United FC will also be able to generate economic impacts in new way, such as through the organisation of events and functions or by hosting commercial businesses within the new stadium.

4. Social Impacts

Oxford United FC and its foundation, Oxford United in the Community (OUitC), contribute to local wellbeing and drives positive social outcomes.

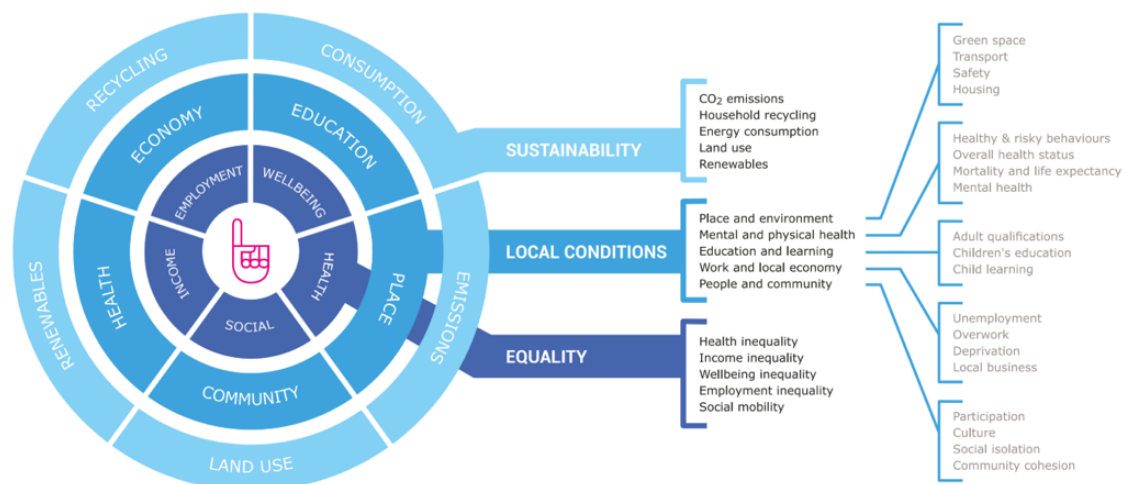
4.1 Wider Impact Approach: Thriving Places Index

While measures such as GVA and employment are useful to capture the quantifiable economic impact of an organisation, they may not cover some of the wider social and cultural benefits associated with Oxford United FC. Therefore, this assessment also highlights a range of non-quantifiable areas to which Oxford United FC contributes.

The framework used to capture this impact is the Thriving Places Index, which uses a range of official indicators. This framework allows different areas to understand the factors that are needed to create a place that supports individual and societal wellbeing, to compare across different areas and to focus on areas where the most impact on wellbeing can be achieved. As can be seen in Figure 4-1, the index is split into three headline elements:

- sustainability, which focuses on areas such as emissions and resource use;
- local conditions, which comprises the drivers of wellbeing, such as good health and education outcomes, good employment opportunities, and affordable housing; and
- equality, which includes a number of indicators, such as income and health inequality, and social inclusion.

Figure 4-1 – Thriving Places Framework



Source: Thriving Places Index



The activities carried out by Oxford United FC and Oxford United in the Community have been assessed against these indicators and, where relevant, the analysis has highlighted how these activities contribute to individual and societal wellbeing.

It should be noted that, as with any measure, the indicators compiled in the Thriving Places Index will not capture all activity that supports societal wellbeing. However, it can provide a useful framework for assessing activities that do make a difference.

4.2 Oxford in the Community

Oxford United in the Community (OUitC) is a non-profit organisation associated with the club which was founded in 2008 and currently employs seven full-time employees. In 2020/21, the activity of OUitC involved:

- 103 kids in Premier League Kicks;
- 53 people in DIVERT;
- 1,219 participants in Manor Club Extra;
- 54 teachers in Premier League Primary Starts;
- 123 students in the National Citizens Service; and
- a total 19,913 participants in football courses (holiday courses, skills centres and development centre).

The foundation's vision is to provide every person in Oxfordshire with a positive connection with Oxford United FC and OUitC every day, with the hope to inspire happier, healthier and better-connected communities within the county. To achieve this, the foundation has a mission of working alongside local and county-wide delivery partners using football to inspire the community to be positive on their future health, wellbeing and self-confidence.

In the past OUitC had traditionally focused on younger children at primary schools via the Football in the Community programme, but it have recently changed its strategy to "Oxford- A Community United". This has expanded the foundation's focus to support the whole of the Oxfordshire community using a more place-based approach.

The foundation's vision, mission and focus are linked to the key indicators of the Thriving Places Index (local conditions, sustainability and equality) and contribute to enhance the wellbeing of the local community.

4.3 Local Conditions

Local conditions within the Thriving Places Index reflect how an organisation contributes to the drivers of an individual's wellbeing.

4.3.1 Place and Environment

OUitC participates in the **National Citizens Service (NCS)**, a government funded programme aimed at bringing together 16–17 years-olds from different backgrounds



and helping them to discover new skills, interact with new people and make a difference in the local community. The programme traditionally takes place for four weeks during the summer holidays and includes a two-week residential stay. Young people can gain independence and confidence while working in groups to create, plan and deliver a social action project. The programme has seen hundreds of pounds raised for charity, and testimonials from graduates of the programme tell of how it helped them to develop key life skills such as budgeting and writing a CV.

OUIc is the delivery partner for **DIVERT**, which is a custody-based intervention programme aimed at reducing reoffending, funded by the Thames Valley Policing Unit. OUIc employs a dedicated independent Custody Intervention Coach who works out of the custody suite and engages with 18–25 years-olds, who have been arrested. DIVERT is the only intervention programme of its kind taking place in England and Wales and helps reduce reoffending rates amongst young people through long-term development plans. These plans guide offenders using education, training and employment to fulfil their goals and to cut out potential for reoffending.

4.3.2 Mental and Physical Health

Manor Club Extra is an online and offline programme which is funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as a part of the English Football League Trust's Tackling Loneliness Together Project. The programme began in August 2020 and had the focus of tackling the loneliness and isolation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic amongst the over 70s. The project has also partnered with Age UK Oxfordshire and Active Oxfordshire to film exclusive Q&A sessions with past players and club officials in place of the physical Manor Club.

The foundation also offers a weekly virtual coffee morning, where supporters can join to chat about all things related to Oxford United FC, and provides a friendly phone call service where the charity phones Oxfordshire residents aged 70+. This allows for residents to have a chat about Oxford United FC, as well as for team members to check in with them to see how they are doing and how their week is going.

Oxford United FC also offers to men over 50 and women aged over 18 **Oxford United Walking Football Club**. The club has a varied membership from all walks of life, who enjoy playing football in a friendly and supportive environment. The club plays locally, in overseas tournaments as well as in charity events.

Oxford United FC players encouraged supporters and beyond to get vaccinated against **Covid-19**, as they were themselves vaccinated at the Kassam Stadium vaccination centre. Players' example can act as an encouragement towards those fans who have not yet received the jab, which will allow spectators to safely watching the team's games.

4.3.3 Education and Learning

For primary-aged children, Oxford United FC runs a **Premier League Primary Stars Programme**. The project is in co-ordination with Oxford United FC and the Premier



League and strives to use the inspiration of the league and professional clubs to create healthier and brighter futures for all children aged 5-11 in England and Wales whether it be in the classroom, on the playground or on the sports field. Schools involved in the programme get free access to an array of teaching resources, high-quality PE lessons, and CPD for teachers. OUitC delivers the programme in multiple schools across Oxfordshire, getting thousands of children across the county involved.

The **Premier League Kicks** programme is a football-based youth engagement programme which is aimed at 8–18 years-olds, bringing them together to play sport, while socialising with friends and building positive relationships. This programme is free for all, regardless of background or ability. The programme aims to inspire young people in some of the most deprived areas of Oxfordshire to make positive choices through positive and exciting activities such as sports, coaching, music and educational and development sessions. The programme is funded through the Premier League’s Charitable Fund and is delivered through weekly evening football sessions which are taken by OUitC coaches.

OUitC provide various courses for children and young adults. Holiday camps are run throughout school holidays which offer courses and help inspire children to improve their health and wellbeing, alongside improving their footballing ability.

Skills centres also offer technical coaching to girls and boys of any ability between the ages of 4 to 12 years old. These player-centred environments allow children to boost their creativity and become inventive within their football development.

4.3.4 People and Community

OUitC changed its vision in March 2021 to increase its scope of social impact programmes across Oxfordshire. By creating a Hub and Spoke operational structure, this will allow the charity to deliver programmes in up to 15 of Oxfordshire’s towns over the next three years.

The **Manor Club** was started in 2017 and is for Oxford United supporters who are over 50. Meetings which are on the first Wednesday of every month bring together older supporters through a Q&A session with a guest speaker who is a past or present player/club official who shares stories and memories of their times at Oxford United.

Oxford United FC is leasing **Oxford Sports Park** from Oxford City Council. The facility hosts the training sessions of the first team and the academy. The space provides community access to 3G training facilities, including six five-a-side and two seven-a-side pitches. In this way, the club provides facilities for people to exercise.

4.4 Sustainability

EB Charging is Oxford United FC’s sponsor for the 2021-22 season. EB charging is a Hertfordshire-based electric vehicle charging specialist, that aims to improve air



quality and address the inadequate infrastructure of charge points for electrical vehicles. By working with Oxford City Council, EB Charging installed electric vehicle charging across the city, including at Oxford United's training ground. This development will contribute to the City Council's goal of clean air and being the first Zero Emission Zone in the UK.

Polythene UK is a long-term sponsor of Oxford United FC involved in the packaging industry. The collaboration between the football club and Polythene UK has resulted in the use of carbon neutral plastic bags at the Stadium Store and Covered Market Store. The technology developed by Polythene UK is based on the use of plant based raw materials. This decision made Oxford United FC the first football club in the UK to use plastic bags certified by the Carbon Trust and shows its commitment to reduce carbon emissions.

4.5 Equality

4.5.1 Gender

Oxford United FC provides avenues for females, who on average exercise less than men, to get involved in sport in and around Oxford. Girls are encouraged to develop their football potential from aged four right through to adulthood. For girls aged 10-16 Oxford United run the **Women's Girls Academy**, as well as providing a development team for players before they can reach the women's first team.

For adults, the **Oxford United Women** was founded in 2005 and had major success in their first two seasons by winning two league titles, and then further success in the 2012/13 season when they won the South-West combination and were chosen as inaugural members of the Women's Super League 2nd division. Women in these teams provide positive role models to young girls, and regularly engage with younger girls to encourage them to take part in sport.

4.5.2 Disability

Oxford United FC currently has 134 spaces for wheelchair users within the stadium, (120 for home supporters, 14 for away supporters), also providing 89 spaces for disabled parking.

Oxford United launched the sensory room in 2018 at the Kassam Stadium. This can be accessed by anyone under the age of 23 who may become overwhelmed by loud noises during the match. Fully trained helpers are also on hand to help within the sensory room.

4.5.3 Cultural

In June 2020 Oxford United signed the **Nujum Sports Muslim Athlete Pledge** to show the club's commitment to equality and diversity in sport. This to encourage Muslim involvement in sport, with the club showing its support for the pledge by helping to increase the number of Muslim players in football and Muslims within football supporters.



Oxford United is an equal opportunities employer, and goes above and beyond the positive action measures introduced by the English Football League and Premier League to deal with the under-representation of coaches, managers and staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. Oxford United shortlist at least one BAME candidate for all full-time roles within their academy.

4.6 Summary of Wider Social Impacts

Through their engagement within the community and the programmes they offer, Oxford United FC and their foundation OUitC contribute to the key indicators in the Thriving Places Index.

OUitC improves the quality of Oxfordshire as a place through its engagement with young offenders and young people, helping them to achieve positive outcomes. The foundation's participation in NCS focuses on improving children's social skills and inspiring them to learn new abilities through personal development. Through DIVERT, OUitC helps to lower reoffending rates within Oxfordshire, as young offenders are supported with long-term development plans.

Oxford United FC and OUinC contribute to education and learning through programmes such as Premier League Stars, which offers resources and lessons to teachers throughout Oxfordshire, and Premier League Kicks. The club also offers a variety of football programmes during school holidays and weeknights to help children improve their footballing ability.

Through its link with sponsors such as EB Charging and Polythene UK, Oxford United FC shows its commitment towards sustainability, which underpins Oxford City Council's goal of becoming the first Zero Emission Zone in the UK. EB Charging supports the transformation of existing infrastructure with electrical charging points, helping reducing emissions in Oxford, whereas Polythene UK produces eco polythene products.

Oxford United FC promotes equality on several dimensions. Oxford United Women is a successful club, which inspires girls and young women. The club also runs an academy for girls aged 10 to 16 years old, which develops players who may end up playing for the Women's first team or development squad. Oxford United FC also accommodates disabled supporters through dozens of parking spaces for disabled supporters, as well as a sensory room within the stadium equipped with trained staff. The club is an equal opportunities employer, shortlisting at least one BAME candidate when hiring, and promoting Muslim involvement within football by being a signatory to the Nujum Sports Muslim Athletes Pledge.

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