



**OXFORD**  
**CITY COUNCIL**

# Developing Oxford City Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

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Council

# Developing Oxford City Council's EDI Strategy



The examples given throughout today will aim to demonstrate how Oxford City Council has achieved the following across the organisation:

- Focusing on embedding inclusion in practice.
- Working with, instead of to communities, and improving how impact is measured.
- Addressing systemic disadvantages and improving outcomes for under-represented groups.

# Community Access, Support and Engagement



- We are investing in all keeping all of our access channels available to our citizens including: Face to Face services (co-location), Telephone, Webchat, Website and Community locations (such as food larders)
- The Council launched locality hubs to provide coordinated support and advice to communities. This approach has since evolved into a broader locality network model, where the Council are working to bring together Council services, statutory agencies, and community organisations. These networks aim to ensure residents can access the best possible support, wherever they live.
- We also have an option on our main telephone line dedicated to “Vulnerable residents” which our citizens can select to get help with multiple needs including financial support with benefits, council tax, rents and signposting to support services where needed
- Our standard practice is to maintain ongoing consultation with communities, for example the distribution of Crisis and resilience fund and design of our Youth Hub

# Healthy Communities



## Public Health Funded Community Insight Profiles

- Across Oxfordshire, there are 10 wards which include areas ranked in the 20% most deprived in England, 6 of these sit within Oxford City.
- Through Public Health funding, we conducted a programme of work with local partners to create Community Insight Profiles; providing an in-depth understanding both of local health needs as well as supportive community assets. The community profiles use local data and community insight that was based on an asset-based community development model (ABCD).
- Along with the Insight Profiles we have received ongoing funding for a Community Health Development Officer for each area, allowing work on a hyper local level to address the health inequalities and recommendations of each insight profile.
- Finally, there is a programme of ongoing grant funding for local community groups to start/continue work which addresses local recommendations.
- Currently over £200k has been distributed to local organisations across the city.

# Healthy Communities



## Community Champions

- Community Champions are individuals from various backgrounds, including black African, black Caribbean, Asian, refugees and those with lived-experience of homelessness and substance abuse.
- This group collaborates with partners across the healthcare sector and local organisations to develop effective practical solutions for overcoming healthcare access barriers in the city.
- Work has included:
  - Black History Month events
  - Mens Health Workshops
  - GP Receptionist Video
  - Vaccine hesitancy work
  - Consultation on strategy and policy

# Leisure and Active Wellbeing



Within the Oxford leisure contract, we placed a high importance on the pivot from leisure to active wellbeing; designed to supported all our communities to access meaningful and affordable leisure opportunities.

- Free swimming for under 17's
- Bonus card concessionary offer
- Physical Activity pathways offer for programmes such as Move Together and You Move
- Homeless Pathways Offer
- Active Communities Programme, including an in-contract Active Communities Manager
- In kind Communities Fund; offering free facility access to local community groups and healthcare providers. For example, giving space for free to a local social prescriber to deliver a preventative physical activity programme for those identified as being at risk of developing long term health conditions.
- Co-designed Youth Hub, funded by the Youth Investment Fund at The Leys Leisure Centre

# Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT)



- The aim of LIFT is to maximise resident's income or reducing their outgoings, with targeted benefits take up campaigns. With an EDI lens ensures these campaigns prioritise groups who face systemic barriers.
- LIFT accurately identifies residents who are eligible for and missing out on benefits such as, Pension Credit, Universal Credit, Free School Meals, Healthy Start, and Council Tax Support. LIFT can be used to identify the best cohort of households in your area in need of additional support.
- Supports targeted interventions direct to households in need based on data we hold. Ensuring there is multiple options of communication, letter, phone call, drop in opportunities face to face.
- Providing in-person support for residents partnering with community partners to support.
- 6 month plan to deliver at least one campaign a month based on eligibility and need. Looking at the largest benefit gaps and monitoring uptake by demographic.
- Examples of use – Free School Meals campaigns, pension credit campaign and childcare campaign.

# Barton Healthy New Town



## How we connect with the community and support integration around new developments:

- Identify local health needs and barriers to wellbeing, working with partners to share space, hold partnerships together and ensure everyone is aligned.
- Connects partners to support in the design of new projects, activities and intervention, as well as sustaining good working relationships and connection via the partnership.
- Supports long-term community resilience by empowering residents to take control of their health, be able to voice their concerns and see long term outcomes.
- Creation of Barton Integration and Community Engagement Partnership (BICEP); a joint community meeting between Barton and Barton Park
- Integrating old and new communities through delivery of groups, sessions and activities
- Development of residents board for new residents within Barton Park

# Grants Programme



**Oxford Community Impact Fund – £980,887 annual funding for communities**

- Deliver pre-application grant application briefing sessions to emphasise the funding aim to reduce inequalities and support those who are less experienced at bid writing to apply – over 20% of applicants for each bidding round are new and have not applied for funding from the council previously.
- Working with, instead of to communities, and improving how impact is measured by hosting at least 2 networking sessions per year for our 45 Big Ideas grantees. They are interactive sessions which facilitate a partnership approach to addressing inequalities, monitoring and celebrating success.
- Addressing systemic disadvantages and improving outcomes for under-represented groups by running focused grant advice sessions supporting groups to access additional external funding e.g. those who work with Refugees & Asylum Seekers.

# Culture – Dancin' Oxford



## **A unique local authority-led umbrella for high quality dance interventions across the city.**

- Delivering projects in areas with the greatest levels of inequality and working with people of all ages with diverse abilities, cultural and social backgrounds to include a wide range of dance styles.
- Building local knowledge & designing projects in response to local feedback.
- Taking a long-term approach to build local relationships and trust
- Reducing barriers to participation: local access / low cost, free or Pay-What-You-Can activities.
- We measure impact through engaging participants in the co-design of evaluation frameworks, and gather qualitative as well as quantitative data including gathering personal stories etc.
  - Dance interventions significantly improve physical and mental health & wellbeing.
  - Successfully engaging a wide range of people at grassroots level within local communities.
  - Reducing inequalities, isolation and helping people to change and better their lives through increased confidence & social connectedness within communities.
  - In 2025-26, Dancin' Oxford engaged 20,903 beneficiaries (including 2,693 young people).

# Culture – Museum of Oxford



**The only museum that tells the story of Oxford and its people through their own voices and objects.**

We embed equality, diversity & inclusion through:

- Co-creating our exhibitions and programmes through long-term embedded relationships with local communities.
- Showcasing the stories of the people of the city through their own objects and voices in our galleries, temporary exhibitions, events and activities and on-line in our digital exhibitions.
- Visiting our communities at diverse local events and collecting new stories to share in the museum.
- Evaluating all of our activities with partners and participants and using feedback to develop future programmes.
- Reducing barriers to participation through initiatives such as free entry days, low-cost family activities, free pilots, workshops for schools in regeneration areas and free entry for partners who have contributed their voices to the museum.

# Council of Sanctuary



## Embedding Inclusion in Practice

- Embed inclusion into systems (EQUIA, policy, services).
- Sanctuary principles shared and embedded across all service areas.
- Staff training is being developed and ongoing: trauma-informed & culturally competent.
- Accessible services: translation, digital tools, single face to face access (Sanctuary Door pilot- run by sanctuary seekers for sanctuary seekers).

## Addressing Systemic Disadvantage

- Tackles structural barriers e.g. housing, health, employment, education.
- Multilingual support & digital inclusion.
- Wraparound support for integration.
- Evidence-based outcomes: GP access, housing stability, better ESOL provision.
- Focus on root causes of inequality.



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