

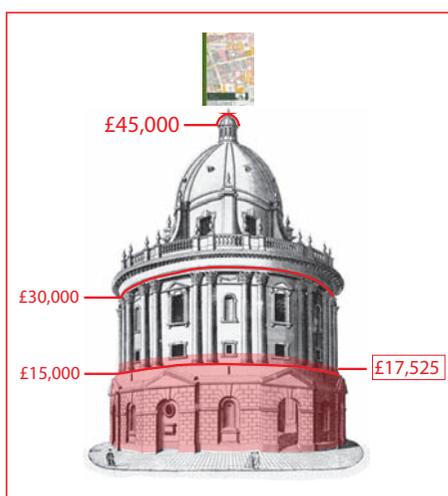
# British Historic Towns Atlas VOL. VII OXFORD

## NEWSLETTER NO.2 FEBRUARY 2017



An occasional series for supporters and donors to the Oxford Atlas project

Welcome to our second newsletter! The idea of the newsletters is to let you know what progress has been made on the British Historic Towns Atlas volume on Oxford, and is for those who have generously supported it, either financially or in kind. The Historic Towns Trust is very grateful for your support, without which the project would not be able to proceed at all.



### FUNDS CONTINUE TO RISE!

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we're delighted to report that we have so far raised £17,525. This represents a slight increase on the situation we reported in Newsletter 1, and is more than one third of the way to our target of £45,000.

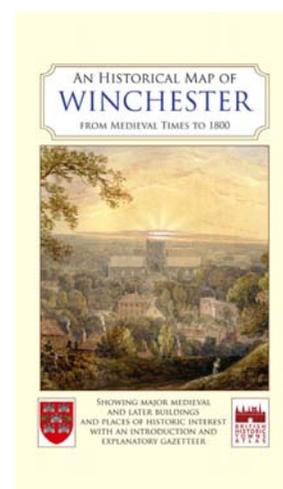
With the new year, we are redoubling our efforts to raise the remaining amount, and we're optimistic that we will achieve our target sum, and achieve it on time.

In the autumn, we were delighted to hear that we will be awarded a grant from the Greening Lamborn Trust, and we are very grateful to the trustees for their generous support of the atlas. The grant is very welcome as it's a good example of an Oxfordshire-based charity recognising the support that another Oxfordshire-based projects needs. And we would also like to thank the individual donors to the project who have given since July 2016 and whose generosity is also very much appreciated.

### HISTORICAL MAPS OF OXFORD AND WINCHESTER

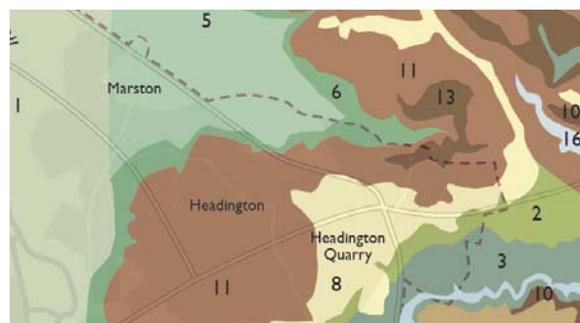
In our first Newsletter, we reported pleasing sales of the Historical Map of Oxford. The map has continued to sell well and is stocked in a number of outlets in Oxford and elsewhere. Readers might like to know that it was joined in October 2016 by a HISTORICAL MAP OF WINCHESTER, and in April 2017 we will also be publishing an HISTORICAL MAP OF KINGSTON UPON HULL in the same series.

It's very interesting to compare Winchester and Oxford as cities; Oxford was a much more densely populated city than Winchester which had many open spaces within its walls, and far fewer inhabitants, even though it was a judicial and administrative centre. The map of Hull will be published to celebrate the city's status as UK City of Culture 2017. Details of both these maps can be found on our website.



### COMPLETED WORK...

Since reporting last time good progress has been made on the introductory text which explains Oxford's history since its foundation. All four historical chapters now exist as first drafts, and they have been joined by a fifth chapter which brings the story of Oxford up to date, outlining what has happened since 1876. The next step is to refine the drafts; the atlas's editor, Alan Crossley, will be revising them from March onwards with a view to their completion in the late spring.

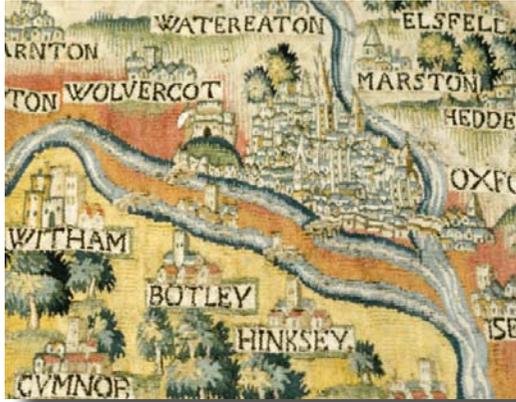


- The Cartographic Editor has completed work on two geological maps of Oxford and the surrounding area, one showing bedrock (solid) geology, and the other superficial (drift) geology. The inclusion of these maps is going to be very useful to explain the origin of local quarries (especially Headington's, which provided so much stone for the city), and also to explain why Oxford's situation is prone to flooding and constantly changing river channels.

## ...AND WORK IN PROGRESS

Within the next six months, we are aiming to see:

- Major editing of texts during March;
- Supplementary maps for 1050, 1150, 1279, 1400, and the Civil War completed by Oxford Archaeology;
- Supplementary maps for 1500, 1578, 1675, and 1800 completed by Alan Crossley;
- Completion of the in-text maps;
- All illustrations acquired and captions written;
- All aerial photographs selected and acquired;
- Fundraising towards our target of £45,000.



### *The Sheldon Tapestry Map*

*The Sheldon Tapestry Map of Oxfordshire (c.1590) includes this depiction of Oxford which the editor is keen to use in the atlas. The tapestry has some puzzling aspects, not least of which is the placing of the Thames bridges in relation to Botley and Wytham. The tapestry itself was cleaned in Belgium in early January, and is now undergoing restoration treatment with the National Trust's conservation team at their studio in Norfolk. Once conservation treatment has been completed, it will return to its home in the Bodleian Library. Cleaning has made a huge difference to the appearance of the tapestry, revealing its vibrant colours and amazing workmanship.*

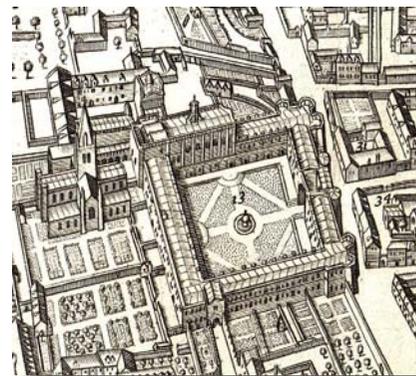
## THE OXFORD ATLAS TEAM ON THE ROAD

Since the last newsletter, the Oxford Atlas Team (editor Alan Crossley and contributors Anne Dodd, Malcolm Graham and Julian Munby) have been helping to raise the profile of the project by engaging with the public. For example, Anne and Julian, with their connections with Oxford Archaeology, have taken the opportunity to show off and sell the HISTORICAL MAP OF OXFORD at public exhibitions and open days, and the map has been well received. Meanwhile in October, Nick Millea of the Bodleian Library and Cartographic Editor Giles Darkes staffed a stall at the Oxfordshire Family History Society's annual exhibition in Woodstock, showing off the map and explaining to the 450 or so visitors what the project is all about. It elicited a lot of interest and some donations as well, for which we are very thankful.

## PROBLEMS IN MAPPING...



North is always at the top of a map, right? Well, not really. It's a relatively modern convention, really only standardised in the eighteenth century, and many earlier maps are differently orientated (a term that means facing east!). In the case of Oxford, two of its most important early maps were made as if they were bird's-eye views, but from the North. Ralph Agas's view (left, showing the North Gate and bocardo or prison) dates from the 1580s, and was redrawn by Robert Whittlesey in the 1720s; David Loggan's view — one of the most important early town maps in Europe — was published in 1675. The extract on the right shows Christ Church. Both maps will be reproduced in the atlas.



## COME AND JOIN US!

The Oxford atlas team will shortly be inviting all donors and supporters of the atlas project to a tea-time event in Oxford in the spring where progress on the atlas will be presented and donors will be given a chance to talk to members of the team. More details will be sent out shortly.

The HTT's website carries up-to-date information on progress: [www.historictownsatlas.org.uk](http://www.historictownsatlas.org.uk)  
or contact Nick Millea at the Map Room, Bodleian Library,  
Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3BG tel. 01865 287119  
Email: [nick.millea@bodleian.ox.ac.uk](mailto:nick.millea@bodleian.ox.ac.uk)

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