



COLLEGE STRATEGY

Adopted by Governing Body on 10 June 2020

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1. PURPOSE

This document is the working Strategy Framework adopted by the Governing Body as trustees of Mansfield College.

This document:

- ***summarises our shared vision of Mansfield's culture and core values;***
- ***identifies our aspirations for the College by 2040 and the strategic objectives which flow from them, and***
- ***identifies priority actions over the next 5 years to achieve the strategic objectives.***

This is a working document, but will form the basis for, further work on honing objectives and developing annual plans will be done by the individuals and groups responsible for delivering the goals.

The strategy will also be worked into a Case for Support and development plan, which will be tested with alumni.

Lead responsibility, timelines and budgets will be put on initial priority actions when the first phase of the Covid-19 crisis is resolved and the planning and financial context becomes clearer.

2. VISION AND CORE VALUES

The vision is what we see as the overarching purpose of Mansfield College. The core values identify the approach and attitudes which sustain this purpose and inform our actions.

Vision

Mansfield College is an egalitarian academic community which sustains, protects and promotes intellectual and social openness. We actively pursue social and intellectual diversity and excellence in scholarship, and the preservation and development of knowledge, ideas and expertise.

We aim to educate, equip, and empower our students with the skills, critical thinking capacities and self-confidence to achieve their educational and life goals, so they can provide enhanced leadership in the world, and be part of a civil society informed by diverse voices and experiences.

Core Values

Because of our history and purpose, we have evolved a certain ethos that guides what we do and how we do it:

- We seek to make education, academic life and ideas available to, and to be undertaken by, a broad range of people without discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics or socio-economic status, and especially to those who have traditionally been excluded or marginalised.
- We welcome and facilitate the pursuit of academic originality and excellence rather than social elitism. We have a flexible and dynamic view of academic excellence, recognising that it can be achieved at different ages and under different circumstances, and that it can be assessed in many ways.
- We champion access to transformative educational experiences, and foster equality of capability for our students to study and live in ways that are meaningful to them.
- We educate, equip, and empower our students to make positive impacts in the world and future lives.
- We are open to the world.
- Drawing on our non-conformist and human rights tradition, we cultivate academic/intellectual autonomy and freedom.

- We value diversity and difference as necessary elements of a vibrant intellectual culture.
- We strive to foster an inclusive community based on equality and respect.
- We value and promote expertise as a vehicle for making informed contributions to addressing pressing problems at a range of scales.
- We nurture the well-being of all members of our community, and aim to provide a stable, secure, respectful and fair workplace to all our academic and non-academic workers.
- We seek to run our college in an environmentally and financially sustainable and ethical way, and our operations and investments are undertaken with due consideration of and respect for good environmental and human rights standards.

3. MANSFIELD'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We identified six strategic objectives for the next stage of the College's development:

- 1. Academic excellence**
- 2. Broadening participation in academic life**
- 3. Strong community, inclusion and well-being**
- 4. Robust governance, operational effectiveness and environmental sustainability**
- 5. Reputation and intellectual leadership**
- 6. Financial sustainability**

The content of these objectives is summarised below.

1. Academic excellence:

to continue, secure and enhance the development and sharing of knowledge, ideas and expertise so as to strengthen the teaching and research which are our core functions.

By 2040, Mansfield will support the development and sharing of knowledge, ideas and expertise:

- By having at least one fully endowed joint appointment in each of its core subject areas;

- By supporting our academic staff and maximising opportunities for good research and teaching, and providing clear, secure and well-supported pathways through academic life;
- By seeking to maximise resources to support academic life, including financial support, good IT, library and other research facilities.
- By continuing to embed and incorporate cross-disciplinary collaboration, including drawing on our unique relationship with the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights.

2. Broadening participation in academic life:

to continue, secure and enhance our work on broadening participation in academically elite higher education, so as to give a wider pool of people voices in shaping academic and social discourse and decision-making.

By 2040, Mansfield will be a beacon for broadening participation in academic and public life:

- By continuing to be the leading college for identifying, attracting, admitting and supporting undergraduate students with the greatest potential regardless of background;
- By continuing and extending Mansfield's model of good practice and thought leadership in the University of Oxford and beyond, in broadening access to and participation in excellent higher education.
- Having extended our excellence in identifying, attracting and admitting students with greatest potential regardless of background to graduate students, by securing funding to extend the proportion of graduate students who are fully funded;
- By providing a pipeline to academic careers and advancement for those who are marginalised or under-represented in academic work.
- By taking active steps to diversify our pool of academics.
- By displaying and actively supporting diversity and plurality at all levels within the college and provides a fair and respectful working environment for all.

3. Strong community, inclusion & well-being:

to ensure that Mansfield is a good place to work, to study, and for our students to learn and develop as citizens.

By 2040, we will have well-developed arrangements and resources to enable our students and fellows to have the confidence and support fully to enjoy and benefit from their study at Mansfield, and to make the best possible use of the academic and other opportunities at Oxford University:

- By diversifying our pool of academics;
- By ensuring that students from a wide range of backgrounds are attracted to, accepted by, and can flourish at Mansfield, and leave with the skills and self-confidence to achieve their educational and life goals and lead positive change in the world.
- By taking active steps – such as outreach work and needs-based finance (eg Reach scholarships, Weidenfeld-Hoffmann/Kofi Annan scholarships; College of Sanctuary refugee scholarships) – to open access to our community to those who might not otherwise be part of it.
- By sharing our ideas, promoting good internal communication among different members of the College community (including between academics and students, across disciplines, and between academic and non-academic staff); with alumni and other supporters; and of our work to the world outside the College and the University.
- By supporting the development of intellectual, social, political, cultural and sporting networks and encouraging our students to participate in the wider life of the University.
- By providing support and facilities to engender wellbeing, autonomy and self-confidence for all college students, staff and fellows;
- By ensuring that we have state of the art teaching, social and living facilities to enable our students and academics to work and study well.
- Providing a pleasant well-maintained working environment, including libraries, gardens and common-room space; including more and better teaching and working space along the front of the main site;
- By enabling all our undergraduate students who wish to be housed onsite to do so, enabling the Ablethorpe site to become graduate accommodation.

4. Robust governance, operational effectiveness and environmental sustainability

Ensuring that Mansfield is run efficiently, sustainably and effectively, to maximise use of resources and to support Fellows better in their research and to enable people to contribute well to the community without unnecessary stress:

- By being well-managed with robust and transparent governance, employment structures and procedures approved by Governing Body.
- By ensuring this is a good place to work, with clear induction and staff management procedures, feedback and expectations, in which academic and non-academic staff are treated and rewarded fairly and supported to work well and effectively.
- By optimising the use of our physical space, to protect, maintain and enhance our buildings and facilities.
- By having made and implemented plans to develop more and better teaching and learning space, and improved residential space, on the main site, to fulfil agreed and planned academic, facilities and residential accommodation needs of Mansfield College, and planned and agreed additional teaching space for the Bonavero Institute, funded through a joint philanthropic campaign between Mansfield and the Bonavero Institute, and the returns to an income-generating building.
- By having in place processes to ensure that in all aspects of its operation, Mansfield runs in a sustainable and environmentally sustainable way.

5. Reputation and intellectual leadership

Ensuring that Mansfield is well regarded and known for its academic and social mobility work in the University, among alumni and supporters, and in the wider world, and provides an exemplar of good practice.

By 2040, Mansfield will have established a high profile and a strong, well-regarded name for its academic work, its progressive and imaginative ethos, and its contribution to positive change in the world:

- By building upon and sharing our excellent academic and access work.
- By encouraging academic and policy work in the field of social mobility, and drawing on our existing strength in access, to engage in academic and policy work on broadening participation in higher education and social mobility.

- By engendering a sense of pride in our students about Mansfield and being Mansfield graduates.
- By developing and sustaining a clear external communications strategy for our media contacts, and our online and offline communications, to celebrate our ethos and our academics', students' and alumni's achievements.
- By leveraging our reputation for being a community which respects and values the rights and voices of everyone, and our links with the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights.

6. Establishing our financial sustainability

To ensure that Mansfield has sufficient financial security to continue its activities as a sustainable going concern, and to allow for further projects and initiatives.

By 2040, Mansfield will have achieved the financial security to be a secure, innovative and highly successful long-term academic institution:

- By having and working to a sustainable business plan, approved by Governing Body, which harnesses all possible opportunities to put Mansfield in a secure financial position - to include the structured long-term finance available to Oxford Colleges; cornerstone philanthropic gifts, an enhanced legacy programme and structured regular giving; strengthening and diversifying our summer school and conference business.
- By ensuring that the financial implications of decisions are well-known and understood and feed into decisions on issues like recruitment, size and shape of student body so as to maximise our fee income.
- By ensuring we maximise our earned income from eg conferences, summer schools, events;
- By continuing to seek to leverage a fairer level of financial and non-financial support from the University overall.

4. PRIORITY ACTIONS 2020-2025

In order to take specific measurable steps towards meeting each strategic objective, we have identified a number of priorities for action over the next 5 years, some of which address more than one objective.

Focussing on these priorities, identifying the people responsible, the resources needed to achieve them, and carrying out those actions, is our plan for fulfilling our strategic objectives.

1. Academic

- Establish a planning group representative of College to draw up a proposal for planned subjects and subject families to be offered at Mansfield by 2025 - including the possibility of adding at least one additional subject or ceasing to offer subjects; on links with the Bonavero Institute where appropriate; exploring possibility of creating formal links/joint appointments with other Colleges to support smaller disciplines. Identify desired appointments in each of these areas and resources (academic, financial and facilities) needed to achieve this.
- Considering attracting funding for academic work at Mansfield on social mobility.
- Adopting and implementing a Mansfield policy to discourage use of casualised academic contracts.
- Identify a target number of JRFs with modest teaching load, and/or advocacy role for BAME equality, and draw up costings for funds and facilities needed to support this, to develop case for philanthropic support (to feed into Development Plan). (Also falls under Broadening Participation).
- Draw up 'cases for support' for academic posts in critical areas (as part of Development Plan).
- Devise and implement subject-specific and cross-curricular programmes of academic support for students, based on feedback on pilot programmes.
- Establish a system of regular career support meetings for academics:
 - a. To review contracts and ensure these fairly reflect work undertaken (including research expectations for those whose contracts include sabbatical);
 - b. To offer resources and support for teaching fellows to engage with pedagogic specialists to share best practice and creative ways of teaching and learning;
 - c. To support career development especially for early years fellows.

- d. To ensure so far as possible that College and departmental objectives and expectations are fairly aligned.

2. Broadening Participation

- Undertake an external evaluation of our outreach work to help devise and use new ways of communicating it and continue to review other ways of doing outreach.
- Take steps to communicate the success of our outreach work to alumni and thereby devise steps through the Development Plan to secure (ideally through endowment) our outreach work
- As part of a Development Plan, and working with University's graduate finance team, leverage match funds for graduate support (especially for members of underrepresented groups (eg BAME home students, women in STEM) and those without independent means of support.
- Seek to secure and embed 'participation' scholarships – REACH and refugee scholarships, and Kofi Annan scholarships.
- Create and implement a diversity plan to:
 - communicate our desire for more diversity (especially racial diversity) among candidates for and existing members of our student, academic and staff bodies; and
 - address the lack of racial diversity in our academic body by identifying ways to attract and appoint academics from a racially and socially diverse pool.
 - ensure that students, staff and academics from under-represented groups feel heard, recognised and included as part of the mainstream of the academic, working and social life of the College. **(Also supports community, inclusion and well-being).**

3. Strengthening community, inclusion & well-being

- Engage with recent past and present students and tutors to identify welfare and well-being needs; and conduct a review of best practice in other colleges and contexts.
- Devise and implement a clear wellbeing and welfare strategy with clear lines of responsibility and communication for tutors and others in dealing with welfare, wellbeing, making use of opportunities and resilience, and clear lines of support.
- Review and improve College support for participation in sport, arts, culture (both within College and at University level), and develop and raise awareness of opportunities and financial support for coaching, mentoring and travel (with the understanding that sport, arts and cultural activities for many are an essential part of wellbeing and community inclusion).

- Devise and implement procedures to streamline communications with and between academics, staff and students, to foster a sense of community; awareness of opportunities (and improving our ability to communicate Mansfield's message to alumni to leverage philanthropic support); while minimising workload and information overload.
- Develop case for support as part of Development Plan to enable Mansfield to offer:
 - Excellent student welfare and wellbeing provision;
 - accommodation that is affordable, environmentally sustainable, high quality, with good facilities for all students who wish to have it, including first year graduate students, where possible.
 - good quality learning, social and recreational facilities for students to provide parity of experience with other Oxford colleges.
- Foster an alumni base engaged with student career mentoring and support, and support for students' extracurricular activities.
- In the context of above actions, ensure that we make best use, and make our students aware, of University-wide offers.
- In relation to well-being of academic and non-academic staff, see actions under Objective 4.

4. Robust governance, operational effectiveness and environmentally sustainability

- Conduct a review of College statutes, Terms of Reference for committees and specific College posts, and operational policies and procedures.
- Draw up a buildings and accommodation strategy to identify and plan for operational and residential accommodation needs and teaching space for Mansfield and the Bonavero Institute; to include financial and practical feasibility plan.
- Devise and implement a system of environmental audits and ensure responsibility for sustainability is part of job description of every department lead and is taken into account as an important consideration in buildings and accommodation strategy and any refurbishment projects.
- Devise and implement a review of personnel procedures, good communication with, management of and support for academic and operational staff.

5. Reputation and intellectual leadership

- Devise and implement a communications strategy
- Put in place resources for an academic/policy conference on social mobility through education, and devise plan for academic work around social mobility and inclusion.

6. Developing our financial sustainability

- Once priority actions are approved, ascribe costings to core existing functions and aspirations, devise and operate a sustainable business plan approved by Governing Body, to cover costs of core functions, and to enable the priorities identified in this plan to be achieved, through a combination of:
 - structured long-term finance;
 - University support (through CCF etc);
 - A Development Plan to include cornerstone philanthropic gifts, an enhanced legacy programme and structured regular giving;
 - strengthening and diversifying our summer school and conference business.

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX A: Summary of where we are now

Mansfield was originally founded in 1838 and has existed on its current site since 1887 (first as a non-conformist theological college; from 1955 as a Permanent Private Hall and from 1995 a full College).

2020 is Mansfield's 25th anniversary of Mansfield being a full College of the University. It is also the 40th anniversary of Mansfield being fully co-educational, though it admitted women for ordination training as early as 1913.

The 25 years since achieving full College status have been a time of significant growth and development. Mansfield has continued to welcome students traditionally excluded by Oxford University, and its academic stock has risen markedly as its pool of students has broadened. Mansfield prides itself on being outward looking, plural and broadminded in its culture, research and education, and in fostering a supportive community in which diverse people and ideas can grow and flourish.

Mansfield's profile and standing in the University are rising. We are particularly well known for our academic outreach, and our strong and effective work in broadening participation in higher education for students from a very wide range of social backgrounds (where we consistently lead the University and the Russell Group), and as home to the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, which reflects the culture of the College.

Mansfield's Governing Body is unanimous in its intention to preserve and extend this progressive intellectual and social community, to continue to act as an exemplar of a progressive and inclusive collegiate academic environment, and to generate excitement around our work. Our small size and relatively short history have forced us to think creatively and enable us to move quickly to innovate.

However, the Oxford University funding model does not yet work for Mansfield, and the Covid crisis has imposed financial pressures before we have been able to put in place a financial structure to enable us to withstand them effectively.

If our achievements are to be preserved and extended, the College must find a way over the next 20 years to communicate our work more effectively, to embed our work and reputation, to review our governance, and to place ourselves on a secure and sustainable financial footing.

The Size and Shape of the Community

Mansfield is a small college relatively to most other colleges at Oxford and teaches a relatively limited range of subjects in depth. This means that there is a critical mass of academics and students in the subjects we teach, but we may wish to extend or subject range if finances and facilities allowed (particularly to teach computer science). Physical

teaching space and limits on student rooms are a block on growth.

In the 2019-2020 academic year we have:

- 251 undergraduate students (of whom 216 are home or EU and 35 are overseas)
- 176 graduate students (of whom 71 are on taught courses and 105 are undertaking research degrees, and of whom 96 are home or EU and 80 are overseas)
- 39 Governing Body Fellows
- 29 other teaching Fellows of various kinds, and two JRFs at any one time, plus a varying number of short-term College Associates and visitors
- and a total of 87 staff, including 7 on casual contracts.

These numbers are in significant doubt for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 as a result of the Covid crisis (and uncertain impact on student numbers), the University recruitment freeze, and financial pressures which may result in a need to make significant budgetary savings.

APPENDIX B: A Brief College History

Throughout its history, Mansfield has fostered its founding principles of freedom of conscience, respect for difference and dissent, and access to education:

- Until the Test Acts were passed in 1852, those who would not or could not take an oath of allegiance to the Church of England could not be full members of Oxford University, so dissenters and non-conformists were long excluded from the life of the University.
- Mansfield was founded in 1838 at Spring Hill, Birmingham, as a United Reform Church theology college, to offer education at the highest level to everyone.
- Mansfield transplanted its non-conformist roots to Oxford and its current site and Champneys buildings in 1887;
- It accepted women for ordination from 1913 and became fully co-educational in 1979.
- Mansfield became a Permanent Private Hall of the University in 1955, and broadened range of subjects taught.
- Launch of Access to Excellence – 15 May 2000. From 2000, Mansfield's major outreach initiative to attract state school applicants to Mansfield with the Access to Excellence Scheme (pioneered by David Marquand, Janet Dyson and Lucinda Rumsey, funded by Guy Hands, HEFCE and the Sutton Trust) focussing on attracting candidates from Further Education colleges and underrepresented areas of the country. This was initially a consortium with other colleges, though hosted at Mansfield.

- Whatever Mansfield did, it worked. From 2000, the University average for state sector offers crept up from approximately 54% to 67% (2020 offers), Mansfield's state sector average rose from around 67% to over 90% (in nearly all those years having a state sector entry significantly higher than any other college). Mansfield also performed and continues to perform strongly in attracting and admitting students from non-selective schools, under-represented regions and from the first generation in their families to attend University.
- The principalship of Helena Kennedy, 2011-2018, was a period of significant growth and development. A very successful £23m fundraising campaign which endowed the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights, enabled the development of new kitchen and dining facilities and the building of a 160-seat lecture theatre and 74 new ensuite student rooms.
- The Bonavero Institute and new Hands Building were opened by Kofi Annan in 2017, and the Eleanor Roosevelt statue unveiled by Secretary Hillary Clinton in 2018.
- During this time, Mansfield climbed gradually so that it is usually now mid-Norrington table, and graduate numbers also grew significantly. (The big leap in graduate numbers was from 2013 entry (51) to 2014 entry (78), and numbers have risen in most years since, with a target of 94 (88 FT, 6 PT) for 2020.
- In December 2018, alumnus Jan Fischer pledged a significant gift of £250,000 a year for five years for student experience and communicating the Mansfield message. He later pledged more than £260,000 in graduate funding to support new Kofi Annan Weidenfeld-Hoffmann Scholars at Mansfield between 2020 and 2025.
- A new Principal took up post in September 2018, followed in September 2019 by a new Bursar and Development Director, bringing the opportunity for a fresh look at the next stage of the College's development.
- In 2020, Mansfield obtained significant positive media coverage for its access and outreach work and was 5th in the Norrington Table.

APPENDIX C: Analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

Strengths

- Foundational principle of bringing high level education to people who had traditionally been excluded from Oxford, gives us a history of access as an ideal, to which we have stayed true.
- Dissenting tradition makes it easier for Mansfield to question assumptions about the status quo and to maintain a strong voice advocating educational change in Oxford, thereby facilitating our own evolution and fostering change in the wider University.
- Leads the University on access and diverse intake, while academic performance of students rising.
- Authentic message on broadening access: we do not see it as an alternative to genuine intellectual excellence and we have proof of concept with rising Norrington Table position.
- Beautiful buildings, spacious feel, and very central but out-of-the-way site close to science parks, libraries, city centre.
- Strong academic performers and 'star' researchers among fellows, and some high-profile Honorary Fellows and other supporters who are advocates for our message.
- Link with Bonavero Human Rights Institute: synergy between dissenting tradition and Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
 - valuing freedom of thought including for minorities (social, intellectual, ideological) everyone;
 - believing all humans born free and equal in dignity and rights; and in a democratic society founded on values of pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness.
- Academics who genuinely enjoy and take pride in their teaching.
- Small size – College is friendly and we can be agile and move quickly.
- Relatively new and specifically founded for an innovative idea, so not a huge weight of tradition pulling us down.
- A strong cohesive ethos – unity of purpose and no big internal rifts.
- Warmth towards Mansfield, and a 'punch above our weight' reputation in the University as a result of students and academics embracing roles in University (on access and curriculum reform in particular).
- A growing national profile as:

- access to higher education and social mobility become more fashionable issues, and attention is drawn to our work on access;
 - Mansfield Public Talks and the Bonavero Institute in particular have resulted in a series of high-profile people coming to Mansfield and growth of an advocacy network;
 - the national media become interested in our work.
- Rising academic performance (generally now mid-Norrington table; 5th in 2019)
 - Good relationships between students and between students and academics.
 - Many long serving and loyal members of staff and governing body mean strong shared ethos and folk memory, coupled with strong and imaginative recent recruits in senior management.
 - Increasing number of Mansfield admirers/advocates and a few loyal and wealthy supporters.
 - We have far more resource to put into student contact, wellbeing and welfare than most HE educational institutions in the country and the world.
 - Many of our graduates have interesting, influential and successful careers.

Weaknesses

- Not as well known or well-regarded as older, more long-established colleges.
- Not so high a proportion of first choice candidates as other, better-known colleges.
- Relatively limited range of subjects taught and limited space and resources make it hard to work out how we could broaden this.
- Small size can lead to insularity/timidity/'stuck-ism' where it is difficult to question established ways of doing things for fear of causing offence in a small community.
- Relatively new – so we do not have the established reputation, sense of long history or long-established endowment of other colleges.
- Resource constraints meaning less back up/support than in other parts of the University.
- Small endowment (c£15.3 million) means only approx. 7% of income comes from endowment by contrast with 27% average across Oxford colleges, which imposes pressure on need to earn income, and vulnerability to changes in student fees, pensions, conference market etc.

- Lack of reserves to withstand risk events – eg major legal dispute, Covid crisis, sectoral or global financial shocks.
- Severely constrained resources and physical space make expansion/change challenging and pose risk to the College's resilience and sustainability.
- Resource limitations mean we struggle to offer the same level of resources per student and academic as other colleges, which can have an adverse effect on morale.
- Resource limitations limit funding we can devote to attracting and supporting graduate students.
- Resource limitations make it difficult for us to broaden our pool of ideas and build our reputation by welcoming senior visiting scholars as other Colleges can do.
- Outdated IT and operating methods, without space and resources to reform them.
- (Over?) cautious approach to change.
- Rapid evolution in a period of severe resource constraint and with many long-serving academics and staff may mean roles sometimes devised and filled in a piecemeal way, and ad hoc solutions are adopted without sufficient strategic thought.
- We deprecate unstable and inadequately supported early years career pathways for academics but are part of the problem not part of the solution in frequent use of insecure stipendiary contracts, partly as a result of our poverty.
- Insufficient regular robust engagement with some procedures and governance issues and reviewing shape of academic body and contractual terms and conditions. attention and resources have been devoted to some structural issues – governance reform, size and shape of academic and staff body, modern personnel management and support.
- The growth of the fellowship and student body has not been matched by a significant increase in staff to support the functions of the College, development of dedicated personnel support or by regular or robust engagement with procedures and governance.
- Stability can be a weakness as well as a strength, the longevity of service of many staff including some long-serving tutors can make it difficult to see ourselves as others see us, and risk reluctance to question ways of doing things.
- Internal communication is not as strong as it could be and there is a lack of clear induction for new members of staff.
- Limited pool of alumni given very small size and profile of alumni base until very recent past.

Opportunities

- Success of 'Access to Excellence' and campaign to build the Hands Building and endow the Bonavero Institute provide proof of concept, to imbue College and potential supporters with confidence: when Mansfield decides to achieve something, it does it.
- Using strong college reputation and ethos which reflects current wider social concerns about inequality and social immobility, at a natural moment of transition to build a shared vision for the future and strategy to get there.
- Growing national reputation for access and openness helps us communicate our message and attract further supporters.
- The gift from Jan Fischer over 5 years gives us the ability to experiment: enables us to strengthen student experience and support, strengthen well-being, trial new academic support initiatives;
- Growing self-confidence: bidding for (and sometimes obtaining) University posts.
- Growing pool of prospective benefactors and professionalised operation to inspire their support;
- Capitalising on strong recent hires of senior management team with vision as to how to build robust structures and still able to see us to an extent from the outside.
- Capturing and building on strengths and loyalties of a stable committed staff team to provide support for developing commercial and conference activities.
- Willingness to ask hard questions, and to assess what changing the size and shape of the College might mean for us culturally and socially, as well as financially.
- Historically low interest rates provide opportunity for long-term cheap borrowing to support potential building work to provide college with the accommodation and amenities it needs, and to enable us to obtain more rental and commercial income.
- Our successful and fond – especially recent – alumni can act as examples of what Mansfield achieves in the world, supporters and advocates, if we ask them to be.

Threats

- Global shocks like Brexit and Covid-19 may constitute existential financial threats to a small financially insecure college like Mansfield in the face of global and sectoral financial turmoil. Financial threat in terms of recruitment and retention of staff at all levels, and students and business model.

Pre-Covid threats:

- Threat to the University sector generally, is under threat in an increasingly populist and illiberal society.
- Major changes to student finance / fees could prevent us operating on our current model as we do not have sufficient commercial or endowment income to plug a significant gap.
- We are at risk of losing our market share/ USP on access now it is such a focus for the Office for Students and other Oxford colleges. We are really good at admissions - but other colleges have better resources for proactive access work.
- We are at risk if our access profile leads to adverse publicity / accusations of inconsistent or hypocritical messages / political correctness / 'social engineering' / bigging ourselves up.
- We are reliant on conference income and are vulnerable to competition from other Colleges and other academic institutions as they increase their stock of appropriate conference accommodation.
- We rely on income from our Visiting Student Programme, in the face of University policy to reduce ratios, and other Colleges moving into this sector.
- We have modelled ourselves on an increase in graduate numbers, but this is threatened by other institutions if we cannot compete on graduate finance.
- We have no cushion income, so we are vulnerable to risks (eg changes to conference market; big legal challenge).

APPENDIX D: The process of strategy development

September 2019 - new Bursar and Development Director in post.

Potential strategic priorities identified and tabled for discussion at Governing Body and Academic Policy committee meetings during Michaelmas term 2019, in preparation for two strategy development days before start of Hilary Term 2020.

Appointment of Anna Raverat as facilitator for strategy days; AR visits college and has pre-meetings and discussions with a number of fellows.

Michaelmas Term 2010 - Small-group discussion of specific policy areas, and feedback in Governing Bodies and APC.

January 2020 – two policy development/discussion days.

24 February 2020 – draft strategy arising from discussions and development days circulated to GB (in two parts – A and B – for discussion in last GB of Hilary Term 2020.

Last GB of Hilary Term overtaken by practical arrangements for ensuring safety and teaching during Covid crisis and addressing immediate cash flow crisis.

Covid crisis cast doubt on previous assumptions upon which strategy paper was based.

First GB of Trinity Term 2020 considered whether to shelve strategy development process, or to review in light of crisis.

GB decides to ask Principal to complete the process of identifying and agreeing overarching objectives for 2020-2040 period which had been developed over Michaelmas 2019 and Hilary 2020, to bring these to GB for approval, and to identify priority areas for action, and as a basis for further financial and development planning.

20 May 2020 - Further working draft of strategy tabled for discussion by GB.