



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning

**Ministry of Housing, Communities &
Local Government**
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12 May 2025

Neale Coleman CBE
By email

Dear Neale,

CHAIR OF THE OXFORD GROWTH COMMISSION

I am delighted to confirm your appointment as Chair of the Oxford Growth Commission. Your appointment will commence on 12 May 2025, for an initial period of 18 months, unless terminated before that date.

This Government is committed to growing the economy and driving change. The Oxford Growth Commission (OGC) will form part of our plans to deliver the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor and support the wider UK economy. Your work as Chair will aid our ambitions set out in the Plan for Change to build 1.5 million homes and new critical infrastructure, which will in turn create jobs, boost living standards, and put more money into working people's pockets.

We are committed to building on and supporting Oxford's ambitions for economic growth. Oxford and Oxfordshire deliver over £6.8bn and £23bn of GVA to the UK economy respectively. Oxford's two universities' economic impact is worth well over £16bn per year to UKPLC and the University of Oxford's research programme is around 25% larger than any other academic institution in the UK. The Deputy Prime Minister and I are committed to ensuring we build on this growth.

The OGC will help to unleash the economic potential of Oxford and Oxfordshire, by prioritising and creating a coherent narrative for the delivery of infrastructure, housing and employment across the city and surrounding area. This is vital and essential work, promoting a jewel in the crown for UK scientific endeavour, higher education, innovation and enterprise.

You will drive growth by working across HMG, as well as with local partners and others to facilitate the delivery of priority transport infrastructure, addressing utilities constraints, identifying a pipeline of priority housing projects, and encouraging more private investment into the city. You will support the development of local skills and talent and pilot new investment models to unlock the financing and funding needed to accelerate growth.

As Chair of the OGC, your key responsibilities will be:

1. To lead the Commission to review how best to unlock and accelerate growth in the city and surrounding area, working with central and local partners to understand how Government can maximise the benefits of growth to the local area and to the UK as a whole and report to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by autumn 2026.
2. To chair the OGC, membership of which consists of central and local government, business and academia; setting the direction for the OGC, leading its distinct workstreams and driving forward its vision and objectives.
3. To undertake a comprehensive programme of engagement with the local government sector, cross-government stakeholders, members of the business and investment communities and academia, in order to build the evidence base on barriers to and opportunities for growth.
4. To provide independent advice to Ministers on avenues to deliver increased growth in Oxfordshire and on the future of the OGC itself.
5. Act as a figurehead and advocate for Oxford and Oxfordshire, including across government and to prospective investors.

I would ask you to work closely with Peter Freeman as Chair of the Cambridge Growth Company and with my Ministerial colleague, Lord Vallance as Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor Champion in discharging your duties. I would welcome regular conversations to keep updated on the progress of the work of the commission.

I enclose the terms of your appointment. I would be grateful if you could sign (e-signature is sufficient) and return to the MHCLG Public Appointments Team at PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Oxford Growth Commission Secretariat.

Your appointment is made on the basis that you have no conflicts of interest in taking up this role. Should any potential conflict of interest arise in future, you must notify MHCLG in writing and be prepared to step aside from decisions on which you are conflicted.

I hope that you will enjoy this opportunity to work with local partners and industry to drive meaningful growth across one of the UK's economic powerhouses. I look forward to working with you over the coming months, and to supporting the recommendations of the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State for Housing and Planning