

Appendix 5a

Communications and Engagement Summary for Market Square

Background

Cherwell District Council commissioned a communications-led engagement campaign to support the Bicester Market Square regeneration project. A dedicated communications and engagement specialist worked alongside the project team to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, and build trust across the community. The campaign aimed to shift early negative sentiment and ensure widespread participation in shaping the future of Market Square.

The engagement ran from November 2024 to January 2025 and included a mix of both online and in-person activities and events. It was supported by a strategic communications plan involving multiple media channels, stakeholder outreach, and creative marketing tools.

Objectives

The communications and engagement strategy aimed to:

- Build awareness of the Market Square regeneration project and encourage participation across local stakeholder groups
- Generate 800–1,000 meaningful interactions with the community through outreach, workshops, public engagement events and the survey.
- Drive significant survey traffic, targeting over 1,500 unique visitors from those living, working, studying, or frequently visiting Bicester town centre
- Encourage public participation in engagement activities and promote transparency and collaboration
- Build community confidence in the engagement process through consistent, positive and visible communication.

Approach

The campaign adopted a phased approach, coordinated with key project milestones.

Communications activities included:

- Targeted digital advertising via the Google Display Network (GDN), Meta (Facebook and Instagram) and programmatic channels
- Press engagement with local and regional media including Bicester Advertiser, Oxford Mail, 3Bs Radio, BBC Oxford Radio and BBC News Online.
- Posters and roller banners in prominent community locations such as the library, shops in Market Square and surrounding areas and at the local Friday market
- Direct outreach to councillors, schools, businesses, and community groups
- Use of stakeholder networks to amplify the campaign and distribute content.

Physical displays were installed at Bicester Library throughout the engagement period and the design concepts were also placed in a café within Market Square. Event engagement was supplemented with on-site materials and QR codes linking to the survey.

Channels and Tactics

Channel/Tool	Description
Digital Advertising	£5,000 allocated to geo-targeted programmatic ads via Meta and GDN
Social Media	Multiple campaign-related posts published on Meta; key posts reached up to 2,000 users
Press Releases	2 press releases issued; coverage secured in regional print, radio, and online (including BBC News Online and BBC Oxford Radio)
Posters and Banners	A4 and A5 posters; roller banners for events and community venues
Community Amplification	Support from the town council, local councillors, businesses, community groups, schools and local media to spread campaign reach
Events and Drop-ins	Two business/councillor workshops, two public drop-ins, two market stall events

Results and Impact

Metric	Value/Outcome
Survey Responses	1,542 total responses
In-Person Participants	Over 400 attendees across engagement events
Social Media Reach	Multiple campaign-related posts published on Meta; key posts reached up to 2,000 users
Campaign Impressions	403,877 digital impressions (Nov–Dec 2024) across Meta and GDN platforms
Campaign Interactions	9,213 total interactions (clicks, post engagements, QR scans, etc.)
Clicks to Survey Page	4,688 recorded clicks on links to the survey page
Public Sentiment	Shift from scepticism to collaboration observed in event and online feedback
Stakeholder Engagement	Relationships built with local councillors, businesses, community groups and local and regional press

Supporting Visuals



Fig. 1

Bicester Market Square: Have Your say

Help us shape the future of Market Square by telling us what matters most to you. Your feedback will go directly into shaping the proposals for Market Square. Visit our exhibition in Bicester Library and pick up a paper copy of the survey. Meet the project team:

- Tuesday 26 November at Bicester Library from 10 am – 4 pm
- Friday 29 November at Friday Market from 9 am – 3 pm

Take the Survey Now! Visit
<https://bicestermarketsquarepublicsurvey>

Survey closes on Sunday 29 December 2024.

or scan the QR code

Support community health and wellbeing

Make a place that is accessible for all

Celebrate local identity

Support local business

Cherwell
Bicester Council
Bicester Corporation

Take 10 Minutes to Share Your Ideas for Market Square

Boost

Time is ticking! There are just two weeks left to share your t...
December 17, 2024, 3:30 PM
ID: 993999679431111

Interactions

1 reaction 9 comments 2 shares

Overview Performance Feed preview

Performance

Overview				
Views	Reach	Interactions	Link clicks	
3,185	2,001	7	5	

Fig. 2
Fig. 4

Fig. 3

[Community urged to have say on Bicester Market Square | Oxford Mail](#)

[Bicester Market Square multi-million pound scheme explained | Oxford Mail](#)

[Bicester Market Square plans open for public feedback - BBC News](#)

Fig. 5



Cherwell District Council - Bicester Market Square Consultation - Nov-Dec 2024

No data

Currently there are no issues

Campaign overview

Impressions

403,877

Clicks

4,688

Interactions

9,213

Reach Max

15,404

Spend

0

Campaign Objective | Drive engagement with Bicester Market Square Consultation

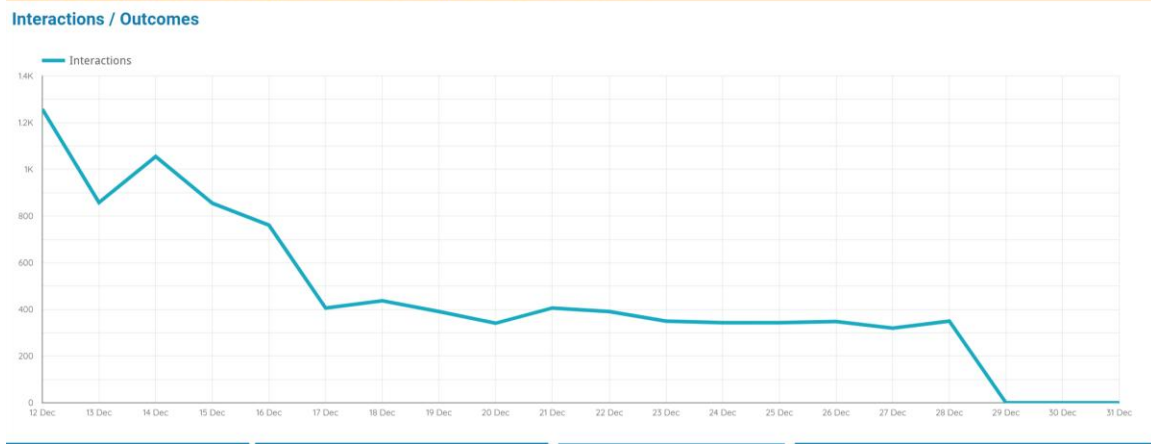


Figure	Description	Format	Notes
Fig. 1	Digital ad creative from Meta/GDN campaign	Ad graphic	Used in programmatic campaign
Fig. 2	A4 Poster and roller banner	Print graphic	Displayed in library, shops, schools
Fig. 3	"Take 10 Minutes to Share" campaign post (17 Dec 2024)	Screenshot	Reached 2,001 users, 7 interactions, 5 link clicks
Fig. 4	Media coverage in <i>Oxford Mail</i> , <i>Bicester Advertiser</i> , BBC Online	Link	Coverage of public engagement and events - online and print in the Bicester Advertiser
Fig. 5	Campaign media tracker	Screenshot	Delivery of posts and ad placements

Note: "Impressions" refers to the number of times content was displayed to users. "Interactions" include link clicks, social reactions, QR code scans, and other forms of direct engagement with campaign content.

Recommendation

Based on the outcomes of this campaign, it is recommended that future regeneration and engagement-led projects within the district embed a dedicated communications and engagement lead from the outset. Strategic communications played a vital role in shifting public sentiment, securing participation, and building trust - all of which were essential to the delivery and legitimacy of the Market Square engagement process.