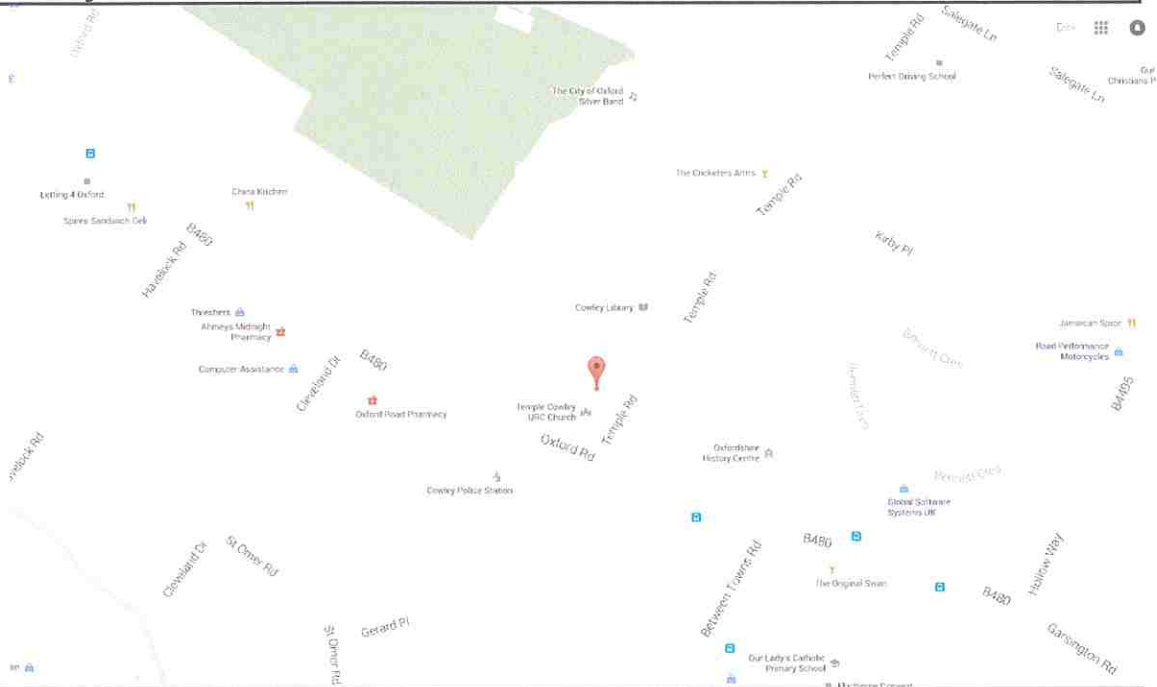


Nominate a Heritage Asset

Name and location of your candidate heritage asset (please provide a photograph and a map showing its location):

Temple Cowley United Reformed (formerly Congregational) Church, Oxford Road, Cowley, OX4 2ES. Coordinates : [51.734844,-1.213227]



1. WHAT IS IT? Is it one of the following?	Tick
a building or group of buildings	✓
a monument or site (an area of archaeological remains or a structure other than a building)	
a place (e.g. a street, park, garden or natural space)	
a landscape (an area defined by visual features or character, e.g. a city centre, village, suburb or field system)	

2. WHY IS IT INTERESTING? Is it interesting in any of the following ways?	Tick / Rank
Historic interest – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry	✓
Archaeological interest – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
Architectural interest – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials	✓
Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	✓

What is it about the asset that provides this interest?

The church was built within the space of 4 years and completed in 1930, as a direct result of the influx of migrant workers to Cowley in the mid to late 1920s particularly from the Welsh valleys. The Congregational Church provided a welcome, hospitality and a focal meeting point for the new arrivals and grew rapidly in size, necessitating a much larger building. It was the birthplace of the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir. The minister of the time, the Revd Whatley White, was a well-known local figure, a city councillor and chair of the Housing Committee involved in the construction of Florence Park. On more than one

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occasion civic services were conducted there attended by the majority of the councillors. His successor, the Revd Rees Tyrer, was also a city councillor, as is the present minister. The scale of the building therefore reflected the growth in significance of the nonconformist churches in Oxford — until then, a predominantly Anglican city. The foundation stone was laid by Revd Dr W.B. Selbie, Principal of Mansfield College, then a permanent private hall of the university and a college for Congregational ministers. The splendid large stained glass window in the northeast elevation with its unusual troika of King David, Jesus and St Paul on the untypical (for nonconformists) theme of the Ascension, commemorates the dead of the First World War : “To the glory of Christ the Prince of Peace and in loving memory of the men of Cowley who gave their lives in the Great War 1914-18”. Another plaque in the church bears a more frank (and rather unusual) inscription to a young man simply “killed doing his duty to king and country”.

3. WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED? Is the interest of the asset valued locally for any of the following reasons?	Tick / Rank
Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area	✓
Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character	
Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history	✓
Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously	✓
Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community	✓
How is the asset locally valued as heritage?	
<p>Many residents of Cowley feel a connection to the 'red church' through baptisms, marriages and deaths. During the 1930s – 1950s it was a major social centre, the Sunday School had a membership of well over 200, and excursions to the seaside required a fleet of six coaches. (On one occasion a special train was chartered). The rock garden at the front provides a rare point of natural beauty in a highly built-up area and the large tree, planted at the time the church was built, together with the church itself, with its tower, dominate the street scene at the top of the rise as the Between Towns Road junction is approached from Cowley Marsh.</p> <p>The church sits on the edge of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area, though neither it nor the library next door are included within the boundary. They should be.</p>	

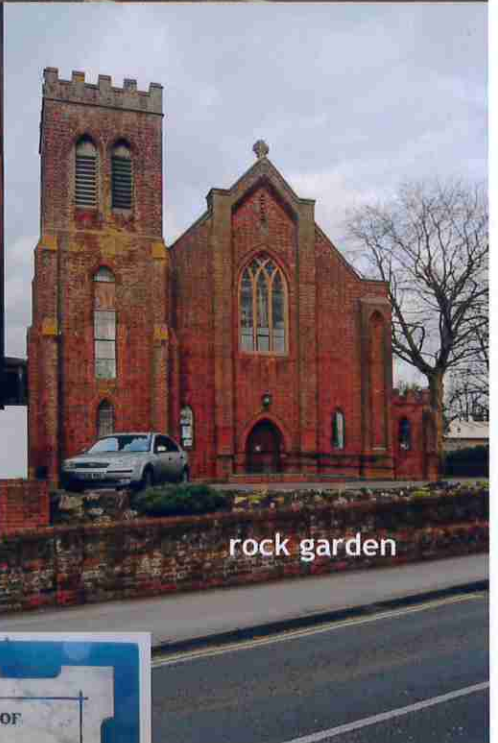
4. WHAT MAKES ITS LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SPECIAL? Do any of the following features make the heritage significance of the asset stand out above the surrounding environment?	Tick
Age ... Is it particularly old, or of a date that is significant to the local area?	✓
Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?	
Integrity ... Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?	✓
Group value ... Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or communal association?	
Oxford's identity ... Is it important to the identity or character of the city or a	✓

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particular part of it?	
Other ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?	
How does this contribute to its value?	
<p>The church was one of the first buildings of major significance to be constructed after the mass movement of migrant workers into Cowley in the mid to late 1920s. It is a solid reminder that many of those new Cowley inhabitants were 'chapel people', and a witness to the ability of the Congregational Church of the time to respond quickly to major social developments, since only ten years before Temple Cowley had been a small settlement. That history is now being repeated as migrant workers of many different ethnicities, in coming to Oxford, are setting up their own churches, although because of the lack of availability of land none except the Muslim community have been able to construct new buildings to mark their arrival. It is therefore very important to the identity of Cowley and District. Externally the building is unaltered, although the interior has been reconfigured.</p>	



from Temple Road, library on right



rock garden



Temple Cowley United Reformed Church