

WHOLESALE ROUTE FOR OXFORD WINE

The Oxford Wine Co will target growth in wholesale and the on-trade after shutting its store in Cirencester and ruling out expanding its retail arm.

The firm sold its Tetbury store as a going concern two years ago and has just closed Cirencester, leaving it with just two stores in Oxford.

It also has two Oxford Wine Cafés in the city and owner Ted Sandbach said one of them makes more profit in a month than the closed stores did in a year.

He is planning to develop further wine bars in the city and expand the business's wholesale reach, but will not open any more shops.

Sandbach told OLN: "Our whole Oxford operation has been so successful and it was a pain in the neck to go out to Cirencester, which is completely the wrong direction. We weren't making much money there, so we wanted to concentrate on



The café arm of the business is trading well

what we do really well. It just became hard work. I just thought bigger it - retail is not where I want to develop any more. Wine cafés and wholesale are where I want to develop. It's a reflection of the market.

"Retail is hard. We opened the shops [in Tetbury and Cirencester] four or five years ago with a view to develop them. It wasn't a disaster, it just wasn't really going anywhere.

We weren't making losses or anything - we just weren't making much profit, so I couldn't waste all my time and energy on it.

"The bars are doing phenomenally well, making big, big profits and that's great. The wholesale side is going well. We have six sales reps and we are doing business from south Wales to London, mainly with restaurants."