



# Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association

May - June 2010

Welcome to Newsletter 93 of the Oxford Pedestrians Association

## **Will a new government give us more walkable streets?**

Nobody can deny that the run-up to the General Election has been more interesting than usual. From the perspective of our daily lives, a question we may well ask ourselves is “What will Party X do to make our streets more pleasant, our towns and cities more enjoyable for people on foot?” With the focus of debate upon the national parties, it’s easy to forget that elections to the City Council will also be taking place on Polling Day. As we report below, Oxford City Council has been consulting on whether to declare the whole city an Air Quality Management Area. It is this kind of initiative that can make so much difference to everybody’s lives. When it comes to making a better Oxford, how you vote locally could well make more difference than how you vote nationally.

## **Consultation update**

Two consultations are coming to a close, which we hope members will have responded to. These are the City Council’s proposals to declare the whole city an Air Quality Management Area, and its consultation on the City Centre

## ***An Air Quality Management Area for the whole City?***

The City Council is seeking views on whether to declare a Citywide Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) because Oxford is in breach of national air quality objectives as a result of excessive emissions from transport both within and outside the City. There is an online questionnaire available on the City Council website ([www.oxford.gov.uk](http://www.oxford.gov.uk)), or write to Roger Pitman (e-mail [rpitman@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:rpitman@oxford.gov.uk)). Respond soon as the consultation is about to close.

## ***What sort of City Centre do you want?***

The City Centre Manager and City Centre Partnership Officer Group, which is made up of representatives from both City and County Councils are particularly interested in hearing your views on the city centre. The formal consultation period closed on 30<sup>th</sup> April – too late for this edition of *WalkTalk* – but if you have views do share them with the Council – write to:

H Plume, Consultation Officer, Oxford City Council, Town Hall, St Aldates, OX1 1BX.

## ***Local Transport Plan update***

The County Council is about to begin its next round of consultations on its third Local Transport Plan. This will run from 10<sup>th</sup> May to 20<sup>th</sup> June and will be an opportunity to comment on and help the County identify the best scenarios to meet the agreed objectives for travel and transport in Oxford, as well as in Oxfordshire’s various types of settlement (larger towns, smaller towns and rural areas). You will be able to take part in the consultation online at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltp](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltp).

## ***Oxford Station***

Following earlier consultations, the County has now published its proposals for a new platform at Oxford station on the south side of Botley Road. These include a new bridge across Botley Road linking the new platform with the main station. We are continuing to press for better pedestrian access to the station, arguing that continuing growth in passenger numbers will add greater pressure to already inadequate pedestrian routes.

## **Walk to School Week May 17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>**

A last reminder that **Walk to School Week** is coming soon. The theme for this year is

'Walk Your Way', encouraging children and parents to explore the wayfinding and independence benefits of walking to school. Resources are available from the **Walk to School** website with free guides: [www.walktoschool.org.uk/](http://www.walktoschool.org.uk/)

**Gwynneth Pedler, Chair of Oxford Access Forum** was our speaker at our April meeting. She reminded us that, no matter how much we may think we consider the needs of people with disabilities, our streets often present enormous challenges to people with impaired vision and mobility. Visit our website "Meetings" section for a report of the discussion (<http://www.oxpa.org.uk>)

**Murder Most Foul on the Internet**  
A wonderfully written tirade from 1947 against the injustice of the slaughter of pedestrians and cyclists on our roads by JS Dean, the then President of the Pedestrians' Association (now Living Streets), is now available online. Many of Dean's arguments are as relevant today as they were in 1947. See it through the "History" link on the "Other news" page of our OxPA website. (Thanks to Tristram Wyatt for bringing this to our notice)

**Area Committee volunteers.**  
Area representatives are still needed to attend the East, Cowley, and Northeast Area Committees each month and report upon any Agenda items affecting pedestrians in their part of Oxford. Contact Paul or Corinne if you have time to help OxPA once a month in this way.

**Survey of Oxford's Worst Places for Pedestrians**  
Your responses were submitted to Cllr John Tanner (city) and Cllr Rose (county) both of whom responded with some encouraging comments. We are told that wheelie bin nuisance is being dealt with, a crossing in Oxford Road, Cowley is to be installed, and the Broad Street/Parks Road junction is to be improved with removal of the existing lights (which have no pedestrian phase). Puddles will be investigated by the Area Office but, as with many of many schemes beyond the scope of the revenue budget,

may have to be tackled under the next LTP. However for most of our complaints, there is no immediate remedy in sight and some have already been rejected. Please visit the website for a full report.

**Oxford on Foot Podcast**  
A visitor to Oxford so enjoyed our book of walks that he made a podcast of the Waterways walk, with spoken description and photographs of the route. You can enjoy this and download it for your own use by following the link on our "Other news" page on our website. Perhaps you would like to follow his example?

**Next Meetings:**  
**Our next meetings in May and June will be on dates other than the fourth Tuesday of the month. Please note different dates and times:**

**Thursday May 27th, 7.30pm in the Town Hall.** A joint meeting between OxPA and Cyclox, the cycling campaign for Oxford: 'To share or not to share?' Can people on foot feel happy and safe when people on bikes are in their midst? Can people on bikes be satisfied with routes they have to share with people on foot? Come and join the debate. We hope to have councillors and council staff there to hear the discussion.

**Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June, OxPA is invited to join a sponsored walk and fun events organised by OXFORD GREEN SPACES,** to raise money for CPRE Oxford, Friends of Oxpens Meadow and Friends of Warneford Meadow. This will replace our usual meeting on Tuesday June 22nd. Leaflets with map and joining instructions will be in libraries and the Oxford Times from May 6th.

**Contacts**  
**Chair:** Paul Cullen, 426805  
**Secretary:** Corinne Grimley Evans, 779663  
**Treasurer:** Ray Jones, 865070  
**Membership:** Michaele Philbin, 201541  
**Website:** <http://www.oxpa.org.uk>  
**National Pedestrians Association**  
[Living Streets] 0207 737 4900  
**Write to:** OxPA, c/o 431 Meadow Lane, Iffley, Oxford OX4 4ED