



# Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association

November 2018

## Welcome to Newsletter 127



### Dockless bicycles – what do you think?

OxPA member Penny Jacques wrote to Oxford Times in September about this issue: here is a slightly shortened version of Penny's letter.

*"Dear Sir, I walk into the city centre nearly every day, over Folly Bridge and up St Aldates, and am increasingly frustrated and angry about the astonishing number of dockless bikes cluttering up the footpath. On August 23rd I counted 78 bikes on the east side of St Aldates between the junction with Thames St and the gates to Christchurch gardens, [many] parked directly under large signs stating No Bicycles. I support the idea of encouraging cycling but this scheme won't do that. Anyone at all interested in cycling would not want to ride on a heavy, single gear, uncomfortable bike such as these. I am outraged that the County Council gave permission for a scheme which is of no benefit whatsoever to citizens who already have to share the pavements with vast groups of tourists, and reap no benefit at all from the ugly, pavement-littering dockless bikes."*

Penny then cited the County Council's Oxford Code of Conduct for Dockless Bike Sharing Operations:

*"The operator must ensure that bicycles used in the scheme are not left in areas where they would be an obstacle or nuisance to pedestrians, wheelchair users or the general public. Specifically cycles should not cause an obstruction to the highway or be placed in a location which gives rise to health and safety issues."*

This issue has raised controversy on OxPA's Facebook page (see below). Let us know what you think.

### OxPA on social media

OxPA has a very active Facebook page, led mainly by OxPA member Oly Shipp, with contributions also from other members. Posts on this page can stir up considerable and lively debate. Aware that not all OxPA members have Facebook accounts, we give here a flavour of some recent issues.

'Will Queen Street ever be free of motor vehicles?' – accompanied by a shot of buses in Queen Street from Oxford Mail – the subsequent comments favoured removal of buses or replacement with electric vehicles.

'Would you vote pavements for people?' (referring to the Iffley Fields & St Mary's by-election) – this attracted many comments (for and against regulated pavement parking) including a photo (below) of 'white-line creep'.

'Electric shuttle buses' – with photos of small electric local buses from Ambleside (Cumbria) (photo below) and Cannes.



PA is now also Tweeting! Please send anything you want Tweeted to Don, our Treasurer to Tweet as @OxfPedestrians

### Puddles

In the new version of A More Walkable Oxford, we discuss the problem of 'ponding', where road drainage is badly planned or badly maintained. OxPA member Deborah Glass Woodin took this picture of ponding on the Railway Station footbridge. Deborah says: 'I walked my bike across so as not to splash this gentleman, and then lent it to a hooded youth in suede shoes who didn't want to get them wet!' (Also shown below: outside Waterstone's.)



### Phil Jones Associates report

In October OxPA members looked at the Phil Jones Associates report 'Oxford City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy' commissioned by the City and County Councils 'to enable the local authorities to achieve a much-improved public realm and achieve more walking and cycling by adopting a revised transport management strategy'. Three different loop systems for buses are envisaged in the report, all requiring a reduction in through private motorised traffic, and making currently 2-way streets one-way. A focus on pedestrians in the report is pleasing; however, given that Holywell and Broad St are used as bus corridors in two options, and Cornmarket in a third, the report is likely to be controversial should the ideas ever be seriously worked up. A lack of essential fine detail hampers the report and makes it hard to get to grips with, although some ideas are worth considering, such as narrowing the roadway on Hythe Bridge Street to a single one-way system. However, the status of the report is unclear, and we recall the Kim Wilkie study of Broad St, which was also visionary but unworkable (in that feeder streets into the west end of Broad St were not considered), and never seriously worked up.

The overall message of the Phil Jones report was that unless through private traffic is restrained in Oxford no solution to reduce traffic congestion and pollution is going to work. OxPA members read the report with interest. We welcome their focus on 'public spaces' (see photo), but favour even more radical solutions (e.g. electric buses, closing Hythe Bridge St to through private motorised traffic etc).



Figure 4-22 Key public spaces – Broad Street

### More help needed!

We need more people to help out with OxPA's work, staffing stalls and helping with publicity and administration. We especially need volunteers on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December at Oxford's Green Fair, to help on OxPA's stall. Please consider if you could help and talk to one of the officers, or contact [oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com](mailto:oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com).

### OxPA's AGM will be at 7pm on Tuesday November 27th at Oxford Town Hall

We are seeking nominations of volunteers for the roles of Stall (keeping stall stock, making it available or bring it to stalls, keeping stock up dated); Website Manager; and Books (checking outlets have plenty of AMWO's and 'On Foot In Oxford' copies, supplying them if needed and organising reprints in liaison with other officers of OxPA).

Our speaker will be **Patrick Lingwood, Walking and Cycling Officer for Oxfordshire County Council**. He will introduce his role and talk about how lobby groups like ourselves and Cyclox can best work with him and the County Council.

### Meetings (all 7 pm in the Town Hall):

**November 27<sup>th</sup>**: AGM – details above.

**January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2019** – t.b.c.

### Contacts:

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