



# Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association

March 2018

## Welcome to Newsletter 124



### Pavement extension in the High

To relieve pressure outside the covered market, the pavement further east has been extended to make space for bus queues and passers to co-exist without stepping into the road. For pedestrians this is a welcome improvement, but many cyclists feel endangered when trying to pass stationary buses in the narrowed roadway. In view of these conflicting reactions, we hope our Highway Authority is monitoring the situation. Please let us know your views?

### Air Quality

A study on air quality in Oxford is being organised by Empathy Sustainability, from a human, spatial and temporal perspective, with the participation of Oxford University, Ricardo Energy & Environment, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council amongst others. It will measure and map air quality for different routes, times of day and modes of transport around Oxford City to give people information and to get more reliable human level exposure data for Oxford (which people can then use to call for a more robust and urgent strategy to minimise it and take strategies to avoid their exposure, such as quiet ways, different time of day or modes of transport. Levels of air pollution will be measured by bike (Pedal & Post), by bus (Oxford Bus Company), and by car, but some pedestrians are needed! They will have to carry a small electronic diffusion tube and a gps, both very light, and we need to get data across 4 weeks (perhaps with different people) for our first test protocol before looking for funding to expand the project. Jake

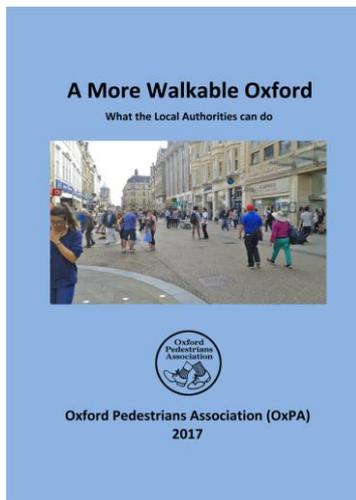
Backus will attend our April meeting to introduce to us this project, which we hope to follow and be involved with.

### Welcome to our new Treasurer

We are delighted to introduce our new Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Don O'Neal. An OxPA member for over a year, Don has already contributed to our meetings and street auditing. He came to Oxford in 1986 to study Mathematics and Computer Science at Oxford Brookes. He was the treasurer of Oxfordshire Green Party for about thirteen years and is currently a trustee of a small disability charity covering Oxfordshire. We very much look forward to working with Don as a committee member, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.



## A More Walkable Oxford



OxPA is pleased to announce that the launch of our updated version of 'A More Walkable Oxford' (AMWO) at our social event in January was well-received, and that copies are now available for the modest sum of £2.50. Dedicated to our previous Chair, the late Paul Cullen, who wrote the first edition, the new AMWO is illustrated with colour photos throughout, and is a clear and concise laying out of OxPA's policies and vision, together with the obstacles to walking that need addressing. Recognising that the City and County Councils have already adopted many of these policies we stress that what is needed is a determination to implement them. We hope that AMWO will be of help in clarifying both generally and specifically the work needed. To order your copy please contact Sushila by ringing 01865 790783 or by emailing [oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com](mailto:oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com)

### AGM February 2018

Our postponed AGM took place in February with guest speaker John Paine of the National Pensioners Convention. John's presentation of the history of the transport policies leading to the current situation of buses in Queen Street. The ensuing discussion included: replacing current huge buses with smaller electric ones; a single bus company to reduce congestion and bunching; removal of long distance coaches from the High etc: see report on our website.

### Active Travel

There are now two Council bodies focusing on Active Travel in Oxford. **The Active & Healthy Travel Steering Group** convened by Oxfordshire Council aims to promote walking and cycling countywide: it has produced guidance for developers to ensure appropriate infra structure in new developments to this end. **Active Travel in the City** is a more recently established group, aiming to share information and ideas on increasing active travel within the city. OxPA is represented on both these groups, which meet during the working day. It is important that we continue to provide a voice for pedestrians at such forums, and it is interesting and encouraging to be involved with plans for a more pedestrian-friendly environment. **If you are interested in representing OxPA at these meetings please contact Corinne or Sushila.**

### Access to Headington update

Access to Headington is a £12.5m County Council project aimed at improving "facilities for pedestrians, public transport and cyclists, and will include junction upgrades, improved cycling facilities and pedestrian crossings". It is taking place in stages over several years. OxPA responded to the original consultation for this project in March 2016, welcoming some new pedestrian crossings but also expressing disappointment at changes to existing crossings. In the intervening period, a proposed new pedestrian crossing of London Road near the entrance of Osler Road was dropped because of lack of funding: this is an important crossing point for people walking or cycling between Churchill and John Radcliffe Hospitals. However, following sustained pressure from local councillors, further funding has now been approved and this pedestrian crossing will be constructed starting over the Easter period. The roadway will be narrowed, making crossing easier than at present. We are still disappointed, though, that it will be an 'informal crossing' rather than a controlled one. Other aspects of the project continue, including removing the mini-roundabout at the entrance to the John Radcliffe Hospital from Headley Way. This has been controversial, but pedestrian access will not be much affected.

### Bike Hire in Oxford

A recent CycloX meeting promised to explain to the bewildered how the dockless bike phenomenon that has changed the streetscape of the city works. We learned that there are now over 800 of the colourful dockless bikes available to those with the right apps on their mobile phones, plus the local Bainton bikes that preceded them. The three new companies have agreed a voluntary code of conduct with City and County Councils, and according to the companies, the hirers are "learning to share the bikes" considerably. This is supported by a recent Oxford Mail poll which showed 56% v 44% in favour of more bikes. A system of "demerit points" for antisocial bike behaviour leads eventually to hirers being blacklisted. It seems unlikely that Oxford can sustain three such bike fleets indefinitely but for time being people needing a bike in a hurry are spoiled for choice. **We would like to hear what pedestrians think - please send in your views.**

### Meetings:

Tuesday March 27th: open discussion to include bus survey, street audits et al

Tues April 24th speaker: Jake Backus on Air Quality  
May 29 (**NB later date**) Walk/street audit, details to follow.

### Contacts:

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