

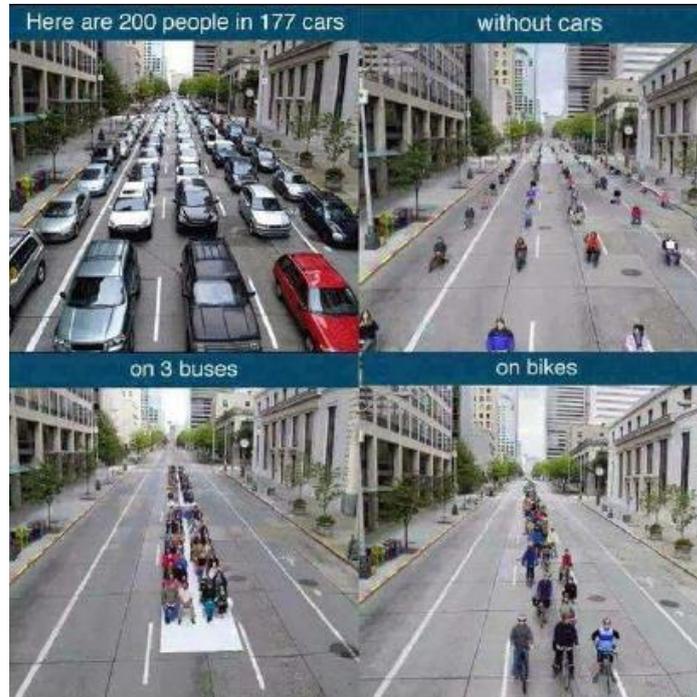


Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association
August 2020

Welcome to Newsletter 135

Oxford's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan



From Oxford's
LCWIP, Fig. 2

At our virtual meeting on 28th July, Patrick Lingwood, the County Council's Active Travel Hub Lead, introduced the LCWIP for us. The LCWIP can be viewed at https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/roads-and-transport-connecting-oxfordshire/OXFORDLCWIPv200101_0.pdf. It has been approved by Cabinet and now forms County Council policy.

Patrick told us that Oxford is consistently in the top ten of UK cities for the percentage of adults walking: 15% of trips into the City Centre are on foot (33% by bus; 30% by car), and there are an average of 32,000 pedestrians on Cornmarket each day. Areas of concern include the pedestrian route in from the railway station; St Giles; Broad Street; St Aldates and the High Street. Next steps include: updating the Walking Design Guide; extending the CPZs; preventing pavement parking; ensuring footways are a minimum of 2m wide (wherever possible and where there are changes to the road); improving pedestrian crossings; creating Quality Pedestrian Corridors where pedestrians have priority; and improving the cycle paths on Magdalen Bridge.

Oxford's new one-way system for pedestrians

Sushila Dhall writes:

Whilst not questioning the well-meaning intent behind Oxford's city centre's new pedestrian system, a few things stand out: that the length of time taken to respond by the light-controlled crossing at the new Hythe Bridge/George St junction will guarantee a build-up of walkers who cannot physically distance; the air has gone back to depressingly noisy and dirty with traffic on both these roads; George St and St Aldates pavements are still too narrow; Cornmarket signage keeps walkers to the sides of this pedestrianised street and a high number of cyclists now speed along it;

and there are far too few benches since if one person sits on a bench nobody else can sit there. The one way systems for pedestrians are widely ignored as they do not work for people. The new system treats people on foot as if we were slow, thin cars of little importance, moving steadily at the same speed in a single direction. This displays a sad lack of understanding of the needs of pedestrians in Oxford, pre- or post-lockdown.

Letter to the Editor: Air pollution versus Covid

Dear Editor,

My husband, Mike Woodin, City Cllr and co-leader of the national Green Party, died of lung cancer

aged 38 (our children were 4 and 2), 16 years ago this month. He had never smoked, been down a coal mine or exposed to asbestos (we were asked by the Oncologist) but had lived and worked all his adult life in Oxford, where air pollution levels regularly breach WHO safety guidelines (we weren't asked about that by the Oncologist).

Every year, more than 36,000 people die prematurely due to the impact of air pollution from motorised traffic, and have done for decades. We are all - not just people over 70, or with a previous health condition - as likely (if not more likely) to die from an illness caused by air pollution as from Covid-19. Yet local and national Governments turn a blind eye to this serious health risk, as they did for decades to cigarette smoking. Current Government advice says I should wear a mask in shops etc, but when I come outside and breathe the air I have to take my chances: a mask won't protect me from particulates. Death from breathing NOx fumes and particulates is simply a price our Governments, local and national, are willing for us to pay. I have campaigned on this for years and continue to do so. And have never felt as angry about the situation as I do now.

Deborah Glass Woodin
Marlborough Rd, Oxford

Consultations presently open

The councils are sharing updates on the temporary bus gate proposals which aim to assist Oxford's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic. The bus gates are part of a number of measures being taken forward by the County Council as the transport authority, and the city council as key stakeholder and partner, to counter the effects of the pandemic. The problems are significant and need fairly radical intervention. The proposed temporary bus gates are one part of the Councils' emergency measures to support the bus network and local businesses as part of Oxford's recovery, and will be important in creating conditions which support the levels of walking and cycling that have been seen in recent months. The main goal with these bus gates is to see the city centre returning to being a destination for local people and visitors, not simply a drive-through route. If drivers respond *en masse* rejecting the bus gate proposals, then councillors will not be able to support them and nothing will happen. Therefore OxPA asks members to take part in this public survey to inform the proposals on the temporary bus gates (open until August 9 2020):

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/oxfordbusgates/consultationHome>. Alongside the survey, the councils have also co-created a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) based on the questions that both County and City Councils have received over the past few weeks.



The 'pop-up shop' operated by CoHSAT in Ship Street during the week 27th July – 1st August to alert people to on-going proposals

The Government have opened a consultation on a review of the Highway Code, to "improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders". This is open until 27 October 2020. Details are at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-highway-code-to-improve-road-safety-for-cyclists-pedestrians-and-horse-riders>.

OxAria study of air quality

OxPA member Dr Suzanne Bartington, County Councillor and Clinical Research Fellow at the University of Birmingham's Institute of Applied Health Research, together with colleagues in Oxford and elsewhere, has been running a research study monitoring air quality and health outcomes in Oxford, funded by the National Institute for Health Research. The original plan was to follow how these changed with introduction of the Zero Emission Zone, but the intervention of Covid-19 has changed the focus. The investigators have now obtained more substantial funding from the Natural Environment Research Council for a longer study until December 2021. Sushila Dhall and Keith Frayn sit on the Study Steering Committee as lay members, and we hope to ask Suzanne or one of her colleagues to talk to us about the findings at a future meeting.

Meetings: Note that Town Hall meetings are on hold at present

September 22nd: details t.b.c.

Contacts:

Chair: Sushila Dhall, 01865 790783

Secretary: Chris Cowley

Treasurer and Membership: Don O'Neal

Newsletter Editor: Keith Frayn

Stalls goods: Deborah Glass-Woodin

Email: oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com

Website: www.oxpa.org.uk

Facebook: Oxford Pedestrians Association - OxPA

Twitter: @OxfordPedestrians

Write to: OxPA, 12 Stable Close, Rewley Park, Oxford OX1 2RF.

Living Streets: 0207 377 4900