



Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association

September - December 2010

Welcome to Newsletter 95 of the Oxford Pedestrians Association

The coming of autumn means warmer clothing being needed, and more walking being done in darkness instead of daylight. With pressure on our councils to cut costs, there will no doubt be issues about whether or not to light our streets; whether to sweep and clean them; or whether to repair damaged pavements. We hope OxPA members will remind their elected representatives not only how important walkability is to everyone, but what good value it provides for the small sums spent on it. *Investing in a Walkable City* will be the theme of the talk to be given by our retiring chairman Paul Cullen, at the AGM to be held on 19th October. We hope members will come and not only listen but join in the debate about how to get even better value from walkability investment in difficult times.

East Oxford Controlled Parking

The County has decided not to proceed with any of the East Oxford controlled parking schemes for the time being. We hope this breathing space will allow more acceptable plans to be developed which will reduce the congestion without sacrificing these narrow pavements to the parking of cars.

Speed Management

OxPA shares the widespread concern that removing cameras from Oxfordshire's roads will reinforce popular misconceptions about the seriousness of speeding. Road safety experts fear the result will be an increase in deaths and injuries, and will reduce drivers' awareness of the intimidating impact excessive speed has upon other road users. At the same time we hope that this will lead to more attention being given to enforcement of Oxford's 20mph speed limit. Not one enforcement action has been taken by Police since the scheme was implemented a year ago.

Frideswide Square proposals

Following the county council's consultations on a proposed re-arrangement of Frideswide Square, OxPA will shortly respond, with comments and suggestions made by members. Among our concerns is the need to reduce unnecessary motor traffic through the square – the harmful impact on city life of 35,000 vehicles passing through the space each day must be tremendous. We also think that the proposals fall short of addressing the needs of disabled people – the intended scheme envisages vehicles moving uninterrupted by traffic lights through the space. We will prepare OxPA's submission after ***OxPA's next meeting on September 21st***. Do let us know what you think.

Shared pavements

While keen to encourage sustainable travel by foot and cycle, OxPA cannot support shared space schemes which intimidate or place legitimate pavement users at risk. Our view is that if a carriageway is too hazardous for cyclists,

the Highway Authority should reduce traffic volumes and speeds, rather than pass on the risk to more vulnerable road users.

European Mobility Week – Oxford street parties

OxPA has been at the forefront of Oxford activities to support European Car Free Day (September 22nd), when people across Europe take steps to be 'In Town Without My Car'. This year the city council has focused its support on the way we use and relate to our streets. OxPA has long argued that our streets are places first and foremost – and that their use by motor vehicles both moving and parked is a secondary activity. To celebrate European Mobility Week, **Oxford Streets for People** is, with the city council, helping to encourage and coordinate street and neighbourhood events. Find out more online at www.oxstreets.oxfordcivicsoc.org.uk.

Walk4Life goes live on 26th September with a website and substantial catalogue of local walks to download. There will be a Walk4Life events calendar and supporting materials to help people promote and run events. People will be able to add their own routes so that Walk4Life should build up into a huge easily accessible catalogue of local walks. See the Walk4Life website – www.walk4life.info

An end to street clutter?

The government wrote to all local authorities recently, encouraging them to reduce street clutter by taking away unnecessary signs, posts, and other such material. This should make getting about our streets easier for less able-bodied people, while restoring some of the visual charms of our historic city.

Living Streets Forum goes live

National charity Living Streets has launched its online Forum, enabling anybody (not only Living Streets members) to raise a query or take part with others in a discussion about specific aspects of walking and walkability. Living Streets is aware that there are many

people who want answers to questions like 'What can I do about pavement parking?' but who do not know how to get them. (They could of course ask us at OxPA!). To visit the forum go to: www.livingstreets.org.uk/forum.

Next phase of Local Transport Plan consultations about to begin

The county council is about to carry out its final stage of consultations, on the entire draft Local Transport Plan 3. This takes place from 4 October 2010 to 9 January 2011. This will be an important opportunity for OxPA, and individuals, to help in shaping LTP3. You can keep up to date with progress online at: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ltp

Volunteers for Oxford on Foot

We have now sold almost 1500 copies of our popular books of walks, and it will soon need an update. If you would like to follow one or more of the walks to ensure accuracy, please contact Paul or Corinne.

Next Meetings – 7pm at Town Hall: NOTE CHANGED DATES as follows:

Tuesday September 21st, 7pm: general discussion in advance of AGM

Tuesday 19th October, 7pm Annual General Meeting. Retiring Chairman Paul Cullen will talk about *Investing in a Walkable City*.

Contacts

Chair: Paul Cullen, 426805

Secretary: Corinne Grimley Evans, 779663

Treasurer: Ray Jones, 865070

Membership: Michael Philbin, 201541

Web-site: www.oxpa.org.uk

National Pedestrians Association

[Living Streets] 0207 737 4900

Write to: OxPA, c/o 431 Meadow Lane, Iffley, Oxford OX4 4ED