

# Oxford Pedestrians Association

OXFORD PEDESTRIANS' ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER No. 67  
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2006

Welcome to OxPA's Newsletter number 67, and wishing all our readers a very happy New Year, good health and plenty of enjoyable and efficient walking from now through to December and beyond!

1) **OxPA in the news.** We have had some excellent media coverage in recent months. In November, OxPA members got out on the street at various places in Oxford, as part of the national campaign for 20mph speed limits, the **20 is Plenty** Action Day. We were interviewed for television, and had good photographic and editorial coverage in the Oxford Mail. We then took part in a three-hour 'phone in' on Radio Oxford's Bill Heine show. We hope to make the most of our media contacts in the year ahead.

2) **Car Free Day 2006.** At our November meeting Paul Cullen showed slides of the Car Free Day (CFD) celebration that took place in Zurich in September. In Zurich, CFD takes place on a Sunday, as opposed to 22<sup>nd</sup> September in countries of the European Union. The slides prompted a lively discussion with a response being given to the City Council, saying that for Oxford, the principles underpinning European Car Free Day are more appropriate than to Zurich, where CFD is more about fun in a city where most citizens travel by public transport. Hence Oxford Car Free Day, which falls on a Friday this year, should be aimed at encouraging people to leave their cars at home on the day. However, the fact that it will fall on a Friday allows the message to be extended to those who travel into Oxford for evening entertainment, and there should be a specific set of evening entertainments supporting and underpinning the Car Free Day philosophy. Zurich's strong focus on young people should be applied in Oxford, with early engagement of schools and development of projects, etc., possibly as part of the 'Communities' element of the school curriculum, to engage children's imagination about 'fuel-free' or low-carbon travel. Everybody at the meeting agreed that an early start would be needed. The City has now arranged its first planning meeting for early January, so we will have sufficient time to really help Car Free Day 'take off' in 2006.

### 3) **Council Consultations**

We have recently responded to the following consultations undertaken by the City and County:

**County Local Transport Plan**

**County Children and Young People's Plan**

**City Air Quality Action Plan**

**City Leisure Strategy**

In all of these we have argued the importance of walking for independent mobility and health. We encourage individual members to make their own submissions to such documents. Unfortunately the timescales for responses are usually so short as to prevent us from contacting members – so keep an eye on your local library, and if you have internet access, take a look at the City and County web sites.

We also continue to respond to local proposals that affect our streets. We recently objected to the County's proposals for the junction of Banbury Road and Moreton Road. **Amazingly, the County had collected no data about foot traffic at this major signal-controlled junction.** Following our own objections and those of the strong local residents' lobby, the County has withdrawn its proposals. We will be making representations to the County regarding its exclusion of data about the most vulnerable road users from its analysis of road junctions.



**4) OxPA Campaigns for 2006.** Thanks to the 25 people who kindly responded to our Campaigns questionnaire. Three subjects clearly emerged as the important issues to be pursued in 2006, both in terms of the numbers of supporters and the priorities given on the questionnaires. They were:

**Parking on Footways  
Cycling on Footways  
20 miles per hour zones**

Obviously members want the sanctity of the footway re-established, and we will vigorously pursue this issue.

A good number of respondents kindly offered their time and skills to support our campaigns, and we will respond to them as the campaigns are developed.

**5) Living Streets affiliation.** Members had decided in the past that OxPA should not become a branch of the Living Streets organisation for a number of good reasons. Living Streets have now created the opportunity for community groups to 'affiliate' with them, enabling organisations to take advantage of Living Streets facilities for £15 per year. This offers two main benefits for walking – it gives groups like us a free person-day's training each year at a Living Streets training session; and it strengthens national lobbying by bringing together those groups wanting better streets. OxPA has signed up for one year, after which we will determine whether to continue to affiliate. **If you have views about this, do please contact the Secretary or Chairman.**

**6) Central Oxford streets.** Members may have noticed that George Street has lost its shared priority coloured brick surfacing and has reverted to being primarily a fast route for through vehicles. Likewise Little Clarendon Street has had its coloured brick surfacing removed where vulnerable road users cross, again meaning the message to motorised vehicles is to go faster along a clear route. These changes were made by Council officers acting without any democratic mandate. **Councillors are working to have these changes reversed, but members can help by writing to Mr Brian Fell, Assistant Head of Transport, Highway Management, Oxfordshire County Council, or ring him on: 815083**

**7) Volunteers.** As we become more active and influential, we will be seeking support from members. Volunteering is good for you! It helps strengthen your Association's arguments, and you make new friends.

**Our next two meetings will be on Tuesdays, January 24th and February 28th, at 7pm, in Oxford Town Hall. At our January meeting we will be planning our 2006 meetings programme. We want OxPA meetings to be enjoyable, informative, and educational. We plan to have some outdoor meetings this year, so we can learn about different parts of our city on foot. Do come along and help us plan our series of meetings for the year.**

### Contacts

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