



Oxford Pedestrians Association

Newsletter Number 79 - January 2008

Welcome to OxPA's Newsletter number 79.

City Centre News - Over the winter break the City Council have been busy chopping down trees in central Oxford. Oaks and elms on Bonn Square have vanished, and all forty two semi mature trees behind the Westgate multi storey car park are being culled as this Newsletter is being written. All of this is in the name of modern economically competitive development. The argument goes that Oxford is not competing strongly enough in economic terms and so needs greater commercial input. Trees get in the way of new development stores and CCTV cameras, and attract pigeons, therefore must go. The ironies are two-fold: firstly all those trees were planted originally to soften the impact of development and it is only now they have grown to a size to do that that they are being cut down, and secondly Oxford City Centre is an Air Quality Management Action Zone (AQMA) with a duty on local Councils to reduce toxic air pollution. In Oxford City Centre the madness of following principles of economic competitiveness above all other concerns means we are going backwards in terms of environmental sustainability and health.

Cotteslowe and Sunnymead Park News – This is Oxford's largest park, with land on both sides of the Ring Road, linked by a foot and cycle bridge. There are a great variety of features, with opportunity for every type of 'walker' from the disabled to the jogger. The footpath network is comprehensive. Over many years there has been an active link between local communities and the park. Currently, this is represented by 'Friends of Cotteslowe and Sunnymead Park', on the management committee of which there is a member specifically for footpath matters. That person is Keith Holly, an OxPA member, and he would welcome any constructive comments relating to the park and those who use it, or wish to do so. Contact Keith at 36 Sunderland Avenue, Oxford. Tel. 01865 515879

East Oxford News – Parking issues are to the fore in East Oxford right now. Local households have been given another opportunity by the County Council, to express their views about a parking zone being introduced, with parking charges to be paid. What has that to do with walking? Footway parking could well be 'regularised' in some parts of the area. If you have views about this you can let the County Officer dealing with the matter know – he is Richard Kingshott, Principal Engineer, Oxfordshire Highways, Speedwell House, Speedwell Street, Oxford OX1 1NE .

Pavement Parking Policy - Because the subject of pavement parking is beginning to arise more and more often, OxPA has produced a policy statement on the subject. It's attached with this Newsletter, and we encourage members to make it available to others whenever that is felt appropriate.

Oxfordshire's Active Travel Plans – The County is writing a document about Active Travel, and this should accompany the next Local Transport Plan, for the period beyond 2011. Why does it feel the need to do this, given that it pays no heed to the County Walking Strategy which it adopted in 2007*, and which contains, among other things, a commitment to increase walking. That has clearly crept to the back of someone's desk, never to be seen again. But, putting scepticism to one side, we have invited friends from cycling lobby group Cyclox to our next meeting to discuss what should be the contents of an Active Travel Plan for the County, and hence for the City. **We hope that a County staff member will attend to hear the discussion. DO THEREFORE COME TO THE NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 22ND JANUARY, 7PM AT THE TOWN HALL.**

Future meetings – Meetings are held at 7pm at the Town Hall, usually the fourth Tuesday of the month – but our March meeting this year will be on the third Tuesday of that month, due to a Town Hall closure the following week. Do come along – and of course, bring a friend or two.

Tues 22 January	Active Travel Plans – joint meeting with Cyclox. Hoping a County officer can attend
Tues 26 February	Oxford's traffic signals and light controlled crossings – discussion with an officer from the County
Tues 18 March	OxPA open meeting – members to discuss issues of concern
Tues 22 April	
Tues 27 May	