



Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association
June 2022

Welcome to Newsletter 142

Human bollards move to East Oxford



OxPA's famous 'human bollards' were called into action once again after a spate of thefts and vandalism jeopardising the new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in East Oxford.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are intended to reduce traffic on side streets by preventing drivers from using them as shortcuts. This benefits pedestrians by making it quicker and safer to cross the road, easier to walk and cycle especially with children, quieter and more pleasant. The latest LTN trial started on May 20th when the County Council installed bollards at a dozen key points on each side of Cowley Road. Within a week, several had been stolen, putting vulnerable road users in danger - especially children returning to school after the half-term holiday. The council and the police passed responsibility to each other and neither took action.

So, starting on June 6th, OxPA committee members joined local residents in Howard Street, a rat run between Cowley and Iffley Road. Traffic on Howard Street has been bad for so long that it is already fitted with raised tables at every junction, which make it difficult to cross on foot and almost impossible with a wheelchair or pushchair. Just as we did in Oriel Square last summer, the human bollards stood peacefully in the road by the 'no motor vehicles' signs. And just like last summer, a number of drivers tried to force their way through, revving their engines, sounding their horns, and shouting abuse. We stood firm.

Some drivers even called the police, but instead of moving us on, Thames Valley Police once again confirmed that we were in the right. Despite the hostility from motorists, we also received expressions of gratitude from residents and from families taking their children to school on foot, on scooters, and on bikes.

OxPA's action made the front page of the Oxford Mail, which attracted more volunteers to safeguard the school run each morning. The publicity also finally provoked the County Council into action, and most of the bollards have been reinstated today (June 16th). We wait with interest to see whether they will last, but if not, OxPA's human bollards will continue keeping the streets safe.

Botley Road update

Botley Road has had work done on it to improve it for pedestrians and cyclists. However, it still seems very motor dominated. We will be walking

up and down it with a camera and notepad to critically assess the street now that thousands of pounds have been poured into it, and will circulate our findings.

Update on County and City Councils' proposed major changes to transport

On Weds 20th July, CoHSAT (a group which includes OxPA) are running a major public meeting on the future of transport in Oxford.

The County and City Councils are proposing the most sweeping changes to transport since Cornmarket was pedestrianised in 1999. This event is a chance to get up to speed on their plans before public consultation opens in the autumn. Liam Rice, Transport Correspondent for the Oxford Mail, will be interviewing:

- Louise Upton, Cabinet Member for Health and Transport, City Council
- Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Highways, County Council
- Luke Marion, Managing Director, Oxford Bus Company
- Tim Schwanen, Director, Oxford University Transport Studies Unit.

with plenty of time for questions

Wednesday, 20 July 2022, 7 - 9 pm

Wesley Memorial Church, New Inn Hall Street
OX1 2DH: Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-future-of-transport-in-oxford-tickets-370627245067>

Restore Fayre at Elder Stubbs

OxPA will have a stall at the Restore Fayre on Saturday 20th August 12.30-4pm. Please come and support us for an hour or so. It is a great way to meet people and engage in conversation about current transport issues and changes. No chairs are provided so it will mean standing - but it should be a lovely event. Details at

<https://www.restore.org.uk/2022/restore-fayre-at-elder-stubbs-2022>



Elder Stubbs Restore Fayre

BT proposing Street Hubs on pavements

BT are putting in a number of planning applications for 'Street Hubs' in Oxford. These vertical display units provide access to some services (local WiFi, emergency calls etc), but their main purpose seems to be to display large advertisements – presumably generating revenue for BT. They are claimed to be replacing unwanted telephone booths, but in the case of those in Headington, and many others, the booths

were removed many years ago. OxPA considers that additional obstructions to pavement users are unwanted. Please keep an eye open for planning application notices near you, and object if you can. Interestingly, Plymouth City Council planners have rejected all 29 hubs planned there.



Photomontage of proposed BT Hub in Headington (this one does not replace a current phone booth). From BT Planning Application 22/01153/FUL. Thanks to Stephanie Jenkins for the information.

Vacancies at OxPA

OxPA is urgently looking for people to fill the following positions: Newsletter Editor (which comes with a format ready to be filled with articles from members, quarterly); and Secretary (this is a paid position for around 6 hours a month paid at £10 per hour). Contact us at oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com if you are interested. You would join a small team of people dedicated to putting pedestrians and wheelchair users at the heart of transport planning in Oxford.

Meetings are on the fourth Tuesday of each month (excluding August and December), at 7 pm):

June 28th: Walk in east Oxford looking at LTNs and bollards and how well or otherwise they are working. Meet by the Ultimate Picture Palace cinema on Jeune St, 7 pm.

July 26th: Details t.b.c.

Contacts:

Chair: Sushila Dhall, 01865 790783

Secretary: Position vacant

Treasurer and Membership: Don O'Neal

Newsletter Editor: Position vacant

Stalls goods: Deborah Glass-Woodin

Social media coordinator: Owen McKnight

Email: oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com

Website: www.oxpa.org.uk

Facebook: Oxford Pedestrians Association - OxPA

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

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