



Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association
October 2023

Welcome to Newsletter 147

Christchurch Meadow fundraiser



On a rapidly darkening evening in mid September, Mark Davies, local historian and writer, led a well attended walk as a fund-raiser for OxPA, around Christchurch Meadow, stopping to talk about the many points of interest and history on the walk. Who knew that Folly Bridge was originally called the South Bridge, and has been there since before the 11th century in some form? It is called Folly Bridge because in the 17th century Thomas Waltham (which became 'Welcome') added another storey to the crumbling tower that stood by the bridge, whereupon it became known as 'Welcome's Folly'.

We had to rather hurry around the walk as darkness was falling fast, but we were very pleased that members of Unlimited Oxfordshire came on the walk (though some parts were bumpy for the wheelchairs). Mark has said he will lead another walk next year, and we thank him for his generosity, the wealth of his knowledge, and his support for OxPA.

Cycling on Cornmarket and Queen Street

Our summer social event in the Friends Meeting House in August had as its topic the question of bringing cycling back onto Cornmarket and Queen St. The results of our survey of members show: Cyclists are in favour, and pedestrians who cycle are cautiously in favour. Many think cycling should be allowed on Queen St but not Cornmarket. However the majority of OxPA members who responded to the survey are against bringing cycling back to both streets between 10am and 6pm, on the grounds that there are few spaces in Oxford that feel safe enough for vulnerable walkers. The more vulnerable the walker the more they want the streets to remain cycle-free.

Submissions to our survey of OxPA members on cycling on these two streets are still welcome - the formal consultation is not until October - and a detailed response will be prepared ensuring no comment is left out. Please email us at oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com if you have not responded and would like to do so.

A series of mini surveys carried out informally show that people already cycle all the time on both streets, and the majority of pedestrians appear unaffected; however, crucially, there are pedestrians who are slower and more vulnerable who are affected, who glance both ways before crossing Cornmarket in case of cyclists coming fast, who are nervous when swerved past, and who tell children off for nearly being hit by cyclists.

OxPA represents the most vulnerable walkers and will be responding to the upcoming consultation by saying no to reintroducing cycling to these streets between 10am and 6pm.

Oxford Green Fair – 25th November

The Green Fair will be held in Oxford Town Hall on Saturday November 25th, where OxPA will have a stall. A very popular and sociable annual event, it is being held a week earlier than in previous years. Please come and help on our stall, where we will be displaying our work and selling our pavement parking stickers, an empowering and effective way of making our feelings about pavement parking known.

Guide dogs pavement parking campaign

For decades now OxPA has campaigned against pavement parking on the grounds that it narrows footways unacceptably, widens roads, prioritises driving over walking and wheelchairs, and forces people to walk in single file. Now there is a new petition which we want to support, which is about the impact of pavement parking on people who need guide dogs - please sign and share [this](#).

October OxPA meeting – 24th October

Our speaker at October's meeting (Tuesday October 24th, 7pm) will be Pete Brunskill, Principal Rail Development Manager, Oxfordshire County Council, who will talk about Oxford Community Rail Partnership, and his new role supporting Oxfordshire rail initiatives. Pedestrians and public transport need one another and need to work together.

Please attend - a zoom link will be circulated nearer the time - and ensure your comments and questions are heard.

Volunteer vacancy: Newsletter Editor

OxPA is looking for a **Newsletter Editor** to to put together our quarterly newsletter. The job is not onerous as a template is available, and all articles are provided each quarter. You would be a member of OxPA's committee which is a small but hard-working group at the core of the organisation. Please get in touch if you think this role may be for you.

Volunteer vacancy: Stalls Officer

OxPA is looking for a **Stalls Officer** to store our stall items (photos, merchandise, leaflets, our banner) which do not take up much space), and to ensure they are available for our 2-3 stalls per year. Please let us know if you can help. A bonus is you get to be on the Committee and meet the core group once a month for a management meeting, deciding what we do and how and when we do it. Please contact us at oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com if you are interested or would like to ask any questions about either of these roles.

Cornmarket and Queen Street

Thank you to all who responded to the call for thoughts on re-introducing cycling to Cornmarket and Queen St during the hours of 10am and 6pm. The report we created from your responses is included with the newsletter email as a separate attachment.

Contacts

Sushila Dhall: Chair
Don O'Neal: Treasurer and Membership
Stalls: Vacant, volunteer needed
Owen McKnight: Social Media Co-ordinator
Jamie Blomfield: Secretary

Enquiries:

oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com