



Walk Talk

Newsletter of Oxford Pedestrians Association
January 2024

Welcome to Newsletter 148

Pavement clutter on Botley Road



A survey of the closed Botley Road shows the clutter that is placed on pavements even when the road is almost empty of motorised traffic. Both sides of the road are full of plastic signs and fencing, with the added issue of leaves not adequately cleared. At the time of writing the street is further compromised by flooding, which cannot be helped but which often leaves further debris in its wake.

OxPA created [this](#) presentation to show the issues for pavement users. From the narrow single file tunnel used by motor-cyclists and cyclists wheeling their vehicles, slow and fast walkers, wheelchair and buggy users, and thousands of people on foot, to the negotiating of a plethora of road signs, to plastic fencing and neglected surfaces, it is a tribute to pavement users that they continue to manage the street at all. Workers' signs are routinely placed on pavements all over Oxfordshire, even when they cannot be seen from the road. We are using photographs taken along routes to raise awareness of issues of pavement clutter and obstruction, as done in this presentation, which demonstrates some of the obstructions to pavement users on Botley Road.

Safe Pavements For All

City Councillor Barbara Coyne has started a 'Safe Pavements For All' campaign which OxPA is actively working to support.

Our first and very seasonal call is for salt bins to be made available to all communities to de-ice pavements when it gets cold and wet. However this is just the beginning; loose paving stones, potholes, very large puddles on pavements (like the one on Park End St), and swathes of leaves left to rot also make trip and slip falls a risk for pavement users. This is particularly an issue in wet and wintry weather, when loose paving stones like the many on St Aldates can soak a person's foot and leg in cold dirty water, and mud and ice can mean broken wrists or worse for those who slip or trip.

We look forward to the coming year of working with the Safer Pavements For All campaign to address some of the issues that make walking and wheeling unsafe or impossible.

Pavement Closure on Botley Road

Thames Water will be [closing the north pavement of the bridge](#) over the Thames on Botley Road from March 2024 to March 2025 to complete the works. This leaves pedestrians with only a substandard, too narrow pavement on the south side, and closes off the Thames Path which is used as an off road route for pedestrians and cyclists accessing Botley Road from the north. Apparently this will mean single file motorised traffic over the bridge.

Cycling on Queen St and Cornmarket

Following our submission of OxPA members' responses to the question of bringing cycling back to Queen St and Cornmarket, the County Council has decided to carry out further surveys of their own before coming to a conclusion. These surveys will include a focus on fast e-scooters and e-bikes.

Thanks are due to all those of you who responded - it was a very helpful survey and showed that on the whole OxPA does not support the bringing back of cyclists to either street during the hours of 10am to 6pm.

Petition for greater priority for pedestrians at pedestrian-operated traffic lights

Please sign the petition to the government, asking them to make pedestrian crossings respond instantly, and forward it to anyone who could sign it:

<https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/652591>

It aims to introduce legislation to scrap any time delay following the button-push at pedestrian and cyclist crossings, and the lights starting to change. This should include but not be limited to Pelican,

Puffin and Toucan crossings. Click [here](#) for more details and to sign.

View from the Pavement in the Oxford Mail

Since autumn 2023, OxPA has had a monthly column called 'View From The Pavement' in the Oxford Mail, which we hope to continue this year. This has been gifted to us by our partner cycling organisation CyclOx, who have had a regular cycling column for many years. Our third article, on the need for gritting of pavements in winter, is due later in January.

Volunteer vacancy: Newsletter Editor

OxPA is seeking a Newsletter Editor for our quarterly newsletter. The work is not too onerous as we have a template - we need someone to collect input from members and put the newsletter together, working with the support of OxPA committee, to create a document to be sent to members electronically by our secretary. The Newsletter Editor would be a member of OxPA committee, a small but hard-working group.

Contact us at oxford.pedestrians.association@gmail.com if you are interested or would like to ask any questions about this role.

OxPA social – 23rd January

Please come to our social event on Tuesday January 23rd, which will be in the Friends Meeting House on St Giles, 7-9pm. It is a chance for networking, catching up, and raising a glass together to the work we do with partners and supporters to improve conditions for vulnerable road users.

OxPA AGM – 27th February

OxPA's AGM will be held on Tuesday February 27th. Our speaker will be a member of Unlimited Oxfordshire, with whom we work. If all pavements were fit for wheelchair users they would be fit for all pavement users. Our AGM is an opportunity for members to nominate themselves or one another for the roles listed at the end of this newsletter, and also to hear a report of our work over the year.

Contacts

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

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