Summary of results from 288 respondents to the

Quiet Route Active Travel Survey on Meadow Lane Iffley

(24 January – 4 February 2022)

A survey table was set up at the corner of Meadow Lane in Iffley Village with signage and flyers giving links to the online survey. This location was chosen for best visibility and to try and engage cyclists on the flat section rather than on the slope of Meadow Lane.

It was staffed by volunteers during the week of 24 – 31 January for about 30% of daylight hours. Users of the lane did not usually stop to take a leaflet unless offered one by one of the volunteers and cyclists were particularly difficult to engage as they did not want to stop.

The weather during the survey was predominantly cold (around 1C) overcast and dry, with some sunny periods. The January timing under-represents more vulnerable users and visitors/tourists.

Link to Survey Monkey results online: https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-NRB3SBWJ9/

Q1 Type of journey (n=288/288)

90% use the quiet lane for leisure

20% *for their commute

Commentary: *The commuting figure is lower than expected and is likely a result of difficulty in stopping commuting cyclists to engage in the survey.

User comment: Regular use of this rural-feeling route as a local. Also as a quiet link to the towpath and town and beautiful circular walk.

Q2 Mode of travel (n=288/288)

93.5% of respondents use the lane for walking or jogging,

60% *for cycling.

39% of respondents use the lane only for walking or jogging (as opposed to cycling)

Commentary: * Cycling responses are lower than expected and is likely a result of difficulty in stopping cyclists to engage in the survey. There is multimodality use, with people using the lane for walking/cycling/jogging

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Q3 Vulnerability (n= 247/288)

41% of *question* respondents consider themselves a vulnerable user.

35% of *survey* respondents considered themselves vulnerable users (If it is assumed that the 41 non responders to this question do not feel vulnerable)

Reasons given by the 116 people who identified themselves as vulnerable:

40 (34.5%) age/ mobility /other disability

38 (32.7%) accompanied by young children

38 (32.7%) dog walker

Reasons cited by vulnerable users for taking the Quiet Route:

- The main road is unsuitable and dangerous for these groups.
- The pavements are too narrow & uneven for additional pedestrians, especially those with young children/ mobility scooters / pushchairs/ dogs/ mobility challenges
- The roads are too busy and noisy for people with young children and dogs.

Commentary: There is a very significant proportion of vulnerable users.

User comment: A lot of families, small and large use this quiet road to get to and from the river whilst avoiding the dangerous Donnington Bridge traffic

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Q4 Frequency of use (n=287/288)

78% of respondents use the lane several times a week

32.5% of respondents use it daily

18% use it several times a month

4% only occasionally

Commentary: There were no single visits – this would be expected to increase markedly in the summer months when Iffley becomes a visitor destination

The high frequency of use would mean that detrimental changes to the Quiet Route would have a considerable impact on the lives for people using it.

Q5 Postcode (n 278/288)



98% Oxford postcodes (OX1, OX2, OX3, OX4)

93% OX4 postcodes

Commentary: People come from a wide area to use the Quiet Route on Meadow Lane

This area would be expected to be much wider in the summer months when Iffley is visited as a resort and the Isis Farmhouse on the river reopens.

Q6 Usage of the Quiet Route since the COVID pandemic (n280/288)

63% of respondents have increased their use of the lane since COVID

96% of respondents use has stayed the same or increased since the pandemic

Commentary: Even though lockdowns have ended, usage of the Quiet Route remains increased since the pandemic as people continue to value the peaceful and nature-filled route and prioritise time outdoors.

Q7 Reasons for using the Quiet Route (n282/288)

The top 3 reasons given for using the Quiet Route are:

- Tranquillity (90%)
- Rural atmosphere (86%)
- Safety (78%)

Other important reasons given are:

- Width for social distancing (40%)
- Sense of community (41%)
- the lack of pollution (free text comments)
- large number of opportunities for spotting & hearing wildlife (free text comments)

Commentary: The effects of traffic from a 30-home development on the Horse Fields would severely compromise the top 3 reasons users give for using the lane: tranquillity, rural atmosphere and safety of the Quiet Route.

Safety in particular would be affected by increased traffic at 2 junctions and parking overspill:

1. Junction from Church Way onto Meadow Lane which is already well known locally as danger spot with a blind bend

2. Junction for access to the proposed development onto Meadow Lane where 100 m of steady incline down from Church Way means that cyclists are travel at speed and situated 20m from the blind bend on Meadow Lane.

3. *Parking:* currently there is no issue with parking on the lane: the upper part by the sheltered housing in Lucas & Remy Place is used for visiting carers, the lower part is not used for parking. Plans for 12 parking spaces for 30 homes fall short of the average 1.4 cars/household leaving 30 cars to overspill onto Meadow Lane. This would compromise safety and ruin the character and social space on the lane. Yellow lines would turn this rural lane into a suburban one and push the overspill into the rest of this ancient village in a conservation area.

User comments:

We live in Littlemore. Our nursery is in the centre of town. This is a safe and quiet route that lets us avoid traffic and noise almost all the way. Don't destroy it!

A nice place to walk two-abreast, with a dog, and not have to worry about traffic.

It's part of a really good circular walk of about 40 minutes which is an important part for me in keeping fit.

With a 9 year old brother and busy working parents, it provides a quiet and safe place for us to relax without worrying family. Covid has affected many negatively. Rural areas for much of the community has been a emotional relief during the pandemic. This one just happens to be relief for a huge community. It is rare in such a big city you find that country-side-friendliness

The de-stressing, calming feeling that comes with birdsong and being close to the natural habitats of the hedge along the southern side of Meadow Lane and the sense of space and fields behind them - and the clean fresh quality of the air they circulate.

Q8 Perceived effects of the proposed housing development plans for the Horse Fields (n =278/288)

When asked whether the development and associated T junction on Meadow Lane would affect people's use of the quiet route,

84% of respondents said it would discourage (69%) or even stop (15%) them using it

45% of respondents would feel unsafe

24% of respondents said that it would affect their mental health.

The reasons that people gave for feeling discouraged from using the route include:

- Loss of protection from traffic
- Traffic would increase
- Quietness would be lost
- Feeling of safety would be lost
- Biodiversity and wildlife's habitat would be destroyed
- Less joy and peace

Q9 If the development went ahead, is there a good alternative route you would use to avoid this route?

52% of respondents said that there was no suitable alternative to their route

40% said that the alternative route they would use would not be as good*

Only 5% said that there was an alternative route that was just as good

Commentary: comments about why alternative routes are seen as unsatisfactory because they are:

- Dangerous due to
    - traffic / congestion (main roads)
    - congestion and lack of space on narrow routes (towpath/ unsuitable pavements)
- Longer, which for some makes it unviable (e.g. low mobility)
- Polluted (noise and air)
- Lack exposure to nature
- Unpleasant

User comments:

as a parent of a young child and a dog walker, and a cyclist, I cannot emphasise enough how valuable the quiet route of Meadow Lane is, and how worrying it is that safety will be compromised. The quiet route is more effective than an LTN!

No other route for a daily walk or leisure ride/scoot with kids would involve zero cars

Appendix

Quiet Route Survey results: data and written responses

Q1 What is the reason for your journey? Chose as many as apply (n=288/ 288)

Leisure: 90%

Commute: 20%

School Run: 4%

Other reason*: 22%

* This category in Q 1 and also in Q 2 was used to give other categories of use as well as to quality the type of leisure use and are combined and listed below

Other categories:

- Shopping in local shops
- Visiting family
- Rehabilitation
- Going to Church
- Dog walking
- to reach my allotment
- Residents: Live there! Visiting church, village shop, etc

Type of leisure use:

Enjoying the rural quiet environment:

- Peaceful place to be away from the traffic of the city looking at nature around the area.
- Regular use of this rural-feeling route as a local. also as a quiet link to the towpath and town and beautiful circular walk.
- physical exercise, escape to nature, see natural beauty; Part of a circuit of Iffley, used to keep fit

Social:

- meeting neighbours for a quick chat
- meet-ups, contact with friends and neighbours
- Visit friends
- Travel to partners house

Children:

- supporting 2-5yr olds who are learning to cycle
- Pushing a pram
- Going to the river with kids
- To go blackberry picking in the summer and deer or fox spotting all year round and its the best place to go when it snows for sledging or ice puddles or building snowmen.

Q2 What mode(s) of travel do you use the lane for? (chose as many as apply)
(n=288 / 288)

Walking: 90%

Cycling: 60 %

Jogging: 33 %

Scooting: 4%

Mobility Scooter: 0.7% (2)

Horse riding : 0.3% (1)

Other*: 4.8%

- Skateboarding 1.4% (4)

*Other: The free text responses to question 2 had much cross over with question 1 and have been combined in the Q1 summary

Q3 If you consider yourself a vulnerable user please specify the reason (n=247/288)

Not applicable: 60%

Accompanied by young children: 16%

Dog walker: 15%

Age and mobility: 11 %

Other disability: 5%

Another reason/make a comment: 7%

Comments listed under categories of vulnerable user:

Cyclists and walkers

- all cyclists (even the bad ones) are vulnerable to 4 wheel traffic but this is rarely a problem on Meadow way
- When cycling I consider myself a vulnerable road user in Oxford as the infrastructure doesn't support me.
- I ride a bike, I consider this as one of the few safe routes to Rose Hill
- As a cyclist, I am always vulnerable to cars, especially on narrow lanes with no dedicated cycle lane. As a pedestrian I am always vulnerable to cars especially on narrow lanes with no cycle lane, especially on narrow lanes with no pavements.
- Not so nippy on my feet as I once was

Families:

- A lot of families, small and large use this quiet road to get to and from the river whilst avoiding the dangerous Donnington Bridge traffic

Poor health and disability:

- Need a quiet, vehicle free walk as I was on crutches and couldn't move quickly
- Use on bike with disabled child
- Deafness
- stressful job, going out on a quiet place/line makes all the difference to refresh and carry on my daily responsibilities at work
- Recovering from Long covid
- A cancer patient on chemotherapy
- Mobility scooter in a low traffic zone

Dog walkers:

- This route is the way many dog walkers come to use Oriel Meadow

Reasons cited by vulnerable users for taking the Quiet Route:

- The main road is unsuitable and dangerous for these groups.
- The pavements are too narrow & uneven for additional pedestrians, especially those with young children/ mobility scooters / pushchairs/ dogs/ mobility challenges
- The roads are too busy and noisy for people with young children and dogs.

Q4 How often do you use the quiet route?

Daily:33%

Several times a week: :45%

Several times a month: 18%

Infrequently: 4%

Singe visit: 0%

No free text option

Q5 Please give your postcode (or if you don't know it, the street/ area where you live)

See summary for map. No free text option

Q6 How has your use of this route changed since COVID?

Increased: 63%

Stayed the same: 33%

Reduced: 4%

No free text option

Q7w What is it about this route that you like? (chose as many as apply)

Tranquillity 90%

Rural atmosphere 87%

Safety 78%

Sense of Community 41%

Wide enough for social distancing 39%

Another reason 26% (see below)

Connectivity/Convenience

It is the route to my destination

Access to other parts of town

And the only safe way to cycle from Iffley into Oxford.

Most direct

Convenient

It connects pretty much the only route where I can run without having to stop to cross a road or dodge pedestrians (the loop comes back along the river)

A good short cut for cycling into town not having to go on the main roads

Links to other areas of use

The iffley loop!

Close to home, accessible without driving anywhere

Access to City of Oxford Rowing Club

The best route to get to my workplace from the river.

Quiet circular route, nice environment

Shortest route

Near my home. Part of walk through village

it's part of a wider circuit

It is between iffley lock and donnington bridge which is where I was going

Most convenient route for my cycle commute to and from work

It’s part of a really good circular walk of about 40 minutes which is an important part for me in keeping fit.

Quiet and Safety

We live in Littlemore. Our nursery is in the centre of town. This is a safe and quiet route that lets us avoid traffic and noise almost all the way. Don't destroy it!

Avoids going up Rose Hill on Iffley Road

there are virtually no cars/lorries on this route

Traffic free

fee cars/ lorries

Lack of motorised traffic

Few cars

Important to avoid Iffley Road if possible, especially the Donnington Bridge crossing where I have had very dangerous incidents with cars taking a left.

Safer than Iffley Turn and Iffley Road

safe for cycling while all streets around have heavy traffic and risk of accidents at rush time

Clean Air

Low traffic and low pollution vs Iffley Road

less pollution from traffic by avoiding Iffley Road for as much as possible

Less exposure to pollution

Avoids air pollution of main roads

The clean fresh quality of the air

Less pollution (traffic fumes).

Nature

Wildlife spotting

Quiet and green

Bird song

Animals

Tremendous enjoyment of nature!

Opportunity to view wildlife

Nature

Nature and wildlife

Bio-diversity

To enjoy the view across the fields. To spot wildlife in the fields - our favourite being the young deer we saw sleeping in the field. I used to bring my young son up to look at the horses.

Beautiful wildlife. The day I was handed the flyer I could hear a woodpecker!

The de-stressing, calming feeling that comes with birdsong and being close to the natural habitats of the hedge along the southern side of Meadow Lane and the sense of space and fields behind them - and the clean fresh quality of the air they circulate.

That these fields provide desperately needed habitats for the wide range of wildlife using, passing through and occupying them is most important to me in a time when human encroachment on and destruction of even small green spaces such as this threatens disaster for the planet that we share with them. Humans are responsible for this climate and ecological emergency and in my view we have an over-riding duty to protect the planet and the future by keeping this green space, its habitats and climate-resilience safe from destruction. People are adaptable: we can build on and repurpose other sites for housing while keeping the network of local and global natural environments safe from our worst, most ignorant and self-destructive depradations.

It feels like the countryside, but I am in the middle of a city, and there is plenty of nature to experience from the path.

It always has interesting animals and birds you don't see as often anywhere else local.

Riverside, wildlife

Good for nature - lots of birds for example

<u>Teaching opportunities</u>

Provides teaching opportunities for the little ones i foster

<u>Space</u>

Sense of space

A nice place to walk two-abreast, with a dog, and not have to worry about traffic.

Few places to walk dogs safely and socially distance

forms part of a loop walking down the Thames and back up Meadow lane

A feeling of space

<u>Place</u>

Utterly beautiful, away from busy traffic and angry drivers , makes me more likely to cycle

Familiar

Lovely scenery

Sense of history as an old way to and from Iffley Village

Sense of history. This is a medieval drover's lane, and at the lower half, still retains that feel, with hedgerows bordering on fields, full of river birds, song birds, woodpeckers

Beauty

Historic

Community and wellbeing

Friendly

Meeting new people and their animals (mainly dogs) and striking up new friendships

Meet up with friends

The beauty and proximity of such environments have been recognised for decades as major factors in creating and maintaining healthy human communities.

With a 9 year old brother and busy working parents, it provides a quiet and safe place for us to relax without worrying family. Covid has affected many negatively. Rural areas for much of the community has been a emotional relief during the pandemic. This one just happens to be relief for a huge community. It is rare in such a big city you find that country-side-friendliness

Q8 A housing development for 30 homes is proposed for the Horse Fields adjacent to Meadow Lane with a T junction about 100m from the bend at the bottom of the lane. How do you think your use of this quiet route would be affected by the planned development? (chose as many as apply) 247 responses

It would make me feel unsafe: 46%

It would discourage me from using it: 69%
It would stop me from using it: 16%
Total: 85%

It would affect my mental health: 24%

It would not affect me: 17%

This was linked to a free text box, so it produced a set of mixed responses not consistently relating to the statement: see below:

Comments from those who would feel unaffected

I run through the area only

It is a tiny proportion of my run

I don't think the housing development would affect my jogging

I don't believe this would affect my route either on Bike or on foot

I don't think it would be busy enough to make any difference

I'm not sure there would be that much more traffic because of it

Once built it would not generate much traffic

I cannot say how it might affect my use of this route definitively. I tend to come through quite early so its quiet any way. 30 additional houses might result in a little more traffic at that time but I doubt the impact on route congestion would be significant.

I have the privilege of being able bodied and in full awareness. I can see how it would affect others in the ways you have listed

Comments by those who would feel affected

I have no other choice but to use it. The main effect is that it would depress me, and make me angry, and really hate my City Council, which previous to this development proposal, had my respect and gratitude for the hard work Councillors do.

I would still use it there is little choice, it would become degraded

None of the above. I'd still use it but I would be more concerned

I need access anyway

the turn at the top of Meadow Lane is already difficult

It would affect me because the protection against traffic would be lost

I live here so can only use this route

The quietness and village feel would be lost. I would feel less safe taking my partner's children on bike rides on the lane.

It would spoil the space for animals

I need access anyway

I live on it but I would use it less for walking

It would affect me because the protection against traffic would be lost

as long as cars won't be driving down meadow lane (toward the bend), and the junction provides reasonable lines of site and walking and cycling paths, this could be fine, but I wouldn't want to have to worry about excessive traffic in a confined space as a cylcist.

As well as increase in traffic in the area, my other great concern is the destruction of the existing habitat for the very obvious abundance of wildlife that is in & around the horse field & adjacent meadows.

It will still be the best cycle and walking route for me but I will feel less safe and very sad if it increases car use on sections of the lane

It would remove a key part of the vehicle-free Meadow Lane Cole route into town.

Allot of the routes from abingdon also have this level of traffic, I could get used to it but I'd prefer not to deal with it

It’s the shortest route for me

The route will still be my most convenient

It simply would not be as beautiful as it currently is. There would be much less joy and gratitude and peace

I wouldn't have the quiet time to think or observe the nature and look in to the Horse Fields for the family of foxes or the family of deers who frequently graze there.

Q9 If the development went ahead, is there a good alternative route you would use to avoid this route?

No suitable alternative 52%

Yes, but not as good 40%

Just as good 6%

(2% did not respond)

Please give details of the alternative route(s) and any issues with them

Alternative route: associated issues

alternative would be to use the Iffley Road

Main road - less safe by bike

Main road

There is no other 'loop walk that takes in the river and only has a short section of 'road' - as a parent of a young child and a dog walker, and a cyclist, I cannot emphasise enough how valuable the quiet route of Meadow Lane is, and how worrying it is that safety will be compromised. The quiet route is more effective than an LTN!

I would go up Iffley Road to Courtauld Road and Tree Lane to Church Way, or Iffley to Ashhurst Way via the Oval to Lenthall Road. Both are longer routes and less safe.

I use the route as part of circular walk, so there are other routes I could use to walk, although this is currently one of the nicer ones and my preferred route.

Longer and less pleasant.

I could be cycling via Iffley Road, but it often gets congested and the air quality is significantly worse.

Iffley Road - far less safe for cyclists, even under new plans for the road

Iffley road: busy traffic, no access to nature spaces

I would have to go around by the canal which is a longer route which would be very challenging on days when my mobility/health is limited.

Longer, more traffic, unsafe especially during rush hours when people need to commute

I regularly do circle with Thames tow-path to Lock, then Meadow Lane. No alternative.

Along the river bank. Just a little longer

There is a cycle lane round the ring road which is safe, but requires an extremely steep slope to access from Rose Hill nursery; this descent is unsafe in winter - I am transporting 1 or 2 children (both currently under 2).

Would have to use Rosehill road

For some trips I could cycle along Donnington Bridge Road and Iffley Road but these often feel unsafe.

Using the towpath is now very busy indeed with cyclists at the expense of pedestrians and those with mobility, sight and hearing limitations. National NGO and advocacy bodies have emphasised the discrimination against these groups that the use of e-scooters can result in - and e-scooters are also used on the towpath. The towpath is now just another suburban route into and out of town and lacks the quiet rural element of Meadow Lane. It is also narrow and in places not suitable for cyclists passing from both directions while ensuring the safety of pedestrians so close to the embankment and river. Using public highways and transport is a completely different, vastly poorer and unacceptable alternative, especially given the dawdling traffic, noise and increased air pollution we can expect from new road layouts in the city. Where is the beauty in this? Why are we being treated as widgets and components to be forced into experiences of our surroundings that are of increasingly poorer quality? There are negative health and safety issues with all these 'alternatives', which are not alternatives in any way at all. Imposing their use would simply oil the route to developer's profits at the expense of us all.

No other route for a daily walk or leisure ride/scoot with kids would involve zero cars

Alternative routes are on main roads so less enjoyable for recreation/exercise

need safe walking/bicycle access for Iffley village and through to Donnington Meadow Lane

Iffley Road is an accident hotspot, especially the Donnington crossing and the Plain roundabout.

Walking on the canal paths is dangerous with dogs as it is narrow, has water and cyclists.

we do the circular walk along the tow path. If traffic made Meadow Lane unpleasant, I suppose we would circle Iffley village and go back along the towpath.

Iffley Road is too busy for bicycles, thus, dangerous.

no other routes are as quiet and safe from car traffic for cycling. This is also the safest, calmest and most direct route to Oriel meadow and the Kidneys for dog walking.

Iffley turn leading into Iffley would have more traffic if development goes ahead

Iffley road way too busy

I feel safer cycling in this back route. It's also shorter

No better route!

Possibly go via the lock, but quite a bit further for me to walk.

Iffley Road

Too distant and narrow/poor pavement

Alternative routes involve very narrow pavements (Church Way). Not much room when walking a dog - often have to step out into the road which is unsafe.

I would have to cross iffley road and walk along it, increasing my exposure to traffic noise and fumes. This would have a detrimental effect on my mental and physical health.

I would have to go to the lights at donnington bridge and use that route. Busy , polluted ,less safe. For dog walking no alternative .

I'd have to cycle on a main road, which is less safe and pleasant

Via Iffley lock which is further or via Iffley road which is not great because of traffic.

Travelling via Donnington Bridge to the riverbank sees much heavier traffic - and hence much more noise and air pollution. Travelling into Iffley Village via Iffley Road and Iffley Turn is less safe than Meadow Lane for dogs and children

it would mean cycling for more of my journey on busy roads

All the way along Iffley road. Obviously this route has significantly more traffic and I feel unsafe cycling or scooting along it.

I would walk down Abberbury Road - also a very pleasant route that I use regularly

Iffley lock

I would walk through the village but the pavement is narrow and it is difficult to distance without walking in the road, which is not very safe

We can use other paths in and around Iffley village, although some of them are narrow or feel a bit too empty and potentially unsafe. Around Meadow Lane it's open and used frequently, and you can see what's ahead.

heavy traffic, not large enough roads, no cycling lines, much longer to get to the key venues in the city centre or work

it would mean staying on the main roads - Donnington Bridge Road, Iffley Road, Iffley Turn - or cutting through the Meadow Lane Rec to Iffley Turn

We love to walk round what we call the Iffley loop. It means we can make a circuit using Meadow lane through Iffley Village , crossing over Iffley lock and going back up the towpath over Donnintgton Bridge and back along Meadow Lane. The tranquillity of that walk would be damaged with this proposed number of houses and cars.

Alternatives are all much busier roads not offering the same peace and safety of a very low traffic route for walking and cycling. The nature of the area will be significantly impacted and reduced.

Iffley Road and therefore not as quiet as this route

Through donnington playing fields. Not suitable for my dog when it is being used for football.

Not as safe for young children

Alternative route has a lot more traffic

This would probably make me still run along the route because the alternative route going in this direction is along iffley road, and I do not want to run amongst the traffic fumes.

Would have to walk via busy roads with cars. Unsafe for dog too

I would have to use Iffley road which is unsafe for cyclests and a busy and stressful environment, I would have no alternative for a local nature walk.

Iffley main road, busy and dangerous for cycling.

The towpath along the river is also quiet, but slightly longer distance

Road walks otherwise

The alternative is Iffley Road, which is busy and polluted with poorly maintained pavements

I cycle and dont feel safe on main roads to get to the bus next to Donninton bridge to get to Harwell each day

Major roads with traffic

I would drive to somewhere like Boars Hill instead

Iffley Road - less safe and less pleasant

Further to go to the lock and cross the river there as I commute into town

The only alternative would be to use Henley Avenue/ Iffley Road. These are now significantly more congested since the LTNs came into place and significantly more ˜fumey''.

I would be forced to cycle on the main road to get into the city centre which is much more unsafe for cyclists

Most people will have to cut across the field between Cornwallis close turn (towards Florence Park) or walk around along Donnington Bridge road. This is unviable for those with any sort of disability as scooters or the like will not be able to travel across the soft grass. Equally, this will destroy the field. I studied architecture at university and was astonished at the lack of application to people. Architecture is about making your personal, visual mark when it should be about looking at usage. Although usage is briefly looked at, the scale is never large enough. We often misconceive nee users as change. The physical mass of new homes will force people to find alternate routes. In urban setting this can be a viable option but often means the rural areas (small areas in big cities) experience footfall they werent designed for.

Iffley Road is horrible for walking and polluted