

## **BREAKING: OXFORD ADMIN CAGES IN OUR FIRST CAMPSITE; DESECRATES GAZA MARTYRS' MEMORIAL WITH HEAVY MACHINERY**

25 June 2024; OXFORD, UK – Early this morning around 6:30, after 48 hours of enclosure of OA4P members, University administration destroyed the Gaza Memorial Garden and community space at the Pitt Rivers Museum site using heavy machinery.

Given the over 20,000 children missing, and 40,000 Palestinians murdered in israel's rampant genocidal assault on Gaza, OA4P members erected memorial headstones upon symbolic graves to remind us of those lost: *thousands of wounded children with no surviving family, the maiming and dismembering of yet another generation, the thousands of families that have been completely wiped from civil registries, the untold number missing and buried under the rubble, the slain elderly denied proper funeral, and the hundreds of extrajudicial abductees and arrested.*

**Instead of acknowledging its role in bankrolling and facilitating israel's genocide, University admin instead authorized the destruction of the memorial to the martyrs of Gaza, sending security and staff to shovel, dig up, and desecrate the memorial.**

### **50 Days of Our Movement**

Yesterday marked 50 days since our Gaza solidarity encampment began. In that time, Oxford's rhetoric has increasingly echoed language we have heard from repressive institutions around the globe, including this country's government. Using tactics that range from legal challenges to police violence, universities across the UK have resorted to alarming tactics of suppression to silence the growing student movement for Palestine. This movement has transformed the UK political scene, and this zeitgeist is especially crucial as university administrations are trying everything to shut down the movement before the summer ends.

In our context of Oxford, security erected a fence around its students, installed a padlock, and stated protestors would be permitted to leave the space but would not be allowed to return. By padlocking the gate and barring return, the Administration issued an ultimatum: protestors could have health, safety, and freedom of movement, or they could continue their peaceful protest for Palestine. But they could not have both.

### **While Oxford Stalls, israel Kills**

While the Administration was building a metal fence around our encampment Sunday, israeli jets bombarded an UNRWA compound in Gaza, killing at least eight people. This adds to the almost 40,000 Palestinians that have been killed in the last 8 months. Rather than engage with this reality, the University prioritized the health of its lawn. In quoting the University's statement: "*The lawn outside the Museum of Natural History is an important space for our many visitors to enjoy and relax in. We have temporarily fenced off the area in preparation for returning it to public use to avoid further damage to the lawn*".

**After weeks of regular, good-faith dialogue between our Negotiating Team and the Administration, OA4P is especially appalled that the university chose to prioritize the health and visual aesthetics of grass above the wellbeing of its students, its commitment to the right**

**to peaceful protest, and its moral obligation to act against the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people by the state of israel.**

OA4P remains committed to an ongoing good-faith dialogue with the University and we remain steadfast in our commitment to holding Oxford accountable for its role in israel's genocide. We continue proudly with our second encampment outside the Radcliffe Camera. **This is the largest movement for Palestinian liberation that this campus has ever seen and we are proud to join in the legacies of all those who fought for Palestinian liberation in this city before us and all those who will continue to fight collectively until Palestine is free.**

***For interviews and other enquiries, contact:*** m: 07341377729; e: [oxpalpress@proton.me](mailto:oxpalpress@proton.me); @OxAct4Pal on X, Instagram, and TikTok. For a Press Kit and other resources, visit [OxAct4Pal.com](http://OxAct4Pal.com).

*Oxford Action for Palestine (OA4P) is a student-led collective joined by faculty, staff, and the wider Oxford community, all of whom are dedicated to the liberation of Palestine. On May 6, OA4P established a Liberated Zone encampment in solidarity with Gaza, calling on the University of Oxford to cut financial and institutional ties with Israeli genocide, occupation, and apartheid. For updates, visit [OxAct4Pal.com](http://OxAct4Pal.com) and find us on Instagram, X, and TikTok on @OxAct4Pal.*

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