

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION ATTEMPTS SHUTDOWN OF GAZA SOLIDARITY ENCAMPMENT AT PITT RIVERS MUSEUM; STUDENTS REMAIN INSIDE ENCLOSED AREA

23 June 2024; OXFORD, UK – In the early hours of Sunday morning, the Oxford University Administration erected metal fencing around the entirety of the OA4P Gaza solidarity encampment in front of the Pitt Rivers Museum and announced the intention to clear the space, citing concerns for “health and safety”. The action was taken with no prior communication to OA4P despite OA4P repeatedly expressing a commitment to the University to continue using the space.

The Administration has also chosen to shut down the encampment ahead of our scheduled Community Gardening Day event, in which OA4P was to further develop the raised-bed garden we have established on the site. The plans for the garden were made with a detailed understanding of the sensitive areas of the land with a commitment to the health and safety of the area.

OA4P is deeply troubled by this blatant attempt to intimidate and shutdown peaceful protest, which defies the University’s recently stated commitment to good-faith dialogue. OA4P continues to meet with the Administration as part of a regular, ongoing dialogue to discuss disclosure, investments, finance and the rebuilding of Palestinian higher education – a commitment the Administration has publicly made. We believe good faith dialogue necessitates respect for these sites of peaceful protest, which have garnered overwhelming support from the University and city communities.

OA4P remains committed to the development of the Palestine solidarity space on the Pitt Rivers Museum site, which is dear to thousands in the University community as the site of our first encampment. As the University moved to close the area, a handful of students entered the site. Since, supporters have joined to participate in the pre-scheduled Memorial Gardening event. The students call on all members of the University community to come to the Pitt Rivers Museum camp and demand the reversal of this draconian shutdown of peaceful protest.

For interviews and other enquiries, contact: m: 07341377729; e: oxpalpress@proton.me; @OxAct4Pal on X, Instagram, and TikTok. For a Press Kit and other resources, visit 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 and find us on Instagram, X, and TikTok on @OxAct4Pal.

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