

18 July 2022

Dear Councillor:

I'm not alone in thinking it would be abominable for Oxford to support greyhound racing: an archaic and – let's face it – sadistic “sport” that is responsible for so much suffering and death. In fact, 71% of the local public with an opinion on the matter would prefer that Oxford Stadium be used for another, kinder purpose, for example as a velodrome.

My friends at PETA tell me that a motion on greyhound racing at the stadium will be debated at today's council meeting. I'm writing to urge you to support this motion, which opposes the use of the venue for this cruel blood sport, and to push for an animal-free alternative.

There's much I love about the city I grew up in, including its rich history – but greyhound racing is one thing that should remain firmly in Oxford's past. Let's be clear: this is not a sport. It's animal abuse, and it has no place at Oxford Stadium.

This ghastly business causes thousands of dogs each year ailments ranging from broken legs to heart attacks. Some are even doped with drugs like cocaine, and it's hardly surprising that many animals die as a result of being forced to race. But the casualties don't end there. Once their racing days are over, many dogs are killed or abandoned in shelters that are already bursting at the seams. An additional 12,000 greyhound puppies may be killed every year because they're deemed not fast enough for racing.

We call dogs “man's best friend”, but greyhounds used for racing don't have a warm bed to lie in or a human companion to love and care for them. When these sociable animals are not being forced to race, they spend 95% of their time confined to a cramped cage or kennel, often muzzled. I can't bear to think about the pain and loneliness they must experience – all for human entertainment.

By supporting this motion, you would be doing right by animals *and* compassionate Oxfordians who don't want to see their beautiful city tarnished by this cruelty. Please, help keep greyhound racing out of Oxford.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Miriam Margolyes". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Miriam" and the last name "Margolyes" clearly legible.

Miriam Margolyes