



Oakley Newsletter



**Autumn 2026
Number 108**

New Parish Clerk

Housing Needs Survey

Oakley Show 6th Sept

New Tidy Tip Procedures

Sports & Social News

Green Fingered Volunteer Needed



Front Page Picture :

Pasture in Oakley

Photographer : **Shelley Eden**

The Oakley Newsletter

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Opinions and information

in the Newsletter, both text and adverts, may not be endorsed by the Editor or the Parish Council.

Next issue

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Hello Children

look out for
ten more
little ones



Parish Council News

Autumn 2026

Dear Resident

Welcome to the late summer/early autumn edition of the Oakley Newsletter.

The Parish Council has said goodbye to Parish Clerk Ann Paice who, as I advised in our last newsletter, has decided to retire. Ann's last meeting was in July, although she did not retire until end of August.

We took the opportunity at the July meeting, along with the NDP group and Bill Chalker, to make a presentation to her and thank her on behalf of Oakley village for her dedicated service over the last 18 years. We wish you a long and happy retirement Ann.



New Parish Clerk

I am delighted to say that we have appointed a new clerk. Judith Crosier joins us on 1st September 2026.

Judith is an experienced parish clerk, also looking after Carlton and Chellington. She is looking forward to working with us and getting to know us, as we look forward to getting to know her.

Judith will be working 14 hours per week and will be based at the Old School for four hours per week. To email Judith please use the email address parishclerk@oakleybedford-pc.gov.uk.

We are in the process of setting up a new phone number. Welcome Judith!

A welcome to Councillor Amber Hine, who joined the Parish Council in May. Welcome Amber and thank you for volunteering. The Parish Council is now complete.

OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Continued on page 3

The Parish Council has been attending to village business as you would expect. You can follow all that we do by reading the minutes on the notice board outside the Post Office, or on the village website which is www.oakleyvillage.co.uk

Volunteer Opportunities

We are still on the look out for someone who would like to take care of the planting at the village entrance signs at Highfield Road and the flower bed under the Oakley sign at the cross roads. The cost of new plants are met by the Parish Council so just time, effort, care and attention sought. Please do let the clerk know if you are interested.

Thank you to Bill Chalker

Bill Chalker volunteers to produce this newsletter as we know and he has done so for many years. Thank you to Bill for doing such a fabulous job. The Oakley Newsletter is informative, stylish and FULL of the substantial activity that takes place in the village. The front cover always draws the reader in. There is something inside for everyone and it shows the best of Oakley.

Thanks Bill for all your efforts, which I am sure the whole village appreciates.

Finally, a few dates for your diary

6th September - Oakley Show.

A great opportunity to promote a wide range of skills and talent from across the village; so don't hesitate to make and create; to enter the relevant classes and to share and show off your produce, cakes, jams, photographs, chutneys, bakes, arts and crafts!

The auction at the end is an added bonus and is a lovely way to be able to sample these delights. Maybe with the dry conditions we have had it will have been a more challenging year for the vegetable growers - let's see!

Community Litter Pick - 3rd October.

More information to follow. No need to wait until then though if you see some litter today! Thank you, by the way, to everyone who already picks up litter on a regular basis.

8th November - Remembrance Ceremony.

The Remembrance Ceremony will take place at the War Memorial and at the Oakley Churches.

29th November - Switching on of the Lights.

Please reserve 29th November for the switching on of the lights, community singing and some seasonal fare for that all important time of year. Full details to be published nearer the time.

Come and join us at the Parish Council Meetings

Do not forget residents are always welcome to come and observe Parish Council meetings, or to speak at the open session if you wish to bring something to our attention.

Thank you, Sara Fardon

Chair

OAKLEY VILLAGE MONTHLY



Run by Oakley Parish Council and held in Oakley Village Hall

Friday 18 SEPTEMBER 2026

Friday 16 OCTOBER 2026

Friday 20 NOVEMBER 2026

Friday 18 DECEMBER 2026

7.30pm start

Maximum 6 people per team

£3.00 per person (cash payment only please)

Bring your own snacks and drinks (alcohol allowed)

If you would like to enter a team please advise

Richard Worker at richworker@hotmail.co.uk

Come along and have some fun and socialise with fellow quizzers

Parish Clerk's Working Hours The Parish Clerk is currently working from home Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. She is also in the Old School Meeting Room (at the rear of the building) on Thursdays between 10.00am and 2.00pm if anyone wishes to visit in person. She does not work on Fridays but any messages or emails will be picked up on Monday.

Update on the Oakley Housing Needs Survey

As part of the process of reviewing the Oakley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), the Parish Council commissioned a Housing Needs Survey in the Spring.

The survey was carried out by Bedford Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) and a questionnaire was sent to every household in the village, as well as being published in the Newsletter and on the website. The response rate was 16.3%, which was lower than had been hoped but still provided a representative sample.

Census data gives the most detailed picture of Oakley and shows that there has been an increase in over age 65s and particularly over age 75s living in the village. There is also a very high level of home ownership, large numbers of detached and semi-detached houses and a very low turnover of properties, with only one rental property available at the time of the survey. The data therefore indicates a lack of affordable homes.

Responses to the survey indicated that 75% supported a local housing scheme and fourteen responders were eligible for affordable housing.

A Rural Exception Site development of seven affordable and market properties for Oakley residents was therefore recommended by BRCC to meet this need. Seven rather than fourteen homes was recommended to prevent under occupancy.

Rural Exception Sites are small developments for people with a direct tie to the local community such as current residents, those with close family in the village, or people employed in the area.

The houses on the site must remain affordable and local so shared ownership housing cannot be bought outright and there would be restrictions on extending properties.

The Parish Council has discussed BRCC's recommendation but before considering a Rural Exception Site we are exploring the possibility that the need for affordable housing can be met from the development off Station Road.

The Station Road site is now owned by the Guinness Trust and will consist of 40 affordable houses, 21 social rent and 19 shared ownership properties.

We asked the Guinness Trust about allocating a small number of the properties to Oakley residents and they have agreed to pursue with Homes England, who are providing the funding for the site.

The 21 shared ownership homes will also be available on a first come first serve basis so could theoretically go to local residents first. Anyone interested in one of these properties would need to be in a position to make an offer on a property on the launch day.

The Council and NDP Group has also met with Guinness Trust and Snowdon Homes, who will be building the properties, to discuss the layout and style of the houses. As a result of these discussions, the play area has been moved away from the road and we have asked for the houses to reflect the style of Grange Close opposite. The reserved matters planning application for the site (which deals with the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) was issued for consultation in July and we have raised no objections to these plans.



An Evening Of Live Music With
Ray Cordell & Rick Westoby
Saturday 10th October
St Mary's Church, Oakley, 7pm
Tickets £12 (in advance from Graham or Dorothy Palmer)
or on the door
interval refreshments
further info email, gpalmer@talk21.com or call 07710 462535



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Borough Council Report



Debenhams/Mayes Yard Update

The Council's purchase of the former Debenhams building gave it greater control over a key town-centre site and helped unlock the wider regeneration of Mayes Yard.

Cityheart, an experienced regeneration company, has been selected as the Council's preferred development partner. It will work with the Council, local businesses and the community to shape a long-term plan for the area. The aim is to create a new cultural and commercial heart for Bedford, potentially including shops, restaurants, leisure and community facilities, new homes, improved public spaces and better walking routes through the town centre. The wider plans may also include new library facilities and improvements around the Corn Exchange.

The proposals are still at an early stage. Detailed designs will be developed further and will need to demonstrate that they are financially viable, deliverable and beneficial to residents.

Despite what you may have seen in the local press, there is no agreed £1 sale. The £1 is only the minimum amount allowed under the agreement for each phase. Before any land is transferred, its actual value will be calculated using the real costs and expected income from that part of the development.

Any positive land value is paid to the Council, and the Council also receives a share of profits above the developer's agreed return. We are very optimistic that at last this area will start to be regenerated and will create a new vibrant area in the town centre for everyone to enjoy.

Bedford Library

As part of this town centre regeneration, the Council is considering relocating Bedford Central Library to a new, modern facility elsewhere in Bedford town centre, with the Howard Centre identified as a possible location.

The current library remains well used, but the building is increasingly expensive to run and is not well suited to modern needs. Access to the main library is by stairs, escalator or lift, while the layout limits space for families, community activities, studying and digital services.

A ground-floor library could provide easier access, improved facilities and a more welcoming and flexible space. Up to £4.5 million of government regeneration funding would be used for the project, meaning the relocation would not require additional Council capital funding.

No final decision has been made and the Council is currently asking local residents and library users for their views on the options. You can access the consultation on <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/your-council/have-your-say/consultations>.

Weekly Food Waste Collection

The service has seen a strong and growing participation with more than 1,900 tonnes of food waste diverted from black bins in its first 4 months. Collections have increased steadily with an average of 20.11 tonnes collected each collection day in April rising to 23.47 tonnes in June and remaining high.

The new service has not been without its challenges. Heatwaves, staff shortages and crews adapting to new rounds have all had an impact. Bedford Borough council would like to thank residents for their patience and understanding whilst improvements continue to be made.

Local Plan 2050

The previous Local Plan 2040, submitted prior to the 2023 election, was sent back by the Planning Inspector who identified fundamental soundness concerns. Later, due to the arrival of Universal the Council had to withdraw the Local Plan and begin preparing a new, evidence-led plan intended to provide a clear and deliverable framework for Bedford Borough's future growth.

The Council has recently launched a Call for Sites and Development Opportunities to help prepare the new Local Plan 2050. Landowners, developers, businesses, parish councils, community groups and residents can suggest land for housing, employment, leisure, community facilities, retail, renewable energy or regeneration.

Submitting a site does not mean it will be included in the plan. Each proposal will be assessed against issues such as access, infrastructure, flood risk, contamination and deliverability. Submissions close at midnight on 30 October 2026 and must be made at www.bedford.gov.uk/callforsites.

A wider consultation will begin in September 2026, giving residents and organisations the opportunity to comment on how sites will be assessed and on the priorities for the new Local Plan.

New Household Waste Recycling Centre Permit system to ensure Bedford Borough residents retain priority access

Bedford Borough Council is introducing a free online permit system at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) on Barkers Lane to protect the site from misuse by businesses and people from outside the Borough.

Continued on Page 7

Borough Council Report - Continued



New Household Waste Recycling Centre Permit system to ensure Bedford Borough residents retain priority access - continued



From 1 October, residents using the HWRC for household waste will need to register their vehicle online before visiting. The permit is free, quick and easy to apply for, and there is no need to present anything at the site.

The ANPR camera at the entrance will automatically check each vehicle and alert staff if a vehicle arrives without one. Once registered, residents can visit during normal opening hours without any need to make an appointment.

Many neighbouring authorities now operate stronger controls at their HWRCs. Since those were introduced, Bedford Borough has seen a significant increase in tonnage at Barkers Lane.

Much of this additional waste is coming from people outside of the Borough and businesses which are not entitled to use the household waste service. This is placing significant strain on the Council's waste budget and has led to long queues, particularly during peak periods.

It will take just a few minutes to apply for a permit and three types are available. A permit for a car or pickup is valid for a year, a permit for a van is valid for three months, and a permit for a hired vehicle is valid for 24 hours.

Any resident who is less digitally able will be able to contact Bedford Borough Council Customer Services to register for a permit. A maximum of two active permits may be held per address, and a vehicle registration can only be linked to one address.

The HWRC is a taxpayer-funded service for Bedford Borough residents to dispose of household waste produced at their own home.

Fostering for Bedford Borough Council

Bedford Borough Council is looking for more local families to foster, helping some of our most vulnerable children grow up in a safe, supportive home environment.

If you are considering taking on this important role, you can find out more information at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/fostering/who-can-foster> or contact us fostering@bedford.gov.uk

Jane Walker
Borough Councillor for Clapham and Oakley

If you need any further information or assistance with issues at the council, you can call me on 07952 879587 or email jane@janewalker.co.uk. You can also find me and/or message me on Facebook @CllrJaneWalker.

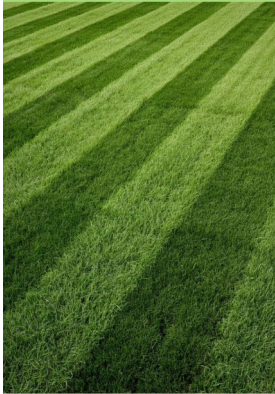
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Borough Councillor for Clapham and Oakley

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News from Oakley Village Agent

Village Agents provide a free, confidential service and are here to help people over 60 with a variety of issues – large or small. We are funded by Bedford Borough Council. We are all DBS checked and operate in the strictest confidence. Andrea is the Village Agent for Oakley.

Support with Blue Badges - if you have a permanent disability or illness that limits your walking ability then you may be entitled to apply for a Blue Badge. This enables you to park in disabled bays closer to your destination. You don't have to be a driver to apply, you can use the badge in any vehicle as long as you are a passenger. Andrea can help you apply.

Attendance Allowance – is a non-means tested benefit for people over state retirement age to help with extra costs incurred because of a severe illness, condition or disability. You could get as much as £114.60 per week. Andrea can help you to claim if you think you might qualify.

Disabled toilet access key - Some disabled toilets can only be used by people who have a special RADAR key. If you have a disability that means you need to use a disabled toilet, call Andrea for a free RADAR key

Help with form filling – many people aren't claiming the benefits they are entitled to. Andrea can help identify which benefits you can claim by doing a confidential benefits check. We can also help you fill in those complicated forms such as Attendance Allowance forms, Carer's Allowance (working age people), Council Tax Support and Blue Badges.

Please contact **Andrea, your Village Agent on**

Freephone **0800 039 1234**

email: **andream@bedsrcc.org.uk**

This is an answerphone service, so please leave your name address & telephone number, & we aim to call you back within 48 hours

Phantom Sprayer

I am saddened and dismayed with how much dog poo is lying around our streets and footpaths.



I really thought people cared about our beautiful, friendly Village. There was a time recently when our streets were remarkably clean and people were very responsible and careful to carry their little plastic bags and pick up and bin after their beloved pet companion.

Walking with my dog today there were little piles wherever I went, and there has been quite a lot on Ruffs furze Green of late – where our children like to play.

I have said before, this mess on pavements gets on people's and children's shoes, pushchair wheels etc. On the lovely off road walks, likewise lots of people walk these areas and the last thing they want is a messy smelly shoe or sandal after the walk.

Please, always take your little plastic bags with you on a walk, pick up and bin everything your dog deposits, if your children walk your dog, make sure they too are trained to pick up and bin.



There are plenty of red and black bins about the Village and either can be used for this purpose.

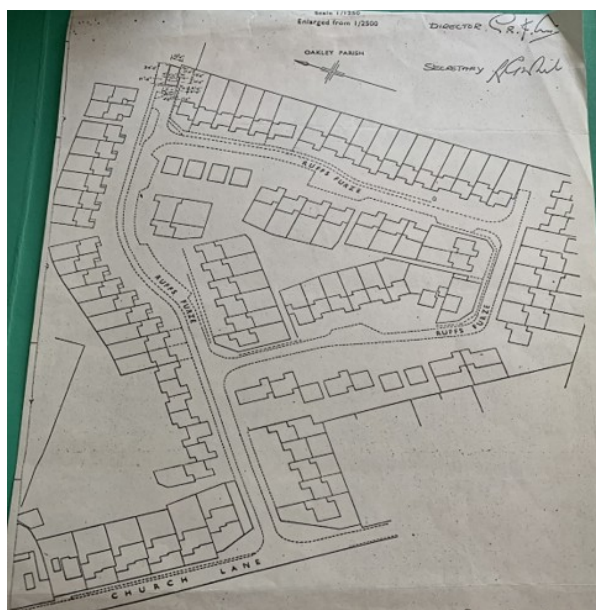
Down Memory Lane – “The New Estate”

Today, one of the most debated and emotive issues across the country is housing development. Every community is being affected, and in Oakley we are facing impending developments in Station Road and the High Street. However, housing development in Oakley is nothing new. During the 18th and 19th centuries Oakley was owned by the Dukes of Bedford. The 7th Duke, in particular, made significant changes, rebuilding many cottages, improving roads and constructing new blocks of estate cottages along the High Street and Station Road.

As I covered in the Winter 2024 newsletter, after the First World War the Duke of Bedford sold many of his estate properties and buildings at auction to raise much needed funds. Some villagers purchased houses and farmland and although no major housing was built the new landowners developed their properties. It was not until shortly after the Second World War that the next development phase started. This mainly focused on “in filling” within the main residential areas and new housing was built in Church Lane and Station Road by the Council but Oakley remained relatively small and agricultural.

However, our location close to Bedford and the available commuter rail connections increased the pressure for growth which in the late 1960’s created the most significant housing expansion in Oakley’s history. The Ibbett family received planning permission to develop the vast acreage of farmland, belonging to Grange Farm in Station Road, which existed in the middle of the village. Infrastructure improvements, such as a new sewer system, and the opening of Lincroft School in 1963, preceded the housing.

The Original Ruffs Furze Street Plan



By 1970, several houses had been constructed the first of which were those in Church Lane at the entrance to Ruffs Furze followed by Ruffs Furze itself and Dewlands. See the plans for Ruffs Furze pictured.

Throughout the early 1970’s development started to “creep” across the large field stretching towards the High Street with the developments of Farsands and Beverly Close and towards Station Road with the creation of Copthorne Close and ultimately Lincroft with the other roads being created along the way. These developments doubled the village’s size with the population rising sharply from 624 in 1961 to 1335 in 1971.

I vividly remember the builders buying bottles of “Corona” soft drinks and discarding the empties around the site. My friends and I collected them in large numbers and took them to the Post Office to reclaim the deposits, which no doubt helped create my lasting love of sweets and ice cream. One downside was that, after the creation of Reynes Drive and Lincroft, the fairground that visited the village each annually could no longer pitch on its usual site.

The Development of Brockwell 1987-8



Since the major expansion the village has generally resisted large scale estate building. The Grange site was further developed in 1987 when Brockwell started to be built on the farmyard, see photo’s, and Grange Close followed a few years later. Other relatively small developments such as Parsonage Close, The Furlong, Parrot’s Close and a few others have followed.

But as evidenced by the current villager population of 2509 (census 2021) compared to 2296 in 1981 and 2438 in 2001 major population increases have been held at bay. But there is no doubt that the dramatic increase between 1961 and 1981 reflects the impact that the Grange Farm development had. It significantly transformed Oakley from a small agricultural community to a substantial village with a strong independent identity and the village we all love today.

Richard Worker

Another incredibly busy summer at Oakley Sports & Social Club, with record membership, major events and continued investment in our facilities helping the Club play an ever-growing role at the heart of village life.



Oakley Sports & Social Club

Family & Sports Bar

A summer of sport and community

The FIFA World Cup provided plenty of memorable moments this summer, with fantastic turnouts at OSSC for England's matches. It was our first major sporting tournament since completing the extension and refurbishment of the clubhouse earlier this year and the additional space and screens really came into their own.

For England's semi-final we went one step further. With support from local events company JAP Sound we transformed part of the field into an outdoor fan zone, complete with a huge screen. The football result might not have been the one any of us wanted, but the atmosphere and experience enjoyed by our members was second to none.



Our investment in live sport at the Club is continuing too. Following the purchase of a new TV subscription, we are delighted that we will now be able to show Bedford Blues rugby matches at OSSC. As a village just a few miles outside Bedford, it is great to be able to support our town's rugby club and give members the opportunity to follow the Blues from the comfort of their own clubhouse.

OSSC was also once again a hub for local families as we hosted our annual School's Out event to mark the end of the summer term. Enjoyed by children and parents alike, it was another example of what can be achieved when the community comes together.

Of course, summer would not be complete without Oakfest26. This year saw nationally-known DJ Spooky take to the stage in our little village of Oakley, supported by a fantastic line-up of more local performers. Bringing this calibre of entertainment to the village while keeping it affordable and accessible is something we are particularly proud of. Seeing people of all ages enjoying the festival together made all of the hard work behind the scenes worthwhile.

Investing in our field

Those passing the Recreation Ground over the summer may also have noticed a fairly significant change: our football pitch has been turned through 90 degrees, together with the installation of a new pitch barrier system.

The new layout will provide a better playing and spectator experience while also making much better use of the Recreation Ground, opening up additional space for activities, events and functions closer to the clubhouse.

We also hope the improved facilities will help inspire Oakley's younger footballers, giving them something to aspire to and demonstrating the facilities and opportunities that can come with their hard work and dedication.

A special thank you goes to Bedford BiFolds, whose support towards the cost of the new barrier system helped make the project possible. Who together with Dale Hamilton of AFC Oakley, OSSC Committee Member Chris Marshall and Steward Adam Worker, have all worked incredibly hard to deliver the changes.

Supporting our community

Our role within Oakley extends beyond the events we organise ourselves. Over the summer we have continued supporting other community initiatives, including raffle donations to Oakley Primary School PTA and the Oakley Show.

We will also be hosting the village Community Litter Pick on Saturday 3rd October, with OSSC providing complimentary hot drinks and bacon rolls for those giving up their time to help keep Oakley looking its best.

Looking ahead...

There is still plenty to come before we say goodbye to 2026.

Our annual **Kids' Halloween Disco** takes place on **Friday 30th October**, with ticket information available through the OSSC website.

Then, on **Saturday 7th November**, what we proudly consider the **best fireworks display** in North Bedfordshire returns! Expect another spectacular combination of fireworks, dazzling laser shows, funfair rides, food and live entertainment. Club favourites Cameo, Hollie-Marie and Tom on Sax will be joined by our headline act Sweet Female Attitude, best known for the UK chart-topping garage anthem Flowers.



Ticket information will be announced shortly. We are also looking for local businesses interested in sponsoring the event and helping us continue to bring large-scale entertainment to the community at an affordable price. Anyone interested can contact info@oakleyssc.com for more information. Christmas then arrives at OSSC on **Saturday 12th December** with the return of our **Christmas Market & Fete**. Santa and his elves will be back – along with his much-loved reindeer – alongside stalls, a funfair, live music, buskers and plenty of festive cheer from the local community.

Finally, we will see out an extraordinary 2026 in style. Local company Bedford Casino Hire will transform the Club with casino tables for our New Year's Eve celebration, accompanied by Mac's Entertainment, with a complimentary glass of bubbly ready to toast the arrival of 2027.



Oakley Sports & Social Club
Family & Sports Bar



Better still, our **New Year's Eve celebration** will once again be completely free and exclusive to OSSC members – just one of the many benefits of membership.

There is plenty more happening between now and the end of the year, including Saturday Sessions entertainment and live music on Xmas Eve, so keep an eye on the OSSC website and our social media channels for all the latest news, events and ticket information.

Thank you, as always, to our members, volunteers, sponsors and the wider Oakley community for their continued support. It is that support which allows us to keep investing in the Club, improving our facilities and bringing events and opportunities to our village.

Robbie Bays OSSC & ORA Chair

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Winner 2025



On 15 July we mounted an operation as part of the National Speedwatch Day which in Bedfordshire involved operations in 25 locations and a total of 78 volunteers.



We thought it was important to be particularly visible so we chose to do our session in the 40mph zone of Highfield Road. We were delighted to be joined by PC Clarke Parkinson and PCSO James Dancer from Riseley who we met at the Speedwatch Coffee Morning in March.



In the hour we saw 129 vehicles, 32 of which exceeded the 40mph limit, 23 between 41 and 44 mph and 9 exceeding 46 mph. Given how visible our 3 hi-viz jackets were and the presence of genuine policemen this tends to indicate poor observation on the part of these drivers at best or a conscious decision to disregard the limit.

Particularly concerning was the rise in average speed from 34-36mph since we mounted a similar operation at this location May 2024. We have been noting a similar 2mph rise across the board in our observations. In the week beginning 29th June we used the Viacount to record a week's data at the same location. The average speed for the 7469 vehicles leaving the village was 33.4 mph, with 230 doing more than 46 mph with a maximum of 82mph. Fewer (5642) approached the village coming down the hill at an average of 32.8 mph, and 102 recorded 46+mph with a maximum of 75mph.

We are disappointed that despite our efforts to make you aware of this 'speed creep' and that speeds around the village are continuing to rise significantly. In general, lowering the average speed by 1 mph reduces the road collision frequency by around 5%, obviously the reverse is true. Hence our concerns.

Maybe being more aware of the consequences might prove more effective. Highfield Road has no foot path as such and is frequented by walkers heading to and from Browns Wood. Pedestrian survival rates after being hit by a car drop sharply as speed increases from around 90-95% at 20mph, 50-80% at 30mph and 10% or less at 40mph. Hopefully food for thought next time you drive up there.

Paul Phillips Speedwatch Co-ordinator

The Oakley Show Sunday 6th September

Remember to get your entries in for this year's show which takes place on Sunday 6th September, we are looking forward to seeing you all on the day.

Even if you do not enter you can come along from 12.30 for tea and cakes, to view the entries, browse the craft stalls, enter the raffle for prizes kindly donated by local businesses and join with our community for this village event to raise funds for our Village Hall. If you would like a programme please get in touch via our Facebook page or give us a call on 07778537427.



Oakley Show Committee

Oakley Rural Day Centre

Oakley Rural, The Old School, Lovell Road, Oakley, Beds, MK43 7RX

Mobile: 07733 227374

Email: oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com

Web: www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com

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AUTUMN 2026

Our Day Centre provides our older people with a place where they can make friends in a warm and comfortable atmosphere. We provide various activities including crafts, word games, board games, bingo and other mentally stimulating activities.

We also provide chair based exercise classes. Our clients really enjoy taking part and we are finding them to be very beneficial. Choirs and entertainers also visit the centre.

We serve freshly prepared home cooked lunches and desserts together with tea, coffee and toast at the start of the day with beverages throughout. The Centre is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10.00am to 2.30pm.

For details of costs, advice and to book a visit please contact Lynne on 07733 227374.

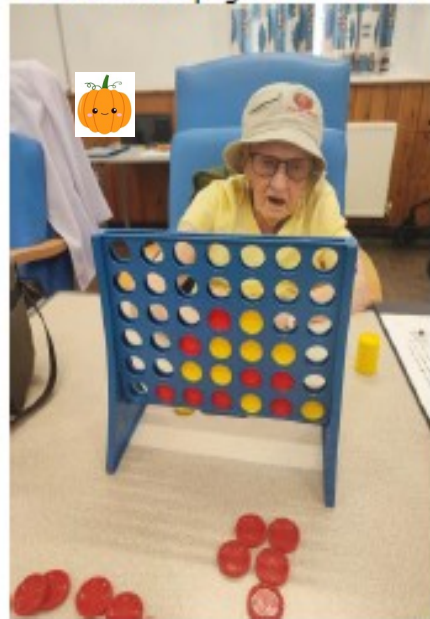
Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.

Please visit our website at www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com

The site is updated regularly with the latest news from the centre.

We also have a Facebook page. This will be updated with the latest news and photographs of events at the centre.

The Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/oakleyruraldaycentre



We have articles in various publications throughout Bedford and surrounding areas to raise the profile of the centre.

NEWS

LORD LIEUTENANT VISIT

We will be having a visit from the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire. We are looking forward to welcoming her and showing the important work we do for the community

TRUSTEE REQUIRED

Our day centre is looking for a new Trustee. For details contact our chair at andrea@virgo-associates.co.uk

ACTIVITIES

Clients have been carrying out various activities which have included making Birthday Cards, painting Wooden Bunting, making Sausage Dog pencil holders and painting Ceramic Wellies. There are always Word Searches, Sudoku, Quizzes and other games available throughout the day.

Many thanks to Kempston Hammers Community Choir. They are a fantastic support to our centre and clients love to have a sing along to some old classics.

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REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

This year Remembrance Sunday falls on 8th November. There will be services in both churches at 9.30am, followed by a joint Act of Remembrance at the village War Memorial at 10.50am.



HARVEST SERVICES

Sun 27th Sept 10.30am: St Mary's Family Service

Sun 4th Oct 10.30am: Oakley Methodist Church followed by a Harvest Lunch.

These are always joyful events and all are welcome to give thanks for God's goodness to us. Cash or non-perishable food donations for the Foodbank welcome.



Our weekly **Messy Church** sessions begin again with the school term

St Mary's Oakley starts Thurs 3rd Sept 10- 11.45am (incl snack)

St Owen's Bromham starts Mon 7th Sept 11.30am—1.30pm (incl lunch)

Messy Church for All date 15th Sept, 20th Oct, 17th Nov, 15th Dec at 3.30pm in Oakley Methodist Church

Messy Church Plus (for children of any age) Half Term Mon 26th Oct 11.30am- 1.30pm St Owen's Bromham (incl snack lunch)

SERVICES OF REMEMBERING

During October we will be holding two 'Remembering Services' to remember and give thanks for loved ones who have died. Everyone is welcome to either service:
St Mary's Oakley Sun 11th Oct (Joint with Oakley Methodist Church)
St Owen's Bromham Sun 25th Oct both at 3pm and followed by refreshments. If you would like the name of a loved one remembered please call Graham or Hilarie.



Christmas Tree Lighting

Save the date! Sat 28th November 5pm at St Mary's church

CONTACTS

St Mary's:	Rev Catherine Wilson 01234 825665 vicar@bromhambenefice.org
Church Wardens:	Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535
Administrator Sarah:	07494 069540 administrator@bromhambenefice.org
Oakley Methodist Church: Steward:	Revd Paulette Tedd: 07591 139940 paulette.tedd@methodist.org.uk Jeanette Letch 825204 jenletch@hotmail.co.uk

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Oakley Allotments

This could be titled, "A Summer of Challenges", for a number of reasons, but let's concentrate on the weather.

Our main challenges have been due to the extended drought, accompanied by prolonged periods of higher than average temperatures – a combination that has led to growing pains in the garden at home and on our allotments.

Some of our much-loved garden plants have suffered severely. No amount of watering has been able to save them, although gardening experts (also experiencing similar setbacks) say that we ought to wait until next year, as many established plants, shrubs and trees, can make a surprising recovery

I hope this will be true for at least some of our old favourites: our blueberries at home yielded over 2 Kgs of fruit this season, but have now started losing their leaves and looking very sad. A much-loved hydrangea promised its best flowering yet, but is now as dessicated as a dried arrangement. At the allotment, we have seen soft fruit bushes suffering. Early strawberries were not affected much but later raspberries were few and tiny, due to the lack of rain.

Our home-measured rainfall records show a depressing picture of the extent of the drought: no rainfall was recorded in July and we have had only 10mm of rain in August, up to the 20th, as I write this. We are now warned that this could become our normal summer weather...maybe with severe winter storms to follow.

Climbing beans have produced very few beans, and this is a problem country-wide. Courgettes, usually such a source of gluts in the past, are fewer, smaller and much more manageable as a crop – I think many of us would prefer previous years' surfeits of courgettes! Onions, grown from seed, have matured, usable but half their hoped-for size.

Having sold the joys of running an allotment to everyone, I will now talk about the good side of the labours...

Early spring was wonderful, as the birds around our allotments held forth in song, and blossom festooned the hedgerows. The new season promised great things to come and the warming weather was a delight.



Fruit trees, with deeper roots and so able to reach underground water reserves, are fruiting prolifically in a lot of places. Wild plums in the allotment hedges have produced vast amounts of good-sized and sweet fruit – easy to harvest and compensation for failures in other crops. Tomatoes have been very good and sweetcorn is looking very good – I hope we get to it when it's ready to harvest before other, wild diners!

Butterflies, moths and bumblebees have been seen regularly – many species of them too. One moth in particular is a type of indicator: hummingbird hawk-moths have been seen regularly this year.



The hummingbird hawk-moth is a strong flyer that migrates northward from Southern Europe and North Africa each year. Warm southerly winds and heatwaves often mean we see more of them in the UK during late spring and summer, hovering and feeding on garden flowers. Unusually, we have occasionally seen two at a time feeding in flower borders this year, as well as the more common individual flyers.

As usual, weeds do not appear to be so affected by drought. Growing profusely, thistles and bristly ox-tongue are both still seen at the allotments, having been the main ground-cover in 2010 before we cleared the field for marking out the allotments. They grow rapidly to produce their parachuting seeds as a counter to the stress of drought, and helping to guarantee their survival.

We are gradually working through the waiting list and may have more space available soon. Contact me if you would like to join the challenge.

Steve Nicholas

Girlguiding in Oakley

Oakley has two guiding units – Rainbows for girls aged 4 -7, and Brownies for girls aged 7-10. If you would like to enrol your daughter in either of these units or any other units locally, please register your daughter at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/> If you would like more information about the individual units before you register your daughter, you can use the contact details below.



1st Oakley Rainbows (Wednesdays)
Unit contact: Amanda Keen (Assistant Leader)
1stoakleyrainbows@gmail.com



The summer term has seen quite a big change for 1st Oakley Brownies, as we are now meeting at the Old School in Oakley each week instead of the Scout Hut, we have settled in well and are making the most of our new venue! In May we walked to Riverside Meadow, just short stroll away, to complete a scavenger hunt, play games and have a picnic! We also had our traditional yearly visit to the Girlguiding Activity Centre on Molliver's

Lane in June, where we made bookmarks with flowers the Brownies collected, created musical instruments using natural materials found in the woods, had a campfire and made s'mores (just before it became too hot!) The Brownies have been working 'Award' learning all about Girlguiding traditions and finding out more about each other and themselves. We are looking forward to welcoming the Brownies back in September and have lots of fun activities planned as a unit, and out and about in the community!

If you think your child would enjoy being a Brownie and taking part in some of these activities, please sign up on the website – girlguiding.org.uk (click on 'Register a child') or contact Kathy Jones, Leader at 1stOakley Brownies by email – snowyowloakleybrownies@outlook.com



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North Beds Ramblers Walk

every Saturday: Please note change of start time for afternoon walks – Summer start 13:30. Come and join us for a walk.

We walk every Saturday afternoon approx. 6 miles and Saturdays twice a month in morning for approx. 12 miles.

Or try our "Ramble" on first Saturday morning each month – slightly shorter, slower pace

For the summer we are introducing evening walks starting at 7pm



Sept Walks

Start of the Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks

5th am "Ramble", Mowsbury Park, 4.5 miles, pm, Mowsbury Park, 7 miles,

Birthday walk No 9 

12th am Riseley, 12.5 miles, pm Stagsden, 6 miles

End of the Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks

19th pm Rowney Warren, 7 miles,

26th pm, Yardley Hastings 6 miles

Oct Walks

3rd am "Ramble", Old Warden, 4.5 miles, pm, Old Warden, 7.5 miles, Birthday walk No 10 

10th am Ampthill, 11 miles, pm Haynes, 7 miles

17th pm TBA, 6.5 miles,

24th am, Milton Keynes 11 miles, pm, Turvey 6.5 miles

31st pm Sharnbrook, 6 miles

Contact; Margaret Sawyer 07780933729

Facebook; North Beds Ramblers

For our latest walks program visit

- <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/north-bedfordshire>



Oakley Education Foundation



The Oakley Educational Foundation exists to assist young people between ages 16 - 25, who live in the Parish, with grants towards the cost of books and tools, etc. in furtherance of their education.

Applications are considered twice a year in May and November. More information and application forms can be obtained from the Parish Clerk during the April and October preceding the application deadlines.

Please email:

parishclerk@oakleybedford-pc.gov.uk

Itemised receipts for purchases of goods must be provided.



Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks

5th to 13th Sep 2026



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For full details visit

www.bedswalkfest.co.uk/walks

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Before



After

Oakley Village Monthly Quiz

Since the last newsletter a great deal has happened over the Summer months. The World Cup, British Grand Prix and Wimbledon have come and gone, we endured a heatwave with record temperatures and of course we have seen one Prime Minister leave and yet another arrive. Throughout it all the Oakley Village Quiz has continued, aided by the Hall air con (!!), with capacity attendance and a genuine community spirit being generated from a great social event.

In May, for the first time, we had a THREE way team tie break. "Nil Point" claimed victory over "The Green Team" and "The Cheesy Puffs". "Outnumbered" won in June, "The Avengers" in July and "Outnumbered" triumphed again in August. All the winning teams are pictured.

There is always amusement created by team names and over the Summer we have had "Crystal Methodist Church". "Summer Fun, Some Aren't", "Let's Get Quizzical" and the team named "Can I have a round of applause please" had their request met whenever their name and score was read out ! Anyone can enter the quiz to have a great time and catch up with friends and neighbours.

The next **FOUR** quizzes will be held on: **18 September** (our third year anniversary), **16 October**, **20 November** and **18 December**. If anyone wishes to enter a team, maximum 6 people, then please email me at richworker@hotmail.co.uk

Richard Worker

"Nil Point" – Winners of the May Three Way Tie Break Quiz



"Outnumbered" – Winners of the June Quiz



"The Avengers" – Winners of the July Quiz



"Outnumbered" – Winners of the August Quiz



Bedfordshire Festival of Autumn Walks 2026

Preparations are in full flow for the 2026 festival which takes place this year from Saturday 5th Sept to Sunday 13th Sept. There will be the opportunity to walk the Greensand Ridge on the second weekend. This runs over 2 days to cover the full 40 miles. Walkers are welcome to walk on one or both days. There will also be the opportunity to walk and sail with the John Bunyan Boat. We are also hoping to host a Bat walk one evening – subject to suitable weather, as the Bats, like humans, generally prefer dry weather!

There will be an opportunity to explore parts of Bedford with the Bedford Town Guides and the Victorian Cemetery on Foster Hill Road, Bedford with the Friend of Bedford Cemetery. We are delighted to have the support of Marston Vale again this year

Full details of the walks can be found at <https://www.bedswalkfest.co.uk/walks.php>, please bear in mind that this program is evolving and walks are being added all the time – so keep checking back for the latest entries. Check out our facebook page too that comes alive in August – just search for **Bedfordshire Festival Of Autumn Walks**. Most events are free and don't need booking so why not fill your boots!

Sandra Kelsey – Bedfordshire Ramblers Publicity Officer



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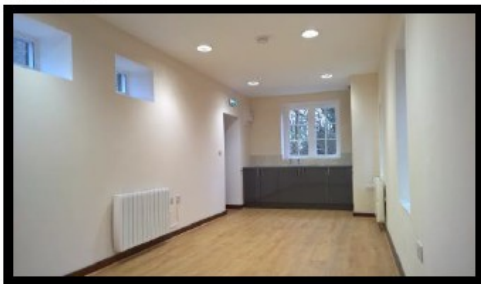
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www.lovellhomesoakley.co.uk

Or contact the Clerk :

Mandy Newton

On 07736 466965

Registered Charity Number : 200480

Oakley Kindergarten News

Phew! What a scorching summer we have had.

We were so lucky to have our air-conditioned building, which enabled us to open throughout the heatwaves and keep our children and staff cool and relaxed throughout the long summer days. The children played with waterplay, ice play and the parachutes to keep extra cool on the hottest days!



Our Ofsted report was published in June, and you can search for this online at Gov.co.uk Find an Ofsted Inspection and type in Oakley Kindergarten.

Planning for our pergola was unfortunately turned down by Bedford Borough Council Planning Committee, but we have resubmitted our planning application and hope to have a pergola by next summer to help add additional natural shade to the back of our building.

Our Graduation Ceremony for the 21 children leaving us to go onto their chosen primary schools was very well attended and we are so grateful for the support we receive from our families; the children sang and danced and received a graduation certificate. We wish all our families the best for their futures, we will miss them and hope that we have supported their children to become lifelong learners!

As the days get shorter and we begin to think of the changes of season and reflect on the changes at kindergarten over the year: Miss Remond left us in the summer term and we wish her well. From the beginning of September, we will be welcoming Mrs Panesar and Mrs Reader to our team, and Mrs Hale and Mrs O'Loughlin will be leaving us, and we wish them both the best for the future.

We are especially looking forward to meeting all the new children joining us for the new term and welcoming back our current families after the long summer break.



We will again be working in partnership with local schools and colleges to provide placements for students within our setting, giving us the opportunity to support and develop the next generation of childcare professionals.

Admissions

If you would like to register your child for a place at kindergarten, please contact us on 01234 826452. Email: info@oakleykindergarten.co.uk Website: www.oakleykindergarten.com Follow us on Facebook to keep up with our latest news and events. For information on funding, you can see details on our website with a link to Childcare Choices or alternatively you can contact the Family Information Service 0800 023 2057

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The Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park and Bedford Borough Council are celebrating our 19th Green Flag Award in a row this year! The park is such a special place for many people and the extraordinary volunteers who put their own time into helping make the park such a lovely and safe place to be for people and for wildlife deserve all the plaudits that come their way. Well done to the volunteers!



There is a Facebook page called The Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park – please feel free to follow this page to find out about wildlife, see views of the park, find out about events and read the occasional but important safety notice about the park.

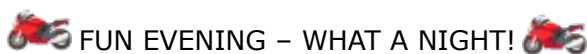
The Friends have organised for a dog trainer to have a free to attend monthly event in the park run by Kate from KSK9 Dog training. Kate is an easy-going and very knowledgeable about dogs, she enjoys talking to anyone about dogs and loves getting dog hugs! This is an opportunity to talk about any specific behaviours your dog may have be that nervous or aggressive behaviour, but to also talk about dog etiquette such as what does 'keep dogs under control' mean, dogs around livestock, the dangers of blue-green algae or why bagging and binning dog poo is the only acceptable way of dealing with dog poo. Keep an eye out on social media or on posters in the park for more information on when these happen.

As usual, our popular I Spot, Children's Activity and Crossword booklets are perfect to keep your kids or grandkids entertained - available to buy for just £1 from The Dragonfly Café.

Every other Thursday, there are health walks around the park and/or local area. Meeting at 10:30am at the woodland entrance to the Dragonfly Café, they last about 1 hour. The dates are September 10th & 24th, October 8th & 22nd and November 5th & 19th. More info can be found at <https://hocp.co.uk/get-involved/health-walks/>

We hope you enjoy your visits to our wonderful park! From the Country Park staff and The Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park.

oakley Motorcycle club



What a fabulous night Thursday 30th July turned out to be... *except for the bit when it rained!*

Despite the weather trying its best to spoil things, an incredible **428 bikes turned up** on the night, making it a fantastic turnout and creating a brilliant atmosphere at Oakley.

We also had an amazing **32 bikes** entered into our **OMC Bike of the Year Award**, and what a fantastic selection they were. We were delighted to have the competition judged by three people who certainly know a thing or two about motorcycles:

 **Guy "Skid" Willison** – Honorary OMC member and star of the hugely popular TV show *Shed and Buried*.

 **Grant "Wag" Wagstaff** – OMC founding member and Isle of Man TT rider.

 **Paul "Burt" Reynolds** – OMC Committee member and owner of a vast array of motorcycles, including the famous BSA sidecar combination that appeared in the TV comedy classics *Dad's Army* and *On the Buses*.

The judging criteria were deliberately simple: "Which three bikes would you most like to take home?"

The judges then ranked their choices 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

3rd Place – Chris Bell, Wellingborough

A very special 1977 Kawasaki, fitted with a Suzuki engine – plus a turbo and nitrous oxide!

2nd Place – Keith Hubbard, Bromham

An absolutely showroom-immaculate and completely original 1975 Honda 400 Four.

WINNER – Simon Jefferies, Abbotsley

An immaculate, exceptionally rare 1973 Ducati Desmo 750 Super Sport – a truly stunning motorcycle and a very worthy winner of the OMC Bike of the Year Award.



AND THEN THERE WAS THE BIKE JUMBLE!



What started as a few bits turned into an absolute mountain of stuff! A huge thank you to everyone who donated motorcycle clothing, accessories, memorabilia, bike parts and much, much more. The Bike Jumble alone raised an amazing **£1,300+ for East Anglian Air Ambulance**. On top of that, the unsold jumble was collected by Emmaus at Carlton and has so far raised another £1,300 plus for them!

While we are talking about EAAA, during the evening we were also delighted to make a presentation to them of **just under £1,400**,



representing money raised by OMC since Christmas 2025. That means a fantastic amount of money has been raised for this incredibly worthwhile cause – and it's all thanks to the generosity and support of our members, visitors and friends of OMC.

To round off the evening, the fabulous Kopy Katz took to the stage and played two brilliant sets, providing the perfect finish to a very special OMC night.

THANK YOU!



Events like this simply do not happen without a lot of people giving up their time and helping behind the scenes.

A massive thank you to all our sponsors who attended, our three judges, Mr Ice Cream Man, all the OMC Committee members and everyone else who helped before, during and after the event. A special thank you also goes to our photographers Toni Harris of BikerLens and Asan Tu of Tu & Tu, who were there capturing the evening.

Continued on Page 35

BEDS CLASSIC CAR MEET

Another fabulous summer so far, with huge numbers turning out and, once again, an ever-growing selection of cars we have never seen before! It is fantastic to see so many different vehicles joining us each month.

Huge numbers of visitors have been to our car nights, with plenty of people from the village coming along to enjoy the atmosphere. It is clear that Classics & Customs has become a popular local evening for everyone to enjoy.

Our final night of the season is Tuesday 8th September, and we will be rounding things off in style with live entertainment from a singer, kindly provided by Oakley Sports & Social Club.

So why not bring the whole family along and enjoy a great evening of cars, food, ice cream, drinks and entertainment?

We hope to see you there!

Luke and the Classics & Customs Team



OMC - Continued

And finally – last, but by absolutely no means least – a very special thank you to the person who organised the whole thing.



👏 OMC Secretary, Bernice Russell! 👏

Bernice put an enormous amount of time and effort into organising the evening, and judging by the **428 bikes that turned up**, the Bike of the Year entries, the entertainment and the amount raised for charity, **it was certainly worth it!** Thank you, Bernice – and thank you to EVERYONE who came along and helped make the **Oakley Motorcycle Club Fun Evening** such a tremendous success.

oakley *Motorcycle* club

🏍️ **428 BIKES – 32 BIKE OF THE YEAR ENTRIES – GREAT MUSIC – AND THOUSANDS RAISED FOR CHARITY!**

WHAT A NIGHT!



HEADLINE: **SWEET FA**
THE GROUP BEHIND THE 00'S GARAGE & RNB ANTHEM & UK #2 HIT

“FLOWERS”

OAKLEY SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB
FIREWORKS

07.11.2026

LASER SHOWS &
MINI MIXES



SINGERS DJ FUN FAIR STALLS KIDS DISCO KITCHEN & BBQ

