



Oakley Newsletter



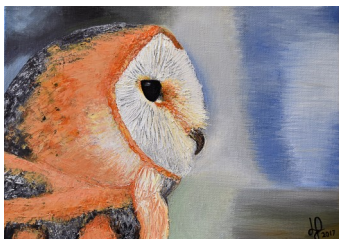
Spring 2021

Number 86

Look inside for

No Verge Parking Scheme
High Sheriff's School Report
Your Village Agent

New CAMEO social group replacing WI
New OSSC Stewards **Biodiversity Project**
New Brownie Leader Needed



Front Cover : "Olive"
By Laura Saunders

The Oakley Newsletter

is published quarterly by Oakley Parish Council and delivered by parish councillors free to every house in Oakley – about 1,000 copies.

Opinions and information

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

Next issue

Final copy date for the Summer issue is 22nd May 2021.
The publishing date is 1st June 2021.

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Hello Children

look out for
Ten more
little ones



Parish Council News

Spring 2021

Hello Everyone,

As I put my thoughts down I notice out of my window that the rain has turned to sleet and then to snow. I wonder how much more, if any, will fall, because it does not seem long since we had our last fall and that has not long gone. The Snowman built next to the Oakley sign on the Green at the crossroads has not long gone. He was there in all his splendour, then he was gone, so, might he return? The young and the young at heart enjoy the snow, but the sight of the snowdrops, aconites and daffodils and other flowers that adorn our gardens and other parts of the village, remind us that spring is just around the corner.

And if ever we wanted spring to come it is this year! What a year 2020 was and who knows what 2021 has in store for us. The Vaccination program is progressing which is such good news, but at present all other matters are so uncertain. At this point I would like to offer our condolences to any family who has lost loved ones through this dreadful disease. The thoughts of the entire Parish Council and I am sure all parishioners are with you. Looking forward we all must be positive, young and older alike, in the knowledge that things will get better and in the meantime do ALL you are told to do by staying at home and remembering hands, face and space.

Budget and Precept

All of our meetings are very important, but the January meeting has an additional element which is the setting of the budget for the forthcoming year. We try to balance what we would like to do with what needs to be done, always being mindful of the impact on our pockets. This year 2021/2022 the Parish Council has agreed to increase the precept, which is the parish's part of your council bill, to £54,700, which is 1.9 percent increase on a band D property taking it from £55.68 to £56.73 per annum. Our annual budget is very much

Continued on page 3

OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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like that of our own households, where much of the money is accounted for on normal expenditure to keep the village functioning.

The scope for us to spend money on new projects then has to be managed very carefully so that we try to keep pace with the requirements of the village. At the same time we are always mindful that the extra money can only come from one place and that being from the residents through the precept or, if we are lucky, from the Village Directory.

Children's play equipment, by its very nature, is expensive. It also has to be regularly inspected. Any faults identified must be repaired for obvious reasons which is also expensive. The Parish Council remains of the view, however, that expenditure on the play equipment is important, bearing in mind our children are our future.

The new projects this coming year include new village entrance signs, improvements to Brockwell Meadow, a new dual purpose litter bin, replacement of rotten bollards on the Green and replacement of part or whole of a piece of play equipment. You will see later that the expenditure for the Village signs and Brockwell Meadow will be paid for by income from our very popular Oakley Village Directory.

Christmas Lights

Even though during December we had the introduction of our second lockdown and many of us were forced to have a very different Christmas to what we would normally, we still had our lovely Christmas lights both at St Marys Church and at the Crossroads.

We used a new contractor this year and I am sure you will agree he maintained the standard we have come to expect. Though all around us there was depressing news we did have the Christmas lights to brighten our days and lead us to Christmas Day and then the hope of the New Year.

It was unfortunate that the lights at the Church failed around Christmas night. The contractor attended and rectified one problem, but storm Bella was responsible for causing more damage which could not be repaired in situ, so we went a week or so without lights at the Church.

The contractor has assured us that he will do his best to carry out the necessary repairs as part of our contract, but of course we remain mindful that there may be a need to replace those lights at some point as we cannot allow our standards to drop.

I am very grateful to the contractor for attending and for all that he did in trying to keep our lights on.

Inconsiderate Parking

I long for the day when there is not a need to say anything about inconsiderate parking, but despite our best efforts we still see far too much of it. Why do so many drivers think it acceptable to drive on verges cutting up the grass unnecessarily; to drive on and park on pavements creating danger to pedestrians, people with pushchairs and wheelchair users; park on junctions contrary to the Highway Code and park across driveways?

All of these actions are totally unnecessary and more to the point are selfish. A 'No verge parking scheme' has been introduced in Lincroft, Hunts Path and Copthorne Close and Bedford Borough Council Enforcement Officers have assured us that they will issue fixed penalty notices to those who do not comply.

Please note, the enforcement officers do not have to see the vehicle being driven; the fact that the vehicle is parked contrary to the regulation completes the offence and it is the driver or owner who is liable.

When you think about it, it is not worth taking the risk, so do not do it. We are in the process of arranging a meeting with the Police to discuss these parking matters; I do however believe that with a little bit more thought and consideration we could overcome these problems and save the Police a job.



Please think about what you are doing and if your actions are likely to impact adversely on others then do not do it. Leaving your vehicle properly parked on the road actually helps with traffic calming, but a vehicle half on and half off the pavement achieves nothing. Let us all work together and stamp this behaviour out.

Village Directory

I am confident that by now every household in the village will have received the 2021 edition of the Oakley Village Directory and that you all know exactly where to lay your hand on it.

The Parish Council is so grateful to Councillor Sara Fardon and her team for the work that they put into its preparation and publication and also to Old Road Securities for having sponsored the directory since it was introduced. Continued on page 4

We are so grateful for this continued sponsorship and as a consequence the directory has provided the Parish with an additional £20,000 over the 15 editions, meaning that the new Village entrance signs and the work in Brockwell Meadow will be funded by the directory.

Captain Sir Tom MOORE

Of course our nation was saddened to hear of the death of Captain Sir Tom Moore from Marston Moretaine on Tuesday 2 February 2021. He was indeed an inspiration to us all and he had a real ability to put a smile on all of our faces.

As a tribute and as a mark of remembrance to him and to all those who have died since the start of the pandemic we flew the union flag at half mast at the War Memorial on Wednesday 3 February 2021.

Leopold Hector PLATER

As a final thought, I am researching how Leopold Hector PLATER aged 19 years, a Craftsman with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, was fatally injured at an incident in Clapham on 5 November 1945. Should anyone have any information at all then please contact me on 07968122301 or email me at paulphil-lips65@gmail.com



Paul Phillips.





FRAUD ALERT

From the Police, NHS and your local services: Coronavirus Vaccination Scams



In the UK, coronavirus vaccines will only be available via the National Health Service (NHS). You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a GP surgery or pharmacy local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, the vaccine is **free of charge**. At no point will you be asked to pay.

- The NHS will **never** ask you for your bank account or card details.
- The NHS will **never** ask you for your PIN or banking password.
- The NHS will **never** arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.
- The NHS will **never** ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726 which is **free of charge**.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

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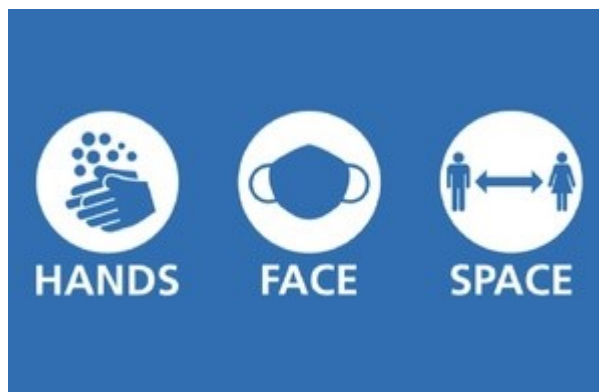
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Borough Council Report

We have entered 2021 in a similar fashion to how 2020 ended, but there is hope ahead. The vaccination programme is working well, with the three centres in Bedford all being used. By the time you read this, we should hopefully have had a pathway back to some social contact announced by the government. Even when this happens we cannot become complacent to Covid-19. As we saw when the last lockdown ended, infection rates in Bedford rose to nearly 1,000/100,000 of the population. They are back down to under 200/100,000 but this is still far higher than in the spring of 2020.



Please remember **Hands, Face, Space**.

Finances

The 2021/22 Bedford Borough Council budget was approved at the Full Council meeting on the 3rd February, with cross-party support. The budget maintains the Council's record of saving frontline services and protecting the vulnerable, despite severe government underfunding and the financial challenge caused by the pandemic.

The context in which the budget will be delivered was laid out in stark terms during the meeting, including the £24 million cut in the Council's main government grant since 2015, and the need for £10.9 million of ongoing savings to be delivered in one year.

Savings are targeted at the way the Council operates including the use of new technology and streamlined ways of working, with savings within directorates and increased income generation, all in order to protect vital frontline services.

There are also a range of measures to continue to reduce the Council's environmental impact and help tackle climate change, including a major investment in a Solar Energy Farm that makes new use of the former Elstow landfill site.

Meanwhile, ongoing support for the vulnerable includes full Council Tax Relief for those least able to pay, more investment for Adults and Children's social care services, and more emergency accommodation for the homeless.

Investment in the Borough also includes further town centre regeneration, expanding schools to create more school places in growing areas and road and pavement resurfacing and improvements.

Transport

Zebra Crossing for Lovell Road

In March work will start on the installation of a new zebra crossing on Lovell Road, Oakley, just east of the junction with Parrott Close.

This is being jointly funded by Bedford Borough Council, Oakley Parish Council and my Ward Fund.

This will allow children who live in Parrott's Close to safely cross the road when walking to school. It will also allow the residents of The Lovell Homes to reach the bus stop for buses into Bedford.



Parking

Lincroft/Hunts Path/Copthorne Close

A no verge parking scheme has been introduced in these three roads, to counter the actions of a selfish few who consistently park on the grass verges and pavements, so ruining the environment for everyone and making access for pedestrians, pushchairs & wheelchair users more difficult.

This has been introduced at the request of the Parish Council and has been paid for from my Ward Fund. With the installation of the signage, Bedford Borough Parking services are now able to issue fines to offenders caught parking inconsiderately.



Environment

Making Bedford Borough Friendlier for Bugs and Bees

As part of the 'Bugs and Bees' project, the Council is planting new hedgerows and wildflower meadows.

The Bugs and Bees project launched in the summer and saw the Council receive lots of requests from local residents for areas where a more wildlife-friendly maintenance regime could be put in place.

As a result, the Council is trialling more areas where the grass is not mown but instead left to grow naturally. By not cutting the grass it creates natural wildflower meadows, allowing local native species to bloom and provide pollen and nectar.

The Council also brought this approach out of the parks and onto the streets last year. On roadside verges the grass must be cut short to ensure that people can see and that junctions are safe. However, the grass is often left long at the back of the verge away from the road. This is an important way to encourage wildlife such as invertebrates, butterflies and bees into the heart of the urban area.

If you would like further information about this project, or to suggest an area that the team could look at, then please email bugsandbees@bedford.gov.uk.

Councillor Jon Abbott Telephone: 07784 549180 Email: jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com



It is with some sadness that we realise that it has been almost a whole year since Brownies last met face-to-face, but we are continuing over Zoom and we hope that it will not be too much longer until we are able to meet off screen.

Brownies have kept busy playing games, telling stories with puppets they made, learning about birds ready for the RSPB Birdwatch, cooking (rocky road and peppermint creams) and celebrating Chinese

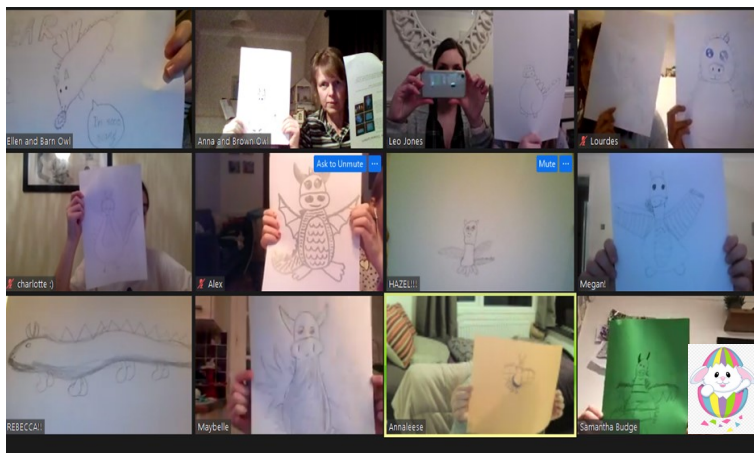
New Year. Instead of a beetle drive we had a 'Dragon drive' and Brownies created these lovely dragons:-

Sadly Mel (**Barn Owl**) **will be leaving us** at Easter as she will be busy on Friday evenings with her party tent business. We will all miss the fun activities she organised, her care and consideration and the hard work she did behind the scenes, such as communicating with parents and purchasing badges. I would like to pass on big thank you to Mel for all that she has done for Brownies.

As a result of Mel's departure, we are on the **lookout for a new volunteer**. There is plenty of flexibility in the role and attending every meeting would not be essential.

If you are interested in finding out more,

please email Lindsay at oakleybrownies452@gmail.com. Lindsay Saunders



MERRI Flowers

After a bit of a break from the farm, February and March are our key months for planning for a successful 2021.

Home-schooling our boys has prevented both of us from going up the farm on a daily basis but, like everyone else, we have learnt to adapt to a 'new normal'. Sowing seeds, plant propagation and potting on seedlings are now carried out from our home on our kitchen table, whilst the boys are cooped up in their bedrooms staring at screens doing online schooling from 8.30am to 3pm. Their planned breaks have become our breaks, so it is not all bad.

This time of year is all about future proofing our cut flower and Christmas tree businesses. The most tedious task is checking our rabbit fencing around the entire perimeter of our farm to prevent pesky rabbits nibbling on our over wintered flower and Christmas tree seedlings. Thankfully, the few days of snow helped us no end with this task, because it is far easier to see pawprints in the snow to discover their entry points than pawprints in mud.

Which has just reminded me to say a big THANK YOU to everyone in the village who donned their wellies and came up to our farm to buy their 2020 Christmas Tree from us in November or



December.

Our 2020 Merri Christmas Tree Fundraiser raised money for twenty-five local charities, including Oakley Pre-School, Oakley Primary, Lincroft and St Marys Church. It is hard to believe that in 2018 we only had five charities involved (three of which were in Oakley).

We would also like to thank everyone within Oakley who bought flowers from us during the Merri months of May to September 2020. We must have delivered flowers to someone in Oakley nearly every day last year. So when it comes to May 2021, please do not forget about us when you need flowers to brighten up someone's day.

Anyway, it is time for us to go and sow some more seeds for a brighter future. Stay safe. Stay positive.

Rachelle and Julian Merrill, (opposite Oakley Post Office)



A very Happy Easter from everyone at St Mary's and Oakley Methodist Church

We warmly invite you to join us in our celebrations of Easter.

Information on Methodist services can be found on
www.northbedsmethodist.org.uk



Click on Oakley for local information, or Worship Resources for Circuit services.

To keep up to date with St Mary's Easter Events and Services please visit
our relaunched website: www.bromhambenefice.org or follow us on
Facebook: CofE Benefice for Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden.

Please join us on Zoom every Sunday at 10.30am for live services.

The Methodist Church will have a cross up outside the church on Easter Sunday
for people to decorate with flowers. And look out for the Easter Garden outside
St Mary's!

We will also be sending out Easter bags for our Messy Church members.



CONTACTS

St Mary's: Rev Catherine Wilson 01234 825665 vicar@bromhambenefice.org

Church Wardens: Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535

Oakley Methodist Church: Rev Gill Baalham 01234 930025 gill.baalham@methodist.org.uk

Church Steward: Jeanette Letch 825204



Oakley Band of Bell Ringers update

It has been a sad time for the Oakley bell ringers. Shortly before Christmas we lost one of our small band. Marion Ridgway joined the Oakley Band of Bell Ringers in 1971 and her husband, Graham, took over the role of Tower Captain in 1972. As Graham recalls, Marion and the rest of the band raised the money for the treble bell, the newest bell in the St Mary's bell tower, by holding jumble sales and discos in the village hall, as well as fundraising in the church. The treble bell was cast in the Whitechapel foundry in 1978 and was delivered to St Mary's on the 18th December that year. Graham remembers installing the girder in the bell tower while the Nine Lessons & Carols was taking place in the church. Graham and others in the band installed the frame fittings and the bell on the 28th December, just in time for

the practice that evening. Marion was the first person to ring the new treble bell and it was the first time that six bells had rung out in Oakley.

Three of our band members (in a family group) were able to ring the bells at St Mary's in honour of Marion before a beautiful service in the churchyard. Marion will be greatly missed by us all and our thoughts and best wishes are with Graham and their family.

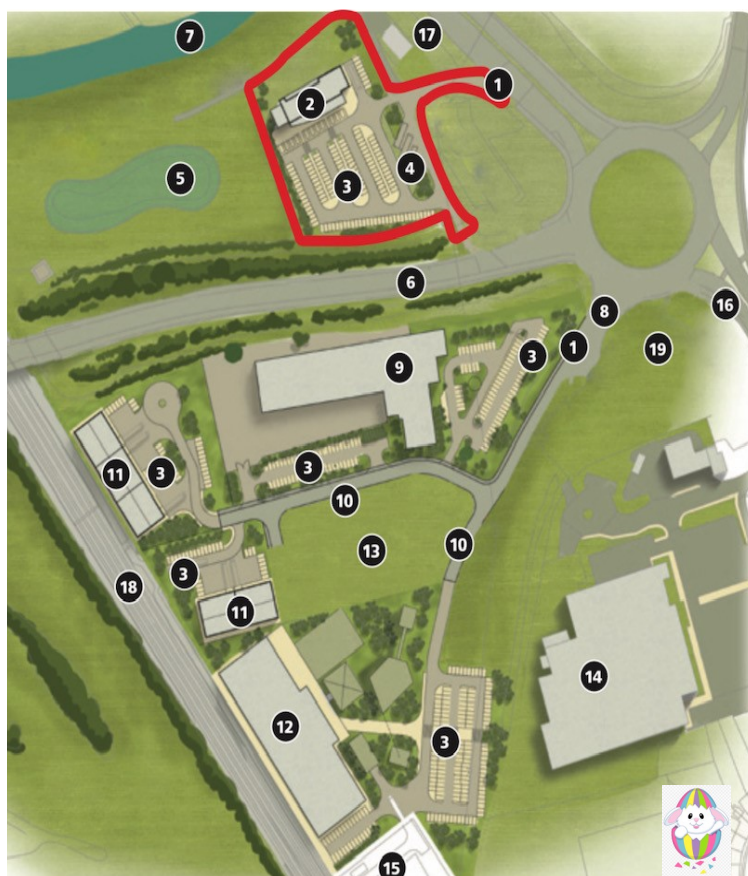
It has almost been a year since we have all been able to ring together at St Mary's and we miss it so much. All we can do at the moment is keep our fingers crossed that the control measures work, and we can start getting back to normal. By Shelley Abbott, on behalf of the Oakley Band of Bell Ringers

Nosey Editor

As one of the side effects of our present circumstances I now spend part of a morning taking exercise while my wife braves Sainsbury's shopping emporium. Consequently as I passed Brewpoint I noticed large tractors and earthmovers working on the rest of the site. As a committed silver surfer and remembering vaguely about a hotel and an activity centre I started to do some virtual digging.

First of all I found that Cut Throat Lane is now being renamed Fairhill. There are more than a dozen streets called Cut Throat Lane in Britain and Ireland. In some cases local legends speak of a terrible murder having taken place there, in other cases the name is attributed to the existence of an abattoir on the road where animals had their throats cut. Personally I think the latter in Bedford's case although there has been a trial trench evaluation revealing evidence for a possible late Iron Age/early Roman settlement in the north of the site close to the river Great Ouse.

As you can see there is going to be a mixture of residential, retail and food outlets with the microbrewery and potential multi-activity centre.



1. Highway Access Point
2. Hotel - Up to 80 Bedrooms
3. Car parking
4. Coach Parking
5. Country park
6. A6 - The Great Ouse Way
7. River Ouse
8. Fairhill
9. Brewpoint : Charles Wells Brewery
10. New roads
11. Fast Food Outlets
12. Adrenalin World - multi-activity centre from David Lloyd Developments have an option here
13. Area for further housing development
14. Sainsbury's Supermarket
15. Electricity Distribution Site
16. A6 Clapham Road
17. A6 Paula Radcliffe Way
18. Railway
19. Aldi Supermarket



CAMEO

**(come and
meet each other)**



Sadly the Oakley WI has found it necessary to close, we have done our best with Zoom meetings each week to chat and having the monthly talks on Zoom, but many of our members are unable or have not joined us and unsurprisingly, after the last year of lockdowns, the uncertainty of next year too, and being unable to meet, are not considering re-joining WI for the next year, which makes it unviable for our group to continue.

To keep our village in contact, we propose starting a new group for any lady to join, no subscription at present, we will call this CAMEO (Come and Meet Each Other)

At the start this will obviously be regular weekly zoom meetings, just to have a cup of tea and chat with your friends – or make new friends. The aim for the future is to try and form a casual social gathering, based around the Knit and Natter group who made the poppies for Remembrance, where people can drop in for a chat probably starting with meeting regularly at the Bedford Arms. This does not mean you have to knit or crochet or sew, it means those who wish to, can, and the rest can just chatter over a coffee or tea etc. It is purely social at present and we will build from there.

Contact please if you are interested:-

phylmaj@icloud.com



Editors Note - no you will not recognise anyone!!

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Update from Lizzie, Oakley Village Agent

COVID-19 Help Latest

Your Village Agent is still working during these difficult times.

Lizzie is still able to help with completing forms and discussing if you are entitled to Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit or a Blue Badge.

Did you know.....? Below are some useful items that Lizzie can help you with.

- **FREE** handy Reachers – first come first served
- **FREE** colouring books and word searches
- **Help** with accessing transport to get to your vaccine
- **Help** with form filling can still be done
- Other useful **FREE** items such as carbon monoxide alarms, jar openers and more, while stocks last
- Referrals to services that can **help** you with any problems you have at this current time.

Do you have elderly relatives? If you have a question or would like to talk through about how to support an elderly relative during this challenging time, many services are available regardless of where you live, so if you are worried then please do give Lizzie a call.

All work is conducted within current government guidelines

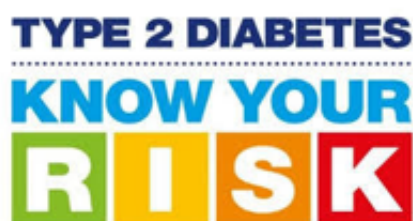
Please contact Lizzie, your Village Agent on

Freephone: 0800 039 1234

or

Email: lizzieb@bedsrcc.org.uk

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



Type 2 diabetes is a serious health issue. As well as all the other problems diabetes can cause, such as blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks and strokes, we know that diabetes leads to worse outcomes with COVID-19.

Many people living in our communities have undiagnosed Type 2 diabetes. The NHS is asking as many people as possible to check their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes through the quick and easy 'Know Your Risk' tool - <https://riskscore.diabetes.org.uk/start> - anyone who gets a moderate or high risk result can join the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme to get help to reduce their risk

Oakley Rural Day Centre

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

Tel: 01234 824935 Mobile: 07733 227374

Email: oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com

Web: www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com

Registered Charity No: 1060283



NEWSLETTER Spring

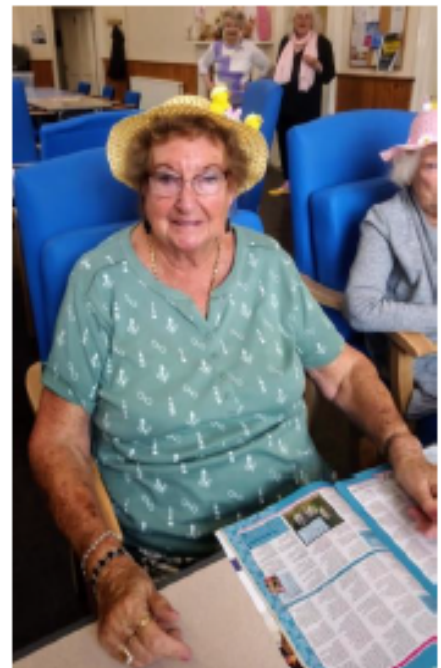
Welcome to our latest Newsletter. If anyone has access to the internet please visit our website, www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com The site is updated regularly with the latest news from the centre.

We also have a Facebook page for anyone who has a Facebook account. 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 are also producing articles in various publications throughout Bedford and surrounding areas to raise the profile of the centre.

MESSAGE FROM THE DAY CENTRE

Due to the ongoing Covid 19 situation the day centre remains closed at this point. We are putting together the procedures that we will need to have in place before reopening. We are hoping that this will be in the spring sometime. It is important that we have those procedures in place for our vulnerable people so that it is safe for everyone.

Each week we ring all the clients and volunteers on their usual attendance days and have also added extra calls for the more isolated clients. We check that they are all ok health wise, have no immediate problems, managing with their shopping and collection of prescriptions etc and pass on helpful telephone numbers or advice should they need it.



We send out a weekly two page newsletter and try to ensure that it is both interesting and topical. We also send out quizzes, crosswords, word searches, spot the difference and various things to stimulate the mind. The clients are enjoying them very much (some are even being passed on to friends).

We look forward to the future and talk positively about what we will be doing when the day centre reopens. The clients are missing their companions and very often ask for messages to be passed onto their friends.

The clients tell me how they look forward to their weekly telephone calls as it helps relieve the boredom and the terrible sense of isolation that a lot of them are feeling.

NEWS

Under the news section on our website, www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com you will find a download for a booklet from Age UK which has all kinds of useful information. If you can't access it maybe a carer or family member can help.

WHAT WE OFFER

We normally provide a day centre for elderly residents from Bedford and surrounding villages to meet, socialise and partake in various activities such as crafts, quizzes, chair based exercise and at times provide entertainment such as singers and choirs. We also provide tea/coffee and a 2 course freshly cooked

lunch.

For details of costs and advice please contact Lynne, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays on 07733 227374. **Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.**

David Swallow



News from College Farm, Oakley

We are currently having the wettest winter in living memory off the back of a very wet autumn. I have never known the river to be out for so long and on Christmas day it was just a few feet short of the levels achieved in Easter '98. This has meant that apart from calving, very little activity has been happening on the farm.

Usually I would be writing most probably moaning about the weather, however, just into the new year my Granny, Margaret Saunders passed away at 88.

Granny had lived at College farm from 1955 until 2015 when Laura and I moved in. She was involved in the village in many ways, St Marys church, gardening club and with the alms houses - my memories of this are the weekly egg round.

When I was younger many school holidays were spent with Granny looking after me, my brother and my two cousins. This usually consisted of us building rafts to go down the river on, camping in the garden and helping on the farm.

In between all of this we were forever trying to get into the pantry to get some oatcake, however I am sure granny could hear that door latch from 100 yards away!

At the end of summer, for several years, we always did the churches sponsored bike ride. Over the years we must have ridden along nearly every North Bedfordshire road going. Yes, we had a few accidents, but amazingly Granny did all this on a bike which was so old it only had one gear and

she tied a cushion to the seat to make it a little more comfortable. Usually, granny roped in a friend to help her out with us, unsurprisingly it was never the same person!

I shall never forget the time Granny walked me to school and the Union Jack was flying. She looked at this flag and told me it was upside down. She then marched me into the headmistress's office at Lincroft and made me tell her.

Even when I was grown up, Granny was still looking after me. There was always a meal, jelly was brought out to me most days during harvest, I even got her to ride on the combine a couple of years ago!

The number of cards my Grandpa has received shows just how many lives she touched. Some great tributes have been paid to her with someone at Bedford Rugby Club, where both Grandpa and Granny were once heavily involved, describing her as the 'mother of the blues'.

I will end with saying how thankful I am to my family for being able to care for Granny at home in her last year. Dementia eventually got the better of her and anyone who has witnessed it will know how hard it is to care for someone with it.

The love and dedication my Grandpa showed in the last 12 months is something I can only aspire to try and do.

Henry and Laura Saunders



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High Sheriff's School Report

The theme for my year as High Sheriff was always going to be keeping children in education, but little did I know just how important this topic would come to be. When I last wrote in our newsletter digital poverty was a phrase that we were all beginning to become familiar with. I had just delivered 147 devices (laptops) to schools in Bedfordshire.

At that time, the Council Children's Services had identified the children aged 13 or over that they believed to be most in need.

Since then, we have established a much greater understanding of what digital poverty means and how many more children it affects. With all school years going into lockdown and children not being allowed to mix with other children outside of their own family, learning from home became the only way to learn. It was now essential that a child had access to online services to both learn and communicate with their friends.

At the same time, working from home for many parents became the only way to work. Where perhaps there had been one or maybe two devices that the whole family could share, there was suddenly demand from all members of the family at the same time. Sadly, there were still some families with no device at all.

The future will reveal the full extent of the damage the virus has caused to our society, but for now keeping our children engaged in education requires access to devices. Re-engaging with Council Children's Services we again asked schools to identify those children needing devices



es but this time we included the primary schools.

With huge support from businesses, local trusts, private individuals, and other groups we raised enough money to deliver a further 1500 devices into Bedfordshire. The total number of devices given has risen to almost 1700, this includes 39 to Lincroft Academy and 5 to Oakley Primary School. Both schools were so grateful for their devices, but I have to say a particular thank you

to Denise at Oakley Primary School who even brushed the cobwebs from the school sign and swept away the leaves for my arrival. That was a very special welcome!

This second phase of deliveries has just been completed and I am pleased to report that we have managed to meet virtually all the immediate needs of the schools that responded in Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire.

It has been a huge community effort and I am so grateful to all those who have helped me put almost 1700 smiles on children's faces across Bedfordshire.



Sadly, there remains a huge need in Luton. Even though we have delivered 427 devices to Luton schools, the Council estimate that there are still over 2,300 children and young people who either have no, or very limited access to a device or the internet. This is an appalling statistic and one that will have a serious effect on the long-term educational prospects of children. I am working with the Council to find ways to improve this; hopefully the extra funds recently granted to Luton from Central Government will help.

The dedication of the head-teachers and their staff has not failed to astound me. Much like our NHS staff teachers are going above and beyond their normal duty. One teacher, in her own time, visited every one of her pupils to personally check which device would be best for the family and almost all schools have been making a 'one on one phone call' demonstrating that no child is forgotten.

In a new initiative, we have **begun to collect second-hand devices from individuals and businesses**. These are being professionally data cleansed and refurbished and will then be re-distributed to schools in Bedfordshire. More information on this can be found at www.bedfordshirelearninglink.com

Digital poverty is something that this pandemic has highlighted, but even when normality returns, digital poverty will not disappear. I have spoken to many head teachers about this topic and all agree that a more blended approach to learning will become the norm going forward. This will mean more lessons will be delivered by specialists to greater numbers of young people. Online teaching platforms will continue to be used to enhance existing provision.

So, when schools and life return to normal, connectivity will still be extremely important to the future of all children's education. One headteacher told me he had torn up his school development plan as he now realised that it was no longer acceptable to print off reams of paper to give to those students with no access to a computer. He said "how can that be fair, how can that be equality?" It is the desire to put right this inequality that has driven me to pursue this initiative, something that I will continue once my year of office has finished.

One of the other things I am doing is holding a series of "coffee with the High Sheriff" events. Light-hearted online chat about anything cheerful! I have also spoken at numerous events, including the Small Business Federation and I am looking forward to addressing Bedfordshire Women's Institute on International Women's Day on 8th March.



One highlight of my year was my 60th birthday in October, which I was lucky enough to spend having a socially distanced cup of tea with Captain Sir Tom Moore. He asked me to explain my digital device initiative to him, this I duly did, however as I finished, he turned to me, flashed one of those rather cheeky smiles and launched

into a five-minute speech, that was probably one of the most powerful I have heard, on the importance of equality in education.

He ended by telling me how, even today, out of the four army colleges, only one of them admits girls and how wrong he felt that was. Captain Sir Tom was a true Bedfordshire hero and an inspiration to us all. He helped us through two of the darkest times this country has ever faced and he will remain forever in our hearts.

Last week, I was so pleased to join our village as we paid our last respects to Margaret Saunders. It was testament to the high regard in which she was held to see so many people lining Church Lane. She will be greatly missed by so many. Simon and I would like to send her family our deepest condolences.

My term of office finishes on 6th April and it has been an honour to have served this county. It has been an immensely challenging time for us all and a desperately sad time for those who have lost loved ones. Our frontline NHS employees continue to work tirelessly to save lives and have themselves faced huge personal sacrifices and exhaustion in doing so. Key workers have never been so necessary, and we also owe them a huge debt of gratitude.

I would, however, also like to thank the charities, groups and individuals that have also continued to help others during this difficult time. In Oakley, there has been an extraordinary amount of community spirit, with the Post Office being a lifeline for many essentials or just a friendly chat, the Bedford Arms keeping us well fed on a Sunday and numerous small businesses and individuals just reaching out and helping those less able to help themselves. To you all I send my heartfelt thanks and best wishes.

Susan Lousada DL

The Oakley Village Show 2021

The history of the Oakley Village Show goes back many years. There was however a break of some thirty years or more before a group of keen amateur gardeners, handicraft enthusiasts, and producers of cakes and preserves decided, in 2016, that it would be fun to reinstate this annual event. Since then it has been at this time of the year that the plans are made for what has become an annual event.

In the planning stage we try to think of inclusive events that will appeal to villagers of every age and ability (we are all true amateurs with a hint of a competitive spirit!). Photography, art, baking, preserves, handicrafts, flower presentations as well as the production of home grown fruit and vegetables are to name but a few of the categories. Sadly last years event had to be cancelled for obvious reasons so we are hoping that we will be luckier with the 2021 event which, Covid permitting, we will hold on the **12th September in the Village Hall.**



So please can we ask all the gardeners and cooks of Oakley, of all ages, to start planning your vegetable crops and to think about making home-made jam and chutney.

If anyone would like to come up with suggestions of different classes or even join the friendly committee (we only hold about four short meetings prior to the show) then please contact

Julia Nicholas - **07778 537427**

or by email - **the1juliamn@aol.com**



Oakley Sports & Social Club

Family & Sports Bar

YOUR NEW STEWARDS



STUART & MERIDA LIGGINS

The Oakley Sports & Social Club Committee is pleased to announce our new Stewards, Stuart and Merida Liggins.

Following Mick and Barbara's retirement at the end of 2020 providing over ten years of success, a new era begins with the appointment of Stuart and Merida in January 2021, in which they aim to continue and build upon their predecessors success.

NEW TAKEAWAY MENU

TAKEAWAY OPENING TIMES - THURS TO SUN 5PM TO 9PM :: SEE THE BACK PAGE FOR MENU DETAILS

Stuart was the former chair of AFC Oakley; during his tenure he was responsible for bringing all the various local football teams together and operate as one structured organisation from which the club now greatly benefits from. In tandem, Stuart joined the Oakley Sports & Social Club Committee in 2014 as he had a keen interest and enjoyment in seeing OSSC flourish too.



Merida was a teacher at Lincroft Secondary School. As such, she is well versed in local community matters and has a keen interest in seeing our sports and social club flourish.

Stuart and Merida are obviously facing a sizeable challenge, having taken over during the midsts of a once-in-a-century pandemic. However, they have already been pragmatic by creating a takeaway service with a revised OSSC menu. Looking further ahead, they have fantastic plans for the Club when rules are relaxed - we encourage you to watch this space.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mick & Barb for all of their fantastic - and continued - help with us taking on the stewardship role at OSSC. - Stuart & Merida

The OSSC Committee are looking forward to working with Merida and Stuart and they have every faith that the club will continue to prosper under their Stewardship.

Please remember to support your local, registered charity sports & social club.

New badge for Oakley Scout Group

Last year our Group Scout Leader, Sarah, ran a competition to design a new badge for Oakley Scout Group. We were very impressed with the excellent artwork within the Group and it was difficult to choose a winner. Well done to Lucas, one of our Cub Scouts! Lucas' winning design incorporates an oak tree with the name of the Scout Group on the branches and the three Sections on the trunk. Our new scarves have the badge on them, and the badge will also be displayed on other Scout Group clothing, such as t-shirts, which will look great on camps.



The title of our article in the last edition of the Oakley Village Newsletter was 'We're ready to bounce back!' and bounce back we did. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts managed to fit in a few face-to-face Section evenings in Autumn term, celebrating with Christmas activities and games, all run in accordance with our Covid risk assessment. Then lockdown #3 came into force and our plans to get back to face-to-face Scouting in the New Year were put on hold.

After a bit of a break, Cubs and Beavers sessions have resumed online. All the online activities have to be relevant to the ages of our members, often related to badge-work, and cannot involve lots of equipment that may not be available to everyone. Not an easy task! Our Section Leaders have been working hard to make both face-to-face and online sessions enjoyable for our youth members, while also dealing with Covid and lockdown related challenges in their own lives.

Oakley Scout Group has been able to take advantage of the hospitality and leisure grant fund from the local council. This has allowed the Group to put in place all the extra resources to make sure we can deliver Covid secure face-to-face activities. It has also meant that Oakley Scout Group can continue to exist during lockdowns.

In readiness for a return to face-to-face activities, we are having the interior of the Scout Hut repainted and smartened up. Work on the exterior of the Hut is scheduled for later in the Spring, when the weather is better.

If you would like to find out more about the Group, please email our Group Scout Leader, Sarah, at OakleyScoutsGSL@outlook.com. We have spaces for new members in all Sections, although we do have to keep numbers lower to allow for social distancing, and **we are looking for volunteers** to help us keep the Group running smoothly.



Shelley Abbott, on behalf of Oakley Scout Group



Oakley Educational Foundation

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

Applications are accepted in the months of May and November and must be accompanied by receipts of purchase. Application forms can be obtained from the Clerk, Louise Tunley.

For further information, or for an application form, please contact Louise Tunley on 07917 462213, by post at 19 Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3JY or by email at louise_tunley@yahoo.co.uk.



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Or contact the Clerk :

Mandy Newton

On 07736 466965

Registered Charity Number : 200480

Disaster Struck

The Newsletter build process takes about two months as people suggest and change articles , advertisements arrive or are cancelled.



So by the Wednesday of the last week, when the cut-off was set up for the Friday, I had 66% of the content in place and contributions awaited from ten people.

Then disaster struck. My PC would not turn on. Okay, it was seven years old and a couple of signs had worried me enough in the past few months to set up a new mirror image package to ensure everything would not be lost, but I had set the backup for weekly so I may have lost a weeks work! I rushed the PC and remote hard drive around to Power Computing in Kempston, who built it for me, asking for urgent help as the Newsletter was due! But worst of all scenarios had occurred my motherboard had crashed! But Tom and his wonderful crew have squeezed in time to build me a new one and to my great relief everything is exactly as it was. This is a significant result with the complex architecture I had in place.

My heartfelt thanks are carried to them on these precious pages they recovered. Editor

Amigo

As restrictions begin to ease, I hope to be able to plan a programme of activities. I will be consulting with others about when it will be possible to begin making arrangements. I will make my views known as soon as I can.

John Dixon

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Oakley Parish Council

Biodiversity Improvement Project Brockwell Meadow Consultation

For the last 5 years or so, in answer to the biodiversity crisis, your Parish Council has been working to improve biodiversity on the land it manages.

Residents will be aware from other communications that, with the help of local resident and environmental expert Patrick Knight, changes have been made to the way in which we manage the Linch Furlong Nature Area and the Community Orchard in Pavenham Road. This has resulted in a huge increase in the number and variety of wildflowers at both sites. Wild Pyramidal and Bee Orchids are now a common site at Linch Furlong. The areas are a riot of colour during much of the spring and early summer, accompanied by a significant increase in insect life.

Over the last 18 months, the same techniques have been employed at the Riverside Meadow between the Church and the Two Bridges and an increase in wild flowers and different types of grasses is already apparent.

The Parish Council would now like to consider how we can improve biodiversity at Brockwell Meadow, an area of green space which has pedestrian access from the rear of the Brockwell housing development off Station Road. Some houses along Bevery Close and a few along Reynes Drive also back on to the Meadow.

Brockwell Meadow is currently a grassed area which is simply mown several times a year to keep it under control – these areas are often termed “green deserts” because of the lack of a diverse range of plants, shrubs etc.

The Parish Council would like to work together with local residents particularly those from Brockwell and from Bevery Close and Reynes Drive backing on to the Meadow, to devise a plan to improve biodiversity.

The objective will be to manage the area in such a way as to increase wildflowers and also to plant a few shrubs and small trees in the Meadow. The Parish Council would very much like residents, particularly children, to help in the creation of the area including the planting of trees and shrubs etc.

How will it be done?

By Consultation: The Parish Council will write to those residents directly impacted inviting them to a Consultation on-site at the Meadow. A draft plan will be put forward for consideration by residents who will also be able to put forward their own ideas in order to achieve an agreed plan. Consultation details will also be placed on the PC Notice Boards and Newsletter so that any other interested residents can come along if they wish.

When will it be done?

This depends on COVID restrictions but at the moment we would hope to have the on-site Consultation sometime during May/June 2021.



When will work start?

The objective is to make a start on the project in the Autumn of 2021

If anyone has any questions or would like more information regarding the project please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk, Ann Paice at parishclerk@oakleyvillage.co.uk or on 07873 887370.



Council Reminds Residents to Control Dogs



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bedford Borough Council are reminding dog owners that it is against the law for dogs to be dangerously out of control anywhere, including both public and private land.

A dog may be considered dangerously out of control if it injures a person, another animal or causes someone fear or apprehension that they may be injured. If a dog does injure a person then the offence is aggravated.

It is the owner's responsibility to ensure their dog is acting in a safe and appropriate manner. If this is not the case, legal action can be taken against the owner and/or the person who was in charge of the dog at the time. If a dog is dangerously out of control, the owner can receive an unlimited fine or be sent to prison for up to 6 months.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is in place throughout Bedford Borough. This means dog owners must clean up any fouling by their dog, put an 'out of control' dog on a lead when directed to do so, ensure their dog is on a lead in certain designated areas and not allow their dog to enter areas where dogs are excluded such as children's play areas.

Councillor Charles Royden, Portfolio Holder for Environment, said: "We do not tolerate dogs acting dangerously out of control in Bedford Borough and are committed to making sure that people and animals can feel safe when in public. We would encourage all dog walkers to keep their dog on a lead for the safety of the visitors, staff and wildlife in our parks.

"Anyone who is found to be ignoring a PSPO can be fined £75 on the spot and up to £1,000 if the case goes to court. If you witness a dog that has attacked another person or animal, or is dangerously out of control, you can report it to the Police by phoning 101."

To find out where the Council has issued a dog control orders, visit their website: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/animal-care-and-control/dog-control-orders/>

Phantom Sprayer

Further to the article in the Winter Edition I have received yet another report of an out-of-control dog being walked in the Station Road Field.

This was a large German Shepherd type dog that was off the lead and then charged through a gap in the hedge and straight across the road to try and reach another dog – on the lead being walked on the footpath near the School. This could have caused a serious accident, had a vehicle been driven past, fortunately there was none at that precise moment. Station Road is busy, particularly when the children are coming out of school, so this could have been the caused a very serious accident, this also endangered the dog walking past and its owner.

Sadly, of late, there has been a lot of dog mess left on the pavements, and to my abhorrence I have seen a large pile just outside Lincroft School and another large pile in the Oakley Sports and Social club, you must agree this is disgusting as well as a danger to our local children.

The Parish Council has begun its exchange of dog bins for the larger dual-purpose bins, which have more room for your plastic dog poo bags as well as providing more places to dispose of rubbish.

I hope by the time you read this that COVID-19 will be nearly a past memory, the weather will have improved, so there is not so much mud everywhere and you can all enjoy your lovely walks with your beautiful dogs remembering to carry your poo bags and clearing up after your dog so everyone can enjoy their walks without the danger of treading in something unpleasant.



**DOG FOULING
CLEAN IT UP**

Oakley Pre-school News



What a difference a year makes....

We have been open to all children from 5th January this term and our 13 new starters are all settling in to pre-school life fantastically. We held a socially distanced garden visit in January to help settle the new children and although it was cold, parents /carers and key people felt that this new way of settling the children worked well.

We are continuing to adapt our way of working and are now using an interactive app called 'family'. The app enables us to complete administration tasks and invoices as well as communicate and share the children's learning journeys with their parents and carers. It has been so helpful with the current restrictions in place, which means that parents/ carers are not able to enter the pre-school at drop off times, where they would usually have a chat with their child's key person. It has also helped us to support those children who are not accessing pre-school in the current Lockdown. The app has an activity library and also enables those staying at home to see what activities we are taking part in at pre-school and then use those ideas at home.

We took part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch at the end of January. The children helped to make birdfeeders to hang in the pre-school garden and observed, named and counted which birds visited us. The snow was a wonderful source of fun and learning. We decided to make a 'snow bird' to reinforce our already vast bird knowledge.

We have appointed a new chair person, Lucy Greenbank, and have a dedicated committee to support us through the next academic year and the challenges that it may bring.

Admissions

If you would like to register your child for a place at pre-school, please contact us on 01234 826452 or by email: info@oakleypreschool.com Our website is: www.oakleypreschool.com

Follow us on Facebook to keep up with our latest news and events.

For information on funding you can contact the Family Information Service 0800 023 2057

Sally Martiello



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LOTS OF LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS
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Oakley

Allotments

Spring is on the way and for many it cannot come soon enough for this has certainly been a winter of discontent, for many reasons.

The winter has been wet (very wet at times) and then extremely cold. We had managed a few hours on the allotment, even in December, and returned to inspect it after the snow had finally thawed to find that the once very healthy-looking broad-bean plants had been destroyed by the severe frosts. This is only the second year we have sown broad-beans in autumn to overwinter - last year they were very successful but we will now have to sow again.

Kale and sprouting broccoli have survived - the broccoli is very wilted but should recover, now netted to protect it from pigeons, which seem to enjoy grazing it. Garlic was planted in autumn and seems to have survived quite well. Chard, destroyed by voles last year, has been ruined by the cold this year and I do not think that attempting to protect anything with fleece would have been successful. The chard had cropped very well up until the intense cold struck, so it has not been a disaster.

It is often suggested that a "proper", cold winter can have benefits that compensate for the damage done to early plants by having suppressive effects on some pests and diseases. This is hobby, not subsistence, gardening after all and it will be interesting to see what happens as a result of the winter conditions. Frosts can help to break soil up, so that is a benefit.

We are now looking forward to the new spring and a chance to replant the allotment, including newly -made beds which will increase the opportunities to grow more and different plants. Although, with last year's successes, we still have produce in the freezer, butternut squashes lined-up still to be used and jam we're still sharing with friends and family.

I hope our biggest problem this year will be how we're going to cope with storing all of the bounty from the garden and I wish all of our fellow gardeners the same.

We now have a waiting-list of six Oakley residents.

Steve Nicholas



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Here are some steps we can all take to stay safe online:



Protecting People and Fighting Crime
Together

CREATE COMPLEX PASSWORDS - Create strong, unique passwords for all your critical accounts. Corporate hacks are commonplace now. One database breach can reveal tens of thousands of user passwords. If you reuse your passwords, a hacker can take the leaked data from one attack and use it to login to your other accounts.

BOOST YOUR NETWORK SECURITY - When you are at home or at work a password-protected router will encrypt your data. When you are out and about you might be tempted to use free, public Wi-Fi. But this is often unsecured, which means it is relatively easy for a hacker to access your device or information. If you access the internet a lot when are away from home it is worth investing in a Virtual Private Network (VPN). A VPN is a piece of software that creates a secure connection over the internet, so you can safely connect from anywhere.

USE A FIREWALL - An electronic barrier that blocks unauthorised access to your computers and devices. It is often included with comprehensive security software. A firewall ensures that all of the devices connected to your network are secured, including Internet of Things (IoT) devices like smart thermostats and webcams. This is important since many IoT devices are not equipped with their own security measures, giving hackers a vulnerable point of entry to your entire network.

WATCH WHAT YOU CLICK - Many of today's online threats are based on phishing or social engineering, when you are tricked into revealing personal or sensitive information for fraudulent purposes. Spam emails, phony "free" offers, online quizzes all use these tactics to entice you to click on dangerous links or give up your personal information.

SHARE SELECTIVELY - Be cautious about what you share, particularly when it comes to your identity information. Information could be used to impersonate you, or guess your passwords and logins.
THINK MOBILE! - Mobile devices face new risks: dangerous apps and fraudulent links sent by text message. Do not respond to messages from strangers, and only download apps from official app stores after reading reviews first. Make sure that your security software is enabled on your mobile, just like your computers and other devices.

Giovanna Traetto-Reynolds (Police, PCSO, OPERATION SENTINEL RURAL TEAM)

Snippet No.50

My 50th Snippet for the newsletter!



Snippets started as an idea to add a bit of extra interest in the hope that we could attract more readers to a very well-produced publication.

The newsletter is one of the best of its kind, with local news, interesting information and entertaining articles from many contributors, showcasing clubs, organisations and amazing artistic talent.

All of this has been achieved by the dedication and hard work of excellent editors, responsible for presentation, insisting that there is never a compromise, including printing: I feel privileged to be able to contribute to it.

Steve Nicholas



Editors Note: I remain only as good as the wonderful content provided by my contributors. Thank you

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Final Instalment : Oakley – Back Through Time - 1930's



In 1936 Lord Amphill died and the Estate was sold. Cecil and his family had to move as the cottages were sold. They moved to a new house next door which had the luxury of a toilet in the house. In those days it was unhygienic to



have an inside door to the toilet, this meant they still had to go outside the back door to get to the toilet. (There is now a bungalow and a house in the space between the cottages and the house).



From the bedrooms which overlooked the fields at the back, he could see across the river to Stevington with the windmill silhouetted against the sky. It was a view he loved. His favourite time of year was during the harvest when everywhere was golden. Once the harvest was in, the children used to go gleaning in the fields. His mother collected the cereal that had escaped the binders, corn dollies were made for the church fete and the surplus grain went to help feed the chickens in the winter, so nothing was left to waste.

On leaving school Cecil got a job in Bedford. Again he was cycling as that was the quickest means of travel. He came home for his lunch which meant at least four journeys a day.

In his leisure he still found time to explore the countryside. With a canoe he paddled many miles exploring the river, camping in the fields at night. Tennis was played in Church Lane by the side of one of bungalows. The grass was cut by the players before the game commenced. (There now stands another bungalow on the court). In the early summer dawns Cecil could not resist a swim before cycling to work at 9am. It was his delight.



In 1940 Cecil was called up. He joined the Air Force and played quite an active part in the war. After training he ended up as rear turret gunner in a Halifax plane. One of the operations he was involved in was the drop at Arnhem. He survived the war to come



back and live at Oakley until his marriage in 1949. He continued to visit his parents until they died and he still kept an interest in Oakley.

Transcribed by a resident in the Lovell Homes from Cecil's account.
Pat Olney by permission.

Oakley Toddlers Group



Come and join us every Monday 9.30 - 11.00am term time only in the Village Hall.

We are a friendly local community run group that has been going since the 1970's. We aim to offer a place for mums, dads, babies, toddlers and carers to socialise together and help start some of the building blocks towards our little ones development.

Your first visit is free then only £2.00 for your first child and £1 for each child thereafter.

Children must be supervised at all times (we do not offer childcare)

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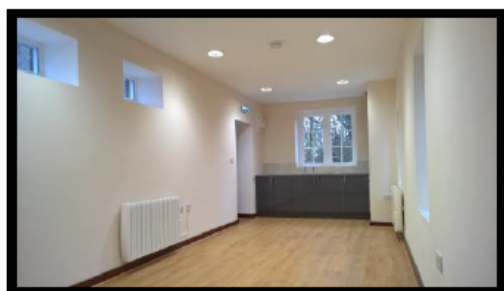
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OAKLEY WI

**It is with regret
that I have to inform
you that Oakley WI
is being suspended.**

**If in the future some
members of the Village
would like to restart the
WI they would be very
welcome by Bedford-
shire Federation.**

Vivian Kirk

OAKLEY GARDENING CLUB

Dear members unfortunately the
booked meetings have
been cancelled.

Please keep an eye
on the notice boards for information.

We are hoping to meet again
in September

For further information contact

Denise Hookham on 01933 312119

Burglary Prevention Advice

We are reminding people of our burglary prevention advice and few simple steps that could help secure your home and deter thieves. In the winter, it is easier to see if people are at home by whether there are lights on, so if you are out during the night, put your lights on a timer and consider keeping your radio playing, so it seems like someone is home.

Keep all valuables and keys safely out of sight from windows, both in your home and car, and make sure you do not hide your keys in a 'safe' place outside your home.

Secure all house and vehicle doors, make sure your door is double locked and make sure your garages and sheds are not left unlocked. Burglars can steal valuable tools, or use them to gain entry to your house.

Have a look at whether it is cost effective to install technology, such as CCTV or a video doorbell device, which helps deter burglars and can also provide opportunity for investigation, should you become a victim of crime. For more visit our website. <https://www.bedfordshire.police.uk/information-and-services/Crime/Burglary/About-Burglary>



Protecting People and Fighting Crime
Together

What happens when a burglary is reported?

- When a call comes in, our call handlers go through a specially designed series of questions, so they can assess the incident and how it should be actioned in the most efficient and effective way.
- All victims of burglary will be visited by a scenes of crime officer to thoroughly assess any forensic opportunities.
- If a burglary occurs in a frequently targeted area, or involves vulnerable victims, or there were witnesses we can follow up with, it will be classed as a priority and an officer may attend to speak to the victim to gather more information.

If you spot someone behaving suspiciously, contact the police via 101 immediately. In an emergency or if a crime is in progress always call 999.

oakley *Motorcycle* club

Normally the end of January sees the annual OMC Curry night at Indiya restaurant which obviously has not gone ahead much to the disappointment of many. In the past that has proved to be a fantastic starter for the forthcoming year and raises a healthy sum for the EAAA (East Anglian Air Ambulance). Dave and Lesley Brown, the organisers, did try to put together a virtual curry night but unfortunately there was insufficient interest to make it worthwhile. My thanks to both of them for trying.

The Curry night is normally followed by the OMC AGM which occurs either the first or second Thursday in February but again that was not possible. The OMC committee have continued to meet via Zoom meetings and it has been decided that the AGM will be postponed for up to six months dependent on COVID restrictions. We are looking at the first Thursday in August, however, it is impossible to predict too much at the moment so fingers crossed.

It seems strange for me as usually I am finalising my speech and putting together the Pillock of the Year Award with its customary slide show. Also I only had two nominations, both very funny. One was our recently retired Steward Mick, who, whilst working at OSSC between lockdowns went to take a drink of his pint of bitter but forgot he was wearing his face screen! The other well known OMC nominee has dodged a bullet at the moment but I will not mention too much just in case.

The good news is that all our committee have agreed to stay onboard and we have had applications from people who wish to come on as well.

So, as it stands, I remain as Chair, Bernice Russell as Secretary and Derek Brown as Vice Chair and Treasurer. The other committee members are Colin Measures, Paul Butler, Keith Russell, Dougie Palmer, Lizzie Wiggins, Gill McBride, Richard Forster, Chris Johnston, John and Jemma Hannaford.

We are taking new memberships and renewals albeit we are not meeting on Thursdays at this time. But your 2021 membership will entitle you to the discounts offered by our sponsors.

Talking of sponsors, we have been keeping in contact and as soon as restrictions are lifted and when gatherings are allowed, our sponsors are very keen to come over and re-commence our popular dealer/sponsor themed evenings.



Furthermore, a new edition to Thursday evenings will be the British Endurance Racing Team who had their debut year in 2020 and are continuing in 2021 in the FIM World Endurance Championship with their practice starting at Le Mans next month. The team is managed by David Railton. His son and OMC Honorary member Jon, is one of the riders on their number 31 Suzuki GSXR1000 bikes. Jon would like to bring the team and bikes over and give a display of speed pit wheel changing. Why not seek them out on social media and follow them as they are based in nearby Little Paxton

Although Oakley Club remains closed new Stewards, Stuart and Merida Liggins have now taken over and are offering a food takeaway service between 5-9pm Thursday to Sunday. The prices are very reasonable, so if you fancy a gourmet burger, fish, sausages with chips or a pizza (the pizzas are cooked in their own ovens) give it a go and support Oakley Club. The menu can be found on the OSSC Facebook page or at www.oakleyssc.com

Finally please ensure you all remain safe and well, we all want to see you again in the very near future. If you have any queries please email info@oakleymc.net

Baysie - Roger Bays - Chair OMC
chairman@oakleymc.net



SHARNBROOK MILL THEATRE

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during lockdown

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Pepperoni **£8**
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Meat Feast **£9**
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Vegetarian Pizza **£7**
Mixed peppers, Red Onion, Mushrooms, sweetcorn, Mozzarella

Garlic Butter & Mozzarella Pizza **£7**

Ham, Mushroom & Mozzarella **£8**
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Gourmet minted lamb burger **£7**

Vegetarian Burger **£7**
Plant-based

Crispy Chicken Burger **£6**
Two 3oz battered chicken fillets

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A 6oz Southern fried chicken breast

Add Cheese 50p Add Bacon 50p

Gluten free buns are available on request.

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