



# Oakley Newsletter



**Summer 2020**

Number 83

## **Look inside for**

Village Family in the thick of Covid19    The Dutch Reach?    Calling all Artists  
VE/VJ Day under lockdown    Oakley Show 2020?    Support Emmaus!    Quizzes  
Reporting email scams    Who is the Bedford Borough Speaker    Oakley Back in Time



Front Cover : **Celia the calf**  
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

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#### Hello Children

look out for  
Ten more



## Parish Council News

### Summer 2020

#### Chairman's report for Annual Parish meeting on 12th May 2020 -

This municipal year started and ended in a very strange way. We started early last summer, with an incursion onto the village green, by a large number of traveller caravans. This was the first time the village had experienced, what a lot of other villages and communities in Bedford had been experiencing for some time. It was very frightening for many people but, as the village green is owned by the Parish Council, we were able to immediately call in the bailiffs and the caravans had all left by the end of the following day. Bollards around the Green are now being strengthened and new bollards on Grange Close Green have been installed to try and prevent further encampments in the future.

The year is ending in an even more surreal situation, with the country in lock down and all meetings being moved online. I am grateful to all of the parish councillors and to Ann Paice who have all quickly adapted to the new way of meeting. So far we have held two meetings where everyone has been involved and we hope as the year goes on and residents get used to looking for "Zoom meeting IDs" we will also have members of the public joining in to listen and ask questions at the public open session parts of the meetings.

#### Neighbourhood development plan

We are delighted that earlier this year, the village voted to approve the Neighbourhood development plan. This will now give us a stronger case when replying to planning consultations in the village. It also means we will receive 25% of the levy placed on each property (Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)) to allocate to projects in the village. This is an extra 10% over what we were receiving before. The Parish Council and the NDP group will use the responses to the new plan to decide how the money from any new developments will be spent. Continued on page 3

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## **Budget**

The decision was taken to ask for a 2% increase in the parish's part of the council tax (Precept) Although this will not give us enough money to carry out any major projects we will plan for those when we have CIL money to spend. Instead, this year's precept will mainly be spent on refurbishing areas of the village.

The largest single expenditure will be on new gates on the play area at the Furlong. We hope this will make it safer and cleaner for families to use. We will also continue with our programme of replacing waste bins with dual dog/litter bins and this year we intend to replace the bin on the green area at the end of Reynes Drive nearest the High Street.

Please remember that all waste bins are now able to take both dog waste and litter, so if you find a dedicated dog waste bin is full, please put it in another bin nearby.

Finally, we hope to be able to do some work on the Brockwell meadow to improve the biodiversity there and make it more of a natural space rather than just an open field. Patrick Knight will be supervising this and if we are able, he is planning to arrange nature walks in various locations in the village to highlight the existing biodiversity and explain his plans for the meadow.

Along with this the parish council has supported the following local organisations with grants in the last year: Pre-School, the Day Centre, the Youth Club, Bedfordshire Scouts and the Royal British Legion.

## **Railway bridge – Highfield Road**

After installing new overhead electric cables over the railway line alongside the village, Network rail decided they needed to increase the height of the parapets on the bridge at Highfield Road.

Instead of rebuilding the bridge parapets they installed ugly concrete coping stones which were completely out of keeping with the bridge. After a lot of lobbying from local people and the parish council, with the help of the Borough Council, they agreed to remove the silver grey stones and look for alternatives.

As the bridge height needed to be raised before the wires became live, a darker grey stone was added which has temporary permission for one year The parish council will be looking closely at the alternatives they offer before it is given permanent permission at the end of the year.

## **Bottle bank**

At the beginning of last year, the Bedford Arms was taken over by new owners who did not want the bottle bank to remain in their car park. We were very lucky that the Village Hall committee agreed for it to be moved to their car park and on the whole, it has been kept tidy and free of litter around it. Thank you all very much for not leaving empty bottles and boxes at the site and thank you to the Village Hall committee for enabling us to keep this facility in the village.

## **Thank you**

Finally, I want to end with a thank you to all the volunteers and parish council staff in the village who give so much time to making Oakley such a wonderful place to live. I know that during this lock down there are friends and neighbours all over the village who are helping people who are shielded or self-isolating and generally helping keep people's spirits up. Thank you all on behalf of the whole village.

As far as the parish council's volunteers go, thank you to all of the councillors who work so hard for the village throughout the year and particularly to Ann Paice who goes well beyond her job as clerk, to support us.

Also, to Bill Chalker who edits the quarterly newsletter with no fuss or fanfare but gives us a great way to communicate with everyone in the village.

Thank you to Susan, our litter picker, who keeps the village so tidy and to the team who plant and maintain the village signs.

Thank you to Sara Farndon and her team for another valuable Village Directory. It would be great if we can all make full use of it this year to make sure that we are supporting local businesses in this difficult time.

Thank you also to the carnival committee team for another fun day last summer.

Thank you to Dave Ursell who has repainted and refurbished the area around the Memorial at the cross roads and made it ready for our VE day commemoration on 8th May.

Thank you to the speed watch team who continue to monitor speeds on our non-camera roads, so that we can make the whole village as safe as possible.

Finally thank you to Phil Supple for his magnificent Christmas lights display.

Jane Walker (Outgoing Chair)

## **BEDFORD BOROUGH REPORT**

This has been a very interesting 12 months, with no one expecting the town, Borough, or country to be in the situation we find ourselves in today. We can also be certain that when this is over things will not return to how things were.

The last twelve months started with Pat Olney standing down after 33 years as the Borough Councillor for Oakley. Pat served the community tirelessly over this time and has left big shoes to fill. The Borough Council officially recognised Pat's service to the community by making her an Honorary Alderwoman at a ceremony held in January, at the Harpur Suite. The overall shape of the council did not change at the election, with a Liberal Democrat/Labour executive plus Doug McMurdo the independent Councillor for Sharnbrook. This has meant continuity for the Borough and the services provided.

### **Transport**

There has been major infrastructure work carried out on roads across the Borough, with the implementation of the Transporting Bedford 2020 plan, which has looked to improve traffic flows on some major roads in both the north and the south of the town. The works on Manton Lane were designed to try and improve traffic flows around Bedford Modern School, by increasing the width of the road, providing a dedicated filter lane for the school and reinstating the footbridge that was removed over 10 years ago. All works apart from the footbridge have now been completed and the bridge is still due to be installed over the summer. There will also be further improvement works carried out to the roundabout at the end of The Paula Radcliffe Way to install traffic lights to help the peak-time flows.

Work has also been ongoing at Britannia Road by the hospital to help improve the flow on this major artery. Due to finding additional utilities under the road that required moving and also Covid-19 pandemic, this work has slipped and should now be finished by the end of June. Works will then start at the Cowbridge Junction and on rebuilding Ampthill Road. The Council also found itself having to rebuild the A6 Bypass at Wilstead after the road collapsed. Now that work is completed they will start on the Ampthill Road beyond the Interchange Park.

Unfortunately, as all of this was going on Network Rail, as part of their plans to electrify the Midland Mainline north of Bedford, decided to close Bromham Road to replace the central part of the road bridge over the railway. This was done with little consultation with the council and caused additional traffic to be funnelled through

the village and over the narrow river bridges. This work is finally due to be completed in the summer.

As part of the electrification the bridge parapets on overbridges have had to be raised or replaced. This has led to the parapets on Highfield Road being raised with GRP pieces that the council does not feel is appropriate for the location. This has been raised a number of times by the Borough with Network Rail to see if a more suitable alternative can be found. The current measures have temporary planning permission with the hope that something more suitable will be put forward for the permanent permission.

During the year Stagecoach withdrew many of N° 51 services that ran beyond Oakley towards Rushden. The Council worked with Grant Palmer to ensure that there was still a service at key times that served Pavenham and the villages north of Oakley.

### **Local Plan**

This was finally adopted at the Full Council held on the 15<sup>th</sup> January with work starting immediately on the next Local Plan to run until at least 2040. The inquiry for the Bedford Borough Plan was held over the summer of 2019 and there were a few major changes recommended by the inspectors, before the plan could be formally made. During the time of the plan being inspected Bedford Borough was subjected to a large number of speculative applications for major development due to a change in how the potential land supply for housing was calculated. This meant that some schemes that would not have been part of the Bedford Borough Local Plan, or individual Neighbourhood Development plans, had to be passed by the planning committee. Oakley has been one of the first villages to have their local plan made, having won an overwhelming majority at the referendum that was held in February. This is thanks to the hard work of the NDP group who ensured that a robust plan was created. The plan allows the village to have a say in any major development that is proposed within its boundary.

### **Council Tax**

Just prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, the Borough Council budget was agreed with an increase of 1.85% in Council Tax plus 2% for adult social care. This allowed for a balanced budget that meant that at the time there would be no cuts to services. Events have overtaken the Council since then and a further budget is now proposed for June 2020.

Continued overleaf :-

## Covid-19

It would be remiss not to finish on this current topic. This has caused the most major change in lifestyle that pretty much anyone alive will have experienced. The way local communities have rallied round to support one another has been very heartening to see. At the end of March the Council set up The Community Hub, in conjunction with CVS, to help ensure that elderly and vulnerable people were supported. This has been (and continues to be) manned by Council staff, who along with over 600 volunteers, have been delivering food parcels, care packages and offering assistance with shopping and other services.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved, either offering support within the village or with the Hub or any one of the other groups which has been providing assistance.

Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone: 07784 549180

Email: [jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com](mailto:jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com)

## Phantom Sprayer

I have just walked around the Station Road Field and it is the worst place in the village for dog mess.



I have this morning used a whole new tin of spray on one quarter portion of the field, and it looks as if it is the same two or three people allow their dogs, as the 'poo' is distinguishable as mostly coming from just a very few dogs at very regular intervals.

There was even dog mess among the farmer's crop – yes the food grown for our consumption!!!

It is disappointing to find there are still some people who are thoughtless enough to allow their dogs to mess on the footpath and around the fields. This is not only very unhygienic but also very unpleasant and distasteful for other walkers.

It is not acceptable to leave the dog mess anywhere at all, particularly when we have many bins around the village to properly dispose of it, nor is it acceptable to bag it and leave it in the bag either on the path the field edge or the hedge.

Sometimes the Borough fail to empty the bins and we are left with overfull bins, which I report on the Clean Streets app whenever it happens. The Parish Council is hoping to gradually replace all the bins with the bigger dual-purpose bins.

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# Oakley Neighbourhood Plan Report

Oakley now has a statutory Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Congratulations to everyone in Oakley for sustaining this over 3 years. Decisions on any planning application in Oakley needs to take account of the plan. How did we get there? Read on-

Bedford Borough Council on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2020 "made" (brought into legal force) the Oakley Neighbourhood Development Plan. The plan is now part of the development plan for the Bedford Borough Council.

This was a result of the referendum on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2020 when more than 50% of those who voted were in favour of the plan being used to help to decide planning applications.

The Oakley Neighbourhood Plan group (NDP) is a subcommittee of the Oakley Parish Council and is comprised of parish councillors and residents of the village.

Over 3 years they found out by consultations how you would like the village to develop and what you felt was important to you as a village community. Bedfordshire Rural Community Charity conducted a housing survey, engaging a consultant, Urban Graphics, who guided us through the legal parts of forming the NDP and successfully brought us to the examiner stage. Different members of the group went through government guidance, Bedford Borough Local Plan policies and background papers to put together the plan so that it could proceed to examination. It was examined by the independent Examiner Wendy Burden who determined that, subject to modifications, the plan met the basic conditions and should proceed to referendum.

It is now a statutory Planning document and planning applications in the future must take into consideration the policies in the Oakley Neighbourhood Plan. Bedford Borough Planning Officers must also take into consideration those policies when making their decisions on planning applications.

Recently, when a planning application came forward for houses in Pavenham Road, the NDP group and the Parish Council were able to use the Oakley Neighbourhood Development Plan to object to that development.

The Future – The NDP group will continue to monitor the plan for the Parish Council and continue to respond to the emerging Borough Local Plan each time reporting the findings to the Parish Council for their consideration.

Thank you to the members of the group for successfully piloting the plan through the different stages. The professionalism and the care they took over many years shows a dedication to Oakley Village. Thank you to the residents who responded to consultations and gave advice and support during this time. Thank you to the officers of the Bedford Borough Council who read through the document several times and who responded to questions and gave advice freely, Thank you to the Oakley Parish Council who supported the NDP who also contributed to the successful outcome.

Cllr Pat Olney Chairwoman of the Oakley Neighbourhood Plan 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](mailto:louise_tunley@yahoo.co.uk).

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## Don't Bin It- Donate It to Emmaus

If you have things that you no longer want, or need, that can be reused don't throw them away. Donate instead and give them a new life. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, many charities are struggling due to a lack of donations and so a lack of income. Emmaus at Carlton is reopening for donations on Wednesday 27 May. Emmaus Village Carlton provides a home and meaningful work for formerly homeless adults in Bedfordshire.

The site will reopen for donating items from Wednesday 27 May, and will be open Wednesday-Sunday from 10.30am-4pm. Items accepted include clothing, books, upholstered furniture with a fire label attached, electrical items less than 10 years old in good working order. At the current time, Emmaus is not able to offer their usual collection service.

People wishing to make a donation must book an appointment before visiting, to manage visitor numbers and ensure everyone can social distance while visiting. Visitors without an appointment will be asked to book and return at another day/time. You can book an appointment by calling 01234 720826, Wednesday – Sunday, 10.30am – 4pm.

Angela Foll, Chief Officer from Emmaus Village Carlton said "The closure of our site due to COVID-19 has closed our ability to generate income. We rely on the income from good quality donated items that we can sell in our shops to support up to 42 formerly homeless people living and working on our site. More than ever, we are asking customers to support us and think about donating their good quality items to us rather than sending them to landfill." Visit [www.emmaus.org.uk/village-carlton](http://www.emmaus.org.uk/village-carlton) to find out more.

## Covid 19 update from our projects in Malawi

Covid-19 has now sadly reached Malawi with several identified cases and its first deaths. Malawi has a very poorly resourced health system - with 50% of the country living below the poverty line and 25% in extreme poverty the effects of Covid-19 could prove to be catastrophic.

We've been busy trying to prepare our communities as best we can. Following government directives, schools and community-based childcare centres have been closed since mid March. So far we have been able to deliver take home bags of Likuni Phala (fortified porridge) to these communities but we remain concerned about the children having long term access to nutrition.

The Joshua team have been on the road over the last fortnight to raise awareness about the virus and advise on preventative measures whilst delivering soap and hand washing facilities.

We're aware that a lockdown may happen soon - this will be hard for many families who live hand to mouth each day. We are applying for travel permits for when the lockdown takes place so that we can continue to support communities with vital nutrition and support.



## Locals with Interesting Lives

The pandemic has brought great chaos to most people's lives whether it has impacted them emotionally, financially, or educationally. But for me it has been remote, numbers to be tracked on graphs publicly displayed, although greatly feared due to my own health situation.

When I heard of a family in the village who have experienced it personally, due to their role in the NHS, I felt this should be recorded to acknowledge what those who are on the front line are going through.

I first met Emmylou when she volunteered to help the Brownies go away on an adventure weekend with my wife who was a leader at the time. When I reached out to her to tell her families story she readily agreed.

Emmylou works part time as a Nurse at the Bedford Hospital whilst her husband Harold works as an ITU Nurse at John Radcliffe Hospital in the Cardiothoracic Critical Care Unit. Back at the start of the pandemic (early March) Harold had spent two days caring for a surgical patient but on his next day off he was phoned by the hospital and told that the patient had come down with the virus. He had no PPE at that time so the family went into quarantine. The children got worried that their parents had caught it and then on the seventh day they both went down with symptoms! They went into quarantine but they have two school age children who still needed looking after and feeding. Harold took two weeks to recover whilst Emmylou took three. Emmylou has found working in her garden very therapeutic whilst recovering although she is worried that her neighbours, who are used to her being chatty, were put off with a smile and a wave because Emmylou was worried that by speaking she may transmit the virus.



Emmylou reckons his speedier recovery was due to Harold's fitness regime – apparently on a Friday he leaves home earlier (before 5pm!) so that he can cycle from Bicester to the Hospital in Oxford. When he got back to work of course everything had changed as his ward is now an eighteen bed ICU of Covid19 patients. He now has full protection to wear and before leaving hospital to go home he now showers and has a complete change of clothes. Harold also now carries a huge emotional burden because of what he is seeing and experiencing. He often wakes up an hour earlier than normal to catch up and spend some time with his family and squeeze exercise time before leaving for work. He works a twelve hour shift and drives for three hours five days a week. But he chose this job to make sure he is with his family every weekend.

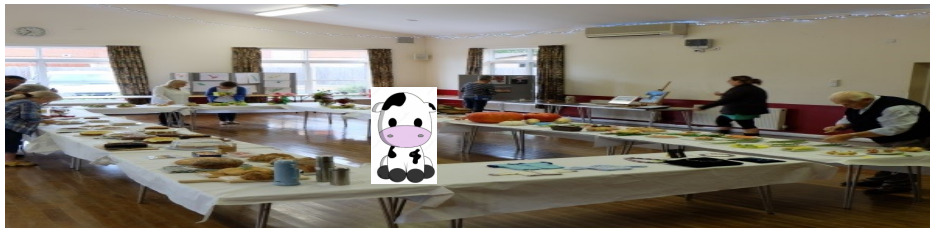
How have the family been handling it ? Well, Emmylou is very grateful to her teenage daughter who has stepped up to help her sister with the home schooling although this puts her under stress to try and get her own homework done when Mum has to go to work. Emmylou trained them in household chores such as cooking, doing laundry, ironing and cleaning while their parents are busy at work saving lives. They all go out cycling for exercise and this was going well until the girls came back in tears after trying to cycle around the village on their own – apparently people were less than thoughtful towards the girls in coping with the distancing. The girls love to join in the clapping on a Thursday evening trying to be the loudest for their "Papa" and it makes them feel very proud of their parents.

Emmylou has found the support in the village to be heart-warming with gifts of cakes, notes of thanks, and bouquets of flowers. But she is especially proud of her husband who has been in the "Covid-19 War Zone since the pandemic began".

They both had now negative swab results and apparently they are being tested at work on a weekly basis. Harold had his antibodies test done and Emmylou will have it done in June. They are now back chatting to neighbours and help in any way they can as they believe that any simple act of kindness brings joy in their hearts and is a good role model to their children.

I think I speak for all of the village when I say a big Thank You to Emmylou and Harold Te, and their family for all they have done and are doing for us. Our thoughts and prayers are always with all the Key Workers who are keeping this country moving.

Bill Chalker, Editor



## OAKLEY SHOW 2020 Cancelled

It is with great regret that it has been decided by the show committee and the village hall committee that in the face of the unknown factors surrounding Covid19 this year's show is cancelled. There is simply not enough time to organize the event. We had the basics sorted but have not been able to add the details so rather than leaving it in the hope life could be more normal we made the decision to cancel.

**But do not despair if you are an artist.** This remark is aimed at adults and children.

Wanted for **Sunday 12th September 2021** when the Show will take place in the village hall

### ADULTS:

We would like you to design an A4 - sized poster which will be displayed in the notice boards around the village nearer the time of the show. Use your imagination and your favourite art medium. The winner of this will be the inaugural recipient of the Terry Youngman trophy. (see opposite page)

### CHILDREN:

Could you also do a poster advertising the show. If your poster is shown in the Village newsletter you will receive a certificate.

All entries to have on their reverse side; the person's name; if a child aged 16 years old or younger their age; contact details of telephone number or e-mail address of an adult.

Entries must be with me by 1st August 2020, I live at 10 Grenidge Way.

Jean Weston. (Email j.weston370 @btinternet.com)



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## Promoting Young Artists in Oakley

Good news for all artists in our community! I am delighted that, although Oakley Show has been cancelled, an art category will go ahead and I shall have the opportunity to present the Terry Youngman trophy to the first adult winner and certificates to the children. There are doubtless many of you who have discovered creative talents during this extraordinary period, as well as those already seasoned artists who are honing their skills in the extra hours gifted by home confinement.

I hope to reignite discussions about promoting art within our local schools, which were brought to a halt by lockdown, with both Oakley Primary and Lincroft Academies as soon as school life has returned to some semblance of normality. I appreciate that this unlikely to be for some time as the schools' priorities will be to get the academic timetable up and running again.

So, in the meantime, children (as well as the grown-ups), let your imaginations run riot and come up with some eye-catching posters for Oakley Show 2021!



Anne Youngman

## SYDNEY HOWARD LOVELL MEMORIAL ALMSHOUSES AT OAKLEY

The Lovell Homes is a small independent living community comprising two bedroomed bungalows and one/two bedroomed flats.

Applicants over the age of 60 are invited to apply to go on to the register of interest for a property - priority will be given to those with an agricultural or related background.

If you would like to be considered please visit the website: [www.lovellhomesoakley.co.uk](http://www.lovellhomesoakley.co.uk)

or contact the Clerk: Mandy Newton  
on 07736 466965

Registered Charity Number: 200480

## Word Search Puzzles

Since we have been in "self-isolation" I have been creating some word search puzzles, but with a slight difference. You have to find the words using "Knight Moves" as in chess. E.g. find OAKLEY VILLAGE in the grid below!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
I	J	A	K	L	M	Y	N
O	K	P	Q	K	R	S	T
U	Z	V	W	X	E	Y	V
F	J	G	L	P	R	A	C
E	Y	D	H	G	R	I	Y
H	G	A	I	L	S	D	X
Z	X	F	F	R	C	H	G

Letters in a cell can be used more than once in a word, but consecutive letters must come from different cells. Some are easy, but they get harder!

Please remember, they are designed to take up a lot of time. Answers will appear eventually. Do try them and Good Luck. E-mail me if you have any queries at

[harry.lynne.moore@gmail.com](mailto:harry.lynne.moore@gmail.com)

For more go to

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### DAYS OF THE WEEK

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	F	O	T	D	X	F
2	A	E	R	A	U	N
3	M	R	N	H	I	D
4	W	S	Y	S	E	R
5	N	W	U	D	D	T
6	E	A	Z	A	T	S

### MONTHS OF THE YEAR

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	A	B	S	J	C	D	N	E
2	T	E	F	N	U	J	F	C
3	G	H	A	P	U	O	G	A
4	S	T	L	V	N	R	T	E
5	C	R	A	A	O	N	J	C
6	I	Y	E	E	I	H	B	J
7	Y	K	L	E	M	R	L	U
8	M	D	N	O	P	N	Q	E

# VE day



We have all enjoyed the recent extended weekend Bank Holiday, with the "May day Bank Holiday" moved to the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020, VE day 75 year anniversary. Certainly a day and an event to celebrate after 6 long years of conflict affecting the whole globe. The end of the conflict could be seen coming and VE (Victory in Europe) was coined as early as September 1944. With the suicide of Hitler on the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1945 during the Battle for Berlin the end became imminent. The signing of the unconditional surrender document at 14.21 on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1945 sealed the end. Winston Churchill called a Bank Holiday for the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 after assurances from the Ministry of Food that there were enough beer supplies in the capital! The Board of Trade announced that people could purchase Red, White and Blue bunting without using Ration Coupons.

Churchill was certainly on the ball. With everything that must have been going on he made sure that there was enough supplies for a good party. But this was all about the Capital.

**What about Oakley!** Things were different around here. Most of the conscripts from this region joined the Beds and Herts Regiment. These troops were engaged in the fight against the Japanese who were a completely different foe. The Japanese were a fighting race who used the element of surprise and an attitude of go forward never take a backward step, even if you died in the attempt. Our troops fought alongside the Americans or existed in Work

camps/Death camps while waiting to die. The horrors of the Atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima marked a change in the Japanese position and the allies celebrated the **VJ day** on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1945 although the surrender was not completed until the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1945. Both of these days are known as **VJ day** but the 15<sup>th</sup> August 1945 is the adopted date.

You can understand the families of Oakley, waiting for news of their relatives, friends, loved ones and the end of the conflict in the Far East, must have found it difficult while the rest of the country and the world celebrated .

So where are we now. Boris Johnson has announced that beer will not be in short supply and we can all try to change that by drinking until 0100hrs on Friday and Saturday. I asked the Parish Council for advice about "is it a celebration for us" or "do we wait until August?" Of course we compromised and joined in on the May celebration. My concern was how do we prepare the War Memorial ? I have done some replanting using the addition of the PEACE roses and Verbena Union Jack (red, white and blue). These you will have noticed are not flowering for the 8<sup>th</sup> May **VE day** but hopefully will be for the 15<sup>th</sup> August **VJ day**. The addition of a Union flag and the painting of the railings completes what we are doing for now.

You will have noticed that I wrote this prior to VE day but decided to delay having it published because I felt it may affect how people viewed VE day celebrations. Covid 19 changed that for all of us. Instead we had an opportunity to practice how we can adapt and celebrate ready for the 15<sup>th</sup> AUGUST. After all it is a Saturday and just needs doing.



Dave Ursell

Hello everyone, Paul Phillips here, incoming Chair of the Parish Council

Yes even 'Oakley Parish Council' is coming to terms with life under lockdown and we have now had a few virtual meetings, the most recent being the Annual Parish Meeting on 12 May 2020 immediately followed on the same evening by the Annual General Meeting. The total membership and the personnel on Council remained the same with the only changes being that Jane and I changed 'seats'. During my illness Jane Walker was elected Chair, thereby taking a lot of pressure away from me. What a sterling job she has done and on your behalf I thank her for all her hard work. I now feel that my recovery is such that I can commit myself more to Parish Council matters and was very happy to accept the position of Chair and Jane Walker accepted the position of Vice Chair.



I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that the Parish Council is here for your benefit: the benefit of the Parish of Oakley. Our monthly agenda is always published on the village notice board and the village web site a week prior to each meeting. This is always on the first Tuesday of the month, except in January when the finance committee meets on the first Tuesday and the full council meet on the second. The astute readers will be saying, 'so why did you meet on 12 May (above) ? That was another exception to the rule! The minutes of the meetings can be found on the noticeboard and the web site within a week of the meetings. On the web site you will also be able to find historical minutes should you wish to refer to something earlier in the year. Please read the minutes and follow the agenda and if there is anything you wish to raise please let us know. We are all very approachable. Each meeting, whether actual after lockdown or virtual during lockdown, starts with a public open session, when residents have the opportunity to raise issues. Should you wish to silently sit in a meeting you are very welcome to do so and we would welcome your presence

I have had the opportunity of reading an article by Dave Ursell about VE and VJ Days which is being published in this Newsletter and the comments that I am making should be seen as complementary to all that Dave has written.

Friday 8 May 2020 saw the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day which marked the declaration of Victory in Europe when Germany surrendered and it was the start of the end of World War II after almost six years of brutal battle. At 11am I had the pleasure, on behalf of all members of the Parish Council and Dave Ursell our custodian of the Village War Memorial, to invite near neighbours, other friends who were out for their daily exercise and those who were engaging through Facebook Live to join the Nation to share our thoughts and give thanks to our World War generation, during an impeccably observed two minutes silence.



I am sure residents will have noticed how 'cared for' the memorial is these days and this is due to the care and attention Dave Ursell has given to it over the last few years. He has planted appropriately chosen 'PEACE' roses and other plants which will have a patriotic colour theme. He has painted the railings (*and a message for children..... the design on the top of one of the spikes is different to all of the others. Can you find it and what does it signify?*) giving it all a real face lift. During his labours he has been assisted by his wife Val and neighbours Jenny and Lionel Shopland, Chris and John Cooper and Bob and Sandra Birch. He also erected a flag pole kindly donated by Paul White, which was minus a FINIAL, but not for long..... Dave spoke to John Cooper and within a very short time, and I mean hours not days, Ray Cheesbrough from Reynes Drive arrived with the most beautiful oak finial which sat proudly on the top of the flag pole. Talk about team work! Thank you Dave, John and Ray. It would be remiss of me not to mention Chris Cooper and her sweeping brush. Late on Thursday and early on Friday she could be seen cleaning the last speck of dust, leaves and sticks from anywhere near the memorial. How annoyed she was, and indeed we all were, when a large lorry carrying straw bales from a location in the village entered Highfield Road from the High Street dropping loose straw like confetti only a matter of minutes before our two minutes silence at 11am. Not to be beaten, out stormed Chris with her broomstick, I mean brush, and in a flash the immediate area was pristine again.



At 3pm in the afternoon of 8 May 75 years ago Sir Winston Churchill delivered his victory speech and crowds around the country celebrated. At that very time, again at the village War Memorial, Councillor Jane Walker raised a glass in remembrance of those servicemen and women who sacrificed so much and also to share in the celebrations of the beginning of the end of the war. Residents near to the memorial joined Jane observing social distancing and others joined virtually on Facebook Live.

Many residents all over the village had individual celebrations in their front gardens and front drives giving the impression of one big street party. At the Station Road/ High Street junction we were entertained by Steve Gadsden playing many of the tunes from the wartime era on his euphonium. Thank you Steve.



I am very pleased that VE Day was celebrated the way it was and enjoyed by so many. I would also like to take the opportunity to remind everyone of VJ Day (Victory in Japan) which is on Saturday 15 August 2020. Subject to Government advice at that time it is likely that the Parish Council will do something similar on that day; two minutes silence at 11am followed by celebrations in the afternoon. Residents near the memorial have expressed a wish to use front gardens, driveways and the green area, always observing social distance. If we are able to go ahead then Steve may be able to call in a favour from his brass band colleagues who could entertain us appropriately. Keep your eye on the noticeboard, the web site and social media, because it will be discussed further at forthcoming Parish Council meetings and we will always be guided by Government advice.



Our village is somewhere to be very proud of and over the last 10 weeks or so, when we have had to remain at or close to home, we have probably appreciated it more than before. The majority of us care for it in all that we do but sadly, as is always the case, a small minority do not seem to care or just do not think. They park just where they want to so they do not have far to walk and never think of the consequences of their actions: whether they have blocked a driveway, the road or the pavement. Parking on or close to junctions seems to happen on a regular basis. **Please do not do it.**

Litter is also the bane of our lives and thanks to our litter pickers, paid and unpaid, what is deposited is cleared on a regular basis and for that we are very grateful. I struggle to understand why we are happy to carry a full can of drink to a location, but do not want to carry it back when it is empty. There was an increase in fly tipping when the Bedford Tidy Tip was closed, clearly by people who just could not wait to get rid of their rubbish or just did not care.

One person clearly could not wait, but did not bargain for an observant Oakley resident who saw black bags and a cardboard box thrown in the bushes at the entrance to the footpath from Highfield Road roundabout towards Browns Wood. On examining the rubbish in a safe way a name and address could clearly be seen. That person was interviewed by Bedford Borough enforcement officers and admitted using an unlicensed 'scrapman' and accepted a £300 fine. That I feel was a satisfactory and just outcome and may it be a lesson to anyone who might have been tempted to do similar. **Please don't.**

Well I think that is about it for now. I sincerely hope you enjoy the rest of the summer and whatever you do comply with the advice at the time and make sure you keep well and keep safe.

Kind regards, Paul Phillips.

## Email reporting service created after spike in coronavirus-related scams

As part of the Cyber Aware campaign, the NCSC successfully launched its suspicious email reporting service (SERS), resulting in dozens of malicious web campaigns shut down on its first day after a spike in coronavirus phishing scams. By forwarding any dubious emails – including those claiming to offer support related to coronavirus – to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk), the NCSC's automated programme will immediately test the validity of the site. Any sites found to be phishing scams will be removed immediately. More than 80 malicious web campaigns were taken down in a day after 5,000 suspicious emails were flagged to new cyber service for investigation within a day of its launch.

**National Cyber Security Centre**

### Phishing attacks

Dealing with suspicious emails

Phishing emails try to convince users to click on links to dodgy websites or attachments, or to give sensitive information away (such as bank details). This advice includes tips about how to spot the most obvious signs of phishing, and what to do if you think you've clicked a bad link. For more information, please visit [www.ncsc.gov.uk/phishing](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/phishing).



### What is phishing?

**Phishing** is when criminals attempt to trick people into doing 'the wrong thing', such as clicking a link to a dodgy website. Phishing can be conducted via a text message, social media, or by phone, but the term 'phishing' is mainly used to describe attacks that arrive by email. Criminals send phishing emails to **millions of people**, asking for sensitive information (like bank details), or containing links to bad websites. Some phishing emails may contain viruses disguised as harmless attachments, which are activated when opened.



### Make yourself a harder target

Information from your website or social media accounts leaves a 'digital footprint' that can be exploited by criminals. You can make yourself less likely to be phished by doing the following:

-  Criminals use publicly available information about you to make their phishing emails appear convincing. **Review your privacy settings**, and think about what you post.
-  Be aware what your friends, family and colleagues say about you online, as this can also reveal information that can be used to target you.
-  If you do spot a suspicious email, **flag it as Spam/Junk in your email inbox**, and report this to Action Fraud ([www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk)).

### What to do if you've already clicked?

The most important thing to do is not to panic. There are number of practical steps you can take:

-  Open your antivirus (AV) software, and **run a full scan**. Follow any instructions given.
-  If you've been tricked into providing your password, you should **change your passwords on all your other accounts**.
-  If you have lost money, you need to report it as a crime to Action Fraud. You can do this by visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk).



### Tell tale signs of phishing

Spotting a phishing email is becoming increasingly difficult, and even the most careful user can be tricked. Here are some tell tale signs that could indicate a phishing attempt.



-  Is the email addressed to you by name, or does it refer to 'valued customer', or 'friend' or 'colleague'? This can be a sign that the sender does not actually know you, and that it is part of a phishing scam.
-  Others will try and create official-looking emails by including logos and graphics. Is the design (and quality) what you'd expect?
-  Does the email contain a veiled threat that asks you to act urgently? Be suspicious of words like 'send these details within 24 hours' or 'you have been a victim of crime, click here immediately'.
-  Look at the sender's name and email address. Does it sound legitimate, or is it trying to mimic someone you know?
-  Your bank (or any other official source) should never ask you to supply personal information in an email. **If you need to check, call them directly.**
-  If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. It's most unlikely that someone will want to give you free trainers, or codes to access films for free.

[www.ncsc.gov.uk](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk) [@NCSC](https://twitter.com/NCSC) [National Cyber Security Centre](https://www.facebook.com/NationalCyberSecurityCentre) [@cyberhq](https://www.instagram.com/cyberhq)

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# Oakley Rural Day Centre

Oakley Rural, The Old School, Lovell Road, Oakley, Beds, MK43 7RX  
Tel: 01234 824935 Mobile: 07733 227374 Web: [www.oakleyrural.org.uk](http://www.oakleyrural.org.uk)  
Registered Charity No: 1060283



## NEWSLETTER Summer

Welcome to our latest Newsletter. If anyone has access to the internet please visit our website, [www.oakleyrural.org.uk](http://www.oakleyrural.org.uk). 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](https://www.facebook.com/oakleyruraldaycentre). We are also producing articles in various publications throughout Bedford and surrounding areas to raise the profile of the centre.

### WHAT THE DAY CENTRE IS DOING DURING LOCK DOWN

Lynne, our Centre Manager sent me this piece.

*Each week I ring all the clients and volunteers on their usual attendance days (either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) to 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. I make sure they are receiving our newsletters which Dave works hard to ensure that it is both interesting and topical and this is confirmed by the clients that they are enjoying them very much (some are even being passed on to friends). We discuss the day centre which I know they are missing terribly. 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.*



We are also providing a weekly newsletter to keep our clients up to date. As well as the two page newsletter which includes recipes, poems, spot the difference, jokes and interesting facts. We also post out on a weekly basis with the newsletter a quiz, crossword and word search. The answers are given the week after.

We all look forward to welcoming our clients and army of volunteers back when it is safe to do so and wish everyone good health.

### 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.

Unfortunately due to the Coronavirus outbreak we have had to temporarily close the centre until it is safe for us to return. As of May 2020 we are still not in a position to re-open. You can still contact Lynne on the number below for updated information or email the centre at [info@oakleyrural.org.uk](mailto:info@oakleyrural.org.uk)

For details of costs and advice please contact Lynne on 07733 227374.

**Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.**

David Swallow

## **Parish Precept 2020/21:**

The precept for this year has been set at £54,400 and the band D rate has increased by 2% from £54.58 to £55.68 p.a.

### **Accounts for 2019/2020:**

In 2019/20 income amounted to £136,424.64 and expenditure to £146,762.29. Income increased by approximately £54,581 largely because Bedford BC paid double the amount of precept in error.

Community Infrastructure Levy receipts reduced by £4,589 and Neighbourhood Plan grants reduced from £3,250 in 2018/19 to nothing in 2019/20.

This was offset by an increase of £9,263 in the VAT refund on expenditure on play equipment in 2018/19. Expenditure increased by approximately £19,129 mostly due to the repayment of £52,800 of precept to Bedford Borough Council, plus an increase of £7,362 in capital expenditure to cover the cost of new bollards on Grange Green and the Green, an additional £2,157 on the play area to repair the surfacing and £820 to remove and clear up after the travellers.

This was offset by a reduction of £36,166 in the cost of new play equipment, £5,943 less due in VAT repayments and £4,235 less spent on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Donations totalling £6,518 were made to the Pre-School, the Day Centre, the Youth Club, Bedfordshire Scouts and the RBL for a poppy wreath.

### **Planning**

During 2019/20 the Parish Council was consulted on and commented on a total of 49 planning and related applications, compared to 47 in 2018/19. Most were for relatively minor works but Council objected to 6 applications on the grounds of impact on neighbours, overdevelopment, development outside the Settlement Policy Area and conversion of bungalows to houses.

As a general policy Council also objected to 6 applications for the removal of trees unless they could not be saved and asked for replacements to be planted in their place.

Council also objected to the proposals for development on land off Lovell Road and behind the High Street on the grounds that the development would be outside the Settlement Policy Area and the sites were not included for development in our Neighbourhood Plan.

The High Street application was refused by the Borough and the Lovell Road applications withdrawn. Council also strongly objected to the unsightly parapets on the Highfield Road rail bridge. These have been given temporary permission for a year to enable electrification to progress but we are hoping that something more in keeping with the area will be put forward for the permanent barriers.

Ann Paice, Parish Clerk

## **Sue Ryder Bereavement Support Services**



Sue Ryder's free video bereavement counselling service is providing a lifeline to many via trained bereavement counsellors. The type of grief that those around us are experiencing as a result of Coronavirus is unlike anything we have seen before.

As a result of the lockdown restrictions, loved ones - of those dying from all causes not just Coronavirus - have been unable to be at their loved one's bedside when they died, hold their hand or say goodbye, attend funerals or find solace and comfort, physically, in the arms of their support networks.

Our usual routines of school, work or activities can provide us with a sense of safety. The consistency can help with the process of grieving but the lockdown and social distancing measures have removed all of this. This is a time when people need support from specialist bereavement support services more than ever before.

Sue Ryder provides a range of bereavement support including:

- Free online video counselling by trained counsellors
- Online bereavement community forum which supports over 10,000 people each month
- Family bereavement support teams at each of our hospices
- A wide range of online bereavement advice and resources offering guidance to people who are grieving or supporting someone through bereavement

To find out more please visit **[sueryder.org/support](https://sueryder.org/support)**

# **OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Summary of Accounts - Financial Year ending 31 March 2020**

Opening Bank Balances		
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/19	£16,740.37	
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/19	£17,214.32	
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/19	£58,698.06	
Hampshire Bank investment bond	£81,126.08	
less uncleared payments	£18.00	
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£173,760.83</b>	
Receipts		£
Precept	£52,800.00	
Overpayment of precept (subsequently refunded)	£52,800.00	
Agency Services (Grasscutting - Bedford BC)	£1,171.33	
Allotments (rent)	£1,025.50	
Community Infrastructure Levy	£5,317.25	
Glass cullet sale from Bottlebank	£1,643.81	
Grants (Neighbourhood Plan)	£0.00	
Interest (including £2,093.50 from bonds which reinvested)	£2,128.24	
Newsletter & Directory advertisements and sponsorship	£5,168.00	
VAT recovered from 2018/19	£14,370.51	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£136,424.64</b>	
[of which £122,099 ring fenced]		} } }
<b>Total</b>	<b>£310,185.47</b>	
£100,949 plus £17,890 interest of the total cash in hand figure is ring fenced for maintenance of The Furlong, the Grange & Parsonage		
Close open spaces and £3,259.90 for maintenance of the High Street bus shelter.		
Payments		
Administration (includes subscriptions)	£3,554.53	
Insurance	£1,958.86	
Grass Cutting	£11,220.00	
Grounds Maintenance (includes tree works and bollards)	£2,750.25	
Wages, Tax, National Insurance, Pension, Clerk's Expenses	£20,548.44	
S. 137 Payments (grants to local organisations)	£6,518.00	
Capital Spending (bollards, seesaw & litter bin)	£10,694.00	
Cricket Field & Riverside (rent)	£817.84	
Allotments	£611.79	
Bottlebank	£1,150.00	
Bus shelters	£0.00	
Community Orchard	£0.00	
Christmas lights	£5,000.00	
Defibrillators	£508.00	
Linch Furlong	£700.00	
Neighbourhood Plan	£5,395.00	
Play area (inspections & repairs)	£6,276.40	
Publicity (Newsletter, Directory, Website)	£5,145.00	
Refund of overpaid precept	£52,800.00	
Traveller removal, repairs and cleaning	£820.00	
VAT refund due on above payments	£8,423.78	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£144,891.89</b>	
Closing Bank Balances		
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/20	£6,362.88	
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/20	£17,249.06	
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/20	£59,495.74	
Hampshire Bank investment bond	£82,421.90	
less uncleared payments	£236.00	
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£165,293.58</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£310,185.47</b>	



## WORSHIP DURING LOCKDOWN

As churches we are following the Government guidelines and at the time of going to print all church buildings remain closed to the public. Church is not closed though and we are providing on line opportunities for worship and fellowship.

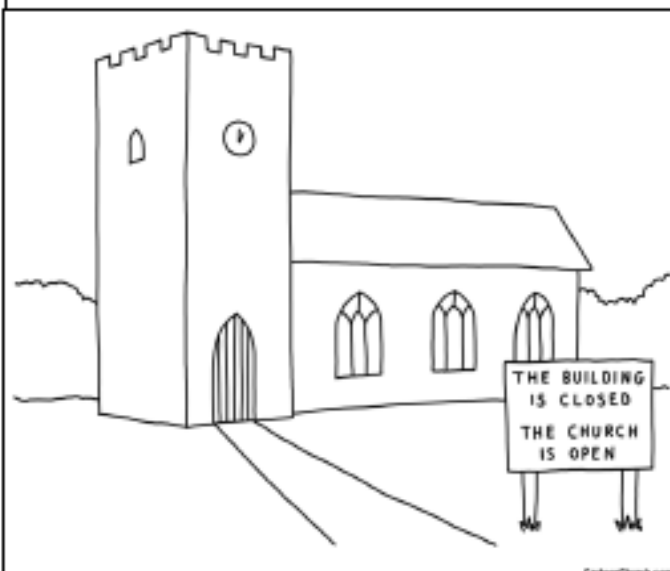
**Oakley Methodist Church** offers an emailed service at 10:30am on Sundays, which can also be made available to people as a paper copy. There is also a weekly evening prayer service at 8:30pm each Thursday hosted on Zoom.

Messy Church for All continues to meet virtually each month, providing songs, videos, activities and crafts for all to enjoy.

For information on Methodist Church activities, please contact Jeanette Letch, details below

**St Mary's** offers a weekly Sunday service at 10.30am via Zoom. This is followed by a further Zoom coffee meeting where people can chat in small groups. Evensong is also streamed live via Zoom at 6pm on the second and fourth Sundays of the month.

For links to all services please visit the website [www.bromhambenefice.org](http://www.bromhambenefice.org) or to be added to the email list for a weekly Pew Leaflet and links to services and events direct to your inbox please email Sarah, the administrator, details below.



## OTHER WAYS TO WORSHIP

There are plenty of services available on Facebook and You tube. Additionally the BBC have radio and television services on a weekly basis- tune in to BBC1 around 10.30am on a Sunday morning or at 1.15pm for Songs of Praise.

Daily Hope is a new Church of England Initiative. It's a free phoneline containing hymns, reflections and prayers. Call FREE 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044

### Contact Details

Rev Catherine Wilson 825665

Church Wardens St Mary's

Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535

Administrator Sarah Smale [administrator@bromhambenefice.org](mailto:administrator@bromhambenefice.org)

Rev Gill Balham 930025

Church Steward Oakley Methodist

Jeanette Letch 825204

[jenletch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jenletch@hotmail.co.uk)

## The churches are closed, but The Church is open.

Although our physical buildings are currently closed, we are continuing to meet as Churches in lots of different ways.

Every Sunday there is a service emailed out to members of the five Methodist Churches under Rev Gill Baalhams's leadership. This is also available as a printed sheet for those who want to join in but don't have internet access. It sounds odd, but it works, and enables us to share in worship together using minimum technology.

We also have a weekly Evening Prayer session hosted on Zoom after the clapping at 20:30, which is open to all.

Members of our congregations are taking the opportunity to join church services via Zoom or YouTube. If there is a church you've always wanted to attend, but never got the chance before, search on YouTube or Facebook. You may well be able to join them for a service. It's also a good opportunity to go back to churches you may have attended years ago. There are all sorts of services available; why not give them a try?

Our Messy Church for All continues to "meet" monthly, with a host of activities, songs, videos and crafts for all to enjoy via an emailed booklet. On Thursday 21st May there was a whole day of International Messy Church hosted on YouTube for everyone to join in with, including an hour session from Bedfordshire.

And we are still holding Coffee Mornings, meeting up via Zoom for a good chat (bring your own coffee and biscuits).

More people are attending church services in the lockdown than ever before. Do join us!

Our buildings may be closed, but our churches are very open.

For information on Methodist services, and Messy Church for All sessions, please contact

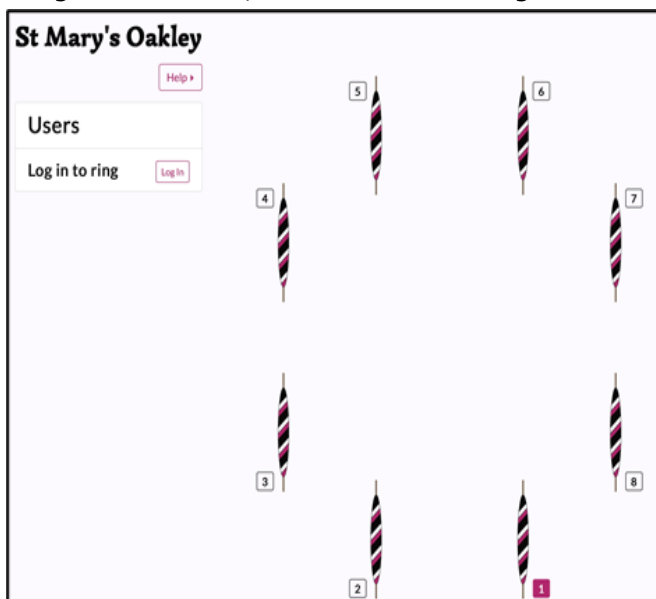
Jeanette Letch on 01234 825204 [jenletch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jenletch@hotmail.co.uk).

### Bell Ringing goes virtual!

Many activities have had to be put on hold while we try and keep ourselves safe from COVID-19, and bell ringing is no exception. At St Marys, we ceased ringing before the lockdown was announced and we all miss it and each other. However, there are various online practise aids which a few of us have been trying. We have also attempted a virtual practise session using a programme called ringing-room.com. Six of us logged into ringing room and were each allocated a bell. We had a Zoom call going simultaneously so we could chat to each other. When it came to ring our bell, we have to click on correct bell on the screen with the cursor. We managed rounds ok, where the bells ring in numerical sequence – one to six, and we managed call changes, where the conductor calls out the moves, but when it came to ring a method (or tune) it all went to pot! When ringing in the bell tower you can see and hear what the bells are doing around you. Just watching bell icons on the screen was incredibly difficult! We did have a good laugh trying though, and it was great to see everyone. Who knows when we will be able to ring as normal again? The ringing room at St Mary's isn't conducive to social distancing. But we will be back at some point and the sound of bells will ring out across the village once again!

Shelley Abbott,

on behalf of the Oakley Band of Ringers



## Oakley Pre-school News



Our fundraiser on 6<sup>th</sup> March, with the fab drag artist 'Candy Couture' putting on an amazing evening's entertainment for us raised £2575.06 for pre-school...what a star!

Since March, pre-school has, like everyone, had to adapt to change. We closed, following government guidance, on 20<sup>th</sup> March and collaborated with Carla Bays and Clapham pre-school, so that

any of our keyworker children could access childcare with these settings.

Throughout the closure we have worked closely with these settings and through our Facebook page we have endeavoured to keep in contact with our families, by sharing ideas on learning through play, at home. We have also shared pictures and videos of the pre-school ladies and the pre-school, to keep the link with our families while the lock down and social distancing guidelines are in place. The children have sent pictures and letters to the pre-school, to let us know what

they have been doing at home with their families.

We now find ourselves following government guidance to prepare for the wider opening of childcare settings from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. Pre-school will not be the same, but we will do our best to ensure the safety of all children and staff and work together as a team to bring quality education and childcare back to our site.

### 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](mailto:info@oakleypreschool.com) Our website is: [www.oakleypreschool.com](http://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



## Councillor Jane Walker - elected as Speaker

I am sure that most of us have all had to get used to virtual meetings, whether with our families or at work. Last month Councillor Jane Walker (Conservative) was voted in as Speaker of Bedford Borough Council at their first Full Council Meeting online where 40 councillors met to carry on the business of the Borough! Here is a picture of Jane in full flow!

If you are wondering what this entails here is the official description. Sounds too much like herding cats to me!

Role and function of the Speaker - The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council will have the titles Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Council respectively.

The Speaker of the Council and, in his/her absence, the Deputy Speaker, will have the following roles and functions: To represent the Council on formal occasions and at external functions either in conjunction with the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor and otherwise as the Mayor shall determine.

Chairing the Council Meeting The Speaker will be elected by the Council annually. The Speaker will have the following responsibilities: To uphold and promote the purposes of the Constitution, and to interpret the Constitution when necessary. To preside over meetings of the Council so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of Councillors and the interests of the community. To ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which Members who are not on the Executive are able to hold the Executive to account. To promote public involvement in the Council's activities. **To be the conscience of the Council.**

Bill Chalker, Editor



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## The Dutch Reach

Almost one in three drivers admits to not looking for bikes when they get out of their car, but there is a proven way to improve this, called the "Dutch reach".

A name given to a technique that originated more than 50 years ago in Holland, where all car occupants must reach for the door handle using their hand that is furthest away, forcing the body to turn and look for passing bikes.

It is taught to every Dutch learner driver and it will imminently be added to the UK's Highway Code.

Dave Ursell (from article in Boundless magazine)



## Steve's Snippet No. 45

For me, a cuckoo does a springtime make and we have had a vocal cuckoo calling around the village for a while now.

I heard early reports that cuckoos had returned across the country and hoped that I might hear one again – well, now I have.

This also led me to wonder just how the iconic cuckoo is fairing in the modern world, so I have done a bit of research.

Whilst cuckoos have declined in numbers by 65% since the 1980s, I was unable to determine if there has been a further significant decline since my report a few years ago.



I suspect there has been a further decline as there is nothing to be optimistic about when looking at any of the factors affecting a lot of migrant species, especially those from sub-Saharan Africa.

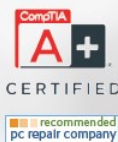
I will now listen for nightingales and hope that I can report something positive in the next newsletter.

Steve Nicholas



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## Oakley Allotments



Looking back at the last newsletter brings back memories of times which will never return in quite the same way. The world is a much different place. The weather is also much different; seemingly endless rain has now been replaced in our region by conditions approaching drought.

Countrywide, allotments have become a lifeline for many people. Although some authorities have closed allotment sites as part of measures they have decided are necessary to control the pandemic, many have kept sites open. The benefits of exercise in the open air have never been so important and gardening is an engrossing and therapeutic activity.

We have not seen so much activity at our allotments since their early days and a lot of plots are receiving attention that other distractions formerly did not allow. Our own plot is certainly included in that number as we have spent more time there over the weekends of restrictions.

Jobs such as the tidying-up of the glory-corner have now been attended to, although the presence of a nest of social, buff-tailed bumblebees has curtailed any of the major works planned for the area, for now at least. Insects of all types need as much assistance to prosper as we can offer them, particularly when our own well-being is so dependent on them.

My allotment developed over the years as a series of separate small beds and raised beds, accessed by grass pathways. As we have become more adventurous (and certainly have more time

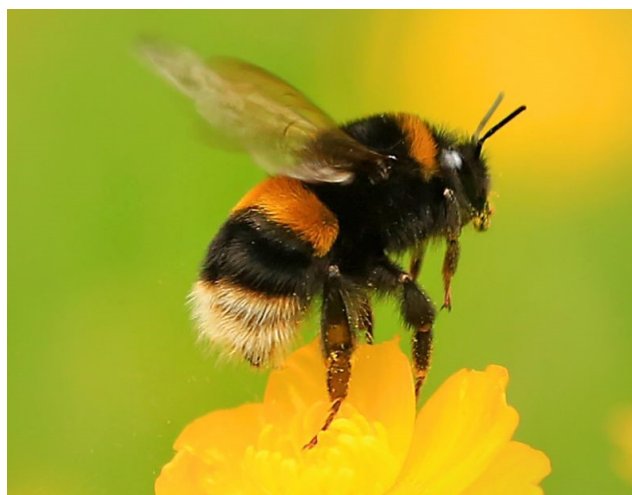
lately) a third of the area will gradually become a continuous bed which can be planted with larger rows. Fewer paths will mean less mowing is necessary, although mowing is not too great a task, being quite enjoyable in itself.

Nothing had been planned to mark the tenth anniversary of the opening of our allotments (on the 1st of October, 2010) and it may be a while before it is possible to mark the occasion.

I am still determined that the area by the community shed will be improved to provide a small community garden and extension to the orchard. The area will need to be cleared of rubbish (some is still being dumped there, despite our requests not to do so) and landscaped. Some raised beds, perhaps inviting others to contribute to the planting, will be part of the scheme.

We now have a short waiting-list again. Please contact me or the clerk to the parish council if you are interested in taking on an allotment. Let us hope that we are heading towards better times.

With special thanks to all of the key-workers and those on the front line. Steve Nicholas



### Steve's Snippet No. 44

...and another thing...

Yes, I'm back on my language hobby-horse again, so blame my grandfather. Things were bad enough back in his day but I think he would be apoplectic today.

After all, if we allow words to be hijacked and their meanings altered, is there another word waiting in the wings or do we lose subtleties of communication and the means of conveying complex ideas?

One of Grandpa's favourites was the misuse of the word, "unique".

Unique – definition: the only one of its kind. There can be no degrees of uniqueness by that

very definition – it's either unique or it isn't – if it's "almost" unique then you will have to define why it isn't the only one of its kind, for clarity and precision, or just say that there are two, or three...

For ease of use, imagine that you have to say, "only one of its kind", because somebody finally stole "unique" and refuses to return it: how much sense does, "it is very the only one of its kind", make?

I am available for parties (when we're allowed such things again) but probably only if you want an early finish.

Steve Nicholas



# Scouting's on hold

March was a time of uncertainty for Oakley Scout Group, as it was for everyone – should we still go ahead with Section evenings or not? A message from the Scout Association ended that uncertainty and ordered that all Scouting activities should cease for the foreseeable future.



After a period of adjustment, some Scout Groups have been able to continue online but this has relied heavily on the ability of the leaders to do so under what are sometimes difficult circumstances.

Oakley Scout Group has had to cancel activities like the Easter Scavenger Hunt and the Oakley Bake-off. Not only do events bring our members and their families together for some fun, they also raise funds for the Group. We have also had to cancel our 2020 Family Camp, which was due to take place in June. We were all looking forward to the camp.

We have tried a virtual camp, with Cubs and Beavers putting tents up in their gardens or making dens indoors and getting together for camp fire songs via Zoom! Not as good as the real thing but fun, nevertheless.

We do not yet know when Section evenings will be able to start again, but when they do, we will have to have a big party! We can't wait to see everyone back together!

Shelley Abbott, on behalf of Oakley Scout Group

## Brownies

OAKLEY

**Monday 16th March** – the start of the week when Coronavirus really started to change our lives. In the morning the leaders were discussing ideas for the last couple of meetings of term, in the afternoon we were discussing whether it would be appropriate to meet that week and by 9pm, following the Prime Minister's briefing, Girlguiding announced that no meetings should be held until further notice. That day was also the first time I had ever heard of Zoom.

A few weeks later, after Easter, Brownies turned to Zoom and joined the national chorus of 'can you hear me?' Each week at the online meetings we have been pleased to have around 15 Brownies (about half the group). Remote Brownies is very different, but a few games work online such as 'traffic lights', charades and 'guess the tune'. We have also had some new activities including making armpit fudge (not as disgusting as it sounds!), a scavenger hunt finding items starting with each letter of BROWNIES, origami, and making paper hands to send a 'hug' through the post.



Remote Hug Hands

Some of the Brownies also asked if we could raise some money for charity. Following a virtual pow-wow we agreed to raise money to raise money for Cancer Research. Brownies are doing a sponsored stair-climb. Each Brownie will count how many flights of stairs they can climb each day for a 2- week period. We will total the number and see which mountain we have managed to climb collectively.

If you would like to sponsor the Brownies' stair climb, you can visit their Just Giving page at:

<https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/brownie-sponsored-stair-climb-steps-to-summit>

Lindsay Saunders



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## Lockdown at College Farm

Since last writing we have spent most of the time living and working under lockdown restrictions, as we all have. Luckily my business has been able to continue as working in agriculture is classed as a 'key worker'. I must admit I do find this a little embarrassing as in no way are we putting our health on the line as the NHS doctors and nurses are.

As lockdown began, the ground started to dry enough to begin our rather large spring drilling campaign, with an easterly wind and sunny days the dust was soon flying. By Easter we were just about completed and after three weeks of little rain, the crops needed a drink.

The cattle were turned out on the river meadows for the summer, this then allowed us to get the sheds cleared of their muck, fertilisers and sprays were applied along with all the other late spring jobs.

Working out in the fields in the lovely weather, whilst many others were stuck to the confines of their houses and gardens, has really made me appreciate both my freedom and how lucky I am to work in and around the Ouse Valley.

The weeks have rolled by reasonably quickly as we have been busy. We now find ourselves at the end of May, grass harvest began a few weeks back and, a first for me this year, we have made hay in May. This not only goes to show how good the weather has been but also how it seems to be becoming more extreme.

Due to the lack of rainfall, grass yields are low and some farmers are already becoming concerned about not having enough grass to get through the winter. The cereal crops do not look as promising as they usually do and if these hot sunny days continue the combine will be out sooner rather than later.

Let us hope by the time of writing the next article these movement restrictions will have come to an end, events will be back on at weekends, the pub reopen and life as we once knew it can resume.

### Front cover artist and helping out on the farm...

I thought I would paint a picture of 'Celia' the calf who lives at College Farm for the front cover newsletter. I thought it would be a change to a view of the village which I am sure you all see daily on your walks. As Henry has mentioned, the cows were recently turned out on the river meadows for the summer. A sight which is always lovely to watch as they all get excited and skip around the fields. Thankfully none have managed

to escape (fingers crossed) so far!

Our eight calves we bought late last year have also been moved from the yard to the field opposite our house (the one on the right as you face our drive). It was lovely seeing a few people watch as the cows witnessed grass for the first time and they have settled in well. We have names for each and they are very friendly. We feed them nuts twice a day, in addition to them having the grass to munch on, which is looking rather dry currently! Our 2 ½ year old daughter loves to stroke them. Feel free to have a nose if you are ever passing.

'Celia' the calf original painting, which is acrylic paint onto an A4 canvas is available to buy for £175 and limited edition, mounted giclee prints are available, starting at £20 for A4. I also offer A3 and A2 sizes. I offer a framing service to all local customers (as I deliver) so if you would like to buy any of my prints framed, please take a look at my framing page on my website which details prices. My Oakley Church original, which featured on the front cover of the last newsletter, is also still available to buy for £80. This is a much-reduced rate to normal prices and 25% will go to the church fund.

In addition to painting and selling my originals and prints, I also have a homeware range with my art on. This consists of bone china mugs, ceramic coasters, wooden coasters and placemats, cushions and tea towels. Feel free to have a look at my website [ljcreativestudios.com](http://ljcreativestudios.com). Sales have increased since lockdown - it is nice to see people shopping locally and supporting small businesses. We always make sure we support local, small businesses when we can, but lockdown has made me realise how many fantastic businesses we have on our doorstep!

If you are interested in buying my artwork or have any queries regarding it, then please email me at [ljcreativestudios@gmail.com](mailto:ljcreativestudios@gmail.com). You can also buy on my website.

We hope you all stay safe and well.

Henry and Laura Saunders



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## Oakley - Back through Time

Cecil was born in 1921 in one of two cottages called Yew Tree cottages (now one large dwelling) in Westfield Road, Oakley. He lived with his parents and eldest sister. The family always had a variety of pets – black and white rabbits, and a goat which had a kid. The kid was free to roam until it was found on top of the kitchen table, henceforth he was tethered. Casualties of the countryside were always taken home, even an owl.

The next door neighbours used to keep pigs for eating and they always offered a joint to Cecil's parents which they all enjoyed. It made a very tasty meal.

The Tithe Barn, situated by the roadside in Westfield Road, by Yew Tree Cottages, (now a big house called the Barn) was used as a store and every year a steam engine came to the barn to thresh the corn. Although it was a very dusty job it was a time when all the men and all willing hands got together as a team. There was lots of laughter, jokes and singing of country folk songs to break the monotony of a long and laborious task.

Cecil's boyhood was very carefree. The freedom of the countryside was to him like the freedom of a bird. There were no fishing rights to worry him. He fished where he knew fish to be. His rod was just a stick, string and a hook. Fishing from the small wooden bridge at Oakley, he caught chubb with soaked bread for bait. To catch a pike he had to first catch a gudgeon to use as live bait. If it was his lucky day he might catch a roach. These were found near the island where there was plenty of small trees and bushes, which made cover and shade for the fish. The flood gates were the ideal place for the eels which fascinated him, watching them flash in and out of the bars of the gate.

Cecil's father worked at Queen's College Farm, where he not only looked after the horses but worked them in the fields. They were used for ploughing, haymaking and for the harvest. Cecil used to take his father's lunch at harvest time and stayed to help, stacking the sheaves into stooks which consisted of 8-12 sheaves. These made good hiding places for games with his mates later in the day. The stooks were left to dry in the fields while the farmer prayed for good weather. When dry the sheaves were stacked onto a cart with a pitchfork with the horse playing another role. He would take the load away for storing.

At a farm which was situated by the river, there was a punt. Cecil and his friends were allowed to

take off up the river to Clapham. This was considered great fun. The Willow trees served a good purpose to hide while they dried their clothes, having fallen in the river on many occasions. They also had a tent which served and played many parts in their imagination. Hunting for duck eggs, as these were plentiful, led to eggs being taken home for tea, making sure that only one was taken from each nest .



**Oakley Bridge about 1900**

Brown's Wood was another favourite play haunt. Primroses were always picked on Good Friday, taken to decorate the house and church for Easter. Bluebells then followed in abundance. The wood took on a blue glow as they covered the ground like a blue carpet.

When he went to school there were various activities depending on what was in vogue at the time. Whip and Top – racing to see who could get the top to the school first, then the hoop, rolling it with a stick or by hand, roller skates and even marbles which was played along the ground, knocking your partners marble out of the way.

At the early age of five he learnt to ride a bike handed down from a Great Aunt. His sister, being the elder, had the advantage of having it first and when outgrown it was handed down to Cecil. Although old it was cherished as a great asset, being the only mode of transport for many years.

At eight years of age Cecil fetched the milk from Middle Farm in the High Street (now the fields are the 1970s housing estate). He had a tin can to keep the milk cool and on special occasions they had cream. Cecil often got nobbled by Mr. Newell to help a farm labourer to get the cows in for milking from the field at Oakley Bridge. This was after school and he had no say in the matter. Mr. Newell had a milk round and went as far as Bedford to sell the milk. Daisy the horse not only pulled the cart for the milk round but worked in the field as well.

Transcribed by a resident from 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.

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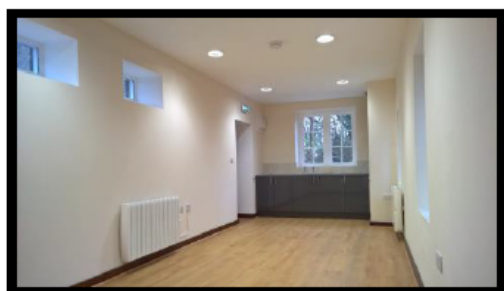
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# Amigo

As you will be aware the outbreak of the Coronavirus has disrupted the programme of Amigo activities including sadly, the cancellation of the coach trip to London that had been planned for Thursday 25th June.

I hope to arrange some further activities before the end of the Summer, details of which will appear in the July issue of the Churches Newsletter and on the Oakley Village News Website

My very best wishes.

John Dixon

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### TO ALL OUR MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

The health and safety of our patrons, performers and volunteers is at the forefront for everyone at the Sharnbrook Mill Theatre Trust; so, following the announcements from The Government on the coronavirus on 16<sup>th</sup> March and since, in common with all national theatres The Mill Theatre is closed.

All up and coming performances and events following '*Daisy Pulls It Off*' in March have been *postponed*. Rescheduling of all our events is our top priority; we aim to move everything forward several months, subject to show licences / artist / speaker etc availability. So please bear with us while we try to put everything in place. As we are all volunteers this might take a little longer to arrange!

Please be assured we will inform every one of the new production and events schedule as soon as we possibly can.

The Theatre may be closed and dark, but we cannot wait to open the doors, resume rehearsals and socialise once more, in preparation for continuing our productions once this awful virus has gone.

In the meantime, please stay safe and as H. M. The Queen said: "*We will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again*".

### IN ADDITION TO OUR SHOWS AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS:

We have a number of on-going beneficial initiatives to help you to continue to support your award-winning local theatre during this period:

- **Join 50/50 Club!** In return for monthly donations by Club members **from just £1** by standing order, 50% of the fund is shared with 3 winners, numbers randomly drawn monthly; **prizes** are currently 1<sup>st</sup> £42.50, 2<sup>nd</sup> £25.50 and 3<sup>rd</sup> £17.00. The other 50% goes to our 'Cool-Down' Appeal. Ask Theo Gibbs (Draw Promoter) to email you details: [twhg1@outlook.com](mailto:twhg1@outlook.com).
- **Do you shop on line?** Please register first with: [www.easyfundraising.causes/sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.causes/sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk) Then every time you shop on-line, begin your search via [easyfundraising](http://www.easyfundraising), then choose your store; over 4000 stores will donate to us a small %age of the price of your item **at no cost to you!** Easy!
- **Quality Notecards** of 'Sharnbrook Mill Theatre reflecting on her first 40 years since conversion', per image herewith, opening in 1979 with *Salad Days*; (for you to hand write - no printed message!). Cards which are 5" square, 300 gsm silk (with envelopes), may be purchased in packs of 5 for £5 (plus postage)/at events, from Theo. Gibbs [twhg1@outlook.com](mailto:twhg1@outlook.com)

### NODA REVIEW OF THE RAILWAY CHILDREN (DECEMBER 2019); ALSO DAISY PULLS IT OFF (MARCH 2020)

Sharnbrook Mill Theatre Trust (SMTT) is affiliated to the National Operative and Dramatic Association, who review each of our productions. SMTT is proud to have received several 'Best...' awards in recent years for their Musicals, Drama and Youth productions; also individual awards in special categories, notably 'Best Youth' and 'Best Technical'.

The critique by NODA Regional Councillor Richard Fitt, for *Daisy Pulls It Off* by Denise Deegan, is published on the SMTT website; <https://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/noda-review-of-daisy-pulls-it-off/> also other recent shows you may have supported (see if you agree!), including our December 2019 production: *The Railway Children* <https://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/blog/archive> ;

Thank you for your continued support and understanding. We look forward to welcoming you again, as soon as circumstances will allow.

[www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk)



## OAKLEY WI

Due to the uncertainties  
of when we can resume meetings  
we cannot as yet give our programme.  
We will do so as and when it is safe,  
in the meantime if you have any queries  
about joining  
or coming as a visitor  
when we resume  
please telephone 825688 or 822087.

**Cancelled**  
Nature Walk  
in Linch Furlong  
and Riverside  
scheduled for  
19th and 21st June  
has been cancelled  
due to  
coronavirus  
restrictions.  
**Cancelled**



## OAKLEY GARDENING CLUB

The Garden Cub schedule is cancelled  
until further notice.

Hopefully we will reconvene  
in September

We will keep you informed as and when  
meanwhile keep safe and  
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in the near future

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# oakley *Motorcycle* club

As a result of this pandemic, OMC set up a COVID 19 sub committee consisting of Roger Bays (Chair), Derek Brown (Vice Chair & Treasurer), Bernice Russell (Secretary), Keith Russell (Health and Safety Advisor) and Paul Butler (Ride out Co-ordinator). We first met just prior to the lockdown and have been having virtual meetings thereafter. Our last meeting on 11th May has resulted in a complete cancellation of all our planned summer activities including the very popular American theme night which had been scheduled for 2nd July.

All scheduled ride outs have been cancelled but we are hopeful that with further easing of the lockdown and in line with Government instructions and guidelines we may be able to consider some days out in the not too distant future.

Some good news for a change, although the Easter Egg run planned for Monday 13th April was cancelled, Easter Eggs were supplied to staff at Agate House, Ampthill, Lomack House, Kempston and Lovell Homes, Oakley. The Easter Eggs were distributed by staff members to their residents on behalf of OMC. Many thanks to OMC member Karen Owen and her company Myfresh at Chicksands for the donation of over £200 worth of Easter chocolate treats.

Many thanks to OMC member Terry Harris and his family, together with the staff of OMC sponsors Anglian Fasteners, whose donation of Easter Eggs were taken to Lomack House, Kempston. They also delivered 26 Eggs to the staff at Bedford hospital Elizabeth Ward (COVID-19 hot ward)



Further good news in that OMC have been selected as one of three nominees to be shortlisted for an EAAA Inspiration Award. The Inspiration Awards have been running for several years now, with the aim of recognising those who inspire and motivate the EAAA staff to do what they do, whilst sharing some joy amongst the amazing EAAA community. Nominations are made internally by EAAA staff and OMC were nominated by Daisy Rivetti in light of all the work we have done to support them.

Kind regards Baysie - Roger Bays - Chair OMC



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