



# Oakley Newsletter



**Summer 2023**

Number 95

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**PLANNING & EASTWEST RAIL UPDATES**

**VILLAGER MINIBUS**

**TWINWOODS FESTIVAL**

**DOWN CRICKET MEMORY LANE**

**CAMEO WALKS**

**NEW LOOK VILLAGE HALL**

**OAKLEY SHOW**

**NEWS FROM THE TOWER**



Front Page by Alwyn Etheridge  
Picture by Bally Thind, Oakley PO

### 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  
little ones



# Parish Council News

## Summer 2023

A warm welcome to all villagers. My name is Sara Fardon and I was delighted to be elected as Chair of Oakley Parish Council at our first meeting post the election on 4th May. More on this shortly.

Firstly, I am sure that I am speaking on your behalf in thanking Jane Walker who has been acting chair of Oakley Parish Council and of course was Chair for many years. Jane has been re-elected as a parish councillor and will continue to serve the village in the unstinting way she has always done. Thank you Jane.

### Parish Council Election

The election was held on the 4th May. In Oakley we had a turnout of 44.6%. It is the first time we have had a parish council election for many years. Thank you to everyone who stood for election and thank you for turning out to vote.

We are very fortunate that two of our Parish Councillors are also Borough Councillors - Jon Abbott and Jane Walker representing the new ward of Clapham and Oakley.

I am delighted that Robert Saunders has been elected as Vice Chair and look forward to working with him. Finally we have a mix of new blood and experienced hands on the parish council. It feels a good way to move forward!

I am writing this just a couple of days after our first parish council meeting. In April however, we held our annual parish meeting. Jane delivered a report about the village and I wanted to give you a flavour of it as it sums up the last year perfectly.

Annual Parish Meeting April 2023 - Acting Chair Jane Walkers Report (extract)  
"At this point I would just like to take the opportunity to thank the current councillors who are standing down at the election. They are Steve Nicolas, Michael Frampton and of course Gerry and Paul who stood down earlier this year.

Continued on page 3

## OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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All four have been Parish Councillors for many years and have done a huge amount for the village both in parish council meetings and outside, on the NDP group, the planning advisory group, finance and helping with parish council events such as the annual litter pick. We will miss their experience and knowledge of the village. I hope they will keep in touch whenever something arises that their unique knowledge will be able to help us with.

On to the things the parish council has been doing over this last year.

### **Play Areas**

On the play area on the Green, we have replaced the slide with a new one and the roundabout is due to be replaced shortly. Both items had been in place for a long time and were beginning to rot. Unfortunately, the safety rules have changed since the originals ones were installed so the safety surface has to be wider for the same height equipment. As we have limited space in the toddlers play area we were not able to extend the surface so have had to replace both with smaller items. Both were paid for from CIL money from the Parrots Close development.

The work continues on Brockwell meadow where we are trying to increase bio-diversity. We had a number of free native trees from the Borough Council along with fruit trees purchased with profits from the Directory advertising, which have now been planted and wild flowers sown. The fence nearest Oakley Kindergarten will be replaced in the summer and we are working on granting a licence for the Kindergarten to use the meadow for organised forest school activities.

### **Celebrations**

Last summer we celebrated the Platinum jubilee of the Queen with a well-attended beacon event on the field near Browns wood in partnership with Clapham Parish Council. It was wonderful that we could do that in light of the queen's death in September. We were able to mark the new King's accession with an official proclamation ceremony in St Marys church. Thank you to the bell-ringers who at very short notice were able to ring the bells which helped to make it a very moving and memorable occasion.

This year the Coronation will be marked in the village with street parties plus organised events at the Sports and Social club and I am sure at the Bedford Arms.

It was also good to be back in St Marys' church for the village Christmas lights switch on. Thank you to everyone who provided refreshments in the church after the switch on and to the village organisations who supplied beautiful wreaths to decorate it.

### **Volunteers**

We are very lucky in this village to have a large number of volunteers who make village life so

special. We have a huge variety of groups who are run by amazing volunteers as shown in the annual village directory, which in itself is produced by Parish Councillor Sara Fardon and a group of volunteers. Thank you to everyone who gives their time in this way to run these groups. On behalf of the parish council:- we have Bill Chalker who does a magnificent job of producing our quarterly Village news; Dave Ursell who took care of the war memorial and Patrick Knight who has taken over from him; Dawn Pither and her team ran the youth club which has now been taken over by Sonya Playford and her team; plus all of the litter pickers who have a never ending job of helping to keep our village tidy. We also arranged a community village litter pick

### **Village Environment**

Further on the environment, we adopted new environmental and memorial seat policies this year. You can find them on our web site. We have also written to the Environment Agency to object to the sewage discharge into the river. The speed indicator sign which moves around the village is being converted from battery to solar power.

Over the year, we have been working with the Borough council to try and get the parking issues on The Furlong resolved along with the drainage issues in Highfield Road and Pavenham Road. We also supported the Borough council's request to turn off the lights on The Furlong between midnight and 5:30am, in line with the rest of the village.

On East West Rail, the parish council is a member of the local representatives group and councillors have attended each meeting and reported back. We are now told to expect a decision in May (overleaf) on the route option that has been chosen.

We have been involved in several large planning consultations this year. The NDP was reviewed to give us stronger evidence to object to large developments. We hope that the Planning inspector recognises this at the forth coming planning appeal on land which we know as the Farmers field on Station Road. We have objected to the 40 houses proposed as it is over the 30 that we have included in the NDP. We will be submitting our evidence to the appeal in support of our objection.

Continued on Page 4

### **Parish Clerk's Working Hours**

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

## Chairs Report Continued :-

We have also been involved in consulting with Lincroft and Oakley Primary to ensure that the schools can develop their facilities without causing detriment to residents around.

Recently we joined with Clapham Parish Council to discuss the new development of 500 houses on Milton Hill, which is in their NDP. The developer there has offered to enhance the footpath between Clapham and Oakley, along Lovell Road but both councils are also asking for a footpath along Highfield Road between the villages.

We were told at the meeting that the developers have costed it at £200,000 which they are unlikely to fund, but both councils are continuing to press for this.

The parish council has limited funds available to local organisations which can be applied for from the clerk. Last year, the parish council gave grants to the village hall, the ORA, Country Days (for local children to access a nature project at Felmersham), Oakley Day centre, Oakley Kindergarten and the Youth Club. A poppy wreath was also purchased from the Royal British Legion.

I would like to thank Ann for her work as clerk to the Parish Council. "

## Current Agenda

But what about our current agenda?

## Yellow Lines and Parking

As ever selfish or thoughtless parking continues to cause problems for others. We have been engaging with a resident in The Furlong over the last few months and recently a meeting with Bedford Borough Council was held to look at how parking issues could be solved. The Borough has suggested double yellow lines - lighter in colour and narrower, therefore less intrusive, but still enforceable.

Vehicles are being parked too close the end of The Furlong making it difficult and dangerous to access into the Furlong or out onto Pavenham Road. Also within The Furlong, some residents were finding it difficult to access their property. We are awaiting information from the Borough and we plan to discuss this as an agenda item in June.

Continuing on the yellow line theme, a resident has drawn to our attention the fading yellow lines in the vicinity of the post office. Vehicles are parking on them and it is making it dangerous for drivers to pull out of Reynes Drive into the High Street as views are obstructed. It is also not uncommon to see vehicles parked on the drop down kerbs for disabled people on the same junction. We have asked the Borough Council to refresh the lines.

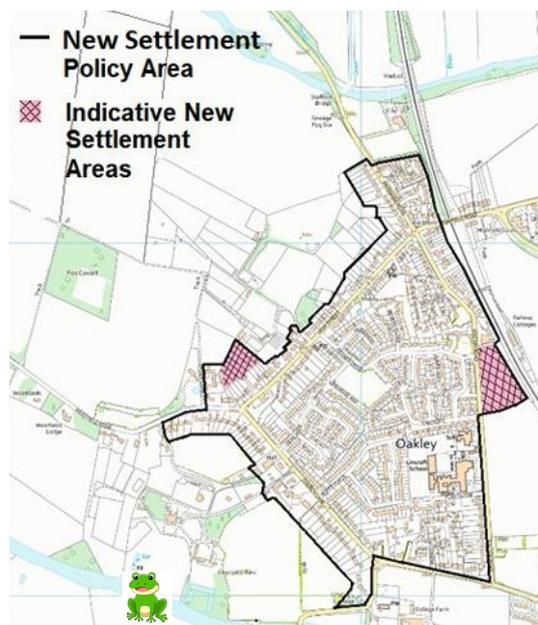
## Congestion

We know there is a lot of congestion in Lincroft as well, particularly on school pick up and drop off times, and this will be on the parish council agenda next month.

Parking is a challenge in today's world. It often does not take much to park a little more considerately, to walk a couple of hundred yards further or to consider whether you are making things more difficult for others before you park. The Post Office area, The Furlong and Lincroft are just some of the hotspots in the village, but my call is for everyone to consider your own responsibility to other road users and pedestrians.

## Planning

You may be aware that there is to be a planning inquiry around the application to build around 40 houses [that is 10 additional houses] in Station Road. (See Jane's comment above) Bedford Borough Council have advised that concerns about noise from the railway and highways layout had been resolved with the appellant and the contents of the legal agreement were expected to be resolved before the Inquiry opened. This means the Inquiry will take place on a single day. We have reiterated our views to the new Mayor, the Chief Officer for Planning, Infrastructure & Economic Growth and Planning Officer that that the appeal should be dismissed as additional housing is not allocated in the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) nor required by Bedford Borough Council Local Plans 2030 and 2040.



Residents are every welcome to come and observe parish Council Meetings, or to speak at the public open session if you wish to bring something to our attention.

Thank you.

Sara Fardon, Chair

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# Borough Council News

## Thank you

At the recent local elections in May, Oakley and Clapham villages were brought together in one ward represented by two councillors. Jon Abbott and Jane Walker were elected. Thank you to everyone who supported us and to the kind words of congratulations we have received since the election. We have worked together as ward councillor and chair of the parish councillor for several years, so will continue working together at the Borough council for the good of the village. Please contact either of us if you need help with Borough Council issues.

## Tom Wootton becomes Bedford Borough's New Mayor

Boundary changes saw an extra six seats created across the borough. The results are as follows:

Mayor:

Tom Wootton (Conservative)

Councillors:

14 Labour councillors (+3)

13 Conservative councillors (+2)

13 LibDem councillors (-2)

3 Green councillors (+1)

2 Independent councillors (+1)

One seat is currently undecided, Wyboston, this is because the winning candidate there, Tom Wootton, was also elected mayor and so has relinquished his seat. A by-election will take place on 29<sup>th</sup> June, to decide the Councillor.

## East West rail route announcement

On Friday 26th May, East West Rail announced that they are going ahead with the Northern route of the rail line to Cambridge. This will be on 6 tracks and will go north through the Poets area of the town and across Paula Ratcliffe way, at Clapham. They have selected alignment number 1. There will be a local information event that is open to the public, at Bedford Heights on Manton Lane on 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2pm to 8pm.

## Local Plan 2040

The new Mayor previously voted not to submit the Plan for examination, but has taken legal advice and considered the risks associated with not progressing the plan, and has decided to continue with the examination as programmed. So, the Local Plan moves to the examination stage in June & September with hearings taking place in two blocks. Block 1 – Week 1 12-16<sup>th</sup> June, Week 2 19-23<sup>rd</sup> June and Block 2 Week 3 11-15<sup>th</sup> September, Week 4 18-22<sup>nd</sup> September.

For more information visit :

[www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2040-examination](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2040-examination)

## **Jane Walker**

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Facebook: Cllr Jane Walker

## **Jon Abbott**

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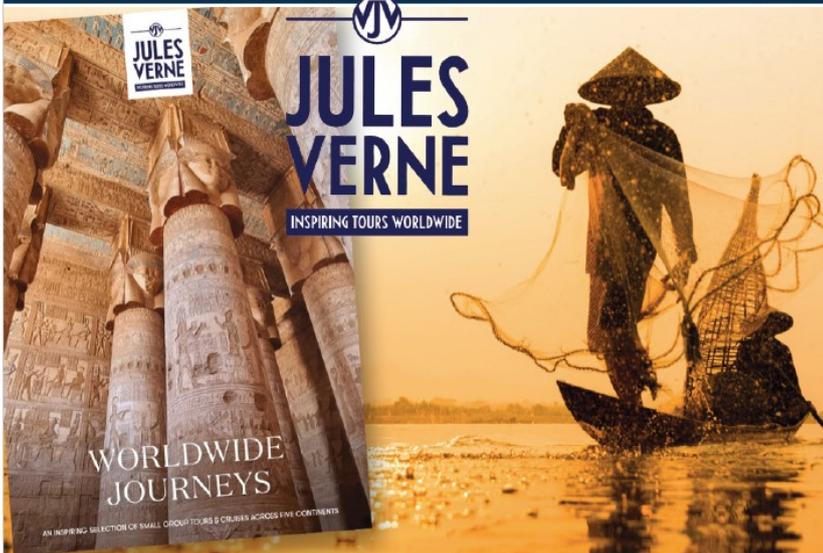
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### Steve's Snippet No.65

Last issue's cryptic clue was, "I hear a tree lapped by sea": the answer is, "beech".

The £10 prize was won by Ellen, who was delighted, telling me that she usually never wins anything.

This issue's cryptic clue is actually two clues for two words.

Have a go, and email me the answers. I will select an email at random after the 1st of July, to give all participants an equal chance.

1. Undisputable evidence of a scam affecting a Greek island (8 letters)
2. Countryside beyond words (8 letters)

[sbnicholas@gmail.com](mailto:sbnicholas@gmail.com)



## 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).

## Cameo Walks

Members and friends of Cameo have been enjoying monthly walks in the beautiful Bedfordshire countryside, followed by very good pub lunches and, most recently, a delicious afternoon tea.

We began in February 2023 with a route from The Fox in Carlton to Chellington, with its glorious views over the Ouse valley and the lakes of Harrold and Odell Country Park.

Our Turvey circular walk in March took us from The Three Fyshes through a rural and undulating landscape, reminiscent of the Cotswolds but certainly much less trodden!

April saw us at The Prince of Wales in Bromham, setting off for a hike to Stagsden. We passed four woods en route with tantalising glimpses of the bluebells to come. A few of us couldn't resist repeating the route in reverse some time later when we were rewarded with the anticipated swathes of blue.

In May we followed the river from Willington to Great Barford - how lucky we are that so many miles of the magnificent Great Ouse are accessible to us. Back at Willington Methodist Church, afternoon tea awaited us - a veritable feast!



Near Turvey



Bromham

Further walks are planned for 16 June and 10 July. We are all busy people with regular commitments so our outings take place on different days of the week to accommodate everyone.

Our routes are 4 - 6 miles in length, taking around 2 - 2.5 hours. Anyone unable to undertake the distances involved is welcome to come

along to the meal venue, maybe arranging a shorter stroll beforehand. Car lifts are often available, with a small donation to drivers towards fuel costs.



Great Barford

If you are interested in joining us, please contact Phyllis Jones at [phylmaj@gmail.com](mailto:phylmaj@gmail.com) to be added to the CAMEO mailing list or me at [anneyoungman@btinternet.com](mailto:anneyoungman@btinternet.com)

Anne Youngman

## Phantom Sprayer

When I look on the Village Facebook page I see many comments about the distress caused by dog mess left on the pavement in the High Street, also complaints about mess outside Lincroft. Our pavements are not very wide and this makes it more difficult for people to avoid treading in the mess, particularly with the way the children leave school in large numbers all with their heads in their mobile phones. It would be wonderful if every dog owner just automatically picked up and properly disposed of their dogs leavings.



I see the Ruffs Furze Green sometimes seems to collect these little piles - just where the children want to kick their football around. There is a red bin on the green **so there is no excuse** not to pick up and dispose of your bags.

Summer is around the corner, we hope, so **please train your children**, if they are going to walk the family pet, the proper way to pick up and dispose of what their dog leaves on the pavement or grass.

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## Sent in by a concerned Villager



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As there is no path on the other side of the High Street and this is a regularly used path it is certainly anti-social and puts pedestrians, especially those with children, in danger. Please do not park like this.

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## Village Hall Face-Lift

Over the last year, Oakley Village Hall has undergone a much-needed facelift.

The work started last summer, when the Hall closed for a week while the maple strip floor in the Main Hall was fully renovated and restored to its original condition and lustre. This made a vast difference to the look of the hall and made it easier to maintain.

The interior of the building was completely repainted over a few weeks in early Spring and to complement the new colour scheme we installed new curtains throughout. All the rooms now look a lot fresher and we are delighted with the compliments we are receiving from users.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Hall.

Ruth Bender



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## Oakley Gardening Club

Programme from June to September

15th June. Cotton Manor

11th July. Cambridge Botanical Gardens

23rd August. Lamport Hall

12th September. Kathy Browns Garden

October AGM to be arranged

An Email will be sent to all members in due course.

Denise Hookham

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## Down Memory Lane from July 1994

### Village council wins top prize in its 100th year



● Zara Smyth won the fancy dress. Picture: 10153-11



● Oakley Brownies. Picture: 10153-5



● Oakley Parish Council won the prize for the best float. Picture: 10153-34

PARISH councillors were the toast of their village on Saturday when they won first prize for their carnival float.

Dressed up as hippies, teddy boys, Edwardian gents and more besides, they illustrated 100 years of Oakley parish council.

The Oakley carnival parade found a winner in their float with the Oakley Club in second, with a theme of Into Europe.

Other floats on parade were provided by Clapham RUFC, Cophorne Village People, Oakley Brownies and more vehicles and walking tableaux.

King and queen for the day were Ben Lenehan and Samantha Clarke from the village lower school. They were transported by limousine.

The Oakley knock-out competition was held as usual in the afternoon and won by the defending champions, the Herd of Nicks.

During a barbecue, which started on Friday evening and continued again on the Saturday, more than 1000 items were cooked and on the sunny Saturday itself some 600 cans of cola were sold.

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## Down Memory Lane

### Oakley Cricket Club .... over and out .....

The quintessential English summer would include the sound of leather on willow, cucumber sandwiches, the smell of freshly mown grass and the excited shouts of "howzat" !! Indeed cricket has historically been a major part of village life and for decades many villages boasted a cricket team. Oakley was no different. Tradition saw sons following fathers and many Oakley families have represented the village team throughout the generations. Familiar Oakley family names such as Saunders, Youngman, Hough, Brown, Williamson, Sutherland, Hulatt, and my own, Worker, to name but a few, have appeared at some point in the Oakley scorebook.

Formed in 1899 by Rowland Prothero the first record of success was in 1958 when Oakley won the Bedford and District Cricket League Division 4. They had to wait until 1976 for their first major success.



1976 was renowned for being one of the driest and hottest summers in history resulting in hose pipe bans, stand pipes in the streets and plagues of ladybirds. That season the club temporarily played on Lincroft School Playing field. The previous pitch was near the top of the current playing field and accessed in Westfield Road but had to be vacated to allow the building of new houses in Church Lane and Westfield Road. The temporary home proved of benefit and

the club won the Bedford and District Premier League and League Cup double and the associated photograph shows the players receiving their trophies. The club were soon able to move back to a newly laid and positioned pitch, and the developing Oakley Recreation Association facilities, in today's playing field in Church Lane.

As the village expanded the cricket club also grew to consist of two Saturday senior sides, a Sunday side playing friendlies, a mid week team and a junior side.

During the 1980's the first and second teams won cups and their respective divisions. However, the most successful period in the club's history came during the 1990s. The Premier League was won in 1992 and, emulating the 1976 team, the Premier League and Cup double was achieved in 1993 and 1994. As a result of dominance on the pitch and off field facilities that were envied by many clubs the decision was made in 1995 to leave the Bedford and District league and play in the more competitive Ouse Valley league taking them to many grounds in Milton Keynes and the surrounding area.



The most successful season in the club's history came in 1996 when they won the Ouse Valley Premier League and the League's Cup final at Campbell Park Milton Keynes, see colour photo.

Today international cricket is thriving as is the professional franchise cricket played around the world. However, grass roots cricket is diminishing rapidly for a number of reasons; kit costs, the necessary time to prepare the wicket and outfield, alternative recreational options and the lack of desire to spend hours fielding when you may get out to a first ball duck when batting !! As a result the number of village clubs has diminished over the last few years. Sadly, despite on field successes and fantastic facilities, Oakley has also been adversely affected and has not had a cricket club for nearly a decade.

Richard Worker

# Oakley Show 2023

Preparations are well under way for the Oakley Show 2023 and you should have received the programme along with this newsletter.



We have a new award for this year, it is the Wendy Gater cup for the Best Kept Allotment on the Oakley site, in memory of our much missed friend and committee member.

The plots will be judged during the last week of August and the winner will be announced at the Show.

The rules have been changed slightly this year which means that you can now enter 2 exhibits in any class but you will only be able to win 1 prize in a class, we hope this will help those of you who cannot decide which of your exhibits to enter.

We have chosen a slightly different title for this year's photographic class and look forward to seeing some interesting entries.

We would like to remind all the youngsters in the village that under 16 year olds can enter any of the classes for free although their age will only be taken into account in the childrens' classes.

Our facebook page 'Oakley Show' will be regularly updated and if you have any questions you can either send us a message or contact us by phone or email as detailed in the programme.

We look forward to seeing you all on the 10th September.

The Oakley Show Committee



## Coronation Pillar Box

CAMEO and the Coronation

One of our CAMEO members Alwyn has been busy knitting a King and Queen for the Post-box outside the Oakley post office, sadly when she came to fit it, it would not sit on the post box after all, so Bali kindly displayed the lovely figures inside the shop.

I do hope everyone will visit the Post Office and take a look at the beautiful figures.

Phyllis Jones



## Coronation Preparations

A big Thank You goes to Tim and Margaret Pedley on behalf of the Parish Council for spending over four hours in the showery rain on Friday afternoon 5th May, the eve of the King's Coronation, weeding and clearing leaves and other rubbish from in and around the War Memorial.

Sara Fardon , Chair

## OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

### Summary of Accounts - Financial Year ending 31 March 2023

Opening Bank Balances	
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/22	£23,823.00
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/22	£7,256.68
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/22	£59,999.74
Hampshire Bank investment bond	£83,748.89
less uncleared payments	£1,360.27
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£173,468.04</b>

Receipts	
£	
Precept	£55,750.00
Agency Services (Grasscutting - Bedford BC)	£1,200.00
Allotments (rent)	£1,296.43
Community Infrastructure Levy	£0.00
Donations	£50.00
Interest	£1,296.24
Newsletter & Directory advertisements and sponsorship	£6,237.00
VAT recovered from 2021/22	£3,690.54
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£69,520.21</b>

Payments	
£	
Administration (includes subscriptions)	£3,994.12
Insurance	£2,862.09
Grass Cutting	£10,225.85
Grounds/Maintenance (includes tree works)	£5,348.03
Wages, Tax, National Insurance, Pension	£26,088.42
§-137 Payments (grants to local organisations)	£6,618.00
Capital Spending (Speed sign and Jubilee tree plaque)	£798.00
Cricket Field & Riverside (rent - 2022/23 & 2023/24 for cricket field)	£1,812.62
Allotments	£2,202.04
Bus shelters	£0.00
Community Orchard	£48.00
Christmas lights	£3,265.00
Linch Furlong	£40.00
Play area (inspections & repairs)	£5,636.85
Publicity (Newsletter, Directory, Website)	£7,485.00
VAT refund due on above payments	£4,255.07
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>£80,679.09</b>

Closing Bank Balances	
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/23	£97,636.81
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/23	£7,288.61
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/23	£59,999.74
less uncleared payments	£2,616.00
<b>Total cash in hand</b>	<b>£162,309.16</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>£242,988.25</b>
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<b>Total</b>	<b>£242,988.25</b>
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£98,988 plus £21,675 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.



## 2022/23 Parish Council Accounts

In 2022/23 income amounted to £69,520.51 and expenditure to £80,679.09. Income decreased by approximately £25,046 largely because a £25,000 Bedford BC Rural Grant was received by the Parish Council for payment to Oakley Kindergarten (Pre-School) in 2021/22.

Expenditure decreased by approximately £5,043. The Rural Grant of £25,000 was paid by the Borough Council to Pre-School through the Parish Council accounts in 2021/22 and this was offset in 2022/23 by an increase in spending on tree works of £5,068 following an inspection of all the Council trees; an additional £4,487 spent on salaries; £3,885 on the Newsletter and Directory as the printing costs for the final Newsletter of 2021/22 and the 2021/22 Directory were not invoiced until 2022/23; an additional £2,960 spent on play equipment as we replaced the slide on the Green, which had begun to rot away due to its age, an extra £1,546 on grants to local organisations as the Youth Club had required less funding in 2021/22 following the 2020 Covid closure; an additional £965 on the playing field rent as both 2022/23 and 2023/24 payments fell into the 2022/23 financial year and £564 more on VAT payments largely because of the purchase of the new slide.

Donations totalling £6,618 were made to the Kindergarten, the Village Hall, the Youth Club, The Day Centre, the Oakley Recreational Association, Country Days (who run an access to nature project at Felmersham Nature Reserve) and the RBL for a poppy wreath.

## Merri Flowers

Hello Everyone.

Welcome to our Summer 2023 summary of what is going on at our cut flower and Christmas tree farm.

Boy hasn't the gardening weather been challenging. I swear our perennials are at least two weeks behind 2022. We would normally be Chelsea Chopping our Delphiniums the week of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, but this year our Delphiniums are not even in flower yet. The process of growing cut flowers from seeds has also been slow this year. Some stems that we usually find easy to grow have failed to germinate, whereas others have loved the cooler, duller days.



Thankfully, Mother Nature bounced back into action in May and planting up our Pick Your Own plots began at the end of May. We do not seem to have the rabbit problems we had last year when they ate a row of 200 sunflower plants overnight. This year they will not be able to get to them because we have hoop netted them!

I cannot believe this will be our seventh-year growing flowers. A mention in the Gardens Illustrated Magazine in February 2023 was totally unexpected. Why were we mentioned you might ask? Well, we achieved a mention as one of the best pick your own flower farms in the UK to visit, which saw a spike in Pick Your Own Experience bookings. If you have not visited our farm, it is what we do best from July to September.

If you are new to the village, and have not got a clue where we are, our farm is based up Queens Close behind the High Street (opposite Oakley Post Office). We are by appointment farm for Pick Your Own Experiences and sell our flowers to Friday Flower subscribers, DIY brides and local florists. Oh and let us not forget that we also create hand-tied bunches and Jam Jar arrangements of 100% MERRI flowers for local delivery or collection from the farm.

Finally, we are excited to announce that we will be re-launching workshops at our farm with an extremely locally (Oakley based) florist. We took time off from hosting workshops when Covid significantly hit our business, but this year seems like the right year to re-host workshops during our summer, autumn, and winter season. We will put a poster at the Post Office to let you know the dates, because we know not everyone is on social media.

Anyway, that is enough time spent writing this article. It is time for us to get back to planting out our grown from seed cut flower plants and weeding.

Wishing you a super Summer.

Rachelle & Julian Merrill, Merri Flowers, Oakley

07946 519737; [www.merriflowers.co.uk](http://www.merriflowers.co.uk)

### Do you keep pigs, even just as pets...?

Help to reduce the risk of African swine fever reaching pigs in the UK



#### Did you know?

African swine fever is present in a number of countries in Europe as well as Asia and Africa. It has led to the death of millions of pigs worldwide. It is highly contagious and fatal to pigs and if it reached the UK it would be devastating to our commercial pig industry, smallholders and pet pig keepers alike.

It is illegal to feed pigs with catering waste or kitchen scraps as these can transmit African swine fever as well as other serious diseases such as foot and mouth disease and classical swine fever.



#### Feed your pigs the right food



- ✗ Feed food scraps and catering waste from any restaurant or commercial kitchen (including vegan kitchens).
- ✗ Feed domestic kitchen waste or scraps.
- ✗ Feed raw, partially cooked or fully cooked meat and fish (including shellfish).
- ✗ Feed dog and cat food.



- ✓ Feed specially formulated commercial pig feed as a safe and easy way to give your pigs a balanced diet.
- ✓ Feed fruit and vegetable material that has never entered a kitchen and which has not come into contact with material of animal origin.

#### Practise good biosecurity

- Use dedicated clothing and boots for you and anyone coming onto your premises.
- Prevent vehicles or equipment from coming on to your premises unless cleaned and disinfected first.
- Ensure that people who look after or visit your pigs understand the disease risk of bringing back meat products and in particular wild boar meat or pork/pork products from affected countries. Trade of pork from affected areas in these countries is illegal.
- Don't bring meat products onto the farm to avoid accidental access to pigs.



#### And remember

You must register your pigs with the Animal and Plant Health Agency. Visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/keeping-a-pet-pig-or-micropig](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/keeping-a-pet-pig-or-micropig)

Seek veterinary advice promptly if your pigs are unwell.

More information about African swine fever can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/african-swine-fever](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/african-swine-fever).



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<https://www.tudorrosepatchwork.co.uk>**

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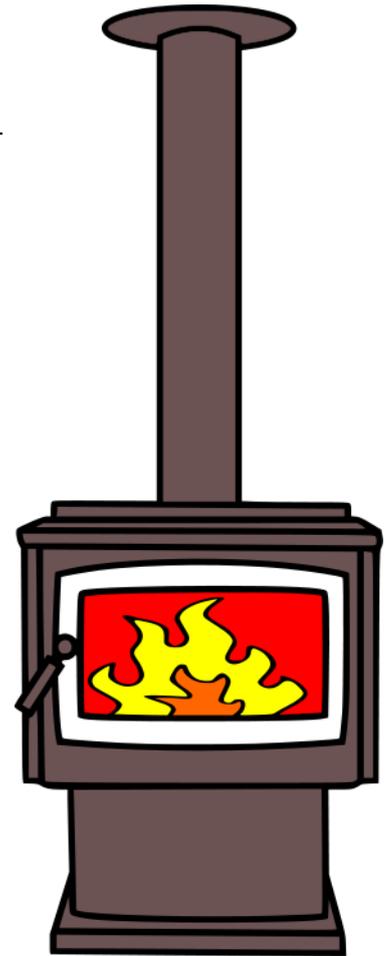
# Reducing pollution from wood burners and open fires in Bedford Borough homes

Open fires and wood-burning or multi-fuel stoves have risen in popularity over recent years. There are many benefits for users but burning at home contributes to a type of pollutant called fine particulate matter. This is present in smoke and the tiny particles can harm the health of people that breath it in.

Some simple measures can be taken to lower any negative impacts of home burning. These can reduce pollution released inside people's homes and to the wider environment. They can also lead to lower costs, by using less fuel, and reduce the risk of chimney fires.

- Burn dry wood - Wet or damp wood creates smoke and increases harmful particulates when burned. This can damage stoves and chimneys. It also means less heat is created to warm the home
- Use approved solid fuels – See the link below for a Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) guide
- Do not burn treated waste wood such as pallets, fence panels etc. - These can create other harmful fumes and toxic pollutants in your home and from your chimney as they burn
- Regularly maintain and service your stove – During use soot and tar can build up, reducing performance.

People who are already using an open fire or wood-burning stove at home, or anyone considering installing one, will need to understand which fuels and stoves can be used. This information, along with other relevant regulations, can be found at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/burnbetter/>.



## Linch Furlong

In March 2023 violets were out in force, a little later this year. However the cowslips were out a little earlier in April. At the moment there is Hawthorn and the Rowan tree is full of blossom. Cowslips are setting seeds. Buttercups, daisies, speedwell and birds foot trefoil, a lovely yellow flower with red edges, are all flowering. Bitter Vetch with reddish/purple flowers is starting to bloom. I have not seen the grass vetchling, a pink flower on the tip of a grass like stem yet. I am looking forward to red clover, ox eye daisies and scabious. Of course the bee and pyramid orchids should be seen soon. Look for hedge and lady's bedstraw putting forward clouds of frothy flowers.

There are many flowers depicted on the notice board [big thank you to Phyllis Jones for recently adding the flower chart]. See how many you can see. I am looking forward to seeing and collecting blackberries, crab-apples and also beech nuts which I collected last year. Beech nuts and acorns used to be ground down into flour in medieval times and during the 17th to the 20th centuries by the poor people in the countryside. In the Community Orchard the pear and apple trees have been in full blossom. People in the allotments have been hard at work growing crops.

Apple Tree



Birds Foot Trefoil



Birds Eye Speedwell



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Web : [www.theoldschooloakley.org.uk](http://www.theoldschooloakley.org.uk)



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Applicants over the age of 60 are invited to apply to go on 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



## The Villager Minibus

### A new Villager bus has been ordered!!!

We are delighted to be able to announce that our existing bus, which has served our community well, is being replaced.



The new **ORION** bus has several new features including:

- **Low floor accessibility**
- **Folding ramp for easy wheel chair access**
- **WIFI & USB sockets by every seat**

We hope to have the bus in service in July!

#### The Villager Minibus

Provides regular bus services for the local community and has Sharnbrook as its base. Transport services cover town and villages throughout North-Bedfordshire based on a scheduled timetable. The service is run and operated by volunteers.

**Anyone can use the bus and with a bus pass is completely FREE.**

Our website <https://www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk/> or scan QR code below, for the scheduled time tables and an opportunity to book yourself a seat. Alternatively you can ring Bedford Borough Council on 01234 718005 who will book a seat on your behalf or be at one of the bus stop at the appropriate time.

If you have any questions please give us call on our enquiry line 01234 708191

We look forward to seeing you on one of our trips.

### The Villager Minibus (Sharnbrook) Ltd

**About the Villager Minibus. Registers address: Villager Minibus (Sharnbrook) Ltd Sharnbrook Academy, Odell Road, Bedford MK44 1JL Villager Minibus (Sharnbrook) Ltd is governed by the Co-operative and Community Benefits Societies Act 2014 Company number: IP27684R**

The Villager Minibus Time Table for Oakley (Free with a bus pass)									
Route	Day in the Month	DEPARTS	TIME	ARRIVES	TIME	DEPARTS	TIME	ARRIVES	TIME
VL6	4th Tuesday	Oakley High Street	09:05	Milton Keynes Shopping centre	10:00	Milton Keynes Shopping centre	12:30	Oakley Memorial	13:23
		Oakley Memorial	09:07	Milton Keynes Shopping centre	10:00	Milton Keynes Shopping centre	12:30	Oakley High Street	13:25

In addition to the bus stops above you can join the bus at **any point** along the route by arrangement. Please call 01234 708191 for a return call and tell us where you would like to join the bus. If you want to guarantee a seat please visit our website [www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk](https://www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk/) and book your seat by following the instructions. You are able to book for more than one passenger! We look forward to seeing you soon on one of our trips.

For full details see [www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk](https://www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk/), e-mail us: [mail@sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk](mailto:mail@sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk) or ring 01234708191 for a return call

# Oakley Kindergarten News



It is our third term in the new setting and we have grown to have over sixty children on our books. Twenty-five of our older children will leave us in July. They will go onto a variety of primary schools and the transition process for this has already started, with arrangements made for the children's new teachers to visit them in the kindergarten.

Mrs Molyneux retired in April, after seven years with us and we wish her a long and healthy retirement. We would like to welcome Mrs Hale, who has joined us as a full-time Level 3 Practitioner and Miss Passmore who has joined us as our Kindergarten Cook. We recently received a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This has enabled us to start our Oakley Kindergarten Nature Reserve Project within the kindergarten outdoor space and to preserve the heritage of the farmland that we have diversified.

The first part of this project was to preserve and reinstate the original Victorian fence, which had been in situ since the 1870s. New uprights were made, the bow top panels were reconditioned and the fence was re-erected. The original farm equipment that includes a horse drawn seed drill and straw chopper had been in the sheep shed, that originally sat on the land. These have been rescued and moved back to the site to be preserved for future generations. The second part of the project is to promote environmental sustainability and to improve the biodiversity of our natural environment to help combat climate change. We aim to teach the next generation through resources, opportunities and experiences, how to make positive changes regarding the environment. We will do this by giving all children that attend our setting the opportunity to learn about the natural world.

By clearing the forest area and planting saplings we have made a suitable environment that children can access daily (Fairytale Forest). The branches that have been cleared have created a 'Logpile house' habitat. The kitchen garden (Cockleshell Garden) that we have created with raised beds for accessible access have provided an inclusive space, where children are given the opportunity to participate in long-term growing projects. This is in addition to our chicken who children are able to help look after and collect her eggs. The children have helped to plant some seed potatoes and tomatoes, so far, and we hope that this area will help to promote healthy eating and life choices too. Our new compost bins help to teach children the importance of sustainability and recycling. We now have two pond habitats on the site. One is part of the sustainable urban drainage system for the building (Pat's Pond) where rainwater is collected. This will create a home for amphibians and wild birds for the children to observe and identify. Our raised pond, which is filled with rainwater, should attract species such as Water Boatmen and May and Dragon Flies. In the forest, we now have a hedgehog house for Mrs Tiggywinkle to inhabit and our birdfeeders to support the local wildlife. We have also created a mound (Muffet's Tuffet) where the sheep graze and the children can climb to develop their gross motor skills.

Literacy is so important to us in Kindergarten that we have recreated features from our favourite books, stories, rhymes and people! The next feature will be a nod to Mr McGregor's Garden, so beware little rabbits! Our signpost to the Fairytale Forest, Cockleshell Garden, Logpile House, Muffet's Tuffet, the Trip Trap Bridge and Pat's Pond is an addition to make our outside area a literacy rich environment too. We would like to thank the National Lottery Heritage Grant and anyone who plays the lottery for making this all possible! We would also like to thank the hard-working volunteers who have given up their weekends to help us, as well as help and advice from Patrick Knight.



We will be holding an Open Morning on Saturday 22nd July between 10am and midday and we would like to invite as many of you as possible to come and have a look around at this wonderful facility within our village.

**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 see details on our website with a link to Childcare choices or alternatively you can contact the Family Information Service 0800 023 2057  
Sally Martiello

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### ST MARY'S FILM NIGHT & OPEN DAY

Are you curious about the history of St Mary's? Or interested in the recent clock restoration?

Sat 24th June 7pm: Film Night in St Mary's. Learn about the recent clock restoration & see a film of the clock in operation. Refreshments available: entry free but donations welcome.

Please contact Graham Palmer to save a space (number at foot of page).

Sun 25th June 2- 5pm: Our historic village church will be open—all visitors welcome! Hear about the history of the church, watch and hear the bells ringing & the church organ playing, and see historic registers.

Refreshments available at Teas in Church (at usual price)

### TEAS IN CHURCH

St Mary's popular 'Teas in Church' is back! Sundays from 3.30pm to 5pm, begins 11th June. Why not come along and enjoy delicious refreshments in beautiful surroundings, while supporting your local church?



### MESSY CHURCH FOR ALL SUMMER PICNIC

Join us for our Messy Church for All Summer Picnic on Tues 27th June 3.30pm to 5.30pm at Lynch Furlong, Oakley

Picnic food provided—bring a rug to sit on!

Contact: Jan Follett 07740 863215



### FANCY ANOTHER CUPPA?

Oakley Methodist Church runs the following coffee groups:

'Coffee Stop' open every Thurs morning 10:30 to 12noon. Funds raised go to the Karibuni Trust.

Saturday Coffee Mornings  
June 24<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>  
10:30 to 12noon. All welcome!

\*For more details on all our events and services visit [www.bromhambenefice.org](http://www.bromhambenefice.org) or [www.northbedsmethodist.org.uk](http://www.northbedsmethodist.org.uk)

Facebook: CofE Benefice for Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden

Instagram: bromhambenefice



### CONTACTS

St Mary's: Revd. Catherine Wilson: 01234 825665 [vicar@bromhambenefice.org](mailto:vicar@bromhambenefice.org)  
Church Wardens: Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535  
Administrator Sarah: 07494 069540 [administrator@bromhambenefice.org](mailto:administrator@bromhambenefice.org)

Oakley Methodist Church:  
Revd Chris Sandy: 01234 860464 [christopher.sandy@methodist.org.uk](mailto:christopher.sandy@methodist.org.uk)  
Church Steward: Jeanette Letch 825204

## Oakley Allotments

Spring is a great time to get started with allotment gardening. The weather is starting to warm up, and the days are getting longer, which means that there is more time to spend in the garden. There are a number of things that you can do to prepare your allotment for spring, and to get your plants off to a good start.

Soil is often best prepared in the autumn. This involves digging it over and adding compost or manure, depending on what type of crops you intend to grow. This will help to improve the drainage and fertility of the soil, which will benefit your plants. If you have a heavy clay soil (yes, we have!), you may also need to add some sharp-sand or grit to improve drainage.

Once you have prepared the soil, you need to clear away any weeds. Weeds can compete with your plants for water and nutrients, so it is important to get rid of them as soon as possible. You can either pull them up by hand, dig thoroughly to remove deep roots (like bindweed) and then use a hoe regularly to prevent new weeds from establishing themselves.

Once the soil is prepared and the weeds have been cleared away, you can start sowing seeds. There are a number of different vegetables that you can sow in spring, including:

Potatoes can be planted in the ground in early spring, once the soil has warmed up: the old adage is to plant your potatoes on Good Friday, which is sound advice.

Carrots can be sown directly in the ground in spring, after the last frost. We sow seeds in large pots or deep beds of well-drained, sandy soil. A poor soil forces root growth as otherwise you can get too much foliage and smaller carrots.

Lettuce can be sown directly in the ground in spring, as soon as the soil is workable. Slugs and snails love lettuce too – welcome to the battle!

Peas can be sown directly in the ground in spring, as soon as the soil is workable.

Beans can be sown directly in the ground in spring, as soon as the soil is workable.

If you have started your seeds indoors, you can plant them out in your allotment in spring. Be sure to harden them off before planting them out, by gradually exposing them to the outdoors for longer periods of time.

Once your plants are in the ground, it is important to water them regularly. The amount of water that they need will vary depending on the type of plants that you are growing, the weather conditions, and the type of soil that you have.

You may need to fertilize your plants in spring. The type of fertilizer that you use will depend on the type of plants that you are growing. You can



either use a liquid fertilizer, or a slow-release fertilizer.

It is important to protect your plants from pests and diseases. There are a number of different things that you can do to do this, including: Sow resistant varieties: There are a number of different varieties of vegetables that are resistant to pests and diseases. By sowing resistant varieties, you can help to reduce the risk of your plants being affected.

Rotate your crops: Rotating your crops helps to prevent pests and diseases from building up in the soil.

Use companion planting: Companion planting is the practice of planting certain types of plants together, which can help to deter pests and diseases.

Inspect your plants regularly: Inspect your plants regularly for signs of pests and diseases. If you see any problems, take action immediately to prevent them from spreading.

By following these tips, you can help to ensure that your allotment garden is a success in spring. With a little care and attention, you will be harvesting your own fresh vegetables in no time.

Our allotment has been hard work to prepare this year as it has been unexpectedly wet (and very windy) after the dry start. We were unable to do much work and suddenly the weeds started growing at a prodigious rate. Now, with everything under more control, we have lots of ground planted and look forward to what this new season will bring.

We have no vacant plots at the moment – if you would like an allotment please contact Ann Paice or me and we can add you to our short waiting-list. In the next issue I hope to include a report on the progress an earlier contributor has made with her new allotment project. Oakley Village Show will include an award for Best Kept Oakley Allotment, in memory of Wendy Gater. The allotments will be judged at the end of August.

Steve Nicholas

(Article prepared with the assistance of Bard, Google's AI Large Language Model)



The train leaves Bedford for Farringdon at 9.04 a.m. and arrives at Farringdon at 10.14 a.m.

Our guide Charlie de Wet will meet us at Farringdon Station and will lead us to Charterhouse which will take about 8 minutes. Expected time of arrival 10.30 a.m. Tea or coffee will be available upon arrival as well as the use of facilities. The tour of Charterhouse is due to begin at 11.00 a.m. and will last for about an hour. The cost per head for the trip to Charterhouse and Dr Johnson's House is £21.50 in total.

The group will then be led by Charlie to Dr Johnson's house in Gough Square. . This will take about 30 minutes passing by the building works of the new London Museum. Dr. Johnson's house is just off Fleet Street. There are plenty of the usual places to have lunch in the area including Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, the Punch Tavern and Ye Olde Bell for more substantial meals.

The visit has been arranged for 2.30 p.m. Charlie has very kindly agree to waive her fee and has asked for a donation to be made to the charity Carers UK. Might I suggest a payment of £50.00 in total from the group. There will be 14 people on the trip, and they have all paid. There is £123.00 in the Amigo fund. I have included this sum as a donation to the trip as I am not doing anything next year.

So the total cost is £21.50 per person which includes the visit to Charterhouse, Dr Johnson's house and the donation to Carers UK. If you have any queries, please telephone me on 01234 824959 or e-mail me at [jwdixon30@gmail.com](mailto:jwdixon30@gmail.com) .

John Dixon

**North Beds Ramblers** As the weather starts to improve how about getting outside and going for a walk? North Beds Ramblers are a local rambling group that have been walking in this area for 40 plus years.

We are a friendly group who walk every Saturday afternoon, usually covering about 6 – 7 miles. We have recently expanded our program and now also walk twice a month on a Saturday morning for those who want a longer walk of about 10 – 12 miles.

We are happy to welcome new members to our fold especially single walkers. The walks are fully guided by our volunteer walk leaders.

Unfortunately, we do not accept dogs on our walks unless they are assistance dog. If you plan to join us, please also bring a drink and a snack/ lunch as we always have a break.

If you want to find out more about us why not check us out <https://www.ramblers.org.uk/north-bedfordshire>, Facebook -

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/northbedsramblers> , twitter @NB\_Ramblers or alternatively call our walk secretary Margaret Sawyer on 07780 933729

Come and discover beautiful Bedfordshire with us, we look forward to meeting



you.

### North Beds Ramblers walk every Saturday

June 10th Walk from Hexton 10:00am 12 miles

Or Walk from Olney 1:30pm 6.5 miles

June 17th Walk from Lidlington Railway Station 1:30pm 6 miles

June 24th Walk from Streatley 10am 12 miles, Part of Bunyan Trail, meet 9:30 in Westoning

Or Walk from Biggleswade 1:30pm 6.75 miles

July 1st Walk from Amptill 10am 6 miles plus summer picnic

July 8th Walk from Riseley Fox and Hounds 10am 7 miles

Or Walk from Riseley Primary School 1:30pm 6.4 miles

Or join us all day from Riseley Fox and Hounds 10am 12 miles

July 15th Walk from Silsoe Church 1:30pm 7 miles

July 22nd Walk from St Ives Park and Ride 10am 12 miles

Or Walk from North Crawley Church 1:30pm 7 miles

July 29th Walk from St Neots 1:30pm 6.5 miles

# 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 Summer 2023

**Welcome** to our latest Newsletter. If anyone has access to the internet please visit our website, [www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com](http://www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com) The site is updated regularly with the latest news from the centre.

We also have a **Facebook** page. This will be updated with the latest news and photographs of events at the centre. The **Facebook** page can be found at [www.facebook.com/oakleyruraldaycentre](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.

We are all looking forward to some warmer weather and go for some short walks with the clients or sit in the beautiful grounds at the old school.

### PLACES AVAILABLE

Our Day Centre provides our older people with a place where they can make friends in a warm and comfortable atmosphere. A range of activities including crafts, entertainment, quizzes and good old conversation are at the heart of our day.

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

For details of costs and advice please contact Lynne on **01234 824935** or **07733 227374**.

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

### ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT

Since our last newsletter we have been taking part in many crafts and games. We have been making birthday cards, decorating coat hangers, egg cups and playing various word games which everyone enjoys. On Wednesday and Thursday we have chair based exercise classes. Our clients really enjoy taking part and everyone is feeling the benefit. Thanks to Ann and Gill for taking these classes.

We also celebrated the Kings Coronation. The hall was decorated with bunting and paper chains all made by our clients. We played some classic British songs, especially the Beatles! Our clients took part in a special Coronation word search and also a Royal quiz. We also had various old newspapers and photographs from the past celebrating Royal events which they really enjoyed looking through. We played Royal Family bingo with first prize being a celebratory tin of coronation biscuits and a smaller pack for second prize.

We continue to receive the support of Kempston Hammer Choir, the Wells Hollow Band and Terry who plays saxophone and Ukulele who regularly entertain us.

### SUPPORT THE DAY THROUGH EASY FUNDRAISING

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your small to large purchases – you could be raising free donations for Oakley Rural Day Centre with easyfundraising? There are over 7,000 brands on board ready to make a donation – including eBay, Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com and M&S – and it won't cost you a penny extra to help us raise funds.

#### All you need to do is:

1. Go to [easyfunding.org.uk](http://easyfunding.org.uk) and register on the site and choose the Oakley Rural Day Centre as your preferred charity.
2. Every time you shop online, go to easyfundraising first to find the site you want and start shopping.
3. After you've checked out, the brand will make a donation to Oakley Rural Day Centre at no extra cost to you whatsoever! There are no catches or hidden charges and Oakley Rural Day Centre will be really grateful for your donations.

**Thank you for your support.**



# Girlguiding in Oakley



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

If you would like more information about the individual units before you register your daughter, you can use the contact details below.



## 1st Oakley Rainbows (Wednesdays)

Unit contact: Amanda Keen (Assistant Leader) [oakleyclaphamrainbows@outlook.com](mailto:oakleyclaphamrainbows@outlook.com)



## 1st Oakley Brownies (Fridays)

Brownies have enjoyed the light evenings which have given us the chance to play games and do some activities outside. To finish off the Live Smart badge, Brownies became tool experts, even managing to put screws in straight to make a robot figure.

As we wondered how to mark the Coronation, Katrina from 'The Bee & Bottle,' came to our rescue. She generously provided the Brownies with mugs to decorate as a memory of the King's Coronation.

As is often the case, the Brownies impressed us with their creativity, producing a wide range of unique, but all equally stunning designs. Katrina then fired and glazed the mugs which provide Brownies with a lovely keepsake of May 6th 2023.



If you have a daughter aged 7-10 and would like to sign up for Brownies, please register on Go

<https://go.girlguiding.org.uk/>

Or contact Lindsay for further information

by email :

[oakleybrownies452@gmail.com](mailto:oakleybrownies452@gmail.com)

Lindsay Saunders



## Oakley Village Hall

Church Lane,  
Oakley,  
Bedfordshire, MK43 7RJ

A well-appointed village hall  
Main hall with stage and PA system  
(Main hall is air conditioned)

Separate meeting room with bar

Well equipped kitchen

For information and bookings  
please telephone 07788 796996



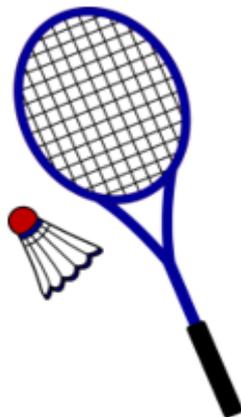
For all Pre-School Children  
At St Mary's Church Oakley on  
Thursdays during School Term 10am to 11.45

Crafts, Painting, Play, Music, Stories and a  
Healthy Snack plus tea/coffee for the adults

More detail from Dorothy Palmer at  
01234 823959



## OAKLEY BADMINTON CLUB



*Lincroft Sports Centre*

*Come and get warm, fixed charge !*

*Every Wednesday 7.30- 9.00pm*

*All ages and abilities welcome.*

*Tel. 07557 441206*

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Email: nigel.wille@sky.com



## News from the tower

A lot has happened up St Mary's bell tower since I last wrote!

The bells of St Mary's fell silent for a few weeks while the bell ropes were sent away to have their bottom halves replaced. That did not stop the Oakley Band of Ringers from practising though! We were invited to ring the bells of St James Church, Biddenham instead. It was good experience for us to ring eight bells, as St Mary's only has six bells.

The Coronation of King Charles III was celebrated by the ringing of church bells all over the country and the Ring for the King campaign encouraged lots of people to take up bellringing. We welcomed two new ringers into the Oakley band, and they have thrown themselves into learning the ropes, literally!

They have learnt the basics quickly and were confident enough to ring rounds (where the bells are rung in order) in our mini Coronation ringing tour of St Mary's, St Owen's in Bromham and St James in Biddenham, with cake and a cuppa in between.

If you would like to come along on a practice night to see what it is all about and to have a go, please contact our Tower Captain, Bill Sellars on 07980 745292 or email [thesellars@btinternet.com](mailto:thesellars@btinternet.com).

We practice on Friday evenings from 8pm to 9:15pm and ring on Sunday mornings before the services at St Mary's Church.

Shelley Eden





**SHARNBROOK  
MILL THEATRE**

Your award-winning, local theatre  
Patrons: Joanna David & Hugh Laurie CBE  
Registered charity 242164



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**Tuesday \*3<sup>rd</sup> - Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30pm**

**EVITA**

This multi-award winning musical charts the rise of the young Eva from poor, illegitimate child to ambitious actress, to the wife of The President of Argentina.

An international hit comes to Sharnbrook!

\*Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October is Charity Night; details on our website soon.

Tickets on sale from 1<sup>st</sup> JUNE

£17 (+ £1 booking fee) from:  
[www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/tickets](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/tickets)  
or Pick-a-Lily, Florist, Sharnbrook (in person)



A carer/ wheelchair discount of 50% is available;  
to book, please email: [boxoffice@sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk)





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The welcome return of the legendary local band **FYNNIUS FOGG** to our main stage on **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July, 8pm** Licensed bar open 7pm

This is a fundraising event for Sharnbrook Mill Theatre; Fynnus Fogg has kindly agreed not to charge a fee for the performance.



**Over 1,000 gigs performed!** They love playing hits such as: *Just One Look, Keep on Running, You've Lost That Loving Feeling and You Really Got Me.* Tickets £13.00 (+ £1 Booking fee) (Unreserved seats); book now at [www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk) or Pick-a-Lily, Florist, Sharnbrook (in person)

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**LITTLE WOMEN**  
By Louisa May Alcott  
Adapted by Scott Davidson  
**is our Winter Drama**

**Join us for the Play reading & Open Auditions**

This timeless classic, set in 1860 during the American Civil War, shares the story of the March girls, Meg, Jo, Amy and Beth, from childhood to maturity.

Please see [www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk) for details of the cast and characters: 7 women & 3 men

**Play reading:**  
Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm

**Auditions:**  
Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 10am  
Show dates: 28<sup>th</sup> November - 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

The next in the series of 'Lunch at The Mill'  
**WEDNESDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**  
12 for 12.30pm

**Fi's Ability**

A hilarious, heart-warming presentation by local author **FIONA RITCHIE**

PRECEDED BY  
2-COURSE LUNCH, TEA/COFFEE  
Wine and soft drinks available Raffle

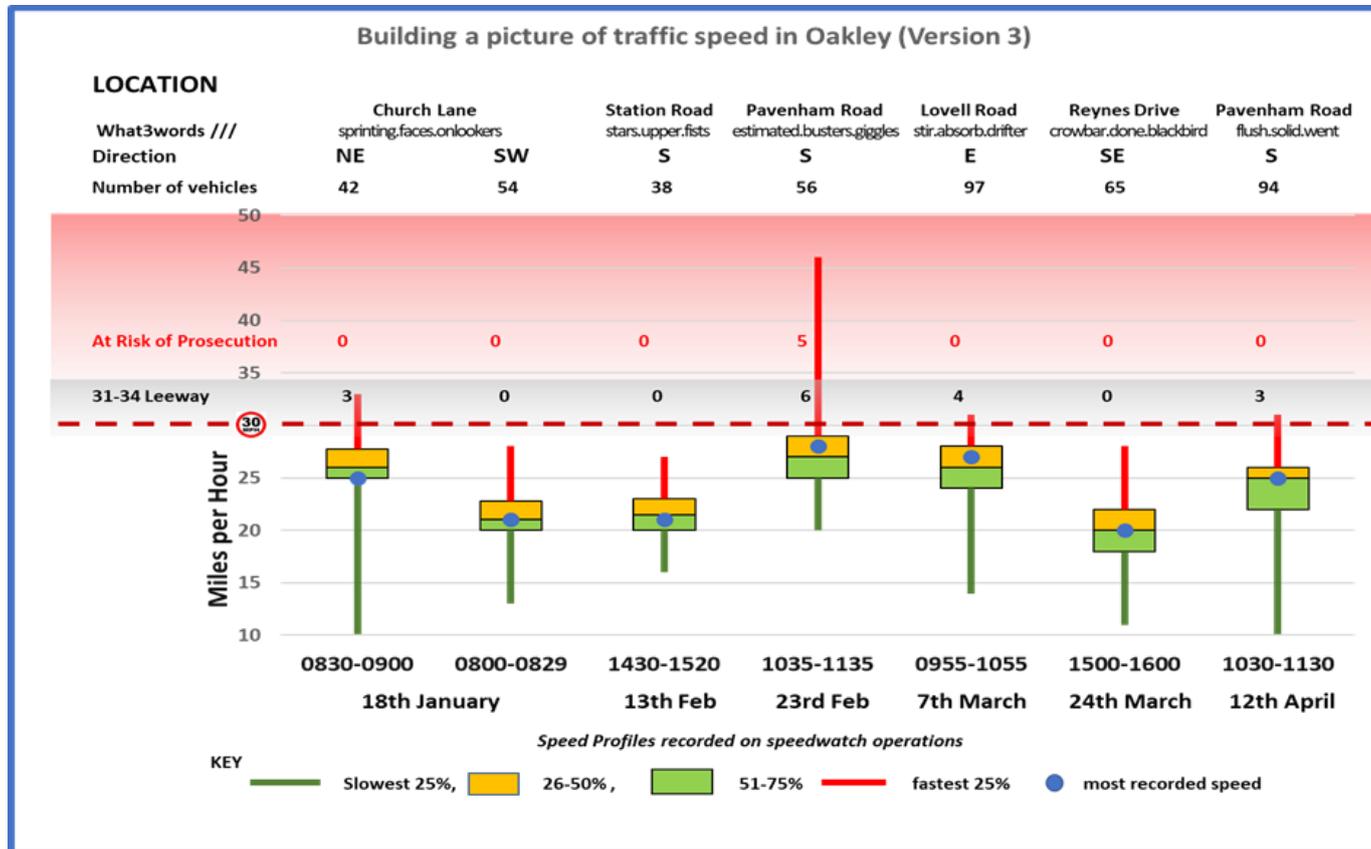
Tickets £18, to include lunch, from Brenda Stafford (01234) 823060  
[brenda.stafford@talk21.com](mailto:brenda.stafford@talk21.com)

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

## Speedwatch Report

Recently a few of us attended the Bedfordshire Community Watch meeting at Police Headquarters. It was good to hear the Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye express his thanks and support for the Watch Schemes. The Police Speedwatch Co-ordinator reminded us of the educational objectives of the Scheme and we hope that the detail in these reports of our activities goes some way to meeting that aim. The speed profiles are intended to visually represent the range and frequency of the speeds we are observing and help with making comparisons of these at various locations around



the village. Our latest offering appears below.

It is an interesting mixed bag of results. Just short of 450 vehicles were observed and of those 16 exceeded the 30mph limit. In 3 of the locations three quarters of the traffic was exceeding 24 mph. Church Lane SW results were affected by parked cars and a bus waiting at the bus stop for 15 minutes. In Station Road we had an unusually quiet afternoon. Speeds on Pavenham Road by the entrance to Willow Vale on 23rd February certainly raised eyebrows, though the second visit, on 12 April, being nearly 50 metres closer to the village, had obviously given more opportunity for the harsh braking so often observed on operations to be effective!

In our last report we promised to revisit the 40mph section of Highfield Road, which we did on 15th March. 20% of the 79 vehicles observed exceeded the limit and three speeds (46,48,51) were reported to the Police.

It is fairly clear from the location and direction of travel that generally those exceeding the speed limit in these operations are not residents of Oakley but passing through to and from the A6. However, before we get too complacent, we are getting reports from villagers regarding inappropriate speeds observed in our residential roads. This is at all times of the day, but especially during morning and evening peaks. Reynes Drive is particularly at risk as it is both residential and a through road and reports point to the worrying speeds being achieved on the straight stretch between the Green and the Post Office, particularly around school opening and closing times. Perhaps reminding ourselves of stopping distances in car lengths, (3 car lengths at 20mph, which doubles to 6 car lengths at 30mph) might result in more appropriate speeds on this stretch.

We must express our thanks for the warm and positive interactions we receive from residents during our operations. Your comments, concerns and feedback are much appreciated. Better still, you could come and join us!

Paul Phillips



**Thank you to everyone who has supported the youth club this term**

**We have a wonderful group of children.**

**We look forward to continue outside as summer approaches and have lots of activities planned.**

**We have spaces available for new members too, please contact us.**

**7-9pm every Friday during term time.**

**£2 entry plus money for our ever growing tuck shop.**

**Sonya, Jules, Maddison and jj.**

### **Why are email accounts so important?**

Your emails contain a lot of information about you, so it's crucial you make your email password strong. If criminals get into your email account, they could access personal information that could be used to scam you or others. To make it harder for them, always use an email password that you haven't used elsewhere.

Your email inbox can also act as a 'gateway' to your other accounts. Once they can access it, a criminal could use the 'forgot password' option to request emails enabling them to get into other accounts, such as your social media.

### **How to secure your email account**

Using a combination of 3 random words creates passwords that are long enough and strong enough.

Turn on 2-Step Verification (2SV) for your email

You won't be asked for this every time you check your email.

If you are using an email service that does not offer 2SV, please consider switching to an email provider that does.

For more advice on how to stay secure online, please visit [www.cyberaware.gov.uk](http://www.cyberaware.gov.uk)

# **Uncomfortable with letting strange people into your home?**

We are an **all-female** team of interior painters and decorators, working in the north beds village area. Fully experienced in hanging wallpaper, painting – including paint effects, restoring and repairing surfaces, wallpaper stripping and all general home decorating. We are all individually CRB checked, will provide references and testimonials showing the standard of our workmanship giving you peace of mind. We will come to your home to discuss your exact requirement, offer advice and produce a free written specification and quotation. We will then arrive on time, keeping disturbance to the minimum and deliver a quality job using only top quality materials.



**OAKLEY ANGELS**  
*The all-female painting and decorating team*

- Trustworthy
- Experienced
- Guaranteed work
- Peace of mind
- High quality work at a reasonable price

**Phone: 07989 778345**  
**or: 01234 822499**

# oakley Motorcycle club

After a very wet start to this year most Thursday bike club evenings have been very quiet! However there have been a couple of fine dry days which saw a fairly large turn out of members. Unfortunately we were due to have a massive bike jumble sale in aid of the East Anglian Air Ambulance back in April, but had to postpone due to the weather.

We have kindly been donated so much kit, parts and accessories that it would all have to take place outside. It has now been cancelled twice and we are hopeful it can finally go ahead on Thursday 8th June. Surely the weather can only improve. No doubt we were spoilt by the hot dry summer of last year with everyone who owned a motorcycle being out on them. (A few pictures from last Thursday are attached)



Other than the jumble sale we have planned dealer evenings again throughout June, July and



August. There will be visits from Beds & Herts SERV (Blood Runners) and Beds, Cambs & Herts Roads Policing Unit Motorcyclists joined by Beds Fire Service Motorcyclists. The date for your diary will be on **Thursday 6th July from 5pm** which is the **American Theme Evening** which will be bikes and American cars plus live outside music by the fabulous Blues Brothers. All persons are welcome. There will be prizes for the best American bike and car on the night.

Roger "Baysie" Bays Chair - OMC

Bedfordshire Classic Cars are going back to meeting monthly on the second Tuesday through to September. Unfortunately due to bad weather and the Oakley Club field not being suitable for vehicles both the shows planned for April and May had to be cancelled.

We are hopeful that we can kick the year off on Tuesday 13th June at 6pm. The other dates will be 11th July, 8th August and 12th September.

We look forward to seeing you then.

Luke - Classic Car Team



## CLASSIC CAR MEET

BEDFORDSHIRE



# MINIATURE STEAM RALLY

## 15TH JULY

OAKLEY SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB



OVER 12 MINIATURE STEAM TRACTION ENGINES ON DISPLAY AND FOR RIDES



FUN FAIR RIDES

BBQ



### LIVE MUSIC

DONNA SAMUELS



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