



Oakley Newsletter



**Summer 2025
Number 103**

Oakley Primary Summer Fayre 28th June



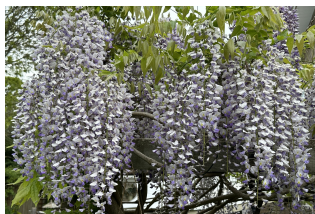
Oakley Show 7th September

Oakley and the history of its Pubs

OSSC Update & Diary of Events

St Mary's Needs a Treasurer

Oakley Village Directory needs an Editor



Front Page Picture : Wisteria Cascade
Photographer : Bill Chalker

The Oakley Newsletter

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

Opinions and information

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

Next issue

Final copy date for the
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The publishing date is 1st Sept 2025

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Colour Advertisements
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Whole page: £120

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Black & white advert rates are available upon request.

Loose inserts, any size up to A4: £100
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Hello Children

look out for
Ten more
little ones



Parish Council News

Summer 2025

Dear Residents,

We held the Annual Parish Meeting in early April. Thank you to all those that turned out. The meeting gives us the chance to report back to you, the parishioners, on the activity of the Parish Council. Much like any annual appraisal it is good to take stock and revisit achievements, yet also see if there are areas for improvement. On your behalf I was pleased to thank all volunteers within the village for their efforts; all the councillors for the work they do and our Parish Clerk Ann Paice, who does a sterling job for all of us.

Now, it is the new term for the Parish Council. At our May meeting I was lucky enough to be nominated again to stand as Chair and I was delighted to accept. I continue to be supported by Robert Saunders as vice chair. All Parish Councillors have additional responsibilities and I have listed them below for your information.

Finance Advisory Group: Chair, J Abbott, J Walker, R Worker

Planning Advisory Group: C Bays, P Jones, P Olney, R Saunders, J Walker

NDP Group: P Olney, J Walker, R Worker

Allotment Group: P Olney. Former Cllr. Nicholas would continue as allotment manager

Speed Watch Group: R Worker. Former Cllr. Phillips would continue as co-ordinator

Village Roads Co-ordinator: P White, J Abbott

Footpaths & Waste Bins: P Jones

Oakley Directory: **Vacancy**

Oakley Recreational Association: P Jones, T Saunders, R Worker

Village Hall: P White

Oakley Rural Day Care Centre: P Olney

Continued on page 3

OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Education Charity Trust: J Walker (Reserve R Worker)

The Villager Community Minibus: C Worker

Tree Warden: R Saunders

Youth Club: S Fardon.

Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteers make such a difference. We are very lucky in Oakley that we have many willing hands all, in their own way, contributing to village life.

I wanted to tell you of some more opportunities and see if I can tempt you to come forwards.

Oakley Village Directory - a little publication that is close to my heart. With a change in personnel we are looking for **new volunteers to get involved - from IT skills to editing**. In a few pages this directory brings Oakley alive - shows us the many clubs, community groups and businesses here in our village. Thanks to the generous sponsorship from Old Road Securities that has been in place for 18 years we have been able to channel all money from advertising back into projects for the village. To that end £24,535 has been raised which is a tremendous achievement.

I use the Directory regularly for phone numbers, contact details, opening hours.

If you would like to be part of the team that makes this happen then please do get in touch.

Secondly, some willing **green fingers needed** to nurture plants and look after planting at the village entrance signs at Highfield Road and the ground under the Oakley sign at Highfield cross-roads. Whether you are keen amateur or a professional gardener, please do not hesitate to nominate yourself. As it is one entrance to our village it is nice if the village can look good as we come into it. The cost of any new plants or materials is met by the Parish Council - it just needs your tender, loving care.

VE Day

VE Day was marked by a joint event with Clapham and held on their playing fields. With war-time music, and some words of reflection there was a mixture of enjoyment and solemnity. Just right. The beacon was lit at 9.30pm, by Nicholas Kier BEM DL, along with others across the nation.

In Oakley, the Union Jack was raised (albeit it



was a very still day so the flag hung still too.) Thank you to Adam Aylott, who ensures that the Union Jack is raised on all necessary occasions. It is much appreciated.

What is on the Parish Council agenda?

You can follow the key issues the Parish Council looks at by keeping abreast of the agendas and minutes on the notice board at the Post Office and on the village website (oakleyvillage.co.uk). The Annual Parish Meeting minutes will be there as well.

With grass growing season underway I am pleased to say that the village is looking very smart and tidy and our contractors have done a good job to date.

Stagecoach have announced they will no longer run buses on route 51 with effect from the end of June, which has caused some consternation. This is purely a commercial decision we understand, as the route is not profitable for them. The Borough Council have been working to ensure there is a solution and I have subsequently been advised that the Oakley should not suffer any break in service, which is good news for parishioners.



Finally, it is just the right time to remind you that the **Oakley Show is set for 7th September**. Now is the time to prepare if you are growing fruit or vegetables. Always good fun, it is so good to be able to see the wide range of entries and the creativity of village people through the craft and photographic entries.

I look forward to being able to buy enjoyable produce in the auction and, of course, if you win a prize that is an extra bonus. Entry forms are being delivered with this newsletter, so please keep them somewhere safe ready to complete your entry.

Public Open Session

The Parish Council has an open session at every meeting when members of the public are welcome to come and ask questions, make points and raise topics. You are always welcome to listen to the parish council meeting in progress as well.

Kind regards to everyone in Oakley. Sara Fardon

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.

Borough Council Report



Universal

The news that we had all been waiting for came in March. Universal gave the go ahead to building their European theme park in Bedford Borough. This is amazing news as it will secure the prosperity of the town for decades to come. We are already seeing heightened activity in the commercial property market in the town as businesses try to get in ahead of the park opening.

Mayor Tom Wootton and his officers have been working tirelessly over the last two years to ensure Bedford Borough was seen as a welcoming and supportive place for the company to invest. Their move into the Borough will bring with it 20,000 jobs during the construction phase, plus 8,000 new jobs once opened. Wixams station will become a 4 platform station and an A421 slip road will be created directly into the park. Other local road improvements will help with flooding and traffic flows around the area. The company have also promised to play an active role in local communities and are already working with our schools and colleges to ensure training and skills are available to ensure local people are able to take advantage of the huge boost the Park will bring to the area.

Debenhams update

In more good news for the town, part of the Debenhams building will soon be re-opening as a Tourist Information centre plus the Corn Exchange box office will also be joining them in the space. There will be information on all events and attractions around the Borough and surrounding area. Please let them know if you have an event you would like promoting. There will also be Bedford Borough merchandise for sale if you are looking for individual gifts or mementos.

Family hubs

From the beginning of this term, Children's centres will be part of Family hubs in the Borough. This has enabled us to increase the number of drop-in sessions available to all families and also the more specialist support for families such as parenting classes and one to one help for families in crisis. You can find all of the sessions available and the weekly timetable, on the dedicated Family hubs web site <https://familyhubs.bedford.gov.uk>.

During the school summer holiday, we will also be opening a brand new Family hub in the town centre near the bus station. This will cater for families with older children and will provide a focal point for youth working in the town.

Foster carers

The Borough Council has a large number of Foster families who work extremely hard to provide love and support to the children in the council's care. We are committed to improving the care and support we provide to these carers to help to show our appreciation for the work they do. We have already increased their basic allowance and this year we will be giving them an exemption from

paying council tax. We are increasing the support we can offer to the Foster families with a new project called "Mocking bird" that works by building a small community around each carer. Now in partnership with GLL, our leisure providers, Foster families are being offered free leisure and swimming for themselves and all members of their household including any foster children.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a Foster carer with Bedford Borough please visit the website at: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/fostering>.

New SEND school open

The new SEND school, Rivertree, opened in Kempston earlier last term. It is a fabulous facility with purpose-built swimming pool, sensory rooms, gym and Interactive room. At the moment there are 60 children with a range of additional needs on roll, but this will increase to 200 in September next year and will be one of the biggest SEND free schools in the country. It was built by the Borough council with Dept for Education money and will enable us to support more of our children and young people closer to their homes.

Year of Reading – Book Fairies

Bedford Borough Council launched its "Year of Reading" earlier this year and we have been busy arranging events throughout the borough all to celebrate and promote reading.

Our latest initiative is a collaboration with the Book Fairies, where we wrap a book with a ribbon, put a personal note inside and a sticker on the front and then hide the book in plain sight for others to find and enjoy. Councillors and school children have been busy hiding books all over the area, in the town and villages and this will continue throughout the year. The Book Fairies will be at the Kite Festival at Russell Park on 21st and 22nd June. Drop in and see them if you would like to be part of the fun.



There will also be book signings and local author readings for the children to enjoy. For more information on Book Fairies go to the Bedford Borough year of reading web page at www.bedford.gov.uk/yearofreading or email: yearofreading@bedford.gov.uk

If you need any further information or assistance with issues at the council, you can call me on 07952 879587

or email jane@janewalker.co.uk.

You can also find me and/or message me on

Facebook @CllrJaneWalker.

Jane Walker

Borough Councillor for Clapham and Oakley

Jon Abbott

Email: jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com

07784 549180

Facebook: Clapham & Oakley Liberal Democrats



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Palm Sunday.

We processed from the Old School to St. Mary's and George & Jack the Donkeys were well behaved.



2025 Oakley Show

The 2025 Oakley Show will take place on Sunday, 7th September so please put the date in your diary.

It is time to start sowing your seeds and getting your crafting started ready for showing.

We would love to hear from you if you have any ideas or suggestions for the show. You can email the1juliamn@aol.com or call on 07778537427.

Keep up to date with what is going on on our Facebook page, Oakley Show.

Oakley Show Committee



Needs You to keep our streets safe!

Our team has been pared down to just 8 volunteers and it is clear that we **urgently need new recruits** if we are to continue to deliver our current level of involvement.

We are a welcoming group and operations are pleasant social experiences; there is plenty of time to chat. If you would find it helpful to come with a friend, we are very able to train and deploy you as a partnership.

Call Paul on 07 968 122 301 or email him on paulphillips65@gmail.com

Paul Phillips – Speedwatch Co-ordinator



Oakley parish YOUTH CLUB



FRIDAYS 7PM-9PM

OLD SCHOOL, LOVELL ROAD, OAKLEY

to find out more contact youth
leader JJ on 07469659826 or email
oycsecretarial@gmail.com

01

entry fee

we do have an entry fee for
the youth club but it is only
£2.50 per person.

02

activities

we have a range of activities that vary
depending on you what to do such as going
outside during the warmer weather and
small football matches. we have indoor
activities and an area you can go and hang
out with your friends.



03

Tuck shop

we have a tuck shop filled with all of your
favourite snacks and treats and if we don't
have anything that you want let us know and
we can add it to the tuck shop so you can
enjoy it with the rest of your friends. The
prices are also cheap!!!!



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Oakley Primary Academy

SUMMER
FAYRE

SATURDAY

28th June

2pm -
4 pm



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Oakley Show

7th September 2025



You should have received a programme for Oakley Show along with this newsletter, please take the time to have a look and see what you can enter this year.

Last year Ian Percival won the Best in Show trophy for the fourth time and he has provided the following useful information for any of you thinking of entering this year:

I have been very fortunate to have been a winner at the Oakley Show over the years and hope that I can persuade others to enter their produce this year.

So, let's consider what to enter in the show. Experience tells me to enter as many categories as possible. Points make prizes! When it comes to my veg, I usually have a good idea what will do well but growing is different year in year out and is very weather dependent. Some years it has not been until the morning of the show that I have decided what to enter and I have been known to harvest my produce on the morning of the show. I have also seen others do the same.

Some useful tips: -

Try to display veg and fruit of equal size and colour. I have in the past gone through a whole sack of potatoes to get similar ones.

It is worth displaying items in an appealing way by using attractive containers/fillings etc.

Clearly label produce with the variety and what they were grown from i.e. seed or set.

Simply appreciate we are supporting our community. Therefore, have fun and remember there are no losers. It is always healthy to have as much competition as possible and to see the produce of others.

So come on, get growing and Best of Luck for the 2025 Show!

Ian Percival

Thanks for that Ian, let us see who can take up the challenge and get their name on the trophy for 2025!

As before there is no entry fee for under 16s but their age will only be taken into consideration in the childrens' classes.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on the day, even if you do not want to enter you are very welcome to come along and enjoy the refreshments and visit the craft stalls, you could even join in the auction and get your hands on some lovely locally grown fruit, vegetables and produce or win a prize in the raffle.

Oakley Show Committee



Oakley Educational Foundation



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

Applications and more information can be obtained from the Parish Clerk from the end of March.

For an application form please email parishclerk@oakleyvillage.co.uk

Applications accepted by 2nd May. Itemised receipts for purchases of goods must be provided.



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OAKLEY BADMINTON



Oakley Village Monthly Quiz

I am pleased to report that the quizzes continue to be extremely well supported. The end of February saw the end of the Parish Council fiscal year. As a result, we were joined at the March quiz by representatives from the organisations nominated to receive a donation from the year's quiz profits. On behalf of the Parish Council and the Quizzers equal donations totalling £2,259 were presented, as shown in the photo, to; Lee Carpenter (**AFC Oakley Junior Football**), Jeanette Letch (**Methodist Messy Church**), Jenny Sudworth (**St Mary's Messy Church**) and Amanda Keen (**Oakley Brownies and Rainbows**). Sargeant Harry Smith, Cadet Flight Sargeant Efraim Gray and Cadet Sargeant Izzie Maguire attended to receive a donation on behalf of the **"2462 Oakley Air Training Corps Squadron"**. **Oakley Scout Group** were unable to attend so received their donation separately.

The ATC are using their donation to help fund a new squadron flight simulator and the Scouts and Cubs will buy a new fire pit and repair slippery decking at their Hut. St Mary's Messy Church are to purchase a new advertising board and craft items and books for the children. The Methodist Messy Church intend to purchase materials for their art and craft and science experiment activities. The Parish Council have decided this fiscal's profits will be donated in the same way as last year's. Therefore, at Christmas £150 donations will be made to the Oakley Day Centre and to the Oakley care home for people with learning difficulties to help fund their Christmas celebrations. In March 2026 the profit balance will again be split equally between the remaining organisations.

The March Quiz was won by *"Great Expectations"* who as *"Return of the Management"* also won the May event. The April honours went to *"The Cheesy Puffs"*. All three teams are pictured.

The quizzes will continue to be held monthly. Please see the posters around the village and social media posts for more details. If anyone wishes to enter a team, maximum 6 people, then please email me at richworker@hotmail.co.uk
Richard Worker

Presentation of donation cheques



"The Cheesy Puffs"
Winners of April Quiz



"Great Expectations"
Winners of March Quiz



"Return of the Management"
Winners of May Quiz



Down Memory Lane

Oakley and the history of its pubs

If asked what makes an quintessential English village, I think Oakley places a big tick in all of the boxes. An ancient bell ringing church, a meandering river with a quaint bridge, a village green, countryside walks, a Post Office and of course a traditional village pub. The existence of an Oakley village pub dates back over 255 years with historical records referencing three pubs during this period; "The Five Bells", "The Red Lion" and "The Bedford Arms".

In records dated 1770 one Oakley property is described as "at Church End a public house called The Five Bells". The location and name indicate that it must have been close to the church. By 1820 this property had been acquired by the Duke of Bedford. The countywide licensing register of 1822 shows only one public house in Oakley, "The Bedford Arms", indicating that "The Five Bells" must have closed at some point between 1770 and 1820.

Records relating to "The Red Lion" show that it first stood on the site of what is now 29 Church Lane, then called Duck End. In 1771 a property purchased on the site is described in the deeds as a public house called "The Red Lion". In 1791, Bedford brewer John Nash, purchased "The Red Lion", as it was still known, and its four and a half acres of land. By 1839 Nash was thinking of selling the property and documents drawn up by his solicitor in January 1820 refer to a public house in Oakley formerly known as "The Red Lion" but now known as "The Bedford Arms". However, it was not until 21 November 1840 that Nash sold the land to the Duke of Bedford. The deed referred to a piece of land in Duck End on which a public house formerly known as "The Red Lion", then "The Bedford Arms" had stood, but "had recently been pulled down and removed". The old pub had not only changed its name from "The Red Lion" to "The Bedford Arms" but had also been demolished. The Enclosure Map of 1804, see this page, shows the buildings and adjoining land and from this map it is evident that this is the site of today's 29 Church Lane, with the current building being constructed by the Duke of Bedford in 1854.

Despite the old pub's demolition, it seems that in 1840 the public house licence simply "moved up the road" to a building which was also owned by the Duke of Bedford. Records describe this as a building "on the south side of the road from Oakley to Milton Ernest late in occupation of John Campion as a farmhouse and now used as a public house and known by the name or sign of the Bedford Arms". The next most significant event occurred on 31 October 1918 when the Duke of Bedford decided to sell parts of the Oakley Estate by auction. The properties included "The Bedford Arms" and "The Smithy" which still stands, albeit dilapidated, on the corner of Church Lane and the High Street. I covered the detail of the auction in the Winter 2024 Newsletter.

Clearly since 1840, when the population of Oakley was 492, the site and building has changed significantly and in April 1985 "The Bedford Arms" became a listed Grade II, of special interest, building.

I have fond memories of "The Bedford Arms", the place of my first illegal and legal alcoholic drink !! I celebrated my 50th birthday and 25th wedding anniversary there and many Christmas and New Year's Eve events. The Millenium celebrations are memorable when the pub was licenced to stay open until dawn on 1 January 2000 to serve the gathered throng with breakfast!!

In recent years the pub trade has been faced with many challenges including law changes impacting smoking and drink driving, wider availability of low-cost alcohol, increased taxes, the development of doorstep food deliveries and more recently the Covid pandemic. Currently 34 English and Welsh pubs are closing each month. However, despite the challenges, for Oakley, the box labelled "traditional village pub" has remained ticked for over 255 years and let us "raise a glass" to the hope that it will remain so for many more. Cheers!!

Richard Worker



Advert for Bedford Arms 1964



The Bedford Arms site in 1804

The Bromham Show

Has grown from a simple village fete in 1948 into a spectacular day of fun and entertainment for the village and surrounding area. The show is a large event with approximately 2500 visitors.

There are lots of attractions and events for all ages and the highlights can be seen on the front cover of the brochure.

Around the arena is a large 'village' of Craft Stalls and there will be a Classic Car Parade where all Classic and Sports car enthusiasts are invited to take part.

Exhibits will be on display from an extensive variety of classes and adults and children are encouraged to enter their work and creations.

Bromham's community event of the year provides a great, value for money, day out.

Bromham Show

2025

Sunday 13th July
Gates open from 12.00pm

Highlights:

- Vander Wheel of Death
- Dogs & Ducks Display
- Bedford Pipe Band
- Wonder Wheelers
- Classic Car Parade
- Bromham Youth Football Match

Bromham Show
Bromham's Community Event of the Year

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SUMMER 2025

Our Day Centre provides our older people with a place where they can make friends in a warm and comfortable atmosphere. We provide various activities including crafts, word games, board games, bingo and other mentally stimulating activities. We also provide chair based exercise classes. Our clients really enjoy taking part and we are finding them to be very beneficial. Choirs and entertainers also visit the centre.

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

For details of costs, advice and to book a visit please contact Lynne on 01234 824935 or 07733 227374.

Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.

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

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

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

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

NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

We have continued with our chair based exercise classes over the three days. This really has helped our clients in their strength and mobility.



Kempston Hammers Community Choir continue to support the centre regularly through the year and the clients really love a singalong!

Clients made Easter wreaths and we had eggs for bingo prizes.

Other crafts have been model making, decorating trinket boxes, gnome garden stakes and wind chimes.

We held a bring and buy sale which raised funds for the centre.

Volunteers week is approaching where we will give special thanks to the people who give up their time at the centre. We are really grateful for their continued support!



Can you help us?

St Mary's Church needs a Treasurer.

You don't have to go to church, just be willing to volunteer a little time on a regular basis to help your local church.

The role includes: attending roughly 6 evening meetings a year, running the church's finances week by week, keeping accurate records, and reporting at the annual meeting.

You would need to be computer literate and have some finance experience. Training and support is provided by the wider church (Diocese of St Albans).

Do you have the skills we need?

Full handover is available from the retiring post holder and there will be plenty of support from the other PCC members and the clergy.

Please get in touch with Sarah Smale on administrator@bromhambenefice.org for more information

Thankyou!



Oakley Village Hall for Hire

Main hall with stage, capacity 100 seated

Air-conditioning

PA system

Smaller meeting room with bar

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OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Summary of Accounts - Financial Year ending 31 March 2025

Opening Bank Balances	
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/24	£7,377.42
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/24	£2,383.96
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/24	£61,006.43
Hampshire Bank investment bond	£85,013.20
less uncleared payments	£628.98
Total cash in hand	£155,152.03

Receipts	
	£
Precept	£58,200.00
Agency Services (Grasscutting - Bedford BC)	£1,836.72
Allotments (rent)	£1,284.45
Community Infrastructure Levy	£0.00
Grants (Bedford BC Ward Fund)	£1,587.00
Donations	£9.55
Interest	£5,279.44
Newsletter & Directory advertisements and sponsorship	£3,907.00
Quiz	£3,206.75
VAT recovered from 2023/24	5,654.02
Sub total	£80,964.93

Payments	
	£
Administration (includes subscriptions)	£4,405.39
Insurance	£3,036.22
2023 Election costs	£1,538.86
Grass Cutting	£11,349.67
Grounds Maintenance (includes tree works)	£2,691.82
Wages, Tax, National Insurance, Pension	£27,414.75
S. 137 Payments (grants to local organisations)	£6,025.00
Capital Spending (new Christmas lights, replacement bins Lovell Road & Green, new defibrillator case, replacement flag)	£4,294.55
Playing Field & Riverside rent	£1,051.32
Allotments	£1,443.41
Bus shelters	£0.00
Community Orchard	£0.00
Christmas lights	£2,820.00
Linch Furlong	£0.00
Play area (inspections & repairs)	£3,069.75
Publicity (Newsletter, Directory, Website)	£4,866.66
Quiz	£2,559.48
VAT refund due on above payments	£4,728.86
Sub total	£81,295.74

Closing Bank Balances	
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/25	£7,862.99
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/25	£2,417.52
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/25	£63,147.25
Hampshire Bank investment bond 31.03.25.	£85,013.20
less uncleared payments	£3,619.74
Total cash in hand	£154,821.22
Total	£236,116.96

Closing Bank Balances	
NatWest Bank current balance at 31/03/25	£7,862.99
NatWest Bank reserve balance at 31/03/25	£2,417.52
Nationwide investment bond 31/03/25	£63,147.25
Hampshire Bank investment bond 31.03.25.	£85,013.20
less uncleared payments	£3,619.74
Total cash in hand	£154,821.22
Total	£236,116.96

£97,680 plus £27,987 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.



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Update from Oakley Village Hall

It has been a busy time at the Village Hall. We are fortunate in that the hall is used by regular hirers every weekday, and over the winter and spring months we have also had parties and all sorts of other events every weekend, often on both days. And of course, the building is full to capacity at least once a month, for the village's splendid Quiz. It is lovely to see the Hall being used so much.



We have been improving the building gradually. Our users and visitors will probably have noticed that a few months ago we installed Perspex panelling in the Main Hall to protect the paint under the stage and the kitchen hatch. I am sure many will be pleased to know that this summer we will be replacing all the kitchen units – the current ones were installed when the Hall was built and have definitely outlived their working lives.

For the Committee it has been a busy time. We have had a change of Bookings secretary and have streamlined our procedures. We now use the online Hallmaster booking system, which has speeded things up for everyone. Hallmaster means that potential hirers can see in advance if their preferred date is available and we and our users are very pleased with how it is working. You can make a provisional booking via oakleyvillagehall.org.uk.

Finally, this year is the Hall's 30th Anniversary! This building was officially opened on 7th December 1995, replacing Oakley's first village hall whose use had grown beyond its original design and which was at times quite cold and uncomfortable. What a magnificent job the Village Hall committees of the early '90s did in raising the money to build a new and bigger hall. The whole village benefits from their efforts!

We are currently seeking New Committee Members

The Committee meets monthly. If you would like to find out how you could become involved in managing this important village asset, please contact our Secretary at r.bender@cranfield.ac.uk



MESSY CHURCH FOR ALL SUMMER PICNIC

Join us for our Messy Church for All Summer Picnic on Tues 8th July 3.30pm at Lynch Furlong, Oakley
Picnic food provided—bring a rug to sit on! Please contact: Michael on 07799 4726865 to let us know you are coming



OPEN AIR SERVICE

Sunday 13th July 10.30am on the grass at Oakley Methodist church, followed by a Bring & Share lunch. All welcome!

TEAS IN CHURCH

St Mary's popular 'Teas in Church' is back! Every Sunday from 3.30pm to 5pm, begins 1st June- 14th Sept
Enjoy delicious refreshments in beautiful surroundings, supporting your local church.

Contactless payment now available.



MESSY CHURCH PLUS!

Long school summer holiday to fill??

Why not come along to Messy Church Plus! On Monday 28th July at 11.30am in St Owen's Bromham.

Crafts, activities and fun — snack lunch provided.

Children of all ages welcome with a well behaved adult. Free event, donations welcome.



TREASURER REQUIRED!

St Mary's Parochial Church Council (PCC) is in need of a volunteer Treasurer, after our current post holder steps down. You don't have to be a church-goer, just willing to support the church in this way, with some basic financial skills.

For more information about the role, get in touch with Sarah (info below). See also separate item elsewhere in this publication.

*For more details on all our events and services visit www.bromhambenefice.org or www.northbedsmethodist.org.uk
Facebook: CofE Benefice for Bromham, Oakley & Stagsden
Instagram: bromhambenefice



CONTACTS

St Mary's: Church Wardens:
Administrator Sarah:

Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535
07494 069540 administrator@bromhambenefice.org

Oakley Methodist Church:
Revd Paulette Tedd:
Church Steward:

07591 139940 paulette.tedd@outlook.com
Jeanette Letch 825204 jenletch@hotmail.co.uk

Blankets for Ukraine

In March I was delighted to pass on six blankets, knitted and assembled by Cameo members and friends, to Hope & Aid Direct, an Essex-based humanitarian aid charity. I have written briefly about the charity, as well as our link via Cholsey (Oxon) Knitters, in a previous newsletter. For more details and updates on its work, visit the web-site hopeandaiddirect.org.uk

I have expressed my appreciation to Cameo members for their efforts and, via the newsletter, I would like to say a big thank you to everyone else in the village - and perhaps beyond? - who is knitting squares. Often a bag of squares appears on my doorstep and I have no idea who has left it!

I am also very grateful for those who are assembling the squares into blankets and, with the addition of a border, creating such attractive end-products. Originally I dispatched the squares to Cholsey to be finished by the knitters there but I am pleased to report that there is now a small team here in Oakley performing this task and we can proudly send off completed blankets. A few more volunteers would be welcome, as it is hard to keep up with the accumulating squares, so if you are a sewer/crocheter rather than a knitter, please get in touch at anneyoungman@btinternet.com

There is an ongoing need for warm bedding, not only in Ukraine but in other war zones and places affected by natural disasters throughout the world. We have the opportunity to turn an enjoyable hobby into a valuable, albeit small, contribution to the relief of suffering. Please carry on knitting at home or in the sociable environment of Natter & Knit, held monthly at the Bedford Arms.

Anne Youngman



Phantom Sprayer

Walking out recently I noticed a slight deterioration in standards, we dog owners have been wonderful over the last few years, meaning very much less coloured spray marking random dog poos.



Sadly it seems there are a few, possibly new, dog owners who fail to pick up after their dogs. They are ignoring the pride in our Village and of our clean streets and footpaths, ignoring cleanliness and hygiene, ignoring the risk to children's health and even ignoring the safety of children's play areas.



It is just so easy to bag it and bin it in the many bins situated around our lovely village. What a pity those few owners and walkers have no pride.



VOLUNTEERS of all ages wanted to PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

Our present volunteers mostly come from the older age bracket and to ensure we continue into the future we would like to appeal to volunteers (over eighteen) to join Oakley Speed Watch.

Are you someone who is concerned about the safety of our children from speeding vehicles. Can commit to one hour per month as part of a team of three to keep our families safe?

Training is done at your own pace and in your own home followed by joining a speed watch session in the village to see how it is done in practice.

Please call Paul Phillips on 07968 122301 and talk it through with him or email him at paulphillips65@gmail.com

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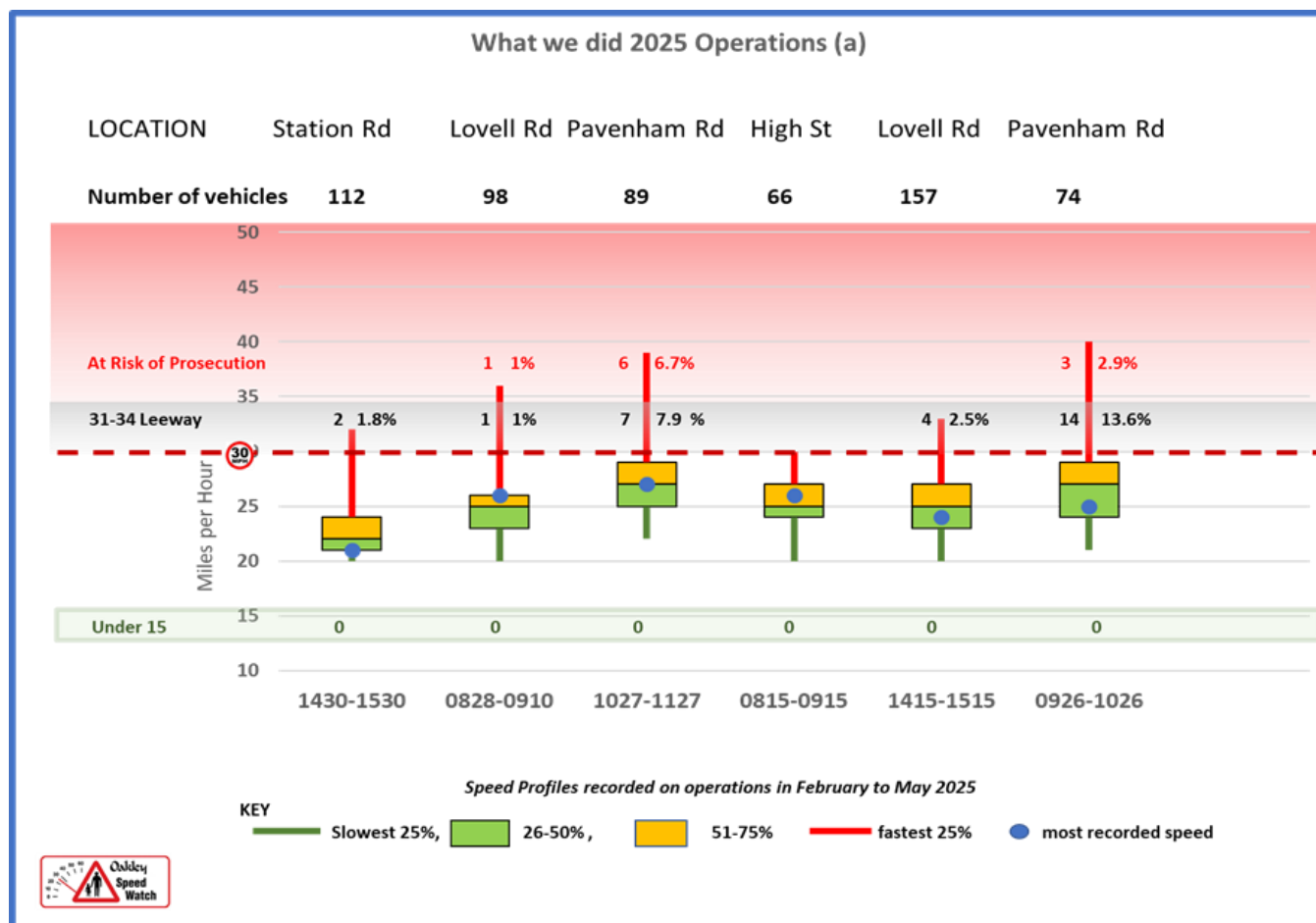
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Speedwatch Report

So far in 2025 we have completed six operations and the chart below shows the profiles of the speeds recorded at each location. We were interested to see a clear correlation between the number of vehicles we reported and the average speed (shown by the border between the amber and green boxes) recorded at the



location of the operation. You can see the majority of those we reported were on observations of traffic entering the village along Pavenham road. The average speed on these operations was 27.1 mph, significantly above the 23-25mph average range of the other locations. We also noted that this average is 2mph higher than that of the same location and time periods observed three years ago. We know from previous data collections that speeds recorded on these 'live' operations is 3-4mph slower than those detected by our remote speed monitoring equipment.

We were able to share this and discuss our concerns with our neighbourhood police Constables Clark Parkinson and Mark Hancock from Riseley. They agreed to step up their speed monitoring in the village and meet with interested members of the Parish Council.

At the request of a resident we have begun monitoring speeds in Highfield Road and Church Lane on Thursday evenings. In our first of these we saw 199 vehicles in an hour where the average speed was 24.4 mph. 5 vehicles exceeded the 30 mph limit with just one of those marginally reportable. Just 8% of the vehicles were motor bikes. Our first operation in Church Lane will have taken place after this report has been published.

We are very sad to report that Jan Kuszlewicz, one of our team, died a short while ago. We have already missed his enthusiasm and engaging conversation on recent operations.

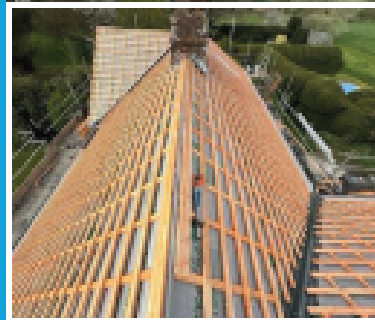
As always, we still are seeking new members and I would be delighted for you to contact me on 07968 122301 and talk it through with me or email me at paulphillips65@gmail.com if you are interested.

Paul Phillips – Speedwatch Co-ordinator



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Oakley Allotments

In the last issue I was speculating on how this year would develop, looking forward to the weather warming and the ground drying out after quite a wet period. How things have changed!

We recorded a total of 59 millimetres of rain in our garden in Oakley during the month of January; 40mm for February, but only 3mm for the entire month of March. Things improved for April, with a below-average 25.5mm, but since the 23rd of April, when we recorded 13mm of rain, we have had no significant rainfall to record.

England's rainfall has been around 27% of the seasonal average and Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland are reporting drought conditions. Our regional supplier, Anglian Water, has said that reserves are adequate for the time being, due to the previously wet times, however we may have restrictions in supplies of water if the low rainfall continues.

This is a concern for our allotments, as the ground has dried and become much harder, making planting of all the carefully nurtured greenhouse seedlings physically much more difficult. Our two 200 litre water butts are now empty as we have used all of our stored rainwater on our earlier plantings of broad beans, peas and savoy cabbage as well as strawberries and other fruit, which are starting to develop.

Unlike last year, when we had very little sunlight and low temperatures delaying planting, this year we have dry conditions, lowish temperatures, but days of sunshine – never a happy average of everything.

One solution is to make a more-easily controllable growing environment, which is something we featured a few issues ago, when one allotment tenant described the installation and use of a small greenhouse. Here is a bit more from Lindsay on her plans for the greenhouse in its second year:-

After a long and cold winter, March rolled around. I gathered up my gardening gloves and seeds, and headed off to the allotment and my greenhouse.

Last year went better than expected with bumper harvests of peppers and tomatoes! Not bad for the first year, however, this year I wanted to try something different.

I had purchased some seeds from a garden centre in Spain and was keen to give them a try.



Disaster, none of the Spanish tomatoes germinated. Oh dear... possibly they did not like our English climate. I am still waiting on the Banana plant!



Time to try carrots in containers, drip fed water by the solar watering system; success - probably too good as they needed drastic thinning. Also, onion seeds seemed to love the warmth.

Still a work in progress this year, with lots of experimenting and hopefully ending up with some delicious organic produce.

Thank you Lindsay – it will be interesting to hear how the plans go and how the banana plant progresses.

Have you noticed that, this year, all types of blossom have been prolific, from the early Blackthorn through to Hawthorn and Elder? Our home pear tree is small still, in its third year, but with many fruits developing. Will this be a record year for fruit? More to anticipate.

The allotments are fully occupied at the moment and we have a short waiting-list.

Happy gardening, in the summer of 2025.

Steve Nicholas

News from the Tower



St Mary's Church has a ring of six

bells, the oldest was cast in 1711 and the newest (the treble, and lightest, bell) in 1978 to commemorate the late Queen's Silver Jubilee. When the clock chimes, it's the heaviest bell (the tenor bell) that you hear.

If you have experience of church bell ringing or would just like to have a go, **please come along to a practice night!** The Oakley Band of Bell Ringers practice on Friday evenings from 8pm to 9:15pm and ring on Sunday mornings before the services at St Mary's Church.

New members are very welcome! Please contact our Tower Captain, Bill Sellars on 07980 745292 or email thesellars@btinternet.com for more information.

Shelley Eden



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Please contact :

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Email: billsellars@theoldschooloakley.org.uk

Web : www.theoldschooloakley.org.uk



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If you would like to be considered please visit the website www.lovellhomesoakley.co.uk

Or contact the Clerk :

Mandy Newton

On 07736 466965

Registered Charity Number : 200480

North Beds Ramblers

Please note time for afternoon walks start at 13:30pm. Come and join us for a walk. We walk every Saturday afternoon approx. 6 miles and Saturdays twice a month in morning for approx. 12 miles, From March the first Saturday of the month introduces a morning "Ramble" – slightly shorter, slightly slower!



June Walks

7th pm Wootton, 6.5 miles

14th am Priory Country Park, Bedford 10 miles or pm Mowsbury Park, Bedford 7 miles

21st pm Sharnbrook, 7 miles

28th am Ivinghoe Canal, Pitstone, 10.5 miles or pm Kimbolton, 6.5 miles

July Walks

7th "Ramble", Wilstead 5 miles, pm Wootton 6 miles

12th am Castle Ashby, 12.18 miles or pm Silsoe 6.5 miles

19th am Walk & Lunch, Riseley, 7 miles

26th am St Ives, 10 miles or pm Bolnhurst, 7 miles

Contact; Margaret Sawyer 07780933729 Facebook; North Beds Ramblers

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



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Sally Martiello invited to the Palace!

I received my British Empire medal from His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, during a ceremony at the Bedford Swan Hotel. I also attended the first Royal Garden Party of the season 2025 at Buckingham Palace, hosted by the King and Queen.

My husband and I spent a wonderful afternoon in the palace gardens enjoying afternoon tea and music from two military bands. It was a truly memorable occasion full of pageantry, and I feel very honoured to have been invited, through my work with the charity and my services to Early Years Childcare and Education in the community. His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Bedfordshire will visit the kindergarten on Friday 11th July 2025 to perform the official opening ceremony of the new building for us.



Oakley Kindergarten News



After a very wet winter, spring has been incredibly dry! We have planted fruit and vegetables in our kitchen garden plots and the children are enjoying tending and watering the plants daily through the drought like weather. We have also planted lavender in our raised beds and added a new bee house to the fairytale garden. On World Bee Day we visited the meadow and sat quietly to observe the bees flying to and from the different species of flowers- such a mindful activity for all!

Over the Easter break, we completed our front garden and carpark project to include a new buggy store, grassed areas, pedestrian path and an evergreen holly hedge. Many thanks to O Sargeant Landscapes for completing the project in a timely manner and for doing such a splendid job!

Our Easter Egg Hunt this year raised £162, thank you so much to all who supported this. Funds raised were put towards the cost of the project and we received a grant from the Parish Council towards our buggy store.

OAKLEY VILLAGE MONTHLY



Run by Oakley Parish Council and held in Oakley Village Hall

Friday 20 JUNE 2025

Friday 18 JULY 2025

Friday 15 AUGUST 2025

Friday 19 SEPTEMBER 2025

7.30pm start

Maximum 6 people per team

£3.00 per person (cash payment only please)

Bring your own snacks and drinks (alcohol allowed)

If you would like to enter a team please advise Richard Worker at richworker@hotmail.co.uk

Come along and have some fun and socialise with fellow quizzers

We are now busy preparing our eldest kindergarteners for their transition to primary school and are welcoming their new teachers to our setting to ensure a smooth transition for all on their educational journey. We are currently operating a waiting list for all our rooms and if you would like your child to start with us, please do make contact as early as possible. From September 2025 the Early Years Funding Entitlement rolls out to include children from 9 months of age becoming eligible for 30 hours of funding per week. For information on all funding criteria please see the information below.

Admissions

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

Sally Martiello BEM

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or: 01234 822499

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



1st Oakley Brownies (Fridays)

If you think your child would enjoy being a Brownie please sign up on the website: www.girlguiding.org.uk (register a child) or contact Kathy Jones - leader at 1st Oakley Brownies by emailing snowyowloakleybrownies@outlook.com Kathy Jones



What an amazing start to the year! We have had some lovely weather on classic car days with 310 show cars on Tuesday 8th April and 296 on Tuesday 13th May. We are now regarded by many within the classic car scene as one of the best venues with the best facilities in the area! Also we are seeing many show cars making their debut at Oakley Club.



The next show day is **Tuesday 10th June**



from 6.00pm. If the weather is good why not pop over and see some fantastic classics, vintage, custom and super cars!



Just two of the cars from the meeting on 13th May

Luke, Tech and the Classic Car Team

Harrold-Odell Country Park!

Without April showers of any note (where have they gone?), and record temperatures for the end of April and start of May, the park is quite dry. This is quite a remarkable thing to say after having been flooded many times over the autumn and winter!

Regular readers of this article will know that we are looking at all the work we need to do to retain the Green Flag Award for another year – so we have been fixing benches, cleaning signage, painting and treating wooden structures amongst a lot of other things.

Of course, the grass and vegetation has started growing well and we are busy cutting back the overhangs and keeping the amenity areas cut but leaving areas for wildflowers too. We are also busy at this time of year with school visits and educating a new generation of youngsters in the kind of bugs that can be found in the park or what can be found in the lakes with our pond dipping sessions – anything from pond snails and dragonfly larvae to water scorpions as well as the occasional water measurer or bullhead fish! Our park is very diverse and we celebrate that sometimes through the sculptures that you might find around the park. Recently, we installed a new otter sculpture to be seen in the water from the duck feeding area – you will have to visit if you want to know what it looks like!

Opening times for the Dragonfly Café are 9am to 4pm, seven days a week. Well behaved dogs are also welcome with doggy biscuits or a puppuccino on the treat menu for your pampered pooch!

Every other Thursday, there are health walks around the park and/or local area. Meeting at 10:30am at the woodland entrance to the Dragonfly Café, they last about 1 hour. The dates are June 5th & 19th, July 3rd, 17th & 31st and August 14th & 28th. More info can be found at <https://hocp.co.uk/get-involved/health-walks/>

We hope you enjoy your visits to our wonderful park!

From the Country Park staff and The Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park.



Above: finishing touches being applied to a repaired bench.

Steve's Snippet No.78

My last Snippet nearly precipitated conflict in a few households, apparently. I was asked to please provide a means of checking the answers in order to avoid a potential 3 months of moody silence until solutions were offered. I will endeavour to do that in future. * See below.

As for the last issue's puzzles, which I appreciate will not have been a puzzle to some/many (delete as appropriate), here goes...

1. The left-handed person becomes 2% of the people remaining, so 50 right-handed people leave; 50 remain in total – 49 right-handed and the 1 left-handed person. Simples...unless you try to reduce the 99% to 98% iteratively.

2. The divisor, 42, cancels the squaring of 42 (=42), plus 42/42 (=1): answer is 43.

Now for this issue's puzzles...

1. What is a four letter word with a short laugh in the middle?

2. What can you see in the middle of both March and April, but never at the beginning or end of either month?

3. How can 4 be shown as half of 5?

Email the 3 correct answers to me at sbnicholas@gmail.com and an email selected at random will receive a small but worthwhile prize (sponsored by me).

*(Also, quiz-counselling is available on request to the same address).

Steve Nicholas

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Winner 2025

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GoodOaks
Quality Care at Home

oakley Motorcycle club

OMC started this year with their AGM on 20th March with sixty plus members in attendance. The Officers and committee of the club remain the same this year with Roger Bays as Chair, Derek Brown as Vice Chair, Bernice Russell as Secretary and Graham Hardman as Treasurer.

The Member of the year award was won by Julie Ward for her continued support in the OMC accounts and book keeping.

There were several nominations for our coveted Pillock of the Year award. Included were - a member who managed to accidentally lock his bike ignition key and padlock key in the top box resulting in an expensive 40 mile round trip by taxi to collect the spare keys, - a member who took his immaculately restored 1974 Honda 175 to a classic car and bike show in Northants only to find it had occurred the day before - a member who booked his bike in for repair due to an unusual noise it was making only to eventually find it was his hearing aid causing it and - a member who was getting married and transposed her partners first names to the Registrar when providing details for the service causing much merriment on the day! All nominees will have to remain anonymous.



OMC Committee 2025

On 20th April OMC yet again made their annual Easter Egg run. This year, due to the works taking place at St Pauls Square, Bedford where we normally meet, the teams set off from Oakley Club instead. Eggs were delivered to the residents of Lomack House in Kempston, Brinkind at Stagenhoe, Sue Ryder at Moggerhanger, Milton Ernest Care Home and Lovell Homes in Oakley, before the riders returned to Oakley Club for a complimentary buffet.

In total over 180 eggs were handed out at these locations with a number left over which were handed to members' kids at Oakley Club that afternoon. Not a single piece of chocolate was wasted!

Following requests from two Care Homes for OMC to visit on 17th May a group of 14 OMC riders went firstly to Elstow Manor Care Home in Wix-

ams and then onto Olney Meadows care Home in Olney as both locations have residents who used to ride motorbikes. The riders were treated to tea and cakes at both locations and it seems the residents enjoyed the visits



Elstow Manor Care Home

Activities are continuing at OMC with ride outs so far this season to Foxton Locks, Market Harborough, The Old Prison at Northleach, The Woodman Inn, 398th Bomber Group museum at Nuthampstead, H Cafe at Berinsfield, The Wheat-sheaf at Edith Weston, and the Rutland and Stroud Brewery, Gloucestershire.

As many may be aware OMC, in conjunction with OSSC, hosted the conclusion of the Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride. This is an international event that takes place on 18th May raising money for prostate cancer and men's mental health charities.

We hosted the Milton Keynes ride out which was one of 64 such rides throughout England that morning. This ride alone had over 200 riders many dressed in retro or distinguished attire. This group alone have raised over £23,000 by completing this ride.



Finally, just to remind villagers of the 20th OMC Anniversary event taking place at Oakley Club on Saturday 2nd August. It starts at 1.00pm with live music by The Kopy Katz and Glam Rampage. This will be an open family orientated event for all to enjoy with all proceeds going to the East Anglian Air Ambulance. We hope to see you there!

Roger "Baysie" Bays



Oakley Sports & Social Club

Family & Sports Bar

Another busy and exciting few months at Oakley Sports & Social Club, with a fantastic line-up of events bringing together friends, families, and our wider community.

Over Easter, we were delighted to welcome singer Cameo Williams in her debut at OSSC – known from ITV's The Voice – who wowed the crowd with her incredible vocals. A brilliant day thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Cameo will be returning for our Fireworks display and Christmas Eve.

Our VE Day celebrations were another great success, with live music,



bouncy castles for the children, and a BBQ to keep everyone well fed. It was heartening to see so many come together to mark such a significant day in our nation's history.

In May, we hosted our first ever charity football match in aid of the British Heart Foundation.

Thanks to the incredible support from players, spectators and volunteers, £3,500 was raised – a brilliant achievement for a great cause. The atmosphere on the day was electric, and it was fantastic to see so many smiling faces, young and old alike.

Also in May, we welcomed around 200 riders from the Milton Keynes branch of the Distinguished Gentleman's Ride – part of a global fundraising event for prostate cancer and men's mental health. With over £23,000 raised, we were proud to serve as their destination and support such an important initiative.

Another group flying the Oakley SSC flag abroad is our Poker Club. Continuing a proud tradition, the team once again celebrated success at a tournament in Las Vegas



– a fantastic achievement and great fun for both seasoned players and first-timers. The group meets every Sunday, with an annual prize trip to Las Vegas on offer, and has recently expanded to include Wednesday night games too, with a new

prize trip to Malta. For more information, contact Did Thomas (did.thomas@oakleyssc.com / 07775 777272) or Neill Kelly (07304 087699).

Back on home turf, congratulations are in order for AFC Oakley's Senior First Team, who have won the Bedford & District Premier



League – their first time reaching the top in a decade! It is a huge achievement and testament to the hard work of everyone involved. Do not forget, we stream their home games live on Facebook and YouTube, so tune in when the new season kicks off in September.

Looking ahead, tickets for our RnB & Garage Night are selling fast. With a top-quality sound and lighting setup, big names in the genre, and an atmosphere like no other, this promises to be one of our standout events of the year. Visit our Facebook page or website for full details.

And of course, we are already preparing for Fireworks 2025 – our flagship event, and one that just keeps getting better. This year's display will feature stunning fireworks, laser shows, fun fair rides, bouncy castles, indoor kids' disco, live music, food stalls and more. We are especially excited to announce our headline act: MOBO Award winner Baby D, performing the UK number one hit and 90's anthem "Let Me Be Your Fantasy." Plus, we will have spectacular performances from fire and LED dancers to further compliment the event. It is all happening on Saturday 1st November – mark the date!

You will find a full list of upcoming events on the back page of this newsletter.

On behalf of the Committee and our Stewards, I want to thank everyone who continues to support the Club – whether by attending our events or simply popping in for a drink and a bite to eat. We would not be what we are without your support, and it is a privilege to be part of such a vibrant community.

Thank you.

Robbie Bays

Chairman, Oakley Sports & Social Club



Oakley Sports & Social Club
Family & Sports Bar

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

**AFC OAKLEY
ROLEY MOORE TOURNAMENT**
7TH & 8TH JUNE



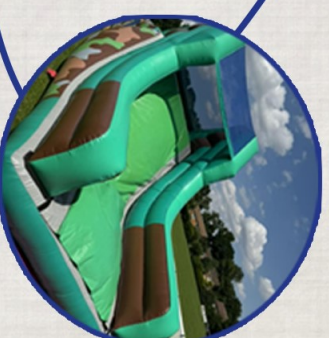
SCHOOL'S OUT
FRI 18TH JULY



**OMC 20TH
ANNIVERSARY**
SAT 2ND AUGUST



LAZY SUNDAY
SUN 24TH AUGUST



KIDS HALLOWEEN
FRI 31ST OCT



**DANNI BENTLEY
& KARAOKE**
SAT 27TH SEPT



FIREWORKS
SAT 1ST NOV



XMAS MARKET
SAT 13TH DEC



XMAS EVE LIVE MUSIC
WED 24TH DEC



NYE
31ST DEC

