



# Oakley Newsletter



**Winter 2016**  
Number 69



**Front Cover**  
Winter Scene  
by Terry Youngman

#### 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 Spring issue is 24th February 2017.  
The publishing date is 1st March.

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Invoices will be issued by Ann Paice, with payment to Oakley Parish Council.

#### Editor

Bill Chalker  
13 Bevery Close  
Oakley  
MK43 7SH  
07789 997733  
bill@chalker.uk.net

#### Printers

White Hart Press  
58a York Street  
Bedford MK40 3RL



#### Hello Children

look out for  
9 more



## Parish Council News

### Winter 2016

By PAUL PHILLIPS (Chair)

Here we are preparing for our Winter publication, which means Christmas is fast approaching. As I start to write, it is really cold outside with snow forecast for some. It is hard to believe that only a matter of days ago temperatures were quite high and many people were back in their summer clothing.

#### Bottle Bank

We continue to have occasional problems with the bottle bank, despite trying to get it emptied at regular intervals. I am sure everyone will agree with me that it is a waste of time and money to have it emptied when only half full. Can I make a plea that if you take your empties to the bottle bank and find it full, please take your empties away again and contact either Ann, the Clerk to the Parish Council or a Parish Councillor and report your findings.

#### Newsletter

We continue to receive very favourable comments about the quality of our newsletter which in turn reflects very favourably on our Community. I am sure the Editor, Bill, would welcome articles, particularly those of local interest or indeed current news. [Editor - yes please]

#### Irresponsible and inconsiderate parking

The majority of our residents and road users act very responsibly, but sadly a minority still do not, for whatever reason.....To the responsible many THANK YOU and to the irresponsible and inconsiderate few please do NOT:-

- Park on the zig/zags outside schools
- Park/stop on verges and footpaths
- Drive on the grass verge. I appeal to you never to do this for obvious reasons. Mounting our grass verges at this time of year will cause irreparable damage.
- Park/stop on or close to a junction.

Continued on page 3

## OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

### PARISH CLERK

**Ann Paice**  
31 Radwell Road  
Milton Ernest  
Bedford, MK44 1SH.  
824852  
maea@paice31.fsnet.co.uk

### CHAIR

**Paul Phillips**  
3 Station Road. 824260  
paulphillips65@gmail.com

### VICE CHAIR

**Jane Walker**  
(Parish and Borough councillor)  
11 Dewlands. 824530  
jane@janewalker.co.uk

### Pat Olney

(Parish and Borough councillor)  
33 Station Road. 824384  
pat.olney@btopenworld.com

### Jonathan Abbott

11 Lincroft 826335  
ma55ey35@gmail.com

### Sara Fardon

61 Lincroft. 824516  
sarafardon@yahoo.co.uk

### Michael Frampton

The Little House, The Drive  
822181  
michael\_frampton@btinternet.com

### Phyllis Jones

35 Ruffs Furze 910187  
phylmaj@gmail.com

### Stephen Nicholas

44, Grenidge Way 824345  
sbnicholas@aol.com

### Gerry Sansom

21 Pavenham Road.  
823295  
gerrysan-  
som@btinternet.com

### Robert Saunders

College Farm. 822328  
rjsaunders5591@gmail.com

### Paul White

20 Reynes Drive. 825472  
paulwhite20rd@gmail.com



- Obstruct the dropped kerbs. They are there for a purpose.
- Park/stop on yellow lines or across entrances to driveways.

We can all play our part in trying to discourage this behaviour, either, if appropriate and safe, by speaking to the offender or by taking a photograph and reporting the matter.

### Neighbourhood Development Plan

I know Pat Olney and her team continue to be very busy in their production of this very important document. It is their intention to give all residents opportunity to comment early in 2017. The consultation will take place at the Village Hall and when the date is announced please do your best to attend. We want the consultation to be as wide as possible.



### Lincroft School/Bedfordia Cross Country Competition 17 January 2017

Lincroft School will once again be organising and hosting a Schools' Cross Country Run on 17 January 2017 which will be attended by many schools from Bedfordshire and surrounding counties. To facilitate the many coaches and to ensure safety for our young people a road closure is being applied for by the school along the length of Station Road from Reynes Drive to Lovell Road/Church Lane between approximately 11am and 4pm. The school is arranging for St Marys Church Car Park and Oakley Club Car Park to be used. Road parking will be discouraged by use of no Waiting cones. Generally the event has been very successful and very well planned by the Staff at Lincroft School. The main problems have been caused by the late arrival of parents who feel they can park just where they want. We are hopeful that this forthcoming event some patrolling Police Staff will be able to deal with offenders in the appropriate way.

### Childrens' Play Areas in the Village

The Parish Council has been looking at improvements to the play area in The Furlong. The views of residents in The Furlong have been

sought and subject to costs and available finance we will endeavour to make some improvements. At the same time we thought it would also be sensible and appropriate to look at the play area on the Green in the centre of the village. Any changes here will also be dependent on available finance. Residents are invited to submit views/comments concerning this play area and its equipment by email to Ann Paice, Clerk to Oakley Parish Council [maea@paice31.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:maea@paice31.fsnet.co.uk)

### Average Speed Cameras

Remember all average speed cameras are now working. At this time I do not have figures available, but hope to include them in our Spring Newsletter. Please be conscious of your speed within the village and keep below 30mph.

Well I think I've rambled enough. Once again thank you for your continued support and thank you to our editor Bill Chalker.

I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas and a very Happy New Year.



Paul Phillips

Chairman

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## Borough Council News by Cllr Pat Olney



### Winter Weather Updates

After a mild Autumn, the frost is upon us and the salting of the roads has been published. The roads carrying the most traffic and with the highest risk of accidents and will be treated first. All A and B roads and the important local roads will also be gritted. If the weather is severe then please go to [weather@twittrtweeps](mailto:weather@twittrtweeps).

Otherwise there is a dedicated twitter account which gives updates on road conditions and the gritter runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [Twitter.com/grittertweets](https://twitter.com/grittertweets).

### Bedford Hospital and Social Care

Now called Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STPs) has now been published.

STPs are being put together across the country to look at how health and social care services will be delivered in the future. Our local STP is made up of 16 organisations including the local authorities, GPs and the three hospitals. It is led by the chief executive of the Luton and Dunstable University Hospital.

This plan should be a real opportunity for the NHS, local councils and other partners to work together to find a sustainable solution for our health and social care services. It is well known that the NHS and social care are near crisis, facing an extremely difficult financial challenge, with increasing demand on services. It is important that they do work together; for instance if people are to leave hospital then the social care needs to be in place so that they can recover safely at home.

Bedford residents and organisations have worked for many years to insist that both A and E and Maternity Units should continue to be based at Bedford Hospital.

The published document sees the Bedford, Milton Keynes and the Luton and Dunstable Hospitals to be run as one hospital on the three sites. However it does not say what services each hospital will have on site and also how social care will be integrated with each hospital.

Hopefully this is the first stage and the next stage will show how the Bedford Hospital and social care will be integrated to meet the needs of Bedford Borough residents. At that stage we will have a clearer idea of the services that will be at the hospital.

You can read the STP report in full, visit [www.Bedford.gov.uk](http://www.Bedford.gov.uk)

### Have your Say

This is a first opportunity for you to have your say on the health and social care changes proposed by completing the STP survey at

[www.blmkstp.org](http://www.blmkstp.org) or by emailing your opinions to [communications.nkuk.org](mailto:communications.nkuk.org)  
Remember when replying that this is the first overview and does not give any details.

### Bedford Borough Local Plan 2021 – 2032

The draft plan will be available for consultation in the spring of 2017. All the calls for development sites are being evaluated for access, services available in the village or urban area and school capacity amongst other criteria.

There are 4 new garden town settlements also being evaluated. They are the two at Twinwoods Clapham/Milton Ernest; The Bedford Airfield Site; the Unilever site at Sharnbrook and a site at Wyboston.

Oakley, Pavenham and Stevington Neighbourhood Plans are progressing well. Congratulations to all the people working on the plans as it is so important for each village to have its own plan for future development.

This is my last contribution for the year and I wish to thank each Parish Council for all the work they do for their parishes.

Finally I wish everyone a happy Christmas and a good New Year. Perhaps a little calmer than this year?

Pat Olney Tel. 01234 824384  
email [pat.olney@btopenworld.com](mailto:pat.olney@btopenworld.com),

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# Oakley Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan Group have been working hard and the policies are now in draft form. They are based on what you have already told us.

The policies will, when adopted, affect all the planning applications that the Borough Planning Authority will consider and the decisions the Borough make.

**The group needs your help again.**

**We need to know that the policies have your agreement and also any new ideas you may have. This is very important because the policies will decide where development might go and inform how the village will develop up till 2035.**

**The Consultation day is Sunday 29th January at the Village Hall.**

**All the policies will be on display. They include: Landscape and Environmental Guidelines; Historic Structures and Important areas Policy; Housing Development and Design Policy; Sustainable Community Policy; Local Business/Employment Policy; Highways and Transport Policy; Green Space Policy; Coalescence Policy (areas of separation); Community Infrastructure Policy.**

**Please put this date in your diaries now.**

**Your Views are needed so that you shape the village you live in.**



**The date is:**

**Sunday 29th January 2017 in the Village Hall**

**10 am to 4pm**

**There will displays, tea and coffee**

**Remember it is your village. I know so many love the village community and living here. By making your views known we can keep a lovely village in a lovely landscape.**

**Do come along. Please Put that date in your Diary now!**

## MESSY CHURCH

Come along and join in the fun at Messy Church. Messy Church takes place every Thursday at St Mary's during term time 10am to 12oclock for children up to 5 years old with their parents /carers . A light lunch is served of fresh fruit with a drink and biscuits , with coffee or tea and biscuits for the adults.

PLENTY OF TOYS.

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A line up of the main machinery and employees at Henry Saunders Agricultural Services.

## Farming life at College Farm, Oakley

I'm Henry, John's grandson, and along with my wife Laura and Daisy, our dog, we live at College Farm.

Me, and my brother Charlie are the fifth generation of Saunders to farm at College Farm, Oakley.

Up until 2002, College Farm was a dairy farm, but due to lack of profitability and room for expansion, the pedigree herd was sold. My father Robert replaced them with a suckler herd of 40 Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle. These have one calf a year born after Christmas and they then spend the summer suckling from their mother on the river meadows before being sent away to be finished, eventually reaching the supermarket shelves.

The remaining land at the Farm is cropped with wheat, barley and oilseed rape. College Farm itself is approximately 300 acres of which 200 is in arable cropping and the remainder is grass. This is rather a small farm these days and it's hard to justify some of the expensive machines to sow and harvest the crops.

To make the Farm viable we have had to diversify. Some buildings are let out on a commercial basis. White's Engineering is based here and we also contract our agricultural services out to numerous other farmers within a 25-mile radius. This allows us to run our own large machinery, and over the past eight years, agricultural contracting has become a large part of what we do. Each season we now combine 1,600 acres, sow up to 2,500 acres of crops and carry out many jobs in between, including silage making, muck-spreading and hedge cutting. To do all this, we employ two people: we work long hours when the weather allows and when it's all going well there is no better job! You may well have seen some of our machinery around the village - it's quite large and not the easiest to manoeuvre around.

The summer of 2016 got off to a terrible start with a really wet June, and the farmhouse was struck by lightning! But once July came and the sun came out, it allowed us to make all the hay



Laura and Henry Saunders

and silage.

Harvest quickly followed and by 16th August it was very nearly complete apart from a few beans. September was glorious and allowed us to spread muck and get the ground ploughed and cultivated. In October, we began sowing next year's crops with the ground dry and dusty, however after a couple of weeks, we had to park the drill up as it was too dry!

Throughout the winter months, our time is taken up tending to cattle, cutting hedges, carting manure to build up fertility in the soil and loading straw for customers. Also, if we are lucky enough to get snow we have two snow ploughs which we put on the tractors and clear supermarket car parks and various other sites between Bedford and Northampton.

Henry Saunders





## Life as a farmer's wife at College Farm

Hello, I am Laura, Henry's wife. I don't work on the farm full time, but instead have a part time job as a Marketing Manager at Robinson & Hall, the Land and Property Professionals and my own art business called LJ Creative Studios. My art is largely countryside themed – painting an array of farm animals, pets and scenery, as well as commissions. My art studio and gallery are based at the farmhouse and is now open every Thursday and Friday from 10am. My next Saturday open gallery will be early next year. Further details will be advertised on my Facebook page and website.

We hope you have found this first article informative - you can follow Henry Saunders Agricultural Services on twitter @HSaundersAg, Facebook and visit

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

You can follow LJ Creative Studios on twitter @LJCreativeStu, Facebook and visit

[www.ljcreativestudios.com](http://www.ljcreativestudios.com).





My art gallery at College Farm which will shortly be open Thursdays and Fridays from 10am

My last role is that of being a 'farmer's wife'. I only qualified in April this year when Henry and I got married at Oakley Church, although it feels like I have been part of the farm for much longer than that! I'm not from a farming background so it took quite a few years to get the hang of farming life, however, I have never looked back!

The main things I have learnt are that you need to react instantly and are often found in situations that are way out of your comfort zone - the most memorable moment happened last Christmas day when we were woken at 6am with a cow in distress (they generally don't stop mooing if something is wrong) to find that the cow was having problems calving.

Before I knew it, I was handed a rope and asked to pull. Thankfully we managed to get the calf out and we named her Holly and she is still on the farm today.

In addition, you have to be good at understanding hand signals when the cows have got out, being a bit of a detective when you think someone who shouldn't be is poking around your farm late at night, keep yourself busy during the summer months as hubby will be working very long hours and being prepared to go on your 'sunny' holiday in autumn or winter.





# LJCreative Studios

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PAINTINGS PHOTOGRAPHY COMMISSIONS



**Be a Scout ! Otherwise you won't feel the benefit. . .**

I expect that every Scout and Guide Leader feels that you do not need to be mad to be a Leader, but it helps.

However, I would have thought that anyone volunteering to spend about 2 hours a week, every week, educating, enlightening and entertaining up to 20 youngsters, who appear to have no volume control or off-setting for their vocal chords and a complete inability to sit still for more than 10 nanoseconds, might hold a somewhat different view. That view being, 'if I was not mad at the start of the evening, then I am at the end'.

Having reflected on the mental state of the Leaders, what of their charges ? Those 20 or so little angels, deposited so gratefully by their parents at the start of the evening session. Each one of whom, when the Leader screams 'Silence !', interprets the resulting drop in noise as the ideal opportunity to hold their most important conversation.

Well, it seems that they are far more likely to reach adulthood, if not actually grow up and reach maturity, in a far better frame of mind to suffer those slings and arrows of outrageous fortune than the rest of us. Research published in November this year, by a team from Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities, has identified an unexpected finding. Children who attend Scouts, or Guides, have better mental health later in life.



Allow me to quote from the numerous interviews. "On average, Scouts and Guides were 15 per cent less likely to have developed mental illness or depression by middle age, even those from poorer backgrounds. It is quite startling that this benefit is found in people so many years after they have attended Guides or Scouts. The results that we obtained showed that it did seem to be particular to Scouts and Guides. These organisations aim to develop self-reliance, resolve, and a desire for self-learning in children, and often involve outdoor activities. We didn't see the same protective effect from, for example, volunteering or from church groups."

"This may suggest that the inclusivity of both charity organisations, which welcome children from all backgrounds, may play a positive role in adulthood. We expect the same principles would apply to the Scouts and Guides of today and so, given the high costs of mental ill health, a focus on voluntary youth programmes such as the Guides and Scouts might be very sensible." All of which is fascinating, I am sure you will agree.

Accordingly, given the expectations that these findings might set, the Trustees of the Oakley Scout Group feel that they need to publish a formal disclaimer. There can be no assurance or guarantee given about the long-term benefits of being a Beaver, Cub or Scout. However, in the short-term, there appears to be every indication that the Youth Members really enjoy Scouting.

Jon Abbott, Group Scout Leader, and his team of Leaders and Adult Helpers are providing a wide range of fun and challenging activities for boy and girl Youth Members between the ages of 6 and 14. The Scouting programme provided for the Sections is a mix of badge work, games, themed evenings, visits and weekend activities. And right now there are vacancies for Cubs.

So, if you are the parent or guardian of a child between the ages of 6 and 14 who may be interested in joining Oakley Scout Group, the relevant contact numbers are below.

Beaver	6 - 8 year olds	Wednesdays	18:15-19:30	phone Karen	07918 181815
Cubs	8 - 10.5 year olds	Thursdays	18:30-20:00	phone Arran	07526 653178
Scout	10.5 - 14 year olds	Tuesdays	19:00-20:30	phone Dean	07854 312255

You know it makes sense. Probably. . .



**Oakley Youth Club** is up and running at the Old School, Oakley. Two youth leaders Courtney and Hannah have developed an exciting programme of events.

We would like to invite all 12-16 year olds down to Oakley Old School on Friday evening during term time from 7:30pm-9:30pm to join in the fun.

Entry is £1 and bring some small change for the tuck shop if you wish.

***More about Courtney and Hannah***

Hannah is a keen football player and can carry out a mean tackle, so watch out everyone.

Courtney is a shopaholic, she has so many hand-bags she can't count them all.

Both of them are looking forward to seeing you at the Youth Club.

If you would like more information then contact

Courtney on 07731652539 or Hannah on 07593613551 or

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## Oakley Rural Day Centre

The Day Centre is a hive of activity at the moment with the clients busying themselves making Christmas decorations for our Christmas tree. We have made pompom snowballs, Angels, woolly bobble hats, Christmas trees made from twigs and ribbon and paper snowflakes. It should look spectacular when we have finished. Christmas is a very exciting time of the year for us when we try to make our elderly clients feel really special and part of a friendly community as sadly many of them will spend Christmas in isolation.

We will be holding our **Christmas Lunches** on the **13th, 14th, and 15th December**. Angela our cook (with some of her little helpers) always make a delicious Roast Turkey lunch with all the trimmings followed by Christmas pudding and maybe a glass of sherry. We will be holding a grand prize draw so hopefully all the clients will go home with a gift. Any donations of raffle prizes will be gratefully received.

We are looking forward to a carol concert from Oakley Lower School and visits from the Salvation Army which will hopefully get us into the festive spirit.

We would like to thank Oakley Lower School for their kind and generous gifts at the harvest festival. Our clients always look forward to a visit from such well behaved and well mannered young children.



If you know anyone who would like to join our happy group we now have a few spaces on Tuesday and Wednesday. Please telephone us on 07733 227374 for more information.

Pat Olney



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## AMIGO

A most enjoyable evening was spent at the Methodist Church on the 25th October when Noel gave us an illustrated talk about whether he had found, as a result of his research into his family history, a "mad" Preacher in his family. A most interesting account was given by Noel of his visits made to obtain information about his ancestors and of the possibly "eccentric" preacher.

An evening of poetry took place at the Methodist Church on the 22nd November. Undoubtedly there are some very talented poets among us. A very wide range of poetry was read with one being sung very beautifully by Ruth.



A traditional evening of **carol singing** and the use of hand bells will take place at the Bedford Arms, Oakley on Tuesday **20th December**.



The New Year will get off to a good start with the showing of the film "**The Lady in the Van**" starring Dame Maggie Smith at the Methodist Church on Tuesday **24th January** beginning at 8.00 p.m. A request for donations will be made to cover the cost of the licence.

A light hearted quiz will be arranged for Tuesday **28th February** at the Methodist Church beginning at 8.00 p.m.

Although details of future events will appear in the March issue of the Oakley Newsletter, it is proposed that on Tuesday **28th March** a talk will be given on the history and plant life of **Linch Furlong** and the orchard prior to a walk in the Summer led by Pat Knight.

I would also mention that plans are being made for a coach outing to **Greenwich** to take place on Thursday **27th July**. It is proposed to leave Oakley at 8.00 a.m. with an estimated time of arrival at Greenwich of about 10.30 a.m.



We are planning a visit to the Old Royal Naval College for a Painted Hall Ceiling Tour. Our guide, Charlie de Wet has made a provisional booking. It is planned to have lunch at the Cutty Sark Pub. There are so many attractions at Greenwich. I hope to arrange an itinerary as soon as possible.

John Dixon

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## Celebrating 50 Years in (between them!)

# Brownies



**Brenda Barnes—Brown Owl  
and Lindy Chalker—Little Owl**

Congratulations to both Brownie leaders. Lindy recently received her certificate thanking her for twenty years of volunteering and next month Brenda will reach thirty years of volunteering.

Lindy attended a Girlguiding Awards Presentation last month where the Sherriff of Bedfordshire presided over the presentation of long service awards to over 50 Guide, Brownie and Rainbow Leaders who volunteer their own time to enable girls and young women to experience new life skills and to help build their confidence and raise their aspirations.

Brenda confirms that they always like to ask the Brownies to choose a name for New Owls and as the older Brownies were as tall as Lindy there was no contest - she had to be called "Little Owl"

I know that you will want to pass on the thanks from Oakley Village for the hundreds of girls who have passed through Brownies under their care - some of who now bring their own daughters to Brownies.

If your daughter is interested in joining Rainbows (from age 5) or Brownies (from age 7) please register online at [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/)



## Guiding in North Beds

This term members of North Beds Guiding took part in a large scale Guiding event in Russell Park, Bedford, in September called Bringing Us to You. Along with members of the public, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Senior Section and their families were invited to try out many different activities, including caving, golf, climbing, zorbing and grass go-karting to name a few. There were also opportunities to ride on a carousel, have a go at an assault course, learn football skills and bounce on the bouncy castle, as well as visit the refreshment tent and find out more about Guiding in Bedfordshire. A great time was had by all and one Brownie was heard to remark – "When's the next one?"

Some units took part in a Bridge Walk along the River Great Ouse in Bedford. There were 13 bridges to travel over and some members attempted several laps to raise money for their unit. Some members of the public were surprised to see so many girls and young women in red, yellow and blue walking (and in some cases running) along the river bank. A special commemorative badge was available to everyone who took part.

In the units, Brownies in Oakley and Sharnbrook celebrated 150 years of Peter Rabbit with lots of Beatrix Potter themed activities, including making delicious savoury biscuits. Oakley Rainbows found out about the festival of Diwali – they enjoyed making lanterns and learning some Bollywood dance moves. Guides and Brownies also visited Gallones Ice Cream Parlour and enjoyed making (and eating!) their own ice cream.

For more information about volunteering with Guiding or about Rainbows, Brownies Guides or Senior Section please e-mail Jane on [div.nbeds@bedsguiding.org.uk](mailto:div.nbeds@bedsguiding.org.uk) or visit [www.bedsguiding.org.uk](http://www.bedsguiding.org.uk)

Jane Thompson, Acting District Commissioner

# The Oakley Show

The Oakley Show of old was abandoned over 20 years ago. Some who remembered it, partly inspired by recent community projects such as our allotments, suggested that the time might be right to hold another Oakley Show in the hope that it could become a regular event once again.



Enthusiasm for the revival had been increasing for a number of years and, finally, a small team got together to plan and stage this year's show. Its success was due to a number of valued sponsors, the considerable number of people who entered exhibits in the wide range of classes and supported the event in other ways, including the many visitors.

The Village Hall Committee supported by providing the refreshments, lots of helping hands on the day and arranging the raffle.

Sponsors, Whites Garden Machinery and Milton Ernest Garden Centre, provided valuable contributions to help guarantee the day's success.



Invited judges gave their time and made some very difficult decisions on the day.

Oakley Parish Council, No 3 Emporium, Mr and Mrs Steele, Oakley pre-school, Oakley Gardening Club, Pat Olney and Mrs D Hookham provided the trophies for the various classes and Paul Phillips, Parish Council Chairman, presented them at the close of the show.



An entertaining auction of exhibits marked the closing moments of the day and saw the disposal of the many superb cakes, vegetables, flowers and baked-goods etc. to the considerable number of people present. This also raised extra funds for the village hall.

Congratulations go to the winners of the well-supported number of classes who received the trophies as follows:-

Donna Peckham - Bakery trophy

Louise Hamshire - Flower trophy

Thea - Childrens trophy

Sandra Frampton - Fruit trophy

Ian Percival - Vegetable trophy

Keeley Frampton - Photography trophy

Yvonne Keyte - Preserves trophy

and Best in Show trophy.



The Oakley Show will be on again next year so please put the 17th of September 2017 in your diaries. There will also be new classes to enter- please contact us if there is a particular class you would like to see included next year or if you have any other suggestions for the show.

Once again, thanks to everyone who was involved,

**Jean and Julia**





# Fun for all the family

## Help us celebrate the Carnival



The Carnival will begin with a procession through the village from **12:30pm** arriving at the ORA field (off Church Lane) for a fun packed afternoon

- Craft stalls
- Fun fair
- Competitions
- Arena show
- Food stalls
- Licenced Bar
- Bouncy castles

Why not get in touch to book a stall, take part in the procession or Arena acts, or to get involved:

Email: [oakleycarnival@gmail.com](mailto:oakleycarnival@gmail.com)

Website: [www.oakleycarnival.co.uk](http://www.oakleycarnival.co.uk)





## A letter from Revd Linda

'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light'.  
Isaiah 9:2

The nights are drawing in towards the shortest day. Advent is a time of special preparation for Christmas, the feast of the Incarnation, the 'coming of Christ'. With the penitential nature of the Churches calendar Advent enables us to enjoy a period of reflection, a time of drawing closer to our Lord, in preparation for Christmas. We can focus our attention on forgiving and being forgiven and grow deeper into God's love. The word Advent is derived from the Latin 'Advenio' meaning coming or arrival. It is the beginning of the Christian Year. The Vestments and Altar Frontals are purple which is a sign of penitence. The Gloria is omitted during the Eucharist; there is a feeling of anticipation and expectancy. It is both poignant and exciting.

Christ came to bring us from 'Darkness to Light'. Before the electric light was invented, the winter period must have seemed dark dreary and endless in comparison to the light we now enjoy at the flick of a switch. Think also of the pleasure we obtain from the lights we use to decorate our houses and town.

The Church saw Christ's coming amongst us as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah: 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light'. The Advent candles which we light each Sunday during Advent are replaced with a white one on Christmas Day. This represents Christ who is the Light of the world; God sent him to dwell amongst us, and Christ described his mission in these terms when in St. John's he declared 'I AM LIGHT OF THE WORLD' (John 8:12).



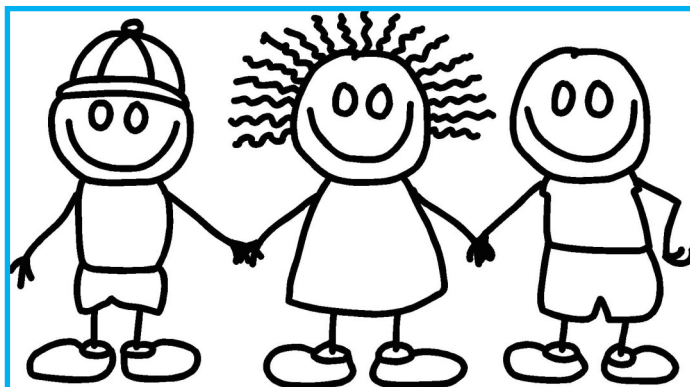
His teaching has continued to be a source of light for two thousand years. The light of Christ is a persistent light, and the light of the Gospel cannot be overpowered by darkness.

This is why candles accompany the gospel book in the procession during the communion service. The Gospel of Christ brings light to our world. Gospel means good news and this is what the Christian message is all about. Good news for ALL PEOPLE.

Amidst the devastation in our world Christ's light brings hope, not despair, healing not hurt, and freedom not oppression for those that allow Him into their hearts. He is a friend, and those who walk with him have the light of life. We have tasted the joy the shepherds must have experienced on the first Christmas night when the light of God's glory shone around. Christ came to save all people so let us let his light shine and make him known in our villages. Do join us during the coming weeks, you will be most welcome.

Have a blessed and spiritual Advent, prepare well and then have a Holy and Happy Christmas.

All blessings  
Reverend Linda.



## Oakley Toddlers

Monday 9.30-11.00am  
term time only in the Village Hall

£1.50 crafts/toys/singing/drinks & snacks

Oakley Toddlers has been running successfully over the last two decades, providing a warm friendly place for mums, dads, grandparents and carers to meet and play with their children.

Anyone interested in volunteering to help run the group please drop in to meet us and see what is involved!

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as well as other types of fabric



## Oakley Allotments



Many agree that this year seems to have flown by and running an allotment just adds to the feeling that this is very true. Mind you, the slowish start to the spring and the onset of decent weather shortened the growing season somewhat.

Some crops have been a failure but others have been successful - each year is different and the unpredictable nature of it adds to the interest.

Successes and failures this year:-

Strawberries were good but there was also a lot of mildew at the time our variety cropped, due to the cool, damp conditions.

Cultivated blackberries were excellent - we picked over 12 kilos of them between the allotment and home (wild ones were very prolific too).

Early brassicas were disappointing but the addition of fish, blood and bone helped them improve so soil condition was an obvious factor here.

Kale is now doing really well and feeding whitefly and us quite well.

Runner beans were reasonable but not as good as in previous years.

Beetroot, not so good and mined quite extensively by slugs.

Chard is the best ever - we planted quite a lot as it was not so good last year and now we have loads of it. I have covered the chard again in the hope that it will continue for a while yet.

Leeks have remained quite spindly although I have planted them in three different areas, which suggests that the weather has affected them.

Carrots were the best ever but only after the second sowing - the first sowing just disappeared.

Parsnips are not so good and after a third attempt at sowing we have about six of them maturing. Others have reported that parsnip sowings have failed to germinate.

Sweetcorn looked promising but was disappointingly tough and starchy.

Celeriac is a complete failure this year having been good in the past.

Fennel produced more than we could use - I entered one bulb in the Oakley Show and won Second in the class of "a presentation of six different vegetables".

Courgettes and squashes were not very good

compared to previous years, not producing the quantity or quality they have produced easily in past years. Sprouting-broccoli is looking good but we will have to wait until early next year to find out how it crops. I am experimenting with self-seeded onions - they have germinated like grass, which is promising.

I must remember to plant some garlic - now is about the right time. I have just "stuck in" shop-bought cloves in the past with a good success rate.

Looking at this list again I am pleased by the amount that we have managed to cultivate this year. We are now at that time again where everything has slowed and the next few months might present us with snow - who can tell. There is little that can be done at the allotment now except to continue to harvest what is left. That is very rewarding.

We only have a half-plot available at the moment. If you are interested in joining us please get in touch with me.

Steve Nicholas



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## Steve's Snippet No.23

I hope someone is keeping count - these Snippets seem to be multiplying...

"Tidy people must be lazy because they can't be bothered to search for stuff"

I would like to think that might be true because it would add some measure of virtue to my untidiness. It is probably the thing I like least about myself but I have a theory that I am not actually at fault...

Firstly, I am a very busy person - not always productive, but busy nevertheless. Sometimes busy looking for stuff but usually sure that what I seek is located in that particular pile and possibly about two-thirds of the way down. Woe-betide anyone who dares to tidy-up for me; they would wreck my filing system. The system is also a complex memory test and so it keeps my flitting, moth-like brain active.

Secondly, the modern universe conspires against any plan to add visible order to the apparent chaos. Just tidy-up that pile on the kitchen table and it is suddenly replaced by one twice the original size as more mail arrives, junk and otherwise, and has to be placed on the pile to be sorted and dealt with...later.

Thirdly, I am a technophile and have assorted gadgets and stuff about the place ready for an apocalypse that will find me well-provided with trick USB charging devices, things to charge with USB charging devices, manuals to explain the subtle attributes of such devices, something to power such devices when the national grid no longer functions, etc. etc. Just for example.

I'll stop there because I need to look for something I might need to refer to in order to continue - I may be some time and therein lies your rescue.

This subject links neatly (or somehow) to my Scotland adventures of July - I was forced to live for over a week in the most minimalist and, necessarily, tidy way - it was GREAT! The story continues in Snippet, err, 24.

...where are my notes...



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## 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).



## Steve's Snippet No.24

(Scotland in July)

The day dawned drizzly and misty. Any hope of a view of Loch Lomond was dashed and so I set off towards Oban somewhat disappointed but hopeful that the weather might improve. It had room to get much worse but I was feeling optimistic and my optimism was in order - the rain stopped and a sort of sunshine began to reveal something of the area's splendour.



At Tarbet one can continue north towards Glencoe and Fort William or bear west towards Loch Fyne. West was the heading for me and the next settlement of Arrochar provided a useful fuel-stop. The tank was fairly low as I pulled-in to the petrol-station and as I did so I had to avoid running over a group of cyclists who were scattered around the forecourt. One of the cyclists was attending an upside-down cycle near the entrance to the shop and so I parked by my chosen pump, exited the van and walked over to him to find out what was amiss.

His back wheel had a broken spoke in the usual and most awkward place, on the sprocket-side of the wheel. I very helpfully suggested that carrying spare spokes was something I always found useful on cycle trips. However the group didn't have a spoke between them and so were searching for a bicycle repair shop anywhere in the locality - oh, the wonders of smartphones!

The apparent leader of the group announced that he had located a shop in Helensburgh and that he would now proceed to order a taxi for his unfortunate friend and his bike. I had finished refuelling by this time and offered to take the man and his bike as I had an, as yet, unused bike rack on my van and some time on my hands before I had to meet Dennis.

The group offered to pay for my fuel if I was prepared to fulfil this generous offer. I declined, pointing out that my fuel cost some £60. The leader said that there were ten of them in the group, they were on holiday from Bahrain, where they all worked and were not exactly hard-up for a whip-round of six quid each in order to help their companion out. So, with my arm bent firmly up behind my back, I was forced to accept and loaded the bike as they paid my fuel bill.



I hadn't planned to include Helensburgh in my itinerary, but then, to be honest, I hadn't got much of a plan anyway. So it was that I headed back the way I had come with Tony and his bike aboard and a tank of free diesel.

We had a good chat on the way down the road and it was good to hear views from an ex-pat from Manchester who lived and worked in Bahrain. He made an annual pilgrimage to Scotland with a bunch of mates on bicycles to cycle for a week and this was to be their last day. My intervention was timely and welcome as his car was parked in Glasgow and he could easily get

back to it after having the repair done. It also meant that the others could complete their last day as planned and with minimal disruption.

Helensburgh was worth visiting, the once... as you drive in you face Greenock across the Clyde. It was not a place I would have chosen to visit otherwise and I unloaded Tony and bike near to the repair shop. I suggested that his luck seemed to be in and that he ought to buy a lottery scratch-card. He waved goodbye and laughed.

The trip was shaping-up nicely I thought as I headed back towards Tarbet in the still-improving weather. I doubted that I would ever get a free trip to Scotland again. Also, I didn't buy a lottery scratch card - I wonder if Tony did. (to be continued - does anything else remotely interesting happen?)





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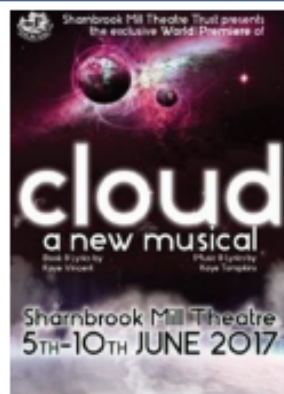
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 we cannot tell you here.....  
 but please visit our website  
 www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk  
 or pick up a Brochure  
 from 'The Mill' ....  
 and all will be revealed!

7th-9th September, 7.30 pm

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*A fundraiser concert featuring  
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*By Gail Young*

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**TICKETS:** on-line from 1<sup>st</sup> February at [www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk](http://www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk) or Twinkle, Twinkle Boutique, High Street, Sharnbrook, in person, from  
 5 weeks before First Night. Group bookings: 10 % discount for 10 + except Charity Nights, Fri. & Sat. 01234 781372, also for 2 wheelchair spaces.



This concert chronicles the life of composer  
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BBC Music Magazine April 2014

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Sunday 26th February 2017  
 at The Quarry Theatre at St Luke's,  
 St Peter's Street, Bedford  
 7.00 pm - Champagne Reception at 6.15 pm

Distinguished concert pianist Lucy  
 Parham presents her second "composer portrait" in  
 words and music, with readings by celebrated actor  
 Henry Goodman, following her huge success with  
*Beloved Clara*, at The Quarry last February.

This performance is in aid of Sharnbrook Mill Theatre's £300,000 Appeal  
 to enable a green-energy based heating & ventilation system to be installed  
 at the theatre. The first phase of the heating system, using water-heat  
 exchange energy blades in the mill pool, and water source heat pumps  
 supplying under seat radiators in the Auditorium, was completed in June  
 2016. Fundraising continues to complete this innovative project, with Phase  
 Two, extending the heating system and Phase Three: natural ventilation.



**Don't miss THE RACE NIGHT AT THE MILL! Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 7 for 7.45 ⇨ £10 inc. supper. [theo@twhgibbs.plus.com](mailto:theo@twhgibbs.plus.com)**



# Oakley Pre-school News



Our autumn term has been a busy one with 16 new starters joining us. So far this term we have enjoyed apple pressing at Middle Farm with Chris and Jenny Knight and we have again enjoyed making a bonfire in the pre-school garden to keep us warm and to enable us to toast marshmallows for a snack. We supported the Bedford Foodbank Harvest appeal and held one of our regular Thursday morning coffee mornings in aid of Macmillan.

Our parents and carers have also joined us for our regular Open Classroom events where they can, as their child's first educators, observe and add to their children's development records. It is extremely important for all children accessing our setting that we work in partnership with their parents and carers.

Education and childcare have been facing many changes in recent months and the Early Years is no exception. From September 2016, we now carry out the Two Year Old Integrated Reviews at pre-school. This means that we are working very closely with our colleagues in Health and we have regular visits from our allotted Health Visitors, who carry out the health and development checks. The reviews take place with the children, their parent/carer and the child's key person all present.



From January 2017 Tax Free Childcare is being introduced. This is a government service which will help parents to pay for childcare. For every £8 parents pay into their Childcare Account, the government will add an extra £2. Thirty hour funding for 3 and 4 year olds will be rolled out

across the country from September 2017. We are currently working closely with the Borough Council to prepare for this change to the funding system.

## Fundraising & Community events



We advertise all our fundraising events on the village noticeboards and also on the Oakley Village Website calendar. Our events are open to everyone, so please do come along and help to support your local pre-school. We held our Crafty Christmas event at the end of November which, once again, proved to be very popular. Our next event will be our Spring Disco on **25th March 2017**. This will be a children's disco, look out for our posters on the noticeboards nearer the time.



## Admissions

If you would like to register your child for a place at pre-school, please contact us on 01234 826452 or by email: [grow@oakleypreschool.org.uk](mailto:grow@oakleypreschool.org.uk)

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

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

Sally Martiello





## Oakley Village Hall

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Separate meeting room with bar

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For information and bookings  
please telephone 07788 796996

Help Malawi 2016

**Joshua**   
Assisting Orphans & their Communities in Malawi

As in many other places, students returned to secondary school in Malawi in the autumn. Completing education is the best chance many of these students have to break the cycle of poverty that afflicts their communities. Joshua currently provides education bursaries to around 230 students who would otherwise be unlikely to complete secondary education. The bursary covers items such as school and exam fees, uniform, stationery and solar lamps.

Even with this support however, making the most of the opportunity to go to school is not always easy. In September, our staff carried out interviews with students exploring the barriers to studying outside school hours. We were struck by just how many of them reported hunger as the main reason they found it difficult to complete homework and give extra time to studies. Given the current food crisis, we perhaps shouldn't be surprised by this. After two weak harvests, over 7 million people in Malawi are expected to need food aid by the end of the year and many families are living off one main meal per day. <http://joshuainmalawi.org.uk>





# BADMINTON


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# oakley *Motorcycle* club

Over the summer OMC held their annual Motorcycle of the Year award. This consisted of a number of preliminary rounds based on eight manufacturers with members bringing some fine examples of Japanese, American, German, Italian and British machines.

Each preliminary round winner receiving a £50 food and drink voucher courtesy of Oakley Sports & Social Club.

The summer ended with the final which was won by Oakley resident John Cooper, with his immaculate 1970 Triumph Bonneville, who picked up another voucher and the OMC Motorcycle of the Year Shield



**John Cooper**

As we move into the late Autumn and Winter months plans are in place for a number of activities including quiz nights, Go Cart racing and talks.

On 10th December there is the annual Christmas bash in conjunction with OSSC featuring The Blues Brothers Tribute act. Entry is free to all OMC and OSSC members. Start time 8.30pm till late with a Christmas raffle and the kitchen open until 8pm serving the usual Thursday evening menu.

The AGM is scheduled for Thursday 2nd Feb 2017 and last year over 120 OMC members attended!

Plans are already in place for 2017 whereby we will see some racing celebrities and racing pundits in attendance. The popular theme nights will continue as well as the Hot Rod and Dragster evening which, weather permitting, could be the biggest yet.

Another successful year comes to an end for OMC, one of the biggest independent motorcycle clubs in the Country.



**Yorkshire Weekend**



**American Bike Theme Night**



**John Sedgwick Memorial Ride Out**

See more at [www.oakleymc.net](http://www.oakleymc.net)

Baysie Roger Bays Chair - OMC



# theWI

## OAKLEY WI



Oakley WI meets on the second Tuesday of the month at the Village Hall. Meetings start at 7.30pm. Visitors are always welcome. Come and join us in the New Year.

### Tuesday 10th January 2017

**AN EVENING OF MAGIC.** We welcome back Chris Bylett to entertain and mystify us.

### Tuesday 14th February.

**BEDFORD STREET ANGELS.** Stephen Elphic on the volunteers who keep people safe in Bedford town centre at night.



This is one of our "open" meetings when we encourage husbands, partners and other male friends to come and join us.

### Tuesday 14th March

**AGM** followed by a **BEETLE DRIVE**. An old favourite which gives an opportunity to chat and laugh with friends old and new.



### Tuesday 11th April

**KEMPSTON HAMMERS CHOIR.** Enjoy an evening of popular music and join in with your favourite songs.

For further information contact Denise Hookham 828844 or Gill Conway 824303



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## OAKLEY GARDENING CLUB



The club meets at 7.45pm at Oakley Methodist Church on the third Monday of the month. Our meetings are relaxed and informal, giving us a chance to swap ideas and listen to our guest speaker.

### MONDAY 16th JANUARY 2017

John Harrowing shares with us his experiences of his life in agriculture.

In FEBRUARY members treat themselves to a meal out.

### MONDAY 20th MARCH 2017

Martin Towsey, head gardener at Woburn, makes a welcome return visit to us. He spoke last time of changes that would be taking place at Woburn. It will be interesting to hear of the new developments.



Visitors are most welcome at our meetings, £3 includes tea or coffee.

For further information tel: 822523 or 823788

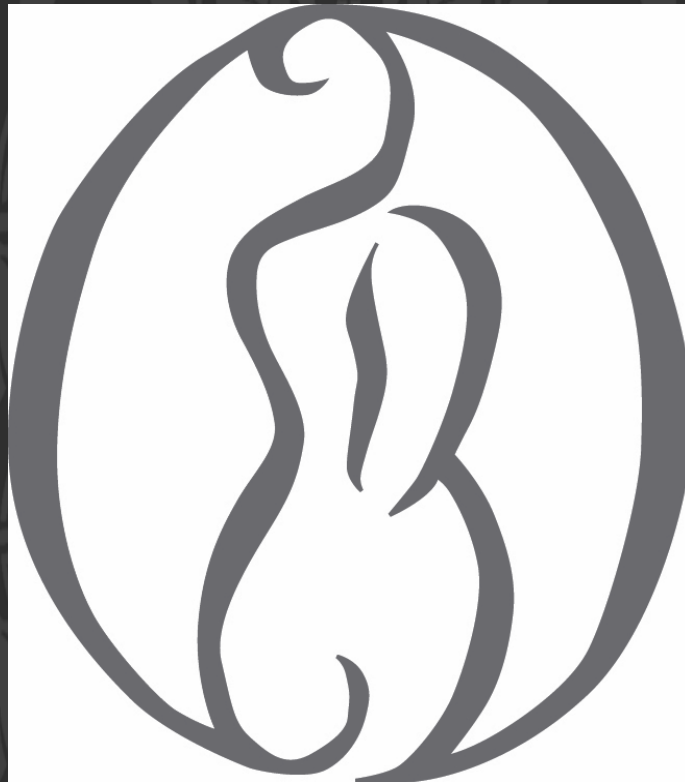
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# Oakley Sports & Social Club

## Family & Sports Bar

Fun for kids   Quality Ales   Fantastic Facilities  
Friendly Atmosphere



Below Average Prices   Freshly Cooked Food  
Sky Sports & BT Sport

*Friday 23rd Dec - 1pm - 11pm  
Christmas Eve - 12pm - 12pm  
Christmas - 11:30am - 1:30pm  
Boxing Day - 12pm - 11pm*

*New Years Eve - 12pm - 1am  
New Years Day - 12pm - 11pm*

### OSSC Kitchen

Download the full menus  
from our website

### Thursday

6pm - 9pm  
Full Menu

### Friday

5pm - 8pm  
Pizza Night

### Saturday

4pm - 6pm  
Full Menu



824977



info@oakleyssc.com



http://oakleyssc.com