



Oakley Newsletter



Winter 2021

Number 89

Look inside for

AFC Oakley Oakley Show Results Pre-School Brick Appeal
Oakley Remembers Update from Police & Crime Commissioner
Winter Hardship Fund Clinical Public Consultation



**Front Cover by
Rosie Mai Line (age 10)**

The Oakley Newsletter

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

Opinions and information

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

Next issue

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Hello Children

look out for
Ten more
little ones



Parish Council News

Winter 2021

Hello Everyone,

By the time you read this newsletter we will be at the beginning of December with Christmas just around the corner. I hope you have enjoyed the end of the summer and the autumn weeks including Halloween and bonfire night. Hopefully we will be getting into the Christmas spirit because the Christmas lights will have been switched on and we might even have been able to sing one or two carols!!

Planning Applications

As usual this past quarter for the Parish Council has been busy, busy, with many consultations circulating and planning applications pouring in. I am always pleased to see the planning applications because it means that many people want to improve their property and remain in this lovely village rather than move away.

Whilst on the subject of planning, residents will, I am sure, be aware that an application was submitted for the development of 'up to 40 dwellings' on land off Station Road that being in the northern part of the field opposite the schools, between Station Road, Tudor Rose and the Railway line.

The application was, as always, properly considered by the Parish Council, but objected to. The Oakley Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) very clearly allocated 25 to 50 new dwellings in Oakley over the period of the plan. Ten dwellings have already been constructed in Parrott Close and the NDP allocates about thirty dwellings only on this particular piece of land (Station Road) and about ten dwellings only on land off the High Street. Housing on this site should be limited to thirty (NDP Policy HG1, page 20).

Further details can be seen in the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 5 October 2021.

Continued on page 3

OAKLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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The safety alterations to Highfield Road bridge are in the process of being carried out. It will never look the way we think it should, but I suppose nothing could be worse than the 'wheelie bin effect' plus that horrible Arris fencing that we have had to put up with for the last couple of years or so. I do think it is vital that the Contractors do not leave site until the Planners are content that the work has been completed in accordance with the proposals, consent and conditions.



Dual Litter and Dog Waste bins

To say that the emptying of the dual litter and dog foul bins by Bedford Borough Council has been erratic is very much an understatement. Councillor Phyllis Jones has worked tirelessly for some while now trying to make sure ALL bins are emptied on the right date and if any bins are missed that we have a PROPER LINE OF COMMUNICATION to make a report and those bins are emptied as soon as possible thereafter.

Unfortunately, for some reason, the bins in Riverside Meadow and Pavenham Road are the bins most affected, despite repeated calls to the Borough Council. This is completely unacceptable, and we will do our best to get the situation rectified if at all possible.

In the meantime, if you find bins full and overflowing please do not leave rubbish or bagged dog poo on or around the bins; please put it in the next bin on your travels or **take it home and put it in your own bin**. Piling it on or around the bin is not nice and it is unhygienic.

This is yet another quality publication that Bill Chalker our editor has produced and, on your behalf, I thank him for that. Thanks also go to advertisers, contributors and most importantly you our readers and supporters. I also want to thank everyone who volunteers in whatever way it might be, but without which this village would not be the place that it is. Thank you.

I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. Paul Phillips, Chair.



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bedford Borough Council is undertaking a very important consultation, which is highlighted below alongside links to access further information.

Corporate Plan Consultation

The Corporate Plan is Bedford Borough Council's high-level strategy and articulates our goals and priorities over the medium term.

We have called our latest Corporate Plan 'Together Bedford Borough'.

We are seeking the views of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders on this important document that will shape the future of Bedford Borough.

www.bedford.gov.uk/cpconsultation

Comments should be received by 10 December 2021 and may be published.

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Borough Council News

Boundary Changes

The Boundary Commission has announced the re-shaping of the boundaries of the Bedford Borough Council. From May 2023 the current Oakley Ward comprising of Oakley, Pavenham & Stevington will be split into three. Stevington will be joining a new Bromham Ward, along with Bromham, Turvey & Stagsden. This is part of an increase of Councillors from the current 40 to 46.

I am keen to assure that I will continue to represent and support Stevington until the May 2023 election. Further details on the changes across the Borough can be found at lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/eastern/Bedfordshire/bedford

Northern Gateway (A6 Roundabout)

Good progress is being made on the Northern Gateway project with the widening of Clapham Road between the Paula Radcliffe Way roundabout and Manton Lane, including installation of the new kerb line, footway and drainage system, along with the dedicated left hand turn lane from Clapham Road into Manton Lane.

Extensive road widening on the north eastern corner of the Manton Lane roundabout adjacent to the Bedford Modern School playing fields is complete and extensive traffic signal ducts have been installed at the Great Ouse Way roundabout. This is in preparation for the installation of permanent lights to control traffic flow.

Works have started on the central reservation of the dual carriageway, introducing a permanent right hand turn into Sainsburys so people will not need to use the Clapham Road/Manton Lane roundabout to U-turn.

Works to the central reservation are expected to continue for several weeks and work will also continue at the Great Ouse Way roundabout and

other areas.

The works are programmed to be completed by the end of March 2022 and the contractor is currently on track to meet this deadline.

Libraries

Mobile Library

The mobile library has been available for Select and Collect for a while, but it is now welcoming customers aboard once again.

Visit the mobile library to browse the shelves, choose some books, and borrow them using the self-service machine. Remember to bring your mobile library card and check the timetable for stop dates.

There is a limit on the number of customers inside the vehicle at once, and measures remain in place to help ensure the safety of everyone on board. Please continue to respect others' space, wear a face covering if you can, and remember not to visit the mobile library if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

Central Library

LibraryPlus has returned to Bedford Central Library. LibraryPlus lets you use the library when you want, offering extended opening times. With LibraryPlus you can choose when you access the library, using a mixture of both staffed and self-service hours.

It is easy and convenient - just use your library card and PIN to enter the library during self-service hours. Not sure whether you are a LibraryPlus user? You need to be aged 16 or over and a full member to register. Pop into any of our branches during staffed hours to find out more.

Bedford Central Library opening hours:

Monday to Friday: LibraryPlus 9am - 11am

Staffed 11am - 4pm

LibraryPlus 4pm - 6pm

Saturday: LibraryPlus 9am - 10am

Staffed 10am - 5pm

LibraryPlus 5pm - 6pm

Sunday: LibraryPlus 10am - 11am

Staffed 11am - 2pm

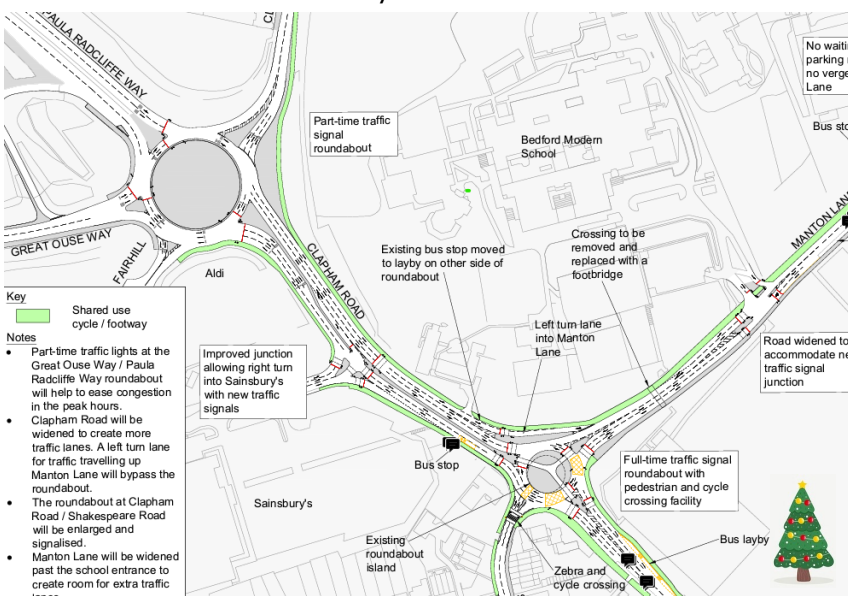
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Councillor Jon Abbott

Telephone: 07784 549180

Email

jonathan.abbott71@icloud.com





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Oakley Rural Day Centre



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

Tel: 01234 824935 Mobile: 07733 227374

Email: oakleyruraldaycentre@yahoo.com

Web: www.oakleyruraldaycentre.weebly.com

Registered Charity No: 1060283

NEWSLETTER Winter 2021

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

We also have a **Facebook** page for anyone who has a **Facebook** account. This will be updated with the latest news and photographs of events at the centre. The **Facebook** page can be found at www.facebook.com/oakleyruraldaycentre We are also producing articles in various publications throughout Bedford and surrounding areas to raise the profile of the centre.

DAY CENTRE

It's been a long hard road through the covid pandemic but we are pleased to say that the Day Centre re-opened in September to the delight of our clients and staff. The joy of seeing our clients interacting with their friends and involved in various activities together is great to see.

Although we have a few safety restrictions in place our aim is to make the clients day as normal as possible. We are all now looking forward to the build up to Christmas which everyone enjoys, especially our final week Christmas lunch expertly cooked by Angela!



VACANCY

We are presently looking for someone to put out tables and chairs in the hall for a Tuesday morning by 8am and return them back to storage on Thursdays after 3pm.

For details please email
pat.olney@btopenworld.com

PLACES AVAILABLE

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

We serve freshly prepared home cooked lunches together with tea, coffee and toast at the start of the day with beverages throughout. The Centre is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. For details of costs and advice please contact Lynne on 01234 824935 or 07733 227374.

Enquiries welcome from Bedford and surrounding villages in North Bedfordshire.

ACTIVITIES

The weeks leading up to the festive period is to involve our clients in making various Christmas items. Clients make Christmas cards, various tree decorations and other festive activities, including word games, quizzes and word searches. In our Christmas party week we sing carols and play festive

parlour games and we also have a visit from Santa!

CHRISTMAS CLOSING DATES

The last day the centre will be open before Christmas will be Thursday 16th of December and will re-open on Tuesday the 4th of January.



The last couple of years have been challenging for everyone! Let's hope 2022 brings us back to a more normal way of life for everyone! Hope you all have a lovely Christmas with your loved ones and a very Happy New Year!

Is your business busy?

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Oakley Remembers

Thursday 11 November 2021 marked the Act of Remembrance and a number of residents attended the war memorial at the cross roads where they made their own personal commemorations. On Sunday 14 November both St Marys Church and the Methodist Church organised their services so that they ended in good time for people to attend the War Memorial before 11am. It was so pleasing to see approaching 300 people gathered together to honour those who gave the most extraordinary service in war.

It was also lovely to see many young people in attendance, including Brownies, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Air Training Corps. Thank you to Major Button and his two colleagues for their contributions. Thank you to our Remembrance Day Musician Catherine Knight.

We are also very grateful to Reverend Catherine Wilson and her colleague Mrs Liz Little, Methodist Circuit Preacher, who guided us throughout.

Paul Phillips



Oakley Village Hall - have your say

Do you hire the Village Hall? Do you attend classes or functions there? Do you vote there?

Join our committee and have your say on how the Hall should develop and how it is run.

Find out more from our Secretary:
Ruth Bender | r.bender@cranfield.ac.uk | 07941 679204



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A Big Thank You to

two four year olds

Cary and Joseph

who regularly pick up litter in the village – a great example to us all



AMIGO

Despite the weather, an enjoyable time was spent at the house and garden of Pat Olney on the 28th September. It was good to have the opportunity of meeting with and speaking to friends again. Our grateful thanks to Pat for her hospitality and for allowing us to see her beautiful garden.

A fascinating evening was spent with Nick Cooke on the 26th October when he gave us a talk on the code breaking work carried out at Bletchley Park during the Second World War

A splendid time was enjoyed by those who came to the Observatory at Bedford School on the 23rd November to learn more about the cosmos. Unfortunately the clouds prevented us from looking through the telescope but what we did see on screens was truly fascinating. So popular was the visit that another visit has been arranged for Tuesday 8th March 2022 at 7.00 p.m. I already have several names on the waiting list so please let John Dixon know if you wish to come. As with the visit on the 23rd November, the maximum number is 14. Please remember to bring warm clothing. John's telephone number is 01234 824959 and his e-mail address is jwdixon30@gmail.co.

The activity for December will be carol singing in the Bedford Arms in Oakley on Tuesday 14th December beginning at 8.00 p.m. Let John know how you feel about this in view of the ongoing

TICK TOCK

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR CLOCK ? - UPDATE!



May I on behalf of St Mary's Church (Oakley PCC) thank all those who have donated to the clock fund, with your help and the securing of several grants, we now have the monies to move forward.

It was hoped that we would be able to start work at the beginning of December but as we are a Grade 1 listed building, and our clock is both very old and of considerable historic interest, a lot of background work has to be done first. We are hopeful that the work will be able to commence in the spring of 2022, but will keep you updated with future developments.

Just for information, the money raised has been set aside in a restricted bank account specifically for the Clock renovations.

Thank you all once again, and wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2022. Kind regards, *Sally Ball* Oakley PCC

situation with regard to corona virus. I hope that it may still be able to take place.

Although not planned as an Amigo event you may be aware that the Bedford Arms is arranging a



Christmas Fair on Saturday 11th December where there will be an opportunity for carol singing for thirty

minutes beginning at 2.00 p.m. This will be a fund raising event for Prostate Cancer.

Looking into the New Year, there will be a film show at Oakley Methodist Church on Tuesday **25th January 2022** beginning at 7.00 p.m. The film to be shown will be "**The Personal History of David Copperfield.**"

A light hearted **quiz** will take place on Tuesday **22nd February 2022** at Oakley Methodist Church beginning at 7.30 hosted by Sue Brecknock.

As you will doubtless be aware, I am proposing a **coach trip** to London on **Thursday 23rd June 2022** and will begin to make arrangements in the New Year. I will let you have further details as soon as I can.

Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

John Dixon

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**Thurs. 2nd – Sat. 4th
December, 7.30pm**
A festive collection of music,
poetry and readings from
stage and screen
A show for all the family...
The perfect way to start
your Christmas!
Do you have your tickets?!
£14 (+£1 booking fee)

**Saturday 5th February
at 7.30pm**

Diary the date!
- for the welcome return
of Gerald Dickens,
great-great grandson of
Charles Dickens to
Sharnbrook Mill Theatre;
following his triumphant
solo performance of
A Christmas Carol
in December 2020...

A fundraising event for
Sharnbrook Mill Theatre

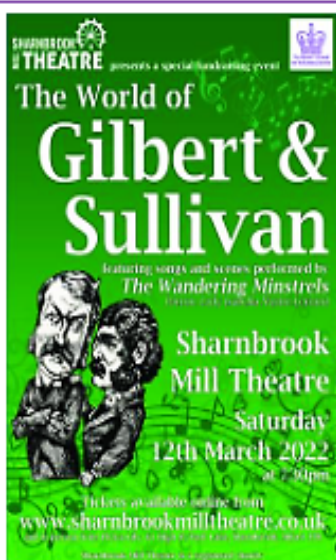
TICKETS £16 (+£1 booking fee) on-sale from 5th December



**Saturday 23rd March
at 7.30pm**

Savoy favourites,
combining the wit of
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enchanting music of
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www.sharnbrookmilltheatre.co.uk/tickets

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SATURDAY 11th DECEMBER

Outside the Church at 5.00pm

Remember those you love and miss.
Place a named tag on the Christmas Tree.
Minister to lead prayers of reflections.
Sing favourite carols around the Tree.
Families to bring torches. Children to be given lights.

Church open to hear popular Christmas music,
to see Nativities and Church decorations,
to enjoy drinks, soup and mince pies.

All very welcome

We are currently helping communities feed 1250 children aged under 6 years old with a daily meal of a fortified porridge. For many children, this is the only meal they get that day.

Joshua
Assisting Orphans & their Communities in Malawi

The abrupt end to our funding from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development office (FCDO) has been hard. There are many ways you can help us keep our spoons stirring whether it's through donating, setting up a regular donation, undertaking a fundraising challenge or organising a fundraising event or by simply sharing with others about our work. Every little helps.

A donation of £10 provides a daily bowl of porridge for a month for a child attending one of our community-based childcare centres. Donate online: visit our Virgin Money Giving page or ebsite www.joshuainmalawi.org.uk



AFC Oakley is your local community football club, established for around 50 years from its legacy groups and providing football and social opportunities for all that are interested... whether you are 5 or 55, we are here to welcome you. Based in the village but operating several other pitches in the local area, we provide a great football experience for children from 5 and upwards, and through our adult and veterans teams, we aim to keep that habit for life! Our teams train and play matches in local Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes leagues, are regularly successful in their results and season on season keep coming back for more (the real success!). We are an FA Charter Standard club, which ensures that all of our volunteer coaches and committee members are highly capable in their roles and deliver a great experience for all.



The last year has been one of turmoil for all of our lives and as a football club have had to adapt to safe ways of working. Primarily we hope that everyone in the community are safe and well and we do everything we can to support that while continuing to offer the football experience to our club members. As a football club the pandemic affected AFC Oakley in many of its activities over the last two seasons. Happily, thanks to the tireless efforts of everyone involved in the club, we have also managed to complete many of the fixture commitments for individual teams. Heartfelt thanks go to all of these volunteers who have continued to provide a vibrant football experience for so many players and spectators.

The adult Saturday team has now come under the new management of Dan Kelly, Robbie Alder and Rhys Allen for the 2021-22 season. The group are making great strides in pre-season training and fixtures towards a competitive season campaign to come in the Bedfordshire County Football League, Premier Division. In addition, we are delighted to see the progress of our new Saturday Development side in its own pre-season. This combines younger players from last season's successful Under 18 side into our "Player Pathway", alongside some older teammates to provide a strong base for the club. This group is being led by Ray Patrickson and Dave Boddington, and are confident of a successful season ahead.



The Youth and Mini football sections of the club continue to thrive. Over 350 players were registered across the Under 6 to the Under 18 sections last season and we are now at 450, which is an incredible feat for a village club! We expect similar numbers in the season to come, spread across 13 age groups and 27 individual sides, so lots of fun and development to come for a lot of eager young players alongside social activities in the groups.

Our primary club partners are M&DH Insurance, SSG Services and Oakley Sports and Social Club, who each continue to provide vital support to AFC Oakley to make all this possible, and to whom we are sincerely grateful !

We continue to seek to bring new blood into the club and so if you are interested in playing, coaching, helping or supporting, please do not hesitate to get in touch...we would be delighted to hear from you! You can find our contact details on our website at -

[//afcoakley.co.uk/contact](http://afcoakley.co.uk/contact)

Or on social media

[//Twitter.com/afcoakleyfc](https://twitter.com/afcoakleyfc)

facebook.com/afcoakleyfc

instagram.com/afcoakleyfc

Cheers, Martin Dazley (Chairperson)

martin.dazley@afcoakley.co.uk #COYO





Dear all,

Since being elected, I have met with 99 Town and Parish Councils online, attended four Parish Council meetings, and a Full Council meeting at each of our three local authorities. In addition to my weekly visit to commissioned partners and organisations, I have held six Community Engagement meetings across the county so far, and been on patrol duties with our officers.

At a recent Annual Parish Council meeting organised by my office which was attended by Senior Leadership Team from Bedfordshire Police, I shared the following with councillors:

Community Policing Plan

As part of my Police and Crime Plan, priority number one is 'investment in community-based and community-led policing for rural and urban areas'.

Together, the Chief Constable Garry Forsyth and I are committed to focussing on 'proactive policing'. Residents have told me they want to see more of a visible, proactive, problem-solving police presence in our communities.

It is therefore my responsibility to hold the Chief Constable accountable for delivering on the people's policing priorities.

In response to this, we have increased the level of visibility in areas of Bedfordshire to:

- 67 Community Police Officers
- 51 PCSOs
- 14 Sergeants

I recognise there is still more to do in tackling speeding, drug dealing and anti-social behaviour. However, I need to ask your help in continuing to provide us with data and activity about crimes. This helps with the deployment of officers. To report a crime, you can do so by calling 101 or anonymously by contacting Crimestoppers.

Early intervention and prevention

A big focus of mine is early intervention. One of my campaign pledges was to roll out 'Out of Court Disposal Orders' which allow officers to refer low risk, persistent offenders to local support services.

What this means is, we keep persistent offenders outside of the criminal justice system while referring them to support services to deal with issues such as drug and alcohol addiction as a condition of the order. Since launching this, I am pleased to say 100% of those referred so far have not re-offended since the scheme started.

This frees up police time, saves tax-payers money and reduces repeat victimisation of our residents.

I've also been spending lots of time at schools across the county and have weekly visits in my diary. I believe it is important for young people to have a positive understanding about policing and know that they have power to make positive choices.

We will be holding our inaugural Bedfordshire-wide schools debating competition in November 2021 for 15-18 year olds. This will create opportunities for developing confidence, critical thinking and life skills.

Continued on next page

Plans are also well under way for the Summer of Fun 2022 initiative which is part of investing in early intervention programmes to safeguard our young people, encourage healthy choices and improve self-esteem.

I am also investing money to tackle domestic abuse and sexual violence by focussing on perpetrators, while changing the narrative from advising victims on personal safety.

Force Control room

I am working with the Force to invest in the effectiveness of the Force Control Room.

They are the first point of contact along with the Community Policing team. We've recruited nine new members recently with almost 20 police officers providing expert support. By April 2022 we will be above our establishment level for the first time in several years.

I will be reviewing this towards the end of the financial year to see what more can be done to improve retention and quality of service to the public.

Speed Watch volunteers

Our speed watch team is currently looking for more volunteers. Speed Watch is a fantastic, educational scheme aimed at raising awareness of speed restrictions and road safety. Those captured speeding receive a warning letter from Bedfordshire Police and persistent offenders' details are passed to our local policing team for further action. If you're interested you can email Watch-Schemes@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

I remain optimistic about the future of Bedfordshire Police and our plans to cut crime, prevent harm and protect victims. Our concerted effort on tackling crime as well as its root causes will pay off.

As ever, if you'd like to get in touch, you can contact my office by calling 01234 842064 or by emailing pcc@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk

Festus Akinbusoye

Police and Crime Commissioner – Bedfordshire



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Our present volunteers only come from the oldest age bracket and to ensure this



Are you one of several concerned villagers or maybe in an existing village group who are happy to diversify and would like to commit to one hour a month, in sets of three, to keep our families safe?

Would you like to go together to the 2 hours of training at Police HQ in Kempston?

Then why not contact Paul Phillips on paulphillips65@gmail.com or call him on 07968 122 301 and get him to come and talk to your group.



Of All Ages Wanted for



is avoided in the future we would like to appeal to other volunteers (over eighteen) to join Oakley Speed Watch.

Is it needed? In October, Bedford Borough Speed Watch groups issued 547 warning letters.

Speeders detected in Oakley are 20 to 30 mph **over** our speed limits! That means an extra 44 feet to stop! The answer is a definite **YES**.

Phantom Sprayer



I am disappointed that **there are still a few people who refuse to collect up their dog's mess** and bin it. I have found quite a lot recently on pavements and in the alley ways.



This is not fair on people trying to walk in these places, some with their children and it is no problem to just collect it in a bag and bin it. I know it is only a few people out of the many dog owners in Oakley, who do pick up and dispose properly and are rightly indignant at those who do not.

I am also sorry that the Borough Council, still seem to miss some of our bins on their fortnightly collection – I do check these bins every time they should be emptied, and report those that are not, although I must say the Borough makes it more and more difficult to make those reports. I have now complained to the mayor, once again, and am hoping for an improvement.





Oakley Show 2021





THANK YOU from the Oakley Show Committee

We would like to thank Whites ES Ltd for sponsoring the show programme again this year and Milton Ernest Garden Centre for supplying the prize vouchers.

We would also like to thank the local businesses who gave us prizes for our raffle, Hazel Kaye, Sally Day stationery and gifts, Merri Flowers, the Bedford Arms, O for Coffee, Tudor Rose and Christine Ord.

Thanks to the judges, the Village Hall Committee and everyone who came to help us on the day.

But the biggest thanks must go to everyone who came to the show, everyone that entered, bought raffle tickets, came to view the entries, enjoyed the refreshments and made purchases in the auction, there would not have been a show without you all.

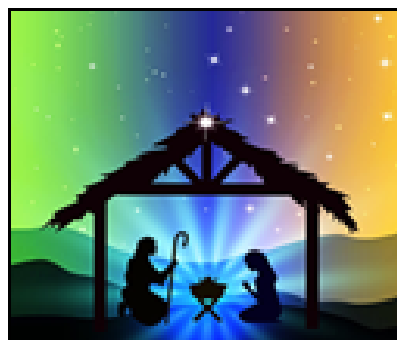
Congratulations to Yvonne Keyte, the winner of the Best in Show shield again this year, can she be beaten?

Well done to Ian Percival, Yvonne Keyte, Derek James, Donna Peckham and Barbara Smart who were all class winners.

We had a great day with the highest number of entries since the show restarted in 2016 and made a profit of nearly £600 for the Village Hall. After missing a show last year due to COVID it was lovely to see the hall being used again for a community event.

Photographer : Steve Nicholas





SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS COMING UP

Saturday 11th December	5.00pm	Festival of Light & Life- Oakley Methodist Church (OMC)
Sunday 12th December	10.30am	Churches Together Christingle Service- OMC
Tuesday 14th December	3.30pm	Messy Church for All- OMC
Sunday 19th December	10.30am	Carol Service- OMC
	6.00pm	Carols by Candlelight- St Mary's
Christmas Eve	4.30pm	Crib Service- St Mary's*
Christmas Day	10.30am	Christmas Day service- OMC
	10.00am	Family Communion Service- St Mary's*

* Donations of GIFT CARDS to the Bedford Refuge greatly appreciated



Christmas Teas in Church

Please drop in to St Mary's between 3.30pm and 5pm on Sunday 12th Dec for a seasonal Teas in Church. There will be hot drinks, home made cakes and a warm welcome. All donations to the upkeep of the church.

SUNDAY 12th DECEMBER

10:30am Oakley Methodist Church
Come and join us for our

Joint Christingle Service

An enjoyable, memorable and child friendly way to begin your preparations for Christmas!

For more details on all our events visit
www.bromhambenefice.org or
www.northbedsmethodist.org.uk



CONTACTS

St Mary's: Revd. Catherine Wilson: 01234 825665 vicar@bromhambenefice.org
 Church Wardens: Hilarie Worley 262166 & Graham Palmer 07710 462535
 Administrator Sarah: administrator@bromhambenefice.org
 Oakley Methodist Church: Revd. Chris Sandy 01234 860464
christopher.sandy@methodist.org.uk
 Church Steward: Jeanette Letch 825204

Snippet No.54

When I was but a Lad the skies, when clear at night, were VERY dark, even in more urban areas.

It was common for night skies to be ablaze with stars and the Milky Way, those parts of our own galaxy visible from our world, could often be seen as a dim, misty band arching across the sky. I was fascinated, and so began my obsession with astronomy.

My school had an astronomy club, equipped with a 4 inch refractor telescope provided by the teacher in charge, himself an enthusiast. Other students made their own reflector telescopes. It was possible to buy a glass blank (often a re-claimed ships porthole glass) and laboriously grind your own main mirror using a second glass blank and gradually-reducing grades of wetted carborundum powder.

The resulting "objective" glass would finally have to be optically checked as it neared completion and returned to the process for more grinding until perfected. It would finally (and finely) be polished with jeweller's rouge before being sent off to a specialist for "silvering", which would turn it into an amazing, convex mirror by depositing a fine layer of aluminium on to its working surface.

The mirror would then be incorporated into an equally home-made telescope. It would take hours...and hours...and hours. I did not have the patience and I wanted to spend my time looking at the sky, not a mucky workbench. The small, low-cost telescope my parents bought me enabled me to search for many of the closer planets and some of the further, more easily-visible objects.



Photo by Vincent Ledvina on Unsplash

Skies are now much more light-polluted and truly dark skies are a rare thing. Despite this there is a growing enthusiasm for astrophotography and amazing results are being obtained with the most simple equipment. Telescopes are readily available, at quite modest cost, which have the ability to track objects of interest whilst something as straightforward as a smartphone is used to capture multiple images.

Current technology now allows for multiple images to be captured and processed in order to overcome a lot of the problems caused by our light-polluted skies. Of course, if you can travel to those few remote and still truly dark places the results are even better. If your budget runs to acquiring high-end kit, including the best cameras and lenses, then the sky is opened up in a way that was inconceivable over 50 years ago.

Steve Nicholas



Reflecting on Steve's snippet above took me back to a recent trip to Norway to see the Northern Lights. This picture was not caught by my camera but by my smartphone with an app that overlaid photos taken each second to create a compound image. Still very proud of it - our guide on the trip referred to it as catching the dragon.

Bill Chalker



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Oakley Pre-school News



We are very excited that we will be welcoming our new building to site very soon. We have been sorting our resources so that they are all organised and ready to transfer to the new building as soon as possible.

Weekly photo updates of the building are being sent to us from where the building is under construction in Rutland. It is moving on very quickly and we have recently chosen colours for the kitchen and toilets!

We would like to thank the residents of Chapel Pound, Brockwell and Bevery Close for their patience whilst the groundworks have taken place, both in the Middle Farm paddock and for the installation of services in Brockwell Meadow.

In the Spring of 2022 we will be holding a grand opening and hope as many of the village residents as possible will come along to have a look.

Do consider supporting our name a brick appeal, details below, to have a lasting memento of your child's time at Oakley Pre-school.

Our new pre-school committee, led by our new chairperson, Rhiannon Washford, organised a successful Halloween Trail over the October half term break and raised a fantastic £175!

Merri Christmas Trees in Oakley have again included us in their charity Christmas tree sales. Thanks once again to Rachelle and Julian for including us in this initiative and please nominate Oakley Pre-school, if you are thinking of having a real tree this year.

New Build

Our **Name a Brick Appeal** is ongoing and you can continue to order a brick, where you can record your involvement with pre-school by purchasing a brick that will be permanently displayed on the interior wall of the new entrance hall.

Please see the **Oakley Pre-school Name a Brick Appeal** on the 'New Build' page of our website for an order form. <https://www.oakleypreschool.com/new-build>

Alternatively you can give us a call at pre-school to discuss your order.

Admissions

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

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

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

Sally Martiello



Oakley Allotments

Now in their eleventh year, the allotments are looking the best they have ever been as more people work hard to maintain and improve their plots. As we approach the end of another season it is satisfying to look back at a very productive time, often shared with abundant wildlife, some more welcome than others.

It seems no time at all since I was contemplating last winter's drabness and the emptiness of an allotment that had been one of the best our hard work had produced. Here we are again, all too quickly it seems, but this year has been even better. We have had even more success through the summer and autumn and there are still many plants in the ground to overwinter, which could produce much for us to enjoy in the springtime.

We have carrots and beetroot still to harvest as well as parsnips, and brussels sprouts, which we have grown for the first time. We also have (the usual) chard, which may overwinter if frosts are not too severe, kale and sprouting broccoli. We have recently sown broad beans direct into the ground as they can overwinter quite easily and hopefully produce a good crop of beans early in the new year.

Our garlic crop was very good this year and we have replanted some of it to produce more next year. We have also grown runner beans from our own saved seed for a number of years now - this self-sustaining success is most satisfying.

We still have leeks to harvest. This has been our best leek crop so far; we took the experts' advice and covered them for the whole season with a very fine mesh to exclude a particular pest - leek moths have devastated our leeks in past years.

We are always learning how to improve our results and a lot of information is shared on the internet, a very useful tool when used positively. There are a number of Facebook groups which



have helped us improve our work and we have had our own Oakley allotments page for some years.

A new administrator has joined us, contributing to our Facebook page with new enthusiasm, so have a look and join the conversations. Everybody is welcome to contribute and you do not need to have an allotment to join in, just search for Oakley Allotments. Our new administrator is a successful and competent gardener and we are hoping to share more information and news over the coming months.

We still have a waiting list. I have contacted people on the list and some have not replied although we have allocated all but one of our vacant plots now. Please contact Ann Paice or me if you are interested in taking on an allotment.

Steve Nicholas



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Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation (BLCF), a local charity, have launched its third winter appeal with the aim to help identify and provide financial support to those in crisis or financial hardship in our county. Working with key community organisations they can either assist with one-off fuel costs (helping to pay electric & gas bills) or providing essential items, such as warm clothing or bedding etc.

This appeal aims to remind the wider community that not everyone is able to heat their homes or care for their families as they may like. With the impacts of the pandemic still being felt, further compounded by rising fuel costs, cease to universal credit uplift and general rise to living costs, thousands will struggle to cover basic needs this winter.

BLCF are teaming up with 6 key organisations in the county to help identify those needing support; for Bedford- FACES & Queens Park Community Organisation (QPCO). In Central Beds- Home-start & Dunstable & District CAB and in Luton- The Level Trust & Luton Irish Forum (as part of Luton Access).

Francesca Johnstone, Head of Operations at BLCF commented "We have seen over the last 20+ months how the impact of the pandemic has affected so many living in our community. The recent documentary from Channel 4 'Growing Up Poor' further highlighted the challenges a lot of families are facing at present. Our hope for this appeal is to highlight some very basic needs for vulnerable people trying to heat their homes, cook food and pay their energy bills. Through last year's appeal we were able to support 1,300 people, over a 3 month period, but we already know there is more demand this year. We're asking those who are able to donate what they can to make a real tangible difference this winter."

Our Total Giving platform is now live and can be found here:

<https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/appeal/winterhardshipappeal>



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

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Girlguiding in Oakley



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Girlguiding

Oakley has two guiding units – Rainbows for girls aged 5 -7, and Brownies for girls aged 7-10.

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)

It has been lovely to be back at the village hall this term! There have been a few occasions when meeting face-to-face has not been possible, but then we have just moved our meeting fun to Zoom!

We are now the only unit covering Clapham as well as Oakley, meaning we are full, with several girls on our waiting list.

We accept girls who are 5-7 years old, but if you know your daughter, who is not yet 5, would like to join Rainbows when she is old enough, we recommend putting her name on the waiting list now. You can do this at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/>

If you have other enquiries, you can email me at oakleyclaphamrainbows@outlook.com but if you simply wish to register, please do this through the website.

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



1st Oakley Brownies (Fridays)

After a year and a half of Zoom and outdoor meetings we finally returned to the beautifully refurbished Scout Hut for meetings.

Even so, while we had light for part of the meeting-time, we continued to spend time outside, playing games and even enrolling some new Brownies.

The darker evenings did have their advantages though – they lent themselves well to the final activity of the Camper Badge: getting ready for bed in the dark. The girls also enjoyed playing Simon Says with torch-based activities.

This term we are working on the First Aid and Environment badges. As we try to avoid getting too close to each other, dolls have come in handy for practising some of the first aid activities.

On Remembrance Sunday we attended the service at Oakley Methodist Church with a small group of girls who did an excellent job of making a colour party with the Brownie flag and laying a wreath at the memorial. At our meeting Brownies also made a poster to display at the church.



You can register your daughter for Brownies at the same website as for Rainbows (see above) and for queries please email oakleybrownies452@gmail.com. Unit contact: Lindsay Saunders

Linch Furlong

This has been the best year ever for the nature reserve thanks to Pat Knight.



September saw so many flowers, insects and butterflies. In September I started eating the blackberries as I took Morse for a walk. Many people were collecting blackberries for making apple and blackberry pies and crumble and for making wine. By the way the blackberries were delicious and I continued eating them until the first week in November. The sloes were ready for picking in late October. Sloe wine is delicious and very simple to make. I usually freeze the sloes then put them with two tablespoon of sugar in a jar and then fill with gin. Keep turning the closed jar for a week and then store in a cool cupboard and it should be ready for Christmas. Decant into small bottles. They make very acceptable Christmas presents. I sometimes use damsons if I have a glut but not so many grew this year. The weather has been very mild and in late October there were daisies and dandelions blooming with an explosion of colour. Reds, golds and yellow leaves were a delight on our walks. Most of the leaves have now fallen and the bare branches make skeletons against the sky.

If you take the footpath under the railway viaduct you can walk to Browns Wood along the riverbank. In the spring you can see mayflies and taste the blackberries during September. I used to take the children (now grown up) for a picnic along here on a hot summer day. They had great fun running and playing along the grass area. I was very pleased to see that happening last summer and again this year. Last year I saw a family making daisy chains, another favourite activity.

Competition Time - The earliest Violets were blooming in late January. I wonder if you saw them. I would like you to take part in a small competition. If you spot the first violets on your walks can you email on pat.olney@btopenworld.com. Perhaps also a first cowslip and the first orchids. etc and we can build up a picture of when they are appearing. If you have some photos of the Linch Furlong could you send them to me and I can put them in the article. Thank you for joining in. Pat Olney

College Farm

As seems to be the case when I write these articles it heralds a change in the weather. After one of the kindest, mildest, driest Novembers in memory, some say since the war, it looks like things are going to change over the weekend. Colder, windier wet weather with snow showers are forecast. Luckily, I am off on holiday!



This autumn we were very keen to get on with the cereal drilling before the weather broke like it has for the last few years. They say you never get three years the same in a row but we nearly did. Luckily after the rain showers we had some great drying days which not only allowed us to fly along with drilling, but the weather made for some very good seedbeds in which the crops have established well.

It was a bit of a shock to me when on Sunday 17th October that we had completed all our planned cereal drilling. We had not been finished this early in years. A great feeling but I was wondering what we were going to do. The weather remained kind and the last month I have named 'the can you just' month. Many customers have been ringing up asking for us to complete jobs, whilst the ground has been so dry, which we have been unable to do for the last couple of years.

This was keeping us busy and with the ground still dry we decided this autumn to crop some of the ground that was planned for spring. This was great as it gets us on the front foot when spring arrives and winter crops are generally more profitable than spring.

Finally, towards the last week of November the arable field work is all complete and we are busy washing and putting our equipment away for the winter.

The cows have had an extra month in the fields, which is a bonus, although they will soon be in as the grass has stopped growing and we are having to take silage out to them daily.

December hopefully will be a straightforward month in the lead up to Christmas; tending to live-stock, hedge cutting and managing wildlife areas then everyone can have a well-earned rest over Christmas and New Year.

Henry & Laura Saunders

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- Fertility Services
- Gluten-Free Food Prescribing
- Milton Keynes Pharmacy First



Consultation ends Tuesday 21 December 2021

Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Clinical Commissioning Group (BLMK CCG) is undertaking a public consultation asking residents to share their views on proposed changes to policies on Fertility Services, Gluten-Free Food Prescribing and the Milton Keynes Pharmacy First minor ailment scheme.

The consultation and supporting documents can be found on the CCG website:

www.blmkccg.nhs.uk/PolicyConsultation

We want as many people as possible to share their views and help shape health policies across Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes, so please do complete the survey.

The consultation runs until 21 December 2021.

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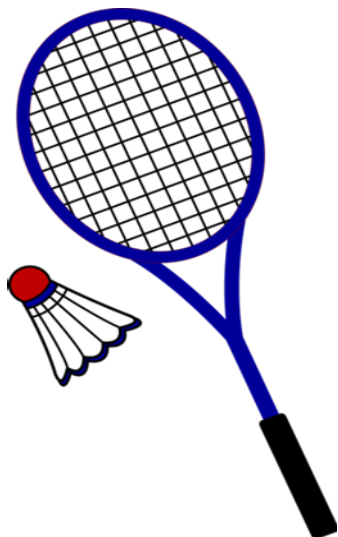
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We are a friendly local community run group that has been going since the 1970's. We aim to offer a place for mums, dads, babies, toddlers and carers to socialise together and help start some of the building blocks towards our little ones development.

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

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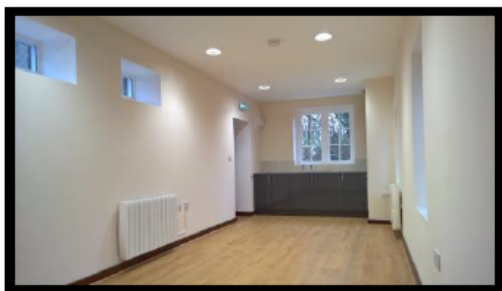
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**Oakley WI suspended at the end of
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**If you are interested in restarting the
WI or want more information of other
WI's locally please contact:-**

The Federation Secretary on:-

**01234 359538 or
bcfwi@btconnect.com**



OAKLEY GARDENING CLUB

We are convening a meeting of the club towards the end of January 2022 to decide how we go forward. Please keep an eye on the village notice-boards for further information.

For further information contact
Denise Hookham on 01933 312119



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Mandy Newton

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Registered Charity Number : 200480

oakley *Motorcycle* club

On Monday 6th September OMC finally got to hold an AGM, some six months overdue. It was not the usual affair that used to see well over one hundred people crammed into the clubhouse on a cold February night for awards and presentations. Just a handful of members and committee in the OSSC marquee going through the basics of an AGM with the usual thanks, election of officials and the club finances.

A somewhat dull evening compared to previous AGMs but certainly a COVID aware AGM! The OMC Officers remain the same with myself as Chair, Derek Brown as Treasurer and Vice Chair and Bernice Russell as Secretary.

The annual OMC memorial ride out took place on 26th September with twenty five bikes participating. They went out on a seventy plus mile round trip before returning to Oakley Club for sausage and chips. Thursday evenings during Autumn have been well attended probably due to the mild weather but as the temperatures drop so do the attendees.

Long standing OMC member Mick Hodson celebrated his 80th Birthday at OMC on 23rd September. Mick lives in Rothwell, Northants and attends OMC every Thursday on his motorbike come rain or shine, a round trip of nearly 60 miles!



Well it has been a funny old year with lockdown, restrictions, delayed re-opening and a basic AGM, however once we were able to meet up again members have not been shy in attending with some exceptionally busy nights. Roll on 2022 when hopefully we can get planning some events

Stay safe,

Baysie

Roger Bays -
Chair OMC



Classic Car Meet In Bedfordshire

The last night of the year was Tuesday 7th September and to show just how popular this event has become and how keen people are to get out in their pride and joy, we were overwhelmed with over 300 show cars attending, a fantastic evening at Oakley Club!

Well that is it for 2021 and we are looking to resume in April 2022 so watch this space.





Oakley Sports & Social Club

Family & Sports Bar

CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS

CHRISTMAS EVE: **12PM - 11PM**

BOXING DAY: **12PM – 11PM**

CHRISTMAS DAY: **11:30AM – 2:30PM**

NEW YEAR DAY: **12PM – 11PM**

CHECK OUR WEBSITE & FACEBOOK

FOR OUR XMAS EVENTS & NEW MENUS

