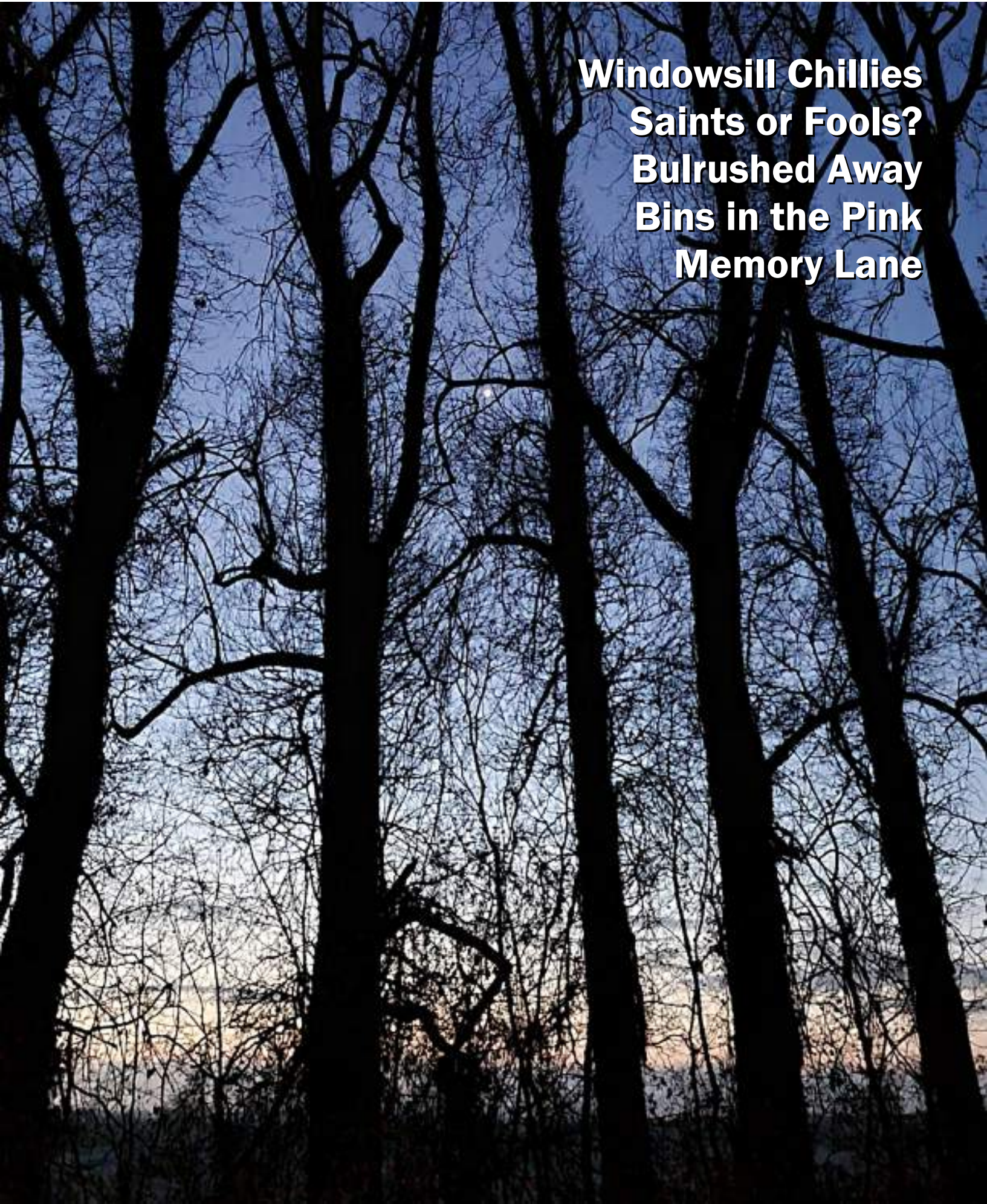


Oakington & Westwick

February / March 2024

Journal

**Windowsill Chillies
Saints or Fools?
Bulrushed Away
Bins in the Pink
Memory Lane**



What's On

Weekly

Mon	Monday Cafe , 9.30—noon. St Andrew's Church Hall, £1 Liz Davis – 01223 232745
Mon	Youth Club , on a Bus, 7–9pm. Recreation Ground, School Year 7 and above. Free. 07853 795256
Mon	Oakington Singers , 7.30–9pm. Church Hall. Elaine Bailey – elainebailey1@live.co.uk
Tue	Happy Feet , 10–11am term time. Church Hall. For under fives. Ben Phillips – familyworker@standrewsoakington.co.uk
Tue	Senior Pilates , 11.30–12.30pm. Pavilion. Classes through out the week. Contact: Claire Young – 07766 554413
Tue	Cubs , 6–7.15pm term time, Pavilion. Iain Ramsay – iain.ramsay@oakingtonscouts.org.uk
Tue	Table Tennis , 7.30–9pm. Pavilion. Gillian L'angellier – 01223 234758
Tue	Poker Night , 7.45pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417
Wed	Mixed Ability Pilates , 10–11am. Pavilion. Classes throughout the week. Contact: Claire Young – 07766 554413
Wed	Yoga , 7–8.15pm. Pavilion. Denise Sibley-Moore – 01954 202235
Thu	Mature Movers , 9.30–10.15am. Pavilion. Katie Harknett 07541 721059 / info@elementalfitness.co.uk
Thu	Little Steps , 10–11.30am term time. Church Hall. Ben Phillips – familyworker@standrewsoakington.co.uk
Thu	Ten Sing , 7–9pm term time. Histon Baptist Church. Terry King – cambridgetensing@gmail.com
Thu	Short Mat Bowls , 7.30–9.30pm. Pavilion. Dawn Stokes – 01223 236427
Thu	Quiz Night , 8pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417
Fri	Beavers , 6–7pm. term time. Church Hall. beavers@oakingtonscouts.org.uk
Fri	Scouts , 6–8pm. Pavilion. Cara Hanman – cara.hanman@oakingtonscouts.org.uk

Fri	2 Feb	Minibus to Bar Hill , 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004
Fri	2 Feb	Mobile Library , 1.50–2.20pm. Coles Lane
Fri	2 Feb	Country Dancing , 8–10pm. Histon Methodist Church. Kathryn Coles – 01223 233191
Sat	3 Feb	Village Walk & Talk , 10.30am. Meet by Church on High Street. Alice – OWNeighbours@gmail.com
Thu	8 Feb	O&W WI , 7.30pm. St Andrews Church Hall. Making Green Hearts. Elaine Bailey – elainebailey1@live.co.uk
Thu	8 Feb	Chess Club , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Fri	9 Feb	PSA Quiz Night , 7.30–10pm. Oakington Primary School. Sign up by 6 Feb. psa@oakington.cambs.sch.uk
Sat	10 Feb	Repair Café , 11am–2pm. Pavilion. Pre-booking recommended. oakingtonrepaircafe@gmail.com
Mon	12 Feb	O&W Parish Council , 7.30pm. Pavilion. All invited. clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk
Tue	13 Feb	Tuesday Talk & Tea , 2.45pm. Church Hall. Cambridge Blue Guide Talk. Marian Cleaver – 01223 232897
Thu	15 Feb	Philosopher's Café , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Sun	25 Feb	Bingo Night , 6pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417
Wed	28 Feb	Sustainable O&W , 7.30pm. Church Hall. sustainableow@gmail.com

Fri	1 Mar	Minibus to Bar Hill , 10am. To book ring Teri Seaber – 07711 531004
Fri	1 Mar	Mobile Library , 1.50–2.20pm. Coles Lane
Sat	2 Mar	Village Walk & Talk , 10.30am. Meet by Church on High Street. Alice – OWNeighbours@gmail.com
Mon	11 Mar	O&W Parish Council , 7.30pm. Pavilion. All invited. clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk
Tue	12 Mar	Tuesday Talk & Tea , 2.45pm. Church Hall. "The History of Stourbridge Fair". Marian Cleaver – 01223 232897
Thu	14 Mar	Chess Club , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Thu	14 Mar	O&W WI , 7.30pm. St Andrews Church Hall. Elaine Bailey – elainebailey1@live.co.uk
Fri	15 Mar	Country Dancing , 8–10pm. Histon Methodist Church. Kathryn Coles – 01223 233191
Sat	16 Mar	Ten Sing Concert , 7.30pm. Histon Baptist Church. Terry King – cambridgetensing@gmail.com
Thu	21 Mar	Philosopher's Café , 7pm. Crossways. Ranko Pinter – ranpin@gmail.com
Wed	27 Mar	Sustainable O&W , 7.30pm. Church Hall. Fruit tree grafting workshop. sustainableow@gmail.com
Sun	31 Mar	Bingo Night , 6pm. White Horse Pub. 01223 232417

BIN DAYS	Fri 2 Feb, Fri 16 Feb, Fri 1 Mar, Fri 15 Mar	Black bins
	Fri 9 Feb, Fri 8 Mar, Fri 22 Mar	Blue & Green bins
	Fri 23 Feb	Blue bins only



Cover photo: Venus, by Kate Spink

Welcome & Repair Cafe

Welcome to a new year for the Journal. The colour's changed but our ambitions remain the same: to distribute information from community groups and local authorities, to support local businesses by providing the opportunity to advertise, and to enhance community spirit in our villages. The Journal Team hope you find it useful, and appreciate any feedback, suggestions and of course articles!

In this issue we look at how a wet winter impacts so many people and continue our exploration of the streets of Oakington and Westwick, as longstanding residents of Coles

Lane look back through the years. Why not get together with your neighbours and write the history of your street for us.

Or beat the winter blues by trying something new – we have reports from many of the village clubs; check the community diary page opposite to see what's going on. And there are tips for getting growing in the garden – hopefully spring is on the way!

Jenny Prince & Graham Tregonning,
Editors



The Journal is published on behalf of the Oakington & Westwick Community Association, to inform residents about events, activities and issues in the parish. It's delivered free to all residents and is funded by advertising, the Parish Council and the Community Association.

Journal Team:

Graham Tregonning & Jenny Prince (*editors*), Adrienne Chaplin (*distribution*), Irène Butlin, Ranko Pinter (*chair*), (*advertising – vacancy, advert layout – vacancy*).

Send contributions to
oakwestjournal@gmail.com

or phone: 01223 233510 (Jenny)
or 01223 233208 (Graham)

DEADLINE FOR APRIL/MAY
ISSUE:
Tuesday 19 March

To advertise in the Journal,
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Business card	£20	£80
¼ page (portrait)	£32	£128
½ page (landscape)	£60	£240

* Six for the price of four

Adverts for the next issue must
be received by **12 March**.

*Inclusion of an advertisement does
not imply endorsement by the
Oakington & Westwick Journal of
the product or service advertised.*

Sustainable Oakington & Westwick Repair Cafe

Oakington's first Repair Cafe will take place on Saturday **10 February** at the Pavilion, 11am – 2pm.

What is a repair cafe? It connects experienced volunteer repairers with people who need stuff fixed. You can bring along broken jewellery, clothes which need mending, bikes, small household appliances, mechanical, electrical or electronic gadgets – and have them repaired for free, saving them from being thrown away and you from having to buy new. Repairers will do their level best to fix your item, and chat to you while they do it – it's a chance to pick up tips from experts as well.



Repairs are FREE (although donations gratefully accepted) but there are also tea/coffee, cakes and lunchtime vegetarian savoury snacks on sale for you to enjoy while you wait. Even if you don't have anything that needs mending, come along, have a cuppa and look around.

Repairs can be booked in advance to guarantee they will be seen – the booking link is on sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe. But if the booked slots are full or you don't get round to booking, you can try bringing your item on the day. First come first served for these limited walk-in repairs.

An e-waste bin will also be on site so if you have any small electrical items which are beyond repair please bring them on the day. Most small items with a plug, battery or cable will be accepted, including toys, appliances, phones, power tools etc; but we can't take smoke alarms, light bulbs or vapes. The items will be used for parts where possible, and otherwise dismantled to be recycled.

Any queries: oakingtonrepaircafe@gmail.com or see sustainableow.co.uk/repair-cafe. In partnership with Cambridge Carbon Footprint.

Jenny Prince, Alice J, Philip & Rachel Garsed



Thank you and Welcome

Congratulations to Thiru and Anu at the shop on the arrival of their baby daughter on 7 December. She is named Kaaviyaa, which means "poem".

Thiru and Anu would like to thank all those who sent good wishes and contributed towards their gift.

Jenny Prince





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Parish Councillors

Chair: David Reeves

chair@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk

Vice-Chair: Tony Starling

John Bailey Julie Grove
Stephen Moore Ranko Pinter
Jake Camilleri
Two Vacancies

Parish Website

www.oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk

Correspondence to the Council should be addressed to the Clerk:

Mrs Laura Lawrence – Email:

clerk@oakingtonandwestwick-pc.gov.uk

Post: 4 Meadow Farm Close
Oakington CB24 3AS

Phone: 07903 295860

District Councillors

O & W, Longstanton, Northstowe

Natalie Warren-Green – 07990 553997

cllr.warrengreen@scambs.gov.uk

Tom Bygott – 07765 475 513

cllr.bygott@scambs.gov.uk

County Councillor

O & W, Longstanton, Northstowe, Over

Firouz Thompson – 07974 680875

firouz.thompson@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

On Facebook:

longstantonoakingtonnorthstowe

Member of Parliament

South Cambridgeshire

Anthony Browne – 01223 603677

anthony.browne.mp@parliament.uk

VILLAGE INFORMATION

Community Association

oakington.westwick.ca@gmail.com

Oakington & Westwick Neighbours

(OWN) – 07902 111786

OWNeighbours@gmail.com

Oakington Primary School

01223 232328

office@oakington.cambs.sch.uk

Pavilion Booking Administrator

Tony Leadley – 07936 024587

oakingtonpavilion@gmail.com

Village Stores & Post Office

Thiru Kunaratnam – 01223 232327

Hardship Fund

Contact Ben on 07342 945373 or

Jo on 07714 760582 or

oak.west.hardship.fund@outlook.com

From our Parish Council Chair

Although there has been a lot of effort to clear **drains**, grips and gullies in the village and in Westwick, one or two problems still exist. Efforts continue to encourage the riparian owner of the ditch along Station Road to clean it out and release blockages. Fortunately for us all there were no reports of flooding in the parish during the recent wet weather. Even the crossroads drains worked!

Meanwhile, I can bring you up to date with various bids for improvements in the parish. The **MUGA** (or Multi Use Games Area) next to the Pavilion will hopefully eventually receive an upgraded surface known as 3G. Delays have occurred due to extra information being asked for by the grant funding body.

New **speed restrictions** will come into force in Westwick, which means the 20mph limits will become widespread on our roads.

Also a bid for a solar powered sign relaying drivers' speeds, the subject of the Local Highways Initiative, will hopefully meet with success. The bid for speed restrictions in Cambridge Road, as reported in November's Journal, is also still in progress.

Permission to place a memorial **bench** next to the bus stop opposite the village sign has been applied for. There used to be bench there years ago and the concrete base still exists.

The bid for solar panels for the pavilion is in the pipeline – so much we are waiting for!

Plans are beginning to be laid for the **Annual Parish Meeting** (Monday 22 April, 7.30pm in the pavilion) when there is usually an invited speaker. It could well be an in-house occasion on the subject of biodiversity in our community. More on this in the next edition!

Better news for **Dry Drayton Road**. Work to repair the road by the pinch point near the old Tomato Farm is to start in March, and the dropped edges on both sides of the road towards the A1307 will be repaired during the summer. All of the road will then be top dressed.

Ever wondered what exactly the **Parish Council** is responsible for? I checked with the Government online site to find that a PC can have up to 26 areas of interest, but since we don't have any public wash houses the list is reduced by one for us! Items such as burial grounds, litter bins, planning, public seats, and recreation grounds are on the long list.

This all carries a financial and human burden. Finance is regulated annually by the means of the precept, the amount the PC can ask its residents to pay through the Council Tax, administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The human effort to keep things running smoothly is made entirely by unpaid elected or co-opted members – the parish councillors. It's easier when we have a full complement but at the moment we need two more councillors. If work helping your community is appealing to you, please get in touch via the parish clerk, Laura Lawrence, or come to a meeting for a while to see how it all works. Please note that the phone number for the clerk is now 07903 295860.

One of our District Councillors, Natalie Warren-Green, reminded the January meeting that their **survey** 'How are we doing?' is active on the SCDC website. It's a very good way of giving the District Council your views on its performance. It's worth taking the survey, after all, it is the body that takes your Council Tax!



David Reeves

From our County Councillor

As winter draws to a close, I would still urge you to drive cautiously near to Oakington Primary School; younger kids could run out, as they may not be road-savvy!



Dry Drayton Road, Oakington: I am pleased to report that Dry Drayton Road has been added to the 2024 Surface Dressing and Gripfibre programme. The section from the traffic lights in the centre of the village to the raised table will be Gripfibre surface treated, and the section from the raised table out to the new surface joint near the A1307 roundabout will be surface dressed. These works are likely to take place in June 2024.

Prior to any surface treatment, the road will be assessed by an experienced contractor, who will be identifying and carrying out any necessary preparation patching works in order to bring the road up to the standard for treatment. This will include any of the edge damage as identified. The programme is yet to be confirmed, but the preparation works will take place during February or March, and as with all road closures, the correct time period notification will be given, which is a minimum 14 days in advance of any works commencing. If you like to know more about the road surfacing treatments referred to above, do look on the County website: tinyurl.com/3ybpvzmt

Quality of life survey shows mixed picture: As part of our vision to make Cambridgeshire greener, fairer and more caring, we launched our annual countywide quality of life survey last year. Read our Strategic Framework document to

find out more about the seven ambitions we have developed to achieve our vision: tinyurl.com/2d7vjnb8

I reported in my last column the summary for the county. We can now drill down to South Cambridgeshire as District-wide reports were provided in December 2023: tinyurl.com/yc5sum65

Some top line summaries below:

- Highest mean happiness – all the districts (7.43 v 7.25)
- 86% concerned by cost-of-living increases
- 82% concerned by climate change
- 48% concerned by investment and jobs

Are residents happy and healthy?

- 64% see family and friends as often as they would like
- 32% have struggled with mental health in the last year
- 31% of parents say their child has experienced mental health problems this year
- 75% of parents feel their child has good relationships with their peers
- 22% often feel lonely

Views on their local community, South Cambridgeshire -

- 86% agree people from different backgrounds get on well together (average 80%)
- 89% feel safe (average 84%)
- 80% feel like they belong (average 75%)
- 77% know where to go to find out how to get involved

Please see contact details on page 5. *Firouz Thompson*

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From our District Councillors

As Spring approaches it's good to reflect on the good things that have been happening across Oakington & Westwick this winter and the continued support we have across South Cambridgeshire from South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Locally, the Oakington & Westwick EAG and TAG continue to impress with their tenacious approach to supporting residents to keep paths and roads clear and safe throughout the community, and I am grateful to them for keeping me briefed about their activity and where District Council might be useful to them. I was also struck deeply on Christmas Eve by the enthusiasm of the Choir at the Christingle Service and the inclusive nature of the service itself by Ben Phillips, who addressed residents and visitors alike, of various beliefs, and made the point that nobody ought to feel they are alone if they are dealing with issues. That the community in Oakington and Westwick has a strong support network so please never suffer alone. I think the work of members of the OWN are evidence that this is the case and it's clear that people have others to turn to in times of need.

More widely, some examples of initiatives across South Cambridgeshire, led by SCDC, are:

Support with Council Tax Payments: Support is available if residents are struggling to meet Council Tax payments. Visit SCDC Website: tinyurl.com/3bejswwu for details. Residents can also sign up to receive their Council Tax bill online.

Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive scheme: In the scheme, landlords who provide properties in South Cambridgeshire to Homes for Ukraine guests and who are resident in South Cambridgeshire qualify for a financial incentive. Anyone who is interested in joining the scheme can find out more by emailing the team on HFULiaison@Scamps.gov.uk or calling on 01954 713411.

Continuation of 'thank you' payments for Homes for Ukraine Sponsors: The payments will remain at £500 per month to reflect the ongoing generosity of hosts in supporting those who have fled the war.

An update on the SCDC 4-Day Week trial: The trial continues to show positive outcomes recorded by The Bennett Institute, Cambridge University. In addition, SCDC are now providing the Government with the data required by them to assess the trial. Details of the data and copies of the correspondence can be found at: tinyurl.com/4ys4yapj

And lastly, a "how are we doing survey" has been launched by SCDC to get feedback from residents across the district. Please share the link so that SCDC can hear from as many voices as possible to help deliver service improvements for residents and businesses across our district. This is a chance to say what you think we are getting right and where we need to get better. tinyurl.com/yc3ztrws



Please see my contact details on page 5.

Cllr Natalie Warren-Green

Find your nearest pink bin to recycle electrical goods:

Bright pink bins for electrical waste have resulted in nine times more e-waste being collected for recycling since being introduced last year. Over 49 tonnes of small electrical appliances have been collected for recycling in the pink bins – instead of it all ending up in the black bin. The pink bins are suitable for most small electrical items which have a plug or battery – including phones, toys, kettles, toasters, and many more. Items which cannot be reused are then sent to specialist operators for recycling into new products.

Pink bin locations can be found by entering your postcode at recycleyourelectricals.org.uk. For example, locations listed near Oakington and Westwick for recycling electrical appliances, batteries and light bulbs include:

- Bar Hill Tesco, CB23 8EL
- Histon Co-op, CB24 9LQ
- Girton Co-op, CB3 0LW
- Longstanton Co-op, CB24 3BT
- Cambourne Morrisons Car Park, CB23 6FY

[Editor's note: There will also be an e-waste bin available at Oakington Pavilion during the Repair Café on 10 February.]

Failure of Cambridgeshire County's policy on weeds:

Numerous residents have complained to me about how weeds have been getting out of control. For example, in Manor Farm Close weeds have destroyed the gutters along almost the entire length of the road. It turns out that the County Council had changed its policy on spraying weeds.

A petition with 1,797 signatures calling on the County Council's ruling rainbow alliance to reconsider its no-spray policy was presented to the County's meeting on 17 October. "We the undersigned believe the state of the roads, paths and cycleways in Cambridgeshire are in a shocking state and unacceptable condition, due to this administration's change to the weeding policy... The sight of rapid decay in our town and village centres is unacceptable, as well as the state of the highways between settlements; these all look more appropriate in a post apocalypse movie, than a first world country... A policy where common weeds will only be removed when they become injurious is ridiculous (ie a trip hazard as an example). The new bureaucracy imposed, involving the public reporting those weeds, the Council tasking an inspector to examine those weeds (up to 14 days later) then deciding whether to instruct a contractor or not, is ludicrous in the extreme. We ask for immediate action to return to a pro-active weed-killing regime."

The Council then voted against a motion to return to a proactive weed-killing policy. The current policy may have been well-intentioned; to foster biodiversity and reduce the amount of man-made chemicals used. Our roads, pavements, gutters and footpaths are not built to be strong enough to withstand the out-of-control growth of weeds.



Please see my contact details on page 5.

Cllr Tom Bygott



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Environment Action Group

You may have noticed that most of the bulrushes were removed from the **village pond** in early January. We were particularly keen to remove these, as besides obstructing the view of drivers turning out of the adjacent driveway they are very invasive and will take over the whole pond to the exclusion of other species if left unchecked. The EAG organised their removal by Mead Plant and Grab, and we are very grateful to the Parish Council for funding this work. We plan to do some further tidying up in and around the pond over the coming months, so if you fancy pulling on some waders and splashing around in the pond we'd love to hear from you – please contact James on jamesyoud51@icloud.com.



with an interest in EAG activities is also always welcome at our **monthly coffee mornings** at the Olive Tree Café – contact James for details.

You may have received a number of flood alerts warnings from the Environment Agency in early January when we experienced heavy rain (two inches in three days). Our **flood mitigation group** observed that, as is typical for our catchment area, the water level in Oakington Brook rose quickly during the heavy rain and briefly exceeded the level set by the Environment Agency for triggering a flood warning alert, but also went down again very quickly afterwards. It seems that work previously done on clearing out the brook downstream of the Cambridge Road bridge



has improved the capacity of the brook to carry water away from the village. Meanwhile, we understand that flood modelling results have now been approved by the Environment Agency and should have been passed to Homes England (Northstowe developers) so that they can design our attenuation pond. We continue to monitor developments.

Stephanie Smith

Oakington & Westwick Neighbours

It's classic that New Year's resolutions rarely last beyond January, but maybe you're thinking 2024 could be different. Oakington and Westwick Neighbours has now been running for over eight years and has established several events on the village calendar, such as the Big Lunch, as well as providing ongoing support to village residents, particularly during the Covid pandemic. The chair's report from our recent AGM shows how active OWN has been, although much of that is unseen as a lot of work goes on in the background.



One positive to come from the pandemic was the setting up of a village Hardship Fund. Posters giving details have been put into local bus stops and the information is always available in the Journal. Cost of living increases have meant that financial difficulties for some have continued well beyond the pandemic. Many people just about manage, but then along comes an unforeseen expense that causes a problem. This is where the Hardship Fund can help. It is funded from donations, and any assistance is confidential. If financial difficulties are ongoing, the Hardship Fund team can refer to other agencies. If you would like to donate to the fund or if you need help or advice contact:

Ben 07342 945373; or Jo 07714 760582; or oak.west.hardship.fund@outlook.com.

As well as the annual events, there are monthly opportunities to socialise. The community minibus provides a door-to-door service to Tesco's supermarket on the first Friday of the month. Make your shopping fun and book your seat by contacting Teri on 07711 531004. If a walk in the fresh air with pleasant company sounds appealing, simply turn up outside St. Andrew's parish church at the top of the High Street at 10.30am on the first Saturday of the month.

OWN really does appreciate all the volunteers who help and support both events and people. But we are aware that OWN does not function exactly as it was originally envisaged. To assess and reflect how best to move forward, we are carrying out a short online survey during February: <http://tinyurl.com/ycyzbdvv>. Please help us plan for the future by spending a couple of minutes to take part. The survey aims to encourage local residents to feedback what matters most to them, and to inspire you to think about ways in which you could improve your local community. Make 2024 the year you can make a difference. That's a resolution that could last longer than January!

To contact OWN: 07902 111786, owneighbours@gmail.com

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Oakington and Westwick WI



We had an enjoyable evening at our Christmas meeting. We had the opportunity to make two very different, but achievable, Christmas crafts. This was followed by mulled wine and mince pies while we did the Christmas raffle with lots of prizes and Secret Santa.

We had to change our meeting in January at the very last minute as our speaker was unable to join us!

Instead, we had a fascinating talk by Ruth Bond, a previous National Federation and Cambridge Federation Chair, on the history of the Cambridge Federation from its



beginnings, the first offices with the smell of fish in the 1900s, to our existing one, the eco-friendly office now in Girton, officially opened by Prince Edward. The Prince asked for his tea in a mug so he could walk and chat!

Show and Share the Love Campaign – Green Hearts

This February, people from all walks of life are coming together to show the love for everything we want to protect from the climate crisis.

Watch out, Oakington and Westwick residents, as this February, Oakington and Westwick WI are going to be out and about with the WI Campaign Sharing the Love, around the village! Look out for our special craft projects! We will also be posting on Oaky Folk with updates.

Do join us at our next meeting, we will be making and then sharing Green Hearts and finding out why it is so important to be involved in the campaign! Thursday **8 February**.

Elaine Bailey



We meet on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the Church Hall. We are a friendly group and if you want to try us out the first meeting is free. Contact Elaine

Bailey elainebailey1@live.co.uk for more information.

Country Dancing

The next two evenings for the Dance Club are Friday **2 February** and Friday **15 March**. Jane and I look forward to seeing everyone on either or both dates.

Kathryn Coles



Meets in Histon Methodist Church, one Friday a month, 8–10 pm. Adults £4, accompanied children 50p. Soft shoes or trainers are recommended.

Tuesday Talk & Tea

Our New Year program began on 9 January with a games afternoon organised by Kathryn Coles. This was greatly enjoyed by all of us, as Kathryn has an amazing supply of different and unusual games.

- **13 Feb** A Cambridge Blue Guide, Sophie Smilie, is going to give a talk with illustrations called “A Word Lover’s Look at Cambridge”.
- **12 Mar** Honor Ridout is going to talk about the history of the Stourbridge Fair.
- **9 Apr** Rama Ram is going to tell us about Indian culture and costumes, with a chance for ladies to try on Saris.

Newcomers are always very welcome, so do come and join us.

Marian Cleaver



The Tuesday Talk and Tea Club meets in the Church Hall at 2.45–4.45pm on the second Tuesday of the month, for a talk or activity followed by a delicious home-made tea. We welcome all comers, especially if the subject that month is of special interest to you.

More info: 01223 232897/marianccleaver@gmail.com.

Oakington Vikings Football Club



Our Teams and Contacts

- First Team James & Ronnie 07834 465188
- Under 15s Marcus & Josh 07866 635241
- Under 13s Winston 07968 716290
- Welfare officer Frank 07841 995713

www.facebook.com/OakingtonVikingsFC

Swavesey Camera Club

Annual Photographic Exhibition

Saturday 23 March, 10am–4pm,
Swavesey Memorial Hall



This event is one of our major opportunities to demonstrate our photographic skills to the public. Visit us and vote for your favourite image.

In addition to the beautiful prints on display, there will be a continuous display of projected images and AV presentations. Some of the images will be available as greetings cards with all the proceeds from the card sales going to Over Day Centre. Coffee, excellent cake and other refreshments will be available all day.

Visit our website www.swaveseycameraclub.co.uk where you can find further details about our club and the exhibition. On the website you will also be able to see an online version of the exhibition.

Maggie O'Moore

Sustainable Oakington & Westwick

In November Kate led a birdbox and bug hotel building workshop, which was a lot of fun and hopefully helped to enhance our gardens and village for wildlife. Members of the Eco Club, which is run by and for kids, gave a talk about litter picking.



On **10 February** SOW is running Oakington and Westwick's first Repair Café – see page 3 for more information.



Last year's very popular fruit tree grafting workshop is back on Wednesday **27 March**. Come and learn this technique, and if you bring £5 you can take your newly grafted tree home and plant it in your own garden. Email sustainableow@gmail.com if you'd like to join in or just come along on the night.

Contact SOW if you'd like to join in with building up records of species in our local habitats for the **Nature Recovery Project**. For example visiting the hedgerow near Mansell Wood to look for butterflies, or the Rec to see if there are any birds you recognise. It could be a couple of visits over the year, or more frequently if it's somewhere you walk regularly. sustainableow@gmail.com.

Jenny Prince



For everyone who's concerned about nature and the environment. All are welcome to SOW meetings, at 7.30pm in the Church Hall on the last Wednesday in the month.

sustainableow@gmail.com / sustainableow.co.uk

Oakington & Westwick Short Mat Bowls Club



If you would like to give bowls a try, come and join us as our guest. We play throughout the year at the Pavilion, on Thursday evenings 7.30–9.30pm. We have spare bowls and you just need some soft, flat-soled shoes. If you would like more information, please contact Dawn Stokes on 01223 236427.

Oakington Singers

We are relieved to report that our choir members have now all bounced back after a collective Covid affliction just before Christmas when pretty well all of us succumbed! Nonetheless we are pleased that we managed to deliver on many of our various Christmas commitments and apologise for the few that were missed. In particular, we were delighted to have been able to turn out for our annual Carol Singing event in the Grand Arcade, raising a very worthwhile £315 for Macmillan Cancer Support whilst putting a smile on the faces of passing Christmas shoppers. We all look forward to this event and relish the consumption of mulled wine and Diana's homemade mince pies that intersperse with our singing.

New Year, New Us! Following our Choir AGM meeting at which our Committee highlighted the need for important changes to keep us nicely afloat, we have an exciting announcement to make. We are delighted to welcome back Paul Tann as our Musical Director and Joan Keating as our accompanist. Both have enjoyed these roles before and been very successful. We are very grateful therefore that their commitments now allow them to take up the not insignificant workload again. We would like to say 'Thank you' to Richard Hinitt from Cambridge for his amazing keyboard skills and for steering the ship in the interim.

Come and Sing! We are a four part community choir and are looking for new members! We would love to share the pleasure we get from singing with more people and to keep this village institution thriving. You do not necessarily need to be able to read music as tunes can be easily learnt by ear. I mean, when you sing along to songs on your playlist for enjoyment, I bet you never need to search for the written notes first!! And I bet many of your favourite tunes are songs we already sing in our repertoire. If not, then I'm sure we can add them! We like to think that there's something for everyone, from very modern through to sometimes quite traditional.

Finally, we would like to reassure you that we are working on setting a date for our planned concert with the Oaktet that had to be postponed from before Christmas. It is an important fundraiser for the Ruth and Poppy Appeal which uniquely provides extra musical enrichment for all children at Oakington Primary School.

If you would like to give us a try, contact Helen Williams, 01223 232614, or just turn up for a rehearsal (details below). We are confident that, however tired you may feel, you will come away rejuvenated and set up for the week. How do we know? Well it's something our members so frequently say at the end of our rehearsal!

Helen Williams



We are a four-part harmony choir which rehearses on a Monday in the Church Hall, 7.30–9 pm. Come along and give us a try! For more information, or if you would like us to sing at your event, please contact Helen Williams on 232614/helenwilliams5@outlook.com or just drop in.

Clubs & Groups

Oakington & Westwick Tennis Club

Fancy a game of tennis?

If you have a few post-Christmas pounds to lose, why not get active on the tennis court and join Oakington & Westwick Tennis Club? The two hard courts can be used all year round and once you're a member, there is no need to book a court – you can just turn up and play.

Current annual subscription rates (subject to approval at our forthcoming AGM) are shown below.

Gill Attmore



Club members can use hard courts at the Recreation Ground. Coaching and social events. Our subscription year runs 1 April – 31 March. Membership: £65 family, £45 adults, £20 for juniors. To join or for more info, contact oakingtontc@gmail.com.

Oakington & Westwick Table Tennis Club



We are a small, friendly club, of mixed ability. We play throughout the year, every Tuesday at 7.30pm at the Pavilion, and welcome new players. We have four tables and spare bats – all you need is a pair of trainers. For more information contact Gillian L'angellier on 01223 234758.

Cambridge Ten Sing

We ended last year by performing at the Choir 2000 Advent concert, performing some Christmas songs, which the group pulled off with energy and gusto, and I think the audience appreciated the effort they all put in. The Christmas Party was good fun, and we repeated the performance of Christmas songs to family members, as many had not been able to get to the concert. This was much appreciated, and the young people sang even louder than at the performance.

Now the focus is on the concert, which is on **Saturday 16 March**. Watch out for posters with information for tickets; the event will be at Histon Baptist Church, start time 7.30 p.m. We already have songs and a dance planned, a signing song and other performances. It should be a lovely evening, and we look forward to seeing you all there.

Terry King, Administrator



Ten Sing is an informal YMCA performing arts group, run for young people, by young people, with singing, dance and drama. We welcome anyone aged 11–18 to come and try us out on a Thursday evening, 7 to 9 pm at Histon Baptist Church during term time. For more information, please email cambridgetensing@gmail.com.

RECYCLING TIP... Plastic plant pots – if you can't re-use/give away, plastic plant pots (smaller than about A3 paper size) which aren't black can go in the **blue bin** if they are clean – rinse off soil or compost.



1st Oakington Scout Group

The last term saw the Scouts busy finishing up our fundraising towards a Crafts Hill trip to the Netherlands. Crafts Hill is our district area and our Group of sections (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts) take part in activities and events that provide occasions for each section to come together with their contemporaries. For the Scouts, 2024 provides an opportunity to travel to Europe for a special camp.

As well as the newly revived Jumble Sale in October, we were delighted to serve hotdogs, hamburgers and drinks at the village fireworks and once again host our Christmas Carol Concert with refreshments, and entertainment provided by Cottenham Brass Band and the beavers, cubs and scouts.



This year will see us aiming to engage more with the local community and we look forward to posting more information about any events or activities here in the Journal or online.

Cara Hanman



Beavers (aged 6–8), Cubs (8–10½) and Scouts (10½–14) meet weekly in term time at the Pavilion/Church Hall. More details on page 2.



Oakington Beavers currently has spaces available!

If you're aged 6 to 8 years old and enjoy games, crafts, learning new things and making new friends, we'd love you to join us!

We meet on Fridays, 6-7pm during term time.

For more information, please contact:

samantha.patterson@oakingtonscouts.org.uk

Adults: we'd love to grow our enthusiastic team further. If you enjoy leading craft activities or games, or could contribute in another way, please get in touch!


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Coles Lane

The lane was probably named after William Coles, a Methodist lay preacher who was on the Cottenham Circuit which included Oakington, from the 1880s to the 1940s. The name Coles comes from Anglo-Saxon and means to have a dark complexion.

In the early days there were no houses on either side of the road from the High Street until Oakington House on one side and Vine Cottage, a smallholding on the other side. The entrance to Barkers Bakery was on Coles Lane, but the front door to the house was on the High Street, with the granary backing onto Coles Lane. The land on the left looking down from the High Street belonged to Jonah Dellar who also owned the bakery until 1950. The field had cattle and pigs in it and high bank with a hedge. Edgar Stearn remembers the bad winter in 1947 when the snow had built up on the bank. It was cleared by a villager with a snow plough and tractor. The snow plough, shown in the photo (with Ruth Nicolas), was for many years left at the side of Coles Lane to be used again.



Oakington House was originally owned by Colonel McCall; his daughter had stables and a field where the entrance to Days Meadow is now. The next owner Mr Trott was the manager of the Milk Marketing Board; much to everyone's amusement his son was called Graham George (ie G.G. Trott). Mr and Mrs Few bought the house in the 1960s and in 1989 built another house in the driveway. There was also a small bungalow next to the entrance, which at one time might have been connected to the main house. Opposite was the second bakery at East View, run by Bert Smith and son Eric. When Bert retired (mid 1950s) Eric went to work at Barkers Bakery.*



Eric lived in Providence House, shown on the left in this picture looking down Coles Lane towards The Croft. It was



next door to East View which later became an electricians where Albert and Sheila Miller set up a business with a shop, which proved very popular.

Starting from Longstanton Road on the other side was Wellington House which was owned by the Papworths, who at the time owned much of the village. When Richard Barker was a boy two elderly sisters lived there. He befriended one, Lottie, who gave him two hats: a bowler and top hat. On the box of one, the label reads "John Lewis 1937".

Next is the Primitive Methodist Chapel, known in the village as "The Little Chapel". It was used in the 1980s as a Youth Club. Next door was a cottage where "Deafy" Butler and his family lived, but this was demolished and new houses built by local architect and builder, Neil Cook. Mr and Mrs Chapman lived in New Close Farm, as did his parents before; they had a smallholding to the back and side. Where the passageway leads to Water Lane and facing Coles Lane itself are some Council houses. Richard and Edgar remember a farm worker called Titty Whitehead, who was a village character, living in one of them. Titty moved Richard and his parents from Station Road to the Bakehouse, in the Farm's horse and cart in 1950.



Next on Coles Lane was Vine Cottage where Edgar's grandparents lived. It got its name from two vines growing at the front of the house. Edgar and Mary bought land nearby from an uncle and built their own home in the 1960s, the rest of the land becoming Vine Close. Gerald Dellar and his wife Eileen were given land by his father Jonah and theirs was one of the first new homes on Coles Lane, built in 1957. The remaining bungalows up that side to the High Street were built in the 1960s.

On the other side of the road, the new bungalows were built from 1977 to 1978. The houses in the new cul-de-sac and the two adjacent on Coles Lane itself were built by Charlie Caufield. He lived in the end one until about 1964, according to Chris Loweth and his wife Pat, who moved into their house when new.



*Written by Sally Barker
History supplied by Richard Barker & Edgar Stearn*

**Photo: George Barker, assisted by Frank Cannon, 1971.*



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Flooding

The flooding in Nottinghamshire in the early part of January this year will have reminded many of us of the flooding we encountered in Oakington several years ago. Almost 6 inches of rain (144mm) fell in one day on 8 August 2014, the water overtopped the flood mitigation pond/nature reserve in Bar Hill and massive volumes of water came our way. Over 60 properties were inundated in Oakington, bringing a disastrous six to twelve months to many people.

Why does flooding cause so many problems in this part of the world, when we live in one of the driest parts of the UK? Perhaps we fail to accept that rainfall is part of the Water Cycle and that we are so arrogant and assume that we can always control this very natural system.

Water moves in an unceasing cycle through rivers, oceans, clouds and rain. As you know, the sun's heat causes evaporation, mainly from the oceans, but also from lakes and rivers, soil and leaves. The water vapour created condenses into clouds that are moved around the planet by wind. Rain and snow fall from the clouds as the air cools (especially over mountains) and this precipitation falls on land and sea.

The water that falls on land will infiltrate into the soil and may enter underground aquifers where it may be stored. We have chalk beneath much of south Cambridgeshire and it is full of fissures and cracks so provides a great resource for water storage. However, water may not always soak readily into soil, especially if contains lots of clay where the soil particles, which are small, fit closely together. The problem is made worse if the soil has been smeared by tyres, cultivation or livestock under wet conditions, and here the water stays on top, runs off the land and spills into streams and rivers. All water, if it does not evaporate, eventually finds its way back to the sea, completing the water cycle.

Our forefathers seemed to have a better idea about the way water behaves than we do. They recognised that rivers and lakes expand when rains come. In Cambridgeshire we have many examples of grass flood plains where flood water can be temporarily stored, along the Cam (such as Granchester Meadows), the Great River Ouse (such as Portholme Meadows), [and Westwick! – Eds], but we now have a

tendency to believe we can build houses and roads almost anywhere. The Environment Agency have the facilities to model water movement and do often advise that some developments should not happen, but they are often outvoted by the planning departments of District Councils. Yes, we need houses, but they should not be built everywhere. Buildings should not be built on flood plains because these areas are needed for water expansion when the rains come. In addition, new buildings, even outside flood plains, take away land needed for water infiltration. Water that falls on roof tiles and tarmac has to find its way to watercourses somehow, often threatening more flooding.



Unfortunately, in the 50s a lot of rivers were canalised to get water to move more quickly towards the sea. This proved to be the opposite of holding water up in storage areas and added to the flood problems downstream.

More happily, some landscape managers are looking at more natural ways to reduce flooding. Traditional habitats that slow water down, as well providing wildlife sanctuaries, include reed beds, wetland areas and broadleaved woodland as well as water meadows. The ability of woodland to reduce flood risk is often underestimated. Tree canopy can hold up to 25% rainfall and the roots of mature trees can hold water for many hours, slowing down the impact of sudden storm events and reducing flood risk downstream. Work at Pontbren, at the headwaters of the Severn, suggested trees and grass reduced flooding peaks by 50%.

Climate change, with its promise of more storm events of greater intensity, can only make flood management more difficult. The Environment Agency recognise this by adding 20% to flood modelling, and many specialists would like to see a bigger increase. Locally our Flood Mitigation Group, led by Andrew Dennis, continues to strive for ways of holding up or slowing down flows, including a flood mitigation pond between Oakington and Bar Hill.

John Terry
johnterry23@hotmail.co.uk



Electronic Journal

If you would like a PDF version of the Journal to read on your pad or share with family and friends, email oakwestjournal@gmail.com to be added to our mailing list. We can also provide electronic back copies from around 2012 onwards.



Pop along to the golf club and enjoy a Coffee with friends and pick up a Membership Application form for Social membership. You don't have to play golf to take advantage of our clubhouse.

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Book Review

Lady Audley's Secret

by Mary Elizabeth Braddon

It is a long time since I read one of the classics. Written in 1862, it was considered to be in the genre of 'sensation novel'! At the time it was described as the most 'sensationally successful' of the sensation novels! Nowadays I think we would call it a mystery. Like Dickens it was serialised so there are cliffhangers throughout and, also like Dickens, it is rather overlong, but for all that it is an engaging read full of twists and turns in the plot. I would recommend it to anyone who has enjoyed the Brontës' novels.



Jane Goodyer

Podcast Review

"Just one LONG thing" – podcast with Michael Mosley.

You will remember that I recommended Dr Michael Mosley's 15 minute podcast series on BBC Sounds back in our Oct/Nov issue. Well he has a new series of six 40 minute programmes to help us all with our New Year's resolutions to make our lives happier and healthier.

bbc.co.uk/sounds/brand/p09by3yy

The topics covered are: Happiness, Sleep, Exercise, Staying Young, Weight Loss and Inflammation. Why not see if you can incorporate some of the recommendations into your "New Year – New You" plans.



Graham Tregonning

Chess Corner

Solution to chess puzzle 6-23 from last Journal:

1st White 1st Black 2nd White

Rf5-f4 If QxBc2 Rh4#

= checkmate x = capturing a piece



Chess Puzzle 1-24

White to move
and checkmate in
two moves.

Ranko Pinter

Gardening Notes

Some Seasonal Gardening Tips: These bleak months are perhaps not the most inviting time to be in the garden, but here are a few jobs that are worth doing and one that is worth not doing.

JANUARY. If you want the delights of sweet peas in early summer, then now is the time to sow seeds. Sweet peas have long roots so plant the seeds in deep pots or old toilet rolls. Put two seeds in each pot and then remove the weaker seedling if they both germinate. Keep them moist and somewhere cool.

The buds of hellebores are now beginning to show. Remove all the old leaves to allow the buds to develop and then enjoy the full beauty of the flowers. (See picture.)



Finally, don't be too hasty in removing dead foliage and leaves from around the garden as they provide an overwintering haven for many of the beneficial insects such as ladybirds.



FEBRUARY. The best time to increase snowdrops by dividing them "in the green". Gently dig up a clump, separate into smaller clumps and re-plant immediately. They will establish much better than 'dry' bulbs planted in autumn.

Peppers and chillies need a long growing season so start them off on a sunny windowsill.

MARCH. Tender vegetables can be started on a warm windowsill and if the soil is warm, ie weeds are starting to grow, hardy vegetables can be sown outside, but don't be tempted to sow runner or French beans, sweetcorn or courgettes. It is too early!

Ann and Peter Rayner

Oakington & Westwick Allotment Society

If you are interested in 'grow your own' and would like a burst of fresh-air and exercise, the allotment site on Cambridge Road now has three vacant plots for rent. The plots are 1/5 of a regular allotment, which makes them much more manageable, and cost £20 a year.



Spring is of course the best time to begin cultivating and there are always other allotment holders on hand to offer helpful tips and advice.

If you would like to know more or to have a look around please contact Ann Rayner (01223) 234203, email ann.rayner42@icloud.com, or Richard Brading (01223) 232770, or Bernie Yates (01223) 235633.

Ann Rayner

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Oakington Church of England Primary School



It's been a good start to the new year here at Oakington Primary. As always, the children have settled in well after the break and we're looking forward to another great term. It has been wonderful to show prospective families around and for them to see our fantastic school in action. If you are considering Oakington as a school for your child and would like to have a look around, please get in touch with our school office.

Whilst it is only January there has been lots happening already. Our school choir, led by the brilliant Jessica Summers, has been working hard in preparation for their trip to London for the Young Voices event at the O2. This is the largest children's choir concert in the world, and we are delighted to be able to participate in it this year. We are also hoping to provide opportunities for our choir to perform closer to home later in the year.

Our year 3 and 4 pupils in Birch class have been taking part in a six-part lecture series with award-winning non-fiction author, Isabel Thomas, alongside other schools in the Multi-Academy Trust. They have been thinking up their own 'impossible' science questions and will be investigating the answers. The next lecture is coming up later this month, where Isabel will share some of her research methods and talk to the children about how she uses her writing to capture the imagination of her readers.

In January I had the privilege of delivering some Trust-wide Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on our knowledge rich curriculum. This is an area that we have worked really hard on as a school and so it was great to be able to share our experience and expertise with others. We have had quite a few opportunities recently to lead CPD in different areas of teaching and learning; I'm immensely proud of the staff for their ambition and determination to provide the best education for the children at our school.

At Oakington, we care deeply about the experience that we provide our children whilst they are in our care and recognise that a holistic approach to education is important for the well-being and success of both pupils and staff. With this in mind, we have begun the exciting project to update our school values. We have deliberately decided to make this a collaborative process and have sought the views of the children, staff, parents and governors. It has been fantastic to receive such a positive response. We are now analysing the feedback and discussing how we can distil the ideas into a set of values that unites us as a community and sets the culture and vision at Oakington Primary for the years ahead.

Nathan Clark



There is a **DEFIBRILLATOR** at the pavilion (hanging outside the patio doors). If you come across someone who has had a cardiac arrest, call 999 and start CPR, while sending someone to fetch the defibrillator – open box, take out defibrillator, shut box (alarm goes off), open defibrillator and it talks to tell you what to do.

Oakington Primary School Parent Staff Association

We would love you to join us for our annual quiz night on **9 February**. You may have spotted our poster (below) around the village with the QR code for sign-up.

Thank you to all who came along and supported our Christmas Fayre last year. We had a wonderful performance from the choir and a lovely range of stallholders from the local community. We were delighted to raise £850 and it was lovely to have some former students helping us in Santa's Grotto and the games room.



During the last few weeks of term the PSA funds supported exciting trips for the school children, including the Ely and Cambridge Pantomimes and a trip to the Harry Potter studios.

Angela Barber

Oakington C of E Primary School PSA

Friday 9th February
7:30-10:00pm
@Oakington Primary School
Water Lane
CB24 3AL



QUIZ NIGHT

£5 per person
Includes entry and table snacks
Quiz will start 8:00pm
Bar opens 7:30pm

To sign your team up for the quiz please scan the QR code below which will enable sign up and payment

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Member Association

My Volunteering

My mother and older sister both volunteered, so when my children were little and spent one day a week with my parents I joined the staff of a charity shop called “Cam Aid”, our answer to “Oxfam”, fundraising for local things. Later, I was introduced to the first ever church “Lunch Club” in Cambridge and then to “Oxfam”. I even managed a “Barnardo’s” shop in Regent Street and won the prize for the best charity shop window-dressing, an accolade I was unlikely to have won in any ordinary shop! When “Camsight” moved their office to Coles Lane I became involved with them for more than thirty years, until Covid altered the way volunteers could interact with clients. Now I am with the Salvation Army shop in Histon, a real Aladdin's Cave offering unexpected treasures, fascinating customers and lovely colleagues.

There are volunteering opportunities for most people's interests: people, animals, birds, gardens, music, theatre, museums, archaeology, sport and many more. Some involve expense or travel, but most only need time, patience and enthusiasm. Some can be done at weekends and evenings.

We can be seen as saints or fools for “doing all that and not getting paid!” but we are the lucky ones who enjoy new company and an endless source of education and entertainment and new skills as well as the satisfaction of putting something back into society.

Governments have never been able to meet everyone's needs but over the years I have seen their contribution dwindle away until it is often only the volunteers who enable our communities to not only function but to thrive as we do in our village. Long may it last!

Liz Davis

www.volunteercambs.org.uk

This website provides an online platform for volunteering in Cambridgeshire – whether you want to offer your time to support a local cause or if you're a community organisation seeking volunteers.



There was a Christmas-market atmosphere on a cold December evening around the pop-up cider and craft stalls at the Blue Barrel Cidery on the High Street.



Journal Archive

We believe the village journal is a wonderful asset and are proud that it has been kept viable (with the odd break) for so long. The Cambridge Central Library agrees and have offered to add back copies to the “Cambridgeshire Collection”. It will be included in the public catalogue, so will be available to anyone who visits the library. We will keep a second set archived in the Pavilion to make it easier for residents here to access.

The Journal started as a two-page community newsletter produced by Elizabeth Dennis for at least 15 years. Subsequent editors were Matt Barnett and Rob White, before Geoffrey Butlin took it on and created the new colour-covered version in 2013, then handing over the editorial to his wife Irène and Jenny Prince in 2018. We are indebted to the Butlins for their dedication to the Journal and for creating the archive from 2013. Sadly we do lack copies from earlier editions, so if you have any and would be willing to donate them, or even just lend them to us for scanning, please get in touch using our details on page 3. We are also setting up a full digital archive, so PDF versions of back copies will be available too.

Editors

Welcome a New Neighbour

If somebody has moved in near you, a village ‘Welcome’ leaflet will help them feel at home. This has a map of the villages and some key information for new residents. Either let Bruce Sutherland know and he will deliver one, or pick one up from him and take it yourself – it's a good excuse to knock on the door and say hello! brucessutherland@aol.com/07730 817350



Advertorial

After closing down in March 2023 your local gym reopened in April 2023 under new ownership. The Vision Fitness gym in Girton has opened in the building previously occupied by Revolution Health and Fitness, Prime Time Fitness and the Barn. The building in Camboro Business Park has been used as a gym space since 2000. It is shared with Cambridge Osteopathy, Motus Physiotherapy, Beauty by Amineh and TG aesthetics.

Vision Fitness Girton is a fully equipped Gym and offers a wide range of group exercise classes too. We cater for all abilities and our aim is to make everyone feel welcome. With expert staff on standby to help you achieve your goals! Whatever they may be. Why not pop down to see how we can help!

*Sean Sallis, Manager
Vision Fitness, Girton*

Station Road Wildflower Meadow

In the five years since we first added a wildflower area to our garden, the ever-changing riot of colour and benefits to nature have been a joy to watch. We've had many comments from passers-by interested in what we've done, so thought we would share some of our experience.

We originally imagined a more traditional cottage-style garden with shrubs and borders, but after planting some fruit trees, we thought it could be nicer to have them in a meadow that might be fun to wander through and sit in. After a little research, we picked a perennial wildflower mix with a diverse range of species to hedge our bets! (Wildflower Lawns & Meadows). We stripped off the turf and sowed the seeds in September.

The following year we were rewarded with a cover crop of poppies whilst slower growing flowering perennials took root underneath. The year after, there was a lovely mix of grasses, ox-eye daisies, birds-foot trefoil, red clover and many others. Every year since we have seen fewer poppies but more later-flowering and smaller wildflowers emerging.



Due to the ease of sowing, we decided to add an annual cornflower based mix on bare soil by our fence. (Emorsgate seeds.) These were planted in the spring and needed a lot more watering. The mix has now left enough seed bed in the

soil that it is happily regrowing each year, although occasional seed top-ups are required.

During lockdown and the house refurbishment, the garden was left to its own devices. Here, nature took over; the number of ground dwelling bees increased to cover the whole of the side garden. The number of flying insects in the wildflower areas makes the whole area buzz loudly. Crickets, grasshoppers and ladybirds are everywhere and we found hedgehogs nesting in the undisturbed parts.

We are still experimenting and each year adding new wildflowers, perennial shrubs and spring bulbs to increase the length of flowering time in the garden. Hopefully, this will create something that looks good as well as being good for nature.



Inspired? Why not try this or some of the other ideas in your garden.

- Put down some wildflower seeds and see what happens
- Leave your grass long or cut it to a longer length - 50mm or higher. This allows low growing flowering plants to flower
- Leave sheltered/secluded areas for hedgehogs and other mammals and holes in fences so they can roam

Suppliers and further information:

wildflowerlawnsandmeadows.com – Luxury wild flower seed mixture for clay, loam or sandy soils

wildseed.co.uk – EM3 mix (perennial) and EC2 (annual)

www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/lawn-and-mini-meadow-habitats

Rachel Garsed
wildflowers@garsed.uk

HOW ARE YOU – South Cambs

Connecting with others, getting active, learning a new skill, being creative, exploring the outdoors, volunteering – all these things (and more) can improve well-being. However it isn't always easy to know what is on your doorstep or to feel comfortable trying something new. HAYSouthCambs.co.uk is a website that brings together a wide range of activities and sources of support that boost mental and physical well-being. Why not take a look – there's something for everyone.

In particular we have a lot of initiatives in Girton, Histon and Impington to help people who are living with memory loss on this page tinyurl.com/557n9e4k

The Cambridge Cancer Help Centre at Great Shelford offers a range of facilities supporting sufferers and their friends, family and carers. For people with specific cancers they have monthly group meetings. See tinyurl.com/y6kcukse

The Cancer Support Service at Cambridge University Hospitals offers advice and signposting on a wide range of

non-clinical issues that affect people with cancer, including emotional, financial and practical support. Find details at tinyurl.com/2eedy7h



Or if you have experience of cancer personally or through a friend or relative you can contribute to improving cancer services through the Addenbrooke's Cancer Patient Partnership Group. See tinyurl.com/h4exf8dp

If you know about a local group or activity that we should feature on the website, please contact me.

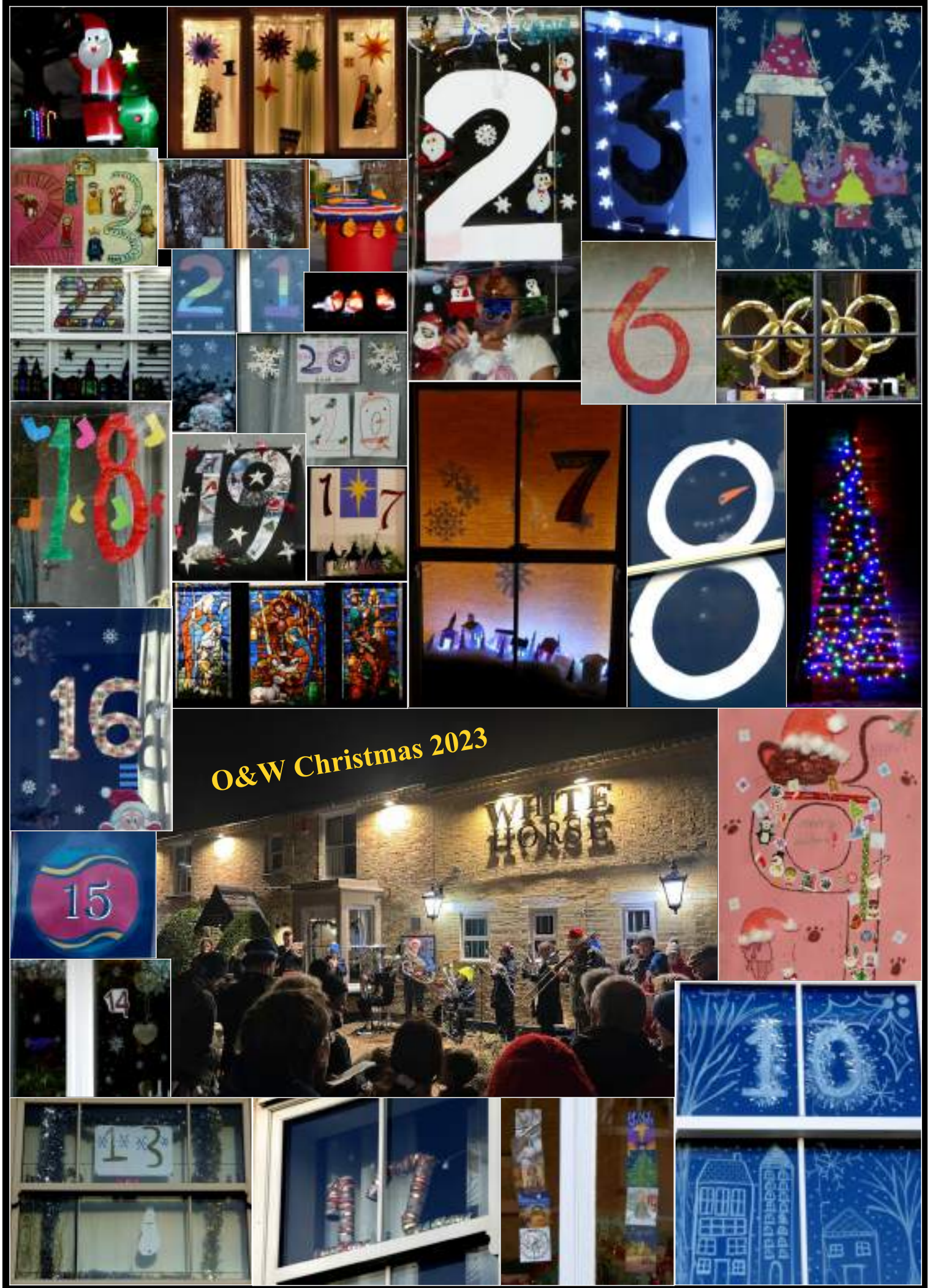
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HAYSouthCambs.co.uk, Facebook: [HowAreYouSouthCambs](https://www.facebook.com/HowAreYouSouthCambs)



H.A.Y. is a Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust project.



O&W Christmas 2023